

French-American, Franco-American, French-Canadian, and Acadian Organizations & Research Resources



Purpose of This Resource List

This document brings together organizations, archives, genealogical societies, cultural institutions, universities, and historical resources connected with French-American relations, Franco-American heritage, French-Canadian ancestry, and Acadian history.

The organizations fall into several different categories. Some primarily promote modern relations between France and the United States. Others specifically preserve the history and culture of Franco-Americans, French Canadians, and Acadians in North America.

That distinction is important when researching the meaning of the term “French-American.” A France–United States diplomatic or business organization and an organization preserving the heritage of French-Canadian or Acadian descendants may use similar terminology while serving very different purposes.

I. French-American and France–United States Organizations

1. French-American Foundation

Location: New York, New York

Primary focus: France–United States relations, leadership, diplomacy, business, government, military, media, academia, nonprofit and cultural sectors.

The French-American Foundation describes itself as an organization dedicated to strengthening the French-American relationship at the highest levels of leadership.

Website:

<https://frenchamerican.org/>

Mission:

<https://frenchamerican.org/about/mission/>

Board of Directors:

<https://frenchamerican.org/about/governance/>

About:

<https://frenchamerican.org/about/>

2. French-American Chamber of Commerce — New England

Location: Boston/Cambridge, Massachusetts

Primary focus: French-American business and commercial relationships in New England.

FACCNE states that it facilitates relationships between France and the United States and their respective business communities.

Website:

<https://www.faccne.org/>

Who We Are:

<https://www.faccne.org/our-chamber/who-we-are/faccne.html>

National French-American Chamber of Commerce Network:

<https://www.faccne.org/our-chamber/who-we-are/facc-national-network.html>

3. French-American Chamber of Commerce — National Network

The French-American Chamber of Commerce operates a national network of chapters connecting French and American business communities.

National network information:

<https://www.faccne.org/our-chamber/who-we-are/facc-national-network.html>

The network includes chapters in major U.S. cities including Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

4. Federation of Alliances Françaises USA

Primary focus: French language, French culture, Francophone cultures, and exchanges between French-speaking communities and local American communities.

The Federation represents more than 100 Alliance Française chapters in the United States.

Website:

<https://www.afusa.org/>

About the Federation:

<https://www.afusa.org/about-the-alliance-francaise/about-the-federation/>

About Alliance Française:

<https://www.afusa.org/about-the-alliance-francaise/>

Governance:

<https://www.afusa.org/governance/>

Find an Alliance Française chapter:

<https://www.afusa.org/>

5. French Heritage Society

Primary focus: French architectural and cultural heritage, preservation, education, and French-American cultural exchange.

French Heritage Society has chapters in the United States and France and works on preservation projects involving French architectural heritage.

Website:

<https://frenchheritagesociety.org/>

About the organization:

<https://frenchheritagesociety.org/who-we-are/>

II. Maine and New England Franco-American Resources

6. University of Southern Maine — Franco-American Collection

Location: Lewiston-Auburn, Maine

Primary focus: Preservation of Maine Franco-American history and culture.

The Collection describes its mission as preserving and promoting Franco-American culture and history. Its collection policy specifically defines Franco-American heritage in connection with France, Acadia, the Canadian Maritime provinces, Québec, and northern Maine.

Website:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/>

About the Collection:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/about-us/>

Collection Policy:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/collections-policy/>

Outside Resources:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/outside-resources/>

Maine Memory Network collection:

<https://francoamcollect.mainememory.net/>

7. University of Maine — Franco-American Centre

Location: Orono, Maine

Established: 1972

The Franco-American Centre was founded by Franco-American students and community volunteers.

Its work includes Franco-American studies, oral histories, the Franco-American Library, and research concerning Maine's French communities.

Website:

<https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/centre/>

Franco-American Programs:

<https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/>

8. Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society

Location: Auburn, Maine

Primary focus: Genealogy and family history relating to French-Canadian and Acadian ancestry.

The Society states that it serves people researching ancestry tracing through Canada and ultimately to France. Its library contains thousands of books and extensive Québec, Maine, Acadian, French-Canadian, and Franco-American records.

Website:

<https://mfgen.org/>

About the organization:

<https://mfgen.org/about/>

Contact:

Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society
217 Turner Street
Auburn, Maine 04210

Email: info@mfgen.org

9. Franco Center

Location: Lewiston, Maine

Primary focus: Franco-American heritage, culture, performing arts, music, theater, dance, and community events.

The organization's legal name is Franco-American Heritage Center at St. Mary's.

