

Autumn 2024

Special Edition 7

Le Trésor des Kirouac

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



Adélie Kirouac, Mère Marie-des-Anges, religieuse de Jésus-Marie (1883-1967)
(Mother Mary-of-Angels, Congregation of Jésus-Marie of Sillery, Quebec)



Kirouac
Kirouack



Kérouac
Kérouack



Keroac
Keroack



Kéroack
Kyrouac



Breton
Burton



Curwack
Curwick



PRESENTATION

Mother Marie-des-Anges was a co-founder of College Jésus-Marie at Sillery, Quebec City area. She was one of a few women who made it possible for girls to follow the *cours classique* which was until then offered only to boys. It was called classical course because it covered French, English, Latin, ancient Greek, history, geography and sciences. At the time when women were fighting to make their voices heard and their rights respected, Mother Marie-des-Anges worked on her very audacious project. She was way ahead of her time but could see well educated young women with a bachelor's degree, playing an important role in society in general, and becoming leaders in the arts, sciences and many other fields of expertise.

Her deep convictions were shared by many other French-speaking Canadian women who were keen to assert themselves in fields still inaccessible to women. Yet, she achieved it within the walls of her convent. Both a mystic and open to the world, Mother Marie-des-Anges was a great woman blessed with a superior intelligence and she unquestionably influenced women's education in Quebec.

Offering higher culture and education to girls was her vision; combined with knowledge she acquired in great French institutions in Lyon and Paris, showed in the teaching offered at College Jésus-Marie in Sillery. The College's reputation for excellence reached far beyond Quebec and Canadian borders and American and even Mexican girls came to study at Sillery.

Mother Marie-des-Anges' received many accolades in her lifetime, including a doctorate Honoris Causa in pedagogy from Laval University in 1952. Afterwards she became a member of the board of the university council representing women's colleges affiliated to Laval University. In 1958, she was given the title of Professor Emeritus.

Céline Kirouac, Kirouac Family Association

Le Trésor des Kirouac **Special Edition number 7 (digital version only)** **ISSN 0833-1685**

Le Trésor des Kirouac, the bulletin of all the descendants of Alexandre de K/voach, is published in two separate editions: French and English, and is distributed to AFK/KFA members. Permission to reproduce an article must be obtained beforehand from *Association des familles Kirouac inc., KFA*, as well as permission from the author of the article

Authors and collaborators for this special edition **(in alphabetical order)**

Céline Kirouac, François Kirouac, Marie Kirouac,
Marie Lussier Timperley, Sister Louise Turmel r.j.m. (archivist of
Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery)

Excerpts from magazines and publications
Aux sources des Bois-Francs, by Thérèse Verville
(Arthabaska Region Historical Society, vol. 3 no. 2, Dec. 1984)
Le Sillery, (various authors; College Jésus-Marie at Sillery)

Graphic Design
Front Cover: Jean-François Landry
KFA Logo on back cover: Raymond Bergeron
The bulletin: François Kirouac

Lay-out
François Kirouac

Translation
Marie Lussier Timperley
Proofreading and editing
Marie Lussier Timperley, Mark Pattison

Editorial Policy
At its discretion, the KFA Editorial Board can edit and shorten texts submitted for publication in *Le Trésor des Kirouac* (including texts for the *TRESOR-EXPRESS*); the KFA Editorial Board also reserves the right to refuse to publish text, photo, caricature, or illustration, deemed of no interest to the KFA mission or likely to cause prejudice either to the Association, to one of its members, or to any person, group of persons, or any organization. Revised text will be published only with the author's prior consent as he/she is still fully accountable for its content.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mother Marie-des-Anges, Adelcie Kirouac	3
Ancestry of Adelcie Kirouac	4
Baptism Record	5
Pioneer in the fight to enable women to access superior studies	6
Chronology of the life of Mother Marie-des-Anges	14
Article about Mother Marie-des-Anges published in <i>Sillery</i>	15
Relationships with her brother Conrad Kirouac known as Brother Marie-Victorin	16
Golden Jubilee of Mother Marie-des-Anges	20
60 th Anniversary of her Religious Vows	24
Death of Mother Marie-des-Anges	29

Original French publication:
Legal Deposit, 3rd Quarter 2019
Quebec Provincial Archives and National Library of Canada

English Translation published
Legal Deposit, 4th Quarter 2024
Quebec Provincial Archives and National Library of Canada

Édition
L'Association des familles Kirouac inc.
3782, Chemin Saint-Louis, Québec (Québec)
Canada G1W 1T5

Mother Marie-des-Anges

of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie

born Adelcie Kirouac

Born in Princeville in the Bois-Francs Region of Quebec, on 26 August 1883, Adelcie Kirouac is the eldest of five children, four daughters and a son. Her brother, Conrad, became Brother Marie-Victorin (of the De LaSalle Brothers) is known as the first French-speaking Canadian scientist. He was the only one of five boys to survive infancy. Both, Conrad and Adelcie, were multi-talented and spent their life working in education in their respective domain. The thousands of letters they exchanged in their lifetime is a testimony to their close relationship¹.

In 1890, their parents, Philomène Luneau and Cyrille Kirouac, moved the family to Quebec City and settled in Saint-Sauveur Parish. In September 1895, the young Adelcie became a boarder at the Jésus-Marie Convent in Sillery. She loved studying there as well as the country scenery by the St-Lawrence. She loved nature, flowers and the River. In 1902, she graduated with all the highest honours and entered the novitiate of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie. In August 1904, she made her final vows and remained faithful to her commitment until her death in 1967, after 63 years given to education.

At that time, two other members of the Kirouac family were nuns in the Congregation of Jésus-Marie: there was Mother Marie-du-Rosaire, born Alma Kirouac (1882-1951) daughter of Joseph-Arthur Kirouac, thus a first cousin of Adelcie, Mother-Marie-des-Anges; and Mother Saint-Robert-Marie, born Cécile Kirouac (1907-2007)² daughter of Ernest Kirouac, thus Adelcie's second cousin. Both nuns taught music, one at the Jésus-Marie Convent and the other at Jésus-Marie at Sillery. Mother Marie-des-Anges also taught piano as a young nun from 1904 to 1920.



Mother Marie-des-Anges
(1883-1967)

¹ *Confidence & combat*, letters (1924-1944) Brother Marie-Victorin, by Gilles Beaudet, féc, Lidec Inc. 1969, 251 pages.

Correspondence (in French only) between Brother Marie-Victorin, née Conrad Kirouac, and his sister, Adelcie Kirouac, Mother Marie-des-Anges (rjm), in which brother and sister talk about various subjects connected to teaching, culture, spirituality, travelling. Preface by Marcelle Gauvreau, Director of the children's school *L'Éveil* at the Montreal Botanical Garden; the correspondence is presented and annotated by Brother Gilles Beaudet, féc.

² See *Le Trésor des Kirouac*, Special Edition, number 4, Spring 2017 (in French only): Sœur Cécile Kirouac (1907-2007) at: https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Sœur_Cécile_Kirouac.pdf



Cyrille Kirouac (1863-1921)
(Photo : KFA collection)



Philomène Luneau (1862-1913)
(Photo : KFA collection)



Conrad Kirouac, Brother Marie-Victorin,
f.éc. (Photo : KFA collection)

Ancestry of Adelcie Kirouac

Mother Marie-des-Anges,
of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie

Generation 1

Alexandre de Kervoach
dit le Breton
(Circa 1702 - 1736)

Cap-Saint-Ignace (Québec)
22 October 1732

Louise Bernier
(1712 - 1802)

Generation 2

Louis Keroack
dit le Breton
(1735 - 1779)

Cap-Saint-Ignace Québec
11 January 1757

Catherine Metot
(1739 - 1813)

Generation 3

Pierre Keroack
(1777 - 1866)

Montmagny, Saint-Thomas
17 October 1797

Marie-Anne Joncas
(1775 - 1816)

Generation 4

Louis-Grégoire Kirouac
(1801 - 1890)

Saint-Pierre-de-la-Rivière-du-Sud
10 January 1825

Catherine Picard
(1803 - 1878)

Generation 5

François Kirouac
(1826 - 1896)

L'Ancienne-Lorette
6 June 1848

Marie-Julie Hamel
(1830 - 1915)

Generation 6

Cyrille Kirouac
(1863 - 1921)

Saint-Norbert (Québec)
29 August 1882

Philomène Luneau
(1862 - 1913)

Generation 7

Adelcie Kirouac
(1883 - 1967)



François Kirouac, April 2019

B. 86
 M. Philomène
 Adèle
 Kirouac

Le vingt huit Août, mil huit cent
 quatre-vingt-trois, nous prêtre sous-
 signé, vicaire de cette paroisse, avons
 baptisé Marie Philomène Adèle
 fille née, avant-hier, du légitime
 mariage de Cyrille Kirouac cultiva-
 teur et de Philomène Luneau de
 cette paroisse. Le parrain a été
 François Kirouac marchand
 grand-père paternel de l'enfant.
 La marraine a été Julie Hamel
 son épouse, de la paroisse de Saint-
 Sauveur de Québec, lesquels ont dé-
 claré que le père, signé avec nous. Lu-
 ture faite

Julie Hamel
 Fr. Kirouac
 C. Kirouac

M. Denoncourt

Copy of Adèle Kirouac's baptismal record in the Stanfold* Parish register of births, marriages and death.
 (*now Princeville, Quebec), dated 28 August 1883.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE HAND-WRITTEN DOCUMENT

On 28 August 1883, we priest undersigned, vicar of this parish, baptized Marie Philomène Adèle, daughter born the day before yesterday, from the legal marriage of Cyrille Kirouac, farmer, and Philomène Luneau, of this parish. The godfather is François Kirouac, merchant, grandfather of the baby, the godmother is Julie Hamel, his wife, from Saint-Sauveur Parish, Quebec City, who signed as well as the father, after the document was read.

Julie Hamel
 Fr. Kirouac
 C. Kirouac

P. M. Denoncourt*, priest

*Abbe Pierre-Moïse Denoncourt, born on 26 February 1848 at Saint-Grégoire-de-Nicolet (Quebec), was ordained to the priesthood at Trois-Rivières (Quebec) on 19 September 1880 by Bishop Louis-François Laflèche.

ADELICIE KIROUAC (MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES, RJM) PIONEER IN THE ARDUOUS BATTLE FOR ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

par Thérèse Verville

Translation of an excerpt published in *Sources des Bois-Francs*, Vol. 3, no 2, December 1984, news bulletin of the Arthabaska Regional Historical Society.

Kingsey Falls is very proud indeed to be known as the native town of a great Quebec scientist Brother Marie-Victorin. But, his fame, however deserved, should not make us forget that there was someone else in his family who, through determination, ingenuity and intelligence, greatly contributed to the cultural and scientific evolution in Quebec. Just like Mozart and many others, Brother Marie-Victorin, né Conrad Kirouac, had a sister just as brilliant as he was, but whose name remained absent from our somewhat sexist history books at the time: Adelicie Kirouac.

Like her brother, Adelicie Kirouac made her religious vows and became known as Mère Marie-des-Anges (in English, Mother Mary-of-Angels, rjm. Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery, Quebec. All her life she strongly believed that women were as intelligent as men and that they could, just as well, take on studies and succeed. This rare conviction was very seldom expressed at the time. To understand how Mother Marie-des-Anges was involved in the battle for women to access superior studies, let us go back in time and put ourselves into the social and school context of the time.

First University

On 8 December 1852, on the anniversary of the Immaculate Conception: "Her Majesty Queen Victoria" granted to the authorities of the Quebec Seminary the letters patent transforming their establishment into a university.

The first Francophone, that is French speaking university in North America was born: Université Laval. Note that only two women were associated with this newly accredited institution: Queen Victoria, who was the only authority to reign over the institution and protect it, and the Immaculate Conception, (*translator's note: as the Holy Virgin was officially recognized by the Catholic Church through a dogma in 1854*).

Université Laval, in principle, put itself under the special protection of the Holy Virgin Mary and chose as its patron saint, the Immaculate Conception on its Feast day."¹

Restriction and Resistance

From day one, Université Laval had no rules nor regulations forbidding women from studying there. But there were certain details in the statutes confirming the fact that the rules and regulations were implicitly meant to supervise only the life of "young men".

