

Annual Newsletter 2023

Ste-Agathe Historical Society



Trail Guides, Roberta Guerrette and Donna Boucher, standing with a replica of the Daughters of Wisdom habit and a scale model, made by Gerald Dubois, of the Notre Dame de la Sagesse Convent/Boarding School. The original convent was built in 1905, under the direction of Mr. L. Gagne of Edmundston, N.B. The first high school graduation was held in 1910 with State Commissioner Mr. Payson Smith in attendance. By 1924, the high school received a Class "A" rating from the State of Maine. This particular section of early education in St. Agatha is one of the permanent displays the trail guides list as a 'must see.' Trail Guides are made possible "with the support of the Maine Acadian Heritage Council."

Ste-Agathe Historical Society
Incorporated March 23, 1978
P.O. Box 237, 534 Main Street, St. Agatha, ME 04772

Preservation Center Open: Last week in June to Labor Day weekend 1 to 4 p.m. Daily, Tues. ~ Sun.

Email: stagh77@gmail

Website: www.steagatethehistoricalsociety.com

Visit us on Facebook

Registered Visitors 2023: 420

Board of Directors

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Terry Ouellette

Vice President
Carole Plourde

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Jack Michaud

Joyce Plourde
Roberta Guerrette
Owen Sirois

Stan Albert
Dr. Paul Buck
Rachelle Caron



Ste. Agathe Historical Society

534 MAIN STREET

P.O. BOX 237

ST. AGATHA, MAINE 04772

December 30, 2023

2023 has been a good year for the Ste-Agathe Historical Society because it has been able to continue in its mission of collecting artifacts to help preserve the history of the community and provide a meeting place where folks can gather and share the stories of their ancestors. The guest register shows that 420 people have been to the Preservation Center with many of them wanting to share their connection to St. Agatha. As we know many of the younger people have been moving away since the 1950's in search for better paying jobs and opportunities. Today we find that their relatives come back to see where their parents lived and what it was like in St. Agatha back then.

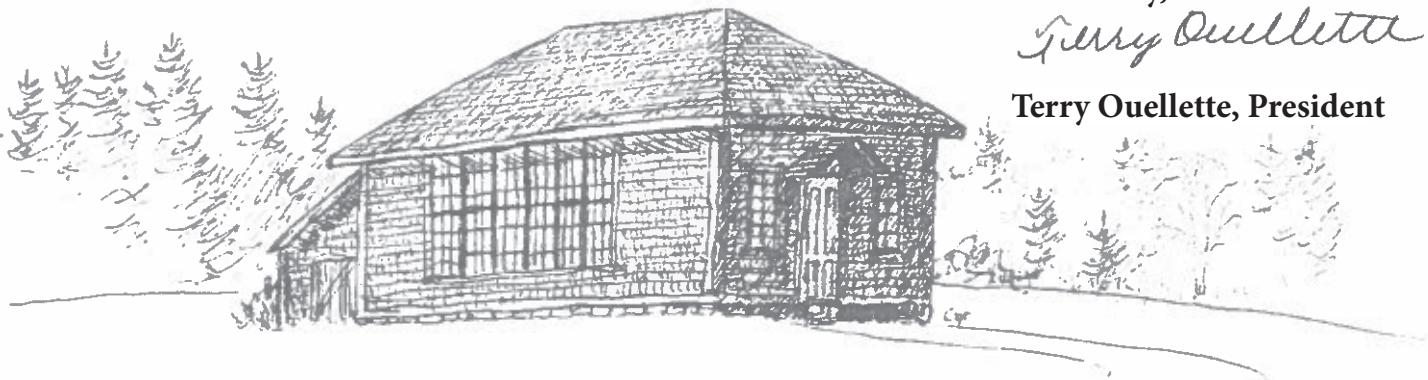
As you may have seen on our Facebook page, progress on the restoration of the Longfellow School shows that both the exterior and the interior have taken on a new look. Many of the folks who had a chance to visit Longfellow School during the summer were most impressed with what the volunteers have accomplished. Already we are looking forward to 2024 when the school will receive its new flooring – all hardwood flooring that was saved from the Queen of Peace Building (now Montfort Heights) when it received its transformation in the 1980's. We are grateful that James and Rita Chamberland donated that saved hardwood flooring to be used in the school. As you know the town of St. Agatha will celebrate its 125th Birthday and the weekend of July 12, 13, and 14 has been set as the Summerfest date. It is at that time we plan to have a ribbon cutting for the Longfellow School.

We want to thank all of our supporters for the annual appeal, all who attended the annual 43nd breakfast held in October, for the Town of St. Agatha appropriation from the Human Services Department, Bobby Michaud's, President of Catholic Financial Life 350N, donation and the Maine Acadian Heritage Council's support for the Heritage Trail Guides.

We look forward to the new year and plan to submit Sandra San Antonio's application to the National Registry of Historic Sites for the Pelletier/Marquis Museum House. As you may realize this application entails a comprehensive review of this 1854 structure and many steps are involved along the way. We hope you plan to visit the historical site in 2024 and bring friends and relatives along. See you there!

