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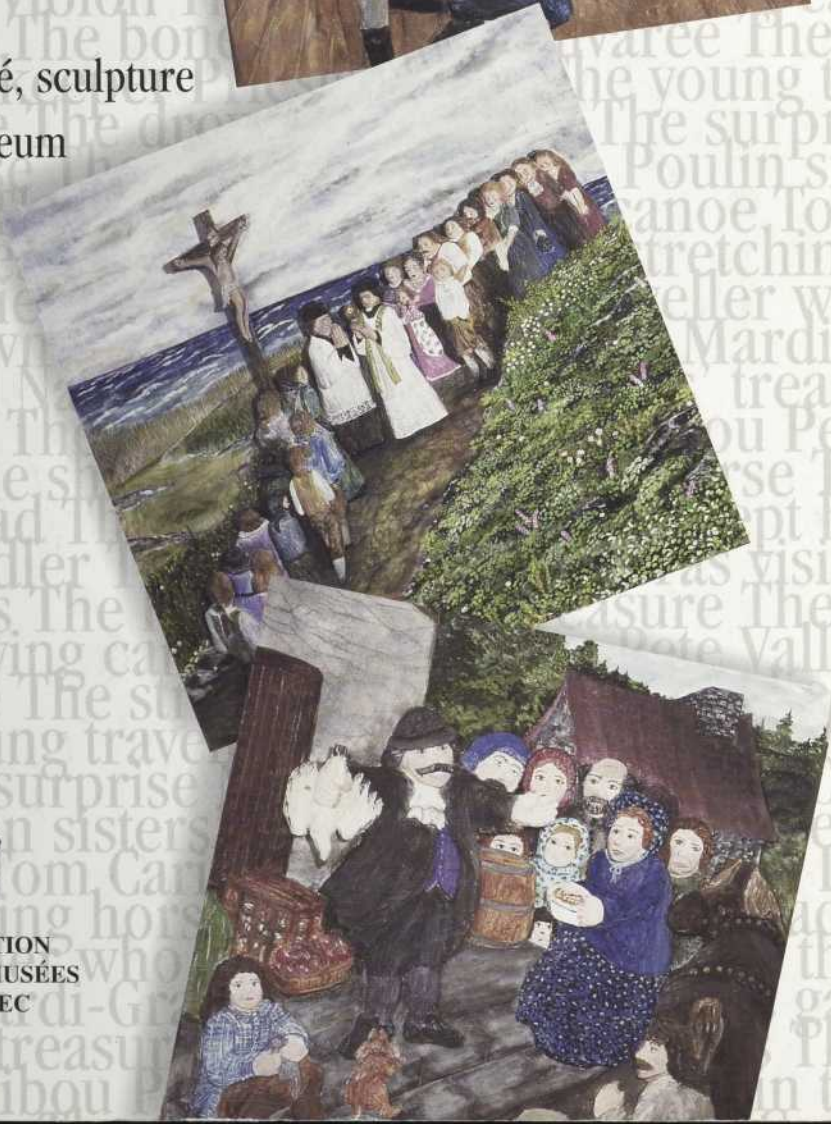
1996

# LEGENDS OF QUÉBEC

Atelier Paré, sculpture  
Economuseum  
of  
legends



LA FONDATION  
DES ÉCONOMUSÉES  
DU QUÉBEC





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Cover

LE LOUP-GAROU  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1995**  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
33,0 cm x 28,6 cm

LE CRIEUR  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1995**  
Bas relief, basswood,  
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LE BONHOMME SEPT HEURES  
**Françoise Lavoie,  
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Mr. Jean-Claude Dupont, Ms. Françoise Lavoie, La Fondation des Économusées du Québec, in particular Ms. Sabine Rioux and Ms. Lucie Trudel.

*Scott Kingsland*

This book is available at :  
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## FOREWORD

*Following the tradition of the troubadours, the hosts of l'Atelier Paré – Économusée des Légendes – invite visitors to journey into an imaginary world. With nothing but the tools of a sculptor and basswood, white pine or Canadian walnut, they give life to the characters of fantastic tales.*

*During those wonderful moments when the supernatural supersedes reality, the story-teller conjures up the memory of an old uncle or a grandmother who also had caught imps stealing horses from the barn to play around in the fields or bad known men who snuck out of the house to change into werewolves.*

*These “real” epic tales tell us that for every demon, will-o'-the-wisp or mermaid in French America there were benevolent spirits, ladies in white and gentle wandering beggars.*

*Popular history also tells us that Europeans discovered lands, forests and waters ripe with fabulous animals and monsters, and that they met men and women who spoke to the stars and the plants... After settling here, the people from the Old World raised war and established a way of life that had to be respected for fear of punishment, while departed parents and friends would come on earth to reprimand those inhabitants who neglected their duties, or to demand that they pray to shorten their stay in the Purgatory.*

*This is but one of the aspects of oral literature present in the St. Lawrence Valley. At Atelier Paré, the storytellers know how to make the fantastic characters sing and dance: they are still very much alive!*

Jean-Claude Dupont



## INTRODUCTION

Every nation in the world can bear witness to the accurateness of traditional legends as a window to the soul of its people.

Throughout its history, Québec's many isolated villages and people have relied on the arrival of the travelling storytellers to teach and humour the community about life and themselves.

Each generation has taken great pleasure in hearing about and laughing at the naivety of their predecessors while at the same time being careful not to upset the mysterious forces that could inflict suffering on non-believers.

Each legend that has endured in the memory of people served a unique purpose. Some tales were to scare people into going to church, for others it was to warn the listeners of the dangers of telling falsehoods. The many imps and elves who are scattered throughout the stories serve to inform the storyteller's audience that even when all seems to be normal there is a chance, however small, that psychic, mystic or supernatural forces could be at work all around them.

Over the years there have been many storytellers, each with sources validating their particular version. Through all of this the basic message of each story remains and the numerous versions that have survived are a testimony to their effectiveness.

The legends found in this book are but a few of the many that will help to reveal the soul of the true Québécois.

Scott Kingsland

The first of these is the ...

The second is the ...

The third is the ...

The fourth is the ...

The fifth is the ...

The sixth is the ...

...

## JOS VIOLON



Our forefathers made use of any occasion to gather and have a party: religious feast days (after church), changes of season, births, good news, etc. Any reason for getting together and having a good time was a good reason.

After the joyful greetings, the hugs and the how-do-you-do's, everyone looked forward to feasting around a generously laden table. Women had prepared their favourite dishes and each was proud to think hers was the tastiest.

In those days, the parish priest was the person given the honour of deciding which sausage, cretons, meat pie, stew, etc., was the best. The host for the evening served a little drink to warm up his guests for the festivities to follow.

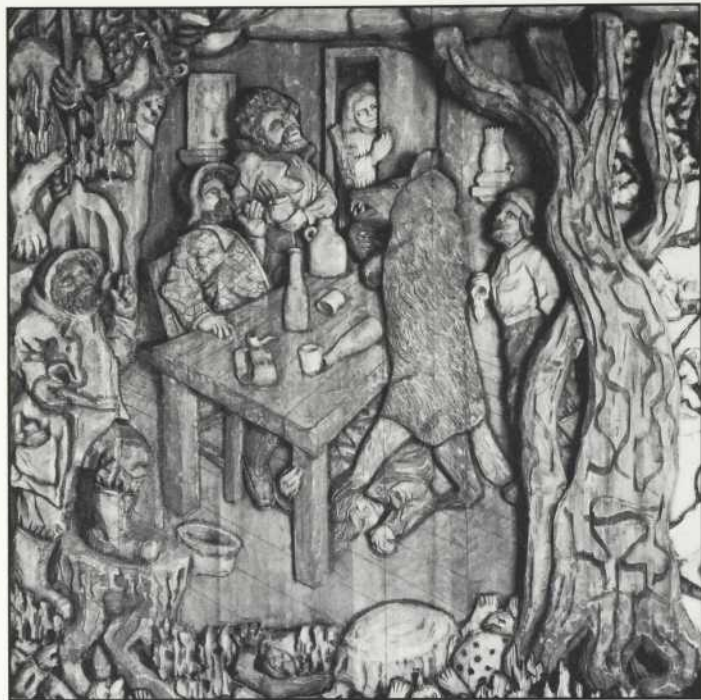
With hungry stomachs full to bursting, they were ready to listen to Joe Violon, the storyteller, who was starting to clear his throat to see if the audience was ready to hang on his every word. He scratched his head and, focusing on the faces before him, he pulled on his face as though the words were to come from the very depths of his mustache. He made use of comical anecdotes from

foreign villages to make his stories more entertaining, transforming different characters into heroes in spectacular or ludicrous adventures. His mimicry and his gestures soon had his audience transported into an imaginary world, open-mouthed in wonder, astonished or doubled over with laughter.

