

June 2006

Number 84

Le Trésor des Kirouac

Bulletin of the descendants of Urbain-François Le Bihan, sieur de Kerboach



1996-2006, tenth anniversary of Jan Kerouac's death — Jan Kerouac in Baja California around 1985

K rouac † K roack † Kirouac † K rouac † K rouack † Kirouack

Le trésor des Kirouac (English Edition)

Le Trésor des Kirouac, the news bulletin of the descendants of Urbain-François Le Bihan, sieur de Kivoach, is published four times a year in two editions, a French version and an English version, and is distributed to all members of the Association des familles Kirouac inc. Permission to reproduce any article must be requested from the A.F.K.F.A. beforehand.

Production team (in alphabetical order)

*Michel Bornais, François Kirouac, Jacques Kirouac,
Marie Kirouac, Marie Lussier Timperley*

Authors and contributors for the current issue (in alphabetical order)

Michel Bornais, Deborah Lash Bower, Lucie Jasmin, André Kirouac, Céline Kirouac, Clément Kirouac, François Kirouac, Jacques Kirouac, Jean-Yves Laurin, Pia M. Karrer O'Leary, Marie Lussier Timperley, Gerald Nicosia

Design

*Front Cover: Jean-François Landry
Association Logo on back cover: Raymond Bergeron
Bulletin: François Kirouac*

Setting

*French Version: François Kirouac
English Version: Gregory Kyrouac*

Translating and editing

Michel Bornais and Marie L. Timperley

Publisher

*L'Association des familles Kirouac inc.
168, rue Baudrier, Québec (Québec) Canada G1B 3M5*

*Legal Deposit 2nd quarter 2006
National Library and Archives of Québec
National Library of Canada*

Responsibility

In Le Trésor des Kirouac, the sole responsibility of the contents of the articles lies with each author.

Printing

*French Version : 160 copies
English Version : 50 copies*

ISSN 0833-1685

Subscription : Canada: \$22 CAD; USA: \$22 USD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>From the President</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>From the Secretary's Desk</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Jan Kerouac's Intentions</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Meeting Jan Kerouac, the beginning of a unique experience</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>In memory of Jan Michele Kerouac</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Last homage to our friend, Jean-Yves Kirouac</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Léon-Solyme Kérouac and Augustin-Magloire Blanchet, two Cousins caught in the turmoil of the 1837-1838 Rebellion</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Chronology of the life of Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer and of the War Years in Italy</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Centennial of Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>In memoriam</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Direction Huelgoat, Brittany</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Press Review, June 2006</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>The Extraordinary Travels of Brother Marie-Victorin</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>The Readers' Page</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Board Members, 2005-2006</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Regional Representatives</i>	<i>39</i>

From the President

On March 6, 1736, Abbé Étienne Auclair, who was the Parish Priest of Kamouraska from 1713 until 1748, presided over the funeral of a certain *Alexandre Kéloaque, of Breton nationality*. In the church register he wrote that on this occasion the whole parish was assembled for the funeral and burial. On August 5, 2006, the descendants of this *Kéloaque* will be gathering in the old Kamouraska Cemetery to pay homage again to their ancestor marking the 270th anniversary of his death and burial there. On March 6, 1736, Abbé Étienne Auclair, who was the Parish Priest of Kamouraska from 1713 until 1748, presided over the funeral of a certain *Alexandre Kéloaque, of Breton nationality*. In the church register he wrote that on this occasion the whole parish was assembled for the funeral and burial. On August 5, 2006, the descendants of this *Kéloaque* will be gathering in the old Kamouraska Cemetery to pay homage again to their ancestor marking the 270th anniversary of his death and burial there.

For a very long time, the descendants of *Maurice Louis LeBrice de Keroack* tried in vain to firmly establish the place of origin of their ancestor having to assist them only the meagre references found in the Church records of the parish of Cap-Saint-Ignace, as were requested by the parish priest, when the ancestor wedded Louise Bernier in 1732.

Documents kept in our Association's archives show that in 1886, a descendant of *Maurice Louis* attempted to obtain information from the then Parish priest of Cap-Saint-Ignace prior to his impending departure for Brittany. The message leaves no doubt that he was looking for information confirming the ancestor's Breton roots. Many others followed suit at the end of the 19th century and during the 20th century always with the same goal. As you

can read in the present issue of the *Trésor des Kirouac*, people are still travelling to Brittany. Mr. Jean-Yves Laurin, nephew of Brother Marie-Victorin, tells us about his recent trip to Brittany last autumn.

For over a century, the popular belief in the K/ families was that the ancestor belonged to a noble family from Brittany and because some names are somewhat similar, it was believed that we were related to the family of the Marquis of Kérourartz from Brittany. The ancestor himself is to blame for the errors concerning the family origins. Indeed, by giving himself bogus names and creating false identities for his father and mother when he married Louise Bernier in 1732; all the more so because, for his mother, he used the surname Muzillac, that of a noble family from Brittany, and established the noble origin of his family for centuries to come on a erroneous identity.

But, of course he could not have foreseen the tenacity of his descendants determined to track him down at all cost. Hence, in 1999, after three years of research, Clément Kirouac assisted by Patricia Dagier, a Breton genealogist, the game was finally over. The hoax was axed!

The extensive research brought to light not only the place of origin of our ancestor but also his clever stratagem in order to create a new identity for himself in New-France. Consequently in 1999, we learned that the name *Kervoac* was a place name and not a family surname. Subsequently we also learned that *Maurice Louis Le Brice de Keroack* was in fact *Urbain François Le Bihan, Sieur de Kervoac*. Last but not least, this genealogical research also told us that our ancestor did not belong to the Breton nobility but did in fact belong to the bourgeoisie or upper class of this French province.

In 1980, during the first family

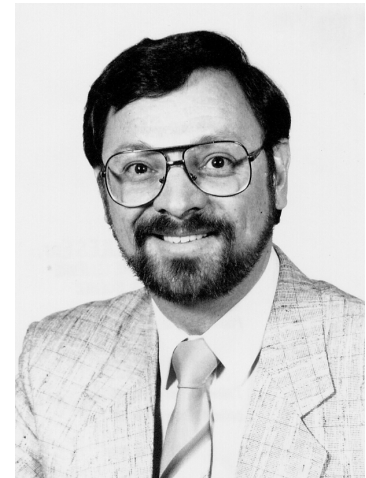


Photo: Studio Les Saules eng.

François Kirouac

gathering in L'Islet to mark the 250th anniversary of the arrival of our ancestor in New-France, our association unveiled a memorial pink granite plaque. This plaque, in the name of *Maurice Louis Le Brice de Keroack* was installed in the pavilion at the site of *Berceau de Kamouraska* (Kamouraska cradle), but it reflects our ancestor's fake identity as recorded in the church wedding registry in 1732.

On August 5, 2006, our Association will unveil a new monument that will establish in stone the true identity of the man buried in the historical site of the Kamouraska Cradle. The text will show the link between what is engraved on the plaque unveiled in 1980 and the results of the research completed in 1999 by Clément Kirouac and Patricia Dagier. The name of the ancestor as known in 1980, and as it appeared in the Kamouraska parish registry will be on the new monument as well as the one uncovered after three long years of research on both side of the Atlantic. The unveiling will conclude over a century of research. Therefore it is an historical event not to be missed. We are looking forward very much to greeting you all in Kamouraska on August 5, 2006!





From the Secretary's Desk

RENEWAL AND MEMBERSHIP 2006

Following our last renewal memorandum to all members, our treasurer, René Kirouac, confirms that, as of May 23, 2006, the membership stands at 158 paid members, e.g. 128 in Canada, 29 in USA, and one in France. **However, there are 27 who were members in 2005 but have yet to renew their membership for 2006.** The publication of the new English edition of our bulletin, *Le Trésor*, plus the new web Site shortly to be on line, and the publicity surrounding the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the Montreal Botanical Garden by Brother Marie-Victorin (Conrad Kirouac) will hopefully attract new members for 2006.

KIROUAC 2006 FAMILY GATHERING

Vous recevrez bientôt l'invitation au rassemblement 2006 des familles K/rouac qui se tiendra au site historique du Berceau de Kamouraska, le samedi, 5 août 2006. C'est alors que sera dévoilé le monument rappelant le lieu de sépulture de notre ancêtre en Nouvelle-France. L'assemblée générale annuelle 2006 aura lieu le même jour à Kamouraska.

MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDEN — 75th ANNIVERSARY

For its 75th anniversary, the

main entrance to the Botanical Garden is getting a facelift and will become a more convenient and user-friendly area. Work has begun on time but as it is a major project likely to be completed just before the winter cold sets in, it seems preferable to wait until spring 2007 for our K/rouac gathering at the Botanical Garden that was announced in the March Trésor.

The enclosed colourful folder is offered to all our readers by Mr. Gilles Vincent, Director of the Montreal Botanical Garden. It is a warm invitation extended to all K/rouac cousins to enjoy the many special activities organized for the 75th anniversary. Everyone should find something to his or her liking all through the summer and, from September 8 until October 31, 2006, the Chinese lanterns again will be swaying gently in the evening autumn breeze. Year after year, these hand-painted silk lanterns made in China recreate a dreamlike Asian décor.

2006 NEW FRANCE CELEBRATIONS PRESENCE OF THE ORIGINAL FAMILIES

After fruitless requests made to the organizers of the New-France celebrations and further to a survey among the family associations, the *Fédération des Familles-souches du Québec* (FFSQ)



Photograph: Yolande Genest

Michel Bornais

has decided not to take part in the 2006 celebrations and has also recommended to the family associations to abstain.

However, responding to an interesting initiative from the Pastoral Council for Notre-Dame-de-Québec, the FFSQ invites all the family associations to take part in special commemorative Masses on August 5 and 6, to be held at the Notre-Dame Basilica in Quebec City and in the Notre-Dame-des-Victoires Church at Place-Royale. Participants are invited to wear period costumes and enjoy the various activities of the New France Celebrations.

INTERESTING ENCOUNTERS AT THE QUEBEC BOOK FAIR

The Quebec Book Fair gave our secretary the opportunity to meet Mr. Jean Fugère, the journalist who, while in Cuba recently, witnessed the interest for Brother Marie-Victorin (Conrad Kirouac) there and talked about it on the radio. This is a most interesting piece of information and we hope to find out more about it.

By the same token, your secretary had the pleasure to

meet Mrs. **Marie José Thériault** and be present when she was interviewed by Danielle Bombardier, talk show host for Radio-Canada (French CBC) concerning the publication of her latest book entitled: **Obscènes tendresses**, published by **Le dernier havre**.

WIKIPEDIA—ON LINE ENCYCLOPEDIA

You are invited to check the information on Jack Kerouac and Brother Marie-Victorin available on the multilingual WIKIPEDIA encyclopaedia website. Any help from multilingual K/rouacs would be much appreciated to inform us of what is also written about these two important men in various foreign languages. We have free access to update the site. At the moment, your secretary took upon himself to add some essential information in French and English including a genealogical note. Your comments would be much appreciated.

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Abbé Léon Laberge, son of François Laberge and Émilie Kérouack (02442) presided at a Thanksgiving Mass in Christ the King Church in Chicoutimi last May 21 to mark the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on May 26, 1956. After the ceremony there was a gathering of the Laberge, Kéroack and Minier families at the Le Montagnais Hotel. Abbé Laberge studied in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Arvida and Chicoutimi. He was Chaplain in the Canadian

Armed Forces with the rank of Captain. He was also Chaplain at the Technological Institute in Chicoutimi while being parish priest of the Christ-Roi Church. Abbé Laberge was also a professor at the *Petit Séminaire* (e.g. College) in Chicoutimi and Parish priest in Girardville.

CHÂTEAU DUFRESNE – EXHIBITION

From June 9 until September 10, 2006, the Château Dufresne presents: **Marie-Victorin and Oscar Dufresne, two Visionnaires Dreaming of a Garden-City**, an exhibition also celebrating the 75th Anniversary of foundation of the Montreal Botanical Garden. The two brothers, Marius and Oscar Dufresne, two pillars of the Montreal francophone upper middle class were friends of Marie-Victorin. The exhibition is an opportunity to discover some of their grandiose projects, impressive buildings drawn by Marius the architect, as well as the social, economical and cultural development promoted and usually anonymously financed by Oscar, who was also a munificent patron to Marie-Victorin's Botanical Garden. This exhibition is but an hors d'oeuvre; it is a must see this summer. Entry to the Château Dufresne Museum is free for holders of an entry ticket to the Botanical Garden which is just across Sherbrooke Street. For information: www.chateaudufresne.com This is a brand new French

website. The English will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Lucie Jasmin, co-editor with Brother Gilles Beaudet, f.é.c., of **Mon Miroir**, was invited to speak about Brother Marie-Victorin at the official opening and Mrs. Marie Lussier Timperley, was invited as official representative of the KFA to say a few words about the K/rouac Family Association.

Château Dufresne: parking at 2929 Jeanne-d'Arc Avenue; visitors' entrance: Pie IX Boulevard, corner of Sherbrooke Street, Montreal. Metro (subway) Station Pie IX. Tel.: 514-259-9201. Fax: 514-259-6466

KFA WEBSITE RECONSTRUCTION

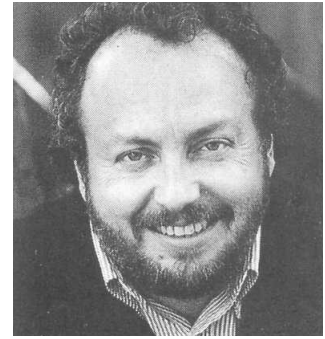
Editing, revising and translating texts are ready. As of May 22, the new formatting was not yet completed, various functions still had to be tested and the new version to be installed. The website's address will remain the same: <http://www.genealogie.org/famille/kirouac/kirouac.htm>



JAN KEROUAC'S INTENTIONS

A Recollection of Jan Kerouac's Years of Work on *Parrot Fever*

By Gerald Nicosia



Gerald Nicosia (Photo: back cover
of *Memory Babe*)

In rereading the manuscript of *Parrot Fever*, I was struck more than ever by what an accomplished book this is - though clearly still only a work-in-progress. In the story of these two half-sisters, Maxine and Claire, there is no mistaking the harrowing but glorious life that was Jan Kerouac's; the ability to put such a stamp of originality on one's own life - to create a vision of it that no one else could steal or plagiarize if they wanted to, because it is so uniquely one's own - is the mark of a true writer.

I first heard of the rudimentary plan for *Parrot Fever* when Jan phoned me from her home in Ellensburg, Washington, in August 1981. Like all of Jan's books, this one changed titles a number of times, and she was calling the book something else then, though I don't remember what. Her first novel, *Baby Driver*, was just about to be published, and Jan claimed that she had already started the second one. She made it very clear that she wanted to create some distance from the raw autobiography of *Baby Driver*, and she was thinking of including some of her past incarnations - which she truly believed in - as a means of doing so. "The book will end in India in 1990," she told me. "Are you predicting your own future?" I asked, somewhat irritated with her. It sounded like the book was an excuse for further excessive globetrotting or amorous adventures, and I was dismayed by what seemed her insatiable appetite for both. No doubt my own brief, unhappy romantic fling with Jan

("You're not my type - you're too kind," she said at one point) played some part in my disenchantment with this idea for a second novel. But the truth is, by this point I had willingly switched from the role of suitor to father figure for Jan, and I was trying very hard to get her to settle down into a stable lifestyle and a productive work-routine. I knew that she could do great things with her life, but not if she kept chasing abusive, empty-headed hunks and will-o'-the-wisp crackpot invitations all over the planet.

"Oh no!" she assured me. She said she would not need to go to India, because she had already read many books about it and talked to many Indian people. She simply wanted to force her imagination to work harder as a means of getting free of slavishly recording her own life.

When I met her in San Francisco in July 1985, she was already well along on writing her next novel, but it was not the one she had spoken of from Ellensburg in 1981. This was the book that would become *Trainsong*, which at that point she was calling *Loverbs*. I regretted to hear that she was back to autobiography. As per her editor's request, *Loverbs* (*Trainsong*) was going to be "a diary of all her relationships with men" over the past ten years, and was going to rely heavily for material on her new celebrity life - of money, world travels, and men, men, men - after the publication of *Baby Driver*. The most promising thing Jan told me during that visit

was that she hadn't given up on the novel about her incarnations. She had sketched out the plot, she said, and would get back to it after she finished the sequel to *Baby Driver*.

