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Number 145

Le Trésor des Kirouac

Bulletin of the descendants of Alexandre de K/voach
Witness to Kirouac Activities since 1983



Marie-Victorin used to repeat: **Consider the lilies of the fields.** Here is a whole field of multicoloured lilies to be admired every summer in July at the home of Julie Kirouac and Mario Simard. Could this be a present-day image of the legacy our cousin Conrad left us? Like the lilies in this large field, his message has been heard, multiplied and spread. Hopefully, the present issue of *Trésor* is conveying this message. (Photo: Julie Kirouac collection)



Kirouac
Kirouack



Kérouac
Kérouack



Keroac
Keroack



Kéroack
Kyrouac



Breton
Burton



Curwack
Curwick



Le Trésor des Kirouac

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Table of Contents

Le Trésor des Kirouac n° 145

The President's Word	3
Official Programme, 2024	
Annual Kirouac Family Reunion	4
Marie-Victorin's Last Field Excursion by Marcel Raymond	5
Two Centennials - ACFAS & SBM	11
Young Naturalist Writes to Marie-Victorin	12
Saving The Mingan Thistle	13
Marie-Victorin, Plants and War by André Kirouac	14
Memories of Pierre Demers	21
Marie-Victorin for/by Lucille Kirouac	24
Marie-Victorin and the CJN by Brother Adrien Rivard	25
New Quebec French Film: "Tell Me Why These Things are so Beautiful"	26
Marie-Victorin in the Caribbean and Canary Islands	27
The Douglastown Quirouet/Kirouac Latest Update by Dominique Gagnon	28
60 th Wedding Anniversary of Leroy Curwick and Kay Rafson	30
The Kite That Couldn't Fly & Other May Avenue Stories by Michael Menard	31
Treasurer's Report For 2023	34
Report of <i>Jacques Kirouac Funds</i>	37
Positive Effects of <i>Jacques Kirouac Funds</i>	38
De Kervoach Descendant through the Female Line, Marie Laberge	39
De Kervoach Descendant through the Female Line, Simon Durivage	41
News in Brief	43
In Memoriam	44
40 th Anniversary of First KFA Reunion in USA, at Hudson (NH) in 1984	45
Genealogy & Readers' Page	46
KFA Board 2023-2024	47
Regional Representatives	47
Members of Permanent Committees	47

The President's Word

On 18 September 2005, the KFA board members entrusted me with the presidency as Pierre Kirouac wanted to leave the post after three years. In September 2024, it will have been nineteen years. It is time to let someone else carry on. As planned, I am remaining on the board for another year to complete the mandate you gave me last year. In September 2025, I will leave my place on the Board to another person.

Being on the Board for the past 47 years, I have worked with thirty-three Board members, including six presidents, counting the one who will be replacing me next September. I have enjoyed working with everyone, and each person's experience has enabled me to be a better president. I am convinced the next one will give our association a new impetus and certainly bring new ideas helping our association develop and better its mission for many more years.

In 2028, we will reach an important milestone, our golden anniversary. The KFA will turn 50. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we were as many participants to celebrate then as we were at our memorable first gathering in 1980?

Rest assured that far from abandoning the ship, I will keep working for *Le Trésor des Kirouac*, our news bulletin, also on our bilingual KFA website, and, of course, on the genealogy of our ancestor's descendants.

Soon I hope it will be possible for KFA members to search our genealogical database on the internet where so many facts have been amassed since 1978. For the Kirouacs, our database is another precious treasure. It is rich of over 50,000 documents covering some 16,000 direct descendants of our ancestor. I am convinced that you will enjoy many pleasant hours



François Kirouac

reading and studying this trove of information.

Many thanks indeed to each and every one of you for your help while I have been president. It has been a great honour and a real pleasure!



The KFA Board elected on 18 September 2005 at Trois-Rivières. From left to right: Michel Bornais, Marie Lussier Timperley, Céline Kirouac, François Kirouac, Lucille Kirouac and Pierre Kirouac. Absent from the photo but behind the camera: Marie Kirouac.

2024 KIROUAC FAMILY REUNION

Royal Canadian Military College at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu

In September 2024, please join us to discover an exceptional historical site, rarely open to the public, the Royal Canadian Military College at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. This year marks the 80th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy and we know that members of our families took part in this momentous event. So please reserve Saturday, 7 September 2024, to take part in our annual gathering held in a very important institution of learning and military heritage.

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 7 September 2024

9:00 a.m.: Registration for the Annual General Meeting, the evening dinner, and Sunday guided tour

10:00 a.m.: KFA Annual General Meeting

11:30 a.m.: Cocktail

12:00 : Cold Buffet

1:00 p.m.: Guest Speaker Stéphane Kirouac (see below)

2:00 p.m.: Visit of Fort St-Jean Museum and Military College
info at: <https://www.cmrsj-rmcsj.forces.gc.ca/index-en.asp>)

5:00 p.m.: End of activities followed by dinner in a local Restaurant, to be announced

Sunday, 8 September 2024

10:00 a.m.: Tour of Fort Chambly (<https://parcs.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/qc/fortchambly>), a national historic site located on the Richelieu River. The fortification dates back to 1711 and is one of the most important examples of 17th and 18th centuries forts built in the style of Vauban (1633-1707), military engineer to King Louis XIV

12:00 : End of visits. See you next year



Royal Canadian Military College
at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (Québec)
(photo credit: Musée du Fort Saint-Jean)

Our guest speaker Stéphane Kirouac, son of Renaud Kirouac (GFK 1584) and Nicole St-Charles

Stéphane Kirouac was born in 1964. Originally from Marieville, he has been living in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu for the past 34 years. He married a local girl, and they have two children. He studied at Cégep Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (College) and graduated with a diploma in electrotechnics. After working for a private company for a few years, he started teaching electronics and has done so for the past 34 years. In his spare time, he pursues his love of genealogy and the history of his town and region. But building a skating rink in his backyard every winter is a must. He is presently working on a history book of Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, 100 years of photos from 1860 to 1960. Any extra spare time finds him cycling and writing historical capsules on Facebook about the past of Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.



Subject of his talk

Stéphane Kirouac will tell us about Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu which has always been at the heart of history. Looking back at events in Fort Saint-Jean and today's town since 1666. The importance of the Richelieu River, 124 km, or 78 miles, running through southern Quebec and Vermont, linking Lake Champlain to the Saint-Lawrence, for two centuries, the highway between Montreal, Boston, and New York. Key events in the area shaped the life of the First Nations, the European settlers, and the nations who fought to control it.

Brother Marie-Victorin's Last Field Exploration

by Marcel Raymond

*Our cousin Conrad, Brother Marie-Victorin, died in 1944, so this year marks the 80th anniversary of his unexpected death in a car accident. **Le Trésor des Kirouac** wants to mark this milestone by publishing various texts looking at the important cultural and scientific legacy he left in Québec, in Canada and abroad.*

In 1977, the government of Quebec created the Marie-Victorin Award, presented annually to a person engaged in a significant career in natural sciences or engineering, but excluding the biomedical field¹.

*The first article is by Marcel Raymond, who was one of Marie-Victorin's closest collaborators who was also accompanying the Brother on that fateful day, 15 July 1944. This text was published on 12 August 1944 in **Le Devoir**, Montreal daily. It was later printed as a booklet by the Botanical Institute of Montreal University.*

The Editor

A long and deep friendship existed between Brother Marie-Victorin and me and we were also close colleagues. I was so much involved in everything the day he died that it is easy to understand how deeply his departure affects me. No need to stress that it leaves me with a profound void. For the benefit of those who have known him and loved him, his nearest and closest disciples, I will try to recount his last day as a botanist, his last hours as a man. Unforgettable memories, most important hours. Although I am still under the shock, I think I can objectively talk about it. In a few days, when impressions will have deeply sunk in, it will be part of those events no one wants to talk about ever again. However, before I start, perhaps some information about the habits surrounding our

field explorations would be helpful to better understand this narrative.

As far back as I can remember between the large expeditions (to Mingan, Anticosti, Gaspé Peninsula, Lake-Saint-Jean, Abitibi, etc.), as soon as Brother Marie-Victorin was back from Cuba, summer and autumn weekends were spent herborizing, that is doing field works, in the Richelieu Valley, the Eastern Townships, along the shore of Lake Saint-Pierre, in the Quebec City region, particularly along the shores of the estuary. All areas he liked so much. Anyone who will be working in the last-mentioned region could never forget Brother Marie-Victorin as two plants abundantly growing in that area are named after him. One is an admirable gentian so special because of its electric blue colour (we never tired of collecting lots of them whenever we were in the area), the other plant is a hemlock. Both plants were named in homage to Marie-Victorin by Professor M. L. Fernald, the famous Boston botanist, who discovered them while exploring the Laurentians with Marie-Victorin.

So every weekend, some of us went herborizing, and for some years, it was almost invariably the same group driving together: Brother Marie-Victorin, seated in front to the right of his driver, either Lucien Charbonneau or André Champagne; and seated at the back: Brother Rolland-Germain, James Kucyniak and me. Sometimes, others joined the group, but during the last five years, our group was always the same, occasionally with an additional traveller: either Jacques Rousseau, Bernard Boivin, Ernest Rouleau or Auray Blain. In the past, others also joined the group: Jules Brunel, Émile Jacques, René Meilleur, Brother Dominique, Brother Jules, and possibly others.

From 1904 onwards, Brother



Brother Marie-Victorin studying the *Poeppigia procera* in Cuba, [between 1942 and 1944]. (Photo : Archives F.É.C.C.F., Fonds Kirouac, Conrad (Marie-Victorin), 1885-1944, N50095, 502740.17.)

Rolland-Germain was ever Brother Marie-Victorin's companion, taking part in all field explorations. When herborizing, he showed real flair, patience, devotion, endurance, and a remarkable sense of observation. In the laboratory, his ability to identify plants, to figure out the finest species or clarify the exact identity of various grasses easily mimicking each other, often making it quite difficult to differentiate them, hence he was a very precious colleague as well as an excellent botanist. Brother Marie-Victorin, ailing by then and unable to walk much, could not do without him and properly carry out his formidable workload at the end of his life; most of it has yet to be published.

André Champagne, an assistant phyto-pathologist and demonstrator in pharmaceutical botany, was a

¹ Editor's Note: List of the 46 recipients of the Marie-Victorin Award is at: <https://prixduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/prix/scientifiques/marie-victorin/> (in French)

more recent participant. He also took over from Lucien Charbonneau as weekend driver. Having grown up in the Farnham area, in the Eastern Townships, every time we travelled in that region, he would describe the various colourful peculiarities of his numerous relations as well as local customs. The “boss” found it very amusing, so he suggested to André to write the *Farnhamiana* (Farnham-ana or log). As we drove through each village, André's stories grew longer and ever more colourful.

James Kucyniak, of Ukrainian origin, and a former student from Mont-Saint-Louis, “Jim” to us all, was a botanist working for the Montreal Botanical Garden. He was also a remarkable bryologist (moss specialist). The Boss liked him very much. His sensitivity, his artistic sense, his love of music, his knowledge of theatre and his marvellous Slavic melancholy inspired him to sing when walking in the Gaspé peninsula mountains or when facing the ocean. It all made him a charming, resourceful and imaginative companion. Without him, an expedition was never quite as perfect.

As for myself, I was somewhat the “enfant terrible”, the unconventional one, to whom the Boss forgave his tale-telling weakness, laughing at the “milking time” style, also dallying and sometimes playing the sophisticate by devising literary texts in between two herborizations.

What a crew! The Brother always holding onto his cane, made of wood from the isles, talking politics, literature, sciences, his bulging black satchel always beside him, full of the latest books, the last issue of the *TIME*, the morning papers, the article he was currently writing and a small bottle of Coramine, the heart medication for his very sick ticker that could betray him at any moment.

At 10:30 a.m. and at 4 p.m., in a field, we would have a cup of coffee and talk about our discoveries and our projects. This is how we travelled across the province of Quebec during the last years, guided by the most marvellous mentor, the most supportive friend and youthful minded companion.

Holidays always made the Boss unhappy because the house was suddenly empty. He worked well and felt happy when there was action around him, happenings, goings on, lots of activities. Jim and I tried as hard as we could to take the place of the many absent ones. Every morning around 10:30, we went to see him in his office, for the ritual cup of coffee and talk. And again at 4:30 in the afternoon. We went to work with him at the herbarium, incredibly important work that went on for twenty years, about the flora of Mingan and Anticosti Island, that he was keenly trying to complete. This important study is sufficiently advanced to be published. And it will be.

Friday morning, 14th of July, we were getting the morning coffee ready and I clearly remember that we were talking about the visit of General de Gaulle² also that Brother Marie-Victorin was inviting us to accompany him to LaFontaine Park (large Montreal park) when suddenly, out of the blue, he asked us where we would be going the following day.

—Black Lake, I answered.

The idea was to go to Black Lake where an extremely rare small fern could be found growing on serpentine rocks and known only in the Gaspé and Mégantic Counties, also in Grey County, Ontario, and in the Rockies. This information we knew from E.-T. Wherry, an American botanist. The plant's

name is *Cheilanthes siliquosa* (also known as *Pellaea densa*). (*Aspidotis densa*, a fern known by its common name *Indian's dream* or *Serpentine fern* or *dense lace fern*. Source : Wikipedia).

Brother Marie-Victorin agreed with pleasure but on one condition, that we leave early. As it was sometimes difficult to get us (the younger ones) up early to travel, he made that point very clear. It was an old venture that kept being postponed. Another one had been long planned, around the Great Lakes, but it would never happen. Jokingly, he added: *American botanists are only interested in ferns; there must be many other plants to be found.*

So it was agreed to leave Longueuil at 8 a.m. Jim was coming from Lachine, André from Montreal and me from Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. At the appointed time, Brother Marie-Victorin left his room at the Longueuil College where he worked so hard, came down the long staircase; for the last time looked at the morning breeze shaking the palm leaf of the rowan trees he could see from his window. We left but, after driving a few miles, he noticed that he had forgotten his cane. So we stopped in one village after another between Longueuil and Drummondville (60 miles) until he could buy another cane.

It was also agreed not to stop herborizing along the way to have as much time as possible at Black Lake. I can still hear the “boss” describing ahead of time the dreadful mining scene we would find there, the white dust, the meagre trees and the sad-looking vegetation.

Afterwards, he talked to us about his favourite author, Thomas Mann, particularly about his book *Joseph*

² Editor's Note: General de Gaulle's first visit to North America, Washington, DC, 6-11-July 1944, met then US President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, before coming to Quebec on 12 July 1944.

Cycle. Other greats he admired were Leonardo da Vinci, Paul Claudel the French poet; more about him later; also Akhenaten, the Egyptian pharaoh who wrote *Hymn to the Sun*. The Boss was particularly interested in the fact that Mann said that Akhenaten was the pharaoh when Joseph was “intendant”, i.e., Egypt's top administrator. He really enjoyed this historical overlap.

Brother Marie-Victorin greatly admired Claudel the remarkable French poet who wrote in prose (1868-1955). He felt particularly close to *The Legend of Prakriti*. I will always regret not having given him to read the book *Développement de l'Église (Development of the Catholic Church)*, that, I am sure, he would have loved. Yesterday, I went back to his office to retrieve my copy of *Connaissance de l'Est*, (i.e., *Eastern Knowledge*) published in 1900, a book of poems written in prose while Claudel was in China as Deputy Consul at Shanghai (July 1895-October 1899). In various places in the book, he had underlined passages in pencil because they touched his artistic soul, most deeply echoing his feelings: *the banyan tree, herculean plant trying to lift the earth, the coconut tree growing tall and straight in one ringed stalk supple like a weed, the complex pine with its cones like roses inordinately open*; he underlined another sentence, but I know not why: *pain is like summer and the blossoming of death in the flower of life*. (Excerpt from *Tristesse de l'eau* (sadness in water). In summer, flowers and death have woven his destiny.

Around 10:30 a.m., we stopped by a sand dune along the roadside, for our morning cup of coffee, and some oat cookies I had brought from home because he liked them very much; and we stretched our legs. Brother Rolland disappeared under the alders indicating there was a small cold stream nearby fragrant with mint that he liked.

I managed to pick up in the sand a new shoot of *Morus*, mulberry tree, something new for all of us, a nice addition to the Quebec flora, *Rubus tholiformis*, (Wikipedia says it is only found in Quebec and Nova Scotia) curved brambles with soft thorns. The Brother was very interested and helped us spread it, his binder in his lap, sitting sideways on the car front seat, as he usually did, his left arm resting on the partly opened door.

At Saint-Cyrille, we passed a funeral convoy and jokingly I said that in my family it was a bad omen. We stopped here and there searching for plants but we had to arrive exactly at noon for lunch at Saint-Ferdinand, (a small town located on the shores of Lake William, nestled in the Appalachian foothills). From the hilltop, when Lake William appeared, the Brother exclaimed: *The country is so beautiful here. This is the end of the Appalachian. I came here with Brother Rolland in 1920*. It was a long drive by car. For the first time I saw the *Houstonia*.

For the benefit of the non-initiated, it is a charming small Rubiaceae, with delicate light blue flowers with four petals. In spring in this part of the country it covers fields. From a distance, it looks as if snow has not all melted yet.

Charming and copious dinner. Lively conversation about many subjects as usual. Brother Marie-Victorin takes pleasure in everything we talk about like the upcoming elections, our jokes, his work, his readings, our readings, everything. He talks about the different printings of (his two books) *Récits Laurentiens* and *Croquis laurentiens (Laurentian Tales and Laurentian Stories)*. We also joke about expensive book editions. Brother Rolland suggests to him that now he should write the *Croquis cubains (Cuban Stories)*.

Wherry's indications are (in English in the text): *“From Black Lake village drive south along Highway no. 1 for two miles when an electric power line will be seen crossing the lake and extending westward into the hills. Follow this for a mile and the prominent cliffs of serpentine will come into view to the north. Cross the intervening swamp and climb to the top of the talus slope.”*

It is no secret for anyone that since an unfortunate experience at Mont Albert, in 1923, Brother Marie-Victorin was unable to climb stairs, to take long walks, even less climbing a mountain, as was written in a newspaper. Therefore, as far as possible, we looked for places accessible by car for him to enjoy seeing plants in their natural habitat. However, sometimes, we had to resign ourselves to leaving him alone while we went off and explored a swamp, a remote forest or a mountain. He patiently waited, using the time to write and read. We went off, leaving him by a lake, near a small, abandoned cabin.

It was a perfect day. Splendid weather. When we were starting off, the Boss said: *I am not feeling too well, but it is such a beautiful day; however if I were to wait until I feel good to go anywhere, we would never leave*. First, we had to cross the lake by holding on to a metal wire secured between two posts hanging about ten feet above the water, holding on to a second wire set about four or five feet higher. Then we followed the electrical hydro-line and, wading through the peat soil, here and there we picked up some golden ragwort, two kinds of alders, bunched blueberries, indigenous thistle, asters (starworts), sedges, etc.

Soon the first serpentine outcrops were visible and, to our right, through the trees, we saw a mass of fallen rocks that was not visible from the road. That was it! The enthusiasm increased our energy tenfold. We started climbing the rocky face. There were a few blocks here and there, but it was mostly pebbles, some striated with green, on which the common juniper creeps and its stiff leaves hurt our bare legs. Brother Rolland kept going in spite of his 63 years. On the way back, he said he felt proud because he had been able to keep up with the younger ones to the end.

