

# JANSEL COURT CONDOMINIUM



**RESEARCH ON OUR COLLECTIVE PAST**

**ACCOMPANIED BY A HISTORICAL REMINDER OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT**

**FERNAND PIOTTE**

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## INTRODUCTION

Louise and I have been away from winter for twenty years to enjoy a retreat in an enchanting setting, under the blue sky and a bright sun. Owners since 1986, we have been coming since then for short annual stays. We have always wondered how it was, that so many Quebecers had become homeowners from the very beginning? For a long time, for example, we were the largest group of golfers who met a few times a week, as well as at an annual tournament, where we joined Canadians residing in other complexes.

It took me a while, but I can now share my research with you on this subject. As Jansel Court is closely linked to the development of Freeport, I have simultaneously accumulated information about its development. Although I have focused on the search for French Canadians, I am well aware that there are English Canadians, Americans and Europeans. The Bahamians, who were not very numerous in 1975 in Freeport, gradually adopted Jansel Court.

It is appropriate to pay tribute to Don Scott and his wife Beth, as well as to the Fournier family who were from the first cohort of Jansel Court in December 1974. They're always with us.

Don and Beth Scott first purchased apartment 334 before moving to 402, which they still occupy. Mr. R. Fournier purchased apartment 324, which the family still occupies. This makes our associates and friends Don and Beth Scott and the Fournier family the deans emeritus of Jansel Court.

It is also worth noting the presence in Jansel Court, as early as 1978, of Val Richards, apartment 115. He was the first Bahamian to join the community of Jansel Court. Let's pay him this tribute.

Finally, let us remember that for many years the Bahamians have been, as it should be, the majority group in Jansel Court.

If you have any information that would refine our knowledge of the history of Jansel Court, please contact me.

Fernand Piote # 412. [fernand.piotte@hotmail.com](mailto:fernand.piotte@hotmail.com)

## **FREEPORT**

### **Historic Reminder**

For several centuries, the Bahamas was inhabited by Indians, Siboneys and Lucayans (Arawacks). In 1492, Christopher Columbus docked in the Bahamas and took possession of it on behalf of Spain.

The Bahamas was successively under the rule of Spain and then Great Britain. The English were present in 1629 and ruled the Bahamas in 1718. Spain regained control in 1781 and the Bahamas was returned to the English in 1783.

When slavery was abolished in the Bahamas in 1834, freed slaves settled on the South Coast and created Freetown, a land of emancipation.

West End had spurs of activity, dues to its proximity to the Florida coast; gun trade during the American Civil War from 1861 to 1865 and alcohols during Prohibition from 1919 to 1934.

A new Constitution giving more local autonomy was adopted in 1964. The Bahamas had its first self-government on January 10, 1967 (Majority rule) and gained independence on July 10, 1973.

### **Foundation of Freeport**

To 1950s, Grand Bahama was an immense forest of pines. Wallace Groves (1902-1988), a financier and American businessman, arrived on the island in 1944 with the aim of cutting wood for his Abaco Lumber Company bought from Roberts family in financial difficulties.

Seeing the potential which would offer the development of the island, he was interested in it and suggested to the government of the Colony to undertake the development of the port and the industry of Grand Bahama.

## **The Hawksbill Creek Agreement**

The Hawksbill Creek Agreement, is essentially a contract, signed in 1955, between the Government of the British Colony of the Bahamas and the private company Grand Bahama Port Authority ( GBPA), created by Wallace Groves with the support of Stafford Sands. This act was the basis of the foundation of Freeport.

The Government granted to the (GBPA) 50 000 acres of the Ground land to be developed . The GBPA obtained later more land making a total holding of 149, 000 acres or 233 square miles.

To encourage the development of this land, the Government also granted:

1. Freedom from taxation on income and profits;
2. Freedom from Customs duties.

The Hawksbill Creek Agreement was amended in 1960, on 1965 and 1993. The agreement will come to an end in 2054.

