



# 2025 Annual Report

## French-American Heritage Foundation



*Les Chutes de Saint-Antoine*  
Oil on Canvas, Painting by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902)

The above painting of the Falls of Saint Anthony located on the Upper Mississippi River, in Minneapolis, depicts how the falls may have looked when first seen by the explorer and Franciscan Missionary Father Louis Hennepin in 1680. The harnessing of the powerful water flow of the falls played a major role in industrialization and subsequent settlement and growth of the area. The Dakota name for the falls is Owámniyomni, a site that is sacred to the Dakota people. Owámniyomni Okhódayapi is a Dakota non-profit that has undertaken an initiative to reclaim and restore the surrounding acreage to reflect more of what it looked like prior to the construction of dams and locks, and to honor the river and values of the Dakota people.



P.O. Box 13542  
Saint Paul, MN 55113

[bonjour@fahfminn.org](mailto:bonjour@fahfminn.org)

**President**

Gregory Cash

**Vice President**

Pierre Girard

**Treasurer**

Mark Labine

**Secretary**

Kathy Whelpley

**Directors**

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Jean McFarlane  
Caroline Meilleur  
Jane Peck  
Mark Petty  
Michele Pierce  
Michael Rainville  
Patricia Ruffing  
Marie Trépanier  
John Ward  
MaryEllen Weller

**Executive Director**

Jenny Hambleton

**Mission Statement**

To foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who helped form what is now Minnesota.

**Our Vision**

To preserve, advance, and celebrate French-American heritage and culture.

**YouTube**

[fahfminn.org/videos-2/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfahfminn)

**Facebook**

[facebook.com/fahfminn.org/](https://www.facebook.com/fahfminn.org/)

## Message from the President

Bonjour,

The pages that follow represent the 2025 Annual Report from the French-American Heritage Foundation (FAHF), which was established in 2013. Our accomplishments have continued to add up over the past thirteen years, and we plan to pursue our promotion of educational and community events in Minnesota for years to come.

2025 was a productive year for the Foundation. We participated in Gammelgården Museum's annual Season Opening Day, in Scandia, Minnesota, along with four other organizations: Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery, Twin Cities Swiss-American Association, Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota, and Chinese-American Association of Minnesota, all representing cultures that had immigrants in Minnesota during the 1850s-1880s — the same time period that Swedish immigrants were coming to and settling in Minnesota. We co-sponsored la Fête de la St. Jean-Baptiste, which is an official national holiday of Québec, Canada, at the Sibley Historic Site where FAHF directors made presentations about the fur trade in our state and early history of Mendota. At additional events, other board members spoke about the French explorers/fur traders Médard Chouart de Groseilliers and Pierre-Esprit Radisson, and artist Frances Anne Hopkins. We also published a new series of Feature Articles that are available on our website.

During 2026, we plan to participate in the Highland Heritage Project, and continue our presence at the annual Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste at the Sibley Historic Site in June, and the annual Bastille Day celebration at the Alliance Française in July. In addition, our board members will continue to make French heritage presentations elsewhere in our community. For example, I am planning to conduct one at the Lake City Historical Society about the fur trade. And, we are still considering presentations about: Rev. E.B. Gavreau and the former Church of St. Mary's in Beardsley, Minnesota; the Imprisonment of the Marquis de Lafayette at Olmutz; and the architecture of Emmanuel Louis Masqueray.

Our 100 Associates Endowment Fund continues to grow. As of December 2025, we have 54 members towards our goal of at least 100 members. Also, in 2025, with investment earnings from our endowment fund, we were able to award our fourth annual grant, in the amount of \$1,250.

The Foundation's mission is: To foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who helped form what is now Minnesota. Please help support the mission of our organization. Your financial contribution and/or personal involvement is very much appreciated. We look forward to welcoming you at our heritage events!

Sincèrement,

Gregory D. Cash  
Président

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## Our Branding Update

During 2025, our French-American Heritage Foundation renovated its brand. We had been gifted a flag design from a southern Minnesota high school student. We then tweaked the design to develop what has become our new logo. Red, white, and blue are the colors featured in French flags; the angular blue background is a nod to the shape of the state of Minnesota; the white star is our ever-guiding L'Étoile du Nord; and the fleur-de-lis symbolizes Québec. You'll see this bold new logo not only reflected in this year's annual report, but it is also being incorporated onto our stationery, into our new publications, on our merchandise, and on our new website that is currently under construction.



In the process of fading from prominence now, but not likely to be forgotten anytime soon, is our legacy logo that has served us long and well. It was developed when the Foundation was established in 2013 and it remains in a myriad of past publications and other resource materials.



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**The French-American Heritage Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization with the primary purpose of promoting and sponsoring French heritage events in Minnesota.

**Our Mission: To foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who helped form what is now Minnesota.**

**Our Vision: To preserve, advance, and celebrate French-American heritage and culture.**

French-language heritage has played an important role in the history of Minnesota. It is important that this heritage be celebrated and remembered.

The French-American Heritage Foundation:

- Maintains a website and a Facebook page focused on French-language heritages
- Sponsors educational events focused on French heritage
- Sponsors educational materials and books about French heritage
- Posts Minnesota French-American family history and genealogy to our website
- Provides scholarships for French language and culture studies
- Awards grants for projects that embrace or feature French heritage in Minnesota and the Midwest

## **Membership Structure**

The membership was structured so that 100% of the membership payment is tax deductible. IRS rules state that membership payments are fully deductible where there are no services or goods given to members. Although the Foundation does not provide direct services or benefits to members, it does use the funds provided by members to put on heritage events that are informative and fun! Membership is annual and for the calendar year.

Members may make contributions to the website in the form of articles about French-American heritage, information about their genealogy and family history, and sharing resources that deal with French-American heritage. Members are encouraged to volunteer to assist in activities the Foundation sponsors.

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## 2025 French-American Heritage Foundation Members

Below is list of all the people who have donated to become members of the French-American Heritage Foundation. Those who have provided gifts of \$100 to \$499 are noted as sustaining members. Our supporting members have made contributions of \$25 to \$99. A special thanks to all of these individuals for their willingness to support our organization.

