



THE FRIGONS

QUARTERLY FAMILY NEWSLETTER OF THE
FRIGONS, FRIGONES, FREGOS, FREGOES, FREGONS, FREGONES

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SPRING 2002



TO BETTER KNOW ONE ANOTHER Brother Prosper Frigon, S.C.

Louise Frigon, C. N. D. (32)

Among the honourable descendants of Marie-Claude Chamois and François Frigon, we find Brother Prosper Frigon, a member of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Rosemere, whose remarkable and humble story merits being told.

For many reasons, but especially because of his 90 years of age, we feel the need to learn more about the past of this humble, discreet, and quiet person. Born in Sainte-Geneviève-de-Batiscan on August 5, 1911, he was the eleventh of the sixteen children of Marie-Anne Pronovost and François-Xavier-Philippe Frigon. In tracing his genealogy, we learn that he is a descendant of Jean-François, Antoine-Pierre, Louis-Augustin,



Augustin, Louis-Elzéar, and Philippe Frigon; a lineage first found in Batiscan until about 1711, then permanently established in Sainte-Geneviève-de-Batiscan.

I had a stimulating conversation with my dear uncle on his 90th birthday, while reviewing with him the highlights of his life story. His memory fails him at times, dates have faded away, and events are tinted with imprecision. Nevertheless, Brother Prosper speaks of his long teaching career with great enthusiasm. It is to children at the primary school level that he has dedicated his talents, his unshakeable faith, health, and love of nature.

"Faire l'école" (teaching) led him to the Jean-Baptiste Meilleur and Saint-Victor Schools in Montreal. He also taught in Saint-Hyacinthe, Sainte-Agathe, Saint-Gabriel-de-Brandon, Rosemere, and Brownsburg, ending his career in Rouyn. Having visited him regularly in the effervescent sanctuary of his classroom, I was able to observe the mystical and deeply spiritual dimension of his life: he interpreted the messages of the God of Life that are found in people, things, animals, and plants. In his classroom, there were cages with magnificent birds, aquariums with dazzling fish, and a variety of beautiful plants. Everything in this exceptional setting had a name. During his teaching years, he was a member of the founding-team of the *Camp-Bout-en-Train*, in Chertsey. Every summer, he was there to organize the children's group activities in that beautiful

GENEALOGICAL SKETCH (Prosper Emile Frigon)

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François and Marie-Claude Chamois
|
Jean-François and Gertrude Perrot
|
Antoine Pierre and M.-Anne Trottier
|
Louis Augustin and Marie Lefebvre
|
Augustin and Marie Brousseau
|
Louis Elzéar and Éléonore Massicotte
|
Philippe F.X. and M.-Anne Pronovost
|
Prosper Émile Frigon

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François-Xavier-Philippe Frigon
and Marie-Anne Pronovost.

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Gérald Frigon (116)

Many men have become aware of their place in nature during the course of their lives. In this issue of our newsletter, we read about the relationship that a few Frigons have been able to develop with their natural environment. As a teacher and as an individual, Brother Prosper expanded this kind of awareness and his knowledge of plants and animals that he shared with those around him. Through nature, he came to understand man and his place in the world.

Hunting parties help man to learn about his environment while getting better acquainted with the people who share the event with him. They provide short, symbiotic experiences with nature that give us a hint of that which the voyageurs may have experienced during their trading trips three centuries ago.

Nature is there to help us live. We are becoming less and less solitary in this environment and we must share it with others. Our annual reunion on August 24th, 2002 will give us another excellent opportunity to share the bonds of friendship. Please keep this date in mind and, until then, happy reading!

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natural setting that was so ideal for that purpose. At the age of 70, he was still animating "brico-plâtre" workshops (moulded plaster). I am told that another member of the Frigon family, François (25) was 11 years old at that time, and still cherishes the memories of Brother Prosper and this activity that he loved.

Even today, at the age of 90, he moves cheerfully amidst the youth of the 2000's whom he meets each day in the corridors at the *Collège de Rosemère Residence* where he lives, looking at them admiringly and without a shadow of prejudice. He is happy and confident, for he believes that education must retain its strength and conviction of love.

In the Frigon lineage, Brother Prosper is the personification of all those who have been motivated by love for youth, education, and faith in the God of Life.

May the spirit of Brother Prosper live on in future generations!

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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XIV

The Fur-Trade, a profitable Occupation?

