

# SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 40 ■ Winter 2013 ■ \$2.00



**morrin**

- DESJARDINS GIVES \$100,000 TO MORRIN CENTRE
- AN IRISH PIRATE IN NOVA SCOTIA
- THE BIBLIOPHILE WITH THE SINGULAR PARTED BEARD

The Morrin Centre is managed by the Literary & Historical Society of Quebec.  
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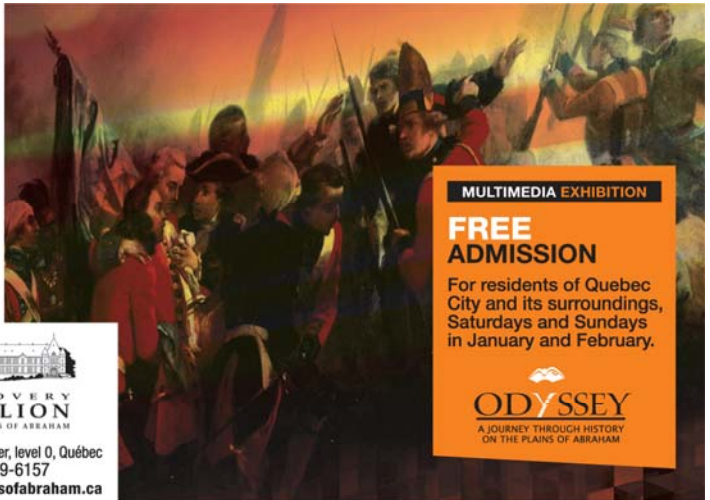
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# SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 40 ■ WINTER 2013

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## LIBRARY HOURS

<b>Sunday</b>	12:00PM-4:00PM
<b>Monday</b>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	12:00PM-8:00PM
<b>Wednesday</b>	12:00PM-4:00PM
<b>Thursday</b>	12:00PM-8:00PM
<b>Friday</b>	12:00PM-4:00PM
<b>Saturday</b>	10:00AM-4:00PM

Front cover: Literary Feast in the College Hall, Credit: Dylan Page

**CONTENT**  
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Louisa Blair

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The mission of the **Morrin Centre** is to share and foster English-language culture in the Quebec City region. The Morrin Centre is administered by the Literary & Historical Society of Quebec.  
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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members and friends,

What was your first experience like at the Morrin Centre? When I first moved to Quebec City, I discovered the library—a beautiful, inspiring space, a hidden jewel. At that time, the library was the only part of the building that was open to the public as the rest of its treasures had yet to be discovered. With each passing month more and more of this potential becomes unlocked. If you have not been to the Centre recently, I urge you to stop by and see what we have been up to. Whether you are a long-time member, or someone who has just discovered what the Centre has to offer, I am confident that you will be delighted.

With the holiday season fast approaching, I cannot think of a better gift to give than a membership to the LHSQ. This is a very meaningful way to support the Society and, at the same time, give a gift of culture and the arts. Encourage your friends and family to come experience all of the great things happening here all throughout the year.

Capping off a busy year, we recently hosted the fifth annual Literary Feast fundraising dinner where we were honoured to welcome two very distinguished and accomplished women, Ms. Phyllis Lambert and Ms. Monique F. Leroux. You will be able to read more about the event later in this issue. I will, however, touch on an important development from the evening. Le Mouvement Desjardins has generously agreed to contribute \$100,000 to the Morrin Centre fundraising campaign. This is an important step that clearly illustrates Desjardins' effort to reach out to Quebec's Anglophone community. This goes hand-in-hand with the Society's continued goal of reaching out to the region's Francophones to truly make the Morrin Centre a cultural bridge between the two linguistic communities. Establishing partnerships such as this are essential to our continued growth and development.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Centre and the Society.

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season,

Sovita Chander  
President

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear members,

Even though it has been over a year since I was named Executive Director, it seems like just yesterday that I was writing my first letter for Society Pages. The Morrin Centre team has had a busy and extremely rewarding year bringing you a rich program of heritage, educational and cultural activities.

The year started on a positive note with Everyday People, the one-day colloquium that broke down the myths surrounding Quebec's Anglophones and wrapped up with last month's Literary Feast, which was the most successful edition to date. In between we welcomed Jian Ghomeshi, Douglas Gibson, Emma Donoghue and others to our ImagiNation Writers' Festival and we held our first ever "Parcours de peur" during which we scared over 1,500 thrill-seekers, most of whom were visiting the Morrin Centre for the first time.