### **Sustaining Members**

Jacqueline Dennis  
Dustin DuFault  
Mark Labine  
Carole Mayers  
Michele Pierce  
Anne Marie Plante  
Micaela Sieracki

### **Supporting Members**

Katie Byboth  
Christopher DeMeules  
Sandra Doolittle  
John England  
Jerry Foley  
Pierre Girard  
Henry Gowin  
Marty Guidry  
Pierre LaGrandeur  
Terrence Mackin  
Nicolyn Rajala  
Pat Ruffing  
Lise Schmidt  
Veronique St-Louis  
David Trudeau  
Pauline Walker  
John Ward  
MaryEllen Weller  
Kathy Whelpley  
Gretchen Amy Wittig

## 100 Associates Endowment Fund

Our endowment fund, named **100 Associates**, was created in 2019 and is managed by the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation. We have a goal of reaching \$100,000, and more, from donations of one hundred individuals, each contributing \$1,000. We now have **54** fully-paid members. Our current fund balance, as of year-end, is **\$64,597<sup>+</sup>**. The endowment's purpose is to provide financial support for the French-American Heritage Foundation, and to fund grants to groups, individuals, organizations, or family groups, for research, educational events, entertainment, projects, and classes that embrace or feature French heritage in Minnesota and the Midwest.

### THEY SPOKE FRENCH



In the spring of 1659, Pierre-Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law, Médard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers, explored the area around the Great Lakes region that included Minnesota. Thus began the origins of the French presence in Minnesota. In fact, French was spoken here for almost 200 years before Minnesota became a state in 1858. During early 19th century settlement, thousands of French Canadians migrated to Minnesota and surrounding areas. These early settlers, and their descendants, were important in all sectors of the society that built our state and region into what it is today.



### 100 ASSOCIATES



**Goal:** Raise no less than \$100,000 through one hundred donations of \$1,000 each from individuals, groups of individuals, families, and organizations.

**Endowment Fund:** All funds are deposited into our 100 Associates Endowment Fund that is managed by the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation. This is a perpetual fund, and only the income from the fund will be disbursed for qualified projects as determined by the Board of Directors of the French-American Heritage Foundation, or a designated successor.

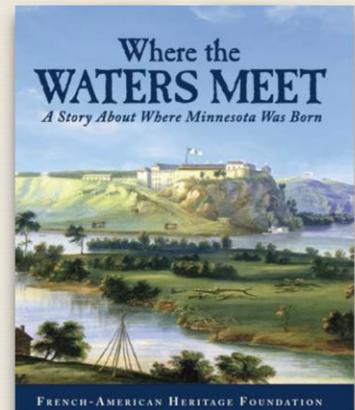
**Purpose of Funds:** The purpose of the fund's earnings is to provide financial support for the French-American Heritage Foundation and to fund programs that embrace or feature French heritage in Minnesota and the Midwest.

FRENCH-AMERICAN HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA

P.O. Box 13542  
Saint Paul, MN 55113

Website: [fahfminn.org](http://fahfminn.org)

### WHERE THE WATERS MEET



Modern Minnesota's beginnings were launched at the place where the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers converge in Mendota, by French-speaking fur traders who lived with and formed close family associations with the Dakota. The terms "Mdote" or "Bdote" literally mean *where the waters meet*, in the Dakota language.



In the short time this Foundation has been in existence, it has become clear that the people of Minnesota appreciate the efforts and contributions that this Foundation has made to provide historical information and educational materials to the public. There will always be a need and desire to learn about our state's history. The French heritage in this state is part of our history, and should be remembered and be available to everyone. It is the intent of the FAHF to fulfill that need.

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## French-American Heritage Foundation

### Current 100 Associates

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Jerry Foley                                   | 2. Dick Bernard                                | 3. Michael Rainville                            |
| 4. William Horn                                  | 5. John Bernard                                | 6. Mark & Judy Labine                           |
| 7. Oliver & Doris Labine                         | 8. Greg Wentz                                  | 9. Jeanne Rivard in Honor of John Rivard        |
| 10. Florence & Carter Hedeem                     | 11. Michele Pierce                             | 12. French-American Heritage Foundation         |
| 13. Max Perras & Nellie Toulouse                 | 14. Gregory Cash                               | 15. Little Canada Historical Society            |
| 16. Don & Abby Marier                            | 17. Kerri & Mark Petty                         | 18. George (Foley) Fallu                        |
| 19. Marie Trépanier                              | 20. Pierre Girard                              | 21. Mark Dillon                                 |
| 22. Constance & Fred Halverson                   | 23. Gayle Middlecamp                           | 24. Labissoniere Family                         |
| 25. Virgil Benoit                                | 26. John & Michele Ward                        | 27. Pat & John Ruffing                          |
| 28. R. Martin Guidry                             | 29. Helene A. Houle                            | 30. Gerald & Jean Ann Landreville               |
| 31. Mary A. Maher                                | 32. Roy & Susie Merie (Trombley) Dennis Family | 33. Robert E. & Gladys Paquin Family            |
| 34. Harold & Carol (LaGessee) Johnson Family     | 35. Frank Bernard                              | 36. Kenneth & Solange (Boinnard) Austin Family  |
| 37. Norman & Odette (DuBois) Buettner Family     | 38. Richard & Margaret (Tessier) Tansom Family | 39. Vavreck Family (LaBrosse)                   |
| 40. Bob & Jean McFarlane                         | 41. Frederick & Florence Michaud Family        | 42. Albert & Leda Proulx Family                 |
| 43. Adolphe David & Julia Verboncoeur Family     | 44. Christine Schulze                          | 45. MaryEllen Weller                            |
| 46. Loria Collette Kelly                         | 47. Christine Loÿs                             | 48. Alfred J. & Stella Guimont (Bourgue) Family |
| 49. Dustin & Carolina DuFault                    | 50. Rémi Roy                                   | 51. Clarence & Audrey Girard Family             |
| 52. Caroline Meilleur & Ian O. Williamson Family | 53. Sisters of St. Joseph of Medaille          | 54. François Yvan André Fouquerel               |

