

50th anniversary in Valleyfield

War bride of 50 years recalls her wedding just before D-Day

by Elsie Melanson
Valleyfield Correspondent

On Sunday, May 29, the family of Alderic (Jim) and Elsie Melanson honored their parents at a special buffet luncheon, held at a Valleyfield restaurant in celebration of their Golden Wedding.

It was a wonderful occasion, attended by approximately 35 family members and friends.

The day commenced with a special Mass at 10 a.m. with the St-Ignatius Guild, in the chapel of the Dominican Sisters, on Larocque Rd., which all of the guest attended.

The happy couple were presented with gifts, flowers and many congratulatory cards.

Jim and Elsie were married in England on May 31 1944, a very short time before D-Day.

Jim, who was in the Canadian Ordinance Corps, was only able to get a couple of days' leave because of the imminent crisis, and was almost immediately shipped over to France.

On May 31 1945, Elsie travelled with baby daughter Jacqueline to Liverpool, where they finally embarked on "The Volendam", a hastily-prepared ship for Canadian war brides and their children.

Rough trip
Every cabin on the ship was packed to capacity, with only one small wash-basin per cabin for all them, and three-tiered bunks in which babies had to sleep with their mothers because there were not enough bassinets to go around.

All in all it was a very rough trip, so much so that even the sailors suffered sea-sickness.

The ship docked in Halifax on June 9 1945.

Many of the children were taken ill during the long trip and developed rashes. Jacqueline was no exception and came down with a high fever and rash the day before



Alderic and Elsie Melanson at their recent Golden Anniversary party in Valleyfield.

the ship docked. She was examined by the medical officer, who decided she had German Measles.

They were then put on the train for Campbellton, N.B., Jim's home town area. It was a long, tiring journey, as Jacqueline was still very sick. They arrived in Campbellton that evening, and were met by complete strangers - who turned out to be Jim's father, Ulric, an Uncle, and some of his younger brothers and sisters. Everyone piled onto a taxi for the drive to the family home in Atholville.

New lifestyle
Everything was confusing for Elsie. Beside the language problem, there were other problems to be met and overcome. The large family had no indoor plumbing, just a well and the "outhouse", perched on the side of the main railroad track.

There was no electric stove or washing machine, just a big old wood stove, which Jim's mum used to do all her cooking and baking, including delicious homemade bread, which she kneaded every day!

One hilarious situation arose when Elsie asked how she could take a "bath"; no one understood what she meant. One of Jim's older brothers, Emile, who had been exposed at some point to British lingo, explained that she meant a "bath".

were parties and celebration everywhere, and Jim's mum held a "shower" for her son and his war bride.

Move to Quebec
But, with the arrival of colder weather, the couple had to find a home. There were no empty houses available in that area, or even jobs to be had.

Jim came to visit an older brother in Valleyfield, and was invited to bring his family to stay until they could have their own home. Jim would get work in the local cotton mill. So three weeks before Christmas, Jim and Elsie packed their few belongings and moved to Valleyfield.

The following spring they rented their own home, one of the Montreal Cotton houses on Whittaker St.

Over the years they raised seven children: Jacqueline, Leo, Robert, Derek, Judy, Francis and Marianne.

Two strikes at the cotton mill, (in 1946 and 1952) lasted for three long months each. Since the strikes were classified as illegal, there were no unemployment payments or other financial aid. Elsie learned many things in those times: how to renovate second-hand clothes for the children; how to make nourishing but inexpensive meals; and how to do without.

Lively turkey
There was always a huge turkey on the table at Christmas and New Year (often won in a Christmas raffles). In those early days the turkeys were not "all dressed" like today, but alive and running around the house!

Things are so much easier now. All the children are married, and have their own families, but they all have their memories of the "Good Old Days".

Elsie and Jim are able to enjoy their large family, which includes 16 grandchildren and two small great-grandsons.

Although England will always be "home", Elsie finally got over her homesickness. She has travelled across Canada by bus to visit two sons in British Columbia, and loved every minute of it, most especially the beautiful Rockies. For her there is no place like Canada, and she is proud of her Canadian Citizenship.

Over the 50 years of their marriage, Elsie and Jim have made many friends in this area, both French and English, and are proud to be members of this Community.



Just before they moved to Valleyfield in December 1945, war bride Elsie Melanson, husband Alderic (Jim) and baby Jackie had this photo taken outside Jim's family home at Atholville N.B.