When I heard from Jan in the spring of 1992, after having lost contact with her for almost two years, she had crossed several major watersheds in her life. The biggest one, of course, was the complete kidney failure she had suffered in Puerto Rico in January 1991. She was now forced to do peritoneal dialysis four times a day - which she performed with her own IV equipment, bags of a special fluid that she had to order by the case, and a permanent catheter that had been implanted in her abdomen - to stay alive. She was living by herself in Albuquerque, and told me she had come to several major realizations about her life. The first was about men. She had reconciled herself to the fact that she was never going to have a life-partner, she said. She had always dreamed that she and her first husband John Lash would get back together, but he was now living in Europe with a French woman that he claimed was the love of his life. Jan said she did not want any more of her famous one-night stands or disastrous affairs with brutal criminals or compulsive womanizers. To avoid her weakness for the wrong kind of man, she was going to attempt to remain celibate for the rest of her life. The other main thing she

talked about was her coming death.

First, though, she told me about her mother's death on May 15, 1990. It had occurred two days after Mother's Day, though soon she would be telling people that it had occurred *on* Mother's Day, and eventually she even seemed to believe that herself, getting the dates confused in various drafts of *Parrot Fever*. There is no question, however, that this was the most momentous event in her life outside of the death of her father, Jack Kerouac. Her mother had been her one true friend, her confidante, and the one person who would always offer her a home, food, and loving care whenever she needed it. When Joan died, Jan was orphaned in the most profound sense. She talked of how her mother had always been too proud and independent to accept other people's help, and had even refused to go to the hospital, until she was so sick that she had had to be taken there a few days before she died. Jan foresaw that she was going to need help in the future too. Though it went against her grain, Jan said she would accept it more cheerfully and gratefully than her mother.

Jan told me that the only thing that would save her life would be a kidney transplant, but she doubted that with the blood disease she'd inherited from her father (in her case, the blood didn't clot properly) she would be eligible for one. Also, she'd heard and read about the agonies of preparation and post-operative care that a kidney transplant entailed, and she was "leery," she said, of putting herself through such an ordeal. Instead, she had made peace with her shortened lifespan, and wanted to do the most important work she could in the little time left to her. Primarily, she said, she wanted to finish her third novel.



July 1994 — Jan Kerouac at the Four Seasons Hotel in San Francisco
Photograph: Gerald Nicosia

Already, though, she admitted that the odds were against her. She had money to live now, thanks to the percentage of her father's royalties the Sampas family had been legally compelled to pay her, but the kidney failure was having a negative impact on almost all areas of her life - including other bodily functions. Her eyesight had deteriorated drastically, she could hardly feel with her fingers, her energy level was very low because of the continual interruption of her sleep for dialyses, her memory was getting spotty, and even her equilibrium was affected. "I stagger like a drunk and I'm not even drinking!" she laughed, for she still had her sense of humor about all this misfortune. As a result, she was no longer able to drive, and stayed home most of the time, ordering out for food and channel surfing through the night, till it was time for her morning dialysis. "I live like a monk," she said, sounding sad and lonely. Completing her third novel, she said, was the only thing she really had to look forward to.

She was calling it alternately *Parrot Fever* and *Fired From Paradise* - not yet sure which title

she preferred. It was clear that she was somewhat torn about which way to go with it. She wanted to keep it in the third person - except for the interposition of first-person "letters" from the protagonists - to attain the objectivity she had long sought in her fiction, and long been criticized for lacking. But the "incarnations" had been too much of a reach for her. Instead, she had settled for splitting herself into two separate main characters, the two half-sisters Claire and Maxine, and allowing her personality to be explored and analyzed through the interaction of the two. The big problem for her as a writer was to decide between letting the book simply become a sequel to the other two - the third and capping book in a trilogy - or giving free rein to her imagination to take it in an entirely different direction, permitting consequences and conclusions to enter the book that might not actually have happened in her life - at least not yet. For one thing, she wanted the more self-destructive of the two, Maxine, to die or disappear near the end. But it was apparent that she was already having trouble keeping the sisters separate both in her writing





April 1995 —Jan Kerouac with the artist Alton Helley during a signing session at Gerald Nicosia's home in Corte Madera, California, USA

and in her head - a result, I think, of the strong autobiographical pull that always gripped Jan when she sat down to write. She would even mix up Claire's last name - at times in the manuscript she is Claire Haggerty, and at others she is Claire Luna, taking the last name of the novel's major male character, Jacob Luna. At several points in the writing of the book, Jan confided to me that her instinct was actually to make Jacob the main character. When she would say that, I always remembered how she'd once told me that most of her previous incarnations were as men - that her soul was male.

Interestingly, Jan said that one of the things that had motivated her to return to the book after her kidney failure was watching a TV documentary about scriptwriter Waldo Salt and, the same day, a TV showing of Salt's film *Midnight Cowboy*, one of her favorites. The scene of Dustin Hoffman's character, Ratso, dying before he ever reaches Florida touched her now more than ever, she said. At one point in her novel, Jan even quotes some of Ratso's dialogue. But what amazed her was

to learn that Salt had spent decades trying to make it as a scriptwriter - writing many mediocre films such as *Taras Bulba* - before he authored masterpieces such as *Midnight Cowboy* and *Coming Home*, for which he won an Oscar. Jan felt that if Waldo Salt could make a stunning breakthrough after decades of trying to get a handle on his art, perhaps she could do the same with *Parrot Fever*.

Almost every time we talked on the phone, her progress and problems with *Parrot Fever* were part of our discussions, and we also corresponded extensively about the book. By the summer of 1992, Jan had already circulated sample chapters to several publishers, but had gotten rejections everywhere. She was discouraged, and felt that if she could get a contract for the book, not to mention a monetary advance, it would help inspire her to complete it - a task that grew increasingly hard as time passed and she grew physically weaker and more forgetful. To help her out, in October 1992, I agreed to serve as literary agent for the book. I sent it to dozens of publishers -

including Viking Penguin, now her father's main publisher - but again it was universally rejected. I would have been discouraged myself, had I not remembered the two years I'd spent submitting *Baby Driver* to every editor and publisher I could think of and seeing it too rejected over and over, until the combination of real literary agent Joyce Cole and St. Martin's Press editor Barbara Anderson made the book a reality. Of course *Parrot Fever* lacks the sort of titillating sex scenes that helped make *Baby Driver* a commercial success - the kind of scenes that - as Jan mocks in the new novel - people had come to expect her to write, so that they could get their cheap thrills from a safe distance, while pretending to admire her "courageous" life.

In 1994, Jan began the lawsuit against the Sampas family, aimed at recovering and preserving her father's literary archive, which consumed the last two years of her life. Both her medical and legal expenses were increasing rapidly, and her royalty income, which the Sampases sought to reduce, no longer covered all her needs. To raise needed money, Jan agreed to let printer Norman Davis issue a chapbook of selections from *Parrot Fever* that spring. I agreed to write the introduction, and to prepare myself for that, I had many discussions with Jan about where she was going with the book.

What I learned was that Jan had a very thorough, elaborate structure in mind for *Parrot Fever*, and that she really wanted the two sisters to be definite, separate characters whose interaction would resolve both the plot and the central mystery of the book - which is: why do gifted, intelligent people self-destruct in this world? The reader has to understand that Jan began this book - at least the real page-by-page writing of it, which she started around 1988 - from the premise of a

wrecked life. At this point, her health had already begun to fail, although she obviously had no idea how catastrophic that failure would become. I remember when she arrived in Lowell in June 1988, for the dedication of the memorial to her father, her legs were swollen from the bus ride and she had other health problems that she thought at the time might be lupus, a disease her mother supposedly suffered from. She had broken up with her last serious lover, Michael in Boulder, three years earlier, and she no longer believed she would find a lifetime partner - as she told Lowell literary historian Brad Parker quite clearly.

When we talked about the book in 1994, Jan told me that she hoped the third-person point of view and dual heroines would allow her to get far enough outside herself to finally analyze how she had landed in such a mess, and to provide her with a useful perspective on her life and perhaps some peace of mind, if not actual hope for the future. She saw her life seesawing between two powerful magnetic poles - on the one hand, her desperate desire to preserve the joy, playfulness, and innocence of childhood; and on the other, her inability to meet the serious demands of the adult world, which kept pulling her into complex, usually tragic situations that she was ill-prepared to deal with. To put it as succinctly as possible, the central issue of the book is: where does childishness leave off and self-destruction begin?

Jan believed her lack of a father figure played a huge role in her inability to solve this dilemma, which most people get past with far less pain and suffering as they embark upon the mature portion of their lives. But she wanted *Parrot Fever* to get beyond just the simplistic bitching about daddy's absence that had characterized the

two earlier books. She wanted this one - her masterpiece, she hoped - to become an allegory for the fractured psyche of every man and every woman, if not the fractured psyche of the world itself - and an allegory, even more important, of how that fracture can finally be healed. To this end, the two fatherless sisters' love and concern for each other was to play a key role in the plot. One of crucial scenes that never got written was that of Claire, the younger "emotional" one (as Jan called her), going to Hawaii near the end to search for her lost and possibly dead sister Maxine. At the end, the older sister, a successful writer who was supposed to have her life together, would crash even worse than Claire, "the family goof" and "profoundly disturbed dreamer" (again, these were terms with which Jan described her to me). The reversal of their usual roles was to comment on the human capacity for growth, in both good and bad directions. But she also wanted to show love as the glue that holds crumbling human life together. One of the central images - which also never found its way into the manuscript, at least the portion of it we have (and a considerable part was lost in Jan's move to Key West in 1993) - was to have been the poster for the movie *Ben Hur*. Jan told me that she used to stare fascinated at this poster when she was a child, and she loved the way BEN HUR was printed in big rocky crumbling letters. But Maxine, by keeping her mind fixed on those crumbling letters, and imagining that she will write a book that will become such an epic masterpiece, manages to put her life back together, at least in words on the page - much as Jan was trying to do with PARROT FEVER. Thus artistic vision would serve as another glue for human

life, working side by side with love.

I was awed by the ambitiousness of Jan's vision, and it was a major tragedy - both for her personally, as well as us, her friends and readers - that she never lived to realize it. What we have here - marred by incomplete chapters, missing chapters, gaps where material was either lost or never written - is far smaller in scope, but like the stone skeleton of Jack London's burned-out Wolf House, it is still a remarkable piece of architecture. In even these shards of *Parrot Fever*, you can hear what was to have been Jan's *Moonlight Sonata* - sadness and passion and ominousness all mixed together. The promiscuous sex is still here, to a degree, but now the overtones are much darker than in *Baby Driver* or *Trainsong*. Sex becomes not an exciting adventure and pastime, as in the previous two novels, but rather an additional and deadly source of psychic and social fracture. There are dark references to the letdown and betrayal both sisters feel from their ex-husbands; and in the end, Claire seeks to end her desperate loneliness with a guy, Louie, whom she knows from the start is nothing but a sleaze ball hustler. How ironic that Jan's first biographer - whom she repudiated before his book came out - sought to emphasize her wild sex and "playgirl" life as somehow the essence of her character, when Jan herself had already moved far beyond those things, both in her life and her writing.

Like the greatest English literature, thinking back especially to Shakespeare, *Parrot Fever* begins with something about to go profoundly wrong with the world and the accepted order of things. This, of course, was the basic story



of Jan's life: a beautiful little girl is born to a husband and wife, only the husband (and now daddy) is nowhere around, in fact is running as far as he can get from the family he has just created - leaving wife and daughter to deal with the cataclysmic consequences of this rupture themselves. Jan opens her story with Maxine LaCrosse stumbling upon a flood in Maine, where she has gone to help celebrate the work of her famous writer dad. It's noteworthy that Jack Kerouac himself used the imagery of a flood in *Dr. Sax* to suggest a world gone out of control as the young Jackie Dulooz enters puberty - though Jan, as far as I know, never consciously sought to imitate her father's work. As Jan's book begins, the flood and fog are "deranging" people, driving them "slowly, quietly mad," and there is a hint that human beings might actually start to murder one another.

This apocalyptic atmosphere pervades the novel, and there are numerous references to the possible coming end of human life. In fact, she intended - with typical Jan pun-in-cheek humor - to title the final chapter, in which Claire goes in search of her lost sister Maxine, "Apocalypso." Of course Jan was approaching the very definite end of her own human life as she wrote all this, and a part of what she was doing was trying to see her own life in the greater human continuum - to merge the two. In so doing, she finds a great personal consolation. She has lost the unity of her own family, but, as she says in "Hedda's Garden" (a kind of perverse version of the Garden of Eden), she has managed to make "her old fond dream come true, of being at the Earth's Hearth" - having reconstituted and rejoined the Family of Man.

Fortunately Jan did complete the book's two most important

chapters, "Chernobyl Swan" and "Trainsong Park" - both of which I think are some of the finest short pieces of fiction written by any American writer in the last decade of the twentieth century. Throughout the book, Jan has been expounding upon her naïve, youthful idea that she can avoid becoming part of the world's evil by simply remaining a childlike witness to human life - like one of those people on the subway with their heads buried in the newspaper, riding home or to their job as they read of nuclear disaster in faraway Russia. But in "Chernobyl Swan," Claire finds that the witness cannot help becoming part of the evil machinery herself. She cracks open a swan's egg, wanting to see what she expects will be a dead embryo - killed by a fierce, possibly radioactive rainstorm in the wake of the nuclear power plant accident in Chernobyl. But the embryo was still alive; and in seeking to examine it, she kills it herself. "She felt as though she had committed a terrible crime by opening the egg and yet at the same time she knew that it would have died in there anyway," Jan writes, somehow condensing her whole life into that one brilliant image. If she had done nothing with her traumatized life, Jan would have died anyway; but in seeking to lead a full, adventuresome, creative human life, she has ironically hastened her own death.

That chapter, "Chernobyl Swan," incidentally, contains some of the most evocative writing about New York City that I think any American writer has ever done - an accomplishment which alone would make Jan Kerouac a significant writer.

"Trainsong Park" recounts the actual death of Jan's mother Joan Haverty in 1990. It rivals, in power and intensity, the great scene in her

second novel *Trainsong*, where she meditates on her father's death at Allen Ginsberg's house in Boulder, Colorado, on October 21, 1982. In "Trainsong Park," Jan attempts to look at death head-on, and to see what it really means. Her mother is supposedly "gone," but "where had she gone?" Jan asks. Memories of her dominate Jan's consciousness, and she is still tremendously alive to Jan. But the big thing that is missing is Joan's distinctive voice. Death, Jan finds, is the Big Silence. Joan's children can now romp through her house, opening forbidden drawers, without fear of Joan yelling at them to stop, and it makes them feel "sheepish," as if "they had done something bad" by usurping what should have been her right to control her own home. Joan had been an immensely strong woman, seemingly able to overcome every form of human adversity, but somehow she has failed to surmount the worst human problem of all: death. "You can't just make a mistake like this and just fail," Jan says plaintively to the mother who is still in her head. In the futility of the children trying to do something useful with what she has left behind - even the Salvation Army rejects her dilapidated furniture - Jan makes a poignant comment on how helpless we all are before this final human destroyer, silencer, and leveler.

In the exceedingly hot summer of 1995, Jan moved to San Anselmo, California, and a few miles from me. That whole summer, she had a blackish purplish sore on the top of her right foot the size of a nickel, which caused her extreme pain, and made it almost impossible for her to walk more than a few yards without stopping for relief. Needless to say, she was not traveling anywhere that summer, and even riding the bus became a virtual impossibility. So I drove to her house several times a week and took her to the grocery store, to the drugstore for bandages

and salves, to the Laundromat, and usually, at the end of her round of errands, to a coffee shop or restaurant to relax for an hour or so - before she returned home to continue work on the novel in her sweltering house. It was in those dozens of different coffee shops and restaurants that summer - as well as sometimes her famous late-night phone calls - that I heard her final plans for completing *Parrot Fever*.

