

# **MY ACADIAN ANCESTORS -**

## **By Bernard Bujold**



The Acadian culture was a peaceful community close to the land, with few financial resources. For this reason, they never bore arms and had no army to defend themselves against deportation. The Acadians wanted to remain neutral in the struggle for territory between France and England, which led to their deportation in 1755, more than 65 years after the first conflicts. Had they taken sides, the Acadians would have either won or lost, but there would have been no deportation.

The first Bugeauld to arrive in Acadia around 1690 was from Saint-Ciers-du-Taillon, a commune in southwestern France's Charente-Maritime region (Nouvelle-Aquitaine). He had left Larochele, where a religious war was raging, and found himself in Port-Royal and later Grand Pré, Nova Scotia, in another war, just as violent and discriminatory as the one between Protestants and Catholics, that of English soldiers against those of France. Rather than live once again in a land of conflict, many Acadian families from Grand Pré and the surrounding area decided to immigrate themselves to the Gaspé Peninsula at Fort Restigouche between 1690 and 1755, before being forcibly deported, including my own ancestors.

To mark National Acadian Day, August 15, 2023 edition, I've chosen to republish a booklet I published on social media in 2017: "MES ANCÊTRES ACADIENS". It's a look at my own Acadian ancestors from the beginnings in 1690, through the time of the 1755 deportation, right up to the present day, illustrated with some 55 photos from my personal album.

It's a way for me to pay tribute to Acadia and salute my two children and granddaughters.

This text is my story as a descendant of Acadian ancestors.

**Bernard Bujold -  
August 15, 2023**

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**The Acadian flag is composed of three vertical stripes in blue, white, and red, with a star of the Virgin Mary in the blue stripe. The flag was chosen in 1884 at the second Acadian National Convention in Miscouche, Prince Edward Island.**

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## **THE GASPÉSIE OF MY CHILDHOOD**

I grew up near the sea, surrounded by forests. My first memory is of the cows that used to come and eat in front of the house - dozens of white and brown cows, with the forest as a picturesque backdrop. Another fond memory is of the fish merchants driving past my house in their vans, offering to sell fresh fish to my mother. She often bought mackerel, which she would cook in a white sauce.

Childhood is undoubtedly the most enchanting phase of life. We are brimming with hopes, plans, and visions, and life feels mysterious, like something we can't quite grasp, always chasing after it to make it our friend.

When I think of Gaspésie, the image that always comes to mind is one of sunshine, a refreshing wind drying the laundry hanging on a large line, and a pale blue sky adorned with puffy white clouds resembling gentlewomen, like nurturing mothers. Fair-weather clouds evoke thoughts of women, while storm clouds bring to mind ideas of strong, stern men.

I would often watch the clouds while sitting on a swing my father had ingeniously crafted from an old car seat, painted in vibrant red...

Gaspésie experiences a temperate climate. The hot season only lasts from June to July, and swimming in the sea is limited to a short period. By the beginning of August, the winds start to blow, and it already feels like autumn. Nevertheless, many fields are still cultivated, and some harvesting work doesn't begin until late August and early September.





**Herd of cows in front of the family home - 1970**



**Beach at Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1976**

## **MY FATHER, THE LUMBERJACK**

My father was not a farmer; he was a lumberjack. I became closely connected to the forest and woodcutting because of him. As a 6-year-old boy, I was captivated by the energy that surrounded my father as he felled trees to the ground, and it was around this age that I started accompanying him into the forest.

My father owned a piece of land where he practiced woodcutting. To transport the cut wood, he utilized a horse to bring it to the gravel road, from where it was further transported by truck or tractor. Léonard, my father, cut two types of wood. Firstly, he would gather firewood, an annual harvest that would keep us warm throughout the winter. Secondly, once or twice a year, my father made commercial cuts that he sold to the New Richmond sawmill, which was owned by the English company The Consolidated Bathurst.

Growing up surrounded by trees is the closest thing to happiness. In the forest, there is life at every level. Watching a tiny fern alongside a towering fifty-foot aspen makes you reflect and understand a little about life.

The forest is mysterious, especially to children, for adults, it may seem like an old friend with no more secrets to hide. Nevertheless, my father appeared to know the forest well and held no fear of it. He would speak to it, and it seemed to respond. I tried to communicate with the forest as well, but often, the response felt like that of an evil monster trying to convey its fears.

For me, the forest was a kind of dangerous jungle when I ventured out alone, while for my father, it was a faithful friend, and the trees were like his brothers. When I was in the forest with my father, I never felt afraid, as he protected me from the giants hiding among the trees!

My father was like a living embodiment of the Acadian poem "Évangéline" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, especially its opening line: "This is the forest..." Undoubtedly, he had the spirit of Acadia's forests within him.

Trees stand as a powerful symbol representing Acadians. In fact, the legendary poem "Évangéline" commences with a salute to the trees and maintains their central role throughout the story, whether for their beauty or as a means of escape and hiding during the English military occupation.

I grew up surrounded by trees, and for my father, a Gaspesian lumberjack, they were his life. He loved walking on his woodlot and had planted several trees around our home in the village of Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure, including two magnificent larches, the official tree of the Acadians, which stood on either side of his driveway. He affectionately referred to these two trees as "violins," the Acadian nickname for larch.

Every time I gaze upon trees, I think of my father and the Acadian culture.