Website:

<https://francocenter.org/>

About the Franco Center:

<https://francocenter.org/about-the-franco-center/>

Contact:

<https://francocenter.org/contact-us/>

Financial documents:

<https://francocenter.org/about-the-franco-center/financial-documents/>

10. Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent

Location: Fort Kent, Maine

Primary focus: Acadian and Franco-American history of the Upper St. John River Valley and northern Maine.

The Acadian Archives documents, preserves, and disseminates information concerning the way of life of the Franco-American and Acadian people of the Upper St. John River Valley.

University information:

<https://umaine.edu/undiscoveredmaine/map-point/acadian-archives/>

III. Acadian Organizations and Resources

11. Acadian Cultural Society

Location: Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Primary focus: Acadian-American history, culture, and heritage.

The organization was founded in 1985 and has published *Le Réveil Acadien*.

Resource listing:

<https://www.acadian.org/about/organizations-and-associations/>

12. Association Nouvelle-Angleterre/Acadie

Location: Manchester, New Hampshire

Primary focus: Maintaining connections among people of Acadian descent and their relatives in New England.

The organization has conducted seminars and workshops concerning Acadian history, culture, and traditions.

Resource listing:

<https://www.acadian.org/about/organizations-and-associations/>

13. Acadian.org

Primary focus: Acadian history, culture, genealogy, organizations, and historical resources.

This is a particularly useful starting point for locating additional Acadian organizations.

Website:

<https://www.acadian.org/>

Organizations and Associations:

<https://www.acadian.org/about/organizations-and-associations/>

IV. Franco-American Archival and Academic Resources

14. Franco-American Digital Archives

A collaborative digital project involving major institutions preserving Franco-American primary sources.

The original project included the University of Maine at Fort Kent Acadian Archives, University of Southern Maine Franco-American Collection, French Institute at Assumption University, and Saint Anselm College's Monsignor Wilfrid H. Paradis Archives & Special Collections.

University of Maine information about the project:

<https://umaine.edu/news/2021/03/first-ever-online-bilingual-portal-to-franco-american-archives-launches-this-spring/>

15. Assumption University — French Institute

Location: Worcester, Massachusetts

The French Institute at Assumption University participated in the Franco-American Digital Archives project and is an important resource for French and Franco-American history.

University website:

<https://www.assumption.edu/>

16. Saint Anselm College — Franco-American Collections

Location: Manchester, New Hampshire

Saint Anselm College's Monsignor Wilfrid H. Paradis Archives & Special Collections participated in the Franco-American Digital Archives project.

University website:

<https://www.anselm.edu/>

17. Androscoggin Historical Society

Location: Auburn, Maine

A historical resource for the Lewiston-Auburn region, including material relevant to the area's French-Canadian and Franco-American population.

Website:

<https://www.ahsoc.org/>

18. Museum L-A

Location: Lewiston, Maine

Museum documenting the industrial and social history of Lewiston-Auburn, including the communities that developed around the city's textile mills.

Website:

<https://museumlal.org/>

19. Lewiston Public Library

Location: Lewiston, Maine

A significant local research resource for Lewiston's history and Franco-American community.

Website:

<https://www.lplonline.org/>

V. Additional Franco-American Resources Identified by the University of Southern Maine

The University of Southern Maine's Franco-American Collection maintains an "Outside Resources" page identifying additional organizations and collections.

USM Outside Resources:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/outside-resources/>

The page includes:

- Acadian.org
 - Franco-American Women's Institute
 - French North America
 - Franco-American Digital Archives
 - Franco Center for Heritage and the Performing Arts
 - Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent
 - Androscoggin Historical Society
 - Auburn Public Library
 - Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center
 - Franco-American Collections at Saint Anselm College
 - Franco-American Programs at the University of Maine
 - Franco-American Center in Manchester, New Hampshire
 - French Institute at Assumption University
 - Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society
 - Museum L-A
 - Lewiston Public Library
 - Lewiston Historical Commission
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VI. French-American Women's and Community Resources

Franco-American Women's Institute

Primary focus: Women preserving Franco-American culture, history, and community experiences.

The organization is listed by the University of Southern Maine's Franco-American Collection as a membership organization dedicated to preserving Franco-American culture and experiences.

USM resource listing:

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/outside-resources/>

VII. French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota

French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota

Location: Minnesota

Primary focus: French-Canadian and Acadian heritage in Minnesota.

The organization describes its work as celebrating, preserving, and sharing the history of the French-Canadian and Acadian pioneers who helped build Minnesota.

