



THE FRIGONS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIGON FAMILIES

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Photo: Honoré Boudreau, Raymonde Frigon's (96) husband

The group shown here on the staircase of the *Musée de la Pointe-à-Callières*, were part of some sixty Frigon cousins who attended the Annual General Meeting 1998-1999 on May 22, 1999 at the *musée* in Montreal.

In the next pages, some of the the meeting's events are highlighted, including an emotional meeting of cousins who had not seen each other in over fifty years (page 2), retirement of the Founding President and election of the new President (page 8) and Board of Directors including some new members (page 5).

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Our little cousin from the States

Georges E. Frigon (93)

Our Association's 1999 annual general meeting was for my brother Jean-Marie (134) and myself, a very special day. We had the pleasure of being in the midst of numerous cousins and discovering the *Musée de la Pointe-à-Callières*.

We were deep in discussion with cousins in the great reception area of the museum when a striking lady approached us, asking if I was Georges E. Frigon at work on the Association's family tree data base. She then asked right off if I was the son of Cora Cayer and Charles-Édouard Frigon, immediately adding I am Claudette Chevrette Naud your cousin from the States.

Ah yes, Jean-Marie and I, were face to face with a little cousin from the States that we had last seen in the early 40s when our American cousins came to visit Shawinigan. The noon meal was very pleasant and gave the occasion to exchange fond memories. Claudette informed us that she and her husband Guy Naud now live in Quebec.

Alphée Frigon and Délima Pronovost

	_____ Amanda Frigon b. 1874-02-01 and Alfred Vézina
	_____ Corinne Emma Vézina b. 1901-11-29 and Roland Joseph Chevrette
	_____ Claudette Amanda Chevrette b. 1931-10-13 and Guy Naud
	_____ Charles-Edouard Frigon b. 1890-05-12 and Cora Cayer
	_____ Jean-Marie Frigon b. 1919-04-23 and Carmen Simard
	_____ Georges E. Frigon b. 1934-03-02 and Françoise Béland



Gérald Frigon, our new President, is awarded the *prix Oriflamme (Oriflamme Award)**

Gérald Frigon receiving the *prix Oriflamme* from André l'Espérance, President, Dettson Inc of Sherbrooke, boiler and furnace manufacturers

The Oriflamme awards pay tribute to the best accomplishments in the natural gas field in Quebec. Two Oriflamme prizes are awarded annually to consulting engineers, one for technological innovation and the other for energy improvement or optimization of equipment.

In fall 1998, engineer Gérald Frigon, was awarded the Oriflamme prize for energy improvement or optimization of a project at Marie-Victorin CÉGEP college in Montreal. This project, in addition to much improvement in comfort, rehabilitation of electrical-mechanical systems and conversion 94% of electric to gas heating, allowed the college to reduce its energy consumption from 12,200,000 kWh/yr to 8,800,000 kWh/yr. This represents a reduction of 38.7% in annual energy costs. The economies thus effected allowed the financing of renovations in the college.

Engineer Gérald Frigon practised in industry, especially in the pulp and paper and oil sectors, during the first 27 years of his career. In the early 1980s, he was responsible for the conversion of the first thermal station in North American entirely controlled by microprocessors. Reduced investment in industry in Quebec forced engineer Frigon to re-orient his activities during the last 7-8 years towards the institutional and commercial fields. Award of the Oriflamme prize to engineer Frigon is a sign that though he has re-directed his field of activity, his objective of excellence still remains his constant objective and we congratulate him for it.

* The annual competition *Les prix Oriflamme* was established to promote innovation in the large gas industry in Quebec. More than a trophy award, the *Oriflamme* prizes recognize the dedication and effort going into projects utilizing and exploiting natural gas. A *prix Oriflamme* is an object of pride since it testifies to the quality and excellence of the accomplishment. Six *prix Oriflamme* are awarded annually: one among the developers and builders, two among the consulting engineers, one for technological innovation and the other for energy improvement or optimization of equipment, and three among entrepreneurs and installers.

Raymond Frigon, our pioneer!*

Pierre Frigon (4)

Raymond(1) is the founding president of the Association of Frigon Families. At the last Annual General Meeting of the Association, held on May 22, 1999 in Montreal, he resigned as president after 5 years of constant involvement. He is the passionate soul and leader who helped us create a dynamic and structured association. An overview of the Association's history will help trace the path followed because of this pioneer's research into the origins of another pioneer, François Frigon.

The first evidence of Raymond's interest in the origins of François Frigon go back to 1967: a letter to *Monsieur Poule* of the *École Nationale des Chartes*, in Paris. This research brought about the hypothesis that Frigon may come from *fragon*, *fregon*, *frigon* (*petit houx*, a medicinal plant)¹. This indicates that his interest in François Frigon dates to some time back!

