



A F G S

American-French Genealogical Society
Woonsocket, RI



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Hours Monday 11AM - 4 PM Tuesday 1 PM - 9 PM Saturday 11 AM - 4PM

NEWS FROM 78 EARLE STREET

Norm Deragon

Building Committee Chair

On Sunday, December 6, about 40 persons, including members of the AFGS Board, former members of the First Universalist Church, and representatives from Salve Regina University and the Sisters of Mercy gathered at the AFGS Franco-American Heritage Center for a special tribute.

The former Pastor's Study, on the first floor of the Center, was renamed in memory of Sister Eugena Poulin, RSM. Sister Eugena lost her battle with Cancer last year. She was a long-time member of AFGS, and devoted countless hours at our library researching articles for the Society's journal, **Je Me Souviens**. In addition, through her family's trust fund, she arranged for the purchase of many collections such as the **Jesuit Relations** and other valuable research holdings for our library.

The newly named Poulin Study will house the Jesuit Relations collections and other collections. The room has been redecorated, has a conference table and will soon include a computer work station for those who wish to conduct research in the study. In addition, the room will house the archives of the First Universalist Church as well as the Archives of the LeFoyer Club of Pawtucket, RI.

This beautiful, peaceful room reflects Sister Eugena's personality.



Sister Eugena Poulin, RSM. Revisit some of your older **Je Me Souviens** to read Sister's series of articles on Quebec women in the 17th and 18th centuries.



The Poulin Study

Would you like to help the Building Committee by becoming a member of the committee? We would welcome any help. Just write or e-mail us a note with your skills or interests and we will be in touch. You must be able to attend meetings at the Society's building.

**WHAT'S COOKING
BY JAN BURKHART
CROCK POT VEGETABLE SOUP**

One of my favorite childhood memories is walking home from school on a blustery, winter day to have lunch with my family. In those days Papa worked at the mill and the family was able to eat lunch together. I can clearly remember walking into our warm kitchen and smelling the aroma of soup coming from the old stock pot on the stove. My Mom always had a pot of soup simmering on the stove and a nice crusty loaf of bread waiting to be cut. She would start the soup early in the morning and add bits and pieces until it was done. I never knew what the pot would hold but I knew it would be good!

Today, I don't have time to fuss with homemade soup but I do still love it. So I have learned to make it in my crock pot. Just assemble the ingredients and presto! In eight hours you have soup. Here is a good recipe to get you started.

1 pound lean ground beef (I use 99% lean ground turkey) 1 C chopped onion 1 C sliced carrots
1 C sliced celery 1 C frozen sliced green beans 1 can beef broth 2 C very hot water 1 can diced tomatoes
1/2 teaspoon basil 1/8 teaspoon black pepper a pinch of red pepper (optional) 1 tsp. salt (optional)
1 C cooked soup pasta (orzo, alphabets, bow ties etc.)

Brown the meat and drain. Add all ingredients, except the pasta, to the crock pot. Cover and cook on low for eight hours. About 30 minutes before soup is done, add in the cooked pasta.

My Mom always added vegetables left over from our evening meal. Today you can save the vegetables in a plastic container in the freezer and use them when you are ready to make soup. (Of course you could add other vegetables of your own choice. If I am in a hurry, I use a bag of frozen mixed vegetables.) I hope you make this soup on a snowy, cold day and think of me.

HAVE YOUR CAKE AND VEGETABLES TOO!

Here is a funny recipe that really tastes good! If you are watching your fat intake, you might like this. Pumpkin is full of fiber and you won't really know it is there. We know our ancestors grew and ate pumpkin but I doubt that they ever used pumpkin in this way!

One 18.25 oz. box devil's food cake mix

One 15-oz. can pure pumpkin

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease and flour a nine inch square cake pan.

Mix the two ingredients together in a bowl. Do not add anything else! The mixture will be very thick but that is OK. Keep on stirring until batter is completely mixed.

