



FOR YOUR DIARIES !

October 17, 2007: NFB film day

November (date to be confirmed): The Club's 13th birthday

December 9, 2007: Christmas brunch

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GOLF DAY

Just a few days left to register! The Golf Day takes place on Thursday, September 20 at the magnificent Club de golf La Vallée de Sainte-Adèle. It's open to all Club members and current NFB employees as well as their families and friends.



Come and enjoy the first autumn colours at a club suitable for golfers at all levels.

OUR PRIVATE ISLAND - OUTDOORS DAY

By Anthony Kent

On June 21, 2007, the NFB Club collaborated with the NFB Social Club for a joint visit to Navark Island, only 5 km. from downtown Montreal, in the middle of the St. Lawrence.

About 30 Club members joined 150 current NFB employees on the island, which was reached by a 3-minute shuttle service from the car park on Ile Charron. We enjoyed many interesting and amusing exchanges with former colleagues and new NFB staff - and management.

An excellent barbecue and buffet table in a huge tent kept us sheltered from the somewhat inclement weather. We also had a superb and unique view of downtown Montreal.

The Club Committee plan to repeat this type of get-together next year in another little-known or unknown location! We look forward to seeing you there!



LUCKY DRAW WINNERS!

More than 200 Club members participated in the annual «Lucky Draw», in support of the NFB Club ONF. On Thursday, July 12, 2007, the NFB Club Committee met in the Laurentians at the home of our Newsletter Co-ordinator, Colette Gendron and Pierre Léonard, who kindly drew the two winning tickets, watched by the Committee members.

One prize was open to the entire membership and one was only for members living at least 100 kms. from Montreal. The two winners of a Pioneer Single-Disc DVD Recorder are Susan Huycke in Montreal and Frances Wynne, in Burlington, Ontario.

Congratulations to the two winners from us all!



◀ Anthony Kent and Susan Huycke

GEORGE STONEY, PROFESSOR AND FILMAKER

(Executive Producer of the Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle Programme at the NFB, 1968-1970)

By Anthony Kent

On June 29, I drove down to Long Island, NY, for the 45th edition of George Stoney's shared birthday party, with his partner, Betty Puleston. George was 91 on Canada Day and Betty turned 90 on the Saturday, June 30. About 200 students, former students, filmmakers and other friends and family joined in the celebrations and enjoyed the pot-luck buffet, with the delightful Dixieland sound of the Isotope Stompers in the background.

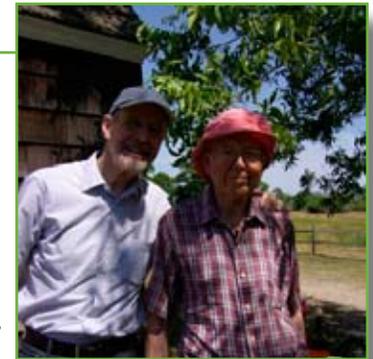
George had just returned from Albany, Georgia, where he spent a month on the pre-production of the sequel to his 1952 documentary, ALL MY BABIES. The film portrays "Miss Mary", an impressive and hardworking midwife. George stayed with her grandson, who had actually been delivered by his grandmother half a century ago! Shooting will commence in October and will feature many of the people who were brought into the world by the dedicated midwife. To free himself for the shoot, George will be taking a sabbatical from NYU, where he normally gives three courses every week – *Social-*

ly Relevant Documentary Production, The Documentary Tradition

and *Images of the 1930s*, in which students are exposed to the history of the period with the help of available audiovisual documents. As term projects, the students (graduates and undergraduates from all over the university) create histories of their own families during the 1930s.

At the all-day party, I talked with a number of admiring present and former students, many of whom are now actively involved in film production themselves. In the evening, we joined George and Betty and a happy group of fellow dancers on the lawn, as the Isotope Stompers belted out some old blues favourites.

When we finally took our leave, as the long twilight faded into night, for the first time I saw George and Betty actually sitting down! It was a memorable day, with a remarkable couple and many of their active and interesting friends.



