

SOCIETY PAGES



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY ▪ NUMBER 4 ▪ SUMMER 2004

NEW

←←← **IMPORTANT** NEW LIBRARY HOURS AND STUDENT PRICE ←←←

▪ LIBRARY HOURS ▪

(STARTING JULY 1)

MO CLOSED
 TU-FR 11:00-15:00
 WEEKENDS 10:00-16:00

▪ MEMBERSHIP ▪

\$60 PER ANNUM
 FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

NEW STUDENT PRICE

\$30 PER ANNUM

IN THIS ISSUE

The First and Oldest?	2
New Acquisitions	3
New Books for Children	4
Transactions	5
People Pages	6
Morrin Centre Project	7
Book Review	7
Blast from the Past	8
W.H. Drummond	9
Library Bulletin Board	10
Upcoming Events	11

EDITORS:

PATRICK DONOVAN (LAYOUT)
 AND VIRGINIA ROE

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

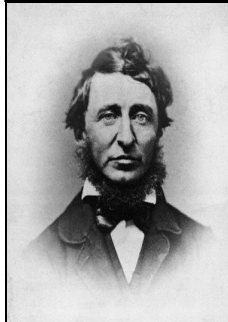
I am delighted to advise that on Monday June 17th the Quebec municipal council approved a grant in the amount of 1 million dollars for the restoration of Morrin College and the creation of the Morrin Centre, our Society's English-language cultural centre.

We expect to be signing the 99 year emphyteutic lease within the next few days and beginning work.

This is a great day in the long and illustrious history of our Society.

David F. Blair
 President

FROM HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S *A YANKEE IN CANADA*



"In Canada you are reminded of the government every day. It is not content to be the servant, but will be the master; and every day it goes out to the Plains of Abraham or to the Champ de Mars and exhibits itself and its tools. . . In the streets of Montreal and Quebec you meet not only with soldiers in red, and shuffling priests in unmistakable black and white, with Sisters of Charity gone into mourning for their deceased relative,—not to mention the nuns of various orders depending on the fashion of a tear, of whom you heard,—but youths belonging to some seminary or other, wearing coats edged with white, who looked as if their expanding hearts were already repressed with a piece of tape."

To hear more travel impressions of Quebec City by prominent American writers, don't miss our A Yankee in Quebec event on July 4th.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: In preparation for the transition period and move, the Library is temporarily no longer accepting book donations. If you wish to donate books please contact Caroline Lamothe with a list of titles for arrangements: 694-9147 or lhsq_library@qc.aira.com

THE FIRST AND OLDEST

HOW DOES THE LHSQ COMPARE TO OTHER LEARNED SOCIETIES? by Patrick Donovan

For years, people have been saying the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec is the oldest of its kind in the former British Empire overseas. It would be great if this was true but it isn't. This wearying talk of being "the first and oldest" happens frequently in heritage circles and should generally be treated with extreme suspicion. Anyone can make a claim, but the desire for bragging rights often outweighs the drive to do proper research. Research is an arduous task; bragging is easier.

Quebec City, founded in 1608, is still quoted in many official sources as being the oldest city in North America. Other places make similar claims: Jamestown, VA (founded 1607); Tadoussac, QC (trading post established in 1600); Saint-Augustine, FL (founded 1565); and Saint John's, NF (first permanent residence built in 1528). If one adheres to a geographical definition of North America rather than a cultural one, all the old Spanish cities in Mexico should be taken into account. And what about Native American settlements?

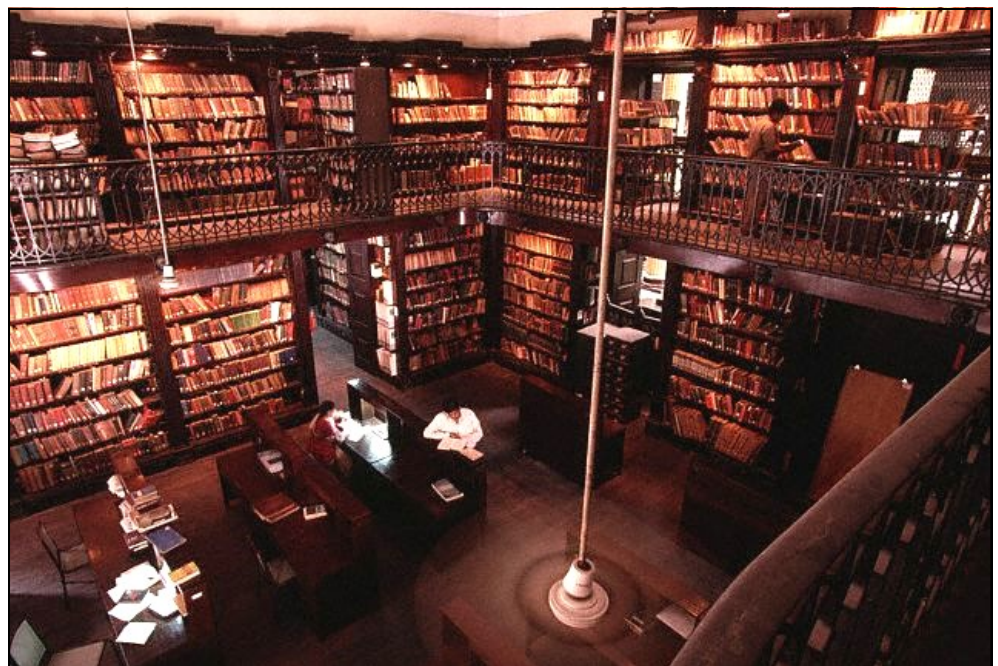
Over time, claims of being the first and oldest become distorted. Most people only remember 10% of what they hear. Is the Literary and Historical Society the "oldest in North America," "the oldest in the British Empire," or the "oldest in the world"? When memory fails us, resorting to the most pompous boast always sounds best.

