
VOLUME 34

NUMBER 1

SPRING 2018



Le Mercien

The Voice of the Merciers of North America

2018 Gathering at Isle-aux-Coudres



Source : photo L'Isle-aux-Coudres-025-95-Quelette001.com

Isle-aux-Coudres (Municipality), Saint-Bernard-sur-Mer (Village), Boarding Wharf located in a small bay on the shipping route in the St-Lawrence River, called the French Mooring. Cars are lined up down the hill to the terminal; the crossing of 3.7 km, towards Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive (Village) takes about 20 minutes. View of the coast of Charlevoix and the Laurentian Mountains.

HONOUR ROLL - GOVERNORS OF THE MERCIER ASSOCIATION

Name	Member No.	Occupation	Residence	Admission
Ernest Mercier *	32	Founding President of the (A.M.A.N. 1985)	Québec, QC	1997
Pierre-Paul Mercier *	19	Administration	St-Lambert, QC	2000
Louis Mercier	52	Actuary	St-Bruno-de-Montarville, QC	2000
Pierre Mercier	73	Engineering	St-Bruno-de-Montarville, QC	2000
Suzanne Mercier	74	Commerce	Montréal, QC	2000
Christine Mercier	75	Teaching	Québec, QC	2000
Charles Mercier	76	Engineering	Québec, QC	2000
Alain Mercier *	77	Communications	Québec, QC	2000
Lucienne Mercier-Croteau *	988	Teaching	Bonnyville, AB	2001
Ralph Mercier	1151	Administration	Québec (Charlesbourg), QC	2012

(*) deceased

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2017-2018 AND SERVICES OF THE MERCIER ASSOCIATION

Board Members	Name	Member no.	Residence	Telephone	Email
President:	Jacques Mercier	341	St-Georges	(418) 228-5426	studiocimai@gmail.com
Vice-President:	Germain Nappert	1480	Boisbriand	(450) 437-1220	nappert@videotron.ca
Secretary:	Aurèle Mercier	1573	Ste-Marie	(418) 387-5079	andreegm007@outlook.com
Treasurer:	Lise St-André	1572	Ste-Madeleine	(450) 795-3853	famillesmercier1985@gmail.com
Administrators	Gilmond Mercier	28	Ste-Sabine	(418) 383-3441	gilmondm@sogetel.net
	Jean Mercier	1524	St-Jérôme	(450) 432-3223	jean.mercier6@videotron.ca
	Mario Mercier	1544	Québec	(418) 903-4752	mario.mercier@bell.net

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Webmaster:	1568	Pascal Mercier	(418) 221-7688	pmercier@ubeo.ca
Newsletter Le Merc: recherche	28	Gilmond Mercier	(418) 383-3441	gilmondm@sogetel.net
Newsletter Le Merc: mise en page	1572	Lise St-André	(450) 795-3853	famillesmercier1985@gmail.com
Genealogy:	222	Benoît Mercier	(418) 623-0833	benoitbmercier@hotmail.com
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Audit:	210	Denise Mercier		denisemercier@videotron.qc.ca

MEMBERSHIP FEES 2017-2018

Annual fees are due before May 31st of each year

Annually :	\$35/1 year \$65/2 years
Annually + spouse(s) :	\$40/1year \$75/2 years
Governor	1 000 \$

Those amounts are in U.S. currency for U.S. residents and in euros for European residents.

This newsletter is named after the Kingdom of Mercia which existed from the 7th to the 10th centuries. It was one of the seven original Kingdoms constituting England. The inhabitants of that territory must have been called Mercien. We are proud to perpetuate that name today.

Legal deposit - 2018
Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec - BANQ
Library and Archives Canada - LAC

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Opinions expressed in the published articles belong exclusively to their authors. The fact that they are published in this newsletter does not mean that the Association agrees with or supports them.

Email : famillesmercier1985@gmail.com - Website : www.famillesmercier.org
L'Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord is a member of the Fédération Histoire Québec

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone,

Your Board has just finalized the last details of the program for our 2018 Gathering. We have already announced in the last issue of *Le Mercien*, that you should mark on your calendar the date of Sunday August 19, 2018, for the gathering at Isle-aux-Coudres. It will be the first time that our Association will hold its annual general meeting in that place, where "few" Merciers have settled.