DEATHS

Marcel Desrochers (projectionist who participated in the Expo '67 Labyrinth), died on June 16, 2007, aged 75.

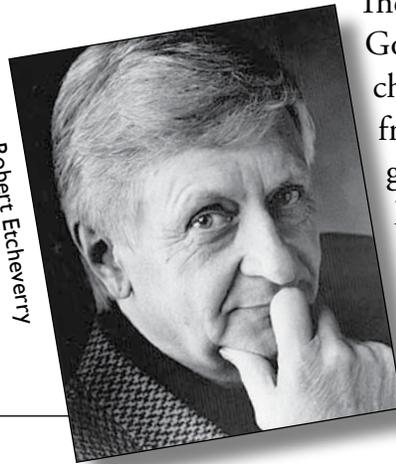
Hans Peter Strobl (sound mixer), died on July 21, 2007, aged 65.

Jean-Théo Picard died on August 21, 2007 at the age of 91. Thus another page is turned in the history of the NFB, which he represented faithfully for 37 years.

JACQUES GODBOUT WINS AWARD

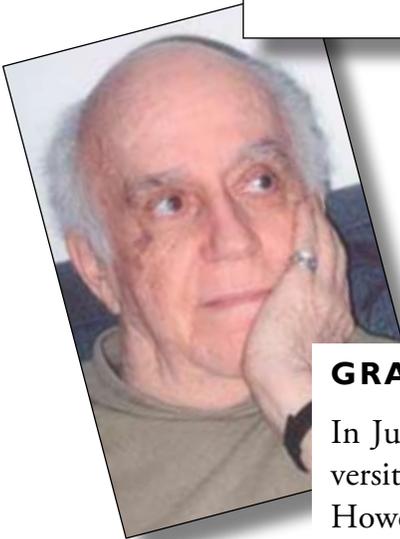
From the Radio-Canada Website

Photo: Robert Etcheverry



The Quebec author Jacques Godbout has once again charmed the Académie française. The prestigious French institution has awarded him the Prix Maurice Genevoix for his novel *La concierge du Panthéon*, published last year by Seuil and lauded by [literary broadcaster] Bernard Pivot.

NEWS



Jacques Godbout will receive his prize in the fall, at the annual public session of the Académie française. The annual prize, which carries a grant of 4,500 Euros, is awarded to a work that illustrates the same moral and human values that have guided the writer Maurice Genevoix in his life and work. Genevoix is Permanent Secretary of the Académie française.

GRANT MUNRO HONOURED

In June, Grant Munro received an honorary doctorate from Concordia University. Grant Munro is a director, producer, actor, scriptwriter and editor. However, he is known principally for having collaborated for four decades with animation pioneer Norman McLaren at the National Film Board of Canada, where he developed such animation techniques as pixilation, the use of puppets and cel animation.

Did you know that the Film Board has set aside two exhibition spaces for the Club? One is on the second floor, in the corridor leading to Technical Services, the other is in the basement in the corridor that houses the Club's room.

If you'd like to exhibit some recent works of yours, please contact Colette Gendron at 450-227-5870 or write to colettegendron@sympatico.ca.



THE CLUB ART GALLERY



Mike Mitchell was a member of the NFB Challenge for Change Indian Film Crew training program, 1968-1970, and Director of the second IFC program, 1970-74. In this interview, Mike often refers to Ernie Benedict, a much-loved and highly respected Mohawk Elder, who has played a very important role in his life (Ernie is now in his nineties).

I caught up with Mike at his home on Cornwall Island in the St. Lawrence, on the Mohawk Reserve of Akwesasne, and asked what he did after leaving the NFB.

In 1974, I came home from the Film Board, after I finished the last film I worked on: WHO WERE THE ONES. I had a meeting with Ernie Benedict – in fact it was Ernie who brought me home. He said: “When you went to school at the National Film Board, I started raising money. It was my dream to take education on wheels to isolated native communities, so we could bring education to them.”

