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**FOR YOUR DIARY!**

March 26: **Sugar shack**

May: **Spring film day**

July: **Cruise**

August 14: **Club golf tournament**

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## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 4 MARCH 2008

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### CLUB CHRISTMAS LUNCH

*By Anthony Kent*

The NFB Club Christmas Lunch was again a great success, with nearly 100 members and guests participating. This annual tradition brings out members from different departments and different generations at the Board. As usual, they mingled happily, enjoying the festive spirit - and the opportunity to get together and exchange news and views.

In addition to the large contingent from Montreal island, we were happy to see members from out of town, including Andy Thomson and Patricia Phillips, from Toronto and Lois Siegel from Ottawa, as well as old friends from the Laurentians and the South Shore. We welcomed several new members and also took a moment to think of those friends who are no longer with us.

There were many favourable comments about the good service at *Le Bordelais*, the reception room upstairs, the deli-



Patricia Phillips, Andy Thompson,  
Marie Tonto-Donati, Giles Walker

### FILM DAY, February 13, 2008

*By Anthony Kent*

Despite an overnight blizzard and continuing snow, a brave band of Club cinephiles turned up in time for an excellent sampling of NFB productions, old and new, in the Pierre Perrault Theatre. We commenced the morning and afternoon programmes with animation classics, ZEA and COSMIC ZOOM, which brought back happy memories for the audience.

AU PAYS DES COLONS presents the grandchildren of the farmers who pioneered the Abitibi settlements, sympathetically and with flashes of humour. Following in the footsteps of Pierre Perrault, filmmaker Denys Desjardins used some of Pierre's footage when introducing the Lalancette family, still struggling to make a living off the unyielding land. Denys joined us at the screening and enjoyed a wide-ranging discussion with club members.

After a convivial lunch in the cafeteria, we returned to the theatre to a heartwarming and fascinating film, BLOOD AND WATER, shot almost entirely in Sri Lanka. This is the story of one man's search for meaning after the overwhelming loss of his wife and daughter in the 2004 tsunami. 65-year old Anton Ambrose spends time with his daughter's closest friends, against the background of a country coming apart with civil war. The film was directed by Anton's nephew, award-winning filmmaker Rohan Fernando, and produced by Kent Martin at the Atlantic Studio.

Those present agreed that it was worth braving the elements for this exceptional Film Day!

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cious meal - and the spacious parking lot. Clearly the Christmas Lunch is a "must" for many members, partners and friends.

The Club Committee would like to congratulate all those members who won various prizes, including tote bags and the Norman McLaren DVD boxed sets provided by the NFB, the weather station key ring, the ice wine and the GPS system!

The Lunch was also an occasion to celebrate the 13th Anniversary of the foundation of the NFB Club and to thank one of the founding members, Olivier Fougères, who will be stepping down from the Club Committee at the end of this year.

We look forward to seeing you all at the 2008 Christmas Lunch - the ideal occasion to enjoy the company of old friends.

## 13 YEARS OLD AND STILL GOT ALL ITS TEETH!

On April 1, the Club began its 14th year. The executive committee thought it would be a good time to review the previous get-togethers and activities and make some adjustments to ensure the Club keeps going strong.

We'd like first to try to find members who've moved and with whom we've lost contact over the years. So we've included in these pages a "Wanted" notice. If you know any of the members listed, please tell us. The list isn't limited to former Club members but extends to all ex-NFBers or current NFBers who may like to join us. If you know any, please give them our contact details. Application forms are always on our Web site.

We think belonging to a club is about offering its members interesting activities. To help guide us towards the activities you really like, we referred to the 2005 survey by Lyle Cruickshank, Guy Gauthier and Claude Parent, a very useful document.

Members still appreciate the newsletter, because it provides those who live far from Montreal with news about former colleagues and Club activities. We experimented with the last newsletter, sending it out electronically to some of you. But comments we got revealed that even though most members are "plugged in," they still prefer a paper copy.

We followed up Guy Maguire's idea to create a Web site. This will serve two purposes: archiving the main information in the newsletters, especially the ever-popular "Life after the NFB," which recounts members' current and future projects, and providing last-minute news mainly about activities.