The idea that the Society is the oldest in the former British Empire overseas goes back to 1875. It derives from a letter by Sidney Robjohns of the Royal Historical Society of Great Britain to the LHSQ. This casual letter was taken as an authoritative source. It was referred to in two M.A. theses as well as the federal government's 1984 heritage study on the LHSQ. With such credible endorsements, the boast of being the first and oldest appeared to rest on solid ground. Let us examine a few older societies that prove otherwise.

India, part of the former British Empire overseas, has several learned societies older than ours. The first and most important of these is probably the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, India. Sir William Jones founded this society in 1784 as a centre to study "the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences and literature of Asia." Its Bombay counterpart, founded a few years later, still maintains a musty Victorian lending library that bears an uncanny resemblance to ours, curved wrought-iron balconies on the mezzanine and all.

The United States also founded several learned societies in the days before the 1770s when it too was part of the British Empire overseas. "The first drudgery of settling new colonies is now pretty well over," wrote Benjamin Franklin in 1743, "and there are many in every province in circumstances that set them at ease, and afford leisure to cultivate the finer arts, and improve the common stock of knowledge." That same year, Franklin founded the American Philosophical Society. The Society's mandate covered not only philosophy but also the natural sciences, literature, and history. The APA continues to flourish today and publishes its *Transactions* regularly. Over 200 APA members have received the Nobel Prize.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



LIBRARY OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY (BOMBAY, INDIA), FOUNDED 1804
(www.corbis.com)

THE FIRST AND OLDEST

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Other existing American learned societies predating the LHSQ include the Massachusetts Historical Society (1791), the New York Historical Society (1804) and the American Antiquarian Society (1812).

An argument could be made that learned societies existed in Quebec before the LHSQ, though in a very skeletal form. *La Société Littéraire de Québec* was founded in 1809 by a group of francophone intellectuals including Philippe-Joseph Aubert de Gaspé (*Les Anciens Canadiens*). This group held meetings every other week. Although literary discussion and creation were their main preoccupations, the circle hosted a talk on the medicinal effects of music. During the *Société's* first summer, a public contest was held with silver medals awarded to “la personne qui célébrera la naissance de sa glorieuse majesté George III, par une pièce de vers, Anglaise, Française ou Latine.” Within less than a year, the society had folded.

Unlike this predecessor, the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (1824) was closer to the accepted British model for a learned society. Its preoccupations

were encyclopedic, covering not only literature but also history and science. Furthermore, the LHSQ engaged in publication, scholarly research, the accumulation of archives, and fostered a museum with many complete natural history collections used for serious study. Over time, these functions were relegated to other bodies. The Society came to be a secretive private library for the English-speaking population of Quebec City who could afford its steep membership rates. Is it right to call the LHSQ the oldest learned society in Canada when it has hardly fulfilled the functions proper to a learned society since the 1930s? What role can learned societies fulfill nowadays?

The learned society is not an obsolete 19th-century concept. The proof lies in the fact that many of the older learned societies described above have adapted themselves to the 21st century admirably well. Thankfully, the Morrin Centre project is a bold first step in giving the LHSQ some of its original vigor and vitality back again. As a next step, why not create partnerships with educational institutions and revive the Society's *Transactions*? ■

Patrick Donovan is in charge of interpretation projects at the LHSQ.

A SELECTION OF THE LATEST ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

This list represents only a small portion of what was purchased in the last three months. Do you have suggestions of book purchases for the Book Committee? Bring reviews to the desk, and they will be passed on to the Committee for consideration. We appreciate your input!

NON-FICTION

Calhoun, Charles C.	<i>Longfellow : a rediscovered life</i>
De Botton, Alain.	<i>Status anxiety</i>
Gray, Charlotte	<i>Canada: a portrait in letters</i>
Ignatieff, Michael	<i>The lesser evil: political ethics in an age of terror</i>
Iyer, Pico	<i>Sun after dark: flights into the foreign</i>
Posner, Michael	<i>The last honest man: Mordecai Richler</i>
Truss, Lynne	<i>Eats, shoots and leaves</i>

FICTION

Barnes, Julian	<i>The lemon table</i>
Connelly, Michael	<i>The narrows</i>
Hodgson, Barbara	<i>The lives of shadows</i>
Rutherford, Edward	<i>The Princes of Ireland: the Dublin saga</i>
	<i>Montreal stories</i>
Gallant, Mavis	<i>Ice road</i>
Slovo, Gillian	<i>The finishing school</i>
Spark, Muriel	

