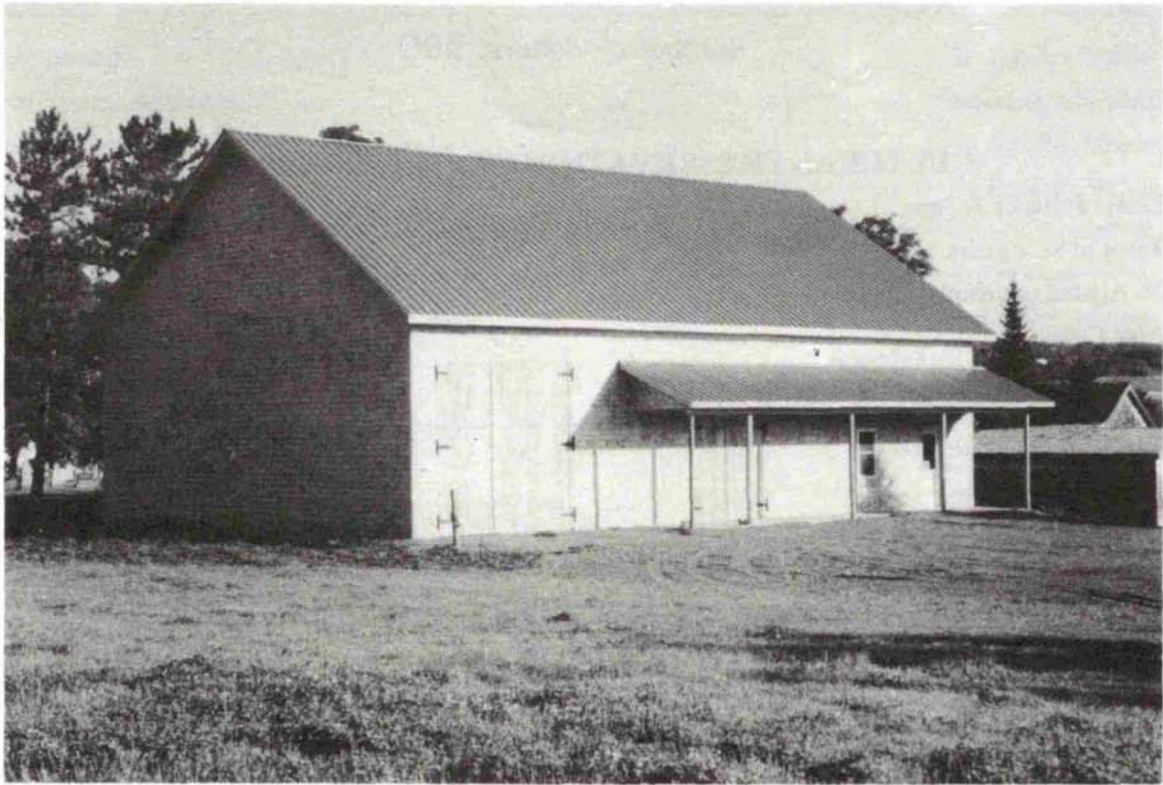


# STE. AGATHE *Historical Society*

## NEWSLETTER

FALL 2002



*"Anything one man can imagine, other men can make real"*

*Jules Verne*

It's getting there! It's actually happening!!! Your new Cultural Preservation Center is nearing completion! The building is up, the beautiful slate roof is on, the shingles have all been placed, one by one. And the building is outstanding! The 1926 McCormack threshing machine has found a new home, as well as a few other priceless farm implements.

The next project, which will be completed this fall, is the connection of the plumbing and electricity. Plans are being developed for a reception area, gift shop and genealogical research section. With the completion of these areas, we can begin moving artifacts and research materials out of the existing location in the Historical House. We will finally realize our dream of the Pelletier-Marquis House being used as a showcase of an early Acadian home.

None of this could have come to fruition without the support of our members and friends. To date, we have received approximately 170 donations totaling nearly \$56,000.00. In this newsletter, you will find the listing of all those who donated as it appears on the St. Agatha website, [www.stagatha.com](http://www.stagatha.com). As our fundraiser comes to a close, we wanted to take this opportunity to say *un gros merci* to all who made this possible.

The Ste. Agathe Historical Society is gearing up for our upcoming 25th anniversary, which will be celebrated in the year 2003. In conjunction with this proud accomplishment, we will be putting the finishing touches on our newly constructed Cultural Preservation Center. A Grand Opening Celebration is being planned for next summer.

**TOTAL DONATIONS AS OF  
9/23/2002 10:57:39 AM  
TOTAL: \$55592**

Donations = \$55592.

Number of Visitors: 590

**CULTURAL PRESERVATION CENTER DONATIONS**

Edwin Pelletier & Sons	Frenchville, Maine
Town of St. Agatha	St. Agatha, Maine
St. Agatha Centennial Committee	St. Agatha, Maine
Abel Caron	Mission Hills, California
John Romeo Marquis	East Hartford, Connecticut

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Terry Marin Ouellette	St. Agatha, Maine
Stan Albert	Fort Kent, Maine
Florine (Morin) Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine
Philip Morin	St. Agatha, Maine
Rose Poulin	St. Agatha, Maine

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Bill & Helen (Vaillancourt) Melvin	Fort Kent, Maine
Rev. Leo James Michaud	Ellsworth, Maine
Bernette Albert	Madawaska, Maine
Maude Marin	St. Agatha, Maine
Francoise (Albert) Sirois	Madawaska, Maine

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Reginald & Fancoise (Martin) Plourde	St. Agatha, Maine
Theresa (Chasse) Albert	Madawaska, Maine
Philip L. Derosiers Jr.	Lebanon, Connecticut
Juliette (Albert) Tardif	Freeport, Maine
Doria (Chamberlain) Wilkos	Windsor, Connecticut