## 2025 Events & Presentations

- **January 28, 2025.** A couple FAHF board members, Marie Trépanier and Michele Pierce, volunteered to help at the Little Canada Historical Society's Annual Open House. LCHS has been a FAHF website sponsor for many years.
- **March 22, 2025.** *French Fur Trade in the Area of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers*, presentation by Greg Cash for Twin Cities Chapter of Minnesota Naturalists.
- **May 3, 2025.** FAHF was invited to participate in Gammelgården Museum's annual Season Opening Day, in Scandia, Minnesota. We were among five organizations (Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery; French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota; Twin Cities Swiss-American Association; Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota; Chinese-American Association of Minnesota) representing cultures that had immigrants in Minnesota during the 1850s-1880s (the same time period that Swedish immigrants were coming to and settling in Minnesota). Mark Labine and Michele Pierce staffed our information table. Family Tapestries (a FAHF website sponsor) owners Anne Kamish McFarlan and Bruce McFarlan joined us for the day; their company creates memorable videos for a variety of occasions.
- **June 20, 2025.** *Frances Anne Hopkins: Hudson Bay Company Wife, Voyageur's Artist*, presentation by book author MaryEllen Weller-Smith at “Mendota After Hours” Sibley Historic Site. MaryEllen is also a founder and board member of the French-American Heritage Foundation.
- **June 22, 2025.** Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Sibley Historic Site. This event was created in partnership with the Dakota County Historical Society, Québec Office in Chicago, Alliance Française Mpls / Saint Paul, and the French-American Heritage Foundation, as they work to bring to life Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste by taking elements of the past and present traditions to create a unique, new celebration that will honor French-Canadians, Canadians, and French culture. Board member Mark Labine shared his research into the 18th and 19th century Little Rapids Fur Trade Post on the Minnesota River near the Dakota village named Inyan Ceyaka, meaning “Barrier of Stone.” Board member Greg Cash discussed the history of the Company of One Hundred Associates, a French trading and colonization company that was chartered in 1627 to capitalize on the North American fur trade and to administer and expand French colonies in New France (now Québec).
- **July 14, 2025.** The French-American Heritage Foundation participated in Alliance Française's Bastille Day commemoration. “La Fête Nationale” is a national holiday in France that celebrates French independence and recalls the storming of the Bastille prison by citizens. The original event that took place on July 14, 1789, would help spark the French Revolution and the resulting Age of Revolution across Europe.
- **August 3, 2025.** St. John the Baptist Parish Festival, Dayton, MN. Participation included featuring our latest FAHF book: *Dayton with a French Accent: Reflections of French-Canadian Roots in Dayton, Minnesota*.
- **September 5-6, 2025.** Osseo Minnesota's Sesquicentennial (150-Year) Celebration. This event provided another opportunity to showcase our newest book: *Dayton with a French Accent*.
- **September 20, 2025.** Salon du Livre — Francophone Book Fair, at Alliance Française. Board members John Ward and Caroline Meilleur spoke about our newest book *Dayton with a French Accent: Reflections of French-Canadian Roots in Dayton, MN*.
- **October 11, 2025.** *Médard Chouart des Groseilliers and Pierre-Esprit Radisson — French Explorers and Fur Traders*, presentation by Greg Cash, in Alliance Française's Grande Salle event space in Minneapolis.

## Examples of Other Events from the Past Three Years

### 2024 Events & Presentations

- **March 2024.** Greg Cash attended a gathering at the Central States American Association of Teachers of French and gave a presentation.
- **May 7, 2024.** The French American Heritage Foundation sponsored a heritage event at the Washington County Heritage Center titled *Huguenots, From Geneva to Hancock*. Neil Simonson, a member of French-American Heritage Foundation gave the presentation.
- **May 2024.** To help in understanding who the French Canadians were, Pierre Girard gave a presentation at the Nokomis Library in Minneapolis as part of the Minneapolis Public Schools Adult Education Program, talking about the Native Americans and the early European migration to North America. He spoke about the migration of the French-Canadians to the U.S. and the difference between the Eastern migration and the Midwest migration. He then told stories about his family history.
- **May 24, 2024.** Greg Cash gave a presentation about the fur trade, at the Sibley Historic Site for the Lakeville Home School Group.
- **June 5, 2024.** Mark Labine gave a presentation about the Fur Trade Era at a Mini Rendezvous in Somerset, Wisconsin. The presentation was part of the annual celebration of Pea Soup Days in Somerset.
- **June 22, 2024.** Saint Genevieve Cemetery Tour, Centerville, Minnesota, facilitated by board member Don Marier's Family History Group.
- **June 23, 2024.** During the Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste celebration, at the Sibley Historic Site, Mark Labine and Greg Cash gave heritage presentations in the Faribault House. Mark discussed the early history of Mendota, including the early French explorers and fur traders, the establishment of Fort Snelling, and migration of Selkirk colonists from the Red River Settlement to Mendota. Greg Cash discussed the French fur trade in Minnesota, from the arrival of his ancestor, Médard Chouart des Groseilliers, and Pierre-Esprit Radisson in Minnesota in the mid-1600s, to the beginning of the Minnesota Territory in the 19th century.
- **July 13, 2024.** At a Labine family reunion, Mark Labine gave a presentation a brief history of Acadia's beginnings and its existence from 1604-1755. He discussed its demise during the French and Indian War, the Acadian deportation of 1755, and he traced his Labine family migration from Acadia in 1755 to Minnesota in the late 19th century.
- **July 14, 2024.** The French American Heritage Foundation sponsored a table for the annual Bastille Day Commemoration at the Alliance Française.
- **July 23, 2024.** MaryEllen Weller-Smith, a board member of the French-American Heritage Foundation, gave a presentation about Frances Anne Hopkins at the Little Canada Historical Society. Frances Anne Hopkins is noted for her paintings of Voyageurs. MaryEllen recently published a book about the life of Frances Anne Hopkins.
- **September 13, 2024.** Mark Labine gave a presentation to the students at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, about French heritage in Minnesota. The students were being taught by Dr. Séverine Bates, who is an assistant professor of French at the college, and the class was about the French connections in the U.S.

- **September 21, 2024.** At St. Anne Catholic Church, in Somerset, Wisconsin, Mark Labine gave a brief history of Acadia's beginnings and its existence from 1604-1755. He discussed its demise during the French and Indian War, the Acadian deportation of 1755, and he traced his Labine family migration from Acadia in 1755 to Minnesota in the late 19th century.
- **November 2, 2024.** MaryEllen Weller-Smith gave a presentation about the life story of Dr. Hippolyte J. Seigneuret, a French doctor who was an exiled French Revolutionary leader in the European People's Spring of 1848. The presentation was given at the Historic Dupuis House at the Sibley Historic Site in Mendota.