"The students will normally receive people from the outside who want to see them, in the parlours. However, sometimes they could admit visitors to their bedroom, like their parents and men well-known and respectable by their age and their conduct. To receive women, they must first obtain a permission from the director; a student will obtain such permission only to receive his mother, his elderly aunt, his older sister, and for other persons accompanying their parents."²

This is the interpretation and application of the strict rules and regulations accompanying the Royal Charter clearly excluding female persons. This regulation also specified that "... no one will be admitted to the Bachelor of Arts diploma, nor register as a student in any faculty, unless it is proven that **HE** possesses the knowledge that is normally part of the colleges' teaching."³

To be allowed to offer college level education, an institution had to be affiliated to Laval University which held the exclusive right for the French-speaking school system. (Author's note: there was no (Quebec) Department of Education at the time). So Laval University controlled all college level institutions and even dictated the standards for final exams. In the province of Quebec, the foundation of Laval University marked the beginning of a double system of education **based on gender**. Hence two separate teaching networks were created and developed. On the one hand a college and business sector duly affiliated provided training for boys and opening university doors for boys and, on the other hand, a parallel system of

¹ Laval University Directory, for the school year 1880-81, p. 47.

² Rules and regulations for the University student-boarders, Laval University Directory for the school year 1858-1859, p. 45.

³ *Temporary rules to write the exams for the Baccalaureate ès arts and registering at Université Laval*. Laval University Directory for the school year 1856-57.

elementary teaching oriented towards domestic training would keep girls away from higher level of education. This is the context in which Adelcie Kirouac worked to open university doors to Quebec French-speaking girls.

Religious Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery

Adelcie Kirouac completed her elementary studies at the Convent, a boarding school, of the religious Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery, Quebec City area. It is important to note that this religious congregation was already trying to achieve a higher level of scholarly ambition for their students which was conflicting with women's traditional image at the time.

Indeed, an important number of their former students became women actively participating in the socio-political life of their time. For example, Doctor Irma Levasseur, was the first woman doctor in

Quebec, but she had to go the United States to obtain her doctorate in medicine in 1900. She worked as a medical doctor in New York while waiting for a “private bill” to be passed by the Quebec Legislative Assembly in 1903, opening the doors to the Quebec Order of Physicians, authorizing her to legally practice medicine in the Province of Quebec. She founded the *Enfant-Jésus Hospital* in Quebec City and co-founded *Sainte-Justine Hospital* in Montreal.

Marie Sirois-Boivin, was the first woman to receive a diploma, a certificate in literary studies, from a French-speaking Canadian University, but she was refused the authorization to take part in the Commencement ceremony to receive her diploma.

These two examples show clearly how the religious Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery worked at enlarging women's role in Quebec society. This international congregation soon saw how women in Europe could attain a better education and how that had been an important lever to better women's condition. There were other important factor too, the nuns of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie were governed by a papal charter enabling them to ignore orders from dioceses or archdioceses, i.e., Bishops and Archbishops, while other congregations had to submit to them. At the time, the Convent of Jésus-Marie at Sillery enjoyed, and still enjoys, such an excellent reputation making it the best place for Adelcie Kirouac to get training.

When Adelcie took the veil at the beginning of the 20th century, as she entered the Congregation of Jésus-Marie, she was in the company of her faithful colleague Mother Sainte-Agnès (born Léa Drolet) and under the authority of Mother St-Joseph (born Bernadette Paquin). Then she fought



Standing: Philomène Kirouac, the mother; from left to right, seated Conrad Kirouac, Adelcie Kirouac, Cyrille Kirouac, daughter Laura; seated in front: Eudora, Bernadette (the youngest) and Blanche. (photo: Archives, fête “Frères des Écoles chrétiennes” in French-speaking Canada) (known as De La Salle brothers in the USA)

against all odds and faced those who actively or passively refused women the right to enter institutions of higher education.

Mother Sainte-Agnès (born Léa Drolet)

We owe a special issue of the news bulletin *Sillery*⁴ where Mother Sainte-Agnès, born Léa Drolet, recounts the first thirty years of her College. She wrote this while proudly assuming her ninety-six (96) years of age. She was a faithful friend and precious collaborator who fought along side Mother Marie-des-Anges. Their lives were closely linked to the history of their institution.

First Steps

In 1904, the nuns of the Congregation of Notre-Dame in Montreal had approached Laval University, as Montreal University was still under Laval's jurisdiction then (Montreal University became autonomous only in 1920). The CND nuns wanted Villa Maria to be recognized as a School of Superior Education under the control of Laval University. But Laval declared the request to be premature. When the CND request was presented, we read in the minutes of the meeting: "It is not opportune to launch young women into superior studies".⁵

In May 1904, Marie Sirois obtained her certificate in literature from Laval University.

The *Journal du Séminaire de Québec*⁶ reveals the mentality following these two events:

"This morning, Bishop Bruchési⁷ presented to Bishop Laflamme⁸ a curious project. The top teaching institutions in Montreal wish their students to receive from Laval University some official parchment attesting their knowledge, their capabilities, etc. Some sort of certificate of advanced elementary education at it is called in English. The nuns see this as a great commendation for their convents, some powerful advertisement for American families who already send so many students to them (in Canada). This certificate would be given after a special exam following a special programme prepared by the University, all monitored and controlled by the University's authorities. However strange such a proposition may seem at first, it may be a good idea to study it seriously. Higher education for women is daily spreading more and more. University already let them sit in literature classes and to those who qualify give a certificate in literature. Perhaps the universities could go one step further and show their approval; **however, it is important not to rush into anything and, before deciding anything, it is very important to know where we are heading.**"(underlining by the translator)

Léa Drolet (1889-1986) and Adelcie Kirouac, were the first women to obtain a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Laval University in 1924. They co-founded the first classical college for girls at Quebec City, *College Jésus-Marie de Sillery* (1925). (Source: Quebec Cultural Heritage Directory) (Photo: College Jésus-Marie's collection)

According to university authorities and the majority of the population, Quebec women were not allowed to develop their mental abilities and skills. In his closing words at the end of 1903-1904 school year, Dean Mathieu underlined that: "Perhaps, women, should not, as De Maister (1753-1821) used to say, emulate men who need to know so much but all this knowledge is absolutely useless to women given their role in life.



Léa Drolet (1889-1986) and Adelcie Kirouac, were the first women to obtain a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Laval University in 1924. They co-founded the first classical college for girls at Quebec City, *College Jésus-Marie de Sillery* (1925). (Source: Quebec Cultural Heritage Directory) (Photo: College Jésus-Marie's collection)

This is what Molière wanted people to understand when saying: "It is dishonest and for so many reasons that a woman should study and know so many things".⁹

As Mother Sainte-Agnès wrote "these University gentlemen were thinking. They were thinking about the opportunity of secondary studies for young women, and, one day in 1910, in the Montreal newspapers some publicity appeared announcing the upcoming opening of a **lay classical college for young women.** Immediately the

⁴ *Sillery* is the Sillery Jésus-Marie College alumni news bulletin.

⁵ *Sillery* Special Issue, 1925-1975, Sillery Jésus-Marie College alumni news bulletin. p. 3; text by Mother Sainte-Agnès.

⁶ *Journal du séminaire* (seminary journal). Volume VII, p. 127, 16 May 1904. Quebec Seminary Archives.

⁷ **Bishop Paul Bruchési** (1855-1939) second Archbishop of Montreal.

⁸ **JCK Laflamme**, (1849-1910) priest and scientist, rector of Laval University. At the time, the Head of the Quebec Seminary was automatically the Dean of Laval University.

⁹ 1904-1905 Laval University Annual Directory, closing ceremony, p. 155.

Marguerite-Bourgeois College in Montreal obtained its affiliation (that had been requested back in 1904...). Between two evils, the university authorities chose the one they considered the least damaging ... **a religious classical college for young women.**

After this, the nuns of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie decided to get on the war path again and they managed to finally convince the University authorities about the advantages for them to regroup under the university's authority the convents providing elementary schooling. Thus, on 28 May 1911, Laval University granted the Jésus-Marie Convent the affiliation charter authorizing them to provide the superior elementary studies programme prepared by the nuns. After that, many other convents obtained an identical affiliation. Quite aware of this victory, the nuns, who had accepted to submit themselves to the University controlled exams, then proposed a secondary studies plan and ...



Mother Saint-Joseph, born Bernadette Paquin at Deschambault, Quebec, in 1874, died in 1945, was a co-founder of the first "classical college for girls in Quebec, the *Collège Jésus-Marie* at Sillery (1925), and was the director of studies for many years. (Photo: *Collège Jésus-Marie* Collection)

"... instead of taking a decision, the University Board started to "think", ponder again".¹⁰

So while the University Board members were deep in their reflections, the nuns used these delays to hone their preparation. Hence as competent personnel was needed and wanted for the upcoming college, some nuns stopped teaching in order to study, including Mother Sainte-Agnès and Mother Marie-des-Anges.

The Great Crossing (going over the pond)

As a condition to authorizing the creation a new college, the University demanded that at least two nuns pass the bachelor's exams. However, the University refused to offer them the needed courses to obtain said bachelor's degree. So be it. Mother Sainte-Agnès and Mother Marie-des-Anges sailed off to Europe and followed the courses offered at Lyon's Catholic University*, at the Catholic Institute and at the Sorbonne in Paris*, as well as at the School in Sèvres.

"During that time, in Quebec City, Mother Saint-Joseph was busy speeding up the process, exchanging letters with the Archbishop and Laval University where Bishop Gosselin, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, fully **disapproved** this sort of feminine emancipation. He was convinced that girls' head were not meant to study Latin nor (ancient) Greek¹¹. Nevertheless, Mother Saint-Joseph, a learned diplomatic woman possessing great writing language skills, in the end always winning her arguments over those of Bishop Gosselin. Smartly, she was opening up the way (i.e., for Mother Sainte-Agnès and Mother Marie-des-Anges)".¹²

Back from Europe on 14 July 1923, Mother Sainte-Agnès and Mother Marie-des-Anges found the groundwork well done. Their training did not include Greek, because the university authorities figured that Latin and Greek would be too much for a woman's head, it would make it explode! Italian was judged sufficient. The most ridiculous part of this adventure is where the nuns wrote their bachelor's exams. Believe it or not, at the end of the 1922-23 school year, they had to write their bachelor's exams in the "wardrobe" adjoining the examination hall, because it was unthinkable to let nuns sit in the same room at the "seminarians".

They did receive their degrees "**Bachelier ès arts**"; but note the missing "e", the word should have been written "Bachelière", French feminine! with *highest honours*. Nevertheless, they were never invited to a Commencement ceremony, their names were never entered in any official or unofficial university alumni lists. The custom at the time dictated that all (parchment) diplomas be written in Latin, but not theirs! Theirs were written in French ... one more proof that university authorities were not yet convinced that women could understand Latin!

* Editor's note: In the original text, Mrs. Verville wrote wrongly that they studied at the *Jésus-Marie Convent* at Lyon and the *Paris' Catholic Institute*.

¹⁰ Special Issue, *Sillery*, 1925-1975, op. cit. Text of Mother Sainte-Agnès, p. 4.

¹¹ Latin and (ancient) Greek were then considered basic elements of (classical) university studies.

¹² Op. cit., p. 6.

Second Step

... “Finally, after lengthy discussions by the Laval University Board members, at the 15 February 1924 meeting, proposed by the new Dean, Bishop Camille Roy, the Sillery Convent was affiliated to Laval University for secondary (high school) teaching. The parents were extremely delighted who wanted for their daughters a culture superior to the elementary level. Other convents in the area also wanted the same privilege. The University accepted but on the condition that each institution presents an individual request.

It had taken twenty years of laborious procedures for young Quebec women to finally be granted the right to fully develop their brains.

We immediately started giving classes to the four students who had chosen the new programme wanting to embark on this adventure. It was a happy momentous day for them and for us when, on 19 January 1925, the affiliation diploma arrived from Laval saying that we were now a *classical college* with all the rights, honours and obligations attached to this affiliation within the limits of the statutes of Laval University.”¹³

A Tight Fight

Mother Sainte-Agnès writes that...¹⁴

“The University has agreed and the College is created; however, public opinion is against us and voiced its disagreement. Negative opinions were heard even from the pulpit and the weekly Catholic paper, *La Semaine religieuse*, wrote: *If the implementation of the Bachelor course in our convents means it is some consecration of the triumph of modern feminism, honestly, we do not have much good to say about it.* The same paper then reproduced an extract from a document published at the occasion of the 1923 diocesan

Synod: *It would be extremely regrettable to think of introducing in our girls' convents the literary or scientific classical course which is the prerogative of boys' colleges. This is a false doctrine declaring education to be equal for both sexes. In addition, it would achieve the Free-Mason's wish as expressed at their 1922 Congress in Tarbes (south of France). We must be weary of opening the doors to feminism by changing the course of girls' education.*”

The bulletin's director felt the need to warn the nuns teaching the *classical course* against the menace they would be facing: a redoubtable weakening of the supernatural spirit and monastic discipline.