Film days at the NFB are always popular and we'll be organizing some more this year (snow storms permitting!). We're very lucky to have an enviable theatre and an excellent technician at our disposal (thanks to Biagio Pagano), outstanding viewing quality and, of course, parking. Other activities will be a balance of open air and cultural outings. Do send us your ideas – we're always open to suggestions.

Finally, a big thank you to the many volunteers without whom this club couldn't function: Marie-Neige and Marcel Diaz, Colette Brodeur, Monique Lavoie, Nicole Chicoine, Janet Chapman, Marie-Pierre Tremblay and many others, currently employed at the NFB, whom we'll welcome in a few years' time!

Looking forward to seeing you!

*Executive committee:* Colette Gendron, Jean Glinn, Micheal Hazel, Antoine Kent and Francine Simard

### DON'T FORGET OUR TRADITIONAL DRAW!

Once again, in order to round out funding for the Club, we're asking members to participate in this year's annual draw.

We're offering two GPS navigation systems as prizes.

Don't forget that one of these prizes will be drawn for members living within 100 km of Montreal, while the other is for members who live more than 100 km from Montreal.

You'll find tickets to fill out included in this bulletin.

Thank you for your participation.

**Price of tickets: 1 ticket for \$2.00 3 tickets for \$5.00 10 tickets for \$10.00**

*Note: The model offered may differ from the one shown.*



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*Part of the series*

**LIFE AFTER THE NFB**

**MARIE FITZGERALD'S CONTRIBUTION:  
READING FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T**

*By Marie-Pierre Tremblay*

“I left the NFB in 1990, after giving it less than 48 hours’ thought. It just seemed like the right time in my life to go, and I’ve never looked back. I had some great experiences at the NFB and came away with some wonderful memories to cherish during my retirement. But what the NFB has become is nothing like what it used to be in my day, and I now feel totally disconnected from everything behind it. What interests me is sound, words, writing. After I left the NFB, Jacques Bensimon offered me a temporary position at TFO (TVOntario’s French-language network). The contract was for 15 days but actually lasted four months. I then volun-

teered as the treasurer of the Phonothèque québécoise, an organization dedicated to preserving our sound heritage. I was a volunteer there for five years.

as to make it sound lively. And it’s sight reading! It requires a good general knowledge and sensitivity. When you read aloud, you realize that there are many possible pitfalls. Since the reader works in conjunction with a monitor who is responsible for the technical quality of the document, that person often helps solve problems such as the pronunciation of foreign words.

“There are two major events each year: the Salon du livre and the Read-A-Thon (10,000 pages read by 200 volunteers in the space of 48 hours). Readers are also occasionally required for special events. For instance, I was asked to do a



public reading for the Muslim community under the tent in front of Place des Arts. And sometimes we receive urgent requests from the Grande Bibliothèque. That’s how I ended up reading *Barbe bleue* along with another reader. It made me feel like a kid again!

teered as the treasurer of the Phonothèque québécoise, an organization dedicated to preserving our sound heritage. I was a volunteer there for five years.

“I had heard of the Magnétothèque, which makes printed materials available in audio form to those who are unable to read. I thought that seemed like very worthwhile volunteer work, and I took their auditions. I’ve been a reader for five years now and I love it!

“Some readers specialize in science, and others work only on mystery stories. I’m a generalist, but they give me difficult things, such as a book by a very well-known author which consisted of paragraphs that ran on for ten pages without any punctuation and touched on an endless number of topics. You don’t act like a star but you do have to be expressive, properly understand your text and be able to think ahead so

“When I started working at the Magnétothèque, the audio books were recorded on four-track magnetic tape. Everything switched to digital in 2004. The change-over caused a certain backlog since there was a lot of training to

be done for the permanent staff and volunteers. They therefore scheduled extra sessions and recruited more volunteers. I was asked to sit on the jury in charge of selecting new candidates. I found that rather difficult since it meant judging people. The applicants want more than anything to help out, and it was very hard to tell them “you don’t seem to understand what you’re reading” or “your voice is too high.” Nevertheless, we still selected a hundred or so candidates last year. So I’d like to invite Club members who might be interested in using their voice to help the visually handicapped to contact the Magnétothèque, at 514-282-1999 or 1-800-361-0635 (toll-free). It’s located at the corner of Boulevard René-Lévesque and Amherst.”