Halfway up the hill, the main trees are red pines, with their squamous bark, long leaves and short cones. Here is a *Cyperaceae*: *Carex scirpoidea*, one of the rare dioecious sedges, and here is a waxwork something new to us. André follows us with his camera. Suddenly, a shout from Brother Rolland. The fern we are looking for is right here, at our feet. The contrast is striking between the arid soil, the desolation of the site, the poverty of the habitat and the daintiness of this small plant with its brown stem and very finely dented fronds: photos, notes, abundant harvest, and our documentation is completed. We have a new friend and now we know better a small portion of the vast world.

We reach the top, taking time to admire the scenery, then we climb down, always looking for plants. Jim finds a few mosses. I draw the list of the plants that are part of this strange association. We drink water from a source. We swim in the lake and finally reach the Brother at five-thirty p.m. He admits that, although he read and worked, he got a bit bored.

– Jim will laugh, he said, if I tell you what I did.

– Sleep? I ask him.

– A little. But essentially, I wrote my opening lecture for Radio-Canada (French CBC): *Consider the Lilies in the fields*. Having no Lily on hand, I had to talk theoretically, like a philosopher! These are the last pages he ever wrote and they are very beautiful; they end with Christ's invitation to men. The reason he did not want to say that he had been working on his radio talk, is that he was late sending it in. This was not the only late text. In the past, he had told me off and especially Jim the previous season, because we had not sent our talks on time.

We had a snack and spread our plants on newspapers, according to the classical method, unchanged since (Carl) Linnaeus (1707-1778). The Boss was happy with our work, especially so with the lovely small fern. He told us about a visit in Ottawa in 1921, when he was in the office of botanist, James Macoun, in walked a geologist named Harvie; he put down on the desk of the botanist a small fern saying that he had found it on the serpentine hills at Black Lake and he wanted to know its name. It was the famous *Cheilanthes*. The Brother said he had never seen a live one nor harvested one himself.

At 6:30 p.m., we were having supper at Saint-Ferdinand-d'Halifax. I was writing up my notes at the table between the different dishes, and I was having fun using the most academic pompous style, and reading aloud each sentence as I wrote it. It amused Brother Marie-Victorin more and more and he used that as an opening to talk about tastes and fashions in literature; he loved to tease me on that.

Did he feel his end approaching when he asked us if we would object to make a small detour by Saint-Norbert? Often, it is only afterwards that we find the profound and precise meaning of the simplest phrases. I distinctly remember answering:

– It does not matter at what time we get back. Today, Brother, the whole day is yours.

The more I think about that 15th of July, the more I see the definitive character of each action of our great departed Boss. Saint-Norbert in Arthabaska County is where he spent so many holidays, at his grandfather's house. The pioneering ancestor had walked from Gentilly to cut the first tree, plant the first Wayside Cross, sowing the first wheat. His childhood was spent there. His heart was there. He wanted to find them again, say goodbye to the child in him, one last time look at the familiar landscape: cultivated fields, the church high up on the hill, the elders smoking a pipe of their balcony, the soft rolling Appalachian hills, so harmonious and ending there, at the end of the dying day, the image of life coming to an end.

He frantically runs out of the car and, for someone who hardly ever walked anymore, he walks very fast down the slope like he used to do as a child. He enters the home of his youngest uncle, in spite of the rather high steps. We see him like in *Intimacy* by Maeterlinck, through the window and the sheer curtain, animatedly talking to a person sitting. He gets back into the car, stops at the home of a childhood friend, gets him to sit on the front seat next to him, to visit another friend. As we drive by, with his arm, he points out the house where the incident of the *renchaussage* (hilling the earth around the growing plants) took place, a story found in his *Laurentian Tales*.

– *So many memories, so many memories*, he sighs.



Brother Marie-Victorin in his office at the Montreal Botanical Garden. (Photo: Montreal Botanical Garden Archives, FMV-03.3.3)

– *Are you talking about your uncles*, I ask him.

He answers: *No, they are not as colourful as André's uncles.*

On the roadside, we see a *contentious cruciferous*, a good excuse for a last stop. We disagree on its identity. It is the last plant the brother touched. Everyone is so tired; we are silent in the car. The sun goes down in a tragic looking sky full of red-hemmed clouds. The hour of destiny is approaching. Around 10:30 p.m., suddenly, tragedy appears in the form of two strong headlights mercilessly pointing at us. Then the shock. Now, I cannot find the words to describe both the speed of what happened and the long minutes that followed. We three at the back, Brother Rolland, Jim and I, had taken off our shoes to rest our aching feet after the climb; we could not find them. The Boss had dozed off, now his head is through

the windshield and his body is squeezed between the car panel and the seat, the violence of the shock and pressure from our knees pushed it in. The four doors are stuck. Unspeakable cries come from the car that struck us. From both cars we see smoke indicating possible fire. Jim climbs out through a window and manages to open one of the back doors. In a fit of fury, Jim succeeds in kicking the front door open so we can finally deliver Brother Marie-Victorin, his face is covered in blood because of a small cut just above one eye, made by a glass shard. Later we will learn that he also has a broken foot.

We open the trunk at the back and help him sit there. Brother Rolland has a broken leg and stoically sits in the car without complaining, saying: *Look after Brother Victorin.* Another car stops by and offers to help but our injured Boss refuses: *I want to stay with you all.* Then he starts

speaking slowly, asking about everyone, and calmly asks for Coramine. The blood is running along his face, it accumulated in his mouth so, unfortunately, the precious medication runs along the cup and trickles in two fine lines at the corner of his mouth. Help is long coming. Jim and André stop every passing car, asking each driver to notify the nearest hospital. After resting for twenty minutes, Brother Marie-Victorin tried to make a few steps but could not; his head resting on my shoulder he said:

- I think this is too much for my heart.

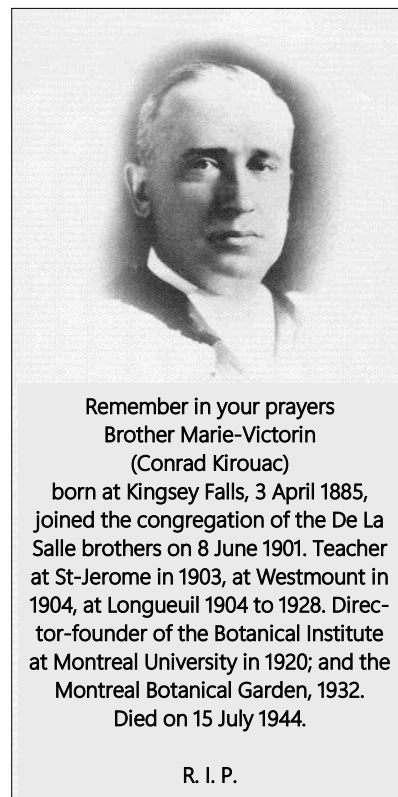
He starts shivering; the more he shivers, the more he desperately holds on to me. After that, I remain silent, afraid to interrupt the long

inner conversation he is having with himself. Ten long minutes go by; he is always fighting; but less and less. Finally, the taxi arrives. We support him up to the open door. He collapses. He is no longer with us.

Afterwards, I only saw him in his coffin surrounded by flowers. I remembered his face so tortured, but now it is perfectly peaceful; the deep serenity one likes to see on departed loved ones.

Now I wander through the big empty house where everything still reminds us of his presence. In his office, nothing has changed. I can still see him sitting in his armchair, resting his chin on his hand. I see him at his desk, lifting his head to greet me. Here are his favourite books and photos. In the large silent herbarium, nothing has changed either. The last specimens that we studied together are there and the book is open at the unfinished page.

For us, the young ones, I say that because once, when talking to my mother, he referred to us as his family. Now we must learn to live in a new way, live without him. We must prove to him that the institutions he created are viable, that he has built them so solidly that they will continue without him. And that the seed he planted in us, will grow, and, to use his favourite expression, hoping the seed did not fall on the *renchaussage*. (hilling-up earth around plants.



Brother Marie-Victorin in the savannahs of Guane (province of Pinar del Rio), Cuba, January 1939. He holds a *Zamia pygmaea* in his hand. In the background, a scattered formation of *Acoelorrhaphe Wrightii*. (Photo: Archives F.É.C.C.F., *Fonds Kirouac, Conrad (Marie-Victorin), 1885-1944*, N50095, 502740.20. Source of description: *Itinéraires botaniques dans l'Île de Cuba [Première série]*, (*Botanical Itineraries in the Island of Cuba [First Series]*), Botanical Institute of the University of Montreal, Montreal, 1942, p.185, figure 113.)

Two Centennials

by Marie Lussier-Timperley

In 2023, ACFAS¹ celebrated 100 years. The paternity of this organization aiming at developing sciences in French went to Brother Marie-Victorin, a member of a religious congregation, teacher, botanist, excellent communicator, writer, poet, an all-round passionate man.

During the 90th ACFAS Congress in 2023 Mr. Jean-Pierre Perreault, outgoing president, clearly described ACFAS in the annual report and how it did in its centennial year: governments were now open to listening and those involved in research were eagerly mobilizing, new lines of thinking were opening. (...) He noted that with 10,000 participants the 90th congress had been the largest ever

(...) On 15 June 2023, ACFAS began its second century with gusto and determination particularly proud to be able to count on a dynamic community and convinced to work towards the advancement of knowledge in French.

This year, in 2024, ACFAS has 6,500 active members, 32 countries are represented, there are six regional ACFAS, and 600 volunteers. To learn more about ACFAS, follow its activities, and receive its E-newsletter go to: <https://www.acfas.ca>

Société de biologie de Montréal—SBM²

On 16 February 1922, a group of doctors and professors from Montreal University, including Brother Marie-Victorin, created the SOCIÉTÉ DE BIOLOGIE DE MONTRÉAL to promote sciences in French, doing scientific research in French and training French-speaking researchers. The SBM relentlessly pursues its mission of protecting and spreading knowledge and appreciation of nature. To learn more about the SBM work and receive its E-newsletter, go to: <https://sbmnature.org>.

¹ Original French name: Association Canadienne-Française pour l'Avancement des Sciences, i.e. French-Canadian Association for Advancement of Sciences.

² SBM in English: Montreal Biology Society.



Brother Marie-Victorin¹ (Conrad Kirouac), and his sister, Adelcie, Mother Marie-des-Anges² (Adelcie Kirouac), two K descendants who greatly contributed to life in Quebec, Marie-Victorin by pursuing the development of sciences in French, and Adelcie, a nun, by enabling women to pursue superior education. (Photo: KFA collection)

¹ On Brother Marie-Victorin: see Le Trésor des Kirouac special issue number 3 (in French): <https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Hors-s%C3%A9rie%203%20g%C3%A9n%C3%A9alogie%20Marie-Victorin.pdf>

² On his sister, Adelcie, see Le Trésor des Kirouac special issue number 7 (in French): <https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Hors%20serie%207%20Mere%20Marie-des-Anges.pdf>

A young naturalist thanks Marie-Victorin

Saint-Aimé, 12 novembre 1942,
Rév. Frère Marie-Victorin,
Jardin botanique,
Montréal.

Révérend Frère,

Comme j'étais content de recevoir les *Récits laurentiens* avec quelques lignes de vous! Oh! c'est moi qui ai eu le plus beau prix attribué au Cercle Val-Aimé! Les dix dollars de Marcel Dupré ne me l'enlèveraient pas, je vous assure! Je ne le donnerai jamais à personne.

Je vous remercie donc beaucoup pour ce beau livre dont je lis les belles histoires le soir après que mes devoirs sont faits et mes leçons sont apprises. *Sur le renchaussage* m'a bien intéressé. Moi aussi j'aime cette vie des champs au grand air; rien ne me fait plus plaisir que d'aider mes parents à cultiver le jardin où j'ai mon carré, puis aller à la pêche dans un ruisseau qui lui aussi, loge de belles petites truites, en contournant le petit bois du couvent.

Beaucoup de gros mercis pour mon magnifique prix, lequel m'encourage à faire encore plus et mieux pour profiter des grands avantages que nous avons pour nous instruire tout en nous amusant.

Votre bien reconnaissant petit garçon.

Georges Robert

Saint-Aimé, 12 November 1942,
Reverend Brother Marie-Victorin,
Montreal Botanical Garden

Reverend Brother,

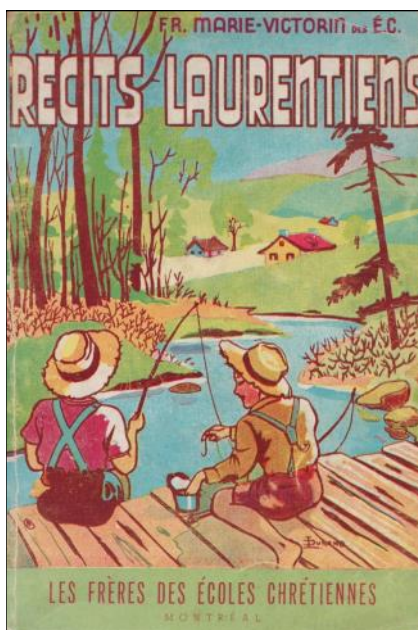
I was so happy to receive the *Laurentian Tales* with your message! I have been awarded the best prize at the Val-Aimé Circle! Believe me, Marcel Dupré's ten dollars could not buy it from me! I will always keep it preciously.

Thank you again very much for this beautiful book. Every evening as soon as my homework is done and my lessons learned, I read the wonderful stories. I really like *Sur le renchaussage*. Like you, I love the outdoor life. Nothing makes me happier that help my parents work in the garden where I have my own vegetable patch, then fish for trout in the stream.

Many thanks again for this wonderful prize that encourages me to keep doing more to better benefit from the great advantages of learning and enjoying work at the same time.

A most grateful little boy,

Georges Robert



Saving an Emblem: The Mingan Thistle

by Marie Lussier Timperley

My curiosity was aroused by this photo of Marie-Victorin holding the famous thistle he had just discovered in Mingan in 1924. Wanting to know about it 100 years later, I wrote MINGAN THISTLE on Google and many links appeared. I was surprised to read an article published on 6 February 2019 about *Saving an emblem: the Mingan Thistle*, by Nancy Dénomée and Andrée Nault, two biologists collaborating on a conservation project at Montreal's Biodome. The following website has it all: reference: ECCC scientists working to save the Mingan Thistle.¹

I kept looking for more information and found the **Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve** created by Parks Canada. The thistle that grows in the Mingan Archipelago is quite unique and the only place where it can be found is in Western Canada, near the Rockies, some 3500 km (2,175 miles) away!

The Mingan Thistle prefers to grow by the sea, but global warming makes it difficult because the sea hardly freezes and storms are more

frequent and stronger; besides, in winter, there is not enough snow to protect the delicate buds growing close to the ground.

Saving a species demands teamwork. In 1995, work started in earnest; each plant got a label and a number to better follow its growth and keep track of its age and survival rate. New favourable breeding grounds were also located to plant new seeds in the Mingan Archipelago.

At Montreal's Biodome they developed new cultivating technique. They produced seeds to be planted in their natural habitat to improve the quality of the existing colonies or even create new colonies in places protected from storms. Over 11,000 seeds were planted and some 600 plants were transplanted between 2017 and 2021. That brought the number of Mingan thistles from 444 to 3,600. The Gosling Institute for Plant Preservation in Guelph, Ontario, developed in vitro culture to grow the Mingan thistle seeds.

Since 2001, various activities to raise awareness and educate the population about the Mingan thistle and concrete actions were done to save it. In 2018, the Mingan agro-forestry cooperative created the Grenier boréal (boreal attic). Pupils from grade three elementary school from the Village of Longue-Pointe-de-Mingan and the Innu community of Ekuanitshit, planted seeds and grew some Mingan thistle plants to be transplanted in the Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve to save the species. There is a *Grenier boréal* website.

¹ See: <https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/blogs/science-behind-scenes/eccc-scientists-working-save-mingan-thistle>



Doesn't he look happy, our cousin the botanist, he has just discovered the Mingan thistle; that was in 1924. A century later, in 2024, much is being done to save this emblematic plant. Let's hope it succeeds! (Photo: Brother Roland Germain, collection of Montreal University Archives)

MARIE-VICTORIN, PLANTS AND WAR

by André Kirouac, the son of another Conrad

Foreword



On 6 June 1944, in wartime, Conrad Kirouac, brother Marie-Victorin, is coming back home from his last trip to Cuba. Last trip and also last month of his life, as he died in a car accident less than six weeks later on 15 July. He was only 59. Think how much more we would have learned from him had he lived longer. Nonetheless, he lived many lives while on this earth and left a decisive mark in Quebec as well as in Canada and in many other parts of the world.



André Kirouac
(Photo taken in Brittany in 2017)

It is amazing how various events spread over many years and apparently unconnected, in the end, have an impact on things. Who could have predicted that one day various interests of mine and experiences gathered under the heading: Montreal Botanical Garden, Marie-Victorin and ... War would merge together!

I had just completed writing an article about Brother Marie-Victorin, my father, another Conrad, and myself in Cuba, when I noticed that my favourite botanist had made seven trips to Cuba, six of them at the height of a world war. Given my way of thinking this brought some more questions and I did not really know how to explain Marie-Victorin's interest for the world in which he lived while millions were dying.

Help came along in a strange way, by chance in a way, as chance often helps. It was an article that unexpectedly turned up among François Kirouac's email. While I was asking myself about the links between Marie-Victorin and war, or wars, someone sent him a text by François Plourde, *a.k.a. Renard Frak*, published in 2022.

This gentleman had written an article entitled *Marie-Victorin cherchait la bourdaine!* (MV was looking for *Frangula alnus*, commonly known as *alder buckthorn*, *glossy buckthorn*, or *breaking buckthorn*.¹ WOW! That was the first ray of light.

This is a rather intriguing opening, I know. So, to begin with, follow me to the Montreal Botanical Garden in 1936.

As we know, Conrad Kirouac, Brother Marie-Victorin, created the Montreal Botanical Garden in 1931. But of course, we know that the now world-renowned garden did not suddenly materialize by magic. Buildings were constructed, gardens were designed and the arboretum took decades to be developed and grown. Besides, Marie-Victorin was not working alone; he was admirably supported by the landscape architect, Henry Teuscher. A name we need to remember!

Working as a gardener at the Berlin Botanical Garden, Henry Teuscher acquired a great reputation as horticulturist and landscape designer. [...] In the 1930's, he embarked on a long and fruitful correspondence with Marie-Victorin, who shared his project and Teuscher started planning the ideal botanical garden something he dreamed of and had been the subject of his master's degree. In spite of the distance and the political setbacks that delayed achieving the project, the two men shared a common enthusiasm.