MYSTERY FICTION

Akunin, Boris	<i>Murder on the Leviathan</i>
Block, Laurence	<i>The burglar on the prom</i>
Mankell, Henning	<i>Firewall</i>
Margolin, Phillip	<i>Sleeping beauty</i>
McCall Smith, Alexander	<i>The full cupboard of life</i>
Walters, Minette	<i>Disordered minds</i>

NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN (TALL AND SMALL) by Caroline Lamothe, Head Librarian

Albert, the dog who liked to ride in taxis

Always Albert hopes for rain. On rainy days Mrs. Crabtree takes him with her for taxi rides. So much better than walks...One day – brilliantly sunny, for a surprise – Albert hops a taxi alone. More than one taxi, actually. You will never guess where he goes! (excerpt from dust jacket)

Kingdom of the Golden Dragon

Acclaimed author Isabel Allende's first young adult novel takes the reader to the Himalayas to accompany the characters in a hunt for the fabled Golden Dragon statue, a priceless oracle that can foretell the fate of the kingdom. "...a fantastical voyage of suspense, magic and awe-inspiring adventure..." (excerpt from dust jacket)

Animal tracks: wild poems to read aloud

Skating alligators, holy mackerel, dancing pigs, and other silly creatures fill this beautifully illustrated collection of poems. Have you ever heard a weasel pop, tried to badger a badger or wondered what's inside a camel's hump (a bowling ball? a turtle shell?) A hilarious laugh-out-loud feast of verse for children.

INTERNATIONAL BOOK DAY

We asked you to recommend a book you have read. Here is a list of those books, and some of your comments.

Book: *The Great War of Words: British, Canadian and American propaganda and fiction, 1914-1933* by Peter Buitenhuis.

What you said: The book explains the role of propaganda in mobilizing the UK, Canada and the US in the 1914-18 World War.

Book: *A Terrible Beauty* by Peter Watson

What you said: A fascinating history or people and ideas of the 20th century.

Book: *All the Shah's Men* by Stephen Kinzer

What you said: A must read for anyone wanting to understand the roots of the present conditions in the Middle East.

Book: *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Asne Seierstad

What you said: For its authenticity – how a middle class Afghanistan family lives at the beginning of the 3rd millennium.

Book: *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver.

What you said: One of the few books I've read twice (and will probably read again!).

Book: *The Most Extraordinary Adventures of Captain Robert Stobo* by Robert Alberts

What you said: British-American soldier captured by French and brought to Quebec.

Book: *Paris 1919: Six months that changed the world* by Margaret MacMillan, Richard Holbrooke.

What you said: A fascinating account of the making of the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War One.

Book: *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown

What you said: Quick read, especially good for mothers and fathers who read between pick ups and drop offs.

Book: *Hen's Dancing* by Raffaella Barker

What you said: Funny...

From the children's collection

Book: *The Berenstain Bears and the week at Grandma's* by Stan and Jan Berenstain

What you said: Good pictures.

Book: *The Tribes of Redwall* by Brian Jacques

What you said: I enjoyed them very much and I hope you get some that I have not read.

Book: *The Complete Tales* by Beatrix Potter

What you said: Very good story.

Book: *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket

What you said: It gives you a wonderful feeling that makes you want to keep on reading.

ACCOUNT OF THE ATTEMPT TO FORM A SETTLEMENT ON THE MOSQUITO SHORE, IN 1823

Read before the Society by James Douglas, M.D., February 10th, 1869 (edited by Patrick Donovan)

On my return from India, in the fall of 1822 . . . I was attracted by an open letter addressed to Sir Astley Cooper . . . requesting him to recommend a well-qualified surgeon to accompany a party of settlers on the Mosquito Shore. . .

The Spanish provinces at this time had declared their independence and were at war with Old Spain. . . [London Merchants] organized a company with the purposes of settling the land, but principally, as I was informed, for the purpose of supplying British dry goods to the revolted provinces. . .

On 21st January, anchored in Port Royal, Jamaica, where we found four ships of war under command of Admiral Rowley, and three piratical vessels, which had been lately captured, I spent a fortnight very pleasantly in Kingston, where I met some old school-fellows, who did all in their power to dissuade me from going on the Spanish main. They represented in vain, but as I afterwards found out, very truly, the unhealthiness of the climate, the want of the ordinary necessities of life, the dangerous character of the natives, and the difficulty of getting away again, should I desire to do so. . .

In February, 1823, we arrived on the Mosquito Shore, and about noon anchored off the mouth of the Black River. A number of the natives, accompanied by a half-caste American, came off to us in a large canoe, called a dory. They obstinately resisted Col. Hall's wish to go on shore with them. . . About half an hour after the departure of the party, the water being calm, I was fishing over the stern of the vessel, when a cat's paw crept over the water. In a few minutes it increased to a hurricane. . . The hurricane continued all night, which was very dark, and although cold and wet, every one remained on deck, listening to the surf beating on the shore, and expecting every moment the vessel to strike. . . We reproached [the natives] for not warning us of [the hurricane's] approach, and for evidently wishing the loss of the vessel and of all on board.

The next morning, accordingly, we disembarked in large canoes. . . We looked in vain for the church and the houses which we had been led to believe existed.

Guided by the Indians, we selected a site for the settlement on the bank of a lagoon, about two miles from the mouth of the Black River, or Rio Tinto. . . As

there was not a clear space sufficient to enable us to pitch tents, all hands were soon busy in removing the trees and brushwood.

