

Quebec Heritage

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News



Contested Ground

Controversial Archeology in Gatineau and Montreal

Lost by a Hare

Chasing the Eastern Townships' Elusive Witch

Letters From Miss Edgar's

Marie Mack Writes Home during WWI

Quebec Heritage News

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Cover: "Indians Paying Homage to Spirit of the Chaudière,"
c.1933, by Charles William Jefferys (1869-1951).
Watercolour over pencil. Library and Archives Canada.

EDITOR'S DESK

Building on Ghosts

by Rod MacLeod

One thing I've learned from Hollywood movies is that you should never, ever build over a graveyard. They don't like it, you see, those people buried below. Sometimes they come up and do nasty things to the people foolish enough to live in whatever is built on the graveyard – I mean really nasty, like yanking little blonde girls through the television or making T-bone steaks crawl by themselves across the kitchen counter. In any case, it's just not worth the risk.

The custodians of Montreal's old Protestant and Catholic cemeteries did not have the benefit of such graphic imagery in the 1860s, yet they were sensitive to popular feeling about building over cemeteries, although in a moment of insanity the Fabrique of Notre-Dame did get architect Henri Maurice Perrault to design a plan for the subdivision of the St. Antoine burial ground into building lots, but

soon came to their senses. (No one wants to live over a cemetery, the former head of the Cartothèque at the Archives Nationales told me many years ago when showing me this plan, a "duh!" clearly implied.) Instead, they turned the space into a park, to be known as Dominion Square since Confederation was in the works. Monuments have been built on this ground, along with benches and a Vespasian, but nothing you would really live in. That is possibly why there aren't many ghost stories connected with the square (now "Place du Canada") despite the reputedly 40,000 bodies still

lying just under the surface. The Protestant Burying Ground further east was also developed as a park (Dufferin Square), even though almost all the bodies were removed before hand – though a few were discovered when they built Complexe Guy Favreau in the 1970s and a few more found under the street during recent repairs to René Levesque Boulevard. I must confess that, in all the happy hours I have spent in the Guy Favreau building, I never saw a ghost – although the Department of Canadian Heritage has recently moved from there for reasons that may, or may not, have to

do with increased sightings of crawling steaks.

do with increased sightings of crawling steaks.

It is possible that the presence or absence of bodies makes a difference if one is contemplating building over a cemetery. Yet we are also sensitive to the idea of living where people died, or even where they experienced pain; certainly many ghost stories involve revenants who haunt such places. Now, from a building developer's point of view, it may be impractical to take every bit of a site's history into consideration; there are surely few urban spaces that have not witnessed some sort of trauma over

the years. But there are certain sites that just seem to call out for sensitive treatment. Hospitals and jails may well be appropriate candidates for redevelopment as housing or offices, but surely it should be done with reverence.

I wrote a couple of years ago of the importance of respecting the site of the Montreal Children's Hospital ("Remembering an old children," *QHN* Summer 2015), arguing that a place of such intrinsic sadness (and, yes, joy – but that's the other side of the same coin) should be preserved regardless of architectural merit because there is something sacred about it. Or at the very least, that its spirit should be preserved and respected. Over the last few months I have been monitoring the steady demolition of the old Children's with a heavy heart. First of all, it's bloody sad. Waiting for a bus on the other side of Tupper Street, I've watched the cranes claw doggedly through the soft brown brick of the

Children's, the gaping void spreading from the former Emergency entrance on my left all the way to Atwater Avenue on my right – and, of course, extending several fathoms down into the earth. There is now nothing left of the hospital but the original annex from 1912, supposedly slated for preservation in whatever new structure emerges.

Yeah, maybe. The odds of anything of the old Children's surviving are slim – and even if the annex doesn't succumb to developmental greed, the spirit will be gone. People have been pointing out the need for community facilities in this



socially problematic neighbourhood: affordable housing would be ideal, or a community centre, or even a drop-in centre. Hey, maybe a school. But the architects' renditions show three or four sleek glass skyscrapers, obviously intended for high-end condos. All very nice in their slick way, but just not appropriate.

What's worse is the sales pitch. I might have preferred total ignorance, marketing the condos using a nice-sounding if meaningless name – like Victoria on the Park, an actual condo development that advertises widely and confidently despite being neither on Victoria Square nor on a Park. But the marketers of the Children's site have opted to exploit its former name, albeit by throwing logic, and reverence, enthusiastically to the wind.

This project is officially called "Square Children's" – meaning that's its name in French. I made fun before of the former hospital for calling itself "Le Children," but this goes one worse, involving two English words that make no sense in English. Where to begin? To point out that most children are not square (in either in geometrical or the 1950s hipster sense) would be pedantic. To say that four glass towers cannot be a square (unlike Cabot Square, a real space, which would lie in front of the condo like a cathedral parvis) would probably be wasting breath, since these days words mean just what marketers choose them to mean. And don't get me started on that apostrophe! Idiocy notwithstanding, the name Square Children's might have worked well if applied to a school or community centre, suggesting that young people would be welcome. Applied to condos the term is inappropriate at best; at worst, it is menacing and downright creepy.

This fact entirely escaped the marketers, however. For much of the summer the site (eventually, the gaping hole) was surrounded by a series of brightly-coloured billboards featuring stylized (but clearly adult) figures sveltely cavorting about rooftop pools and sidewalk cafés, framed by references to "Square Children's" or "squarechildrens.ca." Each billboard was of a different colour, and that colour was reflected in the panel's bizarre slogans. Each slogan seemingly referred to some



idyllic situation one might experience living there: "le rouge profond d'un Bordeaux en 5 à 7" (a deep red Bordeaux during happy hour) or "le noir d'un tatou plein de souvenirs" (a black tattoo filled with memories). I was a bit disturbed by the "s'illuminer devant les joues roses de sa petite-fille" (light up at the sight of your little girl's pink cheeks), which seemed to be an oddly contrived reference to a child, in ignorance of the thousands of hospitalized children whose cheeks were likely not all that rosy – or far too rosy to be healthy. More disturbing was the slogan that appeared to explain the theme: "redonnons des couleurs à notre quartier" (let's bring colours back to our neighbourhood). Oh, I see: having a children's hospital around kind of sucked the life out of the neighbourhood, and it's now up to the yuppies to rejuvenate the place. Divorced of context, these images and slogans are just corny; given the sacred nature of this space they are offensive.

I hope this project manages to include as many community service components as the community advocates



were originally calling for. I don't think it is too late to incorporate some low-cost housing into the plans or even a service centre at ground level. But simply throwing around the word "children" in the marketing campaign to score lame historical points is just wrong. Building over other people's sadness should be done with extreme reverence.

Or it could come back to haunt you.



HINDSIGHT

THE MEMORY OF THAT PLACE

by Dorothy Williams

The memory of that place.
The smell of that place.
The sounds of that place.

When I think of the Negro Community Centre I think of a building, I think of the concept, of an idea that took shape in a financially, economically impoverished community. Yet the building that we call the NCC stood tall and firm through my entire life until my late twenties. This old community building, with its three layers of grey stone and plaster, was filled with “community” for many, many decades even before the NCC inhabited it.

Built as a church in the waning years of the nineteenth century, it served its religious function until the 1920s, when it gave way to local community needs. The Iverley Settlement House claimed it for several decades, where the voices of the neighbourhood’s poor English-speaking Catholic community bounced off its walls. Then, in the mid-fifties, when the NCC joined forces with the Iverley Settlement House, the building began to shake to different rhythms as the Black community made it home. And, once again, for several decades, the building stood as a beacon for one of Montreal’s underserved, underrepresented communities.

Yet, the reality is for many of the people, the Black people in Montreal and Quebec, the NCC is surely that – a memory.

I didn’t know it then but as a youngster I was part of that first generation that climbed the stairs on Saturday to get ready for my ballet class. My parents had not played in that building the way my friends and my siblings did. The tap dance classes later in the day followed by the piano lessons downstairs rounded out my weekend education in that building. And the lessons there continued. During the after-school, here was the

place I learned how to cook, right in the downstairs kitchen. That same kitchen, managed by a host of volunteers, fed us day after day every lunch hour rain, shine or snowstorm.

The boys in my class spent hours in woodworking and carpentry, mentored by able-bodied, thoughtful men on the third floor. I am reminded too, of the top floor where athletically minded youth played their hearts out while representing the NCC in basketball and other team competitions. There was always a strong cheerleading group in the upper



bleachers, when visiting teams from across the city or from another province or even from the US came to rival our dominance.

And yes, its walls heard too our loud debates as teens are wont to argue their ideas with radical fervor, or, as adults, challenged the current mayor, a local councillor or school board official to consider the specific needs of their Black constituents.

There were times the building was the rallying point of a city-wide demonstration of anger, of social injustice and the oft-time lethal outcome of racial profiling. “Come to the NCC!!” on a poster, or on a flyer, signaled that the NCC was urgently calling a community to arms. It

meant: Let’s take a stand HERE!

Those special moments too always reminded me that NCC meant solidarity. Here, we rallied for the African Liberation marches. Its rooms welcomed anti-apartheid networks and the red and black posters encouraged pan-African solidarity. On its walls, I caught glimpses of my roots. It was at the NCC where I first heard about Haile Selassie and every day I passed by the Budweiser posters of African Queens and Kings. I am sure it was there, not in school, that I learned that Egypt was in Africa...

That building, too, served as a meeting place for the Congress of Black Women and for many other nationally-focused gatherings. Through the NCC, the entirety of Montreal’s Black community sat at national tables as local delegates car-pooled or hopped the train to attend the next National meeting convened in Ottawa or Toronto. In a world without Facebook, Skype or Meet-up, the NCC and its affiliate groups could not miss the journey. Our presence signalled to the rest of the country that the Black community of Montreal mattered too.

Thank you, NCC.

Dorothy Williams is the author of Blacks in Montreal: 1628-1986 An Urban Demography and The Road to Now: A History of Blacks in Montreal. She is the founder of Blacbiblio.com Inc., which has produced an educational kit for teaching Black history, ABC’s of Canadian Black History. She is also a director of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network.

QAHN News

by Matthew Farfan

2nd Annual Eastern Townships Heritage Fair, Melbourne

QAHN's 2nd Annual Eastern Townships Heritage Fair took place on Saturday, October 20, at the historic Melbourne Township Hall overlooking the St. Francis River. What an appropriate setting, given the theme of this year's event, "Nature's Waterways and the Web of History," with an accent on the St. Francis River watershed, which covers a vast portion of the Townships, and which had such a profound impact on the region's development.

This year's fair featured displays by over a dozen heritage organizations, including Copp's Ferry Museum, the Georgeville Historical Society, the Eastern Townships Resource Centre, Uplands Cultural and Heritage Centre, the Lennoxville-Ascott Historical and Museum Society, the Brome County Museum, the Colby-Curtis Museum, the Missisquoi Museum, Townshippers' Association, Townshippers' Foundation, the Sherbrooke Snowshoe Club, QAHN, and Richmond County Museum, which provided logistical support (and an open house at the nearby museum) throughout the day.

