



Le Mercien

The voice of the Merciers of North America



REAL MERCIER

**Volunteered time
and dollars**

Has just received the Governor General of Canada's citation for volunteer work from Adrienne Clarkson at her official residence in Quebec City

Here is Real with his certificate in a photo supplied by his brother Benoit, Vice-President of AMAN

See page 4 for an English version of an article published in the daily Le Soleil of Quebec City last September to mark the award. This honour bestowed onto Real reflects on the whole Mercier family at large, and we are proud to congratulate him on this occasion.

Info-AMAN

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and services of AMAN**

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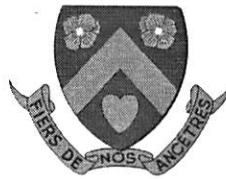
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**HONOUR ROLL
COMMANDERS OF AMAN**



Coat of arms of the Merciers of North America registered by Mgr Jean-Paul Gelinus in 1986



Coat of arms of the Merciers of England in the 15th century published in the Burke Armorial of London



Coat of arms of Ernest Mercier registered by the Drouin Genealogical Institute in 1954

Name	Occupation	Residence	Admission
Ernest Mercier			1999
Pierre-Paul Mercier	Management	Saint-Lambert, Que.	2000
Alain Mercier	Communication	Sillery, Que.	2000
Charles Mercier	Engineering	Québec, Que.	2000
Christine Mercier	Education	Québec, Que.	2000
Louis Mercier	Actuary	Saint-Bruno, Que.	2000
Pierre Mercier	Engineering	Saint-Bruno, Que.	2000
Suzanne Mercier	Commerce	Montréal, Que.	2000
Lucienne M-Croteau	Enseignement	Bonnyville, Alta.	2001

Le Mercien—Deadline

No.	Season	Date
1	Spring	February 1st
2	Summer	May 1st
3	Fall	August 1st
4	Winter	November 1st

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 Claudine Mercier, Sainte-Foy (418) 527-3384
 Isabelle Mercier, Sainte-Foy (Events) (450) 651-3839



This newsletter is named after the kingdom of Mercia which existed from the 7th to the 10th century. It was one of the seven original kingdoms constituting England. The inhabitants of that territory must have been called Mercians (or Mercien in French). We are proud to perpetuate that name today

Membership dues

Annually: \$25.
 Life membership, 65 years and older: \$250.
 Life membership, less than 65 years of age : \$400.
 Commander: \$1,000.
 Those amounts are in U.S. currency for U.S. residents and in euros for Europeans.

AMAN,
 P.O. Box 6700, Sillery Branch,
 Sainte-Foy, Québec, Canada, G1T 2W2

Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord
 Internet: « genealogie.org/famille/mercier »
 Email: « aman@videotron.ca »

EDITOR'S PAGE

In this issue, Le Mercien proudly herald the remarkable achievement of Real Mercier for his volunteer work for a period of over sixty years which he still continue to deliver.

He has received a well deserved award form the Governor General of Canada in person, Mrs Adrienne Clarkson, at her official residence in Quebec City. The daily Le Soleil reported the event in September, and we had the article translated for our readers.

Under different circumstances another Mercier made the news for having launched a book on the history of the college from which he obtained his B.A. degree.

Le Mercien invites you to inform us of similar situations where Merciers are involved . We would be pleased to publish such information for the benefit of our members and to remind them that they should be proud to bear the name Mercier.

In the last issue, we had an article on Louisiana, and it is only fitting to present a Mercier ancestor who came from France to settle in that area.

We thus continue our coverage of each Mercier ancestor who came from France to settle on the North American continent and present to you the second such ancestor. He is Jean who originated from the area of Bordeaux; he is the last French Mercier to have come before 1760.

To continue our exploration of history, we present two articles published last Summer in a Montreal daily which, by coincidence, deal with the aboriginal reserve of Kahnawake on the South Shore of Montreal.

Those two articles are part of our feature "We have read for you" which we have inaugurated some time ago.

We hope to bring you regularly similar articles in order to enrich the historic content of our bulletin.

At their last meeting, the board of directors have created a "**Development Fund**" aimed at supporting various medium and long term projects.

Pages 14 and 15 give all the details of such a fund and you are invited to send in your contribution. Why not add AMAN on your Christmas shopping list?

In keeping with the holiday season spirit, we also publish an article about the first illuminated Christmas tree in Canada. You will surely appreciate it on page 13.

Do not forget to mention the existence of AMAN to your family members during your family reunions and invite them to join us. We need to increase our membership, and nothing beats personal contacts. AMAN counts on you.

Why not give a family member a membership into AMAN?

The quarterly bulletin will remind that person of your gift throughout the year, and your gesture will have been beneficial to AMAN. We rely on you to spread the good news.