A comparison with other trades

We know that the *congé* (trading permit) purchased by the Associates Frigon/Desrosiers had been signed by the Governor of Louisiana, Cavelier de Lasalle. In a previous article, it was mentioned that the voyage of 1686-1687 perhaps had not taken place, because of Governor General Denonville's suspension of all trading permits that had been signed by anyone other than himself. However, it seems that François Frigon (actually) was in Illinois in the autumn of 1686. In November, Notary Genaple wrote in the attestation that Anne Gasnier¹ sent to Marie-Claude Chamois in Paris: "...*that she said and declared that, at the request made to her in a letter from François Frigon, an inhabitant of Batiscan presently on a voyage to the land of the Illinois (Indian tribe), dated last September first and twenty-fourth...*" (Notary François Genaple, November 5, 1686).

As a fur trader, François Frigon could have earned about 700 *livres* in 1686-1687. Let us compare this revenue with that of other occupations.

Administrative Functions

On May 18, 1701, after more than 39 years of service, Olivier Morel de la Durantaye, an officer who was a pillar in the defence of French interests in the Great Lakes region during the difficult years at the end of the 17th century, received an annual pension of 600 *livres* from King Louis XIV. It had taken him two years to obtain this pension.⁽²⁾

In another instance, Monsignor de Laval demanded a tithe of 600 *livres* from the Governor for the parish priests. He succeeded to get five hundred: "*In spite of Colbert's opinion that the priests in France were satisfied with two hundred livres, in October 1678 Frontenac and Duchesneau agree with Monsignor de Laval, upon a tithe of five hundred livres, given*

that the cost of living is higher than in France."⁽³⁾

The salary of the Governor-General of New-France was 40,000 *livres*, of which 12,000 were for his position as Governor. The remainder came from diverse sources: 3,000 *livres* as head of the Government of Quebec; 6,000 *livres* as a bonus from the *Company of the Indies*; 4,000 *livres* in revenue from the canteen. Thus equipped with 40,000 *livres* per year, it was hoped that he would not be tempted to indulge in commerce, which incidentally, was absolutely prohibited for him. The Intendant received about 22,000 *livres*, of which 12,000 were for the position of Intendant and 4,500 *livres* as a bonus from the Company of the Indies. The Governor of Trois-Rivières received only 4,300 *livres*. The civil servants who received 1,000 *livres* or more were rare. The King's Chief-Prosecutor was paid only 250 *livres* per year. The executioner was paid 330 *livres*! It is quite understandable that the civil servants would have been accused of neglecting their duties, and of cheating and speculating.⁽⁴⁾

With regards to the lesser nobility: "*For those who belong to the navy, these salaries, 1,080 livres for a captain and two or three times this amount for the staff, keep them afloat, but there is none left to accumulate.*"⁽⁵⁾

The Trades

"*Two butchers leave 3,000 to 5,000 livres, 'eaten away' in great part by debts. We have only one inventory of a baker who was down and out when he died. Undoubtedly, it is possible to fare better (than this), but at this time one does not become rich through these trades.*" ... "*The tannery is one of the rare viable industries in Montreal.*"⁽⁶⁾

"...*As a rule these metal-working trades are solid,*

(Continued on page 76)

1 - Widow of Jean Bourdon, *Seigneur* of Saint-François and Chief Prosecutor for the Sovereign Council.

2 - Jean-Paul Morel de la Durantaye, *Olivier Morel de la Durantaye, officier et seigneur de la Nouvelle-France*, Les éditions du Septentrion, Quebec, 1997, p. 71.

3 - Gustave Lanctot, *Histoire du Canada, du régime royal au traité d'Utrecht, 1663-1713*, Librairie Beauchemin, 1963, p. 120.

4 - Marcel Trudel, *Initiation à la Nouvelle-France*, Les Éditions HRW, Montreal, 1971, pp. 163, 165 and 169.

5 - Louise Dechêne, *Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVIIe siècle.*, essai, Boréal, 1988, p. 385

6 - Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 394.