## **2023 Events & Presentations**

- **April 2, 2023.** Bottineau Jig: Untold Tales of Early Minnesota. This heritage event, co-sponsored by Alliance Française Mpls / St Paul and the French-American Heritage Foundation featured a video showing of a unique performance from 2011, filled with the history, important characters, dance, and live music from the 1840s Minnesota.
- **June 24, 2023.** 2023's Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptist took place at the Sibley Historic Site in Mendota, MN. This is an event created by the Dakota County Historical Society in partnership with the Québec Government office in Chicago / Délégation du Québec à Chicago, Alliance Française Mpls / St Paul, and the French-American Heritage Foundation. Activities included site tours, performances by dancer/fiddler Danielle Enblom, dancing by Jane Skinner Peck, and singing by FAHF's Les Canadiens Errant.
- **July 22, 2023.** French-Métis Cultural Arts Day, Portage, WI. MaryEllen Weller presented information about artist Frances Anne Hopkins, whose work included paintings of voyageurs during the fur-trading era. Greg Cash discussed the fur trade, and Mark Labine and John Ward staffed the FAHF booth.
- **September 6, 2023.** Presentation by Mark Labine at Our Lady of Lourdes Church about the Métis and the oxcart trails in early Minneapolis.
- **October 7, 2023.** French-American Heritage Foundation's 10-Year Anniversary Celebration included catering by Valerie's French Kitchen, French-Canadian music by Dan Chouinard, and a silent auction featuring watercolor paintings of 23 French heritage sites in Minnesota.
- **October 27, 2023.** Minnesota with a French Accent presentation by Pierre Girard, at Nokomis Library, in Minneapolis, about French history and heritage in Minnesota.
- **October 28, 2023.** At Our Lady of Lourdes, in northeast Minneapolis, board members Marie Trépanier, Michele Pierce, Mark Dillon, and Michael Rainville were among 49 volunteers who participated in the church's annual meat pie baking event, which successfully produced 489 tourtières. Especially popular during holidays, tourtières are available for purchase at the church, throughout the year.

## **2022 Events and Presentations**

- **January 23, 2022.** Joseph Coursolle's French-Dakota Connections, Sibley Historic Site. Independent researcher Jane Hayden-Hart shared her findings about the 1855-1856 "Sioux Affidavits" which were taken by commissioners H.H. Johnson and William Ashley Jones from persons attempting to establish mixed-blood status in order to receive benefits from the treaty signed at Prairie du Chien in 1830. Jane has been researching her maternal Coursolle family history for over 15 years, with her great-great-grandfather Joseph Coursolle being a principal subject. Our musical guest was guitarist Phillippe Gallandat who played and sang French-Canadian and French songs.

- **March 5, 2022.** Charles Napoleon Morin (1849-1922). Presentation at the Little Canada Historical Society, by Jim Morin, a retired marketing executive who has recently edited and published an English translation of his great-grandfather's memoir, *Charles Napoleon Morin – Memories of My Travels and Adventures*. Jim used Charles's remarkable first person story to recall what life was like in the late 1800s, and how what began as a sixteen-year-old's widespread search, eventually gained Charles fulfillment in work, adventure, faith and life. This event's musical guest was Danielle Enblom, a Minneapolis-based step dancer, fiddler, and ethnochoreologist (dance anthropologist).
- **April 29, 2022.** Sibley Historic Site, Fur Trade Presentation and Tour, for Minnesota New Country School, from Henderson, Minnesota; presentation by Greg Cash.
- **August 7, 2022.** In the Beginning There was a Chapel, presentation by Mark Labine, at Washington County Heritage Center, in Stillwater, about the humble, small log chapel, that was dedicated on November 1, 1841; this little Saint Paul Chapel would later become the Cathedral of Saint Paul.
- **August 14, 2022.** The Pond Dakota Heritage Society sponsored a history presentation, by Mark Labine, at Gideon Pond House, in Bloomington. Mark spoke about his research regarding the Little Rapids Fur Post, on the Mississippi River, near the Dakota village named Inyan Ceyaka.
- **September 24, 2022.** Salon du Livre, at Alliance Française; participants included Mark Labine, who provided an overview of his book *They Spoke French*.
- **October 16, 2022.** French genealogy presentation at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Dayton, MN.
- **November 11, 2022.** Partners in Peace, Armistice Day Commemoration at Brit's Pub, Minneapolis, MN. In partnership with Brit's Pub, Alliance Française, Consulate General of Canada in Minneapolis, Vets for Peace, and Minnesota Vikings. The event featured a color guard and words honoring global veterans on the Anniversary of the Armistice that ended World War 1. Mark Labine gave a speech about his grandfather Phillip Labine's experiences during World War I in France.

## Examples of Flyers from Past Heritage Events, and Brochure and Book Covers



These efforts, for our many events and projects, take energy, time and money, and to make sure that this Foundation survives, it must acquire funding to ensure that its mission will be able to continue long into the future. For this reason, FAHF has embarked on its 100 Associates fundraising campaign to generate \$100,000, all of which will be placed into a perpetual endowment fund currently managed by the St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation. The income from this endowment is being used to help support the Foundation, and to fund grants, develop future educational events, and provide services that meet the mission and vision of the French-American Heritage Foundation, which are **to foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who helped form what is now Minnesota, and to preserve, advance, and celebrate French-American heritage and culture.**

**NOTE:** A listing of events, from more past years, is found on our website. Go to [fahfminn.org](http://fahfminn.org), click on the “Home” tab, then click on “About” to learn more.