We have been hard at work preparing even more exciting programming for 2014. The lineup for the 5th annual ImagiNation Writers' Festival is nearly set and will be unveiled in the coming weeks. For the latest news from the Morrin Centre, be sure to like us on Facebook.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of the presenters, collaborators, staff and members of Council for everything they have done for the Centre this year. Special thanks go out to our volunteers who make so many of the great events and activities possible. You will find their names on the back cover of this issue.

I wish you and yours a safe and happy holiday season. See you in 2014.

Sincerely,  
Barry McCullough

## TRANSACTIONS

LIFE OF A PRESIDENT  
CYRILLE TESSIER (1835-1931)

By Maxime Chouinard, Curator

One of the many questions asked by visitors to the Morrin Centre during tours is “When were Francophones finally accepted as members of the LHSQ?” It comes as a surprise to many that the Society has always been open to both Anglophones and Francophones, that we have had members as prestigious as the famous historian François-Xavier Garneau, and that Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau, first premier of Quebec after Confederation, was once president of the LHSQ.

You might have observed the portrait of another of our Francophone presidents when coming up the stairs to the library. While his nameplate is a little obscured, his singular and symmetric beard and hair have surely caught your attention. This is Cyrille Tessier, who presided over the Lit and His in 1892 after more than two decades of involvement.

The son of Michel Tessier and Thérèse Légaré, Cyrille was born in Quebec City in 1835 and studied at the Petit Séminaire and Université Laval. Following in his father’s footsteps he was accepted as a notary in 1859 and took up the family’s office. In 1869 he married Apolline MacKenzie, daughter of Alexander MacKenzie, an associate of the North West Company. The family

had only one surviving child, Joachim Desrivères Tessier.



Cyrille Tessier  
Credit: LHSQ Collection

As a result of his good reputation, Tessier was named notary of the National Bank, the Banque d’Économie de Québec and the Quebec -St. John’s Lake Railroad Company. He became extremely rich through diverse investments in financial institutions and insurance companies. In 1878, for example, he was able to loan \$8000 to a man in Trois-Rivières, an impressive amount at the time. Tessier did not keep his fortune to himself though, and became quite a philanthropist. He was a faithful patron of the Bon Pasteur, Franciscan and Dominican religious communities as well as of the Saint-Vincent de Paul Society and the Caisse d’économie de Notre-Dame.

Although his fortune gave him social status in the province, it is his cultural and scientific commitments that are of the most interest to us. Not only was he a long time member of the LHSQ, he was also involved in the Institut Canadien, the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, and the Quebec Society of the Archaeological Institute of America; and he was a founding member of the Geographical Society of Quebec.



# TRANSACTIONS

**LIFE OF A PRESIDENT** (continued from previous page)

Tessier was also renowned as a numismatic collector and bibliophile. His collection of books was one of the three most important in the province, and even at the national level it was compared to those of Université Laval, the National Archives in Ottawa and the Toronto Public Library. Collectors wanting to sell their collections would contact him before contacting the Smithsonian or the British Museum. However, he applied his talents not only to his own personal collection but also to help maintain those of the societies over which he presided, including that of the LHSQ.

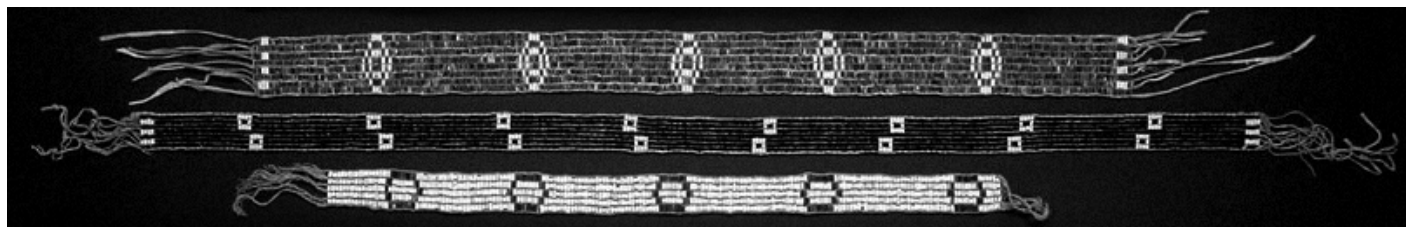
He also possessed a celebrated collection of wampums that he had acquired through his lifelong contact with the Lorette community, including a wampum belonging to the Huron chief Nicolas Vincent and

