

# QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Teachers – the rock on which education is built

# Spring: Rebirth, rejuvenation, the flowers that bloom

**W**hew! A Quebec Heritage News at last, and a jumbo edition too just to make up for a dearth of issues in recent months. I have certainly not helped the situation, having promised our editor material on Quebec schools for far too long and only recently delivered. Schools are a subject dear to my heart; not only did I go to a few (also for far too long) but have been studying them for some years now and take far more interest in buildings that used to be schools than I am sure is healthy. It has also been my privilege to chair the governing board of my children's school for the past two years in many ways a thankless and hopeless task, given what our government expects us to do without giving us any of the resources needed. I have been particularly struck by the hard work of teachers, who must not only train, mould, and instruct brats such as mine (Hi Guys!) but do mental and bureaucratic cartwheels in order to make it all conform to the Ministry's requirements. To anyone who has ever taught in a Quebec school I raise a glass of the finest Scotch having first removed the stick of gum I was chewing!

Speaking of Scotch, I was also privileged to sit in the visitors' gallery at the National Assembly while the formal adoption of Tartan Day took place on April 6. Thanks to the efforts of Ted and Louise Gunn of Quebec City a delegation of Scots (and pseudo-Scots, would-be Scots, and those that have had scottishness thrust upon 'em) were introduced to the parliamentary members and afterwards royally received and entertained in the Speaker's lounge. A few days before, the Thistle Council and the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association held their awards banquet and ceilidh at the Black Watch Armoury in Montreal. This was a delightful event featuring scrumptious haggis, highland dancing, and a stirring speech from the scotswoman of the year, the Honourable Flora MacDonald. Among the many other award recipients were Victoria Dickenson and Heather McNab, honoured for their efforts in putting together the McCord Museum's current exhibition, "The Scots: Dyed-in-the-Wool Montrealers" a must-see event for all that find themselves in downtown Montreal before September 6th, 2004.

I cannot close without some words about Ed Laberee, who died on the last day of 2003 after an all-too sudden bout with cancer. Ed was one of QAHN's original board

members and a mover and shaker at the founding conference in June 2000. From that time on he was invaluable to QAHN, both as a mine of useful information and in several key capacities, notably our annual elections officer and, since last July, secretary to the board. In 2002



he sat on the Quebec Community Groups Network's steering committee to formulate a Global Development Plan for Quebec's English-speaking community; in this role he assembled and chaired a Heritage task force, one of eight sectors within the GDP, which drew up a number of priorities and goals. Alas, Ed will not be present as the GDP moves onto the community consultation phase later this year. I particularly valued Ed's keen, rational mind; although not a man who could be easily swayed, he always presented his arguments calmly and considerately, and though he did not suffer fools gladly he was always ready to compliment people who deserved it, even if he did not agree with them. If something awkward or unpleasant needed to be said, Ed would find a diplomatic way of saying it. He will be missed. QAHN is the poorer without him.

On a happier note, it is spring: rebirth, rejuvenation, the flowers that bloom tra la. I wish all of you the very best of the season, and see you at the Annual General Meeting.

As many of you know, Valerie Bridger is once again in the Executive Director's seat after a year's maternity leave. I am very pleased to welcome her back and wish her the best for the coming year. I'm sure she will find taking care of QAHN every bit as rewarding as mothering an infant after all, our organization needs regular attention and often requires quite a bit of scrambling in order to provide sustenance; it can also keep one up at night and distracted during the day, although from time to time something really cute happens that restores one's faith. I would also like to wish Nathan David a belated but heartfelt happy first birthday.

It would be amiss if I did not at this juncture salute Charles Bury for his success at keeping QAHN going over a rather difficult nine months (no further maternal analogies, now!) and of course Noreen Corcoran who did her best for QAHN until her life took an unexpected and tragic turn last spring. But for the expanding QAHN family, the saga continues...

**Rod MacLeod**

## QAHN MATTERS

### An agenda for everyone

# 2004 annual meeting at the McCord

We cordially invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting and Marion Phelps Award Luncheon on June 19th at the McCord Museum of Canadian History.

The day begins at 10 a.m. with our Annual General Meeting where we will present our new Strategic Plan based on the findings, also presented, of the 2004 Needs Assessment Survey (See pages 4-5). Ron Ratcliffe, Oral History Project Coordinator, will show us a multimedia presentation on his project as it can be applied in the schools. The Quebec Heritage WebMagazine Editor, Matthew Farfan, will present his site to be launched in August 2004. Last but certainly not least; the Marion Phelps Award will be presented to Gaspé historian Dr. Ken Annett (See Page 24 for why).

We dine at the en-suite restaurant before going on a guided tour of The Scots Dyed-in-the-Wool Montrealers. "Discover the important role these immigrants and their descendants played in the development of the metropolis and the country as a whole, one that involved a lot more than just bagpipes, whisky and kilts!"

This is an opportunity to find out what QAHN is all about. Come meet our members from across Quebec, exchange ideas, flag issues of common interest and concern... and network, of course!

RSVP: [home@qahn.org](mailto:home@qahn.org); 1 877 964-0409

Member admission is free; it includes lunch and the guided tour. A suggested donation of \$15 covering the meal would be appreciated.

#### **The Scots Dyed-in-the-Wool Montrealers**

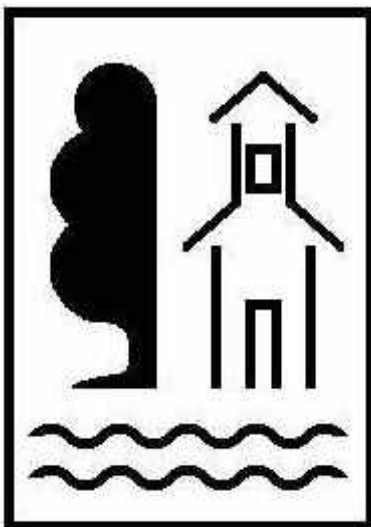
William Dawson, William C. Macdonald, James McGill, Simon McTavish, A.W. Ogilvie, John Young... starting in the 18th century and throughout the 19th, Montrealers of

Scottish heritage steered the city's commerce, finance, industry and modes of transportation. They spearheaded advances in scientific research, higher education and political organization, and left significant legacies that would benefit their fellow citizens for generations to come.

How did this cultural group, the majority of whom came from modest origins, achieve such dramatic success? Was it just a question of good timing and unrelenting personal ambition? Or did a unique combination of cultural factors, including religious beliefs, educational practices and new economic theories, give the Scots a leading edge that allowed them to carve out their place in a new city?

Find the answers to these questions in The Scots – Dyed-in-the-Wool Montrealers. Discover the important role these immigrants and their descendants played in the development of the metropolis and the country as a whole, one that involved a lot more than just bagpipes, whisky and kilts!

The McCord is located at 690 Sherbrooke Street West, in downtown Montreal, across from McGill University. While there is no visitor parking at the Museum, there are parking meters and commercial parking lots close by. On a Saturday, commercial lots are \$5.



#### **QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS**

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## QAHN MATTERS

### Mirror, mirror on the wall

# Quebec heritage community looks at itself

A key part of QAHN's annual meeting this year will be discussion of the Strategic Plan, to be proposed for adoption. The plan stems from this year's Needs Assessment Survey by consultant Susan Grundy. Here are her report's conclusions, intended to provide QAHN with direction for strategy and planning.

#### **Profile of the heritage community**

The heritage community is a highly eclectic group. Needs and concerns vary not only according to geography, but also between and within sectors of activity. As an umbrella organization, this diversity remains a key challenge for QAHN. Regarding the heritage organizations surveyed:

- The geographic coverage of the majority of the history and heritage societies is local. These groups are often concerned with losing local ownership and control.
- The mandates of the heritage organizations (across all regions and sectors) are based on similar concepts of conservation, research, education and promotion.
- The age of the heritage organizations ranges from two to 180 years. There has been a marked growth in the number of history and heritage societies over the past twenty-five years – six new organizations were established in the 1980's and seven in the 1990's. QAHN itself is a young organization.
- With few exceptions, the heritage organizations are incorporated and have a charitable status.
- Most of the history and heritage societies do not own property, but maintain an office equipped with a computer – over half have an Internet address and less than half maintain a web site. The museums and cemetery associations typically have an Internet address and a web site.
- The operating budget of the history and heritage societies ranges from \$3,000 to \$500,000 with the largest proportion (44%) reporting a budget of less than \$5,000. Only 15% report a budget over \$100,000. (The budgets of the museums and cemetery associations range from under \$5,000 to \$150,000 to several million (McCord Museum).
- Membership and fundraising are the sources of revenue mentioned most often by the history and heritage societies. Societies who generate at least 50% of their revenue from these sources typically operate with a modest budget (under \$25,000 and often less than \$5,000). Private donations and other sources (consignment sales, publication sales, lecture series, admissions, etc.) are generally not a primary source of revenue. A little over 30% of the societies receive operating grants and/or project grants and the relative importance of these grants ranges from 5% to 66% of total revenue. These societies tend to have a larger operating budget. Revenue from corporations and foundations is insignificant.

