

QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS

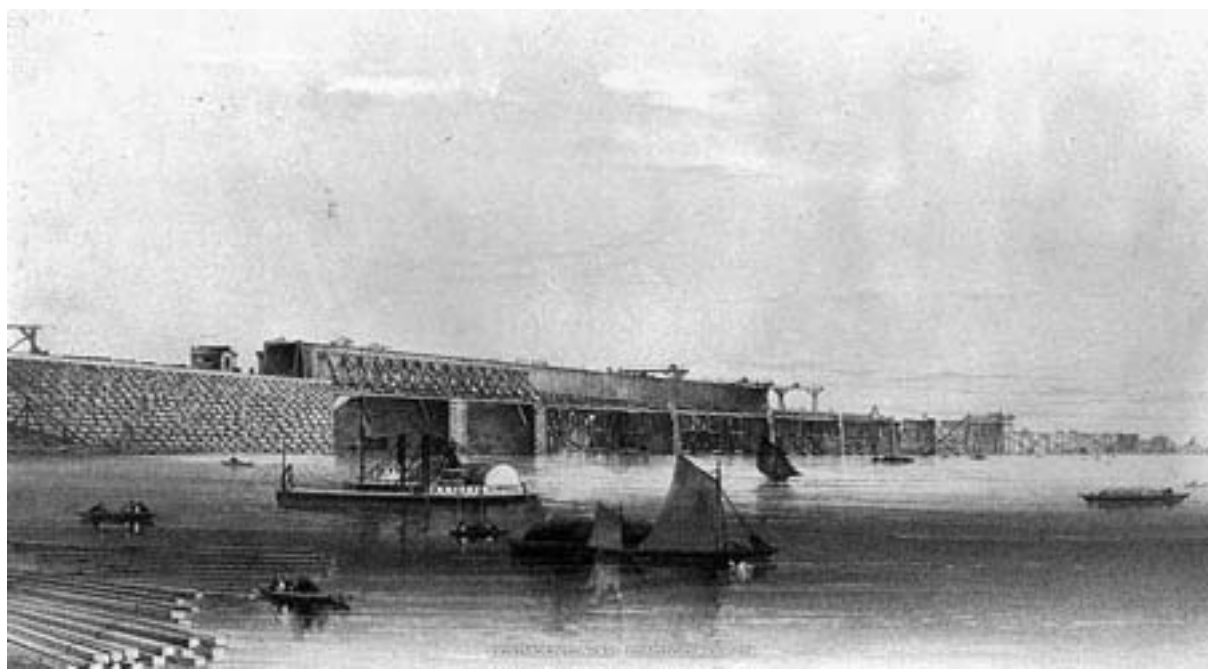
JANUARY 2003

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When it opened in 1859 the Royal Victoria bridge changed the destiny of Montreal – see Page 14

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RAILWAY HERITAGE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Still many who sit on the sidelines waiting

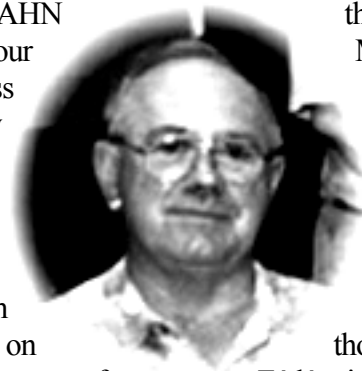
The one resolution for the year 2003 here in QAHN is to carry on with the efforts to develop our network into an instrument of active usefulness to present and potential members. It is now three years since we were in the early stages of contemplating launching such an organization. With the aid of Canadian Heritage we brought together in Montreal in February 2000 a group of heritage folk from across Quebec for a one-day study session on whether or not there would be a place and a use for organizing.

The sense of agreement was strong that the effort to launch such a venture was worth the time of a group of volunteers to plan an initial conference. As many of you know, that took place at Bishop's in Lennoxville in June 2000 and 2½ very busy years have ensued.

We've received a lot of help and encouragement from a variety of people across Quebec but we are still an organization in an early and fragile status. We have some very good supportive member groups and have established many useful connections with the potential for strong long-term benefits for the historical interests we share.

But there are still many who sit on the sidelines waiting to see weather or not we succeed to become a bandwagon they should climb aboard. We have a long challenging road ahead before the potential membership fully appreciates that the usefulness of a network is dependent on the inputs of the participants. Everyone contributes; everyone receives benefit from being a part of the action. People don't contribute, not much is available.

We have been developing useful connections with regional community groups across Quebec who are part of



the Quebec Community Groups Network. Many of these have been sometime activists in the heritage field, but a central linking organization was not there until QAHN was launched in 2000.

We have developed useful links with the board of La Fédération des Sociétés d'Histoire du Québec. It is not our intent to displace their role and we encourage those organizations that have been part of the Fédération to continue doing so.

We are encouraged to find potential pathways for stronger links with our schools and universities and believe our Oral History Project now underway will be a useful instrument.

Opportunities

Finally, we see many opportunities to exploit, over time, the growing international interest in heritage tourism and bring to our historic communities across Quebec, visitors to whom we can tell our story and in the process inject new economic life into some troubled corners. What an opportunity this presents us to re-awaken pride in who we are, what we have contributed, and give some reasons for more of our young people to stay home and build new lives!

Simply through existing and being active, QAHN is making discoveries and opening doorways. But, in the long run, interest and active participation at the local member level will be where success happens or not.

We wish a successful and active year for everyone in 2003 and especially that the field of history and heritage work finds new activists and enthusiasts.

Richard Evans

NEWS AND NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

- QAHN Vice-President Rod MacLeod was guest speaker at the November meeting of the **Lennoxville-Ascot** Historical and Museum Society. His topic was Montreal's historic Mount Royal Cemetery. His slide presentation included the homes of some of the more noteworthy people of Montreal through the 1800s who were very much a part of development of the cemetery and its landscaping. The cemetery was recognized in June 2002 as a National Historic Site.
- Megantic County Historical Society held its annual

meeting in **Kinnear's Mills** in early November. Of special interest for this group is the protection of cemeteries, not only those in the villages and associated with churches but also the "orphan" cemeteries along backwoods, some having been family burial grounds, others having been associated with churches or rural communities now disappeared. The members at the meeting had an opportunity to review the heritage trails pamphlet for Megantic County sponsored by QAHN and prepared by Dwane Wilkin with local help from Joy Nugent.

HERE AND THERE AROUND QUEBEC

- The **Sherbrooke Snowshoe Club** at one time was a very active snowshoeing and winter outing social organization whose members gathered for evenings of food and fun through the winter months. Its beginnings were in 1877 and the club celebrated in 1978 with a book entitled "A Century of Fellowship". Now, 25 years later, a new book is being offered titled "The SSSC Tradition Continues". It is available for \$23, postage included, from Fred Currier (819) 562-2543.
- The **City of Sherbrooke** spent the year 2002 marking its bicentennial year. The date chosen sparked considerable debate about the significance of 1802 as a starting point. However, the year saw many events and the release of a number of publications, collections of old photos and so on. Regrettably, very little of this got translated to English. One event of special interest to the English community was an exhibit at the *Musée des Beaux Arts* titled "The Taste of an Era" and revealed how Sherbrooke's early leaders, including prominent industrialists and bankers, were sponsors of art collections with links to the region, including works by Robert Harris, A. Y. Jackson and J. E. H. MacDonald and an early townships landscape artist Allan Edson. Art historians and museologist Monique Nadeau-Saumier gave a talk on the Sherbrooke Library and Art Association 1886-1926.
- The **Gaspé-Jersey-Guernsey Association**, formerly the Gaspé Channel Islands Society, has an active membership across Canada, the current President is George Edison Langlois and they publish a newsletter entitled *L'Anglo-Normand*. The postal address is 1208 Côte du Monument, Gaspé QC G4X 6T6 Through this organization, history of the Channel Islands and of the

descendants of channel islanders come to Canada can be obtained in books, videos, maps and other material.

- A new **Wakefield cenotaph** was dedicated, Sunday, November 10, to the memory of the ten young men from the Wakefield area who gave their lives for Canada in the World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. Members of the following families laid poppies on a cushion at the monument in memory of the fallen: 1914-1918: James Russell Brown, Robert Willard Carman, Sebra Kimber Hall and Robert Henry Neley. 1939-1945: John Donald Bates, Edwin Albert McCorkell, Lawrence Joseph McGarry, James Allan Reid, Sydney Gordon Stephenson and Glenn Allen Stewart. The new cenotaph replaces one erected by volunteers from the Wakefield Legion 25 years ago.
- Exhibit: February 18 to March 31: Wakefield area artist Ed Robinson has created an art exhibition entitled "**Chelsea: The Historic Series**". Using oil on canvas as the medium, the series depicts various Chelsea historic sites and scenes at the turn of the century. The series will be presented at the Historical Society of the Gatineau general meeting on 17 February 2003 then will move to the Chelsea library and remain on display until March 31. For further information, please contact Ed Robinson at (819) 827-4606.
- The Municipality of LaPêche (incl. Wakefield Village) has an ambitious program to celebrate its heritage buildings. Their **Heritage Designation Program** saw ten sites designated in 2002. Building owners each received a plaque and citation outlining the history of their building. Since the program's inception, more than 100 properties have been recognized. The principal criteria for the recognition is that the home or building be built prior to 1902. The program does not affect the tax status of the property nor does it limit its alterations.

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RAILWAY HERITAGE

The Opening of the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railroad

First train was pulled half by steam, half by horses

To celebrate the opening of the first railroad constructed in any of His Majesty's Provinces in British North America, the management of the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railroad had invited many distinguished guests, three hundred in all, to attend a special event on July 21, 1836. Among the visitors were His Excellency the Earl of Gosford, Governor-General of Canada; Sir George and Lady Gipps, Sir Charles Grey; Mr. Elliott, the secretary of the Commissioners, the Honourable Peter McGill, president of the railroad company, and several members of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, including the Hon. L.J. Papineau.