(Continued from page 75)

especially that of gunsmith."... "Two blacksmiths who died at the age of 30 already had clear assets of 4,000 and 5,000 livres, the amount that it usually takes a settler a whole lifetime to accumulate." ... "It is quite different in the building trades. The majority of the small, semi-rural carpenters and masons on the market in the 17th century live poorly." ⁽⁷⁾

"Half of the rural folk (of Montreal) leave a fortune varying between 1,000 and 3,000 livres.... The farmer's fortune consists first of all of his land, 30 or 40 acres of cultivated fields and meadows, which account for 50% of the value of the inventory. Then follows the house, again very basic and small, measuring about 18 by 20 feet,..." ⁽⁸⁾

A certain Pierre Pigeon, after working his land for sixteen long years, left 1,200 livres as a legacy, "barely more than that which two years of trading brought him a short time ago." ⁽⁹⁾

And what were the annual wages of the *engagés* (hired hands) that communities and private individuals had sent for from France? For the most part, their occupations were at a subsistence level of pay. The period covered: 1662 to 1714, from notarized documents collected by Jean Hamelin.⁽¹⁰⁾ Salaries vary according to the experience and the skills of the person.

Ploughmen	50 l., 75 l., 80 l.
Men servants	50 l., 60 l., 90 l., 140 l.
Flour merchants	170 l.
Bakers	100 l. 150 l.
Millers	100 l.
Gunsmiths	100 l., 160 l., 200 l., 300l.
Edge-tool makers	100 l.
Carpenters	150 l.
Coopers	120 l., 150 l.

Non-tradesmen

"Below these categories, we find the small fringe group of those having no trades, who have given up clearing the land or who simply never wanted to do so. When they serve the masons and carpenters, it seems that they receive thirty sols per day and a meal. These are fabulous wages by any standards, but they have no significance." "It is true that the workers' salaries are high, writes the Intendant (Champigny, November 4, 1693), but at the same time, it is necessary to take into consideration that they can work only five months a year because of the harshness of the winter, and that during this time they must earn enough to subsist during the seven other months." "...The workday at thirty sols applies only to short term jobs; when an artisan needs a helper for the season, he pays him monthly wages ranging between twelve and fifteen livres. When buying bread from the baker, one must count on four sols per day for a quantity equivalent to a soldier's ration, that is a minimum of 50 livres to feed one person during the months of inactivity. Add to this the rental of a heated room, between 50 and 70 livres per year, and there is nothing left. When there comes a year with big expenses, the labourer is not able to survive."⁽¹¹⁾ "After eight years of work, a settler should have gotten beyond this stage, but there is always the possibility of bad luck, disability and often fruitless roaming in the Outaouais Region."⁽¹²⁾

During a man-power shortage, "...in April (1685), De Meulles allowed the soldiers to sell their services for ten or twelve livres per month, or to work at their trades by the day, at the rate of one livre and three sous per day, meals included,"⁽¹³⁾ that is at 120 to 144 livres per year if they worked as non-specialized labourers.

Therefore, in general, "ordinary" folks earned between 100 and 150 livres per year and could leave very little to their heirs.

(Continued on page 77)

7- Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 395.

8- Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 399.

9- Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 172.

10- Jean Hamelin, *Économie et société en Nouvelle-France*, PUL, 1960, p. 93.

11- Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 397.

12- Louise Dechêne, op. cit. p. 399.

13- Lanctot, op. cit. p. 129.

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Why furs ?

These facts clearly show that fur trading was one of the best-paid occupations. However, we also know that it was the riskiest. A few years of indebtedness to a merchant and everything could collapse. However, the principal explanation for fur trading's appeal to youth is that the colony offered hardly any other economic option. "Agriculture, the main industry of a young nation, seems indeed to have met with nothing but indifference on the part of the following Governors: Lauzon, d'Argenson, d'Avaugour, Mésy, Courcelle, Frontenac, La Barre, Denonville, Callière and Vaudreuil, from 1651 to 1725."⁽¹⁴⁾ There was the same indifference towards industry: the king himself had ordered that the products of the colonies should not compete with those of the motherland. Constant prodding to develop "factories for wool, for leather, and generally for that which they need, and even for that which can be exported," and encouragement regarding potash production, that it "should be

maintained and increased"⁽¹⁵⁾ were done strictly in this spirit.

It is a vicious circle. The market within the country is minuscule ⁽¹⁶⁾ and the export of manufactured goods toward France is rigorously controlled. Furthermore, qualified labour is at a premium in the colony. Consequently, industry does not develop. There are not as yet towns important enough ⁽¹⁷⁾ to guarantee a good market for agriculture; and the exportation of agricultural products is tightly controlled.⁽¹⁸⁾ As a result, agriculture only serves the purpose of feeding the producers themselves. The only real source of income lies in furs. The lure of gain alone then does not explain the phenomenon of the fur-traders.