Joe Violon would not speak all evening. In fact, the party began only when he turned his back to the audience and pulled the instrument out of the case. Before he faced the audience again, the first note resounded, only to tune the souls to the pitch of the violin...

Everyone did not yet jump to their feet, they listened to the phrasing. They then joined in the reeling merriment of the dance. There were songs, some of which are still popular to this day. To the accompaniment of the wooden spoons clapping together, they happily danced the night away. Those joyful parties formed an important part of community traditions.

JOS VIOLON  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1995*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
33,0 cm x 28,6 cm



## THE WEREWOLF

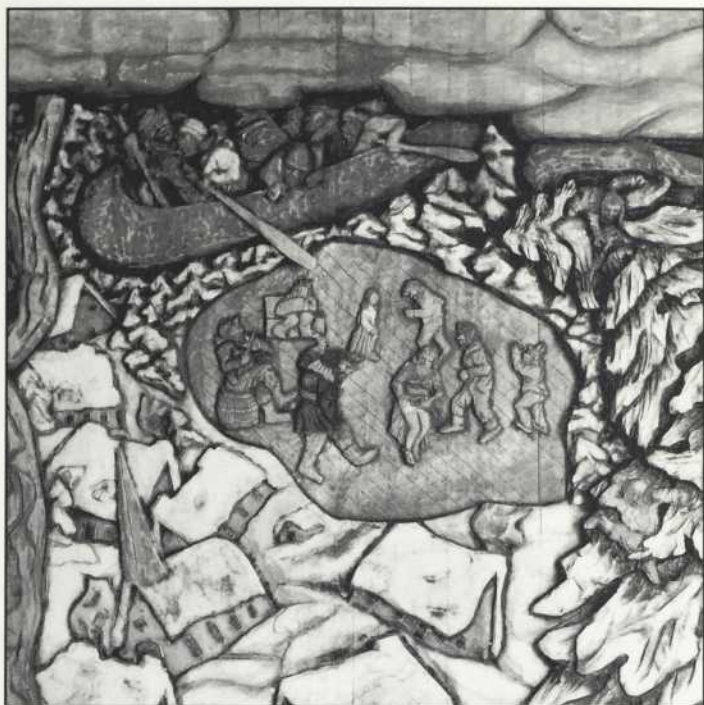
LE LOUP-GAROU  
*Alphonse Paré, 1987*  
*High relief, pine,*  
*polychromed, lacquered*  
*223,20 cm x 161,00 cm*

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a majority of local settlers were of Catholic faith. Amongst their beliefs was that if they missed going to mass for seven Sundays in a row, they would be haunted by a werewolf. As a rule a friendly neighbour would be only too happy to see if you were doing as you should.

One snowy Christmas Eve, some of the boys decided to play a game of cards and have a few drinks before setting off to Midnight Mass. As the evening progressed, they got quite involved in their card game and very involved in their drinking - before they knew it, it was a bit late to go to church.

Shortly after midnight, one belated church goer noticed that the men were still sitting at the table. He decided to teach them a lesson. He threw a fur coat over his head and scratched the door. When the boys opened the door they were frightened by the hallucinating sight of the werewolf. They were so scared that they disposed of their cards in the stove and ran off to church to beg the priest to save them from the terrible beast. They swore that they would never again miss another mass.

## THE FLYING CANOE



One New Year's Eve, in a secluded camp deep in the woods, a group of lumberjacks were feeling homesick and began to wish that they could be with their families and loved ones. But how could they possibly get there when there was so little spare time?

Unexpectedly, the Devil appeared and proposed a solution in the form of a challenge. He offered to supply them with a flying canoe that would transport them home if they would agree not to swear for 24 hours! In the French-Canadian language, swear words often invoke religion, which annoyed the Devil. Well, thought the lumberjacks, that was easy! They agreed. They all piled into the canoe and were on their way home, navigating silently across the cold winter sky.

What a party - dancing, singing, eating, and lots of drinking - a wonderful New Year's Eve affair!

Suddenly it was time to return to their lumber camp. They got into the canoe, but, having had quite a lot to drink, the men began to argue about which one of them was sober enough to take the helm. As the argument got livelier and livelier in the Devil's boat, the canoe started to stagger in and out of the clouds and one of the men forgot the deal and began to swear.

It was too late! The Devil had heard them and decided to punish them. He seized the canoe and vehemently hurled it into the forest.

The lumberjacks tumbled out and fell to earth. Luckily for them the trees broke their fall. As they untangled themselves from the branches, they promised that they would never swear again for as long as they lived.

LA CHASSE-GALERIE  
*Alphonse Paré, 1987*  
High relief, pine,  
polychromed, lacquered  
223,20 cm x 167,60 cm



## TOM CARIBOU

TOM CARIBOU  
*Alphonse Paré, 1987*  
High relief, pine,  
polychromed, lacquered  
223,20 cm x 142,20 cm

In one of the local villages lived a man by the name of Tom Caribou. Tom was a nice enough fellow but one thing he didn't like to do was to share his rum, not even with his best friends.

One winter evening, when most of the villagers were at church, Tom decided that he had better things to do than sit for an hour listening to a sermon. While everyone was concentrating on what the officiating clergyman was saying and no one was looking, Tom sneaked out of church and walked away. He climbed up in the big tree where he had hidden his stash of rum.

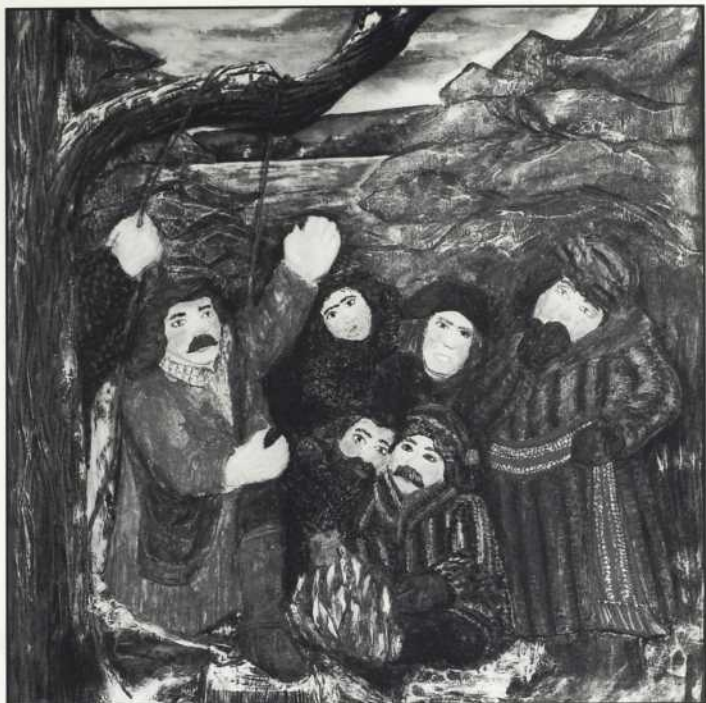
He opened one of the jugs to sample his treasure, but was so excited that he didn't notice that a few drops had fallen on the nose of a bear hibernating at the base of the tree.

The bear woke up in a bad mood and slowly started climbing up the tree. When he got high enough he reached out and grabbed Tom by his trousers. A very frightened Tom began yelling and screaming for help. Finally, Tom's friends heard him and came to his rescue.

First, they scared off the angry bear, then they rescued Tom from his perch high up in the tree, but not until he had given each of them a share of his rum.

Poor old Tom! Besides the fact that he was scared out of his wits, his secret hiding place had been uncovered. From that time on, he had to share his rum with all of his friends.

## PETE VALLERAND



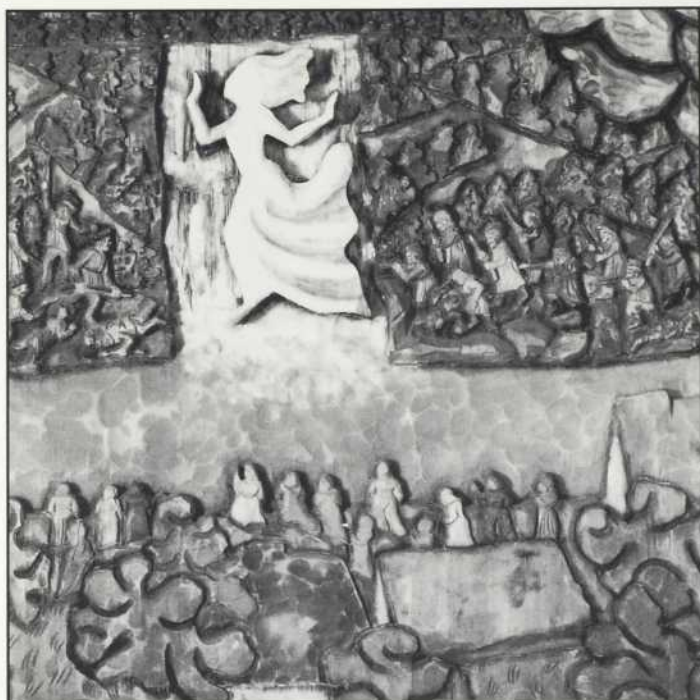
Pete was really a good fellow who loved to laugh and make others laugh as well. He told endless stories. His one annoying habit was that he finished each story with: "If I'm not telling the truth let the devil hang me by my feet!"