**Marie Nycz-FitzGerald** joined the NFB in 1957 as administrator of the French Versions Studio under Jacques Bobet. She then worked with the Média-Recherches group before setting up the 16 mm self-serve loan service at the Montreal office. Back at Headquarters, she worked on various distribution projects and became PIPSC's national vice-president. In 1985, she moved to Technical Services, where she worked on the

Brazil exchange project. This ambitious project, carried out for CIDA, was intended to create a mini-NFB in Rio de Janeiro, to train technical staff in Brazil and Canada, to train animators and to provide basic animation stands in various cities in Brazil. Marie was also involved in preparing the UNIATEC Congress. She retired from the NFB in 1990.

## MORE ABOUT THE MAGNÉTOTHÈQUE

In Quebec, there are 113,000 people with a visual impairment, 45,000 of whom need to use adapted reading tools, such as Braille books or audio books. Since 2005, the Magnétothèque has been the sole producer of audio books distributed by the Service québécois du livre adapté, which is part of the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec. It now records its titles in response to requests from the BNQ, which tries to balance the different types of documents: fiction, psychology, history, religion, magazines, erotica, etc. The 8,000 books recorded over the past 31 years are loaned free of charge by the BNQ, but they cannot be read by anyone who does not have a digital or analog adapted reader since they are encoded for copyright reasons. These readers are loaned by CLSCs to persons with disabilities. Selected books can also be purchased through Les Éditions Stanké.

The primary mission of the Magnétothèque is to record general-interest written documents, in English and French. To earn extra revenue, it also records documents for companies and other organizations that want to communicate with their clients in audio form.

Last year, 318 volunteers completed 638 titles, representing 25,612 hours of work. There are 13 recording booths, supervised by specialized staff.

Each volunteer must be available for two and a half hours a week, at a specified time and day, pass an audition, take training in reading and recording standards, and enjoy working as part of a team. He or she could be assigned to preparing the books, reading or recording, as needed. A good reader reads about 30 pages per session.

The Magnétothèque also produces radio programs that are broadcast live six hours a day and available as a re-broadcast 24 hours a day. Its readers, technicians and programmers are in charge of reading the headlines, editorials, brief articles and political cartoons from Montreal and other Quebec newspapers and broadcasting them via cable (Illico 555 digital television) or the Internet (<http://www.lamagnetotheque.qc.ca>).

## CHEAP FLIGHTS

*By Anthony Kent*

Friends are surprised that I managed to visit my brother in London, my son in Ireland and my daughter in Paris this January, without spending much on airfares. So I thought I would share my experiences with budget airlines.

Transatlantic fares on Zoom ([www.flyzoom.com](http://www.flyzoom.com)) are less expensive at this time of year, but also cheaper the earlier they are purchased. Zoom flies from seven Canadian cities to six European destinations: Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow, Manchester, London and Paris – with services to Rome commencing in the spring. You also have the choice to return from a different destination – for example fly to London and return from Paris, without any additional charge. The service was very punctual and friendly and the meals good.

Just to give an idea, Zoom fares from Calgary and Vancouver to the U.K. before April 30 are \$229, just \$129 from Toronto or Montreal (\$199 May-October) and \$349 to Rome (starting in May), plus taxes. Check other budget carriers from Canada, including [www.canadianaffair.ca](http://www.canadianaffair.ca) to London and Dublin, and Air Transat. Also you should visit [www.cheapflights.com](http://www.cheapflights.com), with its wide choice of flights.

If you want to find which low-cost European airlines fly to your destinations, do not bother with Expedia or Velocity, use [whichbudget.com](http://whichbudget.com), which gives a comprehensive introduction to Europe's no-frills carriers. In Europe there are many budget airlines, including the world's largest - Ryanair, the little Irish airline with flights all over Europe. My Ryanair flight from London (Gatwick) to Shannon cost \$43.42, according to my Visa statement. This included baggage, priority boarding and taxes.