Also attending were the officers of the garrison.

At Montreal the guests embarked on the ferry Princess Victoria where the band of the 32nd Regiment entertained the passengers during the fifty-minute trip to Laprairie. The happenings of that memorable day are best described by excerpts from contemporary reports published on July 23, 1836 in Montreal's newspapers: After landing at the Railroad wharf, which runs out into the river a considerable way, the company proceeded to the cars which were in waiting at the termination of the Railway to convey them to St. Johns. Before starting, the locomotive engine made two short trial trips with its tender, and as the accident which occurred lately to it had not been thoroughly repaired, it was deemed advisable to attach it to only two of the passenger cars, all of which are comfortably fitted up and elegantly painted

outside; while the other cars with the rest of the company, were drawn each by two horses.

The locomotive with its complement soon shot far ahead of the other cars, which passed along the road, just as fast as the nags, which were none of the fleetest, could drag them. The motion was easy, and elicited from many, comparisons far from favourable to the usual comforts of travelling by the stage road. In less than two hours from starting all the company had arrived at St. Johns in good time, and in excellent mood for the collation in the Railway Station House, which was pleasantly cool, and decorated with green branches.

The locomotive with its complement soon shot far ahead of the other cars, which passed along the road, just as fast as the nags, which were none of the fleetest, could drag them. The motion was easy...

The repast, with its accompaniments of sparkling champagne and madeira, was not more enjoyed, than it was universally admitted to be in itself, suitable and excellent.

After the company had appeased both their hunger and thirst, Mr. McGill proposed in succession three toasts - to the King, the President of the United States and his Excellency the Earl of Gosford. Not forgotten were "the ladies who honoured the day's proceedings with their presence."

During the second part of the official reception, Mr. McGill remarked on the importance of the occasion to Canada, and expressed

the hope that other railways might be planned and executed in rapid succession both here and in the other British North American provinces, in imitation of the example set by the Champlain and St.

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Lawrence Railroad Company. Ending his speech, Mr. McGill proposed a toast to Mr. Pierce, without whose efforts and persistence the railway would not likely have been built. After complimenting each other, the company of gentlemen and ladies proceeded to the cars, extremely well pleased with the entertainment they had received. The return trip to Montreal was described by the Courier, two days later:

The locomotive in returning took four cars with it, and the other twelve were dragged back, as before, to Laprairie by horses. There would have been almost a surfeit of enjoyment, had nothing occurred to break in upon the pleasures of the day. It was pretty far advanced in the afternoon, before the company got re-embarked on board the Princess Victoria, for Montreal, and it unfortunately happened that, in consequence of a strong easterly wind, and the depth of the boat in the water, she grounded on leaving the wharf. When at length she was got clear and had proceeded a little way on her voyage, she was again detained by being compelled to lie-to, till a man who had fallen overboard was picked up. By this time it was so dark that it was considered dangerous to pass the rapids and she returned to Laprairie. Upon landing, there was an immediate scramble among the passengers for beds, of which few, in proportion to the demand, were to be found. To diminish the disagreement of this mishap, and to extract even

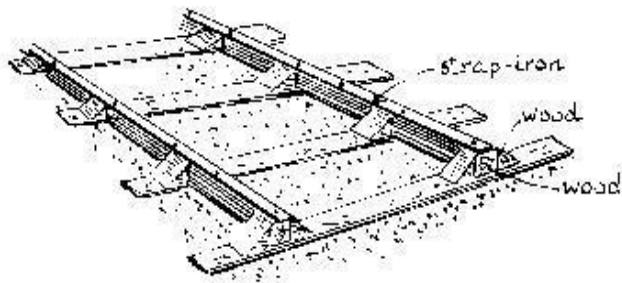


Second class fare bought a seat in the smoke-filled front car, which lacked doors and window glass. First class riders enjoyed a fully-enclosed coach, but from time to time they too had to get out and push – or haul water and firewood.

amusement from the misfortunes of so pleasant a day, a dance was got up at the Laprairie Hotel, which was continued till a late hour. Those who were unable to procure beds that could be slept in, had a fund of amusement for the rest of the night, in recounting to each other their adventures in search of such luxuries. About six o'clock yesterday morning the Princess Victoria landed her valuable cargo in perfect safety, with every cause to make them have agreeable recollections of the opening of the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railroad.

Since writing the above we learned that the locomotive engine went yesterday morning from Laprairie to St. Johns in 45 minutes with four passenger and two freight cars, the latter loaded, and that she returned in 30 minutes. The distance is nearly 14½ miles.

This story and pictures are from the book Canada's First Railway, by Nick and Helma Mika, Mika Publishing Company, Belleville, Ontario, 1985.



Early track was crude and flimsy, consisting of thin strap iron nailed to a wooden rail, or sometimes a flattened log.

NEXT ISSUE — WOMEN'S HISTORY

THE MARCH ISSUE OF THE *QHN* WILL FOCUS ON WOMEN'S HISTORY. AS USUAL, WE WILL ALSO BE PUBLISHING ANY AND ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS, EVENTS, QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS YOU WISH. THIS IS YOUR FORUM — USE IT!

RAILWAY HERITAGE

The railway changes the Laurentians

Iron highways brought people and prosperity up north

By Sandra Stock, Morin Heights Historical Association

Starting in the 1870s, the isolation of the settlements in the lower Laurentians slowly began to end with the establishment of a railway line from Montreal to St. Jérôme. This first link, called the Montreal and Occidental, was part of the ambitious northern Quebec development schemes of the energetic Curé Labelle (See *Le Roi du Nord*, Page 8). However, it was also a not unexpected aspect of the spirit of the Victorian age in Canada. The creation of our country in 1867 had hinged upon the famous sea-to-sea railway that would facilitate economic progress and centralized political union.

Although this rail line to St. Jérôme was still at some distance from the more northerly pioneer settlements now known as St. Sauveur, Morin Heights and Ste. Adèle, it was an improvement. The first settlers (1830s to 1850s) had arrived on foot, usually following watercourses and guided in by aboriginal trappers and/or government surveyors. The French speaking pioneers had come from the old seigneurial lands banking on the St.

Lawrence – St. Eustache, Ste. Scholastique, et cetera. The English-speaking pioneers had come in for the most part by the Ottawa River route by barge from Montreal, landing at St. Andrew's East (St. André Est) and moving through Lachute, Lakefield, and Mille Isles and later into Morin and Arundel. These were, for the most part, emigrants directly from Ireland with a few from England and Scotland as well, along with some Lower Canada (Quebec) born second generation settlers who wished to receive their own land grants in the new areas.

From the 1840s to the coming of the railway into Morin Flats village in 1895, the first citizens of Morin Township lived in almost total isolation from the outside world in a difficult terrain with extreme winters, muddy springs and generally harsh conditions. It was the same, if not worse, in the entire Laurentian area. The first cash crop of a sort was potash, made from burning the trees in land clearance for agriculture. To take this to market, the pioneer had to walk to either Lachute or St. Jérôme – even to Montreal in some rare instances that have been recorded. Not many settlers had horses to begin with as there was not enough clear land to grow the hay to feed large animals. Most of the farming was initially done by hand – with a hoe – and

because of the rocky soil and short growing season, was limited anyway.

This first railway was later extended to Ste. Agathe and in 1892, the first train arrived at Piedmont, still eight miles from Morin, but certainly better than the thirty mile trek to St. Jérôme. Around this time, rail service had also been expanded to the Lachute area. There was even a grand plan to strike out across the northern regions to Winnipeg in the west from Lac St. Jean in the east, passing through the Laurentian wilderness and “opening it up” on the way.

In 1890 another company, the Montfort Colonization Railway, was formed, later known as the Great Northern Railway and later, Canadian National Railways. At first, this line, which reached Morin Flats in 1895, and to Arundel and Huberdeau a few years later, was accessed at a spot called Montfort Junction. The first Montfort Junction was outside St. Jérôme, where a transfer could be made from the Montreal-St. Jérôme line, now called the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and subsequently, after that line was extended



to Piedmont, the “Montfort Junction” site was located there. An old CPR railway map of the Laurentian area from 1911 still places the “Montfort Junction” near St. Jérôme although the transfer spot had moved north by then. This met the CNR line through to St. Sauveur, Morin Flats and Huberdeau, which is clearly marked as well. Ultimately, the Canadian National tracks went on to St. Rémi d'Amherst (Lac Rémi) and the Canadian Pacific extended much farther north to Mont Laurier.

By the 1890s the economy of the Lower Laurentians had developed considerably from subsistence farming and potash production. The lumber industry was at its peak throughout the Ottawa Valley and northern Quebec regions. Also, there were a few mines briefly attempted in the Laurentians – mica at St. Rémi, for example. Also, there are granite quarries around Rockway Valley, close to Arundel. The main intention for the railways had been to exploit and transport natural resources out of the district. However, to the probable surprise of the railway owners, the main source of revenue for the longest time turned out to be transporting vacationers in to the newly accessible lands. Freight, especially lumber

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and later milled wood products, was always important, and the rail service was predictable and reliable even in the worse winter weather. Yet it was the rise of the tourist trade that brought the Laurentian communities into the mainstream of modern life. The first areas to be viewed as, at first summer only, retreats from the city stresses of Montreal, were those places closest in distance: Shawbridge being the prime example. It is no accident that Alex Foster invented the very first ski tow in Canada in Shawbridge, around 1930. Although Nordic (cross-country) skiing was already wildly popular in the region, this development of downhill skiing with its attendant resorts really led to the expansion of the Laurentian tourist industry. There were still no really good all-season roads and motorcars were to remain a rarity until well into the 1950s. This was still very much a railway dependent area. Local transport remained sleigh in winter and cart in summer for a large part of the Laurentians.