Births and Deaths

Cards of Thanks, In Memoriams, Marriage Notices, Engagements, Announcements.

BORN

DONNELLY, Edson and Cecilia, are proud to announce the birth of their second child, a son, Spencer David. Born May 7, 1994 in Ottawa, 10 lbs. 6 oz. Happy grandparents are Everett & Letty Donnelly of Huntingdon, Que. and David and Helen McIntyre of Douglas, Ont.

FARQUHAR, Wade and Monika (née Danko). We are happy to announce the birth of our first child, Savannah Taylor. New playmate for Thor and Alexis, born May 25, 1994, at Anna Laberge Hospital in Châteauguay, weighing 7 pounds 8 ounces. Proud grandparents are Rita and Benjamin Plazier of Howick, June and Hilton Farquhar of Rockburn and Edith Danko of Montreal.

DIED

CHARTRAND, Leo - At the Centre d'Accueil du Haut St-Laurent Ormstown on June 15, 1994, age 76, husband of Agnes Galenecer, father of Ray (Elaine Connelly), Bob (Debby Sulany), Tony (Nancy Larivière), Diane (John St-Louis). Also survived by his grandchildren Marc, Leigha, Michael and Ryan. Funeral service was held on Friday, June 17 at 2 p.m. at St-Malachie Church, Ormstown. Arrangements made by McGerrigle Funeral Home Inc., Ormstown.

PRIMEAU, Rose Alba, born Soucy - at the Centre d'Accueil du Haut St-Laurent, Ormstown, on June 19, 1994, at the age of 94 years, wife of late Stephen Primeau. She leaves to mourn her children, Fernand (Marie-Ange Soucis), Fernande (Roméo Picard), Arthur (Claire Léveillé), Lorette (Théobald Dandurand) and Robert (Céline Dumas), also 7 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and his brother-in-law, Arthur Allen. Funeral will be held Thursday, June 23, in St-Malachie Parish Church, Ormstown, at 3:00 p.m. Interment, Parish Cemetery. Funeral arrangements by McGerrigle Funeral Home, Ormstown.

McCOMB, James Robert - Suddenly at the Moore residence in Ormstown, June 20, 1994, James Robert McComb, aged 71 years, son of the late Tom McComb and Bessie Cleland. Survived by one cousin Lols McComb Waddell and family. Funeral service Thursday, June 23 at 2:00 p.m., in the J.M. Sharpe Funeral Home Chapel, Franklin Centre. Cremation will follow. Visitation Wednesday 2-4 & 7-9.

ATCHER, Basil - Suddenly on Sunday, June 19, 1994 at his home in Montreal, aged 62 years. Beloved husband of Muriel McCartney. Dear son of Rosina Atcher and the late Rev. Canon Atcher of Huntingdon. Brother of Roll (Ruth) and Victor (Barbara). Resting at Kelly Funeral Home, 19 Lake St., Huntingdon. Visitation Tuesday, June 21, 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Service from the Chapel Wednesday 2:30 p.m. In lieu of flowers donations to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

DIED

NORMANDEAU, Albert - In Longueuil, on June 15, 1994, at the age of 89 years, died M. Albert Normandeau, husband of M. Médéric Quesnel. Besides his spouse, he leaves to mourn 2 sons and 5 daughters, Laurent (Evelyn Noreau), Raymond (Anita Soucy), Biola (Yvon Lavoie), Monique, Luce, Adèle (André Bruneau), Suzanne (Robert Desjardins), and also many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral was held Saturday, June 18 at 3:00 p.m. in St-Anicet Parish Church. Interment at a later date. Funeral arrangements by Rodrigue Montpetit & Fils, 170 Châteauguay St., Huntingdon, Quebec.

MURPHY, Mabel (née Robidoux) - Peacefully on June 16, 1994 after a short illness at the Henderson General Hospital, Hamilton, Ont. Mabel was the daughter of the late Oliver Robidoux and Catherine McConville, also preceded by 6 brothers and 3 sisters. She was the loving wife of the late Thomas Murphy, formerly of White Station also preceded by a daughter Iona (Bill Rielly) and a son Harold Murphy (Eileen). She leaves to mourn, her loving sons Rodney Murphy (Elizabeth) and Gary Murphy (Vivian). Lovingly remembered by 14 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. Funeral was June 20 from Cresmount Funeral Home. Mass of Christian Burial from St. Peter & Paul Church. Burial at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Hamilton, Ont. Mabel and Tom Murphy were owners of a General Store and Feed Mill at White Station for many years prior to moving to Hamilton, Ont in 1941. She will be sadly missed by many relatives and friends.