Sincerely,

Terry Ouellette, President



St. Agatha's Own War Bride

Written by Clifford Chasse, Joan Corbitt and Sandra San Antonio

The US declared war against Germany and Japan in 1941, this led to Romeo Chasse along with many local citizens being drafted into the war effort. In 1942 Romeo was drafted into the Army and assigned to the Army Air Corp at the age of 26.

Therefore, a local young farmer from Flat Mountain did basic training on the beaches of Miami, in December, and after additional training was assigned to Grafton-Underwood near Northampton, England. Romeo crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth which had been converted to a troop carrier.

Romeo shared that it was a six-day voyage.

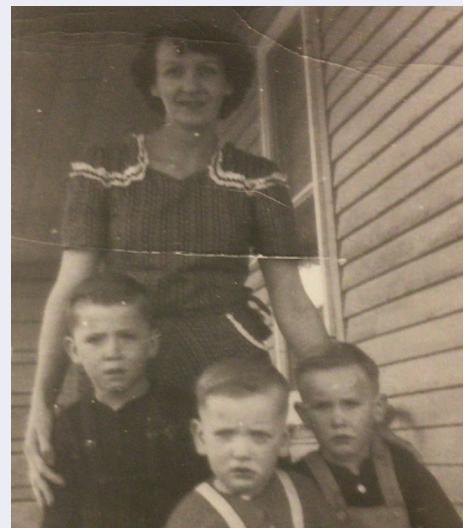
This assignment in Northampton led to his meeting a young Irish lady.



Romeo and Bridie



Romeo & Bridie Chasse
Northampton England



Bridie with Cliff, Richard, Frank

Bridget Kiely, was born September 1918, daughter of John and Mary (Harrington) Kiely of County Limerick, Ireland. Raised on a small farm in Ballingary, Bridie (as we all knew her), at the age of 18 along with her sister, Nora, immigrated to England for work opportunities.

Bridie was employed at Northampton hospital as a nurses aide. She then met and married Romeo in 1944. Bridie shared many war stories one of which is about unexploded bombs that landed on the hospital grounds. She attributed this to the efforts of labor workers that sabotaged the ordinances. Bridie said "they saved my life".

During the war effort Romeo and Bridie had the opportunity to meet up with his brother, Paul Emile, a Quartermaster, also deployed in England.

While still in Northampton, Romeo and Bridie welcomed their eldest son, Clifford. Bridie and Clifford lived in Northampton while Romeo was performing his duties in France.

For some period in 1945 Romeo would be assigned to Marseille, France. Due to his knowledge of local French, he would converse with the locals and helped with the war effort.

At the end of the European conflict, priority was given to the return of US servicemen. In September of 1945, Romeo once again crossed the Atlantic on the USS Victory, to be discharged from the military at Fort Devans, MA, and returned home to St. Agatha. Once most of the military had returned home, war brides and children were the next group to come to the United States.

In February of 1946 Bridie faced a conflict. She was notified that she would be allowed to return to Ireland to see her family, but on that same day she received notice that she and Cliff were scheduled to make the trip to New York on the Queen Mary. It was a difficult decision as she had not seen her family for over 10 years. She made the decision to come to the United States.

From New York Bridie and Cliff traveled by train to Van Buren. They were greeted, in the middle of winter, by Romeo and his parents, Denis and Marie (Hebert) Chasse. Bridie was shocked at the amount of snow, and the transportation was by horse and sleigh...let alone the language difference.

Adjusting to life on Flat Mountain

Romeo, Bridie, and Cliff lived at the Chasse homestead on 1st Row for three years. After living in England for 10 years Bridie was accustomed to more modern conveniences such as, electricity, indoor plumbing, motorized vehicles. This was a challenge for Bridie, along with the culture and weather. Learning the French language for Bridie was difficult, as family members at the homestead, spoke primarily French and taught her French words that were not quite appropriate. In time she understood the local language however she decided not to speak it. Her neighbor (Bernice Guerrette) and her sister in law (Alma Chasse) credited Bridie their learning of English. While still living at the Chasse homestead Romeo and Bridie had two more sons, Francis and Richard.

In 1949 they purchased the neighboring home and farm from Willie Martin. Bridie was the consummate housewife giving birth to three daughters, Joan, Lorraine and Sandra. All the while doing chores around the house and potato fields. Bridie always had a large vegetable garden and beautiful flower and rock garden. She helped with every aspect of the farm from cutting seed potatoes, to picking potatoes, fixing meals for the family and for the potato pickers. She was always the last to sit down to eat.

St. Patrick's Day, March 17th, was a day of celebration in the household. This resulted with the gathering of friends and the "want to be Irish". Bridie's Mom always sent cards from Ireland with real shamrocks and Irish pins and flags. All of the children left for school dressed in green.

After twenty-two years of being away Bridie longed to see her parents and siblings in Ireland. With this in mind, a dedicated field of potatoes was set aside to raise money for her trip home. Unfortunately, the first truck load of potatoes from that field crashed at the bottom of Marquis Hill. Luckily no one was injured but the truck was heavily damaged and out of commission for the remainder of the harvest which sadly meant no trip home.

In 1961 the community of St. Agatha rallied together to raise funds to allow Bridie to make the trip to Ireland. Some of the people leading the fund raiser were Sam and Bernadette Michaud, Johnny and Orilla Belanger, and Rosaire and Lucille Michaud. Bridie was forever grateful to the community for all that they did for her. This allowed Bridie to see her parents and siblings. Her dad passed away the following year.