Transfer batter to the cake pan and smooth out the top with a spatula or the back of a spoon. Place the pan in the oven, and bake for 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Allow to cool, and then cut into 12 slices. You might want to add a bit of cool whip, ice cream or frosting. Enjoy!

A TIP FROM YOUR "BOOKIE" BY JANICE BURKHART

I know I have written about this before, but it is worth repeating. Know what you want to happen to your genealogy related books and papers and make definite plans for your wants to be accomplished. It is a new year. Make this a resolution.

So, you have worked for years gathering information, recording data, labeling pictures, buying books, writing letters, and preserving primary source records. Now you wonder what will become of these treasures when you pass away. It might not be as easy as you think. Perhaps members of your family are not as interested as you are. Perhaps you are the last of your line. Perhaps you have to move into a smaller home and do not have room for all these papers.

My advice to you is to start thinking about this now. Ask members of your family if anyone is interested. Hopefully there will be someone. If not, think about your local library or historical society. See if they would be willing to accept your work. Also consider a genealogical society. Ask what they will accept.

Then, and this is very important, make sure you leave written instructions for the person settling your estate. Leave a letter for your Executor or give a letter to your lawyer with a name and address to be contacted or give specific instructions to a member of your family. Make sure you have a contact person and address.

You would be very shocked and surprised to learn how much painstaking research ends up in the trash because heirs do not know what to do with it. Please make arrangements so this does not happen to your hard work.

TIPS FROM OUR WEB GUY BY BILL POMMENVILLE AFGS Web site New Sections

Part of the American-French Genealogical Society's mission is to collect, preserve and publish cultural and historical matter relating to Americans of French and French Canadian descent. In keeping with this goal a new section has been added to the American-French Genealogical Society's web site and it is called **Historical Collections**. One of the features of this section is an Historic Picture Album. This will contain early pictures from areas such as Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts as well as any other historical collections that may be donated.

Our first collection is the "**Henry Dursin Collection**" which includes over 150 pictures of the Woonsocket, RI area from about 1901 to around the 1920s. An additional collection is currently being worked on and will contain pictures, post cards, advertising cards and much more from Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts.

A second part of this Historical Collections section includes the beginning of a new American-French Genealogical Society project. It will be devoted to funeral cards. It will contain funeral cards for any person of Canadian, French, French Canadian and Franco-American descent. The project will make these cards available online for genealogical purposes. Currently the section contains the "Noella Nichols Bouliane Collection" of over 80 Funeral Cards which were donated to AFGS from one individual. Donations of over 50 cards as well as individual cards will be accepted. Please see the web site for details. The Collection is not currently indexed but will be indexed in the future. Check it out at the following:

http://www.afgs.org/Historical_collections.html

Also, there is another new section. This is on DNA Research - Genetics. In conjunction with the AFGS class on DNA, presented by Tom Allaire, there is a new section with information on the AFGS - DNA Project. This Project is with Family Tree DNA. This company is a world leader in Genetic Genealogy. Check out this link to learn more and possibly join our project.

http://www.afgs.org/DNA_Research_French-Canadian.html

DNA WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

On Saturday, November 21, Thomas Allaire presented a class on the benefits of using DNA in your genealogy. The class was well attended and Tom was able to answer the many questions the audience asked. AFGS has established a project that our members may join. Being a member will allow you to have testing done at a reduced rate. You will be able to learn more by checking out our web page at www.afgs.org



Tom Allaire presents interesting information to members and guests who attended the recent workshop on DNA. The current **Je Me Souviens** contains DNA information and you can also check out the following link:

http://www.afgs.org/DNA_Research_French-Canadian.html

WEB SITES YOU MIGHT ENJOY

Here is an interesting web site which you might enjoy.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/genealogy/index-e.html>

is the address for Library and Archives Canada. This is a wonderful site that you could explore for hours. You will find census information, practical help for beginners, databases to explore, other genealogical society links and much more. Give this one a try.