Visit the websites – ryanair.com, openjet.com (to compare eight low-costers), europebyair.com (for \$99 European flightpasses), airberlin.com, easyjet.com (one of the best established), flybe.com, thomsonfly.com, wizzair.com (with the comfortable seats!).

Take the time to check the prices on different sites, as well as the varied baggage limits and costs for excess-luggage. These budget airlines take online bookings by credit card payment – and will confirm immediately. They are very handy for flights without tight connecting times. In my experience, it is usually best to have a couple of hours to spare...

You may find reasonable fares on the national airlines, when you are close to your departure date, as they often drop their prices to compete with the low-costers, which usually offer far greater savings. Remember also that there are excellent high speed train services that may take less time and be more convenient (and scenic) – though more costly, unless you take advantage of the many flexible Eurail Passes (www.eurail.com).

Check all the tempting possibilities on these fascinating and user-friendly websites, with their wide choice of exotic destinations. It is a great way to spend a winter evening! Bon voyage!

### WANTED – OLD FRIENDS!

The Club would like to find several former colleagues - but we need their addresses. If you are in contact with any of the people mentioned below, please let us know. This request is not limited only to former Club members, but to all ex-NFBers who might be interested in joining us. If you know anyone who may be interested, please give them our address and website. Membership forms can be picked up from the Club website any time.



#### Wrong e-mail

Thank you for sending us your exact e-mail.

Avoine, Jacques  
 Brind, Bill  
 Brunelle, André  
 Cournoyer, Rachelle  
 Defoy-Nachtigall, Danielle  
 Dubois, Michel  
 Durand, Victor  
 Masaites, Robert  
 Métayer, Lucille  
 Tremblay, Gilles

#### Lost addresses

Allard, Suzanne  
 Aumont, France  
 Baker, Victor A.  
 Bourgon, Karole  
 Brisebois, Huguette  
 Cassidy, David  
 Cloutier, Claire  
 Côté, Benoit  
 Davidson, B.G  
 Delorme, Johanne  
 Demers, Françoise  
 Emo, Barbara  
 Gariépy, Jacqueline  
 Habib, Bernadette  
 Hutchison, Rose  
 Joyal, Lucie  
 LeBlanc, J. Émile  
 Lozier, Michel  
 McLaren, Audrey  
 McLeod, Brian  
 Mackey, Ruby  
 Montagne, Michel  
 Mullen, William  
 Poirier, Albert  
 Stanley-Venne, Murielle  
 Taylor, Anne  
 Thomas, Gayle  
 Torrance, Jennifer  
 Wallbank, Gordon  
 Zytynsky, Joan

#### Ex-NFBers who left between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2000 and March 31, 2004

Biard, Linda  
 Brun, Gisèle  
 Duchscherer, Brian  
 Dussault, Carole  
 Dutan, Françoise  
 Frenette, Daniel  
 Janes, Barbara  
 Krepakevich, Jerry  
 Lachapelle, Andrée  
 Lamothe, Nicole  
 Latchem, Tim  
 Lewis, Philip  
 Marchand, Paul  
 O'Brien, James Neil  
 Paquin, Daniel  
 Parent, Gilles  
 Pépin, Diane  
 Saint-Germain, Jean-René  
 Smith, Margaret  
 Taylor, Jane  
 Vautier, Ann  
 Villeneuve, René  
 Vincent, Peter  
 Weldon, John

## MEMBERS' LETTERS

### OTTAWA LUNCH

*Jacques Labelle, Chelsea, QC*

The sun was shining on December 17 when a small group of NFBers braved the slush to celebrate the festive season at Theo's Greek Taverna in Ottawa. In the photo, from left to right: Lynn Foran (ex-admin assistant, Commissioner's Office, Ottawa), Léo Beaulieu, Lucie Joyal, myself, Clara Palmer, Danielle Dionne, Allan Palmer and Roland Rainville. Danielle is the only person in the group still active at the Ottawa office!

The menu made us pine for the clement climate of Greece, so different from the Canadian winter. No turkey,



stuffing, cranberry sauce and pudding; rather, Greek salad, meze, souvlaki, moussaka and baklava. The house wine was called Apelia.