Teuscher worked on the first plans and was officially appointed superintendent and chief horticulturist of the new Garden in 1936. He also designed many presentation greenhouses and created various great plant collections for the Garden. Already in the 1930s, Teuscher, the visionary, had planned the creation of an Asian Garden and a First Nations Garden!²

We were then going through the Great Depression that followed the stock market crash on the “Black Thursday”, 24 October 1929. From 1929 to 1932, the unemployment rate jumped from 7.7% to 26.4% and the average income fell by 44%. Governments had no choice but to find work for people, if only to lessen tensions. Colonization programmes, help to farmers, and, considering what we are talking about in the present article, public works.³

Public works during the Great Depression changed the urban

¹ See: [Plourde, François \(Renard frak\) \(2022\). « Sauvons les abeilles ! Est-ce du greenwashing ? ». Montréal, 18 p.pdf - Google Drive \(Save the Bees!\)](#)

² See: [Henry Teuscher | Space For Life, i.e., Montreal Botanical Garden](#)

³ See: [Les quartiers ouvriers de Montréal pendant la Grande Dépression | Cairn.info](#)
Montreal working class district

landscape of many Quebec towns, by leaving quality infrastructures meant to improve citizens' lives. Among the best-known realizations, let us name the Palais Montcalm (large concert hall) in Quebec City, the Botanical Garden, the Chalet* and Beaver Lake as part of the large park on the top of Mount Royal in Montreal.⁴

For Marie-Victorin, the first money and the first workers became the lever he needed to get his botanical garden project off the ground, so to speak. Month after month, it grew and on 7 May 1936, [...] Brother Marie-Victorin officially appoints Henry Teuscher as landscape architect, responsible to produce the plans of this 185-acre property to become the Montreal Botanical Garden. Thus it is during the Great Depression in the Dirty Thirties that the garden was born. It was a huge project and it helped palliate the economic crisis by giving work to thousands of unemployed people. This is the context in which Teuscher was the visionary behind the "economic garden" in Montreal, an immense vegetable demonstration garden.⁵

In 1937, a first vegetable garden, named the "nourishing garden", where the public learned not only about edible plants, but also about non-edible products like: textiles, tobacco, oil, perfumes, cosmetics, aromatherapy and pharmacology. Since its opening in 1937, this garden has been one of the visitors' favourite destinations.⁶

⁴ [Réalisation de travaux publics pendant la grande dépression - Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#) (List of public works carried out during the 1930s)

⁵ Vegetables to be grown in hard times | Blogue | Space for Life, Montreal Botanical Garden

⁶ Renew with nature at Montreal Botanical Garden, Tourism Montreal (mtl.org)

⁷ Source : Victory Gardens at - thecanadianencyclopedia.ca)

Perhaps you are asking yourself what the link is between this nourishing garden and the looming war that Canada will officially enter two years later, on 10 September 1939. This garden created by Marie-Victorin and Henry Teuscher had another aim: to demonstrate that vegetables and fruits can be easily and locally grown as well as feed a population lacking the means to subsist. It is based on a similar principle implemented during the two world wars: *Victory Gardens*.

The Victory Gardens were vegetable gardens sown across Canada (and in Great Britain) during the Second World War inspired, at least in part, by the patriotic mobilization similar to that during the First World War. Largely an urban phenomenon, the Victory Gardens were an important element of symbolic material mobilization of the civilian Canadian population on the local front. [...] The basic idea behind the Victory Gardens and gardening during the two World War was the same: the more vegetables Canadians grew in their front yard, in empty lots and in former flower gardens, the more food, Canadian soldiers and munitions could be sent to the Allied forces overseas.⁷ [...] The height of the Victory Gardens was reached during WWII, when there were over 200,000 gardens across Canada, producing 57,000 tonnes of vegetables.

Following the launching of the **nourishing garden** in 1937, and even after the war, Marie-Victorin and Henry Teuscher carried on with their



Victory Gardens in Montreal. Children growing vegetables at Montreal Botanical Garden in 1943. (Photo source: Herménégilde Lavoie, BanQ/Quebec, Department of Culture, Communications and Feminine Condition, Québec Film Board)

demonstration gardens to feed needy people and, at the same time, keep alive the name Victory Garden.⁸

On 20 August 2020, the Montreal daily *La Presse* wrote that: *the Garden was able to supply 287 boxes of vegetables to community organizations, including CAP St-Barnabé, Le Chic Resto Pop and Un plan pour la vie, all located close to the botanical garden. The boxes include parsley, turnips, eggplants, kale, carrots, beans, and onions. Name them, they are in the boxes! says with a smile the then director of the Montreal Botanical Garden.*⁹

I already told you the chance I had to do my internship at the Botanical Garden at the end of the 1970s and that my father's first name, Conrad, played a part in the tasks I was assigned to. Now, who could have imagined that fifty years later, I would learn new information about the famous botanist Brother and contemporary spin-off of his work.

I had no idea about the surprises in store for me when François Kirouac forwarded to me an article about *Nerprun bourdaine!* Called buckthorn in English, the story of a plant with war links. What is this plant? Marie-Victorin explained its name in French as: the word *nerprun* could be a contraction of *noir & prunier* (black & plum), as he wrote in *Flore laurentienne*.¹⁰

Here is what François Plourde writes about the buckthorns' invading properties!

The Frangula alnus, buckthorn, and the nerprun cathartique (Rhamnus cathartica) are both exotic invading plants. Extremely invasive! [...] In short: buckthorn slowly but surely kills native species ... Monsters they are, I am telling you! But this is where it becomes interesting. The wood from the buckthorn (Frangula alnus, formerly Rhamnus frangula),

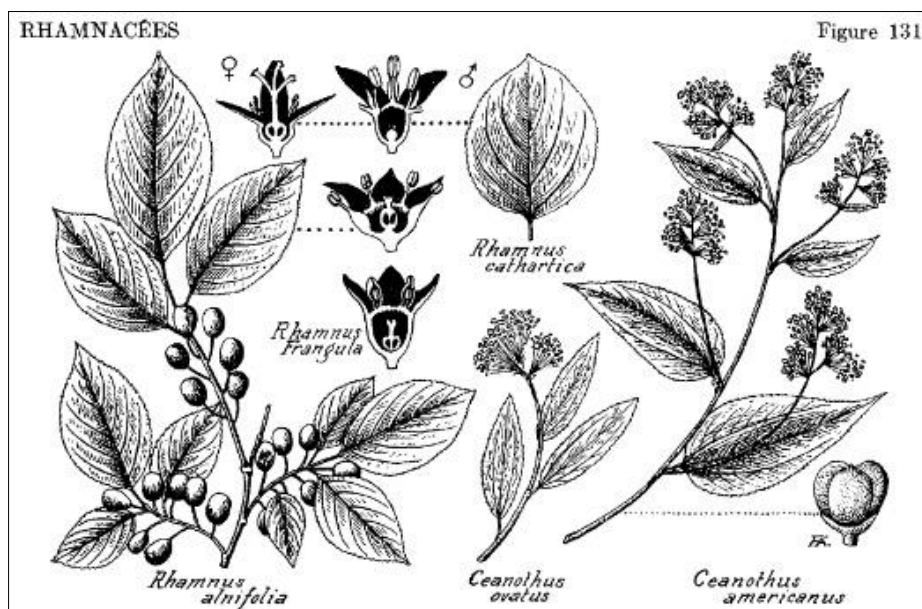
once transformed, provides an excellent charcoal to produce gunpowder, also called black powder!

During the Second World War, it seems that the Canadian army asked Brother Marie-Victorin to make a list of the largest colonies of buckthorn in Canada! One of the side stories that are part of Conrad's life¹¹

That did it, like Mr. Plourde, I was launched into tracking an article published in *Le Devoir* (Montreal daily) on 25 October 1941 and digging into my copy of *Flore laurentienne*.

The article printed in the column of the Cercles des jeunes naturalistes (CJN), was entitled *Nos petites enquêtes (Our Small Investigations)* written by Marie-Victorin himself. The (Canadian) authorities are eager to find different places where *Bourdaine européenne (Rhamnus frangula, buckthorn)* may exist in this country. *This shrub supplies the charcoal needed in the explosives industry.*¹²

Marie-Victorin is at the service of military authority asking him for help, because of his notoriety and knowledge. The description of the plant that we read in *Flore laurentienne* does not mention the special “explosive” aspect



Source: *La Flore laurentienne*. Varieties of *Rhamnus, nerprun bourdaine*, i.e., glossy buckthorn.

while the botanist abundantly explains its nefarious side and that the inner bark has been used to treat scabies.

Anyway, there is little documentation about *nerprun bourdaine* and its by-

⁸ [Les installations du Jardin botanique pour nourrir les gens dans le besoin \(radio-canada.ca\)](https://www.radio-canada.ca) The Montreal Botanical Garden equipped to feed the needy. Interview of Charles-Mathieu Brunelle, director of Space for Life, 1st May 2020.

⁹ See: [Le Jardin botanique donne des légumes | La Presse](https://www.lapresse.ca), article about Botanical Garden giving vegetables.

¹⁰ Pierre Gingras, *À bas le nerprun (Down with Buckthorn)*, *La Presse*, 29 October 2011.

¹¹ Chosen extracts from: Plourde, François (Renard frak) (2022). « Sauvons les abeilles ! Est-ce du greenwashing ? ». Montréal, 18 p.pdf - Google Drive. With thanks.

¹² Source: BANQ, *Le Devoir* newspaper, 25 October 1941.



www.la-vie-naturelle.com

Source: [Bourdaine \(Rhamnus frangula, Frangula alnus\)](#) | [La Vie Naturelle \(la-vie-naturelle.com\)](#)

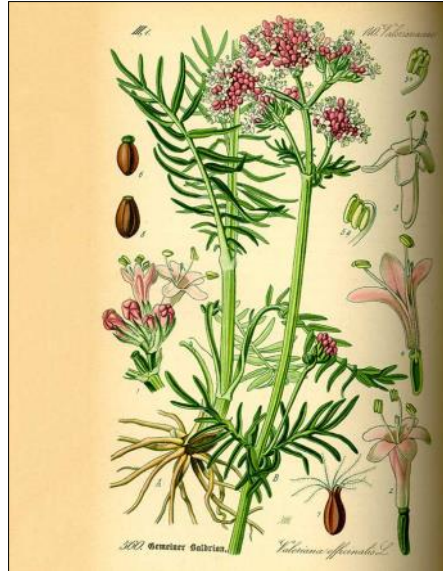
product, the black powder, for example, this extract from the *Guide de gestion du nerprun bourdaine pour les propriétaires forestiers* (Quebec foresters guide: how to deal with buckthorn): *The buckthorn has many names: (in French: nerprun noir, bourdaine, bourgène, aulne noir, bois-à-poudre); in English: glossy buckthorn, glossy false buckthorn or alder buckthorn. In Europe, it is the most useful shrub to build hedges in damp areas in the countryside. Like its cousin, it is known for its medicinal properties, as the fruits and bark have a purgative effect. In the old days, the charcoal made from the buckthorn was used to make slow-combustion black-powder.*¹³ This being said, this powder can still be bought online from *Vera at Curney* in Great Britain.

I am enjoying going from one surprise to another, so why stop



Source: charcoal powder - alder buckthorn - Etsy Canada

now? Why not carry on and talk about Valerian. In a text published in 1999, Maryse Bilodeau writes this about Valerian: *We see that the first settlers to the new Continent brought with them their therapeutic knowledge of medicinal plants. Valerian may also be part of this*



Source: [valériane officinale bio - LA SOCIÉTÉ DES PLANTES \(lasocietedesplantes.com\)](#)

*paradigmatic group because it is a powerful anti-spasmodic, besides being a sedative for the nervous system.*¹⁵

Marie-Victorin underlines that this particular property was rediscovered during the First World War. Valerian would have indeed been used to treat nervous shock during then.¹⁴ Marie-Victorin wrote about it: *It is a powerful anti-spasmodic and a nervous system stimulant. The use of Valerian to treat nervous shock was greatly developed during the Great War.*¹⁵

Maryse Bilodeau adds: *The root of the Valerian has been used in medicine since the Middle Ages. It is an effective sedative and it has a calming and anti-depressive action. For this reason, it is commonly used in medicine for various neuroses, from pathological agitation accompanied by*

*headaches and insomnia, up to pounding heart. [...] More particularly, Valerian acts on the nerves by stopping or calming convulsions, or nervous movements called spasms. Scientific progress has decoded/determined the real medicinal properties of the Valerian. Nevertheless, in 1597, John Gerard was close to the truth when he wrote about this plant: that it was good for those who were afflicted by cramps and other convulsions as for those who fall.*¹⁶

In the *Gallica Blog*, Luc Menapace adds: *During the First World War, people turn to Valerian in large numbers to combat stress and anxiety caused by bombardments.*¹⁷

In 1917, a doctor wrote about one of his patients: *he does not sleep anymore, he does not eat, he is anemic and is wasting away. He is afraid. He moans, trembles with every noise, and hides. With every shell whistling by, he repeats to himself: this one is for me.*¹⁸ But what is his affliction? It is shell shock.

Marie-Victorin, his plants and the wars have taken us onto the battlefields and to the hearts of those who were most deeply affected within their souls. Among them, how many are not counted as suffering from traumatic shocks and

¹³ See: [Guide-Nerprun_Francais-VF.pdf](#) (environnementestrie.ca)

¹⁴ Quebec Medicinal Plants, reported in papers from 1860 to 1950; study by Maryse Bilodeau. See: [MQ46702.pdf](#) (collectionscanada.gc.ca)

¹⁵ *The Flore laurentienne*, page 538.

¹⁶ See Footnote number 14.

¹⁷ See: [La valériane | Le blog de Gallica \(bnf.fr\)](#)

¹⁸ See: [Les traumatisés des tranchées - Ça m'intéresse \(caminteresse.fr\)](#) (Trench's trauma). See : "Shelshock" at: <https://www.warmuseum.ca/>

post-traumatic shocks? How many, whether civil or military, tried to alleviate their sufferings using extract from the roots of the Valerian, a plant described in the *Flore laurentienne* by Marie-Victorin adding: *The use of Valerian to treat nervous shocks was greatly developed during the First World War.* This simple phrase opens a door to fundamental reflections needed about the impacts of wars.

For now, let's put aside these yesteryear stories by various knowledgeable people and end with another plant whose story is akin to those listed so far, my favourite plant, the MILKWEED.

When describing *Asclepias syriaca* Marie-Victorin does not mention its potential utilization in wartime, its military characteristics probably appeared only after the publication of the *Flore laurentienne*. However, as we know him, he could not forget to talk about the special properties of the silk extracted from that plant that will eventually be so useful for military purposes.

He writes: *Attempts to use the egrets from the flowers by mixing them with silk, wool or cotton, did not produce satisfactory results. In Russia, they tried using the bast (inner bark) to make something similar to cotton padding.*

Now we are getting to the heart of the subject.

In his description, there is another characteristic of the egret of the *Asclepias* that Marie-Victorin does not mention. However microscopic, the egrets are hollow! Therefore, it means that they can float.

On the Montreal Botanical Garden website, this characteristic is clearly presented: *In the early 20th century, a number of efforts were made to commercialize the plant, from extracting the latex to using the silky hairs in the manufacture of various textile products. During WWII, the floss was used as stuffing for life jackets. That floss, which is in fact made of microscopic tubes, has good flotation and insulating properties.*¹⁹

According to Marie-Victorin, the *Asclepias* is also known by various names, in French: *petit cochon (piglet), cochon de lait (suckling pig)* and mainly, *Milkweed* (there are many common names in English). As you can see in this American publicity encouraging the production of this plant to replace the kapok²⁰, which had become more difficult to find, to fill floating vests for aviators and other soldiers.

So: *during WWII, the American navy filled 1,2 million floating vests with the milkweed fibre, as an alternative to kapok no longer available*²¹. However, *after the war, the Milkweed fibre was abandoned again due to the popularity of synthetic fibres.*²²

Bruce Gélinas, from the Canadian Department of Agriculture, adds, *during the Forties, collecting milkweed follicles was part of the war effort in the USA, because the egrets were a substitute to kapok used in floating vests (Whiting, 1943). Supplies were collected in nature because the possibility of industrial cultivation parameters were unknown*

WANTED

15,000,000 Lbs. Ripe Milkweed Pods

For Use In The War Effort

Government needs Milkweed Floss as a replacement for Kapok in the making of Life Preservers, Aviators Jackets and other military purposes.

Harvesting to start about September 25 or as soon as pods are ripe. Seeds in pods must be brown.

15¢ per bag for fresh pods — 20¢ per bag for dry pods delivered to buying station nearest you.

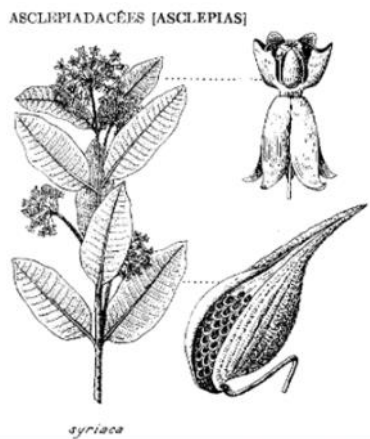
EMMET COUNTY BUYING STATIONS

Petoskey—Emmet County Fair Grounds.	Pellston RFD—William LaTocha, Lark's Lake.
Eggleston—Henry Maxwell, Petoskey, R-2.	Bliss—Frank LaTocha Store.
Curtis School Area—Walter Truman, Petoskey R-2.	Cross Village—Marack Store.
Alanson—Fairbairn & Son.	Good Hart—Dale Lankin.
Brutus—John Steen.	Statenville—Ralph Radle.
Pellston—Calvin Gillett.	Harbor Springs—Phillips Service Station (Maurice Phillips).
Levering—Chester LaTocha Store.	Bay Shore—Jack Hinkley.

Pick Milkweed Pods for Victory--for Profit

War Hemp Industries, Inc., Milkweed Floss Division, Petoskey, Michigan

Source: Milkweed is a treasure in Quebec.



Asclépiade syriaca,
Flore laurentienne, p.519.

¹⁹ Les asclépiades indigènes du Québec, Space for Life, Quebec's Indigenous Milkweed.

²⁰ Kapok, tall tree from tropical areas, originally from Latin America. Its natural cellulosic fiber is obtained from the seed hairs of kapok trees. Wikipedia (wikipedia.org)

²¹ See: *L'asclépiade, une richesse au Québec! - COOPÉRATIVE MONARK* (coopmonark.com) Quebec's precious milkweed)

²² See: *L'asclépiade, une richesse au Québec! - COOPÉRATIVE MONARK* (coopmonark.com) Quebec's precious milkweed

then. (Gaertner, 1979). But this application prompted agronomic research of milkweed. In Canada, some studies were done during the 1940s as part of the war effort, to find substitutes to kapok and rubber (Minshall, 1977; Moore, 1947).²³

In its collection, the Canadian War Museum has a floating vest like those used during WWII, but the type of filling is not mentioned!

Nevertheless, the most famous life saving vest, filled with kapok or milkweed, is definitely that of The Honorable Gilles Lamontagne²⁴, a bomber commander who was shot down by the Germans on 13 March 1943. He wrote: *We were flying over Holland. We were just about to arrive at Zuiderzee, the large lake. I landed in a field [Editor's note: with his parachute while the plane was nose-diving] and buried my parachute and my Mae West [life jacket] according to instructions*²⁵.

