

## FALL 1997

### ST. AGATHA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**\* 50 YEARS OF SERVICE \***

1997 marks the 50th Anniversary of the St. Agatha Volunteer Fire Department. We gratefully acknowledge fifty years of active, volunteer service to the community. The longevity enjoyed by the department is due in part to the sense of commitment displayed by its members. One only has to read the membership roster to realize that the average length of service of the majority of the members is over ten years.

The department's official incorporation on March 30, 1949 marked the beginning of many years of continuing commitment to growth, advanced training, and service to our community. We can be grateful to the leadership of a few men who shared a vision expressed by the charter members in early 1945. Chief George E. Dugal having served the department for six-

teen years lay the foundation for ongoing progress and growth.

John D. Belanger was then elected as the department's second fire chief. The next seventeen years were driven by a visionary. Johnny, as he was known by many, believed in continuing education, training, and improved equipment and facilities. As his daughter, I remember the depth of his commitment to the department. I also remember the involvement of the wives of the firefighters in the various fund raising activities, county and state functions, and in the many cups of coffee and bowls of soup provided during the fire fighting hours. I believe that the social conscience that is passed from generation to generation is a prime factor in the survival of volunteer services. When Chief John passed away in June 1984, the tribute paid

to him by his beloved fire department was very thoughtful and greatly appreciated by the family.

Joel Chamberland was elected as fire chief in 1979. It was during Chief Joel's ten year tenure that the community orchestrated a massive fund raising activity to build a new fire station. I have yet to see such an event! The new facility was paid for with donations, pledges, and fund raising activities. The pride visible in each community



Front: Phil "Super" Chasse, Deputy Chief Mark Chamberland, Maurice Sirois, Assistant Chief Roger Bosse, Chief Gerard Castonguay, Rickie Chamberlain, Ken Lerman and Lucien Ayotte. Back: Shawn Ouellette, George Cyr, James Morneault, Gary Chasse, Gerard Chasse, Bobby Guerrette, Robert Chamberland, Brian Plourde and Doug Lerman. Missing from photo: Leo Bouley, Diane Castonguay, Kevin Chasse, Roger Chasse, Peter Collin, Kevin Couture, and Richard Derosier.

member's eyes, on the day of the building dedication, was evidence of the deep sense of commitment to the community and the fire department.

The Ladies Auxiliary also became a visible and important component of the volunteer fire department. The support provided by the auxiliary in fund raising activities, moral support, nutrition during fire fighting hours, continued to portray the volunteer spirit.

In 1989, Richard (Rick) Chamberlain assumed the command post of Fire Chief. During his five years of able leadership, the commitment to continued education and training was evident. With training expertise provided by Richard (Mitch) Michaud, the department fire fighting skills entered the modernized era of fire fighting technology. The department was also actively recruiting new fire fighters to maintain the effectiveness of the department. The new recruits have been working hard to maintain the spirit of commitment that has been the foundation of the fire department.

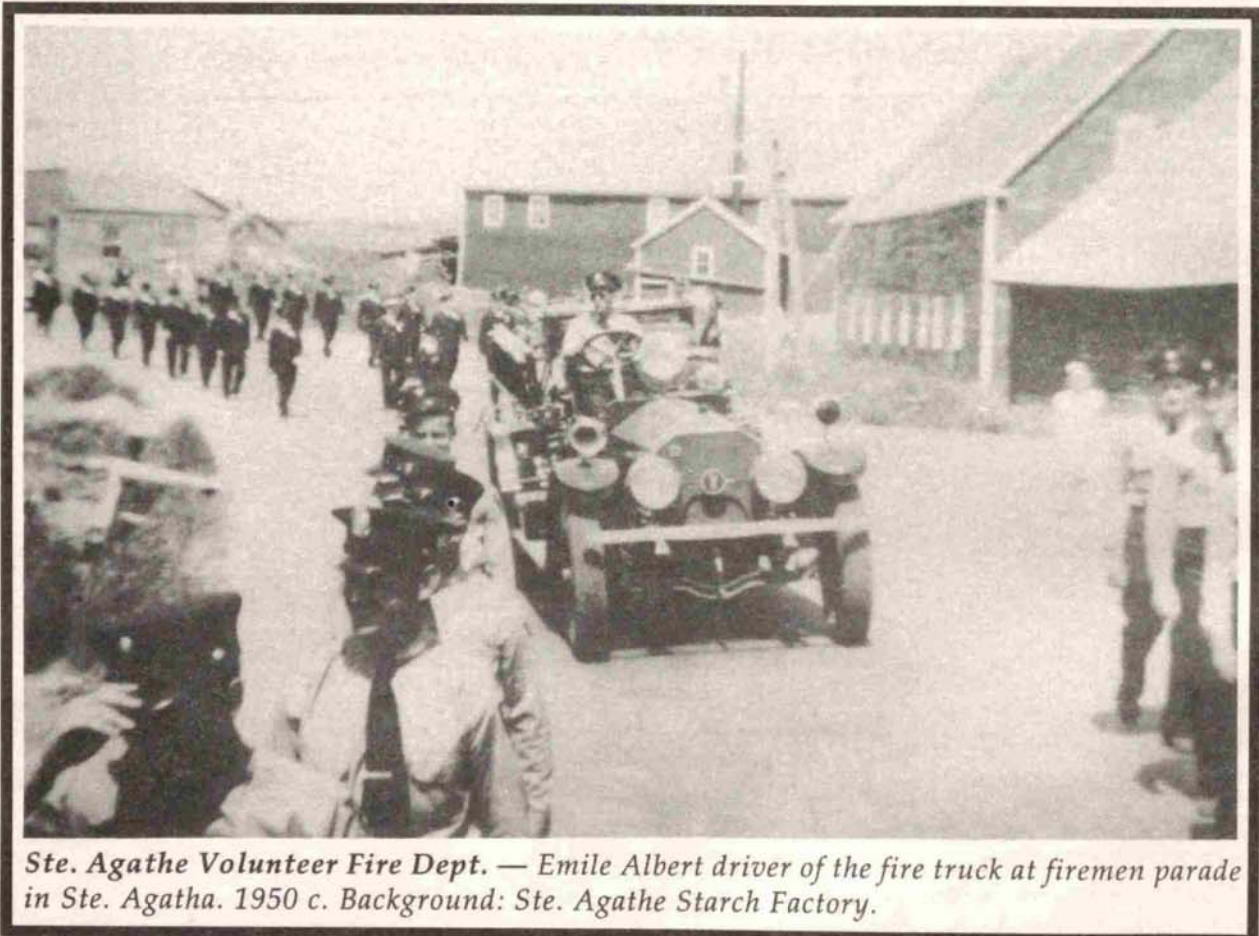
After five years of devoted service to the community as fire chief, Rick retired as chief. He continues to serve the department as a fire fighter.

