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"Dans l'bon vieux temps ça s'passait d'même..."



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Cover Photo: Firefighter Léo-E. Aubert (1920-1980) decorates an aluminum Christmas tree at the Salem Willows fire station 50 years ago, in December of 1970. It was noted that the tree was "lit indirectly", reducing the danger of fire.

News

It was announced on 10 June that Assumption College in Worcester would now be known as "Assumption University". *Félicitations!* • The *Grand Séminaire de Montréal* has moved from its spacious quarters on Sherbrooke Street to a former convent on Boyer Street. Enrollment has fallen from 318 seminarians in the 1950s to only 16 this year. *C'est triste.* • The Cathedral of *Ss. Pierre et Paul* in Nantes, France, was badly damaged by fire on 18 July. Begun in the year 1434, it was not completed until 1891. Restoration is expected to take three years. *C'est un trésor!* • Sr Pauline Fortin celebrated the 65th anniversary of her profession as a Sister of Ste-Chrétienne in Ste-Anne's church, Salem, on 16 August. A tribute appeared on the front page of The Salem News two days earlier. *Ça se fête!* • Salem's Tommy Beauregard has been selected to continue his baseball career at Wheaton College in Norton following his graduation. *Bravo!* • Our member Cheryl Lussier Poppe (#279) was selected by Governor Baker in June to take over the Department of Veterans Services. *Un Honneur!* • We are saddened by the loss of two prominent members of the Greek community. Dr Phyllis Dragonas died on 1 August at the age of 89. She was a President of the American Association of French Teachers, and France awarded her the distinction of *Chevalier* in the *Ordre des Palmes académiques*. Rev. George Vartzelis died on 16 August at the age of 92. He was a 1946 graduate of *l'Académie St-Joseph* in Salem, and was ordained in Holy Cross Cathedral on 29 September 1953 at the age of 25. *Nous nous souviendrons d'eux.* • Our sympathies to the family of Louis-Charles-Edouard Martel of Manchester, NH who died this past summer. Son of the late Senator Louis-Israël Martel, he was a generous supporter of the Franco-American Institute of Salem. *Nos condoléances.* • Westmount High School in Montréal is celebrating the nomination of Kamala Harris as candidate for Vice-President of the United States. After settling in Montréal, she attended Westmount for four years, graduating in 1981. *De beaux souvenirs!* • The fiftieth anniversary of Lowell's *Semaine franco-américaine* has been postponed to June of 2021. *On a hâte d'y assister!* • As of this writing, the U.S./Canada border remains closed to visitors due to the Coronavirus. *C'est dommage!* •

Donations received include: File material from Paul Darisse (#87); journal and gift from John M. Kobuszewski (#3); books (3) from Ronald McCulley (#67); and books (6) from D.-Michel Michaud (#1). *Un grand merci à tous!*

Editorial

Le nouvel an d'autrefois

In our last issue we recommended the classic French-Canadian novel "Maria Chapdelaine" by Louis Hémon. Here are more excerpts. These describe a harsh winter leading to an unusually quiet celebration of the New Year.

Since the coming of winter they had often talked at the Chapdelaines about the holidays, and now these were drawing near. 'I am wondering whether we shall have any callers on New Year's Day,' said Madame Chapdelaine one evening. A sigh disclosed that she still was dreaming of the coming and going in the old parishes at the time of the New Year, the family dinners, the unlooked-for visits of kindred arriving by sleigh from the next village, buried under rugs and furs, behind a horse whose coat was white with frost. Through the little window they looked on the gray sky, and found little to cheer them.

New Year's Day, and not a single caller! Towards evening the mother of the family, a trifle cast down, hid her depression behind a mask of extra cheeriness. 'Even if no one comes,' said she, 'that is no reason for allowing ourselves to be unhappy. We are going to make *la tire*.'

The children exclaimed with delight, and followed the preparations with impatient eyes. Molasses and brown sugar were set on the stove to boil, and when this had proceeded far enough Telephore brought in a large dish of lovely white snow. They all gathered about the table as a few drops of the boiling syrup were allowed to fall upon the snow where they instantly became crackly bubbles, deliciously cold. After further cooking, and just at the proper moment, the cooling toffee must be pulled for a long time. The mother's strong hands plied unceasingly for five minutes, folding and drawing out the sugary skein; the movement became slower and slower, until, stretched for the last time to the thickness of a finger, it was cut into lengths with scissors – not too easily, for it was already hard. The *la tire* was made.

The children were busy with their first portions, when a knocking was heard on the door. 'Eutrope Gagnon,' at once declared Chapdelaine. 'I was just saying to myself that it would be an odd thing if he did not come and spend the evening with us.' Eutrope Gagnon it was in truth. Entering, he bade them all good evening, and laid his woolen cap upon the table. Maria looked at him, a blush upon her cheek. 'You are the only visitor who has come our way to-day,' said Chapdelaine, 'and I suppose you have seen no one either. I felt pretty certain you would be here this evening.' 'Naturally...I would not let New Year's Day go by without paying you a visit.'

Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année à tous!

LeBrun's Christmas Tree Land



Evergreen trees, wreaths and garlands were sold throughout the city during the weeks before Christmas. They appeared not only on vacant lots, but in front of variety stores, retail shops, and at service stations. One dealer, Al LeBrun (1904-1963), operated in Salem for nearly a quarter-century.

Almon-Louis LeBrun was born in Lynn on 6 August 1904, the son of Joseph LeBrun (1876-1945) and Rosanna Beaupré (1881-1960). After his marriage in 1929 to Hélène Melanson (1909-2006), the couple settled in Salem where they raised their two children, Almon-Eugène and Thérèse.

LeBrun purchased a filling station at 129 Canal Street at the corner of Laurel which he operated for a decade until 1942. In that year the Shell Oil Company built a new "two-car lubritorium and gasoline station" at 210 Washington Street opposite Dodge Street at a cost of \$10,000. LeBrun sold the Canal Street business and purchased Salem's newest and most modern station, located in the heart of the city and in the shadow of the Salem Depot.

Seventy-five years ago, World War II had just come to an end. Those serving in the armed forces would soon be returning home

to be with their families, and Christmas of 1945 was sure to be more festive than ever. A display advertisement for LeBrun's Christmas Tree Land appeared in the pages of the Salem Evening News. The lot was open daily until 12 midnight for the convenience of its customers. So large was his inventory that LeBrun offered trees in bulk at wholesale prices to other vendors. LeBrun's Christmas trees were among Salem's most popular, and business was brisk.

It was announced in 1954 that the old Salem Depot, along with other buildings, would be razed to create the future Riley Plaza. LeBrun's Shell Station was forced to close and was razed in 1955. After owning and operating his own gas stations and Christmas Tree Lands for nearly a quarter-century, Al LeBrun found employment as manager of other stations in Salem, Danvers and Saugus. He died in Peabody just before Christmas, on 8 December 1963, at the age of 59.



La Tourtière de Mme Boudreau

Owner, manager and chef of Salem's Lyceum Restaurant a half-century ago, Joan (Dansreau) Boudreau gained a wide reputation for her culinary creations.

Joan Dansreau was born in Salem on 20 July 1942 to police officer Wilfred-C. Dansreau (1912-1979) and Rose-A. Marquis (1911-1992). She became a prominent figure in the city, serving as president of the Salem Redevelopment Authority for 14 years, and was a member of the board of Salem Hospital. She was also president of the Salem Chamber of Commerce, and was named Business Person of the Year. She was the recipient of the Hawthorne Historic Preservation Award, and was the first woman to serve as Grand Marshall of the Salem Heritage Days Parade.

Mme Boudreau purchased Salem's historic Lyceum Hall on Church Street in the early 1970s. Slated for demolition due to urban renewal, she restored the building and created the successful restaurant which she operated for a decade. Joan Boudreau was "very well known by her family and patrons for her love of cuisine. She studied cuisine at the London Cordon Bleu and it is this knowledge that helped build the Lyceum Restaurant's well-known reputation" while preserving her family recipes.

"The cuisine of the French-Canadians in the United States," said Mme Boudreau, "is much like the people themselves – hardy with a blend of French, New England and Canadian influences. It is a country cuisine based on many fresh products, especially corn, pork and maple syrup. Tourtière," she went on to say, "is the traditional pork pie served by French-Canadians early Christmas morning after midnight Mass. The name of the pie comes from an old pottery casserole, called a tourte, in which French-Canadians first baked this flavorful pie."

Mme Joan Boudreau died on 16 August 2007 at the age of 65. Her family recipe for tourtière remains a favorite.

Tourtière (Joan Boudreau)

This recipe makes four generous pies. This can be made ahead and frozen, or made one or two days ahead and reheated. Although, it is also good cold.

- 6 lbs lean ground pork
- 6 cups water
- 3 cups finely chopped onion
- 1½ cups finely chopped bread and/or cracker crumbs
- 2 Tbsp. salt
- ½ tsp. ground sage
- ½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 4 9" two-crust pie shells

Cover ground pork with water and simmer, stirring occasionally for one hour. Add remaining ingredients, stir, cover and simmer for about 20 minutes until the onions are tender.

Line the pie plates with crust, fill with meat mixture, add top crust, seal and flute edges. Cut slits on top. (I like to make additional designs with cut-out pieces of crust.) Brush with an egg wash mixture.

Bake at 400 degrees until golden brown, about 30 minutes. To avoid overbrowning, cover the edges of pastry with foil, if necessary.

