

AN EVENING TO HONOR AND REMEMBER

WILFRID J. MICHAUD, JR.

Special Guest Speaker:
Ambassador Alain Briottet
Consul General of France in Boston
1985-1990

Monday, April 7, 2003

The Michaud Family

When Pierre Michaud, an eighteen-year-old from the small town of Fontenay-le-Comte in Poitou, contracted in the nearby port city of La Rochelle to spend the next three years, 1656-1659, as an indentured servant in Canada at the meager annual wage of 36 livres, he could not have suspected he would become the ancestor of all the Michauds in North America, today a numerous brood! Pierre was raised Catholic in Notre Dame parish, but like many people from his region in the seventeenth century, he had Protestant relatives. Although he could write, he left no record of his decision to leave his homeland for the fledgling colony of Quebec, population 2,000. He was probably seeking employment, and possibly adventure. In any case, as a young, single male from an urban background, he fits the profile of most early French immigrants to Canada.

Despite his humble beginnings, Pierre prospered in the New World. In 1667, as a master shoemaker, he married sixteen-year-old Marie Ancelin, who had arrived from La Rochelle with her family two years earlier. The couple had ten children, 6 boys and 4 girls, only one of whom died in infancy. Although the child mortality rate in France was 50 per cent, in Canada nine Michaud children survived to found families of their own. Most acquired small farms on the fertile lands of the St. Lawrence Valley.

Two hundred years later, members of the Michaud family became immigrants again, when Wilfrid's grandparents made the journey from Quebec to Fall River. Like tens of thousands of their compatriots, they found it increasingly difficult to make a living in the now crowded Quebec countryside, and they hoped to better their circumstances in New England's rapidly expanding industrial cities. Fall River was at that time the largest cotton-manufacturing center in the world.

As large numbers of French Canadians settled in Fall River and other New England towns, they recreated the world that they knew, worshipping in French parishes, studying in French schools, organizing French fraternal societies, reading French newspapers. Appropriately, their close-knit neighborhoods surrounding the mills became known as Petits Canadas. This is the world that nurtured Wilfrid in his childhood, providing him with a deep and lasting love of French language and culture, and sending him on a journey that would eventually take him full circle to Fontenay-le-Comte, where more sedentary Michauds take pleasure each year in welcoming their Canadian and American cousins.

Leslie Choquette
L'Institut français
Assumption College
Worcester, Massachusetts

Program

Welcome

Elaine Uzan Leary, Executive Director
The French Library and Cultural Center/Alliance
Française of Boston and Cambridge

Presentation of Ambassador Alain Briottet

Michèle Marinthe, Présidente
Club Richelieu Alain Briottet

Who Was Wilfrid Michaud

Ambassadeur Alain Briottet

Presentation of Jacques E. Staelen

Michèle Marinthe

Cercle Horace Viau

Jacques E. Staelen

Presentation of Cercle Horace Viau Award

Adèle Boufford Baker
Honorary Consul of France in New Hampshire

Closing

Elaine Uzan Leary

When seeking to honor Wilfrid it seemed appropriate that many of the materials he collected should remain in Boston, where he attended Law School and lived for two decades. He was a proud Franco-American and astute collector of all things French. Having studied in France, he returned often, visiting an every widening circle of friends in Paris, Saumur, Poitiers and Nantes. Their hospitality, guidance and enthusiasm resulted in the acquisition of many items that formed his collections. I am grateful for the gracious participation of his mother, Mrs. Rhea (Lavoie) Michaud, to honor both her sons and their proud ancestry. Working closely with Director, Elaine Uzan Leary, and Librarian, Jane Stahl we selected books, language materials and furnishings that compliment the Library's holdings. John Bardes lent an able and steady hand.

It was Wilfrid's wish that his Franco-American materials be offered to the French Institute at Assumption College. Leslie Choquette has made these selections with the greatest care.

This evening we remember Wilfrid as the first anniversary of his death approaches. The richness of his life should never be measured in years, but rather in countless hours of unselfish commitment and service.

