

33rd Family Gathering 1999

September 5th, 1999
Kamouraska, QC

The 33rd meeting of the Ouellets-tes , a cheerful day narrated by Jeannine Ouellet (#2168) President

Following this wonderful day held at Kamouraska , the members of the Administrative Council of the Association of the Ouellet-tes of America sincerely thank all the population of Kamouraska for its support, efficient collaboration, and participation at the festivities. We offer special thanks to Mrs Michaud -Bossé who was with us all day.

Approximately one hundred persons from various regions of Québec, New-Brunswick and Maine were present at the 33 rd meeting.of the Association. Among them young David 12 years old and Pascal 15 years old , both nephews and god-child of the President Jeannine Ouellet. and Marie Suchet ; 96 years old from the Montréal region Also attending were Monette Ouellet and Emile Briand from La Pocatière who celebrated their 60 th wedding anniversary this year..

Again the sun was with us in all of its splendor. The day unfolded without a glitch under the Honorary Presidency of Ernest Ouellet former mayor Of Saint-Pascal-de-Kamouraska and ex-President of the Association. .

The opening session took place at the Community Center situated south of the church in Kamouraska., at 9am.

At 10am a Mass giving thanks and honouring the ancestors was celebrated at the Church by the parish priest.

Upon returning to the Center an honorary glass of wine was served. Then to our surprise we received a visit from Seigneur Aubert de La Chesnaye and his spouse. They presented a plaque with the text of the concession of the land to Mathurin Rene Ouellet in 1695. Mr. Guy Drapeau, Director of the former Courthouse, , played the role of the Seigneur magnificently. Our pastoral animator Father Gerald Ouellette, curate of the Saint-Joseph de Granby parish, made us sing the "Benidicite" with his known jovial spirit.

During the royal buffet the President Jeannine Ouellette recalled a few historical facts about Kamouraska: it is early at the end of the 17 th century that the name Kamouraska entered in Quebec history with the concession in 1674 of the Seigneurie des Kamouraska to Olivier Morel de la Durantaye, a nobleman who arrived in the colony in 1655 and was commandant of one of the six marine troupe companies in Quebec. He was at that time the owner and manager of the Durantaye Seigneurie situated between the Beaumont and Bellechasse seigneuries. Many different ways of writing Kamouraska were used such as Camouraska, Cap Mouraska, Kamourascheka.

In 1681 there was only one person who lived in Kamouraska, not a certified colonist since the land survey had not been established possibly a fisherman, a hunter, a smuggler or who knows, the first tourist to arrive.

In 1703 there are some twenty families of the 33 colonists who have received their lands from Seigneur Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye. The name Kamouraska meant "il y a du jonc au bord de l'eau" – there is wicker near the water. It became a religious parish in 1709. The first and second churches were erected in that historical area called "Le berceau". In 1791 a church will

be erected on that actual piece of land.

From 1694 to 1712 thirty-six concessions were granted. Mathurin Rene Houellet , living in Riviere Ouellet is the third to acquire land situated on the southwest corner of the last stream of Camouraska on February 18th 1695 , the same day as his neighbour, Mathurin Dube.

In 1713 Intendant Begon requested Mathurin Houellet to pay the rent of his pew at church or face the loss of it. Mathurin is thought to have died between August 1st 1717 and February 7th, 1719. In 1723 his son, Augustin, was living on the second piece of land (six acres east of the road leading towards the village of Saint-Germain).

The same year Mathurin's widow owned a piece of land of twelve acres. Her third neighbour to the west is her son Francois, who owns land of five and a half acres.

Therese Mignot (dit Chatillon),, second wife of Rene Houellet, was buried on December 5th, 1728 in Kamouraska. In 1733 of 50 families here, six are Ouellets. They are from Francois, Alexis, Jean, Augustin, Joseph and and a second Francois. Unfortunately due to the loss of the first Death Registers, the earliest Act is dated July 8th, 1727. From 1732 and 1984 (252 years) one hundred and seventy-nine marriages were celebrated of a man named Ouellet and one hundred and sixty-six marriages of a woman named Ouellet. Ten marriages united two persons named Ouellet. Nine generations of Ouellets have resided in Kamouraska. Seven members of the Ouellet family became church wardens from 1723 to 1887. Some Ouellets still live in Kamouraska. In 1813 land surveyor Joseph Bouchette declares Kamouraska to be "a renowned part of the province for its healthy climate". Sixty years later journalist, Arthur Buies, declares that " to go to salted water means to go to Kamouraska ." Kamouraska celebrated this year its 325th year as a "seigneurie".

Florent Ouellet, from Lévis, responsible for the « Club des 100, » gave honorary certificates to three new members of the club. These are: Adrien from Saint-Mathieu (#468), Yvon from Hull (#2610) and Ferdinand from Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies (#1881). Since its inception the following have become members : Monique (#2491), Rose-de-Lima (#1301), Thérèse (#898), Gérald (#2432), Réjean (#1870), Rosaire (#1315), Roger (#999), Ernest (#819), Raoul (#159), Alphonse (#1652), Richard (#2567), Roger (#2577) and myself, , Jeannine (#2168). Thank you very much for your generosity and sincere congratulations for your membership in the "Club des 100."

A moment of much anticipation from our Association finally happened today: the launch of our first dictionary. Richard Ouellet from Montreal, author of the Dictionary

"Ouellet/Ouellette/Ouellon/and Willet presented the fruit of his work in collaboration with Richard Ouellet (#2567) from St-Elie d'Orford. The information was collected from various books and historical references. There are 59,970 names listed in that dictionary.

Towards the end of the meal a draw for various prizes created some anticipation from the attendants. The following were elected to the Administrative Council during the Annual General Meeting : Victoire Ouellet-Fortier, from Saint-Romain, Alphonse Ouellet, Director General from Lévis, Richard Ouellette, from Saint-Élie d'Orford, Florent Ouellet, from Lévis, and Ferdinand Ouellet, from Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies. All were previous members of the Council other than the last one mentioned. The following were elected last year: Jeannine Ouellet, from Rivière-du-Loup, Gisèle Ouellet, from La Pocatière, Micheline Larose-Ouellet, from Montreal North and , Gérald Ouellette, from Beloeil. Sincere congratulations to the administrators of the Association. During the visit of the « Seigneurie » which included seven parishes more than 80 Ouellet-tes were able to admire the beauty that is Kamouraska.

This memorable day will be inscribed in the annals of the Association of Ouellet-te of America. No doubt that the memory of this day will stay with the participants for a long time.