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Roger & Bernice (Lagasse) Martin	Madawaska, Maine
Joyce C. Koerber	Goffstown, New Hampshire
Al & Jane (Jalbert) Marin	Hillsborough, New Hampshire
Paul & Avril (Pelletier) Marin	Madawaska, Maine
Leonide N. Albert	Palm Beach, Florida

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Paul & Rose Lagasse	Auburn, Maine
Patricia Stuart	Hampton Bays, New York
Marie E. Bosse	East Windsor, Connecticut
Gloria Sirois	Bristol, Connecticut
Ross & Judy (Ayotte) Paradis	Frenchville, Maine
<hr/>	
Carole Plourde	St. Agatha, Maine
Adrian Ayotte & Melinda Ricker	Kennebunk, Maine
Russell & Doris Staples	St. Agatha, Maine
Albert & Anita Chasse	St. Agatha, Maine
Roger & Claudette (Belanger) Sirois	New Britain, Connecticut
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Nester & Irene Gendreau	Higganum, Connecticut
Elaine M. Michaud	Manchester, New Hampshire
James & Carol Chasse	Oceanport, New Jersey
Howard & Cheryl (Plourde) Palmer	Waterbury, Connecticut
Emile & Lillian Chasse	St. Agatha, Maine
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Guy & Irene Dubay	Lewiston, Maine
Doris (Plourde) Beaulieu	Glastonbury, Connecticut
E. Jean (Michaud) Crabtree	Berlin, New Hampshire
Ron & Lou (Plourde) Bernstein	Bristol, Connecticut
Lorraine Chamerlain	Plainville, Connecticut
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Sylvia (Ouellette) Mellon	Oakville, Connecticut
Linda Boccialetti	Waterbury, Connecticut
James & Faye Young	Roseville, California
Annemarie Poulin	Ventura, California
Phil & Karen (Bosse) Chasse	St. Agatha, Maine
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Tom Welborn	Omaha, Nebraska
Roger & Marion Albert	Toms River, New Jersey
Patricia Morin	Carmel, New York
Allan & Patricia (Michaud) Dow	Fort Kent, Maine
Philip & Linda Bechard	St. David, Maine
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Theresa Popolizio	St. Agatha, Maine
Sylvio & Loraine Albert	Niagara Falls, New York
Judy Deschaine	Presque Isle, Maine
Theresa (Chamberland) Martin	Sinclair, Maine

Lucille Peachey	Greenville, Maine
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Peter & Rachael Lapointe	St. Agatha, Maine
Joe & Julie Cyr	St. Agatha, Maine
Francis & Fernande (Ayotte) Desjardins	St. Agatha, Maine
Alfred C. Jefferson	Boston, Massachusetts
Leonie M. Lagasse	St. Agatha, Maine
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Paul Morin	New Rochelle, New York
Fernande (Bouchard) Harris	Wilmington Delaware
Vaughn Bouchard	Millinocket, Maine
Theresa & Clifford Gervais	St. Agatha, Maine
Bobby & Rachael (Ouellette) Michaud	St. David, Maine
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Marie (Saucier) Duclos	Bristol, Connecticut
Francis & Thelma (Michaud) Patry	Lewiston, Maine
Rev. Valmont Gilbert	Waterville, Maine
Glenn & Monica (Bourgoin) Gordon	Ansonia, Connecticut
Luella (Cyr) Laprise	Kensington, Connecticut
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Roland & Phyllis (Collin) Paradis	St. Agatha, Maine
Raymond & Kate Hebert	St. Agatha, Maine
Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary	Portland, Maine
Roger & Antoinette Lizotte	St. Agatha, Maine
Babe & Yvette Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine
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Jean & Yvette Albert	Farmington, Connecticut
Stephen & Peggy (Morin) Bruno	Canton, Connecticut
Aurel Benoit LaChance	New Britain, Connecticut
Emelda Tardif	St. Agatha, Maine
Reginald & Eva Martin	Southington, Connecticut
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Stephen & Cherly (Michaud) Dionne	Newington, Connecticut
Lucien & Joyce Ayotte Farms	St. Agatha, Maine
Lewis & Rinette Michaud	St. David, Maine
Richard A. Ayotte	St. Petersburg, Florida
Ernestine E. Tolisano	St. Petersburg, Florida
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Philip & Sharon Boucher	Ellington, Connecticut
Philip & Hermance Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine

Therese M. Ringuette St. Agatha, Maine  
Lucien & Constance Desrosier St. Agatha, Maine  
Gerard & Judy Chasse St. Agatha, Maine

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Jackie (Martin) Landry Newington, Connecticut  
Claudette P. Antonitis Plainville, Massachusettes  
Donna Levesque Frenchville, Maine  
Jeanne Chamberland St. Agatha, Maine  
Dick Marston St. Agatha, Maine

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Dr. Marc & Pris Chasse Fort Kent, Maine  
Lorraine Dufour St. Agatha, Maine  
Harold & Joanne Chamberland St. Agatha, Maine  
In Memory of Solange (Martin) Plourde Connecticut  
D & G Contractors Inc. Plainville, Connecticut

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James & Patricia Morin St. Agatha, Maine  
Florence R. Martin Lewiston, Maine  
Carol Keegan Bayer Old Saybrook, Connecticut  
Willie J. Chasse Milford, Connecticut  
Therese Albert Tampa, Florida

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The Lakeview Restaurant St. Agatha, Maine  
J. Paul & Cleo Ouellette Frenchville, Maine  
Gary & Donna (LaPointe) Boucher St. Agatha, Maine  
Raymond & Rita Donohue Bolton, Connecticut  
Daniel & Roberta LaBrie St. Agatha, Maine