A new traveling exhibition was launched at the fair. "Waterways

of the St. Francis," as it is called, features a series of thematic banners on the heritage of the St. Francis River and its tributaries. Researched by QAHN's own Dwane Wilkin, with graphic design by Sherbrooke's Museum of Nature and Science, it is now available to museums that wish to borrow it.

Several speakers gave conferences during the fair on subjects related to the St. Francis. These included Dwane Wilkin (the fate of the once-thriving local ocean-going salmon population); Julie Grenier of the Conseil de gouvernance de l'eau des bassins versants de la rivière Saint-François (watershed conservation); and John Husk of the City of Drummondville (waterway restoration).

A special guest this year was the Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Member of Parliament for Compton-Stanstead and Minister of International Development, who was on hand to announce \$248,500 in funding from Canadian Heritage for two major QAHN initiatives: "Diversity and Achievement in Anglophone Quebec" and "Heritage, Culture and Communication: Balancing Traditional and Digital Media in a Changing World." These projects, the minister announced, will take place over two fiscal years.



Scenes from the 2nd annual Eastern Townships Heritage Fair, Melbourne.
Photos: Renee Arshinoff, Matthew Farfan and Ro Ghandhi.

Launch Event, Quebec Heritage News, Fall 2018 Edition, Concordia University

The official launch of the Fall 2018 edition of *Quebec Heritage News* took place on November 6, in connection with the Annual General Meeting of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University. This issue of the magazine was produced in collaboration with history students at Concordia, and featured contributions by 19 students as well as by Prof. Steven High who is a co-director of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS).



High praised the Centre's partnership with QAHN and called the launch a wonderful event, sentiments echoed by many of the students who participated, including Tanya Steinberg who wrote that she was "so proud" of "the amazing work" that went into the publication, "as we all are at COHDS."



2019 Heritage Talks Lecture Series

QAHN's 2nd annual Heritage Talks lecture series will get under way in early 2019. Overseen by project director Christina Adamko, this new series will include a range of fascinating talks at historic and cultural venues around Montreal and in the regions. Check out QAHN.org for programming details in the coming weeks.



6th Annual Montreal Wine & Cheese, Atwater Library: Mark Your Calendars!

QAHN's ever-popular annual Montreal wine and cheese will take place at the historic Atwater Library in Westmount, on Thursday, April 25, 2019, from 5 to 7 p.m. This event, which has become a tradition on Montreal's heritage calendar, is an excellent occasion for heritage enthusiasts, both English- and French-speaking, from all across the Island of Montreal, to meet and mingle in an informal setting. Check QAHN.org for more details in the weeks to come. And by all means, mark your calendars!

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Heritage in Brief

Kenogami Cemetery by Margaret Mitchell Bernard

Another year has rolled around and more work has been completed on the Kenogami Cemetery.

Some really interesting things happened over the summer months. One day while Roger Morel was working in the cemetery, a man by the name of Derek Bunn arrived with some very sophisticated camera equipment. He was looking for the grave of a New Zealand pilot that had been killed during training exercises over Lake St. John during World War II. Mr. Bunn belonged to the New

Zealand War Graves Project and was traveling the world locating and taking pictures of the fallen New Zealanders of World War II. He was even able to locate the stone he was looking for exactly by a GPS device that was attached to his camera. Later, Mr. Morel sent me a handout that he was given by this individual. I will keep in touch with this person as he tries to locate any living descendants of the New Zealand pilot.

This is only one example of the extraordinary things that have happened during the summer as the cemetery continues to attract visitors from many different walks of life.



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DONORS & DREAMERS

THE CULTURE OF GRATITUDE

Donor Stewardship
by Heather Darch

This is the fourth in a series of articles by Heather Darch addressing the perennial question of fundraising. It was inspired by her work on the QAHN project, DREAM.

I used to receive thank-you letters from the charities and non-profit organizations I support that had that “production line” look to them. They said all the right things but they were pretty generic with formal greetings and pre-printed signatures. It was easy to walk away from some of them; some I only gave to once. There was something about those letters that left me a little cold.

Even though the notion of thanking those who donate for your organization may seem obvious, not doing so, or not doing it effectively, is a big mistake. Even if you think you are thanking your donors sufficiently, it’s a good idea to consider the thanks from their perspective. As Juniper Belshaw of the Centre for Community Organizations says, “at the heart of all fundraising, is donor stewardship and the progressive building of relationships.”

Engaging a donor is important, but keeping a donor is vital. Stewardship is an integral component of success. At the QAHN DREAM conference in Morin Heights, we heard Juniper say: “What your organization does to retain your donors and how it works toward building a long-term relationship with those donors, speaks to the process and methodology of stewardship.”

Having accountability and due diligence in the care of your donors goes a long way. Part of the stewardship process includes administration procedures – meaning you have to be able to receive money in a professional manner. Donors will be watching for accountability and how donations are raised, invested and spent. Stewardship extends in two directions: back to the care of the current donors, and forward to those who are considering your non-profit for their next gift.

There are great tools for tracking and thanking your donors in downloadable applications from many companies on the web and for varying fees. For those of us on tight budgets, though, a simple Excel spread sheet can help us keep track of who donated and when, their specific interests in our organization, their preferences for donating (i.e. monthly or annually), why they

donate, how much they give and if they have been thanked. You can even keep track of personal notes and reminders.

Perfecting and personalizing your thank-you message is crucial. The rule of thumb for thank-you letters is 10 days, hand-written and personalized. The message should be simple but clearly express gratitude and recognize the impact of the donation. Explaining how their gift will be used to move your mission forward is an element not to be glossed over in the letter. Don’t include their donation history in a thank-you letter or ask for more money; that’s a separate letter. Thank-you letters are just that – to say thank you.

You may have noticed in the past few years a change in thank-you letters from charities. Formal salutations are crossed off and first names are written in pen. One of my non-profits always has a small personalized note to me written by the executive director next to his hand-written signature. That’s commitment. I recognize his effort and the organization’s appreciation of my contribution. I keep donating. We have developed a culture of gratitude.

Our donors should be part of a recognition program or strategy. If you don’t have a stewardship plan, make one. It should outline specifically what you will do to acknowledge all of your donors. According to Juniper Belshaw, “recurring donors, or those who donate on a monthly basis for example, also require acknowledgement beyond the end-of-year thank-you letter and tax receipt.” Consider a mid-year phone call to thank them or a special recognition of monthly donors in your communications. Major gift donors to your organization should be recognized with certificates, wall plaques or forms of public recognition – with their permission, of course. An overall recognition program, using press releases, websites, social media or other organizational materials, should be adopted to reflect your donors’ generous support.

Good stewardship means that donors have a sense of belonging and an attachment to what you do and why you do it. Through proactive ongoing recognition and by organized actions to help us keep track of our donors, we can all build better fundraising results for our organizations.



Good stewardship means that donors have a sense of belonging and an attachment to what you do and why you do it.

DIGS AT GATINEAU

by Roger Fleury
(with the collaboration of Wes Darou)

In the spring of 2014, the City of Gatineau began redevelopment work on Jacques-Cartier Street, work budgeted at \$43 million, including \$16 million from the National Capital Commission. While burying some hydro lines, city workers came upon First Nations artefacts. The city hired a private archeology company, Archéotec, to conduct excavations that were to last three weeks. The archaeological digs, designated BiFw-172, began at the corner of Jacques Cartier and Saint-Antoine Streets. Archaeologists eventually discovered 110,000 objects, including arrowheads, axes and a copper spear. The City of Gatineau first declared that these objects were insignificant and without spiritual value or even of great importance. This perspective would change dramatically over the next three years.

The discovery

In early May 2014, John Savage, a Métis living on Jacques Cartier Street, asked me in my capacity as Chief for help in protecting our ancestral boating rights, specifically regarding his little wharf that accessed the Ottawa River. But local city councillor Myriam Nadeau and Mayor Maxime Pedneaud-Jobin insisted on the destruction of this small Métis wharf.

On June 3, 2014, we organized a press conference on the site. Journalist Denis Gratton of *Le Droit* noted that it was the first time in his life that he had done an interview in a teepee! (Gratton, 8) A key aspect of this meeting was to emphasize the importance of all peoples working together: the Kitigan Zipi Algonquins, the off-reserve Anishinaabegs and the Non-Native residents.

Pierre Plouffe from TVA asked me, “Chief Fleury, how far are you willing to go to defend your rights?” My answer: “Our rights are non-negotiable.”

In our efforts to defend our right of access to the river, John Savage told me that there was an archaeological dig going on near St-François-de-Sales Church. I went to investigate and discovered the archaeologists at work. Right off, one of them handed me a stone ax. He told me that it was about 3,500 years old. Because I am a history teacher and Anishinaabe, I was moved to



be holding in my hand something that came from my so-distant ancestors.

From there, a few Aboriginal friends and I went to the City of Gatineau offices, and then to a city council meeting. We explained that we wanted to be involved, and to work with the city, the archives and the archaeologists – nothing more complicated than that.

The situation was about to degenerate.

On July 10, John Savage informed me that the city was filling the archaeological site with sand and that a bulldozer was stationed on site.

We hurried to the site. To prevent them from burying the artefacts, we installed two teepees. We also lit a sacred fire, of great importance for the protection of the site. So began a 42-day occupation.

The site

History shows that the Gatineau River delta has long been an important

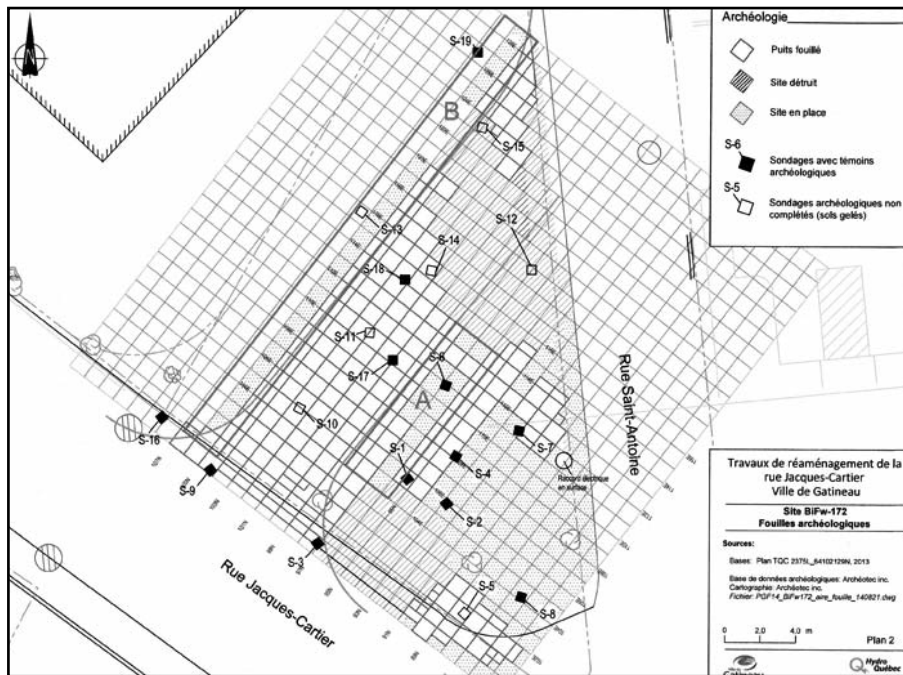
location for First Nations. It was the crossroads of three rivers. The Rideau River gave access to the south and what is now known as Perth, Ontario. Reverend William Bell described groups of First Nations people from Oka passing by on the Rideau River in 1824 (Shaw, 22). The Gatineau River gave access north to the Saint Maurice River and to today's Trois-Rivières. The Ottawa River gave access to the east, Montreal, the Iroquois countries and the Atlantic. To the west it gave access to James Bay and Lake Superior.