In April of 1960, Bridie and her two sisters in law, Alma Couturier Chasse, and Lucille Marquis Chasse traveled to Houlton and became Naturalized American Citizens. This was a day to celebrate.

In the late 1960's Bridie started working for the school district as a cook and shortly thereafter she became foodservice supervisor. In 1974 she was diagnosed with breast cancer. After treatment, therapy and additional surgeries Bridie continued to work and maintained a positive outlook. In September of 1978 Bridie along with her daughter Sandra made the trip Ireland and England where she visited with her mother and all her siblings. On the morning of her leaving Ireland 35 family members including her 86 year old mother were at the airport to see her off.

Upon on her arrival at the Presque Isle Airport, Bridie was taken directly to Northern Maine Medical Center and passed away ten days later.

Bridie loved her St. Agatha home, community, lifelong friends. She was a welcoming, kind and loving person to all.

Romeo continued to live on Chasse Road and spent many good years advising local farmers and becoming known as “Pepere Hot Wheels.” He loved to spend time in his large vegetable garden and shared his harvest. He enjoyed sitting on his swing and watching the contrails from the Europe bound jets. He passed away at the age of 93.

Romeo and Bridie left their legacy of five children, eight grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren, living in Florida, Ohio, Connecticut, and Maine.



Romeo and Bridie's Children
Front: (l-r). Frank Chasse, Joan Corbitt.
Back: Sandra San Antonio, Richard Chasse and Cliff Chasse.



The Grandchildren
L-R: Erin Chasse, Jamie Chasse, Tony San Antonio, Kim Andrusia, Mike San Antonio, Scott Corbitt, Mike Corbitt. Missing from photo: Sean Corbitt.

New Lifetime Members

Joan Chasse Corbitt
Jeffrey & Kathleen Trottier
James & Carol (Coltart) Morneau

Dr. Romeo J. Levesque

Dr. Romeo J. Levesque, native son of Frenchville, was remembered at a mass held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of his death. The mass was held at St. Luce Catholic Church July 15, 2023. He served this local community from the late twenties and practiced medicine until his death in 1963. In 1993 Jean Paul Ouellette, a local businessman, had delivered a special message to the school children who at the time were celebrating the 30th anniversary of his death. These students all attended the town's elementary school that was named Dr. Levesque Elementary School. Part of Jean Paul Ouellette's talk about "The Good Doctor," included "Dr. Levesque was a very talented and gifted person. He did not limit his practice like most people do today. He delivered babies, repaired broken bones, patched up burns, gave various vaccines to his patient, took blood tests, volunteered to hold public health clinics, dispensed medications, and even pulled teeth when he needed to. His office was not big, a simple desk, a few chairs, and a medicine closet. This office was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It was not unusual for him to be gone for a day or two in the back settlements of Frenchville and St. Agatha or even as far as Stockholm to be with an expectant mother or a very sick person. He himself would even bring the patient to the Eagle Lake or Van Buren hospital for treatment. The Fort Kent hospital did not exist until 1952. Let's not forget that during most of the time during his practice, many of our roads were not paved nor plowed in the wintertime. So, people living on these roads would see Dr. Levesque at his office during the summer and early fall days, but during the harsh winters and muddy springs they depended on the GOOD Doctor to travel to their homes and that's what he did.

With help from a local mechanic, he traveled all over the valley on a home-made snowmobile. Dr. Levesque was also blessed with a good voice. He was a member of the church choir at the St. Luce Church, and when he did, the parishioners knew that The Good Doctor was in church. His patients, his family, his God, his Church, and his work were always placed ahead of his health and financial gain. Many times, he was sick himself, but he would travel to see his patients. Often, he did not get paid for his services. Sunday was normally a day of rest for Catholics in this area. But not for Dr. Levesque. For him it was a steady call, starting after the ten o'clock Mass and lasting until late afternoon. His Sunday dinners often turned out to be early suppers. Dr. Levesque left us at the early

age of 64. He never had the chance to retire and enjoy himself with his family.

Dr. Levesque visited my home many times and delivered 13 babies including myself. He was by our side when our parents died. Like many others who contributed to this presentation, I am very proud to have known The Good Doctor Levesque."

Dr. Levesque's daughters and granddaughters.



Left to right: Donna Levesque, Odette Levesque, Arlene Weldon, and Rose Marie Levesque. Back Row: Kathleen Tregoning, Karen Roswell, and Cynthia O'Hara.

Do you recognize some of these St. Agatha people?



June 1976 Seniors on a Bus Trip to Canada.
Photo Courtesy of Alan Michaud

On February 19, 2023 the Ste-Agathe Historical Society presented the Most Senior Citizen Award to its 11th recipient - **Mrs. Alma Chasse**



Front: Louise Bither, Mrs. Alma Chasse, Gerard Chasse

Back: Roger Chasse and Therese Rossignol

Unable to attend: Anita Bava from Florida and Ronald Chasse from Connecticut

Alma (Couturier) Chasse

Alma (Couturier) Chasse was born to Denis and Marie Anne (Martin) Couturier on February 4th, 1925, in her childhood home in Ste. Joseph, New Brunswick, Canada. She is the oldest of 7 children.