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Le Restaurant français



HOTEL LAFAYETTE

The first attempt to establish a Parisian restaurant in Salem was made by Philippe Poirier (1853-1915), entrepreneur.

Joseph-Louis-Philippe-Orphir Poirier was born at Bécancour (Nicolet) PQ on 12 July 1853, the son of Uldéric Poirier and Sara Bourgeois. He married his first cousin, Caroline Poirier (1862-1934), at St-Cyrille-de-Wendover (Drummond) PQ on 16 January 1882. The couple would have eight children.

In 1906, after working as a bookkeeper for a lumber firm in Canada for 25 years, Philippe

settled in Salem. He first lived at 116 Lafayette Street in the home of his brother-in-law, Dr Émile Poirier (1856-1920), along with pharmacist Pierre-L.-M. Gaudette (1863-1931).

Philippe immediately began construction on the first of his three “elegant brick blocks” on Washington Street near the start of Harbor Street. The Lafayette Hotel at #243-245 was completed in 1907. This was followed by the Florence Apartments at #251-253 in 1909, and by the Montcalm Apartments at #247-249 in 1911.

In November of 1907, several weeks before the formal opening of the Lafayette Hotel, Philippe’s first French restaurant was opened to the public. The hotel and its restaurant were fully described in the press which said in part:

“The Restaurant Francais has been open for several weeks, and those who have had the good fortune to dine there are loud in the praise of the efforts of the French chef.

There is a separate entrance to the apartments, while a stairway leads directly to the restaurant, which is one of the most cheerful and pleasantly located dining rooms in the city. Its seating capacity is over one hundred. A la carte and table d'hôte meals are served. Luncheon can be obtained for the very reasonable price of thirty-five cents. In the kitchen everything is cleanly and bespeaks the greatest fastidiousness on the part of the chef and his staff. All food used on the premises is cooked here, a huge baking furnace being part of the equipment. There is [also] a private dining room on the first floor. Mr. Poirier is prepared to cater to small parties outside his restaurant and will sell bread, cake and pastry."

— Salem Evening News, 20 December 1907.

Despite much high praise, this first attempt did not prove successful. Le Restaurant français closed in the spring of 1908 after less than six months. But Philippe was determined and, within a year, he opened a "thoroughly renovated and considerably changed" restaurant, securing the services of chef Brierre. René-Lucien Brierre (1880-1961) was born in Chartres, France, and his reputation was world-renowned. After working in Paris and London, he came to the United States in the summer of 1903 and worked in New York and Boston before coming to Salem. His arrival and the reopening of the new Restaurant français was heralded in the press:

"The French restaurant in the Hotel Lafayette building at 243 to 245 Washington street, re-opened last evening under most auspicious circumstances, which augurs well

for the future. A large number of prominent people were present. The restaurant reopens under the management of Rene Brierre, a French chef of wide experience in French style of cooking, obtained during his connection as chef at the Hotel Du Louvre, Paris; Princess hotel, London; Cafe Martin in New York; Union club and Cafe Dreyfus, Boston. The French restaurant, immediately, following its first opening a few years ago, became a very popular place for table d'hôte lunches and dinners among the citizens who appreciate a high class eating place with refined surroundings. It is the plan of Mons. Brierre to conduct the restaurant on the same genteel lines, leaving nothing undone in the matter of comfort for his guests. A specialty will be made of the table d'hôte meals served at the popular prices, the menu for which is well diversified. The entire place has been thoroughly renovated and considerably changed in its arrangement. Last evening it was particularly effective, palms and flowers adding their grace to the scene."

— Salem Evening News, 29 January 1909



FRENCH RESTAURANT

HOTEL LAFAYETTE.
248-246 WASHINGTON ST., SALEM.

OPENING

Thursday Evening, Jan. 28

8 O'CLOCK

Table d'Hôte Lunch, 45c.
Table d'Hôte Dinner, 60c.

TABLE D'HÔTE DINNER.

Consommé Taylor Brunelle
Canapé Lafayette
Coquilles St. Jacques
Pâté of Chicken à l'ancienne
New Potatoes à la Française
Potato Croquettes
Roast Lamb Tenderloin of Beef
Lettuce Salad
Camembert Cheese French Pastry
Café or Tea Cream

French Cook, Cuisine Par Excellence
HENE BIKERE, Proprietor.

Further praise was forthcoming. "The cuisine is unexcelled by any other first-class hotel in the state. Mr. Poirier, as a host, has countless friends among the travelers and townsmen and is highly esteemed in all circles of the community."

Again, despite the esteemed host, the celebrated chef, and the sumptuous surroundings, the restaurant failed after only eight weeks. The news was astonishing.