My father's ancestors were Acadians who fled from English occupation to the French fort of Restigouche in Quebec. My father (Léonard Bujold 1915-1976) was an Acadian descendant, and his direct ancestors had arrived in Baie-des-Chaleurs before the deportation of 1755. It is essential to recall that the English army

strictly forbade Acadians, under penalty of death, from leaving the Grand Pré region, fearing they might join the French soldiers stationed in Quebec City to fight against England. To achieve this, the English army secretly deported the Acadians by sea, first from Fort Beauséjour in August and then from Grand Pré on September 5. The goal was to deport them as far away as possible from their territory, preventing them from reaching Quebec and, equally importantly, preventing them from returning to their Acadian homeland.

However, many Acadians managed to escape the English military occupation, risking their lives through forests and seas to seek refuge at the French fort in Restigouche, and later settling throughout the eastern Baie-des-Chaleurs. My ancestors were among those who successfully escaped. A dozen Acadian families founded the parish of Bonaventure in 1760, followed by Carleton in 1766.

My village, Saint-Siméon, was established in November 1914 when many families found it too far to travel to the Bonaventure church for Sunday mass. In 1913, transportation at the time made access to the Bonaventure church challenging for those living to the west of the parish. Consequently, a community of citizens requested permission from the diocese's religious authorities to start a new parish. On November 21, 1913, a request was sent and considered by the Bishop of Gaspé, Mgr André-Albert Blais, who approved the move, and on March 1, 1914, the first council of churchwardens was chosen for the parish of Saint-Siméon. Subsequently, in November 1914, the Municipality of Saint-Siméon was officially established.

Over 100 years after the deportation, in 1881, during the first Acadian National Convention held in Memramcook, the Acadian elite selected August 15 as the official feast day of their people. Nevertheless, the true date of the deportation was September 5, 1755, when approximately 400 Acadian men from Grand Pré were summoned to church at 3 p.m. for the reading of a supposed royal missive. English soldiers locked the doors, and Lieutenant-Colonel John Wilson announced the deportation to various destinations along the American coast, including Louisiana. The primary purpose of locking the men in was to prevent them from returning to their respective farms, where they could have obtained homemade weapons, mainly farm tools and defended themselves against the English soldiers...

This was not the first Deportation of Acadians; a month earlier, on August 11, 1755, approximately 400 other Acadians had been summoned to Fort Beauséjour, New Brunswick, and informed of their deportation from the territory.

The deportation from the church of Saint-Charles-des-Mines de Grand-Pré, however, became the symbol of the Deportation, largely because of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who immortalized the event in his poem « Évangéline ».

**For the link to the poem "Évangéline," please visit:**

**<https://gutenberg.ca/ebooks/lemay-evangeline/lemay-evangeline-00-h.html>**

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Acadian men confined to Grand Pré church - September 5, 1755



Deportation and destruction of the Acadian farms at Grand Pré - September 1755



**Boarding for the deportation of the Acadians at Grand Pré - fall of 1755**



**Léonard Bujold (November 6, 1915 - June 5, 1976)**



**Larch (nicknamed fiddle) official tree of the Acadians**

## MY CHILDHOOD HOME

My family's life on the Gaspé Peninsula in the 1960s revolved around our house, and unlike in the city, where people often moved frequently, in the countryside, families tended to stay in the same house for generations, passing it down from father to child.

Even now, nearly 70 years later, I cherish numerous warm memories of my life in the family home. I lived there from birth until I turned 18, before moving to Sept-Îles.

Rural life differed significantly from urban life. In the city, popular myths and beliefs were often challenged and exposed. However, in the countryside, myths, folk beliefs, and superstitions were an integral part of our daily existence, shrouded in mystery. Both of my parents were deeply superstitious, and these beliefs were often inherited from their ancestors. Religion played a dominant role in our lives, and the village priest held great authority.

My father was a devout Catholic, while my mother rarely attended church, preferring to pray alone at the kitchen table, where religious images of the Virgin Mary adorned the wall. Every evening, the family would recite the rosary, which was broadcast live on the regional radio station, CHNC.

As a child, I was fascinated by my church in Saint-Siméon, especially by the impressive height of its steeple. At its tip, there was a tin rooster that, on a windy winter's day, ended up in my father's yard, or at least the few pieces that remained after it had fallen. Eventually, the rooster was replaced by a more robust metal cross.

The church steeple and the sound of its bells were integral parts of life in my Gaspesian village of Saint-Siméon.

I also recall a vivid memory of a visiting priest from a retirement home in Cap Noir, who was an extraordinary actor. He described hell with such passion, portraying its terrible fires and unbearable suffering in surreal ways. While this created fear, it also had an element of entertainment.

The visiting priest would come to our village once a year, and the parishioners would await him with awe, trusting him to help them avoid the horrors of hell. Looking back, I realize that talk about hell was prevalent, while discussions about the beauty of heaven were scarce. Our priests likely found it easier to convince through fear rather than offering a pleasant vision of paradise.

One of my most cherished memories of the church is the atmosphere during celebrations. The silence as we awaited the priest's entrance, the quietness before we went to confession, and the hushed tones as other families arrived, dressed in their Sunday best. Observing the clothing, aging, and presence of visitors who had left the village to live in town became a way for people to catch up on the latest news!

