

# Violette Family Association

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Newsletter

Fall 2025

## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



Welcome to the Fall 2025 edition of the VFA Newsletter! It's an exciting time for the Violette Family Association and we want to bring everyone up to date.

Plans are in motion for our [next family reunion](#) which is to take place three years from now—a wonderful opportunity for us all to reconnect, share stories, and celebrate our rich family heritage.

Meanwhile, we invite everyone to contribute by sharing your treasured family photos, and favorite family recipes—especially those that have been passed down through generations. We plan to add a [Members' Corner](#) section in upcoming newsletters—be sure to share family memories, news, and milestones that can be included.

We're also pleased to announce that the [Violette Family Association has now been formally incorporated](#), marking an important milestone in preserving our legacy for future generations.

Our Treasurer provides an update on our [current finances](#), and we ask that you consider donating to help support the VFA. No amount is too small to make a difference!

A key aspect of our Association is to remember and honor our ancestors and history. You can read more about [caring for our ancestors](#), get an update on the [1751 court documents research](#) in this issue, and contemplate how our common ancestor, [François may have interacted with the Mi'kmaq](#).

And finally, we'd like to introduce our new [Membership Secretary](#), Debra Lukac. She is especially keen to expand our membership to the next generation of Violette descendants and interact with members.

*(Links will take you to the page with the article)*

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## VIOLETTE FAMILY ASSOCIATION INCORPORATES AS A 501(C)(7) ORGANIZATION

By David B. Violette, President, Violette Family Association

Earlier this year, the Violette Family Association (VFA) reached an exciting milestone in its ongoing journey to preserve and celebrate our shared heritage. With the approval of the VFA Board of Directors, the Association officially incorporated as a 501(c)(7) nonprofit social organization. This decision marks an important step in strengthening our foundation for future growth, connection, and stewardship.

We proudly incorporated in the State of Maine—a location deeply woven into the history and roots of every VFA member. Maine is not only home to many branches of the Violette family but also stands as a symbol of our shared legacy and enduring ties.

### **Why Incorporation Matters**

Incorporating as a nonprofit provides the VFA with a number of practical and strategic benefits. First and foremost, it gives the Association a formal legal identity, allowing us to operate in an organized and protected manner. This means the VFA can enter into contracts, open bank accounts, and hold property in its own name—all while shielding individual members and officers from personal liability. It ensures that our activities and assets are governed by clear bylaws and structures that reflect our collective mission and values.

Additionally, our 501(c)(7) federal tax-exempt status with the IRS recognizes the VFA as a social and recreational organization. This designation allows us to focus on promoting fellowship, heritage, and connection among our members without the burden of federal income taxes on most of our activities. Donations, event revenue, and any other money collected can now be directed more fully toward family programs, newsletters, reunions, and historical preservation efforts that strengthen our community.

### **Looking Ahead: A Stronger Future for the VFA**

Incorporation not only secures our current operations but also positions the VFA for a vibrant and sustainable future. It provides a stable framework for leadership transitions, financial management, and compliance—ensuring that future generations can continue the Association's work with clarity and confidence. As we plan for the next family reunion and beyond, this formal structure will allow us to expand programs, maintain records more efficiently, and preserve our family's story for decades to come.

As President of the Violette Family Association, I am deeply grateful for the vision and support of our Board and members who made this milestone possible. Our incorporation strengthens the VFA's ability to connect, celebrate, and serve our growing network of descendants and friends across the world.

For more information about our mission and ongoing activities, please visit our website at <https://violetteregistry.com/>.

## PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING TO VFA

By Paul Violette, Treasurer, Violette Family Association

Dear VFA Members,

As many of you know, the Violette Family Association (VFA) relies entirely on donations from its members to cover operating expenses. From the beginning, we chose not to require membership dues or fees, unlike many other organizations.

Historically, our family reunions were a major source of funding, thanks to generous donations and raffles. However, our last reunion was held in 2014. Since then, our largest expense has been mailing printed newsletters. To reduce costs, we transitioned in 2024 to sending all future newsletters electronically.

In the meantime, sales from our Violette Heritage books provided some financial support, but those sales have now slowed to nearly zero. Currently, our account balance stands at approximately \$4,118.72. Our ongoing expenses include legal fees related to our transition to incorporation and the maintenance of our website, VioletteRegistry.com, including software support.

We're reaching out to ask for your help in meeting our current funding needs. To those who have donated in the past—thank you! Your generosity has made a meaningful difference.

Looking ahead, we have exciting plans: a potential VFA Family Reunion in 2028, and more frequent, informative newsletters to keep us all connected.

If you'd like to support the future of the VFA, please consider making a donation. You can contribute directly to the VFA Treasurer or use the link below to donate using PayPal.