In the next article, we will see that in 1686-1687 the fur-trade was strictly controlled. Freedom was less important than it might seem to those who, like François Frigon dit Lespagnol, did not enjoy the favours and the benevolent complicity of the authorities, as did certain big wheeler-dealers.

14- Gérard Malchelosse, *Cahiers des Dix, Cahier, 6, 1941*, p. 109.

15- Émile Salone, *La colonisation de la Nouvelle-France*, Boréale, 1970, p. 247, note 5.

16- The 1685 Census lists 10 725 inhabitants in the colony. Émile Salone, p. 241.

17- The 1685 Census lists Batiscan as having 261 inhabitants; Sainte-Anne 114, Trois-Rivières and Champlain 272 each; Quebec 1205 and the surrounding area 292.

In 1683, the population of Montreal was: " 647 in the parish of Villemarie, 314 at la Chine and the top of the island, 427 at Pointe-au-Tremble and on île Sainte-Thérèse." For a total of plus or minus 1388 habitants. Émile Salone, op. cit. pp. 241 to 245.

18-Gérard Malchelosse, op. cit. p. 123: " The farmer offered the merchant neither *oats, wheat, hemp, nor flax, because these products were banned on the French market.*"

FAMILY NEWS

Georges E. Frigon (93)



Sincere condolences to our members, cousins and families who have lost a loved one:

Roch Frigon,	son of the late Pierre Clarence Frigon	died on February 14, 2000	in Edmonton, Alberta.
Jean-Charles Frigon,	husband of the late Angéline Vézina,	died on July 8, 2001	in Malartic, Quebec.
Josée Frigon,	wife of Yves J.-Louis Trudel,	died on August 27, 2001	in Ste-Anne de la Perade, Quebec.
Gaston Mélançon,	husband of Marguerite Frigon,	died on September 17, 2001	in Rosemere, Quebec.
Paul-Henri Rainville,	husband of Aldéa Frigon,	died on October 22, 2001	in Albanel, Quebec.
Dora Frigon,	wife of Joseph P. Manilowski,	died on November 8, 2001	in Westborough MA, USA.
Georgette Frigon,	wife of feu Noël Roberge,	died on January 18, 2002	in Charlesbourg, Quebec.
Laurette Mailhot,	wife of Georges Frigon,	died on January 29, 2002	in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec.
Cécile Frigon,	wife of David Hamelin,	died on January 31, 2002	in La Tuque, Quebec.
Jeanne Piché,	wife of Rolland Léo Frigon,	died on February 10, 2002	in Montreal., Quebec.
Jean-Pierre Frigon,	husband of Jeannette Gobeil,	died on March 10, 2002	in Sainte Anne de Bellevue, Quebec.
Denis Pierre Frigon,		died on March 23, 2002	in Prince George, British Columbia
Monique Frigon,	wife of Clément Massicotte,	died on March 26, 2002	in St-Prosper de Champlain, Quebec.
Richard Frigon,	husband of Louise Grandchamp,	died on March 27, 2002	in Laval, Quebec.
Victorin M. Frigon,	husband of Jeannette Gignac,	died on April 5, 2002	in La Tuque, Quebec.
Yvette Duperre,	wife of Leonard Frigon,	died on April 9, 2002	in West Springfield MA, USA.

A HUNTING TRIP WITH THE FRIGONS

during the 40's

- III -

Jean-Pierre Frigon (194)

THE CAMP, THE TERRITORY

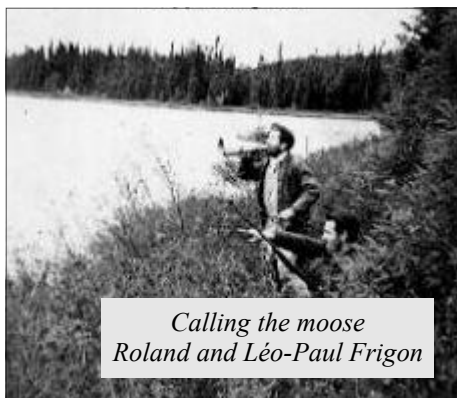
The camp was in fact just a rustic log cabin that had been roughly assembled. It consisted of two small rooms: a 10- by 12-foot kitchen with a double burner stove, a table and a few chairs; a 10- by 18-foot bedroom furnished with four bunk beds. Obviously, there was no electricity in that little cabin nestled deep in the woods. Water had to be fetched from the lake about 150 feet away. Finally, a dry toilet, in other words, an "outhouse," had been set up 75 feet behind the camp. Overall, the little camp provided very little comfort but it blended marvellously well with the forest setting.