Rest assured, Mr. l'Abbé, we could have written to him a few years later? *The supernatural spirit and monastic discipline of the teachers sent many women with a bachelor's degree towards contemplative communities or other religious communities while their colleagues are real Christian militants in the world. The services rendered by our students to their families and to society contributed to convert a great number of still hesitating Chrysales*¹⁵.

Authorities, both religious and from the university, had finally understood that it was urgent to agree to the wish and request of parents who were well informed about how superior studies were available to women in Europe, also in other Canadian provinces and, closer to us, in Montreal. The innovation rejoiced some people, others put up with it, but it worked. It worked so well that, in 1928, the first group of young women who had followed the four-year course at our College very successfully wrote the exams and obtained their bachelor's degree.

All was not won yet, because prejudiced still lurked about a woman's head not being able to absorb Greek or Latin. For women, the University had replaced the study of Greek and Latin by a living language, either Italian or Spanish. In order to keep what we had already obtained we decided to comply. Indeed it would have been terrible to lose what had been gained by trying to win too much.

Noblesse oblige

Well, when talking about a College then it meant proper buildings and classes. Therefore, first, the ordinary installation had to be transformed as were needed special laboratory for physics, for chemistry, for biology, better classrooms, auditoriums, an enriched and better equipped library. But where would the needed subsidies come from? We decided to ask the Provincial Government, as boys' colleges were receiving annual subsidies of ten thousand dollars, why not ask the same for girls' colleges?

The answer to our legitimate claim was that we should be grateful that universities were open to women now. That was a smelly red herring to excuse refusing our just request. And all this when, on paper, we were given the “same rights and privileges” as men.

On 18 March 1926, a first letter from the Honorable Alexandre Taschereau, then Quebec Premier, gives a negative answer ... with regrets. But the College will not accept defeat.

¹³ Op. cit., p. 5 & 8.

¹⁴ Op. cit., pp. 13-14-15.

¹⁵ In Molières' play *The Learned Ladies*, Chrysale is the family father who pretends to be the master in his house, maintaining that women should be concerned only with house matters and nothing else, but he is quite unable to stand up to his wife or contradict any decision she makes.



Mother Marie-des-Anges, Adelcie Kirouac, at her desk at College Jésus-Marie in Sillery. (Photo published in "Sillery", number 95, March 1967)

The deputy of the County, Mr. Bédard, was told about our difficulties and wrote a personal letter to the Premier of the Province who wrote back: "A convent cannot possibly be considered the same as a classical college. We must hold on to the fact that colleges are places where boys are taught." **So again it is a question of sex! It is a sexist position.**

Follows a new demand in 1931, and a new refusal. Again, Quebec Premier Taschereau answers that *it is impossible for a convent to be considered the same as our classical colleges who receive subsidies.* Now it is a question of word! The school where the girls receive the same education as the boys is called a convent, therefore is it illegal!

As there is no hope on that side, we put all our hope in God,

the *Provident*, the great Provider. He answered our prayers by inspiring the nuns' parents, the friends of the college, to take a real interest in our work. Right from the start, thanks to their gifts, the College was able to cover the necessary expenses to modernize the building. The Quebec Department of Public Instruction supplied a few small subsidies, that is amounts granted to all schools at the time.

Only in 1959 did the Quebec Government understand that it was a question of honour for them to treat the girls' convents like the boys' colleges. That annual subsidy finally enabled the College to reach the level of an institution worthy of the name. "The College was already thirty-four years old by then!"

Mother Marie-des-Anges

Allow me to let Mother Sainte-Agnès revive the high personality of the woman who was the College's chief personality creating the family atmosphere, its social character and its fully human image. The woman whom Bishop Parent called the *great Mother Marie-des-Anges*, because she had a great soul, a warm heart and sharp intelligence.

Her love of God was clearly apparent in all she did. Letters, private conversations with her pupils, shared spiritual readings, instructions, exhortations, it moved even the most stubborn wills because her great love was always felt. Her heart was sensitive but strong. Her emotions never got the better of her will when it came to doing what was needed in order to prepare people to face the future.

Her intelligence was way above the average. She made the most of it, she gave herself fully to all her tasks. Her writing was generous, very witty, always new and it enchanted even the most difficult readers and, whatever the subject, her students were always captivated and delighted by the way she taught them.

Besides the extremely well-prepared pedagogical lectures, the long year-end school reports, the compositions enhancing congregation gatherings, our literary circles and receptions for VIPs, we also owe to Mother Marie-des-Anges a biography entitled: *Dieu, Thérèse et trois ducats* (God, Theresa, and three ducats). Prelate Cristiani (1879-1971) who was used to this literary genre, said about it: *Once I started reading the book, I could not put it down until I reached the last page. Every detail interested me.* Although she started writing the history of our Congregation in Canada, she never manage to finish it because, at the same time,

and for over thirty years, she was also writing the congregation bulletin: *Sillery*.

All initiatives that will be talked about in the following pages, came to be or were developed because of her work. Every time you will read about some progress made, some innovation achieved to give something useful, pleasant or beneficial to the students, her name will be mentioned, as she was always the inspiration behind it.

In 1952, Laval University recognized the exceptional merit of this great educator by awarding her a PhD Honoris Causa in Pedagogy with the privilege to sit on the university board as the official representative of the Women's colleges affiliated to Laval University. In 1958, she was granted the title Professor Emeritus.

On 30 May 1954, the Alumni Association superbly celebrated her religious golden jubilee. As wished by the jubilarian a thirty-seven-foot-tall mast was erected on the College grounds. Also the same year, Montreal put up a monument to the famous botanist Brother Marie-Victorin (at the entrance of the Montreal Botanical Garden). The family gave a smaller version of that monument to the Sillery College. The statue and the mast will remind future generations of the exceptional value of the two siblings.

As we mention Brother Marie-Victorin we must mention a few facts about his life as they fit in with our history. The brother of the great Mother Marie-des-Anges lived in a different world, but he had the same depth of soul, heart and intelligence. One could feel how close they were.¹⁶

Cardinal Villeneuve¹⁷ considered Marie-Victorin as one of the rare Quebec scientists. Already at the age of twelve, the young Conrad was familiar with the Sillery

Convent as he used to visit his sisters who were boarders there.

Later on, when Marie-Victorin was a professor at Montreal University and director of the Institut de Botanique before founding the botanical garden which really should be named after him. Whenever Mother Marie-des-Anges heard that her brother would be nearby to give a lecture, she would immediately invite him to the College. He never refused what he would call the *Sillerisation** of his lectures. (*play on word)

He made a special visit to supervise the College students' herborizations at Orléans Island (École de la Route = learning on the road) to identify plants for the College herbarium and also to identify the trees on the College grounds. Creating the (Montreal) botanical garden demanded, from Brother Marie-Victorin, a faith that moves mountains. I believe that Mother Marie-des-Anges' faith was just as strong. Her faith was doubled with almost fool-hardy trust and it resulted in obtaining what was deemed impossible.

Mother Marie-des-Anges was the College's director from its foundation until 1955, when she had to retire due to ill-health. We owe much to the woman who was described by her students as "the strong woman according to the Gospel, the great lady, the born educator, and everyone's friend."

With her colleagues she opened a door and we all walked through it quite smoothly. On 28 October 1928, was the commencement ceremony for the first group of women-bachelors from the College. After winning many battles, Mother Marie-des-Anges was winning the war and the first four women earning their baccalaureate degree were her reward and her comfort: Dorothy Smith, an Anglophone from the Quebec region; Yvette Laporte, a Francophone from New-Brunswick; and Madeleine and Marie-Paule Laliberté ... from Warwick! **

¹⁶ Op. cit., pp. 11-12-13

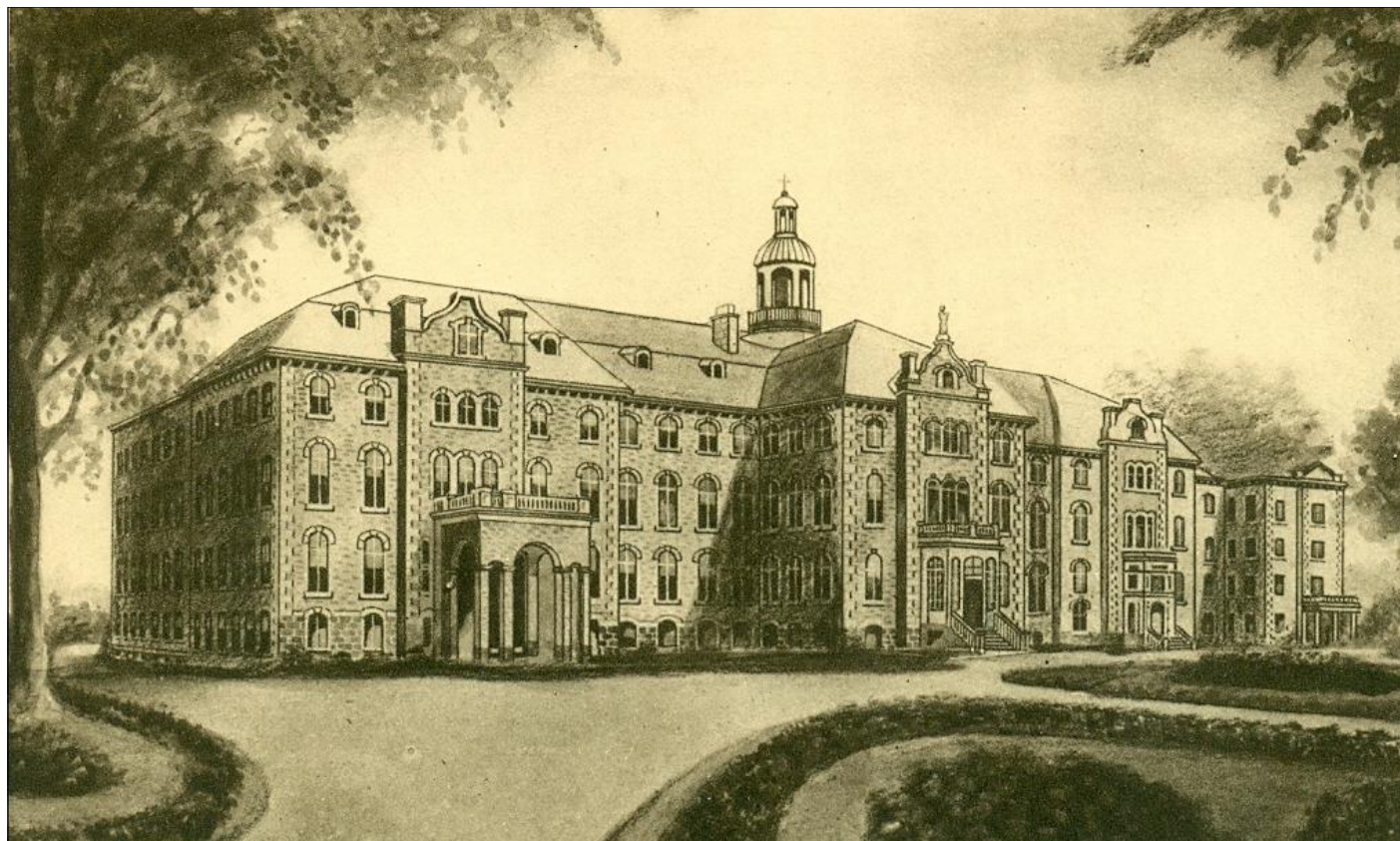
¹⁷ 1883-1947, Archbishop of Quebec from 1931 until his death.

**Editor's note: Adelcie's great-grandfather, Louis-Grégoire Kirouac lived in Warwick, in the Bois-Francs region from 1858 until his death in 1890. Louis and his wife are resting in the crypt of Warwick's parish church.

Adelcie's grandfather, François, often took the train from Quebec City to visit his parents living in Warwick. Adelcie's father, Cyrille and his family lived for a while at Kingsey Falls, a village near Warwick, where Adelcie's brother, Conrad, was born in 1885.