Some of the most exciting things to me were the scenes Jan projected that would for the first time deeply explore her relationships with men. One such key scene was to be a description of Claire's striptease act in a sleazy Eugene, Oregon, topless club - to be based upon Jan's own striptease act in such a place shortly before she left for Puerto Rico and her near-fatal kidney failure. Jan told me the scene would involve a confession of how she actually enjoyed stripping. "You get a whole stage and music and can do with it anything you want," she said. She had approached it in a creative fashion, devising all sorts of imaginative costumes and dance routines, many of which involved the black star-on-thigh tattoo her first real love, Paul Ortloff, had given her at about age twelve. What would give tension and clarity to the scene would be the contrast between what Claire expected - which was to receive loving adoration and appreciation from the men she danced for - and what she actually got: "a bunch of horny dolts who all wanted her to get down to the nitty-gritty, to see her naked." The scene, Jan said, would be a paradigm of her life: her search for love, repeatedly frustrated by men who only saw the hot, foxy sex symbol - the *Marilyn Monroe* that Claire wants so badly to become in one of the early chapters of *Parrot Fever* - and not the lonely, unloved girl



March 1995 — Jan Kerouac with Tony Bliss at Bancroft Bookshop
(photograph: Gerald Nicosia)

inside. Jan conveyed this cruel insensitivity in an image I liked so much at the time that I wrote it down in my notebook: "men [at the strip club] would look up at her [Jan/Claire] with eyes demonically white and milky in the black light."

Another scene, also based on Jan's own life, would be one of the girls - probably Maxine, whose character needed beefing up - riding a Manhattan bus with her mother at about age two. The little girl lifts up her skirt to show off her new panties - knowing how cute she is - and embarrasses her mother. All the people smile at her mother to show their appreciation for her cute little girl. "They're really smiling for the mother," Jan said, "but the little girl thinks they're smiling at her." And the little girl quickly develops a craving for this kind of "outpouring of affection" - which, according to Jan, was the only equivalent she could find for the father-love that did not exist for her.

There were also to have been detailed scenes of Claire's life with Louie, the Puerto Rican gigolo.

Claire, again based on Jan's own experience with a similar man in Puerto Rico, would continually go out of her way to meet Louie's needs, but when she needed something basic, even something as essential as a ride to the hospital when her body was beginning to collapse, Louie would shrug her off, saying it was too much trouble. At some point Claire would have an illumination of where this excessive need to cater to men had come from. Jan wanted to recount the real-life episode of spending an hour with her father in her tenement apartment when she was about ten. She said a "blue spark of recognition" had passed between their eyes, and she had seen how much hurt it had caused Jack, since he had been forced to turn away from her for the rest of the visit. She had decided at that moment that it was her job to protect men from being hurt. It was that moment, Jan claimed, that began her years of taking care of men who were "big babies," letting them abuse her and always blaming herself for their unhappiness.

Jan's mother was going to come in for some heavy criticism too - for





April 1995 — Jan Kerouac raises her glass to the success of her project to save her father's archives, she is with her cousin, Paul Blake Jr. and his wife, Linda.

the first time in her writing, though she often criticized her in private to me and other close friends. She wanted to show a scene of one of the girls - probably the same panty-flasher on the bus - wanting a hug and kiss from her mother, and being coldly rebuffed. In reality, Jan said, Joan almost never hugged her at all as a child, and she felt that such absence of physical affection may have done real emotional damage to her.

It seemed to me that what would make *Parrot Fever* so radically different from Jan's earlier books was this no-holds-barred approach, which would make everyone - her mother, her father, even her own self (or perhaps one should say *selves*) - fair game for critical analysis. In September 1995, just before she returned to Albuquerque for the last time, Jan told me she wanted to recast the whole book from Jacob's point of view. Obviously she would soon fall far too sick to even begin such a massive revision, but there was a genuine artistic impulse at work in such a plan. She admitted that in seeing herself dissected in the two half-sisters, she disliked a lot of what she saw in her own personality and behavior. She

found Jacob a much more sympathetic and likable character - the kind of person she wished she could have been. She had based a lot of the "Jacob" chapter on her interaction with her agent Peter Livingston, who later died of AIDS. In reality, she said, there had been a sordid side to that relationship too, as she had actually been having a secret love affair with Livingston despite the fact that he was married at the time.

I think if Jan could ever have really broken through all her protective facades and cover stories, as she at least suggested to me that she would do in *Parrot Fever*, she could have produced a truly great novel. She told me the novel would essentially have two morals or mantras. One would occur in a scene where one of the half-sisters sees a sexy, dreamy young woman swishing blithely by in her miniskirt in some café, unconscious of all the actual misery around her, and she thinks, "Just you wait, dearie, you'll find out what *pain* is all about." That mantra was a vision of the universal suffering that all flesh is heir to, on a par with Dostoyevsky.

The other mantra would occur in a scene that I thought was an absolute stroke of genius - a scene between Claire and her mother in Sacred Heart Hospital in Eugene, just before Joan's death.

In one of her last utterances, Joan said, "Jan, you know I'm going to be all right, don't you?" Thinking her mother wanted to be comforted, Jan had answered, "Yes." When her mother died a few hours later, Jan was overcome by immense guilt for having lied to her. But eventually Jan - and this would be the key to the scene - came to see that what was actually transpiring was *Joan's attempt to comfort Jan*. That someone on the verge of death could think enough of someone else's needs to put that other person's comfort first was an astounding revelation to Jan. Although never conventionally religious, Jan was definitely seeking some form of religious or spiritual truth as she approached her own death, and Joan's final act of selflessness seemed like some ultimate form of salvation to Jan - something she could always look back to whenever she needed comfort in her own life, a gift that could never be taken away. The importance of caring for others was thus to be the book's other great lesson.

"Why did she want to title it *Parrot Fever*?" some people ask. The fact is Jan loved parrots - all birds, in fact - and, besides her relationship with the real-life Macadamia, had often kept parakeets for pets. But beyond that, I think she could find no better symbol for the essential message of her book than the parrot. It is a benevolent, human-friendly, fun, childlike creature - but it is also the bearer of a potentially fatal disease. That paradox is at the heart of the book's double vision. The small, lithe, ever-curious and quirky green parrot is a symbol of Jan

herself - or at least a significant part of her nature - and the disease she tries to avoid is mortality. She tries to avoid it by becoming an expert observer and chronicler of it, but in the end that isn't enough to save her from the universal, fatal contamination. Yet she manages to make friends with the parrot's disturbing behavior and even its destructiveness - learns to make peace with its troublesome intrusions and even to soothe its mad flurries with her own love songs - as Jacob eventually makes friends with Mackie and plays classical piano compositions such as *Les Oiseaux Tristes* for her.

That is how I think of *Parrot Fever* - as Jan's final love song to her own troublesome life.



Photograph: Gerald Nicosia

April 1995 — Jan Kerouac and her cousin, Paul Blake Jr. at Gerald Nicosia's home



Paul Blake Jr. and Gerald Nicosia on Jack Kerouac Street in San Francisco, California, USA
(Collection Gerald Nicosia)



Meeting Jan Kerouac, the beginning of a unique experience

by Jacques Kirouac

Part One

This text was originally written to be included in *Parrot Fever*, Jan Kerouac's third novel. Given that Jack Kerouac's estate has yet to be settled and that it is unlikely to happen in the near future, the editors prefer not to print the novel until the court's final judgment is known; therefore this text is reproduced in *Le Trésor* out of context and on its own merit.

Early in the autumn of 1988, I heard that Jan Kerouac, the only child of the Franco-American writer Jack Kerouac, would be coming to Quebec City and that I would be able to meet her. At the time, she was completely unknown to me. So I started reading *Baby Driver*, her first novel.

I must admit that after finishing the book, I was left with a rather negative opinion about her and asked myself: what kind of girl am I going to meet at the cocktail party given in her honour by the *Secrétariat permanent des Peuples francophones* (*Permanent Secretariat of Francophone*

Peoples) located in the lower part of Old Quebec? I was then the president of the Kirouac Family Association and, though I was very interested in Jack Kerouac as a writer, I was not interested in his daughter or her books. At the cocktail party, I first noticed her from a fair distance; I could see her moving around people. She had a nice smile, was well dressed and wore a skirt.

After a few minutes, I met her and was immediately struck by her very bright crystal-like blue eyes. She was quiet and looked serene, as we shook hands she said a few words in English, easily understandable for me because she was speaking slowly enunciating very well. My negative apprehension had vanished and the best was still to come.

Indeed, I invited her to have dinner with the Board of Directors of our Family Association. So the next day I sat beside her for at least two



Photo: Marie Kirouac

Jacques Kirouac

hours. During that time, she was like an open book, telling me about her life but mainly about her only two meetings with her father. She was sorry not to have any souvenir from him except the cork from a bottle of wine, she saved when she met him for the first time. She ate very little and drank no wine, telling me she had given up drinking.

She told me she was living like a monk in her flat, in Kingston, New York. During that meal, she made some sketches and drew a car on the white place mat that was on the tablecloth. She did it with great simplicity, smiling all the time but usually not laughing. She never spoke loudly, being rather reserved all the time.

So, at the end of the meal, I had a completely different opinion about her and her life. From

that very moment we became firm friends until the end of her life. After talking for two hours, she told me she felt tired but, before leaving the group, she made a short speech. She told us she was happy to have found a new family with our Family Association; then she then became a regular member.

By the end of our first meeting, I was impressed by her great simplicity. She had no pretension and I felt a great affection for her. To me she was not responsible for the poor childhood she had had on account of her father's absence.

A few months later, she sent a short article to be published in our family bulletin about her trip to Quebec City. Here is an excerpt:

"When we got out of the car, the very first thing I saw was the apparition of Chateau Frontenac. I didn't even know about it yet, but the eerie under the lit spires seemed to broadcast its name into my head. Then we trudged up the street, where I was amazed to find a brass placard riveted to the side of a stone building with Association des Familles Kirouac (1) engraved in it, right at eye level. Suddenly I remembered how I used to look through the monstrous

Manhattan phone book as a child in New York City, searching in vain for my name, and finally came to the reluctant conclusion that I was some kind of a freak."

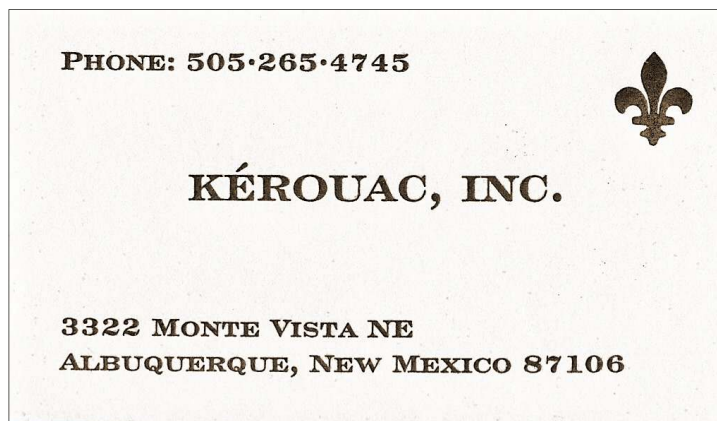
"Well, not here, I'm not. Hey! This is my kind of town. Upstairs in an enormous room I met a great collection of people, all very warm and *simpatique* (2) (sic). And in the midst of them all, were two sky blue eyes beaming at me like a beacon of recognition... My cousin Jacques Kirouac, the President of the Association. When I met him and held his hand, I instantly felt a bond much closer than I feel to my grandmother or my uncle! Looking into Jacques' eyes, I felt as if I were staring into a mirror."

As you can see, right from

that moment we felt at ease with each other, hence our friendship grew from there. Although we were not closely related within the K/ genealogical tree, I became the closest Kirouac to her and, some years later, she told me that I was like an uncle to her. Some months later, in March of 1989, I stopped at her flat in Kingston, New York, while on my way to Florida with my wife. She was living in the historical part of the city. Big trees almost covered the impressive stone houses. But her flat was located in a rather old house which badly needed repairs. She was waiting for us under the veranda to be sure we would find her. Once inside, I was surprised not to

(1) At this point Jan is mistaken. The plaque said "Club Jack Kerouac."

(2) In French with a faulty spelling.



Jan Kerouac's business card

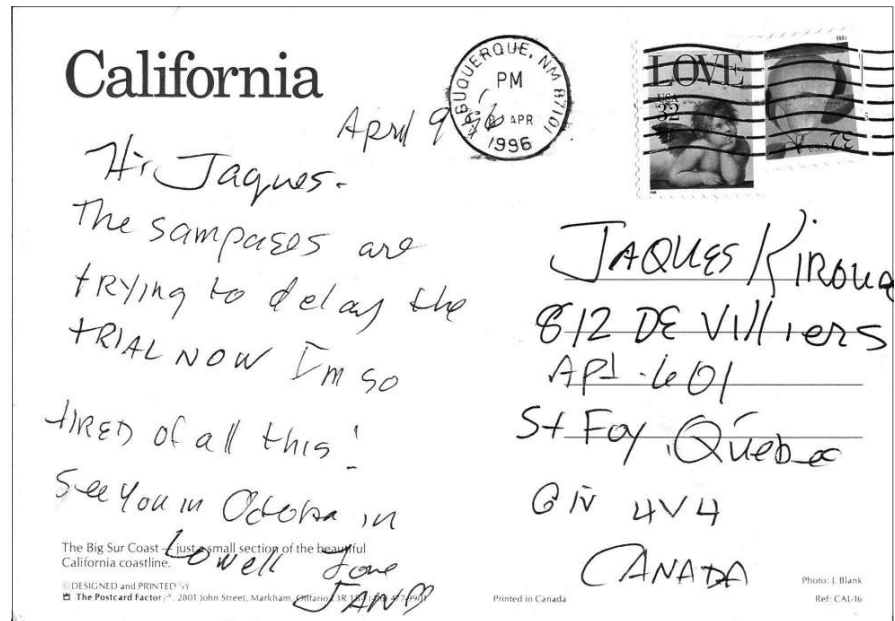


find much furniture. She had almost nothing, and she told me that the things I saw did not belong to her. She was really poor, having only a mattress on the floor in the middle of an empty room.

As I looked at the borrowed typewriter I saw she was working on a book; she would later call it *Parrot Fever*, but at that moment, it was still entitled *Fired from Paradise*. With much simplicity, she then told me that her books were her children. Looking sad, she glanced at a stack of books on the floor. She told me those books had been written by her father, but that she had not read them all. That surprised me a little but I did not ask why.

In another room, I was surprised to see a Quebec flag hanging on the wall. Some years later, she told me being in favour of Quebec's sovereignty. I did not think that she was interested in that question, but eventually, I found out she was very concerned about her own roots.

Almost at the end of our meeting, we went to a small room where there was nothing but papers and boxes on the floor. Amongst that mess, she



Postcard from Jan Kerouac, dated April 9, 1996, addressed to Jacques Kirouac



Parrots were among Jan Kerouac's favourite animals; here are a few on a postcard addressed to Jacques Kirouac by Jan on March 1, 1996.

was looking for pictures, and she gave me a wonderful one (3) taken in a boat on the west coast of the United States. Though she had almost nothing, she offered me a full loaf of bread that she had baked herself. It was too much for me, especially knowing she had so little food. So I took only half of it, but I was really impressed by that gift which showed how important it was for Jan to share with others.

I left her with the promise to see her in Florida later on; but when she went to Sarasota, we were suppose to meet at the Greyhound bus station. A young man informed me that she had left that morning but he did not know where to find her. It was only the following day when I was in a motel further north that I was able to speak to her on the phone. This was our first missed rendez-vous! Later on I understood that she was like a bird flying from tree to tree. It was not easy to catch her. The same thing happened again on our way back when passing through Kingston, NY and the following summer when she wanted to come back to Quebec in order to visit Rivière-du-Loup, specifically the village of Saint-Hubert, birthplace of her grandfather. To make plans

even on the spur of the moment was difficult for her.

But we kept in touch mainly through postcards. I was amazed by her choice of them: very colourful, funny subjects, very short texts with drawings, stamps overlapping, red ink, etc. So she seemed rather unconventional, not to say eccentric, but I was always glad to read these cards as they conveyed her feelings of the moment.