Alma's childhood was not untypical of those in that time - her maternal grandmother, Euphemie (Racine) Martin, died of the Spanish Flu around the year 1912, leaving Alma's mother, Marie Anne, to live in an orphanage from the ages of 6 until she turned 16 and married Alma's father, Denis. The nuns who raised Marie Anne were very strict, and instilled the importance of chores, hard work, and a fear of the Devil in her. These taught beliefs trickled down into how Alma and her siblings were raised.

While Alma did spend time tending to sheep on their farm in Ste. Joseph, many of her responsibilities revolved around caring for her younger siblings - changing and washing cloth diapers, hauling water for cooking and cleaning, among other chores. Eventually, Alma's responsibilities became too much, and when her home life became unbearable and unsafe at just 5 years old, she was taken in by her paternal grandparents. Alma says that it is from her grandmother, Delphine (Plourde) Couturier and her grandfather, Honore, that she learned love and patience. From them, she also learned the love of God, rather than the fear.

When Alma was in her mid-twenties, her youngest sister, Georgianne (Couturier) Fongemie, introduced her to an American man. Benoit Chasse had to first agree to attend mass with Alma before she would go on a date with him - and he did. They married on February 20th, 1950, less than a year after their first date. Alma and Benoit were older than the typical newlyweds of those days, Alma being 25, and Benoit 27, when they married.

Once married, Alma and Benoit moved to St. Agatha with Benoit's parents, Denis and Marie (Hebert) Chasse. For several years, Benoit and Alma cared for and worked alongside Denis and Marie, and for that they were deeded the farm. Denis and Marie lived until 1962 and died within months of each other.

Alma and Benoit raised 8 children on that farm. Alma sold cream and homemade butter and cooked for her large family and many of the men who worked on the farm. The farm produced beef, pork, chickens, and eggs. Vegetables were also grown and canned for storage. Because

electricity and plumbing only came to the farm 15 years after Alma and Benoit arrived, food was cooked on a wood stove. Other crops, like potatoes and buckwheat, were the primary source of income.

It was difficult for all small farmers to make a decent living with minimal profits and high costs. It was during this time that farming experienced extreme changes - it was this generation that saw the introduction of tractors, trucks and harvesters. Benoit stopped farming in 1970, but kept livestock to provide for the family. He worked for the Daughters of Wisdom, the nuns of the parish, which then turned into full time employment with the school system, MSAD #33. Alma earned income through various avenues, like selling Amway, Avon, and Sara Coventry Jewelry. She also worked in the Wisdom/Montfort School cafeterias and volunteered at the Swap n' Shop at the church basement. This event helped families to exchange clothing and shoes to dress their children. Later, Alma worked for Mainstream, a group that operated under ACAP (Aroostook County Action Program) and also was affiliated with AAA (Aroostook Area Agency on Aging).

After their youngest child graduated high school in 1982, Alma and Benoit were able to move to the newly renovated Boarding School, previously named "Esprite de la Sagess", now to accommodate to house elderly people or people with special needs. Benoit became disabled in 1978 at the young age of 56. Alzheimer's was a diagnosis that was not yet common in 1978, so new that doctors didn't know what to expect, or how to treat Benoit's worsening symptoms. Benoit died at the age of 71 - an autopsy of his brain confirmed Early Onset Alzheimer.

Alma busied herself with her adult children and her many, many grandchildren. Many of them became very close to "Memere Chasse". She continued to be active in the church and spent time volunteering in Religion Classes being the "class Memere". In this way, she had many more grandchildren than only those related to her.

As Alma aged, her vision deteriorated. By 2020, as Covid-19 became more of a concern in the immediate area, it was determined that it was no longer safe for Alma to live alone - cooking, cleaning and just moving around without someone close by was dangerous for her. After over 40 years of calling Montfort Heights home, Alma was able to gain residency at Country Village in Madawaska.

Now, in November of 2023, Alma is 98, soon to be 99 years old. She continues to be a wealth of knowledge and has an incredibly strong memory. Alma tells stories of her younger years and is consistently consulted about how to cook certain recipes. Her family is her source of pride and happiness. She spends her time talking to family and friends on the phone, enjoys having company, and continues to say her Rosary.

Factors that Alma believes have contributed to her long life revolve around her faith. Through the most difficult times, she prayed often and kept her Rosary close - prayers before bedtime help her fall asleep and rest peacefully. Alma avoided medications as much as she could, and to this day still gives her caretakers grief about them. Prayers and surrendering herself to God are what give Alma her strength. She prayed especially for the safety of her children, then grandchildren.

Alma has endured her share of loss - she lost her eldest son, Yvon, at the age of 10, due to complications following a surgery to repair a congenital hole in his heart. She also lost another son, Rino, who died after losing a battle to lung cancer at the age of 58. Many will remember Rino for his amazing gardens that produced beautiful vegetables. She speaks often of these losses, and only those who have also lost a child understand her heartbreak. However, through the difficulties of those losses, as well as coping with Benoit's Alzheimer diagnosis for 14 years, Alma is known as a kind, strong, and loving woman. Her faith, and her sense of humor, have allowed her to live a long, full, and colorful life - her family, friends, and members of the community know just how lucky they are to know and love her.