As usual, the Board will be present in the afternoon of Saturday August 18. Those who will come should know that there is a free twenty-minute ferry service from Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive (please take that into account when planning the time of your arrival). So as to avoid extra driving time, we have chosen Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres for the gathering.

Should you wish to arrive on Saturday, you will find all the details concerning the accommodations on page 5 of this issue of *Le Mercien*. You can stay at Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres for \$141 PER PERSON plus taxes. The package includes the following: the Room, a 4-course Dinner, breakfast on Sunday and gratuities. Should you choose this package at Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres, you should make your reservation before July



10, 2018, and mention that you are part of the "Mercier Family" group. We have also included a list of other hotels on Isle-aux-Coudres.

You will notice in this issue of *Le Mercien*, that once again a Mercier woman is being honoured. The write-up about Sister Yvonne Mercier is quite captivating. Please do not forget to renew your membership and pay your dues by the end of May. Your contribution is essential to the survival of our association. In closing, I must mention that the updating of our Internet site, which had been announced for the end of March, has been postponed. We are still working on it and as we often see with our governments, there will be a slight delay, but without any "extra costs".

Enjoy reading *Le Mercien* and it will be a pleasure to see you on August 19th.

Jacques Mercier, President

NOTICE OF RENEWAL ANNUAL FEES 2018-2019

For members whose contribution will have expired in May 2018, you are invited to renew before June 1st, 2018.

Just fill in the form on page 15 and return it to the address indicated.

We thank you for your support!

Program For the Day

of August 19, 2018.

33rd Gathering of The Association des MERCIER de l'Amérique du Nord at Isle-aux-Coudres

Time	SUNDAY AUGUST 19, 2018	Location
8 h 30 9 h 30	Welcome in the Hall of Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres 444, Chemin de la Baleine, L'Isle-aux-Coudres	Hotel
9 h 45 11 h 15	Annual General Meeting Amphithéâtre (premier étage)	Amphithéâtre
11 h 30 13 h 15	Luncheon (included in the \$60 fee for the gathering) À la salle à manger (premier étage)	Dining Room
13 h 30 16 h 30	Guided Tour of Isle-aux-Coudres (included in the \$60 fee) by bus Tour de l'Isle, visite du moulin à farine et de la cidrerie avec 4 dégustations	By bus 48 passengers
16 h 30 17 h 00	Return to the hotel and end of the Gathering	Hotel

Departures on Saturday August 18, 2018 From St-Joseph-de-la-Rive Towards Isle-aux-Coudres

1	07 h 30 Regular Departures
2	08 h 30 Regular Departures
3	09 h 30 Regular Departures
4	10 h 00 Regular Departures
5	10 h 30 Regular Departures
6	11 h 00 Regular Departures
7	11 h 30 Regular Departures
8	12 h 00 Regular Departures
9	12 h 30 Regular Departures
10	13 h 00 Regular Departures
11	13 h 30 Regular Departures
12	14 h 00 Regular Departures
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17	16 h 30 Regular Departures
18	17 h 00 Regular Departures
19	17 h 30 Regular Departures
20	18 h 00 Regular Departures
21	18 h 30 Regular Departures
22	19 h 30 Regular Departures
23	20 h 30 Regular Departures
24	21 h 30 Regular Departures
25	22 h 30 Regular Departures
26	23 h 30

Departures on Sunday August 19, 2018 From Isle-aux-Coudres Towards St-Joseph-de-la-Rive

1	07 h 00 Regular Departures
2	08 h 00 Regular Departures
3	09 h 00 Regular Departures
4	09 h 30 Regular Departures
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7	11 h 00 Regular Departures
8	11 h 30 Regular Departures
9	12 h 00 Regular Departures
10	12 h 30 Regular Departures
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20	17 h 30 Regular Departures
21	18 h 00 Regular Departures
22	19 h 00 Regular Departures
23	20 h 00 Regular Departures
24	21 h 00 Regular Departures
25	22 h 00 Regular Departures
26	23 h 00

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jacques Mercier, President
at (418) 228-5426 (Saint -Georges)
or write to
studiocimai@gmail.com

Ferry Schedule for Isle-aux-Coudres
from St-Joseph-de-la-Rive:

Ferry Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive-Isle- aux-Coudres

Free Ferry Service.

Crossing time: 20 minutes.