At this time of the year, AMAN offers you their best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

May you enjoy yourselves with your families.

Le Mercien



REAL MERCIER

This is the story of a volunteer decorated by the Governor General of Canada for his many years of devoted community work and also the story of a young girl's love for her grandfather.

This text has been written in English by E.A.N. Mercier of Somers, Ct., USA. It is inspired by an article published last September by Alain Bouchard in the Quebec City daily Le Soleil.

Catherine Cantin, a professor of English, is a twenty-six year old member of the Canada Naval Reserve, Real Mercier, is her 82-year-old grandfather.

Doris, the oldest of four children of Real, is Catherine's mother and she herself is a social worker who gives much of her time as a hospice worker to those terminally ill at Maison Michel- Sarrazin, what we know as a nursing home for terminal patients.

Last spring Catherine secretly undertook the long process of enrolling her grandfather as a candidate for the Mutual Aide Award from the Governor General of Canada and provided details, authentication and commendations from various organizations.

Real recently received the award from Adrienne Clarkson, the Governor-General of Canada.

Here is his story.

Real Mercier, from Saint-Henri-de-Levis, began his charitable work at about the time he moved to Saint Sauveur in Quebec to become a meat cutter (butcher) at age 22.. "The Butcher Shop " as he tells it," was located in the Halles Saint-Pierre and later became Centre Durocher after a fire destroyed the Halles. Poor people used to come for scraps.

We soon organized a system for an emergency food supply, thanks to our very understanding boss".

A lot of knowledge;

In some ways this could be considered the forerunner of the mobile soup kitchen of today where Real has been the delivery man for its products for the last eighteen years. Not only does he provide his vehicle but he also pays for the fuel used. In other words he pays to be charitable.

" What I find extraordinary about this man is that he is so knowledgeable with so little formal schooling.," says his granddaughter. Perhaps his knowledge comes from the "School of Hard Knocks" as the old folks say, has made this son of a farmer successful in spite of not having completed his seventh year of schooling nor any High School. At that time, where he lived out in the country, that was not so bad. "However " says Real, "even if I had little formal education, I have a lot of common sense. My parents taught me right from wrong and to love my neighbor. They taught the same thing to my nine siblings."

Real Mercier is one of the drivers of these mobile soup kitchens. which is operated by Sister Lise Bouchard of the Sisters of Notre Dame. We know them as Meals on Wheels". There are fifteen drivers who deliver fifteen to twenty meals, which take two hours to deliver.

The week is not yet over for our silent hero. He is also involved with the Golden Agers Association of Saint- Malo, which he helped to organize. He is also treasurer of the Old Timers' Bowling league in the section where he has his own house.

All of this after having been a member of committees at the school and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.



He was also on the administration council for the Bank of Saint-Malo. When asked how many community organizations he is involved with he says, "I don't have enough fingers to count them all."

Real Mercier began working at fifteen years of age. He was a meat cutter (butcher), north of Mistassini a few years later." With the little education I had I was obligated to accept any job I was offered." Says he. "But I can't envision having been something other than what I was. I had confidence that life would take me where I should be."

Words of a happy man, a man at peace with himself he assures us, but also the words of a churchgoer. He says, "I offer my opinions if they ask and I have confidence in destiny, but before making a judgment I listen attentively."

Real Mercier says he has been lucky in life without any grave problems in his family. His parents both deceased, at almost the same age, of eighty eight and a half which was very rare at that time.

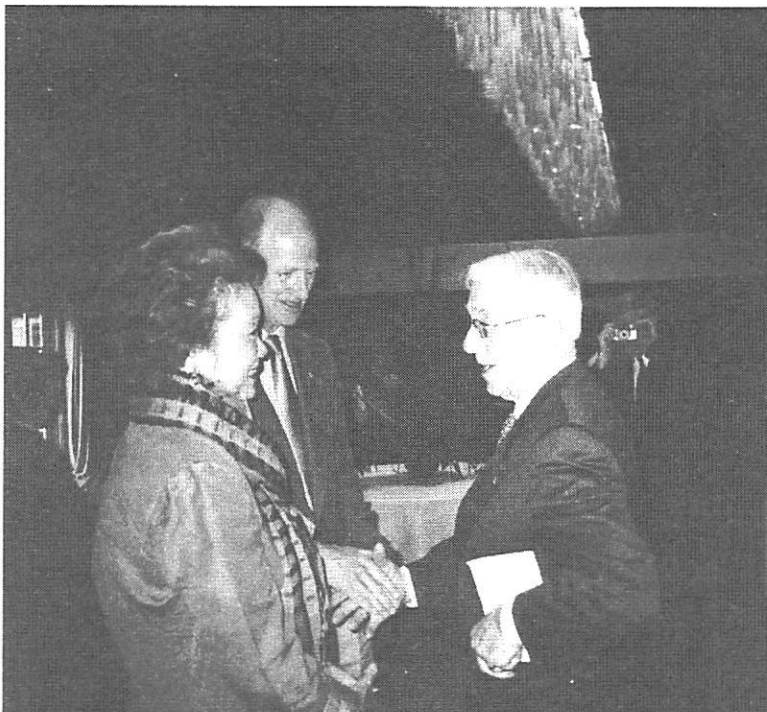
The man says that social injustice is a disgrace, but he is not ready to condemn the system.