Archeology confirms this notion. Official maps show that the tiny BiFw-172 site on Jacques Cartier Street is a small fraction of a large archaeological site north of the Ottawa River between the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and the mouth of the Gatineau River.

Indeed, archaeologist Daniel Chevrier, president of Archéotec, found that the site is part of a “very old archaeological mega-site.”

The city gave a \$168,753-contract for the excavations to Archéotec. Between May and June 2014, the company collected about 25,000 items. Archéotec submitted the results to the city and received another contract on August 22, 2014. These new excavations collected another 85,000 items.

At this point, Daniel Chevrier announced that the site was “unique but without spiritual dimension.” I describe this random approach to funding as “TV dinner archeology.” What does spiritual dimension mean exactly? In our language, nouns have either an animate or an inanimate designation. A rock is a living being. If an elder does a ceremony around a rock, it becomes a spiritual object. It's essentially the same thing for holy water. It is nothing but tap water up to the point that it is blessed by a priest! I do not believe that professional archae-



ologists are able to say which objects are, or are not, spiritual.

Among the 110,000 objects inventoried were sacred artefacts, ceremoniously buried by our ancestors: arrowheads, axes, a copper spear from Lake Superior, a peduncle of a material found in the extreme south of Ontario, a fragment of a scraper from Mistassini Lake in northern Quebec and an arrowhead made of New England rhyolite. The archaeologists found fireplaces containing charcoal that allowed for carbon dating. The objects were found to date from 3,500 to 6,000 years ago (Tulloch, 12).

It is important to note that in our

- Store the artefacts in a safe place;
- Hire an archaeologist according to the state of the art;
- Include a First Nations observer during new searches;
- Assure that First Nations will be informed of future archaeological projects.

At present, we have no indication that any of our demands have been, or will be, met.

The sit-in

Our occupation of the site began on August 8, 2014 with our two teepees and

Our sacred duty was to draw to people’s attention that a sacrilege was committed at the expense of many sacred artefacts unnecessarily destroyed. Thus began a four-year legal battle, both criminal and civil.

On September 10, in an effort to end the sit-in, the city obtained an injunction demanding that we leave the site, arguing in court that it was imperative that they finish the construction immediately because it could not be done in the winter. But we photographed them doing the work all winter long.

On September 17, 2014, the city decided to move the case from civil to criminal. We view this decision as an intentional act meant to intimidate us. I'm not easily intimidated! If the city had taken the civil option, it would have been conducted by a bailiff and not by the police. The city would not have had to embarrassingly withdraw all criminal charges a year later. Civil procedures would have made our lives easier and saved the public a lot of money.

Six people were arrested: Robert Marois, Alain Lafortune, Albert Bourassa, André Lambert (four citizens of the sector), Audrey Redman and myself. After spending one night in jail (longer in my case), we were offered release if we complied with certain conditions: that we not disturb public order and exhibit good behavior, that we live at our current address at all times, that we not be within 100 metres of the site, that we be in our residences between 10 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. every night, and that we refrain from being in the presence of other accused. The last two conditions were dropped on October 9, 2014, although for four years the City of Gatineau Police Service, the Sureté du Québec, the RCMP and Canada Customs continued to go after us, claiming that they were unaware that these conditions had been removed.

The other five who were arrested were released the following day, having accepted these conditions. I did not, and was charged with “mischief.” I was released from jail on September 22 under the same conditions offered earlier.

Following the sit-in and the arrests, we went to court a number of times and in front of five different judges.

On April 7, 2017, the City of Gatineau Police Service announced that



protests we never requested possession of these artefacts. We only wanted to be assured that they would be protected and that the excavations could continue to the end. We requested that the city:

- Produce a video of the excavations;

sacred fire. Audrey Redman of Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation and myself were the two permanent protesters, helped by about a hundred proud people who came to support us.

Top: Site, corner of Jacques Cartier and Saint-Antoine streets, Gatineau, 2014. Source: Archéotec.

Bottom: Audrey Redman at the site, September 2014. Photo: Robin Levinson-King, Postmedia.

the city's charges would not be upheld and that the case was closed.

The city had spent a fortune attacking the fundamental rights of citizens who were simply doing their duty to defend an important part of their heritage.

This process could have cost us a lot of money. A SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) is a “lawsuit aimed at hindering political participation and activism... and aimed at intimidating the defendant or exhausting it financially in order to silence it.” As I said, I am not easily intimidated. However, in order not to exhaust myself financially, I chose to represent myself legally.

At a court hearing on July 13, 2018, the city withdrew all charges against me.

It remains to be seen what will happen to the artefacts. To my great surprise, in 2018 the City of Gatineau claimed to own the artefacts. This position goes squarely against federal law C-391, the *Repatriation of Indigenous Cultural Property Act*. The city's claim is essentially an act of neocolonialism. It has shown no signs of respect for Aboriginal history related to regional heritage. This is shameful in the National Capital Region.

Governments, the city, and the National Capital Commission must stop stealing our heritage objects.

Spiritual or not, the site and the artefacts have great historical and archaeological value. They deserve to be protected, as have been the objects



the west coast, and many others.

The city could have easily moved the installation of the pipes ten metres to a place where they would normally be installed. But instead, they diverted the pipes over the archaeological site. In the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the city has built a nice little park on the site of the excavations, named Place Abinan. According to the explanatory panels, the name was “proposed by the Kitigan Zipi community,” a community located 150 km from Gatineau. But the park was not approved by Band Council, and the decision to build was hardly made in collaboration with the local Aboriginal community. The city seems to believe that spending a few thousand dollars on a pretty little park gives it permission to destroy an ancient site and bury thousands of artefacts.

It is also obvious to me that an attempt was made to divide First Peoples, orchestrated by the City of Gatineau. They tried to play one group against another by denigrating off-reserve Aboriginals and pitting us against Status Indians.



found at the Pointe-à-Callières Museum in Montreal, on the HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror*, the L'Anse aux Meadows site with its Viking remains, the wrecks of the Basque whalers at Red Bay, Labrador, the submerged Haida sites on

You can – in fact, you must – fight city hall. Otherwise, governments will continue this behavior.

Chief Roger Fleury was born near Maniwaki in 1942 and raised in Chapeau, Quebec. He studied at St. Mary's Teacher's College, the University of Ottawa, and Syracuse University. Roger was a trapper and tourist guide, a history teacher and a provincial-level union representative. In 2011, he was elected Chief of the Quebec Fort-Coulonge Off-reserve Algonquins. Roger's political actions, beyond protecting the archeological site, include supporting the rights of the intellectually challenged and disputing Ontario's sovereignty of Calumet and Allumette Islands.

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TRACES OF CHARITY

St. Bridget's Refuge by Sandra Stock

The central area of downtown Montreal, especially the part that abuts Old Montreal, is a multi-layered heritage site almost in its entirety. The sector between Sherbrooke Street to the north and Notre-Dame to the south is rich in historic architecture, both domestic and institutional, and features several important public and commercial sites.

However, many buildings, very important in the past, have disappeared in this district. This is the natural progression of urban development from the early industrial growth of the first part of the nineteenth century through to the later movement of Montreal's financial and shopping centre from St. James Street (Saint-Jacques) up the slope to Dorchester (René Lévesque) and St. Catherine streets. As Montreal expanded, what were formerly mainly residential and institutional areas became the downtown we see today. This led to many buildings either being repurposed or disappearing altogether.

Often the institution itself survived but in a different location: for example, the Father Dowd Home, St. Margaret's Home, the Montreal General Hospital, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue and some other less known facilities, usually tied to religious denominations or health care. The practical reason for these moves was to be close to their population bases, who had moved to newer residential areas. Many old buildings were left behind and many were demolished.

One of these buildings was St. Bridget's Refuge – later called St. Bridget's Home, and then called the first Father Dowd Home until the building was razed in the 1970s and most of its remnants disappeared under a parking lot

just below St. Patrick's Basilica on de la Gauchetière Street. St. Patrick's Orphanage, on the same location beside the church, was also demolished.

St. Bridget's was among the first large long-term care residences in Mon-



treil, initially caring for poor, ill and socially isolated survivors – mostly women – of the tragic Great Famine and ensuing typhus epidemic of the 1840s in which 6,000 people died in Montreal. It was an important institution for Montreal's Irish community in its time, when funding and support for those in need had to come from religious denominations and private citizens. Father Dowd raised the funds and built both St. Bridget's and St. Patrick's Orphanage.

In *Saint Patrick's of Montreal: The Biography of a Basilica* (1998) by Alan Hustak, Dowd is described as a “good and decent man of superior intelligence” who travelled from Ireland to the United Canadas in 1848 to minister to the Irish community of Montreal. He had excellent promotional and fundraising abilities and promoted the building of St. Patrick's on what was then a fine location up on an escarpment – called a terrace – just outside the then limits of Montreal. This site had what must have

been a terrific view of the harbour and river – now totally obscured by high rises.

This prime real estate was the site of a mansion built in 1819 by Pierre de Rastel de Rocheblave, a wealthy former North West Company fur merchant who had gone on to increase his fortunes by investing in railroads and real estate before entering politics. Surrounding the mansion was a large parcel of land, on which fruit trees flourished – a very different Montreal from today! In 1843, the Sulpicians purchased this property from Rocheblave's widow, and it became the site of St. Patrick's Church. The large mansion became the first location for St. Bridget's Home and Refuge. In 1869, St. Bridget's was moved to a new building a

short distance away. The Rocheblave house was beyond repair, and was demolished around 1900. By this time, the area was mainly commercial.

As time went on, most of the remnants of both of the two St. Bridget's buildings and of St. Patrick's Orphanage disappeared under the soil of the green spaces and parking areas around the church. The site's upper sector, where the church sits, has become an attractive outdoor resting and stopping off place; the church provides picnic tables for downtown workers and local residents. The lower green space – down quite a steep slope edging de la Gauchetière Street – was, and is, an unofficial neighbourhood park with large and very old trees, many of them maples and elms. This is where many large pieces of the St. Bridget's foundations are visible. The old cement steps leading up from de la Gauchetière Street towards the site of the former buildings are still evident.