Website:

<https://fahfminn.org/>

VIII. Historical Franco-American Organizations

Several important organizations existed historically among French-Canadian and Franco-American communities in New England.

These should be treated separately from contemporary organizations because some are historical institutions rather than currently operating organizations.

Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique

A major historic French-American organization.

Association Canado-Américaine

A historic French-Canadian/Franco-American organization with chapters and membership in New England.

Ordre des Forestiers Franco-Américains

A historic Franco-American fraternal organization.

Ordre des Chevaliers de Jacques Cartier

A historic French-Canadian and Franco-American fraternal organization.

Artisans Canadiens-Français

A historic French-Canadian fraternal/benefit organization.

L'Assomption

A historic French-Canadian/Franco-American mutual-benefit organization.

Historical organization reference

A historical overview identifying these organizations and their role in French-Canadian communities can be found here:

<https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06271c.htm>

These organizations should be researched through historical records rather than assumed to have the same purposes or structures as present-day organizations.

IX. Particularly Important Resources for Acadian and Franco-American Research

For research specifically concerning **Acadians, French Canadians, Franco-Americans, Maine, New England, and the Canadian Maritimes**, the following resources are especially relevant:

University of Southern Maine — Franco-American Collection

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/>

USM Collection Policy

<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/collections-policy/>

University of Maine — Franco-American Centre

<https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/centre/>

University of Maine at Fort Kent — Acadian Archives

<https://umaine.edu/undiscoveredmaine/map-point/acadian-archives/>

Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society

<https://mfgen.org/>

Acadian.org

<https://www.acadian.org/>

Franco-American Digital Archives information

<https://umaine.edu/news/2021/03/first-ever-online-bilingual-portal-to-franco-american-archives-launches-this-spring/>

Franco Center — Lewiston

<https://francocenter.org/>

French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota

<https://fahfminn.org/>

X. Organizations With Different Meanings of “French-American”

For research purposes, the organizations above can be placed into several broad groups:

France–United States relationship

- French-American Foundation
- French-American Chamber of Commerce
- French-American Chamber of Commerce — New England
- Federation of Alliances Françaises USA
- French Heritage Society

Franco-American ancestry and heritage

- University of Southern Maine Franco-American Collection
- University of Maine Franco-American Centre
- Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society

- Franco Center
- Franco-American Women's Institute
- French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota

Acadian heritage

- Acadian Archives at UMaine Fort Kent
- Acadian Cultural Society
- Association Nouvelle-Angleterre/Acadie
- Acadian.org
- Other Acadian historical and genealogical organizations

Historical French-Canadian/Franco-American institutions

- Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique
- Association Canado-Américaine
- Ordre des Forestiers Franco-Américains
- Ordre des Chevaliers de Jacques Cartier
- Artisans Canadiens-Français
- L'Assomption

XI. Important Research Distinction

The term **“French-American”** **does not have one institutional meaning.**

Some organizations use the term to describe the relationship between the modern nations of **France and the United States**. The French-American Foundation is an example: its stated mission concerns strengthening the relationship between France and the United States at the highest levels of leadership.

Other institutions use “Franco-American” in a historical and genealogical sense. The University of Southern Maine's Franco-American Collection explicitly connects the term with people whose heritage traces to France and the French colonies of the Canadian Maritimes, Acadia, northern Maine, and Québec.

The Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society similarly identifies its constituency as Americans of **French-Canadian and Acadian ancestry**.

XII. Starting Point for Further Research

For a study focused specifically on **Acadian and Franco-American descendants in New England**, the following institutions provide a strong starting network:

1. University of Southern Maine — Franco-American Collection
<https://usm.maine.edu/franco-american-collection/>
2. University of Maine — Franco-American Centre
<https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/centre/>
3. Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society
<https://mfgen.org/>
4. Acadian Archives — University of Maine at Fort Kent
<https://umaine.edu/undiscoveredmaine/map-point/acadian-archives/>
5. Acadian.org
<https://www.acadian.org/>
6. Franco Center — Lewiston
<https://francocenter.org/>
7. Franco-American Digital Archives project
<https://umaine.edu/news/2021/03/first-ever-online-bilingual-portal-to-franco-american-archives-launches-this-spring/>
8. French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota
<https://fahfminn.org/>
9. Acadian Cultural Society
<https://www.acadian.org/about/organizations-and-associations/>
10. Association Nouvelle-Angleterre/Acadie
<https://www.acadian.org/about/organizations-and-associations/>

These resources provide different types of evidence: **genealogy, archival records, oral histories, academic research, cultural preservation, Acadian history, French-Canadian history, and contemporary Franco-American community activities.**