At the beginning of the 1980s, with others, he undertook a systematic research by writing the archives of a number of French *départements*. A possible encouragin at the *mairie* of Boutigny-sur-Essonne, near Paris, turned into a disappointment: Charles Frigon, after consultations with handwriting experts, becomes Charles Begon.

At the time, at least four persons were interested in the origins of François Frigon and in his wife Marie-Claude Chamois: Raymoond, Robert(2), Luc (3) and Pierre (4).

The 8,9,10 of October, 1993, at the 50th Anniversary Convention of the *Société généalogique canadienne-française*, in Montreal, Raymond and Pierre meet for the first time. They discuss the importance of joining forces to avoid duplication of research and especially to set-up a legally-constituted organization for membership recruitment.. Raymond, Robert, Luc and Pierre meet later and the idea of an association is firmly established.

Raymond takes steps to incorporate an association. Its charter is granted on April 8, 1994.

On May 7, 1994, at the Queen Elizabeth in Montreal, Raymond, Robert, Luc and Pierre become the first members of the board of directors of the Association: Raymond, president; Robert, vice-president; Luc, treasurer; Pierre, secretary.

On September 17, 1994, in Montreal, Louis-Georges (10) and Jean-René (11) are present at a Board meeting. They undertake to help run a membership campaign. Jean-René agrees to select suitable genealogy software and manage its contents; Raymond to produce the first newsletter, Robert to supply articles. The Association was really born that day!

During that year, research was undertaken, meetings were held regularly and membership increased

*Translation RF

August 31 and September 1st , 1996, a great family reunion, picnic-style, took place in Batiscan

Today, the Association is increasingly active, with a membership of over 130 in Canada and the United States. The newsletter has been published without interruption. The *plaidoyer* given at Marie-Claude's trial has been published. The family tree has been computerized and contains more and more names. Our financial resources are slim but enough to organize family reunions. It will be possible to eventually erect a monument on the ancestral land to commemorate François and Marie-Claude, or to implement projects to further our knowledge of the pioneer founders of the Frigon families.

Thank you, Raymond, for the road followed.!

1. See articles by Pierre Frigon (4) in newsletters Vol 2 no 1 and Vol 2 no 3

Original mission accomplished!

Raymond Frigon (1)

Pierre's good words above come as the original mission of the four founders - Robert, Luc, Pierre and I, comes to an end. Without this mixture of talents, the Association and its newsletter *Les Frigon / The Frigons* would not have survived. And, it has to be said, on the administrative side, Pierre was able to put to good use his remarkable abilities as *corporate* secretary, for the greater benefit of the board of director, and especially the president! Having said this, we must carry forward to assure a "dynamic and structured Association, the mission must persist, good times bad times.

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTED MAY 22, 1999

Executive Committee

President: Gérald Frigon, Laval, Québec

Vice-Président: Robert Frigon, Charny, Québec

Secretary: Louise Frigon, Ste-Anne-de-la-Pérade

Treasurer: Pierre Frigon, St-Hubert, Québec

Founding President : Raymond Frigon, Ottawa, Ontario

Members at large

Claudette Frigon*, Longueuil, Québec - **Claudette Chevette Naud***, Longueuil, Québec -
 Georges E. Frigon, St-Boniface, Québec - Ivanhoë Frigon III, Rock Forest, Québec -
 Jean-René Frigon, Trois-Rivières, Québec - **Jean-Claude Frigon***, Montréal, Québec -
 Paul Frigon, Cornwall, Ontario - **Thérèse Frigon***, Montréal, Québec

*New member of the board

LIGHT ON THE PAST - X.*

Robert Frigon (2)

In preceding articles, we began telling what we know of the destinies of the children of our ancestor, François Frigon. First there was Jean-François and his two spouses, Madeleine Moreau and Gertrude Perrot; then Madeleine, the wife of Jean Prime; the little Louise-Françoise, who died at an early age, and the sickly Antoine, who died in 1712. Two other children of Marie-Claude Chamois, François and Jeanne will occupy our thoughts.

Françoise Frigon, entered in the baptismal registry of Champlain but actually baptized in Batiscan under the name of Marie-Françoise on March 30, 1681, born the previous day, had as godfather, **Pierre Comptant** (Coutance) and as godmother, **Marie-Chatou-Lagarde**, a "Fille-du-Roy" (protegee of the king) who had arrived around 1666. On February 8, 1700, in Batiscan, she espoused the fur-trader **Joseph Moreau**, son of **Jean Moreau** and **Anne Guillet**. It was a double ceremony. On the same day, Jean-François Frigon married **Madeleine Moreau**. The nuptial blessing was given by Laurent Vallier, a missionary.