depicted in his famous portrait. Many of these are now preserved at Université Laval, the Musée de la civilisation and Parks Canada. Very much attached to his region, Tessier refused the multiple demands for this collection by David Ross McCord for his museum in Montreal. He wanted them to stay in Quebec.



Appolline MacKenzie  
Cyrille Tessier's wife

A quiet but extremely efficient man, Tessier is a familiar name to many historians investigating the times in which he lived. He left behind 11,963 deeds, and signed his last deed on the morning he died at the venerable age of 96 years old. His son inherited most of his collection, although it is unclear at the moment where most of it is preserved. His funeral at Notre-Dame de Québec Basilica was attended by hundreds, including Lieutenant Governor Henry George Carrol. He was buried in Belmont Cemetery. ■



Wampums from Tessier's collection.  
Credit: Musée de la civilisation, dépôt du Séminaire de Québec, collection Cyrille Tessier.



Cyrille Tessier, second from left, visiting his friend James MacPherson Lemoine (seated) at Spencer Grange in 1905. Credit: BANQ.

## TRANSACTIONS

## COCHRAN'S PIRATES

## OR HOW MY ANCESTOR NARROWLY MISSED A BOATHOOK IN THE BRAIN

By Alan Stairs

*In the last issue, we published an article about Andrew Cochran, who served several terms as president of the Literary and Historical Society between 1837 and 1848. The article mentioned that as a young law student, Cochran quickly made his reputation by publishing an account of the trial of Edward and Margaret Jordan, accused of piracy and murder aboard the schooner Three Sisters. Mr. Alan Stairs, member of the Society, has a particular connection with this story. His great (four times) uncle was Captain John Stairs from Halifax, NS, and he was master of the Three Sisters when it was pirated by Edward Jordan. The story of Jordan the pirate has been part of his family lore as long as he can remember. Alan Stairs wrote to complete the story:*

John Stairs was born in Halifax in 1785 and was the elder brother of William Machim Stairs, my direct ancestor. After attending school for a short time in Halifax, John was apprenticed to a merchant in the hopes of avoiding the danger of the press-gangs, who were very active in those days. Unfortunately the strategy was not always successful, and he was impressed in a raid and forced into service on board a British man-o'-war. The vessel eventually reached England and through the influence of family friends, John was able to obtain a discharge. In spite of the hardships of life at sea, he immediately signed on to a merchant ship and, in due course, obtained his master's ticket.

In 1809, while laying over in Halifax between voyages, John Stairs was offered a small commission that has since become one of the legends of Nova Scotia.

Jonathan and John Tremaine, Halifax merchants, had business dealings with Edward Jordan, an Irishman who at that time was living in Gaspé, QC. In June of 1808 Jordan had obtained a line of credit from the Tremaine family in order to purchase fishing gear and supplies. In September of the same year he requested further credit to buy gear for an unfinished schooner he was building in Gaspé. The funds were advanced with the schooner acting as security. In the spring of 1809 the *Three Sisters* was launched and Jordan sailed to Halifax with his new vessel. On arrival he was arrested for a small debt. The Tremaines advanced him further funds to allow him to

clear his debt and purchase additional supplies. Security for the funds was 1000 quintals (1 quintal = 50kg) of dried cod that Jordan claimed to have back in Gaspé. Worried about their investment, the Tremaines insisted that their representative be given command of the *Three Sisters* on its voyage back to Gaspé, whereupon the schooner would be returned to Jordan on receipt of the cod.

Captain John Stairs was a friend of the Tremaines and readily accepted the commission. On his arrival in Gaspé their suspicions regarding Jordan's solvability was confirmed. He was only able to produce 100 quintals of cod, not nearly enough to cover his debts. Captain Stairs refused to release the schooner to Jordan and set off back to Halifax. Jordan, his wife Margaret and their four children, being destitute, were given passage aboard as there was nothing left for them in Gaspé. In addition to the Jordans, the ship's complement consisted of the mate, John Kelly, and two seamen, Tom Heath and Ben Mathews.