The present fire chief, elected in 1994, is Gerard Castonguay. He is strongly committed to providing continued education, training, and equipment for the fire fighters. He believes in team work and is always willing to lend a hand to anyone in need.

Being a fire fighters is sometimes fun, always work, and provides a necessary service to a community. In addition to the able leaders who have helped build and maintain the fire department, we need to remember the many individuals who have spent countless hours training, fighting fires, and fund raising to buy equipment. That we can provide this necessary public safety service in the company of individuals who willingly risk their lives and property of others is a privilege. I don't know what drives a person to volunteer for such a job, but I do know that a small community cannot survive without such volunteers.

I am proud to have been able to witness the growth and development of the St. Agatha Volunteer Fire Department throughout most of my life. The level of dedication I have witnessed from my parents, family, and friends has been an inspiration to me.

Diane Castonguay



*Ste. Agathe Volunteer Fire Dept. — Emile Albert driver of the fire truck at firemen parade in Ste. Agatha. 1950 c. Background: Ste. Agathe Starch Factory.*

## ST. AGATHA'S SERVICE AND SACRIFICE TO THE GREAT WAR

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the United States' involvement in World War I. Ever since the 1800's, European nations lived in suspicion and fear of each other, which resulted in a massive growth in their armies. At the dawn of 1914, two great alliances had been formed and European nations were on the brink of war. One alliance was called the Triple Alliance which comprised the countries of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. The other was the Triple Entente, made up of France, Great Britain and Russia. Each country in each alliance had pledged military support to one another in case of aggression from a country of the opposing alliance. The United States had not committed itself to any side, but by 1914 felt the strain to do so.

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Sarejavoby a Serbian nationalist in Austrian province of Bosnia. Austria declared war on Serbia, which had ties to the countries of the Triple Entente. This began a chain reaction. Germany declared war on France and before the year was over, Europe was engaged in a bloody struggle that became known as The Great War.

The people of St. Agatha were well aware of the war in Europe. Some people in town subscribed to the newspaper *Le Madawaska*, published in Edmundston, N.B., that carried many accounts of the war since Canada had entered the war in support of Great Britain in 1914. Occasionally *le Madawaska* printed letters from local men fighting in Europe. Because of the close family ties between the people on both sides of the St. John River, people in St. Agatha may have read a letter from a relative which made the war across the ocean much more real and personal.

The parish priest, Fr. Raoul Bourbeau, also informed people of the war. A native of Victoriaville, Quebec, Fr. Bourbeau kept very current on the war. Before the days of weekly parish bulletins, parishioners were informed of parish and community events from announcements made from the pulpit by the parish priest before the Sunday Mass. Fr. Bourbeau kept meticulous notes of these announcements in an announcement book. On Sunday, November

15, 1914, he appealed to the people of the parish for a railroad car load of potatoes for the people in Belgium who had been ravaged by the German invasion of their country. He wrote, "*Il est question de demander à chaque municipalité une contribution d'une char de patates pour nourrir les malheureux réfugiés Belges.*" People responded generously to his appeal. By Christmas, Fr. Bourbeau announced that only 50 barrels were still needed to fill the railroad car.

The United States did enter the war. On April 4, 1917, the U.S. Senate voted to declare war on Germany. On May 18, Congress passed the Selective Service Act which required all men between the ages of 21 and 30 (this was later extended to age 31) to register for military service. Those who registered were placed in five categories headed by able-bodied single men without dependents. Of course, men could volunteer. If the number of volunteers was insufficient, the deficiencies was made up by the draftees. On Sunday, May 27, 1917, Fr. Bourbeau announced that a meeting would be held on June 5 to explain the rather complicated selective service process.

The government developed a lottery system to determine which registrants would be called. Each registrant was assigned a number. The State of Maine was divided into districts. St. Agatha was in district number 2 which included all towns north of Presque Isle. The inductin office was located in Fort Fairfield. When men were needed, each district was assigned a quota of men to fill. The local draft board had the responsibility to draw the draft numbers and fill the quota. The first call for men came in early August, 1917. Nine of St. Agatha's young men were inducted at this time. Four men had already enlisted.

According to the *Adjutant General's Report of the State of Maine*, a total of 54 men from the Parish of Ste. Agathe were eventually inducted into military service. These men gave their place of residence as either St. Agatha, Sinclair or Cleveland on their induction papers. Some men who were born and raised in St. Agatha had since moved to other communities and were not listed under St. Agatha's listing in the *Adjutant General's Report*. Ten of the 54 men were inducted in September and October, 1917; 17

from March to June, 1918; 23 from July to October, 1918. The primary mission of the soldiers was either to help France stop the German advancement on the Western Front or to protect the United States shores from possible German attack. Twenty of our 54 inductees served overseas in France.

In March, 1918, the Germans launched a major offensive in France. In May, they were approximately 50 miles east of Paris. The Germans had crossed the Marne River, a river that empties in the Seine River in Paris, and France was on the verge of capitulating. The American troops launched a successful offensive of their own at Belleau Wood on June 3. On September 12, 1918, the Americans launched a fierce attack at St. Mihiel, a town on the Meuse River near the Belgium and German border. This was the first battle of the war carried out by a complete American army under its own command. Eight men from St. Agatha were listed as present at this battle: Donat Boucher, Damase Bosse, Henry Bourgoin, Remie Daigle, Onezine Michaud, Eddie Plourde, Joseph Raymond and William Raymond. Several other St. Agatha men were in France at this time and may have fought in this battle but unfortunately, the Adjutant General was not specific as to their location.