The ski trains themselves were seen as part of this growing tourist culture, not just as means of transport. The cars were adapted for the carrying of skis – awkward sports equipment to say the least – and social life revolved around the weekend trips from Montreal. The arrival of the train was an event. In Morin Heights (named changed in 1911 to encourage tourists), a local industry had grown from the train – boarding houses for summer and winter vacationers, horse and sleigh or horse and cart taxis to and from the station, and eventually such economic offshoots as bars, restaurants, real hotels, downhill ski tows and second home rentals. The ski industry had also brought new skilled people to the Laurentians – many of them German, Swiss and later Scandinavians, who had expertise in the resort and skiing fields.



As time passed and the social and economic changes of the twentieth century finally spread to Quebec in general and to

the Laurentians in particular, the railways became an unprofitable and even obsolete means of communication. In a sense they had created their own demise by bringing easy contact with the wider world to the small outposts of settlement in the north. The resource-based economy of family farms and lumber mills couldn't continue with mechanized agriculture and changing industrial requirements. Even the thriving tourist trade was changing

with the improved road system and the now common ownership of family autos. By the 1960s, especially after the construction of the Laurentian Autoroute, skiers and other potential tourists could drive to St. Sauveur in forty-five minutes and to Ste. Agathe in just over an hour from Montreal. The need for overnight accommodation was greatly reduced and the need for passenger trains virtually disappeared. The last train into Morin Heights was in May 1962. By the 1970s, there were no more trains of any sort into the Lower Laurentians and the removal of the tracks had begun.

As the nature of the economic and social life of the Laurentians changed, different communities have responded to the post-railway period in various ways. Some, like St. Jérôme, Lachute, and even Ste Agathe farther north, have continued as small cities servicing their wider areas and having an urban level of development. Some, like St. Sauveur, have grown into world class resorts, no longer maintaining a really rural atmosphere. Some, like Val David, have encouraged artistic and cultural development. Others, like Morin Heights, Montfort, or Mille Isles have in many ways declined – losing their former hotels and small tourist-oriented businesses. However, these less “developed” municipalities have begun to stress environmental awareness and the preservation of a rural lifestyle as opposed to becoming bland, distant suburbs of Montreal. The old railway tracks of the Canadian National have become the Aerobic Corridor for non-motorized sports-cross-country skiing in winter and hiking in summer. A similar, although somewhat more intensively developed, fate has arisen for the former Canadian Pacific tracks between St. Jérôme and Mont Laurier. The legacy of the railway has managed to be reborn into our new age of eco-tourism. May this trend continue and grow in the lower Laurentians.



References: *Morin Heights, 1855-1955*, Laura Nesbitt, *Morin Heights, 1855 – 1980*, J.F. Trenholm, *Skiing Legends and the Laurentian Lodge Club*, Neil & Catharine McKenty, 2000, *The Porcupine*, # 4, Morin Heights Historical Association, 2001, “Recollections of a Railway Man”, Mike Lavendel and “Friday Night Trains”, Rowena Blair. Map of the Laurentian Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the Province of Quebec, 1911.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

Curé Labelle, Le Roi du Nord

Big man with huge heart preached back to the land

Adapted from the Doncaster *Ballyhoo*

By Joseph Graham joseph@doncaster.ca

François-Xavier Antoine Labelle was born in 1833, the son of a shoemaker in Ste. Rose. Although his family had no financial resources to help him get an education, he pursued his studies first at the seminary in Ste. Thérèse, and then, from age 19, at *le Grand Séminaire de Montréal*. After his ordination in 1856, he was vicar in several small parishes where he witnessed a massive exodus. In 1867 he informed his superior, Mgr. Bourget, that, as so many members of his congregations had moved to New England, he felt obliged to follow them. Mgr. Bourget, feeling that he was too valuable to lose to the States, offered him the post of St. Jérôme, which was a rich and prospering parish. His father had passed away in 1861 and his mother had found a position, probably with her son's help, in the presbytery at St. Jérôme. True to the adage 'behind every great man....' the Curé's mother had considerable influence in the parish and became known as 'Madame le Curé.' She continued to look after the presbytery for the balance of Labelle's life.

From his vantage point in this new, rich parish, Curé Labelle began his mission. Working with business people and the Church, he promoted a vision of rapid colonisation of the North-West. He envisaged French-Catholic parishes from St. Jérôme north-west, through present-day northern Ontario, all the way to Winnipeg. He spoke with conviction and authority. A tall, energetic and imposing man, well over six feet and weighing more than 300 pounds, he was not the kind of person often contradicted. Wherever he was, when he spoke of his dream, people followed. Arthur Buies, a writer who was his contemporary, began his career criticizing the Church, but, after meeting the Curé, became his greatest admirer and ultimately

wrote of the mission and life of the great priest, in the book *Au Portique des Laurentides : Une Paroisse Moderne*.

Antoine Labelle carried his huge weight up the trails and over the portages north of Ste. Agathe and was said to have kept a good pace. On those rough early trails horses and wagon were essential to any serious traveling, but the passengers would often have had to walk along behind. Among the more famous of these trails was the one that climbed the hill called *La Repousse*, so-named because it repulsed all attempts to build a road over it. Located a bit to the north-east of Mountain Acres golf course in St. Faustin, the road north of Ivry was the approach to this challenging pass.



The Curé became known as *L'Apôtre de la Colonisation* and *Le Roi du Nord*. He was so positive and convinced of his mission that people were in awe of him. Among Labelle's companions was Narcisse

Ménard, the first homesteader in Morin Township. He was also over six feet tall. These were big men whose presence was felt. One can imagine that their arrival in a village was an event.

In 1873, Amable Godon of Ste. Agathe had his auberge licence revoked. Depressed, he decided to sell his farm at a ruinously low price and move on. Around this time, Curé Labelle came to stay at the auberge on his way to investigate the mountain called *La Repousse*. In the morning he found some fresh butter and bread in his bag, placed there by the Godons. After thanking his hosts and explaining to them that he was a poor priest, he told them that the only way he could repay them was to give them a good piece of advice. He told them that they should not sell, that one day Ste. Agathe would grow into a much bigger town, and would absorb their farm. If you know Ste. Agathe well, Godon's farm can be

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located by the names of his children, commemorated in the names of the streets that once were a part of his fields: St. Bruno, St. Donat, St. Antoine, St. Joseph and St. Amable which was subsequently renamed Ste. Agathe, the whole bordered by rue Godon.

Among his friends, Labelle could boast both Adolphe Chapleau, Prime Minister MacDonald's Quebec leader, and Honoré Mercier, the Premier of Quebec. How the son of a shoemaker from an outlying village became the intimate of such powerful men may be less a testimonial to our democracy than a demonstration of the great charm and energy of the man himself. He never lost sight of his vision. It is hard to know if he foresaw the disaster that would befall the Laurentian colonists once the wood ran out, or whether he wanted to push the development ahead as fast as possible. Whichever, he knew that his north-country needed the train. In 1868 it did not even extend to St. Jérôme. Labelle made repeated attempts to have the train extent to his parish, but he mustered no enthusiasm. Montrealers had other priorities than those of a rural priest of a northern farming town.

In the winter of 1871-72, Montreal experienced a firewood shortage. The rivers had frozen early and the usual supplies of firewood could not be floated into the harbour. Labelle, seeing an opportunity to demonstrate how valuable the St. Jérôme region could be to Montreal, organized a huge bee to collect firewood for the poorer families in Montreal. Once collected, a whole army of horse-drawn wagons marched on the city loaded with firewood for the needy. The next year, when the Curé looked for support for his railroad, the city of Montreal listened, and contributed a million dollars towards its construction over the next few years.

To Labelle, this was only a first step in his plans to have the train run right through his colony. He made repeated trips up the *Chemin de la Repousse*, helping to establish the village of La Repousse, (subsequently renamed St. Faustin), in 1870 and St. Jovite in 1875. The discovery of the fertile valley of the Red and Devil rivers spurred

him on and by 1881, 200 families had made their way over the notorious hill to find homes in this new area. Serge Laurin points out in his book *Histoire des Laurentides* that the Curé thereby stopped the advance of the Protestants beyond Arundel. It is doubtful that the Protestants were aware that they had been outflanked, since their development did not seem to have any agenda or particular direction. In fact, the younger Protestant generation even then was looking west. Many of the new homesteaders and colonists were the children of farmers who had established in Ste. Agathe a generation earlier. Their parents' farms were on poor, rocky soil, and they responded to the news of a more fertile valley beyond the *Repousse*.

The Curé continued to work towards the building of a railroad that would link his northern valley to his parish.



He managed to get a lottery accepted to finance the project, a very unusual means of fund-raising in those conservative times. It is hard to imagine what drove him on. Did he imagine train-loads of produce finding its way from the northern valleys to Montreal or did he see the train as a means of bringing more and wealthier settlers north?

He was clearly spearheading a movement to build Catholic communities, to stop the exodus that he had witnessed in his earlier years. Sadly he didn't live to see the train arrive in Ste. Agathe or climb *La Repousse*. He died in 1891, the year before the completion of the rail link to Ste. Agathe. In the next twenty years the small village of Ste-Agathe-des-Monts would grow to twenty times its size. The old photos of the first train arriving with all the important men posed before the station represent the beginning of a whole new age, an era of holiday and recreational use, of hospitals and ski-hills, of hotels and camps. Ironically, had Curé Labelle been standing in the middle of the picture in 1892 with these ambitious, happy men, he would have looked like an anomaly, an anachronism.

Sources include Histoire des Laurentides, Serge Laurin and Album Historique de la Paroisse de Ste-Agathe-des-Monts, 1849-1912, Dr. Edmond Grignon.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

Baie des Chaleurs train still running

Port-Daniel station – how we got it and how we still have it!