The Jésus-Marie convent at Sillery as it stood before burning down during the night of 13-14 June 1983. (Photo: Convent's Archives)



The Jésus-Marie convent at Sillery as it stood before burning down during the night of 13-14 June 1983.
(Illustration: Convent's Archives)



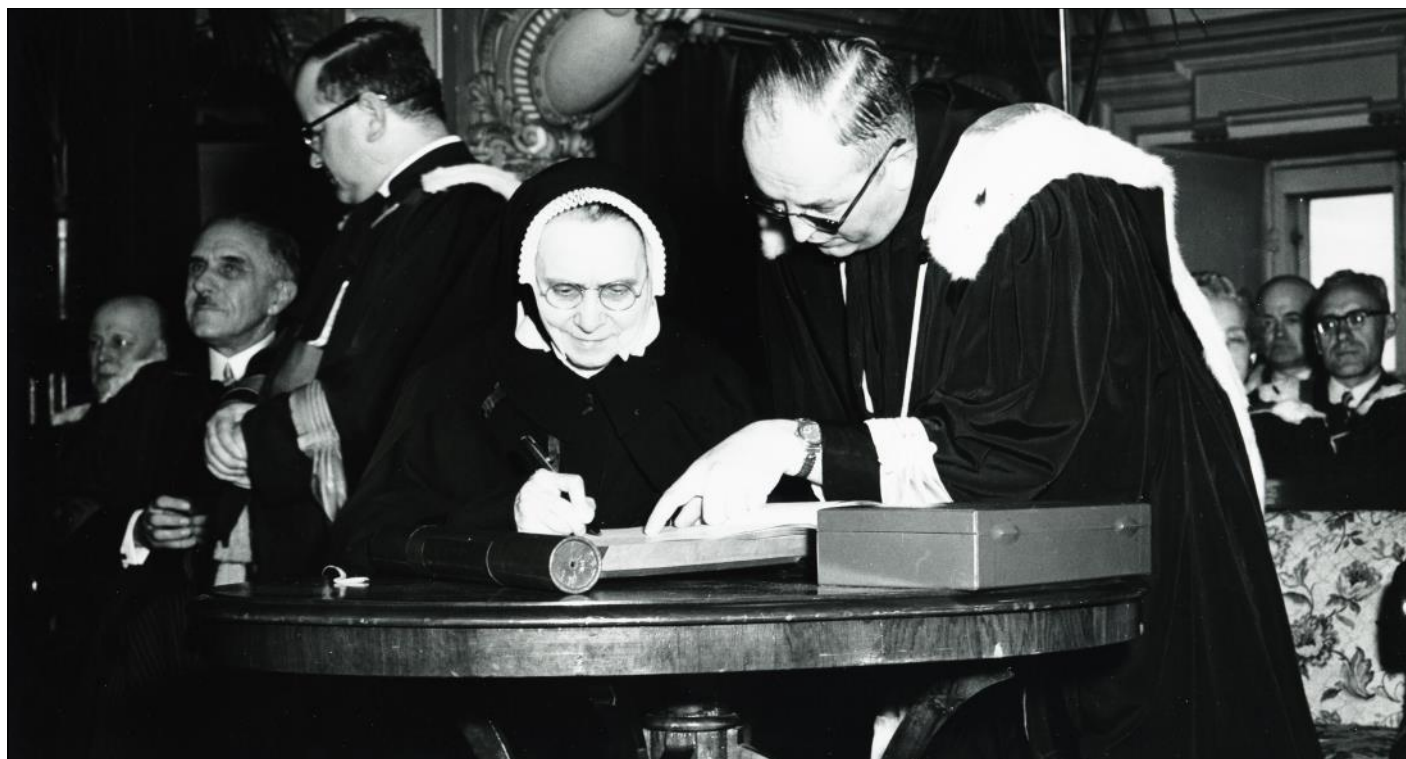
(Photo : collection AFK)

Brother Marie-Victorin (Conrad Kirouac) and his sister, Mother Marie-des-Anges (Adelcie Kirouac).

Chronology of the Life of Mother Marie-des-Anges, (*rjm= religieuse (nun) of Jésus Marie*) (*Adelcie Kirouac*)

- 26 August 1883, birth.
- From September 1895, boarding at Convent Jésus-Marie in Sillery, Quebec.
- June 1902, completed her studies at Convent Jésus-Marie in Sillery.
- 1900, secretary of the first *Former Students Association*.
- August 1902, enters the Novitiate of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery.
- February 1903, receives her religious habit.
- 19 August 1904, makes her religious vows.
- 1921, leaves to study in Europe with Mother Sainte-Agnès, born Léa Drolet.
- 1923, receives her Bachelor of arts degree.
- 1924, foundation of the Classical College at Sillery, co-founded with Mother Saint-Joseph, born Bernadette Paquin.
- 1934 to 1964, Editor of *Sillery* (The Alumni's Chronicles).
- 1940 to 1965, Director of the Alumni Association.
- 1930 to 1955, prefect of Studies.
- 1952, awarded a PhD Honoris Causa from Laval University.
- 1947 to 1962, advisor to the Provincial Government Education Department.
- 31 May 1954, Golden Religious Jubilee of Mother Marie-des-Anges (1904-1954). Celebration of gratitude organized by the Alumni.
- 3 May 1964, Diamond Jubilee: private celebration organized by the Alumni's council.
- 18 January 1967, departed for the Lord's House.

Source: Extract from Sillery number 95, page 20.



Laval University in Quebec, 21 June 1952, award ceremony granting Mother Marie-des-Anges (Adelcie Kirouac) a PhD *Honoris Causa* for teaching. (Photo: Archives of Laval University, Dept. Communications, U519.7920.2.230)

In the following pages, we reproduce a number of texts from **Sillery** with the kind permission of the Sisters of Jésus-Marie¹. **Sillery**, bulletin of College Jésus-Marie's Alumni. Mother Marie-des-Anges was the editor for thirty years. **Sillery**'s mission was to be the link between its "daughters" and their Alma Mater. Over the years, many of the girls who graduated from College Jésus-Marie wrote anecdotes, memories and their gratitude towards Mother-of-Angels² the College Director until 1955.

The Editor, **Le Trésor des Kirouac**

¹ Much gratitude to Sister Louise Turmel, rjm, archivist of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie at Sillery, for researching and lending us many issues of the **Sillery** bulletins and other documents. Consulting and photocopying extracts pertaining to the life of Mother Marie-des-Anges from **Sillery** was much appreciated.

² As the students used to call Mother Marie-des-Anges, simply *Mère des Anges* (*Mother of Angels*), this is how she is referred to in many excerpts taken from the **Sillery** bulletins.

In the text, lowercase and uppercase are used according to the present-day rules of Office de la langue française, except for texts taken verbatim from identified sources.



Mother Marie-des-Anges working at her desk at College Jésus-Marie in Sillery.

MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES

Bishop Parent¹ called her: The **Great** Mother Marie-des-Anges. Yes, she was great indeed in her soul, her heart and her intelligence. Her soul overflowed with God's love and that permeated everything she did. Her letters, her private conversation with the students, the spiritual conversations she shared, her instructions, brief exhortations shifting even the most stubborn wills, through all her love was always felt.

Her heart was very sensitive but just as strong. She had the will to dominate it when it was for the good of those, she was preparing to face the future. Her intelligence was well above average, so, she applied it to all mental crafts. She wrote very well, and at length, it was witty and refreshing and captivated even the most difficult readers and, no matter the subject, her students were always captivated by her classes.

Besides the extremely well-prepared pedagogical lectures, the long year-end school reports, the compositions enhancing congregation gatherings, our literary circles and receptions for VIPs, we also owe Mother Marie-des-Anges a biography entitled: **Dieu, Thérèse et trois ducats** (God, Theresa and three ducats) about whom prelate Cristian² who was used to this literary genre, said: *Once I started reading the book, I could not put it down until the last page and every detail interested me.*

She had started, but never finished, to write the history of our Congregation in Canada as well as, during over thirty years, writing the congregation bulletin: **Sillery**.

All initiatives that will be talked about in the following pages, came to be or were developed because of her work. Every time you will read about some progress, innovation, achievement, new useful, pleasant or beneficial to the students, her name will be mentioned, as she is the inspiration.

Extract from **Sillery 1925-1975**, pages 10-11

¹ Alphonse-Marie Parent, catholic priest and Quebec educator, born at Saint-Jean-Chrysostome on 2 April 1906, died on 7 October 1970 at the age of 64. He is best remembered as the man in charge of the *Royal Commission on Education in the Province of Quebec*, known as **Rapport Parent**.

² Léon Cristian, prelate, historian, theologian, published four books under the name, Nicolas Corte. Born on 4 January 1879 in France he died on 8 January 1971. Known for his works on the history of Protestantism and the Church in the 16th century. He also wrote many biographies, historical analyses, and books about theology essentially around Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Satan, and the notion of faith.

(Source: Wikipedia)

RELATIONSHIP WITH HER BROTHER CONRAD, BROTHER MARIE-VICTORIN

One heart
One mind
One ideal

Brother and sister
By birth and
By grace

One day, a member of the De Lasalle congregation wrote to Mother Marie-des-Anges that Brother Marie-Victorin counted on her for the development of his works in heaven as on earth. This is what he wrote: *You were bound hand and foot in his work; you were aware of it and even happy to be so connected with him. This explains the secret of his unimaginable ascendancy on the student population, so intrinsically enthusiastic but also just as enthusiastic about him. You will be happy to know that Marie-Victorin is still working on improving the people he loved so much and dreamed to see achieve so much greatness.*

My dearest older sister,

I have just read with great interest your letter and the draft for your article. Thank you so much for thinking about me so soon after your great celebrations which most likely took all your time and attention. They were right to cut your heads and tails in Victorian fashion. It is quite enough that I should be victim of this literary appendix completely inoperable. Nevertheless, do not believe that now your sentences are nonsensical (that does not make head or tail)! Quite the opposite, they are like newspaper report, amorphous, perfectly flat (boring), where it is forbidden to show emotion and pretend that it did happen! Thank God who saved us both, you and I, from journalism!

By scanning through the long pages of *L'Action Catholique* (Quebec French-speaking Catholic newspaper), I got an idea of your wonderful celebrations. It is great that Sillery (College) gets the publicity it deserves. These gatherings mean so much to the former students. It does good to their souls and contributes more than we may think to keep them linked to a past that, for most of them, is modestly synonym with vertu.

As for the whiff of incense that some like to put under your nose concerning me ... well, enjoy its aroma. God is sending it to you! It does not endanger me because, as for all prophets, I am not recognized in my own country. Let me tell you that after residing at Longueuil (College) for sixteen years, except for the young men (students at the College), very few people know me. I am better known in Montreal. Possibly because Montreal is a big village where more people can read!

Translation of extract from Brother Marie-Victorin's letter to his sister, Mother Marie-des-Anges, 27 June 1920, printed in *Sillery*, bulletin number 95, pages 18-19



Adelcie Kirouac's grandparents: Julie Hamel and Chevalier François Kirouac.

François Kirouac was a wholesale grain and flour merchant. He was also the mayor of Saint-Sauveur and its first alderman after the village became a district of Quebec City. (See *Le Trésor des Kirouac*, Special Edition, number 5 & 6 about François Kirouac, Knight of the Holy Sepulcher)

Special Edition 5 :

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Chevalier%20Francois%20Kirouac.pdf>

Special Edition 6 (only in French) :

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Hors%20serie%206%20Chevalier%20Francois%20Kirouac%20voyage%20en%20Europe.pdf>

BROTHER MARIE-VICTORIN

The brother* of the "great Mother Marie-des-Anges" evolved in a very different world than his sister, but they shared the same heart and soul, and intelligence.