Well, one day his friends decided to take him at his word. They threw a rope over the branch of a tree and on the ground where Pete would stand. The branch happened to be above the campfire. As Vallerand came to the end of his story, he uttered his infamous - "If I'm not telling the truth let the devil hang me by my feet!" and suddenly found himself upended, hanging above the fire like a sausage in the smoke.

When he became aware of his predicament, he thought that the Devil had really caught up with him this time.

After letting him hang there until his face and hands were black with soot, his friends finally helped him down. The practical joke that Pete's friends had played on him was soon making people laugh throughout the countryside. To this day it is said that many of the Vallerand descendants have inherited Pete's inimitable style in story-telling and the bad habit of distorting the truth.

TI-PIT VALLERAND  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1995*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
33,0 cm x 28,6 cm



LA DAME BLANCHE  
*Alphonse Paré, 1989*  
*Bas relief, pine, polychromed*  
*91,0 cm x 211,5 cm*

The most beautiful Beauport girl was very much in love with a proud and handsome soldier. They became engaged and were ecstatically happy as they made their wedding plans. One day the young man was unexpectedly called to action. The poor girl was brokenhearted and feared that he would not return after the summer campaign.

Following the battle at Montmorency Falls, the commanding officer came to visit the girl to break the sad news that her fiancé had lost his life on the battleground. She just couldn't believe it!

Every evening she went out searching for him, calling his name, convinced in her heart that he was not dead but that he would finally come back and hold her in his warm and loving arms.

## THE LADY IN THE FALLS

After almost one year of pining she could stand it no longer. One moonlit night she put on her wedding dress and threw herself into Montmorency Falls. As she fell, her wedding veil blew off in the wind and slowly tumbled down the escarpment. Her body was never recovered.

Since that time, local people say that when the moon is full they can see the beautiful girl dressed in her wedding gown through the mist in the shimmering water of Montmorency Falls.

Just west of the main waterfall is a smaller cascade which many believe is the girl's wedding veil that has been transformed into a beautiful natural attraction, a further reminder of a tragic love story.

## THE TOWN CRIER



On Sundays the church was the place where whole communities got together. Before and after High Mass, the crowd gathered in the vacant area in front of the church. These weekly get-togethers gave everyone a chance to chat with their friends, to enquire about the health of some, the work being done by others, all in a cordial environment. This was also the opportunity for the Town Crier to broadcast news from the civil and religious authorities.

This information session did not ordinarily last too long except in the month of November when it took on a special significance. It was called the "Auction sale for the Dead". The money raised was used to pay for masses throughout all of November for the repose of the souls of dead parishioners.

This custom was very popular in French settlements. For these folks, the souls in Purgatory who still had sins to atone for before they could go to Heaven were of particular concern.

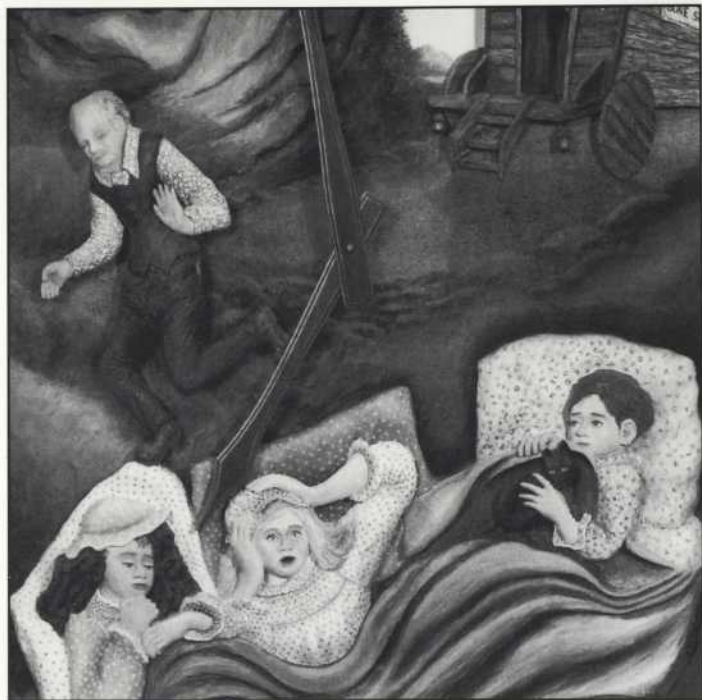
The Crier would break the ice by starting the bidding on different items to be auctioned, such as fruits, vegetables, honey, maple syrup, leaf tobacco and various farm animals such as chickens, turkeys, rabbits, etc. The inhabitants didn't waste any time and bid without any regard for the real value of the items. Their bids were more a form of charity than actual purchasing. All the money raised was used for Masses to be sung in memory of the "Dearly Departed".

LA CRIÉE

*Alphonse Paré, 1990*

*Bas relief, pine, polychromed,  
lacquered*

*71 cm x 77 cm*



## THE BONESETTER

LE BONHOMME SEPT HEURES  
*Françoise Lavoie,  
 Herman Beaulieu,  
 Scott Kingsland, 1990*  
 High relief, pine, polychromed,  
 lacquered  
 152 cm x 118 cm

A bonesetter was generally a kindly fellow who had learned, often from one of his parents, the art of massaging muscles and setting various bones back into position when accidentally displaced. The bonesetter travelled in his wagon throughout the countryside treating the local inhabitants.

The fear all started because the people of Québec pronounced with a French accent the word bonesetter they saw painted on the side of the wagon - bon' sept-heures - (good seven o'clock). Because of this, the man inside was known as the *Bonhomme Sept Heures*.

The children in the villages would hear the adults' howls as they were being treated, and the little ones would be told that if they did not obey when they were told to go to bed the *Bonhomme Sept Heures* would come to see them.

To this day, the suggestion that *Bonhomme Sept Heures* (also known as the boogie man) may pay them a visit will frequently convince children that seven o'clock is the ideal time for kids to go to bed.

## THE SHIVAREE



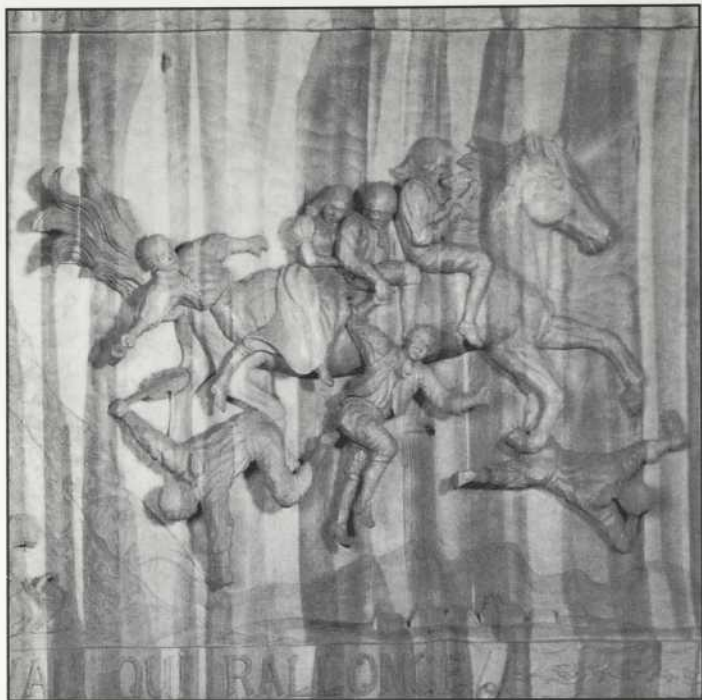
Following a wedding, the townspeople would gather outside the room where the newlyweds planned to spend their first night together. They would bring along home-made noise makers such as tin trumpets, horns, and old pans. The crowd made as much noise as they could to disrupt the couple's attempts to consummate their marriage. In an effort to put an end to the disruption, the newlyweds would throw money to the crowd in the hope that the townspeople would take the money and continue their party elsewhere, thus leaving the couple in peace. This practice was known as a *shivaree*.