Then later on, she wrote to me that that she was going back to Eugene, Oregon, to take care of her mother who was dying from cancer. So I lost track of her for quite a while, not even knowing about her trip to Puerto Rico, where she almost died from kidney failure. So I was very glad to hear her on the phone from her new home in Albuquerque. Of course we talked about her sickness, but now we had another subject to talk about: the Sampas family! She was arguing that her grandmother Gabrielle's signature on her last will was a forgery, and she wanted to sue the Sampas. But being very ill, she relied on her friend Gerry Nicosia and

wanted our Family Association to give her moral support.

Some time after that, she phoned me again asking to meet her in New York City, in order to help her in her lawsuit against the Sampas family. I was reluctant to go, unsure of what I could do to help her, but after a phone call from Gerry Nicosia, I changed my mind and went to New York at the beginning of June 1995. It would be our third meeting and also the last.

(3) Jan had also chosen that photograph for the cover page of *Parrot Fever*, and it is found on the cover page of this edition of *Trésor des Kirouac*.

**To be continued in the
September edition**



In memory of Jan Michele Kerouac

16 February 1952 – 5 June 1996

by Deborah Lash Bower

Having been first a sister-in-law, and then a “sister-out-law” (as she put it) to Jan Kerouac for nearly thirty years, it is a privilege to reflect on her life on the anniversary of her death. I have remained largely silent over the ten years that she has been gone. I have grieved deeply, and have not deigned to join the fray of writers who, captivated by Jan’s lineage as the only child of an American literary icon, have portrayed her as the creative, bad girl Kerouac who veered ‘off the road’ to heroin, prostitution, and hard living. Instead, to my family, and me Jan was more than the stuff of the “autobiographical fiction” she described in her books. She was part of the fabric of our lives, a part that became more tightly woven at the end of her life.

Janet Michele Kerouac was born in Albany, N. Y. on February 16, 1952. She was the daughter of Joan Virginia Haverty Kerouac and Jean-Louis Lebris de

Kerouac, better known as Jack Kerouac. Jan was raised by her mother. She met her father only twice. The second time, en route to Mexico with my brother, she stopped to see Jack. Before she left, he told her “Write a book, use my name if you want to.” She finished two books, ***Baby Driver*** and ***Train Song***.

In a jungle hut in Mexico Jan gave birth to a stillborn daughter, Natasha. It was the only child Jan would have. She and my brother, John, buried Natasha in the “rain forest soil beneath the banana palm.” Jan

took this loss, as she did many losses, with acceptance. It seems to have been a pattern in Jan’s life — to accept, to live without preconceptions, without expectations, with child-like hope. Those of us who knew Jan understood how vaguely she planned, how little she expected, how greatly she anticipated, and how tremendously she trusted.

It was later in the summer of 1969 that I met Jan. She and John were living in Vichy Springs, CA. My first impression of Jan was of her stunning beauty. She was sixteen, with hip



Deborah Lash Bower and Jan Kerouac in Maui, Hawaii in 1987

Collection Deborah Lash Bower

length hair the color of honey. Black lashes fringed clear blue eyes. Her expression was one of intelligence, eagerness, and goofy amusement. She loved language and languages. She spoke eloquently on subjects ranging from metaphysics to bread recipes. She thanked me for the "lucky bean" I had sent her. "When I hold that bean I feel I can pick up trees with my big toe." That summer in Vichy Springs Jan made loaf after loaf of bread. She loved to bake, and as she kneaded the bread, she regaled me with stories of her remarkable adventures. She told me a story of her father coming home in the middle of the night, demanding that Jan's mother make him a spice cake. Joan refused.

Years later, in my kitchen, Jan and I would stay up into the wee hours of the morning baking, making bread and pastries, and--in honor of Jack--spice cake. We would sing, and Jan would rap a spice cake ode she wrote to her father. We talked, and sang, and clattered pans. And as Jan would paint a veritable multilingual montage in French, Spanish, German, and Arabic, I would emphasize her words with a smashing of pots. We were like dervishes, engaged in baking frenzy.

Jan cooked like she lived—

without reading a recipe. In fact, she hardly read more than two paragraphs of anything -- including her father's books. She had no patience for it. However, despite this impatience, she knew literature and languages, geography and art, science and sociology. She was good company. So good, in fact, that I invited Jan to be my 'sternman' (lobsterman's helper) on my fishing boat. For one summer we were the "Harmonica Virgins" that she referred to in her unfinished book, *Parrot Fever*. That summer, according to Jan, was the longest period of sustained fun she had ever had. In the fall, Jan journeyed on.

Over the following years, Jan and I met in New Mexico, Maui, Maine. However, Jan was losing something of herself. She was becoming sick. On New Year's Day, 1992 she wrote from Puerto Rico that she was having hemodialysis, but she was feeling very ill and afraid. We invited Jan to come live with us in Albuquerque. When she arrived a few days later, we took her directly to the hospital. The shunt in her chest was cracked. She was scheduled for immediate surgery. Thus, we began the days and



Jan Kerouac at age 16
Photo: Deborah Lash Bower

Collection Deborah Lash Bower

months of medical care that were punctuated by trips on which she pretended to be well.

By June of 1996 Jan was gravely ill. Before her last surgery, we sat in her darkened hospital room. "I have become the Bride of Frankenstein," Jan quipped. Over those last hours of her consciousness, we talked about our summer of lobstering, about her brother David and his son Miles, about my brother John, about my husband and three children, about Natasha, about Jan's mother, about Jack. Jan was propped up in bed. She had a tube protruding from her neck. Her neck and torso were packed with gauze pads. She told me that a priest had come and prayed with her. She liked that, so summoned another priest. However, she sent the second priest





Jan Kerouac, summer 1987, Maine USA
Photo: Deborah Lash Bower

away because “he had an attitude.” She asked me to find a “better” one. She reminded me of my promise to her as “durable power of attorney for health care decisions.”

Jan died on June 5, 1996, in Albuquerque. My husband and I were holding her hands. As she wished, she was cremated. As I promised, I went in search of a “better” priest. Instead, I found the best. I told this priest all about Jan — about how she was from a large French Canadian Roman Catholic family. I told him about her great strengths and her great weaknesses. I told him about her sins and about the depth of her acceptance of others, about

how she lived without guile, with an uncommon, selfless generosity. I did not hide her past, her marriages, her cremation. I told him how I had asked for a priest when Jan was in a coma, and no one came. He looked at me curiously. He said (paraphrased) “You are a good friend to Jan. If she was thirsty, would you give her something to drink? If she was hungry, would you feed her? If she was naked, would you give her clothes? If she was sick, would you comfort her?” I answered, “yes” to each of these questions. He continued, “And would she do the same for you? (Yes) And would she do the same for others? (Yes). Then she was generous and loving, which is one of Our Lord’s commandments. You have been a good friend to Jan. She has been a good friend to you. Good friends to one another are good friends to God. God shows His friendship in many ways.”

Father Mondragon performed a funeral mass with communion for Jan. It was held at the Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jan’s ashes are buried with her grandparents, Leo and Gabrielle Kerouac, in Nashua, New Hampshire.

My family has not visited her grave. We have no need. She is woven into the fabric of our lives. She is knitted in our hearts.

In loving memory of Jan Michele Kerouac ...

Deborah Lash Bower

deborahbower@comcast.net



Jan Kerouac
Collection Jacques Kirouac
Photographer unknown

Last homage to our friend Jean-Yves Kirouac

I will never forget Jean-Yves' smile. I met him at one of the Kirouac Family gatherings. That first day, it did not take long for us to find our special link; our fathers were first cousins as well as Sister Cécile Kirouac's father because our three grandfathers were sons of Chevalier François Kirouac. So I always liked Jean-Yves very much. He was such a cheerful person and always showed how pleased he was to meet me ... and it was mutual.

I loved to hear him tell anecdotes about the life of his grandfather, Joseph-Augustin, at the beginning of the 20th century in Quebec City. It was always related with such a sense of humour. It was also so pleasant to see him with Claire, his wife, in the evenings during our weekend gathering ... one of the best dancing couples among the Kirouacs. I loved to hear him talk to Sister Cécile who was always so moved and touched by his care and concern.

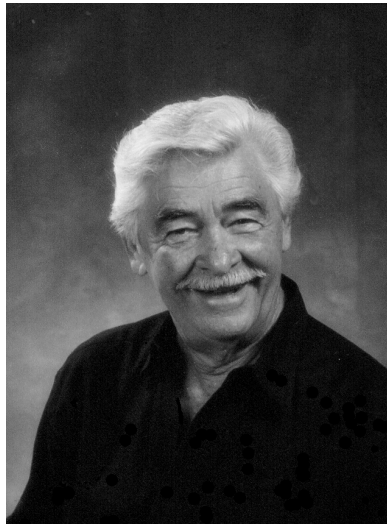
Jean-Yves was a true gentleman. We will remember him as a devoted member of our Family Association, the perfect image of cheerfulness and kindness. Luckily enough, I had the privilege to know him!

Céline Kirouac

Jean-Yves attended almost all our association's annual family gatherings. Right from the very beginning, he offered to translate into English whatever was said by the various speakers in order to make sure that our American cousins could also appreciate their stay among us. Quite early on he also suggested that the texts published in the *Trésor des Kirouac* be translated into English but this took a little longer to materialize.

His constant care and preoccupation for our American cousins were proof of his great interest for the Association and he believed that it was very important that those who no longer spoke French should know what was happening and being discovered by the association's volunteers. He was so generous. He had a very big heart and was deeply attached to the large Kirouac family.

In addition to being a member of our association from the very beginning, Jean-Yves was also a member of the



Jean-Yves Kirouac
1925-2006
(Collection Jean-Yves Kirouac)

Board for some ten years before saying his final goodbye last year. We will all miss him. Personally, I will remember him as someone always smiling, pleasant and who loved to share his great interest for our Association.

Bon voyage Jean-Yves !

François Kirouac

Jean-Yves is the first of our Association's presidents to go "Ad Patres" as they used to say in the old days, e.g. that he has gone to join his ancestors. From now on we will talk about him in the past tense but his attachment to his family and also his implication in our association's administration will forever remain present in our mind.

It is important to mention his care and work for our Franco-American cousins, especially in Nashua, NH, where his ease in the English language enabled him to make so many contacts. Hence he brought to them his personal touch and his usual cheerfulness. As a result, he deserves our gratitude and homage and we will remember his special and distinctive place in the life of our Association.

Jacques Kirouac

I will remember Jean-Yves as a committed man, easy to talk to and very pleasant but, most of all, the very sensitive person hiding behind

the ever unruffled gentleman is an inspiring image to me. Impossible for me to forget his serenity when facing the inevitable adversity.

J.A. Michel Bornais

I remember ... year after year, Jean-Yves arriving at the annual Kirouac gathering; Claire holding his arm, both smiling away and greeting us so warmly. Looking at them, I thought, these are real Kirouacs ... and how they look like us. They are one of us; that is great. He was our president for a few years with all the dignity that was his. He always listened to others and respected their opinion. In 1999, we were all very happy to follow him to Lowell and Nashua, in the United States. I remember his eagerness and pride in getting ready for this event. We were all proud of him. My dear, Jean-Yves, we will miss you.

Éliane et Clément Kirouac

My friends, the Grand Heavenly Master came to fetch he who loved life so much and Jean-Yves was the man who knew how to communicate this love of life to others. Through death we lose a great president of our association. I always considered Jean-Yves as someone dignified and a man of great wisdom. He knew how to put up with aggravating moments which are part of everyday life. I will remember his heartfelt handshake and his slap on the back whenever we met, he never missed his chance. It was his way to show his warmth and care during those ever too short meetings.

We thank you, Jean-Yves, for accepting to preside over the destinies of our Association. I will never forget that photo of your wife, Claire, and yourself, taken in the Confessional-box in Issoudun during our annual family gathering; this photo now displayed for all to see in your home in Laval.

Jean-Yves was a friend and a brother to me. My deepest condolences to Claire and the children.

André Kirouac



Léon-Solyme Kérouac and Augustin-Magloire Blanchet, two Cousins caught in the turmoil of the 1837-1838 Rebellion

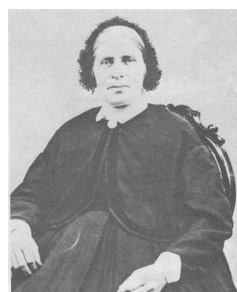
by Clément Kirouac

This is the second of three articles mentioned in the March 2006 *Trésor*. In the following pages, our focus will be on the Richelieu Valley as we bring out many surprising 'historical' events which took place in Lower Canada. Let's carry on. As we saw, the family of Charles Kérouac and Josephite Blanchet left Saint-Pierre-de-Montmagny, on the St. Lawrence's south shore, on October 12, 1836, to settle in Saint-Georges-d'Henryville, on the Richelieu River, about 25 miles from the American border.

Their son, Léon-Solyme most likely preceded them in the area because, according to his marriage contract, he was already a school teacher in Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu,



Léon-Solyme Kérouac



Éléonore Létourneau

located forty-seven miles down river from Henryville. It must have been while going up the river that, on the right shore, Léon-Solyme met the lovely *Éléonore*, whose Christian name seems to have predestined her to meet *Léon*. Born in St. Marc on the Richelieu, some eight miles up river from St. Charles, Éléonore Létourneau married Léon, on April 11, 1836. For the occasion, Léon and his father, Charles, restored the full family name ⁽¹⁾ *Le Brice de Kérouac*.

The school master must have been particularly exceptional as he enjoyed an enviable reputation in the whole area ⁽²⁾. We know that he became the President of the Beloeil Section of the Teachers Association of the Montreal Region. For many years, Léon devoted himself to the youth of the Richelieu Valley.

However, a new question arises here. Could Léon-Solyme have been invited to this area by his cousin, Augustin-Magloire Blanchet, who, since 1830, was the Parish priest of St-Charles-sur-Richelieu, and also in charge of the church of Saint-Marc-sur-Richelieu, across the River? The two cousins hailed from Saint-Pierre-de-Montmagny where Augustin-Magloire was born on August 22, 1797, son of Pierre Blanchet and Rosalie (Marie-Rose) Blanchet. Léon's mother, Josephite, was Rosalie's sister.

Given the political climate in Lower Canada then, the two

(1) This detail is important as it concerns this particular branch of the Kirouac family.

(2) See the article from the Dictionary of Canadian Biographies reprinted in the last issue of *Le Trésor*, number 83, March 2006.

cousins were about to live through some rather troublesome times in the Richelieu Valley, the period known as "The 1837-1838 Rebellion". Father Blanchet would find himself in the front rows during the conflict between the Patriots and the "Loyalists", sharing the sufferings of both sides with his cousin Léon Kérouac. Most historians of the period mentioned the implication of Father Blanchet.

To better understand the setting, here are a few historical facts. In the autumn of 1837, following complete dissension between the militant nationalist fringe in Lower-Canada, led by Louis-Joseph Papineau, and Governor Gosford, some rather dark clouds were gathering over the Richelieu Valley. The memorable 5000-strong gathering on the heights of Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, called (*Assemblée des Six Comtés*) the Assembly of the Six Counties, took place near the presbytery. Father Blanchet was shaken by the demonstration but he did not know then that it would drag him into a terrible politico-religious turmoil. All observers at the time noted that, during the assembly, there was a strong mobilization for the defence of the rights of the Canadians.



Patriots and loyalists
(Source: WebSite of the Patriots)

It is also important to mention that another key personage appeared on the scene prior to the important political battle just about to unfold. On October 24, Bishop Jean-Jacques Lartigue ⁽³⁾, first bishop of Montreal, published a first Mandamus concerning the Rebellion. The Bishop's text was read a first time on Sunday, October 25, in Saint-



Assembly of the Six Counties
(Painting by Charles Alexander, Quebec City Museum)

Charles of all places and, on the following Sunday, it was read in the other parishes. The forewarning was solemn and serious.