He has found through the years that help is available everywhere and probably sufficient everywhere. "However," he says. "Unfortunately, many who need help are too disorganized to take advantage of the help which is available. That's the problem. The inability to search for assistance for themselves. Help is out there but they are not aware of it, or they can not do it by themselves. Understand it's not their fault."

When we contacted Real Mercier for the interview he said that the media coverage following the award was more than he expected and, he explains, "I have seen enough people in need in my life that I have learned modesty. There are many people like myself, but they are simple not known"

"Even without a lot of education, I have learned much." Says Real Mercier. "My parents taught me how to live life and to love my neighbor."

Translation by E.A.N.Mercier Somers, Ct.



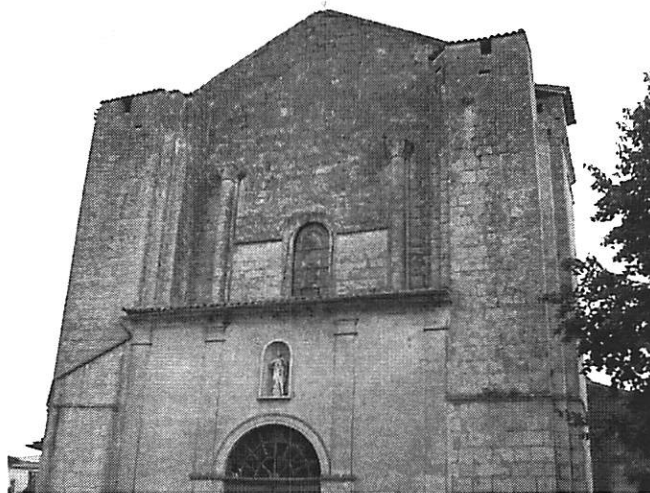
Here is Real receiving his certificate from Governor General Adrienne Clarkson

JEAN MERCIER

The last Mercier to come from France before 1770 to settle and raise a family in America was Jean, who came from the region of Bordeaux.

He is believed to have been baptized at "San Andreas" of Bordeaux on May 25, 1730. This most likely the church of St-Andre-de-Cubzac, a village of less than 5,000 inhabitants, approximately 15 kilometers North of Bordeaux.

that region, other than tobacco. The main activity revolved around trade for furs and metals with France.



Ships would leave from France with provisions for the French colonies of the Caribbean, then transported slaves to Nouvelle-Orleans and returned to France with furs and metals, mainly tin.

Bordeaux has always been a major port for international trade, and Nouvelle-Orleans had a similar activity. This might be a factor that attracted Jean to the area.

The parents of Jean are still unknown, and we do not know the identity his wife either. He was buried in Nouvelle-Orleans on April 18, 1818.

We know that he had three sons and three daughters. One of his sons, Jean-Baptiste, married Heloise Leduc in Nouvelle-Orleans around 1789.

That couple also had six children: four sons and two daughters. Two of his sons, Placide-Jules-Armand born in 1813 and J.-Charles-Alfred, born in 1816, became surgeons.

The former had a son, Sydney, who married Irene Yenni. This couple had four children. The oldest, M.A.-T. Mercier married Helen Ferris



Michelin map #335 local, Gironde, Landes (Enlarged)

He settled in the village of Nouvelle-Orleans, in Louisiana in the early 1760s, and would thus be the only French settler named Mercier not to have lived in the Saint-Lawrence River valley.

In those years, there was little agriculture in

on February 12, 1907, in Los Angeles. This couple had a son who died at a young age and two daughters who were married.

That is the end of that line of descendants bearing the name Mercier, but little is known of the descendants of the other sons and grandsons of the ancestor Jean who might have continued the lineage. They seem to have moved around Nouvelle-Orleans, in Southern United States and even to California.

They worked as settlers and also in medicine, performing arts and railroad building.