"The French Restaurant of the Hotel Lafayette, Washington street, closed its doors on Tuesday, March 23rd. This news traveled across Salem like lightning and resounded like a crashing peal of thunder amid a calm sky. Everyone thought that this restaurant

would succeed this time and would continue the work so admirably begun, but the general hope was shattered. It is with a very deep regret that we learn of its passing. It was the only Salem restaurant worthy of rivaling the Boston restaurants. Its closing is a loss for the Franco-American renown of our city." – *Le Courier de Salem*, 4 February 1909 (trans.)

Philippe sold his three blocks at 243-253 Washington Street to his brother-in-law Émile, but retained ownership of other properties. Shortly after, on 25 June 1914, all were destroyed in the Great Salem Fire. The family moved to Springfield, MA where Philippe-Orphir Poirier died on 7 August 1915 at the age of 62. He was buried in Salem, and his family returned here to make their home.

Chef Brierre never returned to Salem, but became a U.S. citizen and served in the U.S. Army during World War I. He later returned to France and died in the American Hospital in Paris on 19 October 1961 at the age of 81. He was buried in the new cemetery at Neuilly-sur-Seine, France.



L'Orchestre de la Famille Blais

A most unusual concert took place a century ago in Ames Memorial Hall located in Salem's Y.M.C.A. La Famille Blais was an orchestra composed of eight brothers and sisters aged 9 through 22, organized and promoted by their aunt Olivine Houle.

Joseph Blais (1874-1941) of St-Évariste, Frontenac, PQ, and Anysiema Houle (1872-1943) of Béancour, Nicolet, PQ, were married in Lewiston, Maine on 16 February 1897. The couple first settled in Salem, but relocated to Beverly after the Great Salem Fire of 1914.

Eight of their children were musically talented. Their aunt Olivine Houle (1876-1956), a professional singer who had given many performances in Lewiston, recognized their talents. Under her guidance, l'Orchestre de la Famille Blais was created.

Three of the young musicians were students at the Boston Conservatory of Music where Angéline studied piano, and brothers André and Idéo studied violin. Four studied with private teachers: Ida, clarinet, Émile, cello, and Fernande and Cécile, cornets. Gabrielle, the youngest daughter, played drums, bells and cymbals.

It was shortly after Christmas of 1920 that their first concert was announced. Tickets were on sale at the stores of Rose Brochu on Lafayette Street, Octave Ouellette on Harbor Street, Jean-B. Landry on Essex Street, and Eustache Morin on Jefferson Avenue.

Their much-publicized début was scheduled for Friday evening 14 January 1921 at 8 o'clock, but one account indicates that it was postponed to the following Wednesday. In any event, the frigid temperature was "absolutely unpleasant" and so the attendance was "not as numerous as one would have hoped."

La Famille Blais performed several orchestral works together, and each musician was heard in a solo performance. Olivine Houle sang three solos, "Écho de France" and "Connais-tu le pays" by Ambroise Thomas, as well as an aria by Verdi. All were accompanied on piano by the eldest daughter Angéline.

It was remarked of the family that music was their passion in life. The talent of each young musician was apparent in their solo performances, and their spirit of working together was said to be exemplary. Their modest début was a success and their "artistic future" was assured. The group continued to perform until each, in turn, married and raised a family.

Olivine Houle, who played a large part in the success of the orchestra, was married in St-Alphonse, Beverly, on 5 August 1922 to Achille Thériault (1864-1938). They made their home at 58 Perkins Street, Salem.



Front: Gabrielle, Émile, Fernande, Cécile and Angéline. **Back:** Ida, Idéo-Louis and André.

The Blais Family Musicians

Angéline (1898-2000) married Chambord Lafrenais

André (1899-1974) married Emma Aylwin

Fernande (1901-1991) married Arthur Aylwin and Frank Cook

Idéo-Louis (1902-1975) married Winifred White

Ida (1906-1996) married Peter Giunta

Cécile (1907-2002) married Andrew Velardi

Gabrielle (1909-2000) married Warren Jones

Émile (1911-1974) married Rose-Delima Guy



Charles-A. & Charles A., Aviators

Many youngsters dream of flying, but few imagine themselves living with the most famous aviator in the world. Salem native Charles-A. Richard had this opportunity.

His parents Georges Richard (1867-1927) and Zélie Talbot (1866-1957) were married in the church of St-Paul-de-la-Croix, Rivière-du-Loup, PQ on 13 January 1891. The couple settled in Salem where their son Charles-A. Richard was born on 7 February 1904. After attending welding school, Charles worked as a mechanic. He eventually operated his own auto repair shop from his family home at 150 Bridge Street in Salem. At the age of 23 he trained at the Lambert Flying

Field in St-Louis, Missouri, and developed a friendship with the most celebrated aviator the world has known.