## Our Website

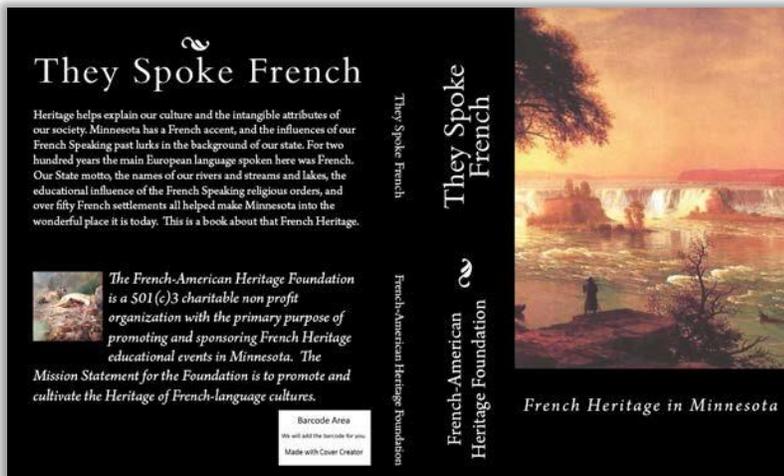
The screenshot shows the website's home page. At the top is a blue header with the title "French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota". Below it is a dark navigation bar with links: Home, Events, Library, Food/Drink, Things We Do, Resources, Our Publications, Videos, Donate/Membership, and Contact. A red "FOLLOW:" bar contains social media icons for Facebook and Email. The main content area is titled "HOME" and features a central graphic with a map of Minnesota and the text "French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota". Below this is a welcome message and a link to the event calendar. A "OUR MISSION" section follows. On the left, there are sponsor logos for Alliance Française Mpls/St Paul and French Heritage Corridor. On the right, there is a "MORE" section with a search bar and a list of upcoming 2026 events.

Information about the French-American Heritage Foundation Website includes the following, and **more**:

- **Home** page describing our organization and showing a list of our sponsors. The home page also shows a list of upcoming events planned by the Foundation. Please consider sponsoring an ad on our website.
- **About** page giving the history of our Foundation
- **FAHF Board Information** page listing current board of directors.
- **Annual Report** page listing all past annual reports for the Foundation
- **Food/Drink** page listing Twin Cities area restaurants with a “French connection.”
- **Things We Do** page about scholarships and opportunities regarding French heritage classes
- **Library** page with many articles about French heritage, copies of newsletters of old French organizations, and links to other French heritage sites.
- **Genealogy** page where we have info on French and French-Canadian genealogy websites.
- **Publications** page describing the French heritage books published by the Foundation.
- **Videos** page showing past YouTube videos produced by the Foundation about French heritage and history.
- **Donate/Membership** page where people can sign up to be members and make donations.

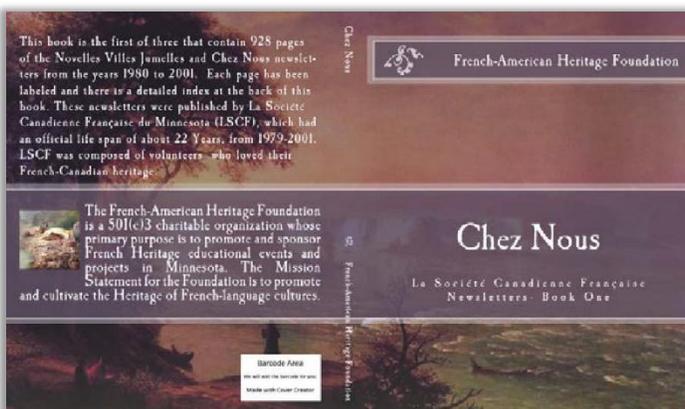
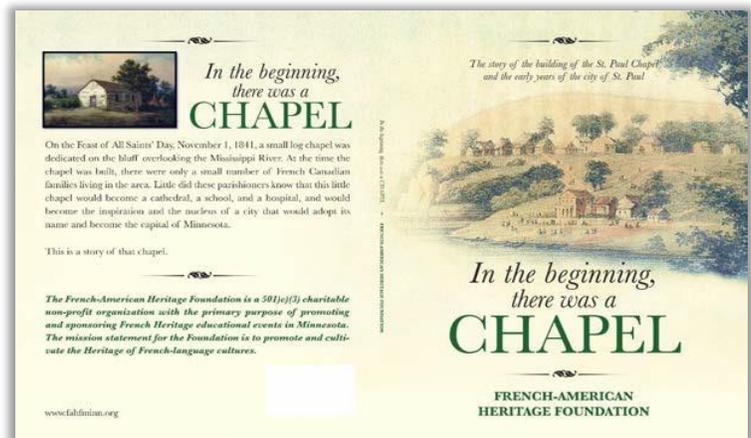
## French-American Heritage Foundation Publications

The French-American Heritage Foundation has completed five heritage projects. This includes the publication of four books, and the completion of a heritage brochure. Information about these five heritage projects, (and a new book in progress), are shown below. These publications may be purchased at future French-American Heritage Foundation events, and the books are available online at Amazon.com.



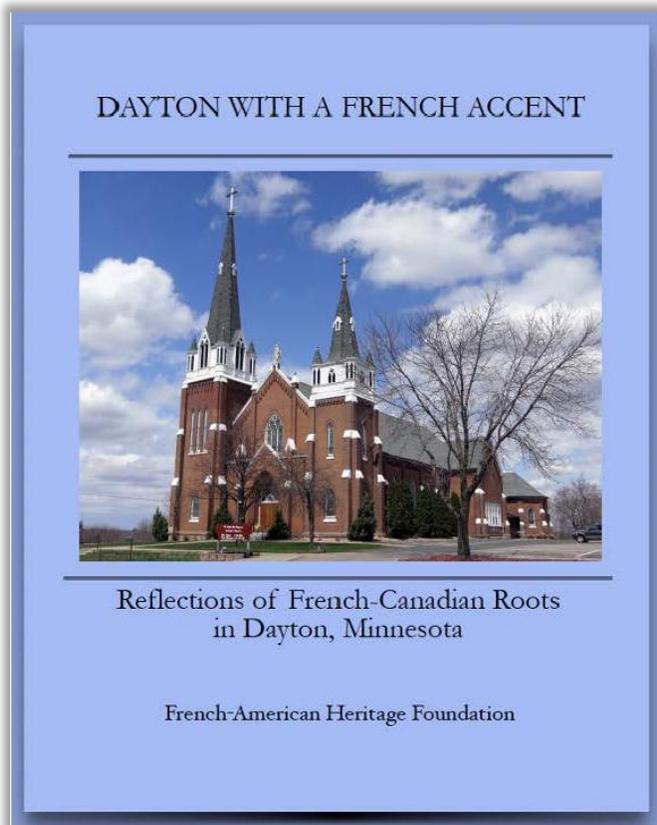
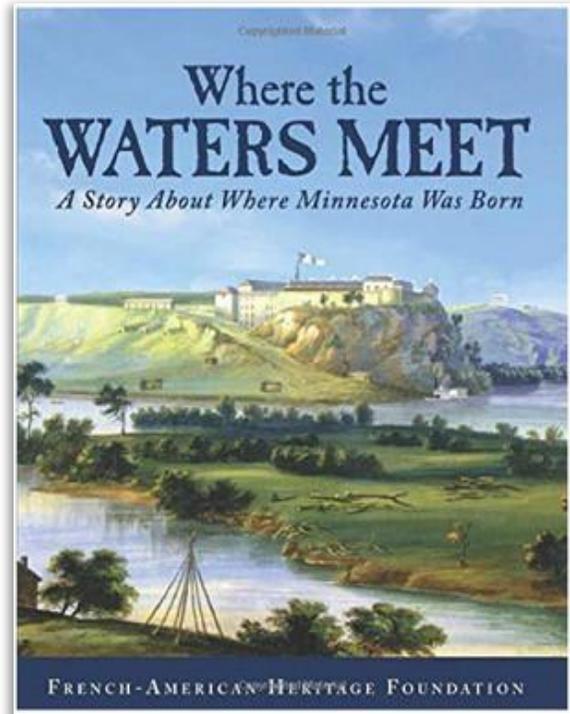
*They Spoke French* is about French heritage in Minnesota, including details about the early heritage in Minnesota, explorers, early settlers, and French-speaking settlements, including Métis, French-heritage sites, French place names, and other information about the state of Minnesota's French accent.