Wallace Groves is considered the founder of Freeport. He assumed the leadership of this approach and gathers of him a group of investors. So, the British financier Sir Charles Hayward (1892-1983) and his son Jack Hayward (1923-) and Sir Stafford Sands (1913-1972) who was Secretary, minister of Tourism and Finances minister in the colonial government and was an invaluable legal advisor for his first partner. To this first team joined other investors

Mention should be made of Canadian Louis Chestler, who will be responsible for the development of casinos in the early 1960s. Sir Jack Hayward, the son of Charles and Edward St-George, who bought the shares of Wallace Grove in 1976 were important members of the GBPA.

In 1960, Charles and Herbert Allen investment bankers from New York heading a Consortium jointed de GBPA.

In 1958, Daniel K. Ludwig a shipping magnate from Chicago joint the Group bringing material and expertise to dredge and build the Port. In return he received two thousand acres of industrial land and the concession for building

a cement plan. He left Freeport when the port was completed, but he came back in 1962 to invest in housing, commercial and touristic projects.

The most important financial transaction occurred in 1968 when Benguet Consolidated, inscribed at the New York Stock Exchange and the largest gold producer at Philipines, merge with GBPA. Benguet has acquired the control for eighty million dollars. The intend for this transaction was to give to outsider the opportunity to invest in Freeport...to avoid a potential local take over.

In return for approval, the Bahamas government received seven and a haft percent of the shares in Port Authority and representation on the board.

### **Freeport development**

As soon as the agreement was signed, the development of Freeport began. The port was the priority, and it opened in 1962. Meanwhile, roads, hotels and two casinos the Monte Carlo at Lucayan and El Casino Princess were under construction. They opened in 1964 and 1967 respectively.

In march 1960, the first edition of the Freeport News mimeographed was distributed.

The port opened officially in 1962.

In 1962, East Mall Drive was the first four lane boulevard.

Lucayan Beach hotel and Monte Carlo casino open in early 1964.

The International Bazaar was completed in 1967.

“El Casino” near the International Bazaar opened in 1968.

Meanwhile, GBPA was also building schools, churches, health structures and housing. Later, schools, churches and health structures fall under Government responsibility and financing.

## JANSEL COURT

As far as Jansel Court is concerned a first transaction is recorded on March 1 1968, volume 1251, pages 524 to 545. This is the transfer of the land from GBPA to Jansel Bahama Limited. This company was created in April 1964 in Freeport. Frederick Powers and Christopher C. Cafferata co-signed the contract. The construction of the Jansel Court building began in the months that followed.



Jansel Court building in construction 1968

The architect of the building is Jean Venne as it appears on the plans dated June 1964. The name Bellevue Bahama Limited is also on the plans.

After the construction the units were rented as hotel-apartments or residential hotel offering a complete fully apartment and serviced apartment complex using a hotel booking system with no fix contracts where occupants can “check out” whenever they wish.

On October 1, 1974, Jansel Court was submitted to the Condominium Act of ownership by Jansel Bahama Limited. Frederick J. Powers and Christopher C. Cafferata co-signed the document as Directors of Jansel Bahama Limited. (vol. 2325 pages 566 to 595).

During the first six months of 1975, 58 apartments were registered in the name of 5 companies that would seek to sell them, while 62 apartments were registered in the name of individuals. Six of the people in the latter group own more than an apartment in their name. Forty-three French-Canadians were among the new owners.

The companies involved are:

Jansel Bahamas which owns 8 or 100 to 102, 106, and 108 to 111.

Regra Anstalt, 30, 200 to 209, 300 to 309, 400 to 409.

Sunacri Anstalt 10, 230-235, 335. 428 to 431.

Ardnor Limited 8, 112,222, 313 to 317.

Tralee Estate Ltd 2, 413, 414.