As a young man, he travelled to Missouri determined to learn to fly and in 1927 he received his pilot's license at Robertson Aircraft Corporation. Mr. Richard once lived in the same house as the famous pilot Charles A. Lindbergh and found an abandoned motorcycle in the basement belonging to the pilot. He was given the motorcycle by Lindbergh and had it shipped to Salem where he was working as a mechanic. During his spare time, he restored the 1920 model Excelsior then wrote to Colonel Lindbergh offering to ship it to him. The offer was accepted and Richard's brother, a jeweler in Salem, imprinted the name of the famous flyer and the date on the crankcase. It is now in the Henry Ford Museum. One of Richard's prized possessions was a letter of thanks from Col. Lindbergh. They had become friendly when they spent time together flying from the airport after Lindbergh's famous flight to Paris. – Salem Evening News, 23 October 1991.

Detroit native Charles A. Lindbergh (4 Feb 1902 - 26 Aug 1974) received worldwide attention after his non-stop solo flight from New York to Paris on 21 May 1927. He was awarded a \$25,000 prize by French-American hotelier and philanthropist Raymond-B. Orteig (1870-1939), a native of Louvie-Juzon (Béarn), France. Lindbergh was again in the news in 1932 when his child was kidnapped, held for ransom, and murdered. He was commissioned as a colonel in the U.S. Air Corps, served on the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, and was promoted to brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve. He died in Hawaii at the age of 72.

Charles-A. Richard married Stella Maga and the couple settled in Ipswich in 1936 where they raised their two children. The former mechanic did not pursue a career in aviation, nor did he work for his brother, Salem jeweler Joseph-R. Richard (1907-1984). Rather, he became a printer for a Boston firm. Yet, he was able to share many fascinating stories of his life with Lindbergh with his two children, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Charles-A. Richard, friend of Charles A. Lindbergh, died in Ipswich on 17 October 1991 at the age of 87.

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Danger under Ice

Omer Chouinard (1883-1912) was born in Salem on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1883, the third of eight children born to Camille Chouinard (1853-1912) and Exilia Bédard (1864-1944). Camille, a native of St-Roch-de-Québec, had come to Salem in 1877 and was married here on 14 July 1879.

Omer had been employed as a shoe worker in Salem when, in September of 1911, he decided to move to Montréal. His parents remained in Salem along with his three surviving sisters, Marie-

Jeanne (1890-1978), Blanche (1891-1985), and Renée (1898-1985). The family was then residing at 35 Cabot Street.

When Camille and Exilia received word that their son had been injured in an accident, they immediately left for Montréal. The Montréal newspaper *La Patrie* reported the incident on 26 February 1912 (*trans.*):

Omer Chouinard, [28] years of age, died yesterday in the General Hospital due to a skull fracture, caused by the falling of an icicle, as the victim passed [a factory] at the corner of Ste-Catherine and Cadieux Streets, some ten days ago. The deceased has no relatives in Montréal. He leaves his father and his mother in Salem, Mass. He lived at No. 914 rue Ste-Catherine Est for the five months that he was in our city.

On the following day, the same newspaper reported on the investigation:

This morning the coroner opened an inquest into the death of Omer Chouinard, who died of a skull fracture, caused by the falling of an icicle on the 17th of February instant. Mr. Ovide Coutlée, Mr. Jos. Perrin and lieutenant Élie Gravel, of Post No. 4, were witnesses. The coroner adjourned the inquest to tomorrow morning, so as to find eyewitnesses.

The body of Omer Chouinard arrived in Salem on Friday March 1st, and was received by undertaker Herménégilde Tremblay (1873-1954). A solemn high funeral Mass was held in St-Joseph's church the following day, and he was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery.

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Gagnons Set A Mill Record

What is believed to be a record for a single family in the service of a manufacturing plant is held by Salem's famous Gagnons.

So begins the caption to a photograph which appeared in the Salem Evening News on 19 December 1947.

Fourteen members of this family, with a combined service record of 210 years, are employees of the Pequot Mills. The blackboard in the center of the photograph shows the number of years each member of the family has been employed at Pequot Mills.

Gagnon record		
Norbert	=	31
Alexina	=	20
Omer	=	27
Amedee	=	27
Malvina	=	16
Charles	=	28
Rosario	=	25
Leocadie	=	26
Robert	=	2
Wilfred	=	3
Victor	=	1
Ludger	=	2
Lionel	=	1
Andre	=	<u>1</u>
Total years		210

This is the family of Élie Gagnon (1863-1937) and his wife Adèle Bérubé (1866-1939) who were married at St-Arsène, PQ on 4 May 1886. Two children were born at St-Arsène and, after the family arrived in Salem in March of 1889, eleven more were born: Élise (1887-1967), Napoléon (1888-1968), Alma (1890-1961), Émile (1891-1932), Adélard (1892-1979), Roseanna (1893-1958), Alexina (1894-1986), Omer (1898-1982), Norbert (1900-1979), Malvina (1902-2001), Amédée (1904-1972), Léocadie (1906-1988), and Irène (1909-1984). The family resided in Salem until the fire of 1914 then, after a brief stay in Lewiston, Maine, returned to Salem in March of 1916.