*In the beginning, there was a CHAPEL*, is the story of the small log chapel built by French-Canadians that became the nucleus of the city of St. Paul.



*Chez Nous* is a set of three books that contain 928 pages of *Nouvelles Villes Jumelles* and *Chez Nous* newsletters published during the years 1980 to 2001 by La Société Canadienne Française du Minnesota (LSCF). These three books are filled with numerous articles and stories about Minnesota's French-Canadian heritage and also stories of French heritage in North America.

*Where the Waters Meet* is the story about how the state of Minnesota had its beginnings in the area known as “Mdote” by the Dakota (aka Bdote), which literally means “the place where the waters meet.” The state’s beginnings involved an interesting cast of characters including French explorers and fur traders with names such as: Pierre LeSueur, Nicolas Perrot, Alexis Bailly, Jean Baptiste and Alexander Faribault, Joseph Rolette, and Joseph LaFramboise. This book is the story about that place, its role in our state’s beginning, and a focus on the many French-speaking people who were part of the transformation from Dakota Nation to a member of the United States.



*Dayton with a French Accent: Reflections of French-Canadian Roots in Dayton, Minnesota*, was published in July 2025. This book furnishes genealogy information representing 102 French-speaking pioneer families of Dayton, Minnesota, and some in adjoining Otsego. Including spouses, there are 225 first-generation individuals who were adults when they arrived in the Dayton area and who have many living descendants there today. The French-speaking communities were, in large part, linked by ancestry, country of origin, language, and religion, so Dayton is connected to many other similar communities in Minnesota as well as several neighboring states and provinces.

# Minnesota French Heritage Sites Brochure

The French-American Heritage Foundation completed the creation of a brochure showing French heritage sites in Minnesota. The heritage brochure project was designed to promote multidisciplinary on-site visitation and remote learning in a way that expands public awareness and understanding. The heritage brochure includes original illustrations, and descriptions of 24 statewide sites and their significance to French heritage in Minnesota. All featured sites are publicly accessible. **NOTE:** Information about these sites can be found on our website: [fahfminn.org](http://fahfminn.org) — go to the menu bar at the top of our home page, select the “Resource” tab and then click on “Minnesota Historical Map.”

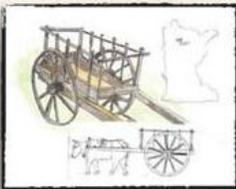
During the early years of European settlement in Minnesota, many French-Canadians migrated here, and at least 79 French-speaking towns and communities were formed in Minnesota. French-speaking ancestors were important in all sectors of society, and they helped build our state and region into what it is today. This brochure shows some of the heritage sites in Minnesota that are related to Minnesota’s French accent. The watercolor paintings in the brochure were created by artist H. Jean McFarlane (née Collette), a board member of the Foundation. The brochures are available at Foundation heritage events.

**Rivers**

**Father Hennepin Bluff Park.** This 5.5-acre park rests on a wooded bluff overlooking the Mississippi River and St. Anthony Falls. It connects to many parks on both sides of the river through an extensive trail system. It is named for French-speaking Catholic Franciscan priest Fr. Louis Hennepin who visited the region in 1680 and kept a diary of his journeys and his discovery and naming of St. Anthony Falls. (9)



**Red River Oxcart Trails.** This network of 19th century oxcart routes connected the Red River Colony in Canada with the Mississippi River at Mendota and St. Paul. The trails provided French Canadians and the Métis people a way to transport furs and supplies without reliance on the monopolistic Hudson’s Bay Company trade developed by and along the trails connecting Fort Garry with St. Paul. This commerce contributed to the settlement of Minnesota and North Dakota, and accelerated the settlement of Western Canada. (11)



**Lake Pepin, Fort Perrot/Fort Beauharnois.** The lake was first named in a 1703 map of New France made by Guillaume Delisle at the request of King Louis XIV. The lake was named for Jean Pepin who settled on its shores in the late 1600s after exploring the Great Lakes from Boucherville. Nicolas Perrot erected the first of several fur trade posts, Fort Saint Antoine, in 1686. In 1727 René Boucher de La Perrière and Michel Guignas built Fort Beauharnois on the lake. In the 19th century the lake was used to transport lumber downstream to mills at Winona and St. Louis. (12)