### Individual owners registered on January 1975

Doris Dettling 104	W. Lecouffe 227	Doris Dettling 333 Don Scott Roblor Inv 334
M. Bar 105 J. Gervais 107 Gervais et Morin 113 Millette et McBride 114	Simard, Lecouffe 228 Y. Poirrier 229 G.S. Thorne 233 A et P. Arratibal 310	Mrs V.I. Trump 410 Mr et Mr R.Huntgate 411 Léo Bonneville 412 C. Lefebvre 415
Jacques et Claude Desrosiers 210 Marcotte et R. Jacques 211 L. Brault 212 Rita Brisson 213 J. Okeefe 214 L. Laframboise 215 Lise Pelland et F. Fuoco 216 G. et N Pardos 217 P. Bannister 218	R.L. John 311 E.H Favelle 312 J. Ranger 318 P. Hillier 319 H.E. Ramey 320 N.Y. P. Muhler 321 H. Hughes 322 P. Hillier 323 R. Fournier 324 C. Lefebvre 325	J. Snowden 416 Agémon Ménard 417 P. Roy, K. Hartenberg 418 H.E. Ramey 419 N.Y. Champagne,Paquette 420 Mrs L. Thompson 421 Lebeau et Bisailon 422 Claude Levebvre 423 J.D. Byrd 424 H.E Ramey 425 N.Y.
M. Hazell 219	R. Thompson 326	M. Bauer 426
Mrs. Hazell 220 G. Pelland, M. Mireault 221 Mavis Curry 223 G. Ross 224 P. Hillier 225	J. Snowden 327 F.J. Mcloughlin 328 F. Fuoco 329 Lebeau et Bisailon 330 G. Ste-Marie 331	L. Sigouin L.Bourassa 427 Doris Dettling 433 Margaret Burke 435
R. Saint-Jacques 226	Dr. D.M. Jenkins 332	

By June 1975, the situation had already changed. Jansel Bahamas had sold apartments 100 to 102, 106, 109 to 111. In addition, Ardnor had sold apartments 313 and 314. Finally, five condos belonging to individuals changed hands.

From Gervais and Morin to M. Weinberg	224 From G. Ross to Collasante
214 from J. Okeefe to Claude Girard	319 From P. Hillier to M. Jones
218 From P. Bannister to K.C. Benoit	

New individual owners registered.

M. Perreault 100	Mrs N. Frascarella 108	C.A. Brownlee 111
R.W. Sally, J. Kaminski 101	Mrs M.E. Malboeuf 109	M. W. Metke 313
André Gascon 102	M. Pilon 110	Dr. J. Wittern 314

## Ownership of the building

As noted above, Jansel Bahamas Limited is the company that acquired the land, chaired in the construction, management of the hotel-apartment phase and the registration of Jansel Court under the Condominium Act of Bahamas.

At the time of the ownership of the building by the owners' association as stipulated in the Condominium Act, five companies, including Jansel Bahamas Limited, initially retained ownership of nearly 50% of the condos and paid for the condo fees. Regra Anstall and Unacri Anstall are companies incorporated in Liechtenstein, which own 40 apartments, or 32.5%, of collective ownership. This represents an investment value of \$400,000, not including condo fees of \$4,600 per month. This situation must have facilitated the financing of the start-up of the condominium phase. We will see later that it will evolve rapidly.

We learned from Ms. Lise Lefebvre that the real estate brokerage firm Armand DesRosiers was closely involved in the sale of Jansel Court's apartments through her husband Claude Lefebvre, Jean DesRosiers and André Gascon, brother of Jean DesRosiers and real estate agent of the firm Armand DesRosiers. Ms. Lefebvre recalls coming to Jansel Court often.

We found traces of the intervention of Claude Lefebvre and André Gascon in several cases. André Gascon is present in the files of apartments 102, 201, 208 and 431, while Claude Lefebvre is present for 325, 415, 423. André Gascon acquired the 208 apartment of Regla Anstalt and the 431 of Sunacri Anstalt. He immediately sold the 208 to Marcel Salvail and the 431 to Dr. Jacques Desrosiers. Greenseas Invest. Ltd. acts on behalf of André Gascon of Armand Des Rosiers Inc. Similar situations may have occurred in other cases, as we were able to consult a limited number of files.