In the wake of the Battle of St. Mihiel, American operations shifted westward and down the Meuse River through the Argonne Forest toward the city of Sedan. This military operation became known as the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Eddie Plourde lost his life during this campaign. He was the only St. Agatha sol-



Eddie Plourde

dier not to return to his loved ones alive.

Eddie was born on February 22, 1896, the second child of Joseph and Modeste (Ouellette) Plourde. He was inducted into the army at Fort Fairfield on October 2, 1917, and assigned to the 38th Co. 151 Depot Brigade until November 11, 1917. He was then transferred to Co. F, 327 Infantry, 82nd Division. He served in France from April 22, 1918, until his death October 15, 1918, only 28 days before the armistice was declared. He took part in the Battle of St. Mihiel on September 12 and 13. In fact, the 328th Infantry of the 82nd distinguished itself during the battle.

According to the account found in the book, *A Guide to the American Battle Fields in Europe*, the 82nd Division was located near the Moselle River about 25 miles east of St. Mihiel in late September. Their mission was to help penetrate the "Hindenburg" line, a heavily fortified system of German trenches, and capture the town of St. Juvin. The initial attack began at 2:30 a.m. on September 26. Despite the deep ravines, the networks of wire, dense forests, shell craters and inclement weather, the offensive went satisfactorily. In four days the army had penetrated four miles into the heaviest fortified area in the Western Front.

On October 7, the 82nd struck the Germans at the towns of Châtel Chéhéry and Corney near the Argonne Forest, approximately 40 miles northwest of the French town of Verdun. It was near the town of Corney that Corporal Alvin York of the 328 Infantry, 82nd Division displayed the great heroism that earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre. For the next two days the 82nd pushed the Germans to the Northwest toward the small town of Marcq and captured it on October 10. On the following day, they captured the town of Sommerance. On October 14, the 82nd broke through the Hindenburg Line and weakened the German hold on the town of St. Juvin but could not drive the Germans out. They were joined by the 77th Division later in the day. It was probably during these hours that Eddie Plourde was killed. On October 15, St. Juvin was taken and the 82nd continued Northward and arrived at the town of Champigneulle on the 16th without Eddie. No one will ever know what exactly happened to Eddie. According to family tradition, Eddie was shot while returning to his trench with a bucket



*Relatives of Eddie Plourde: Back: Rena (Boucher) Cyr, Claudia (Plourde) Morin, Gloria (Plourde) Gervais and Doris (Cote) Matthews. Center: Romuald Plourde.*

of water that he had filled at a nearby well.

It is not known exactly when Eddie's family received the news of his death. The great numbers of casualties and the slow communications system of the era hampered quick notification. Fr. Bourbeau announced news of his death December 22, 1918. He made the following announcement prior to Sunday Mass, "*Nous venon d'apprendre la triste nouvelle de la mort d'un de nos jeunes gens Eddy Plourde, fils de Joseph à Damase Plourde, tué au front le 15 October 1918.*" The fact that Fr. Bourbeau used the words "*nous venons d'apprendre*" indicates that the news may not have reached the family until December. His body arrived home early in February. Fr. Bourbeau made the following announcement on February 9, 1919, "*Mercredi à 9-1/2 hrs. Service solennel pour le repos de l'aime d'Eddy Plourde, fils de Jos. à Damase Plourde, tué sur le champ de bataille le 15 Octobre 1918. Parents et amis invités, mais particulièrement tous les jeunes gens qui ont été soldats.*" His funeral was held on February 12, 1919, in the Ste. Agathe church. He was buried



in the parish cemetery. In 1935, the American Legion Post #145 was dedicated in his honor along with Denis Cyr of Frenchville, who died of disease at Fort Devens, Massachusetts in 1918.

World War I was supposed to be "the war to end all wars." But, as we are well aware, this was not the case. Twenty-one years later, Europe was embroiled in another vicious war which eventually carried American youths to the four corners of the world.

by David Raymond

#### ST. AGATHA WORLD WAR I VETERANS

1. **Albert, Harly.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-18, Infantry, no overseas service, died of disease at Camp Devens on 9-23-1918.
2. **Baron, Charles.** Private First Class, Enrolled in Regular Army at Fort Slocum, N.Y. 3-30-1917, Infantry, no overseas service, discharged 3-18-1919.
3. **Bosse, Damase.** Private First Class, Inducted at Somerset County 10-2-1917, Wagoner, Engineers, served overseas from 7-14-1918 to 6-13-1919, engaged at St. Mihiel, discharged 6-20-1919.
4. **Bosse, Dan.** Private, Inducted in Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, on overseas service, discharged 8-31-1918, Surgeon's Certificate of Disability.
5. **Bosse, Fred.** Private first class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-7-1917, Medical Department, Base Hosp., Camp Greene, N.C., no overseas service, discharged 3-12-1919.  
(The Adjutant General's report lists two Fred Bosse on the roll of St. Agatha. However, we could only find one that was living in St. Agatha at the time. The other Fred Bosse born in Caribou and residing in Van Buren at the time. Is this a mistake in the Adjutant General's report? We would appreciate help to clarify this.)
6. **Bouchard, Fred N.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, served overseas from 11-24-1918 to 1-14-1919, Vet Hospital, (no specific location given) discharged 2-17-1919.
7. **Boucher, Donat.** Private, Enrolled in National Guard at Augusta 6-17-1917, Infantry, served overseas from 9-27-1917 to 12-9-1918, engaged at Chemin des Dames Feb. 5 - Mar. 20, 1918, Toul Sector April 1 - June 27, 1918 (Bois Brulé)-Xivray), Battle of the Marne July 4-26, 1918, St. Mihiel Sept. 12-13, 1918, and Meuse Argonne Sept. 26 - Oct. 16, 1918, wounded three times: 6-18-1918, 9-12-1918, 11-10-1918, discharged 1-24, 1919.
8. **Boucher, Ernest.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-23-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Williams, (Preble?) no overseas service, discharged 12-23-1918.
9. **Boucher, Patrick.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-27-1918, Infantry, served overseas from 7-4-1918 to 2-22-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 3-13-1919.
10. **Bourgoin, Albert L.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-23-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Williams, Portland, no overseas service, discharged 3-20-1919.
11. **Bourgoin, Baptiste P.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-27-1918, served overseas from 7-12-1918 to 5-7-1919, Cook, Depot Brigade, Ammunition Train, Service Corps School, (no specific location given) discharged 5-12-1919.
12. **Bourgoin, Henry.** Private First Class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-2-1917, Infantry, Depot Brigade, Service of Supply, Engineers, served overseas from 3-10-1918 to 9-4-1919, engaged at St. Mihiel and Meuse Argonne, discharged 9-25-1919.
13. **Chamberland, Paul.** Corporal. Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-1-1918, Engineers, Camp Forest Ga., Forestry Replacement Battalion, no overseas service, discharged 1-17-1919.