**DONATE**

Your financial support is deeply appreciated and helps keep our family legacy thriving.

## DID SOMEBODY SAY REUNION??



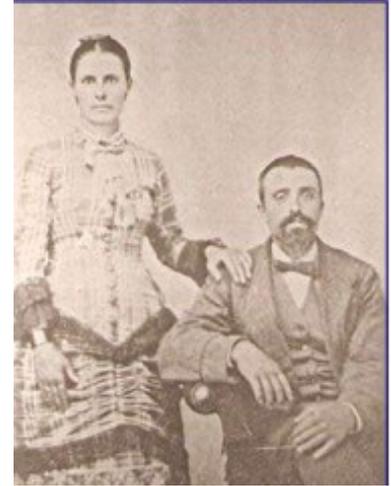
The VFA Officers are discussing 2028 as a year to hold our next VFA Reunion. This year is very special, as it will mark 50 Years since the very first VFA reunion was held. That reunion was organized by Rita Violette Lippe, and drew 375 people when she hoped that she would get 50 in attendance! You can read the article clipping about the first VFA reunion here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/121159360197/posts/10166993619890198/>.

Stay tuned for more updates, and please feel free to reach out to any Officer or Executive Committee member if you'd like to share your ideas.

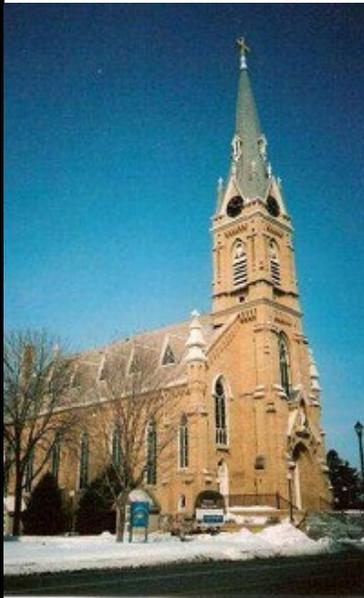
## MEET OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

By Debra Lukac, Membership Secretary, Violette Family Association

It has been said one should build their legacy brick by brick. My great, great grandparents literally did just that more than 150 years ago. Marguerite Violette and Joseph Levasseur married in Maine, moved to Minnesota and started a firm manufacturing bricks in an area once called "Frenchtown" and later designated Dayton, MN.



Marguerite Violette and Joseph Levasseur



St. Michael Catholic Church  
in St. Michael, MN

Every brick used in the church where my son would one day be confirmed came from the family brick mill. St. Michael Catholic Church in St. Michael, MN is on the National Registry of Historic Places. The French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota included Marguerite and Joseph in a recent book on French speaking pioneers. The history is so fascinating and one of the reasons I signed on to be the new VFA Membership Secretary!

I'd like to invite all of you to join in continuing to maintain and build the VFA!

Do you have family members who haven't joined us yet? Would you share my e-mail with them so that I may do some outreach? Would you provide me with contact information for any family member you think might like to learn more? Please contact me or widely share this e-mail: [membership@violetteregistry.com](mailto:membership@violetteregistry.com).

The goal is to grow membership with a nod to focusing on sharing our history with the next generation. If you have any ideas or suggestions, I'd love to hear from you!

## SHARE YOUR NEWS FOR FUTURE MEMBERS' CORNER NEWSLETTER FEATURE

Calling all VFA members—we are planning on adding a Members' Corner section to our newsletters—featuring you and your family! Tell us about notable family members, achievements and more:



- Trips you've taken.
- Anniversaries, awards and other big milestone events.
- Submit your poetry or short stories.
- Send a slice of life tidbit about a family member.
- Share family traditions.
- Artwork.
- Spill about a black sheep ancestor!

Be sure to include photos, lots and lots of photos with captions! Send to: [membership@violetteregistry.com](mailto:membership@violetteregistry.com)

## DID FRANÇOIS INTERACT WITH THE MI'KMAQ?

By Pete Violette, Vice President / Genealogist & Historian, Violette Family Association

It is hard for us to learn about our ancestors' everyday lives, who were ordinary folk. Much less if our ancestors ever met or interacted with the First Nations.