Seller apartment		Buyer	Seller apartment		Buyer
André Gascon	102	W. Trump	Claude Lefebvre	325	Westley Grey
André Gascon	201	Roland Blais	C. Lefebvre	415	J.G Lavallée
A. Gascon	208	Marcel Salvail	C. Lefebvre	423	Claude Vermette
A. Gascon	431	Dr. J. Desrosiers			

The active presence of this real estate brokerage firm involved in the case certainly influenced the purchase, by many French Canadians, of apartments as early as 1975. The foreign firms financially involved in the operation were able to find a timely ally!

André Gascon had a sale office at the International Bazaar.

### **Conveyances**

In fact, In December 1974, some condos were sold by Jansel Bahamas Limited. Mr. Christopher C. Cafferata co-signed the conveyances that we have seen.

In an affidavit signed the 28<sup>th</sup> day of November 1996, Mr. Christopher Cafferata said: “ I was employed by Carson, Lawson & Co in its successor firms as a Registered Associate from 1967 to 1978, that during my Association with Carson, Lawson & Co and its successor firms I had the conduct of many conveyancing matters with respect to sales and purchases of Units in Jansel Court Condominium.”

### **SALE OF APPARTEMENTS**

From the beginning, the majority of condos were sold to French Canadians. In some cases, people would come in small groups and take advantage of a golf trip to visit Jansel Court and buy an apartment. The presence on site of representatives of the firm Armand DesRosiers probably made things easier.

In 1975, out of 69 apartments acquired by individuals, 50 were purchased by French Canadians, representing 72.4%. In 1977/78, when all apartments were sold, 80 French-Canadians were registered as owners, or 65%.

Among the first buyers, whose title deeds were consulted, were:

Léo Bonneville of Pointe-aux-Trembles (412) registered on 31 December 1974. Vol. 2358, pages 540 to 543.

Veronica Trump (410) registered on December 31, 1974. Vol. 2358, pages 512 to 515.

Don Scott (334) registered on December 31, 1974.

Luce Dionne Bourassa and Liliane Sigouin (427) recorded on December 31, 1974. Volume 2370, pages 247 to 250.

On June 13, 1975, Regra Anstalt at Greenseas Investments Limited, (208) or André Gascon of Armand DesRosiers Inc. Volume 2461, pages 22 to 28.

On July 1 1975, André Gascon (Greenseas Investments) to Marcel Salvail. Volume 2517, pages 180 to 186.

Victor Kenneth Whittaker (414) a Canadian citizen from Ottawa, registered on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1975. Vol. 2533, pages 93 to 100.

Jean-Guy Lavallée (414) registered on April 4 1977. Vol. 885, pages 439 to 445

Claude Morin and André Lessard (410) registered on 31, 1977. Vol. 2902, pages 476 to 481.

Jean-Guy Marcotte (414) registered on March, 1978 Vol. 3096, pages 561 to 568.

We learned also the following information from discussions with owners.

In 1976, Pierrette and Marcel Lestage bought the apartment (100) which had been a rental office during the Hotel apartment period. The fourth generation of the Lestage family began to enjoy Jansel Court.

In the spring of 1976, Paul, Albert and Pierre Lévesque of Sturgeon Fall were the first Franco-Ontarians to buy an apartment in Jansel Court.

Camille Bérubé (423) sold to Claude and Mariette Vermette in 1978.

Gérard Beaulieu (301) sold to Gerry and Pauline St-George and Hervé et Lola Boissonnault on March 9, 1981.