On September 13, the *Three Sisters* was making good way in a fresh breeze, east of Cape Canso, about three miles offshore. Captain Stairs went below briefly along with Tom Heath. A slight movement from the skylight above caused him to glance up just in time to see Edward Jordan pointing a pistol at him. His instinctive jerk backwards as Jordan fired caused the bullet to graze his nose rather than hit him in the head, but Heath was not so lucky and took the same bullet in the chest. Stairs scrambled to get his own pistols from his sea chest only to discover that they along with his cutlass were gone. Another shot was heard from the deck above and he immediately jumped for the companionway only to meet Jordan coming down with a pistol in one hand and an axe in the other. Stairs shoved him backwards and was able to wrench the pistol and then the axe out of Jordan's hand and throw the weapons overboard. The mate, John Kelly, was at the helm and despite repeated pleas from the captain refused to come to his aid. Ben Mathews, the second seaman, badly wounded by the other shot that Stairs had heard, collapsed as he tried to help out. At the

# TRANSACTIONS

☞ *COCHRAN'S PIRATES (continued from previous page)*

same time Margaret Jordan entered the fray and began to strike at Stairs with a boathook. Meanwhile Jordan had managed to find a second axe and took a few seconds to finish off Mathews with three or four blows to the head before returning to the attack on Stairs. Faced with insurmountable odds, Captain Stairs seized a section of hatch cover, threw it overboard and jumped in after it. The *Three Sisters* swiftly drew away and no attempt was made to reverse course and come back for the captain. Stairs was able to stay afloat on the hatch cover, and three hours later was miraculously sighted and picked up by an American fishing schooner, the *Eliza*. The captain of the *Eliza* refused to put Captain Stairs ashore at Halifax for fear of the press gangs, but continued on to his home port of Hingham, Massachusetts. From here Stairs made his way to the British consul in Boston where the alarm was raised. The *Three Sisters* was eventually found and seized in Bay of Bulls, Newfoundland, just before setting off to Ireland. Edward Jordan, his wife Margaret and the mate John Kelly were arrested and brought back to Halifax to stand trial.

The trial was a full dress affair presided over by Sir George Prevost, Governor of Nova Scotia. Both Jordan and Kelly were found guilty of piracy and murder and were sentenced to hang. Margaret Jordan was found not guilty and Kelly was later pardoned on grounds of insanity. Jordan was hanged and gibbeted (tarred and hung in chains) at Point Pleasant Park. Three decades later his skeleton had fallen apart but his skull was recovered, and was ultimately given to the Nova Scotia Museum. It was recently part of the exhibition "Pirates: Myth and Reality" at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax.

Captain John Stairs went on to a successful career with Cunard Lines, serving for several years as master of their first transatlantic steamer, *RMS Britannia*.

Andrew Cochran's report of the trial brought him to the attention of Sir George Prevost, which in turn led to his posting in Quebec City. It is interesting to speculate: if my ancestor Captain John Stairs had not survived his encounter with Jordan the pirate, Andrew Cochran might never have caught the eye of Sir George Prevost and might never have become president of the Lit and His. ■

## CRANBERRY-PINEAPPLE CHUTNEY A SPECIAL ADDITION TO A HOLIDAY DINNER

Thanks to Gail Cameron for sharing her family recipe

3-4 cups of fresh or frozen cranberries  
1 cup of raisins  
1 Granny Smith apple finely diced  
3/4 cup of sugar  
1 small can of crushed pineapple with its juice  
1/4 cup of orange juice  
2 branches of celery finely chopped  
3 tbsp. of vinegar  
1 tsp. fresh ginger chopped  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon

- Mix all ingredients in a pot and bring to a boil
- Reduce heat and cook for 15-20 minutes stirring often to break open the cranberries
- This keeps two weeks in the fridge
- It is great served with turkey or pork

Enjoy!