Summer: Departures every 30 minutes
(between 9:30am and 6:30pm)

Departures every hour
(between 7:30am to 9:30am and
6:30pm to 11:30pm)

*It Will be a Pleasure to
See you There!*



Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord
560, rue Desbiens, Sainte-Madeleine (Québec) J0H 1S0

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province/State: _____

Postal (Zip) code: _____ Phone: _____

Email : _____

Member N°: _____ Number of adult(s) \$60* _____

**The package covers: 2-hour guided tour by bus, tastings (4) a social drink with the group, a raffle ticket as well as Sunday lunch, taxes and gratuities included.*

**GATHERING
OF THE MERCIERS IN
L'ÎLE-AUX-
COUDRES
ON AUGUST 19
2018**

COST : \$60 / ADULT

SUNDAY AUGUST 19, 2018



• I WILL TAKE PART IN THE GUIDED BUS TOUR ON:

YES No. of person(s) _____ NO

• I WILL ATTEND THE LUNCHEON:

YES No. of person(s) _____ NO



• MENU CHOICE:

(1) Poultry White in the Forest Forest

(2) Catch of the Day, Season Accompaniment



MEETING PLACES:

Place : Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres
Adress : 444, Chemin de la Baleine, L'Isle-aux-Coudres, Qc
Phone : (418) 438-2711



ACCOMMODATION

Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres

444, Chemin de la Baleine, L'Isle-aux- Coudres, Qc
Tél.: (418) 438-2711

Our gathering is set for one day, but because of the distance and the ferry schedule to reach the island, we have negotiated a special rate for the overnight stay on Saturday.

Accommodation Cost for Saturday Night per Person:
\$141 p.p. / double occupancy (plus taxes) includes:
-on the 18th: 4-course table d'hôte dinner
-on the 19th: full American style buffet breakfast

A block of 20 rooms is available for our group, but reservations must be made **before JULY 10, 2018**. You only need to mention that you are part of the group **FAMILLES MERCIER**.

L'Hôtel du Capitaine

3031, chemin des Coudriers
Isle-aux-Coudres G0A 2A0
Tél. 418-438-2242

Hôtel-Motel Les Voitures d'Eau

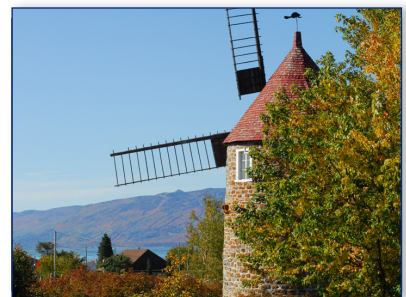
1933, chemin des Coudriers,
L'Isle-aux-Coudres G0A 1X0
Tél.: 1 800-463-2118

Auberge La Coudriere

2891 Chemin des coudriers,
G0A 2A0 L'Isle-aux-Coudres.
Tél. : (418) 438-2838

Auberge La Fascine

1064, chemin des Coudriers,
Isle-aux-Coudres
Tel : 418 438-1010



ISLE-AUX-COUDRES WAS DISCOVERED...

Source: tourismisleauxcoudres.com



... on September 6, 1535 by Jacques Cartier. Noticing the numerous Hazel trees (*Corylus cornuta*), called *coudriers* in French, a tree that produces a variety of hazelnuts, he named the island “Isle es Coudres” (modern spelling is: Isle-aux-Coudres).

It is on this island that the very first mass was celebrated in Canada, on September 7, 1535. History tells us that the first family that arrived on the island was that of Joseph Savard and his wife Marie-Josephte Morelle, around 1720.

The first inhabitants were able to find on their land and around the island almost everything they needed. The Islanders enjoyed community life. Today, there are some 1313 residents on the island.

Isle-aux-Coudres has become a tourist destination, thanks to its beautiful landscapes, its tranquillity, the invigorating air from the river, as well as the warm welcome from the residents. After the ferry service was established in 1930, the island became more accessible and the number of visitors increased, resulting in a well-structured network of lodging services being created: hotels, motels, inns, chalets, campsites, as well as bed and breakfasts. Craft shops offer a variety of traditionally made products by local craftsmen and women. As for food, all kinds of services are offered, from fast foods to fine cuisine.