And then there were the wooden benches. Each family rented a particular pew, securing their spot for Sunday ceremonies and religious holidays through an annual payment. My father had pew number 5 for a long time, which he had obtained through an auction, granting him the right to rent it.

Sitting beside my father on that bench, I hold fond memories of our time together in the church. It felt like we were presenting ourselves as a united front to the entire village, with my father announcing, "This is my son!" and me accepting the message, saying, "He is my father."

It was a communication of father and son with the village.

Despite my childhood in a Catholic presbytery, I later learned that my Acadian ancestors, who arrived in Acadia in 1690, were actually Protestants. They were Huguenots, Protestants from the kingdoms of France and Navarre during the War of Religions in the late 16th century. These Protestants were in conflict with the Catholics who dominated the territory and were protected by King Louis XIV. Thus, despite the Catholic surroundings of my upbringing, my ancestors had a Protestant heritage.

In my village, the post office was the second most important meeting place. Mail was delivered twice a day by train, and families living close to the post office could pick up their mail and chat with others to hear the latest news. For families living farther away, mail was delivered once a day by van.

Rural life on the Gaspé Peninsula involved families growing their own food, leaving little room for stores. Only during the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy did general stores gain importance, eventually replacing the post office as the primary village gathering spot. In Saint-Siméon, the cooperative store served as the general store.

I knew the cooperative well because I worked there as a clerk, responsible for maintaining and restocking the shelves. It was not a complicated job, but it allowed me to stay informed about all the village's happenings. The cooperative was the perfect place to chat and learn about the village's adventures.





Léonard Bujold's family home - 1976



**Léonard Bujold's home garden with the two Acadian trees - 1976**



**The author on his father's woodlot in Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1976**

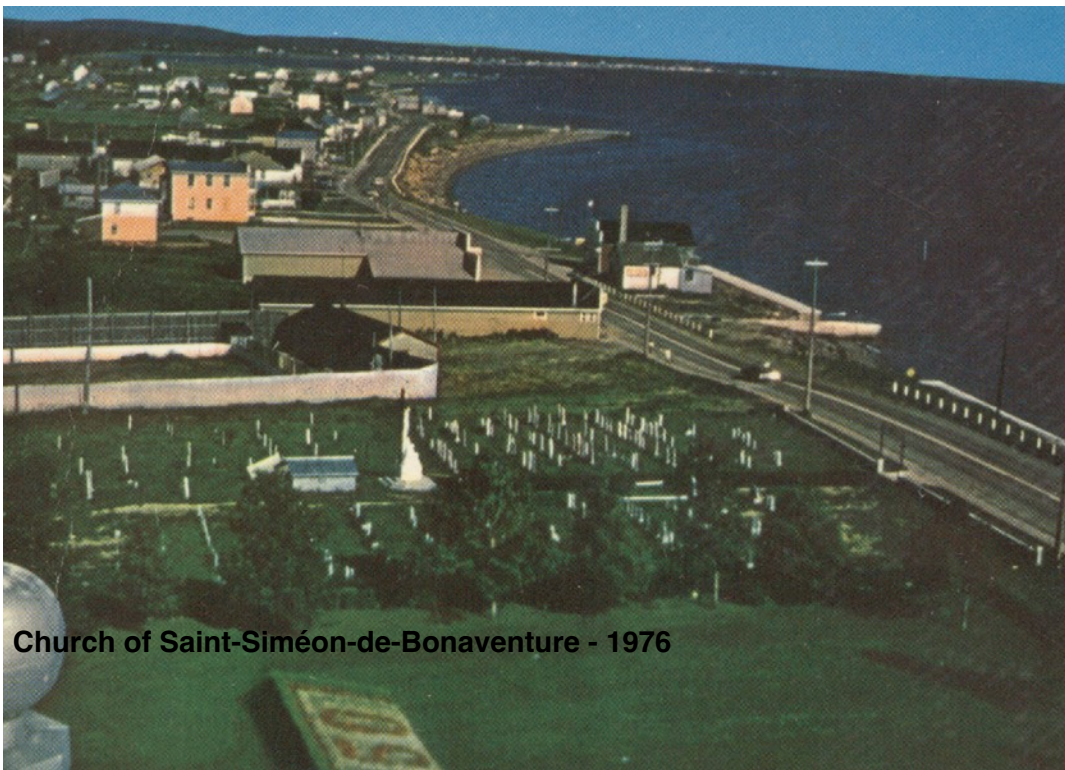




Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure Church parish pews - 2014



**Church of Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1976**



**Church of Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1976**

**Aerial view of Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1965**



**Presbytery of Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1965**



**Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure Cooperative - 1973**

## **FAMILY LIFE**

My father first married GEMMA POIRIER in 1950, the daughter of Benoît Poirier and Suzanne Henri from Saint-Siméon. The couple had high hopes for their life together.

However, Gemma tragically passed away at the age of 31 in 1952 due to complications with the baby she was carrying. She died because the baby had already passed away in her womb. From what I could gather, my father was deeply in love with Gemma, and the feeling was mutual. There was genuine love between the two. So much so that Leonard agreed to dismantle his newly built house on his land on the 4th range and transport it to the village of Saint-Siméon.