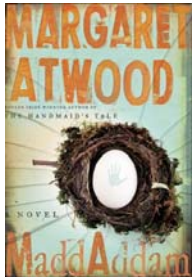




# LIBRARY PAGES

## NEW ACQUISITIONS

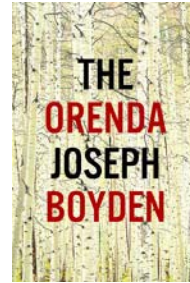
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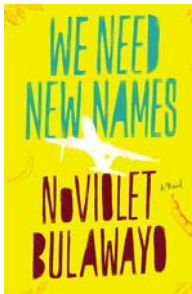
**Fiction**  
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Atwood, Margaret  
A887 2013



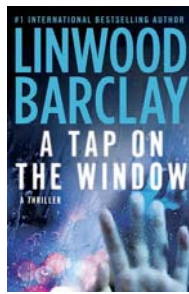
*The Lowland*  
Lahiri, Jhumpa  
L183 2013



*The Orenda*  
Boyden, Joseph  
B789 2013



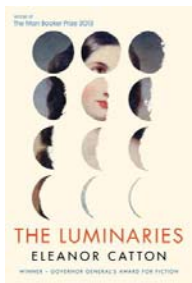
*We Need New Names*  
Bulawayo, Violet  
B933 2013



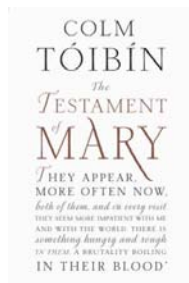
*A Tap on the Window*  
Barclay, Linwood  
B244 2013



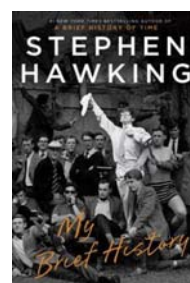
*Just One Evil Act*  
George, Elizabeth  
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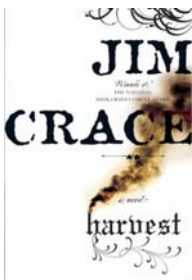
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Catton, Eleanor  
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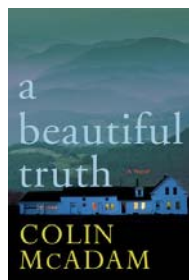
*The Testament of Mary*  
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T646 2013



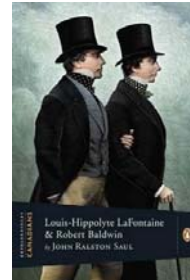
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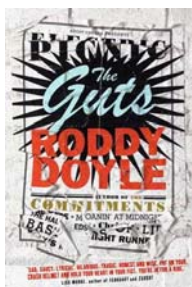
*Harvest*  
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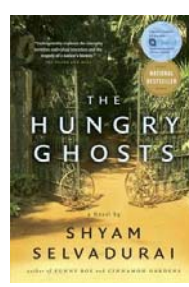
*A Beautiful Truth*  
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M113 2013



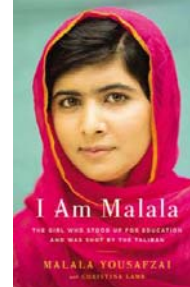
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Saul, John Ralston  
Bio L166 2013



*The Guts*  
Doyle, Roddy  
D754 2013

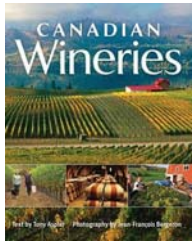


*The Hungry Ghosts*  
Selvadurai, Shyam  
S469 2013

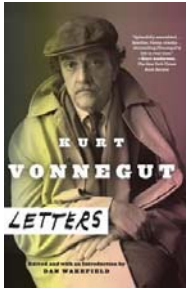


*I am Malala*  
Yousafzai, Malala  
Bio Y82 2013

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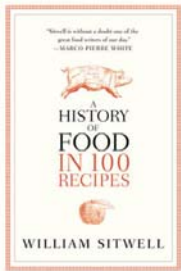
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**Canadian Wineries**  
 Aspler, Tony  
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**Vonnegut: Letters**  
 Wakefield, Dan  
 Kurt  
 813.54 V947



**Juvenile fiction**  
**Fletcher and the Snowflake Christmas**  
 Rawlinson, Julia  
 JF RAW 2010



**A History of Food in 100 Recipes**  
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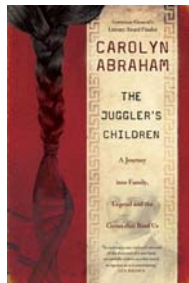
**Knitting Rules!**  
 Pearl-McPhee, Stephanie  
 746.432 P359