This past summer we became aware

St. Bridget excavations. Photo: Sandra Stock.

of the redevelopment of the southwest corner of the St. Patrick's property by the Université de Montréal's Hautes Études Commerciales. St. Patrick's has sold this part of its land to finance the church and ensure its survival as a functioning urban parish. The church itself is an important heritage site and still an active institution for Montreal's (especially Irish) English-speaking Roman Catholic community. Although the decision to sell this land is understandable, we have serious concerns about the fate of both the preservation of the St. Bridget's remnants and whether suitable information on the history of the site will be prominently displayed. In an area with almost no green spaces – a real downtown “heat island” in summer – local residents and the wider Montreal community would like to be assured that as many of the large trees as possible are preserved and as much lawn as possible continue to be publicly available. This issue is particularly important to the residents of adjacent Chinatown – a sector of great historical importance itself – which has recently received many threats from inappropriate development suggestions of various kinds.

An archeological survey of the site carried out by the HEC revealed many traces of both St. Bridget's Refuge and St. Patrick's Orphanage. Whether these



traces will eventually be covered by the new building and its surrounding landscaping is still uncertain. What the nature of any exterior or interior historic information plaques and / or actual incorporated remnants might be is also still uncertain.

An article in the *Montreal Gazette* (July 5, 2018) by Andy Riga quoted a HEC spokesperson as saying “the school plans to commemorate the site's history by outlining the location of St. Bridget's in its new building and will use the foundation stones to build part of a hall.” Fergus Keyes, a prominent Irish community leader, responded to this statement by saying that “HEC should leave the foundations where they are and a large green space should be preserved. A green space gives you a sense of a memorial space where you can sit and remember the importance of the area.”

Phil Chu, who lives two blocks from this site and recently led local community opposition to the removal of the YMCA from the Guy Favreau Centre, says that the HEC project should go forward but also wants the foundations and most of the green space preserved.

It will be interesting to see how this project unfolds, especially in regard to its relations with the surrounding community and to its dealings with those concerned about the preservation of heritage. Given the precipitous decline of most traditional religious institutions, so



many of which are sitting on extremely valuable properties, the progress of the HEC / St. Patrick's situation is important in that we may see what the priorities are for both developers and communities.

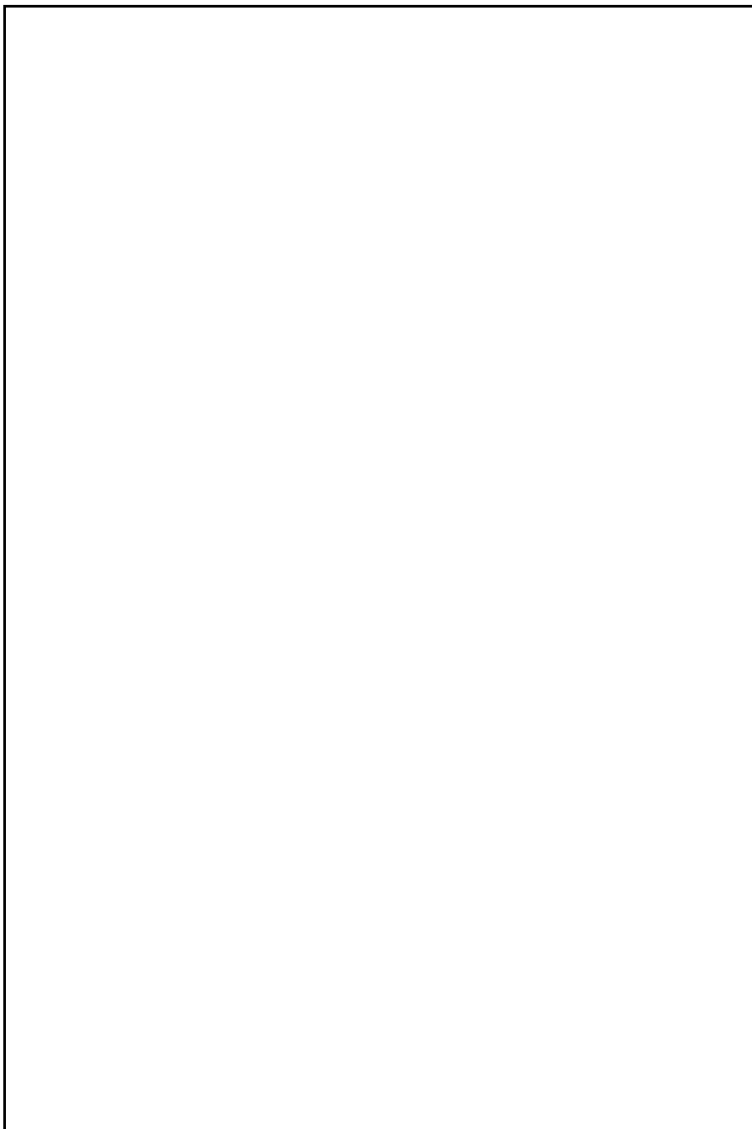
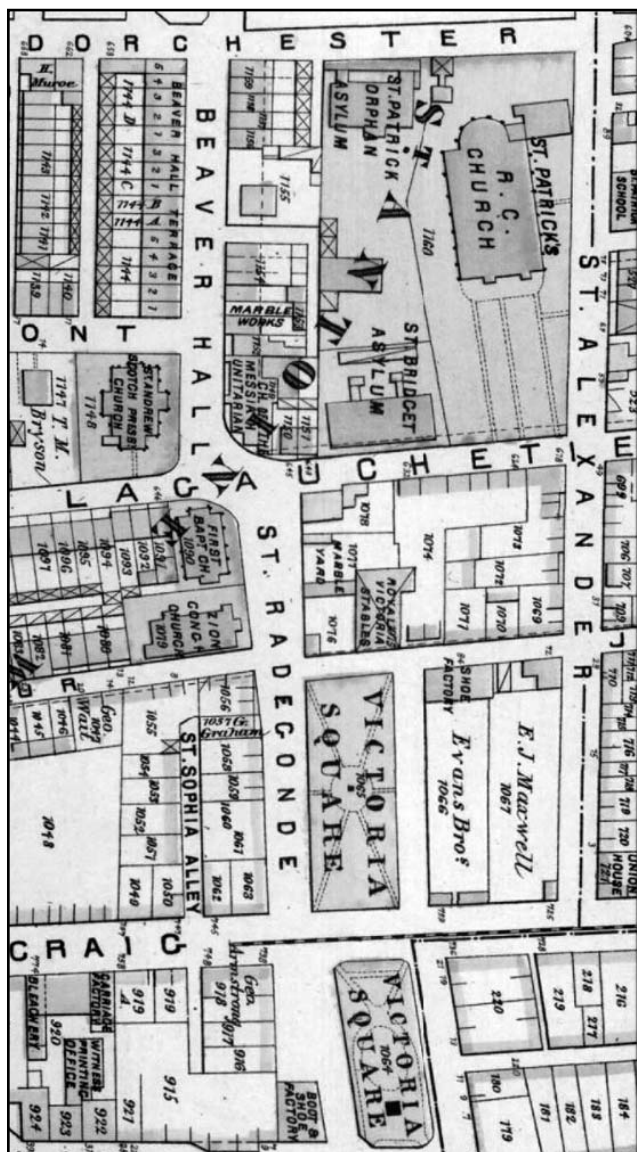
Sandra Stock, who is a director of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, has written extensively on heritage issues, with a special focus on urban archeology and Montreal's Irish heritage.

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Top right: St Bridget excavations. Photo: Sandra Stock

Bottom left: Henry W. Hopkins' Atlas of the City and Island of Montreal, 1879.

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BERESFORD TOWNSHIP, ST. AGATHE

by Joseph Graham

Beresford Township, originally settled by peaceful French-Canadian farmers, was named for a British war hero, a major general who throughout his career fought Napoleon and never set foot in the Canadas. Encompassing St. Agathe, it sits on a high plateau south of the St. Narcisse Moraine and includes a part of the headwaters of the North River.

Although the Weskarinis Algonquin left evidence of their presence, conventional history in the area describes it as most likely an unsettled territory from the last ice age until Augustin-Norbert Morin's first pioneers began arriving in the 1850s. Coupled with the lack of navigable rivers and the very thin layer of soil that remained after the passage of the glaciers, it has a higher elevation than its neighbours north of the moraine, and the frost-free season is much shorter than areas north, west and south. The first settlers found an undisturbed forest rich in pine and maple and discovered clean, clear lakes teeming with trout. They brought with them a farming culture that was ill-suited to the thin soil and short seasons. However, they doggedly perceived themselves as farmers and stripped the forest away, burning it and selling the residue as potash for a few cents a hundredweight until all that was left was the barren soil and the fishing season.

Since these hardy, independent people were Catholics, their own name for their settlement owed more to the parish and the priests than to the bureaucratic authority that had called it Beresford, and it became known as the Paroisse de Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts. Rarely would they have thought of the man for whom the township had been named, or of his legacy, even as the fields were abandoned and the forests began their slow return.

Major General William Carr of Beresford was 84 years old when Beresford Township was named in his honour in 1852. He died two years later, never

having seen the ill-fated forest. The illegitimate son of Lord George De La Poer Beresford, First Marquess of Waterford, in Ireland, and of an unrecorded woman, William joined the British Army at 17 years of age. Lord George fathered two children by different women prior to marrying and fathering seven legitimate children. It was customary for less advantaged members of titled families to be given a commission in the army, where they were basically on their own. These commissions were not merit-based, but were purchased by those who could afford them, and it is possible that it was the Marquess who paid for William Carr's commission. The evidence for this is that William Carr's elder half-brother, born in the same circumstances, also obtained a title in his lifetime after having proven himself as an officer in the navy. Beresford first showed his capabilities in a battle in Toulon in 1793, a battle that saw Napoleon rise from captain to general in his victory over the British. As Napoleon rose to power, the British sought ever further afield for the trees that would maintain their navy, beginning the long process that would eventually contribute to the demise of the forests of Beresford Township.

Beresford was among those determined career soldiers who, despite injuries (he had lost an eye) and setbacks, would dog Napoleon to the end of his career. He served in Nova Scotia, India, Egypt, and Cape Town, South Africa. He rose to the rank of general, captured Buenos Aires, was forced to surrender it, escaped from prison there and returned to England. His major military contribution was during the Peninsular War against Napoleon, in Spain and Portugal. He earned the title of Marquis de Campo



Maior from the King of Portugal for his services and was an intimate of Sir Arthur Wellesley, the future Viscount Wellington. He is also credited with re-training the Portuguese army while in Wellington's service.