Stephen Borkowski

The French Library and Cultural Center/
Alliance Française of Boston and Cambridge
53 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02116

Morning Prayers
Appleton Chapel, Memorial Church
Harvard University
April 30, 2002

Good morning. I am Anne Taylor the University's General Counsel.

I had an entirely different topic that I planned to talk about today, but events intervened and I hope you will indulge me by letting me share with you, and solicit your participation in, something that is big in my life and thoughts right now. I hope it touches something in your life too.

I have a house in Provincetown on the Cape. Among my best friends there are a couple, Steve and Will. Over the years we have had a zillion good times, soulful talks, good meals, and fun of every kind with them. Will was an accomplished guy - a lawyer, a deep devotee of everything French, a shopper and antique collector, philanthropist, and a political maven. He was utterly devoted to the care and support, financially and otherwise, of his elderly mother and his profoundly disabled brother.

Last fall Will was diagnosed with a very aggressive cancer and endured awful torment in an effort to arrest it. Steve stopped working and took care of Will 24/7. A week ago, Steve called and said things were not good. My husband and I went to their place in the South End. Will was clearly dying. The apartment was full of friends, gay and straight, sitting on or around the bed talking to Will, telling stories, often laughing about past good times. It was the farthest thing from creepy or macabre. In fact, it was very spiritual and very loving. There was even a sense of joy in being allowed to participate in the conclusion of a good and well lived life. Another moving aspect of the scene was the power and comfort of faith. Will was a deeply believing, though not rigorously observant, Catholic. Towards the end of his life his faith became increasingly important and sustaining. A lovely Jesuit brother came to visit him often and was a terrific help. That evening as we gathered at his bed, there were many symbols of his faith around - just as he would have wanted it.

Eventually that evening everyone left and I stayed with Steve so that he would not have to be alone with death. At 2:00 am Will peacefully died in Steve's arms. Steve and I then dealt with the details and held each other. This past week has been full of the rites of passage for Will.

Why am I telling you this? The experience has made me focus on several points which I

think are worth talking about.

The whole experience rekindled my rage at homophobia, and indeed intolerance of all kinds. I defy anyone to judge that this man, his beloved partner, their many, many friends and loving families are in any way fundamentally different, deviant, or unworthy. On the contrary, in my view they are exemplars of what it means to be good people. I hope at the end of the day my score card will have as many virtue points on it. I live in Newton where a debate is raging about a tax override. Flyers were sent around town opposing the override and saying that the community should stand up to the gays, jews, and liberals. This is intolerable. We must all commit ourselves to tolerance, joy in diversity, and acceptance in our hearts, and work for those values in our communities.

Secondly, it made me think about the church. I am not a catholic, but I, like many of your I am sure, I have been following closely and with horror and outrage the sex abuse scandal and the response of the hierarchy to it. The experience with Will made me step back and remember that the actions of these priests was awful, but it is also an aberration. Father Carrol who came so many times to the apartment to help Will was just what a priest should be. The father who gave the homily at the funeral had mentored Will since he was a fatherless fourteen year old, had facilitated his first trip to France (an experience that ended up changing Will's life in so many positive ways), and had always stood behind him cheering and giving encouragement, causing him to achieve things that might have otherwise been impossible. These priests are out there doing god's work and we must not forget that they are there.

Finally, it made me really think about death itself. What was very clear is that it does not have to be an event characterized only by grief and horror. Well done, with love and appropriate care, it provides positive and peaceful closure to the dying and participating in such a passing is a terrific gift to those left behind. I actually felt really privileged to have been part of something so elemental and important in the lives of these dear friends. I thank Steve and Will for inviting me in.

Will absolutely loved pageantry and symbolism of all kinds. Trust me, he would get an enormous kick out of the fact that he is being remembered here today at Appleton Chapel at Harvard. Shortly after these remarks, we will sing a hymn together. I would be grateful if you would join with me as we sing to remember Will and to send him joyfully on his journey.