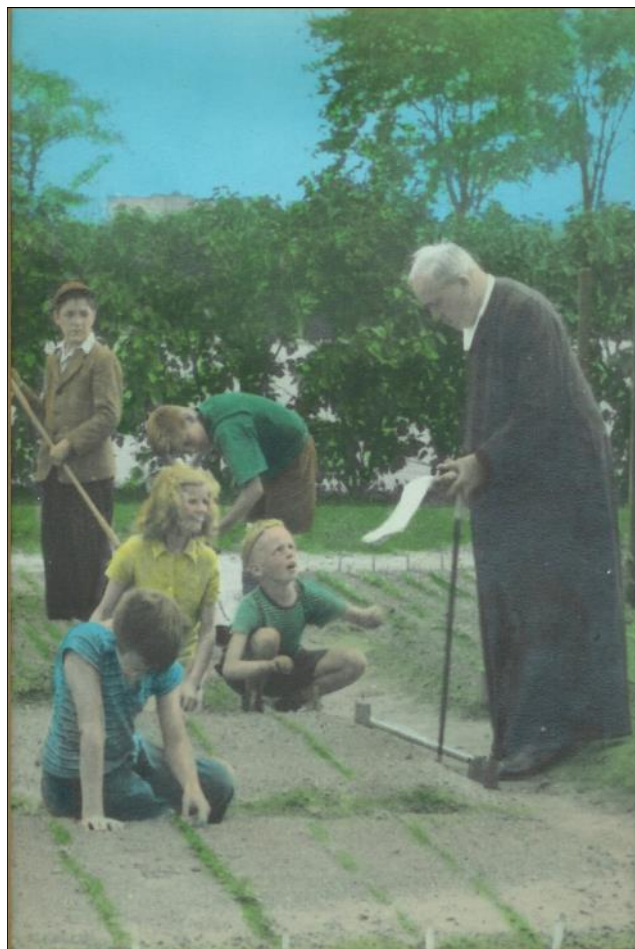
Considered as one of the rare Quebec scientists by Cardinal Villeneuve¹ Conrad, aged twelve, first discovered the Sillery Convent, because he used to visit his sisters who were boarding students there.

Later on, the Sillery College received the Brother who was a professor at Montreal University, and Director of the Montreal Botanical Institute before he created the famous (Montreal) Botanical Garden that should really bare his name.

Whenever a lecture by Marie-Victorin was announced in the Quebec area, Mother Marie-des-Anges immediately invited him to stop by the College and he never refused as he loved to do what he called: the *sillerisation of his talk*; a play on word: serialization & sillerisation.

He accompanied the college students on an herborization outing at Orléans Island to identify plants for the College's herbarium and also took the time to identify the trees in the arboretum on the College ground (*École de la Route (school on the road). It has been said that it took Brother Marie-Victorin a faith that can shift mountains to create the Montreal Botanical Garden. It is fair to say that it took Mother Marie-des-Anges the same kind of faith. A faith doubled with almost fool-hardy trust that resulted in obtaining what was deemed impossible. (*province wide program called: École de la Route, i.e., school on the road, especially geared to botanical outing).

Brother and sister: two great lives given absolutely and identically to one goal: the improvement of their compatriots. Extract from *Sillery* 1925-1975, pages 12-13



Brother Marie-Victorin, Conrad Kirouac
(KFA Archives, collection Jean-Yves Laurin)

¹ Rodrigue Villeneuve, Oblate of Mary-Immaculate Congregation, born on 2 November 1883 at Montreal, he died on 17 January 1947 at Alhambra, California, USA. Archbishop of Quebec 1931-1947. He was created cardinal by Pope Pius XI on 13 March 1933. (Source: Wikipedia)

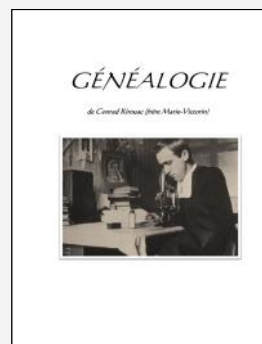
* See *Le Trésor des Kirouac*, Special Edition, number 3, published in 2016 (in French only):

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Hors-s%C3%A9rie%203%20g%C3%A9n%C3%A9alogie%20Marie-Victorin.pdf>



* See: *Genealogy of Conrad Kirouac*, (Brother Marie-Victorin, including collaterals (in French only):

https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/F-5.4.1_G%C3%A9n%C3%A9alogie%20de%20Conrad%20Kirouac%20fr%C3%A8re%20Marie-Victorin%202.pdf





College Jésus-Marie at Sillery, Quebec, after the 1983 fire. Students were welcomed in the new building in September 1984. (Photo: Sister Cécile Kirouac, collection Céline Kirouac)



Eudora Kirouac, Adelcie's sister, Mother Marie-des-Anges, married Édouard Laurin. (KFA Photo, collection Jean-Yves Laurin)



Adelcie, Mother Marie-des-Anges and Conrad, Brother Marie-Victorin (seated, second from left) had another sister, Blanche Kirouac, (seated, second from right), who was the wife of Arthur Drolet, seated in the middle of the photo. (Photo: KFA collection)



Brother and sisters of Mother Marie-des-Anges, Adelcie Kirouac; from left to right, Eudora (Laurin), Laura (Lebel), Conrad, Blanche (Drolet) and Bernadette (Maranda). (Photo: KFA collection)



Cyrille Kirouac and Philomène Luneau's children: from left to right: Eudora Kirouac-Laurin, Blanche Kirouac-Drolet, Adelcie, Conrad, Laura Kirouac-Lebel, and Bernadette Kirouac-Maranda in the garden of College Jésus-Marie at Sillery on 8 June 1941. (Photo: KFA collection)

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES

A special issue of *Sillery*, number 53 published from May to August 1954 describes the various celebrations honoring Mother Marie-des-Anges for her golden Jubilee:

For twenty years, Mother Marie-des-Anges wrote about *Sillery* (College). Today, *Sillery* presents Mother Mère Marie-des-Anges. It is the homage of a son to his mother to whom he owes everything: a respected name, safe first steps, wonderful vitality, rich language, and myriads of friends. As a testimony of gratitude, the *Sillery* carries the vibrant echo to the world of the celebrations marking the jubilee.

Wednesday, 26 May 1954, three studios.

Three art studios in the house, each one very different. In one studio, delicate work on porcelain and on leather; in another studio, imagination at work, for the Golden Jubilee of Mother Marie-des-Anges, madonas are created in the 1954 fashion, modern statue of the Virgin Mary. On the ground-floor, humorous inventive work created by the younger girls. No words needed, only a gesture. At the door, a leprechaun sitting astride a wooden pallet offer paints to her classmate who traces: *Fresh paint. Come in and see.* Surprisingly intelligent elves display their creations.

Thursday, 27 May, the exhibition halls are open to the pupils' parents ... We saw mothers in awe in front of their daughters' marvelous angels, gently improved by the art teacher; another one reading a composition for the tenth time, proofread and emended, written by her youngest daughter; a third one crying for joy, discovering that her daughter had learned to sew! We saw fathers, laughing till they cried

when looking at their portrait; other fathers spending hours trying to solve involuntary riddles, other prisoners of their daughters holding on tight to them to show them all they had done. Look at this and that, and that, *Daddy, I did this, and this, and this too.*

30 May 1954, already

Everything turns around this date. Today is the solemnity of Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur as the chapel is named in honour of Our Lady of The Sacred Heart and this day was well chosen to celebrate Mother Marie-des-Anges' Golden Jubilee. The sun kept a low profile through the whole month of May. Will he come out for the celebration? He is still hiding behind a thick curtain of clouds this morning. This afternoon's outdoor ceremony depends entirely on his good will. Let's see.

Indoor, nothing is affected by the outdoor greyness. It is all light and joy. Mother Mère Marie-des-Anges' family, as well as the Alumni's President and Board members, the nuns from nearby congregations are all here for the solemn High Mass. Officiating is Reverend Father Roger Drolet, Jesuit, nephew of the honored lady. The angelic music during the High Mass was worthy of the Queen of Angels; isn't it her name?

For that day, the Alumni's corner in the house is much larger than usual. At two p.m., the former students arrive and minutes later, at long last and in spite of the forecast, the sun makes an appearance. Warm rays shine exactly where the inauguration of the mast will take place. The mast is a gift to the jubilarian.

At three p.m., the sound of the brass band attracts crowds on the College grounds as for a large wedding. Two-hundred-year-old trees were cut down to make space for the

imposing thirty-seven-foot mast, very close to the "bow" of the College. On the opposite side of the brass band, a temporary platform was built for the VIPs.

Behind the mast, Miss Landry, student body president, holds the flag that should never touch the ground. A touching peculiarity of the ceremonial! In the centre there is a large empty space: the Patro's younger members make a noble guard and help keep the crowd in line. The Alumni and the actual students are standing in front of the College building. The nuns fill the path along the wing.

A drumbeat, then the voice of Mrs. Paul Godbout, President of the Alumni, says: *Today, dear Mother, you are witnessing one of your dreams come true, and surprisingly enough, for once it has happened without you! Your mast is standing magnificent and strong, at the College's entrance, your capital work. Your former students present it to you to immortalize your memory.*

This monument is here to stay permanently as a symbol of your extraordinary personality. The mast, like you, is forever pointing to heaven, symbol of high hopes, unselfishness and success. It is solidly anchored in a cement base and will stand up to winds and storms, reminding everyone of all the hurricanes that threatened your courage but never manage to shake it.

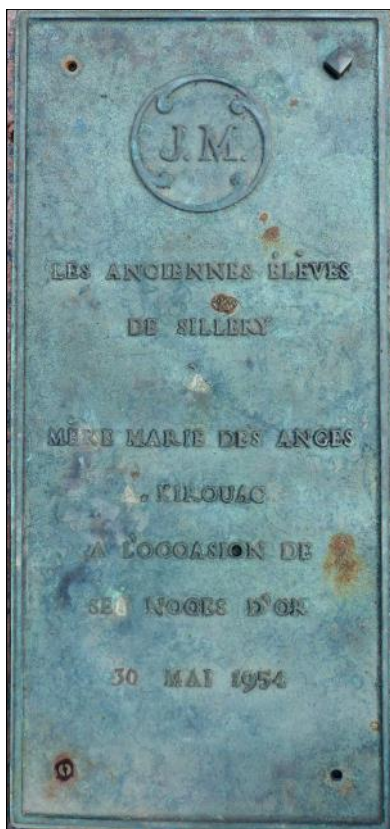
50th

'If ever its fine head were to lightly bend under squalls, we will say with a smile: It is her mast! It can even brave lightning, of course, if it were hit, it would protect its surrounding. Haven't you sometimes shown daring audacity and parry the blows meant for others? A mast is in itself an ornament and a symbol but, on some more solemn days, it holds a flag, baring a lesson or a message.

'Here ends the comparisons: don't we all know that Mother Marie-des-Anges cannot wait for a feast day to launch her marvelous ideas given that even the night cannot slow her creative mind? Today, the Quebec flag is floating at the top of your great mast, so proud to be the first one to do so. This flag is only six years old (was voted by the Quebec Government in 1948). So, it is with youthful enthusiasm that it flies in honour of the province and the exceptional lady making her province proud.

Together we salute the flag that must, in turn, in the future, salute our happy events.

Dear Mother, other colours will also be flown from your mast, that of the Congregation that owes you so much success and glory.



Plaque unveiled on 30 May 1954 at the foot of the mast, gift to Mother Marie-des-Anges.