14. **Chamberland, Peter.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 12-3-1918.
15. **Chasse, Denis.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, served overseas from 11-16-1918 to 8-31-1919, Depot Brigade, Veteran Evacuation Sector, Germany, Veteran Quarantine Station, discharged 9-6-1919.
16. **Chasse, Donat.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 9-2-1918, Medical Detachment Hosp. N.Y., N.Y., no overseas service, discharged, 7-21-1919.
17. **Chasse, Willie.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, Medical Department, no overseas service, discharged 10-25-1919.
18. **Cyr Donat.** Private First Class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 8-27-1918, Depot Brigade, Veeteran Quarantine Station, served overseas from 11-16-1918 to 8-31-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 9-6-1919.
19. **Cyr, Joseph V.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-1918, Depot Brigade, Quartermaster Corps, no overseas service, discharged 5-18-1919.
20. **Daigle, Remie.** Private First Class, Enlisted in the National Guards in Augusta on 6-17-1917, Infantry, served overseas from 9-27-1917 to 4-7-1919, engaged at: Champagne-Marne, Ainse-Marne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, wounded three times: 6-19-1918, 7-28-1918, on or about 11-4-1918, discharged 4-28-1919.
21. **Duby, Victorie.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-27-1918, Depot Brigade, Development Battalion, Utilities Detachment, Quartermaster Corps, no overseas service, discharged 4-18-1919.
22. **Dumond, Antime.** Private, Inducted at Eagle Lake 4-27-1918, Infantry, Quartermaster Corps, served overseas from 7-7-1918 to 8-2-1919, engaged at Meuse-Argonne, wounded, discharged on 9-9-1919.
23. **Dumond, Olsime.** Private, Inducted at Fort Fairfield 10-23-1918, Coast Artillery Corps Ft. Williams, Portland, no overseas service, discharged 2-6-1919.
24. **Dumond, Ernest.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 7-21-1919.
25. **Frank, James.** (no rank given) Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 8-13-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Warren, Mass., Ammunition Train, Coast Defense, Ft. Adams, R.I., no overseas service, discharged 12-13-1918.
26. **Gervais, Florent.** Private First Class, Inducted in Ft. Fairfield 9-20-1917, Field Artillery, Quartermaster Corps, no overseas service, discharged 6-21-1919.
27. **Joseph, Gervais.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 12-11-1918.
28. **Gorneault, Baptiste.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 10-21-1919.
29. **Gorneau, Willie.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-23-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Williams, Me., no overseas service, discharged 12-23-1918.
30. **Guerrette, Donat.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Wagoner, Engineer Train, no overseas service, discharged 1-28-1919.
31. **Guerrette, Philip.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, Engineer Train, no overseas service, discharged 1-21-1919.
32. **LaChance, Edmond.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 12-3-1918.
33. **Legassie, Alsime.** Private. Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 3-29-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 12-1-1918.
34. **Lizotte, Eli.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-30-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged Surgeon's Certificate of Disability 10-2-1918.
35. **Lizotte, Fred.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-1918, Depot Brigade, Recruit Co. General Service Infantry, no overseas service, discharged 1-21-1919.
36. **Marquis, Ubald.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Depot Brigade, no overseas service, discharged 12-1-1918.
37. **Martin, Eddy.** Private First Class, Inducted at Fort Fairfield, 5-27-1918, Depot Brigade, Infantry, Headquarters Co., served overseas from 7-6-1918 to 8-17-1919, engaged at Meuse-Argonne, discharged 11-6-1919.
38. **Martin, Victorie.** Private First Class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 9-20-1917, Field Artillery, Engineers, served overseas from 11-12-1917 to 4-18-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 5-2-1919.
39. **Michaud, Donat.** Private First Class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-1918, Depot Brigade. Supply Train, no overseas service, discharged 1-28-1919.
40. **Michaud, Joseph.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-30-1918, Artillery, served overseas from ? to 1-5-1919, discharged 1-24-1919.
41. **Michaud, Onezime.** Private First Class, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-2-1917, Infantry, served overseas from 5-18-1918 to 5-11-1919, engaged at St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, discharged 5-20-1919.
42. **Plourde, Adolphe P.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 6-22-1918, Infantry, no overseas service, discharged 1-6-1919.
43. **Plourde, Eddie.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-2-1917, Depot Brigade, Infantry, served overseas from 4-25-1918 until his death on 10-15-1918, engaged at St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, Killed in Action probably near St. Juvin, France.
44. **Plourde, Paul.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 4-29-1918, no overseas service, discharged Surgeon's Certificate of Disability 5-11-1918.
45. **Plourde, Ernest.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 7-24-1918, Medical Department, no overseas service, discharged 6-12-1919.
46. **Plourde, Maxime.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-23-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, no overseas service, discharged 12-23-1918.
47. **Raymond, Joseph.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 9-20-1917, Field Artillery, Served overseas from 5-27-1918 to 7-21-1919, engaged at St. Mihiel, discharged 7-26-1919.
48. **Raymond, Patrick.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 5-27-1918, Headquarters, served overseas from 7-6-1918 to 2-12-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 2-28-1919.
49. **Raymond, William.** Corporal, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 10-2-1917, Infantry, served overseas from 4-25-1918 to 7-9-1919, engaged at St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, discharged 7-17-1919.
50. **Sinclair, Albert.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 9-20-1918, Coast Artillery Corps, no overseas service, discharged 12-23-1918.
51. **Sinclair, John.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 9-20-1917, Field Artillery, served overseas from 7-16-1918 to 4-25-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 5-1-1919.
52. **Tardif, Joseph.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 3-28-1918, Depot Brigade, Supply Co., Infantry, served overseas from 7-7-1918 to 3-23-1919 (no specific location given) discharged 4-5-1919.
53. **Tardif, Luke.** Private, Inducted at Ft. Fairfield 8-27-1918, Depot Brigade, Coast Defense of Boston, Ft. Warren, Coast Artillery, Corps, no overseas service, discharged 12-23-1918.
54. **Willette, (Ouellette?) Albert.** Corporal, Enlisted in regular army at Ft. Slocum, N.Y. on 6-2-1918, Infantry, no overseas service, discharged 2-15-1919.