Many decades later he wrote: *During the 1980's, I received a call from the Dutch ambassador who told me that a farmer's son, on whose farm I had landed (in 1943), wanted to see me. So I went. The village was a sea of flags. They were so happy to see me again.*²⁶

I had the privilege of knowing the Honorable Lamontagne and he often added that back in Holland, when he was handed his precious life jacket that a farmer had unearthed while tilling his field, it was a very emotional ceremony, and just as much to bring it back home. One day as he was telling me the story, he said he wanted his vest to be kept in a safe place, i.e., in the museum vault in the city he was in charge of (mayor) and where he lived. Thus, after a brief ceremony I accepted that his life vest be permanently lent to Quebec City Naval Museum. It is a very precious memento that has sometimes been exhibited. The last time his vest was displayed was in June 2016, when the Honorable Lamontagne was lying in state in Quebec City Hall.



While back in the Netherlands, Gilles Lamontagne put on his precious life-vest. (Source: Quebec Naval Museum, Gilles Lamontagne Archives)

Honorable Lamontagne's life-vest is unique in the world, it is a museum artifact. Once the war was over, the other life vests labelled "surplus" were sold by the government, like the one in this ad in April 1947.

When I started writing the present article, I wanted to amalgamate the words of Marie-Victorin about plants and wars, but I must admit that I had no idea where it would take me. Even less so now when I would like to conclude on a rather not-so war-like note ... although!

Not war between humans, but another war, that for the survival of the Monarch butterfly. Milkweed is renowned for its floating qualities but it has many other properties.

Marie-Victorin clearly underlines that the *Asclepias (milkweed) entomological fauna attractions is most remarkable; beetles, insects, butterflies and true bugs, visit milkweed and feed on its roots and flowers.*

Conrad adds: *It is worth noting that the dominant colour of all these*

²³Bruce Gélinas, Table sectorielle en grandes cultures du ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation; see: Document_94247.pdf (agrireseau.net) Economic Strategy Tables at Economic Strategy Tables (canada.ca)

²⁴ Quebec City mayor (1965-1977), Canada National Defense Minister (1980-1983), Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Quebec (1984-1990).

²⁵ See: Hon. Gilles Monty Lamontagne | thecanadianencyclopedia.ca

²⁶ Idem.

²⁷ *La Flore laurentienne (Laurentian Flora)* p.520.

insects is red and that the milkweed flowers are visited by a huge number of night butterflies, diurnal, crepuscular and nocturnal.²⁷ Among the butterflies, the Monarch! What colour is it? Reddish orange. Which plant attracts the Monarch to the point of being its only source of survival? The *Asclepias*, the milkweed.

*The Asclepias is the only plant, the exclusive host of the Monarch butterflies. (Danaus Plexippus). Their symbiotic relation goes back millions of years and is so complex that science has not yet unravelled all its mysteries. [...] The Monarch females lay their eggs exclusively on milkweed plants growing along their migratory roads from Mexico to Canada. [...] Therefore is it almost impossible to describe the Monarch butterflies without mentioning the milkweed and vice versa.*²⁸

The dependency of the Monarch butterflies on the milkweed is such, that through time it has become a major problem. So many farmers and gardeners have eradicated this plant using herbicides, and added to deforestation in the Americas, in less than twenty years, in doing so the Monarch butterfly's population has dwindled from 500 million to barely 30 million.²⁹

What can we do to stop the Monarch butterflies' disappearance?

Let us conclude on one wish, even better, on two wishes.



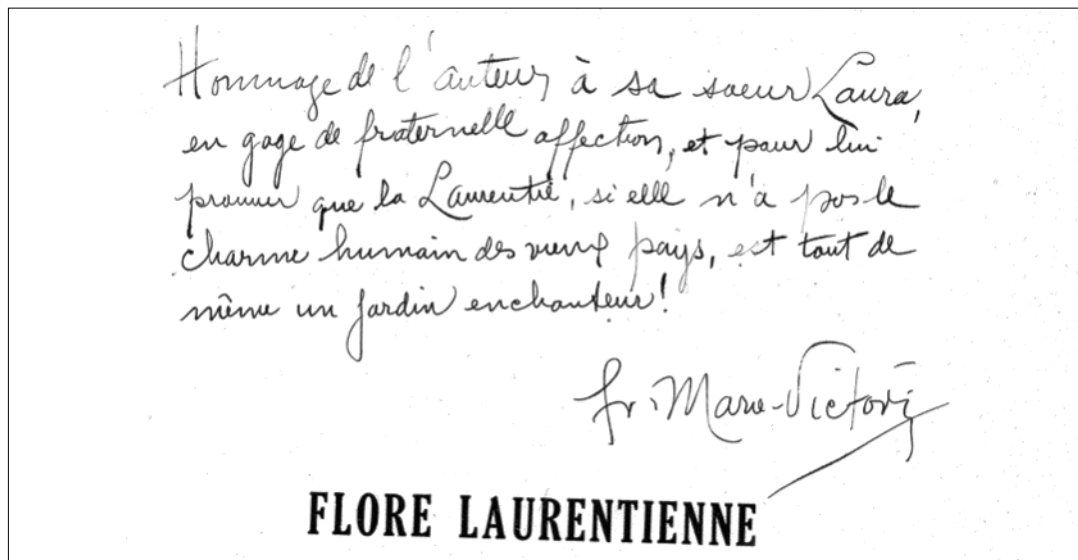
Monarch Butterfly. (Photo : Toulouse Museum, France, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

--- This plant may not be needed in wartime, because there is no war. A Utopian wish, I know, but morally necessary.

---But let us plant and cultivate ever more *Asclepias* / milkweed in order to ensure that the marvellous adventure of the migration of the Monarch butterflies continues each Autumn.

²⁸ *Asclépiade: pilier des écosystèmes et isolant végétal haute performance, voir : Asclépiade : Description, rôle et utilisation | Lasclay (Milkweed, pillar of ecosystem & best insulating material, see: Milkweed: Description, Role and Use | Lasclay)*

²⁹ *Disappearing monarch butterflies? What to do. Claudine Pronovost, 7 May 2019. See: La disparition du monarque, ce que nous pouvons faire. – Ferme Bédard Blouin (fermebedardblouin.com)*



Brother Marie-Victorin signed a copy of *Flore laurentienne*, first edition published in 1935, for his sister Laura Kirouac.

Her son, Gontrand Lebel (1917-2001), Laura's son, willed it to the Kirouac Family Association.

Note: Gontrand was born in Clifton, Illinois, 15 miles (24 km) south of Kankakee, site of the June 2011, Kirouacs/ Kyrouacs - Re-unification Celebration in Illinois.

Memories of Pierre Demers¹

Notes written for my granddaughter Éliane about Marie-Victorin²

In 1933, when I started at the Department of Sciences at Montreal University, on Saint-Denis Street, I had already heard about Brother Marie-Victorin, especially from my biology professor, Father Bernard Taché, Jesuit, at College Jean-de-Brébeuf³. I considered him an important person, rather superior whom I thought very intimidating. Since then, I have learned that in life, all humans are equals and that our mutual relationships must be based more on reason than respect.

I attended all his public lectures in a large, overheated hall filled to capacity, located on the main floor of the building. I especially remember the lecture he gave just after returning from Africa and Cuba.

I took part in many plant identification sessions where I presented some specimens from my collection, all mounted on cardboard. Marie-Victorin either confirmed or corrected the names of the plants I had collected. And I brought him a few new ones. I particularly remember an aquatic plant: *Potamogeton robbinsii*, or *Robbins Potamot*, commonly known as Robbins' pondweed, a North American herb that I found at Lake Sainte-Francois not far from Trois-Pistoles. After that session, he added this town as part of the larger area where that plant grew, and mentioned it in the *Flore Laurentienne*, the book he was then working on.

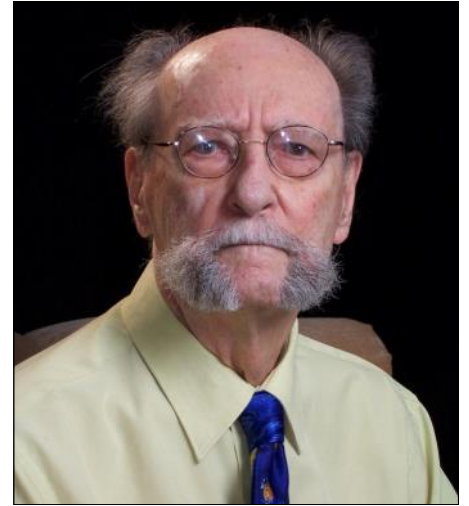
My herbarium⁴ includes over 1000 specimens, some were presented at identification sessions.

Quite often, I brought so many specimens that I had to bring them back at a later session, to give a chance for other people to present theirs. These sessions were held in the herbarium, on the ground-floor (street level) in the south-east wing of the building. From the street, one could see through the windows the large size German daisies⁵.

In mid-morning and mid-afternoon, all collaborators gathered around him, in his office at the north-east corner of the building, for a coffee break. Sometimes I went to these meetings. The attending collaborators present were: Émile Jacques, Armand Frappier, Dr. Simard, Ernest Rouleau, Marcel Raymond, Roger Gauthier, Brother Adrien, Brother Rolland-Germain, Gustave Chagnon, Jules Labarre, André Champagne, Marcel Cailloux, Miss Marcelle Gauvreau, M. Aubert, Jacques Rousseau, Jules Brunel, Dr. Barbeau, Abbe McDuff, the bryologist, a moss specialist, Germaine Bernier, Brother Alexandre who did the drawings, Georges Préfontaine and Henri Prat, came especially all the way from their fourth-floor laboratories.

It is in this office that Marcel Cailloux took the only two known colour photos that we have of Marie-Victorin. It is also in this office that, in 1935, I went shyly asking him to autograph my copy of the *Flore Laurentienne* I had just bought.

On another occasion, I went to ask him for a letter of recommendation. (pp. 22-23). When he died on the way back from a plant-collecting excursion, near Sherbrooke, in the car driven by André Champagne, I wrote a poetic homage entitled Marie-Victorin's last words. It was published in the magazine *Aujourd'hui*, edited by Roger Duhamel.



Pierre Demers (1914-2017)
(Photo: Facebook)

This is glorious history and history to be proud of. Tomorrow's history is laboriously written every day, whether one is called Marie-Victorin, Pierre or Éliane.

¹ Editor's note: Gift authorized by his son, the late Joël Demers (1963-2016).

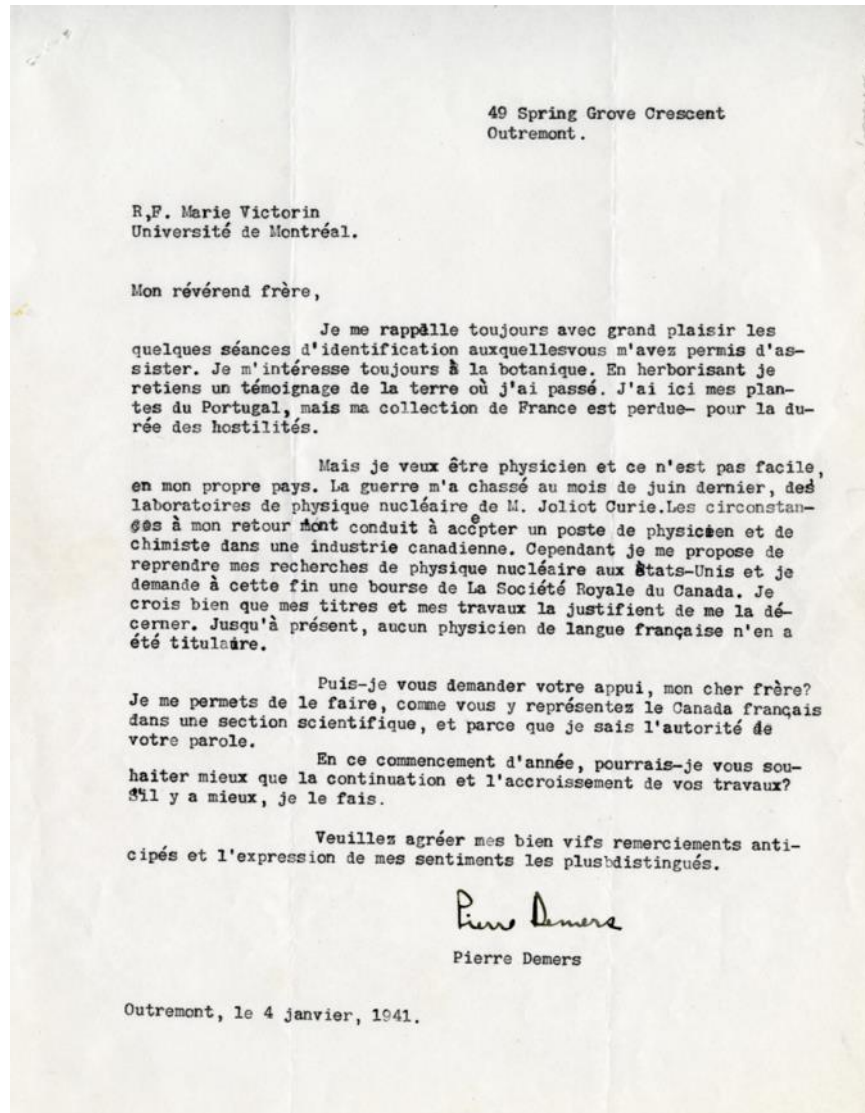
² Pierre Demers (1914-2017), Born in England, physicist and inventor, was honorary member of the CJN (Cercles des Jeunes Naturalistes).

³ Editor's note: Father Bernard Taché (1902-1984), Jesuit priest, naturalist, also professor at College Sainte-Marie.

⁴ Editor's note: When Pierre Demers died, his herbarium was given to the CJN by one of his sons. For conservation purposes, the CJN gave Pierre Demers' Herbarium to the Marie-Victorin Herbarium. Both are together forever.

⁵ The Herbarium was first located in the old Montreal University. Then in 1939, it moved to the new Montreal Botanical Garden administrative building, and in 2011, it was finally and permanently relocated in the modern Bio-diversity centre.

Correspondence of Pierre Demers and Marie-Victorin in 1941



Outremont, 4 January 1941

My Reverend Brother,

I always remember with pleasure the identifications sessions you let me take part in. I am always interested in botany. I still have my collection of samples from Portugal but all those from France, are lost because of the war.

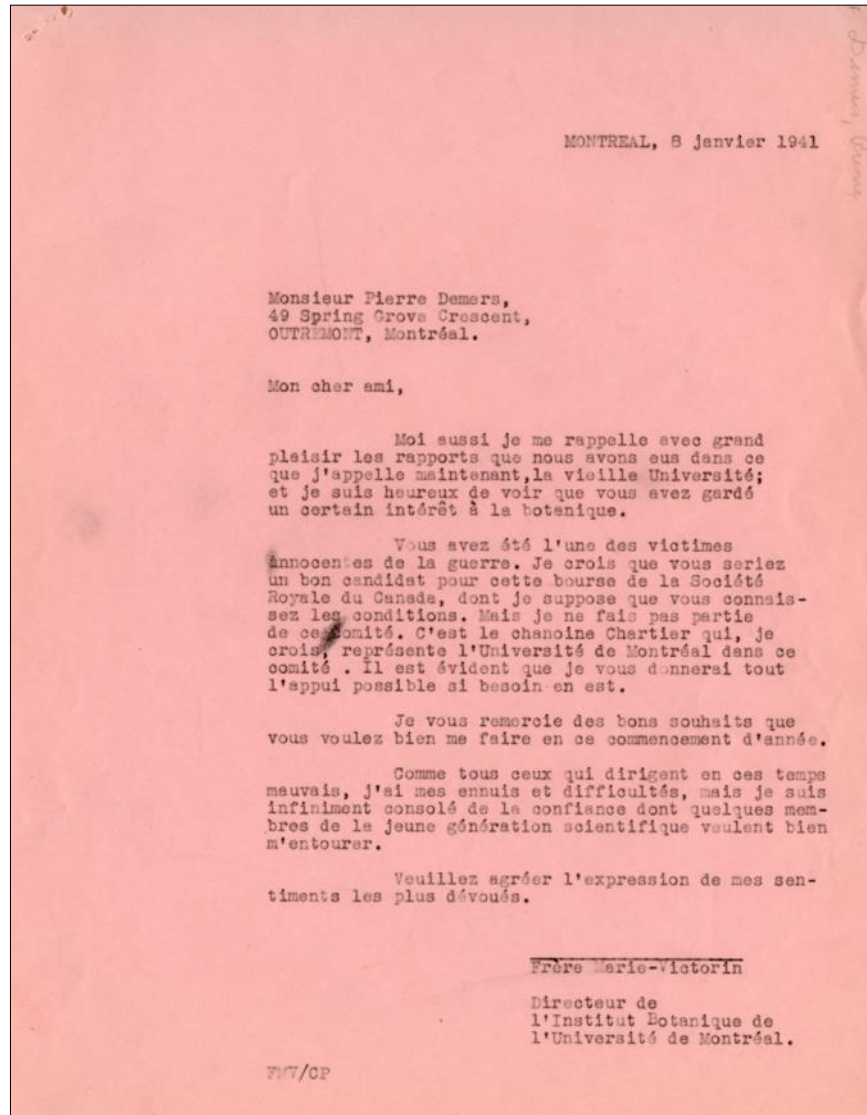
Being a physicist in my country is very difficult. War chased me out of France last June. I want to keep working as a physicist, particularly in nuclear physics, I had to accept a post in a Canadian firm. As I would like to carry on my work in the USA, I have asked for a grant from the Royal Canadian Society. I believe my work and my competence justify it, but, until now no French-speaking physicist has ever received one.

May I ask for your help? I take this liberty because you are a recognized authority and you represent French-speaking Canada in sciences.

At the beginning of this new year, may I wish you great success in your work.

Pierre Demers

Correspondence of Pierre Demers and Marie-Victorin in 1941



Montreal, 8 January, 1941

Dear Friend,

I remember with pleasure the times with met in the "old University" and I am happy to see that you are still interested in botany.

You are one of the innocent victims of this war. I believe that you would be an excellent candidate for the grant from the Royal Canadian Society. I believe you know their conditions. However, I am not a member of their committees. It is Canon Chartier who, I believe, represent Montreal University on that committee. Of course, I will support you as much as I can, if that is needed.

I thank you for your good wishes for the new year. Like everyone in leadership position, in these hard times, I face difficulties too but I am greatly consoled by the trust I receive from some members of the younger scientific generation who work with me.

Brother Marie Victorin

Marie-Victorin for and by Lucille Kirouac

I really discovered and understood Brother Marie-Victorin by reading a book entitled *Marie-Victorin, Science, Culture and Nation*¹.

For most people in Quebec, his name is associated with the Montreal Botanical Garden and with the **Flore laurentienne**; his book on botany first published in 1935. That makes him a very important personage, but Yves Gingras helped me discover the greatness of our famous cousin by reading some of writing of our “cousin Conrad Kirouac.” I discovered that:

- Marie-Victorin was determined to see Quebec progress in the field of education in general and more particularly in the field of science;
- He stood up for the causes he deeply believed in, like training of university personnel to be leaders as well as teachers;
- He worked relentlessly to give children of all ages, teenagers and adults, a proper knowledge of nature, the real nature they we are surrounded by;
- He was very open minded, realistic, and receptive to new ideas and to the modern world;
- He had an independent mind but always remained faithful to his religious commitments.

