

SOCIETY PAGES



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Chapter Two - Brunching with the Mad Hatter



One door led to another, and then another, until Alice was back on the library's mezzanine again. The dowdies and frumps were down eating the cakes and cookies that had made Alice shrink and grow so uncomfortably. She ought to warn them: "Be really careful when you eat those cookies," she said. Dozens of puzzled faces looked up. "You might become taller. Or maybe you'll shrink if you drink tea!"

She looked around the balcony. A curious statue of a general in a three-cornered hat winked at her. "What a surprising place!" thought Alice. "When I used to read fairy-tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one! There ought to be a book written about me, that there ought!" The statue winked again. Alice winked back and it stretched out its arm, pointing to a mirrored door that magically appeared at the end of the balcony.

Alice stepped through the looking glass. At first she thought she was in the mirror image of the vaulted library room she had just stepped out of. The same dowdies and frumps sat eating breakfast at banquet tables in this room. But then some differences caught her eye: there were no shelves or books, the walls were the colour of mustard, thick green velvet curtains hung from the windows, and the breakfast was more elaborate. It looked like a ballroom, but no one seemed to be having a ball. They were mumbling away into their muffins. Alice looked closely: "I wonder if these people are mirror images too, with their left eyes in place of their right eyes and vice versa."

At the head of the room sat a colourful old mad hatter gesticulating and pontificating and to the dowdies in their drab suits. Then, all of a sudden, he broke into a curious song:

*Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!
How I wonder what you're at!
Up above the world you fly,
Like a tea-tray in the sky.*

To be continued...



morrin

extravaganza

1 September 2006

Inauguration of our cultural centre after completion of phase I. *More info on page 4*

FESTIVAL
CELTIQUE
DE QUEBEC

SEPTEMBER 2-3
MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 3

LIBRARY HOURS

SUN	1:00PM-4:00PM
MON	CLOSED
TUES	12:00PM-9:00PM
WED	12:00PM-4:00PM
THURS	12:00PM-4:00PM
FRI	12:00PM-4:00PM
SAT	10:00AM-4:00PM

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members and friends,

On Saturday July 8 2006, the Society reopened the doors of the Library in the Morrin Centre after having been closed for over a year of restoration work.

It was a gloriously sunny day in Old Quebec and many members and friends attended the ceremonial opening, which included speeches, tea, and surprise appearances by Alice in Wonderland.

It was with some trepidation that members climbed the stairs to gain their first glimpse of the newly restored rooms. There was much relief and rejoicing as all those assembled came to the collective realization that the magical essence of the library had been preserved intact and even enhanced by the extraordinary restoration that was now complete. The Library looked magnificent, Alice surprised us all with her magical appearances, and even the statue of General Wolfe, overlooking the proceedings from the gallery seemed to have a look of relieved contentment on his burnished face. It was a glorious day in the storied history of our society.

While much work remaining to be done in the rest of the building, the heart and soul of the new Morrin Centre is now up and running and I encourage all members to drop by and admire. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank all those involved, particularly the architects, the engineers, the builders, staff, members of council, and members who have all contributed and supported the realization of this great milestone.

I look forward to seeing you at the official opening of the Morrin Centre on September 1st.

Sincerely,



David F. Blair, President

The LHSQ presents its Staff Recipe Book

"Tea and Tea Treats"

On sale now at Library!
All proceeds go directly to the LHSQ's
fundraising campaign.



UPDATE FROM THE LHSQ TEAM

by France Cliche

It is sometimes hard to believe how much the LHSQ has expanded and flourished over the last 4 years. Through my involvement in the Morrin Centre project – first as a consultant, then as an in-house restoration project manager and, finally, as the LHSQ's Executive Director – I have witnessed an incredible transformation. This mandate at the Society is often demanding, but always fulfilling. As I often say, these are really the best of times to be working for the LHSQ.

None of this would have been possible without the vision and dedication of LHSQ President David F. Blair, the active participation of the Executive Committee and the commitment of all present and former Council Members. I would like to thank them all for all their help and support!

I believe changes are occurring in a respectful and inclusive way. Continuity and development coexist gracefully at the Society through creativity and compromises. Consultants, employees, and our many volunteers share the values of this great institution and have worked at finding respectful and compatible solutions to our different challenges.

How time flies! The library services have already been open for a month and we are now about to inaugurate the Morrin Centre. The Alice in Wonderland theme will continue to accompany us through the different steps of our development. Follow her search and discover what the Morrin Centre will offer members and visitors...