During my father's time, the role of women was being homemakers, while men worked on the land. Life was organized around land ownership and farming. However, this kind of life didn't seem to suit my father's first wife, who was ahead of her time. She convinced Leonard to move the newly constructed house to another plot of land, located in the center of the village. My father's original intention was to settle in Range 4, at a distance of 4 miles from the sea and the village, on land he'd bought that was still three-quarters wooded and on which a barn had already been built for raising farm cattle, but without the house. Léonard's future farm was located less than a quarter of a mile west of his parents' home, Élie and Louise. It was on this same land that my father would later cut his firewood, and where

he would introduce me to the forest. My father loved his land, and it's as if he regretted all his life not having become a farmer.

Transporting a two-story house with four rooms on the second floor and three large rooms on the first in four detached pieces was quite a delicate undertaking. The transport was done by road, and the pieces were reassembled like a puzzle on a cement foundation once they arrived in the village.

The sudden death of his wife two years after their marriage left him in a particularly painful situation: he had a house in the village to start a family, but he no longer had a wife to create it with!

My mother, Anita Cyr, was from a nearby village, New Richmond (St-Edgar), and she came from a family of eleven children. It is said that this house in the village (the house intended for Gemma) was offered to my mother when my father proposed marriage to her in 1954. Anita Cyr was 32 years old at the time.

This house was spacious and made it possible to comfortably raise a small family. It must be noted that by 1954, the trend of large families was becoming less popular due to the lack of economic resources. A general movement of Gaspesian families moving away from the land meant that Gaspesians were becoming increasingly reliant on wage labor. As education was not highly valued, salaries were modest, and jobs were scarce, at least for the social class that my parents belonged to.

In life, some things are chosen, while others are imposed upon us.

For my father, the death of his first wife was imposed upon him, and he was deeply affected by it. He found some solace in his

second marriage when he began to see his children being born. He considered himself almost happy with his family of three healthy, intelligent boys who bore his name. He even started thinking about the roles his sons could play in the village! Perhaps one of them would become a farmer? He could give him his land on the 4th range.

His three sons would become good citizens for the village, surely three families carrying on the Bujold name, which was his.

My father's family consisted of eight children, all settled in the village, except for Albert, who had left for the city to work in an office in Shawinigan. It should be noted that he was the only one who had managed to secure a spot in a classical course in Gaspé with the promise of becoming a priest in return... But the other brothers and sister of my father all lived in Saint-Siméon, each in a house they had built with their own hands using the same common plan drawn by Élie, my grandfather, who knew how to read a house plan and measure the dimensions of a building but couldn't read or write the alphabet.

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**Léonard Bujold and his first wife Gemma Poirier (1921-1952)**



**Léonard's second wife, Anita Cyr - (February 4, 1922 - September 5, 2005)**



**Louise Paquet (1882-1967) and Élie Bujold (1878-1973) - Léonard's parents**



**Léonard's house on his farm in the 4th range at Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure -**



**Leonard's house in the village of Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 1950**



Leonard and his three sons in front of the family home - 1965

## **FAMILY TRAGEDY**

A cruel tragedy occurred in Leonard's life that marked him until his death! His son André was diagnosed as deaf.

My brother wasn't born deaf, and there was no indication during his birth or early years that he would be handicapped. It was only around the age of four that doctors discovered André's deafness. It was believed to have been caused by complications from the measles that our entire family had contracted a few years earlier. For some unknown reason, André was the only one who suffered permanent consequences because he wasn't treated quickly enough, resulting in damage to his auditory canal. It should be noted that the quality of healthcare in the 1960s in Gaspésie was not very advanced.

What do you do when you are parents and learn that your child, the one you consider most beautiful, is suddenly handicapped and will not be able to grow up normally in the village? He will never hear; he is deaf!

What do you do when you have placed all your pride and joy in the value of your family and especially your three children? This tragedy of deafness, which would have been tragic for anyone, was very difficult for my parents and especially for my father. They were asked to separate from their 4-year-old son and take him to

an Institute for the Deaf somewhere in Charlesbourg, a village in the suburbs of Quebec City.

The decision was finally made to take André directly to Charlesbourg for the start of the school year. He would be five years old by then, but since my father was too saddened by the situation, it was decided that my mother would make the journey.

On-site, my uncle Albert's brother-in-law would receive her at his place for a few days. It was also decided that I would accompany them on the trip to keep my mother company. It would be my first big trip, and I was 10 years old. The journey was made by train overnight, covering a distance of over 400 miles (643 kilometers).

The arrival in Lévis at dawn was dramatic because of the city lights. Once we entered the station in Lévis in the early morning, we took the ferry to Quebec City's wharf, where my uncle's acquaintance was waiting for us. To this day, I remember the lights of Quebec City's port and the wooden floor of the ferry resonating under my feet. I had never experienced anything like it, and I felt far away from my village. My uncle's brother-in-law welcomed us by offering his living room as our bedroom.

The discovery of urban life compared to life in Gaspésie left me in awe. First, there were the curtains in the living room, white draperies that descended to the floor. I had never seen anything so beautiful. The windows were different too. The living room window was a large showcase facing the street in front of the house. The outdoor environment was also different, and while in Gaspésie, the distance between houses was hundreds of feet, here in Quebec City, there were only a few feet between the walls

of different houses. But the most striking difference was the noise. The next morning after our arrival in Quebec City at night, I was awakened at 7 am by the honking of many cars. However, these honks sounded like a new kind of music, like a melody I had never heard before.