While still busy clearing the banks of the lagoon, we were visited by a party of Caribs, the remains of the aborigines of the W.I. Islands. These people at the beginning of the century were confined to the Island of St. Vincent, . . . [but] being very troublesome. . . were finally captured by the British Government and landed . . . just beyond the borders of the Mosquito Kingdom. I found them a fine manly race, with a peculiar artificial form of skull, and an intellect and disposition much superior to the Mosquito men. I engaged a band of five of them to build me a house, which they did remarkably well. . . They supplied me with game, fish, and fruit, in return for bleeding them, an operation of which they were very fond, and were never tired.

[In April], of 220 individuals all were sick with the exception of nine. One family of seven persons were all ill : they lay on the ground on cane leaves. On visiting them this evening, found the mother had been dead some hours, without the knowledge of the others.

[In May], I became suddenly seized with acute pain in my head and giddiness. I hardly know how I reached my hut. I recovered with a vague and dreamy idea of having bled myself, and of having neglected or been unable to bandage up after the operation. In five or six days I regained my full consciousness. . . but an obstinate intermittent set it, which reduced me to a skeleton. . . I was only able to sit at the window and shoot parrots, lizards, or anything eatable or uneatable, to sustain life in myself. . . I have a dim and dreary remembrance of being carried to the beach in a hammock by the sailors, and of lying on the deck of the Redwing until her arrival in Balize (sic). . .

In September I became so ill and weak as to be unable to rise. . . I have a dim idea of a gentleman visiting and praying with me. I have a dim recollection of him offering me a passage to Boston, and some time after, of his heading a procession of sailors who carried me on board of a schooner in a hammock slung on an oar. ■

James Douglas, born in Scotland, was a prominent doctor who founded Beauport Asylum in 1845. Soon after arriving in Boston, Douglas fled the United-States to avoid charges for robbing corpses from graveyards for medical study. His bust sits in our window with the Methodist Church he helped found and finance standing across the street

PEOPLE PAGES: FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS

BOOK COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Miriam Blair
Linda Blythe
Irene Calfat
Marie Creighton Tremblay (Honorary Librarian)
Cynthia Dooley
Gillian Valcourt

GUEST SPEAKERS AND LEADERS

Mary Ellen Reisner Poetry Workshop
Louisa Blair Discussion Groups
Marianna O'Gallagher Discussion Groups
John Cheetham Discussion Groups
Pierre-Louis Lapointe Discussion Groups
Catherine McKenna Discussion Groups, Bloomsday
Catherine Cairns Bloomsday
Rosemary Rouzier Bloomsday
Patrick McSweeney Bloomsday
Jack Cloutier Jazzin' with Shakespeare

MOBILE LIBRARY DELIVERY

Gill Ayre
Barbara Bignell
Beth Clibbon

OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Ronnie Blair
Having completed the list of overdue books, is now helping with cataloguing of donated books.

Christine Veilleux

She heads the Canadiana Development Committee.

Gilles Prémont

He has helped with the typing of catalogue cards

Mike Coward

He is presently completing inventory of our non-fiction collection.

Maureen Shier

She is presently completing inventory of our non-fiction collection.

Ann Henderson

She is working her way through the fiction books and selecting those needed for the temporary library, which will operate during the restoration period.

Shalaka Shah

She will be volunteering this summer for a second year to help out with a number of projects.

Don Hembroff

He put his carpentry skills to good use in making our welcome sign now hanging on the front door.

Claude Belleau

He is a conservator researching the Wolfe statue. Claude also painted our new welcome sign on the front door.

NEW STAFF AT THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Patrick Donovan

He spent some of the past year here at the Society doing research on Morrin College for his Masters in Conservation of the Built Environment. He has been hired as *Site Interpretation Coordinator*, and will be managing our new team of site and history interpreters for the Morrin Centre.

Yves Valois

Our new *Administration Officer*, Yves has been working on updating the budget for this year, updating timelines and researching prospective accounting software. Yves hails from Quebec City and has a B.A. in biochemistry and another in business administration. He studied at Thames Valley University in London.

Kimberly Thomson

Kimberly will be working as a *Site Interpreter* over the summer. She has just moved here from the Toronto area to discover the city that her family moved away from before she was born. She recently completed her B.A. in Visual Arts and Italian Studies at Guelph University.

Gaëlle Troude

Gaëlle will be working as a *Site Interpreter* over the summer. She is currently a psychology student at Laval who has also worked and studied as a graphic designer. Her tasks will also involve working on a new brochure for the Society.

THE MORRIN CENTRE PROJECT

A PAGE DEVOTED TO INFORMING MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PROJECT AND OUR PROGRESS

We are moving steadily towards opening our new cultural centre for Quebec City's Anglophones in the restored Morrin College building by 2006. Things are moving faster than ever before. We have improved our visibility within the community by holding more events, recruiting new members and working in partnership with many organisations. New staff has been hired and grant applications for various projects are being sent out regularly. Here is a summary of our recent accomplishments:

PEOPLE

Patrick Donovan comes on board as the *Interpretation Projects Coordinator*. Yves Valois joins the team as *Administration Officer*. 3 summer *heritage site interpreters* and 2 summer *inventory personnel* have also been hired.