Under the French regime, New France spread from the Saint-Lawrence River valley, through the Great Lakes and to the Mississippi River valley. The territory went from the Hudson Bay area to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic Ocean to the plains in the West, ex-

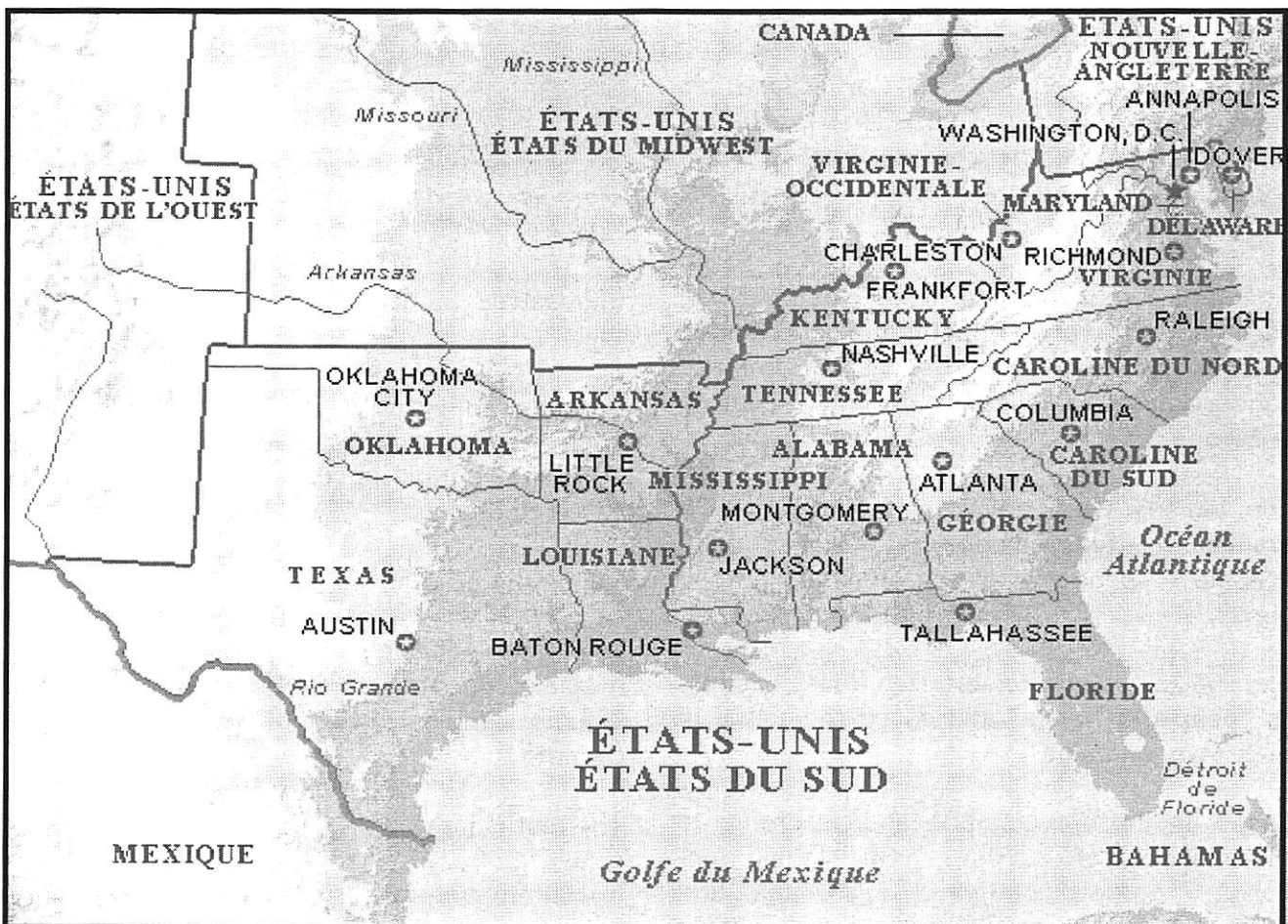
cluding New-England and Florida which was then a Spanish colony.

Louisiana covered in whole or in part fifteen of the present states in the American Midwest and the South.

Descendants of this line of ancestry are invited to contact us with additional information on their families.

You can see other scenes of Saint-Andre-de-Cubzac, and of other places of origin of other Merciers on a cassette video presentation entitled "L'Arrivée des Mercier en Amerique" in French only, for now, available shortly from AMAN.

Pierre-Paul Mercier



Map reproduced from Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 2001 edition (enlarged)



HOCHELAGA WHAT'S BEHIND A NAME?

In an article published in the Montreal daily *The Gazette of Montreal* last June, it was reported that the bones recently uncovered in the port of Montreal were believed those of the Hochelaga Indians, an Iroquois Tribe of the Saint-Lawrence River valley now extinct.

The article also mentioned that the human remains would be given to the present day Mohawks who are believed to have been related to the former Hochelaga Indian tribe to arrange for proper burial.

Such news prompted Chief Billy Two Rivers of the Kahnawake reserve on the South Shore of Montreal to bring about precisions about the name Hochelaga, and his interpretation was published in *The Gazette of Montreal* on June 29, 2003.