At home in Gaspésie, I was used to a rural wake-up with the sound of birds in the summer and the wind making the walls of the house creak in the winter. The sounds of the countryside were not mechanical. While the countryside may not be silent, its sounds were more natural, feeling like they were part of us, as if they came from our inner soul. In the city, the sounds seemed to come from an environment completely disconnected from our being.

Another difference that struck me was the bathroom. First, there was the bathroom floor. At home, my father had set up a bathroom at the end of the corridor leading to the four bedrooms on the upper floor. The room wasn't large, but it contained a toilet, a bathtub, and a sink. It was barely 4 feet by 4 feet in size, but it represented luxury for my family. It had replaced an old outdoor cabin, a small 3 feet by 3 feet cabin that housed a wooden toilet with a hole in the center. This cabin was installed below a large hole manually dug into the ground.

Another important detail about our bathroom in Gaspésie was the floor. As this room was set up in a rudimentary way at the end of a corridor, the wooden floor was neither completely straight nor solid. Neither were any of the other floors in the Gaspesian house. All the wooden surfaces in all the rooms were like surfaces of the sea. The undulations were not fixed or silent, and they varied depending on our movements. Sometimes musical cracking noises came from the floors, adding to the sensation of

waves. This movement is normal as wood is a material that transforms and moves unlike cement or steel.

In Quebec City, at my uncle's brother-in-law's house, the floors were not made of wood but marble. It was obviously just polished and varnished concrete, but to the country boy that I was, it looked like marble. The bathroom was also not at the end of a corridor but placed in the center of the house. It was large, at least 10 feet by 10 feet. There was even a shower. The interior lighting was also different and was like lighting I had never seen before.

Note that our host's accommodation was not luxurious. Later, when I became an adult and visited this family's friends, I had to acknowledge the average quality of this house in Quebec City

It was a simple city duplex, well-built, located in a residential neighborhood. The inner courtyard was modest, about 25 feet wide by 15 feet deep, and the back balcony overlooking this courtyard also served as a temporary storage shed. Viewed from the street, this two-unit house had the appearance of a square box covered with red bricks. This residence was far from luxurious. My uncle's brother-in-law was not wealthy; he was a simple postal clerk at the central post office in Quebec City. But for the young 10-year-old child that I was at the time of my first visit, his house projected the image of a truly luxurious and opulent castle!

Another striking difference from this first trip was the urban eating habits. My mother, who grew up on a farm, always had a hearty appetite. She had this particular habit of not serving portions but placing the dishes at the center of the table for each guest to help themselves.

In the city, the custom is to serve portions to each guest at the meal. Additionally, breakfast is modest as dictated by the fast pace of city life. My mother was astonished by these controlled meals, and she didn't know whether to be ashamed of her hunger or if the hosts were stingy in serving their visitors!

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**Léonard Bujold and Anita Cyr in their home in Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure -1968**



Léonard and his son André - 1968



**My brother André and I at breakfast - 1970**



**André and his brother Raynald - 1967**



**My brother André - 1968**

## **THE GASPESIAN DEPORTATION**

The school for the deaf where my brother was supposed to go was located in Charlesbourg, an urban area set up as a suburb of Quebec City. The institute resembled a college and was guarded at the entrance by a massive glass door, securely locked.

The next morning after our arrival in Quebec City, my uncle's brother-in-law drove us to the Institute so that my mother could meet in person with the religious brother, an Oblate who was in charge of welcoming parents whose children were going to attend the specialized school for deaf children.

The religious brother, a man in his late thirties, received us politely and gave us a tour of the place. The college for the deaf was vast and had all the facilities to enable independence. There was a laundry room, a cafeteria that could accommodate hundreds of people. My mother was even invited to have lunch, which pleased her as she could help herself until her hunger was satisfied.

There was also an enormous dormitory where the beds were arranged without any walls separating them. Finally, we visited

the chapel for Sunday masses and an infirmary to care for the residents.

My mother had a private meeting with the religious brother, and they talked at length. They discussed the enrollment process and the method of payment for my brother's accommodation, which was largely covered by the provincial government due to my father's low income. They just needed to buy clothes for André.

Ultimately, they discussed how my mother, myself, and my uncle's brother-in-law would leave the Institute, but leave my brother there. I didn't understand all of the conversations, but I remember it was decided that we would leave after supper. Perhaps my mother wanted to avoid another meal offered by our hosts in Quebec, and the generous cafeteria was highly appreciated. I also understood that the departure would be from the infirmary. I can't quite recall why, but that's where the separation was supposed to take place.

My brother André had been dressed in brand-new clothes, from his pants to his shirt, including a cap that made him look like a character from a history book. This cap had something different about it, and it gave my brother the appearance of an immigrant from overseas, a figure of an Italian newcomer arriving in the New World by boat. I still remember my brother's hairstyle when he took off his cap. It wasn't even messed up because my mother had put a lot of BuiltCream in it. His short blond hair was slicked back and the comb-made parting accentuated the reddish hue mixing with his blond color.

My brother must have sensed the impending departure because when it came time to say goodbye, for no particular reason, he refused to let go of my mother's hand. It was strange because all

the while before, he had walked around without holding her hand and seemed completely at ease in what would be his home for the next 12 years. He was 5 years old and would stay at the Institute until he turned 17 in 1978.