Ernie had run out of money, so the “Travelling College” was dormant. He said: “It’s a vision and I want you to take it over – think about it!” Later I said: “I thought about it - but I would run the college differently. I was raised by my grandparents when I was very young and I had exposure to a lot of Elders. They were good teachers. They taught us our ceremonies, our knowledge of the natural world, the gifts that we have when we are born, traditional teachings and philosophy, songs and legends, and I realized that I am in privileged company, because this didn’t happen to everybody. If I was to run a college I would get all those Elders and invite them to be our teachers. But I would need a place for them to work from. My vision of a travelling college is to get young people and our Elders together, hit the road, teach at some universities, hospitals, prisons, high schools and so on, aside from all the native communities that we could visit. I see some video projects going on, photography, writing books”.

Ernie said: “Well you acquired all the obvious skills, why don’t you just go and do that with my blessing and bring the skills home. I had a selfish motive for asking you to come home. Too many of our young people leave and never return. I was afraid that you might be one of them. You were meant to come home and share your knowledge with us.”

INTERVIEW ON CORNWALL ISLAND WITH MIKE MITCHELL

By Anthony Kent

We didn’t have a whole lot of money, so we built everything on an

old farm we leased, including a monster log cabin, which became the museum and the place we gave lectures. It was supposed to be a learning institution, so the Elders on many reservations heard about it and wanted to come down. I was busy writing proposals and chasing grants. Since I first talked with Ernie, I had 52 people working for me at the Native North American Travelling College. Pretty soon we had about five vehicles on the road.

We started visiting the prisons in Kingston, about five of them, and every prison was full of First Nations people. So I brought the Elders there and they were so glad to learn from them. What I learned from this program is that alcohol and drugs don’t belong to our people, because for the one night that you lose your memory and maybe rob a bank or kill somebody, they put you in jail and you wake up - but you are going to spend 30 years of your life behind bars.

A lot of the people that we interviewed didn't have the inclination to harm anybody. They were not hardened criminals, so they were very open to learn about their aboriginal culture. I would send different Elders out there, because there were people from different tribes, with different languages.

We put a series of lectures from the Elders on videotape. So I was a mini media film crew, because anything we learned we taught - and when we were on the road we would film at the same time, doing interviews, then we would edit them. Some of the Elders that we interviewed over a ten-year period have since passed on, but at least we had their knowledge on tape, including the stories and legends.

In 1982 I did return to filmmaking. I had written a letter from the Travelling College to the Mazola Corn Oil Company, complaining about the Native content in their TV commercial. They wrote back, asking me to submit my ideas. So I wrote two storyboards, a canoe sequence and a traditional 18th century lacrosse game. They bought both and we shot them here at the Travelling College - and they were shown on all three U.S. TV networks. In fact I co-directed them and made some money for the College!

In 1982 there was a crisis on the American side of Akwesasne, between the elected and traditional leadership - and there was a confrontation with the State Troopers. The roads were blocked on the American side but it was across the river from the Travelling College, so we took food across to them at night. The Canadian authorities caught on that we were really like the Red Cross. I was acting as a middle person to provide

relief, medical care and Elders to tend to their spiritual needs. Then I got involved in mediating a lot of factions and feuds that were going on.

In 1982 you also had the dilemma of being from a traditional family, but pressured to run for election as Grand Chief?

Yes, Ernie Benedict had run for chief twice and he tied and became chief both times. Later in 1982 his son came to the College and said "You know politics is going to kill my father. We need somebody younger - we need you to run. You're popular in the community and you have a lot of support. They would put you in." I said "Well that's a hell of a contradiction, because I grew

up in a traditional way, far removed from the elected system. My grandfather was always against it. He said that if we're traditional, then we're not ever going to get involved."

The chiefs and the Elders in the longhouse said: "We need somebody to

bring us together and you're the right person, with all the different skills you have, communicating and talking - and you take a hand in helping the community and bringing the factions back together." It was a rough ride!