– Recurrent funding is a major concern of the museums. Two of the four museums receive substantial operating funding from the Province. The cemetery associations do not receive government funding – they depend on foundation support, tour groups and fundraising.

– The membership base of the history and heritage societies is relatively modest – an average of 164 members. There is growing concern that this constituency is ageing and diminishing – many groups describe the average age between 60 and 79 years. Only one of the two cemetery associations has a membership program. The museums tend to focus more on museum visits than membership.

– Limited financial resources are reflected in the large number of the history and heritage societies, which are volunteer-run (65% are without staff). Societies with staff often depend on part-time (seasonal) positions. Most of the heritage organizations do not formally track volunteer time. The average reported by the history and heritage societies is 154 days (responses range from less than 50 days to over 500 days).

– Seventy-three percent (73%) of the history and heritage groups produce a newsletter or bulletin – typically once or twice a year. For some groups, diminishing resources have limited this activity to ad hoc email communiqués.

– Limited financial and human resources have also restricted youth programs – which are considered by the heritage organizations to be of high priority. There is concern that these activities should be part of the school curriculum and not restricted to field trips. Several groups report resistance from the education sector.

– One-half of the groups maintain a collection of which the scope, size and handling/storage varies widely. A few groups report over 1,000 artifacts. Many could not quantify.

– Excluding the dedicated archive centres that were contacted, almost 60% of the heritage organizations maintain archives. The state of these archives varies significantly. Several groups were in a position to quantify their archives (ranging from 10 to 180 linear metres of textual records). However, more often than not, archives are managed by volunteers, are not completely catalogued or itemized, and cannot be measured according to archive standards.

#### **Achievements, aspirations and Challenges of the heritage community**

– The most significant achievements of the past decade, as reported by the heritage organizations, fall under four themes 1. Raising heritage awareness 2. Publishing journals, magazines, books 3. Protecting and preserving historic sites 4. Building and maintaining archives and/or collections.

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– Regarding aspirations for the decade to come, the groups typically refer to building on these four achievement themes, while addressing the need for human and financial resources, space and expansion.

– The most frequently reported challenge is related to financial resources. Many of the groups can no longer rely on financial strategies of the past – particularly those who wish to expand from being volunteer-run. The museums are concerned with securing recurrent funding. Another challenge frequently reported is the trend towards declining membership and diminishing volunteer resources.

**Evaluation of QAHN by the heritage community**

– The networks of the heritage groups typically involve memberships with one or two organizations. Many of the history and heritage societies belong to the Fédération des sociétés d'histoire du Québec (FSHQ). Other affiliations of these groups include national and local groups as well as universities. The museums (and archive centres) tend to be affiliated with a wider network.

– Levels of satisfaction with these networks vary from highly satisfied groups to groups who wish to expand to groups with insufficient resources to fully participate in these networks.

– Sixty-two percent (62%) of the heritage organizations are current members of QAHN. Organizations who are not members are either unfamiliar with QAHN and/or lack the resources (time and people) to participate.

– There is strong agreement, across all regions and sectors, of the need for a provincial heritage umbrella organization and QAHN's potential to fulfill this role is recognized. It is also acknowledged that this potential has not yet been fully realized, given the recent entry of QAHN.

– Networking and exchange are considered key benefits of a QAHN membership (access to a support system and information, opportunity for more exposure). Several groups refer to the benefits of representing the interests of the heritage community and acting as a heritage focal point. Several groups are not aware of the benefits given a lack of exposure to QAHN.

– Regarding QAHN's programming, the highest levels of awareness are associated with QAHN's newsletter, followed by the Oral History and the Heritage Trails projects. The Historians at Work Conference and the Listserve have the lowest awareness levels.

– The Heritage Trails project and the newsletter received the greatest number of high priority ratings. The Listserve received a significant number of low priority ratings. A little over one-half the respondents were unable to rate the Conference due to a lack of knowledge.

– The heritage organizations suggest that QAHN also offer funding support and guidance (access to information and

expertise and lobbying) and other practical assistance and expertise on managing a heritage organization.

**Future direction for QAHN**

Advice for future direction, as reported by the heritage organizations (including the archive centres and regional community associations), falls under seven overlapping themes.

1. Consultation at the local level to build the trust and confidence necessary for a long-term working relationship. Clarify QAHN's role as facilitator. Consult with the existing infrastructure, including regional community associations. Match QAHN resource persons with member groups. Develop tailor-made and not generic projects (see Review and modify QAHN's services). Aim for Board representation from all regions.

2. Increase visibility. Adopt a uniform publicity strategy. Work in partnership with other heritage groups to promote heritage events and activities (do not work in parallel with these groups – see Partnering). Make greater use of the newsletter. Develop and promote the web site and Listserve (see Review and modify QAHN's services).

3. Become a strong provincial voice. Forge stronger links with the Province (see Increase visibility).

4. Create and promote a resource network. Enlist the full support of the heritage community. Assure support of regional community associations (see Consultation at the local level). Connect with cultural organizations. Address regional gaps where they exist.

5. Review and modify QAHN's services. Redirect QAHN's resources from provincial conferences to local/regional workshops offering practical guidance and expertise/best practices on various aspects of running a heritage organization, including: grantsmanship, fundraising and heritage research. Build a Speaker's Bureau. Initiate/spearhead province-wide projects that groups could not undertake alone.

6. Partnering. Collaborate/team up with other networks on certain initiatives such as the newsletter and conferences. Define how QAHN's mandate "fits" with the FSHQ and how to engage with the French-speaking community without losing sight of the English-speaking minority interests.

7. Provide support to collections and archives. Evaluate the condition and needs of the archives and collections within QAHN's network. Target specific groups to help. Invite archive centres and the larger museums to be part of QAHN's network. Ensure that QAHN members and the archives/museums are aware of each other's activities. Call upon the museums and the archive centres for expertise and guidance as needed – practical tools. Consider spearheading a virtual heritage archive (portal) of the English-speaking communities across Quebec – with the understanding that a physically centralized archive may be neither realistic nor desirable. "You can't put it all in one place."

**Copies of the full QAHN Needs Assessment Report  
will be available at the annual meeting June 19**

# HISTORY OF EDUCATION

## Dissent paid off for Laurentian community

### Hundredth anniversary of English Education in Ste. Agathe

By Joseph Graham

One hundred years ago, in 1904, a group of taxpayers got together and decided it was time to have an English-language school in Ste. Agathe des Monts. At the time, there was a well-established French-Catholic school board. In order to set up a Protestant board, they had to formally 'dissent' from the existing Catholic structure in an application to the Council of Public Instruction, and their grounds for dissenting were religious. Thus, they created one of only a half-dozen 'dissentient' school boards outside of Quebec City and Montreal.

Looking back at the make-up of Ste. Agathe, it is astonishing to think that this separation into two school boards happened rather easily. From the perspective of today's thinking about public education, it is remarkable that the Catholic board had not set up an English-language non-denominational section in one of its schools. According to the figures that we have for

1911, the tax base for the Catholic board was \$839,205 and the Protestant base was \$490,000. Therefore upon the formation of the Protestant board in 1904, the Catholic community lost about one third of its tax base. The Catholic board in the same year (1911) boasted 9 *écoles du rang* and two larger schools. The two larger ones had 525 students, and the 9 *écoles du rang* must have also had a significant total number of students. By contrast, that same year the Protestant board had 60 students. To add to this evident disparity, the Protestant tax base was growing at an extraordinary rate, while its student numbers were growing much more slowly. The area was becoming the country home destination of choice for many wealthy Montrealers, people who had to pay the school tax, but did not have children in school in the area. The resident community that would actually use the schools was generally associated with the two non-Catholic tuberculosis hospitals that had been established in Ste. Agathe. For the English-speaking community, the

creation of a Protestant board, beneficent as it was, very likely had the side benefit of reducing their tax burden.

According to Robert Sellar, author of *The Tragedy of Quebec; The Expulsion of its Protestant Farmers* published in 1916, the same eroding of the school tax base was happening in reverse in the English-speaking rural areas of the province. In the agricultural regions like the Eastern Townships, the Protestant schools were extremely fragile because, being agricultural, their population was spread very thinly. This made it necessary to have small schoolhouses spaced among the farms, and the school numbers were dependent upon everyone going to the same school. For the different Protestant denominations, this meant having a secular school, but as Catholics moved in, the schools began to split along denominational lines. In this way, the Protestant boards were weakened, and in time the families moved away.

Ste. Agathe, though, started as a Catholic mission.