*\*The research for this project was largely due to the efforts of Guy Dubay through a grant from the Maine Humanities Council. Any corrections or additions to our list of veterans would be greatly appreciated.*

## *Some Photographs of our World War I Heroes*



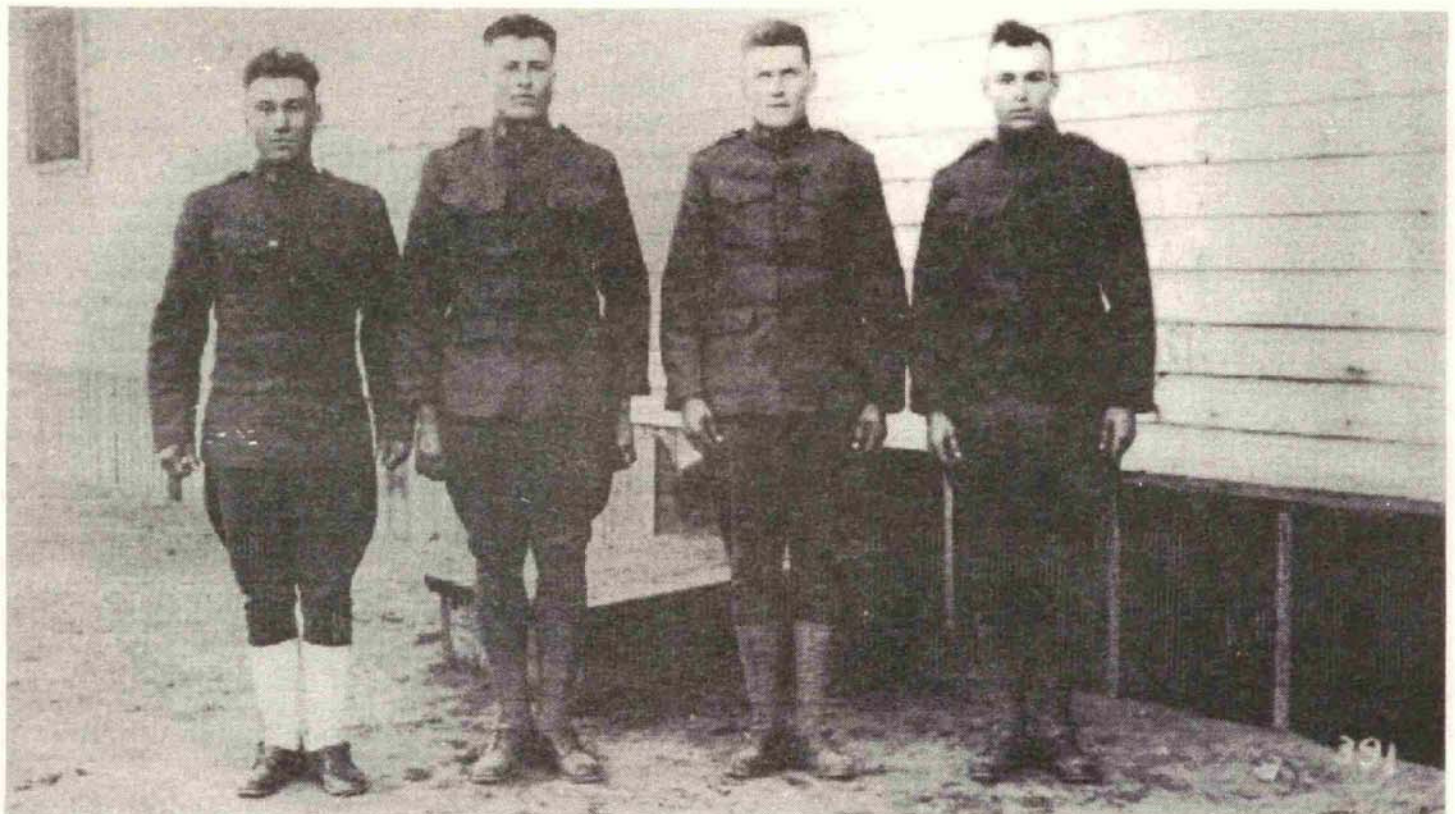
*Donat Michaud*



*Donat Boucher*



*Fred Bouchard*



*Joseph Gervais, far right, with unidentified soldiers.*

*Some Photographs of our  
World War I Heroes*



*Willie Raymond*



*Damase Bosse*



*Onezime Michaud*



*Albert Bourgoïn*



## HEALTH CARE COMES TO ST. AGATHA

In the late 1970's the idea of a health care center coming to St. Agatha was the talk of the day. The Board of Selectmen made initial strides to generate interest from potential health care providers to locate an office in the village to serve the medical needs of our residents. Brief notations were made in Board meeting minutes which indicated that municipal officials would seek potential interest from various independent physicians, the Ft. Kent Hospital and representatives from the Aroostook County Action Program.