Port-Daniel station was built in 1908 by the AQ&W, (Atlantic, Quebec and Western Railway) but is now the property of Via Rail. Along with those in Percé and Barachois, it is one of very few remaining little village stations built at the turn of the century.

In the 19th century, the Gaspé Peninsula was very isolated from the rest of the country due to its geographical position and also because of its lack of adequate means of communication. Most traffic, travelers or merchandise traveled by boat, the roads being nearly non-existent and the few that existed impassable in the winter months. The train appears

like a miracle which will finally end that isolation.

In 1863, a federal commission mandated engineer Sandford Fleming, to study possible layouts for a railway network

connecting the East to the rest of Canada, hoping to link at the same time the Maritime provinces and the Gaspé region. The

chosen route would go from Rivière du Loup, Quebec, to Truro, Nova Scotia through the Matapédia Valley.

Work started in 1868 and Campbellton was reached in 1876. But this is not much help to Gaspésians - the Baie des Chaleurs coast is served on the New Brunswick side but not on the Gaspé side. That would take much longer. Politics, huge debts and strikes by unpaid workers slow things down. In December 1891, the McGreevy-Langevin financial scandal delayed work and cost Honoré Mercier his position as premier of Quebec.

Various small companies got involved, each constructing a little piece of the track. The Compagnie de la Baie-des-Chaleurs was responsible

for the Matapédia-Caplan portion, which opened in 1894 and was 98 per cent paid for by the federal and provincial governments. One of the shareholders was William McPherson, mayor of Port-Daniel.

The saga continued. La Compagnie de chemin de fer Atlantique et Lac Supérieur bought the Compagnie de la Baie-des-Chaleurs, which was heavily in debt. The train reached Paspébiac in 1902. (eight years to cover 40 km Caplan-Paspébiac).

In March 1901 a group of financiers from Quebec City, Toronto and England started the AQ&W (with their eyes and interests on some oil deposits in the

region) and planned at last to link Paspébiac to Gaspé, following the coast line to the tip of the peninsula. With

grants and other government help, 26 railway bridges were built to finish the line. The track reached Port-Daniel in 1907 and the station was built the year after. It is a larger station

because for a while it was the end of the line. (See the November 2001 issue of Quebec Heritage News for my article on the renovation of the nearby Legrand Hotel and its connection with the railway's arrival).

Not done yet

Port-Daniel had been reached but Gaspé was the goal. The mountain east of Port Daniel is granite and the presbytery had to be expropriated, etc. It took two years to build a tunnel 193 metres long and rising 73 metres above the water to cross Cap à l'Enfer in Port-Daniel. The work was supervised by engineers Sir Douglas Fox and Associates. To this day the tunnel is recognized as a feat of engineering, with teams of workers digging at each end and finally meeting in the middle. Eight workers died in a blasting accident during construction. Gaspé was reached in 1911.

Continued on next page



McInnis Cove, Port Daniel

RAILWAY HERITAGE

Continued from previous page

The arrival of the train allowed many industries to develop: the Nadeau sawmill which had started in 1896; a fish farm for the reproduction of lobsters is sponsored by the government; the Bonaventure Pulp and Paper Co., which cut wood behind Port-Daniel, could use the train to haul wood to its mill in Chandler; limestone is sent to paper mills in Bathurst N.B.; the tourism industry grew, as did traffic back and forth between small and big centres.

On May 30, 1929, the Quebec Oriental Railway (Matapédia-Paspébiac) and the AQ&W (Paspébiac-Gaspé) sold their networks to the Canadian National Railway. The 102.4 mile Paspébiac-Gaspé portion, with its tunnel and 26 bridges, is bought for \$902,800 dollars. The entire line became part of the Intercolonial Railway which ran from the Maritimes to Vancouver.

In the 1960s provincial highway 132 was rebuilt and trucks start eating away the railway's revenue. Passengers were using their cars more and more and a bus company started service between Gaspé and Montreal in 1970. So we nearly lost our train. In 1970 CN asked the Canadian Transport Commission for permission to abandon the Matapédia-Gaspé line. On February 4 1972 the answer was No. Saved this time. Same again five years later, saved a second time. Improvements were to be made instead.

In 1978 passenger rail service across Canada was turned over to Via Rail. In 1983 Via sought a more direct Montreal-Gaspé run - with fewer stops. There were 38 stops from Montreal to Gaspé, 27 of them between Mont-Joli and Gaspé. Some stations

were closed but Port-Daniel remained. Relief again. Denise McInnis was the first female stationmaster, hired in 1984. She is still at it.

In 1990 passenger service was cut from seven days a week to three. The station was no longer busy so in 1991 Port Daniel rented space from Via and moved

municipal facilities there. Chaleur, as our train is named, was still sick. Via gave it one year.

Somehow, we still have it. The line has been split into separately owned parts; the municipal offices were moved to the Maison Legrand after its renovation in 2000; last year part of the station burned and we thought that was the end for sure.

But, contrary to all sad expectations, it has been restored by Via Rail. Now it is here to stay, as a precious monument to our Quebec Heritage. Some of the space may become a small café - tea and brioches - if our economic development group gets its wish.

The Port Daniel station stands proudly in the centre of the town, overlooking the Bay. It has been listed as a tourist attraction and houses an interpretation centre explaining the history of the train on the Gaspé coast.

Our station is the soul of the village. It doesn't bring

merchandise any more but it does bring family home for the holidays, friends and relatives for weddings and funerals, tourists looking for spectacular travel. It is our lifeline, our link, our umbilical cord. When we hear the train whistle, we know we are connected with the big wide world outside. Rain, snow and sleet can stop cars and buses but the train always runs. You'll get there and most of the

time, on time. Some of them are quite high so don't look down when you're going over a trestle.

By Monique Porteneuve Nadeau, this article is a summary of a report prepared for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada by architect and heritage preservation consultant Christiane Lefebvre.



Via Rail spent about \$100,000 refurbishing the building, erected during the first decade of the 20th century. The station will again sport its original colours, burgundy, yellow and white.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

When trains first came to the Missisquoi Valley

Several railway projects were on the drawing boards of many municipalities of the Eastern Townships in the 1860s. An important one was the *South Eastern Railway* which, after its promoters discarded a plan to build it through the Bolton Pass to Mansonville, opted for the West Farnham, Richford and Mansonville Station (Highwater) route to connect with the *Connecticut and Passumpsic Railroad* at Newport, Vt. Completed in 1873 this became Potton Township's first railway. With the *South Eastern Railway* in a precarious financial position, the *Canadian Pacific*, in 1883, assumed full control. During the 1990s they sold this branch line to American interests.

Following the end of the American Civil War the need for copper increased and, in 1870, the *Huntingdon Mining Railway* was inaugurated linking the Huntingdon copper mine at Dillonton, near Eastman, to Waterloo. The *Vermont Central Railroad* bought it in 1871. Also in 1870 Lucius Seth Huntingdon and Ralph Merry, obtained a charter to build the *Missisquoi and Black Rivers Valley Railway* from Richmond, Que. to the Dillonton copper mine where it joined the Waterloo to Magog railway.

By December 1877, the line had been extended through Bolton Centre to the Potton Sulphur Springs located at the northern limit of Potton Township and which, by this time, had become famous for their therapeutic value, attracting visitors from many areas and where the Potton Springs Hotel had been built two years before. Falling upon hard times the line progressed no further.

In 1888 Judge Samuel W. Foster formed a new company and renamed the line the *Orford Mountain Railway*. He extended it north to Windsor Mills in 1903 and, in 1906, south to North Troy. That year, a station

was built in Mansonville and called MANSONVILLE VILLAGE. To honour Judge Foster, it was inaugurated with great pomp on Place Manson, on July 11, 1907. The former station is today a private home on Chemin Bellevue. In addition, there was a siding at Peabody Road and the Willard shoe last factory was located nearby at Traver Road, then called McNeil's Crossing. At the Potton Springs stop there was a sheltered ramp to welcome hotel passengers.

Bought out by CPR

Faced with rising financial difficulties, the railway was acquired by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1910 who continued the line to North Troy, Vt. where it connected with their Montreal to Boston link, the former *South Eastern Railway*. Purchase of the OMR, as well as other

small Eastern Townships rail lines by the Canadian Pacific was, if nothing else, an insurance policy against the Vermont Central encroaching on its territory. Like its predecessor the MBRV Railway, the O.M.R. was built to tap the copper ore and the valuable timber resources of the area as well as transporting hay to the New England states during World War I. The "Peanut Special", so called because of the small size of its locomotives, also ran four trains a day, including mixed freight and passenger cars, two in each



Arrival of the Orford Mountain Railway train in Mansonville Village Station around 1907. The engine burnt wood, not coal, and the large funnel shape chimney had a screen on top to prevent sparks from lighting fire along the tracks.

Courtesy of Brome County Historical Society.

direction between Windsor Mills and North Troy.

By the 1920s and early 30s service had declined to the point where the CPR was forced to cease operations in 1936 and the rails were removed soon after, ending an interesting period in the history of Potton Township.

Many local people still have fond memories of when the trains whistled their way through the Missisquoi Valley.

Peter Downman Vice President with Gérard Leduc President, Potton Heritage Association Inc.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

A picture's worth ten thousand words

But good archives are worth a million



Top left: Passenger Coach to R.R. Station 1909-1910. Driver Anson H. Heath drove this coach to hotels, Stanstead College and homes to pick up passengers and luggage to go to the RR Station. This was taken about 1909 or 10. Donated by Irma E. Goodrich, 16 Blue Ridge Dr., Rutland, Vermont.

Left centre and below: Train Wreck at Stanstead - Oct. 3 1900 - Fireman Bowker killed.