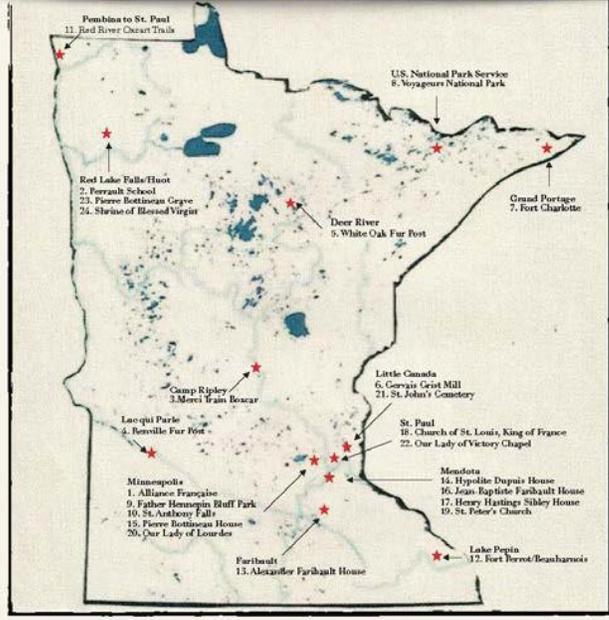


**St. Anthony Falls.** A major waterfall located in Minneapolis on the Upper Mississippi River; it was first named the Chutes de Saint Antoine in Father Louis Hennepin’s 1680 journal and is part of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It was a leading tourist attraction for French traders and early European settlers, and a special place for the Dakota people. This once significant source of water power sustained wool, cotton, and flour mills, as well as sawmill and paper mill trades. (10)



Sample Panel from Inside Brochure

**Map of Minnesota French Heritage Sites**



**French Heritage Historic Sites in This Brochure:**

<p><b>Places of Learning &amp; Commerce</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alliance Française</li> <li>2. Perrault School</li> <li>3. Merci Train Boxcar</li> <li>4. Lac qui Parle/Benville Fur Post</li> <li>5. White Oak Fur Post</li> <li>6. Gervais Crist Mill</li> </ol> <p><b>Natural Places &amp; Forts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Grand Portage/Fort Charlotte</li> <li>8. Voyageurs National Park</li> <li>9. Father Hennepin Bluff Park</li> <li>10. St. Anthony Falls</li> <li>11. Red River Oxcart Trails</li> <li>12. Fort Perrot/Fort Beauharnois</li> </ol>	<p><b>Homesteads</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Alexander Faribault House</li> <li>14. Hypolite Dupuis House</li> <li>15. Pierre Bottineau House</li> <li>16. Jean-Baptiste Faribault House</li> <li>17. Henry Hastings Sibley House</li> </ol> <p><b>Places of Faith &amp; Culture</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Church of St. Louis, King of France</li> <li>19. St. Peter’s Church</li> <li>20. Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Minneapolis</li> <li>21. St. John’s Cemetery</li> <li>22. Our Lady of Victory Chapel</li> <li>23. Pierre Bottineau Gravesite</li> <li>24. Shrine of the Blessed Virgin</li> </ol>
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Back Cover of Brochure

## Feature Articles

In January 2025, we introduced a new series of articles that were published throughout the year under a newly designed Feature Article banner:

**FEATURE ARTICLE**



**ARTICLE DE FOND**

Following are the introductory lines of the articles, which can be read in their entirety on our website. On the top right corner of our home page, you'll find our Current Article link under the text "Feature Article." For past Feature Articles, go to the lower right of the page to "See the **Past Articles** by clicking here."

January 07, 2025

By Pat (Foley) Ruffing

### Welcome and Goodbye

Bienvenue! Congrégation des Sœurs de Saint-Joseph de Bourg, Province de Crookston.  
Au revoir! Liées aux ancêtres à tout jamais.

(Welcome! Congregation of Sisters of Saint-Joseph de Bourg, Crookston Province.  
Goodbye! Linked to the ancestors forever.)

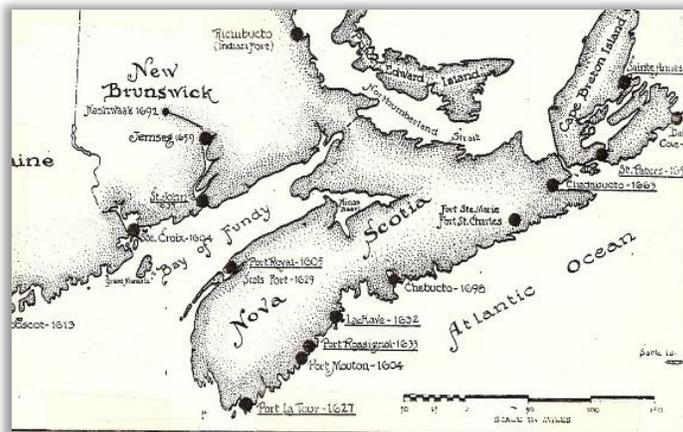
My French-Canadian maternal grandparents, Maximilien Perras and Nellie Toulouse solicitously pursued a high school education for their daughters, thereby linking their family history years with that of the St. Joseph Sisters for 100 years. Both Max and Nellie came to Red Lake County Minnesota as children in the 1880s. Their parents had immigrated.....



*Catholic Convent – Argyle, Minnesota*

### Dayton with a French Accent

In 2013, a group of individuals with a deep passion for French heritage in Minnesota established a nonprofit organization named the French-American Heritage Foundation. Their mission was to focus on projects that would enhance the public’s understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who played a pivotal role in shaping the present-day state of Minnesota.....



Map of Ancient Acadia

### The 333rd Machine Gun Battery

My Grandfather Alfred LaGrandeur enlisted in the army on March 29th, 1918, at the age of 26. He became a member of the 333rd Machine Gun Battalion, was promoted to Sergeant on May 7th and Corporal on August 17th. He was very eager to join the fight. They trained for trench warfare and drilled with rifles, handguns and bayonets. His battalion was moved from Wisconsin, Detroit, Canada, Niagara Falls (they were given a half hour to look at the falls) to a base near New York City. They spent a couple of weeks there enjoying leave in the city and displaying their skills to the local gentry. (This article is based primarily on entries from a diary that Alfred kept during World War I.).....