One of the most famous *shivarees* to have taken place in Québec happened in 1683.

Soon after the death of her first husband, a woman decided to remarry. But in the eyes of the townspeople, the woman did not grieve long enough over the death of this man and the people attending the *shivaree* refused to leave the newlyweds alone. The party actually continued outside the woman's home for seven or eight days and nights. The event became so noisy and boisterous that the Bishop of Québec, Monseigneur de Saint-Vallier was called on to intervene. He threatened to excommunicate all of the merrymakers, as well as anyone else who held *shivarees* in the future.

*Shivarees* discontinued for a while, but a form of the custom continues to this day when old shoes and tin cans are tied to the bumper of newlyweds' car as they drive off on their honeymoon.

LE CHARIVARI  
**Alphonse Paré, 1990**  
*Bas relief, pine, polychromed,  
 lacquered*  
 149 cm x 98 cm



LE CHEVAL QUI RALLONGE  
*Gilbert Lefrançois, 1988*  
High relief, pine lacquered  
91 cm x 212 cm

## THE STRETCHING HORSE

**D**uring heavy spring rains, the dam at the mill in Beauport was swollen with excess water. The townspeople decided to bring the wheat kept in storage during winter. The grinding wheels in the mill whirled as they never had before.

As more and more people arrived, it was decided that they should have a party to celebrate the event. The local innkeeper agreed to host the evening at his establishment, as long as the party was finished by midnight. People who celebrated after 12:00 p.m. on Saturday nights were flirting with the unknown. Everyone agreed to the terms.

In order to make this the perfect celebration, the very best musicians from Ile d'Orléans were invited. The food was delicious, the wine flowed, music filled the air and everyone was having a wonderful time. At midnight the owner shoved everyone out.

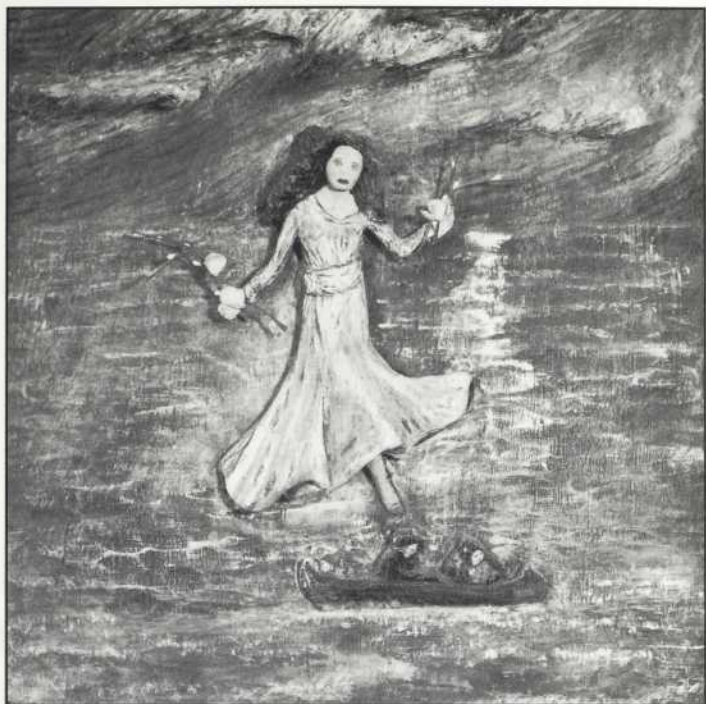
As the musicians made their way back to the banks of the St. Lawrence to board the homeward-bound longboat, the celebrating and fun continued.

The more they fortified themselves with the wine, the more intoxicated they became. Suddenly, a horse they had never seen before appeared before them. They decided that this horse would be an effortless way to get home. Everyone quickly mounted the wondrous horse, one after another. Despite the fact that there was a crowd, there seemed to be room for one and all on this amazing animal.

The musicians were so excited that they continued to drink and play music. Much to their surprise, instead of following the usual path, the horse took to the air, carrying them past the river bank and over the flowing waters. Once the horse reached the middle of the river, it turned upside down dropping everyone into the cold water below. The horse was heard neighing in laughter as it flew away.

When everyone woke up the next morning on the banks of the river, they were not too sure whether the event had actually taken place or not. But, from that day on, they never celebrated after midnight on Saturday nights.

## THE GLADIOLA LADY



Many stories have been told about what could happen to anyone who ventured out onto the St. Lawrence River when the moon was full. One of the most terrifying is the story of the Gladiola Lady.

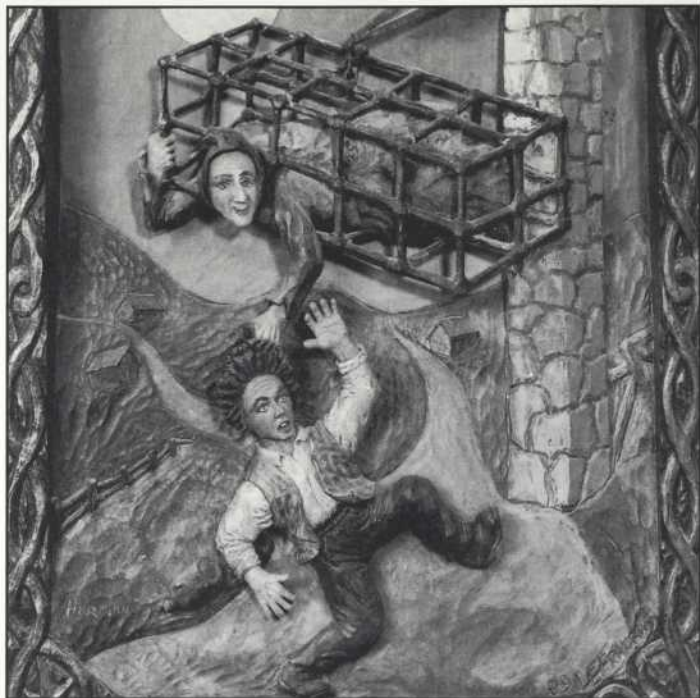
She appears as the full moon breaks through the clouds. Dressed all in white, she is visible only to children because their innocence allows them to be convinced that one could walk on water in the middle of the river. No matter how many real adults in the boat, they are unable to see or hear the Gladiola Lady as she slinks closer and closer.

Many youngsters have told unbelievable stories of how both men and women have left the boat, attempting to walk on water as they fell under the evil spell.

The apparition, with long black hair flowing in the wind, wears a smile when she arrives but quickly turns ugly and distorted when she has someone lured by her charms. People standing along the shore have often said they could hear moans coming from the middle of the river - it was the cries for help from those who yielded to the apparition.

No one really knows at just what age one becomes an adult, but many young men have become cautious travelling onto the St. Lawrence during the full moon, fearing that childhood has not yet receded and they may still be of an age to fall into the grip of the Gladiola Lady.

LA DAME AUX GLAÏEULS  
**Françoise Lavoie**, 1992  
*Bas relief, basswood, polychromed*  
59,4 cm x 44,0 cm



LA CORRIVEAU  
*Gilbert Lefrançois,  
Herman Beaulieu, 1989*  
High relief, pine,  
polychromed, lacquered  
88 cm x 51 cm

Following the death of her seventh husband in 1763, Marie-Josèphe Corriveau was jailed. During the course of her trial, she revealed how she managed to kill seven husbands.

The first, an unpretentious little man, died in his bed; *la Corriveau* gave him a sleeping potion and efficiently smothered him with a pillow by sitting on it. The second, arriving home late one night, laid down on the couch to sleep. *La Corriveau* took a rope and tied one end around the man's neck; she passed the rope out through the open window and attached the free end to her horse. Then she watched it gallop away with the trailing husband.

Number three would feed special potions to his stallion. One day, when he was bedridden with a cold, he asked his wife if she would fix him a hot drink of ginger tea. Searching through the cupboard, *La Corriveau* came across the potion and decided to make a soothing brew that would cure him. Her fourth husband was a spoon maker who spent a lot of time talking to the young ladies of the village.