To create an NFB feel, I'd prepared a table setting using various filmmaking items. Everyone had fun identifying them and reminiscing. . . In short, fun was had by all and we left the place very well fed with Greek food!



### THE WEST COAST GANG

*Eric Gee, Victoria, BC*

"Back in December, after receiving the most recent electronic newsletter on the Club OBF/NFB's activities, I sent an e-mail back to thank you for the new, fresh look of the web-site. I thought my message would end up being read by Tony (Antoine) Kent or Ron Jones, both of whom I worked with during my twenty years at the Board.

"I reflected on the fact that NFB-ers out here in BC are a "long way from home", spiritually speaking, and that perhaps the Club should consider ways that we might better keep in touch with each other.

"The next day I received a reply from Antoine and a session of «back-and-forth» messages ensued, resulting, as of this writing, in a list of e-mail addresses for seven BC and two Alberta ex-staffers. I am now considering just what to say to them in a introductory message. (If any BC or Alta. retirees read this, I would appreciate them commenting on my idea, either positively or negatively, by e-mailing me at ekgee@shaw.ca .) If we had "chapters" in each province, there might be occasions when we could meet; perhaps at the time of a visit from Montreal HQ personnel or a «cross-Canada tour» by a Club officer.

"I would also like to obtain mailing addresses from anyone who doesn't have e-mail connections at their disposal. Anyone reading this can write to me again with any positive or negative comments, or any ideas on best ways to implement the idea.

"Really, what I am trying to do is (1) find ex-NFB staffers in my local area, whether they are acquainted with me or not and (2) raise a «sense of presence» of ex-staffers among ourselves AND among the central-Canada core of Club NFB/ONF. It's wonderful and very nostalgic to hear about the sugaring-off parties, golf games, etc. but those of us out west sometimes feel left out.

"As I said in my first e-mail which started this thought-process going, "We are all part of a great organization. Don't leave us out on a limb".

Eric Gee,  
807 St. Charles Street,  
Victoria, BC  
V8S 3P4

## NEW BRUNSWICK GOES TECHNO

*Roland Brideau, Moncton, N. B.*

(...) five New Brunswick venues will screen a selection of docs and animations every Wednesday and Thursday evening from January 17 to April 10, 2008. The host municipalities are Edmundston, Kedgwick, Caraquet, Bouctouche and Moncton.

This event is a first in Canada. It's made possible thanks to e-cinema, a new technology that requires just a server, projector or HD television set and a sound system.

I attended the opening evening on January 17, in the Jacqueline Bouchard room at Université de Moncton, and subsequently saw *Le temps des Madelinots*, *Isabelle au bois dormant*, *Sexy inc.*, *Nos enfants sous influence*, *Les épouses de l'armée* and *Jeu*.

I was most impressed by the picture and sound quality. This bodes well for documentary screenings in Acadia.

*Bye!*

### IN BRIEF

#### PAYMENT OF DUES

The Club starts its new fiscal year every April 1. Several members have already sent in their dues; for those of you who haven't yet done so, you'll find a renewal form in this news letter. Thank you for helping our Club run smoothly!

#### PRIZE-WINNERS AT THE CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**GPS:** Tony Ianuziolo

**Ice Wine:** Claire Provençal

**Multi-use key ring:** Louise Overy

**Norman McLaren DVD Set:**

Micheal Hazel, Olivier Fougères, Jacques Ricard

**Tote Bag:** Estelle Bordeleau, Nicole Généreux, Huguette Marion, Susan McNabb, Lois Siegel, Giles Walker

#### OBITUARY

We are deeply saddened to inform you of the death of René Marier, who passed away last February 7, at the age of 76. René was head of printing at the NFB.

## OUR THANKS TO OLIVIER!

*By Anthony Kent*

In 1994, Olivier Fougères joined a few other dynamic young retirees to form the NFB Club ONF, a group of former colleagues who wanted to maintain friendships and the family atmosphere, which had made the Board a special place for many staff members.