Despite Beresford's vital contributions to the defeat of Napoleon, the early bureaucrats of the Canadas who chose his name may have had a different reason to commemorate this great general, a reason that would seem to tie him more closely to the township. Beresford is best remembered for the work that he began during his retirement. On his property called Bedgebury in Goudhurst, Kent, England, he began a conservatory of pine tree species that has grown into the largest coniferous preserve in the world with "over 10,000 tree specimens growing in 320 acres, including rare, historically important and endangered trees and is home to some 91 vulnerable or critically endangered species...." (from The Friends of Bedgebury Pinetum web site).

Our ancient woodlands were lost during 150 years of peaceful history, but we can celebrate the legacy of General Beresford while witnessing the occasional crown of a white pine breaking through the canopy of our young second-growth forest. Had our earliest farmers known him, perhaps they could have set aside a small portion of our virgin pine forest in his honour. Perhaps we can still do something. The residents of Lac Brûlé in St. Agathe have been protecting their forest for over 100 years, and the white pines are now standing head-and-shoulders over the forest canopy.

Joseph Graham, author of Naming the Laurentians, is writing a book that re-examines much of our early history, the elements that drove European society, and the extraordinary damage these ideas inflicted on North America.

THE WITCH OF NEW MEXICO ROAD

Irish Folklore in the Eastern Townships

by Grant Myers

The graveyard was a quiet and forlorn place. As I entered through a rusty gate, a cold wind blew in from the empty field to the west, robbing the early spring sun of what little warmth it had to offer. The patches of snow that remained on the ground somehow emphasized the decay of time and neglect and suggested that those buried in the old cemetery were forgotten, or would soon be forgotten, in the memories of the living.

This had to be the right place.

The Eastern Townships are haunted by old tales and legends of times past that lurk incomplete or only half-remembered in the collective imaginations of families that have lived here for generations. Stories told by parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles compete for attention with the complex trappings of contemporary life, and more often than not they are lost to memory. But sometimes, if only by chance, an old tale is recorded or written down and survives in a published book or manuscript, taunting us by its paucity of detail to unwrap the riddles of its narrative. Such is the legend of Peggy Green, the witch of New Mexico Road.

I first read the story of Peggy Green in John Robert Colombo's *Ghost Stories of Canada* (Dundurn Press, 2000). According to Colombo, sometime during the 1880s, farmers living in the vicinity of "the Old Mexico Road" just a couple of miles east of Island Brook, Quebec, were dismayed to discover that their cows were no longer giving milk. Suspecting that someone or something was stealing the milk, a few of the farmers set a trap and, during the night, caught a large white hare suckling on their cows. Apparently suspecting that supernatural forces were at play, the farmers released the animal, but not before notching its ears. A short time later, an old woman named Peggy Green died and it was observed at her funeral that her ears were

notched in the same way as the captured hare. This confirmed suspicions that all was not as it seemed. Following the death and burial of the old woman, the farmers expected that their cows would start producing. However, this was not the case. Only after they returned to the cemetery and walled in Peggy Green's grave did things return to normal and the



cows again begin to yield milk.

The legend rattled around in my head for a good five years before I took the first tentative steps toward further exploration. After some deliberation, I decided that a good place to start would be to find Peggy Green's final resting place. Colombo had reported that the grave could still be seen. To find it I would have to locate Old Mexico Road and the cemetery referenced in the story. The problem was that I could not find a

geographical reference to Old Mexico Road anywhere in the Eastern Townships.

I turned for help to Stanstead historian Matthew Farfan. Matthew had recently undertaken an assessment of "at risk" cemeteries in the Eastern Townships for QAHN and informed me that the graveyard I was searching for was most likely the Thompson Cemetery. It was located just outside Island Brook on "New" (not "Old") Mexico Road.

The hamlet of New Mexico, Quebec, is today little more than a quiet corner at the intersection of two country roads. In the 1880s, it was a busy agricultural settlement made up of mostly Irish and French-Canadian Catholics. New Mexico is still listed and recognized by the Quebec Toponymy Commission. According to the Commission, the community's first settlers were from Mexico, Maine, a farming town at the confluence of the Androscoggin and Swift rivers at the western end of the state. They came to Quebec to take advantage of cheap land and abundant forests, and it seems they brought the name of their community with them.

The Thompson Cemetery was the Catholic burying ground for the New Mexico settlement. Thirty-three existing and legible headstones, with dates ranging from 1873 to 1994, were recorded during a survey conducted in 2005. Without exception, all the recorded stones displayed names of either Irish or French-Canadian origin. Peggy Green was not among them. If her grave was in the Thompson Cemetery it was unlikely that the headstone was extant. But it was possible that some evidence of the walled-in burial was visible. I would have to visit the cemetery and see for myself.

Perhaps the name Peggy Green itself held clues to the mystery. The sur-

Johannes Gehrts, "Ostara." Felix Dahn et al, Walhall: Germanische Götter- und Heldensagen, 1901.

name struck me as English rather than Irish. Had Peggy Green been an English Protestant in this predominantly Catholic New Mexico community? If so, as an outsider, had she been the target of rumours and accusations? Throughout history, people accused of all manner of misdeeds have often been marginalized by religion or language. It was a tempting, but highly speculative, theory.

Green or Greene is a very common English surname and is associated strongly with Northampton in the East Midlands. The name in Ireland, while certainly not as widespread as it is in England, is still well known. Like most of the Irish surnames preserved on the headstones of the Thompson Cemetery, it can be traced back to one or more Gaelic antecedents. Irish family names such as O'Huathnin, McGlashan, Fahy, and Mac Grianna have been variously anglicized as Green or Greene.

In the matter of religion, if Peggy Green was buried in the Thompson Cemetery she must have almost certainly been Catholic. Protestants would have been granted Catholic funerals and burials on only the rarest of circumstances and then, as now, only with the approval of the local Bishop. Then again, there must have been cases where the necessities and circumstance of life in isolated rural communities would have precluded absolute adherence to religious tradition. But perhaps I was looking in the wrong direction. Maybe the key to understanding the story of Peggy Green was to be found not in the pages of history but in the realm of folklore.

The story of the Irish community in Quebec is long and complex and began during the French colonial period. Some historians have argued that, in the mid-eighteenth century, the origins of as much of 5% of the population of New France could be traced to Ireland. Irish immigration to this province peaked in the first half of the nineteenth century. Some came during the Great Famine of 1845 to 1852, but most arrived earlier in the century as part of a British plan to resettle the Irish poor in their North American colonies. According to statistics provided by the Grosse-Ile and Irish Memorial National Historic Site, over 25% of the approximately 1,940,000 immigrants that landed at



the Port of Quebec between 1829 and 1867 were from Ireland. Not all stayed in Quebec, but many did.

While these newcomers shared the Catholic religion with their Francophone neighbours, they brought with them a distinct culture and unique folkloric tradition. Legends and tales from “the old sod” were quite literally uprooted and replanted in a new land. While the setting was different, the characters and main elements of narrative remained the same.

The elements of the Peggy Green



legend are well rooted in the folkloric traditions of the British Isles. In the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis (*Topographia Hiberniae*, 1188) reported that in Ireland, Wales and Scotland it was believed that certain “old hags” would steal milk by turning themselves into hares and suckling on the teats of cows. He suggested that this belief was ancient.

The story of a shape-shifting hare is just one of the ancient traditions related to the “milk magic” of Celtic peoples. Identified by folklorists as the “Witch as Hare” motif, the tale conforms to a more or less constant formula, with only minor variations. It has been told in prose, poetry and music for millennia: a farmer is concerned because his cows are producing little or no milk. A large hare is caught suckling the cows, identified as the cause of the poor yield, and is maimed or injured in its attempt to escape. A short time later an old dying woman is observed to have the same injury as the hare and thus discovered as the thief.

In *Folk-Lore and Folk-Stories of Wales*, Marie Trevelyan (1909) recounts the following tale:

In a lonely part of South Glamorgan a certain hare baffled the hounds for many years. The animal's head was described as being quite grey with age, and it was stated that she had lost all her teeth. She was seen frequently in the early morning running among the cows in the meadows, and the farmers knew that she was a witch because the yield of milk was always less when she was about. After years of chasing, both by hounds and huntsmen, she was slain. Because the people thought that the hare was a woman transformed into animal shape, they gave the body a 'decent burial'; and it was asserted that from the moment the hare was killed the witch disappeared and was never again seen in the district.

The origins of these old stories are rooted broadly in Indo-European mythology. Many of the deities of ancient Europe were reputed to have shape-shifting powers, and supernatural references to a variety of ani-

mals, among them the hare, were numerous. The Norse goddess Freyja was said to have employed hares as her train-bearers. The Anglo-Saxon fertility goddess Ostara, her veneration sometimes identified as a pagan precursor to the Christian celebration of Easter, was often depicted with hare's ears. Cupid, the Roman god of love, was sometimes depicted in the company of hares.

In the first century BCE, Julius Caesar noted in his *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* that the Celtic inhabitants of Britain were forbidden, along with geese and chickens, to eat hare. This reference, supported by iconographical and archaeological evidence, has suggested to some scholars that the animal was somehow sacred or connected to religious practice and ritual in pre-roman Britain.

With the advent of Christianity, the old gods of pagan Europe became the subject of folklore and fairy tales: compelling, yet incomplete vestiges of another time. Among the rural people in parts of the British Isles and elsewhere, creatures of myth lived on as harbingers of the otherworld: a world of spirits and magic that, although largely unseen, played an important role in defining the fortunes of the living.

The panicked fears of black magic and Satan worship that gripped most of Europe during the Protestant Reformation, leading to the witch-hunts of the early modern era, stood in stark contrast to the world view of the Celtic peoples living on the rural margins of the continent. As John D. Seymour points out in *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology* (1913),

“in Celtic Ireland dealings with the unseen were not regarded with such abhorrence, and indeed had the sanction of custom and antiquity.” While the inhabitants of the otherworld such as fairies, ghosts and witches were often mischievous, sometimes malevolent, and rarely dangerous, they were nevertheless considered part of the natural order. It was this world view, a thick stew of Catholic faith and pre-Christian belief, that Irish immigrants brought with them to the New World.

I did not find Peggy Green in Thompson Cemetery on that cold early spring day. But I do think I unwrapped the riddle of her legend. I believe that, far from being merely a character in an obscure rural folktale, Peggy Green can be seen for what she truly is: a remnant of an oral tradition and cosmology that has spanned two continents and innumerable centuries to become part of the cultural legacy of the Eastern Townships.

Grant Myers is the president of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network. A resident of Austin, Quebec, he holds degrees in Social Anthropology (Carleton) and Anthropological Archaeology (UBC). Grant has had a lifelong passion for history and material culture, and he usually knows which witch is which.




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LETTERS FROM 507 GUY STREET

by Ginette Guy

While researching material for a biography of Mary Mack, first female alderman of Cornwall, Ontario, I noted a series of letters she wrote to her parents from her Montreal boarding school. Those letters provide a glimpse into her life as a boarder, and also of events happening in Montreal between 1914 and 1918, her time at the school. Through the eyes of a teenager, in simple terms, and within the context of her own priorities at the time, she relates events that are now part of history.