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Gaetan & Therese (Chasse) Rossignol St. Agatha, Maine  
Don & Rachel (Dufour) Daigle St. Agatha, Maine  
Adrien & Mary Ann (Plourde) Caron Harwinton, Connecticut  
Richard Raoul Collins Northport, Maine  
Catherine Morneault St. Agatha, Maine

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Philip Leo Martin West hartford, Connecticut  
Albertine Chasse Martin Beaulieu St. Agatha, Maine  
Denis & Phyllis (Martin) Levesque Madawaska, Maine  
Richard L. Martin & Yvonne DeCesare Madawaska, Maine  
Bob & Pat Bourgoin St. Agatha, Maine

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Software Essentials Inc.	Portland, Maine
Norman & Karen Fournier	Canaan, Maine
Jim & Carol Morneau	St. Agatha, Maine
Jean Paul Michaud	Brooklyn, New York
Abel Caron	Mission Hills, California

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Andrew Michaud	Cambridge, Massachusettes
Jacqueline (Desrosiers) Baller	Joliet, Illinois
Bertrand & Eileen Cyr	Hermon, Maine
Cecile (Collin) Fontaine	Portland, Maine
Nexfor Fraser Papers	Madawaska, Maine

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Paul & Connie Malenica	St. Agatha, Maine
Florence Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine
Armand & Gloria Gagnon	St. Agatha, Maine
Jean & Anne Chamberland	St. Agatha, Maine
John & Karen Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine

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Simone Morin	Union City, Georgia
Walter Fournier	Sinclair, Maine
Clarence & Helen Ayotte	St. Agatha
Richard "Mitch" Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine
Maynard & Claudette Martin	St. Agatha, Maine

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David & Sandy (Chamberland) Adcock	Winston, Georgia
Frenchville Historical Society	Frenchville, Maine
Jim & Theresa Foster	Sinclair, Maine
Theresa Stoddard	Redondo Beach, California
Arthur & Gisele Faucher	Madawaska, Maine

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Lorraine (Morin) Zimmerman	Lake Worth, Florida
James & Rita (Morin) Chamberland	St. Agatha, Maine
Carl & Theresa (Belanger) Michaud	St. Agatha, Maine
Bertha (Fongemie) Reuss	S. Windsor, Connecticut
Guy & Francine (Desrosier) Ouellette	Tolland, Connecticut

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Louis LaBrie	St. Agatha, ME 04772
Gunter & Simone (Albert) Schultz	Waterloo, Ontario
Camille Morin	St. Agatha, Maine
Valere & Jeanne Chamberland	St. Agatha, Maine

Patsy (Gervais) Flynn

Westersfield, Connecticut

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Dr. Tom & Jackie Chasse

Winslow, Maine

Lawrence & Irene Ayotte

St. Agatha, Maine

Sr. Jacqueline Ayotte

St. Agatha, Maine

Sr. Joann Ayotte

St. Agatha, Maine

Herman & Doretta Desjardins

St. Agatha, Maine

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Alfreda Chamberland

St. Agatha, Maine

Harold & Candide Sedlik

West Hartford, Connecticut

Morneault Family (In memory of Leo Morneault & Vivian Morneault Egan)

No Location Given

Joseph A. & Gloria Gervais

St. Agatha, Maine

Gerard & Pauline (Chamberland) Plourde

Plainville, Connecticut

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Roland & Chris Caron

New Britain, Connecticut

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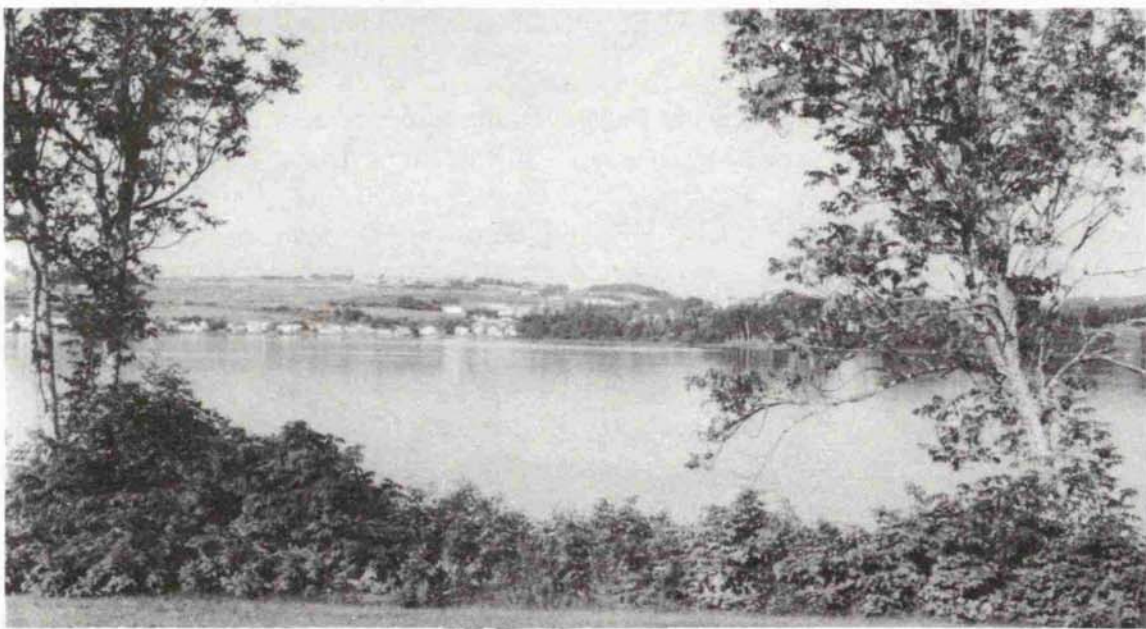
Donations received from:

62 St. Agatha Residents Totaling \$14,572.00\*

42 In-State Residents Totaling \$17,622.00

62 Out-of-State Residents Totaling \$23,707.00

\*Does not include parcel of land donated by Edwin Pelletier & Sons Inc. Valued at \$10,000.00 and Appropriation from the Town of St. Agatha of \$5,000.00



**View of the Village of St. Agatha, Maine as seen from Pelletier Island, Long Lake**



## MICHAUD FUNERAL HOME

### OPEN HOUSE

November 24, 2001



Dedication of the new Michaud Funeral Home took place on November 24, 2001. Carl and Theresa chose to dedicate the new funeral home to the "People That They Serve".