Fifteen years earlier, in 1889, Ste. Agathe was a small parish surrounding Lac des Sables, struggling to eke out an existence on thin unproductive soil in the face of long, cold winters and summer droughts. Its original settlers, after clearing the land, had discovered that the agricultural potential of the area was extremely poor given the short frost-free season and poor soil. It was a subsistence-farming region, barely clawing a living out of its fields and the surrounding forests. The families that stayed on into the second generation were hardy and fiercely self-reliant, making their own clothes and shoes. Money was rare, but some hard cash could be earned from the Montrealers who ventured out in the spring for fishing. These Montrealers, called *les étrangers* by the locals, rented cabins and bought a few essentials including ice. One far-sighted occasional visitor, Curé Labelle, had a larger dream for the area, and imagined a railroad line running through it.

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The train changed the small town completely. Suddenly those fishing cabins were accessible to the whole family as a summer escape spot. The local farmers, having a totally different relationship with money, happily sold their farms to the city people, initiating a huge transfer of property from the pioneer families to the vacationing Montrealers. Rapidly, these same farmers retrained themselves, offering services to the city folk. By 1911 the total of municipal property evaluations had grown to twenty times those of 1892 and there was a sense of prosperity in the air. For this reason, the Catholic community very likely did not feel the loss that occurred when one third of its school tax base re-invented itself as a Protestant school board.

At least two of the first four commissioners of the newly formed Ste. Agathe Dissident School were Montrealers who would never use the school. A third was the Anglican minister and the fourth could have been a Montrealer as well, but by 1911, this had all changed. In those few years a viable English community had been established. The rented schoolhouse had been replaced with a permanent structure that included a second-floor apartment with place for two teachers and, by 1913, a twenty-foot extension had to be added and a third teacher engaged.

When the war began, the Laurentian Sanitarium for the treatment of tuberculosis took on new importance and with it an ever-increasing permanent English community grew. By 1915, the commissioners applied for status as a Model School, allowing it to prepare students for High School, and its name changed to the Ste. Agathe Model School. By the time the war was over the English community had reached a critical mass and English businesses began to appear in Ste. Agathe, assuring the future of the school. By 1919, the school had its first principal, Mrs. A. Gwilt.

In 1922, the Laurentian Sanitarium closed its doors. Having been commandeered by the Canadian military during the war, it was turned back to the Quebec government in peacetime. It was promptly closed, but the community continued to grow. Around 1926 the hospital re-opened as the Royal Edward Laurentian Sanitarium, having partnered with the Royal Edward Chest Hospital in Montreal.

Ste. Agathe Model School was a well-run rural school

that stopped at grade 9, called Academy 1 in those times, but it was too small to become a High School. That was still to come. In 1928, the school found more than a principal in the person of James H. Jacobsen; it found a community leader.

Jacobsen was a passionate man who lived for the school. He would be its principal until 1964, when he died while curling with his students, and during those 34 years, the school would be transformed. He was a sports-minded person, and he encouraged the formation of teams in every sports discipline that interested his students. He involved the school in interscholastic competitions and was not above bending the rules to get athletic students to attend his school. It was he who championed the acquisition of new land from the Royal Edward Laurentian Sanitarium in 1949 and the construction of the new Ste. Agathe High School. Not only did he choose his teaching staff, but also it was said that he handpicked his trustees. He encouraged his sister, Rita Jacobsen, as well as Bruce Smail to come to teach at the school, and between these two he guaranteed that the students would have a demanding academic programme. Rita Jacobsen, a life-long spinster, was a mathematics teacher who had the discipline and determination to assure that any student in her responsibility would have a good grounding in mathematics. When she retired in 1968, she had been teaching for 51 years, the record at that time for a public school teacher in the Protestant system. Bruce Smail was an inspired English and Literature teacher who opened the world of reading to 25 years of Ste. Agathe students.

In 1997, the Laurentian School Trustees merged with the newly created Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board and the small dissident Protestant school became a non-denominational school in the large, linguistic board.

Today, the school boasts 358 students and 25 teachers. It draws students from a huge basin, comprising Mont Tremblant to the north and Val Morin to the south. It still attracts sports-minded students and maintains an enviable reputation in interscholastic sports. It has come a long way from the germ of an idea that might have been partially inspired to reduce non-resident school taxes.

*Joseph Graham can be reached at  
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## HISTORY OF EDUCATION

### The early schools of Potton

# Teenage teachers also hauled water and wood

By Gerard Leduc

For the early settlers of Potton Township educating their children was of prime importance and one-room schoolhouses were built in various localities some, of which, were also used for church services and special community meetings. Before the days of school boards, schools were usually run by the church.

In 1796 the population of Potton was around 287; in 1825 about 319, 1851 about 1707 rising to 2380 by 1881. Today the permanent figure is some 1767. The first school dates from about 1807 and was the result of an 1802 petition sent by Henry Ruiter, James Polson, Benjamin Barnett, Daniel Jones and others, to Sir Gordon Drummond, Administrator-in-Chief of Upper and Lower Canada. It was located on the Vale Perkins road just east of the Missisquoi River. Another was built in 1809 at Meig's Corner, a crossroads between Mansonville and Highwater.

Potton Township once had as many as 18 Protestant schools scattered throughout its territory, thus making schooling accessible to most children. They were usually identified by number but people found it more convenient to name them after a family or place, such as School No. 1 (West Potton-Dunkin); No. 7, Sweat or No. 6, Blanchard.

Life was not easy for the teachers, mostly very young women, some aged only 16 or 17, who rented rooms in the neighbourhood. They not only had to teach different age levels in one room, but also keep it clean, bring in water and wood. Pupils often made brooms by tying hemlock and cedar boughs to sticks. Books were scarce and consisted mainly of readers and simple arithmetic. As paper was expensive, pupils used individual slates for writing.

Rev. E.M. Taylor, school inspector from 1889-1930, states in his book "The History of Brome County" that the Sweat school No. 7, where he taught in the winter of 1867-68, on the road to South Bolton, "had a choir loft running across the back as the school did duty as a church as



**Knowlton Landing school in about 1910 (above) and Mansonville convent a little later (below).**



well." The teacher's desk became the pulpit on Sundays. The long benches had boards on top on which to write. The Knowlton brothers, Luke and Henry, each taught a term here in the 1860s.

Among the teachers who left their mark were Emma Perkins and Abner Kneeland (Blanchard's, No. 6, corner of Traver Road and Route 243) and Kate Magoon who taught for several years at the Jones school, No. 12, in Vale Perkins. She was very strict and when Rev. Taylor offered her pupils a half-day holiday she replied that they "needed all the time they could get."

The first school in Mansonville was built in 1825, with the encouragement of Robert Manson, where the cenotaph is now. Becoming too small, another was built across the river.

After burning down in 1893 it was replaced by the Model School on the site of the first one. The name was changed in 1915 to Intermediate School which put more emphasis on higher learning. By 1890 the English population was declining and of the 18 schools only seven were functioning by 1935, with a few continuing into the late 1940s. With improved transportation in the 1930s and 40s children could be bussed to Cowansville or Magog to attend high school with the two Mansonville schools assuming a more elementary role. Today the English school has about 35 students and the French 100.

The French Catholics began arriving about 1860 and not having schools of their own, started using the abandoned English schools, giving them French names such as Christ-Roi and Ste Thérèse. In Mansonville, the first Catholic school was built in 1880 by which time they had nine in the area. Following a fire, it was rebuilt in 1922 and the nuns of the Filles de la Charité congregation taught in the convent from 1924 to 1956 (today the Legion Hall and CLSC) when the present Le Baluchon school was built.



# HISTORY OF EDUCATION

## 'Intolerant and Disgraceful Scenes'

# Public schooling and religious strife in Hemmingford

By Rod MacLeod

In late August 1844, two local school commissioners went to the southeast corner of Hemmingford Township to investigate complaints made against John Hood, the teacher of District School No. 1. A number of Irish Catholic families had claimed that Hood was forcing their children to take part in "devotional exercises" and to study from religious books that they found objectionable. This went directly against school board policy, formulated two years before: "On account of the diversity of religious opinion existing among the Inhabitants...it is highly desirable that a selection of school books should be made for such districts, which will be suitable to all without giving offence to any." Donald McFee, a Scots Presbyterian, and Leon Lalanne, a Methodist of French-Canadian origin, hoped to persuade Hood to respect the spirit of public education, but the commissioners found themselves confronted by a hostile crowd who were "predetermined to be factious and unreasonable." Hood's supporters had been spurred on by Henry Hazard, the leader of the Anglican mission in Hemmingford and

