Raymond J. Barrette, son of Rose Barrette O’Dea, was born in Lowell, Massachusetts on May 10, 1929. He attended the École Saint-Joseph, run by the Grey Nuns (the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa), and St. Joseph’s High School, run by the Marist Brothers. He then spent three years in the U.S. Army, during the Korean War, before working as an accountant for the State of Massachusetts until his retirement.

He was very active in Franco-American associations including the Société Historique Franco-Américaine, the Richelieu Club, Cour Domrémy No. 23 of the Association Canado-Américaine, Conseil No. 100 of the Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d’Amérique, Action pour les Franco-Américains du Nord-Est (ActFANE), and the Conseil pour l’avancement du français en Amérique (CAFA). He also worked on new initiatives, for example, creating a Louis-Alphonse Biron Room in Lowell’s Pollard Memorial Library in 1977. In 1975, he founded Le Journal de Lowell, the first newspaper published in French in Lowell since L’Étoile went out of print in 1957. He had three goals in creating Le Journal de Lowell: providing a means of communication for Franco-Americans in Lowell and surrounding regions; promoting reading in French; and contributing to the preservation of French-Canadian heritage. Following an accident in 1976, he turned Le Journal de Lowell over to his assistant, French teacher Albert Côté, who ran the newspaper with his wife Barbara until 1995.

Mr. Barrette was named 1984’s “Franco-American of the Year” by the organizers of Lowell’s Franco-American Day, and the Association Canado-Américaine bestowed its medal of honor on him in 1998. In 2003, he was named to the Cercle Horace Viau, an honor roll of donors.
to the Fondation Richelieu International. Mr. Barrette died in his hometown on November 25, 2006.

Leslie CHOQUETTE

WORKS

-Le Journal de Lowell. Published monthly from February 1975 to December 1995. A complete collection can be found at the Patrick J. Morgan Cultural Center in Lowell and on microfilm at the Boston Public Library.

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