According to him, Jacques Cartier and his French crew believed in error that the Indian tribe who greeted them in Montreal in 1535 were called Hochelaga, and here goes his interpretation.

As they disembarked and faced those Indians, Jacques Cartier and his companions extended their hands with the intention of shaking hands, as was the custom currently prevailing in Europe.

The Indians were not familiar with such a practice realized, however, that these were "people of peace" and started shaking their hands.

The Indians then characterized those visitors as "people of hands" and called them that in their own language.

Based on the oral tradition and according to the meaning of words in their Indian language, a group of people is called "aga" and the word hand is pronounced "osha". Hence the Indians whispered "osha:aga" between



Picture reproduced from the *Microsoft Encyclopedia Encarta*, 2001 edition

themselves to describe the strangers before them.

Cartier assumed that the Indians were identifying themselves and later recorded in his log book that he had encountered an Indian tribe called Hochelaga.

Hence the error.

The real Hochelaga people were the Frenchmen described by the Indians, rather than the Indians who had been given that name by Cartier.

The rest is history.

It is interesting to clarify this after 468 years.

Le Mercien

THE LAST JESUIT IN KAHNAWAKE

The Catholic Mission set in 1667 in the Mohawk Tribe of Kahnawake on the South Shore of Montreal will no longer be served by Jesuit priests.

The religious order no longer has enough priests to replace the current pastor, Louis Cyr, 67, the thirtieth in line after 336 years.

This information is based on an article written by Harvey Shepherd for the Montreal daily The Gazette, in its June 26, 2003 edition.

As is the situation prevailing in most Catholic Orders of the Montreal area, Jesuits have experienced a major decline in enrolment for many years, and the average age of their members is relatively advanced.

The order had some 900 members in the 1950's and now numbers barely over 200; their average age is well over 70. Of that number, about fifty are at the infirmary in Saint-Jerome, Que., and some 35 are serving in Haiti.

The mission was set up in 1667 by Father Pierre Razaix

"who gathered small groups of Indians of various nations at what is now Laprairie,

partly in an effort to offset English influence among Mohawks and other Iroquois. The community settled at the present site, South-east of Laprairie around 1716.

The rectory of the first church finished around 1720 is still there, along with the second church which dates back from 1845.

No one really intends to leave Kahnawake's Catholics—perhaps 1,500 households out of 2,000 in the community—without masses or funerals. Nor is anyone about to close down the church.

Among other things, it's home to the shrine to Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, the internationally renowned "Lily of the Mohawks". She was declared "blessed" in 1980 by Pope Jean Paul II."

According to Harvey Shepherd, in his article.

Mgr Jacques Berthelet, the Bishop of the South Shore diocese of Saint-Jean Longueuil, committed himself to maintain religious services through priests shared with other parishes.

Le Mercien

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Since the last issue

Mrs Lucie Mercier of Montreal (#1347)
qualified herself as a life member.
Congratulations and thank for her confidence in AMAN

Mrs Diane l'Ecuyer of Anjou, Quebec
joined AMAN (#1465)
Welcome to our group



FOUNDING FAMILIES FAIR

The Desjardins Business Complex in downtown Montreal was the site of the first Founding Families Fair to be held in the Montreal area. It took place on October 18 and 19, and AMAN attended along with some sixty other family associations.

The event was part of the celebrations organized to mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Recruit of Montreal.

It is important for AMAN to participate in such events and make itself known. A similar fair has taken place for the fourth year at the Place Laurier Shopping Centre in Sainte-Foy and has increasingly been popular.

Our booth was manned by Robert of Valleyfield, Jacques of Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka and Lucie of Saint-Lambert, under the su-

pervision of Pierre-Paul.

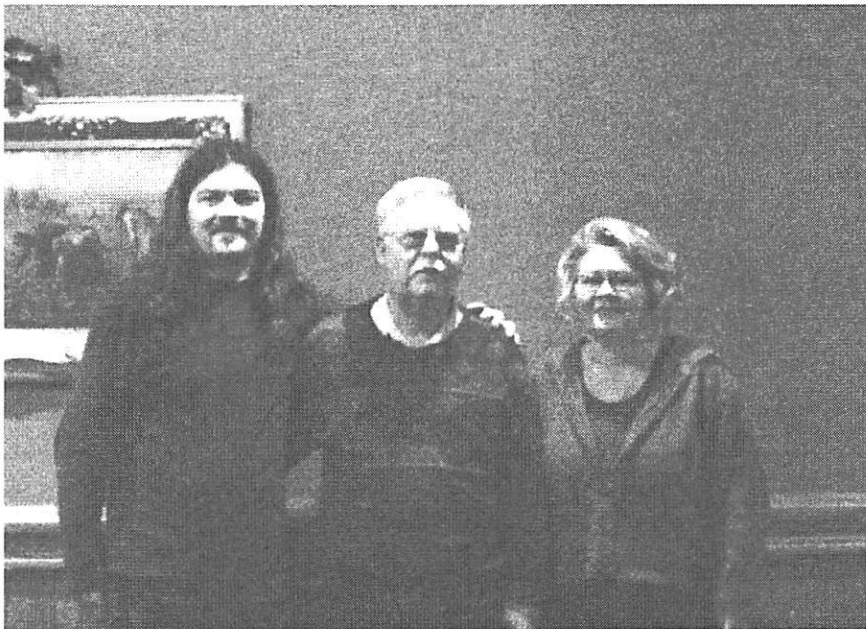
AMAN is grateful to them for their participation.