The whole book is worth reading, but here is an excerpt showing the place French-Canadians should play in sciences:

Page 37 – Page 37 – One worrying question in this country is: In North America is there and will there be sciences in French? We must admit that we are in a weak position. Look at the list of members in our Canadian Academy, the Royal Society of Canada. In the scientific section, where are the French-Canadian names? In the collection of printed papers where are their works? But everything fits together in a people's life! Remember the lessons of history! Remember Lord Durham's famous (or infamous) report where he concluded that the two races in this country should be merged. He wrote: “They are a people without history and without literature.” Depending how you interpret this, the first part was a calumny; and the second a half-truth; about which Mr. Chartier, a priest, recently said what we should think about it. But this crack-of-the-whip must be a wake-up call, the lesson must be useful. To carry on, we must be worthy of living and, being surrounded by positive peoples watching us, we must win recognition in all fields giving irrefutable proofs of our activities and our special genius and demonstrating that French genius is also in scientific culture in general.”

Let's continue, with some thoughts from Brother Marie-Victorin showing his great love of nature. NATURE. These comments are taken from a book entitled *La Laurentie en fleurs*².

P.7 - In 1938, speaking to members of the Réveil rural, Marie-Victorin said: La Laurentie en fleurs (editor's note: freely translated: The Blooming Laurentians) this could be the title of a great book that I would like to write to offer as a charming breviary to all those who are privileged to live close to earth, living in its light, hearing every hour its soft and truthful voice.

P. 41 - Alas! There are very few French-Canadians who take the time to look at nature for other purposes than exploit it; botany counts very few adepts.



Lucille Kirouac
(Photo: KFA collection)

But there is a small number of nature lovers, of faithful people who, every year, pay a visit to the hosts of the mountain. They know all its nooks and crannies, follow its cascading streams, climb up its slopes or tumble down its ravines. They sweat profusely, bugs eat them alive, their feet are burning in their beat-up shoes; but they do not feel it, all busy are they greeting their many friends, everywhere, at the bottom of the sources, on the mossy rocks, in the bushes, on the sand by the lake.

P. 68 - There it is, in the limitless scale, the integral Garden, the one that is one with me, the man, Nature's master. It has stability and harmonies, I must look for the pattern to redo around my house, on a small scale, what Nature has done, on a large scale in the world.

Pp. 72-73 -My Laurentian Garden must be a four-season garden, as it

¹ GINGRAS, Yves. *Science, culture et nation/frère Marie-Victorin*, les Éditions du Boréal 1996.

² GINGRAS, Yves et Gilles BEAUDET, é. c. *La Laurentie en fleur, frère Marie-Victorin*, les Éditions du Boréal, 2023.

never fully abdicates in front of Marshal Winter, those who do not waver in the cold!

Look at the Pine's black silhouette, the Cedar's golden cone, the Fir's green geometry. Even in Winter, it is still a beautiful garden and its shining white coat only reflecting the great long leafless and standing still the living trunks of the Grey Elms and Silver Birches.

Oh yes, the Laurentian, the most beautiful garden in the world! The Great Gardener, Nature's Creator, on his own, discreetly, does it all with infinite art, so we stop, surprised to see that each season brings back, without fail, and in rigorous order, the same resurrections!

To read Brother Marie-Victorin, sometimes, means accepting to be compelled and stunned to recognize our blindness in front of all the beauty that Nature offers, however it also means accepting to be carried away by its enthusiasm and, in so doing, open up to its teaching.



Marie-Victorin and Cercles des Jeunes Naturalistes

by Brother Adrien Rivard, Holy Cross Congregation

Director of Cercles des Jeunes Naturalistes

(Young Naturalists Circles)

Le Devoir, Saturday 21 July 1945

Research by André St-Arnaud

Few scholars in Canada or elsewhere have drawn more esteem and admiration from their colleagues and followers than Brother Marie-Victorin. The kindness and sympathy he always showed to everyone created around him such a favourable atmosphere propitious to new ideas to emerge and such new ideas are always at the base of evolution and even at the base of scientific, literary, artistic, economic and social revolutions. The idea of creating groups for young naturalists was one of those ideas that the illustrious master was glad to encourage, even if at the beginning he thought that it was rather bold.

In winter 1931, the Société Canadienne d'Histoire Naturelle holds its regular meetings in the lecture hall of the Botanical Institute. Brother Marie-Victorin is the president of the French-speaking Canadian Natural History Society. At one of the meetings, I proposed the creation in the province of Quebec, of circles, or clubs for young men and young women under the direction of their teachers, men and women, with one

aim, specifically to study nature. This is not a new experience for me; for the past six years I lead two such groups at Baudet School in Ville Saint-Laurent (Montreal suburb). The results obtained through these groups are very gratifying; they are even better than expected. Thus, I present my project to the Society members, concluding my presentation saying that this innovation having been successful in one part of the province, it is most likely to be successful elsewhere, as the children are just as well ready for this kind of training. It was a very large-scale project to develop and I was only an elementary school teacher then. So I asked the Canadian Society of Natural History to adopt it and take the necessary steps to develop it.

It was quite obvious that this project being very large and entailing considerable consequences that the Society would first have to study it fully before agreeing. At this first meeting, my project did not generate much enthusiasm and it was only decided that a committee should study it. And one knows



Brother Adrien Rivard (1890-1969)
(Photo: Montreal University, Public Archives)

what that usually mean.

However, this rather flat refusal did not worry me. It was to be expected. At the next meeting, the committee presented its report and the Society definitely approved the project. In the meantime, stubbornness and some persuasions were needed to garner general approval. That is when Marie-Victorin said to me: "Brother Adrien, create your Circles and the Society will help you". I had the Master's blessing and I knew I could always count on his support. Since then, the number of circles kept multiplying.

Alone I would never be able to carry forward such a huge project, such a colossal task. But I was strongly supported by a whole army of collaborators including, of course, the most renowned, Brother Marie-Victorin.

It is impossible to picture how much the Young Naturalists Circles owe to the generosity and magnanimous heart of Marie-Victorin, to his alert penmanship, his strong inspiration, his initiative and spirit, his organizational sense, all these qualities that are beyond this article. Let me underline some highlights demonstrating his great attachment to the young naturalists.

We know about the pamphlets for the naturalists, these four-page leaflets covering various scientific subjects especially written for young people. Their publication started in January 1932 written by Brother Marie-Victorin. Between 1932 and 1945, 77 leaflets were published, including 13 written by our great botanist.

Brother Marie-Victorin never missed a chance to use radio to let the public know about the new work. On many occasions, he also used broadcasting to launch invigorating slogans to the new generation in this country. His last great initiative was creating a radio programme entitled: *La Cité des Plantes* (i.e., City of Plants), was a series of weekly talks on many scientific botanical subjects.

He always wrote to the organizers of every CJNI large exhibition held in various provincial regions showing tangible encouragements and his attachment to the cause. On many occasions, he very discretely gave prizes to reward the best works presented by the youth at these fairs. A great number of youths also benefited from his generosity but never knew it.

He was so keen to encourage students and their teachers. (Editor's note: see p. 12) He was the very first one to adopt a circle and to become its patron. Afterwards, he became the patron of three other circles. The title of "Paron" was given to a person who spent \$25.00 to help create a circle.

Nevertheless, his greatest contribution to the work of the CJNI was the publication of the *Flore laurentienne* in 1935. Before that, it was difficult for young people to methodically study everyday plants. Books written in French were rare or rather old. The publication of this botanical treatise opened a new era for young naturalists. Finally they could use a modern and well-designed tool. Brother Marie-Victorin took years preparing these luminous pages to guide young people on the challenging scientific trails.

He knew how difficult it was for keen young people to find out the secrets of Quebec's flora. While he spent long hours writing his manuscripts, he did while thinking about them. In the first pages of his *Flore Laurentienne*, after thanking his numerous collaborators, he wrote that the youth were not forgotten, that they would never be forgotten: "I dedicate this book to the new youth of my country, particularly the 10,000 boys and girls who are members of the pacific army of the Cercles des Jeunes Naturalistes (CJNI). This is my humble contribution to an urgently needed work: using our intelligence to return to Nature and rediscover its benefits, go back to the admirable Book, not opened often enough, this botanical bible that speaks the same language as the other Bible, but humans have such a difficult time reading and understanding the rhythm of beauty and the rhythm of the words of life."

Young naturalists of my country, if today your thoughts are not exactly like those of previous generations, if your eyes are now more open to the beauties of the Laurentian nature, if you understand better the great lesson of life blossoming around you, let me tell you that these benefits are yours because one day a very intelligent man, with forward and proper thinking, a man with a noble soul walked among us. This man loved you; he wanted you to enjoy a beautiful life and to this end he kept repeating to you what Christ used to say: "Consider the lilies in the fields!"



Marie-Victorin in the Antilles and Canary Islands

by Marie Lussier Timperley

Professor Javier Francisco-Ortega, from the Department of Biological Sciences of Florida International University, came to Montreal in 2017 following the discovery of Brother Marie-Victorin's travelogue written during his 1941 trip to the Caribbean; the precious travelogue is kept in Montreal University's Archives. (*Le Trésor*, no. 124, 2017, pp.13-14)

Then in *Le Trésor* no. 125, pp.17-22, the report of the KFA annual gathering held on 9 September 2017, at the Montreal Botanical Garden, includes photos of participants visiting the Marie-Victorin Herbarium¹, where wonderful volunteers explained how plants were preserved, work done under the supervision of Geoffrey Hall, curator of the collections.² Seven years later, what are Geoffrey Hall and Professor Ortega involved in? Both are still much involved in Marie-Victorin's research in the Antilles.

When interested in botany in the Caribbean, one immediately turns to **THE BOTANICAL ITINERARIES ON THE ISLAND OF CUBA** by Brother Marie-Victorin and Brother Léon, the account of their explorations and discoveries from 1939 to 1944. The **ITINERARIES** were published in French in three sections, numbered 41, 50 and 68, as part of the Contributions from Montreal University's Institut Botanique.

First series published in 1942, number **41:1-496**

Second series in 1944, number **50: 1-410**

Third series in 1956, number **68: 1-227**

It seems that a Spanish translation would be appreciated and useful in Cuba, as well as an English one for botanists around the world. The **Itineraries** represent 1000 pages to be translated requiring knowledge in botany, geography and languages, plus love and patience. A stimulating project for some three retirees: in Cuba, Quebec and the USA .

Since 2016, a number of studies about Marie-Victorin's field explorations have been published outside Quebec, either in English, Spanish or French. Among the collaborators, three names appear for each study: Javier Ortega, Geoffrey Hall and Luc Brouillet³. The titles are:

- *The De La Salle Brothers and Botany in The Antilles.*

- *Illustrated Travelling Journals of Marie-Victorin at Puerto Rico in 1942.*

- *Marie-Victorin in the Canary Island, a Botanical Voyage on Three Continents in 1929, published in Spanish in 2016.; and in English in 2017.*

- *A Lectotype Nomenclature of Quebec Species Identified by Marie-Victorin, published in English in 2017.*

- *First Colour Photos taken by Marie-Victorin, annotated & published in English in 2017.*

- *Haiti-Québec, the French-Canadian Mission To The Island of Quisqueya, shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, from 27 December 1937 to 7 January 1938: Perspective of Marie-Victorin, Montreal Botanical Garden Founder. Journal of Haitian Studies, published in 2019.*

The Account of Marie-Victorin's voyage in Haiti, was published in English in 2020, as well as other botanical explorations in the Antilles in 1940-1942. These studies are available online but only on private sites. To obtain a PDF version of any of them, please email Geoffrey Hall at:

hall.geoffrey@gmail.com

Link to the **Marie-Victorin Herbarium official English website:** <https://irbv.umontreal.ca/research/collections/marie-victorin-herbarium-mt/?lang=en>

¹ Photo on the left: Geoffrey Hall, showing a first edition of *Flore laurentienne* to Gilles Kirouac, Marie-André Lavigne-Kirouac and Marie Kirouac.

² Carole Sinou, manager of the Canadensys botany services at the Biodiversity Centre has just been named Coordinator of the Herbarium collections, replacing Geoffrey Hall, recently retired.

³ Luc Brouillet, former Herbarium Curator and professor in the Department of Biology at Montreal University retired in 2019.



Photo: Pierre Kirouac

QUIROUET/KIROUAC FROM DOUGLASTOWN

Recent Genetic Results for Élie dit Breton, Latest Update
by Dominic Gagnon, Projet Québec ADNy

In the 2023 Spring issue of *Le Trésor des Kirouac*¹, we explained how the descendant of Augustin Quirouet who married Sarah Holland at Percé (Gaspé Peninsula) in 1839, had the Y chromosome from the Elie dit Breton*, like the descendants of Jean Elie and Jeanne Labbé, pioneers on Ile d'Orléans (island). It was a stunning discovery because the Elie dit Breton family's roots are in Ménéac, Brittany. So, could a link with the Lebrice/Le Bihan de Kervoach have already existed in Brittany? Or could the genealogy of these two families, Élie dit Breton and Kervoach dit Breton, have been mixed up once transplanted into North America? (* dit, i.e., known as)

After obtaining the BigY results for two descendants of Augustin Quirouet and Sarah Holland, we faced a list of undetectable SNPs² among the Elie dit Breton. Wanting to cover all the branches of the Elie dit Breton family, we needed at least one BigY test from descendants of each of the three sons of Jean Élie the pioneer, and the head of the three branches, through his three sons: François born in 1672, Pierre born in 1676 and Jacques born in 1681. The result of the BigY test, done in the Spring of 2024, on a descendant of François born in 1672, did not reveal any markers enabling us to identify a common ancestor with the Kirouacs descending from the Douglastown Augustin, nor with a known branch of the Elie dit Breton. So we went back to the sources and studied the baptism, marriage and burial registers.

François Kirouac clearly identified Augustin Quirouet as a son of François Quirouet and Catherine Gagné married in 1839 at Percé³. When consulting the marriage deed of the Quirouet/Gagné couple, if one substitutes Breton where the surname Quirouet appears, we find the marriage of Jean-Baptiste Elie on 6 May 1805, at Saint-Gervais-de-Bellechasse, with Catherine Gagné. Then in the **PRDH**⁴ and **Nosorigines.qc.ca**⁵ it is indicated that Jean-Baptiste juggled with various first names in his lifetime. When he died on 8 May 1847, he was François Breton, husband of Catherine Gagné. Well, then, could it be possible that the first son of the Breton/Gagné couple, born in 1806, moved to the Gaspé Peninsula? Could "Francois-Louis" Élie/Breton, baptized François in 1806, have copied his father's habit, and changed his first name during his lifetime, even becoming Augustin at his marriage? That might explain why the **PRDH** and **Nosorigines.qc.ca** lost track of François Breton born in 1806.

¹ In *Le Trésor no. 141, Spring 2023*, pp. 18-20, **Research about the Origins of the Douglastown Branch, Major Discovery**, read the article by Marc Villeneuve and François Kirouac.



Dominic Gagnon, projet Québec ADNy
(Photo courtesy Dominique Gagnon)

² The Y chromosome is transmitted from father to son in its entirety and usually with few mutations. A specific Y chromosome may randomly change its constituent. This type of mutation is called **Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP)** and is passed on to all the descendants when tested for the BigY. At the present, we do not have any correspondence between the **SNP** observed in Augustin Quirouet and the three sons of Jean Elie and Jeanne Labbé. One possible explanation could be that during his life Pierre, Jean Elie's son, did not develop a personal **SNP**, because that would have later appeared in his descendants.

³ **KIROUAC François. The Douglastown Branch, The Search Goes On- Where are we now? *Le Trésor des Kirouac***, no 138, pp 37-42.

⁴ **PRDH, Historical Demographic Research Programme** created by Montreal University including all the data from Quebec parishes from 1621 to 1849; all civil deeds, a genealogical dictionary for all Quebec families (1621-1849), unions, filiations. Bilingual site at : <https://www.prdh-igd.com/>

⁵ **Genealogy for Quebec and French America.**

The Three Lines of The Pioneer Jean Élie

The Jean Élie identified by DNA to the descendants of Augustin Quirouet/Kirouac of Douglastown

François (1672-1735)
married Françoise Bidet-Roussel
on 23 September 1692
in Saint-Jean-de-l'Île-d'Orléans

Pierre (1676-1760)
first marriage to
Rosalie Pépin
on 5 July 1700 in Québec

second marriage to
Hélène Laforme
on 30 July 1722 in Beaumont

Jacques (circa 1681-1766)
married Louise Lacasse
on 3 September 1715
in Beaumont

The genetic results available for Élie dit Breton do not enable us to amalgamate the branch of Jean-Baptiste Elie/Breton married to Catherine Gagné in 1805. Jean-Baptiste-François-Louis Elie/Breton is definitely a descendant of Jean's second son, Pierre Breton. We have the results of the tests done for Pierre Breton; however, the branches tested diverge immediately in the generation following that of Pierre born in 1676:

1 st test Big Y BRETON Candidate IN70688	2 nd test ELIE Candidate 78890	3 rd test BRETON Candidate 71890
III	III	III
BRETON Joseph + CORRIVEAU Josephite, 1727 August 6, St-Vallier-de-Bellechasse	ELIE Pierre + LEFEBVRE/BELANGER Louise, 1725 January 29, Berthier-sur-Mer	ELIE André + ROY Marguerite, 1762 February 1, St-Vallier-de-Bellechasse
II	II	II
ELIE Pierre + PEPIN Rosalie, 1700 July 5, Québec	ELIE Pierre + PEPIN Rosalie, 1700 July 5, Québec	ELIE Pierre + LAFORME Hélène, 1722 July 30, Beaumont
I	I	I
ELIE Jean + LABBE Jeanne, 1669 November 28, Sainte-Famille-de-l'Île-d'Orléans	ELIE Jean + LABBE Jeanne, 1669 November 28, Sainte-Famille-de-l'Île-d'Orléans	ELIE Jean + LABBE Jeanne, 1669 November 28, Sainte-Famille-de-l'Île-d'Orléans

If our hypothesis concerning the change of first name by François Breton, born in 1806, were to be correct, here is what his ancestry and that of the Kirouacs from Douglastown would look like:

VI

BRETON François becoming the Augustin in Gaspé Peninsula, born on 27 January 1806, at St-Gervais-de-Bellechasse

V

BRETON Jean-Bte-Louis-François + GAGNÉ Catherine, 1805 March 6, Saint-Gervais-de-Bellechasse

IV

ELIE/BRETON Pierre + ROYER Geneviève, 1774 October 18, St-Charles-de-Bellechasse

III

ELIE Pierre-Marie + DORVAL Françoise, 1747 April 10, St-Vallier-de-Bellechasse

II

ELIE Pierre + LAFORME Hélène, 1722 July 30, Beaumont

I

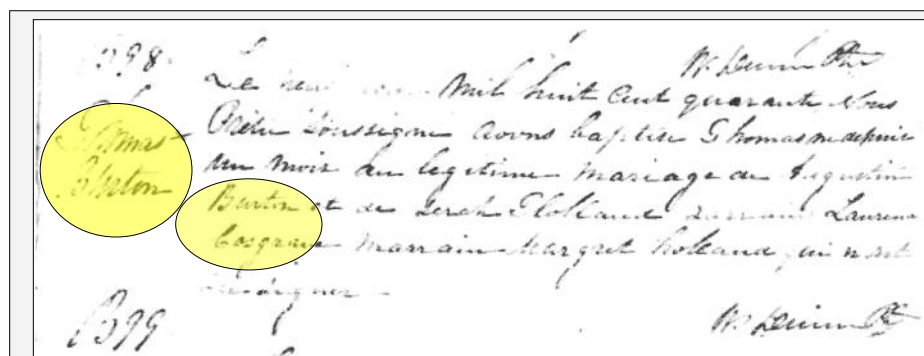
ELIE Jean + LABBE Jeanne, 1669 November 28, Ste-Famille-de-l'Île-d'Orléans

We have yet to test a descendant of Pierre-Marie Elie and Françoise Dorval's branch, the above third generation. Now a descendant from this couple must be found and

tested. The KFA offers to pay for the yDNA test. Matching specific markers to those of the descendants of Augustin Quirouet and Sarah Holland would then prove that the François Breton, born in 1806, is the same who became Augustin in Gaspé Peninsula.