While doing your research, have you ever come to a place name that seems almost impossible to find? Perhaps it is a deserted village that no longer appears in an atlas. Or maybe it is a place that has had a name change. Or maybe it is so small that it just isn't listed anywhere. If this has happened to you, then try this interesting site:

http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/search/search_e.php

It is a page on the Natural Resources Canada page and it is called **Querying Geographical Names of Canada**. It allows you to query the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base (CGNDB). You type the name of a city, town, lake (or any other geographical feature), specify the type of feature you are searching for and the Province or Territory where it is located, and click "**Submit Query**". This will send a query to the CGNDB and return a list of places or features with the name you specified. This is a neat site.

If you own a crockpot, check out this site which contains many recipes. Everything from chili, soup chowder, main meals, dessert and much more.

www.gather.com/viewArticle.action?articleId=281474977647546

AFGS DRAWING WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The AFGS Holiday Drawing was held on November 21, 2009. Following are the winners: \$250 winner - Albert J. Beaudreault, RI; \$250 winner - Carol Ellis, MI; \$500 winner - Wallace Therien, SC; and \$1000 winner - Mr. and Mrs. J. Paul Fagnant, RI. Congratulations to our winners and a very big thank you to everyone who participated.

FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS

The following was sent by member Linda Gooley: I have recently found an Association for my ancestors named Tetreau. It is comprised of all Tetreau families in Canada and the United States regardless of spelling. The Association is called **Les Descendants de Louis Tetreau**. The site can be viewed in a Google search by typing in **Tetreau Association**. It is a true find for any Tetreau.

Claudette Charest-Yokell sends the following information: The **Charette-Charest Family Association** was founded in October, 2000. The goal of the Association is to foster an historical and genealogical study and appreciation of the Charette name and its variants, such as Charest, Shaurette, Shorette, etc. With this web site, we hope to increase the Association membership by reaching out globally to all descendants of Mathieu Choret. You may send mail to Ray Thomas, 22 Ludlow Rd., Windsor, CT 06095, send e-mail to Bahai999@aol.com, or check the web site at:

www.charette-charest.com

Also get information about **Association des Familles Catellier** at

artcattellier@verizon.net

Remember, if you have a family association you would like us to know about, send the information to misskoko@aol.com.

PRESERVING NEWSPAPERS AND CLIPPINGS

Newsprint is not archival-quality paper. It is made using untreated, ground wood fibers with impurities remaining after processing that include resins, tannins and lignins. Lignin represents the largest amount of the impurities and although not an acid, it promotes acidic reactions when exposed to heat, light, high humidity, or atmospheric pollutants. Acid is what causes paper to become brittle and deteriorate. And because of newsprint's high lignin content this deterioration can happen rather quickly.

In preserving your newspapers and clippings, you should decide what is your main focus - preserving the content (information) in the clipping, preserving the physical clipping, or both.

If the information is your focus, consider photocopying the clipping using acid free, buffered paper on a commercial copier. The National Archives has a [peel test](#) to evaluate the ink retention of a copier, which you can run if so interested.

Of course, you can scan and store the clipping digitally.

Most likely, you'll want to preserve the actual news clipping. There's nothing like looking at an actual clipping from times past to feel a sense of history! The following are recommended steps:

1. *Optional:* spray one side of each clipping with a deacidification spray, such as [Bookkeeper](#). This will neutralize the acid and also apply a buffering layer.
2. Place the clipping in a [polyester film sleeve](#) with a sheet of [acid-free buffered paper](#) behind it.
3. Put the polyester sleeves in [file folders](#) of acid-free, alkaline buffered materials.

Finally, put your newspapers and clippings in [archival storage boxes](#) - ones that are acid free and buffered. For added peace of mind, consider placing a full newspaper in an archival bag before putting it in the box. This will further insure protection from water and dust. Caution: **NEVER** store newsprint with other documents you want to preserve. The high acid content of the newsprint will contaminate the other documents. When stored against another document, you will eventually observe a yellow silhouette of the clipping on the other document. Choose storage locations for your boxes that minimize exposure to dampness, heat, air pollutants, dust, insects and vermin. Store them above the floor, to avoid damage from unexpected water.