However long you wish to stay for, a wide range of activities are available: bicycle rides, walking on the beach or in the orchards, hiking in the “*Sentier des Chouenneux*”, stargazing and bird watching, painting, tennis courts, bowling, picnics, playgrounds, treasure hunts, wild berry picking, weir fishing, guided boat tours, cruises, summer theatre, folk dance shows. You can also enjoy spas, beauty salons, etc..

You can also visit the *Moulins de l'Isle-aux-Coudres*, an ecomuseum, and *Les Voitures d'Eau*, also a museum, as well as the Observation Centre *Les Voitures d'Eau*, various churches and chapels, painting exhibitions, *Cidrerie Verger Pedneault*, an ecomuseum, the heritage circuit “*Mémoire du tour de l'isle*”, the patio bars, the bakery, the library, the Internet Centre...



Saint-Louis Church in 1923. The church was built in 1885 and the Saint-Pierre Chapel in 1837. One part of the village was destroyed by fire in 1958.

Memorial Cross in honour of the first mass at Isle-aux-Coudres on September 7, 1535, at the time of Jacques Cartier's second voyage.



8 GOOD REASONS TO VISIT ISLE-AUX-COUDRES

Tour the Island on a Bicycle

Isle-aux-Coudres is a magnificent place to discover while bicycling through Charlevoix! The bicycle path winding through the most spectacular scenes and views on the island offers a very full day of biking for the whole family. The *Sentier des Chouenneux* hiking path allows you to explore the island briefly.



La Cidrerie and the Apple Orchard Pedneault

In 1918, a government subsidy allowed the Pedneault family to plant the first 300 apple trees and other kinds of fruit trees on its ancestral land at Isle-aux-Coudres in Charlevoix. The year 1999 was a particularly important benchmark for the business, with the addition of a cellar, as well as a vinegar and cider production facility. In 2007, the owners of the business were proud to receive several awards at the *Festival de la gastronomie de Québec*.

This place is included in the guided tour



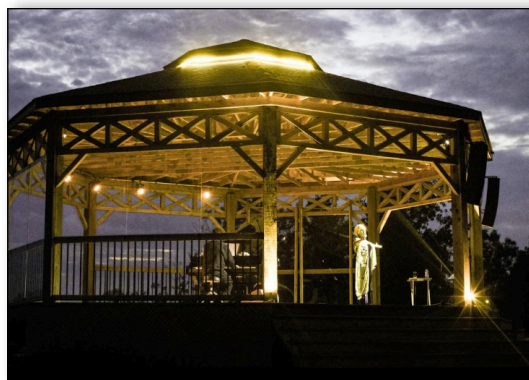
Kitesurfing or Paddle Boarding on the River

It is said that Isle-aux-Coudres is one of the best places for kitesurfing in Quebec! There is a kitesurfing school, where you can also rent water sport equipment of all kinds or even take outdoor yoga classes!



Enjoy Concerts at Havre musical de l'Islet

The *Havre musical de l'Islet* is located at the Southwestern end of Isle-Aux-Coudres, right by the river, with the mountains and the magnificent sunsets of Charlevoix as a backdrop. Every Sunday, the *Havre musical de l'Islet* offers an outdoor concert (for which only a voluntary contribution is required), at this enchanting site, with a magnificent sunset as a bonus!



Source: tourismeisleauxcoudres.com

Taste the Famous “Pâté croche” and Other Products from Boulangerie Bouchard

It is a specialty of the island. Ask a *Coudriolois* (a resident of the island) to tell you why this meat pie is nicknamed “pâté croche” (crooked pie)! And of course, you must try it! When you go into this artisan bakery you will discover an array of homemade regional products. The Boulangerie Bouchard is proud to be still serving its customers after almost 70 years!



See the Only Crooked House

The *Maison Croche* of Isle-aux-Coudres. Its architect is not Numérobis (from Astérix and Cléopâtre). This original site is listed in the world as a true monument to freedom and autonomy. The house is a testament to the will of a very sick man. It defies the present building code and it challenges our certainties. Behind this crooked façade is a man honoring the outer limits of design, like a King Bozo.



A Mandatory Stop at the Fabrique de l'Isle

A sure favorite! *La Fabrique de l'Isle* is a boutique café and art gallery with a patio in a warm and bright former presbytery. You can have a bite to eat, have a cup of excellent coffee and shop for local and other Quebec products! It's pure happiness in the sea air!