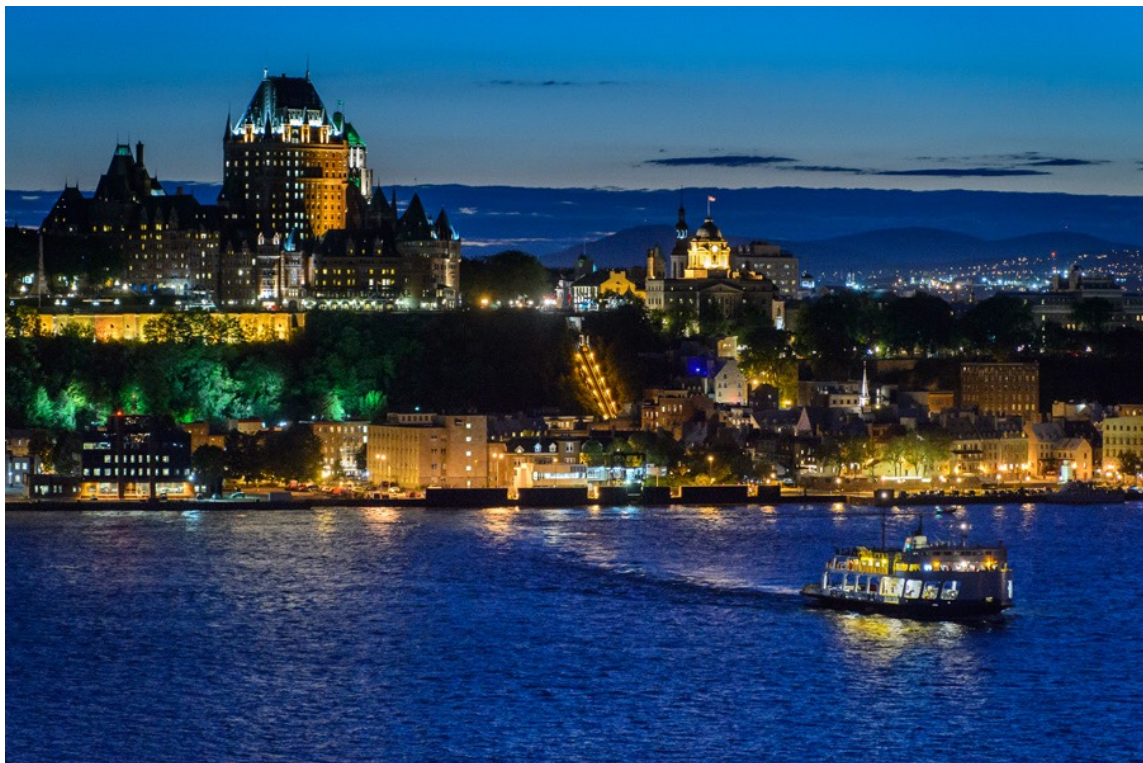
When my mother attempted to leave the room we were sitting in, in order to depart without announcing it, it was like an explosion. My brother didn't want to let go of my mother's hand and held on with all his strength. Yet, the religious brother had said that the proper method was to leave the room without saying goodbye to the child. It avoided crying fits and lessened the sorrow on both sides. My mother had intended to follow this approach, but my brother seemed to read her mind. He was deaf, though, and shouldn't have been able to understand the conversations with the clergyman. How was it that my brother understood that they wanted to leave him alone in this institute?

Finally, an assistant to the religious brother had to forcefully take my brother's hand and restrain him while my mother, my uncle's brother-in-law, and I left to depart quickly. My brother tried desperately to break free from the assistant's grip, and he knew that time was running out. He saw us running behind a glass wall and understood that we were leaving. He must have been thinking, "Why are you abandoning me?"

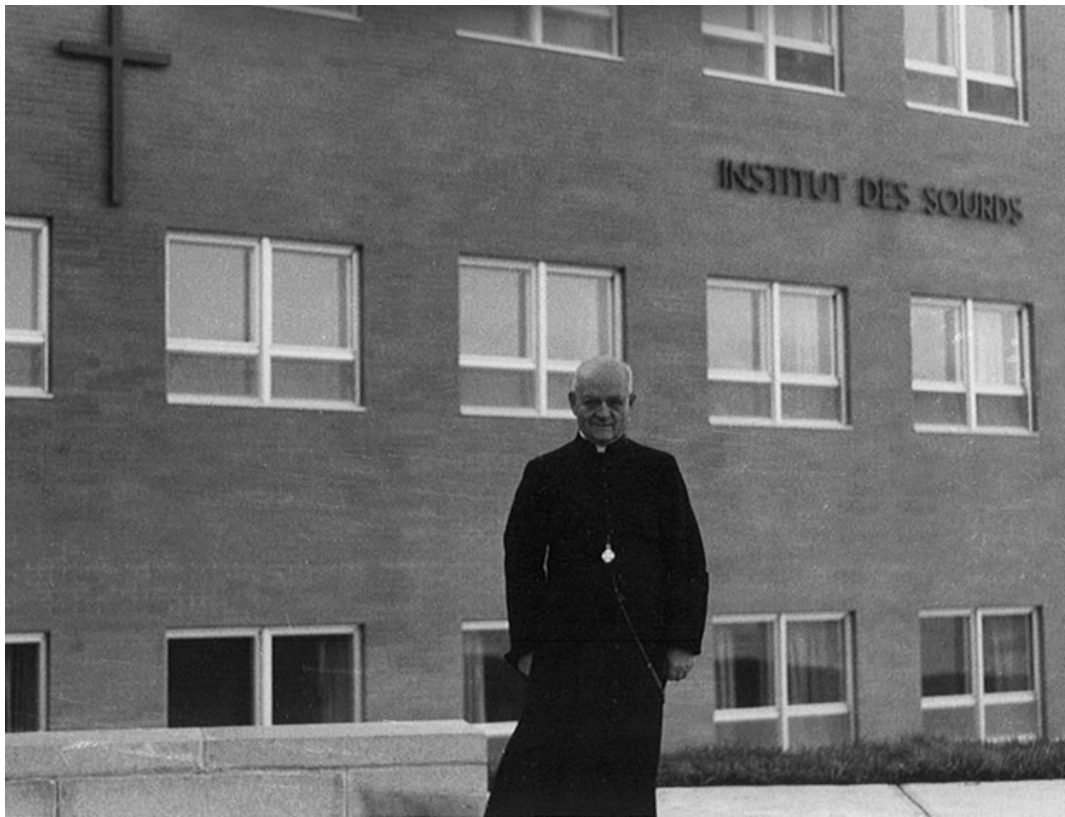
I looked back one last time and saw my brother desperately trying to break free from the grip that held him, prisoner. He gave me a pleading look, and the rage emanating from him contained both the despair of a last chance. For a moment, I seemed to hear my brother, who never spoke, shouting at me, "Wait for me, don't leave without me! Wait, I can hear well now, it's a mistake, wait, I want to go with you."