PLACE

Although we are still waiting for the 99-year lease to be officially signed, and the reins to be handed over, we are busy preparing for the site and heritage interpretation tours given hourly throughout the summer in French and English.

INVENTORY AND PACKING

The team will be sweating and hauling boxes of books and artefacts in preparation for our temporary move this fall. Volunteers are welcome to join in the fun! If all goes as planned, restoration of the building should begin in October.

PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES

New friendships have been made, and old ones have been solidified. Branching out into the community, the Lit & Hist has forged partnerships with the Quebec Art Company, Archives nationales du Québec, Société de généalogie de Québec, St. Andrew's Church, Irish Heritage Network, English Second Language Teachers Network, Holland Centre, Voice of English-speaking Quebec, Quebec Chronicle Telegraph, St. Patrick's Church, Pub St-Alexandre, High Commission of Britain in Ottawa, Conseils des monuments et sites du Québec, Commission de la Capitale Nationale, and many others.

EVENTS

Loads and piles of activities will be held this summer at the Lit & Hist. See *Upcoming Events* on page 11 for full details.

BOOK REVIEW

JAMES A. MICHENER'S *THE SOURCE* reviewed by Virginia Roe

Robertson Davies once said, "a truly great book should be read in youth, again in maturity and once more in old age, as a fine building should be seen by morning light, at noon and by moonlight". As our perceptions change, so too, does the book. This is why revisiting James A. Michener's *The Source* will take you through a new adventure of contemplation, sometimes frustration, and plenty of tears. Today it is more difficult to see the creation of Israel as a completely positive event.

I have spent the last couple of months slowly feeling my way through *The Source's* many layers; the rise of religion and the evolution of a homeless people. Judaism, Christianity and Islam living side by side in the Holy Land, all struggling to find a place in history, society and heaven. Michener's fantastically detailed account of Israel, a country at times shared by the people of Africa, Asia and Europe, does a wonderful job of explaining how thousands of years of conflict make no easy

solution possible as things heat up between Jews and Muslims once again.

Archaeological digs, power struggles, wars, synagogues, churches, mosques are interwoven in the very fabric of *The Source*. Michener fills his book with historical facts as relevant today as they were forty years ago. The family of Ur, from the Bee Eater of 9830 B.C.E. to the Arab governor of Tiberias in 1876 C.E., manages to survive in Israel for thirteen thousand years. The decision makers and survivors of the community, real people like Rabbi Akiba, Emperor Vespasian, Dr. Maimonides and their true-life stories are intertwined with Michener's fictional personages. ■

Virginia Roe has been working as the Society's Outreach and Marketing manager since march 2004. Originally from Oshawa, she studied history at Queen's and Thunder Bay. Virginia has been living in Vieux-Quebec for the past three years

CHESS CONTROVERSY IN THE SOCIETY ROOMS by Patrick Donovan

In 1862, the Council of the LHSQ authorized the purchase of two sets of chessmen and boards. Soon, students from Morrin College and others were dropping by regularly to play chess. Several members found this pastime terribly crass and far too frivolous for the noble confines of the Society. Others probably argued that the game stimulated the intellect and had its place within the reading room. The debate ended up being quite intense, as the Society hired a lawyer to settle the question.

“I have carefully perused the Royal Charter,” wrote G.O. Stewart, esq., Q.C. in 1873, “. . .for the purpose of answering the question suggested by the accompanying resolution of the Council of the Society.” According to this charter, the LHSQ had been founded to fulfill three mandates: research into the early history of Canada; recovering, procuring, and publishing documents; and advancement in the arts and sciences.

According to Mr. Stewart, the law obliged corporations to limit themselves to activities for which they had been incorporated. Games, defined as being “an exercise or play for amusement or winning a stake,” fell outside the Society’s mission. “Games or amusements were not contemplated by the founders of the Society and do not

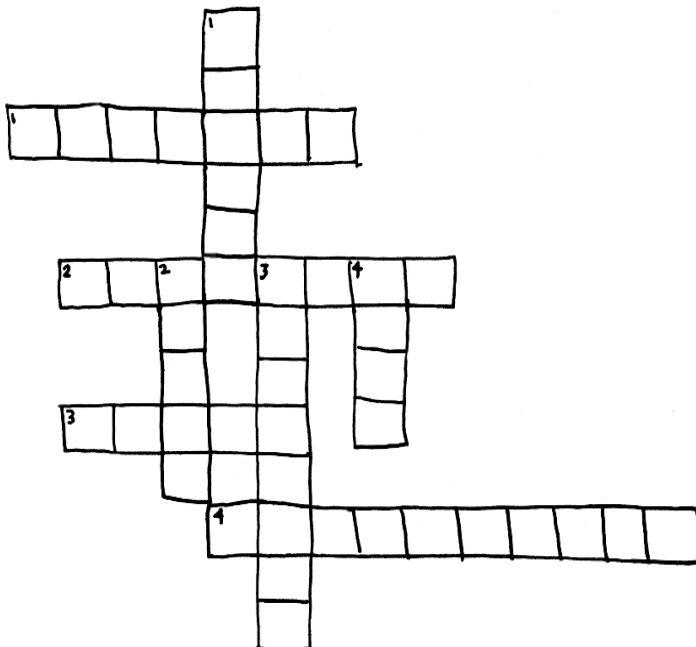
fall within the terms of the charter. . . And therefore [the] introduction of chess into the Rooms of the Society would be repugnant to and in violation of the Charter.”