Alan Michaud, Carl's nephew, delivered the welcoming remarks at the dedication. An excerpt from his speech follows: *"The Michaud Funeral Home has been a staple in the community of St. Agatha for many years. Carl's father, Onezime J. Michaud, became funeral director in the 1930's and, at that time, services were mostly held in private homes. He purchased his first mechanized hearse in 1949. Prior to that, the horse drawn carriage, the "corbilland" was used. In the late 1940's, the furniture store and funeral parlor were constructed. After Onezime retired in the 1960's, my Uncle Sam and Aunt Bernadette operated the business for many years, and as some of you remember, they also acted as the exclusive ambulance service for this area. The hearse was a multi-purpose vehicle at that time. They also constructed the Michaud Funeral Home in Frenchville in the 1970's. They continued to provide these services to St. Agatha and the surrounding communities for many years. Carl and Theresa purchased and have been operating the Funeral Home for fourteen years.*



## **MICHAUD FUNERAL HOME**

### **OPEN HOUSE**

**November 24, 2001**

*As time went on, they realized that they had outgrown the current facility in the furniture store. In order to continue providing this valuable service to the community, and to provide it in a way that would adequately and respectfully serve their clients and the public, they decided to construct this state of the art building."*

On behalf of the Town Council and the citizens of St. Agatha, Diane Castonguay stated the following: *"We have all experienced the loss of a very special person in our lives. Dying is our most personal and irreversible act. We want our loved ones to be treated and remembered in ways that express and show respect for their uniqueness and their specialness to us. Funeral customs may vary, but most traditions are displayed with a high level of dignity and reverence. Michaud Funeral Home has long exemplified this tradition in the degree of professionalism and human connection displayed by the entire staff. It is comforting to be in such a warm and accommodating building during the most difficult times we have to face. Saying our final goodbye to a beloved family member or dear friend is never easy, but it can be made more bearable with the services of a caring funeral director and staff in the midst of such beautiful surroundings. Thank you, Carl and Theresa, on behalf of the residents of the communities you serve."*



***Theresa & Carl Michaud with the Corbilland***

## *Le Magasin à Gérard*

By: Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso

Gérard Chamberland woke up at 4:00 a.m., pulled on his clothes over his long johns and stepped outside. He trudged through a foot of freshly fallen snow to the barn where he hitched two horses to his sled for the 17-mile journey to Alfred D. Soucy's wholesale supply store in Fort Kent. The sky over Long Lake was just beginning to break with the first glimpse of the new day when he returned to St. Agatha. He led the horses to the barn, unloaded his supplies and began his workday at his store.

*Le Magasin à Gérard B. Chamberland* is well known in St. Agatha where it was founded and where farmers carried out 100-pound sacks of Startena for baby chicks or Growena and cracked corn to feed their chickens, pigs and cows. Housewives came looking for a box of Jordan's red hot dogs, a pound of freshly milled buckwheat flour to make *ployes* or a scoopful of rice to make *de la soupe blanche*. Schoolchildren would cross the street from Montfort School and *Notre Dame de la Sagesse* High School at noontime to buy a bottle of Brunswick strawberry, orange or cream soda, a bag of Cain's potato chips or a whoopee pie to round-out their sandwich, can of sardines or vienna sausage and crackers and sit on the Sherwin-Williams paint cans that lined the front of the store. But the store is also well known throughout most of northern Aroostook County because of the number of customers who come from Caribou and Presque Isle to buy hardware and building materials to fix their camps on Long Lake, Mud Lake and the other lakes in the Fish River chain.



Although he had worked on the family farm in the *concessions* of St. Agatha, Gérard, one of 13 children, in 1934 during the depression, decided to become an entrepreneur and opened a small grocery store in his house at the center of town. His



father and mother, Belone and Edith (Chassé), had sold the family farm *au deuxième rang* to their son, Siméon, and had moved *au bord* with the rest of their unmarried children where, in 1928, they built their house two doors down from the church and presbytery. Belone passed away a year later. After graduating from high school in 1930, Gérard completed a business course at the Maine School of Commerce (now Husson College) in Bangor. In 1936, he bought his first car, a two-door Chevrolet, for \$692, and built a new store adjacent to the house. Later, he built another addition attaching it to the house to facilitate access. He married Eva Guerette in 1937 who had also come from the *sixième rang des concessions*. [The *rangs* have been renamed so they no longer agree with the historic names.] The house emptied of his younger siblings as they married and moved to their own homes; and as Gerard's family grew and the store inventory increased, Memère Edith moved to an apartment down the road in her son Raoul's house. To supplement their income in the 1940s, he also took his hammer to the construction of the present-day Montfort Heights and to the Air Force Base in Presque Isle while Eva managed the store as they raised their growing family. Ronald was born at the end of the 1930s and Jacqueline, Arlene and James arrived in the '40s. Ellis was born and passed away in 1945 before he was seven months old. The "near twins," Louise and Jeanne, came not quite a year apart in the early '50s. When they were old enough, the children helped stock shelves, mark prices on goods, keep the store tidy, pump gas, wait on customers and pack orders for delivery. As they got older, they also helped with paper work, especially Jeanne who was there longer than anyone else. Even the pet cats contributed, serving as hunters controlling the rodent population attracted by the animal feed.