Mary Agnes Mack (1899-1978) was born in Cornwall, a bustling industrial town in Eastern Ontario. Her grandfathers were businessmen and politicians, and she could trace her ancestry back to the first settlers in the area: Loyalists and Scots. Through hard work and perseverance, the families had built a comfortable living. As the only child of William R. Mack and Mary Isabella Snetsinger, Mary was first schooled at home, with a private tutor. To complete her education, the choice was made to send her to a private school in Montreal.

Montreal was the logical choice; Mary's aunts had been educated in Montreal, and her mother had attended Bute House on Sherbrooke Street at the corner of McGill College Avenue. Both the Macks and the Snetsingers had ties to Quebec; the Macks came from Huntingdon, and the Snetsingers had a villa in Cacouna, used by the family for nearly a hundred years. Mary had cousins in Lachine and her half-brother Harold was a medical student at McGill. The city was easily accessible by train – the *Mocassin* made regular runs to and from Cornwall – but the children had to be

boarders. The family chose to send Mary to the new school known as Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's, at 507 Guy Street.

The school's founders, Maud Edgar and Mary Cramp, were progressive teachers who strived to equip their

her parents when she was between 15 and 19 years old, she comes across as a typical teenager from any decade. Her mind seems to be on everything but her studies. She comments on the food, the rules, weekend plans, shopping and going out with friends. The letters highlight the close relationship with her parents, and provide a glimpse into the world of the privileged, and of Montreal, during this historically charged period.

All her letters start with the heading "507 Guy Street, Montreal."

Dear Mother,

Doris came in yesterday and before lunch, and we went to Childs and had a delicious lunch; chicken pie, French fried potatoes, raisin pie and coffee. It only cost 55 cents, Doris took a salad, bran muffins and lemon pie and coffee and hers only cost 35 cents.

After lunch I took my watch to Birks for repairs. I looked at Fairweathers for coats, all their English coats run around fifty dollars, there was a perfect beauty the same make as mine, steel grey, woolly cloth, with black leather buttons and awfully stylish, but it was fifty dollars.

When I looked at Hendersons for my coat they had a stylish, lightweight coat in sort of a covert cloth for \$32.50. It was an English coat, it was Mandalbury make.

Love Mary

On weekends when she was not going home to Cornwall, Mary typically spent her Saturdays out with her brother Harold or her cousins Doris and Violet



students with knowledge of literature, language, and fine arts, as well as science, mathematics, and ethics. Maud Edgar was the daughter of Matilda Ridout Edgar, a historian and feminist from the early days of the suffragette movement in Canada. Based on this influence, the curriculum supported liberal arts, focusing on leadership and philanthropy. In its beginning, the school had seventy students; fifteen were boarders.

Mary Mack spent the war years (1914-1918) at the school, and she found the life of a boarder, away from home, difficult at first. In letters written to both

Mary Mack, c.1914. Photo: Douglas Cornwall.

for shopping at Morgan's, tea at the Windsor, or lunch at the Corona. Amidst the social life of Montreal – the plays, operas, and shows – one could not completely shut out the reality of the times. In 1916, the Infantile Paralysis (polio) epidemic changed the way the young boarders lived their lives:

Dear Daddy,

You will have got Miss Edgars letter about the Infantile Paralysis. We are not allowed to go to the theatres, churches, on street cars or in shops or crowded places.

We have to gargle with Listerine or Peroxide and snuff it up our noses. We will not be allowed to go out except to some private house or driving on the mountain. They say that fresh fruit is dangerous but as my oranges were from Robertson they gave me one. None of the day girls can attend except the over fifteen who do not come on street cars. The little Cowans boy, Mrs. Andrew Allen's grandson has it, and his cousin has it also.

With love,
Mary

There was a duality of realities for the privileged students, and the school encouraged their charges to help whenever they could and to participate in



political and social events of the day. Mary led a drive for leather gloves, repurposed for the war effort overseas, and she reminded her mother about two meatless days a week and about using brown bread. The girls were taken to the Liberty Loan parade, and they made gifts and knitting for the less fortunate. Mary also learned about priorities versus the family rules of her strict Anglican upbringing:

Dear Mother,

I do not suppose you will like it, but we have to knit socks on Sundays. That is to say that if Miss Cramp sees you not knitting during reading, she may tell you to get your knitting and not to be so lazy. I went

as long as I could but it was not very pleasant thinking you may be landed on any minute. Anyway, the war does not stop on Sundays, and you can get nearly a whole sock knitted while during the week one gets no time for it at all hardly.

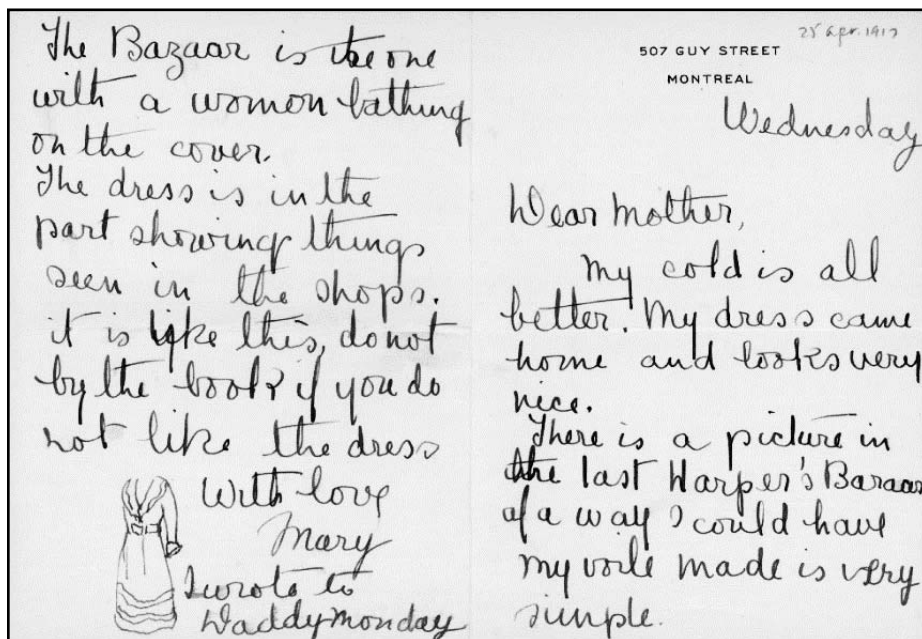
Love, Mary

Cornwall's population back in 1917 was around 7,000. Mary was aware of the sacrifice that many had made in the war. Receiving the Cornwall papers, she writes to her brother, "there has been quite a few killed, and wounded from near Cornwall, I hope the ones we know have come through alright." Mrs. De Sola, the wife of the Belgian consul, asked if the girls would be godmothers to some of the Belgian soldiers and write to those who had not heard from family since the beginning of the war. Mary thought the idea exciting and an excellent way to improve her French. Her correspondent was Emile Houssin.

On May 14, 1917, Montreal rolled out the red carpet for the visit of Marshal Joseph Joffre, French hero of the Battle of Marne. The excitement was high, and Montrealers took to the street with French flags to see the parade. Marshal Joffre inspected the troops and opened the new library. It was a short visit, but Mary Mack was front and centre and wrote with great excitement about her encounter:

Dear Mother,

We did not go to church this morning but we had all been invited to go



Bottom: Letter, Mary Mack to her mother, April 1917. Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School Archives.

Top: School photo, c.1918, Mary Mack is second from the left on back row. Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School Archives.

and see Joffre from the balcony at the Royal Victoria College so we had a splendid view. He was awfully well guarded there were detectives and secret service men standing facing the crowd on the foot-board of his motorcar and more policemen on the side of the road. I think they had the Dominion police down from Ottawa. With our dancing display Friday night and having the Old Girl (alumni) back and dance last night and seeing Joffre this morning I have had quite an exciting weekend.

On May 30, 1917, Mary was once again at the Royal Victoria College, but this time to see Arthur Balfour, Foreign Secretary, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and author of the Balfour Declaration in support of a national home for the Jewish people. He had just been to a luncheon at the Windsor and had given a speech to a full house from the Canadian Club. At the R.V.C., heads of McGill University conferred degrees on Mr. Balfour, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, Rear-Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, and General G. T. M. Bridges. The hall was packed, and Mary wrote:

Dear Mother,

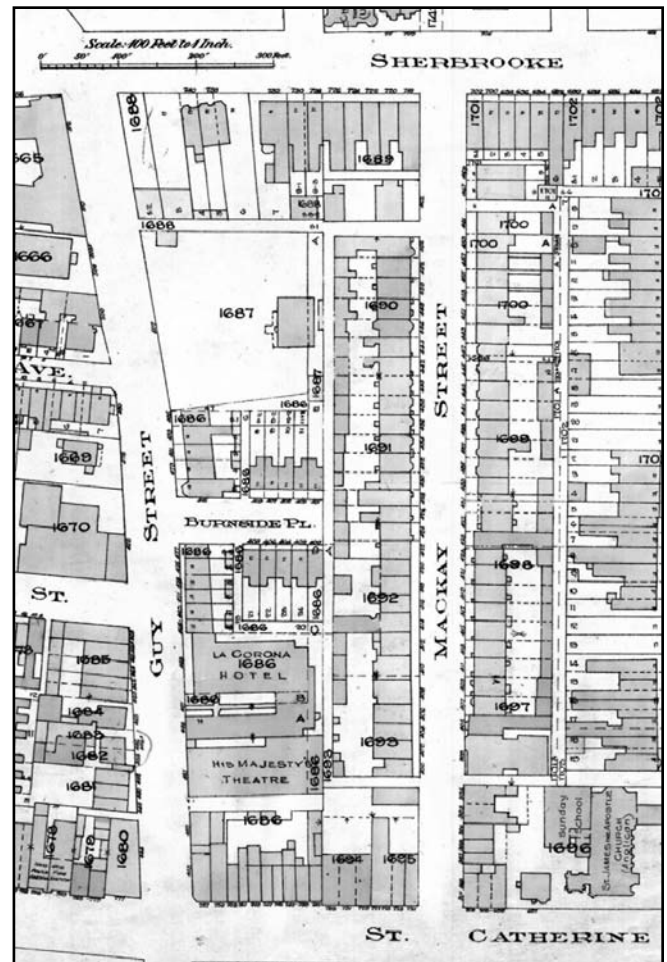
You asked if we saw Balfour, I did. We were all, or nearly all of us were taken to the Assembly Hall R.V.C., and we saw him receive his degree. He spoke afterward, and I think he had a very good reception.

We came out afterwards to find an aisle of soldiers, a policeman conducted us down and we had just got to his carriage when he came out of the College, of course the crowd pressed forward, and we squashed in just beside his carriage, we got squashed against the horses and the press was heavy but they were fairly quiet and we got a good view, he passed within five feet of me. He had such a nice smile. He smiled all over his face and seemed very pleased with his reception.