Jean Moreau, called Laporte, originally from Saintes, in Saint-Onge, espoused, in 1667, **Anne Guillet**, the daughter of **Pierre Guillet**. Batiscan was opened to colonization in 1666, leading to the grouping of the pioneers of the north bank of the Saint-Lawrence, east of Trois-Rivières. The **Gilletts**, the **Moreaus**, the **Rouillards**, the **Trottiers** settled there and, within a few months, all the river lots had been granted, after a bit of pressure had been put on the **Jesuit Fathers** who had reserved this territory for the **Attikamègues**. The brothers **Nicolas** and **Robert Rivard** also arrived and, with the notary **François Trottain**, the new community found itself quite well served with notables and leaders.

But they did not all open new land. The census of 1681 is quite revealing on this matter. Fifteen years of intensive colonization sufficed to identify the true settler, one who should clear an average of one "arpent" of land per year and the simple renter who contented himself with a pasture for his cattle and a garden to grow his vegetables.

In 1681, only a few settlers could claim to have more than twenty "arpents" in value: François Fafard, Jacques Marchand, Anthoine Trottier, Nicolas Rivard, Pierre Comptant, Robert Rivard, Jean Baril and Noël Jérémie were the most productive cultivators of Batiscan. Of the fifty or so little thatch-roofed homes which constituted the village, some harbored a gunsmith, like François Moreau who was later replaced by Laurent Brunsard, or a cask-maker like Antoine Roy, or again a surgeon such as Félix Thunay, or two cartwrights like Nicolas Rivard, son and Jean Trottier. We conclude with the miller Jean Joubert, the wooden-shoe maker François Baribault and the blacksmith Mathurin Thibaut. According to the census-taker, the merchant and speculator Antoine Trottier, *Sieur des Ruisseaux*, kept the village supplied with his 30 heads of cattle and his one hundred exploited "arpents". This son of Jules Trottier and Catherine Loyseau, who was born in France, and arrived in 1646, became rich by profiting from the misery of his fellow citizens.

There are few documents to enlighten us about the daily existence of the pioneer families of Batiscan, other than the notarized records, which, fortunately, are numerous. The pioneers who, in 1681, declared that they had cleared only a dozen "arpents" over a period of fifteen years, undoubtedly were busy with hunting, fishing and canoe trips to meet the natives ready to trade moose and beaver skins for bullets and powder or some trinket, if not for spirits. In 1681, the average size of a piece of cleared land for the inhabitants of Batiscan was about fifteen "arpents"; **Jean Moreau** had only a total value of eight "arpents" and **François Frigon** declared seven "arpents", a very small number, clearly under the average. The interest of these two ancestors certainly was not in agriculture.

It was the same for their son, it seems. **Joseph Moreau**, son of Jean, spouse of **Françoise Frigon**, was known as an intrepid "coureur de bois" (fur trader), and it was as an associate of **Lamothe-Cadillac** that he lived his last adventure. He never returned from an expedition to the Illinois and it is believed that he either died accidentally or was assassinated around 1708, leaving a widow with three young children, **Marie-Josèphe Moreau**, **Marie-Jeanne Françoise Moreau** and **Madeleine Moreau**. The latter was born early in 1707. We will meet them again as young adults on the steps of the church of Bécancour and Yamachiche, ready to link their destinies with the men of their lives.

At that time, the village of Batiscan already had the reputation of producing hardy oarsmen filled with the spirit of adventure, of providing business opportunities for the local merchants, who in the comfort of their little shops were assured of good revenues, even of seizures, leaving to the canoeists the difficult portages and the risk of losing their lives by drowning in the rapids. The **Moreaus** and the **Frigons**, neighbors and companions in misfortune, succumbed to this obsession for the west. For this they paid dearly.

François Frigon "voyageur"*

Pierre Frigon (4)

V

The Montreal "Fair"

They were numerous, those who came from the West at the beginning of each summer. Thus, in 1693, 700 to 800 Outaouais came to the annual fur "fair", in Montreal¹. Evidently, they obtained more for their furs if they came themselves to Montreal than if they sold them to the voyageurs who visited them and who needed to compensate for their travel expenses. Expenses that were high, as we will see further on.