Newspapers are still a major means of communication today. With a little care, those clippings that are important in your life can be around for many future generations.

Copyright, Your Family Legacy, Family Heritage and Archival Storage Supplies at www.webYFL.com

**OU EST ALLE GRANDMERE?
(WHERE IS GRANDMOTHER?)
SUBMITTED BY RICK WHITESELL**

A joy in doing our family history is coming across a reference that helps us to extend it or add data to what we already know about a person. Maybe it's just a reference to the everyday chores in their lives and we can then picture in our minds how they lived, loved and how it was different than today. Sitting around the kitchen stove on a cold winter day, on a Canadian farm in the late 1800's and reading a story to your kids is very different than today. Now it's you watching the big screen and them in their room with Nintendo or other games.

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Being able to go and visit the land of our ancestors and finding their graves is also another joy of the research. In the U.S. and Britain, the grave is looked upon as the eternal resting place of our ancestors. It is a place where we can go to visit them. This is not always the case in other countries. Many countries reuse old graves after a time, due to lack of space or different burial customs.

One does not buy a grave plot in Germany. It is leased for a period of 20 - 30 years depending on local customs. At the end of the lease the family has a choice of renewing for another period or abandoning the grave. Sometimes it happens that there is no family left or the cemetery is not able to locate them. At that point, after a waiting period, the monument and decorations are removed and the grave reused. Part of the notification process, other than a letter going out, is applying a sticker to the monument for one year informing any viewer that the lease is up for renewal and to contact the cemetery office. Hopefully, family members visit and will see it.

Several cities have recognized the art that is involved in some of the turn of the 20th century monuments and have set up programs where one can sponsor a grave site that no longer has a family that is responsible for it. A contract is signed requiring the restoration and maintenance of the monument and also the biannual change of grave decorations. One benefit of adopting an historical grave is that you are then allowed to be buried there when your time comes.

In America, we embalm bodies, place them in metal caskets, then in cement vaults to “preserve” our loved ones. Germany and some other countries do not allow embalming due to the hazardous chemicals. The casket is biodegradable and there is no liner used in the internment, so in time the body returns to the earth.

Greece has a custom in which the body is buried in a shroud with direct ground contact in a marked grave. At the end of 5 - 7 years, the remains are removed by the family and the bones are washed in wine, wrapped in linen and then placed in an ossuary.

In Morocco, I visited a producing citrus orchard that had in the past been a cemetery. The shrouded body is buried without a casket and the body decomposes. I must admit that I would feel a little strange eating fruit that is produced there, but there really is no health issue involved. Look at some of the things our ancestors used as fertilizer for their crops - night soil and animal dung.

There is currently a movement within the United States for “Green Burials” which follows the methods of our ancestors. The deceased is washed and clothed by family members and a funeral home is not involved. Many people are coming to realize that the preparation of the remains of one’s loved one is a part of the closing process in losing them. The viewing takes place at their home and while a coffin may be used, it is not necessary. Remains are then buried in a cemetery that may be a forest like setting with no traditional monument being placed to mark the burial site. A small metal post with the name, a rock or plant and even GPS coordinates may be the only indication of where the person is buried. The calling of “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust” is fulfilled.

Times are changing as people become more aware of the eco system of our planet and the cost of a funeral that serves mostly the funeral industry.

As an end to this, several sources state that Canada also practices the reusing of cemetery plots in some areas. So, if you have ever had thoughts of visiting the land of grandmère, maybe the time has come for you to do so before you are forced to ask **“Ou est allé grandmère?”**

CENSUS ABBREVIATIONS

Following is a list of abbreviations used in the Canadian Census records. It is a helpful list to keep handy if you are going to peruse the census. If you own the **AFGS Research and Reference Guide**, make a copy of this list and keep it in the guide for easy access and reference when looking at the records. The list was found at the following site:

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/genealogy/022-911.005-e.html>