Olivier was particularly adept in seeking out new activities and planning successful excursions to interest Club members, a talent which he pursued for the fourteen years he devoted to the NFB Club. At the same time, Olivier's organisational abilities have helped enormously to keep the club on track and in touch with new retirees.

For those who have worked with him and benefited from his thoughtful suggestions and untiring work to make the NFB Club a continuing success, Olivier has been an inspiration. On December 31, 2007, Olivier stepped down from the Club committee – although he continues to be a source of advice and support. We will sorely miss his invaluable networking, his wide-ranging knowledge of people and places, his intuitive insights and his unrelenting efforts to achieve the aims of the NFB Club.

Those of us who belong to the Quebec Chapter of the FSNA (Federal Superannuates National Association) will know that Olivier is the Regional Treasurer for 16,000 members, in addition to his highly appreciated and professional work framing pictures... We wish him every success in his future endeavours.

#### COMPETITION TO LAUNCH OUR CLUB WEBSITE!

Thanks to all those who participated to the competition; you were a dozen to have given us the right answer. The draw took place at the meeting of the Club Committee, on January 3, 2008. And the winner of the rearview back-up camera is: **Marie-Neige Diaz!**

#### A GREAT FIND!

During the holidays, we discovered a superb little inn, l'Auberge sur la falaise, at St-Alphonse in Lanaudière. If you enjoy the peace of the countryside and a great meal, we sincerely believe that this is the ideal place – and it is only 45 minutes from Montreal. <http://www.auberge-falaise.com/>

*André Galbrand and Danuta Klis*

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## RIGHTS FROM THE HEART IN ALSACE

By Thérèse Descary



In early 2007, I got an e-mail from Mariana Santillan, the director of the *Les Petites Vues* festival, inviting me to this first international festival of films for young audiences on the rights of the child, which was to take place throughout Alsace from November 15 to 25.

I was thrilled, because it had been eight years since I last watched and discussed *Rights from the Heart* films, so I accepted. However, I stipulated that the NFB's permission must be obtained to use films at the event. The head of the Animation Studio sent my request to the International Office and they responded punctually and promised they'd cooperate.

My husband, Jean-Louis Bertrand, and I grabbed the opportunity to do a quick tour of Belgium and Germany before going to Alsace, where I was to meet Mariana Santillan in Sélestat on November 17 at 9 am. We took a train to Strasbourg on Friday 16, but a rail strike was announced for the next day. Well, we just swapped the train for a bus; but when we got to Sélestat, we found out that the cottage reserved for us was a good 30 km away! There was no public transport, so we had to take a taxi, which dropped us at the wrong address – Rodern, a tiny hamlet in the wine region, its sole inhabitants six wine growing families and an innkeeper. The latter took pity on us and got his son to drive us to the cottage perched on top of the mountain, near the Château du Haut-Koenigsbourg.

The next morning, after a lightning visit of the Château, Mariana picked us up and drove us to Sélestat, where I met the filmmakers who'd been invited, while Jean-Louis visited the delightful town.

The following days saw us and the festival's young team driving up and down Alsace, sustaining ourselves with apples, croissants, pizzas and cassettes. First visit: Strasbourg's cinéma Star, then Niederbronn-les-Bains's cinéma du Casino. Next, north to Reichshoffen at the Castine, Rixheim at the Passerelle and then south to Colmar at the GGR (a multiplex) and Mulhouse at the Bélair. Result: packed, lively houses when the festival got the cooperation of schools and teachers; nearly empty theatres when the advertis-



ing only addressed parents. The organizers learned a hard lesson: no young people's festival without the cooperation of teachers and headteachers.

The Alsatian kids were great: they're curious, attentive and take the mike with unusual confidence. I also enjoyed meeting the young filmmakers, who take very seriously the quality of the films shown to the children. We talked about transmitting values to our children, what can or cannot be said in children's films, the effect of new technologies on young people's development ... subjects that fascinated me when I was at the NFB. I was delighted that these talented young filmmakers were continuing to explore the same themes.

And Alsace is just amazingly beautiful! In the streets of Colmar, as workmen put up kiosks for the Christmas market, I felt I was in a tale from the Thousand and One Nights.