After quoting a text from Saint Paul where he demands submission to the official legal civil authority and the Encyclical Letter by Pope Gregory XVI, dated August 15, 1832: "Do not be led astray by someone who wants you to join a rebellion against the established Government, under the pretence that you are one of a sovereign people: adding to this that no individual, no group of Citizens can declare Sovereignty. And, who would dare say that, in this country, all the Citizens wish the destruction of their government?"⁽⁴⁾

Bishop Lartigue's ideas were first made public on July 25, in Montreal, during the consecration ceremony of Bishop Ignace Bourget, his colleague. "In front of all the clergy of the Montreal diocese, during a banquet which ended by a toast to 'the King', the local bishop repeated the Catholic Church's Roman doctrine: *it is forbidden to revolt against the rightful authority and to absolve those who preach such doctrine*"⁽⁵⁾. During the following days, the daily, *La Minerve*, raised the subject of rightful authority according to the Liberals: "To preach respect for the rightful authority, means preaching respect for the people, the only rightful source of authority. We know very well that the Church has always proclaimed that all authority comes from God." (*Omnis potestas a Deo*)⁽⁶⁾.



Bishop Jean-Jacques Lartigue,
Bishop of Montreal, in 1836

Gosford, that he may well have been misinformed and that "if the Government wants a happy country, as soon as possible it must accede to the just demands of the people".

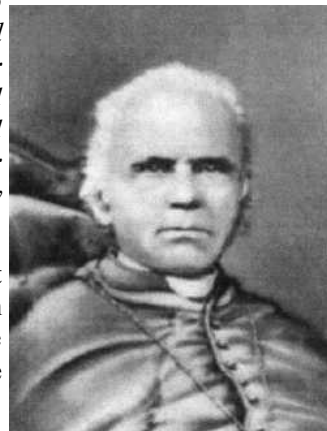


Bishop Ignace Bourget
(1799-1885)

Pastor Blanchet soon realized that his parish was the stronghold of the Patriots in the area. He acknowledged the merits of Louis-Joseph Papineau's grievances and, though he refused to get involved in politics, in a letter dated November 9, 1837, he warned the Governor, Lord Gosford, that he may well have been misinformed and that "if the Government wants a happy country, as soon as possible it must accede to the just demands of the people". He also added "that one should not count on the members of the clergy to stop the popular movement in the surrounding areas" because "a minister cannot abandon his flock."⁽⁷⁾

The many versions of the events of the autumn of 1837, written by various historians all concur. For example, "On November 25, at six o'clock in the morning, just before the battle began in St.

Charles, all the armed men waiting in the camp were happy to have the visit of their parish priest, *Magloire-Augustin Blanchet, though he has come to scold them. He repeats that he is not getting involved in politics but that he has come simply as a priest, to pray to the Holy Virgin Mary and recite with them, five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys. He encourages all the men to make amends for their sins and he looks very sad as he leaves*"⁽⁸⁾.



Bishop Augustin Magloire
Blanchet, Parish Priest of Saint-
Charles-sur-Richelieu

Pastor Blanchet's conduct was not at all considered an act of compassion by the British authorities and those on the government's side. The fighting between two unequal forces left a good number of dead on the grounds and among the surviving patriots many were arrested and imprisoned in Montreal. On December 16, accused of high treason, Father Blanchet was arrested and taken to the new prison in Montreal. After an investigation there and a lengthy explanation by Blanchet, the Bishops of Montreal and



The battle of Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu
(Reproduction of a print by N. Hartnell, from a drawing by Lord Charles Beauclercq, November 25, 1837. Civilisation Museum, Library of Quebec City Seminary, old archives)

Quebec City, not wanting to compromise the clergy, their version of the facts was presented by Bishop Lartigue: "He concluded that the Parish priest had been a little weak and imprudent, where as Bishop Joseph Signay"⁽⁹⁾ believed that he had acted out of fear of the Patriots. Therefore, both

3) Bishop Jean-Jacques Lartigue, first bishop of the Montreal Diocese.

4) Mandamus from Bishop Lartigue, bishop of Montreal.

5) Yvan Lamonde, *Histoire sociale des idées au Québec* (Social History of Ideas in Quebec) 1760-1896. Fides 2000, 565 pp. p. 233

6) Yvan Lamonde. op. cit. 234

7) Dictionary of Canadian Biographies.

8) Elinor Kyte Senior, *Les habits rouges et les Patriotes* (Red Coats and Patriots), 1997 VLB Editor, 305 pp. - p.134

interceded in his favour verbally and in writing with Governor Gosford as well as with Sir John Colborne, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in Lower and Upper Canada. Thanks to the combined efforts of the two Bishops, on March 31, 1838, Blanchet was liberated against a bail of £1000.⁽¹⁰⁾

After nearly three and a half months in prison, Pastor Blanchet, replaced his brother, François-Norbert, in the Parish of Les Cèdres; the latter was sent to Oregon as a missionary and eventually became the Bishop of Oregon City. In 1846, Augustin-Magloire joined his brother and became the Bishop of Walla. The courageous Cousin Blanchet died in Oregon in February 1887, fifty years after spending time in prison and the Rebellion of 1837-1838.

But where was Léon Kérouac while his cousin Blanchet was going through this difficult period? He most certainly was very close to him while undergoing such trials and tribulations. Thanks to the archives of the late Mrs. Françoise Lussier, a short note published in *L'Album* in 1980, where it says that "while the village of St. Charles was burning, Léon-Solyme would have saved the sacred vases and other church objects. Then the Parish priest, other parishioners, his wife and baby Philomène, had to stay hidden in the forests for some days."⁽¹¹⁾ Léon-Solyme will tell us himself exactly what happened But where was Léon Kérouac while his cousin Blanchet was going through this difficult period? He most certainly was very close to him while undergoing such trials and tribulations. Thanks to the



Reds and Patriots
Drawing by M.A. Hayes (ANC C3653)

archives of the late Mrs. Françoise Lussier, a short note published in *L'Album* in 1980, where it says that "while the village of St. Charles was burning, Léon-Solyme would have saved the sacred vases and other church objects. Then the Parish priest, other parishioners, his wife and baby Philomène, had to stay hidden in the forests for some days."⁽¹¹⁾ Léon-Solyme will tell us himself exactly what happened.

The school master from Saint-Antoine will use his pen to defend Blanchet, the Parish Priest. In March 1838, while the latter was still in prison, Léon-Solyme sent to the newspaper

Le Populaire⁽¹²⁾, a detailed article in the defence of Father Blanchet. The article was published on March 18, but to his great annoyance, it had been intentionally 'chopped up' by someone close to the editor, favourable to the British government.

Frustrated by this situation, Léon-Solyme went to Luc Éthier, editor of the newspaper *Le Canadien*⁽¹³⁾, and asked him to do whatever was needed to ensure that his article was published in its entirety within the pages of his paper which was more favourable to the Patriots. So it was done in spite of much journalistic fuss.

Finally, on May 18, 1838, the whole article was rightly published within the pages of *Le Canadien* and was carefully introduced by a letter explaining the situation in order to unmask the attitude of those working at *Le Populaire*. A skilful writer, Léon analyses in detail the situation to prove that the British authorities misinterpreted the presence of Pastor Blanchet in the Patriots' camp on the morning of the battle.

Read carefully his letter to *Lieutenant-Colonel GUGY*. Léon does not indulge in pleasantness, quite the opposite, he dares to defy him. The tone of his letter is the same from beginning to end, that of a British subject with a solid backbone; to say the least.

Finally, the reader will have to get used to the French language of the time, long sentences, lots of semicolons and rather antiquated vocabulary. Transcribing this article from microfilms⁽¹⁴⁾ was no easy task but the result is worth the trouble.⁽¹⁵⁾

As I finish writing this text, we are now facing a rather bitter debate in Quebec about the teaching of history; it brings back to mind how important it is to know our *Past* as it is the key to understanding the *Present*. A wise man once wrote: "Not knowing where we come from might entail not knowing where we are going."

It is therefore, with great joy and pride that I introduce our brave cousin, Léon-Solyme Kérouac, school master in Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, one of us, and courageous enough to stick with his own people and, using the medias of the time, standing up to see the truth triumph in front of the British authorities. Bringing to light the memory of one of ours can only be but valuable to all of us.



-
- (9) Coadjutor Bishop of Quebec City
 (10) Dictionary of Canadian Biographies
 (11) Raymonde-Kérouac-Harvey, *L'Album*, p. 70
 (12) *Le Populaire*, 'middle-of-the-road' newspaper
 (13) *Le Canadien*, fighting newspaper founded by Pierre Bédard.
 (14) Microfilms from Quebec National Archives, 19th Century newspapers.
 (15) Translator's note: Converting old French into English is an appealing challenge particularly as the translator is a proud great-great-granddaughter of Léon-Solyme Le Brice de Keroack.

Mr. Luc Éthier
Editor of *Le Canadien*

Saint-Charles 18 May 1838

I would have preferred very much that the letter to which Mr. Leblanc de Marconnay ⁽¹⁾ has complacently added my signature, that the said letter had not been printed in your *newspaper* as I am the author of said letter. This long epistle ⁽²⁾ which he attributes to me belongs entirely to him, except for possibly some twenty phrases that he did not have the time to mutilate or twist to reflect his style. I wish to inform you of this situation as I find this dishonesty on his part so strange.

Towards the end of April, Mr. Éthier asked him if he could print in *Le Populaire* a letter in favour of Mr. Blanchet, esq.; the charitable and impartial Editor, believing that the way I spoke of his honourable friend was not kind enough, Mr. Gagy ⁽³⁾, would only publish the letter after a number of changes were made to the text.

Mr. Éthier then said to him that if he did not want to print it as it was written, he would therefore send it to you hoping that you would publish it without any alteration. The letter was then entrusted into the hands of someone in Montreal who was supposed to make sure it reached you immediately. If you did not receive it, one can imagine that it was intercepted, or that it fell, *by chance*, into his hands, or else that he had the nerve to ask the person in whose hands the letter had been entrusted by Mr. Éthier in order to have the satisfaction of printing it with his *admirable* comments. You would oblige me very much if you were kind enough to publish it again but this time as it was originally written.

Dear Sir, Editor, I remain,
Your obedient Servant,
LÉON S. KÉROUAC

To the Honourable Gagy, Esquire, Lawyer, M.P.P.,
Lieutenant-Colonel, Provincial General Head Quarter,
Judge-Barrister of the future Martial Court, Inspector of
the Canadian Military Forces, etc., etc., etc.

Sir,

Please allow one of your very humble servants, someone without title nor glory, to approach your most *excellent person*, to express a few truths, however unpleasant, they must nevertheless be known.

With great trust I will express myself because you have invited all those who have something to reveal against you to speak up, therefore, Sir, I beg to answer your invitation, in the hope that you will have the honour and openness to accept the truth and not deny it in order to be true to your admirable words which I have carefully gathered and

saved.

However, before introducing you to the scene that seems so obviously unpleasant to you, I would like to say that I was very surprised to see a Judge-Barrister of the Martial Court try to prejudice the public against the person who is to be arraigned, so they say, in front of its supreme tribunal sometime before doomsday. It seems to me, Sir, that, *in case it might involuntarily prejudice the defence of the accused*, you should have left out from your letter all the malicious observations that, though false, might leave some bad impressions on the mind of a few credulous ignorant persons. You seem to be aware that your process is harmful because under the veil of hypocrisy you try to hide from us your true intentions but the latter emerge in spite of yourself.

You dare say that only for the sake of truth you have been forced to speak out, while it is evident that your aim is not to refute the preposterous stories of the Justice's Friend, because, at the end of your letter, you naively declare that you do not wish (likely with all due respect for truth) to reveal the numerous lies it contains.

Among the various reasons you have to speak up, the most imperious was obviously not, as you pretend, to correct the facts basely perverted so they project the hateful part of the business onto the government and the army of His Majesty, as in your *interesting* letter, you only speak about yourself; your own defence seems to be your sole preoccupation, as if it were enough to clear your name to justify the military and the Government; frankly, if we did not know you, Mr. Gagy, we would think that *You are the Country, the Government!* ... It is easy to see that your sole aim was to publicly accuse the respectable Parish Priest of St. Charles, Mr Blanchet, in order to justify your shameful conduct towards him.

Although you dare say that *you most sincerely wish that he should be promptly cleared of all (light) suspicions presently weighing him down ... and that you would be most distressed to further aggravate the position of the ex-clergy prisoner*, nevertheless, you preposterously claim to deprive him of his priesthood, and one would have to be really blind and not see that, all you want, is to make sure others share your assertions.

Undoubtedly it is permitted for you to defend yourself personally *when, under the cover of anonymity, you were under attack*, but it is regretful that you have attempted to build your defence *on the ruins of the true facts*

N.B. Notes are added by Clément Kirouac

(1) *Leblanc de Marconnay*, Editor in Chief of the newspaper *Le Populaire*.

(2) *Léon Kérouac* is talking about his letter dated, March 31st

(3) *Gagy*: Montreal Magistrate. Impetuous, hot tempered, very colourful character, but the large and loud colonel was not sectarian.



Undoubtedly it is permitted for you to defend yourself personally *when, under the cover of anonymity, you were under attack*, but it is regretful that you have attempted to build your defence *on the ruins of the true facts*.

First you give us a rather strong proof of your dishonesty by trying to prove, using some reasoning as simple as it seems subtle, that Mr. Blanchet wanted to make the Holy Virgin look as though she was on the side of the rebels by putting his unfortunate parishioners under her protection.

Sir, you have to be very credulous or rather quite hypocritical to believe that Mr. Blanchet, after having had the courage to declare to the insurgents that he could not approve violence let alone the *shedding of blood*, had in the following moment, *the weakness*, some would say the extreme folly, to bless them, to encourage them to pray to the Holy Virgin to be favourable to their cause while fighting. If the *Honourable Judge-Barrister* still wishes to use his invincible arguments to prove that it is possible to carry out a well armed revolution without shedding a single drop of blood, then, like him, I will believe that Mr. Blanchet, as he prayed for the rebels, was showing himself one of their supporters; that he acted as a traitor, a revolutionary, though always with sensible people, when the words he used in the camp openly condemned the rebellion.

Those whose mind does not seek vengeance will of course see that Mr Blanchet, witnessing the deplorable mistake of his parishioners, was overwhelmed by compassion for them and prayed that there would be no blood shed. As a Minister of Jesus Christ, he believed that, without committing a crime of High-Treason then, he could summon the Lord to hold back his anger against the culprits and give them the needed time to repent.

Now, Mr. Guly, it is time to lift up all the errors in your letter, *put your hand on your conscience and listen to the voice of truth, without blushing if you can*. Possibly, in order to voluntarily hurt the defence of the accused, you pretend to believe with the best of intentions, that Mr. Blanchet, in defiance of the Mandamus of the Montreal Bishop, he took the liberty to comment on it and praise the chief ⁽⁴⁾ and his opinions. How terrible, my dear Sir, to be so misinformed! It is absolutely sure that Mr. Blanchet, far from defying the Mandamus of his honourable Bishop, because on the very day when the Mandamus was generally defied by his parishioners, he said in front of me and other persons, with a profound pain: "What a scandal! ... and who will be able to put things right? ... The Bishop's authority has been trampled! ... All those present in the church that day, can corroborate that, after having read the Mandamus, Mr. Blanchet did not add a single word of comment and immediately read the Gospel of the day as this, to him,

was the appropriate thing to do rather than praise the Chief and his opinions. In the future, Sir, learn not to automatically take for granted the impostors' reports.

Now let us see if it is really true that Mr. Blanchet was received at Head-Quarters *with all the respect that his person justifies, in spite of the existing prejudices against him*. A few hours after the battle, he went to the village, accompanied by Mr. Éthier and *your humble servant* ⁽⁵⁾, to ask permission to bring religious succours to the Catholic braves.

Colonel Wetherall ⁽⁶⁾ received him very politely and showed respect to the person and the priest. However, within about fifteen minutes of our arrival, a person appeared and greeted us with condescendence and rudely asked Mr. Blanchet: "Who are you?" – "I am the parish priest from St. Charles, - So, he added angrily, you are the shameful priest who preached rebellion and approve infamous revolutionary papers and you are therefore the cause of all the bloodshed today!!..."