"Religion" column

Abbreviation	Religion
B.C.:	Bible Church
C. (of) E.:	Church of England
C. (of) S.:	Church of Scotland
E.M.C.:	Episcopal Methodist Church
F.C.:	Free Church (Presbyterian)
M.E.C.:	Methodist Episcopal Church
P.C.L.P.:	Presbyterian-Canada and Lower Provinces
P.F.C.:	Presbyterian Free Church
R.P.:	Reformed Presbyterian
U.P.:	United Presbyterian
W.M.:	Wesleyan Methodist

"Country or Province of Birth" column

Abbreviation	Country or Province of Birth
B.C.:	Bas-Canada (Lower Canada, Quebec) and British Columbia in 1881 and 1891
C.B. :	Colombie-Britannique
C.E. :	Canada East (Canada-Est, Quebec)
C.W.:	Canada West (Canada-Ouest, Ontario)
H.C.:	Haut-Canada (Upper Canada, Ontario)
I.P.:	Île-du-Prince-Edouard
L.C.:	Lower Canada (Bas-Canada, Quebec)
Man.:	Manitoba
N.B.:	New Brunswick
N.B.:	(uncommon usage - North Britain, i.e. Scotland)
N.E.:	Nouvelle-Écosse,
N.O.:	Territoires du Nord-Ouest
N.S.:	Nova Scotia
N.W.:	Northwest Territories
N.W.T.:	Northwest Territories
O:	Ontario
Ont.:	Ontario
P.E.I.:	Prince Edward Island

Que.: Quebec
Q: Quebec (the Q sometimes look like an L)
U.C.: Upper Canada (Haut-Canada, Ontario)

1851 Census

The abbreviation F indicated that the individual was born of Canadian parents.

Marital status:

W: widow
Wr: widower
X: married

1891 Census

Residential dwellings were described using letters and numbers. For example, S2/6 indicates a stone house, two stories, six rooms. W1/2 indicates a wooden house, one story, two rooms. Under relationship to the head of the household:

D: domestic
L: lodger

1901 census

Please note that the following terms were used by the enumerators in 1901 and do not reflect current usage when describing a person's background.

"Race" column:

w: white (Caucasian)
r: red (Native)
b: black (African)
y: yellow (Asian)

"Racial/tribal origin" column:

The use of "breed" and "half-breed" indicated a person of mixed Native and other background as noted in the following examples that were used at that time:

Fb: French breed
Eb: English breed
Sb: Scottish breed
Ib: Irish breed
Ob: other breed
Cree fb: Cree and French breed

ELECTION RESULTS ANNOUNCED

The AFGS recently held its election for Board of Directors and Officers of the Society. At the Annual Meeting, the following individuals were elected to the Board of Directors: Norm Deragon, Roger Beaudry, Alice Riel, Bill Beaudoin, and Bill Pommenville. We thank these individuals for the hours of time they donated to the Society.

The following Officers were elected at the November Board Meeting: Jan Burkhart - President; Norm Deragon - Vice President; Bill Beaudoin - Secretary; Roger Beaudry - Treasurer; and Alice Riel - Assistant Treasurer. Congratulations.

SOCIAL SECURITY DEATH INDEX

This article is reprinted, with permission, from another genealogical newsletter.

The Social Security Administration's Death Index (SSDI), can be a boon to genealogists. The Social Security number is the most valuable piece of information when seeking a number of other documents. It is essential for ordering paper copies of original death records, obituaries and more. The SSDI is the first step in obtaining this information. If you only trace your US ancestry back to your grandparents or possibly great-grandparents, the Social Security Administration (SSA) can help you find where they were born, the names of their parents and more.

The SSA was created by an act of law in 1935 as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal program. The act laid out a retirement system for many Americans, although not all. The Act also created a new governmental agency to manage the program and has since become one of the largest agencies in the Federal Government.

The SSDI originally was a database of deceased persons who received Social Security benefits. The SSA started computerizing records in 1962. This made it possible to produce an index of people who had Social Security numbers and were deceased. Most death records prior to 1962 were never computerized and therefore do not appear in the SSDI although a few exceptions do exist. Some online Web sites advertise that the data they possess will contain information about deaths "as early as 1937." but that claim is a bit misleading because 99.9% of the data is for 1962 and later.

