

SOCIETY PAGES

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■
RESTORATION
OF THE
PRISON CELL
BLOCKS
■
THE LITERARY
FEAST 2010
■

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SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 30 ■ WINTER 2011

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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

The renowned Canadian thinker, philosopher and broadcaster, Paul Kennedy is a long time friend and supporter of the Society and, as host of CBC radio's "Ideas" program, he provided us with excellent national coverage in the recent two part Ideas program entitled "Dalhousie's Dream."

Last Tuesday, he gave a fascinating talk at the Morrin Centre on the life of Pierre-Stanislas Bedard, an important but somewhat obscure figure in the early history of democracy in the British colony of Quebec. The library was full and following the lecture and a break for tea, a prolonged exchange occurred between Paul Kennedy and many members of the audience. As the discussion progressed, several learned members raised interesting new perspectives of Bedard's life and influence, sometime challenging Paul on his characterization of Quebec society of the time.

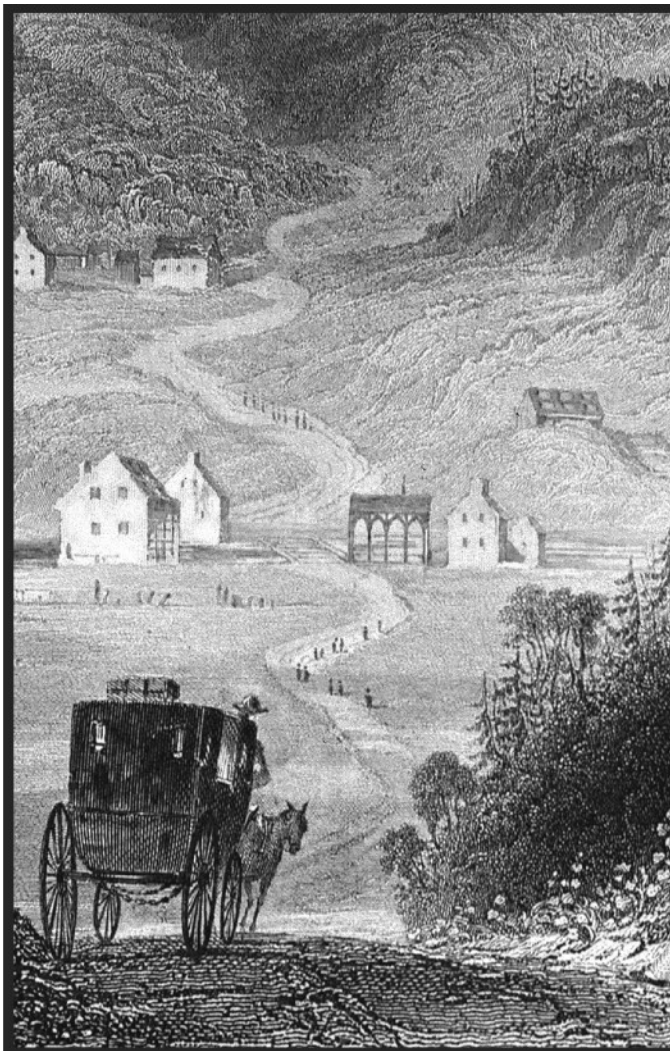
I sat there and thought to myself this is exactly what we have been all working so hard for so long to achieve. We have been seeking to create an environment where just such a debate might occur and there was I, in the middle of it! I was most pleased.

We have a very interesting programme of cultural events in the next weeks and months. I encourage each and every one of you to consult it and to attend, participate and contribute to those that may be of particular interest to you.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting scheduled for March 28, 2011.

Thank you for your continued support.

Your sincerely,



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello,

The winds of change are blowing through the corridors of the Morrin Centre both physically and from a human resources point of view. Since the last issue of *Society Pages*, we have seen the final stages of the building restoration begin. We started in September with the jail blocks, restoring and reinforcing the floors, walls and ceilings. This will be finished by the end of February. Then in December, we began restoring the science classroom and a small office on the fourth floor. A meeting room on the third floor is presently being worked on as the restoration slowly works its way down the building. Handrails will be installed in the central staircase as well as in the stairs leading to the library and College Hall, and the stairs will be re-covered and spruced up. The children's section is in the process of being made more welcoming and will have new furniture installed. We also plan to deal once and for all with the lighting problem, especially in the back library.