The Autumn 2006 issue of our newsletter includes many interesting articles relating to the reopening of the College Hall, essential information on the upcoming inauguration of the Centre, as well as the detailed programming of the *Festival Celtique de Québec*. Enjoy!

SOME NEWS

Restoration project: The first phase of Morrin Centre restoration will be complete by the end of August. Our contractor completed his work according to schedule and we have spent all the confirmed public and private funding. We are thus putting a temporary stop to construction work until we hear from our pending applications for the upcoming phases. We are looking forward to completing important parts of the project, such as installing the elevator or completing restoration of the cell blocks.

Staff: We have already started to say goodbye to some of our competent and dedicated students. **Jaclyn Rohel**

(a.k.a. the "Big Alice" from the Library reopening) has moved to Edmonton to pursue her Masters. You can appreciate the results of some of her excellent work by reading her article on page 7. We were luckily able to extend the mandates of **Anne-Frédérique Champoux** through a grant extension from the Young Canada Works programme. We are also waiting for news on an extension of **Julie Lamontagne's** contract.

Fundraising efforts: I would like to introduce Ms. **Helene Fortin**, a key person who will be working closely with the Society as of mid-August. Ms. Fortin is a member of the KCI team, our fundraising consultants since spring 2005. She will be working in our offices on the next steps of our fundraising efforts.

Rentals: The first Morrin Centre rental is a teacher's conference scheduled for August 15 to 18. Upcoming rentals include a wedding, a happy hour, a breakfast meeting and a gala evening from September to November 2006. Every visitor to the Centre is thrilled by the magnificent character and warmth that our spaces convey. ■

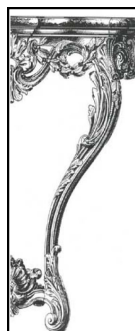
WE'LL LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

Since the reopening of the library, members have commented on the lack of light in the library rooms. Please note that planned upcoming interventions will improve this situation.



Reading room: Suspended lamps with green globes that existed in the room until the 1960s are being restored. Additional table and floor lamps will grace the room, as well as a chandelier.

Council room: Wattage of the ceiling lamps will be increased with additional lighting between the narrow bookshelves if necessary. There will also be additional lighting in the children's section.



Michel Gilbert

Ébéniste-restaureur / Cabinetmaker, restorer

- » Mobilier / Furniture
- » Objets anciens / Antique pieces
- » Restauration
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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS • SEP 1-3



FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1

20:00 -----**Concert: Randall Spear and Clement Jacques** (of 5 fois 5) *Morrin College Hall*
Be the first to discover the newly-restored Morrin College Hall. All are welcome. **FREE**

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2

11:00 -----**Mad Hatter's Brunch, followed by Guided Tours** *Morrin College Hall*
Join the Mad Hatter for a fine brunch in the new College Hall followed by guided tours with explanations of recent restoration work. **\$50 members, \$60 non-members. By Reservation Only. Call 694-9147 for tickets.**

19:00-----**A Whisky Tour of Scotland and Ireland** *Morrin College Hall*
Join our whisky experts for a taste of four fine malts and blends and learn about the tradition of whisky, along with musical accompaniment by Crépuscule. **\$15 prepaid, \$20 at the door.**

22:00 -----**"Kiss us, we're all Irish" Celtic Jam** *Nelligan's Pub*
Let the Fraser Highlanders lead you from the whisky tour to the Nelligan's Pub for some informal drinking and festive Celtic music. **FREE**

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 3

11:00 -----**Celtic Mass** *Saint Andrew's Church*

12:30-----**Parade of Scottish Military Music: 78th Fraser Highlanders** *Chaussée des Écossais to Hôtel de Ville*

13:00-----**Official Greeting by Jacques Joli-Coeur** *Hôtel de Ville*

13:00-17:00-----**Celtic-themed Booths** *Chaussée & Kirk Hall*
Irish Heritage Quebec, several Scottish clans, the *Société de Généalogie de Québec*, the *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationale du Québec*, and other groups will be present — Breton crêpes for sale on the chaussée! **FREE**

13:00-----**Celtic Music Workshop/Jam** *Chaussée des Écossais*
Bring your instruments or come listen to celtic music with Crépuscule, Patrick McSweeney (of Bonhomme Setter) and Agincourt. **FREE**

14:00-----**Scottish Dance Workshop** *Chaussée des Écossais*
Join Tess Leblanc to learn the art of traditional Scottish dance. **FREE**

14:00-----**History of Celts in Europe** *LHSQ Library*
Join Dominic Haerincq to learn more about the history of celts. **FREE**