Conclusion: if this hypothesis is correct, it would explain why a child of the Quirouet/Holland couple was baptized in 1840 at Percé. When we read BURTON as the family name, it should be BERTON. Of course, BERTON is a phonetic alteration of BRETON⁶.

⁶ Editor's note: The Kirouacs from L'Islet also say Berton. According to Raymonde Kerouac-Harvey, in her 1980 book, *L'Album*, she notes that families often even said "Borton". In the KFA genealogical data there are a number of Kirouacs from Cap-St-Ignace and L'Islet areas called Berton.



In the above baptism deed for the Quirouet/Holland couple's first child, born on 9 August 1840, we notice that the name Quirouet is absent and replaced by the surname Burton. Strange, isn't it?

Among the Kirouacs, it is a well-known phenomenon. Even our ancestor did it, Alexandre de Kervoach dit Le Breton (known as the Breton), and the name was carried over by many of his descendants for many generations.

See *KIROUAC François. Quirouet/Quirouac: The Douglastown Branch - The Search Goes on - Where are we Now? In Le Trésor des Kirouac no. 138, p 39.*

60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF LEROY CURWICK AND KAY RAFSON



On April 7, 2024, LeRoy Curwick and Kay Rafson of Minnesota celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Here we see the couple with Leroy's two younger sisters, from left to right: Kay Rafson-Curwick, LeRoy Curwick, Valerie Curwick-Jakob and Virginia Curwick-Steinfeldt. We wish them many more years of happiness.

Photo: Curwick family collection

Kay and LeRoy celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Their daughter, Ann and her husband, Mike Hotz, hosted a family party at their home in St. Paul, Minnesota. Kay and LeRoy's siblings were in attendance, as well as several nieces and nephews and their grandchildren.

They moved back to Minnesota in 1996. They now live in an apartment in an independent retirement complex in Andover, Minnesota. They have four children, Tim, Ann, Rick and Bill, twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Kay Rafson and LeRoy Curwick were married on March 21, 1964, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Sally Rafson Petersen, Kay's sister, was a bridesmaid; Tom Jeffrey, a friend of LeRoy's in the army, was his best man. Sally and Tom both have since passed away.

During their 60-year marriage, Kay and LeRoy lived in Minnesota where LeRoy was completing her studies to earn a PhD at the University of Minnesota and during that time Kay worked at the University Hospital as a nurse. Then they lived for twelve years in Warwick, New York; then twelve years in Upland, California where LeRoy worked as a metallurgical engineer.



Photo: Curwick family collection

From left to right: Ann Curwick-Hotz, her parents, Kay Rafson and LeRoy Curwick, Kay's brother and his wife, Dennis and Karen Rafson, and their daughter, Kristin Rafson-Blomme.

THE KITE THAT COULDN'T FLY, AND OTHER MAY AVENUE STORIES

The Memories of Michael Menard

Press Revue* by Marie Lussier Timperley

On June first, 2024 in Kankakee, Illinois, at the launching of Michael Menard's book, eleven of the fourteen siblings stood on the stage together. The title is based on a kite that their mother created, but one which could not take flight, yet was beautiful and loved. It shows that even a kite unable to fly can soar to unimaginable height. Michael Menard tells his childhood stories of beautiful redemption and how light comes from darkness.

Mike Menard, a 1969 graduate of Kankakee Westview High School, and the second of the fourteen children born to the Paul and Arletta Menard, transported himself back to the time when life circled around the house, its occupants and its neighborhood.

This is the third book for the now 73-year-old Nashville, Tenn. resident, and a far different book from his first two best-selling business publications: *A Fish in Your Ear: The New Discipline of Project Portfolio Management and Corporate Transformation: A Guide to Survival and Success*.

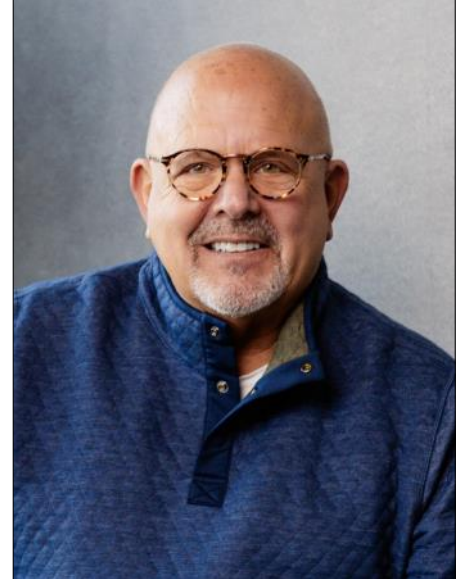
Without formal engineering training, he developed the disposable diaper concept at age 19 while caring for his siblings. Labeled as "non college bound" he was placed in a trade school program.

At the age of 21, Michael Menard joined Johnson & Johnson to operate the blueprint machine. Twenty-five years later he was named the company's first vice-president of engineering and an officer of the company with responsibilities in forty-four countries.

Now labeled as "exemplary creator", he has received fourteen US and multiple international patents. His inventions revolutionized the absorbent product industry and are now responsible for more than \$50 billion in annual sales.

As co-founder and president of The GenSight Group, a company helping corporations find a systematic approach to strategic choice and resource optimization, Michael has advised senior leadership at institutions such as Fedex, Westinghouse, Cisco, Glaxo, Pfizer, Coca-Cola, and the US Department of Energy.

In his non-fiction, 326-page memoir, Menard weaves a narrative of resilience and hope from his childhood challenges while raised in poverty as his father worked at the Kankakee Roper plant making stoves. He describes his story as *a journey through the harrowing and the humorous, the unbelievable and the universal, resonating deeply with the human spirit of overcoming adversity*.



Michael Menard
(Photo: Joaquin Films Co.)

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

As he began crafting his memoir about living life within the ups and downs of such a crammed household of children, Menard began to learn this life had a much deeper impact on him than he ever imagined. He said that it helped him grow.

He had intense discussion with behavioral experts. He even suffered depression for the first time in his life as he pushed

**The Kite That Couldn't Fly: And Other May Avenue Stories* - This text consists of extracts from Lee Provost's article, published in Kankakee's Daily Journal, on 30 May 2024, and the author's own comments, dated 1 June, 2024. For more information, look up Michael Menard's FaceBook Page and read about THE MAY AVENUE FOUNDATION.

through the research and writing process.

He forced himself to walk back through 118 South May Avenue; through every room, opening door after door. He held the hand of his younger self, the Mike of his childhood. It was therapeutic. It was a rush of emotions. But why go through it? Why open up one's life in such a manner? Just maybe it can help some people. Maybe 10. Maybe 1,000. Maybe 1 million.

It is about the book's central message: *Though someone may be experiencing suffering, they are not alone. "This does not have to be a life sentence. Childhood trauma leads to so many things like depression, disorders, anger, substance abuse, just to name a few. This is a crisis.*

I am not talking about life's disappointments. I am talking about trauma and it is across all economic and social spectrums. ... This is a story of hope and resilience.

Menard's initial motivation for writing his book was to leave a legacy and a record of history for his five daughters and nine grandchildren. But when he sought advice from mental health experts, the book took an interesting and serious turn.

The experts all agreed that what Menard and his siblings had experienced was Complex Childhood Trauma, possibly explaining why Menard had lost two brothers to drug addiction.

His research created a burning question that he was compelled to answer: Did he achieve his successes in spite of, or because of his childhood experiences? Part memoir, part educational, Menard marries his storytelling with

thoughtful insights and awareness of the wide-reaching implications of childhood trauma.

The May Avenue Stories feature three main characters. Arletta, a gifted and dedicated mother, who taught her children about love, relationships, hope, grace, and mercy and to never ever give up; and about the power of gratitude; to be thankful, even for their one dim lightbulb.

She taught her children about Jesus and that God's love comes from everywhere. Through her words of wisdom, her children learned how to forgive, especially their father, Paul.

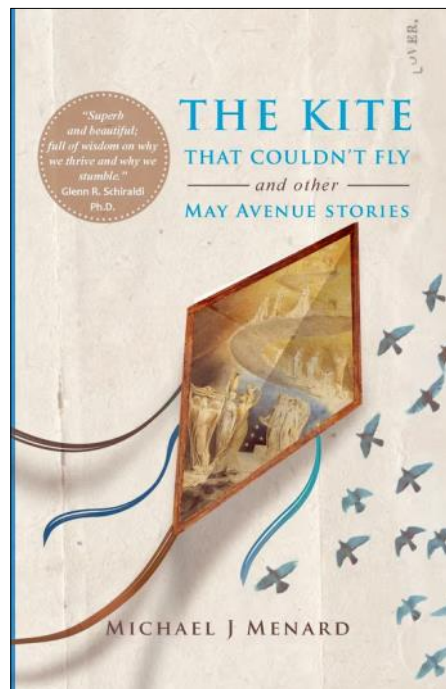
The father is the antagonist of the book. A victim of Complex Childhood Trauma himself, Paul virtually worked himself to death while trying to provide the basics of survival for his family of sixteen. He taught his children mostly the wrong lessons of life: how to cheat, steal, and destroy their enemies.

On the positive side, Paul taught his children how to stand up for themselves, how to stop bullies in their tracks, and about the pride of being a Menard.

Jamie, the oldest of the fourteen, is the center of most of the May Avenue Stories. Like his father, Jamie was a fierce street fighter and troublemaker who just could not stay in school.

Yet he had a heart of gold and a singing voice that won hearts and the lead in all the school plays. Read how Jamie transformed from a violent teenager to a gold-standard husband and father and the school principal.

Discover how Polly and Michael made mouse-skin gloves in a mice-infested house. Learn about the



kite that couldn't fly. See what it was like to have faith that the Lord would provide, even while the cupboards were bare. Understand how the alchemy of tough and tender created extraordinary women and real men.

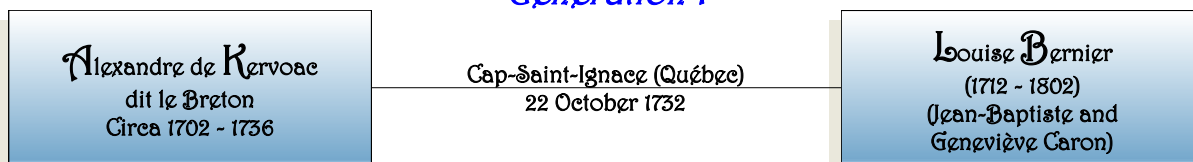
Complex childhood trauma can annihilate us or bring out the best in us. We all go through difficult times in life but what Michael and his siblings experienced is out of the ordinary but one we can all relate to. The May Avenue Stories prove that we are not alone, and it gives us the chance to reflect on subjects that we desperately need to face and discuss.

The May Avenue Stories are testaments to the enduring power of possibility. If you have been feeling something must change, this may just be the book for you.

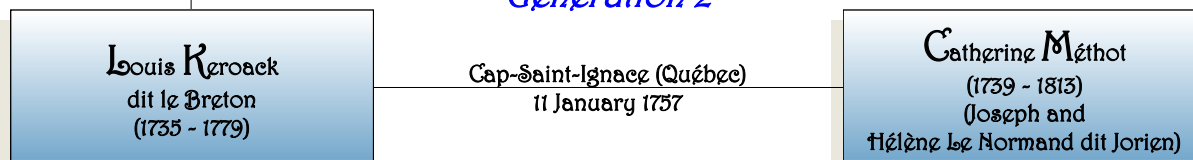
To learn more and discover: MAY AVENUE FOUNDATION, PROMISE OF HEALING, visit Michael Menard's Facebook page at: <https://facebook.com/authormmenard>

Ascendancy of Michael Menard

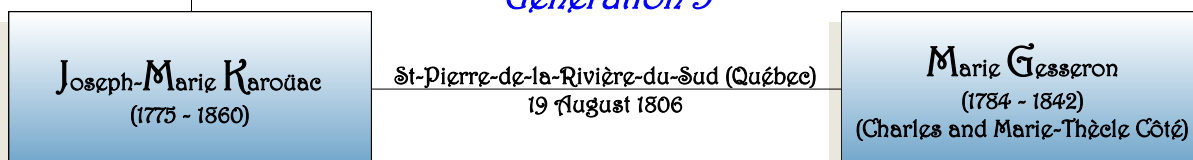
Generation 1



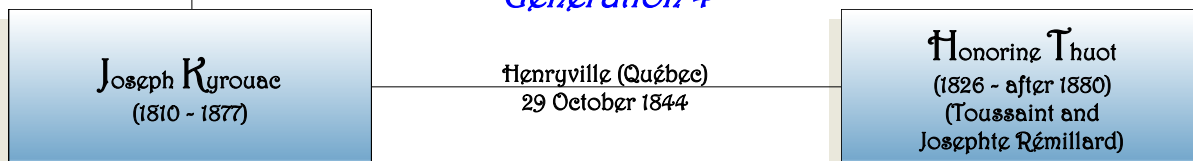
Generation 2



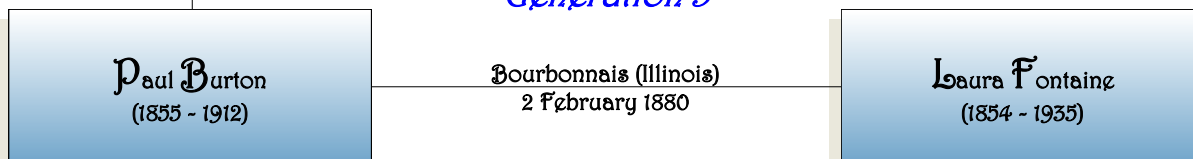
Generation 3



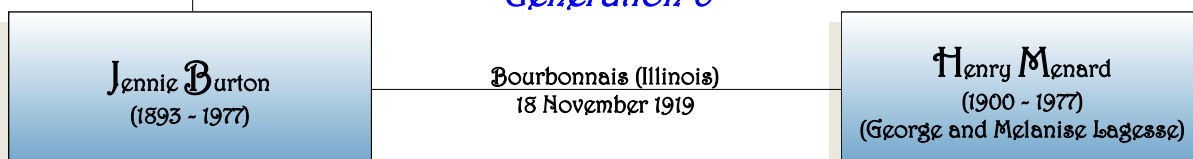
Generation 4



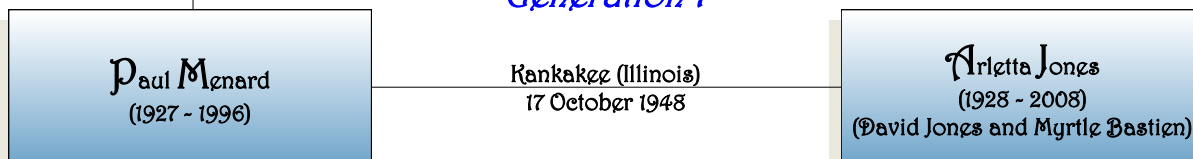
Generation 5



Generation 6



Generation 7



Generation 8



FINANCIAL RESULT FOR THE YEAR 2023 (Non verified)

René Kirouac, Treasurer

The financial results for the year 2023 show a negative result of **\$1,591.64**, expenses being larger than revenue. The Board members decided to show a lesser balance in the financial results about the Website development cost. It was agreed to show an amount of **\$1,500.00** in 2023.

There is a remaining balance of **\$4,578.42** to be allocated in the coming years. It is only a question of accounting presentation because the KFA has already paid the whole amount.

As for the membership, there were 122 members in 2023, ten less than in 2022.

The **Revenue** went down by **\$604.62** compared with 2022. This decrease is due to two items: Gifts & Recovered Amounts **\$1,491.22** and Annual Memberships **\$360.00**. It is

worth mentioning that in 2022, two generous donors gave respectively \$1,000 and \$500. In 2023, gifts amounted to over \$1,000. The KFA Board members are most grateful to the generous benefactors! On the other hand, less members means fewer annual dues collected.

About **Gifts & Recovered Amounts**, the total increased by \$450.24 due to increased revenues from the Jacques Kirouac Funds. The Jacques Kirouac legacy increased by \$6,050.00 and the annual interest rate for the Desjardins Capital Shares also increased from 5.35% to 6.00%.

In **Sundry**, book sales were **\$1,235**.

In 2023, **Expenses** went up by **\$1,077.66** compared with 2022. Expenses increased essentially due to two items: *Genealogical File* **\$1,356.83** and *Miscellaneous*

\$2,352.28. The cost for DNA tests went down by almost **\$1,400.00** and, in miscellaneous, exceptional expenses were incurred for: buying two Seagate external hard drives; printing the bilingual book *Jack Kerouac & le Québec*; the memorial plaque now installed in the Sailors Chapel at L'Islet-sur-Mer and last, cost of work done on our Website.



Expenses linked to the publication of *Le Trésor*

The following table presents the expenses for the three issues of our bulletin, *Le Trésor des Kirouac*, published in 2023.

Issue Number	141	142	143	TOTAL
Production Cost	\$732.07	\$827.11	\$1,037.37	\$2,595.55

Revision of Financial Statements for the year 2023

29 March 2024

Mr. François Kirouac, President

The treasurer of the Kirouac Family Association, René Kirouac, gave me a copy of the financial results for the year 2023. I looked at them and asked him for some additional information.

The treasurer answered my questions very well, so I certify that the 2023 financial results are accurate and correspond to the additional information provided in the appendix by the treasurer.

Mercédès Bolduc, G.C.C.