With love,
Mary

At the time, the visits of Joffre and Balfour were seen as an opportunity to boost support for the war and to fight the anti-conscription movement in Quebec. Riots and civil disturbances were common in Montreal in 1917. The young ladies at Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School would feel the tensions in the city. They were not allowed on St. Catherine Street near Morgan's because of the strikes, and a Scotch Battalion was drilling on the campus of McGill. They were there to keep order in case there was trouble with the anti-conscriptionists. Because of her upbringing, Mary was politically "aware" at a young age, and her roots were loyalist and monarchist. Her grandfathers had been an MP and an MLA, both Liberals, while other family members had been involved in municipal affairs. Even as a teenager, Mary had strong views and supported the war effort. She did not sympathize with the rioting and striking.

Mary Mack graduated in 1918 and remained in Montreal through the 1920s. She studied art at the Art Institute of Montreal and in Paris. From the mid-1920s, she was part of the vibrant artistic community in the city, herself a landscape painter, favoring the lower St. Lawrence and the Cacouna area for her paintings. She returned home to Cornwall in 1930 and dedicated her life to helping others. A social advocate, she was influential in no less than twenty organizations, most of them put in place through her leadership. Mary was Cornwall's first female alderman and kept her seat on the town council for ten years, chairing the industrial development committee. She never married but had an active social life, attending functions in Ottawa, Paris, and London.



It is hard to determine the impact of the years spent at Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School (marked 1687 on the map) and the historical events of the day, but Mary was more than just a spectator, she had an awareness that served her well in later life.

Sources:

Mary Mack, *Letters to her parents 1914-1917*. Miss Edgars's and Miss Cramp's School Archives, Montreal.

Ginette Guy, *Unforgotten Mary Mack*. SD&G Historical Society, Cornwall, Ontario, 2017.

Ginette Guy, author of Unforgotten Mary Mack, is a volunteer with historical societies and community heritage organizations in Eastern Ontario and Quebec. She enjoys researching and writing about the most interesting lives of ordinary people.

2018 QAHN HERITAGE PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

FIRST PRIZE

Kira McGown
Grade 8, West Island College
Title: "Spilling the Tea"

Just a regular teacup right? Not to me. From my point of view, this single teacup represents my great-grandmother and my family. Sadly, I never actually got the chance to meet her but I did inherit this teacup instead.

My father has always told me stories of his grandmother and how important she was to our family. He told me how she was the person you were looking forward to talking to at family reunions. I've also heard that she was a strong woman that nobody dared to mess with.

Looking at this antique teacup makes me think about the number of times she has drunk her warm tea on Quebec's cold winter nights with my great-grandfather by her side.

Every time I drink from it, I feel like there's a piece of her still with me and that powerful feeling warms my heart.

The teacup and saucer underneath are full of stains and scratches but that's what makes it perfect. All of its flaws represent every part of my great-grandma. The shiny gold colour represents her strength and how kind-hearted she was, and the scratches and stains represent her tough personality.

Lastly, tea and family are extremely similar in the sense that they both warm the heart. In the future, I hope to tell stories about my grandparents to my kids as my parents told stories about theirs to me.

SECOND PRIZE

Simba Pellerin
Grade 7, Joliette High School
Title: "Gloomy Back Alley"

If you asked me to find this back alley again, I could not. I was walking around Old Montreal with my uncle in the middle of December. The light was perfect and so I clicked. I like the gloomy atmosphere, it is almost scary. In a way there is nothing special, but it's more about the general feeling.

Montreal is a very old city. 375 years old to be precise. In the beginning, the streets were cobbled to allow for horse carriages to travel through. Some streets in Old Montreal are still cobbled while others have been paved over. This back alley seemed interesting to me because it was still cobbled while being surrounded by paved streets. The modern meets the old. The city is full of examples like that. I find it interesting because I grew up in B.C., where the oldest buildings are about 100 years old at the most. It has been great to discover Montreal's heritage and older architecture. I feel like I am seeing parts of history when I take pictures of old buildings.

THIRD PRIZE

Cassandra Onichino
Grade 11, Rosemere High School
Title: "Thread"

Over the years, my grandmother has accumulated piles and piles of thread for her sewing machine. Going from a basket next to her ironing board to a cabinet full of different threads, the collection grew. Yellows, blues, reds. Every colour imaginable can be found in that cabinet. This cabinet full of thread is a constant reminder of my grandmother's passion. My goal is to pass on this passion to my children, as she has done to me.

HONOURABLE MENTION

Samantha Black
Grade 7, West Island College
Title: "The Ring"

This ring has been in my mom's side of family for generations. It was given to my great-grandmother on April 19, 1933, and has been carried on in our family ever since then. Not only is this ring special to me because it has been around for so long and that it is my great-grandmother's, but the S symbolizes something very important to me and my family.

On April 19, 1933, the S on the ring symbolized the first letter of my great-grandmother's name but now it symbolizes all of our names. My great grandmother's name was Sheila, my grandmother's name is Susan, my mom's name is Sarah and my name is Samantha.

I hope that when I have kids I can share this special tradition with them and it can go on forever. The ring was passed on to my grandmother and mom and soon it will be given to me to love and cherish.

HONOURABLE MENTION

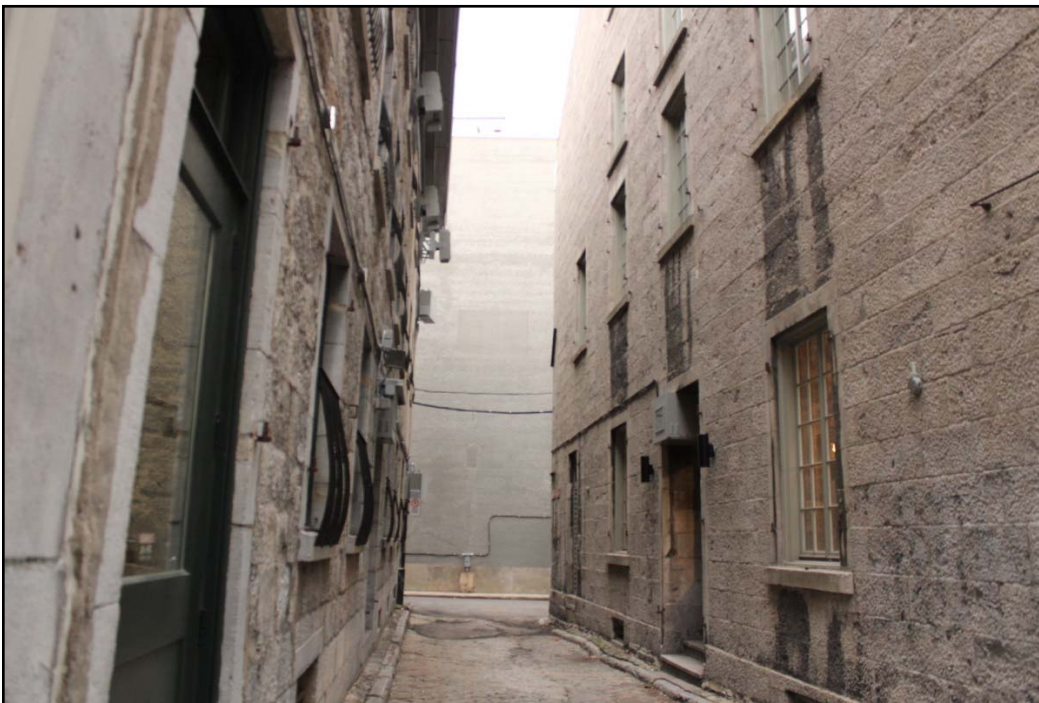
Keira Morcos
Grade 8, West Island College
Title: "Fate Is Real"

Do you believe in fate and how the universe directs and guides us? I never used to until recently.

Since I was two months old, my parents have taken me to a small town called North Conway. It is a picturesque town nestled in the Blue Mountains of New Hampshire. My family has been going there for many years. It reminds them of their home, Austria. I have always had a strong connection to it.

For my first birthday, my uncle Wolf bought me an antique, sterling silver tea set. My uncle told me he just could not resist buying it for me which warmed my heart.

Occasionally being polished, but mostly getting tarnished, this



set has been sitting in a cabinet since. One day I pulled it out and took a good look at it. I noticed an engraved marking on the bottom beside the 925 silver stamp. It was familiar, but I just could not place it. While visiting my grandparents, I noticed the coat of arms from our ancestral village on the wall. Finally... I realized it was the same marking as my tea set.

Apparently, this tea set belonged to the grandmother of the flea market owner. She lived in a small village near Innsbruck, Austria. It was something the woman cherished her whole life. She would always say that one day the tea set should belong to someone who

was family but a stranger. When my Uncle passed the flea market, the woman said she had finally solved her grandmother's riddle. In their conversation, my Uncle had mentioned that it was his niece's birthday. The woman asked what my name was. When he said Keira, this riddle was finally solved. For grandmother's name was also Keira and she had the same birthday as me.

HONOURABLE MENTION

Matthew Kornfeld
Grade 7, West Island College
Title: "Time to Breathe"

I'm 12 years old but I already know what I would like to be when I grow up. Architecture is

something that has always fascinated me with all the cool photos you see on the Internet of pictures of dream homes and ultra modern houses. Something that is also fascinating is heritage architectural buildings that you can see in different areas of Montreal. It is all their unique styles that I find interesting.

This picture that I took of the Montreal Clock Tower, also known as the Sailor's Memorial Clock Tower was built in 1919. It is almost 100 years old which is probably the oldest structure I've seen in Montreal. I admire its beautiful white stone that has somehow

Top left: First Prize: "Spilling the Tea," by Kira McGown.

Bottom left: Second Prize: "Gloomy Back Alley," by Simba Pellerin.

Top right: Third Prize: "Thread," by Cassandra Onichino.



managed to look pristine even with its age. It is impressive to think how it was built when people didn't have access to modern machinery.

Now that I have become aware of this heritage monument, it has made me curious about other heritage architecture in Montreal.

HONOURABLE MENTION

Tania Skoulakis
Grade 11, Rosemere High School
Title: "In the Air"

I took this picture at the 2018 Greek Independence Day Parade which takes place every year on Jean Talon Street in Montreal. Seeing this flag held up in the sky inspired me to take this important shot because the flag represents Greek pride in Canadian air.

Although I was born and raised here in Quebec, and have adopted Quebec's cultures, I have also always kept a close connection to my Greek roots.

This image of the Greek flag may seem simple, but it holds strong meaning behind because of the people who for many years risked their lives to protect our land and fight for our freedom. This flag holds strong significance, as each stripe represents "Ελευθερία ή Θάνατος," which means Freedom or Death. This is why even Greek-Canadians are proud to celebrate Independence Day, and that is why we go out and march in celebration for this parade while holding our Greek flags with pride!