We are seeing changes among the staff too. Simon Auclair left his position as library manager in October and has been ably replaced by Virginie Haustrate. Virginie will continue the good work done by Simon and is now starting to bring her own touch to the library. If you haven't done so already, please come in and see what is going on. Just last week, our longest full-time serving member on staff, Valerie Deslauriers,

announced that she was moving on to another job after five years working as the administrative assistant. We wish Valerie the best of luck and thank her for all the work that she undertook while at the Morrin Centre.

Changes are also taking place at the Chronicle Telegraph. I met with Ray Stanton, the new owner, last week to discuss the Morrin Centre, the newspaper and its role in the city. I came away from that meeting with refreshed hope for the newspaper as Mr. Stanton, who lives in Ontario, seems to have a good grasp of the community's needs and has realistic expectations. He has also offered to be a sponsor for the upcoming ImagiNation writer's festival that will be taking place from April 13 to the 17.

All of these changes are positive and promise an improved cultural and historic interpretation centre. At the end of the year, we sent out letters asking for your support in the annual campaign. I urge you to continue to show your support for what we are doing by attending the events, using the library and sending in your contributions.

I hope that 2011 will be a great year for all of us and I hope to see you at the Morrin Centre during the year.

Sincerely,



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TRANSACTIONS

A BROKEN SWORD

By Maxime Chouinard, Museologist

During the archaeological digs that took place in the prison cells last fall, many interesting objects were discovered, including shoes, coins, pipes and, probably the most surprising of them all, a broken sword blade. Now, what could a sword blade be doing under the floors of a 19th century prison? Many theories were put forward, including the possibility of it being a prison-guard's sword (believe it or not, prison guards and police officers were equipped with swords in the 19th century), or a sword smuggled in by a crafty inmate.

The identity of the sword itself is troublesome. There are no maker marks visible for now and no fittings which might give a clue to its origin. Based on the blade's shape, it could either be a 17th-century rapier, or a 19th-century Scottish basket hilt, the latter being the most plausible.

The basket-hilted sword appeared around the 16th century when advances in smithing and metallurgy made it possible to make lighter and more complete guards for the sword. The hand being an easy target, people wished to protect it and so elaborated the hilt until it formed a kind of basket covering the whole hand.

The basket-hilt was popular all around Europe, but gradually died out, except in Scottish Highlands, where it became the most popular of weapons. Along with the targe – a kind of small shield strapped to the forearm – it made Scottish soldiers and duellists renowned for their use of the broadsword. By then, most of the blades were produced in Italy and Germany. One of the most famous makers was Italian Andrea Ferrara, whose

***“We'll put in bail, my boy;
old Andrea Ferrara shall lodge his security.”***
—Scott: *Waverley*, ch. 50.

blades acquired such renown in Scotland that his signature was imitated by shady dealers hoping to make a profit on his reputation even long after his death. Peo-

ple sometimes even referred to Scottish broadswords as “Ferraras.”

The basket hilt was exported to the New World mostly by the Scottish regiments who used it, including the 78th Highlanders. One of its members, Donald McAlpine, even taught its use when he moved to Boston in the 1770s, at the famous Green Dragon Tavern. One of his students, the young Sir Benjamin Thompson, gathered notes and drawings on these teachings, creating the first illustrated fencing manual ever made in the Americas.

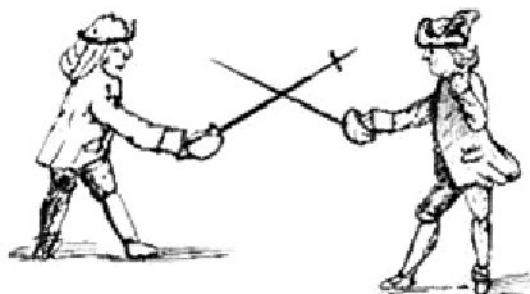


An antique basket-hilt, probably from the 18th century.