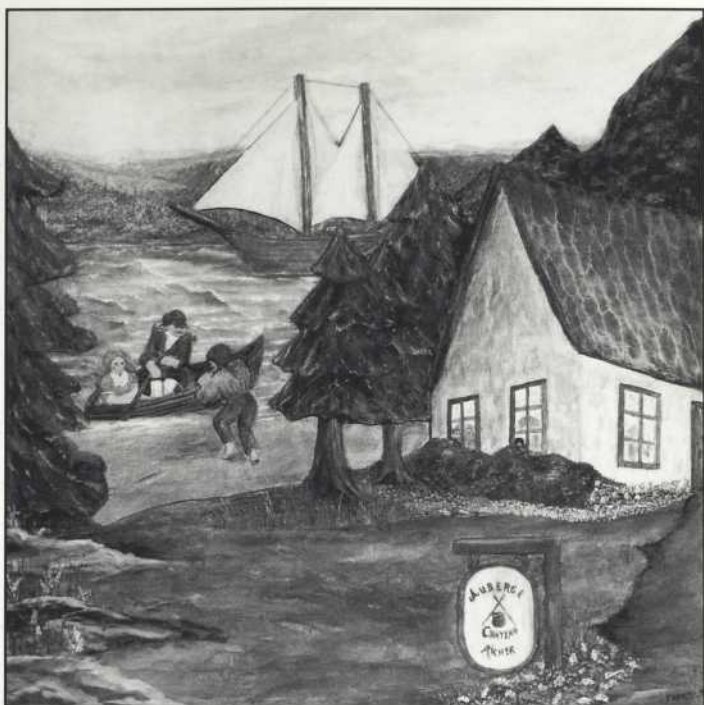
## MADAME CORRIVEAU

One day, as he was sleeping, his loving wife heated up some lead and proceeded to pour it into his ear.

The fifth was a jealous man who never left the house. He spent too much time on his knees praying in the living room. *La Corriveau* took advantage of one of these praying sessions to knock him out with a strong blow to the back of the head. A shoemaker was the sixth. He made the mistake of leaving his awl lying around the house for fear of losing it. *La Corriveau* put it in a place where he would be sure to find it – his stomach. Number seven, a boorish man who enjoyed ordering her around, was struck on the back of the head with a stinking manure fork.

*La Corriveau* was convicted by an English court in Québec City. She was sentenced to be hanged for the assassinations, and her body was displayed in a steel cage at Pointe-de-Lévis because she was also found guilty of witchcraft.

## THE WICKED INNKEEPER



The village of Château-Richer has been home to many inns over the years. One of these was owned by Louison and Josée, a brother and sister who had turned their parents' home into an inn following their death.

Most of Louison's guests were hunters who came from far away; many of them were captains of the ships docked in the port of Québec. Louison was very busy. He was both the innkeeper and the guide for the many hunters who stayed at the inn. Josée was a pretty yet simple-minded girl who was often left alone to look after the place when Louison was away.

One day a sea captain arrived in a beautiful vessel named Hope. It was painted bright green with red trimming on the bow. While Louison immediately fell in love with the boat and expressed his deep desire to own it, the captain spent most of his time admiring the beautiful Josée.

One starry night the people in the village saw Louison and the captain boarding the boat with Josée, and sailing off towards Québec where the captain's ship was loaded and readied to set sail. Louison returned to Château-Richer alone at the helm of the beautiful green boat which he had been given by the captain in return for his sister.

Once the people in the village realized that he had traded his sister to a stranger for a boat, the inn began to lose money, the hunters who came to admire the beautiful Josée no longer stayed, and shortly thereafter Louison died a poor broken man.

LE MAUVAIS AUBERGISTE  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
77,5 cm x 71,0 cm



## PRIESTS' ROAD

LA ROUTE DES PRÊTRES  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1993**  
*Bas relief, pine, polychromed,  
 lacquered*  
 76 cm x 71 cm

The preserved arm bone of St. Clement was cared for by the parish of Saint-Pierre, Ile d'Orléans, as devoutly as its sacred church vessels. On Rogation days, the parishioners venerated this relic to which they attributed miraculous cures said to occur when the affected part of a privileged body was touched by it.

One night the precious relic vanished. The good people of Saint-Pierre immediately suspected the parishioners from the village of Saint-Laurent who claimed that the relic really belonged to them. For the next thirty years, the people of these two villages were involved in a feud that was to dominate their lives and ruin friendships.

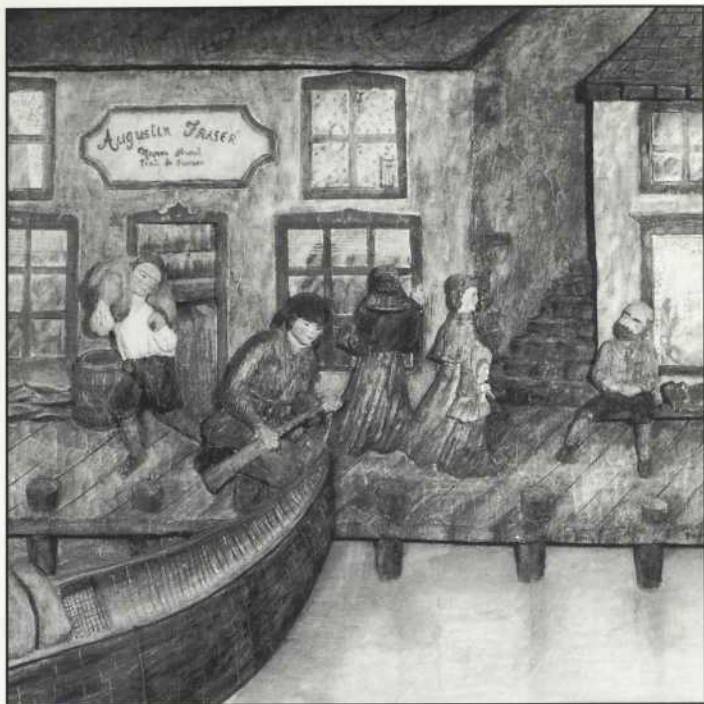
In 1733, the Bishop of Québec summoned the Pastor of Saint-Laurent and his parishioners to meet the pastor of Saint-Pierre and his flock at a sugar house on a small road that runs north and south along the border of Saint-Pierre and Saint-Laurent.

The sight of the two dissenting parties finally meeting on common ground, and the ensuing ceremony when the relic was once again returned to the people of Saint-Pierre was certainly a moment in history not to be forgotten.

To commemorate the amicable gathering, it was decided that a highway cross be erected and the historic transfer of the precious bone be made on the site. As though to stress the importance of this icon, the Bishop of Québec attended the historic event and blessed the cross which had been erected.

To this very day, this highway cross is ardently preserved, and the road to the sugar house bears the name of Priests' Road. The people of Ile d'Orléans still pay a special tax to maintain the road and its monument.

## THE YOUNG TRAVELLER WHO KEPT HIS WORD



One of the busiest shops located in the Place Royale public market was the supply store owned and operated by Augustin Fraser. Early one spring, a young *coureur des bois* entered the shop looking for supplies he would need for his trip into the forests of Québec. Unfortunately, the young man did not have very much money but he did, however, make a promise to Mr. Fraser that when he would return, he would pay the store owner in full and then some. For one reason or another Mr. Fraser had confidence in the young man's promise and allowed him to take the goods on credit.

Sadly, the young man never reached his destination. His canoe overturned in rapids, killing him immediately. At that very moment, Mr. Fraser was startled by the apparition of the young man in his store. In a very confident and reassuring voice, the young traveller said: "In order to repay my debt to you I will come and warn you one hour before your death".

Some time later, Fraser was doing some work on a piece of farmland he had recently acquired when he realized he had to remove a boulder. After struggling for about an hour, the stone was finally moved. Much to Fraser's surprise, hidden underneath the boulder was the vision of the young traveller. He immediately called to his helpers to leave their work and follow him to his home. Upon reaching the house he got right into his bed, called for the priest to administer the last rites and summoned a notary to dictate his last will and testament.

Within an hour Fraser was dead.

Because of Fraser's kindness to the young traveller, it is said that since that day Fraser's descendants are always warned an hour before their demise.