Le Mercien



NEWS FROM THE BOARD

The board of directors met in November 15th and elected its executive for the current year. The results are as follows: President: Pierre-Paul of Saint-Lambert, Executive Vice-President: Lucie of Saint-Lambert, Vice-President-Finance: Benoit of Charlesbourg, Secretary: Jacques of Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka and Treasurer: Jean of Charlesbourg.



For the first time in our history, a father and two of his children are sitting on the board. Jean-Louis of Levis has already been a board member since last year, but now, his son Raynald of Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce and his daughter Johanne of Charlesbourg have joined him.

We are proud to present the family picture taken at the end of the last board meeting.

This is a strong indication that the family spirit is alive and well in the Mercier Family.

Le Mercien

ANOTHER MERCIER IN THE NEWS

A 400 page book tracing the history of Sainte-Croix College in Eastern Montreal has just been launched by our president, Pierre-Paul.

In this book, more than twenty five authors deliver a vibrant testimony of their years in college.

The first such witness is the founder of the institution himself, Father Herve Morin, whose diary contains a detailed and vivid description of the year of operation, back in 1929.

Mr Rene Clement, who was the last rector of Sainte-Croix and the first executive director of Maisonneuve College, the new institution created in 1967 according to the new Quebec legislation, describes the transition process from a classical college to a technical and professional teaching institution within the same premises.

Two former students, Mr Claude Ryan, a former Quebec Minister and Mr Gilles Gougeon, currently news anchor for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, authored portions of history. Other alumni also wrote about their period in college.

It is a collective effort, enriched by papers from a former and the current executive directors of the college.

The launching of the book was part of the celebrations organized by Maisonneuve College throughout the academic year 2003/2004 to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of Sainte-Croix College.

The activities are aimed at emphasizing the close relationship between the new college and its forerunner, as well as the influence of the two institutions in the Eastern Montreal.

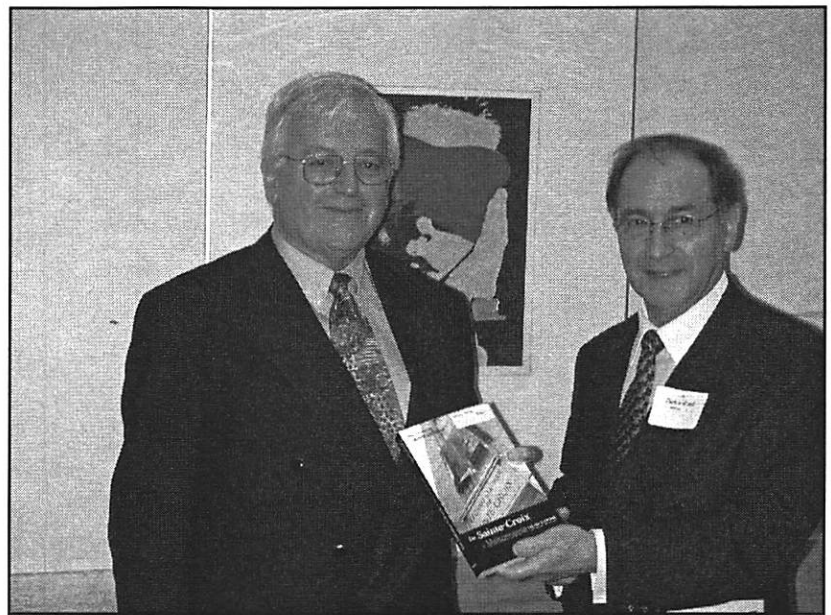
Pierre-Paul has been the chairman of his alumni association for the last six years and was the driving force behind the publication of this book which has been in the making for two years now.

The launching took place during the annual alumni association dinner on October 30.

Le Mercien

Editor'note: Merciers take an active part in society and Le Mercien is proud to highlight their achievements which benefit the whole Mercier family at large.

In the opposite photo, Pierre-Paul (on the right) presents a copy of the book to Mr Pierre Leduc, one of the authors, during the launching ceremonies.