What seems more repugnant about this entire debacle is the fact that the Society actually spent “eleven pounds, thirteen and four pence” for such legal advice. This amounts to over a thousand dollars in today’s terms.¹ On a positive note, the matter was settled once and for all. No more chess was played in the Society rooms.

The Irish of Quebec City had their own ideas about what was and wasn’t appropriate for a literary society. In 1882, the Saint-Patrick’s Literary Institute moved to a building on Sainte-Anne street across from the College Court (where the Hôtellerie Fleur-de-Lys now stands). Marianna O’Gallagher writes that “the men of the parish gathered for occasional speeches and lectures on various subjects, but more often for an evening at cards.” Gambling in a literary Society!? If such activities were indulged in, it seems unlikely that the St. Patrick’s Literary Institute would have had any problems with chess.

¹ according to the purchasing power index at eh.net

CROSSWORD CORNER



ACROSS

1. Pre prison period
2. Not Wolfe
3. Model ship
4. Moved in 18__

DOWN

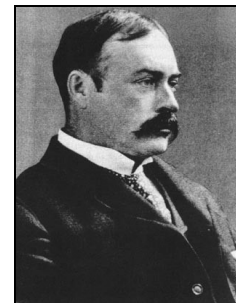
1. Visited library: _____ MacLean
2. Knot
3. _____ Lamothe
4. Acronym for the Society

Answers from spring issue's quiz:

1. *Cosmo*; 2. *McGreedy*; 3. *three: Danielle Thériault, Cheryl Ann Moore, Catherine McKenna*; 4. *86*; 5. *Madonna*; 6. *Memoirs of New France*; 7. *Canadians more freestyle classroom*; 8. *Mary Hilda Stephens*; 9. *\$1978*; 10. *Redoubt*.

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND: 1854-1907

by Catherine McKenna



He was 'an Irishman, warm-hearted and whole-souled...' (May Harvey Drummond)

It was over twenty-five years ago off a logging road in the mountains of Vermont, in the hand-constructed Shaker style home of a country doctor ...Ahab, my gritty little cross-country horse, now well-accustomed to our visits, grazed contentedly outside, unsaddled and untethered. We'd our feet up under a blanket by the fire, warming ourselves in the early spring evening. Conversation turned to our respective homes and despite the beauty and peace of the moment, I lamented to Daniel about how terribly I missed Québec. After a long and responsive look searching my eyes and then his thoughts, he settled in closer with me, took off his glasses, threw his head back and from his broad and generous smile, began in startlingly perfect French Canadian patois:

On wan dark night on Lac St.Pierre,
De win' she blow, blow, blow,
An' de crew of de wood scow *Julie Plante*
Got scar't an' run below –
For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre
Wan arpent from de shore....

Out of this lovely memory came the impetus to explore these charmingly unique poems Daniel had recited in a style very true to their author...

William Henry Drummond's inspirations for his habitant and voyageur poems originated during his work at Bord-à-Plouffe, a small village on the banks of Rivière des Prairies behind Mount Royal. It was there he heard Gédéon Plouffe recount the tragedy that he would transform into *The Wreck of the Julie Plante*.

Drummond was a colourful poet whose work came from his heart and was expressed in honest and simple verse. In addition to the famous poems *'The Wreck of the Julie Plante'*, *'Little Bateese'*, *'Phil-o-Rum's Canoe'* and *'The Habitant'*, he remained faithful to his Irish roots with *'We're Irish Yet'*, a poem that recalls his sustained connection to his homeland.

'The Habitant' was Drummond's first volume and in his preface he wrote of his love and admiration of the French Canadian. The poems were crafted from tales told by his own friends and were penned for English listeners not fluent in French. Geographically, they were created during his years at Kerr Lake, known also as the Cobalt District, an area plagued with typhoid. Written in patois, these portraits were affectionately drawn, as is well-documented by those who knew him.

He was born April 13, Holy Thursday, 1854, near Mohill, County Leitrim, to an officer in the Royal Irish Constabulary and a mother whose simple motto was "fear God, and work hard". Growing up, Drummond was scholastically gifted to such an extent his father remarked, "The boy is more like master than pupil..."

Nine-year old William emigrated with his parents and three brothers to Montréal where, after a few months, his father passed away. A determined and brave widow, Mrs. Drummond's first priority was the education of her sons.

To provide for her, Drummond studied telegraphy at an early age and became an expert in his field at the time. He then returned to his studies at McGill and in 1884, graduated from Bishop's Medical College. As a student, he left "an impression of strength and integrity, which deepened with age..." He was athletic, and though bereft of any penchant for studiousness, he exerted a sharp intellect and intuition.

Dr. Drummond would have returned to live and work near his mother and three brothers, but on a drive with a friend to Stornoway, near Lake Megantic, they met someone in desperate need of a doctor to save the life of a young girl with scarlet fever. Successful in his mission, he was welcomed to establish his practice there; after two years he moved to nearby Knowlton to set up a larger practice. Well-loved and revered in his community, they were loathe to hear him announce he was returning to Montréal in 1888. He opened a practice at the family home on St-Antoine.