LE VOYAGEUR QUI TINT PAROLE  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
76 cm x 71 cm



## SOULARD THE MASTER FERRYMAN

SOULARD, MAÎTRE PASSEUR  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
74,5 cm x 71,0 cm

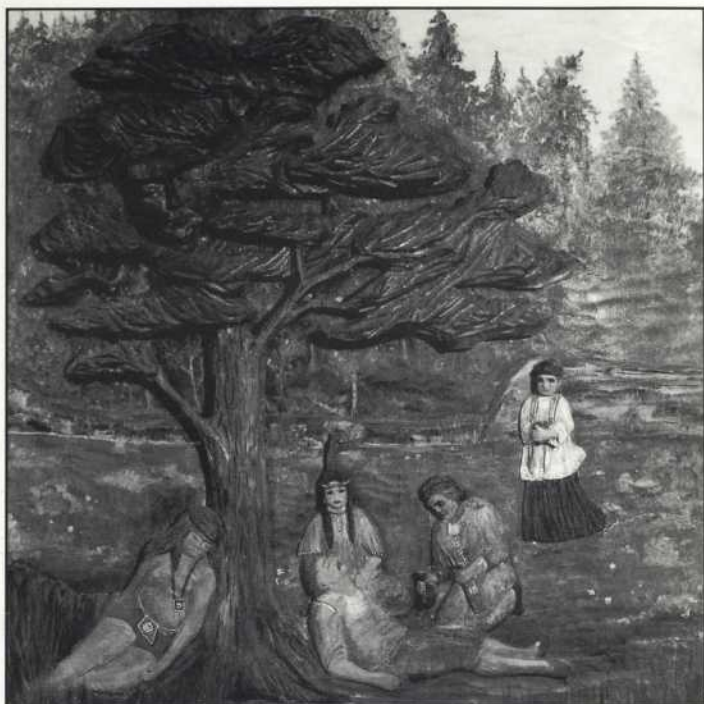
**P**ierre Soulard was a very proud and vain man, a ferryman who made the journey between Québec and Lévis throughout the year. He often boasted about how he and he only could travel across the St. Lawrence no matter the obstacles Mother Nature would put in his way. One winter's day, in the midst of a bad storm, despite warnings about the adverse ice conditions on the river, Soulard refused to admit that the river could get the better of him. During the crossing, a large block of ice broke away from the shoreline, crashed into the ferry severely damaging it, hurtling all the passengers to their death in the icy water. Only Soulard escaped drowning by gripping on to a sheet of ice.

The next day, half-dead, he was pulled out of the freezing water on the shores of Lévis.

From then on, no one would board his ferry - he hid himself away, drunk from morning to night, in his house - a house which still bore a sign saying Soulard the Master Ferryman.

One night, after another drunken spree with some woodsmen who had been unable to cross the river because of inclement weather, he agreed to take them to Lévis over the broken and fast-moving ice floes. As the party reached the middle of the river, Soulard lost his footing and fell into the frigid waters. A shard of ice broke away from a floe and, hurled by the rushing waters, decapitated the vain ferryman. The head floated and spun away on the icy water. Since then, it is believed that, during a storm, Soulard's head may be seen on the water, and it is also said that anyone who encounters the dreadful sight will die within the year.

## THE DREAM TREE



One summer day, an old Indian chief came home tired from a day of trapping, and lay down to rest beneath a tree on the banks of the Kabir Kouba (St. Charles River). While he slept, Our Lady of Lorette appeared to him and told him that he would not live to see the blossoms on the trees, but that she would open the gates of heaven to him.

Much later, a lazy young man in the region who sold rum illegally, stole animals from other hunters' traps and had no respect for traditions, heard that story. He travelled the river bank and lay down under the very same tree to bid defiance.

A few minutes after he had fallen asleep, the earth trembled and above the water the head of a large snake appeared with dazzling, shining eyes. The reptile, whose skin shone like gold, opened its large mouth and said to him: "I know you came here searching for the Lady of Lorette, but I am the Great Manitou. I am more powerful than her, the Indians worshipped me before they were taught about the Lady of Lorette."

The young man was petrified with fear. Suddenly, the reptile was replaced by a shaman with a terrifying laugh, who said: "I will give you a large sum of money. I will dress you like a king. Your bottle of whisky will never go dry. To insure that you are never lonely, I will arrange for you to marry the daughter of the Grand Chief. All this will be yours if you will worship the Great Manitou."

The lazy character accepted the shaman's offer. A few years later he took sick and was about to die. The parish priest was summoned to give him the last rites, but no matter how the priest tried to reach the dying man, he was always prevented from doing so by the terribly mocking laughter of the shaman.

Just as quickly as the lazy man's easy life began, his life in Purgatory was about to begin.

L'ARBRE DE RÊVE  
**Françoise Lavoie**, 1993  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
76,0 cm x 68,5 cm



## THE DROWNED PEDDLER

LE COLPORTEUR NOYÉ  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1992**  
*Sketch on tracing paper, felt pen*  
 17.0 cm X 28.5 cm

One evening along the banks of the St. Lawrence River near Beauport, the body of a local peddler was washed ashore. The man had gained a certain reputation as a lazy and sinful character. As a result, the parish priest refused to conduct a funeral for a man he thought of as unworthy.

A few weeks later, the same priest was being taken to administer the last rites to one of his servants who was dying. As soon as the party began its trip in the woods, the priest fell asleep. Suddenly the horse stopped in its tracks and refused to move another step. The cleric awoke with a start and thought he was dreaming when he saw a shining coffin which was blocking their path. He climbed down from the wagon, raised his hand over the coffin and said: "If you have been sent by Satan, depart, but if you are from God, I will pray for you." As he spoke he saw that the coffin glowed even brighter. The priest spoke again: "I am blameworthy, tomorrow I shall conduct your funeral service".

Suddenly they heard the birds begin to sing, everything returning to normal. The horse began to pull the wagon and they continued on their way to the young man's house.

The day following this amazing apparition, the bodies of the drowned peddler and the bodies of two children who had died unbaptized were removed from their resting place. The priest then had the church caretaker build coffins of the best wood available and he conducted a funeral the likes of which was reserved for only the wealthiest and most influential of his parishioners. It is believed that if one searches in the proper cemetery, a monument can be found with the inscription: "Here lies a worthy peddler, slain in Québec, whose body was thrown into the sea to a far-off place".

The priest really wanted to make sure that he would never meet this man again in his lifetime.

## THE SURPRISE MARDI-GRAS VISITOR



One Mardi-Gras evening, the day before Ash Wednesday, young people of the village invited a company of fiddlers and harmonica players to party and dance. Just before midnight they heard sleigh bells - an unexpected visitor!

A handsome fellow stepped down from the sleigh and walked in. He removed his hat and cape but not his gloves. All the girls wanted to dance with this dashing man with the piercing eyes, but he saved all his dances and attention for the daughter of the household.

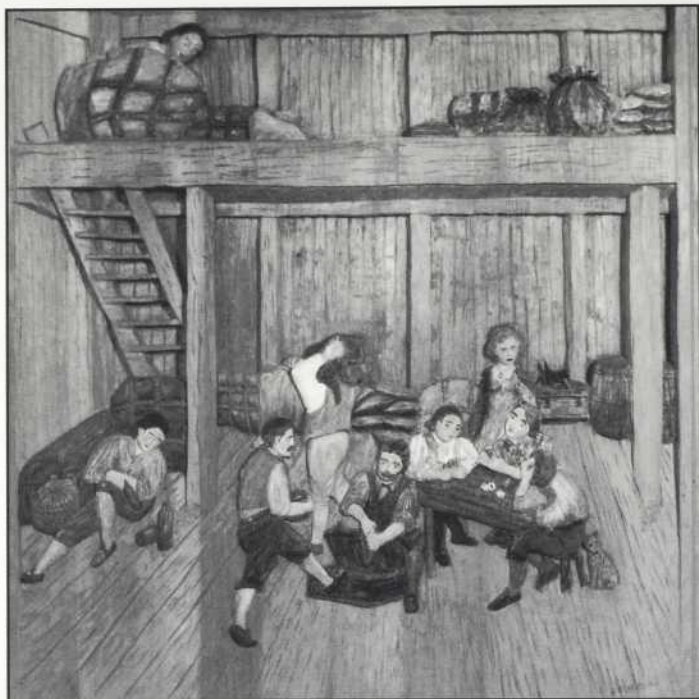
The young people who ventured outdoors were fascinated by the stranger's horse. It appeared to have travelled a long distance for it was wet with perspiration. Despite all their efforts, the animal would not take any of the oats or water they offered it.

Inside the house the noise woke up the old grandmother and the baby whom she had been rocking.

The grandmother noticed that the baby trembled when the stranger came near, and that he had gently placed a gold chain around the neck of the lovely daughter of the household, replacing the cross which she always wore there. Without hesitation, the grandmother ran to her room, dipped her fingers in a jar of holy water and she made the sign of the cross on the visitor.

Immediately the acrid smell of sulphur filled the air. The stranger hurriedly departed, racing towards his sleigh - taking with him his beautiful dancing partner. The young girl could be heard crying out in fright as the sleigh flew out of sight over the river. Flames appeared under the sleigh's runners and the glow from the horse's shoes generated bright sparks in the heavens which could be seen for some time in the night.

LE SURVENANT DU MARDI GRAS  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
75 cm x 69 cm



LA BANDE DE CHAMBERS  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1993**  
*Bas relief, basswood,  
 polychromed, lacquered*  
 76 cm x 70 cm

## THE CHAMBERS GANG

The Chambers gang carried out its robberies along the banks of the St. Lawrence River in the Québec City region. At night, they would wait for merchants with horse drawn wagons attempting to ascend Côte de la Montagne [Mountain Hill]. Although they appeared to offer their services to help push the weighted wagons up the steep incline, they were in fact gradually removing bales from the wagon for accomplices to recover and carry away.

