



Society Pages

The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec's Quarterly Newsletter
Volume I, No. 1 Summer 2002

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT



I am delighted to welcome you to the pages of the first edition of our newsletter, which will be published four per year.

This newsletter is another sign of the metamorphosis that your Society has undertaken to resume its rightful place as a premier actor on the cultural scene of Quebec. The Society has always been much more than a library. With our new plans and focus, the Society will become the cultural motor for the English community as well as the English cultural motor for the entire city.

Upon taking over the remainder of the Morrin College building, we will be adding a new and exciting children's library, an enhanced archives centre, a heritage exhibition centre, as well as an ongoing arts program.

These activities will enhance the library as will the library enhance these new activities. The remainder of the Morrin College building, virtually unused since 1904, will again ring with the life of a vibrant new cultural centre benefiting our members, our community and the city at large.

Please support your society with your ideas, your help, your participation and your donations.

Thank you and have a wonderful summer.

DAVID F. BLAIR
President

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It is my pleasure to introduce the newest addition to our wide range of services to our membership: Society Pages. It is not only a means of communication that enables the Society to transmit information and keep you up to date: it is also a wonderful catalyst meant to spark ideas, comments, and remarks on your part. This newsletter is an opportunity for you, the members, to participate in what is meant to be a constructive tool. We are therefore asking for your input! If you've read a good book and want to share your impressions, perhaps you could contribute a review. If you wish to offer services or information about your field of work or expertise, you could write an article for the newsletter... We invite you to communicate with us and submit your ideas: see our coordinates on page 6.

Our pledge to you is to produce a complete and consistent quarterly newsletter that will include, among other things: book reviews, information about the library, historical facts, a children's corner, a calendar of upcoming events and activities, and a special feature called *From the mailbox*. Your participation is strongly encouraged and we are looking forward to hearing from you. Until then, enjoy!

Caroline Lamothe,
Head Librarian.

IN OUR COLLECTIONS

The Quebec Library Association (1843-1868)

By Christine Veilleux

The year 1866 is a landmark in the history of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec. After surviving two fires (February 1st 1854 and October 25th 1862), the contents of the library was largely depleted. The Museum was totally destroyed. Of our 4 000 volumes, only 700 were saved along with the manuscripts. So when the Quebec Library Association sold their collection to the Society, it was a welcomed addition that increased our own to 8500 volumes. Though many titles of this precious collection have been sold or lost throughout the years, about 2000 volumes still remain in our Library today, including many books belonging to the Quebec Library.

The Quebec Library was the very first public library to be established in Canada in December 1779. A good deal of other libraries and cultural organisations, including the Lit. & Hist. (January 1824) came into existence during the first half of

the 19th century but most were short-lived. Among these was the Quebec Library Association which was established in December 1843 and incorporated on March 17th 1845. Many members and proprietors of the Quebec Library joined the new Association. Eventually both were amalgamated and the older library passed out of existence on July 23rd 1847.

By 1865, bad management had caused the Quebec Library Association severe financial problems. A catalogue printed that same year reveals that the Library owned 6990 volumes as well as a good number of English and foreign newspapers and leading magazines. Then in 1866, the collection of the Quebec Library Association was sold to the Literary and Historical Society for the modest sum of \$500 and the Association was dissolved in March 1868. Shortly afterwards their archives were also transferred over to the Lit. & Hist. where they remain to this day. These mainly include the Act of incorporation and by-laws, minute books, financial papers, registers, membership lists and correspondence of the Association throughout its existence.

Oral History Program

By Lorraine O'Donnell

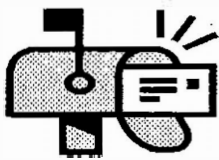
I am pleased to inform members about an exciting new initiative of the "Lit. and Hist."; an oral history program. It will involve documenting different aspects of the recent history of Quebec City's English-speaking community through a series of interviews. The interviewees will be local English-speaking senior citizens. The interviewers will be students from three local English-language schools: St. Patrick High School, Quebec High School and CEGEP St. Lawrence. The interviews will be recorded on video and preserved as a primary historical source in our archives center. They will also be incorporated into some of the historical exhibits that will be installed in the now-empty part of the Morrin College building that houses our library. This will occur when the cultural center that I am helping to plan for the Society opens, a few years from now.