A lot of goods at Chamberland's came in bulk, to be scooped, weighed or measured for sale. Flour, rice and sugar came in 100-pound sacks and beans in 125-pound sacks. Barrels contained vinegar and molasses. Salt cod arrived in five-gallon pails or crates. Nails were weighed from 100-pound barrels from "*la shop à clous*" (often called the side store). The warehouse in back of the store, added on after space became a problem, was filled with roll and shingle roofing, brick and asbestos siding, sheetrock and other building materials providing an intriguing array of hiding places for the frolicking Chamberland kids. Jacqueline and her friends learned a very uncomfortable lesson one day while playing hide and seek in loose fiberglass insulation. Shortly afterwards, they were all scratching a skin rash studded with tiny bits of glass which lasted several days until the glass worked itself out of their behinds. James fell from a pile of sheetrock when he was four or five and had to have stitches on his forehead. When he was a little older, he threw a bit too much kerosene on the fire in the kitchen wood stove and emerged with singed eyebrows and *sans* eyelashes.

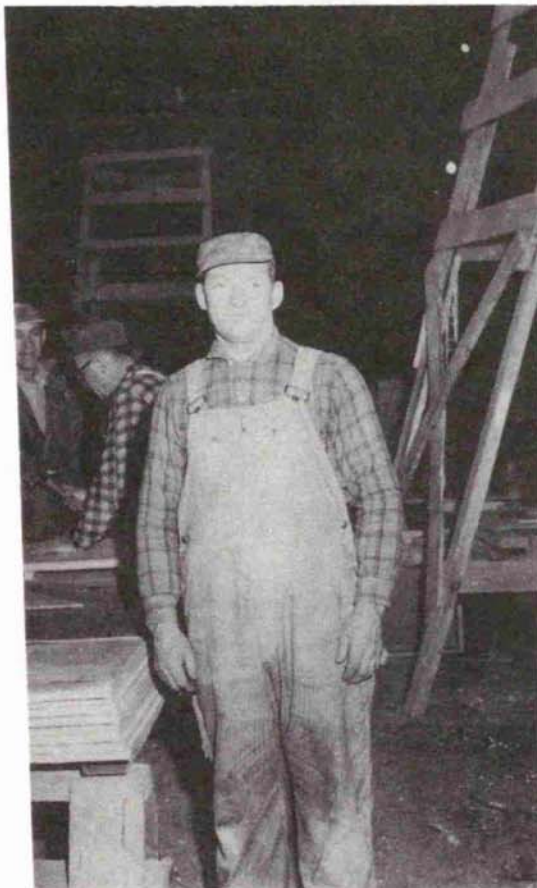
When Monsieur Gérard was in his thirties, a hammered nail ricocheted into his left eye. He was told that if he stopped work for a year and rested for several months, he had



a 50% chance of recovery. He chose to continue his work, lost sight in the eye and functioned quite well with one eye for the rest of his life; although he did say that initially his perspective was thrown off and he had to retrain his reach.

Customers and neighbors would come to the store at night to socialize and listen to CJEM radio from Edmundston, N.B. to hear the latest episode of "*Un homme et son péché*" to find out the latest horrible, miserly event "*Séraphim*" was visiting on his long-suffering wife, *Donalda*. When they came, they brought their broken appliances, and all manner of other household furnishings for Gérard to fix. Some who could not read English would also bring their mail for help with whatever problems they could not address themselves. Someone who had just met him, once asked whether he was a little stern. Because he was reserved, he might have given that impression; but, he was a soft touch and always responded to a hand outstretched for a charitable cause. He genuinely liked people, and everyone liked him. He would often invite particular friends into the house for *un petit coup*.

Gérard liked to tell the story of the night he and Eva wanted to go to the movies and there was only one dollar in the cash register. They went to the movies anyway with the idea that the next day would take care of itself, which, of course, it did. Years later, he remarked that the best time of his life was when they were struggling to raise their family and make ends meet.



In the early 1950's, Loring Air Force Base in Limestone and the Strategic Air Command (SAC) replaced the Presque Isle base and the military needed housing. Gérard went out on his own as a building contractor. His Caribou projects include 20 houses sold to Loring Air Force Base officers in 1951-1952 in Burgess Village; in 1976, he began the 90 Plourde apartments near the cemetery on both sides of Route 164. Locally, he built Memorial School and Wisdom High School in St. Agatha; Patrick Theriault School in Sinclair; Ste. Luce Convent and a wing of Dr. Levesque School in Frenchville. He renovated the Sinclair and Ste.-Agathe churches, as well as building or repairing practically every house in town and many other towns nearby. Before the days of ready-mix concrete, he poured many house and potato-house foundations all over the St. John Valley since he was one of the few contractors around who owned his own cement mixer. He bought a front-end loader in 1956 to load gravel and sand into the mixer. The concrete was then poured either into two barrels or four wheelbarrows and



emptied into the prepared forms. If it was a large foundation, they would start pouring early in the morning and finish late at night. Many times dinner was delayed because the foundation had to be finished before Gérard and the workers could end their work day.

Gérard built, brought in and sold goods to the community and gave of his time willingly. He was once asked to fix the drainage field for a Van Burenite. When he went to see him, Gérard told him that he already had undertaken too many jobs that summer and could not add another. But, he sat down with him, drew him a plan and told him how to go about fixing it himself. This man was amazed when he was not given a bill for Gerard's time. The field was fixed and still works today. He taught remedial night school during the 1930s. He was a member of *l'Union St.-Jean Baptiste* most of his life and attended several of their conventions. He also served as a charter member of the Fire Department and as a volunteer fireman for 15 years; Democratic Town Chairman for two years; town Treasurer for one year; town Budget Committee for 10 years; Director of the Credit Union for 25 years; and Director of the Sanitary District for over 30 years.