15:00-----**Parade of Scottish Military Music: 78th Fraser Highlanders** *Chaussée des Écossais*

16:00-----**Celtic Dance: Violon Vert** *Chaussée des Écossais*
Demonstration of professional Celtic dancing on the chaussée. **FREE**

★ **20:00** -----**Closing Show: Paddy Keenan, with Agincourt** *Saint Andrew's Church*
Legendary Irish uilleann piper Paddy Keenan, the renowned king of bagpipes, plays with opening band Agincourt, from Montreal. **\$20 prepaid, \$25 at the door. Call 694-9147 for tickets.**

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Wish List

AUTUMN 2006 PRIORITY
MODERN LIBRARY'S
100 BOOKS OF THE 20th CENTURY

The eight missing Booker Prize winners highlighted in the last issue were purchased with proceeds from the spring book fair and will be added to the shelves shortly. Thanks to help from generous members we now have a complete collection of Booker Prize winners.

We continue to build up our fiction collection by acquiring missing volumes from the Modern Library's list of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. If you have any of the following in your collection, please consider donating it to the Society. All donations will be acknowledged:

Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio*
Max Beerbohm, *Zuleika Dobson*
Saul Bellow, *Henderson the Rain King*
Samuel Butler, *The Way of All Flesh*
Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* and *Nostramo*
James Dickey, *Deliverance*
John Dos Passos, *U.S.A. (trilogy)*

Theodore Dreiser, *An American Tragedy* and *Sister Carrie*
Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
James T. Farrell, *Studs Lonigan (trilogy)*
William Faulkner, *Light in August*
Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End*
William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*
Robert Graves, *I, Claudius*
Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* and *Point Counter Point*
Henry James, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Ambassadors*,
The Golden Bowl
James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*
Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*
Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead*
Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer*
Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*
George Orwell, *Animal Farm*
Robert Penn Warren, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*
Anthony Powell, *A Dance to the Music of Time (series)*
Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*
Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*
Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
Richard Wright, *Native Son*



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à votre table
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Château
to your table

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Avec son panache habituel, notre Chef exécutif de réputation internationale, Jean Soulard, saura concocter un menu délectable, conforme à vos désirs pour l'événement que vous organisez. Qu'il s'agisse d'un petit déjeuner d'affaires ou d'un repas champêtre dans le décor de lieux historiques et culturels de la région, vos convives garderont de merveilleux souvenirs. Le traiteur du Fairmont Le Château Frontenac créera pour vous, une expérience culinaire exquise dans une ambiance des plus élégantes.

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With his customary panache, our internationally renowned Executive Chef Jean Soulard creates spectacular menus to suit any venue. Whether it's a business breakfast, a garden party, or an event in one of the city's historical sites, rest assured that every guest will walk away with cherished memories. Fairmont Le Château Frontenac's Catering service is all about creating exquisite culinary experiences and elegant ambience in unique settings.