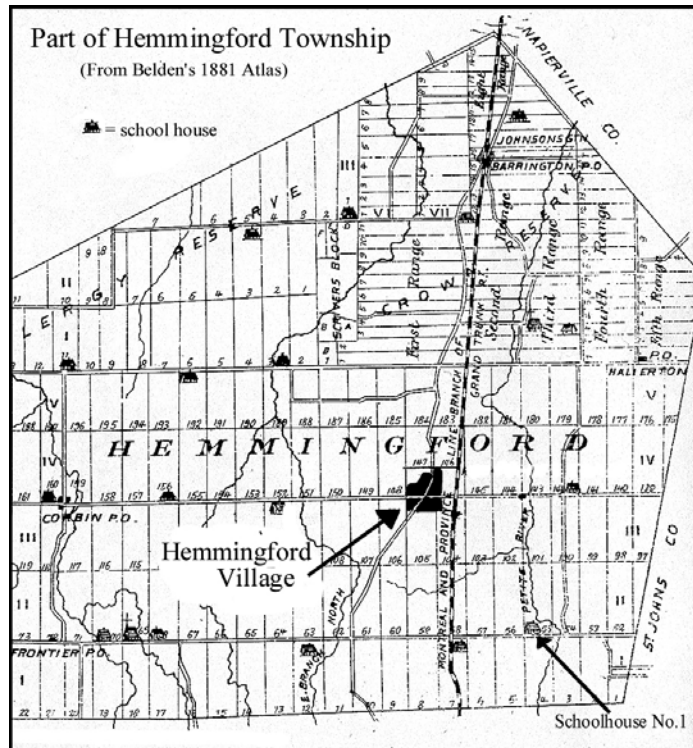
an agent of the evangelical British North American School Society. According to McFee and Lalanne, Hazard launched "unwarrantable invective" and "unseemly and opprobrious epithets" against the school commissioners; they were horrified that a clergyman should "so far lose sight of the dignity of his office" to be "disseminating, promoting, or perpetuating discord and disunion," especially in a place like Canada with its "mixed population."

The Hemmingford school board did its best to enforce the letter and spirit of the 1841 Education Act, which envisaged schools "without distinction of Creed" where no rules could be "enforced which cannot be conscientiously complied with by scholars of all religious denominations." Like the township's population, the board itself was diverse in nature, comprising various ethnic groups as well

as both Protestants and Catholics. The chair for most of the 1840s was William Barrett who, though an Anglican, became an implacable foe of Henry Hazard and a staunch defender of the Catholic parents of District No. 1. When Hazard and Hood refused to back down, the board went so far as to set up an alternative school taught by a Catholic master, and took legal measures to regain possession of the original schoolhouse.

Eventually Hood agreed to return to the fold and the alternative school was closed, but the damage had been done.

In 1854 Hemmingford's Catholics formed a dissentient school board under the auspices of the new parish of St-Romain-de-Hemmingford; this move secured a Catholic education for the Irish families of District No. 1, but forced them to operate within a system dominated by francophones and an increasingly nationalist Catholic church. It did not, significantly, secure for them a liberal, non-denominational form of education, which they seemed to have wanted back in the 1840s - or at any rate, an education that was free from evangelical fervour. Nevertheless, a separate school board was



the path of least resistance.

The historical separation of Quebec education into Protestant and Catholic camps is so ingrained that we easily forget that there was a time when it was conceived as liberal and non-denominational - and, moreover, when people of different faiths and backgrounds were prepared to work together to find common ground. Of course, there were (and are) the Henry Hazards who are always out to promote discord and disunion, and all too often such individuals are successful - but we should never assume conflict is inevitable. People cannot get along often simply because they have been told they have never done so and believe they cannot.

*Citations are taken from the Minute Books of the School Commissioners of the Township of Hemmingford, New Frontiers School Board Archives, Chateauguay.*

## HISTORY OF EDUCATION

### Searching for community

# The Jews of Scotland Schoolhouse, Ste-Sophie

By Rod MacLeod

Among the many curious items in the McGill University Archives is a set of minutes for a Protestant school board written partly in Yiddish. In the course of our research for *A Meeting of the People*, my co-author Mary Anne Poutanen and I stumbled across this gem, and we were soon plunged into the world of the Scotland schoolhouse in Ste-Sophie. This school, open from 1913 to 1949, was run entirely by and for Jews, and yet came under the authority of the Protestant school system.

Quebec's education laws made no provision for those who were neither Protestant nor Catholic. The Jewish community, which had grown very large by the beginning of the 20th century, made various arrangements with Montreal's Protestant school board to accommodate their children; Baron Byng High School is perhaps the most famous of the city's Protestant schools that were over 90% Jewish. The appeal of Protestant schooling was that it enabled children to learn English (the key to North American integration) in an environment where religion played only a minimal role (the daily Lord's Prayer, a few hymns, and the Christmas pageant), although in some communities (Sherbrooke, for example) school boards allowed after school Hebrew lessons. The Jewish families who settled in the Laurentian parish of Ste-Sophie created for themselves a far more complex and beneficial system: at the Scotland school house (which also doubled as the synagogue) children studied in English for half the day with a teacher (normally Jewish) trained at Macdonald College, and spent the other half with the local Hebrew teacher who was typically the Rabbi and *schoichet* (poultry slaughterer) - thereby gaining the best of both worlds. The local Jewish community was able to make this arrangement by virtue of being the defacto minority in Ste-Sophie; although the area had been originally settled by Scots in the 1820s, the Protestant population was now concentrated in nearby New Glasgow where there was a school, also with a significant numbers of Jewish pupils, whose most famous graduate was Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The official school commission in the parish of Ste-Sophie was Catholic and French-speaking. Normally in such circumstances it would be the Protestant minority that would form a "dissentient" school board, but the local Jewish leaders pressed the school inspector JW McOuat, who in turn pressed the Department of Public Instruction, to accept Jews as dissentients. As a result, the Jewish community acquired not only a school but a form of municipal autonomy: it was the dissentient school board

that settled disputes between farmers, hired the *schoichet*, and regulated the delivery of services.

As the younger generation moved to the city after World War Two, Scotland school was forced to close. Although we knew that there were still numbers of Jewish farming families in the Laurentians, the Ste-Sophie community had gone off the radar except for a suggestion in a brief newspaper article from 1990 that the synagogue was still standing. Over a decade later, we wondered, would we be able to find it?

Intrigued, we set off on a bright November Sunday armed only with a CAA map and the knowledge that the town of Ste-Sophie wasn't that big. First stop was the parish church where we hoped some historically-minded person might remember the Jewish community. Church and office were closed, but there was a *dépanneur* next door - unfortunately a not very helpful *dépanneur*: *les juifs à Ste-Sophie? J'en ai jamais entendu!* We headed up to Rue Principale and inquired at the restaurant, the gas station, and the pharmacy, but no-one had any idea that there had ever been a Jewish community in those parts, let alone where the synagogue might be found. Finally the pharmacist herself overheard the discussion and remembered that she had an elderly customer with an English name who might therefore be Jewish. She happily called up Mr Goodz, explained the presence of two "researchers" from the city, and conveyed to us his willingness to meet. We followed directions to his house - which, curiously, stood across the street from the parish church and the unhelpful *dépanneur*. So much for knowing your customers!

Solomon Goodz, a somewhat grim-faced but pleasant gent of 85, kept us busy for an hour on his porch relating the history of the Jewish community, its school, and its synagogue. He had grown up on a nearby farm, like most Jewish families in the area keeping cows and chickens, selling vegetables, and taking in summer boarders from inner-city Montreal. His house had once been a general store and truck depot for deliveries into the city; his sons still kept carrot farms in Ste-Sophie, though they lived with their families in the Montreal area as did a great number of their generation. Mr Goodz then accompanied us to the synagogue, located a kilometre or so south of town - not the sort of building we would likely have stumbled across just by driving around - and the fascinating cemetery just behind it with graves dating back to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After recounting tales of his school days,

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Mr Goodz explained that the synagogue was still used, albeit only for high holidays when the rabbi and most of the congregation came up from the city.

As a result of this interview and subsequent research, we were invited to a reunion of the Scotland school alumni and other former Jewish residents of Ste-Sophie. This event was held in a large West-Island restaurant which was barely adequate to hold the many generations of families crowding in for food, songs, and endless (some decidedly risqué) stories about the good old days. We were warmly received, and introduced as experts on the Ste-Sophie

school – hardly accurate, but people are always intrigued when outsiders, especially from a university, take interest in their story. We tried, not entirely successfully, to impress upon them how unusual the Scotland school was, especially its relationship with the Protestant education system. We also emphasized how little known this community is; clearly its presence has been entirely forgotten by the residents of Ste-Sophie. As part of Quebec’s anglophone heritage, however, the history of these families should be celebrated, and their fine old school preserved.

### **Wanted: Historian looking for a project**

The Montreal branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society is looking for an historian/writer to research and write its history. The documents in the branch’s archives are un-vetted but indexed. “The aim of the society is to promote interest in and knowledge of the Commonwealth,” said RCS spokeswoman Betty Le Maistre. “Our files include details of the Society’s involvement in post-World War Two immigration from Commonwealth countries, international aid, and collaboration with our sister societies in Montreal.”

This paid project would be ideal for a graduate or post-graduate student looking for a thesis project. Applicants should provide a current c.v. and references. Mail to Betty Le Maistre, 2028 Marlowe Ave., Montreal QC, H4A 3L5 or fax to (514) 488-7929. For more information call Betty at (514) 488-0705 or Judith at (514) 281-6718 or see [www.rcs.ca](http://www.rcs.ca).