Salvatore Del Deo
"Giovanna's Rose"

2002, Oil on Board, 10 X 8

Represented by the Berta Walker Gallery
Provincetown, Massachusetts

THE WILFRID J. MICHAUD, JR.
MEMORIAL FUND

THROUGH ITS GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS

HAS DONATED THIS PAINTING TO THE

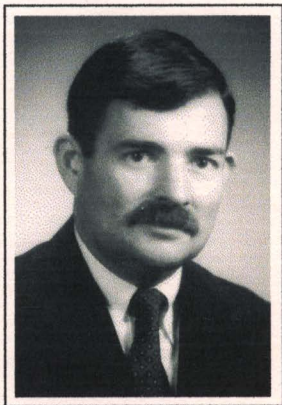
ART COLLECTION

OF THE

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

IN MEMORY OF WILFRID, ON THE

53RD ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH



Dear Friends:

*To honor and serve Will's memory,
I plan to purchase a major painting
by an esteemed Provincetown artist
for donation and display in
Provincetown. Please join in
creating this memorial gift by
sending a contribution to:*

*The Wilfrid J. Michaud Jr.
Memorial Fund*

clo James H. McNulty, Jr.

Tyler & Reynolds

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Boston, MA 02110

617-695-9799

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stephen Borkowski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stephen Borkowski

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WILFRID J. MICHAUD, JR.

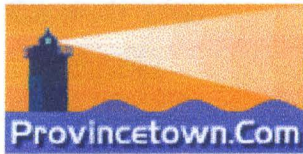
**Special Guest Speaker: Ambassador Alain Briottet
Consul General of France in Boston 1985-1990**

**Monday, April 7, 2003
6:00-8:00 p.m.**

**The French Library and Cultural Center/
Alliance Française of Boston and Cambridge
53 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02116**

Please R.S.V.P to (617) 912-0400

PROVINCETOWN'S AWARD WINNING WEEKLY NEWSPAPER



PROVINCETOWN BANNER



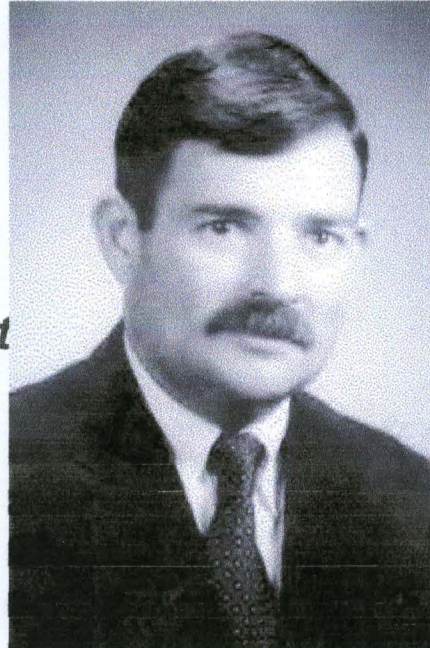
April 25, 2002

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Wilfrid J. Michaud, Jr., 51

Attorney, philanthropist former school teacher



Provincetown Banner Staff

Wilfrid J. Michaud, Jr., 51, of Boston and Provincetown died of cancer on April 22.

Banner file photo Wilfrid J. Michaud, Jr.

An attorney and former teacher of French, he was also active in civic and philanthropic work, particularly in the field of French culture. Born and raised in Fall River, Mass., he received the B.A. degree with highest distinction from Southeastern Massachusetts University, a Masters of Arts in French from the University of Rhode Island, and taught in the Fall River public schools. He then attended Boston University School of Law, receiving the J.D. degree cum laude, practiced law in New York City and Boston.

He served as President of the Advisory Board of the French Institute of Assumption College; Commissioner of the American and Canadian French Cultural Exchange Commission (appointed by Governor Dukakis); and founding president of the

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Richelieu Club of Boston, Locally, he was a supporter of the Provincetown Art Association, Provincetown Arts Press, PASG and HOW. In addition to many interests, he spoke French and Portuguese fluently.

Surviving are his partner of 15 years, Stephen Borkowski, family members and many dear friends.