Visit the Mills of the Island

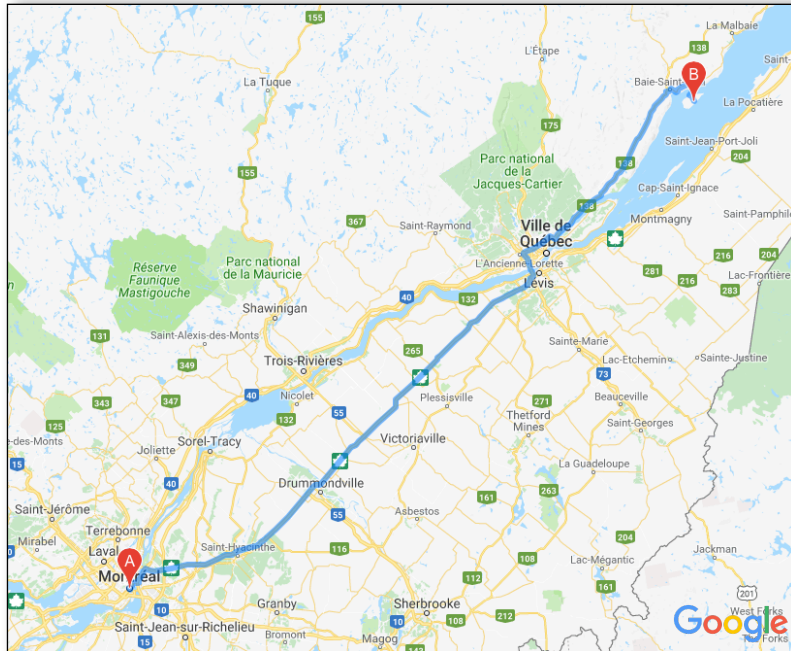
A windmill, a watermill, the miller's house and more... Two permanent exhibitions are presented in the reception building. The first one, “Hommage à l'ouvrage” (a tribute to work), displays the history of the island's traditions through folk art works by artist Alfred Desgagnés. The second one pays tribute to well-known filmmaker Pierre Perrault. Between 1963 and 1968, he shot three documentaries *Pour la suite du monde*, *Le Règne du jour*, and then *Les Voitures d'eau*: "La Trilogie de l'Île-aux-Coudres".



This place is included in the guided tour

Source: tourismeisleauxcoudres.com

HOW TO GET TO ISLE-AUX-COUDRES



From Montreal to Quebec City

-Take Exit 196S to Highway 40E/Highway 55S towards Trois-Rivières/Centre-Ville/Québec. (240km).

From Quebec City to Isle-aux-Coudres

-Take Highway 440E.

-Take Exit 15 towards Highway Robert-Bourassa N/Highway 740N

-Take Exit 9E to get to Highway 40E/Highway 73N towards Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré/Saguenay

-Get onto Highway 40E/Highway 440E

-Continue on Boulevard Sainte-Anne/QC-138E and take Exit Québec 362E towards Les Éboulements/L'Isle-aux-Coudres

-Continue on Route 362E and turn right onto Route du Port, and then onto Rang des Éboulements Centre

-Continue on Rue Félix Antoine and then bear slightly left on what becomes Chemin du Quai.

Arrival at the Ferry linking Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive with Isle-aux-Coudres at St-Bernard-sur-Mer.

Montreal/QuebecCity/Isle-aux-Coudres - about 4 hrs 30 min. (380km)



Quebec City/Baie-Saint-Paul/Les Éboulements/Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive - about 2 hrs 15 min. (140km)



ISLE-AUX-COUDRES FERRY

Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive/Isle-aux-Coudres

Free Ferry Service. Crossing Time: 20 minutes.

Summer: Departures every 30 minutes (from 9am to 6pm)

Departures every hour (from 7am to 9am and 6pm to 11:30pm)

Saint-Bernard-sur-Mer/Isle-aux-Coudres

-Drive North-East on Chemin des Coudriers towards Chemin de la Bourroche, bear slightly right onto Chemin de la Baleine.