Fairmont
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QUÉBEC

NEW ROOMS ACCESSIBLE ON SEPTEMBER 1ST: COLLEGE HALL & CLASSROOM FOR CLASSICS

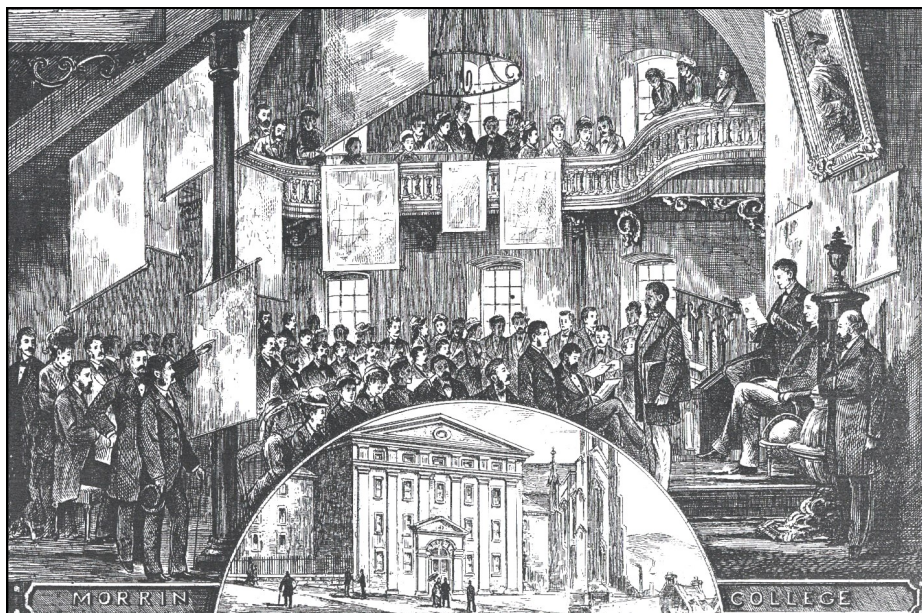
by Patrick Donovan

The main College Hall and Classroom for Classics are located in the south wing of the Morrin Centre building. The College Hall shows similar characteristics to the Library, including a decorated gallery. Like the Library, it originally housed two stories of cellblocks from 1813 to 1868. It was opened up by architect J-F Peachy to create a space for larger public lectures and meetings of the Morrin College glee club, debating society, Alma Mater society, and Saint Andrew's Society. Next door, Greek, Latin and Hebrew classes were given by Drs. Weir and Crockett. The rooms were joined by large folding doors in the early 20th century and housed the LHSQ's museum for a while. This museum contained everything from a cast model of Vimy ridge to DeSalaberry's walking stick. Several community organizations met in the large hall, most notably the IODE (Imperial Order of the Daughters of Empire), who held regular meetings to knit balaclavas and do charitable work from 1941 to 1989 (see page 7). The rooms have been empty and unused for the past 17 years.

The primary reference period for the restoration of these rooms is the College era. An engraving from 1879, reproduced on this page, shows the original layout and décor of the College Hall: this historical document served as our inspiration and will continue to guide us in furnishing the rooms. We went back to the original wall colours, a dark Victorian ochre. The cast iron posts were painted in their original lustrous forest green. Maps, banners, and other furnishings will be added later.

The new vocation of these spaces meant raising the prestige and functionality a notch. Green velvet curtains will give the College Hall a cozy charm for receptions, and ensure that adequate darkness can be created for events and presentations. A new air extraction system and ceiling fans were added to improve ventilation of the Hall.

Although relatively empty now, suitable furnishings and cabinets to aid interpretation activities will be added during the next phase. An audio-visual console and flexible lighting systems will also provide more functionality to the room. Stay tuned! ■



The College Hall in 1879 (*Canadian Illustrated News*)



The College Hall under restoration in 2006 (Photo Paul Dionne)

IODE & THE MORRIN CENTRE

by Jaclyn Rohel



"The mission of the I.O.D.E., a Canadian women's charitable organization, is to improve the quality of life for children, youth and those in need, through educational, social service and citizenship programs." (Echoes, I.O.D.E. newsletter, 2004)

The story of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire began in 1900. In response to the Boer War, Mrs. Margaret Polson Murray invited women throughout Canada to "unite with the women of Montreal in federating as Daughters of the Empire." The first chapter was formed shortly afterwards in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Chapters quickly sprung up all over Canada.

Quebec City's earliest chapter, the Baden Powell Chapter, was founded that same year. Thirteen different chapters have existed in Quebec City over the years. Throughout this time, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, later named the I.O.D.E., shared a rich history with the Morrin Centre. From January 1941 through to 1989, chapters met in the former Morrin College Assembly Hall. Members discussed sources of funding and donations to community projects, prepared packages of books and clothing, and even held sewing meetings there.

In 1941, the *Alouette News* reported that "recently the morning's mail brought from the Head Office of the I.O.D.E.... an urgent appeal for gloves and mitts for the men. By noon that day from supplies on hand and contributions of members, 126 pairs were packed and ready for shipment and further supplies were sent a few days later."



The IODE Room, or former Morrin College Assembly Hall, in the 1970s (MCCQ)

Members' children also regularly took part in I.O.D.E. efforts, whether by learning to knit face cloths for military hospitals, by "making stitches grow" as Annette Wolff recalls, or by serving tea during meetings and fundraisers.

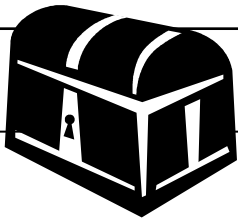
Though its initial work concentrated on supporting servicemen overseas during the Boer War, WWI and WWII, the I.O.D.E. developed strong educational and social aims. During times of peace it played a leading role in welcoming new immigrants to Quebec. Members were the first point of contact for immigrants, often providing clothing, books and food. Mothers and their babies were led to nurseries and newcomers mailed letters to family and friends at the I.O.D.E.-run mobile post office. Rosetta Joseph, notorious at the I.O.D.E.'s provincial and national levels for her work with the Baden Powell Chapter, recounted in a 1960s newspaper interview, "I remember lots of days when we would go to the port at eight in the morning and not get home until midnight."