CARD OF THANKS

If you haven't heard from us, it is not because we have forgotten you. Your kindness and continued support is very much appreciated and we thank you sincerely.

Residence Elle
Board of Directors

The family of Mrs. Yvette Decostes-Garceau would like to sincerely thank all those who showed them marks of sympathy following her death, which occurred on May 13, 1994, at the age of 71 years. Either by flowers, cards, visits or attendance at the funeral, all was greatly appreciated. Also, we would like to thank the Dames Chrétiennes and Filles d'Isabelle for having prepared the meal served after the funeral.

Former Chateaugay N.Y. farmer, 85, dies in Texas

Fort Worth, Texas - Alexander J. MacDonald, 85, of St-Francis Village, Crowley, Texas, and formerly of Chateaugay, N.Y. died Monday, May 30, at St-Joseph's Hospital in Fort Worth.

Born in St-Andrew's West, Ont. on October 10, 1908, he was the son of John J. and Maud McGahey MacDonald. He graduated from St-Andrew's West High School and Cornwall Commercial College.

On April 16, 1932, he married Loretta C. Cosgrove at St-Patrick's Cathedral in Montreal. She predeceased him on June 21, 1974.

Mr. MacDonald worked as a paymaster at the Howard Smith Paper Mill in Cornwall, Ont. from 1944 until 1959. From 1959 until 1975, he owned and operated a dairy farm in Chateaugay. After his retirement in 1975, he moved to Florida until 1987. In 1988 he moved to Texas.

CARD OF THANKS

McCallum, Walter - The family of the late Walter McCallum wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to family, friends and neighbours for their many acts of kindness. Sympathy cards, charitable donations and food received following the recent loss of a husband, father, brother, uncle, brothers and sister-in-laws. Please accept this as a personal thank you.

The tributes and remembrances of Dr. Wilfred Watson's 94 years of community participation and service were a testimony to his place in the memory of the people whose lives he touched. The family of Wilfred Watson wishes to extend their thanks to all who shared their memories by expressions of kindness to the family with flowers, cards, meals and visits. Dr. Kevin Brissette and staff at Barrie Memorial Hospital, Ormstown and Dr. Jean-Pierre Hebert and staff of Huntingdon County Hospital are appreciated for their excellent care of Dr. Watson. The many visits by St. Chrysostome CLSC Mrs. Patricia Fortier, R.N. were a comfort to the family throughout his illness.

The Watson Family

Following the death of Aloysius Cusson, formerly from Sainte-Martine, on the 31st of May, at the age of 94 years old. His children: Flora, Yvette, Hervé, Hélène and Blanche, he was also father of (deceased Bernadette) wish to deeply thank every one who expressed them their sympathy.

IN MEMORIAM

DINEEN, Eileen -- In loving memory of a dear friend and neighbor, who passed away June 19, 1993. To hear her voice, To see her smile, To sit and chat with her awhile To be together, in the same old way, Would be our dearest wish today.

Vera & Helen

GARDINER, Janet Clark - In loving memory of Janet Clark Gardiner, who passed away June 28, 1990. There will always be a heartache And often a silent tear But always precious memories Of the days you were here We hold you close within our hearts And there you will remain To walk with us throughout our lives Until we meet again. Sadly missed by husband Brodie, children Ruth, Heather, E. Brodie Jr. and sister Irene.

WEDDING RECEPTION

In honour of
Barbara Ocnas and Bill Brooks
Saturday, June 25, 1994
9:30 p.m.
L'Hermine Cabane à Sucre
Everyone Welcome!

WEDDING RECEPTION

In honor of
GRACE CULLEN and JOE HECKENAST
ORMSTOWN CURLING CLUB
June 25, 9 p.m. till 2 a.m.
Everyone Welcome
LIVE MUSIC

25th Wedding Anniversary

for
Ken & Shirley Romanada
(Cosgrove)
Sat., June 25, 1994
Legion Hall, Huntingdon, Qué.
9:00 p.m.
Music and lunch
Everyone welcome