They further discovered that travellers aboard the large sailing ships frequently left valuable jewelry and money in their cabins. While some of the gang were entertaining the sailors with whisky and rum, the other members of the gang would be filling their pockets with the money and bounty from the cabins.

As their greed grew, they began turning their attention to the local churches.

One day at twilight, a fisherman was caught in a violent rainstorm near the mouth of the Cap-Rouge River. He sought refuge under the eaves of an old abandoned grist mill. He had hardly settled when he saw a large row boat anchoring on the shore with a band of men carrying with them many religious objects. The robbers were using the mill as a workshop where they would melt down the objects to make gold and silver bars.

Circa 1835, the Chambers gang was finally arrested, detained and brought to trial. Everyone was greatly relieved, but the joy was short lived as the Church immediately began asking its members to double and triple their contributions for the replacement of the stolen objects.

## WILL-O'- THE-WISP



A few places are to be avoided at night. They say, for instance, that if you sat on the fence around the yard after dark you would see the will-o'-the-wisps jumping from one fence post to another. It was also said that you should never turn over new ground after dark.

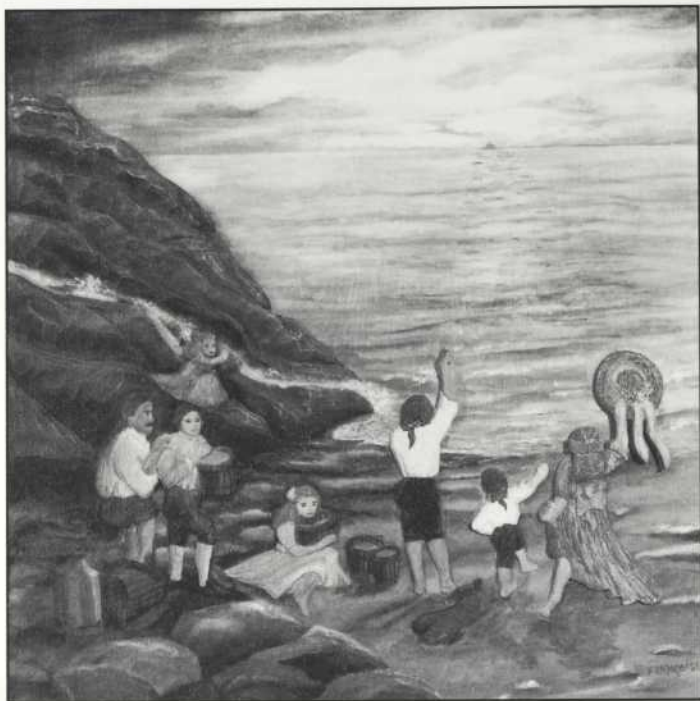
It was the mystery and fear that surround these will-o'-the-wisps that gave three young children the scare of their lives one summer evening. They were having such a good time at their aunt's that they did not notice just how late it was getting. The aunt quickly sent them on their way home, reminding them that the moon was full and there was almost as much light as during the daytime. The children hastily headed across the fields.

The trip home was going well until they reached the marsh. At that point they had to cross a little footbridge over the water and the youngest sister stopped suddenly.

The children were momentarily paralysed with fear as hundreds of will-o'-the-wisps whirled all over the water. The children had no choice, they had to get home. The oldest boy took a leap and managed to clear the bridge without hardly touching it. The second child grabbed the hand of the youngest and they flew across the bridge. As they jumped, they looked down to see the pond alive with bright flashes of light.

When they finally reached home, out of breath, their mother told them that on nights when the moon was full, the frogs jumped and croaked, and that it was the reflection of the bright moon on their backs that they had thought were the will-o'-the-wisps.

LA MARE AUX FEUX FOLLETS  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Sketch, basswood,  
pencil and felt pen, lacquered  
74,5 cm x 68,5 cm



LA DANSE DU SOLEIL  
**Françoise Lavoie, 1993**  
*Bas relief, basswood,  
 polychromed, lacquered*  
 76 cm x 71 cm

If the children went to bed early enough the night before Easter Sunday, the parents would wake them before sunrise and take them to the banks of the river to watch the sun dancing over the water.

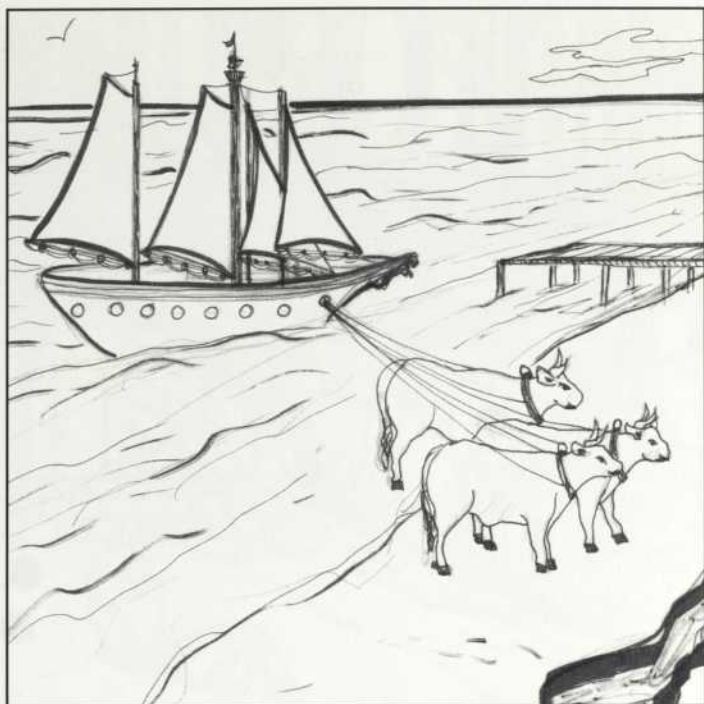
Everyone was very excited about collecting as much Easter Water as they could carry. All types and sizes of jars were gathered and brought along. The containers would be filled by scooping the water from the river against the flow of the current. This Easter Water was considered as good as holy water, you could drink it to help cure illness and sprinkle it on your windows to protect you during thunderstorms. Water was also collected for the elderly who were unable to walk the distance, or because there was still snow on the ground.

## EASTER SUNRISE

Just as all the containers were filled, the sky would light up with a blaze of colours and the sun would appear from behind the horizon. As the sun slowly began to rise, the waters along the river would show signs of life. The rays of the sun would then brush the rippling water and generate a ballet to glorify the dawn of a new day and a new beginning.

When one is lucky enough to catch a glimpse of this enchanted moment it is not easily forgotten. From that point on, every sunrise reminds you of that day.

## THE BULL NARROWS



Seafarers who live along the St. Lawrence River have always had a special apprehension of the whirlpools near Sainte-Pétronille, Île d'Orléans. Mother Nature seems to have placed a strong undercurrent close to the shores at the western confines of the island as a test to the abilities of any captain who would dare steer a ship into this area at falling tide. More than one ship has been lost, passengers, cargo and crew, despite many warnings about the risk. A ship which dares to venture into the area slowly begins to spin only to find itself uncontrollably drawn to the bottom.

One night, Captain Joseph-Bellarmin Noël, one of the Island's master shipbuilders and an experienced sea captain, was showing signs of fatigue as he returned from a long journey. Without a warning, he found himself caught up in the dreaded vortex. His ship began to spin out of control like a poorly crafted top.

The Captain prayed to the Virgin Mary, patron of sailors, begging for help to get out of this whirlpool which would destroy his ship and drown him.

As the situation worsened, three large bulls with huge golden horns appeared in the waters around the ship. The captain shrugged off any possible disbelief and immediately cast out lines which became hooked around the long horns that shone in the night. The bulls swam strongly, hauling the ship as they did at the dock in Saint-Jean. Captain Noël continued praying to the Virgin Mary, placing all his faith in Her to help save his ship and his life. In remembrance of this amazing event, the area near Sainte-Pétronille where these tidal currents occur has been known as the Bull Narrows.

As for the captain's descendants and friends, they continue to exercise caution by saying a special prayer to the Blessed Virgin each time they pass near Sainte-Pétronille.

LA PASSE AUX TAUREAUX  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1992*  
Sketch on tracing paper, felt pen  
17.0 cm X 28.5 cm



LE TRÉSOR DES SŒURS POULIN  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1992*  
*Sketch on tracing paper, felt pen*  
*17.0 cm X 28.5 cm*

Legal battles can be the ruin of many a family fortune, as the last of the Poulin sisters of Trois-Rivières found out. At the end of the 19th century the sisters inherited one of the most beautiful woodlands that existed between Québec and Montréal.