Efforts toward education consisted of raising funds for books, knitting Christmas packages for students, sponsoring ballet classes at elementary schools and funding scholarships at the post-secondary level. The Stadacona Chapter raised money by hosting community teas, rummage sales and "dessert bridges" at the Morrin Centre. The General Turner V.C. Chapter funded bursaries, supported a Well Baby Clinic and sponsored a basal metabolism machine at Jeffery Hale's Hospital through their annual Gaieties event, a large fundraising ball that included a floorshow, a dance and games of chance.

The I.O.D.E. has wended down significantly in recent years. Though the final chapter in Quebec City closed its doors in 1990, its memory is preserved in the newly inaugurated Morrin Centre. Keep an eye out for the LHSQ's upcoming exhibit on the I.O.D.E. next summer. ■

Jaclyn Rohel is a summer intern who worked on a variety of historical and interpretation projects.

The LHSQ would like to thank the following individuals for their gracious contributions to the Society's research project on the the I.O.D.E.: Mrs. Gill Ayre, Mrs. Babs Bignell, Mrs. Eleanor Carruthers, Mrs. Pam Dunn, Ms Betty Neil, Ms Annette Wolff, Ms Joan Wright, Mrs. Diana Stavert and Ms Mary Woods.



FROM THE VAULT : MORRIN COLLEGE

by Ethel L. Gale, former student, edited & reprinted from The McGill News, 09/1930

Morrin College had its origin in the civic pride and Presbyterian ardour of Joseph Morrin, a physician of Quebec.

In 1860, Dr. Morrin declared his desire to establish a College of Divinity and Liberal Arts as a lasting memorial of his regard for the City of Quebec. An Act of Incorporation, passed in 1861, officially established Morrin College. The College was opened on November 6th, 1862. As a suitable building had not yet been secured, these lectures were given in the Masonic Hall. Immediately after its opening, affiliation with McGill was secured and, from that time up to the year 1900, Morrin College carried on its work in the Arts according to the requirements of McGill, and its students were entitled to present themselves to the University as candidates for degrees. In the Faculty of Divinity, the course of study was that recommended by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Two classes had already graduated in Arts when the trustees purchased the old gaol building. With good judgment and true Scottish thrift, they retained all that was serviceable, notably the staircases whose steps, each a solid oaken block, were smoothed and followed by the tread of prisoner and warder long before they felt that of the Morrin student.

A large part of its northern wing was leased to the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec for their museum and library. The south wing was made over in such a way as to provide lecture rooms, an assembly hall, and, on the upper floors, a few rooms for residence within the College. It is true the enrolment was not large, but there was reason to believe that larger numbers of students would come in.

Under the principalship of the Reverend John Cook, D.D., the College worked on effectively, if quietly. In 1885, however, it made a new venture. McGill, the year before, had opened her halls to women for the first time. The effect of this action was felt almost at once in Quebec, and application for entrance was made by two adventurous spirits.

The classes at Morrin College were never large, and women students had all their lectures in common with the men. Indeed, almost the only recognition of the women's department at Morrin, aside from our seats in the lecture rooms, and the particularly pleasant manner which the professors adopted towards us, was a small dressing room. Here a table and a deep window seat provided us with space for text books, note books, and such properties as

would not hang on the hooks provided for our hats and coats, or gowns. The age of luxury had not yet arrived—or, perhaps, we were not sure enough of our status to make demands—and we seem to have been satisfied with these conditions. However, there did come a day when the stirrings of a noble discontent were apparent and a group of women students assessed themselves for an amount sufficient to curtail the windows, supply a much desired mirror, and add a few touches suggestive of its feminine occupation.



**Morrin College students
Ethel Gale and Margaret
Macadam, c 1891**

Morrin, or course, had its share of student activities. For a few years, a magazine flourished under the title *The Morrin College Review*. A Glee Club also existed. Whether or not this club fulfilled the object to which it was organized “to concern itself with the study and practice of music” it certainly added interest to the meetings of the Debating Society. For the Divinity Students, there was the Students' Missionary Society, which had for its object mission work, mainly within the Presbytery of Quebec. There was also the Alma Mater Society, which sought to foster “a fraternal spirit” among students and ex-students.