The outgoing Eva was the one who maintained the conversation. Being the practical, feet-on-the ground half of the partnership, she kept things humming. She often rose at 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. to wring out and hang the wash before customers arrived. She cooked, assigned tasks to the children and the household help, which included *tante* Rena, Gladys Chamberland, "Gordoune" Gervais and "Ki Ki" Roi, often while singing "Silver Threads Among the Gold" or "*La Vie en rose*," in her lovely voice. She had sung at *veillées* when she was a young girl. Gérard, on the other hand, couldn't carry a tune, but he never let that stop him from singing "Don't let the stars get in your eyes" as everyone would laugh. She was also a member of *Les Dames de Sainte-Anne*. Every summer, they made a pilgrimage to Sainte-Anne de Beaupré with Eva's mother and father, Fortunat and Emma Bourgoïn Guerette, and her sisters and their husbands, often with children in tow. They both always walked fast, and Louise once remarked that it seemed as though the feet couldn't keep up with the walk. But Eva found time to teach herself to play the accordion and piano. Long after her brood left the house and had children of their own, she still

L. to R. front:  
Arlene Lerman,  
Gérard, Eva,  
Louise Cyr  
back: Jeanne,  
Ronald,  
Jacqueline Blesso  
James





mended everyone's socks, gloves and mittens whenever she spotted a need. In the summer, when Gérard came home from work and when it wasn't too late, he would make time to take the children to the ferry landing to swim. At night, he would sometimes read to his assembled young family books such as "*Les Cinq enfants perdus et retrouvés.*"

Gérard always blessed himself or tipped his hat whenever he drove by the church. Eva made sure the family got there every Sunday and religious holiday. They both had a very soft spot for the Daughters of Wisdom and priests of Ste.-Agathe Parish. Whenever they harvested vegetables in their extensive garden, or returned from gathering berries, *fougère* or *noisettes*, or when Gérard brought home smelt, salmon or trout, they always shared the bounty with the nuns and priests. Eva used to send the Chamberland girls to help clean the nuns' parlor or to drive them to summer outings at nearby cottages. Arlene remembers that she didn't like having to change her shorts to more "appropriate clothing" to do errands and bring groceries to the convent kitchen. Several of the nuns would come to visit regularly and Eva would invite them into the living room for a glass of soda. Today, whenever members of the family meet people returning to the St. John Valley, they often remark about Gérard and Eva's hospitality.

At peak construction times, especially in the 1960s, Ronald remembers that Gérard managed and worked alongside some 60 carpenters and laborers divided into several crews. They seemed to understand what he wanted them to do without a lot of discussion. The regulars, Willie Chassé (he used to bring back berries that he had picked during lunchtime to the Chamberland children), *Gros Pit* Michaud, Claude Collin, Arthur Albert Louis Chamberland, Camille Ouellette, Raoul Chamberland, Rosaire Guerette, Donald Chamberland, Dennis Ouellette, Gérard Pelletier, Patrick Guerette, Wally Dufour, Elzior *Pit* Picard, Emile Thibeault, Réginald Guerette, and many others, would assemble at the store at the end of the week *pour jaser* while Gérard made out their checks, figuring out their time and deductions on his Burroughs adding machine. Late at night he would often be working on sales-tax remittances, bills and other paper work, his least-favorite part of keeping the business going.

The store was 50 years old when he turned it over to his son, James, in 1984, and sold it to him in November of 1985. It has been in continuous operation for 68 years and now concentrates on the sale of hardware and building supplies. When they retired, Gérard and Eva moved a mile south on Long Lake to a smaller house at a more tranquil location. He liked to play cribbage, and she was an exuberant Charlemagne player and winner. Eva, born April 13, 1915, passed away July 1, 1991 in their 54th year of marriage. After her death, several family members and friends rallied to accompany





Gérard and help him realize one of his dreams of fishing in Alaska. He also spent many days with friends on Long Lake in the houseboat he built to fish and cook his catch for lunch. At 80 years old, fulfilling a long-time interest, he bought himself a regulation-size pool table. Even with a slight tremor in his swollen hands, he was the best one-eyed pool player in the Valley. He believed in working hard, but he also believed in having time to unwind. He enjoyed hunting. Although he did not bring home a deer every fall, there were always partridge and rabbits, which Eva would cook and tell the children it was chicken, since they wouldn't eat rabbit. He liked to make molasses taffy, and he would enlist the help of children, grandchildren and anyone else who walked into the house to pull and share it. He also loved to travel, and he and Eva had been to Europe, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and the Caribbean, often on bonus trips from suppliers. Gerard, who was born May 3, 1912, was survived by 12 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren when he died on August 25, 2000.

Grandchildren L. to R.  
front: Paula Bennett,  
Amy Strong, Gérard,  
Eva holding Kelly Cyr,  
Trisha Cyr, Monica,  
Champlin holding  
Marc Chamberland,  
back: Michelle Cannan,  
Francis Blesso, Jr.,  
John Blesso, Matthew  
Blesso and Douglas  
Lerman



He refused to govern his life according to what other people said. He never panicked. He never flew off the handle. He didn't scold. He would approach situations with a gentle demeanor and a quiet wisdom. One of his favorite things to say whenever anything happened, good or bad, was: "These things happen." He repeated it when his children's marriage plans or pregnancies were announced as well as when there were grandchildren with skinned knees or broken bones. In the wider scheme of things, these were all passing events. Gérard knew that tomorrow was never far off, and that he would probably be getting up at 2:00 a.m. to climb into his truck to cover the nine-hour 350-mile trip to Lincoln and back to pick up a load of lumber.