Mr. Éthier, and myself, then tried to say a few words in defence of him who was so unfairly accused: "Shut up, said he impudently, you are all in the same clique." Then, in a milder voice he asked where were the chiefs, how many Canadians were in the camp? As Mr. Blanchet was unable to give satisfactory answers to these questions, the great plenipotentiary in his fury and forgetting all sense of dignity, used some utterly shameful expressions in the mouth of a gentleman, amongst other insults he even dared to say (to Mr. Blanchet) you're *a damn rascal Priest* ⁽⁷⁾ from whom it was impossible to find anything ... I have learned since that this important and frightening character was only an ordinary volunteer! Someone you most likely know very well.

After this gracious reception, after receiving us with all usual due civilities, you suggested that Mr. Blanchet go immediately to St. Denis ⁽⁸⁾, to deliver some letters urging the insurgents to lay down their arms. Not only did he not refuse, as you dare pretend, but he answered right in front of us all that he would be very happy if he could be of use to his compatriots, and that he was ready to execute your orders. All he asked for was to wait until the following morning, in order for his mission to be more successful. He mentioned that obscurity and bad road conditions made travelling rather difficult and that travelling to St.

(4) *Louis-Joseph Papineau: brilliant Member of Parliament for Lower-Canada, charismatic chief of the patriots' movement.*

(5) *The humble servant, meaning Léon-Solyme.*

(6) *Wetherhall: Sir George-Augustus, Commander of the Montreal Garrison, Guly's superior*

(7) *Damn rascal Priest: in English in the French text.*

(8) *St-Denis: on Oct. 23, 1837, it was there that was the only victory of the patriots, against General Gore's troops.*

Denis at night time, he might be arrested by the insurgents who would take him for a spy. Therefore it is absolutely false that he answered with vain pride: "That he was not Colonel Wetherall's messenger!" and that he would have positively declared that he wanted to remain neither for nor against the government and the rebels. Thus it is not quite true that you were obliged to use up all your (offensive) arguments to make him see reason. Colonel Wetherall, without consulting you, rashly told Mr. Blanchet that he could delay his departure, so you kindly added to this that if he did not want to leave for St. Denis ⁽⁹⁾ right away, then he would be kept prisoner until the following day.

Following these kind words, we were granted permission to go to the presbytery where the wounded were, afterwards we entered into the church; Mr. Blanchet wanted then to go to the sacristy to pick up the silver and the key to the tabernacle where the Holy Ciborium was kept, but Captain Deveney, who had been ordered to allow him to take all he felt should be taken out, said to him in front of me, that he could not enter this room while assuring him that nothing would be touched, nor taken. Therefore, that day, we had to leave without taking anything ⁽¹⁰⁾. Back at Head Quarters, Mr. Blanchet, having declared to you that he preferred to remain your prisoner until the following day, rather than go to St. Denis during the night, you went into a rage, *threatening him* to have him taken to the Montreal Prison, handcuffed and shackled ... if he refused to leave immediately. This time, Colonel Wetherall, meekly and unfortunately approved your threats saying that all you would do would be well done, Mr. Blanchet was forced to obey you, without saying a word.

After telling him to get ready to execute your orders, you curtly dismissed him and his companions. It must have been about seven o'clock in the evening and your letters were finally ready and given to him by one of your messengers only after ten o'clock. Mr. Blanchet, unable to find a carriage in the village, was forced to walk over half a league ⁽¹¹⁾ to find one. Being afraid to be arrested he took a long round-about road and only arrived in St. Denis at two in the morning. After a short rest, he had to travel another two leagues to immediately deliver your

letter to the Mr. Demers ⁽¹²⁾, the Vicar General, who, the day before had to leave the village. After completing his difficult mission, he then obtained the favour to fetch the sacred vases in the sacristy, but unfortunately the permission was granted a bit too late as robbers, who probably were not among the prisoners, had been able to remove the silverware ⁽¹³⁾ worth about thirty-five Louis ⁽¹⁴⁾. After having refuted all the small lies that you made great use of to excuse your attitude and conduct towards Mr. Blanchet, I still wish to say that you are greatly mistaken if you believe, or rather feign to believe, that if the inhabitants were interviewed, *not one would dare complain about the British military.* Do take the time, Mr. Gury, to go to St. Eustache, St. Benoît, and to St. Denis, where you will find hundreds of miserable people *bearing permanent marks of the excess committed* by the troops; you will see a great many miserable people whose properties have been burned to the ground or ruined through pillage; you will meet some quiet peasants who, after living in some comfort, now probably do not have even a single grain of wheat to sow in their field! ... and after that you will tell us *that the soldier was as courageous while fighting, as he was clement after the victory.*

Before I make you disappear from the scene where you dislike being anyway, I will confess to you, Sir, that *I would have preferred, like you, not to be required to explain what was known to have happened during those dreadful days, but a strong hatred for lies forced me to express the truth openly and clearly,* of course all truth should not necessarily be made public, as you know. As you think that it is sufficient to put one's name forward to be believed, therefore I will not remain anonymous like *the Friend of the Truth*, because I would not want to be considered a slanderous coward, hence, Mr. Gury, I declare that,

*I remain humbly yours,
With profound respect,
One of your Admirers,*

LÉON S. KÉROUAC

St-Charles, 31 March 1838

I, the undersigned, witnessed the interview between Mr. Blanchet and Mr. Gury, and as his companion on his overnight trip, openly certify that all above-mentioned facts are unfortunately all too true.

LUC ÉTHIER

Editor

(9) From St-Charles to St-Denis, about 12 km or 7½ miles.

(10) In *L'Album* by Raymonde Kérouac Harvey, p. 70, it says that "he is known to have saved the sacred vases"

(11) One league = three miles or 5 km

(12) General Vicar for the Diocese of Quebec.

(13) See note 10

(14) About 35 louis: a louis is a twenty-franc piece.



Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer

By her daughter, Pia M. (Karrer) O'Leary
Part 2

In May 1906, Huguette Morin was not expected to live.

In May 2006, Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer celebrated her 100th birthday!

Her knowledge of three languages has always been an asset. During the war, she was able to make a little money by giving private French lessons. In Toronto, she organized a French conversation group for the parents' association at Pia's High School and even helped an aspiring opera singer with his Italian pronunciation. In Boston, she accepted a position as a governess for a family of seven children. Even at the age of ninety-six, she was tutoring the daughter of her home-care worker. Despite her many moves she always adapted to life be it in French, Italian or English.

Being the eighth child in a family of thirteen children and having survived her older brothers' 'boot camps' made her adaptable and resilient in the face of adversity but who could have imagined all the challenges she would have to overcome. Marrying an Italian army officer on the eve of the Second World War was her first major hurdle (details of her Italian saga in *Le Trésor*, March 2005) Then she had to adapt to married life in a different culture while sharing an apartment with her mother-in-law and brother-in-law.

She gave birth to her only child, Pia, by Caesarean section, was unable to breastfeed her and did her best to raise a baby on the war-time rations of one half cup of milk a day⁽¹²⁾. Moreover, she and her husband had to sell their most cherished possessions (wedding presents, Carlo's gold medals in gymnastics...even their gold wedding rings) in order to put food on the table. There was no longer any water, electricity or gas in their apartment building. Hunger and thirst were compounded by cold and fear. When the bombs came, they had to run ten minutes to the safety of Castel Sant'Angelo (a former summer residence of the Popes). When Carlo was taken hostage by the Germans, Marie sought refuge in a convent run by the



Photo: Pia M. Karrer O'Leary

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate-Conception, a French-Canadian order who had a convent in Monte Mario near Rome. She survived disguised as a nun ... the perfect camouflage so long as Pia remembered not to call her "Mamma".

During the war, her Canadian background made her the object of surveillance. Naturally she was suspected of sympathizing with the Allies. After the war, the tables were turned but she was still on the wrong side. Having become Italian by marriage made her ineligible for the rations which the British government doled out to other expatriate Canadians in Italy. The change of citizenship also made it a struggle for her to return to her homeland with Pia.

Then she had to wait another two and a half years before her husband would be allowed into Canada. Two years after the end of the war he was still considered an enemy because of his military career in spite of the fact that he had avoided serving in the Fascist army and had consequently spent part of the war as a hostage of the Germans⁽¹³⁾.

When Carlo finally arrived in Canada, the position which awaited him at the Independent Order of Foresters, (IOF) was in Toronto. Once again, Marie was the outsider having to adapt to a new language and another culture. On top of that, she now had the additional task of initiating Carlo into the North

(12) In Rome during the war, the milk ration for every child under three was only one half cup of milk a day. There was no milk for those over the age of three!

(13) On September 3, 1943, the Allied Forces landed in Southern Italy and signed an armistice with the Italian government. Immediately, the Germans seized all the principal towns in Italy. Officers and soldiers alike ran to hide in order to avoid serving under the Germans. Carlo did not want to abandon his wife and child who could have easily been identified and killed. So he did not flee. He kept hoping the Allied Forces would soon reach Rome.

Mindful to remain true to his military code of honour, while refusing to serve in the army of the pseudo-Italian Social Republic, he took a health leave. So on September 9, 1943, instead of showing up for his military service, he checked himself into a hospital where he underwent a tonsillectomy. After spending ten days in hospital he succeeded in being granted another three-month leave for stomach ulcers (probably brought on by the constant hunger). On January 12, 1944, he was deemed cured but he continued to be excused from duty because of his classification as 'mutilated'. In fact Carlo had lost an eye in a military vehicle accident before the war.

Unfortunately, his health leave expired before the Allies reached Rome. In early April 1944, he was arrested and disarmed in front of his family. The Germans took him to Venice behind the Gothic line in the German-controlled region of northern Italy. There they kept him under house arrest in civilian clothes as a hostage. The Germans would kill ten of these 'deportees' for every German officer that was killed by Italian Partisans. This strategy allowed the Germans to contravene the Geneva Convention which forbade killing prisoners of war (by definition, a prisoner of war is one caught on a battlefield).

(14) W.A.S.P. stands for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

American way of doing things and raising a child. However, neither of them was prepared for the outright xenophobia in a very WASPish⁽¹⁴⁾ post-war Toronto. If you had an accent, finding an apartment was next to impossible and a simple game of tennis with Pia in a public park on a Sunday morning scandalized the neighbourhood. Carlo struggled with the English language while trying to earn a degree in actuarial science at the University of Toronto. Then the arrival of the first actuarial computation machines and the resulting downsizing at IOF left him unemployed. It was a struggle to make ends meet.

When the *Sheraton Hotel* chain offered Carlo a position, the Karrers migrated to the United States where they spent the next twenty years in Boston, Binghamton, NY, Roselle and Rutherford, NJ. Neither Carlo nor Marie became American. Carlo continued to serve as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Italian reserve army and Marie did not want to risk losing her

Chronology of Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer's life and the War Years in Italy

1906	(May 12):	Marie's birth in Montréal.
1906 to 1937		Marie lives in Montréal.
1937	(July 17):	Leaves for Perugia, Italy, to study Italian.
1938	(January 27):	Returns to Canada.
1939	(March 2):	Marries Carlo Karrer by proxy (Carlo in Rome, Marie in Montréal). In so doing she becomes an Italian citizen.
1939	(April 8):	Leaves for Italy.
1940	(April 20):	Pia's birth.
1940	(June 10):	Mussolini declares war on the Allies.
1942 to 1945		Austere conditions, lack of food.
1943	(July 9):	The Americans land in Sicily.
	(September 3):	An Armistice is signed. The Italian government surrenders to the Allies. The Germans seize all the major Italian cities.
	(September 9):	Mindful to remain faithful to his military code of honour, Carlo takes a health leave rather than swearing allegiance to the Germans.
1944	(April 4, 1944 to April 28, 1945):	Carlo is taken hostage by the Germans and brought to Venice. Marie remains alone with Pia in Rome without any source of revenue or contact with her family in Canada.
1944	(June 4-5):	The Allies arrive in Rome but war continues in Italy.
	(Summer 1944):	Marie goes to live in the convent of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in Monte Mario.
1945	(April 28):	Liberation of Venice. Carlo is free to return to Rome.
	(December 18):	Marie and Pia immigrate to Canada.
1947	(July):	More than two years after the end of the war, a Peace Treaty is finally signed between Italy and Canada.
1948	(June 29):	Carlo immigrates to Canada.
	(July 19):	Carlo starts working for IOF in Toronto.
1959	(January 20):	The Karrers emigrate to the United States.
1980	(August):	The Karrers return to Canada settling in Ville Mont-Royal.
1988	(July 22):	Carlo dies in Montreal.
1989		Marie moves to Château Vincent-d'Indy in Outremont.
1996	(September 1):	Marie moves to London, Ontario.
2002	(September 17):	Marie moves to Mount Hope Centre in London.



Canadian citizenship again. All that time they carried American immigration Green cards which identified them as “aliens” a term which can refer to foreigners as well as to extra-terrestrials. One way or the other, again they were outsiders... but that was nothing new for the Karrers.

In 1980, when Carlo retired at the age of 72, the Karrers decided to settle in Montreal in order to be closer to the Morin family. Marie was packing when a failing heartbeat caused her to collapse. Earlier that morning, Carlo had left for the day in New York with a suit he planned to take to the cleaner’s on his way to catch the bus. As luck would have it, the cleaning establishment was closed for the day. So, when Carlo returned home to leave his suit, he found Marie on the floor near the phone but unable to reach it to call for help. She was rushed to the hospital and outfitted with a pacemaker which allowed her to return to Montreal and reunite with her remaining siblings. In 1996, after the death of her last sister, she settled in London, Ontario, to be closer to Pia and her four grandchildren.

Marie’s good genes, healthy lifestyle and strong family ties along with her mastery of three languages, her openness to others and to new adventures have combined to help her reach her 100th birthday. She has been a wonderful mother and grandmother. Now her ambition and dream is to become a great-grandmother. But while she waits, we remind her that she is already a GREAT grandmother!

Bibliography:

Karrer, Marie-H. Interviews with Pia O’Leary (1999-2005).

Karrer, Marie-H. Ten-page letter to her parents (dated June 5, 1944).

Keates, Jonathan. The rough guide: History of Italy, Rough Guides Ltd., London, 2003, 384 p.

Morin, Victor. Correspondence concerning the marriage by proxy, Marie’s return to Canada and Carlo’s immigration to Canada.

100th Birthday Party of **Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer**

London, Ontario, Sunday, May 21, 2006

What an honour and a pleasure it was to be invited and attend the Brunch celebrating Marie-Huguette Morin-Karrer’s Hundredth Birthday! Because I am a distant cousin but also to represent the Kirouac Family Association. What a privilege it was to travel between Montreal and London, and return, with Sister Huguette Turcotte, m.i.c., When Mrs. Karrer addressed a letter to: “The last surviving sister of those who were in Rome during the war” the letter landed in the hands of Sister Huguette who immediately phoned Mrs. Karrer. As an amateur historian and very interested in the archives of her religious community the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, she asked Pia to tape her mother as she recounted her souvenirs particularly those concerning her stay with the MIC sisters in Italy during the Second World War. (See *Le Trésor* 79, March 2005).

Some thirty relatives and friends enjoyed the delicious brunch held at the Grosvenor Club on Sunday, May 21, 2006. Our centenarian looked so good in her attractive spring outfit sporting a lovely orchid. She greeted each visitor with a large smile and a kind word and kept smiling away for the hundreds of photographs. She was so happy to talk with everyone, among them, her four grandchildren, Stephen, John, David and Susan, and their partners, some Morin cousins who drove from Montreal and some long-time friends. She received many wonderful bouquets of flowers. Jacques and Alberte Kirouac from Quebec City sent a lovely white basket of flowers.

Among the many testimonies prepared specially for the occasion one must be underlined particularly for its historical importance. When Sister Huguette Turcotte learned that Napoléon Bourassa, had been Marie Huguette Morin’s godfather, she quickly looked up the important links between this famous architect and artist and the M.I.C. Sisters and documented it accordingly as well as the links between the M.I.C. and another member of the K/ clan and a rather important one at that. (Article to be published in a future issue of *Le Trésor*).