Top right: Militia parade at Stanstead Railroad Station, 1914

Lower right: Washout in Tomifobia, date unknown. J.J. Parker Collection

All these photos are from the archives of the Stanstead Historical Society

RAILWAY HERITAGE

Victoria Bridge connected Montreal to the world

‘The most gigantic undertaking in the history of engineering’

By Alan Hustak, The Gazette

The first bridge to link Montreal to the South Shore was commemorated by the Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in November with a cairn that recognizes the importance of the Victoria Tubular Bridge. That's what the Victoria Bridge was called when it opened to rail traffic on Nov. 24, 1859. Built by the Grand Trunk Railway, it was the first bridge to span the St. Lawrence River. At the time it was called the eighth wonder of the world – “the most gigantic undertaking in the history of engineering.”

Treasury Board president Lucienne Robillard unveiled the commemorative plaque at the McCord Museum in a ceremony that also launched the museum's virtual exhibition, *The 8th Wonder of the Modern World*. It's not the first time the importance of the bridge has been recognized. The Canadian Engineering Society unveiled a plaque on the bridge in 1988 honouring “the skill and diligence of the engineers of yesterday.”

When the bridge opened, trains rumbled through an enclosed 2,009-metre-long tube made of wrought iron plates. At first the smoke from the locomotive engines didn't cause any problems. But in the 1870s, when coal and oil replaced wood as fuel, the long train tunnel was choked with greasy fumes. The bridge was rebuilt in the



View from the south shore with Montreal in the background. The wedge-shaped limestone piers keep the St. Lawrence ice jams from wrecking the bridge. The tubular iron tunnel was replaced with an open truss in 1898.

Illustration from the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers

1890s to accommodate wagons and pedestrians as well as trains. When it reopened in 1898, it was rechristened the Victoria Jubilee Bridge. It is now owned by Canadian National Railways. Two years ago, CN spent \$38 million to repair the railway lines on the bridge and another \$35 million was spent to repair the roadways. According to Transport Quebec, about 40,000 vehicles use the bridge daily.

The Victoria Bridge – The 8th Wonder of the Modern World, a bilingual virtual exhibition, is online at www.mccord-museum.qc.ca.

Heroics and tragedies in train songs

Life on the rails produced many songs and poems of heroism, great wrecks, tragic events, and narrow escapes. We can recall “Casey Jones”, “Wreck of the Old 97” and many such.

The Depression era and life along the rails produced singer-song writers of the time with material to sing about hardship, hunger, cold, death and danger. Jimmie Rodgers, himself a train man who died young of TB, is remembered by “Waiting for a Train” and others. Then there was “Hobo Bill” (He was just a railroad bum who died out in the cold) and a variety of blue yodeling songs.

The lonely sound of train whistles worked its way with many songs, several by the late Hank Williams, and in the same era “Golden Rocket” and “Moving On” built a singing career for Nova Scotia's Hank Snow.

It would be hard to find another era of human activity of the late 19th and early 20th centuries which gave us an equal amount of story and song to include in our North American History. – R.E.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

Refused to release the brakes until the last possible moment

William Best: Minnesota hero, Quebec unknown...

By Richard Evans

In December 1894, a great fire swept an area of Northern Minnesota destroying 480 square miles of mostly forest lands and leaving 418 dead, turned a Great Northern Railway engineer, William Best, into a hero, still remembered there. What became known as the great Hinckley fire, for one of the towns destroyed and scene of many deaths, today has the Hinckley Fire Museum operated by the Pine County Historical Society.

William Best was one of the engineers controlling the brakes of a Great Northern Railway train consisting of an engine and 5 passenger cars. With fires raging in the area, the railway was the only way into and out of Hinckley. The train arrived on time at 2:35 pm to find the entire area exploding in flames with people and animals racing for safety. People in total panic scrambled aboard the train, itself in danger of bursting into flames at any moment and with the engine and controls reaching nearly unbearable heat. Urged to rush away, Best waited and refused to release the brakes until the last possible moment and allowing many lives to be saved. Finally, when the danger to remain would have led to the deaths of those already aboard, Best allowed the train to go, none wanting to look back at the horrors happening to the less fortunate still behind. There were still frightening

moments in the miles outward as surrounding forest, towns and rail trestles were afire.

Best is remembered as a great hero, though a controversial one. Another engineer, Barry, claimed it was really he and not Best who deserved the acclaim. But the general consensus is that William Best played the greater role.

William Best went on to become a leader in the railway union movement and from a base of operations in Winnipeg, was frequently seen as a "thorn in the side" of the railway.

Born in Lennoxville, Quebec, on March 15, 1856 to a family who had migrated into Quebec from Newfoundland, William Best went to Vermont as a young man where among other things he became a musician in a local band. He went on to have a life-long railway career, returning to the Eastern Townships in retirement. He died at Coaticook on February 18, 1934 and is buried in Malvern Cemetery, Lennoxville.

A book *From the Ashes* by Grace Stageberg Swenson of Minnesota covered a comprehensive story of the fire. There are several other smaller publications by other authors. A collection of papers and memorabilia on William Best is in the possession of Jim Belknap of Dixville, Quebec.

Railway Art and Memorabilia

Railway historians are such a numerous and diverse lot of people that their collector interests cover just about everything you can imagine and much you never have considered. From model trains, to caps and overalls, to railway silver and china, calendars, post cards, lanterns, tools, photos, tickets, union cards and on and on.

As someone stricken both with the collector urge and a love of train memories, I was stopped short one winter day in Saskatoon in the mid-1980s in front of a jewellery store window by a collector plate with a dramatic image of a coal burning steam engine on a winter's day. The painting entitled "Symphony in steam" by artist Ted Xaras was the first in a series of several collector plates featuring his paintings of trains in a variety of Canadian settings and times. Put out by Christian Bell Porcelain these railway collector plates found several audiences of collections, all contributing to their value being quickly augmented.

Suppliers to the railway industry know that corporate marketing promotional "give-aways" from calendars to whiskey decanters, to pens and penknives will find enthusiastic seekers crying, "Where can I get one for me?"

Across Canada we are preserving a select few railway stations and memorabilia associated with them. Others are saved only in artwork, post cards and photos. Saskatchewan artist Henry Ripplinger has incorporated railways scenes into much of his art and has successfully marketed numbered prints from his work.

Perhaps our most haunting piece of railway-related art is Alec Colville's disturbing painting of a horse racing a train. Is there a future for railway art showing skidoos and ATVs racing trains? – R.E.

RAILWAY HERITAGE

A traditional favourite for stamp collectors

Mail clerks rode the rails in railway post office cars

In Canada's Museum of Civilization in Hull is the Canadian Postal Museum. Within that is a special section on the railway post offices. For many years, the passenger trains had a mail car, usually linked to the baggage car, and in this mail car, a postal counter with postal staff sorting and stamping mail. Bags of mail were put aboard, then stamped and sorted and distributed in mail pouches put out at stations along the line. One result was some very fast and effective mail delivery. A letter mailed at one point could be received within a few hours, at a point many miles along the system.

These railway post offices, or RPOs, each had their own cancellation hammers and collections of the stamps thus cancelled, has become an important sub-



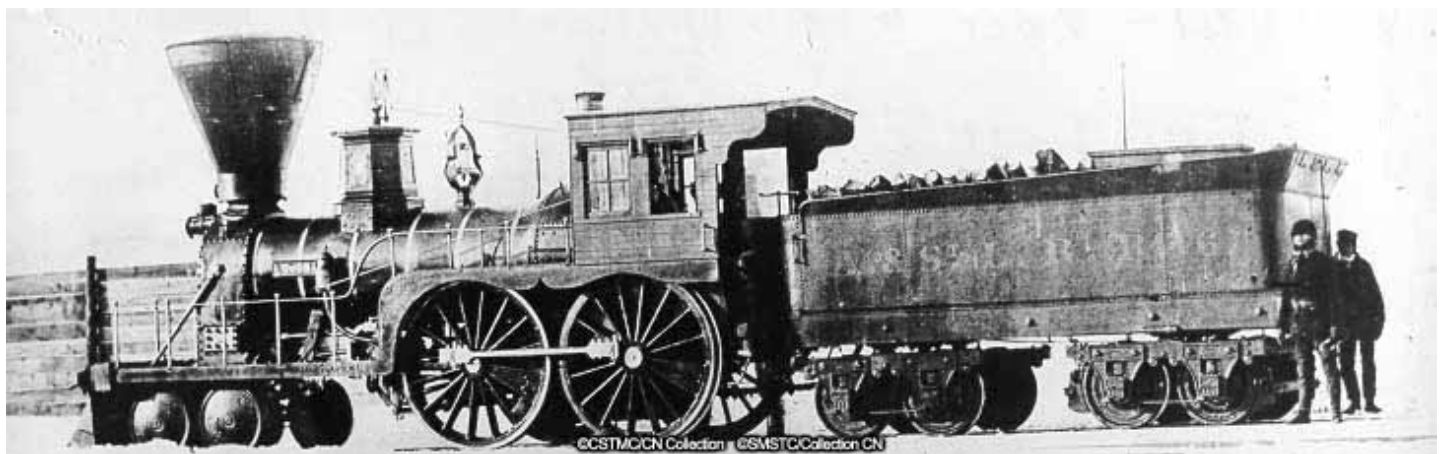
An early Grand Trunk mail car.