By Therese Chasse Rossignol

Back in June of 2022, Darrell & Mary Ann Bosse, made this list of all the St. Agatha local businesses they could remember. Hope this list brings you back in time and see how many of them you can remember. Darrell & Mary Ann moved to Maryland in July of 2022 so that they could be living near their daughter, Tina, and her family.

Stores/Businesses We Had In Town

Joe Chasse Shop & Pool Room – Cleveland Road

Peter Paul Dufour Store – Corner of Main St. & Cleveland Rd.

Noella's Dress Shoppe - Cleveland Rd.

Albert Michaud Store – Main Street

Donat Michaud Gas & General Store – Main Street

Leo Parent Clothing & General Store – Main Street

Rosairio Franck Barber Shop, Pool Hall, Soda Fountain & Clothing – Main St.

Babin's Meats & Grocery Outlet – Main Street. *Now GG'S Market

Gerard Chamberland Building Supplies & Snacks Store – Main Street

Arthur Albert Barber Shop, Pool Hall & Snacks – Main Street

Fred Marin's Naborhood Store – Main Street

Donat Daigle Plumbing, Heating, Electrical Business – Main Street

Emile Chasse Hardware Store & Sunoco Gas – Main Street

Noel Plourde Car & Truck Repair Garage – Main Street

Joe Bourgoin General Store – Main Street

Denis & Richard Ringuette Car & Truck Repair Garage – Main Street

Sam Michaud Furniture Store & Funeral Home – Main Street

Rosaire Pelletier's "Boutique" - Main Street

Leonide Ayotte General Store – Main Street

Antoine Paradis Hardward & Barrel Making Shop – Main Street

Barber Shop on Brook Road – Marie V. Michaud

Paul Guerrette General Store & Pool Hall – Flat Mountain Road

July 22, 2023 Dedication of the Ms. Betty Bridge

Some members of the ATV Club got together to build a bridge and install it on one of the ATV Trails on Flat Mountain. After Rodney Chamberland had demolished one of his potato houses, he decided to donate the lumber to the ATV Club and in turn volunteers got together and built this much needed bridge. On July 22nd Mrs. Betty came over the mountain with her all-terrain vehicle to see many of the townspeople gathered at the bridge. "What are you all doing here?" Needless to say, she was very surprised and enjoyed the honor bestowed on her just before her 94th birthday. In photo are Mrs. Betty Ouellette, holding the sign for the bridge, and her children, Ron, Emile, Bobby and Carol.



Mrs. Betty Ouellette, holding the sign for the bridge, and her children, Ron, Emile, Bobby and Carol.

September 17, 2023 Appreciation Brunch

Photo of Board Members, Trail Guides, Groundskeepers, and Longfellow School Volunteers



Center: Stan Albert
Front Row: Roberta Guerrette, Diane Castonguay, Judy Chamberland, Terry Ouellette, Doreen Daigle, Carole Plourde, Joyce Plourde, Rachelle Caron, and Donna Boucher.

Back Row: Gaylen Thibeault, Sandra San Antonio, Jean Chamberland, Roland Guerrette, Jeff Trottier, Harold Chamberland, Sharon Lizotte, Gene Lizotte, Dr. Paul Buck, Gary Boucher and Philip Morin.

Not able to attend the event - Jackie Michaud, Roger Gervais, and Dana Michaud.

St. Agatha, Me –

Fern Desjardin, then President of the Ladies of St-Anne in St. Agatha, asked who would be interested on working up a presentation for the 19 years when the Mother of the Year was a project conducted by the organization. Andie Labbe, a retired teacher and genealogists for the Michaud Family Reunion, volunteered for the task. It was at that time the church hall was being refurbished and the posts holding the portraits of the Mothers of Year had come up short in number. It was determined that special scrapbooks could contain the portraits along with a write up on each recipient. Andie started out by contacting the families involved and collected information on each Mother of the Year. Four years later, Andie Labbe has completed the project and has done an excellent presentation for each candidate. The albums will now be housed at the Ste-Agathe Historical Society's Preservation Building during the summer months and then stored at the Long Lake Public Library for the colder seasons. Here is a list of the recipients:

1997	Alma Michaud
1998	Catherine Morneault
1999	Mathilde Ouellette
2000	Rose Anne Gervais
2001	Orilla Belanger
2002	Blanche Collin
2003	Lucille Michaud
2004	Edwinna Dufour
2005	Pauline Marquis
2006	Alma Chasse
2007	Alfreda Chamberland
2008	Jeanne Chamberland
2009	Velma Thibeault
2010	Cecilia Michaud
2011	Constance Desrosiers
2012	Rita Collin
2013	Terry Ringuette
2014	Irma Landry
2019	Antoinette Lizotte



Andie Labbe with her scrapbook project of the Mothers of the Year.

Scenes of Activities at the Preservation Center 2023



Official photo of Board of Directors - 2023

Front: Sandra San Antonio, Diane Castonguay, Carole Plourde, Terry Ouellette
Back: Gary Boucher, Jean Chamberland, Philip Morin, Harold Chamberland, Roger Gervais
and Gaylen Thibeault.

