

6 Wallace Avenue  
Orchard Hill Park  
Charlottetown R.R. 7  
P. E. I.  
April 13, 1977

Honorable Alex B. Campbell  
Premier of Prince Edward Island  
Provincial Administrative Building  
Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Honorable Mr. Premier,

The Centre Culturel Port Lajoie of Charlottetown was instituted through the efforts of the Saint-Thomas Aquinas Society. The Charlottetown branch of the Society, in operation since the 1920's, brought the idea of forming a French cultural centre to its annual meeting of 1971.

Efforts were continued and the Centre came into being in 1972. Over the next two years, it increased its membership to approximately 100 members. However, due to a lack of facilities, it was not in a position to offer a variety of programs and services nor to attract more members.

The Centre Culturel Port Lajoie has given itself as objectives:

- 1) to encourage and provide the means by which franco-phones might meet on a regular basis
- 2) to promote the use of the French language
- 3) to contribute to the strengthening and influence of the French culture
- 4) to encourage a spirit of brotherhood and co-operation among members of the Center

We have a duly elected executive and administrative council but we are not as yet incorporated.

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After a period of inactivity during which we searched for and finally found a suitable locale for our Centre, we are now about to resume activities directed at the francophone population of Charlottetown and surrounding area.

As you are undoubtedly aware, we have agreed to rent the second floor of a recently renovated property on Sydney Street belonging to Marc Gallant. It is centrally located and large enough to allow us to undertake various programs within it.

Besides serving the interests of the francophone population of our immediate area, we are interested in attracting and entertaining some of the large numbers of tourists who arrive each summer from the Province of Quebec and who seldom, if ever, have the opportunity of meeting other French speaking Canadians while on holidays. Since most of them spend their holidays in Queen's County or at least visit Charlottetown, we would be in a position to help make their stay here that much more meaningful. Chances are that if their visit provides pleasant memories and shows that an effort has been made to accommodate them in part in their own language, they will return to visit us again.

Also, the city of Charlottetown will be welcoming many new citizens in the years ahead. These new community members will be arriving as a result of the decentralization of the Department of Veterans' Affairs to our fair city. Undoubtedly, many of these people will be of French origin and French speaking. It is our intention to have a French Cultural Centre which would allow these people to feel at home within it, and to participate in its activities from the time of their arrival.

The reason we are writing to you today in your capacity as Minister responsible for Cultural Affairs is that we are in need of financial assistance, especially at this time when we are attempting to set up an organization which hopefully will start generating funds in the future. We will have to pay a rent of \$325 per month, raise funds in order to be incorporated, buy some basic necessities: stove, refrigerator, tables, chairs, etc.

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We will be meeting a representative of the Department of Secretary of State in the near future in order to discuss the funding of certain projects which we hope to undertake. They do not, however, allow for financial assistance to cover rent, furniture, appliances, etc. Because of this and because we believe the provincial government would want to see a French centre in Charlottetown, we are requesting your assistance as we attempt to reorganize the Centre Culturel Port Lajoie. (Needless to say, any financial assistance which you will be able to provide will be greatly appreciated by our membership.)

We would also ask you to take time from your busy schedule to meet with us at your convenience in order that we might provide you with more details concerning our present plight as well as our future plans and activities for the Centre.

Respectfully yours,

*Tilmon Gallant*

Tilmon Gallant, President  
Centre Culturel Port Lajoie