Highland fencing soon become all the rage, and served as a model for the British army's new sabre method devised by Henry Angelo. For some reason, the regimental basket-hilted blades became quite thin compared to their ancestors. The same 1828 model is still in use today by some Canadian and British regiments. Some people are even studying the historical fencing

techniques associated with it, including Quebec City's 78th Fraser Highlanders.

People used to keep broken blades to use them as knives or tools. The fact it remained hidden suggests that the blade found in the jail cells never committed its grisly deed... You will be able to see this blade, along with many other artifacts, at the prison exhibit which should open by summer time. ■



Backsword fencers *en garde*, according to the teachings of Donald McAlpine (from the memoirs of Sir Benjamin Thompson).

TRANSACTIONS

RESTORATION OF THE PRISON CELL BLOCKS

By Simon Jacobs

Restoration work began on the two jail blocks in mid-September 2010. The idea has been to keep the first cell block (the first block on the left) as 'natural' as possible, with a simple reinforcement of the floors, subtle lighting of the cells and the replacement of rotten floors. Cell block 2 will also have the floors reinforced, masonry strengthened and be completely replastered with modern wiring throughout. This space will be used for an exhibition about the prison, to open in the summer of 2011.

Why are they there?

People have asked why the cells were left intact during the time of the college, when there was so many changes made to the rest of the building. Typical of the time, the architect produced just one ground floor plan which was reproduced on each floor. We have a copy of the original plan by François Baillargé, drawn in 1807, showing the guard room, kitchen, cells, as well as drainage and cistern systems. Then in 1837, we find another plan by Frederick Hacker with a different placement of the kitchens and distinctly sinister names given to the cell blocks. The two blocks still there today were labeled the 'condemned cell' and the 'black hole'. More on that later...

In 1867, the prison was shut down and moved to a new building on the Plains of Abraham. Morrin College, founded five years earlier, bought the building and entrusted Ferdinand Peachy to redesign the inside. We have all seen the results of the drastic yet beautiful transformation he made – the college hall and the library – but the mystery remains as to why the cells on the ground floor were left virtually intact. Cell block 1 was unchanged, with the rings that were used to chain prisoners to the floor left in situ. Some changes were made to Cell block 2, such as new base boards, and two cells were made into a strong room, replete with a double safe door and steel shutters on the window. Also a doorway was created to the outside courtyard by elongating the window in the middle cell.

It was Peachy who installed a newfangled hot-water central heating system in the newly converted college, an avant-garde idea at the time. Those same radiators can still be seen throughout the college today. Before the restoration started, a series of pipes traversed

both cell blocks and a cement base to accommodate a furnace had been installed in cell block 2. It is possible that cell block 1 could have been used to store coal.

State of the prison blocks before restoration

For years before the building became the Morrin Centre, much of it was left unused and practically abandoned. The library continued to operate in the north wing and the last janitor, Mr. Muise, lived with his family in the south wing on the ground floor. Impromptu tours of the prison blocks and the cellar area were sometimes given, which is why graffiti from the 1980s and before could be seen on the walls.

Cell block 1 appears to have remained practically unchanged from the time it was first constructed. The floor of the common area was made of planks of red pine of various widths and set in the French style: the planks were laid end to end in a neat line corresponding to the joists they were nailed to (*Fig. 1*). About half of the planks were in reasonably good shape, although they bore witness to the prison era, with repeated scores of about one inch in length all over the place, sometimes in the shape of an 'L'. We are not yet sure why, but this could have been caused by the feet of iron-bed frames that were used in the later period of the prison. There was a lot of wear and tear on the planks, with almost total disintegration of the floor close to the two windows that let onto the prison courtyard. The floors of the cells were in much better shape. Near the middle of the room, where the planks had lifted from the floor, revealed an under-floor made of boards of about four inches in width. These were covered in charcoal or coal dust, leading us to surmise that the wood stove had stood there, being the prisoners' only source of heat during the cold winter.