*"To prevent disorder, diverse measures are imposed: no intercepting of the canoes on the river of the Outaouais; no trading outside of the fair; the natives must be free to choose the shops that they want to enter, without being badgered; at night they must lodge outside the walls of the city."*²

At this Montreal "fair", palavers took place in the presence of the Governor-general. This is Lahontan's description of the one held in 1685:

"...Monsieur de la Barre arrived a few days later, accompanied by Messieurs de Hénaut, Montortier & du Rivau. At almost the same time, I saw twenty-five or thirty canoes of Coureurs de bois (fur traders) landing, loaded with beaver pelts coming from the Great Lakes. (...) They were followed by fifty canoes of Outaouais and Hurons who usually come down each year to make their purchases which are less expensive here than in their own land of Missilimakinac, situated on the banks of the Lake of the Hurons, at the mouth of the Illinois. This is how this little commerce takes place. First, they set up a camp at about five or six hundred feet from the City. The day of arrival is spent in storing their canoes, unloading their merchandise, and erecting their tents which are made of birch bark. The next day, they request an audience with the Governor-general, which he grants them the same day, in the public place. Each Nation makes its own circle, then when these natives are seated on the ground, pipe in mouth, and the Governor is in his chair, the Speaker from one of these Nations rises, and declares in the form of a harangue, "That his brothers have come to visit him, and at the same time to renew their old friendship with him; that the principal purpose of their trip is to render service to the French, among whom there are some who, having neither the means of trading, nor the physical strength to transport the merchandise along the Lakes, are not able to handle the beavers, if their brothers do not come themselves to do the trading in the French Colonies; that they are aware of the pleasure that they give the inhabitants of Montreal, with regard to the profit that these same inhabitants derive from this; that these pelts, having a great value in France, contrary to the meager value of the items that are used in trade for them, they want to show the French the desire they have to provide them with that which they so eagerly seek. That, in order to be able to bring even more goods another year, they have come to get guns, powder and bullets in exchange, to be used to improve their hunting, or to torment the Iroquois should they decide to attack the French homes; and, finally, as proof of the sincerity of their words, they are throwing in a porcelain necklace with a number of beavers for the Kitchi Okima (governor) whose protection they request, should they be robbed or mistreated in the City."

The discourse being finished, the Speaker returns to his place and his pipe, while the interpreter explains the contents (of the discourse) to the Governor, who usually answers in polite terms, especially when the unsolicited gift is quite important. He responds by giving them a trivial gift, then the natives rise, and return to their abodes to prepare for the exchange.

The next day each native has his slaves carry his pelts to the merchants who give them the items that they request. All the inhabitants of this City have the permission to carry on this trade, except for wine and spirits which are forbidden...³

It is interesting to note that upon his return from his 1686-1687 trading trip, François Frigon did not stop in Montreal, his contract specifying that he should deliver his pelts directly to the merchant DeFay, at Quebec. The previous year, DeFay had had his furs delivered to the merchant Couage, in Montreal⁴. We will see further on why, in 1686-1687, he asked François Frigon to avoid Montreal. In the next article, we will talk of the occupation of the trading voyageur.

1- Lahontan, *Oeuvres complètes I*, édition critique par Réal Ouellet et Alain Beaulieu, PUM, p. 282, note 109

2- Marcel Trudel, *Initiation à la Nouvelle-France*, Éditions HRW, 1968, p. 211

3- Lahontan, tome 1, pp. 316-317

4- Traités pour un voyage aux Outaouais : Acte du 30 mars 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Guillaume Hébert dit LeCompte; acte du 9 avril 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Guillaume Hébert, Antoine Gabory, Philippe Listourneau, Joseph Peron, Charles Goulet et Jacques Durocher dit Peron; acte du 30 avril 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Pierre Moreau sieur de la Topine et Jean Le Mire; acte du 30 avril 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Joseph Blondeau, dit Lafranchise; acte du 2 mai 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Charles LeNormand. Traités pour un voyage aux Illinois : acte du 6 novembre 1685, passé chez Genaple avec Denis Turpin.

A word from the retiring President

At the Annual General Meeting in Montreal on May 22, 1999, I resigned as president of the Association, wanting to leave the way open to the younger generation. The Association is on solid foundations, the time has come to hand over the helm to retirees now becoming available.

The transition will take place little by little: I will continue to serve on the Board of Directors though the Executive Committee as Founding President. I will continue to devote myself to the tasks of publisher and editor of the newsletter *LES FRIGON / THE FRIGONS*, always looking to increased participation on the part of the membership. As well, I expect to enjoy the support of Lucie Frigon, who helps me navigate the particularities of written French! In other words, I shall to continue with the task, God willing! Note: Gérald will take over this column with the next issue,

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Active members as at June 30 1999: 130 of 1000
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