Missing in photo: Jackie Michaud and Judy Chamberland



An afternoon of music with *Les Chanteurs Acadiens* Don Levesque, Roger Damboise, and Charlie Stuart



Galen Fongemie performing "Les Chansons que ma mere chantait" on July 9th.
Galen and Terry Ouellette in photo



Moose Burger luncheon for the Longfellow Volunteers made possible by Harold's lucky hunting season
l-r Roland Guerrette, Gary Boucher, Jeff Trottier, Stan Albert,
Jean Chamberland and Harold Chamberland

Scenes of Projects at the Longfellow School 2023

All of this work was made possible by these dedicated volunteers including Harold Chamberland, Gary Boucher, Jean Chamberland, Stan Albert, Roland Guerrette, and Roger Gervais.



Gaylen Thibeault installing the electrical power to the school.



Dana Michaud digging the ditch to connect power to the school.



View of the finished ceiling, walls and windows.



Jeff Trottier plastering the wall.

Scenes from the 43rd Annual Breakfast



Those attending from furthest away-Dave & Judy Voisine from Alaska sitting with Harold Chamberland



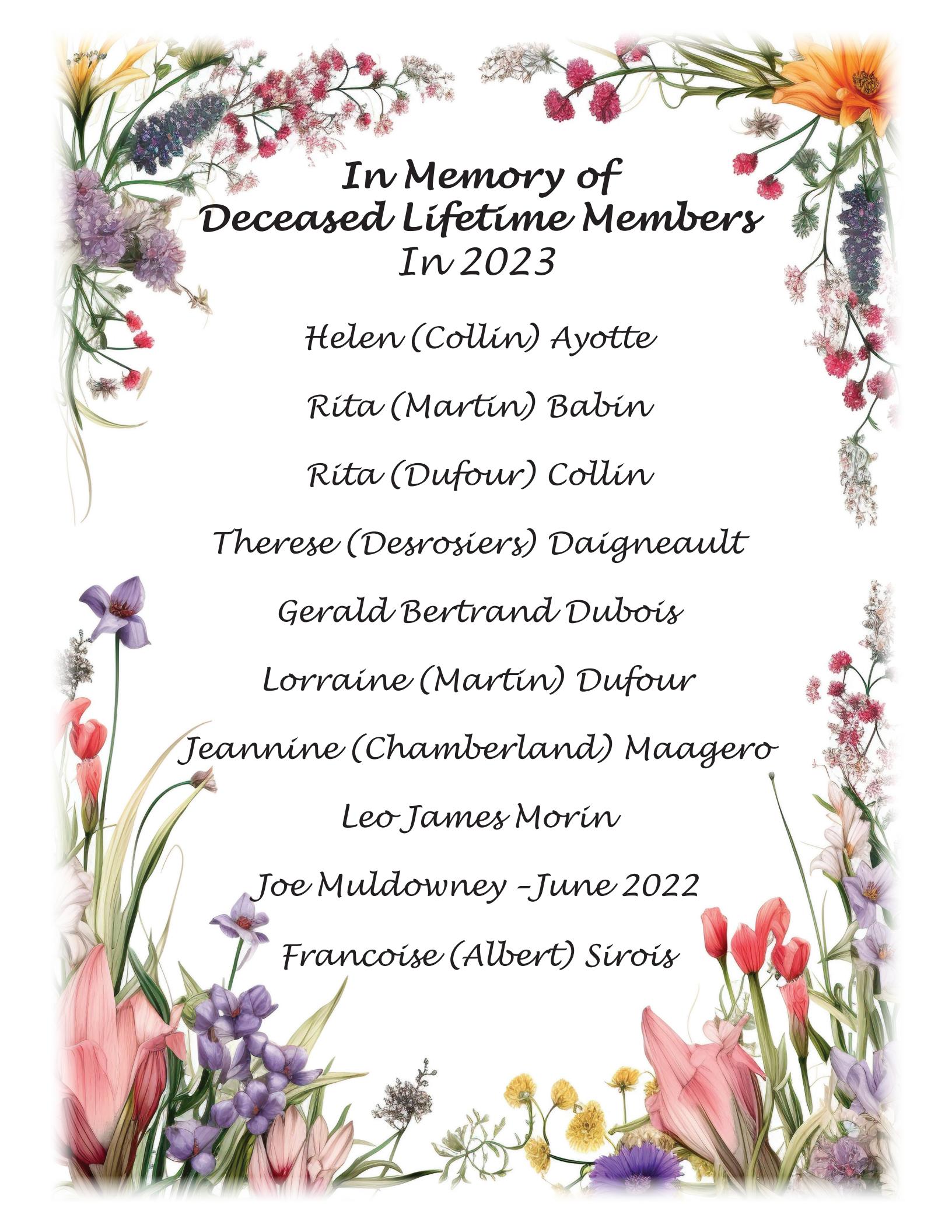
Shirley Chasse, Jean Chamberland and Juliette Sirois



Bobby Michaud presenting the \$500.00 donation on behalf of the Catholic Financial Life 350N



The Theriault Family - Mom Kathy with Juliette, Josh and Joe with Diane Castonguay and Christy Chamberland