Élie Gagnon was a yard man at the Boston & Maine railroad for 39 years. However, his wife and “all thirteen of [their] children at one time worked at Pequot.” (Pequot Shield, January 1947).

Only six of those mentioned in the “Gagnon Record” are children of Élie and Adèle: Norbert, Alexina, Omer, Amédée, Malvina, and Léocadie. Charles Jalbert is the husband of Malvina; Rosario Michaud is the son of Élise; Robert Talbot is the son of Alma; Wilfred Jalbert is the son of Malvina; Victor, Ludger and Lionel are the sons of Amédée; and André is the son of Omer.

Also mentioned in the caption to the photograph is “the late Mrs. Adele Gagnon, who herself was a 37-year Pequot veteran. With her length of service included, the family total would reach 247 years.” Curiously, there is no mention of the years of service of her children: Élise, Napoléon, Alma, Émile, Adélard, Roseanna, and Irène. Surely, this would result in well over 250 years of service by the Gagnon family! Despite these omissions, “Salem’s famous Gagnons” did indeed gain national fame. The caption to the 1947 photograph indicated in closing: “Because of the unique record, their story is being circulated throughout the country through the Textile Information Service.”

L'Académie St-Joseph

Part VIII

Père Melvin-C. Surette, a Salem native, was guest speaker at the 1979 commencement and Salem Mayor Jean-A. Lévesque personally greeted each of the graduates.

St-Joseph's was now one of only nine parish high schools in the entire Archdiocese. Many were facing the problems of aging Sisters and fewer vocations. Lay teachers demanded higher salaries. But St-Joseph's High School had maintained a staff of 12 Sisters and no lay teachers in its 1979-1980 academic year.

A study reported that the two schools had "put a drain on the financial resources" of the parish. It was projected that the high school, with its 100 students, would end the year "without a deficit"; but the elementary school, with its 300 students, needed a quarter-million dollars in repairs! Yet, the Archdiocese "pledged its support" to keep both these schools open.

A meeting for teachers and parents was held in February of 1980 when it was announced that the high school tuition was to be raised from \$300 to \$800 per student per year! This sharply divided the parish. Teachers, parents and students of the high school had worked tirelessly to raise funds and to increase enrollment in order to avoid closure, while those of the elementary school supported that closure in order to stabilize their own staff and finances. After months of "fiery discord", the decision was made final. Père Bergeron met with the faculty, then with the entire student body, to deliver the stunning news: "I cannot finance both schools. *The high school must close.*"

The Salem Evening News of Friday 23 May 1980 announced the final graduation exercises. "The quiet battle to save a school has ended, and tonight the 25 final graduates of 'small but special' St. Joseph's High School in Salem will say a bittersweet farewell to their alma mater." Mayor Lévesque called the school a "source of pride", and Sr Lucille Tétrault simply asked that "students accept this decision in faith." The press acknowledged that the "loss of the school is being felt particularly keenly by the city's large Franco-American community."

Four alumnae of l'Académie St-Joseph were among the members of the final faculty: Sr Marie-de-Lisieux (Jeannette Gagnon '41), Sr St-Jean-d'Éphèse (Évangéline Pinette '42), Sr Lucille-de-la-Trinité (Lorraine Normand '45), and Sr Irène-du-Divin-Coeur (Irène Martineau '55).

It was the end of an era which had spanned a half-century.

[to be concluded]

Les anciens élèves de l'Académie

Class of 1979

Conville, Teresa M.
Cox, Linda A.
Curley, Caroline M.
Dragon, Lisa Anne
Dubé, Karen P.
Dufour, Réna-Marie
Gasiorowski, Susan M.
Haggstrom, Michael W.
Hudon, Dianne-E.
Humarian, Michael M.
Johnson, Cheryl Anne
Lamarre, Nancy-R.
LaPointe, Cheryl
Lapointe, Kathleen-J.
LeBlanc, Mary
LeBrun, James-D.
Lévesque, Marc-Steven
Marquis, Priscilla-J.
Michaud, Doreen-Joan
O'Keefe, Richard B.
Oquendo, Eugene J.
O'Rourke, Colleen C.
Paganis, Pamela
Sanford, L. Rozanna
Sauvageau, Donna
Schrader, Judy
Sirois, Susan-Carolyn
Skelley, Diane
Southwick, Robert F.
Thibodeau, Maureen-E.
Twomey, Sean Patrick
Veazey, Charles Gerard
Wakabayashi, Miyki
White, Henry C.