After the brunch, Pia showed some old photos on screen and presented her mother with a thick souvenir album containing stories, anecdotes, photographs sent in by parents and friends. For some six months Pia had been emailing one and all asking them to send in something for the album and, if you have been astonished by the unbelievable adventures

that Marie-Huguette survived since her birth (see *Le Trésor*, number 83, March 2006), believe me, some of the stories written in the album and read after the meal, prove that our cousin Marie-Huguette has even more than nine lives like cats do!

This beautiful family reunion went on at Pia and Paul's home afterwards while our happy centenarian was taken back to her room at the residence. She was still all smiles in spite of the emotions and the tiredness of such a long day. Months of preparation and efforts really paid off; it was a great success.

As for K/rouacs' longevity, it is interesting to note that for many years Mrs. Karrer was very proud to be the eldest of the clan; but now we know that she is the youngest centenarian of the K/rouac clan! Again, we wish her many more years of happiness among her wonderful family.

Marie Lussier Timperley (21 June 2006)



From left to right: Camille Morin, Mrs. Karrer's great-grand-niece; André Morin, Camille's grandfather and only son of Roger (Victor Morin's youngest), Stéphanie, André's daughter and Camille's mother, the new centenarian: Marie-Huguette Morin Karrer. (Collection Pia Karrer O'Leary)



From left to right: Sister Huguette Turcotte, the Centenarian and Pia Karrer-O'Leary (Collection Pia Karrer O'Leary)



Left to right seated, Pia Karrer-O'Leary, Marie-Huguette Morin-Karrer, Paul O'Leary, Standing: David, Steven, John and Susan O'Leary. (Paul and Pia's four children) (From the Zimmerman family collection)

in memoriam

Bérubé (Paulo) Paul-Émile

Paul-Émile Bérubé (Paulo) 1931 - 2006 from Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu, on May 21, 2006, at the age of 75, passed away Mr. Paul-Émile Bérubé, husband of Mrs Marguerite Pelletier. Beside his wife, he leaves to mourn his children: Sylvie, Richard (Michelle Chiasson), Brigitte (Daniel Kirouac) and Natalie (Michael Jemtrud); his grandchildren: Valérie, Olivier, Simon, Camille, Vincent, François, Thomas, Antoine, Sophie, Théo and Alice. A prayer ceremony was held at the funeral parlour on Saturday, May 27, 2006.

Kerouac, Betty Alice (née Griffin)

Betty Alice Kerouac, for many years a Nashua area resident, passed away on May 21, 2006, at the age of 78 at the Fairview Nursing Home. Daughter of Malcolm B. Griffin Sr. and Alice F. (Mc Manus) Griffin, she was born on November 30, 1927 in Arlington, Massachusetts. Through her life, she was a very devoted nurse. She loved her many pets, particularly her cats and dogs. She was blessed with a generous sense of humour. She loved to travel and play Bingo. A long-time member of the Saint-Casimir Parish in Nashua, she was also a member of the *Hudson Citizens Fire and Police Academies* and the *Hudson Seniors*. Recently she was a

member of the Board of the residents of Fairview Nursing Home. Her husband, Edward Kerouac (GFK 01563) who passed away on December 30, 1988, was for many years responsible for the K/rouac Family Association in the USA. She leaves to mourn, her son: Jeffrey M. Kerouac from Chichester, NH; two grandchildren: Kristen and Jerrod Kerouac; her brother Malcolm Griffin from North Fork, CA; nephews and nieces.

Kirouac, Jean-Yves (00664)

On May 4, 2006, aged 80 years and seven months, at the Cité de la Santé Hospital in Laval, passed away Mr Jean-Yves Kirouac, husband of Claire Robert. He was the son of the late Rosaire Kirouac and Jeanne Vallée. Beside his wife, he leaves to mourn his two daughters: Monique (Francis Marin) and Francine; his grandchildren: Mélissa, Jessica and Yannick; his brother, Guy (Pauline Maisonneuve) his sisters, Gisèle (Marcel Vincent) and Lucille (Jean-Baptiste Quenneville) relatives, friends and all the members of the Kerouac Family Association. He was a past president of the KFA and his last mandate as vice-president ended in September 2005.

Kirouac, Jacqueline (00958)

At IUGS Pavillon St-Joseph, on April 5, 2006, passed

away Mrs Jacqueline Kirouac, at the age of 77 and eleven months. She was the daughter of the late Joseph Kirouac and Victoria Martel. Funerals were held on April 10, 2006, in the Church of the Immaculate-Conception in Sherbrooke. Burial was in the local St-Michel Cemetery. Mrs Kirouac leaves to mourn her daughter Joanne Cadorette (late Roger Jr. Letarte); her grandchildren: Sandra Letarte (Marco Frappier) and Éric Letarte; her great-grandson Christopher Aupin Letarte; her brother and sister Estelle (late Fernand Girouard), Hervé (Jacqueline St-Louis). She was also the sister of the late Simonne (late Léopold Lacroix), the late Roméo (late Alice Guay), the late Claire (late Raoul Raymond), the late Jeanette (late Émilien Papillon), the late Conrad (Jeanine Girouard) and the late Réal (Cléopée Gaudette).

(Kirouac) Gaboury Béatrice (01589)

At Les Jardins du Haut Saint-Laurent Residence, on February 24, 2006, at the age of 86, passed away Mrs Béatrice Kirouac, widow of the late Jean-Paul Gaboury. She lived in Quebec City. The religious service was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2006 in St-Michel church in Sillery and the ashes were buried in the adjoining cemetery in the spring. Mrs Gaboury leaves to mourn her children: Gilles (Huguette Baron), Jean-Guy (Lise Beaulac), André, Denyse (Pierre Blanchard), Louise,

Conrad (Gaétane Routhier), Roger (Diane Marcotte), Gaétan (Francine Simard) and Denis (Ginette Fréchette). She was the mother of the late Raynald and the late Michel; the sister of the late Emile, late Rose and late Lisette and the sister-in-law of the late Jacqueline Gaboury (late René Andrew). She also leaves to mourn thirteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren; her sister Jeannette (the late Armand Guérette) from New-Brunswick; her brother **Fernand (Louise Lecorre)** from Brownsburg, QC; her sisters-in-law: Rita Gaboury (the late Raymond Miller) and Huguette Guay, wife of the late Joseph Gaboury (he late Alma Bernier) as well as many nephews and nieces, other relatives and friends.

Leblond, Jean-Marie

At the age of 96, in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Doctor Jean-Marie LeBlond passed away. He was the son of the late Dr Joseph LeBlond and the late **Corinne Kirouac**. Predeceased by his wife, Béatrice Legault, in 1995; his sister, Jacqueline Trottier; his brothers: René and Roland and his wife, Germaine Martin; his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: Dr Jean-Louis Beaudry from Trois-Rivières; Émile Legault and his wife, Loyla Carroll from Hull, QC, Roger Sarra-Bournet and his wife, Blanche Legault from Aylmer, QC, Jean Gauthier and his wife Yvonne Legault, from Hull, QC, his half-sister, Marie-Paule LeBlond from Quebec City, and his granddaughter, Catherine LeBlond from Toronto. He leaves to mourn his son, Pierre, and his wife Donna Massena from New

Hamburg, Ontario; his daughter, Louise Champagne and her husband, André Lamarche from Ottawa; his sister, Liliane Beaudry from Quebec City; his grandchildren: Lynne LeBlond, Paul and Philippe Champagne; his great-grandchildren: Dakota, Josh and Dustin and his great-great-granddaughter Chloé. Funerals were held on May 6, 2006, in the Church of the Assumption in Kirkland Lake.

Poulin, Rosaire

On February 25, 2006, at the age of 52, passed away Mr Rosaire Poulin, husband of Lyse Néron, son of the late Alphonse Poulin and the late **Jeanne d'Arc Kirouac**. The religious service was held in the presence of the ashes on March 4, 2006, in the Church of Sainte-Monique les Saules in Quebec City and burial was in Saint-Charles Cemetery. Beside his wife, Mr Poulin leaves to mourn his daughters Maryse, Sonia (Olivier Sauvé); his brothers and sisters René Poulin (Manon Verville), Jacques Poulin (Louise Lyonnais), Raymond Poulin (Murielle Fortin), Francine Poulin (André Côté), Nicole Poulin (**Robert Kirouac**), Liliane Provencher.

Prenovault, Gérard

In Saint-Boniface, on Monday, April 17, passed away Gérard Prenovault, at the age of 93. He was a resident of the Centre Taché in Saint Boniface during the last years. Son of the late Joseph Avila and the late

Eugénie Kéroack, he was predeceased by his first wife Germaine Robert and his sister Annette. He leaves to mourn his second wife Marie-Jeanne Benjamin, his son, Robert (Kim Sawchuk) as well as his grandsons Joël and Yves, and his great-grandchildren Loïc, Laila and Laure. He also leaves his sister Maria, S.N.L.M., his brother, Denis (Germaine Alarie) as well as many nephews and nieces. A salesman by trade and a traveller by choice, he travelled the province of Manitoba as the representative of Lever Brothers and for many years was the Official *Voyageur* of the *Festival du Voyageur* in Winnipeg-Saint-Boniface, Manitoba.

OUR MOST SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO THESE FAMILIES



Direction: Huelgoat, Brittany

During the autumn 2005, my wife Cécile and I with our daughter Johanne went to France looking for our Laurin ancestor as well as the Kirouac one because my mother was a Kirouac.

At the Roissy-Charles-de-Gaule airport in Paris, we rented a Renault Kangoo car. After visiting some castles: Chambord, Chaumont-sur-Loire, Amboise and Villandry, we went to Loudun in the Poitou region where we were more or less successful in our search for my ancestor Pierre Laurin. I am twelve generations removed from him. Our findings were not really significant but, small consolation, in the Loudun cemetery, we found the name Pierre Laurin on a funeral monument, not the ancestor though, but one of his descendants bearing the same name.

Driving in the direction of the port of La Rochelle, we visited the Isle de Ré (island) then drove through Brittany starting at Nantes then on to Vannes, Belle-Île, Quimper, finally reaching in Huelgoat.

But as we arrived in this lovely small town, for one moment I thought it was all a waste of time because the tourist office was closed, of course it was a Monday, September 26. However, someone suggested we asked at the Town Hall where information on my ancestor might be forthcoming. We were told there was no monument but a commemorative plaque in the name of François Le Bihan, son of a certain K/rouac. Finally, after many more questions, I found the plaque as you can see on the photo.

During that time our daughter Johanne had been asking around, and a beekeeper told her that the house located between the church of Saint-Yves and La Presse was where the Kirouac ancestor used to live. It happens to be the oldest house in Huelgoat. Great !!



From left to right: Patrice Langlois and Jean-Yves Laurin
Collection Jean-Yves Laurin

With this information in hand, we walked to the alley between the church and the house. I pushed open an old door on the side of the house and went in. There I met an artisan doing some repair work.

I introduced myself saying that I believed this old house was probably where my Kirouac ancestor lived. He immediately agreed. Eurêka! Patrice Langlois is an author, composer, musician and multi-instrumentist. He bought this house to turn it into an artists' studio and art gallery to exhibit paintings, sculptures, etc. His partner, Sylvie Bozoc is a painter, sculptor and musician who plays the double-base.

He explained that the main part of the building dated back to 1668 and used to be an apple warehouse. Cider used to be made on the second floor and the rest of the building was used by the parish priest of Saint-Yves as his presbytery.

Mr. Langlois also told me that one part of the house is most likely a hundred years older, e.g. dating back to 1568, also that it is one meter lower than the 1668 construction. This is perfectly obvious from some beams and walls. Then he showed me the huge opening of a large fireplace as well as a deep well still in use. The new owner is very

kind indeed and I was able to take some photographs to illustrate my comments. You will find some with my article.

The owner's website is: www.patricelanglois.com and you can email him at: marjolai@club-internet.fr or you can write to him by snail mail at: Patrice Langlois, Beurc-Hoat, 29690 Berrien, France.

In short, this is the story of our adventures tracing our ancestors, a journey I shall never forget.

Editor's note: Jean-Yves Laurin is the son of the late Mrs Eudora Kirouac Laurin, one of Conrad Kirouac's sisters, therefore Jean-Yves is a nephew of the famous botanist, brother Marie-Victorin.

**Article published on June 24, 2005
in Édition Ouest France - Carhaix**

It has to be one of the oldest houses in the town, if not the oldest. Dating back to 1668, it is located to the right of the church when coming from the Aristide Briand Square it can be reached by a narrow paved lane. The lane does not have a name yet. The Town Hall is searching into its archives to find a suitable name for this lane. This house used to be a cider 'chais' e.g. shed for storing cider. On the ground floor some iron-bound cider barrels can still be found. To reach the second floor, uninhabited for 100 years, there is a stone staircase, typical of old houses but few of these remain nowadays. The new owners, two artists and musicians from Berrien, Sylvie Bozoc and Patrice Langlois have started renovating the building. At the moment they are repairing the façade. Jérôme Gouessin, Sylvie's son, is also working on this project and, once it is completed, with his mother he plans to open a workshop and art gallery to exhibit paintings and sculptures. Jérôme, a trained staffer did the inside renovation of the Theatre in Morlaix.

Answer to an e-mail from Marie Lussier Timperley in June 2006

A year ago, almost to this day, we bought this building. The work is coming to an end (and the aches and pains as well!!!!) Paintings and sculptures will be put on display during the first half of July. We are flattered by the interest you show to our project in your ancestor's home. Hoping to meet you in Huelgoat some day.

Sylvie and Patrice



Johanne Laurin and her father, Jean-Yves Laurin in front of the memorial plaque to our ancestor in Huelgoat

Collection Jean-Yves Laurin



Photo: Jean-Yves Laurin

Town square of Huelgoat; at the back of the house on the right-hand side of St. Yves church is the house where our ancestor was born

An e-mail from Patrice Langlois dated May 15, 2006, addressed to Mr. Laurin

Bonjour,

The renovation work is progressing well. The opening of the workshop & art gallery for the paintings and sculptures of Sylvia Bozoc, my partner, is planned for July 2006.

No more important discoveries though, save for a few bits of potteries and earthen pipes found in the beaten earth floor. For the moment, we are unable to date these artefacts. We are saving some of the dirt from the beaten earth floor on which your ancestors walked. We are trying to keep the building as authentic as possible by using the existing materials, like the old beams whenever possible.

Here is an interesting story: When we redid the roofing over the side section, the laths underneath the shingles were all made from laths from old wine and liquor crates (measuring about 50 cm X 15 cm = 20 inches X 6 inches); some of them still had their shipping statements in the name of Mr. Le Bihan (1910 and 1920). We had to replace the laths but we saved some old ones as samples.

Attached are some photographs. We would love to receive your publication *Le Trésor des Kirouac*.

Soon we should be able to send you some photographs of the workshop and art gallery.

Hoping to see you again in Huelgoat.

Patrice Langlois
Sylvie Bozoc



PRESS REVIEW, JUNE 2006

SOLD -- JACK KEROUAC'S HOUSE IN CAPE COD

Source : *Le Journal de Montréal*,
Thursday, April 27, 2006 (AP)
Title: *Jack Kerouac's house in Cape Cod is sold*

From this article, we learn that the house where he lived at the time of his marriage with his third wife, Stella Sampas, and which he occupied for a short period before his death in Florida, has been sold on April 19 for just under its estimated value of \$320,000 US.

Let us recall that this is where Jack first met his new "Breton" buddy from New York City, **Youenn Gwernig**, whom he greeted loudly, shouting in his Quebec-French slang the equivalent of "Danm you're tall!" Indeed, Youenn was still a tall man when we met him in Huelgoat during the 2000 K/rouac celebrations. Beside mentioning this particular incident, Youenn Gwernig also revealed that about a year prior to Jack's death, he had purchased airline tickets for Jack to fly from New York to Brittany, during which he planned to take Jack to Huelgoat, both of them being totally unaware that it was the birthplace of Jack's Le Bihan de Kervoac ancestor.

ON THE ROAD REVIVAL OF FILM PROJECT

Source: *Lowellsun.com*
(Massachusetts), April 29, 2006
Title: *Kerouac film bid brings crew "On The Road" to Lowell*
Author: *David Perry, Lowell Sun Staff*

This article reminds us that, in 1968, Francis Ford Coppola bought the screen rights to *On The Road*, one year before Jack Kerouac's death; but the project remained on

the back burner, Coppola being unable to find the person(s) able to handle *On The Road* "inherently difficult adaptation to the screen" as he would have said himself.