The cabin was in the centre of the Caribou Club's hunting territory. "It was a nice little territory," as my father Roland would say. It did not cover a large area, but it had a half dozen small lakes. The largest one, Caribou Lake, was not very wide. However, it was at least a mile long. This territory was located at the junction of three valleys embedded in the rugged terrain. The valleys it seems were the natural pathways for the moose migrations. This is what made the Caribou Club such an excellent hunting territory.

THE HUNT

The hunt consisted in tracking down the animal, and luring him with a "call" to the place where he could best be shot. Then as well as today, moose hunting called for a good dose of patience. Even though they often came back empty handed, it was rare that they had not at least detected the presence of game at the Club.



*Calling the moose
Roland and Léo-Paul Frigon*

In the morning, the hunters separated into two groups. One portaged towards Guimond Lake. This way they were able to track the moose in that direction. The other went out on

Caribou Lake in canoes or boats and "called" the moose. Usually the latter method was the most effective.

Early in the morning, the hunters of the second group got into two boats. They paddled slowly, carefully observing the shores of the lake to detect the presence of game. By early afternoon they began to call, imitating the hoarse cry of the female moose. They called at fifteen-minute intervals, while continually moving on the water. After these preliminaries, they reached a small island at the far end of the lake. Standing on the shore, they called for nearly an hour. This was the strategic point of the territory. From that island, it was easier to watch the surrounding shores and to shoot than it would have been from a canoe or a boat. Many portages started from that point and led to different lakes. The whole strategy of the hunters consisted in patiently attracting moose to the vicinity of the island where it was easier to spot and shoot. They used to return to the camp for supper and, in the evening, a small group would return to the island for one last hour of calling.

When the hunters finally caught sight of an animal, there were moments of intense excitement. A dialogue took place between the hunter and the animal. The former, imitating the cry of the female, tried to lure the animal towards him into a deadly trap. He adapted his calls to the response of the animal. My father Roland still remembers one of those memorable hunts. Assisted by his brothers Charles and Paul, he had succeeded to attract a male almost close enough to kill him by the end of the day. Excitement ran high among the hunters. However, a real female moose joined the party and began to call, drawing the male in the opposite direction. The hunters were in desperate competition with the female. It was a lost cause: the responses of the male came from farther and farther away. They saw that all their efforts were to no avail.

When, after so much effort, the hunters succeeded to kill a moose, they experienced the most intense joy imaginable. Some released their primitive instincts by indulging in savage howling that resounded in the hills; others took out their bottle and generously "baptized" the event; still others religiously drank the first drops of blood of the victim; finally, others engaged in a kind of ritualistic dance. Few are those who can explain what happens to a man during the short lapse of time between the appearance of the animal in the line of sight and his collapse, mortally wounded. Man, it seems, finds within himself instincts that have been repressed up to that point. An animal instinct possesses him.

(Continued on page 79)

A HUNTING TRIP WITH THE FRIGONS during the 40's

79

(Continued from page 78)

The messy work followed the grand finale of the kill. They began by draining the blood of the moose, and then they opened and cleaned him out, neatly and methodically. Many could not stand this sight. Seeing the innards and smelling the foul odours upset their stomach. After removing and burying the entrails, they proceeded to cut the meat in quarters, which they then wrapped in cheesecloth. The men transported the quarters on their back for a long distance. They then loaded the quarters in the boats and returned to the camp singing an odd assortment of songs.



they baked all night in the oven and were eaten for breakfast. Peas soaked all night and simmered all morning with pork, so that there would be a thick soup with bread and cheese for dinner. Occasionally, a few trout caught during the day ended up in the frying pan for supper. Bacon, eggs, pancakes and preserves completed the menu. So

much for cholesterol!!!

In the evening, those who did not go to the little island for a last call remained at the camp. They prepared the next morning's breakfast, dressed the fish caught during the day and cleaned the firearms. During their free time, they played cards by the light of the lantern. This was also the time for lively discussions, vying with one another in recalling the events of the day, and planning their strategies for the following day.