Initially, the SSA only recorded the deaths of individuals who were receiving retirement benefits from the Administration. Those who died before reaching retirement age were not listed. Neither were those who had different retirement systems, such as railroad workers, school teachers and other municipal, state and federal employees. In the 1970's, the railroad and many other retirement systems were merged into the Social Security system after which the deaths of those employees started appearing in the SSDI.

In the late 1980's and after, all deaths in the US were reported to the SSA and recorded in the SSDI. You can find deaths of children and non-retired adults listed for the 1990's and later, but not for earlier years. Because legal aliens in the US can obtain a Social Security card, their names may appear in the SSDI if their deaths were reported, even if their deaths occurred overseas.

The online SSDI databases contain the following information: Social Security number; surname; given name; date of death; date of birth; last known residence; location of last benefit; and date and place of issuance. Keep in mind that the online SSDI database is only an index. The SSA holds additional information that can be a genealogical jackpot. The index listing of an ancestor is merely your ticket to this jackpot.

From 1936 on, anyone who applied for a Social Security Card filled out an application form (SS-5) that the US government keeps on file. This application form contains the following information: full name; full name at birth including maiden name; present mailing address; age at last birthday; date of birth; place of birth (city, country, state); father's full name "regardless of living or dead"; mother's full name including maiden name "regardless of living or dead"; sex and race; ever applied for SS number / Railroad Retirement before? Yes / No; current employer's name and address; and date signed.

To obtain a copy of an original SS-5, you can process the request online at:

http://www.ssa.gov/foia/html/foia_guide.htm

Using the following link,

http://www.socialsecurity.gov/foia/html/foia_guide.htm

you have the option of either a computerized extract of the Social Security Application or the original. For direct access to the form for requesting the originals, go to:

<https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps7/efoiassa/internet/SSA711.jsp> .

To purchase the originals (with the Social Security number supplied) the request will cost \$27.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Susan Rivet writes: This is a heads-up that there will soon be a substantial scholarship opportunity available to language students thanks to a bequest from the estate of former University of Rhode Island French Professor Beatrice S. Demers. According to the article, The Beatrice S. Demers Foreign Language Fellows Program will be administered by the Rhode Island Foundation. Once it is established — which should be in time for the start of the 2010 fall semester — it will make annual distributions to any RI resident who wishes to pursue foreign language study, with a preference given to those who enroll in courses at URI. “The scholarships will be available not to just full-time and part-time students but to anyone, including retirees, who want to learn another language,” said Providence lawyer Anthony Mignanelli, who is co-trustee of Demers’ trust. “That was her wish,” he said. You can read the Providence Journal article at

http://www.projo.com/news/courts/content/DEMERS_BEQUEST_11-14-09_I0GE13D_v17.37d017e.html

Please pass this information on to any RI students in your extended family.

POEM

SUBMITTED BY PAUL McNEIL

GENEALOGY

In the sweep of generations
across a thousand years or more,
I search for my ancestry:
the fathers of all my fathers,
the mothers of all my mothers,
for they are all a part of me
and I am all of them
and where I’ve come from
is my identity.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER ON LINE

AFGnews has been available on line (www.afgs.org) for a number of months. We have received very good reviews from members who have checked it out. The online version has several advantages to you, our readers.

1. It contains very nice colored pictures.
2. It contains active links. Just click and you are there.
3. The newsletters are easily stored on your desktop.
4. It saves paper.
5. It saves AFGS postage thus giving us more money to spend on resources.
6. You receive it more quickly than when it is mailed.

Try it out. We think you will like it.

Bob says: “The on-line newsletter is fantastic. The clarity is great, the timeliness is great and the ability to share with others is great.” Dick says: “This is a great idea; it can save postage and get us the news faster.” Gene says “I also find the pictures to be great in color. “