**Sing a Song of Mother Goose**  
 Reid, Barbara  
 JF REI 2008



**The Edge of the Precipice**  
 Socken, Paul  
 809.911 S678



**The Juggler's Children**  
 Abraham, Carolyn  
 929.2 A159

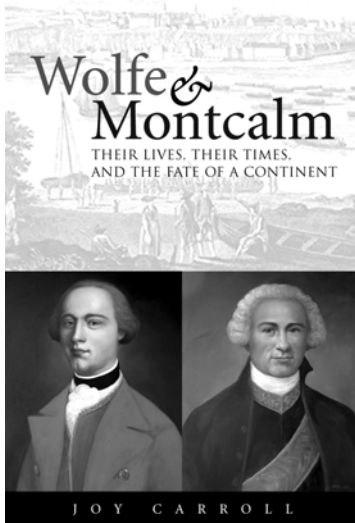


**Bluenose Adventure**  
 Halsey, Jacqueline  
 JF HAL 2013

## BOOK REVIEW WOLFE & MONTCALM:

### THEIR LIVES, THEIR TIMES, AND THE FATE OF A CONTINENT BY JOY CARROLL

By Cheryl-Anne Moore, library clerk



This slender volume relates, in a clear and engaging manner, a vivid and comprehensive yet succinct account of the conquest of Quebec, impartially juxtaposing the two great generals, Wolfe and Montcalm – their lives, their accomplishments and their tribulations against the great backdrop of the battle for North America, while shedding light on the fact that in the political and moral climate of the time the results could have been very different.

Historically accurate, rich with details of Canadian, French and English life in the eighteenth century and including a supporting cast of famous and influential persons, this is a must read for every inhabitant of Quebec as well as visiting tourists who wish to have a better knowledge of the history surrounding them, not to mention all Canadians who would do well to improve their understanding of the events which helped create this great country. ■

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### MR. HYDE'S LABORATORY SCARE YOU AGAIN NEXT YEAR!



From October 25 to November 9, nearly 1,600 people took part in our new Halloween tour, Mr. Hyde's Laboratory. With close to 144 performances over eight days, this has been one of our most popular events ever at the Morrin Centre. It not only appealed to many of our members and regular visitors but also allowed us to reach a much broader audience in the Quebec City region and across the province.

These visitors' comments reflect the overall reaction to the interactive experience:

**“Really very good. We laughed and screamed the whole way through.”**

**“Wow, excellent. The library was really scary and the costumes were great.”**

**“Super exciting. Everything from the decor to the actors was really well done.”**

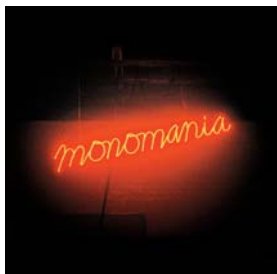
Thanks to this year's success, the Morrin Centre is planning to offer another frightening Halloween activity next year. Thank you to all those who chose to celebrate All Hallows' Eve in our spooky building. Scare you again next year! ■

## EVENTS &amp; ACTIVITIES

## FIVE GREAT ALBUMS FROM 2013

By Barry McCullough, Executive Director

The Society Pages has always featured book reviews on the latest library acquisitions. Since the Morrin Centre has hosted several music events in the past few months, we have decided to include a feature on some of the more interesting recent album releases. Rather than create an actual 'Top 5,' I am presenting five great albums from 2013.

**Deerhunter – *Monomania* (4AD)**

After a series of highly praised albums, Deerhunter had gained a reputation of creating ambient, noisy, psychedelic pop records. With *Monomania*, flamboyant band leader Bradford Cox has opted for a more straight-forward approach creating their noisiest, least-refined album to date. This is a very good thing. The sloppy “Pensacola” is one of the best cuts and the excellent acoustic-guitar driven “Punk (La Vie Antérieure),” is one of the least punk-sounding tracks on the album.

**Junip – *Junip* (Mute Records)**

Junip is a three-piece Swedish band fronted by José Gonzalez, whom you might know from his successful solo career and who is perhaps known best for his cover of Massive Attack’s “Teardrop.” The band’s self-titled effort is its second full-length release and, perhaps its finest. The album is a more up-tempo affair than 2010’s *Fields* and benefits from a little more experimentation. “Your Life, Your Call” and “After All is Said and Done” are standouts.