One possible way we can learn is through the study of history. And Ken Donovan, a now-retired historian from Parks Canada, reported back in 2002 in his *Acadiensis* article titled "After Midnight We Danced Until Daylight: Music, Song, and Dance in Cape Breton, 1713-1758". "*The Mi'kmaq took an active part in singing hymns during two outdoor high masses celebrated in Louisbourg in 1757 and 1758.*"<sup>1</sup>

Now, let's think about his statement for a minute. During 1757 and 1758, our ancestor François was a 13- and 14-year-old boy at Louisbourg. We know from studying history that Abbe Pierre-Antoine Maillard was the missionary of the Mi'kmaq on Cape Breton and was fluent in Mi'kmaq. History also teaches us that Abbe Maillard developed an orthography for the Mi'kmaq hieroglyphs and used his knowledge to teach the Mi'kmaq the Lord's Prayer and hymns. History also shares with us the words of another missionary, Christian Le Clercq, who noted that the Mi'kmaq had "good voices as a rule, and especially the women." Abbe Maillard even remarked that "the majority of the Indian women have very pleasing and very soft voices, which they know remarkably well how to keep in tune in singing," so it is easy for me to believe that those Mi'kmaq who sang during 1757 and 1758 were most likely women.



Rebuilt Louisbourg Chapel: Courtesy Author



Click on image to view YouTube video

Our ancestors didn't leave us a diary, nor is there any written record that François attended the high masses when the Mi'kmaq sang. But I can state that if I were a 13 or 14-year-old boy at Fortress Louisbourg, with very little entertainment available, "I would have gone to listen to the Mi'kmaq women sing!" Now that you know about the Mi'kmaq singing at Louisbourg, I want you to listen to the following YouTube video of a young Cape Breton Mi'kmaq woman named Kalolin Johnson, who, after a brief introduction, will sing "How Great Thou Art" in Mi'kmaq and parts in English and imagine you are sitting in the Capel at Louisbourg, next to François.

Note: How Great Thou Art was written well after our ancestors and the masses were held outdoors, I suspect because of the size of the crowd, but I don't think any of that matters.

Link to YouTube video referenced in article: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3BIXSew\\_NO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3BIXSew_NO)

<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Donovan, "After Midnight We Danced Until Daylight: Music, Song and Dance in Cape Breton, 1713-1758", (*Acadiensis*, XXXII, 1 (Autumn 2002),) 27

## CARING FOR OUR ANCESTORS

By Nancy A. Nolette, DNA & Heraldry, Violette Family Association

Growing up in Maine, I would hear my father talk about visiting the family grave sites. He would do minor stone cleaning and place bouquets of flowers beside the grave stones of our family members buried in the two local cemeteries.

Sometimes I accompanied him not really knowing who these deceased persons were related to me. They lived several generations before my birth. I may have seen their photos yet I paid little, if any, attention about them.

Decades later and researching into my family ancestry and now the senior family member, I have taken my father's mantle to oversee these family grave sites.

I already knew where my parents and siblings were buried. Then I started by locating where both sets of my grandparents were interred, one set in Maine and the other in Manitoba, Canada. Then onto the four sets of great-grandparents. Again, three sets in Maine and one set in Manitoba, Canada. Finally, I am trying to find where the eight sets of great-great-grandparents are located in different US and Canadian cemeteries. Unfortunately, I have not found them all so my quest continues.

Of course, the most reliable and detailed records are in their published obituaries and local church records assuming the church owned the cemetery. Some municipalities owned the cemeteries setting aside designed Catholic, Veteran, Paupers, etc. sections. Not all burial records were kept or are correct. Fortunately, I remembered some grave locations when I accompanied my father and later attended graveside burials. I have asked cousins where their parents are buried and they do not even know.

In the past, the cemetery sexton was responsible for the care, maintenance, record keeping and managing the cemetery. This is not necessarily so. Death certificates can be incorrect and/or missing burial site locations. Many family members are cremated and their ashes scattered in unknown remote places, retained in urns at home, placed in a columbarium niche or in the family's in-ground burial site.

Currently not all cemeteries have the resources to maintain the grave sites under their authority. Short of caring for family grave sites yourself or by another designated family member, you may want to hire a professional gravesite maintenance service vendor who can provide the unique tasks you lack:

- Safe and gentle cleaning with approved products that avoid harsh chemicals or pressure washing to protect the stone.
- Restoration including repair of damaged and broken stones, levelling and resetting them.

Below is an example of professional grave site services:

BEFORE



AFTER



MONTHS LATER



If you are unable to visit your family graves, you can go to: <https://www.findagrave.com>. This online search can include valuable information on the deceased relative including a copy of the published obituary, links to immediate family members' burials and most important, if available, a photo of the gravestone with its exact location.

## SHARE YOUR FAVORITE RECIPES FOR OUR VFA FAMILY COOKBOOK!

By Michelle Archambault, Secretary & Webmaster, Violette Family Association

We're cooking up something special — a custom **VFA Cookbook** filled with favorite recipes from our members! This professionally published collection will showcase the dishes that bring our families together and is sure to become a cherished keepsake for years to come.