***Hôtel Cap-aux-Pierres 444, Chemin de la Baleine,
L'Isle-aux-Coudres (about 7 minutes, once on the island)***

MAP AND INFORMATION



*Tour of the Island: 23.3 km - Area: 30 sq.km.
 To learn more, visit the Isle-aux-Coudres Tourism site:
<http://www.tourismeisleauxcoudres.com/carte/>*

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FEES - NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS [as of April 30, 2018]

Member no.	Name	City - Province/State	Fees	Donations	Expiry Date May 31
40	Madeleine Mercier	Montréal QC	65,00 \$		2020
87	Dorys Mercier	St-Augustin-de-Desmaures QC	65,00 \$		2020
149	Gilles Mercier	Québec QC	35,00 \$		2019
156	Napoléon Mercier	Dosquet QC	65,00 \$		2020
419	Armandine Mercier Bouchard	Saint-Henri-de-Lévis QC	35,00 \$		2019
578	Émilia Mercier	Gaspé QC	35,00 \$	20,00 \$	2019
704	Josette Mercier	Montmagny QC	35,00 \$		2019
706	Yves Mercier & Nicole Morin	Sainte-Sabine	40,00 \$		2019
861	Robert Mercier &	Îles-de-la-Madeleine QC	40,00 \$		2019
935	Joseph N. Mercier	Glendora, Californie USA	35,00 \$		2019
1252	Yvonne Nadeau	Windsor QC	35,00 \$		2019
1391	Jean-Charles Mercier & Réjeanne Létourneau	Saint-Hyacinthe QC	75,00 \$	25,00 \$	2020
1428	Roger Mercier	Québec QC	35,00 \$	5,00 \$	2019
1465	Diane Mercier Lécuyer (Paul Lécuyer)	Anjou QC	35,00 \$		2019
1523	André F. Mercier	Québec QC	65,00 \$		2020
1525	Nicole Mercier & Réal Lemyre	Sainte-Marthe-sur-le Lac QC	75,00 \$		2020
1606	Anne Mercier	Montréal QC	35,00 \$		2019
1614	Claude Dupuis & Annette Dupuis	Pabos Mills (Chandler) QC	40,00 \$		2019
1638	Patricia Hubbard	Thomaston, ME USA	35,00 \$		2019
1639	Odette St-André	Laval QC	65,00 \$		2020
1640	Anna Mercier	Mascouche QC	65,00 \$		2020

Thank you for your support!

LUDOVIC GERVAIS, ARTIST AND GLASS PAINTER AT ISLE-AUX-COUDRES

Ludovic Gervais was born in Montreal in 1983 and showed very early his interest in working in the arts.

He first learned forging, then wood carving and then stained glass. His talent as a painter was revealed during a drawing class with Paul Montpetit, in September 2001. Shadows and lights fascinated him, and the dripping technique allowed him to represent with emotion what he saw.

When he saw a pastel painting made by his professor, he was so impressed with it, that he decided to work mainly with this medium, although he still worked with watercolour as well as with acrylic. He moved to Isle-aux-Coudres with his parents in May 2002. He continued to work there and to hone his talent on his own while remaining in contact with his professor and other artists here and in France.

The landscapes of the region were an inexhaustible source of inspiration. He remained fascinated with the colours produced by the extraordinary light of Charlevoix, during any season, at night and also under the Northern Lights.

Through his paintings of landscapes, still lifes or portraits of young women, he loved to express what he was feeling: love and beauty in all of its shapes or forms.

He participated in the last “Rêves d'automne”, at *Festival de la peinture*, on Saint-Jean-Baptiste St., Baie-Saint-Paul, Charlevoix, where he appreciated contacts with the public which he continues to relish. The honorable mention he received at the national painting competition in 2003 for “Rêves d'automne” about the forces of nature, was for him the beginning of his young career as an artist.

Early in 2004, he created his own glass painting business, creating jewelry using fused glass, and then he started thermoforming and also blowing glass.

He learned how to blow glass at “Espace Verre” in Montreal.