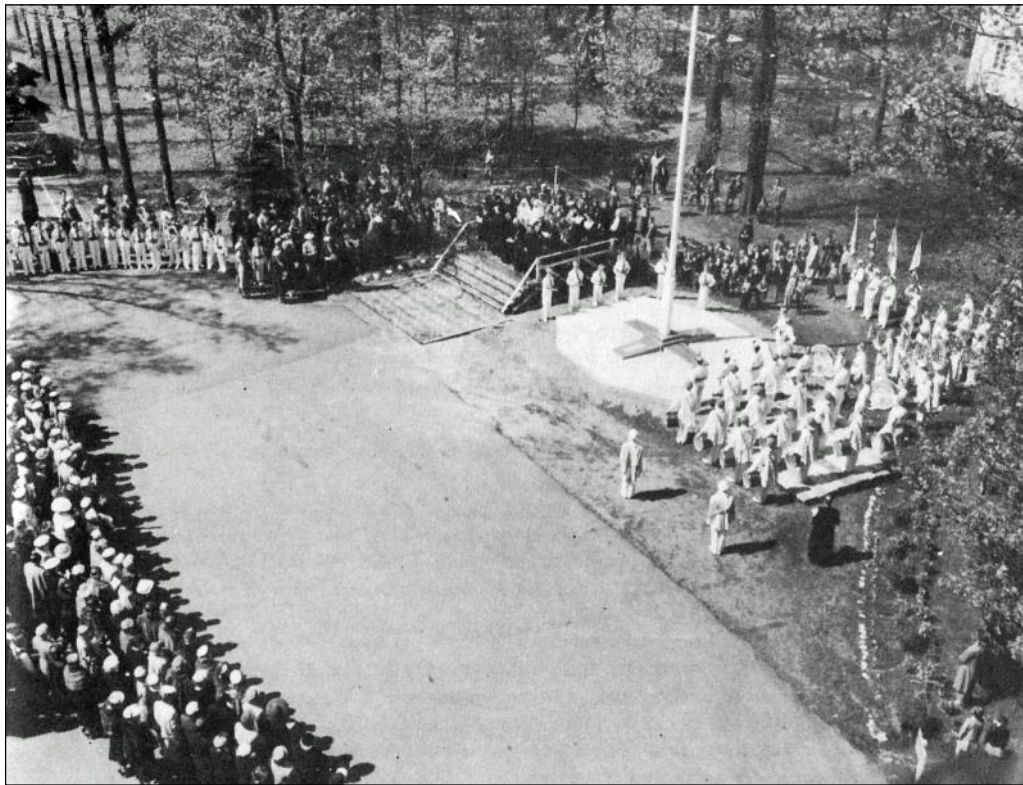
Photo : F. Kirouac, 21 juin 2019



Inauguration of the mast gifted to Mother Marie-des-Anges at the Jésus-Marie Convent at Sillery, Quebec, on 30 May 1954. (photo source: *Sillery*, special issue number 53, May-August 1958 chronicles, p. 398)

The nature of a mast is to be tall, so its purpose is to highly display family, national and religious emblems. And that of a person whose merit is so great, like her vocation and titles, hence the outreach of her mission.

You works, dear Reverend Mother, are a testimony to your high ideals as a nun and apostle. We must bow our heads to you and your example and be ever grateful to be your former students in the Institution you belong too.



On 30 May 1954, Part of the assistance attending the inauguration of the mast at Jésus-Marie College in Sillery, Quebec. (Photo source: *Sillery*, special issue number 53, May-August 1958 p. 399)

Editor's Note: The brass bands included the bugle corps from one of Quebec City's Patro to enhance the unveiling of the mast. **Patro**, short for "patronage", catholic youth movement founded in Quebec in 1861. Its mission was to develop youths through training activities, like music, gymnastic, winter sports and leisure. In the province of Quebec, in the nineteen-fifties, the **Patros** took part in the Saint-John-the-Baptist day parades (24 June), Labour Day weekend and many other popular gatherings.

"May the mast, symbol of your dreams and a powerful antenna, bring you, dear Mother, the words of loving admiration from all Sillery College's former students, wherever they are in the world!"

A minute filled with amotion when Mother Marie-des-Anges, at the sound of the drumbeat, raised the flag to the top of the high mast! The spectators watching in contemplative silence. Sadly there is no photo single showing the whole assistance.

Singing the salute to the flag at the end of the ceremony:

I- We salute you, proud flag!
Symbol of courage,
Fly and shine up above
Witness to hope!

Chorus

Fly over my College,
Symbol of protection!
Honour to you, proud flag!
Fly and shine above us!



Solemn Moment: Mother Marie-des-Anges raising the flag. (Photo source: *Sillery*, special issue number 53, May-August 1958 p. 399)

II - Ô proud flag, honour to you!
Gracious anthology,
Reminder of the exploits
And ideals of my College!

III - Ô Lord, bless our flag!
Our soul beseech thee,
From above, may it proclaim
The glories of Jésus-Marie
(College)!
And Mother Marie-des-Anges

For a few moments, **Sillery** will
proudly stand again at its normal
peak

"Dearest Alumni,

Yes, Dearest! I would like to find
another much stronger moniker to
express my feelings towards
everyone of you. You have been so
generous towards me today; you are
all now much dearer to me. God
willing, I will keep serving you as
long as the twilight's shadow,
somewhere not too far, do not
diminish or snuff out my working
capacity. In the meantime, I
remember a passage from the
Talmud saying: *Comes a moment
when words die on the lips, except
for words of thanksgiving.* This is
where I am at this moment in my
life, I feel it is the moment when
everything comes together and
becomes a song of gratitude that
you can hear, I am sure, without my
having to say a word . . .

How can I add up all your
kindnesses, your generosities, your

tokens of affection, your faithful
testimonies, not only towards the
person speaking to you but also
towards all of Jésus Marie College,
even Rome who benefited from
your substantial offerings; and
remembering all the Jubilees that
we celebrated at Sillery!

How can we add up all the
extraordinary events organized by
the Presidents and counsellors who
guided the Alumni Association
during the past fifty years, whom
we saw hard at work, admiring the
work as it progressed! Listing
names would only end up in a long
enumeration of living and departed,
present and absent, it would be an
endless litany of friends closely
linked by unbreakable ties forever
surrounded by an endlessly growing
circle around the Canadian Jésus-
Marie foundation.

During the long career that God
gave me, I have known saintly
women, and many in our religious
congregation while walking this
earth but now in heaven. I have
known and benefited from wise
women, remarkable superiors
presiding over the destinies of your
convent. I met women who led very
special edifying, even heroic lives,
whose virtues placed them high up
on the value scale.

Here, I could name some former
students who well deserve to be in
our Legion of Honour. For all this, I
thank God, And I thank Him also

because he enables me to reap so
much even in so many places where
I had not been sowing, for this
please thank the Lord with me. Most
likely you have already done so
today when we were gathered at the
foot of Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur.

And now to conclude this day with
the younger ones, we will show you
a film that will not have the
seriousness of the lectures presented
at *École des Parents* (school for
parents). It is a fanciful film,
particularly the part about the
youngest pupils, the film was made
by Mother Marie-de-la-Joie. This is
the eighteenth edition since the first
film made in 1936 for the new
College's film library."

As you wanted to underline my
career as an educator, in this film
you will recognize activities similar
to those of your youth and teenage
years. Hour after hour, season after
season, parallel to student life, you
will see the nuns from your convent,
carrying on the same maternal role
as your former teachers did. I have
the great pleasure to leaf through
this beautiful book of images, and
narrate it, this is the film of the
school year 1953-54.

The film, with its very special
soundtrack, was carefully and
lovingly listened to by those present.

Extract from **Sillery**, number 53 pp. 397-
401 and pp. 416-417.



Photo & Logo, courtesy of Collège Jésus-Marie



Sixtieth Anniversary of Religious Profession

EDITORIAL

Introduction:

An issue of the *Sillery*, however special it is, must always include an editorial by Mother Marie-des-Anges. Totally unaware of it, she offered us a most pleasant editorial that we are very proud to include in the present *Sillery* as an homage to the devoted foundress of our College on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee of religious life.

Without any doubt, Mother Marie-des-Anges, you are essential, indispensable...

My dearest former students,

At Sillery, we are still enjoying the invigorating air of May third when friendship scents the home. The three o'clock chime calling me to be with you in this hall, witness of so many solemn celebrations or private ones, is still filling my ears, and my heart will not forget it. All the happy faces of those of you who were present, and the absent ones as well, because of the wonderful messages received, provides me with great joy as I still remember. These reminiscences keep entertaining me with so many delicious memories.

My warmest gratitude goes to all those of you who came, and to all those who wanted to come. I can still feel the deep warmth of so much true filial love surging when we met again!

I always knew that I loved you, and I have many reasons to do so: and I think that with age, my feelings are not diminishing, quite the opposite, the intensity is growing tenfold. Among people who live and work closely toward the same goal, precious feelings of affection develop; that are sources of joy for heart and soul. This is why I said to those around me, on that Sunday, May third, something like this:

"Dear friends, I think that my poor eyes are able to better see now, especially when it comes to all of you to whom I have consecrated the past sixty years of my life! My memory is still sharp. I can remember your youthful antics of yesteryears, particularly when I am at the chapel, where you are still a distraction... So with daily growing sympathy I thank you!

Excerpt from *Sillery*, special number 88, chronicles from May to July 1964, page 111.

Reverend Mother Marie-des-Anges,

You have entrusted us with your beloved child: *Sillery*! What a responsibility it is for us! This beloved child of yours, has inherited your great talent! Indeed, you styled him with tenderness, but always with gentle and indispensable discipline. It grew in age, unavoidable contingency, but particularly radiated. It remains a young charming child visiting many hundreds former students bringing them refreshing friendship, affectionate warmth, awakening pleasant memories in each one.

For each of us, it is a child easily forgiven with a grateful smile, for disturbing the busy timetable running our daily activities.

We are always keenly interested to welcome it. We know it is our duty to treat it with the same love we had for him in the past.

It will require much more intelligent care from us. If would be a great mistake not to supply it with a rich diet of intellectual quality. We would enormously harm it! Its menus will have to be well planned... Otherwise, it will wither! Its development must continue harmoniously for it to grow true to itself and faithful to its inner promises.

Reverend Mother, notwithstanding our beautiful and sincere resolutions to watch over your child with joy and interest, you cannot abandon your child!

It will require your frequent visits, otherwise, the Alumni would no longer find the usual exquisite tone in their *Sillery* which is part of its charm and should not disappear. You will certainly want to keep feeding it delicacies, e. g., articles as only you can cook with the right taste.

Finally, promise to be faithful to your heir by serving it a fully vitaminized editorial for each issue. Remember, dear Mother, that today's children are very demanding, yours as well as ours.

Mrs. Kathleen Renaud-Grenier, vice-president.

3 May 1964

For the sixtieth anniversary of religious life of
MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES, r. J.-M.

Excerpt from *Sillery*, special number 88, chronicles from May to July 1964, pp. 112-113.



Adelcie Kirouac (Mother Marie-des-Anges) and her sisters, in the garden of College Jésus-Marie at Sillery, Quebec, 8 June 1941. From left to right: Eudora, Mrs. Edouard Laurin, Blanche, Mrs. Arthur Drolet, Adelcie, Mother Marie-des-Anges, Laura, Mrs. Flavius Lebel, Bernadette, Mrs. Albert Maranda. (KFA Collection)

Sixtieth Anniversary of Religious Profession

SIBLING'S TESTIMONY

May we be permitted to add our testimony to that of our classmates who knew and loved our dear Mother Marie-des-Anges, to edify or even amuse the Alumni.

There will be indiscretions, but we may even risk the ire of a lamb! Here we are! We, her siblings, Eudora, Blanche, Bernadette and Laura Kirouac, have been privileged to spend many years near her, in our family home or at the convent. We always had so much love and admiration for her great qualities as a keen nun. We will leave to others the pleasure to laud her various exploits, her knowledge, her psychology, her administrative capabilities, to talk about her youth weaknesses, sweet sin. Can you imagine that she was a peacock ... And quite a peacock!

Without her permission, we will tell you about her last worldly days before entering the Novitiate.

She was nineteen. One evening, she asked our mother for one last favour: a pretty farewell dress. Mother who loved her eldest daughter gave her *carte blanche*, i.e., a blank check) although with tears in her eyes.

And off she went looking for the dreamed treasure. It was a success: the dress was a gentle light grey with pretty embroidered white satin lily appliqués, and narrow black velvet ribbons inserted.

It had a high collar as was the fashion then and very modest of course!!! The dress was very long with a train also in fashion in the 1900... And she was nineteen!!! No need to mention the sautoir, the small crystal cut vial of perfume, attached to a long gold chain, today it would be replaced by a simple silver cross. And what about the hat! Ravishing, adorned with a long gray ostrich feather, that kept sweeping her shoulders. It was VERY elegant... and she knew it!

And one day, thus attired, she left the house to visit her brother Conrad, Brother Marie-Victorin, then at the Mont-de-La-Salle novitiate in Hochelaga, (in the east-end of Montreal). The doorman described the young lady to the headmaster of the novitiate who hesitated before giving permission for her to go to the visitors' parlour. Finally, the headmaster said to the young Brother: "Go, my son, but be careful!" Of course she had mentioned being his sister, but... you never know? The parting was touching and comforting because they loved each other.

In the end, this important shortcoming only reinforced her allegiance to her vow of poverty added to her vow of obedience, the virtues we always admired in her, but, sometimes, caused us great embarrassment. Whatever we brought her, went straight to Mother Superior's room; so much so, that with time we would ask ourselves what would make Mother Superior happy!



Adelcie Kirouac, at nineteen,
16 August 1902
(Photo by Vandry, KFA collection)

We nearly sincerely believed that it was such a deeply ingrained habit that, if the Lord himself sent her some favours from heaven, she would feel bad not being able to offer them to Mother Superior!