The St. Maurice Ironworks Company, located in the same area, required large quantities of wood charcoal to melt iron for their smithy. Having depleted all of the woodlots in the area, the company then started to farm the trees that stood on the woodlands inherited by the Poulin sisters. Despite their objections, the company continued their work, alleging that it was the company that really owned the land.

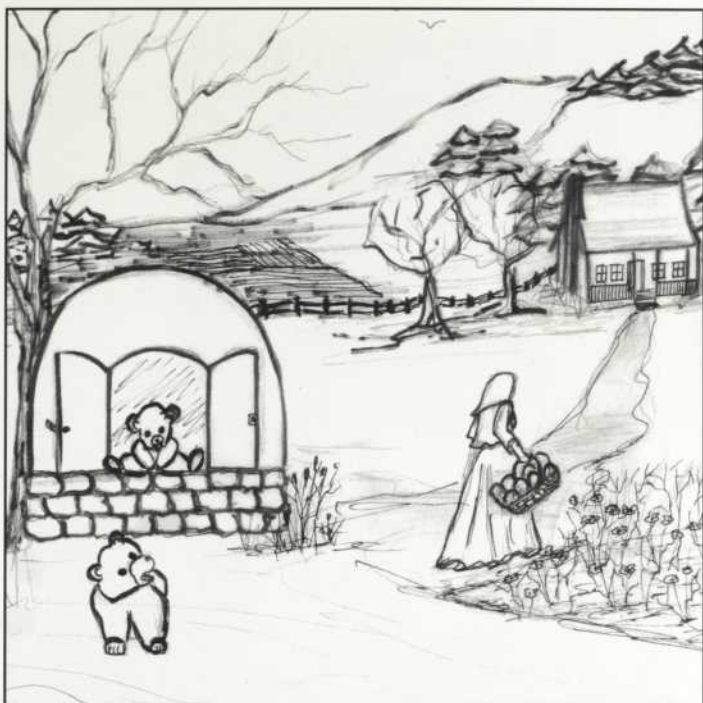
At this point began one of the longest trials to have ever taken place in the history of Québec. Not only did the sisters lose their woodlands, but they were financially ruined by the enormous legal fees involved.

## THE POULIN SISTERS' TREASURE

It is said that, when the last of the Poulin girls sensed that her death was at hand, she realized that the court would be seizing the family treasure that had always been kept in a large chest and passed on from one descendant to another. In an attempt to protect that which she felt was hers, she managed to load the chest into a small boat, tediously rowed to the middle of the Pinière River and tipped the treasure to the bottom. "There, she said as it sank, God couldn't save our land, so let the Devil protect our treasure!"

Ever since, many treasure hunters have attempted to recover the Poulin sisters' treasure, but just as anyone comes close to finding it, the Devil himself moves it to another place.

## THE BREAD- OVEN BEARS



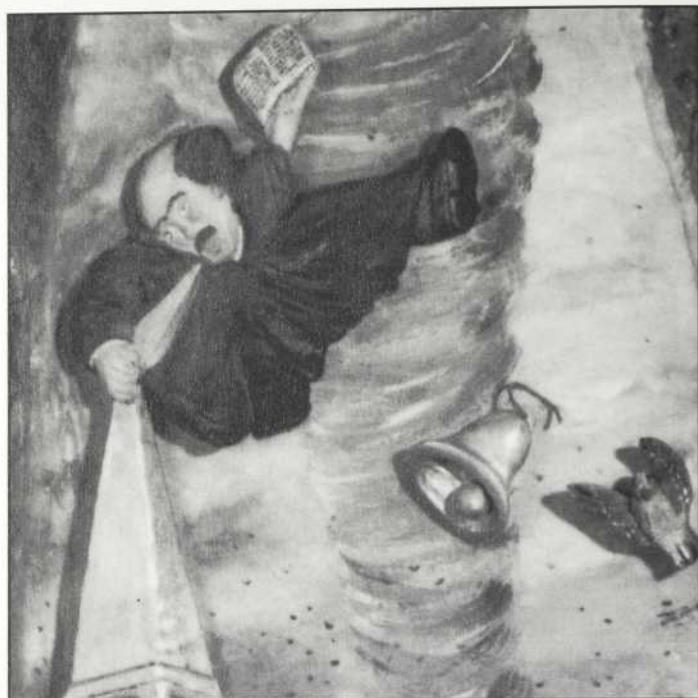
Once upon a time in the village of Château-Richer, two badly behaved little children, a boy and a girl, were born to a hard working couple. Their children were constantly getting into trouble. Everyday something would happen because of mischief they created: the sheep got into the vegetable garden or the chickens in the middle of the road, clothes would be found yards away from the washing tub, the door to the root cellar would be left ajar allowing any living creature to raid the next winter's supply prematurely.

One day, the children were arguing so ferociously, climbing up and down the apple trees, that their mother decided the time had come to punish them. Since she had chores to do around the house and could not leave the children unattended, she played a trick on them... Pretending they were bear cubs, the mother told the children that they should use the bread oven as their den. Once they climbed inside, she closed the door and locked it shut.

The woman was free to continue her work without interruption. She prepared a soup, helped her husband in the barn, made a large supper and in fact she really became quite lost in time. It wasn't until the father mentioned the absence of the children at the supper table that her thoughts returned to her. Remembering that the little agitators were still shut up in the bread oven, she quickly ran to open the door and let them out. To her surprise, a pair of bear cubs, a white female and a black male, jumped out to freedom, running away on their short legs into the forest.

Since that day children in Château-Richer have been warned to never crawl inside a bread oven unless they wish to spend the rest of their lives as bears.

LA NAISSANCE DES OURS  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1992*  
*Sketch on tracing paper, felt pen*  
*17.0 cm X 28.5 cm*



LA TORNADE DU CURÉ  
*Françoise Lavoie, 1993*  
Bas relief, basswood,  
polychromed, lacquered  
202 cm x 49 cm

At the end of the 1800's, parts of Québec were experiencing drought conditions. For the farmers, this was a disaster. In one of the villages lived a rotund priest known as Pastor Lacourcière. The pastor had heard stories of how the people of a neighbouring village had once overcome such a drought through the power of prayer, so the pastor felt quite confident that he could repeat the achievement.

The pastor spent many days and nights researching and gathering every bit of scripture and biblical reference related to rain. One evening, around seven o'clock, the townspeople all joined together in the local church to listen to the words of Pastor Lacourcière. Suddenly, billowing clouds appeared in the sky and high winds began to shake the fences. As the storm developed, bales of hay began flying through the air, houses began to twist around on their foundations and collapse, even the rectory was unable to withstand the forces of nature - the roof blew off the structure.

## THE PASTOR'S TORNADO

The raging tornado sucked the rotund Pastor Lacourcière out through the hole in the top of the building. He began spinning around in the air, flew over toward the church, and smashed into the steeple, breaking it in half. He finally ended up in the cemetery beside the church bell and the weather vane from the top of the steeple.

The rain which poured down in buckets throughout the night finally brought the prelate back to consciousness. The last words the people heard coming from the pastor's mouth in a faint voice were: "Thank you God, but I wasn't really asking for that much!"

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword .....	3
Introduction .....	5
1. Jos Violon .....	7
2. The werewolf .....	8
3. The flying canoe .....	9
4. Tom Caribou .....	10
5. Pete Vallerand .....	11
6. The Lady in the falls .....	12
7. The town crier .....	13
8. The bonesetter .....	14
9. The <i>shivaree</i> .....	15
10. The stretching horse .....	16
11. The Gladiola Lady .....	17
12. Madame Corriveau .....	18
13. The wicked innkeeper .....	19
14. Priests' Road .....	20
15. The young traveller who kept his word .....	21
16. Soulard, the master ferryman .....	22
17. The dream tree .....	23
18. The drowned peddler .....	24
19. The surprise Mardi-Gras visitor .....	25
20. The Chambers gang .....	26
21. Will-o'-the-wisp .....	27
22. Easter sunrise .....	28
23. The Bull Narrows .....	29
24. The Poulin sisters' treasure .....	30
25. The bread-oven bears .....	31
26. The pastor's tornado .....	32



# THE PAST REVISITED A HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

THE PAST  
REVISITED  
A HISTORY OF  
THE  
COUNTRY

The history of the country is a story of growth and change. From the early days of settlement to the present, the land has been shaped by the hands of many. The pioneers who first set foot on this soil brought with them a way of life that was simple and hardy. They built a foundation upon which future generations have built a nation of progress and opportunity. The challenges they faced were great, but their spirit was unyielding. They sought to create a better life for themselves and their families, and in doing so, they laid the groundwork for the success of the country today. The story of the country is a testament to the human spirit and the power of perseverance.

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