MERCIERS HAVE A SWEET TOOTH

Do not forget our annual sugar party which will take place on April 17, 2004 at one of the ten best maple groves in Quebec, according to a 2003 ranking.

This is usually the largest gathering of Merciers during the year. Follow the indications below.

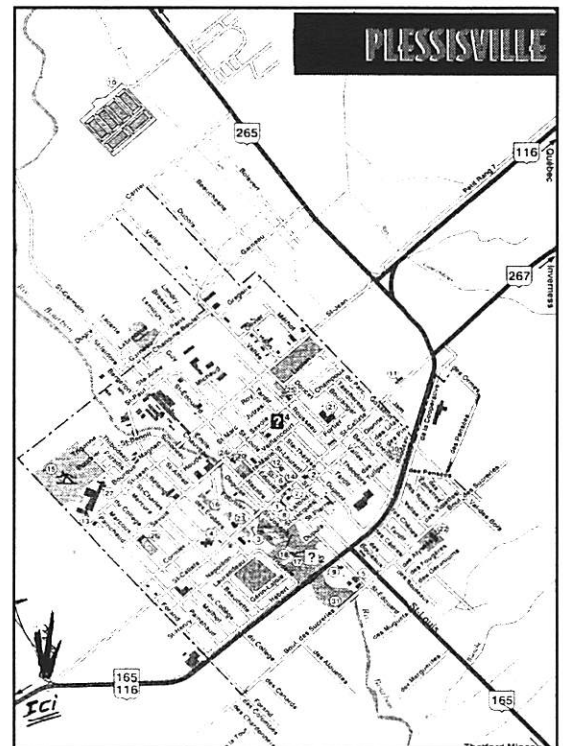
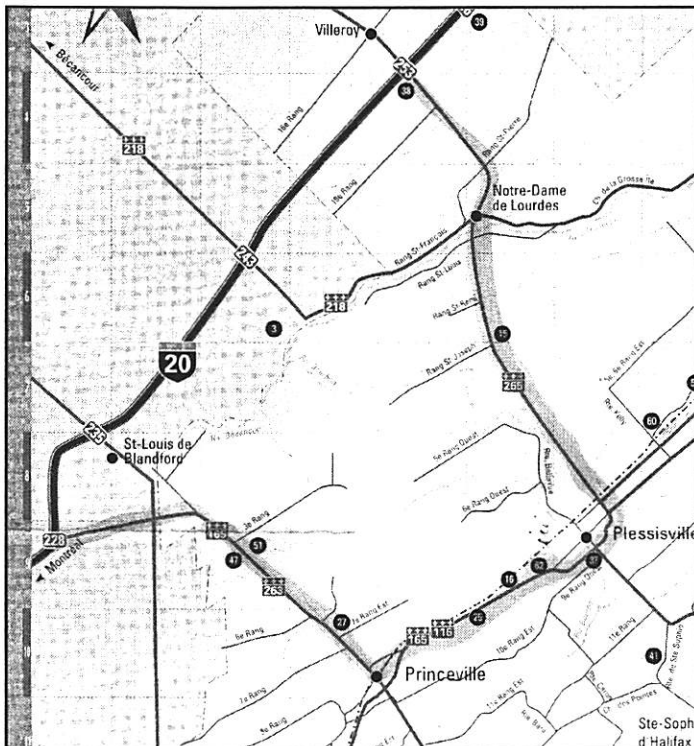
Please reserve your place as soon as possible by contacting the person responsible in your area:

Plessisville: Lucie (819) 362-2856
Quebec City: Jean-Guy (418) 650-3874
Montreal: Pierre-Paul (450) 671-9051

The price?

\$16. For adults and children older than 10,
\$8.50 for children 6 to 10
Children younger than 5 are free guests

The address: **320, Highway 116 West, Plessisville, Que.**



THE FIRST ILLUMINATED CHRISTMAS TREE IN CANADA

It is in Sorel, Quebec that the first Christmas tree was illuminated in Canada. It happened in the Governor's mansion.

A German Baroness had noted the event in her diary. She was Frederica Von Massow, the wife of Friedrich Adolphus, baron Von Riedsel of Wolfenbüttel.

Here is how the story goes.

The British parliament had just imposed new taxes and the colonies to the South were most displeased. In 1774, the thirteen American colonies saw no possible solutions and tried to convince the Canadians to rally with them.

The war of independence started in 1775, and England did not have sufficient troops on the continent to combat the insurgents and turned to Germany to hire fighting troops. They were mercenaries.

Major General Von Riedsel arrived in Quebec City on June 1st 1776 and was given the responsibility of commanding all German troops on Canadian soil.