**Grand Trunk locomotive 209, Trevithick.
Photo by William Notman, ca 1859**

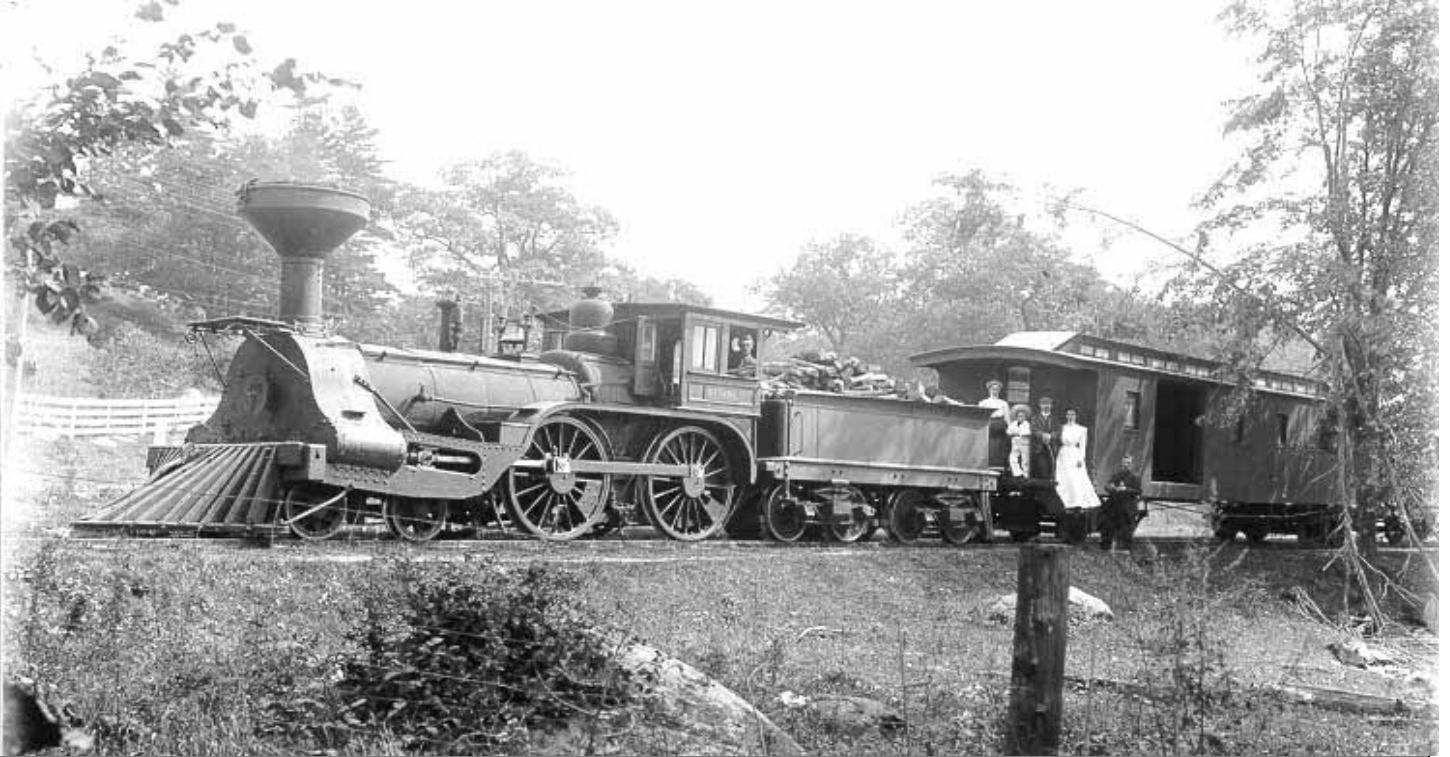
section for Canadian stamp collectors. There are specialized booklets about them and entire separate collector valuations for these; highest would, as well, be such special items as the stamps issued commemorating the visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1938 and any which were cancelled on train routes travelled by the train used for the tour, with the appropriate RPO cancellation. Then of course, stamps depicting trains and commemorating railway history event and people are another set of themes of interest both to philatelists and to railways historians.

Nor should we forget that baggage and mail cars were the object of most of the train robberies and therein lies a host of romantic tales, legends and fictions.



An Atlantic & St. Lawrence crew await orders on a chilly winter day in Longueuil in about 1856. All photos on these two pages are from the Canada Science and Technology Museum.

RAILWAY HERITAGE



Above, a Carillon and Grenville Railway passenger train near Grenville in 1914. The broad-gauge locomotive was built in Britain in the 1850s. Below, the famous Quebec Bridge.



QAHN MATTERS

A way of passing on knowledge and skills

Oral history is both ancient and modern at the same time

By Ronald Ratcliffe

“Herodotus of Thuri here sets down his inquiries toward the end that the things done by men should not be forgotten with the passage of time and that the great and marvelous exploits, performed by both Greeks and barbarians should not lose their radiance.

“I suppose you will bring out a book of these stories someday. I have told you now all the tales I remember, and I am glad... I hope that they will shorten the night for those who read them or hear them being read, and let them not forget me in their prayers, nor the old people from whom I myself learned them.”

There has been an explosion of oral history in the last few decades. This can be attributed to the advent of easily used, portable recording equipment. We can view this phenomenon as a reaffirmation of a way of passing on knowledge and the skills that continue to be of importance in our lives. It did however become under appreciated. As written, scholastic history was developed, starting in the Age of Enlightenment, that which we call history became tied to identifying, sifting, and manipulating of documents. This led to the illusion that documents such as lists, treaties, letters, are reality. The result was the concentration of history on great men and key events of global and national importance.

However the study of the recent past employed the interviewing of great men, for example war leaders, and these interviews were either recorded in writing, or transcribed. The historians were trying to fill in the gaps left in the documental record. They were back to manipulating documents. And a document is the product of its time, location, and the belief system of its originator(s).

The study of folklore and social anthropology also started during the Age of Enlightenment and continued to develop during the Romantic Age. The interrelatedness of folklore, social anthropology and history, and the shared use of the interview ensured the importance of what we call oral history. It is important to consider that it is the folklorists and historians who have controlled what is preserved, and the presence, now in decline, of a prejudice to trust the written word over the spoken word.

Early folklore, from 1772 to 1850 had a nationalistic racial, and linguistic identity that was also present in the development of the nation state. Colonialism brought collecting overseas. The knowledge acquired was used to control the subject populations, and to encourage xenophobic reactions at home. We can see the negative potential of this type of application in its later exploitation by Stalin and Hitler. The work done in these early years still has value and

it is at this time that the modern systems of ordering collections of folkloric material were established.

It was in Finland in the first half of the Twentieth Century that researchers took the lead in the development of the “scientific” methods that other countries came to use, and as stated before, it was technology that provided the means. It started with wax cylinders, and then magnetized wire, but these early systems were bulky and expensive so the interviews and stories recorded tended to be erased for reuse after they were transcribed. Fortunately, many early examples of traditional songs and music were not erased. It is from the collecting and preserving of folk music and folklore in the twenties and thirties that sound archives were developed. During this period the oral interview was “rediscovered” to supplement traditional written sources which there were less of because of a decline in letter writing due to the telephone and a new ease of travel.

The portable reel tape and later cassette tape recorder made all types of sound recording much more accessible. Guided interviews provided multiple views on events and subjects. It became possible to obtain “history from the bottom up”. Radio and especially television adopted the method and popularized it.

The appreciation of sound recording grew and has developed into the concept that the tape recording is primary, and the transcript secondary. This relationship can be compared to that which exists between the person and the photograph. Recording has made the gathering of material both easy and accurate. It captures the voice, the intonation, the accent or dialect, the laugh, the sob; it cannot be replaced. Paperwork is necessary for note taking, documentation of recordings, setting the scene, and other details that are not on the recordings. However transcription remains important. Transcripts are the accepted standard for most oral history collections. The convenience and time saving afforded by even partial accounts of key excerpts, due to allowing random access and ease of review explain their usefulness. A transcript is easier to analyze, criticize, and deconstruct both textually and literarily.

With the recognition of the supremacy of the recording must go the understanding that not all recordings are equal. They too are enveloped by a social system and limited by the geographic boundaries of that society: by location. They are also limited in time to a life span. Similar to written sources, they are always of a particular nature and bias, and controlled by the political system present and that systems application of freedom of speech.

Continued on next page

It will help to build community identities and individual self worth

The QAHN oral history project is underway

The Oral History Project is a response to the expressed needs of the diverse English linguistic minority communities. The first area of concern is the history, culture, and traditions are seen as being lost, especially to the youth. This leads to a large proportion of the youth seeking their futures in Montréal and outside Québec. The second is the lack of communication and dissemination of information within and among the various English speaking regional communities and their respective organizations and societies. The hope is to create a stronger solidarity and connectivity between the regions and equally between the Anglophone and Francophone communities.

The Oral History Project will involve all the regional communities in locating and identifying the oral histories and collections that pertain to the Anglophone heritage of Quebec. The material will then be archived to the highest bibliographical and preservation standards to promote the communication between informants, interviewers, researchers, and the public. The direction of this undertaking will be towards stewardship in the acquisition, control, preservation, and promotion of this information. The intention is to allow the oral history material to reach its potential as an access to communal memory, an alternative to the loss of information due to automation, and the fragmentation of the Information Age. Perhaps most importantly it will help to build community identities and individual self worth.

To directly address the need for increased communication the project will be going into the schools and setting up an oral history program that would involve teachers and students in gathering material. Another aspect of this program will be to arrange for matriarchs and patriarchs, and others with the aid of the regional organizations to go into the schools to teach concepts, tell stories, and to demonstrate skills and crafts. To further this intergenerational cooperation and sharing students will be encouraged to visit seniors clubs and residences. A student periodical, youth run, with the contents gathered from all regions and divers sources would complement this effort with the hope of it being available to public subscribers as well as the schools.

Many benefits

The future benefits of the project are many. A long term strategic planning document will be produced as a guide for future oral history projects for the use of the regional organizations and others. The project will also generate written articles, books, multi media presentations, and film on video and CD. A link between local organizations and societies will be established with the schools so that the fostering of youth interest in heritage and specifically their local heritage will continue as an encouragement for the young to put down roots in their communities. Finally Anglophone heritage in the Province of Québec will be preserved, promoted, and made accessible.

