

**Fort Kent Historical Society digital image collection of Thibodeau buildings and flood
MCC-00463**

Finding Aid

**Prepared by
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Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes
University of Maine at Fort Kent
Fort Kent, Maine**

Title: Fort Kent Historical Society digital image collection of Thibodeau buildings and flood

Creator/Collector: Jim Thibodeau

Collection number: MCC-00463

Shelf list number: Digital image collection

Dates: 1918-1955

Extent: 1 album (.14 cubic feet)

Provenance: Material was acquired from Jim Thibodeau

Language: English

Conservation notes: All photographs have been scanned and saved as a TIFF and JPEG images as per Maine Memory Network standards. They were inserted in clear archival plastic sleeves for prerservation.

Access restrictions: No restrictions on access.

Physical restrictions: None.

Technical restrictions: A visit to the Acadian Archives at UMFK is recommended to access the digital files.

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Citation: Fort Kent Historical Society digital image collection of Thibodeau buildings & flood, MCC-00463, Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes, University of Maine at Fort Kent

Separated materials: Not applicable.

Related materials: MCC-00455 Fort Kent Historical Society digital postcard collection

Location of originals: Originals are located at the Fort Kent Historical Society.

Location of copies: Not applicable.

Published in: Not applicable.

Biographical information/Organizational history:

The Fort Kent Historical Society is in fact two separate organizations, the first dating to the mid 1920s, the second established nearly a half century later. In 1925, a group of

prominent, civic-minded Fort Kent citizens gathered to form a society to “promote the study of History, Literature, and village improvement.” (State of Maine Certificate of Organization of a Corporation, organizational meeting report, December 4, 1925). They filed incorporation papers with the state of Maine for a non-profit corporation named the Fort Kent Historical Society (hereafter FKHS) on December 4, 1925. Original officers were Paul D. Thibodeau, president; William J. Audibert, treasurer; and Fora Bradbury Pinkham, clerk. The first five directors were Niles C. Pinkham, Mabel K. Theriault, Richard F. Crocker, Irené Cyr, and Hedwidge Pelletier.

Virtually nothing is known about the achievements of the first FKHS, which seems to have gone inactive shortly after its foundation. Its existence faded from local memory, and when the Fort Kent Historical Association formed in the 1970s, organizers were initially unaware of the antecedent organization.

In 1974, a group of Fort Kent citizens began meeting for the purpose of organizing a local historical association. James I. Hoyt and Dr. Roger L. Grindle, then professor of History at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, were particularly active in this effort, recruiting UMFK students and staff as well as community members. By May 1974, the group, known as the “Fort Kent Historical Association,” had created a new set of by-laws and elected their first slate of officers: James Hoyt, president; Miriam Aungst, vice-president; Daniel Michaud, secretary; and Robert Ouellet, treasurer. Members of the first board of directors were Alphy St. Pierre, James Thibodeau, Lois Currier, Donat Michaud, Lowell Daigle, and Emily Evans.

By October 1974, when the Association held its first annual meeting, the society counted 73 active members, 3 junior members, and 1 contributing member. The Association continued to be very active over the next six years, raising funds, building collections, holding membership and board meetings, developing historical displays, and operating a one-room museum on the second floor of the former Fort Kent Town Hall. Officers included Roger Grindle (President), Lucille Pelletier (Vice President and Public Relations), Jack Vanek (Secretary), and Donald Raymond (Treasurer).

In the late 1970s, the Association adopted “Fort Kent Historical Society” (FKHS) as their official name. During this period, the FKHS, under the leadership of Dr. Grindle, negotiated the donation to the Society by the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad of its former Fort Kent branch station, which had operated from 1902 until 1979. The FKHS Building Committee, chaired by James Grandmaison, also negotiated the sale of the branch station property to the Society in 1980.

As a result of these initiatives, the FKHS relocated its collections permanently to the station house and officially opened the doors of the museum on July 24, 1982. On April 21, 1989, the Fort Kent Railroad Station was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Since the opening of the museum, the Society’s energies have focused primarily on restoration work, exhibit preparation, and the production of documentary videotapes.

Scope and content: This is a digital collection consisting of 15 black and white photographs of buildings, flooded roads, millinery store of Fort Kent, Maine, and one newspaper article of the 1955 Church World Magazine (1 copy and 1 original). The photographs are dated between 1918 and 1940. This collection was possible through a grant project of the Maine Acadian Heritage Council.

Inventory:

ALBUM 1

- Photo 1 “Main St., Fort Kent, ME” “c. 1928 photo of Paul Thibodeau Block, man in photo thought to be Dr. Rosairo J. Page” B&W – 1928 15.5 x 10 cm
- Photo 2 “AJ Thibodeau Clothing Store (father of Alva & Tom Thibodeau)” “c. 1918 photo of Paul Thibodeau Block” B&W – 1918 15.5 x 10 cm
- Photo 3 Flooded Fort Kent B&W – no date 15.5 x 10 cm
- Photo 4 Flooded Fort Kent “Looking west” B&W – 1930 14.75 x 9 cm
- Photo 5 Flooded Fort Kent “Looking north from Elm Street, Etcovitz garage” B&W – 1930 14.5 x 9 cm
- Photo 6 Flooded Fort Kent “Bill Pelletier’s Chevy Garage – Main St.” B&W – 1930 14.75 x 9 cm
- Photo 7 Flooded Fort Kent, J.C. Penney Company Incorporated store, post man B&W – 1930 8.5 x 14.25 cm
- Photo 8 Flooded Fort Kent “Edmund and Rupert Thibodeau’s gas and vulcanizing station on Main Street, Ft. Kt. around 1930. To the right is Aunt Ada’s house, which was moved to Elm Street (31 Elm) around 1940 – to become our home” B&W – 1930 14.5 x 9 cm
- Photo 9 Flooded Fort Kent, man in canoe “Hall Street” B&W – 1930 10.25 x 8.25 cm
- Photo 10 Car on flooded road “Rd. to St. Francis” B&W – 1930 6.5 x 9.5 cm
- Photo 11 Flooded Fort Kent, people in canoe “Looking south, back of Savoy Theater” B&W – 1930 9.5 x 7.5 cm
- Photo 12 Flooded Fort Kent “Thibodeau Garage” B&W – 1930 9.5 x 7.5 cm
- Photo 13 Flooded Fort Kent “Looking north from Elm St., Audibert Street Intersection” B&W – 1930 9.75 x 7.5 cm
- Photo 14 Flooded Fort Kent “Hall Street, looking west” B&W – 1930 9.5 x 7.25 cm
- Photo 15 Three women and man in hat store B&W – no date 17.75 x 12.75 cm
- Photo 16 The Church World newspaper, Page Seven B&W – June 10, 1955 44 x 28.5 cm
- Photo 17 The Church World newspaper, Page Eight B&W – June 10, 1955 44 x 28.5 cm