The next article will deal with the trip home from hunting and a few anecdotes.

EATING WELL

To spend a pleasant two-week hunting trip, one had to eat well. Pork and beans, and pea soup were the mainstays of their diet. The beans were prepared the previous evening;



... august 24th , 2002 ...

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

... august 24th , 2002 ...

Register now for our 2002 Annual Reunion, which promises to be a memorable one! It's a date!

Morning

Between 8:30 and 10:00 : registration at the
Érablière de l'Artisan
396, rue Kallé Ouest, Brigham (Québec) J2K 4G5
<http://erabliereartisan.ca/>

Afternoon

Around 2:30, the reunion will move to the
Vignoble de La Bauge
155, rue des Érables, Brigham (Québec) J2K 4E1
<http://www.labauge.com/french.htm>

The Annual General Meeting and diner will take place here. Guided tour of the vineyard, exotic animals, banquet.

For more information :

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Photo taken in Rome on October 7, 2001 at the Beatification Ceremony of Mother Émilie Gamelin.

Pope John-Paul II received Sister Thérèse Frigon, archivist and historian, who worked forty-one years for this Cause.

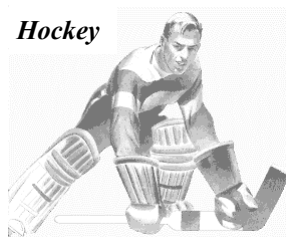
Were also present (from left to right): Sister Gloria Keylor, superior general; James M. FitzPatrick, O.M.I., postulator; and Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte of Montreal.



WHILE SURFING THE WEB...

Sports

Hockey

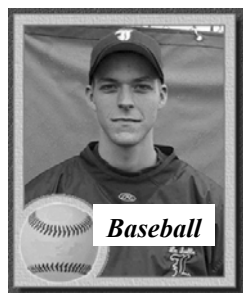


Are you interested in sports statistics? If so, here are a few concerning Peter *Fregoe*, *Louis*, *Marc*, *Réjean* and *Robert Frigon*. On the Web site <http://www.hockeydb.com/index.html> select "statistics by player" from the Quick Surf menu; enter Fregoe or Frigon in the "last name" slot; select a name and consult that person's data using "display player stats".

Lge = league GP = games played
 G = goals A = assists
 Pts = points PIM = penalties in minutes

hockeydb.com

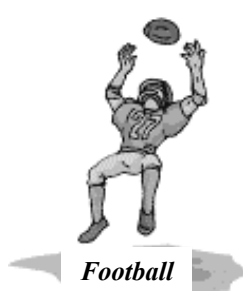
The Internet Hockey Database



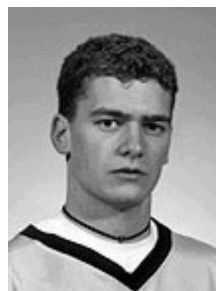
Baseball

Patrick Frigon, "of the LaSalle Cardinals celebrated his sixth victory of the season. Monday, July 2, 2001, *Patrick Frigon* joined Jason Lebrun, of the Montreal Elites, at the top of the list of pitchers having had the most wins this season. Both now have an identical record of six wins, no losses. This evening, *Frigon* led the LaSalle Cardinals to a 5-3 victory over the Quebec Diamants. The lanky Cardinals pitcher played six innings, allowing five hits and five walks. He allowed one homerun and struck out four batters." Jacques Lanciault.

<http://www.rds.ca/lbeq/chroniques/BASEBABASELI3B4121C6.html>



Football



Kyle Frigon; Born July 22, 1979. Student at the College of Arts and Letters, Notre Dame University, Indiana. Residence : Salem, MA. High School: The Loomis Chaffee School. Height/Weight: 5' 10" / 160 pounds. Position : midfield.

Participated in the Garden State Games for three consecutive years. Led Loomis Chaffee School in scoring as a senior (25 goals, 27 assists). Member of the team ranked fifth nationally by Power Ratings and 13th by Lacrosse Magazine in 1999. Led his team to two Founders League championships. Won two letters in lacrosse and two in hockey. Named to

the first-team all-New England. Six cousins have attended Notre Dame over the last decade. Attended Don Bosco Prep School in New Jersey for two years, where he earned all-state honours.

http://und.fansonly.com/sports/m-lacros/mtt/frigon_kyle00.html