In Memory of Deceased Lifetime Members In 2023

Helen (Collin) Ayotte

Rita (Martin) Babin

Rita (Dufour) Collin

Therese (Desrosiers) Daigneault

Gerald Bertrand Dubois

Lorraine (Martin) Dufour

Jeannine (Chamberland) Maagero

Leo James Morin

Joe Muldowney - June 2022

Francoise (Albert) Sirois

Remembering Gerald Dubois

Gerald served on the Board of Directors all the years he lived in St. Agatha. In 1999 when the town celebrated its 100th birthday, Gerald built a replica of the St. Agatha Catholic Church. In 2004 when the Daughters of Wisdom celebrated their 100 anniversary of serving in St. Agatha, Gerald built a replica of the Notre Dame de la Sagesse Convent. In 2008 Gerald built a replica of the last standing one room school house in St. Agatha. That year the replica of Longfellow School was the featured attraction in the special exhibit room. Seen in photo is Gerald and his brother Louis Dubois on the opening day of 2008. These are just a few of the examples of his talent in woodworking. If you've ever visited at the Preservation Center you may have visited Gerald's Craft Room containing some of his treasured work pieces. Gerald was always ready to give a hand at different projects at the historical society's site. He repaired windows on the Pelletier/Marquis House and applied the cedar shingles on the Preservation Building when we added the extension. We are grateful for his many contributions to the Ste-Agathe Historical Society. It was indeed an honor to have him serve on the Board. Gerald passed away in August of 2023.



The Long Lake Public Library



The Long Lake Public Library has been a community attraction in the center of St. Agatha since it first opened on July 22, 2007. In 2006, the first board of directors of the Long Lake Public Library was established. They worked to create a space where community members of all ages could have access to books, various library events, and the genealogy collection in collaboration with the St. Agatha Historical Society. The first members of the board of directors were Sr. Jackie Ayotte as President, Maynard Martin as Vice President, Denyse Michaud as Secretary, Florine Michaud as Treasurer, Jeanne Chamberland, Joyce Crosby, Richard Smith, Terry Ouellette, and Philip Morin. The board along with volunteers in the community started talking about the idea of having a public library in the winter of 2005. It wasn't until two years later that their idea had become a reality with the help and support of various community members, and town officials. In 2006, during the period of planning for the library, the board of directors got a big boost from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation with a check of \$50,000 to help their dream of a library become a reality. In a newspaper article in the *Bangor Daily News* from October 20, 2006, Sr. Jackie Ayotte stated, "This [the King grant] is going to make our library a reality." The funds were used to renovate the space for the library, which was previously a storage room in the Montfort Heights building. The board of directors continued raising funds to help the progress of the renovations to continue. They had a goal to raise \$250,000 as part of a capital campaign and endowment for the library. With the help of the generous donations and dedicated volunteers, it wasn't much longer before the Long Lake Public Library was able to officially open to the public. On July 22, 2007, the Long Lake Public Library held their grand opening event. The Board of Directors and the volunteers who worked towards

this project were able to share the outcome of their dedication with their community by welcoming them into the Long Lake Public Library.

Since the opening of the library in 2007, Sr. Jackie Ayotte and her sister, Sr. Joan Ayotte had the liberty of managing the library during its open hours. Both having been elementary school teachers in the past, the sisters had a strong passion for taking care of the library after they retired, and they truly understood the importance of having a library in their community. They took great care of the library and made sure that every patron felt welcomed as they walked through the door. The sisters have been involved in the library from the very beginning, and continue to serve as active board members and dedicated friends to the library.



In 2014, the Long Lake Public Library was lucky enough to receive a grant from the Next Generation Foundation of Maine for \$50,000. Sr. Jackie and Sr. Joan Ayotte applied for the grant in March, 2014 in hopes to be able to expand the library. When the library was first established in 2007, the entirety of the library was in the old storage room in the Monfort Heights building. Next door to this storage room was the Long Lake Regional Health Center. When the medical centers' space became vacant in 2013, the LLPL Board of Directors saw this as a chance to expand the library. After the library was granted the money from the Next Generation Foundation of Maine in October of 2014, the library was under construction from the end of 2014 and throughout most of 2015. A lot of demolition had to be done to remove all the exam rooms, offices, and create access between the vacant health center and the current library. The renovations done to the library cleared up enough space for nearly double the amount of books, DVDs, and other materials to be displayed than the library previously had. It also gave more room for computers and table space for patrons to utilize as needed. This renovation and expansion project allowed for more space for the community of the Long Lake Public Library to gather and connect with each other over the many treasures that the library had to offer.

In 2017, the library hired its first trained librarian, Deborah Lavoie. Lavoie came into the librarian position with her Masters in Information and Library Sciences, and over 6 years of experience as a school librarian prior to accepting this position. During her time at the Long Lake Public Library, Lavoie worked with the cataloging system for the books in the library, and continued to apply her knowledge in areas such as book selection and technology.

In July of 2018, Jenna St. Onge accepted the available role as librarian. During her time as librarian, Jenna was able to receive a grant from the Maine State Library for \$1,800. The

funding from this grant went towards her children's story and activity hour program. This allowed her to obtain materials and books to host activities for the children in the community. St. Onge had a goal of getting more community members, especially children, into the library and more involved in activities, and she succeeded at doing so.