Although, met with no immediate success of locating such a facility here, the idea would remain within the foremost thoughts of many. In late 1993, persistent municipal officials would create a renewed interest which would gain the eyes and ears of health care providers in Northern Aroostook County. Local officials began contacting independent physicians and health care providers both in the St. John Valley and central Aroostook County providing them with information that this region (i.e. residents of T17R4 Sinclair, T17R5 Guerrette, Madawaska residents living in the Long Lake area, Frenchville and St. Agatha residents) could sustain a health care facility and that the need existed.

On May 23, 1994 a relationship was created with representatives of the Fish River Rural Health Systems in Eagle Lake as they would apply for a Federal grant which would be utilized to create a health center in town emphasizing that the St. John Valley was designated by the Federal government as a health professional shortage area (HPSA). Hopes were temporarily dulled as the competitive national grant was denied.

It is important to note that during the mid 90's the federal government was rethinking its health care system and emphasizing decentralization of health care facilities essentially, advocating that health care providers consider bringing health care to rural America. Outpatient centers were slowly surfacing throughout the nation. Although, more of a practical and affordable solution in heavily populated regions of the nation, health care providers in our area were still reluctant as population figures and associated costs of locating a facility here were prohibitive.

Two years would go by when on May 16, 1996 the Board of Selectmen would appoint a (7) member Long Lake Health Care Advisory Committee to research the medical/dental needs of residents living in this region. The first Committee members were Mrs. Denyse Michaud and Ms. Lisa Theriault of St. Agatha, Mr. Percy Thibeault and Mrs. Carolyn Roy of Frenchville, Ms. Tina Saucier and Mrs. Debbie Thibeault of Madawaska, Mr. Raymond Thibodeau of Sinclair, Mrs. Shelly Coulombe of the Guerrette area, and Chairman Mr. David P. Daigle of St. Agatha. Their primary task was to identify what the health care needs of our area were and what citizens would like to see offered in the event that a health center were to come to our area.

During these few months, expectations were raised as some health care providers were now seriously discussing the possibility of locating a health center in St. Agatha. Executive Directors of the (3) major hospitals i.e. the Northern Maine Medical Center, Cary Medical Center and The Aroostook Medical Center had met with municipal leaders all showing signs of support for a health center in one fashion or another. Tension at times between the three hospitals were escalated with territorial issues being the major focus of discussions. Municipal officials felt confident that the wheels were now in motion and that the merits of our efforts were seriously being considered.

So confident were municipal officials of favorable news that they began soliciting local contractors who might be interested in working with the potential health care provider in building a centrally located health center. Several locations were considered but one particular location appeared more desirable than any other. Mr. James M. Chamberland and Mr. Francis Morin, General Partners of Montfort Heights would wait in anticipation to offer their vacant south wing of Montfort Heights as a good site location. Most coffee shop talks mulled around the idea that Montfort Heights was probably the ideal site for a health center.

Word finally came on Monday, June 24, 1997 with a letter from the Northern Maine Medical Center expressing that they have "met with the owners of Montfort Heights to successfully negotiate an agreement for leased space" to con-

struct the *Long Lake Regional Health Center*. N.M.M.C. Executive Board of Directors were now prepared and committed to providing "health care services to the maximum degree possible."

Citizens and officials were elated to hear that the Northern Maine Medical Center had elected to expand its services here in our town. The impacts of the milestone venture will assist the community in many ways. The L.L.R.H.C. will provide closer health care services to the region's citizens especially our elderly. Health related educational programs will benefit the lives of many who may have wanted to attend similar workshops elsewhere but could not because of travel distance. Incorporated with the establishment of the facility will be a prescription drug delivery service. There are the economic benefits as well. In essence, the health center will give us a sense of sustainability for

many years to come and offer health services for our region.

Construction began in the Fall, 1996 and the facility opened its doors on Tuesday, March 25, 1997 staffed with Dr. André Loiselle, Family Nurse Practitioner Diane Griffin and Medical Secretary Stacey Ouellette. A well attended Open House was held on Sunday, April 13, 1997 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a blessing of the new health center performed by Reverend Angelo LeVasseur followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony and plaque presentation.

In closing, it is important to remember the key elements which revitalized and ultimately brought us to this victorious end. Without the *perseverance* and *endurance* of every municipal official and volunteer involved during the many defeats, this never would have happened.

by David P. Daigle

## Valley Medical Association Long Lake Regional Health Center

(Division of Valley Medical Association)

is located at Montfort Heights in St. Agatha, Maine

Appointments may be made by calling

**543-7567**

### Office hours are:

Tuesday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Andre Loiselle, M.D.

Thursday, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Noon - Diane Griffin, FNP  
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday 9 a.m. to 12 noon - Diane Griffin, FNP



**A SERVICE OF  
NORTHERN MAINE MEDICAL CENTER**

### NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

1996-1997

Robert and Victoria Bosse

Aurele Benoit LaChance

Marie Saucier Duclos

Bill and Helen Melvin

Norman T. and Jeannine C. Maagero

### FOUR DUCKS

by Paul Marin

Four ducks waddling by  
near here  
Straddled a muddy path  
single  
file  
On their way to where ducks go  
before ducks come back.  
Heads j e r k e d  
and n o d d e d  
And moved to left  
to right  
to left again  
and peck again.  
Paused to peck  
and pick  
Wonder why one leads and not some other?  
Wonder why others follow?  
Do they mind or don't they know?  
Would the first three ducks waddling  
single  
file  
T u  
n  
and waddle behind the one bringing up the rear  
if the one bringing up the rear  
made an about face before going all the way  
to where ducks go  
before ducks come back?