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Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso was born and brought up in St. Agatha, Maine. The mother of three grown sons, she lives in New Jersey with her husband and cat where she teaches French at Fairleigh-Dickinson University. She has been published in French and English in the "French Review", "*Les Amitiés acadiennes*" (a French publication), "*France-Amérique*" (the International Edition of *Le Figaro*), "*Le Forum*" (the bilingual journal of the University of Maine), "*The River Review/La Revue Rivière*" (University of Maine at Fort Kent) and "*The St. John Valley Times*." She also sings in French, English, Latin and several other languages with the New Jersey Choral Society.



**ST. AGATHA FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**  
**CELEBRATES 50 YEARS**

Fifty years ago, the citizens of St. Agatha looked toward the future and decided to invest in themselves. Historically speaking, the birth of their investment occurred on May 5, 1952, under the guidance of these founding members: Sylvio Michaud, Emile S. Chasse, George E. Dugal, Onezime Dumond, Irene Michaud, Leo D. Parent and Gilbert Martin. The purpose of the investment in themselves was "to promote thrift amongst its members by offering them a source for provident and productive purposes".

The St. Agatha Federal Credit Union commenced with 173 members and assets of \$17,329.13. The Town Office served as their first place of business until 1967, when growth necessitated a move to a larger facility. Emile Chasse's vacant store was chosen, and the assets of \$383,838.85 were transferred to this new location. In 1973, the growth of the credit union required that the lease be extended, with the acquisition of 3/4 of the lower store area. Remodeling was undertaken, and a manager's office, with additional room for a staff area, improved operations.

During 1976, the credit union's assets topped one million dollars. Growth of this type was a direct result of members' trust, a professional staff, and capable directors. Six directors over the years have been: Sylvio Michaud (1952-1956), Emile Chasse (1956-1971), Joseph Franck (1971-1976), Daniel LaBrie (1976-1989), Robert F. Chamberland (1989-1996) and Arlene Lerman (1989-present).

In 1977, the credit union purchased a parcel of land where the current office is located today. By 1980, they had 1,057 members and assets of \$1,647,007.00. During 1982, the new home of the St. Agatha Federal Credit Union was completed. Managers have been: Sylvio Michaud (1952-1969), Albe Dubois (1970-1989), and Mary Ann Chamberlain (1990-present). The credit union now has 1,745 members with assets of \$12,287,096.00.

***Happy 50th Birthday, St. Agatha Federal Credit Union!***



***Staff Members***

Front: Charlene Sirois, Assistant Manager-Bookkeeper, Tamara Sirois, Teller,  
Shirley Chasse, Head Teller and Jessica St. Jean, Loan Officer  
Back: Lise Sirois, Teller, Denise Sinclair, Part-time Teller, Mary Ann Chamberlain, Manager  
and Patty Michaud, Loan Officer



**BLANCHE BOSSE COLLIN**  
2002 MOTHER OF THE YEAR



***Congratulations Mde. Blanche!!***

Blanche Collin was crowned Mother of the Year for 2002 by the Ladies of St. Anne this past spring. This memorable event was shared with the Parish of St. Agatha at the 4:30 Mass on May 11, 2002. Her son, Roland, shared her story with all those present.

Mde. Blanche was born on September 23, 1920, to Joe and Deline (Chasse) Bosse of St. Agatha. She met and married Claude Collin of St. Agatha at the age of 18. They have seven children: Emile Collin of Frenchville, Roland Collin of Fort Kent, Claudette (Collin) Dionne of Sinclair, Bob Collin of St. Agatha, Jackie (Collin) Levasseur of Madawaska, Cecile (Collin) Fontaine of Portland and Phil Collin of Portland.

To help with the cost of college expenses for her children, Blanche worked as a cook for the Daughters of Wisdom in St. Agatha for 16 years. She then worked for the Ste. Agathe Historical Society as House Receptionist during the summer months, and was instrumental in transcribing data for the Society's genealogical collection. Then from the age of 65 until 76, she worked for the University of Maine Co-op, an employment program for seniors. Today, she is 81 years old and lives in her home on Main Street in St. Agatha.

Throughout her life, Mde. Blanche has displayed a deep faith in God, a devotion in good St. Anne, and a great love for her family. She gave to her family a strong feeling of stability, commitment and loyalty.

**THE STE. AGATHE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**MEMORIAL FUND**

*September 2001 - September 2002 Donations*

In memory of *Mr. Emile Morin*: Philip Morin, Florine Michaud

In memory of *Mrs. Bernice (Bard-Ouellette) Pare*: Mrs. Rose Poulin, Terry Ouellette

In memory of *Mrs. Françoise (Bouchard) Conley*: Carl & Corinne Roberts, Jr.

In memory of *Mr. Gilbert Vaillancourt*: Lucien & Connie Desrosier

In memory of *Mrs. RoseAnn (Hebert) Gervais*: Mrs. Robert E. Evans, Terry Ouellette

In memory of *Mr. Lawrence Ayotte*: Gary & Donna Boucher, Florine Michaud

In memory of *Mrs. Lorraine Bourgoïn Levesque*: Bob & Pat Bourgoïn

In memory of *Mr. Rosaire Michaud*: Philip Morin, Stan Albert, Terry Ouellette, Carole  
Plourde, Ste. Agathe Historical Society Board of  
Directors

In memory of *Mrs. Alma (Chasse) Michaud*: Stan Albert

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**STE. AGATHE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS**