It has taken Coppola all these years to find what now seems to be the perfect team: **Walter Salles** the Brazilian director, and **Jose Rivera**, his associate and screenwriter, of the 2004's highly praised film, *The Motorcycle Diaries*.

This Sun's article includes an interesting summary of the journey that took Salles, soundman Alan Barker, photographer Greg Smith and coordinator Eileen Gibson, across the country, and adds a list of their numerous discoveries while searching and researching Lowell: "It's a sort of a guerrilla filmmaking journey, on which Salles is looking for cultural parallels, touring the changed American landscape, prodding Kerouac's cronies and spiritual children for answers."

"Though Rivera has been at work on a script for a year, the film adaptation is some time off. No casting yet," says the article. Next step should be a documentary ... in Salles words: ...in search of the feature film, a way to

understand a little better what kind of feature film could be developed... It will allow us to have a more complete understanding of it.

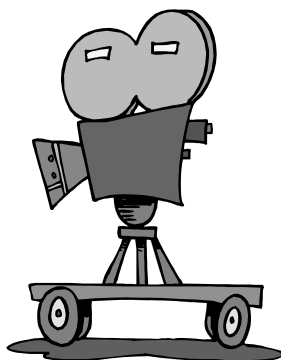
A KEROUAC STAMP IN THE USA?

Source: *The Boston Globe*,
Lowell, March 12, 2006
Title: *Push is persistent for Kerouac stamp*
Author: *Douglas Belkin, Globe Staff*
A gracious tip from KFA member,
Irene Sylvia.

As the article says: *The question bouncing around Lowell these days is this: Why not Jack? --- The 13-year crusade to honour Kerouac with a stamp has gone nowhere --- though now, with Kerouac's 88th birthday celebrated (on that day); his supporters are regrouping for yet another run.*

And who is the guy beating the drum? *Chief among his champions is Dean Contover, who proudly recounts playing a game of pool with Jack Kerouac at the Highland Tap in 1968.* He has accumulated a thick, three-ring binder of supportive responses, many from prestigious politicians, comedians and others, but claims that "the people who really matter, those on the Postal Service Stamps Advisory Committee, have so far given Kerouac short shrift."

Response comes as follows from Ron Robinson, chairman of the Committee: "I would just say this: When it comes to stamps, patience is virtue"... "The Postal service receives about 50,000 letters a year from people around the country championing local heroes, artists and professions. Of those, only 100 to 125 are chosen representing about twenty categories."



THE EXTRAORDINARY TRAVELS OF BROTHER MARIE-VICTORIN

Lucie Jasmin's remarks at the inauguration of the exhibition: "*Marie-Victorin and Oscar Dufresne, Two Visionaries dreaming a Garden City*" presented as part of the events marking the Montreal Botanical Garden's 75th Anniversary, June 9, 2006, Château Dufresne Museum, Exhibition from June 10 to September 10, 2006.

In his novel, *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth*, Jules Verne introduces the most erudite professor Lidenbrock and describes him as a well of science with a creaking pulley. Science has turned this character into a monster of selfishness.

But this is not the case of Brother Marie-Victorin, this font of scientific knowledge; because for Marie-Victorin science is not the enemy of everything that is not scientific. (1).

Quite the opposite.

He was only 19 years old when he was diagnosed with tuberculosis, botany then saved his life because it gave him the chance to escape from what could have been a desperate existence. Botany, therefore, turned out to be a marvellous instrument of liberation for him. Moreover botany opened up new horizons for him and gave him the unexpected opportunity to be in contact with others, e.g. all those involved in the scientific world. When the mind reaches such level, the creaking pulley of selfishness is deadened; he will say so himself in 1930, *science can sing just as much as it can count* (2).

Victorin went into botany like he had gone into the religious life a few years earlier, being one of those passionate people that Teilhard de Chardin talked about, and for whom life is a constant ascension and a race to the future. Marie-Victorin put on the coat of the indefatigable explorer, scientific researcher, and launched forward to discover *our vast domain under the skies*.

As early as 1905, in the company of brother Rolland-Germain, his erudite colleague and life-long friend, he started off on this extraordinary voyage at the heart of his beloved *Laurentie* (3) – by that, and more pragmatically, we mean the inhabited territory of the province of Quebec (4). This voyage, that has become somewhat legendary, was accomplished for the sake of knowledge but still under the influence of a certain poetical way of thinking. The aim was to draw up the inventory of the nation's plants. Consequently in 1935, *La Flore laurentienne* (*The Laurentian Flora*), the golden book of our rich vegetable kingdom, was published, after all the long years of research and thanks to the

ant-like work of numerous colleagues at the Botanical Institute.

And, why not dream of French Canadian sciences in North America (5). Since 1917 already, he had made this peaceful fight his own.

In 1920, he was named professor of botany at the Faculty of Sciences of the newly created *Université de Montréal* where he also created the Laboratory of Botany. As we know this laboratory was to have a long and brilliant future. Marie-Victorin became the emblem around whom would gather all those who felt called by bold ideas portent of hopes for the future. He was a catalyst of souls. He woke up minds, fortified enthusiasm and boosted new scientific vocations among the ranks of the young generation.

The French Canadian Scientific movement was born out of the urgency to become the masters of *our domain under the heavens*, first through knowledge, then by intelligent ownership of our fauna, flora and underground riches. And, consequently, we will be able to add our rightful share to humanity's intellectual capital.

In 1929, Marie-Victorin was designated to represent the *Université de Montréal* at the International Convention of the British Society for the Advancement of Science. That year, the convention was held in Capetown, South Africa. This long journey took him to three continents and convinced him more than ever that his dream of a Botanical Garden had to become a reality. I will simply quote Marie-Victorin writing to Marcelle Gauvreau, his colleague, about the garden. At the beginning of the 21st century, these words of long ago still ring amazingly true and accurate:

"I know that you understand my profound thinking. You know that I harbour no selfish thought in this. You can see, as I do, the immense educational advantage (...): Thousands upon thousands of people will find some peace and quiet; thousands upon

thousands of children will discover intellectual joy, because, I, Marie-Victorin, will have had enough vision and tenacity to create it ..." (6)

At this point, please allow me to express some wishes at the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Botanical Garden, – I take great pleasure in expressing these wishes in front of you today because I do believe that Brother Marie-Victorin would have gladly approved of them; he, who was always so careful to recognize the merits of one and all:

"A thousand thanks to all the dear and kind gardeners who, as I like to call everyone who for the past 75 years, have worked at the Botanical Garden, whether in the shade or the full sun of fame, in order to create a first class place. If giving a round of applause can sometimes be the most vivid way to make flowers blossom, I propose that we throw large bouquets to show our gratitude and admiration to those, thanks to whom Victorin's grand old dream lives and survives across the ages. Long live the magnificent Botanical Garden."

(1) "*Les sciences naturelles dans l'enseignement supérieur*" (*Natural Sciences for Higher Education*), *Le Devoir* (Montreal intellectual daily), October 6-7, 1930. These (French) texts are to be found in: *Sciences, culture & nation. Selected texts presented by Yves Gingras, Boréal*, 1996, p. 98

(2) *Op. Cit.* p.87

(3) *According to the name he gives to the territory where his compatriots live and that was inspired by the physiographic "Laurentides", a name created by the historian François-Xavier Garneau and also by the geological term "Laurentian" created by Dawson and Logan.*

(4) *When Marie-Victorin describes this artificially created territory in La Flore laurentienne (Laurentian Flora), he excludes from it the North Shore, Mingan Region, Anticosti Island and Gaspé Peninsula, all areas that he had nonetheless included in his Croquis laurentiens (Laurentian Sketches).*

(5) "*L'étude des sciences naturelles. Son développement chez les Canadiens français.*" (*A study of natural sciences; its development within the French Canadian community*), *Revue canadienne*, vol. 20, number 2, August 1917, p. 81-97 (Article in French)

(6) 1936



GENEALOGY / THE READERS' PAGE

The AFKFA computerized genealogical database includes a number of couples where the name of one of the partners is missing. The answers to the following questions would enable us to complete this data. (François Kirouac)

Question 79

What is the name of the husband of Theresa Kirouac, daughter of Louis Lionel Kirouac and Aurore St-Roch?

Question 80

What is the name of the mother-in-law of Marie Kirouac, daughter of Didace Kéroack and Hortense Rhéault and wife of Louis Duncan?

Question 81

What is the name of the mother-in-law of Marguerite Keroack, wife of Derry Vale?

Question 82

What are the names of the parents-in-law of Colleen Keroack, wife of Boyd McWilliam?

Question 83

What are the names of the parents-in-law of Helen Margaret Kirouac, wife of Michaël Cronin?

Question 84

What are the names of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th wives of Harold Philip (Kerouac) Burton, son of Ambrose Hector (Kerouac) Burton and Ruth Eileen Dolan?

Question 85

What is the name of the mother-in-law of Katheleen Johnston, daughter of Ronald Johnston and Carmen Kéroac?

Question 86

What is the name of the mother-in-

law of Kristine Johnston, daughter of Ronald Johnston and Carmen Kéroac?

Question 87

What are the names of the parents-in-law of Randolph Scott Kerouac, husband of Pamela Sue Chudy?

Question 88

What is the name of the mother-in-law of Yvonne Keroack, daughter of Aimé-Maximilien Keroack and Malvina Gauthier?

Question 89

What is the name of the mother of Berny Kirouac, born in 1957, he died in 1963, son of Léopold Kirouac?

Question 90

What are the names of the parents of Léopold Kirouac?

Question 91

What is the name of the father-in-law of Jeffrey Thomas Kirouac, son of Albert James Kirouac and Lauren Anita Campbell?

Question 92

What is the name of the father-in-law of André Kirouac, husband of Lucille Nadeau?

Question 93

What are the names of the parents of André Kirouac in Question 92?

When all these questions are answered, it will fill the last gaps in the genealogical database.

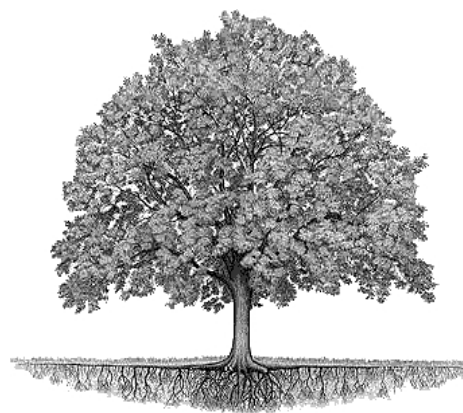
We invite you to consult previous issues of Le Trésor where some questions are still unanswered.

Thank you very much,

The Editorial Team

Please send us your genealogical questions; we will try to answer them and the result will be published in a following issue of *Le Trésor*.

The Editorial Team



ASSOCIATION DES FAMILLES KIROUAC INC.

BOARD MEMBERS 2005-2006

PRESIDENT

François Kirouac (00715)
31, rue Laurentienne
Saint-Étienne-de-Lauzon
(Québec) Canada G6J 1H8
Telephone: (418) 831-4643
E-mail: francois.kirouac@sympatico.ca

1st VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Pierre Kirouac (00321)
3194, rue Berthelot
Trois-Rivières (Québec) Canada G8Z 1N6
Telephone: (819) 375-4175
E-mail : pierre.kirouac@tr.cgocable.ca

2nd VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Céline Kirouac (00563)
1190, rue de Callières
Québec (Québec) Canada G1S 2B4
Telephone: (418) 527-9858
E-mail: ckirouac@myriade.ca

SECRETARY AND EDITORIAL TEAM

Michel Bornais
168, rue Baudrier
Québec (Québec) Canada G1B 3M5
Telephone : (418) 661-1771
E-mail: jambornais@hotmail.com

TREASURER

René Kirouac (02241)
3782, Chemin Saint-Louis
Québec (Québec) Canada G1W 1T5
Telephone: (418) 653-2772

GENEALOGY AND EDITORIAL TEAM

François Kirouac (00715)
31, rue Laurentienne
Saint-Étienne-de-Lauzon
(Québec) Canada G6J 1H8
Telephone: (418) 831-4643
E-mail: francois.kirouac@sympatico.ca

EDITORIAL TEAM

Marie Kirouac (00840)
1039, rue Raoul Blanchard
Québec (Québec) Canada G1X 4L2
Telephone: (418) 871-6604

GENEALOGY

Lucille Kirouac (01307)
123, Chemin Rivière-du-Sud
Saint-François-de-Montmagny (Québec) Canada
G0R 3A0
Telephone: (418) 259-7805
E-mail : kirouac-boulet@oricom.ca

TRANSLATOR AND EDITORIAL TEAM

Marie Timperley
127, chemin Schoolcraft
Mansonville-Potton (Québec) Canada J0E 1X0
Telephone: (450) 292-4247
E-mail: marietimperley@hotmail.com

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

REGION 1, QUÉBEC-BEAUCE

Marie Kirouac (00840)
1039, rue Raoul Blanchard
Québec (Québec) Canada G1X 4L2
Telephone: (418) 871-6604

REGION 2, MONTRÉAL, OUTAOUAIS, ABITIBI

Louis Kirouac (00327)
621A, Rue Notre-Dame
Le Gardeur (Québec) Canada J5Z 2P7
Telephone: (450) 582-3715

REGION 3, LOWER ST. LAWRENCE, SOUTH SHORE, GASPÉ PENINSULA AND ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Lucille Kirouac (01307)
123, Chemin Rivière-du-Sud
Saint-François-de-Montmagny (Québec) Canada
G0R 3A0
Telephone: (418) 259-7805
E-mail: kirouac-boulet@oricom.ca

REGION 4, MAURICIE, BOIS-FRANCS, EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

Renaud Kirouac (00805)
9, rue Leblanc, C.P. 493
Warwick (Québec) Canada J0A 1M0
Telephone: (819) 358-2228
E-mail: denreki@ivic.qc.ca

REGION 5, SAGUENAY, LAC-SAINT-JEAN

Mercédès Bolduc
140, Rue de la Victoire
Chicoutimi (Québec) Canada G7G 2X7
Telephone: (418) 549-0101
E-mail: bolducvilleneuve@videotron.ca

REGION 6, ONTARIO, WESTERN CANADA AND PACIFIC COAST

Georges Kirouac (01663)
23, Maralbo Ave. E.
Winnipeg (Manitoba) Canada R2M 1R3
Telephone: (204) 256-0080
E-mail: georgesk@shaw.ca

REGION 7, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EASTERN TIME ZONE

Mark Pattison
1221 Floral Street NW
Washington, DC 20012 USA
Telephone: (202) 829-9289
E-mail: MPattison@catholicnews.com

CENTRAL TIME ZONE

Greg Kyrouac (00239)
P. O. Box 481
Ashland, IL 62612-0481 USA
Telephone: (217) 476-3358
E-mail: kyrouac@casscomm.com





Founded: November 20, 1978
Incorporated: February 26, 1986
Member of *Fédération des
familles-souches du Québec inc.*
since 1983

Our ancestor's signature on a request addressed to Governor
Beauharnois in November 1733.

To contact us:

E-mail: kirouac@libertel.org

Web Site:

**[http://www.genealogie.org/famille/kirouac/
PAG_UN_ANG.htm](http://www.genealogie.org/famille/kirouac/PAG_UN_ANG.htm)**

ANNUAL FAMILY GATHERING AUGUST 5, 2006, IN KAMOURASKA

Responsible for Membership

M. René Kirouac
3782, Chemin Saint-Louis
Québec (Québec)
Canada G1W 1T5
Telephone: (418) 653-2772

Secretary of the Association

Michel Bornais
168, rue Baudrier
Québec (Québec)
Canada G1B 3M5
Telephone: (418) 661-1771
E-Mail: afkirouacfa@hotmail.com

Canada Post
Mail Agreement number 40069967
for Mailing Publications
Return to the following address:
Fédération des familles-souches du Québec inc.
C.P. 10090, Succ. Sainte-Foy, Québec (Québec) G1V 4C6
IMPRIMÉ—PRINTED PAPER SURFACE