## IN MEMORIAM

Sister Albertine was a prayerful person who radiated Christ, His peace, love and serenity. She always found the good in everyone and spoke it. The first thing one saw was a person, small of stature, very quiet, with a radiant smile. No one left her presence without having received something special. People who met Sr. Albertine remember her gentleness, patience, and kindness. She touched the lives of thousands of children during her remarkable 50 years as a teacher. Father Mike Gendreau, now pastor of Ste. Agathe, has acknowledged the influence Sr. Albertine had on his life. Sr. Albertine touched and changed his life by her gentleness in dealing with him. In announcing Sr. Albertine's death, he said, "She taught my father as Sr. Alfred and she taught me as Sr. Albertine."

Following Sr. Albertine's retirement to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent in 1988, the Sisters of the St. Agatha and Madawaska Communities continued to be in contact with her from a distance. They now have another friend with God. The following truly encapsulates the life of St. Albertine:

Sr. Albertine, a true daughter of Montfort and Marie Louise.

A woman given to charity of speech and action.

A woman able to bring about unity of spirits and hearts.

A woman of great compassion, quick to respond to the needs of those around her.

A woman always seeking facts and truth, alert to the world events.

A woman loyal and faithful (to daily Mass and reciting the rosary even when it was not popular to do so.).

A woman of deep faith attuned to the Holy Spirit.

A woman enthusiastic about life.

A woman dedicated to her work (whatever it was).

*This article was a concerted effort of Srs. Marie Sirois, Yvette Raymond, Joanne Ayotte and Jackie Ayotte. It was edited for the Historical Society Newsletter by David Raymond.*



### *Sr. Albertine Marin, D.W.*

**Religious Name:** Sr. Alfred de l'Immaculee

**Born:** February 11, 1910

**First Profession:** September 8, 1929

**Born to Eternal Life:** March 22, 1997

**Funeral Services:** March 25, 1997

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent  
Sound Beach, NY

**Mass:** March 26, 1997

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent  
Sound Beach, NY

**Burial:** March 26, 1997

St. James Cemetery  
Setaukey, NY

**Memorial Service:** St. Agatha Church  
March 25, 1997

#### **Apostlate/Ministry**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1929-1931 | Teacher<br>St. Mary Gate of Heaven School<br>Ozone Park, NY        |
| 1931-1948 | Teacher<br>Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School<br>Lille, ME              |
| 1948-1979 | Teacher<br>Acadia School<br>Madawaska, ME                          |
| 1979-1981 | Community Service<br>Our Lady of Perpetual Help<br>Sound Beach, NY |
| 1981-1988 | Retired<br>Madawaska, ME   |
| 1988-1997 | Retired  |

## GOING HOME AGAIN

From the time I left St. Agatha in 1953, I took yearly trips back home to visit my parents. Year after year, I was proud of the fact that I remember the family names of all the people who lived in every house, starting at The Sporting Club all the way to Frenchville. By 1982 both my parents had died so I stopped going "up North."

Fourteen years later, in 1996, I returned to St. Agatha. I was shocked at the changes that had taken place. I recognized some, but not many, of the houses and remembered some, but not many, family names of the people who lived in the houses along the lake and all the way to Frenchville. Admittedly, a part of this was due to my failing memory, but the town had changed drastically. Not only did I feel disoriented and disconnected; I felt a stranger. Several buildings that had played an important role during my childhood years were gone: my Derosier and Bossé grandparents' farmhouses on Flat Mountain Road, my grandfather Bossé's house in town, the school next to it, my parents' house (including my playhouse), Mr. Dufour's store, Mr. Parent's store, etc. And most of the remaining houses and buildings in town had been renovated and/or sided. Even the hill by the church and the one near Flat Mountain Road had been made less steep. No wonder I felt disoriented and disconnected! Yet, I have to admit, the changes that had taken place impressed me. St. Agatha looked "clean and tidy"; it had several new houses and businesses, i.e., St. Agatha looked prosperous. I recognized a few familiar faces, I saw many familiar names in the cemeteries, I visited relatives and friends, and my husband and I spent some delightful hours at the Ste. Agathe Historical Society and at the town hall, where I collected data for the family history I was writing. Although I hoped I would stay away so long before my next visit, in 1996 I left St. Agatha with no definite plans to return in the near future. Little did I know that I wouldn't be back in less than a year. Circumstances, as well as small towns, change.

Last October my sister Cookie and her husband, Frank, bought a business in St. Agatha. In May of this year my sister Irene and I drove up

to see them. This time I anticipated the changes; I focused on the unchanging aspects of the town. I was struck by the beauty of the lake, the rolling hills, the potato fields waiting to be plowed and planted, the town's "million dollar view" that Irene and I enjoyed on our walk part way up Flat Mountain Road, the tranquility of the landscape that unfolded before us as we drove around in the "rang des boeufs", around the lake to Birch Point, along the St. John River to Fort Kent and Madawaska, etc. The daily sunrise over the lake, the sunsets, the frolicking muskrats in the lake, the peaceful scene created by the trolling fishermen, and even the snow squall in the middle of May brought back many fond memories. These, plus the friendliness of the people, the visit to my cousin's potato house where the powerful but wonderful smell of "les cave à patates" filled my nostrils, the sweet tasting meat of the fresh trout given to Cookie by a generous friend, and the tears and laughter that my sisters and I shared as we reminisced, made this visit different from the previous one. This time I did not feel disoriented or disconnected; I no longer felt a stranger.

In 1997 I left St. Agatha with sadness in my heart not only about leaving Cookie and Frank but because I'd finally come to realize that it had taken much too long to truly appreciate the fact that my childhood years had been spent in such a special town. Circumstances permitting, I knew I'd be back -- soon.

As Irene and I left on our long drive to Connecticut, the words and tunes of several French songs kept coming back to me. A line from an almost completely forgotten school song filtered through my thoughts as I was driving out of town; back in Connecticut it continues to haunt me, but it also comforts me: "For God is good and Nature kind at Notre Dame de la Sagesse." A poet, Denis McCarthy, wrote these words in 1921. Unfortunately, I'm not a poet. So I hope that Mr. McCarthy, wherever he is, does not mind a bit of plagiarism. I prefer singing these words: "For God is good and Nature kind" . . . in St. Agatha, Maine.