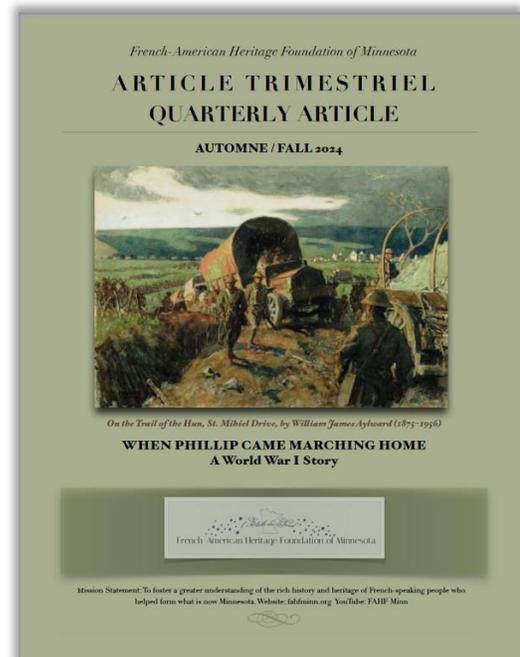
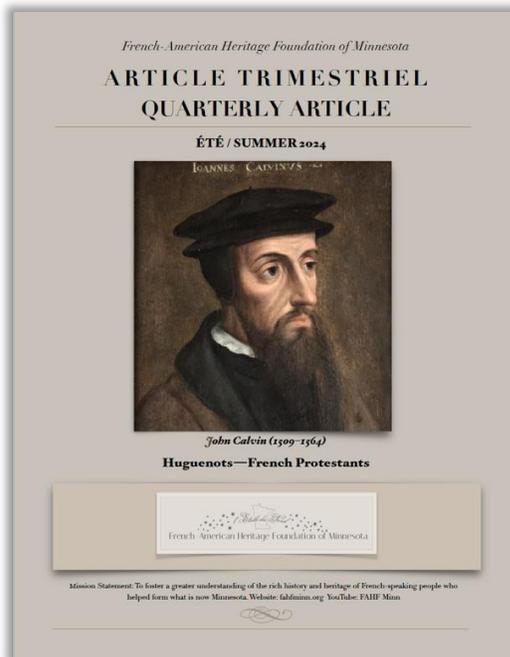
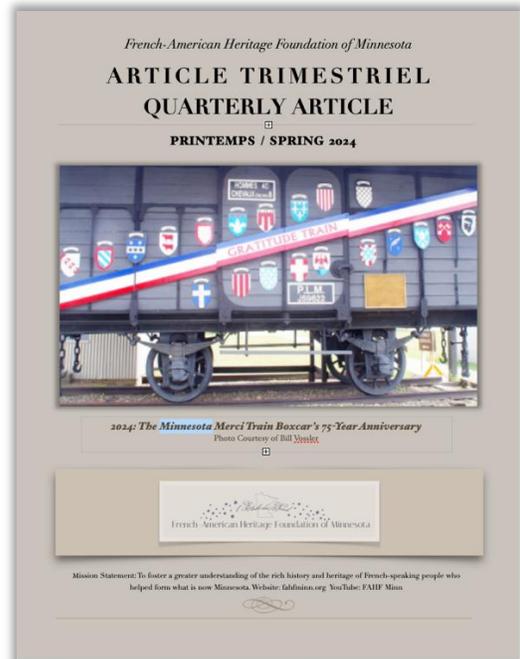
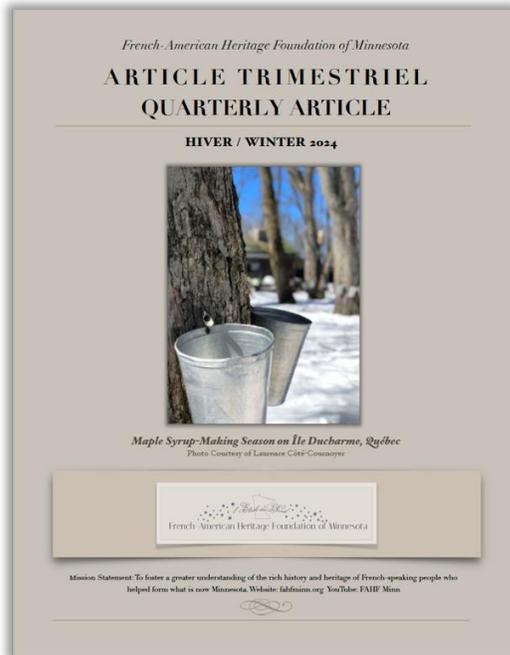


Postcard: Boulogne-sur-Seine – La Rue de L’Église

## Article Trimestriel (Quarterly Article) Past Publications

The French-American Heritage Foundation has also posted quarterly articles related to French-Canadian heritage on the website. During 2024, the HIVER / WINTER issue described *Maple Syrup-Making Season on Île Ducharme, Québec*; PRINTEMPS / SPRING celebrated *2024: The Minnesota Merci Train Boxcar's 75-Year Anniversary*; ÉTÉ / SUMMER covered *Huguenots—French Protestants*; FALL / AUTOMNE presented *When Phillip Came Marching Home, A World War I Story*.

These past quarterly articles are located on the French-American Heritage Foundation's website: fahfminn.org, and can be accessed by scrolling to the end of the right-hand column on our Home page, and then following the instruction "See the Past Articles by clicking [here](#)."



**2025 Financial Report**  
**French-American Heritage Foundation**

<b>2025 Income</b>		
Member Donations, Bank		775.00
Member Donations, PayPal		575.54
100 Associates Donations, Bank		5,900.00
100 Associates Donations, PayPal		482.06
Event Fees, Bank		455.00
Events Fees, PayPal		369.51
Book Sales		3,349.87
Web Sponsors		300.00
Interest/Miscellaneous		14.38
100 Associates Grant		1,448.53
T-Shirts		515.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,184.89</b>

<b>2025 Expenses</b>		
PO Box Fee		192.00
Event Expenses		1,157.00
Website		562.83
Donations		1,000.00
Book Purchases		1,436.96
T-Shirt Purchases		927.00
Transfer to 100 Associates Endowment Fund		6,950.00
Grant Payments		2,700.00
Miscellaneous Expenses		734.68
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,660.47</b>

<b>2025 Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>(\$1,475.58)</b>
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**French-American Heritage Foundation Assets**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
PayPal	686.62	154.87	1,036.09	1,018.33	1,079.99
Bank Account	12,374.30	14,275.48	15,037.65	15,345.46	14,024.07
100 Associates Endowment Fund	26,379.35	27,123.43	42,707.29	54,741.39	64,597.39
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$39,440.27</b>	<b>41,553.78</b>	<b>58,781.03</b>	<b>\$71,105.18</b>	<b>\$79,701.45</b>