Last December, the Jeffery Hale Foundation delighted us by granting the Society \$7 000 to plan the project. Komi Gratijs Gligbe, a sociologist with extensive experience in managing development projects, was our choice as project coordinator. Komi is a native of Togo, where preserving the memories and experiences of older people is a way of life. As Komi puts it, he grew up hearing that "when an elder dies it is like a library that closes."

Komi has been busy planning the project since February. Much of his work has involved meeting with local resource people who have very generously given him information and advice on everything from making interviewees comfortable to using the latest recording technology (mini-DVDs, for your information). A number of these people are also sitting in at our planning meetings. They include Pierre Ross (of CEGEP Limoilou) and Meb Reisner, both of whom have carried out oral history projects; Gail Quinn of Holland Centre; Marianna O'Gallagher of Irish Heritage Quebec; Paul Hinton of St. Patrick High School and Quebec High School, and James Lambert from the archives at Laval University.

Komi has also written a planning document which he will use as he seeks funding to actually run the oral history program. If all goes according to plan, the program will start up this September. We will keep you informed about our progress!

FROM THE MAILBOX



Have a question..about a book, fact or activity?

Contact us and we will be happy to have our staff try to answer it for you.

What kinds of children's activities are planned for the summer 2002?

To: Melanie Cantin, Children's Library Animator

I am organizing a wonderful summer camp experience around the theme *Journey to the Origins of the World*. These camps will be offered to kids 3-5 and 6-9 years of age. Together we will explore rock art, music and the teachings of the shaman. Our Literary Camp will offer kids 9-12 the opportunity to explore the legends and myths of creation through games, reading, writing and illustrations. Activities are scheduled to begin in July 2002. For more details please contact me at 694-9147. See you soon!

NEW ON OUR SHELVES

FICTION

BISSOONDATH, Neil. - Doing the heart good
 CONNELLY, Michael. - City of bones
 MISTRY, Rohinton. - Family matters
 RANKIN, Ian. - Resurrection men
 SHIELDS, Carol. - Unless

NON-FICTION

BRAUDEL, Fernand. - The Mediterranean in the ancient world
 HAWKING, Steven. - The universe in a nutshell
 MARSHALL, Andrew. - The trouser people
 PLOWRIGHT, Joan. - And that's not all (memoir)
 SACKS, Oliver. - Oaxaca journal

BOOK REVIEW - We asked members to give us a review of a book they had read recently. If you have a book that you would like to share with us, send us your reviews.



The Lives of Laurens Van der Post
 By J.D.F. Jones

Reviewed by Miriam Blair

This is a fascinating book! The biographer, J.D.F. Jones, given full access to the Van der Post papers, has succeeded in exposing the many fanciful claims of Van der Post upon which his fame rested, while still revealing his charismatic charm and skill as a story teller.

Born into a comparatively modest Boer farming family in 1906 in the then Orange Free State, he lived in England off and on from 1928, working as a journalist and writer, and being sent by the British government to investigate the possibilities of agricultural development in different parts of Africa. He gradually worked his way into London cultural society, becoming friends with writers, composers and politicians.

Many of his readers, myself included, who had been enthralled by the account of his travels into the Kalahari desert and his studies of the bushmen, which were enlarged and expanded by the BBC into documentaries, lecture tour etc., were disappointed to find that most of his material on the Bushmen was lifted from the work of earlier anthropologists, and that his sojourn among the Bushmen consisted of camping about a mile from them and having brief encounters and conversations through an interpreter (not even from the same tribe).

He charmed his way into the confidence of Margaret Thatcher and influenced her greatly with his supposed knowledge of Southern African society and politics, persuading her to ignore the advice of her ambassadors and experts on the spot. His admiration for Ian Smith in Rhodesia and his distrust of Mandela in South Africa prolonged the agonies of the winding up of colonial power in those countries. He also became a close friend and mentor of Prince Charles and had considerable influence over him as well, in this case probably more benign.