In the meantime, we want to keep her with us for a long time, being so happy for the privilege of being the little sisters of such a good, charming and saintly Big Sister.

Mrs. Laura Kirouac-LeBel

Excerpt from *Sillery*, special number 88, May to July 1964, chronicles, pp. 118-119.

Sixtieth Anniversary of Religious Profession MEDLEY OF MEMORIES

Sixty years of religious life is a long diamond river! Of course, there is a diamond for every year and only the Great Jeweler can tell which is the most beautiful. For us earthlings it is difficult to judge, but I am quite sure that each group of “Mère des Anges” students thinks that their time was the best and the most brilliant. We all claim her attention and affection like a possessive child, to use today's psycho-analytic vocabulary.

However, during our dear Mother-of-Angels' lifetime, some years were particularly notable because they marked a historical evolution in Quebec City and the Province of Quebec. I am talking about the foundation of the college course at Sillery. The perfect adventure to tempt a woman with an open mind and ardent temperament.

Accompanied by Mother Sainte-Agnès, whom we respectfully salute presently in far-away Italy, the two of them sailed to France for a two-year stay in order to do the necessary studies to complete their project i.e., get their bachelor's degree. Imagine these two ladies wearing lay costume, standing very straight on their high heels, all ears and eyes, even with an elegant fox' around Mère des Anges' shoulder, her family had insisted on it. So many memories! It was hard work. It makes me smile thinking of the kind lady in the boarding house offering a magic herbal tea to Mother Sainte-Agnès to cure her headache; the herbal tea was an ordinary cup of tea, and it helped.

In 1923, College Jésus-Marie was finally officially opened. But how many arguments and how much diplomacy were needed to get the university heads to agree! The late Mother Saint-Joseph could talk at length about it.

In 1928, when the first women became bachelors, it was an unforgettable moment! All of you who were present on that October 1928 evening, remember the great reception hall, all the shining bright lights when the students' choir sang the famous: *Estudiantina* with its rapturous verses written especially for the occasion. I can still hear the shout: “Here are our Bachelors!”

Sillery rejoices, rejoices. On that evening, so much effort was crowned! As I write this, the memories still make me shiver, I feel moved and pampered just like on that evening. Can you imagine the emotions the *Mothers* responsible for that event felt?

We lived through exceptionally amazing years and the atmosphere we enjoyed was wonderful particularly influenced by Mère-des-Ange' spirit and heart. She inspired us, she made us want to study and to give our best in everything.

60th Anniversary of Religious Profession HISTORY IS MADE UP OF STORIES

When I arrived at Sillery College, some fifty years ago, Mother Marie-des-Anges had just made her final vows. I admit that I dreaded her slightly ironic comments and her sharp steel-gray eyes. Her eyes were hiding great kindness but that is something I only discovered later.

One day, Mother Marie-des-Anges who was very musical, noticed my rather strident voice. I still remember her reaction: “what a bugle”, she exclaimed. In all humility, from then on and until the end of my studies, thus I signed every literary composition I wrote. This dear Mother was my first piano teacher. Although I was zero in algebra and geometry, she turned me into an honorable graduate.

We can also mention what she did with our news bulletin *Sillery*, thanks to her spiritual and humorous penmanship, it became an international contact liaison maintaining alive the spirit of Jésus-Marie around the world.

When adding up the many different gifts of our Dear Mother of Angels, let us say that she is the perfect case of omniscience, general knowledge. Her humility can absorb that; she has seen and heard a lot more! And, as she reads these lines, I can see the small ironic flame of kindness in her gray eyes, and her wry smile which does not frighten me anymore because I know about its loving indulgence.

Claire Panneton-Neveu
Trois-Rivières, end of April 1964.

Excerpt from *Sillery*, special number 88, May to July 1964 chronicles, pp. 119-120

Text written by Madeleine Laliberté in collaboration with Jacqueline Métayer-Pelletier, printed in *Sillery*, special issue 88, May-July 1964, pages 120-121.

60th Anniversary of Religious Profession
HER NIECE, CÉCILE DROLET-GIROUARD, SINGS FOR HER REVERED AUNT

*Ah! Good Mother-of-Angels
You and your angelic patience...
So many times, your frowned eyebrows
Misled us about your good intentions
But today, we understand.*

Photo from **Sillery**:
Mrs. Cécile Drolet-Girouard, accompanied by
Mother Saint-Robert-Marie*, Cécile Kirouac, rjm.

Excerpt from **Sillery**, special number 88, May to July
1964 chronicles, pp. 119-120

*Editor's note: see **Le Trésor des Kirouac**, Special Edition,
number 4 (in French only):

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/
Soeur_Cecile_Kirouac.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/7bb0d2a7/files/uploaded/Soeur_Cecile_Kirouac.pdf)



August 1904, souvenir studio photo to mark the perpetual profession of Adelcie Kirouac, Mère Marie-des-Anges (Mother-of-Angels). From left to right, seated: Cyrille Kirouac, Mère Marie-des-Anges, Philomène, Cyrille's wife, Conrad, Brother Marie-Victorin, seated in front: Eudora and Bernadette; standing behind: Blanche and Laura. (Photo: Archives, French-speaking Canadian *Frères des Écoles chrétiennes* aka De LaSalle Brothers.)

DEATH OF MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES

UNITED IN THE SAME MISSION

Letter from Reverend Mother Sainte-Agnès, Superior at Paris, to the Reverend Provincial Mother in Quebec.

On the 19, at 7:45 a. m. (Paris time), I received the cable (telegram) that you kindly sent me. I was deeply touched by your thoughtfulness, and I thank you very much.

It was a shock to hear the news. Although after the last news I received from Sillery College, I expected it, nevertheless it leaves a deep sorrow. However, I feel some joy in my heart and I thank the Lord who prepared Mother Marie-des-Anges to meet Him through multiple and gradual separations. That spared her much pain as her faculties weakened and she lost the rare precious gifts He had given her.

Reverend Mother, you can imagine how my thoughts and my heart are more at Sillery than in Paris these days where I find it difficult to live so far away, but somewhat closer to my dear Mother Marie-des-Anges who is now with God.

Excerpt from **Sillery**, special number 95, March 1967, page 5.

AN EDUCATOR'S HUGE INFLUENCE

Clouds can hide a star, but the clouds leave while the star remains. As death struck Mother Marie-des-Anges, it chased away the clouds darkening her last year. As soon as her eyes were closed, our dear Mother appeared to us in all the glory of her great years.

Looking at her in her coffin, she looked younger and so dignified. We relived the years when, under her impulse, Sillery College was growing very fast. It helped us to forget the last months – perhaps the most productive of her life - but our memory will forever bring her back as she was during those brilliant years.

The first memory coming back so vividly is that of the young dynamic teacher: we loved her in spite of her fine irony or more likely because of it. At the time, the Superiors, like astrologers, soon understood that in the Sillery sky she was an exceptionally bright super nova star. Thanks to these discoveries, Mother Marie-des-Anges had the opportunity to progress faster in the Catholic Institutes at Paris and Lyon, France

When she came back, we were so happy to see her on the teacher's podium again, proudly holding a French diploma. Both her teaching and prestige improved. She was ready to “enter” the College, and the College was ready to receive her. Mother Saint-Joseph, having finally won the unfair battle against the anti-feminists, was able to open the College doors to her.

We are surprised today (in 1967) to see how unrestrained the director was at the time, she was not afraid to assume on her own, teaching nearly all the subjects on the programme: philosophy, mathematics, biology, Latin, literature. True, there were few girls then, however, she was also in charge of the boarders. Her duties included preparing classes, correcting homework, as well as being the librarian, the Alumni administrator, and

writer-editor of the **Sillery** (college newspaper). She tackled head on these challenges: audacity was her middle-name and allowed her to win.

She often prayed to the Holy Spirit who obviously helped her right from the start and she succeeded in everything. The teacher provided knowledge and affection, and the handpicked students gave their full measure.

College life during those golden years was both pleasant and vibrant. The timetable was varied too: drama evening given by a group expertly trained by Mother Sainte-Agnès; concerts and lectures given by American and European celebrities; small intimate events where friendships were made and grew; spiritual readings commented with conviction and humour by the director; private talks when the educator happily and successfully took on the role of psychoanalyst.

It was too good to last; when she became general director of studies,

Mother Marie-des-Anges had to abandon teaching to work at a desk in her office where a thousand problems needed her attention

She was the queen of her domain. Reorganizing programmes, adjusting them to the rhythm of her dreams. Students and teachers followed like obedient satellites the sometime-capricious director's progression. After the Ursulines and Bellevue Colleges joined the movement, the programmes were consolidated.

From then on, university exams were no longer shifted from one class to another. However, the regularity broke the charm of the unexpected. By multiplying the changes, Mother Marie-des-Anges

had a gift to give new life to everything she touched.

The growing number of students compelled the prefect of studies to cede her role to Mother Marie-de-Lourdes; She found this to be a great sacrifice but she did it generously. She had to do the same many times over. But isn't sacrifice the complement of every valuable work?

Little by little, she had to abandon her tasks or the tasks left to her, one after the other, until one day she had to relinquish them all. And the last one, the ultimate deprivation was having to abandon her cherish apartment at the College.

Three months later, completely helpless, she reached the *Consummatum* point. There was nothing left for death to take from her.

This, like long extinguished stars, still giving light, years after being extinguished, thus Mother Marie-des-Anges will keep lighting the way and warming up Sillery College, her work and success.

Simone Letellier, rjm. (Mother Saint-Bernardin)

Excerpt from **Sillery**, number 95, March 1967, pp. 6-7.

HOMAGE FROM ONE OF THE FIRST FIVE BACHELORS

The College pioneers who lived those extraordinary first years with so much enthusiasm, intense work under the direction of Mother Marie-des-Anges, this intelligent and fine educator, can only feel a great sadness when realizing that she is no longer. A page from the book of life has been turned. A page full of marvelous memories, stimulating examples on three fronts: intellectual, moral and spiritual, a page that none of us could ever forget and that will forever remain a source of inspiration for all of us.

We know that Mother Marie-des-Anges was received in heaven with open arms, that all the gold and diamonds of her years of religious life assured her a place of choice. Even if her departure leaves a void and make us sad, we can still rejoice to see her free from corporal limits and fully enjoying eternal bliss, the reward for being faithful to God including all the daily courage, the unselfishness and love needed. Let us pray to her who was a lighthouse along the road of our teenage years; from the far away and beautiful heavens, she will continue to shine a light on our road and watch over the education of our children.

It is with great emotion that we join with all her other former students to pay her homage today, the homage of our filial affection and our eternal gratitude.

Madeleine Laliberté.

Excerpt from **Sillery**, number 95, March 1967, p. 10.

DEATH OF MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES FROM A FRIEND - LIFTING THE VEIL

What can I say that you do not already know about the magnanimous soul of Mother Marie-des-Ange, although I have spent eleven years and six months by her side? Did she not give the very best of herself, unaware of it, as she wrote the *Sillery* during over a quarter century?

She was true and spontaneous, but she also enjoyed a little mystery... Particularly where she was concerned, and, above all, the secret of the King. However, all those who can read between the lines must have discovered what she thought was hidden or that she did not want to disclose. Those people who have the habit of keeping everything, now have letters or notes written by Mother Marie-des-Ange, the former students, the subscribers, eager to read her bulletin will likely be pleased to savour again the spiritual flavour of her writings. In those short notes, in those old letters that you might find on your bookshelf, you are likely to find that they have a new taste... a taste of heaven. Because, our dear Mother, at once so far and so close to us, now can understand all our thoughts in the "mirror of divine essence" and give to this sap a new vigour adapted to each one.

Her ideal was to touch souls to make sure they more easily reached the God of Love, why would she not carry on doing the same from Heaven? Let's not forget

that when we think about her, she knows it... and instantly her thoughts reach ours. This is the saints' communion, that is the way she lived on earth, hence she often exclaimed: "Our religion is beautiful! When I will be gone, the veil between us will disappear... and I will not leave you!"

By reading what she has written, isn't that a way to be in her presence? Of course there is a sad part: we can no longer see her or hear her; we cannot dialogue with her as we did in the past. But this mysterious relation of souls between heaven and earth reminds me of a contemporary musical poem where harmony is built of as many silences as notes. And the silences sometime better answer the intimate needs of the musician or of the listener, as two people who are walking together without saying a word, but expressing their feelings better than with words, however tender they may be. So, let us not hesitate to talk with her, explain our problems to her; she loved us so much that she will manage to touch the heart of the Father in our favour... That is how she will answer us.