Ernie asked me to be chief for one term. He said: "You're always welcome to come back to the Travelling College when you get done over there." 23 years later I came back to Ernie and said: "What happened to that one term?" He said: "Well we got so used to having you look after us that we kept sending you back." I would



have liked to go back to the Travelling College, but it had changed so much and they had somebody else in there.

So how long were you Grand Chief?

About 24 years, from 1982 to 2006. Recently I decided to write a book about my political experiences, my whole life. Actually, I am writing three books: A new book on lacrosse, a history book on the Iroquois, based on our trials in the Supreme Court and the International court - and my life experiences. So I am gathering all this information and going over it and I've got my two teenage granddaughters downstairs, on vacation from high school, typing away! So I figured maybe for one year I'll just write and do a few projects. I don't know what I will be doing after that, but I'm not really worried.

If you are going to talk about leadership you've got to write about how you were raised, how you were influenced and who taught you. That's where I'm at now. I think that next spring I'll have everything done and then I'll publish it.

But in addition to writing, you are also a consultant?

Right now I am running a business called the Centre for Nation Building. It's based on my experience here, 27 years of building the community. Akwesasne is acknowledged as a leading First Nation in Canada. Everybody is asking how we set up our justice program and our health program, how we took these programs away from Canada, because the government still runs a lot of these programs in other First Nations.

If there is a formula, the secret is to develop confidence in your own people to take care of themselves. When I started, we had a five million dollar budget for the administration on the reserve. Half of that was a deficit. When I left last year the annual budget was 79 million dollars and they were not in deficit. They were really proud of that. They were

good at sound fiscal administration, with good fiscal practices. Canada uses us as a model of people who can look after their finances, administer their needs and do written reports.

So I feel safe, as far as this community is concerned, to take a few years off to do other things, including this book on lacrosse. I grew up playing the game. It's Canada's national sport, but it's also our traditional game. I also picked up a white man's game that I'm really starting to like - and I'm getting pretty good at it! So I'm entering different golf tournaments. It is a good way to meet more people. It's a bit hard being in public life for so long, being in the public eye. There are very few people who know how shy I am. I have difficulty making conversation until I get to know somebody.

Now I want to take a few years to devote to myself and my family. I'm just getting to know my grandchildren. My children are all healthy, my mother is still healthy and I'd like just to be part of the family. I want to stay here. My office is downstairs. I've probably got more work than I would like, but I'm trying to tailor it so that I can be home more often.

I still bump into my friends from the National Film Board or receive inquiries from different people and I like to find out what people are doing. But I have a few creative ideas for some good documentaries so I might want to go back and finish what I started over there! That might be one of the things that I'll get going again. I still have a lot of fight and spark left!

Thanks very much, Mike. I look forward to seeing you at the Club Golf Day next month!



In winter 2005, Maurice Vallée asked me if I had time to edit a book he wanted to publish. I was curious to know what sort of a novel it was, but when I got the manuscript, I saw that it wasn't fiction but a history – and a History worthy of capitalization at that! The subject was the Swiss de Meuron Regiment of Lower Canada, including a list of all its soldiers who came to Canada to fight in the War of 1812 against the Americans.

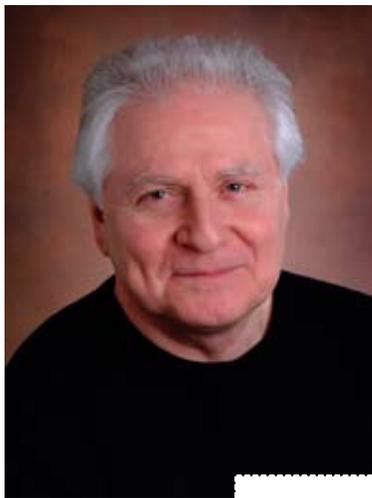
It was followed by another volume, published on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Maurice's village and entitled St-Germain-de-Grantham 1815-2006.