We'd love for **you** to be part of it! Please share **3–5 of your favorite recipes** so your family can be represented in this one-of-a-kind cookbook. Your name will appear with each of your recipes — a lasting way to share your culinary traditions with the whole VFA family. Let's not forget those old Violette family recipes!

Tip: Be sure to tell us what makes each recipe meaningful — a family story, a special memory, or who first made it. If you have a photo of your dish, we'd love to include that too!



Once we've gathered enough delicious contributions, our volunteers will assemble them into the official **VFA Family Cookbook**.

Thank you for sharing your family's favorites and helping make this cookbook a true celebration of who we are — one recipe at a time!

Log in first to the VFA website, and you will see a link on the Member's Dashboard to "*Submit a Recipe for the VFA Cookbook*". The direct link is here: <https://violetteregistry.com/share-vfa-recipes/>

## A FRESH LOOK AT THE 1751 COURT DOCUMENTS

By Pete Violette, Vice President / Genealogist & Historian, Violette Family Association

The VFA has undertaken a new task of looking at the 1751 Court Documents (called by Maurice Violette the "Petition for Guardianship of Jean Hilaret", "Petition for Guardianship of Francois Violet," and "Judgment for Guardianship of Jean Hilaret and Francois Violet"). Many of us are familiar with the wonderful work that Maurice Violette did with those documents and the English translation he provided in his 1990 booklet "The Violette Family—A History." The original documents are now available through the Library and Archives of Canada, and a quick check of those for the word "bankruptcy" (faillite in French) didn't find the word.

Rod Violette, Leonard Ducette, and Pete Violette have joined forces to conduct the study. We are fortunate that Rod volunteered Leonard to assist with this project. Leonard is a friend of Rod's; they grew up together, and he was a professor of French and Drama at the University of Toronto, author of three books and more than 100 articles on the history of French and French-Canadian literature. We also incorporated input from a wonderful Facebook group, Paléographie (aide bénévole) in France. This great group of people helps those, such as me, who have difficulty reading these ancient documents. At the end of our study, we aim to provide the VFA with copies of the original documents, from which we will have produced a French transcription and, finally, an updated English translation. In addition, we hope to provide some interpretations of the ancient documents that will give everyone a greater understanding and appreciation of the history of our shared ancestors.

## HELP PRESERVE OUR FAMILY HISTORY — SHARE YOUR REUNION PHOTOS!



By Michelle Archambault, Secretary & Webmaster,  
Violette Family Association

Do you have treasured photos from past family reunions or other big family gatherings? We'd love to see them! Our family's story is built on shared moments — the laughter, hugs, and connections that bring generations together.

We're collecting photos from past reunions and large Violette gatherings to feature in upcoming newsletters, on our website, and in our archives. These images help us celebrate our shared history and keep the spirit of family alive for future generations.

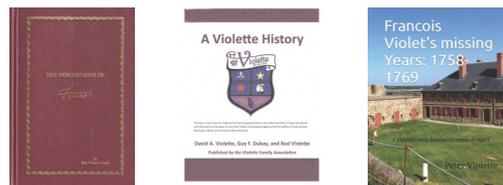
Whether your photo is from your last Violette picnic or a reunion decades ago, we'd be grateful to have it. Please include the year (if known), names of anyone you can identify, and the event location.

Please log in and click on the Member's Dashboard link to "*Share Photos with the VFA*". Direct link: <https://violetteregistry.com/share-vfa-photos/>

## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTERS

The Violette Family Association worked with Patrick Lacroix, Director of Acadian Archives, University of Maine at Fort Kent, to create a permanent archive of the association's old newsletters. To accomplish this, Patrick selected archive.org. Members of the association can now access all the old newsletters at The Internet Archive: [Violette Family Association Newsletter Archive](#).

## VIOLETTE FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS



We have three (3) Violette family history books available from the Violette Family Association.

The first book is the "[Descendants of Francois Violet](#)" by Rita Violette Lippe which was digitized since the original books are no longer available.

Our second book is a narrative of the founders of the Violette family detailed in "[A Violette History](#)." The authors are David A. Violette (VFA #621), Guy Dubay (VFA #689) & Rod Violette (VFA #12).

The third book is by our VFA historian Peter Violette (VFA #1793) titled "[Francois Violet's Missing Years: 1758-1769](#)".

Peter did a deep dive into the years that the association had no records for our founder, Francois. The purpose was to gain an insight and better understanding of what was happening during those missing years and how they may have impacted our pioneer ancestor to New France, present day Canada. This book is currently out of print, and a new edition is expected to be published in 2026.

The print edition prices range from \$18 to \$38 and the downloadable electronic versions typically cost \$10.00.

The Violette Family Association receives a small royalty on each edition sold.



*The Violette Family  
Association Coat of Arms,  
adopted in 2014*