Galleries where his works are exhibited

Galleries Yvan Desgagnés in Baie-Saint-Paul, Charlevoix
Galleries André Bouchard in l’Anse Saint-Jean, in the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean region

Poterie de La Vallée at L'Isle-aux-Coudres, 1938 chemin des Coudriers

Workshop: 2027, chemin des Coudriers, Isle-aux-Coudres G0A 1X0, Quebec, Canada

Telephone: (418) 438-1279

Email: lg@ludovic-arts.com



Source : Site de Ludovic Gervais - <http://www.ludovic-arts.com>

SISTER YVONNE MERCIER, PRISONER OF THE GERMANS

PART ONE



Going through the archives of the Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord gave us the opportunity to rediscover some very interesting documents such as the story of Sister Yvonne Mercier 1916-2009. The daughter of Émile Mercier and Lucie Dostie, she was part of the 9^e generation of the ancestral couple Julien et Marie Poulin and the line of Pierre and Marie Chamberland. As a member of the Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she was sent to France in 1934 by her community. During the Second World War, she was taken prisoner by the Germans. Here are her memoirs which she wrote in 1979, about what happened to her. Please note that some parts of the text have been omitted.

“I was born in Saint-Méthode de Beauce in April 1916 and I was the 7th of a family of 10 children. In 1920, the family moved near Lac Mégantic. Life was good and as they say, there is no story to tell about happy people. At the age of 16, I wanted to become a nun. A dear cousin of mine told me about the Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. On September 8, 1932, I entered the novitiate located on Bowen St. South in Sherbrooke.

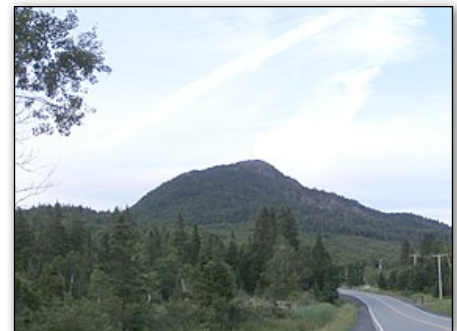
Before members of my family and the Church, I promised to consecrate my life to religion and to practise the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. I had finally become a nun and despite my 18 years, I was ready to work for my Congregation.

My superiors asked me to go and work in France, the country where the Congregation was first established. Eight of my sisters from the same novitiate made the same commitment and we left for France on September 1, 1934.

The Empress of Britain took us to Europe, which was quite unknown to us. We were at sea for five days and we all experienced the dreaded seasickness. On Thursday September 6, around 10am, we saw the land of France: Cherbourg, a seaport, and on the other side of the sea, England; we were in the English Channel (la Manche), an arm of the sea separating France from England.

The Empress of Britain was a transatlantic liner of the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company built between 1928 and 1931 by John Brown & Company. It sailed regularly between Canada and the United Kingdom from 1931 to 1939.

At the time, it was the largest, the fastest and the most luxurious ship to cross the Atlantic between the United Kingdom and the Dominion of Canada. Its maiden voyage from Southampton to Quebec City started on May 17, 1931. The ship was sunk on October 28, 1940 by the U-32, a German submarine.



Source: <https://fr.wikipedia.org>

Adstock is a Quebec town that is part of the Regional Municipality in the Chaudière-Appalaches region. It is the result of the February 14, 2001 merger of Saint-Méthode-de-Frontenac, the parish of Sacré-Cœur-de-Marie-Partie-Sud and Sainte-Anne-du-Lac.

Source: <https://fr.wikipedia.org>

At 5 pm, we boarded the train for Angers and then we got to La Salle-de-Vihiers, where the Mother House of our Congregation in France was located. I spent one month at the Mother House and then I received my assignment for Angers. I remained there for a total of 12 years. From 1934 to 1939, my activities were the usual ones for someone such as me. I looked after the young girls in the boarding school working to make their life happy. I remained a Canadian at heart but I adapted more and more to the French mentality and way of doing things. Come 1939, however, rumours of war were being heard and on September 3rd, war was declared. A feeling of sadness spread over the whole country. We saw soldiers leaving and regiments passing by. Requisitions of all kinds were made: those who owned a car had to give it up for transporting soldiers, those who owned horses, tractors and so on, also had to provide them all for the service of the army, which was allowed to claim everything in order to save the country.



Commune de la Salle-de-Vihiers



For six months, the soldiers were at the borders. The French and the Germans were facing each other. There were a few skirmishes, but nothing too violent. In June 1940, the Germans bombed France and advanced rapidly towards Paris, without sparing anything. Towns and villages were razed during their passage, adults as well as children were killed mercilessly. We were thinking that our turn would come soon and indeed it did come. Our adversaries were coming towards Angers. Day and night, the bombings continued. We slept in the cellars; everything was shaking, the sky was on fire and we started wondering which of the French or the Germans would end up killing us. When the French army decided to retreat, the Germans continued their advance in our direction. However, before leaving the city of Angers, where I was, the French blew up the bridges, and set fire to the oil tanks on the Maine river, which flowed behind

our convent. We were scared to death that the fire would spread to our convent, but once more, the Sacred-Heart was there to protect us. The fire raged on for two days and nights. The next day, the town was declared open and the enemy was able to come in - the town belonged to them. Around 4 pm, we saw the Germans in motorized columns driving around the town of Angers and thus taking possession of it.