**Church of Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure - 1966**



**Château Frontenac view from Lévis, Québec - 1966**



The school for the deaf in Charlesbourg, Québec - 1966

The deportation of the Acadians in 1755 couldn't have been more

cruel than my brother's deportation from the Gaspé in 1966!

## **THE LOVE OF MY FATHER AND MOTHER**

I have not forgotten the love of my father, Léonard, and my mother, Anita, towards us.

My mother was a courageous woman, and I remember she was the only one capable of taking my brother André to the Institute for the Deaf in Charlesbourg in 1966. My father couldn't find the courage to do it, but it had to be done because a deaf person in the village had no future in Gaspésie, except to become an outcast. My brother André was deaf, and while I was limited in my dreams by my parents' financial struggles, he had to face the additional challenge of not being able to hear. Nevertheless, he managed to get married and become the father of a wonderful son, Robin.

My most beautiful memories of life are undoubtedly the moments spent with my father in the backyard of our house in Saint-Siméon, the red swing, my father's shed with all his personal tools, the firewood, the grass, the numerous trees, and the meals around the table. The images of that house remained a present memory in my mind for several years after I left Saint-Siméon.

My mother was an intelligent woman and the strongest among all the women I have known and crossed paths with in my life. She was my inspiration for my passion for photography. She passed away on September 5, 2005, after several years confined to her bed, day and night, in a nursing home. The worst end to a life...

Human life is a strange proposition. For a few moments of happiness, we live through long periods of struggle and perseverance against everyday obstacles.

I like to repeat that life is a 90%-10% proposition. Out of all our life's actions, less than 10% will be significant, while the 90% will be anecdotes and adventures with no lasting impact. That's why it's essential to love what we do with our lives!

If I had listened to my aunt, who was the housekeeper for the village priest, I would have become a priest. I grew up in his presbytery, which I adored, but I was afraid of the religious life... I chose journalism instead! I have always had three life goals: to break the isolation of my native Gaspésie, to communicate with the whole world, and to try to change it.

I still remember that sunny morning in the fall of 1985, one year after Brian Mulroney's election victory on September 4, 1984, when I walked ahead of the Langevin Building in Ottawa with the Prime Minister of Canada. It was pure happiness! The Prime Minister's team dreamed of changing the world, and we felt like a hockey team that had won the Stanley Cup! We were the champions of the hour! I saw myself as a champion and dreamed of changing the world! However, the world wasn't changed, and it's only through lived experience and the attempt to change it that all those who dream of changing the world realize that it's not us who change the world; it's the world that changes us!

I lived what the Acadians of the 1700s had lived. French settlers thought they could change the world by immigrating to America on a welcoming and beautiful land. Many had left a country victimized by religious wars. Instead of discovering peace, they

faced a new conflict, the English against the French, who fought over Acadia... The Acadians couldn't change the world!

Strangely, the story of life repeats itself continually, regardless of the region of the world or its people. I have often compared the deportation of the Acadians in 1755 to the war between Russia and Ukraine in 2020. In both cases, one wants to occupy the territory of another, and the stronger and dominant one deports the weaker and dominated.

While the Acadians did not resist the English military force poorly, other peoples were more fortunate, such as Europe against Hitler in 1940.

The conclusion in Ukraine remains to be seen!



**Evangéline in front of the Grand Pré Church in Nova Scotia**

## **LIFE'S STORY**

One of my friends, an artist painter, from Gaspésie like myself, once said that the only true happiness in life is love and that it's the only conquest we should seek.

My life regret is having often forgotten this essence of life, love, in favor of attending all these worldly events. My goal in participating was always to be part of the group and dominate the clan!

If I have any advice to give, it is never to impose activities just to please the group or the world, nor to dominate a clan. It's essential to find pleasure within oneself first because the only life that truly belongs to us is our own, and it's better to find joy in ourselves rather than in the group. One must be capable of saying no to the worldly calls of life at times! I conclude, in fact, that 90% of our life is filled with insignificant desires, including wars, and only 10% of our life choices will be meaningful. You could call this the profit margin. Unfortunately, to achieve that 10%, one must sometimes spend all their life's capital!