## HISTORY OF EDUCATION

### No apples for these teachers

# Notes from the school board minutes of long ago

### *'Mr Moore pretends he was drugged'*

The behaviour of teachers in rural areas was always a matter of the highest scrutiny, although male principals of academies were usually held in higher regard than the often uncertified young girls who ran the one-room school houses. Such was not the case in Inverness, where local residents were shocked at the antics of the academy principal who was, to say the least, a deeply frustrated man. At a school board meeting held in July 1892, charges were brought against Mr Moore that reveal a great deal about how small communities worked – and how school board secretaries wrote:

Mr William Franklin “charges that on the public highway, meeting Mr Moore after conversation with him about the punishment of his son Edmund, he Mr Moore took the name of God in vain, and swore bitter & profane oaths, & this when Mr Moore was sober.”

Mr William McVetty “charges that on one occasion Mr Moore declared ‘that a man had to be a God damned hypocrite to teach [at] the Inverness Academy.’ This was when Doctor Holdcroft was in New York.”

Dr Holdcroft “charges that on his return from New York he found Mr Moore in his bed after being drunk & learned that he had been to Somerset & he Moore told him the Doctor that he had been to Somerset drinking; further that on the occasion that Mr Moore pretends he was drugged, that he Moore asked to have the alcohol put in his lime juice and had called previously the same evening to see if Calise Michel had brought it out from the station.”

Moore disputes 1st charge (no witnesses), and says he “does not know what he may have said when under the influence of liquor,” and admits after a public apology that “he went in to the Drug Hall of his own free will & took alcohol knowing it such,” and so the 2nd & 3rd charges were dropped.

Mr Moore was soon replaced as academy principal despite the apparent reconciliation. No one would have been taken in by his defence and clearly not by

the argument that he was not responsible for his actions while drunk — how very modern! The secretary’s delightfully catty remark – “and this when Mr Moore was sober!” – suggests that everyone in town was well aware of his habits and his temper. It is surprising that Moore expected to continue teaching, and even more so that he was not tarred and feathered and kicked out of town at once. One suspects that he had loftier ambitions than to teach at a rural academy; given his intransigent defence of his own behaviour, perhaps his true calling was politics!

### *The formidable Miss Caroline Blampin*

Kids today clearly have it soft. Consider the plight of the children who crossed swords with the formidable Miss Caroline Blampin, principal of the New Carlisle Academy during the First World War:

At a local school board meeting held on 24 February 1915, a number of parents made complaints about the discipline meted out to their children.

Mr John Thompson stated that “because his grandson did not stand in line properly the Principal gave the child 30 blows of the strap on the hand, causing his hands to be swollen and bruised, which he thinks was too severe punishment.” Miss Blampin says “the child was scuffling and keeping the whole line back, for which she punished him, but denied giving him 30 blows or beating him too severely.”

*Mr John Thompson stated that ‘because his grandson did not stand in line properly the Principal gave the child 30 blows of the strap on the hand, causing his hands to be swollen and bruised, which he thinks was too severe punishment’*

Mr Perce Flowers stated “his daughter came home one day without coat, hat, or mitts, on account of not having a proper scribbler, he wrote a note asking that his daughter be not beaten by the Principal, but nevertheless the teacher held his daughter while the Principal hit her.” Principal says “the child was reasonably punished for leaving school without permission and for having impudent conduct & language.”

Mr Hugh Assels states “his boy was sent home for

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chewing gum in school, on his return he was punished for that offence, he was again sent home and on his return to school was pushed out of class room by the Principal & Miss Bisson. Mr Assels then wrote a note of excuse." Principal says "Harvey Assels was sent to her for punishment with another boy – Charlie Beebe – and that Harvey Assels left the school – on his return he refused to be punished, or to leave the room, and she then had to take him by the arm and neck of sweater, or coat, and pull him from his seat, when he then left the room."

Mr Ira Flowers stated "his child Alice, was beaten till she fainted for not bringing an excuse for five days absence." Principal says "Alice was asked repeatedly for the excuse and was at last punished for not bringing it, but was not severely punished, and did not faint."

Mr Duncan stated "his son Elmer was given 35 blows on the hands for pushing into line, while the boy was told by the Principal a day or two previous to push into line. Mr Duncan said his boys hands were swollen so that he could not close them, and that the punishment was too severe." Principal stated "Elmer Duncan was punished for scuffling with another boy – S McNeil – and that he was reasonably punished, denied that he was given 35 blows, and that she only punished with the regulation strap, which she produced and exhibited for inspection."

After a "full discussion, the Board did not consider that there had been excessive punishment administered, and requested the Principal in future to keep a record of all punishments as they were made." Nevertheless, parents continued to protest vehemently, and eventually Miss Blampin was replaced – evidence that parents in the old days were very often in favour of sparing the rod.

*He hired Miss Henry as an assistant teacher*

**M**r McManus of the Berthier Academy came highly recommended. He was hired by the

Protestant Board of School Commissioners for the City of Montreal in November 1866 to teach at the Panet Street School in the east end. Along with an £80-a-year salary, he was provided with "all the school fees & a free house...specially provided for the teacher and his family." One would not have expected such a fellow to have taken advantage of his situation...

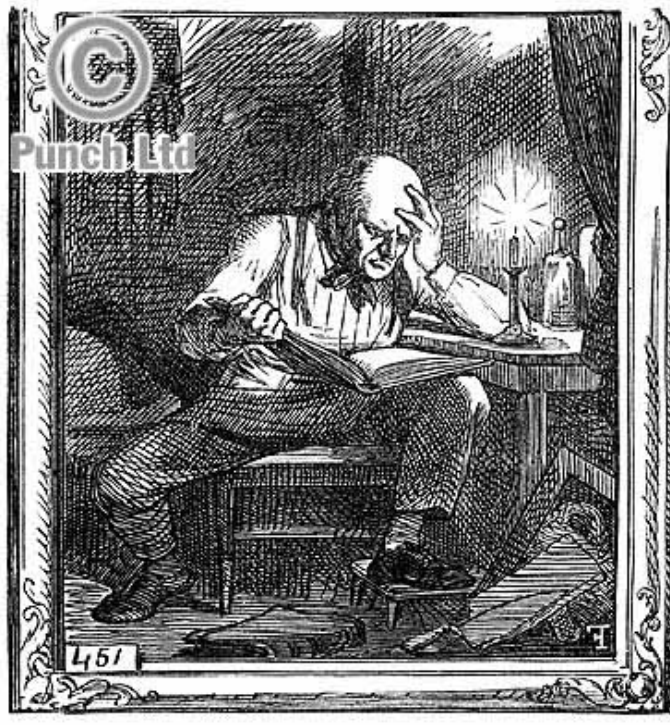
In November of the following year, Mr McManus hired Miss Henry as an assistant teacher. The commissioners observed that "Mr McManus occupied one part & Miss Henry, assistant teacher, occupied the other part of the dwelling in the school house in Panet Street, which is satisfactory." Maybe, but it sounds fishy to me...

The following spring, the school board noted that Mr McManus "had proffered serious charges against the character of Miss Henry, strongly impugning her veracity. They were fully investigated by these gentlemen [ie, school commissioners] & found to be frivolous and without foundation. After some conversation it was resolved that Miss Henry be re-engaged for another year as assist't Teacher in Panet Street school on the same terms as at present, & the same be communicated to Mr McManus."

A week later there was another report of charges brought by Mr McManus against Miss Henry. By now the commissioners had wised up: "...the result of the investigation, wherefore it was resolved unanimously that Mr McManus be informed that his services will not be required after the expiration of the present year."

One hopes Miss Henry slept better after that.

*By Rod MacLeod With notes from the Minute Books of the School Commissioners of Inverness (Central Quebec School Board Archives), Cox (Eastern Shores School Board Archives), and Montreal (English Montreal School Board Archives).*



## HERITAGE NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

### Scottish delegation swarms National Assembly

# First Tartan Day celebration held in Québec City

By Lou Dawson

The mayor of QC and the deputy mayor hosted a reception at City Hall on Tuesday morning April 6. At about 11:30, everyone went separately to lunch, then we reconvened at City Hall for a march to the National Assembly.

A pipe band, made up of Jordan Anderson from the Montréal Pipes and Drums, Dave Irons, Ken MacKenzie and Bob Ranger from the Rawdon Pipes and Drums and several members of a band wearing 78th Fraser Highlanders kilts, only one of whom I recognized, David Stafford.

Leaving City Hall at almost exactly 1:00 p.m. with a police motorcycle escort, we set out toward the National Assembly. As we did, the pipe band played and the sound reverberated loudly in the narrow rue Saint-Louis. People came out of the establishments to watch, some obviously having just interrupted lunch. The watchers made up for their small numbers with heart-warming enthusiasm.