Financial auditor appointed at the last KFA AGM held on 9 September 2023

REVENUES

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS	2023	2022
Regular members (79); (90)	\$1,744.00	\$1,996.00
Benefactors (38); (41)	\$999.00	\$1,107.00
Sub-total	\$2,743.00	\$3,103.00
PREMIUMS AND INTEREST		
Exchange on US currency	\$374.88	\$207.50
Interest earned	\$8.39	\$9.28
Sub-total	\$383.27	\$216.78
GIFTS AND RECOVERED AMOUNT		
<i>Jacques Kirouac Fund – interest</i>	\$1,520.24	\$1,070.00
<i>Jacques Kirouac Fund (rebate)</i>		
Gifts towards administration	\$973.31	\$2,407.30
Gifts towards research	\$51.00	\$557.50
Recovered amounts	\$26.03	\$27.00
Sub-total	\$2,570.58	\$4,061.80
ANNUAL GATHERING		
Surplus from annual gathering	\$145.11	
Sub-total	\$145.11	\$0.00
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS SOLD		
Le Trésor bulletins		\$300.00
Book - <i>Jack Kerouac and Quebec</i> (34)	\$680.00	
Sale of various books at the meeting at L'Islet (Donations of Jacques Kirouac and others)	\$535.00	
Book - <i>The Ancestor & His Family</i> (1); (0)	\$20.00	
Sub-total	\$1,235.00	\$300.00
TOTAL OF REVENUES	\$7,076.96	\$7,681.58

EXPENSES

ADMINISTRATION	2023	2022
Canada Custom & Revenue (Annual Return)	\$38.00	\$37.00
Insurance, General Responsibility (12/12 months)		\$40.00
FAFQ Membership @ \$2/member/year	\$262.00	\$220.00
Bank Book & Bank Fees	\$126.15	\$111.40
PayPal Fees	\$55.29	\$59.45
Sub-total	\$481.44	\$467.85
BULLETIN LE TRÉSOR (no 141 to 143) (138 to 140)		
Supervisor Fee		\$100.00
Printing	\$1,280.86	\$1,460.30
Handling	\$154.12	\$176.94
Postal expenses (Canada)	\$664.90	\$479.29
Postal expenses (US + international)	\$496.67	\$522.23
Sub-total	\$2,596.55	\$2,738.76
SECRETARIAL EXPENSES		
Postage stamps	\$504.90	\$515.16
Photocopying	\$128.50	\$76.20
Stationery, envelopes and cards	\$243.30	\$74.51
Sub-total	\$876.70	\$665.87
GENEALOGY (Research)		
Subscriptions (Ancestry, BMS2000 and Drouin genealogy)	\$492.56	\$459.22
Ancestry-DNA-tests	\$332.14	\$1,722.31
Sub-total	\$824.70	\$2,181.53
MISCELLANEOUS (KFA publicity & promotion)		
Website (balance payable \$4,578.42; \$5,526.54)	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00
Website hosting 2023; 2022	\$379.42	\$412.46
Domain name for English & French sites in 2023; 2022	\$19.08	\$36.47
Photo copyright for publication in Le Trésor		\$88.00
Purchase of two Seagate external hard drives for the KFA archives	\$195.90	
KFA gift to François Kirouac presented at the gathering in L'Islet	\$150.00	
Printing of the book <i>Jack Kerouac and Quebec</i> (45 copies)	\$822.74	
Commemorative Plaque for L'Islet	\$822.07	
Sub-total	\$3,889.21	\$1,536.93
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$8,668.60	\$7,590.94
SURPLUS of Revenue over Expenses	(1,591.64)	\$90.64

BANK ACCOUNT as of 31 DECEMBER	2023	2022
Balance as of 31 December 2022	\$8,124.43	\$11,572.42
Revenues: from 1 January to 31 December 2023	\$12,631.72	\$7,315.58
Expenses: from 1 January to 31 December 2023	\$14,489.15	\$10,763.57
Balance as of 31 December 2023	\$6,267.00	\$8,124.43

Report of the Jacques Kirouac Fund

Balance Sheet from 8 June 2004 to 31 December 2023

- In 2004, \$20,000.00 was invested at Caisse Populaire Plateau Montcalm (bank).
- In early 2023, an amount of \$6,050.00 from the Jacques Kirouac estate was added, bringing the total amount invested to \$26,050.

REVENUES OF THE JACQUES KIROUAC FUND

FUND INCOME			
Year	Interest	Return	Total
2004	\$425.00		\$425.00
2005	\$850.00		\$850.00
2006	\$850.00	\$106.49	\$956.49
2007	\$850.00	\$91.78	\$941.78
2008	\$850.00	\$86.66	\$936.66
2009	\$687.11	\$35.44	\$722.55
2010	\$850.00	\$40.85	\$890.85
2011	\$850.00		\$850.00
2012	\$852.33		\$852.33
2013	\$850.00		\$850.00
2014	\$850.00		\$850.00
2015	\$774.39		\$774.39
2016	\$701.92		\$701.92
2017	\$817.12		\$817.12
2018	\$850.00		\$850.00
2019	\$850.00		\$850.00
2020	\$850.00		\$850.00
2021	\$852.33		\$852.33
2022	\$1,070.00		\$1,070.00
2023	\$1,520.24		\$1,520.24
Total:	\$17,050.44	\$361.22	\$17,411.66

Note concerning the Jacques Kirouac Fund

Below, please find the financial reports for the Jacques Kirouac Fund since its inception. On the following page, you clearly see its impact on the KFA financial results every year from 2004 to 2023. Please note that at the beginning of 2023, an amount of \$6,050.00 came from the Founder's estate. Therefore, the Jacques Kirouac Fund now amounts to **\$26,050.00**.

1st investment: five-year term deposit, from 8 June 2004 to 11 June 2009, at a rate of 4.25%;

2nd investment: convertible term deposit from 12 June 2009 to 30 October 2009, at a rate of 1.5%;

3rd investment: permanent shares issued by Caisse Populaire Desjardins (Bank) on 30 October 2009, at a rate of 4.25%;

Please note that from 1st Jan to 30 June 2015, the interest rate was 4.5%; from 1st July to 31 Dec 2015, the interest rate was 3.5%; and from 1st Jan 2017 to 9 February 2017, the interest rate was 2.75%;

4th investment: share in Capital Fédération from 10 February 2017, at a rate of 4.25%, this was followed by a new rate of 5.35% in 2022 and the rate* went up to 6.00% in 2023;

* **The annual interest rate may vary following the Capital Fédération's AGM.**

BENEFITS OF THE JACQUES KIROUAC FUND

ANNUAL FINANCIAL RESULTS				Results without the <i>fund</i>	% Total Proceeds Funds	Number of members
Year	Revenue	Expenses	Revenue - Expenses	(Revenue - Funds) - Expenses		
2004	\$6,085.57	\$5,694.78	\$390.79	(\$34.21)	7.0%	167
2005	\$5,990.91	\$4,404.87	\$1,586.04	\$736.04	14.2%	171
2006	\$6,887.64	\$7,424.34	(\$536.70)	(\$1,493.19)	13.9%	163
2007	\$5,667.63	\$5,275.23	\$392.40	(\$549.38)	16.6%	165
2008	\$6,767.90	\$6,710.98	\$56.92	(\$879.74)	13.8%	161
2009	\$5,218.30	\$4,484.59	\$733.71	\$11.16	13.8%	152
2010	\$6,065.88	\$4,627.34	\$1,438.54	\$547.69	14.7%	156
2011	\$6,173.67	\$5,282.47	\$891.20	\$41.20	13.8%	178
2012	\$7,399.94	\$7,256.21	\$143.73	(\$708.60)	11.5%	174
2013	\$8,563.59	\$8,527.74	\$35.85	(\$814.15)	9.9%	158
2014	\$5,009.70	\$4,962.32	\$47.38	(\$802.62)	17.0%	134
2015	\$5,689.93	\$5,656.96	\$32.97	(\$741.42)	13.6%	148
2016	\$5,333.03	\$5,320.08	\$12.95	(\$688.97)	13.2%	137
2017	\$5,529.61	\$5,478.66	\$50.95	(\$766.17)	14.8%	139
2018	\$7,234.01	\$6,036.25	\$1,197.76	\$347.76	11.8%	149
2019	\$5,925.52	\$5,168.93	\$756.59	(\$93.41)	14.3%	137
2020	\$5,691.01	\$5,098.18	\$592.83	(\$257.17)	14.9%	124
2021	\$4,834.73	\$4,814.07	\$20.66	(\$831.67)	17.6%	111
2022	\$7,681.58	\$7,590.94	\$90.64	(\$979.36)	13.9%	132
2023	\$7,076.96	\$7,168.60	(\$91.64)	(\$1,611.88)	21.5%	122
Cumulative			\$7,843.56	(\$9,568.10)		

On 2-3 April 2003, during the 25th anniversary celebration of the KFA, held in Longueuil, Jacques Kirouac, and his wife, Alberte Garon, announced that they wanted to give \$20,000.00 to our family association. The following 15 May, the KFA board members and our generous giver created the Jacques Kirouac Fund. Since then, the interest generated by this investment helps pay the KFA's administrative expenses. As one can see from the above chart, the gift that Jacques enlarged at his death in 2019, has greatly contributed to the life of our Association in the last twenty years.



De Kervoach Descendant Through the Female Line

MARIE LABERGE

Genealogical research by André St-Arnaud

Marie Laberge was born in Quebec City on 29 November 1950. She is the daughter of the late Paul-André Laberge (1917-1992), general secretary of Laval University (1962-1975) and of the late Rita Ménard (1917-2005). She studied dance with Ludmilla Chiriaeff. At Laval University she studied journalism and took part in the activities of the theatre group in 1970 and soon abandoned journalism for the Quebec Academy of Dramatic Art. She worked as a comedian before branching out into staging productions and teaching drama. From 1977 to 1980, Laberge was administrator of the Théâtre du Trident at Quebec City. From 1978 to 1981, she was administrator of the Centre d'essai des auteurs dramatiques (CEAD) (drama writer essay centre); she was president of CEAD from 1987 to 1989. But soon writing became her fulltime career.

Her work as a playwright and stage producer has been applauded on both sides of the Atlantic. Since her first novel, *Quelques adieux (some goodbyes)*, published in 1984, Marie Laberge has garnered accolades and distinctions here and in France. She published eleven novels, including a *Trilogie - Le goût du bonheur (a taste of happiness)* selling 900,000 copies. She wrote some twenty plays that were all produced in theatres.

Awards and distinctions:

1981 – Governor General's Award for French-language drama for *Avant la guerre à l'Anse-à-Gilles*. It was also highly successful in its English translation, *Before the War, Down at L'Anse à Gilles* (1986).

1988 – Knight of the French *Ordre des arts et des lettres*

1989 – Knight of the French *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de France pour L'Homme gris*

1995 – Officer of the French *Ordre des arts et des lettres*

In Quebec, she received the Public Awards, Women Readers' awards, and Bookshops Awards in 1993, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2008, 2011, 2016

1993 – Géméaux for *Oublier (forgotten)*, in the drama category

2004 – Officer in the *Ordre des arts et des Lettres* in France

2004 – Officer in the National Order of Quebec

2015 – Companion of *Ordre des arts et des lettres* of Quebec

2016 – Received the Honorary Medal from Quebec National Assembly



Marie Laberge

Photo source: Asclepias, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Her correspondence novel: *Les lettres de Martha* (2009) (*Martha's Letters*) ran for three years in print and became a very successful radio novel in 2019.

To follow Marie Laberge's career, many texts and videos are available on the internet.

Source: (in French)

<https://www.babelio.com/auteur/Marie-Laberge/12749>

Other sources in English:

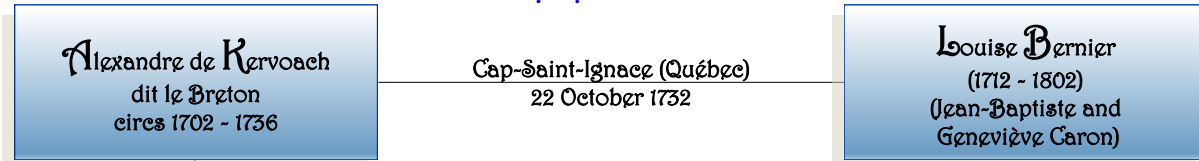
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/marie-laberge>

<http://www.marielaberge.com/biography>

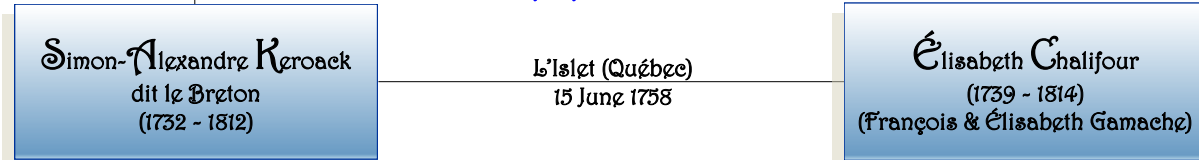
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Laberge

Ancestry of Marie Laberge

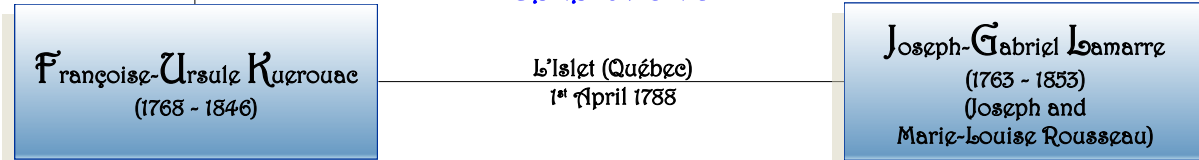
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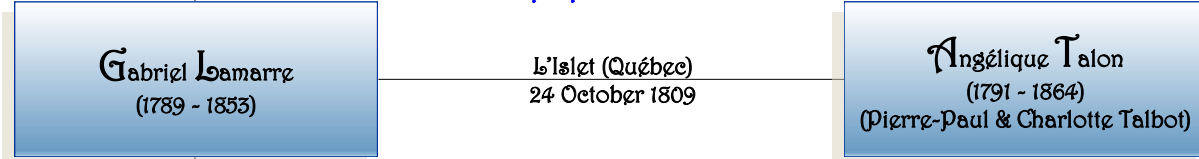
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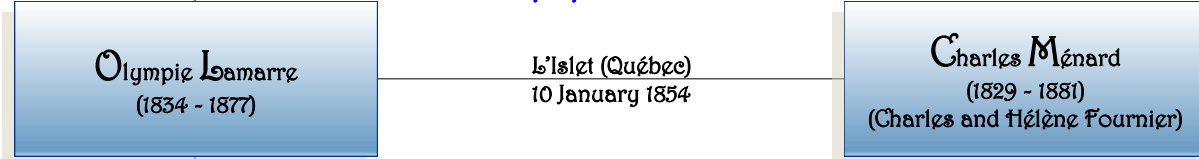
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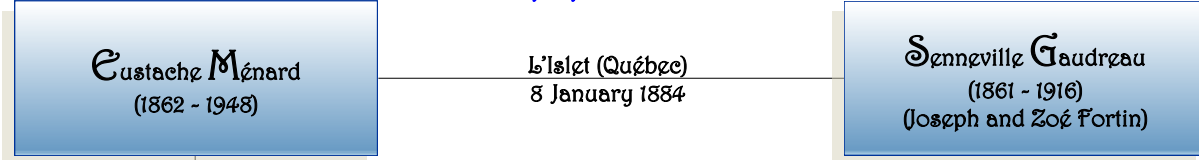
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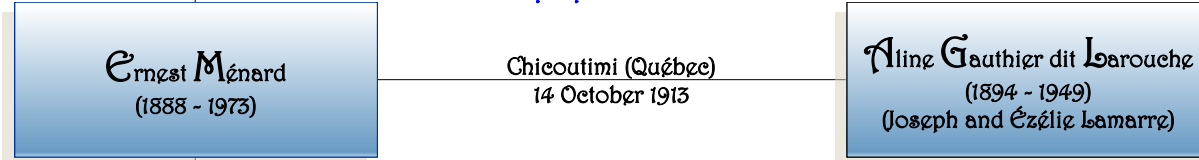
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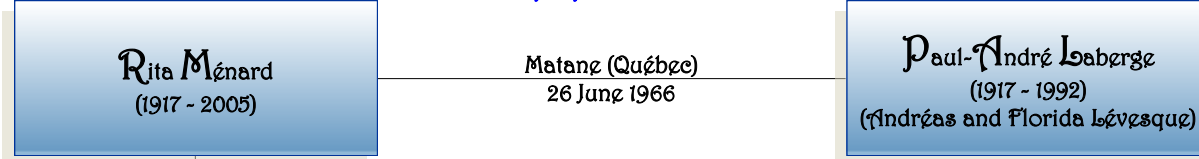
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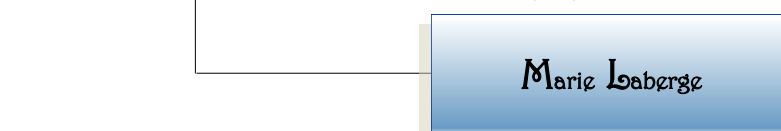
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Generation 8



Generation 9



De Kervoach Descendant Through the Female Line

Simon Durivage

Genealogical research by André St-Arnaud

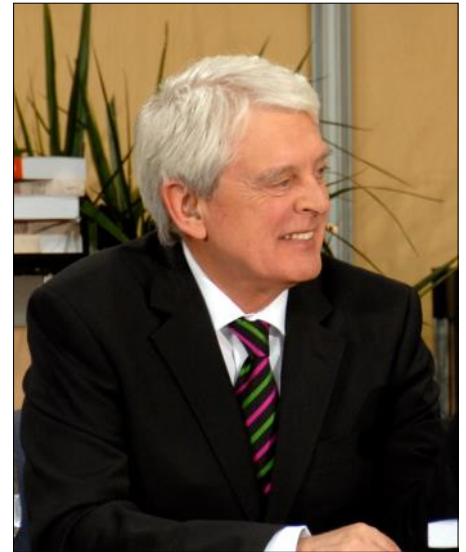
Joseph-Yves-Simon Durivage was born on 10 December 1944 in Montreal, the son of Paul Durivage (1916-1957) and Reine Ménard (1913-2008). In 1968, he graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science from Montreal University. The same year, he was recruited by Radio-Canada to work on the TV programme *Présent*.

For the next fifty years, he was news anchor on various TV shows: *Consommateurs avertis*, *Enjeux*, *Le Point* in the 1980s, *Montréal-Express*, *Montréal ce soir (today)* and editor in chief. He was also involved in all electoral programmes. From the autumn of 1997 until the spring of 2002, he was anchorman at TVA in charge of the daily 10 p.m. news bulletin. In 2002, he left TVA and returned to Radio-Canada (French CBC). From 2004 to 2006, he was anchor of the news programme *simondurivage.com*. From 2006, and for the next ten years, he was day-anchor for RDI, the Canadian French-language news channel broadcasting.

He was also the anchor for *Le Club des ex*, another RDI special, where three former Quebec deputies commented political or social events for 60 minutes at lunch time Monday to Thursday. On Friday, a similar programme but with actual deputies from the Quebec National Assembly or the Federal House of Commons commented the events during the *Match des élus* (elected members' debate).

Radio-Canada's favourite anchorman, originally from Farnham, Quebec, had a 47-year career, from 1968 to his retirement on 19 June 2015. Since 2015 he has been an administrator of the French Chamber of Commerce in Canada.

On 10 September 2020, Radio-Canada announced *Les mille et une couleurs de Simon Durivage (S. M.'s 1001 colours)*. His creative retreat! He started studying piano as a teenager and still practices over an hour daily. But a year



Simon Durivage (Photo: Asclepias, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

before retiring, he discovered painting. He points out that he is not good at drawing but that he likes to play with forms and colours. During the pandemic, that hobby turned out into a useful emotional outlet. It even turned into an almost fulltime occupation and became a collection of abstract paintings exhibited at Galerie Québec Art in Quebec City in the autumn 2020. The profits from the sale of his colourful artworks went to FENDLI, a non-profit foundation financing an orphanage in Haiti. Simon is an administrator of FENDLI.