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Oral traditions are still strong even in a literate society. The modern "traveling legend" and "urban myth" point out that we need to understand the difference between legend and fact, oral performance and interview, and to recognize specific vocal and musical genres. All have an important place in sound archives but need to be identified. Oral history concentrates on the interview, and this has its effects. The interviewer is an intrinsic part of an interview; it is a shared event. The interviewee responds on many levels to the interviewer, there is the presence of a microphone and possibly a video camera, and there are possible time constraints of scheduling and tape length. Recently, the application of oral history is being modified

by the interdisciplinary blending, and more flexible analysis now found in modern scholarship. Both oral history and the sound archives it is found in are used to study linguistics, psychology, and pop culture. There is new research being done on memory, and how it works, and how "reality" is perceived, how imagination affects memory and perception, and how memories can change over time due to ongoing activities and exterior stimulants. It is recognized that memories vary from person to person. Oral history can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of society, communities and individuals, it strengthens and revitalizes of our ties to community, our knowledge of our selves, and our relationship to our community. It is therefore a way to encourage the evolution of the English speaking community in Quebec.

A Tartan Day for Quebec? It could happen...

The Sons of Scotland Benevolent, Montreal branch, have petitions in circulation, in English, French and Gaelic towards requesting a private member's bill in the Quebec National Assembly that April 6 be declared Tartan Day in Quebec to draw attention to the great diversity of contribution of Scots to Quebec's history and development.

April 6 is ten days before the anniversary of Culloden, one of the most devastating points in Scottish history, of which there are many. But April 6, 1320 was a happy day, as the declaration of Arbroath established "the historical independence of Scotland and the rights of the Scottish people to choose their own sovereign." So says National Assembly Bill 394, tabled by PQ deputy François Beaulne of Marguerite Bourgeoise county, and co-sponsored by Liberal Geoff Kelley of Jacques Cartier.

But there yet appears to be no proposal for what would happen on Tartan Day. Would we wear or display our family tartan, our

favourite tartan, or the Quebec tartan? Would we use tartan day to stir up greater interest in the Quebec tartan, certainly a very beautiful tartan though perhaps taking second place to the Maple Leaf Tartan. Now that's not a political observance, just a point of view that the Maple Leaf tartan does call to mind the beauty of our maples in Fall.

To every season...

Perhaps some might personally prefer to do their tartan wearing, if there is to be a special day, in the Fall when colour has started to fade from the landscape and to have a

whole host of people suddenly in colourful apparel for St. Andrew's Day. But would Tartan Day detract from St. Andrew's or vice versa?

Meanwhile, Robbie Burns day is at hand and we'll toast the haggis in good *Uissebeatha* (ooshku-bey-a), the water of life. *Och, aye, the stirrup cup, the wee deoch an duiris an' a' that. If April brings Tartan Day, we'll hae another then.* – R.E.

In the words of Robbie Burns
(from Tam O'Shanter):
*Inspirin' bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst mak' us scorn!
Wi' tippeny, we fear no evil,
Wi' usquabae, we'll face the Devil!*
So, if you're for tartans and all they can say,
find a petition and add your name. And:
*Glenlivet it has castles three,
Drumin, Blairfindy and Deskie
And also one distillery
More famous than the castles three.
(Old Rhyme)*

The really fine print: BILL 394 AN ACT TO PROCLAIM TARTAN DAY

INTRODUCTION Introduced by Mr François Beaulne, Member for Marguerite-D'Youville

Québec Official Publisher 2002

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The purpose of this bill is to proclaim 6 April in each and every year as Tartan Day.

BILL 394 AN ACT TO PROCLAIM TARTAN DAY

WHEREAS Scottish immigrants first settled in Québec over 400 years ago, making the Scots one of the founding peoples of Québec;

Whereas the Scottish community of Québec has significantly contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of Québec;

Whereas the bond uniting the Scottish community and other communities of Québec is profound and sincere and exemplifies a friendship that can exist between communities;

Whereas the National Assembly encourages all Quebecers to be proud of their cultural heritage;

Whereas 6 April 1320 is the date on which the Declaration of Arbroath establishing the historical independence of Scotland and the rights of the Scottish people to choose their own sovereign was signed;

Whereas that date has a special historical significance for all Scots;

Whereas the tartan is a Scottish symbol recognized worldwide;

THE PARLIAMENT OF QUÉBEC ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Tartan Day is hereby proclaimed to be 6 April in each and every year.
2. This Act comes into force on (insert here the date of assent to this Act).

Quebec City concert a success, Frasers sign new troops for Fort St. Andrews

The Quebec City St. Andrew's Day Concert was a success once again. On a snowy evening, over 275 brave souls were present to enjoy the proceedings. Some of last year's entertainers were back to present their Celtic music as well as two new participants, local song and dance artist Tess Leblanc and singer /guitarist Bill Russell.

The contingent of 78th Fraser Highlanders from the Fort Ste-Hélène garrison in Montreal put on a good show as did our own St. Andrew's Pipers, who are now six in number. The program included the introduction of the newly formed Fort St. Andrew's outpost of the 78th Fraser Highlanders. The induction ceremony for new recruits was carried out by Maj. Bruce Bolton from the Montreal garrison and this caught the fancy of the audience.

With the ceremony completed, the personnel of the outpost numbered 15 including five ladies. We will certainly be hearing more about the Fort St. Andrew's outpost in the future.– Edward Gunn [mailto:gunn@upc.qc.ca]

NATURAL HERITAGE

Preserving our surroundings: Landscape is where we live

By **G rard Leduc**

Our heritage landscapes, a lot more than a post card picture, but a place we live in and to be preserved!

On Wednesday, January 15, Sherbrooke hosted an evening of lectures and workshop on heritage landscape, organized by the *Comit  du patrimoine paysager de l'Estrie and P pines (Promotion des Estriennes pour initier une nouvelle equit  sociale)*. The evening was under the honorary chairmanship of Monique Nadeau-Saumier, Director and Curator of the Colby-Curtis Museum in Stanstead and the guest speakers were specialists in the field of landscape management. The evening lectures were chaired by Professor Henri Dorion, geographer from Laval University who introduced the speakers: Mr. David Belgue, President of the Quebec Landscape Board, Mr. Dinu Bumbaru, program Director for Heritage Montreal and Professor Pierre Larochelle, School of Architecture, Laval University.

The message carried through the evening stressed that the notion of scenery is very subjective and has different meaning depending weather you are an ordinary citizen, a logging contractor, a housing developer, a road department engineer or a farmer. Each has his/her own idea about it and, of course, varying interests! Therefore, it is up to the community to try to arrive at a consensus that will best serve the community.

Our landscape is a matter of identity and self-pride

The landscape of a village or of a larger area is, before all, a matter of identity and self-pride. For example, in our area, the unavoidable components of our scenery are the mountains with a focus on Owl's Head and Orford mountains or, as well, Lake Memphremagog. We identify ourselves with these landmarks and we are proud of them. Pride and identity vibrate in our heads and in our hearts!

Our natural and built landscape must be considered as a common good and its protection; its promotion cannot be achieved through rules and regulations. These can be useful tools but it is our identity and pride that count.

Heritage is our future Heritage is the integrated assemblage of the components of our natural and built environment that shall not be taken for granted but ought to be preserved. Heritage is our future, the environment our descendants will live in. It is our cultural legacy that will insure their quality of life.

The preservation of our collective memory is one of the best mean to unite people together and to preserve the quality of life we enjoy and the keeping of that link between the past and the future is the manifestation of our respect for the human environment we live in. Moreover, this environment, this landscape has a memory that ought to be kept by promoting its place names, big or small.

In the past, the landscape had all kinds of names, not only for important geographical locations like mountains, rivers and lakes but, also, most little recognizable hills, turns in the road, crossroads, etc. Each place had a name! We still remember some of these names that locate people in the landscape when they talk to each other. Accordingly, in Potton Township, there were the Bradley Hill and McNeil's Crossing on Traver Road, Meig's Corner on Route 243, a Nigger, a Creek, a Battle Road and many others in Potton Township. That's how people identified themselves with the landscape.

How to protect our landscape? There is no magic formula and we will end up with the landscape we deserve! >From that conference, it became clear that, despite important legislation such as the Quebec agricultural land protection act or various urbanism bylaws, some of the worst scars inflicted to our landscape were perpetrated by some Quebec Government ministries and by some municipalities!

A new tool is now available to urban planners trying to achieve a balance between development and preservation. If a piece of land is de-zoned for tourist, residential or industrial development, the idea of an all-out ban is out of the question. However, computerized landscape modeling allows one to anticipate how the affected area will look like after a development project has taken place. People will be asked: "What do you think about it? Is this what you want?" This modeling allows for redefinition of the proposed project insuring the preservation of the landscape and a better quality of life for the community.

Recently, a tourist and residential development project on Mount Orford was the object of an important social debate. The community mobilized itself, reacted and the project was put on ice, which clearly shows the importance of a community commitment to a cause of public interest.

Our landscape is not only an assortment of scenic vistas for tourist advertising or for post cards but, more important, it comprehends our entire natural and built environment for our daily lives. It is our pride.

Please note: The *Comit  du patrimoine de l'Estrie* just began a series of consultations meetings with all MRCs in the Eastern Townships. A meeting is planned for the Memphremagog MRC, in Magog, at the end of February. Keep an eye out for it!

By G rard Leduc PhD [leduc.potton@sympatico.ca], Potton Heritage Association Inc., Member of the Consultative Committee on Urbanism for the Municipality of the Township of Potton

For more information on the Comit  du patrimoine paysager estrien (CPPE), please contact Cathy Bergeron at (819) 820-3176, ext. 288 or cathy.bergeron@mrn.gouv.qc.ca.