As we arrived at the assembly, we were met and welcomed into the entryway by the protocol officer and a host of very organized workers. Several politicians were on hand, notably MNAs Geoffrey Kelley, sponsor of the Tartan Day bill, Lucie Papineau, co-sponsor, and François Beaulne who was sponsor prior to the spring election last year.

A group of the attendees were given passes to the visitors' gallery and we were escorted to our assigned seats. Others watched the proceedings on closed circuit television. During Question



Period, our delegation was recognized by the Speaker, to an enthusiastic round of applause.

After the end of Question Period, we all met in the Speaker's Hall. Wine and sparkling water were served, brief, spirited and humorous speeches were made in an air of fun and camaraderie, the pipes and drums played, dancers danced, the band played some more – I'm sure you get the picture. François Beaulne pointed out to several people that history has been made, in that Québec officially recognized non-French citizens, i.e. the Scots, for the first time.

Sadly, I had to leave the celebrations early, since there were pressing matters to attend to in here in Montreal. However, my spies tell me that the merriment continued, whisky was consumed, wonderful food was available and consumed (well, yeah – it is Québec City, after all!) and it's reported to have been a night not soon to be forgotten.

The celebration was the culmination of hard work and dedicated efforts on the part of many people all across Québec. The pride and joy of success is shared by us, naturally, but also by those who could not be a part of the process. It is sufficient to know they gave us verbal support and appreciate the end result, which benefits us all. The unity first noted more than two years ago has become stronger and that can only make for a stronger, better Québec.

As we like to say, and as Lucie Papineau startled a few folk by shouting out: "Slainte Mhath!" (Let's hear you pronounce that!)





*'The virtues of honour, co-operation and the discipline of conduct befitting an officer'*

## The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders & friends danced the day away

The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders Regiment was raised in Scotland in 1757, specifically for service in Canada. It holds both a daring and romantic reputation in the making of Canadian history. Perhaps best known for its triumphs in the Seven Years' War and in particular, the Siege of Quebec, the Regiment was disbanded in 1763. Many of the soldiers remained in Quebec, accepted land grants and married into French-Canadian families – many of their descendants are among us today.

During preparations for Montreal's EXPO 67 The David M. Stewart Museum, formerly The Montreal Military & Maritime Museum, re-raised The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders to add a touch of pageantry (akin to the Changing of the Guard) to the summers at The Old Fort on St. Helen's Island. The skirl of pipes, echoes of muskets and the smell of black powder make it a colourful exhibition of living history enjoyed by thousands of visitors to the fort each year.

At present, interest in The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders has spread across North America. The ten existing Outposts and Garrisons, from Ottawa to Los Angeles, boast more than 500 Officers, Men and Regimental Ladies, as well as dozens of young pipers and drummers.

The primary aim of the modern-day Regiment is to raise funds to provide salaries, bursaries, and the necessary support to equip, train and maintain the squad of young pipers and drummers (high school and university students). The training, based on the regimental norms of centuries past, seeks to implant the virtues of honour, co-operation and the discipline of conduct befitting an officer and a gentleman.



The skill and pageantry of the squad's performances makes them a sought-after addition to ceremonial occasions. The Fort St. Helen Squad has acted as Guard of Honour to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on three of her official visits to Canada.

Through the Regiment's activities, its members are able to maintain a link with their heritage and enjoy the honourable military past which has been diluted in the haste of our modern society.

The Fort St. Helen Garrison holds traditional mess dinners, balls and social functions, and participates actively in the military and Scottish communities of Montreal.

New members wishing to contribute to these aims are always welcome and can apply through Lt-Col. Okill Stuart (Tel: 450 671-7870) or by calling the office 514-284-0723, ext. 228.

## HERITAGE NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

*'This town has deep Irish roots and this is our way of showing them off'*

### Shannon show packed with dancers, singers, music and comedy

By Stephen McDougall

SHANNON – For the 38th time in a row, the people of Shannon entertained residents and visitors alike with Irish dancing, song and comedy with their annual Shannon Irish Show, held at the town's Community centre on the Saturday before St. Patrick's day.

"This town has deep Irish roots and this is our way of showing them off to the community and to guests," said Kerry Ann King, one of the show's coordinators.

"It also showcases our Shannon Irish Dancing troupe, which has trained hundreds of girls and boys in the ancient Irish tradition."

The 80 member troupe was the hit of the show, appearing in 15 different reels, jigs and step dances during the two hour run.

Also featured was the eight-member Shannon Rovers singing group, who belted out time-honoured Irish hits such as Patsy Fagan and Marie's Wedding.

Between sets, MC Elaine Neville kept the audience in stitches with an endless deadpan reading of Irish jokes while stagehands prepared the stage for the next performance.

The comedy was developed further with the short Seamus Burke play "Halligan buries the hatchet", in which farmer Mike Halligan literally buries a wood cutting hatchet in hope of saving his marriage with wife Sarah.

The show was rounded out by a Shannon Pub Party, which featured invited musical guests and featured dancers and singers.

"It was a fantastic show," said Marie Laure Turcotte, a



resident of Inverness who travelled up by bus with 30 others from the Thetford Mines and St. Agathe areas to see the show.

"I love the fiddle playing and the dancing. It helps to remind me of my family's Scottish roots."

One of the show's players, Michael Gingras, still can't believe that a town of only 3000 can put on such a production every year and continue to train hundreds of dancers.

"Before this show was started, all we had was bitterness because the federal government had expropriated a lot of surrounding farmland for their Valcartier military base," he said.

"The last expropriations occurred in 1963 and a lot of Irish farmers had to stop their livelihood and settle in the town."

"The show is a way to prove our Irish heritage here, despite what has happened to us. I may be a Gingras, but I am proud that my mother's name was Connelly."

Mrs. King believes the show helps keep the town's younger residents tied to their families, even if the

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majority of them eventually leave for college studies and jobs far away.

“This show is like Christmas for many of them,” she said.

“They always come down for it and other St. Patrick's festivities with their families. Many of them may be living in Ottawa or Montreal or Quebec City, but they know where their real home is.”

King hopes to encourage more contacts with other Irish dance troupes in other parts of Quebec to further expand the dance network and promote the art among the young.

She particularly wants to hear from the fledgling Irish dancers of



Richmond, who have been honing their skills for the past several years.

“We have a busy schedule because we like to compete in dance competitions in other parts of Canada and the U.S.,” she said.

“But if the Richmond people are interested, maybe we could do some visiting at future ceildh and share a step or two.”



Pictures these two pages all by Stephen McDougall  
 Opposite page, above: Musicians Sara Seward and Réjean Vermette perform before the Irish flag with traditional music for the packed house.

Opposite page below: Fiddler David Clark and singer-guitarist Donna King-Gallant warm up before the show.

This page, top: The Shannon Rovers take a break for a photo before their appearance. They are (left to right) Maureen McCarthy, Andrée Coté, Joanne Fiset, Joanne King, Johanne Lachance and Marie Paule Spieser. Sitting are Jennifer Fortin and Line Allard.

This page, above left: Dancers Kelly Hamilton and Penelope Robitaille share a laugh before their turn on stage.

Front page and below right: Shannon Irish dancers Saffron Levesque, Allison Kirkwood, Judith Kotiuga, Maggie Feeney and Katie McBain (sitting) pose before going on stage.



## NEWS & NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

### QAHN loses secretary Ed Laberee

## Mr. Fix-it was devoted to his family, community

Edward (Ed) Francis Laberee of Bulwer, Quebec, a good, kind, and wise man, died peacefully on December 31, 2003, in the Palliative Care Unit at Hotel Dieu Hospital, Sherbrooke, Quebec following a less than 3 month struggle with cancer.

Edward was born at the former Sherbrooke Protestant Hospital on August 20, 1936 to Marion Richardson and the late Waymer Laberee, their first born of six children. Ed, during these years sometimes called, Eddy, attended both the Bulwer Consolidated and Cookshire High Schools. Following a year at Bishop's University he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy in Halifax, NS. The Navy was not to be a career for Ed and following a short time in Ottawa, he moved to Toronto, ON working first with Johnson Controls then eventually working for the Government of Ontario at the Queen's Park offices for more than 25 years. When the opportunity came he chose to take early retirement in August 1991 and return to his roots in Bulwer, QC along with his wife, Sharon.