Our Lord knows that I really want so much good for you. Your gifts, all the Masses, prayers, testimonials. I am touched by your generous donations and it strengthens my admiration for your faithfulness. What a long phrase to say to you that my gratitude will change into



Mother St-Robert Marie, Cécile Kirouac*, R.J.M. (Photo : Marie Kirouac) **French Hors Série* number 4. English translation in preparation.

prayers for your dear soul, each soul which is so agreeable to the good Lord.

Courage, trust and filial abandon to His great Love, this is the grace I especially ask for you. Are these last lines not a testimony of the affection that she continues to give from heaven?

And until the eternal meeting, let us rest assured that her joy will be to incessantly draw for you from the divine Fire, innumerable sparks of light and love.

Cécile Kirouac, R.J.M. (Mother St-Robert Marie)

Excerpt from *Sillery*, number 95, March 1967, pp. 15-16.

DEATH OF MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES OUR DEAREST OLDER SISTER

... For her family, she was a saint whose whole life was a long prayer. Faithful to her vows, humble in her obedience, loving her poverty to such an extent that all she left filled a small cardboard box.

Those who knew her, who loved her, - like us her siblings who could communicate with her more intimately, she had an exquisite thoughtful soul, so completely abandoned to God's will, - we rejoice in the fact that she is our mediator in Heaven. She is now part of the Grand Chapter, she understands our problems, the problems of the new generation, of the numerous nephews and nieces.

She is a woman kneeling in front of God, living only for Him and with Him, in the acquired innocence that is the essence of the saints on earth, she was a woman detached from earthly things, her spirituality was blossoming, human and communicative. Nevertheless, this woman was afraid to meet her Master! She never denied it. Undoubtedly, she had received so many blessings, lights, that the least imperfection, brushing her clear soul, troubled the mystical world in which she lived until the very end!

And God was good to her by gradually retiring her from this world, slowly, very softly, without any shock... one evening she flew away, like a shooting star pushing through our galaxy to rise higher and higher, to reach the Creator of all things . . . and of her soul.

Here is a word, written in her own hand that gives us a clear view of her thinking and rightful desires: "Lord, we need to die, of course, but we also need to live!" She wanted to keep doing good around her.

During the last moments of her life, when a very dear friend was assisting her in her agony and asking her if she wanted to die. "No, she answered, I don't think it is good to wish to die; I only want to do God's will."

For the family, this context of surrender is the synthesis of her whole uplifting and inspiring life. We are happy to have such a protector and advocate to plead for us in heaven for everything.



Laura Kirouac (Photo : Archives des Frères des Écoles chrétiennes; (De LaSalle Brothers' Archives))

Dearest big sister, everything is over! You are now admitted to the Lord's Banquet, like you wanted so much. Our good parents and our beloved departed Brother Marie-Victorin surely came to meet you when you arrived in Heaven to welcome you and accompany you to the Great Rendez-Vous!

We dearly miss you; we pray to you, and we remain hopeful!

Your affectionate sister, Laura Kirouac-LeBel

Excerpt from *Sillery*, number 95, March 1967, p. 17.



DEATH OF MOTHER MARIE-DES-ANGES OTHER TESTIMONIES

From Her Royal Highness the former Empress Zita of Austria-Hungary to Mother Saint-Charles de Milan

Profoundly saddened by your message announcing the death of our dearest Mother Marie des Anges, to you my dear Mother, and to the Reverend Provincial Mother, to Mother St-Robert-Marie and to all the other Sisters of Jésus-Marie, I want to express my heartfelt sympathy.

My sons and my daughters join me, particularly my daughter Elisabeth of Liechtenstein who had the privilege to be a student of the unforgettable departed. As it is impossible for her to write, accidents in her family prevent her from doing so, she asked me in writing to express her sorrow, her understanding, and assure you of her prayers and her children's prayers.

My prayers to the Lord for the exceptional soul of the dear departed are filled with gratitude for her very kind and ever so generous friendship towards our family. The sadness I feel at her departure is mixed with the joy I feel for the reward and glory that are hers now.

Excerpt from *Sillery*, number 95, March 1967, p. 21.

Editor's Note: Empress Zita, widowed at 30 with eight children, lived in Quebec City from 1940 to 1948 to ensure her four younger children could do their secondary/superior studies in a French College; thus, her youngest daughter, Elisabeth (1922-1993), knew Mother Marie-des-Anges.



Empress Zita of Austria-Hungary (1892-1989) official photo taken in 1916 when she was crowned Queen of Hungary at Budapest.

From the Reverend Mother Saint-Thomas d'Aquin to the Reverend Mother Sainte-Blanche de Castille¹

Pear Mother Marie-des-Anges is now in heaven and her country owes a great deal to this great lady now gone. She was a pioneer in classic teaching for young women in Quebec, she fought through thick and thin to change mentalities as much as realities, in everyday life, superior education for women.

The Ursuline sisters remember her kindness and generosity when sharing her experience when their College was starting. . . She can rest assured of our prayers; may she, from her glorious heaven, continue to protect those who are continuing her work with the same apostolic spirit.

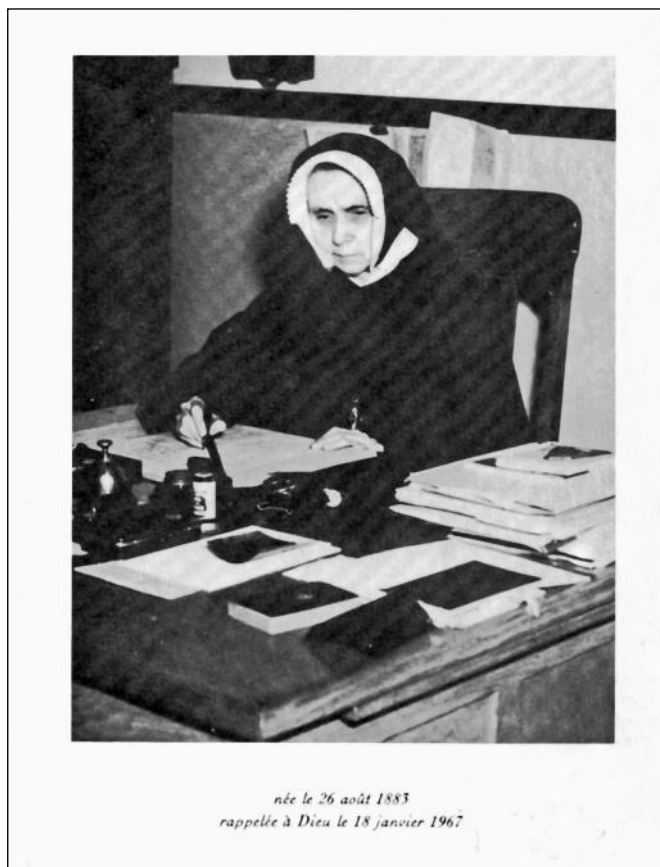
I pray to my late mother (2) who was ever so grateful to her Mothers of Jésus-Marie that now they may be celebrating in heaven today.

Excerpt from *Sillery*, number 95, March 1967, p. 21.



¹ Mother Sainte-Blanche-de-Castille, Provincial Assistant, was a former student of Sillery College. Born in 1912, Mercédès Moisan entered the convent to become a nun in August 1931.

² Mother Thomas-Aquinas's mother was a former student of Sillery College, born Elzire Laliberté-Coulombe, she died in 1965. Mother Thomas-Aquinas was the General Assistant of the Order of Sainte-Ursule (O.S.U.).



Card published for the death of Mother Marie-des-Anges in January 1967; she is seen sitting at her desk in College Jésus-Marie at Sillery (Quebec).

Mother Marie-des-Anges R.J.M.

(A. Kirouac) died on 18 January 1967. Founder of College Jésus-Marie at Sillery, first classical college for girls in Quebec. City

She was Provincial Counselor, permanent consulting person, prefect of studies for 25 years and director of the Alumni Association for many years. She also created the news bulletin *Sillery* and the Federation of the former students Associations of Jésus-Marie (Alumni).

She was the sister of the late Brother Marie-Victorin, féc, of Mrs. Flavius LeBel (Laura), Mrs Edouard Laurin (Eudora), Mrs. Arthur Drolet (Blanche), and Mrs. Albert Maranda (Bernadette).

She was the aunt of Sister Marie-des-Anges, o.p. (Georgette LeBel), of Abbe Gontrand LeBel, military chaplain, of Reverend Father Roger Drolet, Jesuit, and of many other nephews and nieces.

Unknown Source

KIROUAC—It is with great sadness that we announce the death, on Wednesday, at Quebec City, of the Reverend Mother Marie-des-Anges, former General Director of Education for the Congregation of the Sisters of Jésus-Marie at Sillery. Funeral will be held on Saturday, 21 January, at 9:30 a.m., The Reverend Mother Marie-des-Anges, was the sister of the late Brother Marie-Victorin, féc, founder of the Montreal Botanical Garden. She leaves four sisters: Mrs. Flavius Le Bel, Mrs. Arthur Drolet, Mrs. Édouard Laurin and Mrs. Albert Maranda, as well as brothers-in-law, nephews and nieces. Our deepest condolences to the Congregation and the family.

Obituary published in *La Presse*, Montreal's French newspaper, on 20 January 1967.



François Kirouac, Céline Kirouac and Marie Kirouac during their visit at College Jésus-Marie at Sillery (Quebec) on 28 May 2019.



Brief History of the Classical Course for Girls in Quebec City

(Source: Special Issue of *Sillery* 1925-1975)

The origin of College Jésus Marie at Sillery can be traced back to 1908, but it was founded only seventeen years later. Then Stanislas Lortie, philosopher and professor at Laval University, shared the nuns' idea that girls' education must be expanded. This priest was a very important allied of the nuns in the fight against the civil and religious authorities at a time when women's place in society was highly contested. He backed the nuns in the many steps needed to convince Laval University for the need of such training for women.

In 1911, Laval finally authorized the programme for the first part of superior studies; that was a first gain, but it was essential to keep fighting. Mother Saint-Joseph, then director of studies, sped up the process and skillfully kept fighting the solidly anchored prejudices of the enemies of the college. She was fully backed by Mother Sainte-Claire, General Superior of the Congregation of Jésus-Marie. The nuns presented a study plan for high-school level that was finally accepted by Laval University in 1924. Thus, the creation of the *classical course* for women was imminent.

By then the need to have two women with bachelor's degrees was achieved when Mother Marie-des-Anges (Adelcie Kirouac) and Mother Sainte-Agnès (Léa Drolet) returned to Quebec City after studying two years at Paris and Lyon in France.

On 19 January 1925, the first classical women's college was created at Quebec City (in the Eastern part of the province). The College was then officially affiliated with Laval University when Bishop Camille Roy was Laval University's Rector. At long last, the dream of the pioneers, Mother Marie-des-Anges (Adelcie Kirouac (1883-1967), founder of College Jésus-Marie, and Mother Sainte-Agnès, (Léa Drolet (1889-1986) co-founder, was a reality. From then on, young women with bachelor's degree were allowed to study at the university and enter liberal professions.

Our Motto

Pride Dignity Integrity



Founded : 20 November 1978
Incorporated : 26 February 1986

*Member of the
Fédération des associations
de familles du Québec since 1983*

Canada Post
Mail agreement Number 40069967 for Mailing Publications
Return to the following address:
Fédération des associations de familles du Québec
650, rue Graham-Bell, bureau 210, Québec (Québec)
G1N 4H5
IMPRIMÉ—PRINTED PAPER SURFACE

*Alexandre
Le Pihan*

*Maurice Louis
Lebrun de Kervoach*

Alexandre Duchévoach

**Do you know other descendants of Alexandre de
Kervoach who achieved greatness?**

If you do, please let us know!

To contact us or receive information about our activities:

Main Office
3782, Chemin Saint-Louis
Québec (Québec)
Canada G1W 1T5

Website:
www.familleskirouac.com

Email:
associationfamilleskirouac@gmail.com

Treasurer & Membership:
René Kirouac
Telephone: (418) 653-2772

FREE EMAIL KFA NEWS SERVICE

LE TRÉSOR EXPRESS:

**To receive KFA's Info Express bulletins,
Send your email address to:
associationfamilleskirouac@gmail.com**