His career garnered him five Gémeaux awards, one René-Lévesque award in 1996, and the Metrostar award. In 2001 he was named *Personality of the Year*. In 2014, he received the *Order of Canada*.

Source: Wikipédia et plusieurs sites Web

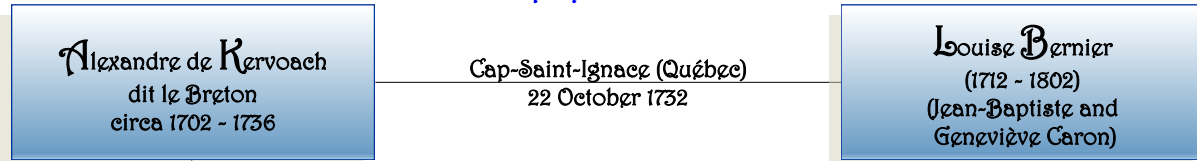
Descendants Through The Female Line

Simon Durivage and Marie Laberge share the same great-grandparents, Eustache Ménard and Senneville Gaudreau. So, they are distant cousins. They are also both descendants of Alexandre de Kervoach and Françoise-Ursule (1768-1846).

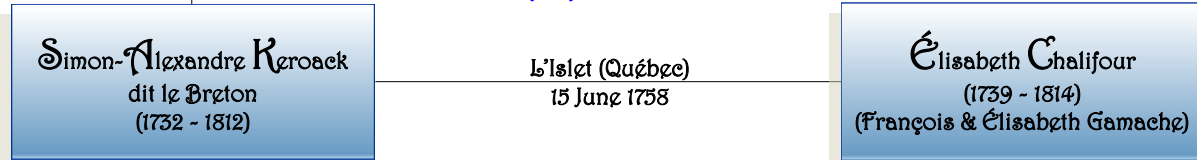
Among other personalities included in this series, descendant of this Françoise-Ursule, there are Pascal Bérubé, Quebec separatist party MP; Nathan-Christopher Fillion, actor, famous in the American series *The Rookie* since 2018; Bernard Lamarre, engineer; Linda Lemay, singer-songwriter; Valérie Plante, Montreal Mayor since 2017; Henri Poitras, comedian, best known for his role in a popular TV programme about the Laurentians. (See *Trésor des Kirouac*, Special Edition, no. 10, at: <https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/F-1.5.1%20Hors-s%C3%A9rie%2010.pdf>)

Ancestry of Simon Durivage

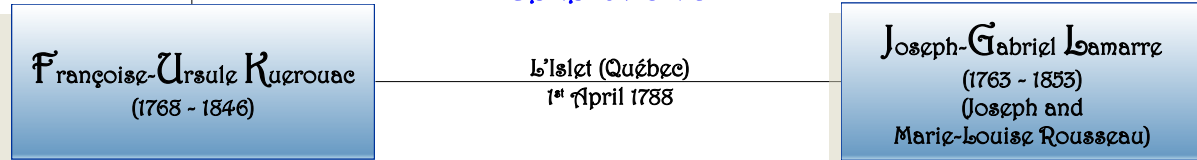
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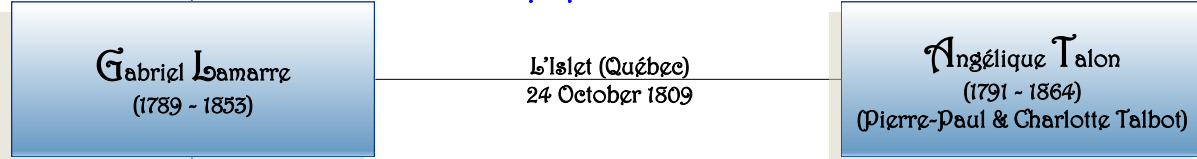
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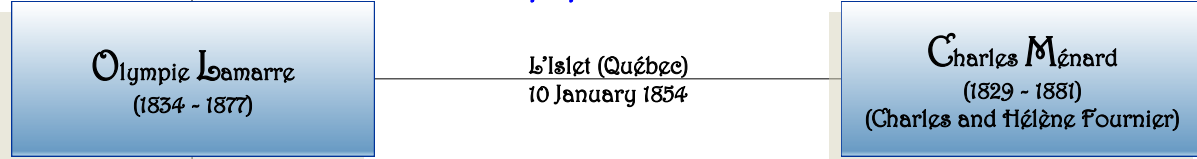
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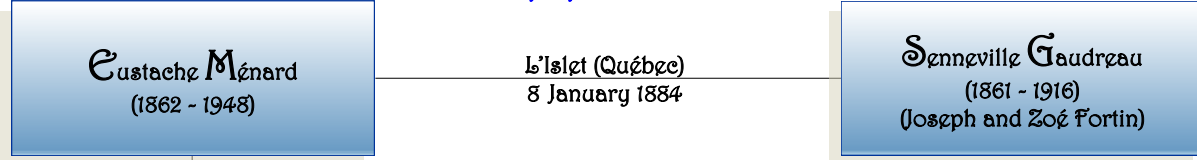
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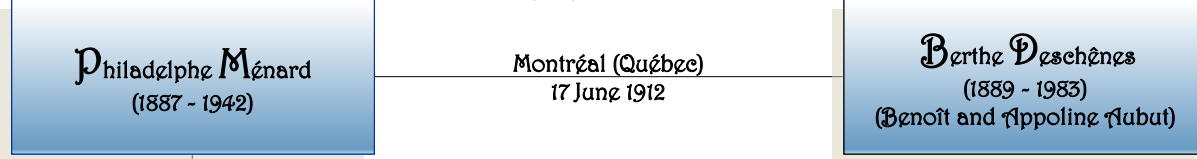
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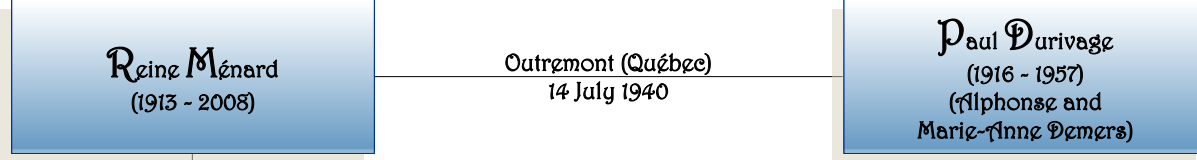
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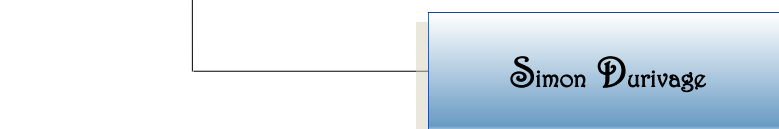
Generation 7



Generation 8



Generation 9



NEWS IN BRIEF



The plaque in homage to Élisabeth Chalifour and Simon-Alexandre Keroack was unveiled by our Association at L'Islet on 9 September 2023. Now it is permanently installed in the Sailors Chapel at L'Islet.

We are very grateful to the descendants of this couple who took on the project: André Kirouac and his son, Étienne, as well as his brother, Serge Kirouac, a member of L'Islet's municipal council and a KFA board member.

Five years ago we bid adieu to our founding president



On 21 July 2019, Jacques Kirouac, our founding president died; that was five years ago.

The story of the KFA started when Jacques Kirouac invited some people to Laval University, at Sainte-Foy, Quebec, for a first meeting on 20 November 1978. Some fifteen people turned up in order to organize a first great gathering of the descendants of Maurice Louis Le Bris de Kervoach, better known under the name he used most often, Alexandre de Kervoach. And the first great gathering took place on 16-17 August 1980 at L'Islet-sur-Mer. Here Jacques raises a gift presented to him to mark his initiative.

IN MEMORIAM

CORMIER, LEE ROY (1931-2024)

Lee Roy Cormier died at Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, on 9 March 2024. He leaves to mourn his wife of 71 years, Lilianne (born Kirouac, **GFK 01752**) and their seven children: Gilbert (Chantal), Hélène Leipsic (Michael), Clément (Jacqueline), Michel (Raelene), Louis, Denise, and Pierre; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral was held on 15 March 2024 at the Cathedral of Saint-Boniface.

CURWICK, DOROTHY (1930-2024)

Dorothy Curwick of Rush City passed away peacefully in her sleep at home on 30 May 2024 at the age of 94. Dorothy Eunice Sandling was born 22 March 1930 to Eugene and Alice (Pendarvis) Sandling in Lancaster, Texas. She was the 12th of 13 children. She was the last survivor. At the age of 15, Dorothy met and married the love of her life George Leo Curwick, who was stationed there in the US Navy. They were married on 23 January 1946. Dorothy was a Homemaker. They loved each other for 78 years but Dorothy had an eternal love and devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ first, her beloved George was second. Together they had 12 children who carried on the legacy of 156 immediate family members. Dorothy is survived by her husband George "Bud" Curwick; her children Shirley (Bill) Wald, Judy (John) Digaetano, Patricia Curwick, Richard (Vicki) Curwick, Rita (Steve) Moynagh, Joseph (Brenda) Curwick, David (Debbie) Curwick, Thomas (Renee) Curwick, Caroline (Ken) Kirchberg, Mark (Barbara) Curwick, Jane (Chuck) Borg; 48 grandchildren; 75 great-grandchildren; 21 great-great-grandchildren; in-laws James Curwick, Gene and Barb Curwick, Rosemary and Gene Bakke; many

other relatives. She was preceded in death by her parents, her twelve siblings and spouse; her daughter Laura Leary, and grandchildren James Robert Digaetano, Danielle Osborne, Sarah Curwick, Kimberly Curwick, Jordan Hubbard; many in-laws and other relatives. On 12 June 2024, Father Matt Shireman celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Rush City. She was buried at Sacred Hearts Cemetery in Webster, Wisconsin.

GAUTHIER, NICOLE (1941-2024)

Nicole Gauthier died unexpectedly at home on 18 April 2024, at 83. She was the daughter of Georges William Gauthier and Marie-Desneiges Villeneuve and the granddaughter of Marie Keroack (**GFK 02480**) and Wilfrid Villeneuve. She was the wife of Adrien Girard. Besides her husband, she leaves to mourn her children: Guylaine Girard (Yves Dionne), Denis (Jacinthe Savoie), the late Mario; her grandchildren: Joey Girard Yockell (Jessika Bouchard), Kim Girard Yockell (Marie-Lise Tremblay), Jennifer Girard (Kevin Lecavalier), Joanny Girard (Jess Wheeler); her great-grandchildren: Naomie, Zack, Félix, Alexis, Alyson, Emma and Rebecca. She was the sister of: Majoric Gauthier (the late Marielle Anderson, the late Lise Gosselin), Gabriel (the late Yvette Bélanger), Gaétane (the late Réal Tremblay), Judith (André Gaudreault), the late René (the late Jeanne Fillion), the late Charles-Arthur (the late Marie-Ange Gauthier), the late Georges-William (the late Brigitte Tremblay), the late Wilbrod (the late Thérèse Bouchard), the late Hubert (Laetitia Bélanger), the late Jean-Baptiste (the late Thérèse Moreau), the late David (Lucille Blackburn); she was the sister-in-law of: René Girard (the late Raymonde Fortin, Annette Gosselin), Marguerite (the late Wilbrod Girard), Jean-Eudes, Lucien (Monique Desgagné), Claude (Pauline Fortin), Philippe (Claudine Blackburn), Guy

(Lise Lavoie), Noëlla, the late Marie-Paule (the late Élie Gauthier), the late Claire (the late Édouard Gauthier), the late Roland (the late Marguerite Bouchard), the late Marcel (Nicole Girard).

HURTUBISE BROUILLET, MONIQUE (1930-2024)

Monique Hurtubise Brouillet died on 27 April 2024, at home in Montreal surrounded by her family. She was the daughter of the late Alfred Hurtubise and the late Germaine Kirouac (**GFK 00842**) she was the wife of the late Hubert Brouillet. She leaves to mourn her four daughters: Anne-Marie (Jocelyn), Martine (Chuck), Lorraine and Christine (Eric) and her grandsons: Mathew, Alexandre, Marc-André and Guillaume. She was a beloved aunt for her many nephews and nieces who always found an open door as her family was always at the centre of her life. She spent her whole life nurturing those family links. Her funeral was held on 1 June 2024 in Saint-Mathieu Church in Montreal.

KIROUACK, ESTELLE (1935-2023)

At Repentigny (Quebec), on 15 December, at 88, died Estelle Kirouack (**GFK 02470**). She was the daughter of Blanche Pedneault and Ludger Kirouack. She leaves to mourn her sons: Yves (Sylvie), Luc (Manon) and Marc (Michelle), her grandchildren: Yann, Jonathan, Karolann (Félix), Simon (Maïlys) and Vincent (Vanessa), her great-grandchildren: Laurent, Romy, Jules and Théo as well as many other relatives and friends.

KIROUACK, SOLANGE (1930-2023)

At the long-term-care Centre Saint-Augustin, on 22 December 2023, at 93, died Solange Kirouack (**GFK 02466**), wife of the late Gaston Bergeron; she was the daughter of Blanche Pedneault and Ludger Kirouack. She lived at Quebec City.

Her ashes were placed in the Belmont Cemetery at Sainte-Foy (Quebec). She leaves to mourn her children: Christine, Louise (Gilles Bradet), her grandchildren: Mireille Bradet (Patrick Dionne), Evelyne Bradet (Vincent Racine), Etienne Bradet (Marie-Josée Beaulieu), a great-grandson: Olivier Racine. She was the sister of the late Marie-Paule (the late Jean-Paul Arseneault), the late Lauréat (the late Berthe Savard), Esther (the late Rodrigue Kirouac), the late Bertrand (the late Lucille Lavoie), the late Denise (the late Hervé Néron), the late Ghislaine (the late Alphonse Cyr), Gisèle (Omer Pelletier), the late Estelle (the late Camil Vachon), Monique (Roy Haydon). She was the daughter-in-

law of the late Eugène Bergeron and the late Marie-Noëlle Cinq-Mars and the sister-in-law of the late Guy Bergeron (Marie-Berthe).

**McARDLE-DUFOUR,
MARSHA MAY
(1938-2024)**

At Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, on 8 May 2024, at 85, died Marsha May McArdle, wife of Régis Dufour. Besides her husband, she leaves to mourn her children Cheryl Wall Kirouac (**Jean, GFK 01676**), James McArdle, Linda Savoie, Diane Savoie (Claude), Josée Savoie (Stéphane), Chantal Savoie, her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren. A ceremony in her memory was held on 20 May in the Chapel of LeSieur & Frère Funeral Home at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

**TRUDEAU-KIROUAC,
ERNESTINE
(1938-2024)**

Ernestine died on 2 January 2024, at 85, at the Residence Action-Marguerite, Saint-Vital, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She was the wife of the late Adélarde Kirouac (**GFK 01753**). She leaves to mourn her children, Ernest and Joanne, her granddaughters, Elizabeth and Victoria. A private service will be held for the family at a later date.

**Our Deepest Condolences
to the
Bereaved Families**

40th anniversary of our first meeting in the United States



In 1984, 40 years ago, Edward Kerouac (1918-1988) and his wife, Betty Griffin-Kirouac (1927-2006) welcomed the Kirouacs in Hudson, New Hampshire. This was the third gathering of our newly created family association. Raymonde Kerouac-Harvey officially represented the KFA Board and was the invited speaker. The Hudson gathering was marking the 15th anniversary of Jack Kerouac's death. Raymonde Kerouac-Harvey before speaking at the Hudson's Sheraton Tara Hotel, standing between Edward Kerouac (GFK 01563) and his wife, Betty Griffin-Kerouac. (Photo: Marie Kirouac)

GENEALOGY / THE READERS' PAGE

The KFA's computerized genealogical database comprises a number of persons' names for which we are missing either the spouse and/or the parents' names. Answers to the following questions would enable us to complete our data. Feel free to consult previous issues of *Le Trésor* and forward us the relevant info.

With many thanks,
François Kirouac

Responses received from Greg
Kyrrouac, Ashland, Illinois.

Question 823

What are the names of the parents of Gerry Lepage, spouse of Simone Kirouac, daughter of Rosaire Kirouac and Denise Lebrun? Simone died on 24 September 2003 at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The names of the parents of Gerald "Gerry" Lepage are Germain Rosaire "Jim" Lepage (1930-2014) & Evelyne G Macchion (1934-1979).

Question 831

What are the names of the parents of Barbara Rock, spouse of Jeffrey Kerouac, son of Edward Kerouac and Betty Griffin? They were married on 9 January 1976 at Nashua, New Hampshire.

The names of the parents of Barbara Rock are David Alan Rock (1929-1980) and Patricia M Callahan (1927-2006).

Question 832

What is the name of the mother of Richard Murphy, spouse of Sandra Kerouac, daughter of Robert Kerouac and Helen

Wilson? They were married on 9 March 1960 at Merrimack, New Hampshire.

The name of the mother of Richard Murphy is Beatrice Taylor.

Question 833

What is the name of the mother of James Leblanc, spouse of Roberta Kerouac, daughter of Robert Kerouac and Helen Wilson? They were married on 18 March 1973 at Merrimack, New Hampshire.

The name of the mother of James Leblanc is Rose Leonice Surette (1906-1994).

Question 834

What is the name of the mother of Helen Wilson, spouse of Robert Kerouac, son of Ludger Kerouac and Dorilda Roy? They were married on 20 July 1936 at Lowell, Massachusetts.

The name of the mother of Helen Thelma Wilson is Gertrude E Kaltreider (1885-1953).

Question 835

What are the names of the parents of Richard Pitzl, spouse of Holly Kerouac, daughter of Paul Kerouac and Kathryn Kulas? They were married on 4 September 1981 at Hudson, New Hampshire.

The names of the parents of Richard Joseph Pitzl are Richard Pitzl and Constance Coppo.

Question 836

What are the names of the parents of Kristine Siebert, spouse of Paul Kerouac (junior), son of Paul Kerouac and Kathryn Kulas? They were married on 13 June 1981 at Hudson, New Hampshire.

The names of the parents of Kristine Siebert are Adam Siebert and Christina J Stephanides.

Question 837

What are the names of the parents of Yvonne Oakes, second spouse of Paul Kerouac, son of Armand Kerouac and Alva Travers? They were married on 7 July 1979 at Nashua, New Hampshire.

The names of the parents of Yvonne Oakes are Carlton C Oakes (1932-1979) and Marilyn R Tapley.

Question 838

What are the names of the parents of Kathryn Kulas, first spouse of Paul Kerouac, son of Armand Kerouac and Alva Travers? They were married on 6 July 1957 at Nashua, New Hampshire.

The names of the parents of Kathryn Kulas are Boleslaw Harry Kulas (1906-1969) and Helen Hennessey.

Thanks to Greg Kyrrouac for the answers to these previously asked questions.

New questions will be asked in our next issue.

*Please send us your genealogical questions and we will try to find the answers. It will be a pleasure to print the answers in a future *Trésor*.*

The Editor

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(in alphabetical order)

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Greg Kyrouac
Mark Pattison
Marie Lussier Timperley

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(in alphabetical order)
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Lucille Kirouac
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Responsible: Eric Waddell

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*Maurice Louis
Le Bris De L'voach*

Alexandre De L'voach

KIROUAC FAMILY GATHERING

Royal Military College at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu

7 and 8 September 2024

Official Programme
Page 4

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