Marie (Florine) Bossé

## THE DANDELION "WEED OR WONDER"

The dandelion, *nos charmants pissenlits*, have been used medicinally since 300 B.C., when the Egyptian physician, Theophratus, discovered that they made a powerful tonic. By around 1000 A.D. an Arabian physician started prescribing them to stimulate the flow of bile in patients with liver problems. During this same period of time, the Vikings were introducing them to North America. They have since remained an herb good for the liver. Today Vineland, New Jersey calls itself the Dandelion Capital of the World. Every year this southern New Jersey industrial town throws a Dandelion Festival, which culminates in a mighty banquet where residents and their guests feast on a variety of dandelion dishes. In Germany, where herbal medicine has reached its highest scientific state of development in any Western industrialized country, dandelion roots and leaves are allowed by the German health authorities to be labeled for medicinal purposes. They use it as a diuretic, for treatment in loss of appetite, dyspeptic problems, and disturbances in bile flow.

Where do dandelions grow? They can be found in all parts of the northern temperate hemisphere. It is said that dandelions never grow where there are no inhabitants. Supposedly the pioneers found no trace of them in North America, but after a few years, dandelions sprang up and soon there were millions of them.

What about the nutrients in a pound of dandelions? Dandelions are exceedingly high in potassium, calcium and sodium. It is also one of the richest food in magnesium and iron content. One pound of dandelion boasts 61,970 I.U. of Vitamin A, 849 mg of calcium, 318 mg of phosphorus, 14.2 mg of iron, 163 mg of ascorbic acid, and 3.8 mg of niacin. The root of the dandelion is a nutrient sponge; it absorbs vitamins and minerals from the surrounding soil and from neighboring plants, so much so that little else can grow in the vicinity.

Dandelion is a valuable tonic. It is used to counteract hyperacidity and to normalize the alkalinity in our bodies. Because of its magnesium content, it is essential for giving firmness to our bones and preventing the softening of the bones. Dandelion juice also builds up the

blood because it contains vital organic magnesium in proper combination and also calcium, iron and sulfur. Magnesium is a builder of body cells especially those in the lungs and the nervous system. When raw dandelion juice is combined with carrot or turnip leaf juice, it will help remedy the spine and other bone problems, give firmness to the teeth, and help prevent pyorrhea and decay.

The leaf, the flower, and the root of the dandelion have all been used medicinally. The root is the herb of choice for liver problems, digestive upsets, and gallbladder problems. It also regulates the female reproductive system by helping to regulate and normalize hormone reproduction. The leaf is used specifically as a diuretic. It helps the kidneys to eliminate excess water held in the body during hormonal changes. The leaf also eliminates toxins from the system. Gypsies in England often applied the milk juice of the whole plant to warts or corns. When this was applied for 2 or 3 days in a row, it was said to remove the growths.

Locally, Acadians who came to this area in the late 1780's maintained their health with dandelion greens. In a crock pot they put a layer of dandelion greens followed by a layer of salt and repeated this process until the crock pot was full. This provided them with "fresh" greens throughout the winter when greens were unavailable.

Dandelions can be served in a variety of ways. Dandelions can be added to soup, omelets, lasagna, or the flowers can be fried as fritters. One can also drink dandelion wine or beer.

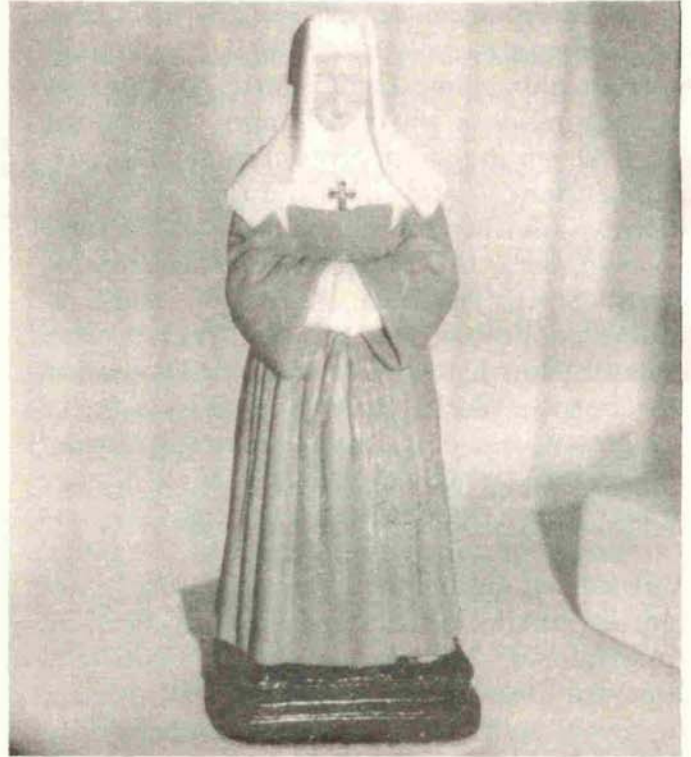
So next time you see dandelions all over your front lawn, look at them differently. Perhaps this humble plant was placed there for your benefit.



Helen Melvin

## STATUETTES

The society is please to make available for purchase handcrafted Daughter's of Wisdom Statuettes. Each statuette is unique and numbered. Also, each is dedicated to a particular sister who served our community since 1904. The name of the sister is written on the bottom of the statuette. The statuette measures 8 inches high including the base. You may order a statuette by mailing \$50.00 to the society at P.O. Box 237, St. Agatha, Maine 04772. (The society thanks Sr. Lucille Campbell for making this project possible)



## A NEW HABIT



On July 16, the society's Board of Directors held an open house to introduce our beautiful Daughter's of Wisdom habit to the public. Sister Annette Picard, an expert seamstress, made the habit as an exact replica of the original habit worn by the sisters. The habit is now on permanent display at the historical house. Pictured at the open hosue with the mannequin and our new statuettes are directors (standing) Fernand Sirois, Sister Annette Picard, our mannequis, Gloris Gervais, Connie Desrosier, Lucien Desrosier. In the foreground are Terry Ouellette and David Raymond.



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