*September 2001 - August 2002*

Roland and Phyllis (Collin) Paradis  
Corinne M. Roberts  
Andrew Michaud  
Carole Plourde  
Lisa Bosse  
Adrien and MaryAnn (Plourde) Caron  
Lou (Plourde) Bernstein  
Francis and Fernande (Ayotte) Desjardins  
Lawrence and Hilda (Ayotte) Bosse  
Reginald and Françoise (Martin) Plourde  
George and Claire LaChance  
Gary and Donna (Lapointe) Boucher



## **DONATED ITEMS**

The following items were donated to the Ste Agathe Historical Society during 2002

Stanley Albert..... Kitchen table and rocking chair

Valere & Jeanne (Gagnon) Chamberland..... Catechisme and adding machine

Lawrence & Hilda (Ayotte) Bosse..... Motor to generate grain thresher

Helen (Vaillancourt) Melvin..... 1 set of classroom letters (A-Z) and 1 book

Phyllis (Fortin) Morin..... 15 Echoes de la Sagesse Newletters

Roger Morneault..... 2 Wisdom Yearbooks (1988 & 1993)

John Romeo Marquis..... 17 issues of Echoes Magazine, 13 "Indian  
Country" Newspapers, and  
17 books.

Priscille Roncallo..... Antique sewing patterns and a fashion  
magazine dated December 1901

Patsy (Gervais) Flynn..... 1 Sommaire Catechisme and 2 books  
(in memory of Mme. RoseAnne Gervais)

Danny & Roberta Labrie..... Framed photograph of Patrick Boucher  
and milk machine wrench

Kermit & Gloria Cote..... 2 rosaries, 1 crucifix medal w/chain and  
2 New Testament bibles

Joseph Emilien Ouellette..... Mooring hook used on the Pelletier  
Island Ferry, c.1940

Conrad & Joyce (Gendreau) Plourde..... 1 Potato barrel hoist

Roger & Vic Bosse..... 2 Searchlights used by the St. Agatha Fire Dept.

Lawrence Ayotte Family..... 1 Infant of Prague statue and 2 pair of  
Lawrence Ayotte's work boots.

Aurel Daigle..... Organ

*Un gros merci!!!!*

**SUMMER OF 2002**  
**AT THE HISTORIC SITE**



It seems like the grass grows the fastest when accompanied with dandelions. Pictured here is Christa Lizotte, the groundskeeper, doing battle with the early dandelions. In the background you can see the construction of the Preservation Center during its infant stage.



A good time was had by all! Most participants at the “basket weaving” afternoon were only willing to watch but talented basket weaver, Lise Sirois, insisted everyone construct their own basket. Pictured here with their creations are: (front) Jeanne Chamberland, Alfreda Chamberland, Rose Poulin and Maggie Blais. Back: Mary Voisine, Judy Voisine, Lise Sirois, Ruth Wright, and Odette Levesque.



## **KEEPSAKES**

The following items can be ordered from the Ste. Agathe Historical Society:

Le Centenaire de St. Agatha Maine.....	\$25.00
History of Ste. Agathe Parish 1889 - 1989.....	\$10.00
Ste. Agathe Cemetery Records 1889 - 1989.....	\$10.00
Marriages of Ste. Agathe 1889 - 1989.....	\$10.00
St. John Valley Souvenir Postcard Book.....	\$12.00
"As Luck Would Have It" by Henry Albert.....	\$15.95
"Le Parler de Chez Nous" by Don Levesque.....	\$ 5.00
Year 2003 Calendars.....	\$ 7.00
Wood Carved Plaque of the Ste. Agathe Historical House Museum.....	\$38.00
Wood Carved Plaque of the Centennial Park Gazebo.....	\$35.00
Wood Carved Plaque of the St. Agatha Church.....	\$35.00

To place an order by mail, circle each item that you would like to receive, specifying how many if applicable. Please include \$3.00 for the first item and \$1.00 for each additional item to cover mailing costs and mail to:

**The Ste. Agathe Historical Society  
P.O. Box 237  
St. Agatha, ME 04772**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## *Upcoming Projects*

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2002

The roof on the Historical House Museum is in need of repair. In addition to the replacement of some shingles, a sealant needs to be applied to the roof to protect the existing shingles against the elements. The Historical Society has received a grant from the Maine Acadian Heritage Council to help defray the cost.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2002

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Ste. Agathe Historical Society Breakfast will be held on Sunday, October 20, 2002 at the Wisdom High School cafeteria. This year's theme is "Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday St. Agatha Federal Credit Union". There will also be a basket weaving demonstration by Lise Sirois. Tickets for the breakfast are \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for students. The public is invited and tickets may be purchased beforehand from any one of our directors.

### Year 2003

Focus will be on finishing the interior of our new Cultural Preservation Center. Upon completion, we will be moving artifacts, genealogical research materials and our photo album collection into the building. The grand opening of the new Center next year coincides with the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ste. Agathe Historical Society, which was incorporated in 1978. An Open House celebration is being planned.

## *Ste. Agathe Historical Society Board of Directors*

### Officers

President.....Terry Ouellette  
Vice President.....Gloria Gervais  
Treasurer.....Phil Morin  
Secretary.....Constance Desrosier

### Directors

Margaret Blais  
Harold Chamberland  
Judy Chamberland  
Gerald Dubois  
Jackie Michaud  
Roger Morneault  
Carole Plourde  
Fernand Sirois

We gratefully acknowledge our loyal and generous patrons without whom this newsletter and our calendar would not be possible. Thank you for your continued support!

**The Ste. Agathe Historical Society  
PO Box 237  
St. Agatha, ME 04772**





*St. Agatha Federal Credit Union*

P.O. Box 130  
St. Agatha, Maine 04772  
(207) 543-7383  
Mary Ann Chamberlain, Manager



149 Main Street  
P.O. Box 188  
St. Agatha, ME 04772

**R. F. Chamberland, Inc.**

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