Ed soon became involved in local organizations, the first one being The Compton County Historical Museum Society that first fall, and he would serve as President from the spring of 1992 until the fall of 2003 when, due to health reasons, he submitted his resignation at the Annual General Meeting. Ed attended his last Directors meeting in November 2003. Ed represented the CCHMS on what was originally called The Group of Seven, now known as the Eastern Townships Chapter of La Fédération Sociétés des Histoires du Québec. These involvements led him to be among the founding members of the Quebec Anglo Heritage Network (QAHN), attending a last meeting in November 2003. In his short time with QAHN he felt very strongly about this group and how it could be the strong link and voice needed by the Anglophone Museums and Historical Societies in Quebec. Sharon & Ed soon became regular attendees at the Bulwer United Church, and as a member, Elder, and

Clerk of Session, Ed became involved with the local Pastoral Charge, serving a term as Chairperson of the Official Board and also as a Delegate to Quebec-Sherbrooke Presbytery. Ed & Sharon joined the Bulwer Community Centre where Ed took on the responsibilities of Secretary. In 1995 he was approached and accepted the

position as Secretary-Treasurer of the Compton County Agricultural Society (Expo Cookshire), eventually filling the role of Secretary only, until his death. Through his association with CCAS he represented the Society at the provincial level, the AEAQ, attending meetings twice a year, in different regions of the Province, where he met many new friends, and learned how each Agricultural Exhibition functions throughout the Province.

Ed enjoyed camping and cycling with Sharon while they lived in Etobicoke, ON, and of course

spending time at the computer as well as making tapes of his favourite show, STAR TREK, yes he was a "Trekkie". Upon moving to Bulwer his leisure activities turned to spending many hours in the wooded areas of the property. He was either transplanting the young, crowded trees or clearing out those that had died, being able to keep firewood provided for the family room woodstove. Ed was a firm believer in dividing his time between physical work and sitting at the computer. During his computer time, when not doing something for the many organizations he was involved with, he began transcribing his father's work on the LABEREE family tree onto the computer, and once it was all entered he began the task of filling in family information from the current generation back to where his

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# Greenwood Centre leader was all things to her people

## Margaret Peyton, 'our inspiration and guide'

Hudson's Greenwood Centre lost more than just its president on New Year's Day with the passing of Margaret Peyton.

"Margaret was our president, our historian, archivist, keeper of the stories and our inspiration and guide," Greenwood Vice-president Adam Rolland said in an open letter. "We shall sorely miss her."

"I know that you all join with me and the Greenwood Board and volunteers in extending our most sincere condolences to Margaret's family."

Hundreds attended a memorial service for Mrs. Peyton on May 15. The family said donations to the Greenwood Centre; the Victorian Order of Nurses, Hudson District Branch, or St. Mary's Anglican Church in Hudson would be greatly appreciated.

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father's work had stopped. With the addition of Internet and Email to the computer, he soon made contact with other's sharing the same interest and so the Laberee family tree and many other branches have grown.

In the spring of 1985, at the Cookshire High School Reunion, as fate would have it, Sharon & Ed were destined to meet again. They knew they had found their soul mate, and so on December 28, 1985, in the presence of family and a few close friends, Ed and Sharon were married in St. George's Anglican Church, Lennoxville, QC. Ed is survived by his wife, Sharon Moore, his sons, Darren and wife Louise, Bryce, his step-daughter, Wendy and husband Morgan deBlauw, and his granddaughter, Ashton Kachurovski, all of Ontario. He is also survived by his Mother, Marion Laberee, his 4 brothers and sister, Gordon, his wife Hazel, Joan, her husband Tim (Edward) Davis, David, his wife Judy, Brian, and John, his wife Jill, as well, his mother-in-law, Betty Moore (the late Archie), sister-in-law, Elizabeth and husband Raymond Mastine, Cathy, wife of his late brother-in-law, Philip Moore, as well as many nieces, nephews, other family members and friends. Ed was also blessed to have Angela Nutbrown-Ward in his life since our return to the Eastern Townships. Family and friends called at Cass Funeral Home, Lennoxville, on January 5, 2004. The Funeral Service took place January 6th with the Rev. Barbara Willard



Hudson historian Margaret Peyton at Greenwood doing the work she loved.

officiating, it being obvious that Ed & Barb had talked about his wishes, and from Barb's words, that she had discovered the heart and soul of a rather quiet, private man. In keeping with Ed's wishes, during the service, he wanted everyone to sing the Lord's Prayer and this was carried one step further with Richard Faubert and Dick Nolet singing the Lord's Prayer in French, he also asked that there be some lively gospel/blue grass music which was provided by Terry Howell on his violin & Carlyle McBurney on guitar. The organ music was provided by Ed's Aunt, Roberta Smith. Ed also requested to have honorary Pall Bearers, at the Church & Cemetery, and he chose them as follows, Richard Faubert, Dick Nolet, Robyn (Parsons) & Edward Jacklin, Neil Burns and Malcolm Fraser. Interment of his ashes was in the Laberee lot, along with his grandparents & father, in the Eaton Cemetery. Following the service family & friends gathered at the Bulwer Community Center for a time to share memories. Ed was a man of many talents, he could fix most anything he set his mind to, be it mechanical or computers, he was "Mr Fix-It".

*I watched you suffer, I heard you sigh  
But all I could do was just stand by.  
When the time came, I suffered too  
For you never deserved what you went through.  
Forever in my heart and soul, with all my love, Sharon*

## NEWS & NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

### A new steeple crowns the old church

# Eaton Corner museum receives \$250,000 restoration

*Editor's note: This story includes a rare interview with the late Ed Laberee, given from his hospital bed shortly before he died (see Page 18). Overseeing the museum renovation project was Ed's last major accomplishment.*

It was out with the old and in with the new yesterday morning in Eaton Corner when workers placed the refurbished steeple, topped with a new wooden fish, back on top of the Compton County Museum.

The museum is undergoing major restoration work, including a new roof, and repairs to the foundation. The building is a historical monument, which means any work done to the building is not allowed to alter its appearance.

Edward Laberee, director of the Compton County Historical Society, explained that certain parts of the building, particularly the roof, urgently needed the repairs. The roof has been replaced with stainless steel shingles by a company in Quebec City.

"The roof was leaking for three or four years," he said "I put four of my own tarpaulins up in the attic, to try to stop the drips."

Most of the funding for the restoration project came from a provincial grant, with the municipality of Cookshire/Eaton and the historical society also kicking in a small percentage. Laberee, who joined the historical society when he moved to Bulwer in 1991, said getting the funding took a long time, and there were disagreements over how to spend the available money. Nevertheless, he is satisfied with what is finally being done to restore the building.



Compton County Museum curator Sharon Moore with the newly carved replacement weathervane which now tops the completely rebuilt steeple. Photo Tom Peacock



The restoration project will cost approximately \$250,000.

We need to preserve these buildings from the past if we want to have an identity, a connection with our past and our history," said engineer Michael Grayson, who has managed projects to restore other small protestant churches in the region.

The museum, originally a Congregationalist church, was built in 1841. The building now houses a permanent exhibit of historical items from the region. There is also a library containing volumes of Eastern Townships history. The museum is open five afternoons a week during the summer months.

As workers from Construction Hatley gingerly placed the museum's steeple back in its rightful place, the townspeople from Eaton Corner watched through the swirling snow. They were glad to have a handsome new fish atop the spire to replace the old one which came down over four years ago, they said. The new fish was carved by Lennoxville artist Debbie Everett.

*By Tom Peacock, The Record (Sherbrooke), Friday, October 24, 2003,*

The same messages of propriety as outer garments and domestic items

# Missisquoi marks 40<sup>th</sup> with an exhibition from underneath

The Missisquoi Museum in Stanbridge East is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. It is owned and operated by the Missisquoi Historical Society. The Museum is actually a complex of three buildings. The main collection is housed in the Cornell Mill.

This three storied red brick structure was built on the banks of the Pike River in 1830 by Zebulon Cornell. The mill served the people of this region through three successive generations of the Cornell family until its closure in 1963.

In 1964, the Missisquoi Historical Society purchased the mill and established the Missisquoi Museum. The history of Missisquoi County since its opening to settlement in 1794 is reflected in the museum collections. The three exhibition floors of the Cornell Mill building depict community life, historic milestones and remembrances of this region in the 19th century.

Hodges General Store, built in 1841, contains merchandise from the era of the Great Depression and World War II. The old general store is a short walking distance from the main museum.

The Museum Annex was originally a casein plant in the 1930s for Champlain Milk Products Company Ltd. Today, agricultural machinery and a collection of carriages and sleighs are exhibited in this structure.

The collections contained in each of the buildings belonging to the Missisquoi Museum were generously donated by the citizens of Missisquoi County.

### Undercover Story

From May 30, 2004 to October 10, 2004 this year the Missisquoi Museum presents the exhibition The Undercover Story. The exhibition brings together a selection of objects from the 19th century, which would have been found, under clothing or furniture and household fixtures. Drawn from the Missisquoi Museum collection, these articles of clothing and household objects provide insight into the everyday necessities of Missisquoi County life in the 19th century. Known for their decorum and sense of style, the Victorian sensibilities were easily seen in fashion and furnishings but what was concealed was also reflective of this same sense of taste. Crinolines and corsets, chamber pots and bed warmers, the underpinnings of life and the objects well known but never seen could convey the same messages of propriety as outer garments and domestic items.

The exhibition also highlights United Empire Loyalist objects, community life in the 19th century, personal and household items from Missisquoi families, the Fenian Raids and Hodge's General Store, which features dry goods from the 1940s.