Class of 1980

Asano, Maya
Cavanaugh, Bonnie
Crowell, Brenda
Dragon, Heidi
Dufour, Donna
Gagnon, Mark
Gaudreault, Peter
Giunta, Mary Kathleen
Haché, Maurice
Hiltunen, Kari
Hudson, Thérèse
Jacques, Michelle
LeBlanc, Daniel
LeBlanc, Noreen
Maher, Regina Marie
Marquis, Diana
Melendez, Carmen
Morneau, Paul
Normand, Ronald
Purcell, Richard
Riley, Mark
Rude, Robin
Sauvageau, Thérèse
Thompson, Ricky
Wilson, Darlene



Le Courrier de Salem

**Events of a century ago in Salem's Franco-American Newspaper
January - April 1921**

Families and People

- Victor Bérubé and Claire Pelletier are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married at St-Arsène on 17 January 1871.
- Jules Laplante and Marie Santerre are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married at St-Éloi on 14 February 1871.
- Florence Pelletier died on 10 January 1921 at the age of 35. The daughter of Jean-Baptiste Pelletier and Héloïse Vaillancourt, she was born at St-Pamphile and had lived in Salem for 24 years.
- Sr St-Zoé, S.S.Ch. (née Anna Thériault) died in February at the convent of St-Antoine-de-Padoue in Shirley. The daughter of Eusèbe Thériault and Zoé Lemieux of Salem, she was 31 years of age.
- Charles Thériault died on 28 February 1921 at the age of 65. He was the husband of Wilhelmine Michaud whom he married in Westbrook, ME on 15 January 1883.
- Mme Jean-Baptiste Voyer (née Rose Tremblay) died on 6 April 1921 at the age of 89. A native of Les Éboulements, she was married in 1854 and settled in Salem in 1871.

Church

- Père Félix Tessier was appointed curate of St-Joseph's parish in April. A native of St-Félix-de-Valois, he was ordained in Boston in June of 1920 and has since served as curate of St-Louis-de-France in Lowell.

School

- A new school building for St-Joseph's parish is under construction at the corner of Harbor and Salem streets.

Music

- L'Orchestre Blais, composed of eight brothers and sisters, will give a performance in Salem's Ames Memorial Hall in January. The orchestra members were organized by their aunt, Olivine Houle, a noted singer.

Genealogies

Blais

- Mathurin Blais & Françoise Pénigaut
of Hanc, Niort (Angoulême), France
- I Pierre Blais & Ann Perrault (Jean & Jeanne Valta)
Ste-Famille, I.-O., 12 Oct 1669
- II Pierre Blais & Françoise Beaudoin (Jacques & Françoise Durand)
C. Chambalon, 9 Nov 1695
- III Augustin Blais & Madeleine Fortier (Jean & Madeleine Ruel)
St-Jean, I.-O., 11 Sep 1744
- IV François Blais & Marie-Bonne Gagné (Pierre & Geneviève Létourneau)
St-Pierre-Sud, 27 Oct 1777
- V Ambroise Blais & Rogère Fontaine (Louis & Marguerite Carrier)
St-Henri, 14 Nov 1803
- VI Étienne Blais & Marie Gonthier (Étienne & Marguerite Audet)
St-Anselme, 28 Jul 1834
- VII Didier Blais & Philomène Carrier (Jean & Ursule Beaudoin)
St-Évariste-de-Forsythe, 9 Apr 1866
- VIII Joseph-Honoré Blais & Anysiema Houle (Ovide & Apolline Ducharme)
Lewiston, ME, 16 Feb 1897
- IX Émile Blais & Rose-Delima Guy (Isidore & Marilda Pelletier)
Salem, MA, 20 Oct 1936

Dansreau

- Sébastien Dansreau & Catherine Noël
of St-Georges-de-Poitiers, Poitou, France
- I Pierre Dansreau & Angélique Abirou (Pierre & Marie-Anne Despernay)
Varennes, 19 Jun 1708
- II François Dansreau & Charlotte Rivet (Charles & Marie-Joséphite Marais)
St-Sulpice, 10 Nov 1749
- III Joseph Dansreau & Angélique Langevin (Louis & Angélique Leduc)
Verchères, 24 Nov 1777
- IV François Dansreau & Marie Wilcot (Abner & Catherine Greffine)
Verchères, 2 Oct 1809
- V Jean-Baptiste Dansreau & Edesse Desmarais (Joseph & Geneviève Meunier)
Verchères, 30 Jan 1838
- VI Charles Dansreau & Lucie Robert (Jean-Baptiste & Edwidge Gagnon)
Stukely, 4 Feb 1878
- VII Charles Dansreau & Angéline Pelletier (Louis & Olive Bélanger)
Salem, MA 5 Jun 1905
- VIII Wilfred Dansreau & Rose Marquis (Omer & Josephine Castonguay)
Salem, MA, 16 Jul 1939

Décès

*Aux familles éprouvées par le décès d'un membre cher,
l'Institut franco-américain de Salem offre ses plus sincères condoléances.*