In 1893, he met his wife May Isobel Harvey at the Laurentian Club and married her in Jamaica the next year. They settled in the former home of Jefferson Davis on Mountain St. and had two children.

Invited to give a toast at the Shakespeare Club of Montréal, the doctor declined and instead read his new poem, "Le Vieux Temps." This would be the first of many public readings where Drummond's love of the real-life characters emanated in the flow of his strong, multi-toned voice. Meanwhile, in the house on Mountain St., the brothers, who visited daily with their mother, would often hear a new poem that would always be subject to, in true Irish fashion, direct and unbridled criticism.

Dr. Louis Fréchette, poet laureate of Canada, was one of Drummond's strongest supporters and backers against a

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

LIBRARY BULLETIN BOARD

Parking: Reminder that there is no parking available on chaussée des Écossais. The parking belongs to St. Andrew's Church, and as Reverend Hayes has moved in, the limited amount of parking available will be used by the Church organizers. Parking details were outlined on page 13 of the *spring* issue of the *Society Pages*.

English-Language Discussion Groups kicked off to a great start. The last discussion in the series will be led by Marianna O'Gallagher and Ted Gunn, and will take place June 22 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

The **Empress of Ireland** talk on May 29 was a huge success with a whopping 42 people in attendance. A copy of Derek Grout's book *Empress of Ireland: The story of an*

Edwardian Liner is available for borrowing at the Library.

Spirits Abroad Poetry Workshop: 25 participants! Enormous thanks goes out to MEB Reisner for her dedication and hard work.

Hydro Quebec has been repairing rue Dauphine, just beside the Morrin College building. Thanks to all who donated *Tylenol Extra Strength* during our time of need.

Thanks goes out to the **McGreevy Family** who so generously donated boxes of books that will go a long way to contributing to the Canadiana and British history sections of the Library.

Volunteers are needed for the packing and sorting of books at the

Library. Please fill out a volunteer form at the desk to join in the fun!

Carpooling is a great way to share parking fees and chat on your way to the Library. If you come regularly why not offer someone a lift? Volunteer to drive someone in your neighbourhood today!

The **Société de généalogie de Québec** has offered to give a workshop on family history and genealogy for a group of 12 or more. The cost to participants would be \$5. If you are interested in attending please contact Virginia Roe.

Société des musées québécois – the Lit & Hist is now an official member of the SMQ! Check us out at www.smq.qc.ca.

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

minority-maintained notion that there was a spirit of mockery inherent in Drummond's poetry: "...jamais la note sonne faux, jamais la bizarrerie ne dégénère en puérilité burlesque." Drummond himself attested, "I would rather cut off my right arm than speak disparagingly of the French Canadian people." A confrère observed that Drummond was "preferring always to discover goodness..." MacMechan explained, "Drummond's intent was so transparently honest that even those who were most doubtful could not hold out against him...", and called his medium of expression a lingua franca. In this regard, he put forth a linguistic portrayal of a segment of the Canadian woods he lived and worked in; language having evolved of course, this patois has been left in the past.

Widely popular as a poet and speaker, he was also charitable in great measures, and "a conscientious doctor who cared deeply about his patients..." who felt better just seeing and talking with him. A child patient described him as "like a big Newfoundland dog; one feels safe when he is near."

In 1901, *Johnnie Courteau* was published. In 1902, Drummond was honoured with an L.L.D. from the University of Toronto, and in 1905, his last publication was *The Voyageur*, with *The Great Fight* (1908) and *The Poetical Works of William Henry Drummond* (1912) following posthumously.

In 1906-7, the good doctor had spent most of the winter fighting an outbreak of smallpox in Cobalt, and returned again at Easter despite an intuition he should not. A week later, he suffered a cerebral haemorrhage and died April 6. At his funeral, the church crowded out into the street before he was laid to rest in Mount Royal.

Hees fader is full-blooded Irish, an' hees moder
is pure Canayenne,
Not offen dat stock go togedder, but she's
fine combination ma frien'
For de Irish he's full of de devil, an' de French
dey got savoir faire,
Dat's mak' it de very good balance an' tak'
you mos' ev'ry w'ere...

From *'The Curé of Calumette'* ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT MORRIN CENTRE

44, chaussée des Écoissais, Québec City, G1K 4H3

0694-9147

linfo@morrincentre@belnet.ca

 Don't miss
Euphemia's

Secret

 Consumed guides take
 you through
 400 years of Anglo life
 in Québec City
 from July 1 to
 September 6

*Tours in French and
 English.*

Tuesdays
 21 & 28

THE LAST

 Discussion
 regional
 may include tourism, public art, community building, and
 religious heritage.