For strategic reasons, he was located in Sorel, on the Saint-Lawrence River, at the mouth of the Richelieu River. He moved in the Governor's mansion in December 1781 with his family, just in time for Christmas. He remained on site until the end of the war in the Summer of 1783.

The Canadian Government marked officially the bicentennial anniversary in 1981, by issuing three commemorative postage stamps.

Le Mercien

This story comes from Entre-Nous, the newsletter of Club de Genealogy de Longueuil, December 2002 edition and was inspired by a book written by Jean-Pierre Wilhelmy entitled: "Les Mercenaires Allemands au XVIII^e siècle et leur Apport à la Population"

THE BIRTH OF LAURIE MERCIER

We are informed that Laurie was born on September in Riviere-du-Loup. She is the second child of Daniel Mercier and Karine April.

The grand parents who gave us the news are proud supporters of AMAN. They are Raymond Mercier and Gabrielle Lauziere who were on the organizing committee of our annual meeting held in Trois-Rivieres in 2000.

Their pictures appeared on the front page of Le Mercien, Vol.16, no. 3, Fall 2000. They are on the left hand side of the picture.

Le Mercien is proud to herald this birth and offers its best wishes to the whole family.

Laurie's picture was sent to us by grandfather Raymond.



THE ASSOCIATION OF MERCIERS OF NORTH AMERICA DEVELOPMENT FUND CURRENT PROJECTS

1- Video Presentation on the arrival of Merciers in America

The year 2004 should see the launching of this project which has been under development for the last two years. It is a 45 minute video presentation which relates the origin of Merciers who came from France prior to 1800, settled and raised families. Several video scenes have been taken on site, where those settlers originated. The presentation will be available in VHS and DVD formats for television, in line with modern communication methods. The book written by Ernest in 1987 "Mercier depuis des Siecles" was a major accomplishment at the time. The video presentation will be similar with techniques of the XXIst century. To date no other family association has produced such a document.

2- Genealogical index of Mercier marriages

The idea of publishing a genealogical index of Mercier marriages has been on the planning board for some time and seem to be one step closer to realization. It will be an important source of information for all the Merciers interested in finding their ancestors and a very useful document for researchers interested in Mercier ancestors. Our data base contains some 55,000 names, which is major source of information. We are currently examining the feasibility of such a project, including the cost involved. It would be nice to launch this kind of work on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the founding of AMAN in 2005. We will need sponsors and other sources of financing in order to make this index available to our members at a reasonable price.

3- Cumulative summary of Le Mercien

The year 2005 will mark the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of AMAN and it will be celebrated properly. One document to be released at that time will be a cumulative index of articles published in Le Mercien since the beginning. It will remain a reference document to perpetuate the memory of years passed by.

4- The twenty year history

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary it would be appropriate to publish a commemorative album of the years past. It would be in order to release a video presentation to remember in pictures and sounds, the achievements of the last twenty years.

5- A monument in La Grandiniere (France)

The house where Julien was born in 1621 still exists in La Grandiniere near Tourouvre (France). It would be interesting to install a monument or commemorative plaque on that site. Some family associations from Quebec have already done so, and such an achievement would contribute to strengthen the relationship between France and AMAN. We already have a plaque in the church of Saint-Aubin of Tourouvre placed between the two stained glass windows erected in commemoration of the visit of Honore Mercier at the church in 1891. Our plaque was erected in 1987, on the occasion of a visit by AMAN's members.

THE ASSOCIATION OF MERCIERS OF NORTH AMERICA DEVELOPMENT FUND

AMAN has just created a « **Development Fund** » aimed at gathering the funds required to achieve a certain number of projects to favour the promotion and organization development of AMAN.

Current income barely covers our day to day operations and does not allow for long term projects aimed at promoting AMAN's interest and promote the noble name of Mercier for future generations.

A certain number of projects have already been identified and others will be added as the needs arise in future years.

AMAN wishes to sensitize its members to such needs and will seek funds also from sponsors, sympathizers and other persons as well as organizations interested in being associated with our projects.

First, we call on our members for donations and invite them to subscribe to our campaign.

The funds will be set aside in a special fund to be used for projects specifically identified along with others to follow.

We count on the generosity of all our members to help AMAN distinguish itself and promote its presence in a significant way.



I wish to contribute my share to the "**Development fund**" of AMAN

I leave it up to the board of directors to apply my donation to any project

I wish to support specifically the following projects:

Surname _____ Name _____

Address _____

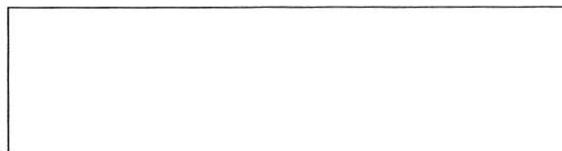
City _____ Prov. _____ Postal code _____

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