Rose-M. (Corriveau) BALL, 80 ans, 24 juillet 2020 • Alfred-H. BÉDARD (#97), 88 ans, 2 juin 2020 • Claire-M. (Castonguay) BLANCHETTE (#98), 76 ans, 28 mars 2020 • Joseph-Bertram BLANCHETTE, 90 ans, 29 juin 2020 • Joseph-Lucien-Louis BLANCHETTE, 89 ans, 17 juillet 2020 • Donna-M. (Vallée) BOUDREAU, 73 ans, 12 avril 2020 • Patricia-T. (Talbot) BURKE, 76 ans, 28 août 2020 • Alfred-L. CHARLAND, 84 ans, 16 juillet 2020 • Jeanne (Bouley) De-FRANCESCO, 92 ans, 15 juillet 2020 • Conrad-P. DIONNE, 84 ans, 19 août 2020 • Barbara-Katherine (Letarte) DOMBROWSKI, 89 ans, 22 juin 2020 • Constance-A. (Roy) FOISY (#141), 85 ans, 6 juillet 2020 • Thérèse-Renée-Albertine (Gabant) GADENNE, 90 ans, 16 août 2020 • André-J. GAGNON, 89 ans, 19 août 2020 • Lawrence-A. GAUDET, 65 ans, 19 juin 2020 • Donald-A. GAUTHIER, 84 ans, 19 juin 2020 • Patricia-A. GAUTHIER, 56 ans, 27 juin 2020 • Pauline-Rose (Gauthier) HARVEY, 76 ans, 15 août 2020 • Mary-Thérèse (Lavoie) KOBIALKA, 83 ans, 11 septembre 2020 • Roger-Léo LAUZON, 73 ans, 5 juin 2020 • James-A. LETARTE, 86 ans, 8 avril 2020 • Mary-Ann (Gauthier) LeCLAIR, 85 ans, 2 septembre 2020 • Margaret-L. (Croke) LeVASSEUR, 79 ans, 14 août 2020 • David-M. MARCOTTE, 65 ans, 11 juin 2020 • Dianne-M. (Michaud) MASSA, 72 ans, 24 juin 2020 • Scott-A. MATTON, 52 ans, 19 juillet 2020 • Hilary (Blesh) MICHAUD, 91 ans, 9 juillet 2020 • Elsie-M. (Allain) NOWLAN, 99 ans, 21 juillet 2020 • Caroline (Alaburda) OUELLETTE, 82 ans, 15 juillet 2020 • Andrew-F. PARÉ, 39 ans, 20 juillet 2020 • Thérèse-F. (Chouinard) PELLETIER, 96 ans, 27 septembre 2020 • Roger-C. ROY, 94 ans, 26 juillet 2020 • Doris-A. (LeBel) RYAN, 89 ans, 22 juin 2020 • Christina-J. (Wright) ST-PIERRE, 35 ans, 8 juillet 2020 • Jeannette-M.-L. (Cimon) SOUCY, 93 ans, 7 août 2020 • Lorraine-D. (Poitras) SOUSA, 91 ans, 22 juillet 2020 • Rita-B. (Pelletier) SZIKNEY, 93 ans, 26 juillet 2020 • Norman-R. TACHÉ, 79 ans, 29 août 2020 • Napolina-L. (LeBlanc) THOMPSON, 66 ans, 29 septembre 2020 • Paul-E. TREMBLAY, 73 ans, 27 juillet 2020 • Maryann-Diane (Roulier) TURCOTTE, 76 ans, 14 juillet 2020 • Jeanne-E. (Lussier) VITALE, 93 ans, 10 août 2020 •

Nous nous souviendrons d'eux

Les Archives de l'Institut

Les documents divers qui se trouvent dans nos archives sont d'importance historique et généalogique. Le nombre de dossiers augmente continuellement, grâce à la générosité de nos membres.



Les cinq jumelles Dionne, nées le 28 mai 1934 à Corbeil, Ontario, attirent l'intérêt mondial. Emélie, Marie, Yvonne, Annette et Cécile sont les enfants de Oliva Dionne (1903-1979) et de Elzire Legros (1909-1986).

Alfred Audet (1875-1960), marchand de liqueurs au No. 11, rue Front à Salem, offrait cette plaque à ses clients il y a 85 ans, en décembre 1935.



La Revue de Salem

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Franco-American Institute of Salem, Inc.

Organized on 1 May 2005 and incorporated on 16 February 2006, the Franco-American Institute of Salem is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history, genealogy, and culture of the Franco-American community of greater Salem, Massachusetts.

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Il nous fera plaisir de vous servir en français.

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Meetings

Board Meetings of the Franco-American Institute of Salem for 2021 will be held at 40 Nahant Street, Lynn, MA on 23 May and 26 September at 3:00 PM. All members are welcome to attend.