Its nearly 300 pages relate all the events surrounding the birth of this place described poetically in a song by Georges Dor:

*Saint-Germain c'est dans la plaine
La plaine à perte de vue
La plaine tranquillité
On était loin du fleuve
On était loin de la mer
On était dans les concessions
On était les concessionnaires
Du bout de la terre*

*[St. Germain is in an endless plain
plain tranquility
we were far from the river
far from the sea
living on land grants
we were from the ends of the earth.]*

And now Maurice is working on yet another book! He's helping put the finishing touches to the work of another keen historian, Jean Thibault, who's written *Chronique d'un demi-siècle, St-Germain-de-Grantham 1926-1975* (Chronicle of a half cen-



tury, St-Germain-de-Grantham 1926-1975). This consists of short summaries of all the events of that period, including births, baptisms, marriages, elections, etc. It's fascinating to explore this history of the everyday and realize to what extent the world has changed: the arrival of the car, for example, on roads hitherto used by horse-drawn carriages; women no longer taking their husband's name; the creation of the first community associations, and all recounted in the style of journalists of the time. The book launch is planned for mid-October. Meanwhile, Maurice has other projects in mind, all connected with his fascination with history.

Now I just had to ask him: what could make a retired person work so hard? He replied quite simply: for a researcher, the greatest pleasure is discovery.

UNCOVERING HISTORY
By Nicole Chicoine

In the case of St-Germain-de-Grantham for example, discovery of the people who built the village, their names, where they came from and how they influenced the history of the village.

But there's another side to this quest, a side that resonates with me as well. Maurice is aware of being the first generation from his village that was able to go to university. That was where he acquired the skills necessary for his research: paleography to decode archives, methodology, technical methods and financial knowledge. For him, it's been a way of giving back to the village what it gave him in his childhood, i.e. a basic education, the ability to get along with people and precious memories.

As he puts it: "Georges Dor wrote novels and songs about the village; my job is to write the history." Well said, Maurice!

For more about Maurice Vallée's interest in history, there will soon be a text on the Club's Website: www.nfbclub.ca

NOTICEBOARD

RECENT WORKS SOUGHT

We're preparing the new version of the e-mail address book and are calling for an illustration for the cover. Hands up, all you talented artists in the Club! If enough of you send in your designs, we can even think about a calendar!

Information:
info@clubnfb.ca or 514-283-9572
(the Club's phone number).

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The period for renewing Club membership will be over soon. Better late than never! Fill in the attached form to continue to receive information on activities and news.

A FRIEND OF A FRIEND

Why not send the form to your friends and invite them to join?

NEW MEMBERS

Aline Bourgeois Champagne
Maryse Beaudin Charbonneau

Newsletter Coordinator:

Colette Gendron

Photos:

Micheal Hazel, Jean Glinn, Anthony Kent

Translation:

NFB Translation Services

Printing:

NFB Print Shop

Not only has she put her time and energy into revamping the Club's Internet site, she's also let her talent blossom forth in one of her favourite hobbies, painting. I can just see her modest blush as she reads those words! However, it's no good hiding one's light under a bushel, for Colette is very talented, as you'll see if you visit the second floor corridor at the NFB, because that's where her paintings

COLETTE GENDRON AT THE CLUB ART GALLERY

by Nicole Chicoine

are being exhibited from August 27. They're mainly acrylics but some watercolours are sprinkled in.

Colette is also a past master at gouache painting.

She began her career in a now almost out-moded discipline: textile design. She then tried engraving and screen printing, and trained in art history, writing, philosophy, graphic design, publishing and calligraphy. She is extremely versatile and creative.

Colette is the third artist to exhibit in this space provided for Club members. Who's next?

ERRATUM

Our apologies for some errors that crept in last time during our enthusiasm at giving the newsletter a new look.

Page 1 should have read:

Tom Perlmutter, Michel Brault, David Verrall
and page 3 :

Marie Tonto Donati