It is said that age and experience help us lead our lives better and make better life choices. That is true, but old age remains a shipwreck!

With age, the perception of events and people becomes very precise. An elderly person can almost predict the future because their sense of interpretation is deeply connected to reality. However, as age advances, a person has less time and physical energy to overcome challenges and especially to bounce back

after failures. Old age is not an asset, and the greatest and only wealth of life is youth.

If I have any advice to give to my grandchildren and all children, it is to make the most of their youth and fully exploit it. Above all, to make the right life choices! The decisions made in youth will influence the entire journey of adult life.

The only acceptable and worthwhile coveting is love.

I have had beautiful moments in life when I tried to do what I loved in my soul. As for the rest, they are mere anecdotes...

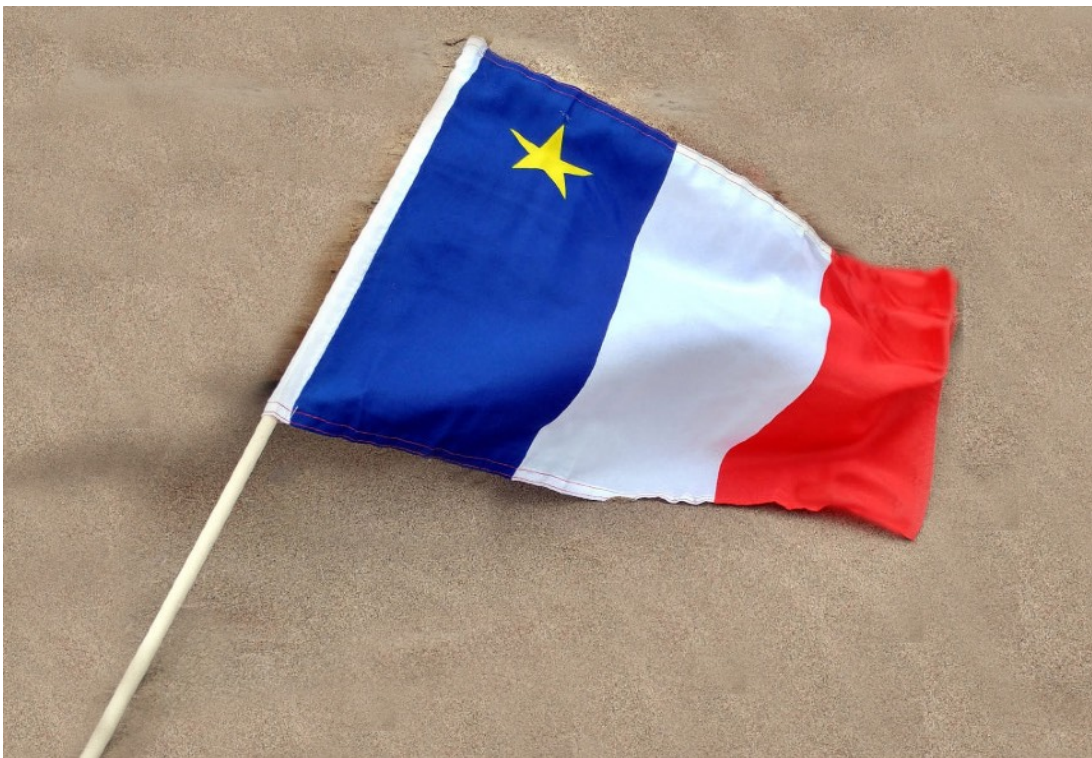
**Bernard Bujold**  
**August 15, 2023, Montreal (Quebec)**



**David-Bernard Bujold and Stéphanie Bujold - June 1995 - Mont Tremblant, Quebec**



**David-Bernard Bujold and Stéphanie Bujold - July 1992 - Moncton, New Brunswick**



**Acadian flag abandoned on a beach in Shédiac, New Brunswick**



Cone of an Acadian larch



**Léonard Bujold's family home in Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure - 2017**





***I dedicate this booklet on my Acadian ancestors to my two children, David-Bernard and Stéphanie, my two granddaughters Ava and Emma, and my brother André.***

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**My Acadian Ancestors - by Bernard Bujold (2023)**

**Legal deposit at Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec**

**ISBN number: 978-2-9821799-7-4**

## **MY ACADIAN ANCESTORS**

**Acadian culture was a peaceful community close to the land, with few financial resources.**

**For this reason, they never bore arms and had no army to defend themselves against deportation. The Acadians wanted to remain neutral in the struggle for territory between France and England, which led to their deportation in 1755, more than 65 years after the first conflicts. Had they taken sides, the Acadians would have either won or lost, but there would have been no deportation.**

**To mark the National Acadian Day, the August 15, 2023 edition, I have chosen to republish a booklet I published on social media in 2017: "MY ACADIAN ANCESTORS".**

**It's a look at my own Acadian ancestors from the beginnings in 1690, through the time of the deportation in 1755, to the present day, illustrated with 55 photos from my personal album.**

**A way for me to pay tribute to Acadia and salute my two children and two granddaughters.**

**This text is my story as a descendant of Acadian ancestors.**

**Bernard Bujold - August 15, 2023**

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