**The National – *Trouble Will Find Me* (4AD)**

People buying a National album will have a pretty good idea of what they’re getting themselves into. Driven by the barroom baritone of Matt Berninger, The National drop another brooding, slow-burn of an album. The album is kind of upbeat compared to earlier efforts, even if it does come off as charmingly self-deprecating at times. The best tracks are “Demons” and “Pink Rabbits.”

**Phosphorescent – *Muchacho* (Dead Oceans)**

Phosphorescent has only one permanent member, multi-instrumentalist Matthew Houck. Stylistically, the album covers a lot of territory, moving seamlessly between rock, folk, dream pop and country. Funnily enough, the least folk/country sounding song of the lot, “Song for Zula,” includes a lyrical nod to Johnny Cash and a moving mix of synth beats, violin and steel guitar. “Muchacho’s Tune,” complete with its Mariachi brass, is a track I revisit often.

**Vampire Weekend – *Modern Vampires of the City* (XL)**

The NYC band’s third album is their greatest achievement to date. It is a delicate balance of contemplative tracks (“Step,” “Obvious Bicycle”) and others filled with high-tempo energy (“Finger Back” and “Unbelievers”). As always, there are plenty of sing-alongs (“Diane Young”) and singer Ezra Koenig provides lyrics that range from very inward-looking and personal to cuts with bits of humour scattered throughout.

# *morrin centre*

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## FUNDRAISING

## DESJARDINS GROUP GIVES MORRIN CENTRE \$100,000 GUESTS DISCOVER DESJARDINS' CONNECTION TO THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

By Elizabeth Perreault, Program and Communications Director

On a chilly evening in late fall, people began arriving at the Morrin Centre for its fifth annual Literary Feast, the main fundraising event of the year. A glass of champagne was served in the front hall and a harp played by Fara Almond drew guests up the steps to the Victorian library. For the first time, guests could also climb up to the mezzanine and get to know some of the Library's oldest books.

Following the cocktail, the guests then proceeded to College Hall, where what had been dubbed the Leroux-Lambert banquet was to be held. Lit and His' president, Sovita Chander, set the tone by quoting the head of the IMF, Christine Lagarde. Commenting on Iceland's recovery from the 2008 economic crisis, Lagarde said that when their economy crashed, "the banks, the funds, the government—everything was taken over by women. So when it's messy, you get the women in. But when the mess is sorted, keep the women!"

The evening honoured and celebrated women in business, culture and the arts—women who get the mess cleaned up. Monique F. Leroux, Chair of the Board, President and CEO of the Desjardins Group,



Monique Leroux, Phyllis Lambert and Sovita Chander  
Credit: Dylan Page

was Honorary Chair, and world-renowned architect Phyllis Lambert was keynote speaker. In her speech, Ms. Leroux told the audience how Desjardins, like the Morrin Centre, is an inclusive institution and that it had ties to the English-speaking community at its origins. Alphonse Desjardins was a member of many learned societies, and co-founded the Société de géographie de Québec with W. Simons, the brother of the founder of La Maison Simons. His acquaintance with Anglophones also had an impact on the North American Cooperative movement: he inspired the foundation of many savings banks and credit unions in Canada and in the United States. He was also friends with Earl Grey, who was the first Governor General invited to become an honorary member of Desjardins.

Today, Desjardins is still invested in the English-speaking community and has supported the Literary Feast since the beginning. Monique F. Leroux was therefore happy to announce that Desjardins, in addition to its support of the event, would be donating \$100,000 to the Morrin Centre's 2013-2016 fundraising campaign. ■

### CANADIAN ICON OF ARCHITECTURE CHARMS LITERARY FEASTERS

Following this wonderful news, Phyllis Lambert revealed how she became the director of planning of the Seagram Building at 27 when she convinced her father to not only put her in charge of finding the architect for the project, but also of the building's construction. She had no experience in this field, yet this skyscraper is still regarded as the pinnacle of New York's postwar architecture. Seagram and Lambert changed the face of American urban architecture. An example of what makes this deceptively simple 38-storey tower stand apart is its plaza, the first of its kind, which set the

building back from the avenue and created an urban oasis for citizens. At 86, Lambert impressed the audience with her energy and passion for heritage conservation, innovation and modern art.