We realized that we were now under German occupation - "under the German boot" - and we took courage in the hope that better days would come...

We spent six months in a state of constant alert and we were worried. We did not have enough food; the Germans reserved everything for their soldiers. The British then bombed the railway stations, the roads, the soldiers' barracks and us, so we got scared...

One morning around the end of November, we saw a notice posted: the Germans were ordering all foreign subjects to report to the German *Kommandantur*, threatening to shoot any foreign subject living in hiding and who was found.

My fellow Canadian companion, Sister Marie-Ernest, and I, went to report our presence. Following a prolonged interrogation to determine the truth about our nationality, they freed us and sent us back to our Convent.

Eight days later, at 3 in the morning, three German policemen showed up at our convent and demanded to see Miss Mercier and Miss Turcotte. There was no mistake, they meant us. They gave us documents stating that we were under arrest and that a car would come to take us to a concentration camp. The following afternoon, a car carrying German policemen arrived and we were driven to some soldiers' barracks. We were still in Angers, guarded by Germans with a revolver pointed at us. I leave out the details about our departure from the convent and the anguished moments endured by our fellow sisters and ourselves, since you can undoubtedly guess how it was...

In the evening of December 8, German officers came to warn us that we would be leaving the next day for an undisclosed destination. There were about fifty of us to leave: Canadian, English, Irish, among whom were several nuns. It was really an agonizing night... We were all assigned a number based on the alphabetical order of our names. At 5am, our officers arrived and did a roll call. Nobody was missing. We were loaded into trucks and driven towards the railway station. There was a train ready and we were forced aboard train cars with other foreigners. I suddenly noticed that I had lost my companion, Sister Marie-Ernest; I discovered that she was at the back of the train and I hurried to join her, which did not please the Germans at all, thinking that I was trying to escape. Three of them rushed toward me, and I got quite upset and close to tears; I explained to them that she was my companion. They let themselves be moved and allowed me get in the same car that she was in.



Source: <https://fr.wikipedia.org>

German guard: armed soldier guarding a military post. In a place occupied by the army, a soldier stands guard.



Source: <https://fr.wikipedia.org>

Besançon is a town in eastern France, close to the Swiss border. The historical centre is encircled by the meander of the horseshoe shaped Doubs river, and dominated by the Besançon Citadel, built on top of a hill. This 17th century fortress houses several museums and a zoo. At the foot of the hill, the Besançon Cathedral contains a unique astronomical clock with 70 dials indicating the time of sunrise and sunset, as well as the tides in French ports and even eclipses.

One German guard was watching us. It was humid and cold, and we feared our feet would freeze... The train kept speeding along; at night, we were provided with a little more heat and we were grateful for that. We prayed and we sang all the hymns that we knew. Our trip lasted two days and two nights. Our only food was a loaf of bread and some cheese. We kept on rolling.

Before the last night on the train, we had the chance to speak with an employee of the Dijon station. He told us that he had not been ordered to welcome us and that it probably meant we were on our way to Germany. The train started again and we were travelling towards the unknown. The train seemed to be extraordinarily long. We took on a great number of passengers, prisoners like us, throughout the trip. We continued along on our way and around midnight, the train stopped in the middle of nowhere, or so it seemed. We wondered if we were still in France... Oh surprise!

To be continued in the next Le Mercien.



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REMINDER

- ★ **May 2018 - Annual Membership Renewal, May 31st, 2018.**
- ★ **July 2018 - Le Mercien - Summer Vol. 34 no. 2**
- ★ **August 2018 - Gathering in Thetford Mines in l'Isle-aux-Coudres August 19, 2018**

Until next time!



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for your
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Published by *the Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord*
Canada Post - Convention 43407517 of the Publications Mail Post Office

Please return undeliverable mail to:
Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord
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**HAPPY
MOTHER'S DAY**