NEWS AND NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

Colby-Curtis museum closes three months for upgrade

Holiday Season activities at the Colby-Curtis Museum in Stanstead were a great success and we wish to thank the numerous visitors who came to enjoy the traditional English cream tea and admire the heritage home adorned with Christmas decorations of yesteryear. We wish to thank our faithful patrons and inform them that the Colby-Curtis Museum will not be open to the public from January 25 to April 1.

A \$17,000 grant from the Museum Assistance Program of Canadian Heritage, will in part allow the staff to undertake an important reorganization of the museum storage spaces, particularly that used for works of art, thus providing improved preventive conservation conditions for our important collection of paintings and works on paper.

Moreover, with the return of several pieces of furniture restored by the specialists of the Centre de conservation du Québec, we will take advantage of the closing to reorganize certain spaces of the heritage home – making it more attractive and also providing

QAHN calls for nominations for Marion Phelps heritage award for 2003

It's that time once again!

QAHN is requesting nominations for the 2003 Marion Phelps Award for outstanding long-term contribution to the protection and preservation of Anglophone heritage in Quebec. The Award is named after its first recipient, Ms. Marion Phelps of the Brome County Historical Society, who works diligently as the Archivist of that society in this her 44th year with the Society. Last year's recipient, Ms. Joan Bisson Dow, was honoured for her work towards establishing the Gaspesian British Heritage Village in New Richmond on the Gaspé Coast.

Do you know of someone who has consistently worked towards the promotion and preservation of your community's heritage? Send us their name and contact information accompanied by a maximum one-page description of their outstanding long-term contribution by **April 30, 2003**. Our Board of Directors will make the selection in their May meeting.

Nominations should be sent to 400-257 Queen St. Lennoxville QC J1M 1K7, faxed to (819) 564-6872

better protection to the precious objects left by the Colby family. The museum boutique and the archives department of the Stanstead Historical Society will be accessible by reservation and the museum will maintain its education program for students of local schools.

The Colby-Curtis Museum receives operating grants from the *Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec* and the Municipality of Stanstead. We wish to thank them for their support in this endeavour that will contribute to an improved permanent exhibition and insure better conservation for our collections.

We apologize for this inconvenience and we look forward to greeting the public again at the Colby-Curtis Museum next April, when we set forth with a new season of activities. For further information please contact us by phone (819) 876-7322 or by E-mail at mccrcip@interlinx.qc.ca – *Monique Nadeau-Saumier, Director/Curator*

or e-mailed home@qahn.org. Please send us also your own name and contact information.

Thank you for helping us recognize the efforts of heritage enthusiasts across the province.

Gatineau researcher seeks Ottawa ski club records

Historical Society of the Gatineau member Jean-Paul Murray is researching the history of the Federal Woodlands Preservation League, the organization responsible for creating the Gatineau Park. The League grew out of the Ottawa Ski Club in 1934 and operated until 1947. Its members included Governor General Tweedsmuir, Mackenzie King, R. B. Bennett and Percy Sparks.

To piece together the League's story, Mr. Murray needs to consult issues of The Ottawa Ski Club News and would appreciate information on how to locate them. He can be reached at 819 827-8085 (Old Chelsea Inn) or by email at jp.murray@sympatico.ca
From the Historical Society of the Gatineau Newsletter, No. 02-06: Dec 2002 - Jan 2003

LOCAL HERITAGE

Search for roots not easy

Kenogami research project information request

Thanks to The Blueberry Connection for permission to reprint this article.

I was born there. My father was born there. My father's parents and his sister are buried there.

I was only 18 months old when we moved to Grand Mère and almost 10 years old when we took up residence in Montreal. I never knew much about Kenogami, as I had only been there three times before: once on a business trip with my father in the early 1970s; once to visit my aunt when she was hospitalized for the last time; and when I returned in October 1981 for her funeral.

I had often heard stories from my Dad, as he would describe the places from his childhood – the Rocks, the Block Pile, the Princess Theatre, the Staff House, and the Shipshaw Dam. All these things stuck with me and I developed some reverence through the years.

I know my father had returned to Kenogami many times over the years, mainly on business trips. But he hadn't been back for many years. Last summer (August 2001) we decided to take a few days and drive to Kenogami for a small holiday.

I have been interested in the history of the English in Quebec since my University days of the mid 1970s, and genealogy even before that. My area of study had always been focused around Quebec City.

As we were traveling through the Quebec heartland, via Grand Mère and then La Tuque, it dawned on me that at one time these towns all had an English community established around the paper mills. They all had company homes, English schools and churches. I also noticed that the English Communities were not in existence anymore as their institutions were closed.

When I arrived in Kenogami, and my father gave me a thorough tour of town, I became very interested in trying to record this information so it would not be lost to time.

On this first visit, we spent a couple of days touring, taking pictures, and visiting with Sheila MacLaren (once my father's next door neighbour), who was very generous at lending some photos that we could scan. The first night's visit, I sat and listened to my Dad and Sheila talk about all the people they once knew who had since passed away. It was probably that evening that I decided something should be done to preserve what we could of the past before it was too late.

The next day we visited the Sir William Price Museum, and met a young man named Daniel Turcotte who had just finished school and was working there for the summer. He was very nice and tried to be as helpful as possible.

When my Dad and I drove around the streets, he could remember all the people and where they lived back into the 1930s, as if it were yesterday. He continued this work after we got home. From his memory, he was able to draw a map of all the streets, all the houses, and put names of families who lived in them. He spent a great deal of the winter trying to remember and fill in the blanks.

My father and I decided to return to Kenogami to try to fill in some of the gaps in our research. We were able to get away in late July (2002) for several days.

On this visit, we met several residents who proved to be very helpful. John Vatcher provided several photographs and reviewed some of the street maps and where people once lived. Jim and Doris Armour were kind enough to spend an afternoon with us. They had many old photographs as well as several books that enhanced our knowledge of the history of Kenogami.

The journalist-broadcaster, Bernice Duffy of Arvida, provided us with many stories and a wonderful visit. She lent us a copy of a publication called the *Saguenayensia* featuring the history of Jonquière, which had a wealth of information. She was very encouraging toward our research project.

As fate would have it, we crossed paths again with Daniel Turcotte, now a researcher at the Sir William Price Museum. He provided us access to a wealth of photographs on the early days of Kenogami. This collection augmented the photographs we had gathered which formed the backbone of our book.

My father was able to map out the streets with the locations of the houses. We found a Kenogami Directory from 1928, which we were able to fill in the gaps in the research.

We acknowledge that there are many gaps in this research project. We have not yet been able to get much information on the Anglican Church, or the English Catholic Church. There are a few photos we would like to find such as the old Kenogami-Jonquière Arena (that burnt down); the boys playing hockey on the out-door rink behind the Catholic School; the Ice-man and his horse and cart with the large cubes of ice; and the sawmills that were located on Price Street. It would be nice to have the photographs of all the men and women that fought in the World Wars. Of course, any story of interest would be appreciated. – *Clark and Dave McIntosh*

E-mail: clarkmcintosh@sympatico.ca , or by mail to: Mr. Clark McIntosh 203 Lake Driveway W. Ajax, Ontario L1S 4Y8, Tel: (905) 417-9009.

QAHN MATTERS

QAHN appoints Valérie Bridger executive director

Lennoxville – As a reflection of its expanding activities and community commitments, the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) announces the appointment of Valérie Bridger to the position of Executive Director. Since joining QAHN in September 2000 as Communications Coordinator, Valérie has been instrumental in developing strong links within the Network and carrying out important projects on its behalf. These have allowed QAHN to occupy an increasingly useful role in aiding community and cultural groups to preserve and communicate the history and role of the diverse English-speaking communities across Quebec. With new opportunities emerging to link economic development and heritage preservation, QAHN requires this position of enlarged responsibility. This appointment is effective January 1, 2003. Bravo Val!

HINTS AND HELP FROM AWAY

Young Canada Works in Heritage Institution

Interested in benefiting from the talents and academic skills of young Canadians who share an interest in Canada's history and achievements — and getting important work off the ground with financial assistance?

Then Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions is for you!

The Department of Canadian Heritage is undertaking this summer employment initiative for the eighth year, as part of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy. Working with coordinating organizations, sponsors and employers, Canadian Heritage helps young Canadians find summer jobs from coast to coast to coast.

Here's what we're looking for

If you're working in a non-profit museum, archives, library, or related cultural and heritage organization and you're willing to provide students with an opportunity to get a marketable work experience, learn more about Canada's history and achievements and better understand Canadians from other regions;

If you're willing to focus on work in areas such as exhibits and heritage collections, development of Web sites, writing and editing, animation of children's summer programs, hosting or performing in heritage programs, marketing, research and other cultural and heritage opportunities;

Then you should submit a proposal to Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions. For an application form or for more information, visit the website at <http://www.pch.gc.ca/ycw-jct/english/emp-her.htm>

Deadline, Feb. 15, 2003

Address label here please

Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages

Interested in benefiting from the language and academic skills of young Canadians and getting important work off the ground with financial assistance?

Deadline end of February or mid-March 2003

If you're working in a large company, a small- or medium-sized business, a public or not-for-profit organization, and you're willing to focus on work that encourages cultural exchanges between French- and English-speaking communities across Canada; on summer jobs in a second-language setting or in both official languages; or on summer jobs that allow youth from another part of the country to live and work in your area;

If you're willing to provide post-secondary students with opportunities that help bring their classroom and language skills to the work place, that further the Department of Canadian Heritage's mandate (for example, by promoting development of English and French linguistic minority communities and use of both English and French in Canada's workplace, cross-cultural understanding, or supporting the development of cultural industries or amateur sport in Canada), then you should submit a project proposal to Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages.

You'll get access to financial assistance for wages and benefits (up to 70% of those costs). Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages can cover a portion of the transportation and housing costs of students who work in another region of the country. The candidates will speak English and French. For more information, visit <http://www.pch.gc.ca/ycw-jct/english/emp-lang.htm>

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