The mandate of the Literary Feast is to nourish mind, body and soul—and this year's Feast met the challenge with gusto. Many familiar faces and long-time supporters were present, but also new participants discovered what makes the Centre a unique part of the city's vitality and history. ■

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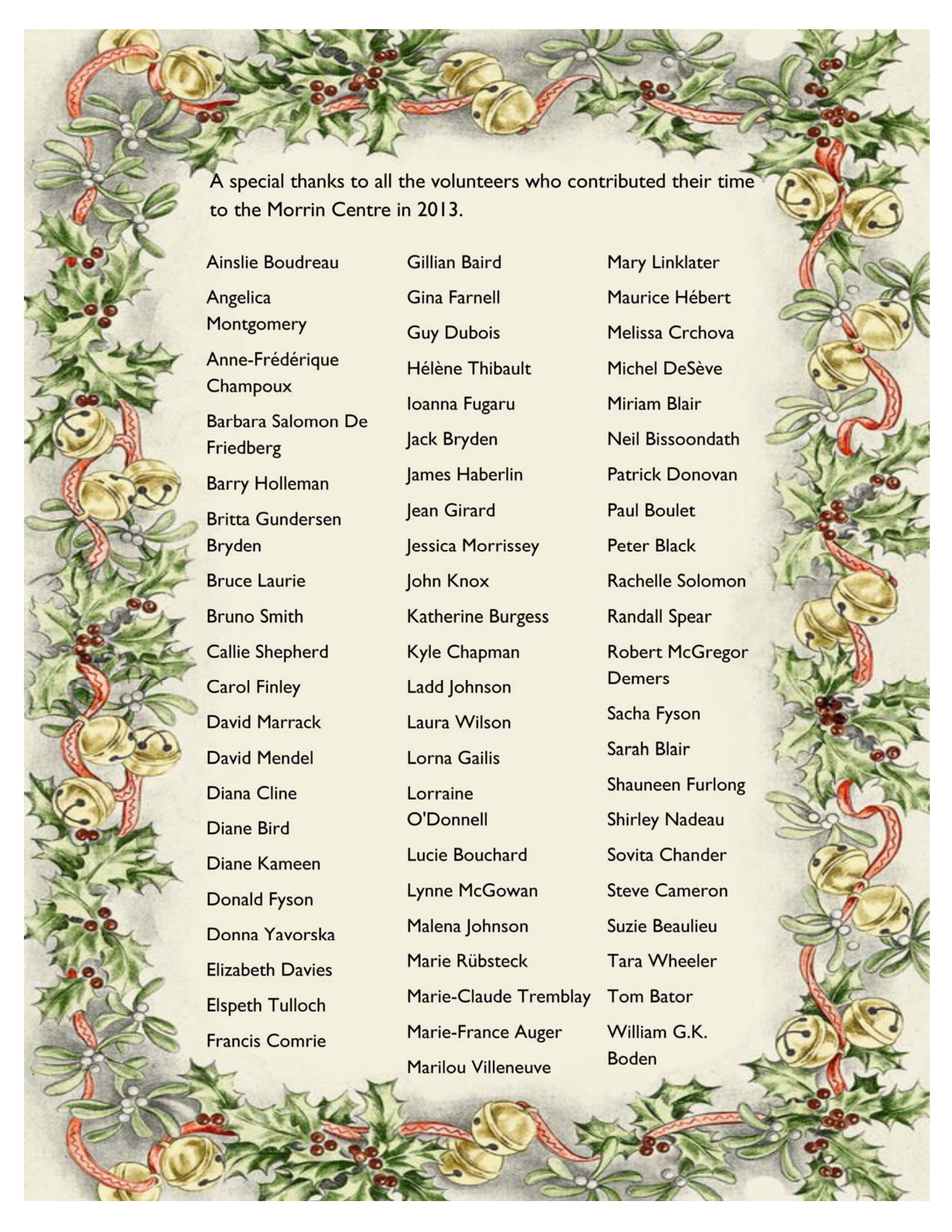


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A special thanks to all the volunteers who contributed their time to the Morrin Centre in 2013.

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