As is so often the case with a well-written biography, it is also a history lesson of the period spanned by the subject. I was very glad to be reminded of many important events, which were taking place in Africa during that time. Van der Post was a mesmerizing charismatic character, held in deep affection by his many friends, who seemed to be able to accept his inability to distinguish reality from fantasy.

kids Corner

Hey Children,
 I'm Cecil the Bookworm.
 If I don't have a book...
 My mind starts to squirm.
 I wiggle and squiggle all day and night...
 Especially when I find a book that's just right!
 I'll guide you through our stacks,
 Until your search is through,
 I will try my best to pick a story
 That pleases you!



THE BAD BEGINNING – A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

By Lemony Snicket

This twisted fairytale, written under the mysterious pseudonym Lemony Snicket, is the first of 13 volumes. The story is based on a series of *unfortunate events* that befall 3 unlucky children who end up in the care of a self-proclaimed “terrible man”. Readers will be delighted to follow Violet, Klaus and Sunny as they use their wits to overcome disaster and danger. This book is not just for children; adults young and old will enjoy the misadventures of the Baudelaire trio.

Reviewed by Callie Palmer

*This book contains mature subject matter and is recommended for children 8 yrs. and up. For more information check out www.lemonysnicket.com.



LOOKING FOR A BOOK?

NEED A NEW BEDTIME STORY?

Look what we have on our shelves for you!

Disney's Storybook Collection 2
 Giggle, Giggle, Quack
 Lemony Snicket, Bad Beginning

If the World were a Village
 Hug Me
 Ultimate Peter Rabbit

Coming Soon...

Y.W.I.C.

Circle Round

Just Kidding

Book Club

Celtic Times

Birth Stories

Sing Along

Activities especially for Children at the Library!

Young writers and illustrators circle.

A storytelling hour for pre-schoolers.

ESL activities for children.

For children who love to read.

Exploration of traditions of the past.

Make-your-own first book for parents of infants.

A discovery of language and music for infants & toddlers.

LIBRARY BULLETIN BOARD



NEW MEMBERS

The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members on behalf of the library staff, council and existing members. (May 2002-June 2002)

Barbara Pattison

Cheryl Anne Moore

Ellen Drews & David Posner

Janice Anderson

Jennifer Falle

José Dechêne

Kathleen Chabot

Lucie Bouchard

Marie-Jeanne Audet

Patricia Bailey

Pierre St-Laurent

Richard & Gina Klopp

Sheila Hadvick

Sophie Harvey

Dr. Vincent Girard



Mary Hilda Stephens' long awaited booklet entitled "*The Story of My Quebec Collection in the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, Morrin College, Quebec City*" will soon be on sale at the Library. This abundantly illustrated booklet relates the story behind the many miniature items of the "Collection" on permanent display in the Library and will be the society's first publication since 1924! – Mary Hilda Freeland Stephens, a lifelong member of the LHSQ, bequeathed her "Collection" to the Library in 1999. The LHSQ also wishes to express its deep appreciation to Miss Marietta Freeland who has generously offered to assume the entire cost of her sister's publication.



On June 8, we held our Annual Garden Party. Unfortunately due to inclement weather the Garden Party was moved indoors to Kirk Hall. Despite the rain, the turn out was a great success. The Literary and Historical Society would like to thank those who supported the event by buying tickets and those who donated their time to help coordinate the activities. We hope to see you again next year!



The Society is seeking volunteers to for a fundraising activity to be held in February 2003. We are also seeking a volunteer typist. If interested, please contact Caroline Lamothe, Head Librarian. Volunteers are also needed for upcoming children's activities. Please contact Melanie Cantin, Children's Library Animator.



Newsletter Committee is Caroline Lamothe, Christine Veilleux and Callie Palmer. Your comments, questions, submissions and/or questions can be directed to us by mail, phone, fax or e-mail.

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