The College had carried its work for nearly 30 years when shadows began to gather. The nearness of McGill, with its wider curriculum, was beginning to tell and Quebecers contemplating a college career chose to attend the University, which offered greater advantages than they could secure at home. By 1900, the authorities of Morrin realized the impossibility of holding any longer the position they had strived to attain. Lectures in special courses were continued for a short time, but by 1902 it was finally decided that circumstances no longer permitted affiliation with McGill.

The College spirit lives on in the men and women whose degrees were won in her halls. It is in their work and whatever of it endures that will be seen the best justification for Morrin's brief existence and the truest fulfillment of her founder's hopes. ■

Ethel Gale graduated from Morrin College in 1893. If you have any information about this former student, please contact Patrick Donovan at 418-694-9147.

On Friday morning, June 9, 2006, Cynthia Dooley succumbed to cancer at St-Sacrement Hospital.

Cynthia Dooley had been head librarian at the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec for more than 30 years, from the 1960s to her retirement in 1997. She was probably the most knowledgeable and popular librarian since the days of F. C. Wurtele in the 1920s.

She was noted for her honest and forthright manner. She spoke her mind, gently but affirmatively, all the while remaining respectful of others. She was a no-

nonsense yet understanding person whose warm humanity will be missed greatly.

Cynthia Dooley (née Cook) was born here and lived all her life in Quebec City. In 1957 she married Bob Dooley, who died in 2000. The couple had one son, also named Bob, who lives and works in Hong Kong. Other survivors include a granddaughter and 10 nieces and nephews.

■

Tomas Feininger was president of the LHSQ from 1993 to

CYNTHIA DOOLEY RECALLS HER LIBRARY YEARS by Louisa Blair



Louisa Blair wrote this piece in 1998 for a publication project on the history of the LHSQ that did not materialize. We hope to revive all the essays that were prepared for this project in upcoming years.

Mrs. Dooley worked at the library for 30 years, first under the former librarian Mr. Parkes, and then as librarian herself from 1974 until 1997. “I grew into the

job,” she says, “We lived behind Morrin College and our family has been a member forever. I was here all the time.” She is a direct descendant of Reverend John Cook, who was principal of Morrin College for 31 of its 40 years, a distinguished pastor at Saint Andrew’s Church, one of the founders of the High School of Quebec, and first chancellor of Queen’s University.

She recalls the strict censorship practised by Miss Strachan, whose family worked in the library from 1891 to 1964. “I remember her asking young people ‘Does your mother know you’re reading that?’ And certain books were put away. She had a special index. Certain people weren’t allowed to borrow them—whether it was because they were too young or too old I don’t know. She was a bit of a tyrant, and when Mr. Parkes came he changed the atmosphere. He was good for the library. He was dogmatic, though. You had to do what he said, but I got on very well with him. He liked train books

and hated mysteries. He’d get people’s backs up by telling them what they ought to read.”

It was a shock when she took over as head librarian, though. “I didn’t realize the responsibilities, that there was more to it than just doling out books at the desk. I didn’t know the background of things. It was a marvellous place to work. There was no rush, no one breathing down my neck. We never had any money but people were always helping.”

Under Cynthia Dooley the library thrived. As a veteran member says, “she was interested, she was bilingual, and she was universally liked.” She was open to any suggestions for fundraising, and there were auctions, flea markets, wine and cheese parties, Christmas sales, and luncheons. The premises were rented out to movie makers and TV shows.

When radio host John Fisher visited the library, Cynthia Dooley mentioned that they needed money. When he did a short item on the LHSQ on his program the next day, the money came pouring in—\$3500 of it. “People outside Quebec always thought us poor English were getting buggered to death up here. They felt sorry for us.”

Sometimes the donations came in with odd conditions. One evangelical congregation from the West Island raised \$92.35, but it was given on condition that they could pray for the library *in situ*. “This woman had come all the way from Montreal with a cheque for \$92.35,”

Continued on next page...

said Mrs. Dooley, “and brought a pastor over to pray with her. I put them in a corner where people couldn’t see them right away, and they sat and prayed away there. We laughed, but maybe it’s thanks to their prayers that we’re still alive and kicking.”

And when the money did come in, people had to be thanked for it. “Irene Calfat and Cilma Landriau and I used to sit around the big table to write thank you letters, and they all invariably started with ‘Dear So-and-so. We were overwhelmed.’”

It was also thanks to Cynthia Dooley’s diplomacy that the Children’s Book Collection started. “The British Council had a trade exhibition of British books that they wanted to send to the schools, but they wouldn’t accept it. I said we’d take it, on condition that they gave us some children’s books for the library for free. They gave us 100, and that was the start of our collection.”