# 75th anniversary of the Stanstead Historical Society

On August 16, 1929, a group of prominent citizens of Stanstead County gathered at the Mansur School for the foundation of the Stanstead Historical Society whose objective was to preserve the rich heritage of the border region for generations to come.

Today, the important archives repository of the SHS, as well as the rich collections of the Colby-Curtis Museum, owned and managed by the Society, are an eloquent testimony to the vision and implication of its founding members and all those who have been involved in the development of the SHS during the last 75 years.

Among the events planned for this important anniversary are an exhibition, The Heritage of the Border Region – 75 years of Safekeeping, will be inaugurated at the Colby-Curtis Museum on Saturday, August 15. Produced in



The Concord Hack Wagon was used to deliver passengers and mail from Vermont to Stanstead in the second half of the 19th century.

collaboration with Dr. Laurier Lacroix, professor at UQÀM and his graduate students, the exhibition proposes a survey of the most significant acquisitions since 1929 in the historical context that presided to the donation of these precious artefacts. The exhibition will run until October 31st, 2004.

In keeping with the exhibition, the Society plans an open reserve in the barn on the grounds of Carrollcroft, the heritage home donated to the SHS in

1992 by the Colby family. Our much admired Concord stagecoach, one of the Society's most important artifacts, will have a place of honour when the SHS opens the barn to visitors during the summer months. For more information call (819) 876-7322.

## AN EDITORIAL

*We did not believe we could own Mother Earth*

### Some thoughts for the Ottawa heritage river project

*Editor's note: The committee hoping to designate the Ottawa as a heritage river held its first public meetings this spring. At a meeting in Gatineau on February 28, Algonquin elder William Commanda made the following remarks.*

My people are the Mamuwini; we comprise the 84 Algonquin nations who were once nomads, and we travelled across Turtle Island, the North American continent, as its caretakers.

We knew the waterways and lands and mountains intimately, and that is how we knew that this was a turtle shaped island.

We drew maps for each other on birch bark, and later, soldiers copied this idea.

The birch tree gave us materials to build our canoes to travel across the land; sadly, because of the relentless clear cutting and because the few remaining trees no longer grow big enough we cannot continue to create the greatest gift our ancestors offered this nation – the canoe.

We taught the explorers and fur traders the routes into the continent.

But my ancestors could not have anticipated the extent of the ensuing exploitation of the land and her plant, animal and human life.

We did not believe we could own Mother Earth; rather, we belonged to her. She taught us the values of generosity and sharing, and this is how we responded to the new comers.

But, because their values were so different, we were gradually robbed, impoverished and made dependent on the newcomers to survive.

The only path to our survival was through the fur trade and logging.

And we were trapped into participating in destroying Mother Earth and her creatures.

Today, Mother Earth is suffering and the spirit of my people is suffering.

But now the newcomers are dying too – despite all the money for research, cancer is everywhere; we worry daily about diabetes, obesity, health and new

diseases. And society is increasingly more violent and angry.

I see connection in the sickness in the land and the sickness of the people. We have to start to heal from the core.

We have choked the life in our rivers by cutting their flow, flooding the lands and the homes of my peoples and the habitats of the animals.

When no longer used, dams remain as ugly concrete “show and tell” edifices still chaining the rivers across turtle island.

Dams prevent Mother Earth from flushing her rivers clean each year, and sending the waters rushing to the salt oceans for healing and purification.

Debris accumulates above the dams, and each summer we see the results of this in the capital city, when Britannia Beach is closed because of the fecal content of the waters. This, of course, affects the poorer folk more than others. (but this contamination of Mother Earth will eventually be the great equalizer).

The big motorized water boats and other pollutants disturb the patterns of life, growth, reproduction and health of the fish, and they are becoming increasingly uneatable.

Mother Earth needs healing urgently.

The Kichissippi River was loved and respected by my ancestors and now it is crying out for healing.

One symbol of such healing, emerging at the nation's capital and reaching out nationally and globally, lies at the heart of my vision for the healing and peace building centre at Victoria island: the eventual undamming of the Chaudière Falls, so that the magnificent circular falls can come to life again; and the reforestation of the concrete covered Chaudière Island.

Then indeed Victoria island and the mighty river on which she sits will become a true for symbol of hope for all the rivers of North America, and serve a true reflection of our heritage, its costs and its pain, as well as its triumphs.

**Armstrong Heritage Farm**

**Bringing history alive: Pontiac High launches Archaeology Corps**

By Mitchell McCann

In the year 1841 Captain John Armstrong was granted lot of land of 200 hundred acres just next to Shawville. His son Samuel Armstrong was born the same year, and began making bricks around 1865.

Now his son Grant Armstrong, of Edmonton, Alberta, has donated 47 acres of this land to the village of Shawville to be developed as a heritage site open to the public.

The Armstrong family ran a series of three brickyards on lot six, range seven of Clarendon Township. The first from 1865 to 1871, second from 1871 to 1885 and the third, which is the one believed to been excavated, from 1885 to 1911. The third one is located at the southernmost end of the projected heritage farm. The brick making process began slightly north of the highway where a mound of clay was gathered to weather the winter. Once that was done the clay and other components were fed into the augur. The augur was a large mixing apparatus driven by a class D steam engine. The one-cylinder steam engine was held in the ground by a series of large metal pipes. The pipes are threaded for bolts on one end and have a rectangle plate on the other. Large stones were laid over the plate, and smaller stones and a crushed brick and mortar mixture was over laid to ensure the rod wouldn't move.

Once mixed the bricks were formed on pallets of six bricks a piece. The pallets had an impression in them with the current

owner's initials. They were left on drying racks for seven days to dry. The racks were approximately thirty meters in length and four of them were believed to exist. The bricks were then piled into beehive shaped structures and covered with a material called clinkers (unburnt coal residue – ed.). These kilns would have cavities in the bottom for the large pieces wood, reportedly four feet long and sixteen inch square, to burn and fire the brick. The result of this action was areas of soil where the heat and brick have caused an interesting formation of red and black soil overlaying the clay.

Three workmen, Mr. Cater, Mr. Brown and Mr. Cashmere, lived on site. they lived in a house on top a hill near the brick factory on the same lot. A stone foundation for the house was discovered along with some wood work believed to be part of a frame. Near the foundation there were also many domestic articles, including crockery, glass, china, utensils and ceramics.

This information was discovered by a group of eight high school students and three professional archaeologists. They participated in the first course in high school in Quebec on archaeology. It ran for two weeks in the summer of 2003. The Pontiac High Archaeology Corps, the name which the group adopted, is now an extracurricular organization consisting of new recruits and the majority of the original group.

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## QAHN MATTERS

Dr. Ken Annett a prolific researcher and writer

### Gaspé historian chosen for Marion Phelps award

Historian Kenneth H. Annett, C.D., D.C.L., F.C.C.T. is this year's winner of the Marion Phelps Award.

The Phelps award is given yearly by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network to honour a person for their contribution to the English-Language heritage of Quebec. Dr. Annett is a Gaspé-born historian who has produced over 400 articles on aspects of Gaspesian heritage.

Begun in 1980 as a retirement project, the massive *Gaspé of Yesterday* project reflects the historic time frame of five centuries of Anglophone Gaspesian history, taking into account the influence of vast and varied physical space on the human experience.



Dr. Annett is a fellow of the Canadian College of Teachers. He studied at Bishop's University and a set of bound volumes of his articles on the Gaspé was donated to the University library. Dr. Annett has been a valued member of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec for many years. He has collaborated with Guy Richer of La Société généalogique de Québec on a number of projects. He is the author of *Huguenot Influence in Quebec and Huguenot Trails*. He has also been a contributor to SPEC, and "Quebec AM" of CBC Radio has broadcast 70 topics of the series *Gaspé of Yesterday*. An index of the 400 articles can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5443/annett.html>.

"The series has sought to recall and present varied aspects of our Gaspésian heritage," Annett wrote in an introduction. "It not only reflects an historic time-frame of five centuries but the geographic reality of vast and varied physical space on the human experience in Gaspésia.

The series has been a personal and private venture. None of the very limited number of bound volumes

have been for sale but sets of them have been donated to:

- His sons Christopher, Richard and Andrew Annett.
- The Gaspé Community Library.
- The Gaspésian British Heritage Centre.
- The Literary and Historical Society of Québec.
- The Bishop's University Library.
- Archives of The Anglican Diocese of Québec.
- Archives nationales du Québec.

*We give you ships and tides and men,  
Anchors a'weigh and windfilled sails,  
We give you back the sea again  
In sailors' songs and rousing tale.*

*And inland where the dark hills rise  
Between you and the salt-thick foam  
You hear the surf, the seagull cries,  
And eastward turn your hearts towards home  
– Dedication of Gaspé of Yesterday*

Picture from the web site of the Gaspesian British Heritage Village at [www.gbhv-vghb.com](http://www.gbhv-vghb.com).

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