September 7, 14,

WORD

Time and Price: To be announced

Saturday September 11

LEONARD COHEN: SONGS AND POEMS

 The music and poetry of Leonard Cohen from the perspective
 of teacher Randall Spear.
Time: 20:00
Price: VOLUNTARY DONATION

Saturday September 25

JOURNÉES DE LA CULTURE:

THE GHOSTS OF QUÉBEC PAST

 A rare chance to visit the entire Morrin Centre building and its
 cells and classrooms with the help of ghosts of Québec's past.
 This will be the last visit before the restoration project officially
 begins in October. In partnership with Québec Art Company,
 Archives nationales du Québec and Société de généalogie de
 Québec.
Time: All day
Price: FREE

Saturday October 2

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

 Metaphysical poet John Donne (1572-1631) demystified by Dr.
 Anthony Raspa, a world authority on Donne who teaches at
 Université Laval and is renowned for colourful and
 controversial lectures.
Time: 14:00

Sunday July 4

A YANKEE IN QUÉBEC CITY

A Candlelight at the Lit&Hist event

 Celebrate the 4th of July through the experience of American
 visitors to Québec City. Dessert served with readings by Mark
 Twain, Henry David Thoreau, and others.
Time: 20:30
Price: \$7.50 (members), \$9.50 (non-members)

Wednesday July 7

WRITERS' CIRCLE

 Creative souls are invited to come with their writing (fiction,
 poetry, non-fiction) for the first meeting of the LHSQ's Writer's
 Circle. Projects include sharing writing tips, critiquing each
 other's work, and producing an anthology.
Time: 19:00
Price: FREE

Friday July 9

JAZZIN' WITH SHAKESPEARE:

FROM THE BARD TO THE BEAT

 Hamlet meets the stock market in Jack Cloutier's musical
 monologues. Readings from England's best known bard will
 follow. Featuring live music by Clarissimo.
Time: 20:00
Price: \$5 (members), \$7.50 (non-members)

Sunday July 18

IMPRESSIONS:

FROM MOODIE TO ATWOOD

A Candlelight at the Lit&Hist event

 Readings on the experience of immigrating to Canada in the
 19th century from Suzannah Moodie's original diary and
 Margaret Atwood reinterpretation of it. With candlelit dessert
 and live music.
Time: 20:30
Price: \$12 (members), \$15 (non-members)

Sunday August 1

**GRAVE-ROBBERS, MADMEN
 AND MINING TYCOONS**

A Candlelight at the Lit&Hist event

 A voyage around the world through the minds of two
 19th-century eccentrics, both of whom are named James
 Douglas. The first arrived in Québec City as a grave-robbing
 refugee and later founded the city's first insane asylum. His son,
 a historian, stumbled upon a copper smelting process that made
 him a millionaire. Readings from journals that take us across
 four continents with dessert served and live music.
Time: 20:30
Price: \$12 (members), \$15 (non-members)

Saturday August 7

FÊTES DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE:

THE CELTIC FACE OF NEW FRANCE

 Special event on chaussée des Écoissais in partnership with
 St. Andrew's Church, the Fraser Highlanders and Irish Heritage.
 Celtic music, kiosks on history and genealogy, and lectures on
 the Anglo-Celtic presence in New France (including readings
 from "Diary of a Captive").
Time and Price: To be announced

Sunday August 21

LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN DOG

A Candlelight at the Lit&Hist event

 Find out the facts behind one of Québec City's most enduring
 legends through readings from amateur historians and William
 Kirby's *The Golden Dog*. The legend gives a sense of the
 relationship between the French and English in Québec City
 following the British conquest. A candlelit walk through the
 streets of Québec City to the current home of the Golden Dog
 will follow dessert and readings.
Time: 20:30
Price: \$12 (members), \$15 (non-members)

SOCIETY PAGES

THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF QUEBEC

44 chaussée des Écossais ; Québec, QC ; G1R 4H3

IMPRINTS III

Discovering the Historic Face of English Quebec



Many of you have met Ray and Diana Bailie on their travels throughout Quebec in quest of stories and photographs of heritage and significant buildings.

For those who have not met them, they are the authors of three books on English landmarks in the Province, the first two books

recently published, the third book about the Quebec City area, the North Shore and the Gaspé to be launched **September 23 at Carter Hall** (Holy Trinity Cathedral), downtown Quebec.

For those interested in the subject or perhaps thinking of a Christmas gift: books, authors, wine, cheese and publishers and will be at Carter Hall from 5:30 to 8 pm. An early bird reply at pltdmp@aol.com will entitle the early bird to a publishers' prize from Michael and David Price.

The SOCIETY PAGES is published quarterly for members of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, 44 chaussée des Écossais, Québec, QC, G1R 4H3; (418) 694-9147; for library enquiries, send an e-mail to lhsq.library@qc.ira.com; all enquiries about the mornin centre project or upcoming events should be directed to info.mornincentre@bellnet.ca

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David F. Blair
President
Diane Kammen
Vice-President
James Habertin
Treasurer
Thomas Feininger
Secretary
Marie Creighton Tremblay
Honorary Librarian
William GK Boden
Judith Dunn
Grant McIntosh
Martha Price
Dorothy O'Brien
Hélène Thibault
Sharon Frenette
Michael McCormack
Marianna O'Callagher
Shelia Wren

LHSQ LIBRARY

Caroline Lamotte
Head Librarian
Catherine McKenna
Librarian
Danielle Thénault
Librarian
Cheryl Anne Moore
Librarian

MORNING CENTRE PROJECT

France Cliche
Project Manager
Yves Valois
Administration Officer
Virginia Roe
Outreach and Marketing Officer
Patrick Donovan
Interpretation Projects Manager
Gaelle Trousde
Site Heritage Interpreter
Kimberly Tomson
Site Heritage Interpreter