Certain events were particularly memorable: a visit from Governor General Mitchener (1967-1974), and another from Governor General Schreyer (1979-1984). Most exciting was the launch of Graham Fraser’s book on René Levesque, to which he and the entire Parti Québécois government came in 1985. “I remember Camille Laurin wandering around on the balcony enjoying the books,” says Cynthia Dooley. “And Graham Fraser quite courageously gave a little talk in English, sitting on the stairs.”

“In 1976, just before the *Parti Québécois* came to power I was asked to present the guest of honour of the Newcomers’ Group. It was Claude Morin, Levesque’s top man. He gave a talk on sovereignty, and the little old ladies drank it up, asking questions like ‘will we need passports?’ Then they fed him cake, and he ate piece after piece, and the women were all thrilled with him. He was a very nice man, and those old ladies probably all joined the PQ.”

Those were exciting times, and the history of the LHSQ sign outside the building tells its own story of those times. “It was banged up and crossed out, and we’d replace it, and the same thing would happen again. It kept getting defaced, so eventually we gave up and took it off.” There was no sign on the building until 2004.

Mrs. Dooley’s times were “livened up,” as she puts it, by two fires. “The first, in 1966, was set by an Argentinian student from Laval. He came in the afternoon and went upstairs. He had three bottles with wicks, and he set them on fire and then walked out. We lost 500 books. He confessed, went to court, and was sent back to Argentina. The second was when the janitor downstairs

had a drink too many and set fire to his sofa. We smelt the smoke, went downstairs, picked up his sofa, and threw it out in the yard.”

There were always characters to be dealt with at the LHSQ, and not just the members. For many years, the library was open from 8 to 10 at night, as well as its daytime hours. Once, a young man stood up at the lectern, banged his fist down, and shouted a tirade of protest against the \$25 family membership fee. “Another man, who always used to bring Cilma a can of Coke, would sit quietly in the back room reading. One time, there was a big noise, and we went in and found he’d taken a big book down and ripped it to pieces.” Another woman would sit quietly taking the plastic covers off all the books. “Mr. Parkes told me never, never, never to annoy her. So I’d sit there petrified and let her do it.”

In 1987, the building was sold and the Library was told to empty out the William Wood Room (AKA Woods Room) stacked with books on the top floor. Around 4,000 books were sold after appraisers from Montreal had looked at the Collection. They raised about \$12,000. A specialist interviewed by *Le Soleil* called it “*dilapidation pure et simple*” of Quebec’s heritage, though the journalist pointed out that the Library’s government grants totalled \$1,250 a year.

“People loved the Woods Room,” recalls Cynthia Dooley. “It was like an old attic, full of charm, with such atmosphere. We kept it locked, but we’d take people up there to convince them to become members. Mr. McGreevy and Posey Cannon had to go through it all, deciding what to keep and what not to, and then we had to pack it all up. I found it tough to break up the Woods Room. And in fact, the new owners never used it. Perhaps we were too hasty.”

Since she has retired, Cynthia Dooley misses the library. “I miss talking to the members and to the strangers too. I found them very interesting. Some corresponded with me for years. But what’s kept it alive is the people who worked for nothing or for very little. Such great conversations have happened in this place. They often lead to good suggestions about books, or how to raise money. We’ve had very few complaints.”

She even misses the badinage with Cameron McMillan who, along with Len Thomson, locked her in the vault as a joke. “It was a spooky place, with a thick door and a huge key. That was mean, mean, mean!” ■

Louisa Blair recently published The Anglos: the Hidden Face of Quebec. She is currently working on a novel.



A SECTION DEVOTED TO
THE WRITERS' CIRCLE

Where's My Money, Colin? by Kirsten Harris

I'm still waiting for the email. That was the agreement made while we stood just across from the ATM machine, near the Vancouver bus station, just below the rails of the Sky Train. With the email, I would know that our transaction had been validated. With the email, I'd know that there would be further contact to flesh out some of the details. The most important of which is how he's going to get my money to me.

I'm still waiting for my email, but now I'm starting to have concrete doubts that it will ever come. At what point can you consider yourself duped?

After living several years in New York City, I felt I had acquired all of the street savvy that living there entails. It didn't matter what snivelling, desperate story anyone told me for some change, I wasn't buying it! But I'd grown soft after living in Québec City. In finger-snap quickness I was channelled back to my suburban Ohio origins.

His name was Colin, or so he said, and this is how I was stripped of my New York armour .

"Excuse me," he said. "Are you Canadian?"