In September of 2022, Lauren Paradis was hired into the librarian position and continues to fill this role today. In June of 2023, the Long Lake Public Library received a grant from the Maine State Library and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development of \$9,000. This grant went towards updated technology for patrons to use such as 4 public computers, a new printer/copier/scanner, and new furniture for a dedicated space for the computers. This space was created with comfort and privacy in mind, while also being suitable for group work. Since receiving the funding from the grant, the library has been completely reorganized to help create a more open and inclusive space for our patrons and for events happening in the library. The library is now split into two rooms, one for fiction books and materials and one for nonfiction books and materials. In the fiction room are all of the adult fiction novels, as well as the young adult, juvenile, and children's sections. In the nonfiction room, you will find all the general nonfiction books as well as topics on religion, world history, American history, Maine culture, Acadian culture, and the genealogy collection along with the St. Agatha Historical Society's collection of albums.

There are always events happening and exciting new things to explore in the Long Lake Public Library. The library hosts monthly 'Story Time' for the children in the community. It's a great chance for kids to be able to explore what's in their local library while collaborating with their friends and using their creativity while trying new activities. The library also hosts other events such as author visits, senior hours, special presentations, and much more! The library is always welcoming new patrons, and invites those interested in getting a library card to come visit your local library to see for yourself what the Long Lake Public Library has to offer.



Annual Appeal For 2024

A donation to the Ste-Agathe Historical Society can be for the:

The Longfellow School Project

The Memorial Account

Lifetime Membership (\$100.00)

Annual Membership. (\$10.00)

In Memory of _____

By _____

**We appreciate your continued support in
helping us preserve the history of this area.**

Date: _____

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The Memorial monetary gifts shall be entered in the Memorial Book of the Society. Funds are to be disbursed based on the memorial donation policy -

“to be used to assist in the preservation of the collected artifacts and sustain the operation of the Ste-Agathe Historical Society.”

STE-AGATHE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

In Memory of, **Mrs. Rita Collins**, by Rita Morin Chamberland, Donna & Gary Boucher,
Donna M. Levesque, Terry M. Ouellette, Georgette Collins,

In Memory of, **Mr. Raoul & Mrs Lucille Paradis**, by Francoise Paradis.

In Memory of, **Mr. Joel B. Cyr**, by Stan Albert.

In Memory of, **Mr. Joseph Muldowney**, by Directors of Ste-Agathe Historical Society.

In Memory of, **Mrs. Claudette Malenfant Plourde**, by Mr. & Mrs. Lionel Daigle.

In Memory of, **Mr. Lawrence & Mrs. Gisele Boucher**, by Roanld & Anita Boucheer.

In Memory of, **Mr. Patrick J. Hebert**, by Charlotte Hebert.

In Memory of, **Mr. Roland Albert**, by Francis & Jacqueline Blesso. Terry M. Ouellette, Stan Albert,
Daniel & Roberta Labrie,

In Memory of, **Mrs. Joan M. Albert**, by Stan Albert, Philip Morin

In Memory of, **Mrs. Bernadette Plourde Saucier**, by Theresa M. Lavasseur.

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In Memory of, **Mr. Joel Voisine**, by Philip Morin, Stan Albert, Gary & Donna Boucher, Patricia Morin

In Memory of, **Mr. Roger Plourde**, by Gary & Donna Boucher, Stan Albert, Philip Morin, Elaine Michaud.
Peter & Rachel Lapointe.

In Memory of, **Mr. Rosaire “Ross” Paradis**, by Sandra SanAntonio, Carole Plourde, Judy Ayotte Paradis,
Mary Ann Ayotte LeBlanc.

In Memory of, **Mrs. Geraldine Ouellette Michaud**, by Bern Thibeault

In Memory of, **Mr. Armand Gagnon**, by Stan Albert, Philip Morin, Gary & Donna Boucher

In Memory of, **Mrs. Hilda Chasse Foss**, by Neda Washer.

In Memory of, **Mr. Eddie & Mrs. Wellena Morin Children, Grandchildren**, by Simone Morin
In Memory of, **Mr. Reno Marquis**, by Joyce Marquis

In Memory of, **Mr. Richard Rossignol**, by Carole Plourde.

In Memory of, **Mr. Emile & Mrs. Marie Estelle Chasse**, by Thomas & Jackie Chasse.

In Memory of, **Mrs. Juliette Aucoin Pelletier**, by Philip Morin, Terry M. Ouellette.

In Memory of, **Ms. Joan M. Gagnon**, by Philip Morin

In Memory of, **Mrs. Dawn Marie Daigle Gagnon**, by Philip Morin, Donna & Gary Boucher,
Jacqueline Dufour Bard, Rita Morin Chamberland.

In Memory of, **Mrs. Claudette Daigle Audibert**, by Terry M. Ouellette,

In Memory of, **Mrs. Anita Morin Cyr**, by Patricia J. Morin, James & Theresa Foster

In Memory of, **Mr. Gerald Dubois**, by Stan Albert, Philip Morin. Directors of Ste-Agathe Historical Society.

In Memory of, **Rev. Eddy Morin**, by Walter & Helen Desrosier, Philip Morin, James & Theresa Foster,
Geraldine Souliere, Patricia Morin, Simone Morin.

In Memory of, **Mr. Maynard Malenfant**, by James & Theresa Foster

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In Memory of, **Mrs. Therese Sirois Collins**, by Joanne Filpi.

In Memory of, **Mr. Jean-Paul Cyr**, by Philip Morin, Gary & Donna Boucher.



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