## REGISTERED OWNERS / DECEMBER 1977-JANUARY 1978

100	Pierrette M. Lestage	224	M. Mme Colasante	328	F. J. McLoughlin
101	Rhona M. Mosley	225	Mary Jo Seep	329	F. Fuoco
102	Walter G. Trump	226	R. St-Jacques	330	R. Lebeau
103	Bureau	227	Yvon Trudeau	331	Gil Ste-Marie
104	B.J. Frey	228	Y. Simard,W. Lecouffe	332	Pierre Lévesque
105	Mary Jo Seep	229	Y. Poirier	333	Doris Dettling
106	G.E Collins	230	C. Robertson	334	Roblor Invet. D. Scott
107	Lise Fradet	231	Pierre Boulva	335	Paul Trudeau
108	Eileen Stemen	232	Yvon St-Gelais	400	Roger Gagné
109	M.E. Malboeuf	233	J.P. Lacoste	401	Dr. Jacques Hamel
110	Donald Fortin	234	Jeannine Giguere	402	René A. Dubé
111	C.A Brownlee	235	Marcel Bernier	403	Denise Bouthillier
112	Horst Rieleling	300	Lise Brunelle	404	René A. Dubé
113	A Weinberg	301	Dr. Gilles Brunel	405	Louis G. Pilon
114	C Critcie,C.J. Dupont	302	Dr. Jacques Hamel	406	Doris Dettling
115	Hélène Desrosiers	303	Monique Bisailon	407	W.I. Ford
200	Marcel Vincent &as	304	Monique Bisailon	408	F. Valiquette
201	André Gascon	305	Yvonne C. Parker	409	Muriel Roach
202	J.T. Goodall	306	André Tremblay	410	Claude Morin
203	Anne, Veron Brown	307	G. Lambert	411	Dr. Jacques Hamel
204	A Bérubé	308	Gaétan Charlebois	412	Léo Bonneville
205	Pauline Paris	309	G.M. Durocher	413	J.G. Lavallée
206	G. Gagnon	310	P. Arratibal	414	J.G. Lavallée
207	C.et M. Mlchaud	311	Monique Rouleau	415	J.G. Lavallée
208	M. Salvail	312	Claude Larose	416	Michel Lucas
209	Michel DeHearne	313	Michel Vachon	417	Agénor Ménard
210	Réginald Dark	314	H.E. Soucie	418	Jacques Provencher
211	P Marcotte R. Jacques	315	Maurice Landes	419	Guy, Louis Ferland
212	L. Brault	316	Pierre Duchesne	420	P.Champagne et Paquette
213	R. Leduc	317	Hartis Thompson	421	L. Thompson
214	Claire Girard	318	Jeanni Rochon-Chabot	422	Chorleywood Inv.
215	YGM Tetreault	319	M. Mme L. Jones	423	ClaudeMarianneVermette
216	Lucette T, Brennan	320	CK Benoit	424	J.D. Byrd
217	Rénald Richard	321	P. Mulher	425	CK Benoit
218	Pannel Fitzpatrick co.	322	H. Hughes	426	Larose et Teasdale
219	Mireault et G. Gervais	323	Mary Jo Seep	427	L. Sigouin, L. Bourassa
220	G. Gervais	324	R. Fournier	428	Victor Marcotte
221	M. Mireault	325	A. Lefebvre	429	H Scheinberg
222	Yves Poirier	326	R. Thompson	430	Paul Myre
223	A. Brownlee	327	John Scott	431	Dr. Jacques Desrosier
432	AM Hardie	433	André Pilon	434	M. Guillet
				435	Paula Weiner

We can add the names of owners who arrived in the following years:

Fernand Corbeil (200), Guy Jacob (212), Chénier (214), Louise Durocher (217), Michel Riverin (229), Willie Saint-Laurent (231), Lesieur (305) Leroux (307), Réjean Carrier, Carrier, Nicole Guay (313), Stan and Lucette St-Amant (325), Elmer Smith / Roland Hébert (326), Jacques Beauchemin (329), Jean-Guy and Monique Landry (330), Renald Bédard (331), Gordon Scott and Marie Carpentier (416), Pierre and Gisèle Racette (403), Claude Desrosiers (425), André Marchand (429), Pierre Racicot (431).