Just exiting the bus station and having just spent 3 ½ days on a westbound Greyhound bus, I was a bit gamey; surprised that anyone wanted to start a conversation with me at all.

"I'm not Canadian, but I live here," I said. "But not here here. I just got off the bus from Québec City."

His British accent and his question made me think we were fellow tourists, checking out the Vancouver end of the Pacific Northwest. I didn't know I had just showed my openness and vulnerability.

"Just new to the city, then?" he asked with a somewhat sparkling smile.

I was agreeable to telling him a condensed version of my life story as I had told others during the week.

"I'm just in for the day. I'm on my way to Seattle this afternoon," I willingly, if not eagerly, responded.

"Ah...you'll luv it," he said enthusiastically. There was a slight shift, a perceptible pause, and then he said, "I'm on my way out, but..." He looked around anxiously. "Do you think you could help me out? I'm really desperate!"

He then began to rattle off a curiously epic tale of tourist woe. His cross-country voyage had included all of the classics: returning rental car mishaps; uncooperative airline ticket agents; bitchy, rushed city dwellers; anti-information from Information Booth attendants; malfunctioning ATMs; incorrect currency exchanges; lost funds; getting lost in general; and, basically, aggravation and grief from almost everyone he had encountered. He ended by telling me that he had to catch a plane that very morning back to England and that he was just a "wee short" of being able to purchase his ticket because of unforeseen taxes. I would be saving his academic life if I could spare \$50.

Before I had a chance to respond, he mentioned collateral and repayment in the same breath. The collateral was his Sony Vaio laptop, but it was locked in the rental car at the airport. Repayment then would have to be by "post." Would that be OK? The plane was leaving in an hour!

I didn't let on that I was thoroughly confused. He had lost me way back with the troubled ATM. I understood well that he needed money and that was a rather easy fix.

We found a row of cash machines beneath the Sky Train station. He waited outside while I easily withdrew \$60. When I turned and folded 3 \$20-bills, I had a slight twinge of doubt about his story. Wouldn't you need a credit card to rent a car? And then, couldn't you use your credit card to complete the purchase of your plane ticket? I pushed my insecurities aside; I was committed to helping.

He meticulously wrote my name, email address, and home address in his little travel journal. Robustly thanking me and giving me a hug, he said he would email me as soon as he got home and we would make arrangements for my repayment. He tossed me his tattered Vancouver City map as he turned the corner saying, "You'll probably need this!" As I walked up to catch the train I was smiling to myself. I was indeed feeling pretty good! It was people like me who could help purge this world of mistrust and hate.

Three stops later, I think I knew I had been had. I ran through his story and realised the glaring holes. Still, I had to believe in my powers of good judgment. I had been schooled in the toughest city in the world. Didn't I recognize a scam when I saw one?

Apparently not. It's been 5 months and I'm still waiting for an email. I smile when I think of myself "helping" him. It is, of course, a travel story I can tell when I'm not too embarrassed about my naïveté. It lets me know that my crusty, big-city aloof layer is truly in shreds. Quebec City has indeed made me soft. Thanks for reminding me, Colin. ■

BULLETIN BOARD

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

At the Library

The LHSQ is looking for volunteers to work at the desk in order to expand library opening hours on weekdays. The work is simple and fun; it involves basking in the atmosphere of our historic library, stamping books, and meeting great people, members and visitors alike. Volunteers must be willing to commit to a recurring schedule. Hours are available from Wednesday to Friday between 10 and 4. For more info, contact Anne-Frédérique Champoux on weekday afternoons at 694-9147.



Knitting Project

During World War II, the IODE was solicited to knit socks and balaclavas for the troops abroad. Among these volunteer women were innovators who improved on the traditional balaclava by designing what became known as “The Quebec Knitting Helmet” (see image). We are looking for volunteer-knitters to knit a reproduction of one of these for our interpretation cabinet on the IODE. Call Patrick Donovan at 694-9147 if you are interested and want to receive detailed instructions.



NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

The Society is witnessing a great increase in membership. We are honoured to welcome a new corporate member to the Society, the **Rhodes Capital Corporation**, based in Toronto and represented

by Mr. Michael Rhodes Skutezky. The Rhodes Capital Corporation is a Toronto based merchant bank providing financing, corporate and legal services to the junior resource and technology sectors. The company is named after Mr. Skutezky's great grandfather

(Armitage Rhodes) and great-great-grandfather (William Rhodes) both of whom were members of our Society. We also take this opportunity to thank our new corporate member for their generous donation that was sent to us on top of their annual dues. ■

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PADDY KEENAN

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