2018 QAHN HERITAGE ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

FIRST PRIZE

“Helen Bachelder: Cat Lover & Teacher”

by Ava Jeuris, Grade 5
Hemmingford Elementary School
Hemmingford, Quebec

Helen Seller was born on April 5, 1927, at the Catherine Booth Hospital in Montreal. She grew up in Sherrington on a farm with her sister Ruth and her two brothers, Eric and Ivan. Her favorite pastime was playing with her cat. She told me how she used to put her kittens in her doll stroller and push them around the house!

At school, Helen used to wrestle in the snow and play softball. At the French school, she made a friend named Milton Whyte, who was Irish. Milton always got into lots of trouble! The teacher used to poke him in the back with a long stick when he misbehaved. I thought that was funny! Her favorite teacher was Miss Benoit, who always took them outside to play fun games like tag and hide & go seek.

As she got older, she started teaching at Shields School, which was a one-room schoolhouse. She later taught at Hemmingford Elementary School, St. Adele School, Granby School, and then got married and stopped teaching. She married Kenneth Bachelder and had three kids: Arthur, Carolyn and Brian. She loved to go camping with them in the summer.

Nowadays, Helen lives in Hemmingford on the same road she grew up on. She loves knitting hats as well as visiting with her great grandchildren, Savanna and Madison. She has a cat named Emma, but she does not get pushed around in a stroller!

I think Helen is a great person because she remembers so much about when she was young, even at the age of ninety-one! I hope I will be able to remember as much as her when I'm that old!



she was able to help many troubled prisoners.

Later on, she realized that she wanted to work with students as a counsellor. She moved to Sherbrooke, Quebec, in 1990, and got a job at Bishop's University as the Director of Counselling Service. Here she encountered students experiencing depression, panic attacks, and anxiety, some more severe than others. She also created a program for special needs students.

One of her biggest accomplishments was when she participated in a local CLSC committee dedicated to the English speaking community who had serious drug and alcohol problems.

I believe that my aunt impacted the English community in Sherbrooke because she helped students and others with their problems. There were not many English speaking volunteers at the CLSC in Sherbrooke. Because she helped out, she impacted the lives of many students and other people with severe addictions and other issues.

SECOND PRIZE

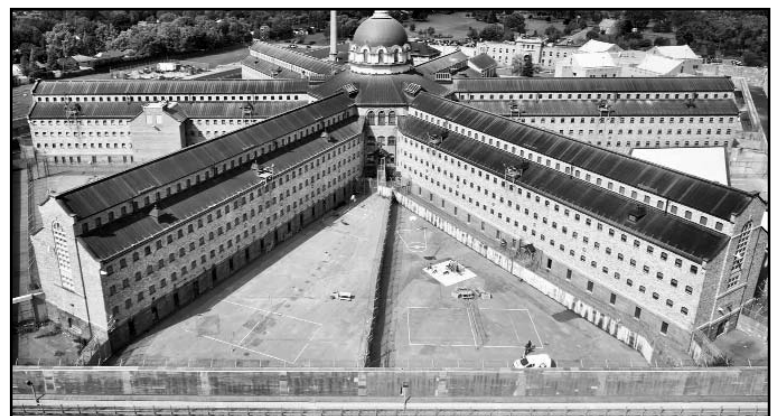
“Aunt Rose”

by Alessia Morelli
Gardenvue Elementary School, Grade 6
Saint-Laurent, Quebec

The person I chose to write about for this essay is my aunt Rose Morelli. She was born in Italy, and at the age of 3, immigrated to Canada with my grandparents.

My aunt went to school at McGill University in Montreal and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree, and then completed her Masters and PhD at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

After all her years of school, she started working at Bordeaux Prison, and helped prisoners cope with their issues. There,



THIRD PRIZE

“Jack Resnick”

by Ryan Werbitt

Gardenvue Elementary School, Grade 6
Saint-Laurent, Quebec

Hello, my name is Ryan and today I will be talking to you about my great-great grandfather named Jack Resnick.

He was born in Lodge, Poland, on May 15, 1898, and lived a happy 84 years. I am named after him since my name in Hebrew (Ya'akov) is Jack in English. Jack is and was a very important person in my family.

I admire him because he served as a Private in World War 2. He was responsible for all military ammunitions. Sadly, he lost part of his leg due to a bomb detonating. He lived, however he was never able to walk the same way again.

I appreciate everyone who serves and served in the military to protect our country. According to my family, Jack always told stories about the war. He had so many friends that unfortunately did not survive the war. Jack was honored with many medals from the war which very proudly remain in our family. He also saved many children from concentration camps.

It's unfortunate that I never got to meet him, since I know how good he was to everyone. I have a pure gold mezuzah that he passed on to my mother who promised to give it to her future children to wear on their bar mitzvah. Luckily... she had me! A mezuzah is a very valuable possession to Jewish people which has writings of the Torah inside. My great-great grandfather was a hero!



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REVIEW

Life at the Mill

Through the Mill: Girls and Women in the Quebec Cotton Textile Industry, 1881-1951

by Gail Cuthbert Brandt
Baraka Books, 2018

This thoroughly-researched history of the lives of female textile workers from the late nineteenth century until the early 1950s illustrates a vanished Quebec from before the Quiet Revolution. What makes this book so interesting is the use of interviews with eighty-four former employees – women born between 1895 and 1934. These interviews were done in 1980, long before the final production of this book.

Brandt traces the industrialization of Quebec in the Montreal area and the Eastern Townships and the particular histories of the major mills where these women were employed. The main focus is on Dominion Textile in Magog and Montreal Cottons in Valleyfield, although there is also mention of mills along the Lachine Canal and in the Hochelaga district in Montreal, as well as mills outside Quebec City and the Wabasso Cotton Company in Trois-Rivières. Some of the earliest entrepreneurs were French-speaking Quebecers; even home-based operations from the French colonial period are cited. But the core of this study is the period from 1895 to 1951, when these very large mills – for a while the largest employers in Quebec – were owned and managed by English-speaking Canadians (not always English-speaking Quebecers) and the work force was almost entirely French-speaking. Although there were many men employed at these mills, the majority of the labour was by unskilled women.

Until the 1940s, there were also many child labourers, of both sexes. School beyond basic elementary grades was not compulsory in Quebec until 1943 when the leaving age was raised to sixteen. Often entire families – both parents, children, cousins, nephews and nieces – worked at the same mill. This family-style employment was encouraged by management and endorsed by the French Roman Catholic clergy, who had tremendous influence over all aspects of Quebec life and were seen as colluding with the mill owners to maintain a “docile and obedient” workforce.

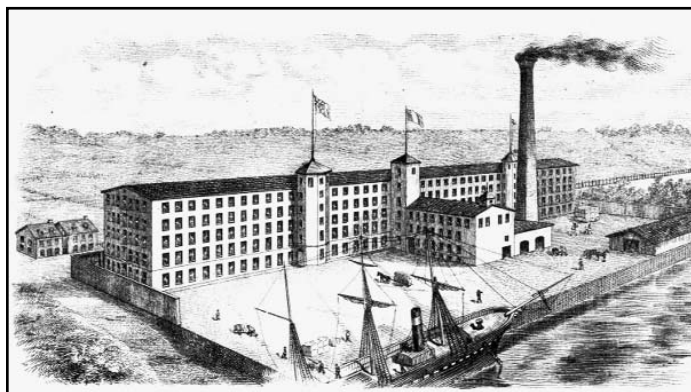


Brandt covers the workers’ eventual success in establishing unions to represent their rights at these mills, and the indifference of the owners and management to working conditions. The low wages and insecurity of employment were conditions that would never be tolerated today in Canada. In regard to girls and women workers, there appeared to be more concern about their morality and often their appearance than with their working conditions and wages. Married women were especially poorly treated and, until quite recent times, were not welcome as workers.

What we have in *Through the Mill* is an example of the origins of the great economic, social, and political upheavals of the 1960s and 70s here in Quebec. Due to the lack of access to good education and opportunities for a large percentage of the French-speaking population, and to the almost total control by a backward-thinking clergy (with a few exceptions, to be fair – for example, Frère Untel), along with a dismissive and prejudicial attitude from mill owners and upper management, little changed in most workers’ lives. It is surprising the Quiet Revolution was so quiet (except for a small criminal element), and not surprising that many subsequent Quebec laws appear to be over-reactions to this society of our recent past.

Through the Mill also has many interesting and well reproduced illustrations, largely from various official archives. Most of them show machinery and the exteriors of the large mill buildings or, in contrast, newspaper coverage – mainly of strikes.

–Reviewed by Sandra Stock



Top right: Workers at the Dominion Textile Mill, Magog. Photo: La Société d'histoire de Magog, Fonds George A. W. Abbott.



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Bottom left: Hochelaga Cotton Factory, 1874. McCord Museum, M979.87.360.



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For more information, Contact Debbie Everett at deverett@ubishops.ca



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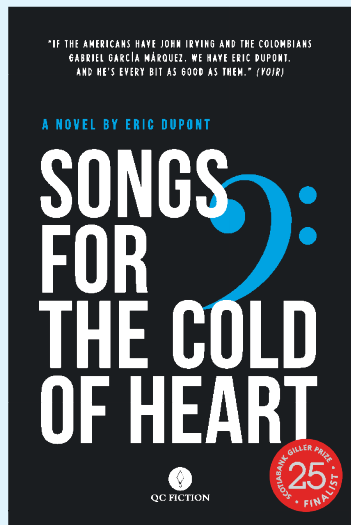
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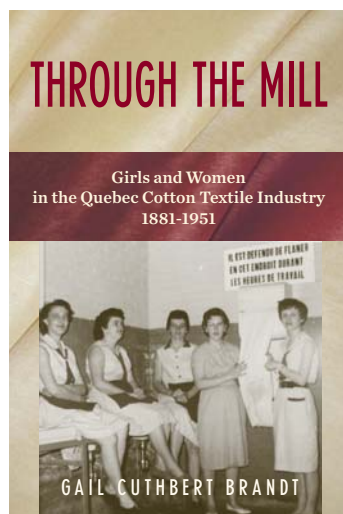
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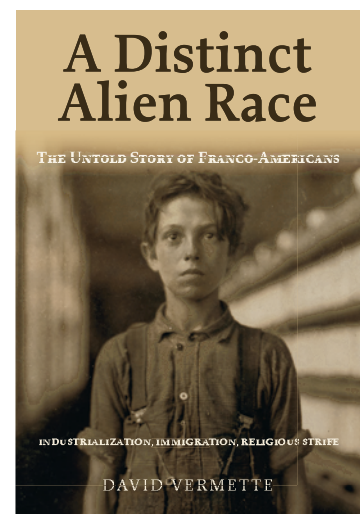


THROUGH THE MILL

Girls and Women in the Quebec Cotton Textile Industry, 1881-1951

Gail Cuthbert Brandt

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