More recently arrived

Jacques Masson (201), Alain Fontaine (219), Gaston Drapeau (428), Robert Bouchard (425), Lise Robert and Mario Beaudoin (229), Yanik Bergeron (316), Jocelyn Laprade and France Chartier (403), Pierre Caschetto (405), Sonia Marchand (407).

There are still 28 French-Canadian owners in Jansel Court.

### **Bahamian owners**

Among the first Bahamians to settle at Jansel Court are:

Mr. Val Richards #115 in 1978

Calvin Miller # 320 in the 70's

Dr. Jean Turnquest # 328 in 1982

Mr. Solomon Hield #219 in 1982

Reginal Adderley # 434 in March 1983

Today Jansel Court has more than 60 Bahamian owners

## **Initial Sales Prices**

The condo fee in 1975 was \$115 per month.

Apartment 410 was purchased by Véroniqua Trump on December 31, 1974 for US\$ 11,940.00.

Apartment 427 was purchase by Luce Dionne Bourassa and Liliane Sigouin on December 31, 1974 for US\$ 11,940.00.

We know that apartment 414<sup>1</sup> was sold on December 31, 1974, to "Tralee Estates Limited" in Freeport for US\$ 9,560.00. The company sold the apartment to Victor Kenneth Whittaker, a Canadian citizen of Ottawa, in December 1975 for US\$15,500.00. The same apartment was resold on April 4, 1977 for US\$16,000.00. Another transaction occurred on March 31, 1978. The apartment was then sold for 17,500 \$US and the furniture for \$5,500.00.

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<sup>1</sup> Conveyances

## QUEBEC CONTRIBUTIONS

Quebec has left cultural traces at Jansel Court Condominium.



### **Architectural mural in the main lobby. / Claude Vermette - 423**

The architectural mural by Claude Vermette, an internationally renowned ceramicist and painter, which is located in the main hall, is certainly the major manifestation of this. Claude Vermette and Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, who was also a world-renowned artist, arrived at Jansel Court in 1978 and remained there until their death in 2006. Their apartment #423 still belongs to the family.

Claude Vermette (1930-2006) was an internationally renowned ceramicist and painter. He was a pioneer of art integrated into architecture. About twenty stations of the Montreal metro present his creations. He was part of the Group of Automatists, but did not signed the Global Refusal Manifest, Paul-Emile Borduas finding him too young.

## FISHING TOURNAMENT



### **BLUE MARLIN IN THE MAIN HALL**

Gaston Bissonnette -407, was the winner of a high-level fishing competition in May 1987. He took 7,5 hours to catch this merlin of 12' 4 " length, and 450 pounds. The Merlin became a trophy and was later offered to Jansel Court, were it is hung in the hall.

## **BAHAMIAN SCULPTURES**

Two huge steel sculptures, now lost, were hung for a long time on the walls of the stairs north and south of the building. The one on the north side, in bad shape, has been removed in the late 1990s, the other was collateral victim of hurricane Matthew in 2016. Carried away by weather and hurricane these sculptures were the work of a Bahamian artist<sup>2</sup>, whose name we do not know, but he was certainly inspired by ancient african masks.



**Sculpture on the south side wall (2016)**

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<sup>2</sup> Lyse Rousseau #423 remembers that her aunt Mariette Rousseau-Vermette told her that the sculptures were made by a Bahamian.

Information compiled by Fernand Piotte  
06/04/2020

### **Warm's Thanks**

To the people who gave me valuable information

### **Sources :**

Conveyances

Jansel Court Financial Statements from January to June 1975 and 1978

Monthly J.C. montly statements from 1975 to 1983 of Apartments 415 to 434.

Ms. Lise Lefebvre, widow of Clause Lefebvre

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