The floor of Block 2, on the other hand, is made up of regular boards of red pine laid in the English tradition: the floor boards overlapped. This suggests that the floor may have been laid later, possibly when the building was converted into a college. Over half of the flooring in the common area had completely rotted away, along with the floors in two of the six cells.

In both cell blocks we find a unique form of ceiling made of four intersecting arches, with both ceilings

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showing signs of wear. The arches had been made by carefully laying and mortaring blocks of stone beside one another against a wooden form that was left in place until the keystone had been inserted. Once the ceiling was stabilized, rubble was used to fill the space above, also providing a downward pressure to keep all the stones in place. The exposed under-stone of the ceiling was then covered with a quarter inch of plaster that would have ideally been whitewashed once a month for sanitary purposes. The ceiling of Cell block 2, besides having large patches of plaster falling off, was also black from the coal furnace that had been used during the college era.

What was found in the dust?

We had to sift through over sixty 25-litre containers of dust and debris in order to find any artifacts. This was undertaken by Maxime Chouinard, the Permanent Exhibitions Advisor at the Morrin Centre. Maxime, who has an undergraduate degree in archaeology, was assisted by Anna Gotgilf, a Katimavik volunteer, and on occasion by Simon Auclair, the former librarian (Fig. 2). They dumped each bucket of dirt onto a board and meticulously sifted through looking for objects. Luckily, the weather cooperated and they were able to do this outside in the courtyard right up until the first snowfall. Among the many objects found was a sword blade (see Maxime's article in this issue), many handmade nails, gnawed bones (not human), a pair of leather shoes, a pipe head and coins. All the artifacts have been passed on to the Quebec City Archaeology Department for classification.

State of the Floors

Our agreement with Parks Canada stipulated that we had to try to conserve as much of the original wooden floors as possible. Once the dust had been cleared away, the state of the floors became more evident. As the large wooden planks were lifted in cell block 1, another wooden floor was revealed. Strangely enough, this floor seemed more recent than the one in the 2nd block, which we had thought dated from the time of the college. This was due to the fact that they were tongue and groove, a new concept back in the early 19th century. In comparison, cell block 2 had double grooved boards with an inserted slat (Fig. 3) which predated the tongue and groove model. We also found traces of holes and rust particles in this floor where other iron retention rings may have been placed. So why was an older type of floor (large planks laid in the French style with hand-made nails protruding at their connections to the joists) laid on



Fig. 1: The French tradition of laying planks



Fig. 2: Anna Gotgilf and Maxime Chouinard

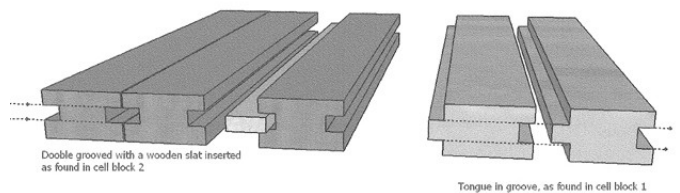


Fig. 3: Illustration of wooden floor boards



Fig. 4: Mortar sub-floor with troughs for the pine joists

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Fig. 5: One-cent coin found in the mortar



Fig. 6: Wooden beams under the walls



Fig. 7: Graffiti of a ship

top of a newer one? When the top planks were lifted to reveal the subfloor, a large quantity of coal dust was found between the cracks where the planks joined one another. This suggests that coal had been stored here at one point, probably during the time of the college, as the prison was heated with wood, not coal.

Upon inspection, it was clear that whereas the wooden subfloor was completely unusable, being thoroughly and irretrievably rotten, many of the upper planks were in remarkably good condition. Once all the wood floors were removed and the dust cleared away, a mortar base was revealed, with long grooves evenly spaced between four and five feet apart. This is where pine tree trunks, including the bark, had been placed in the still-wet mortar to act as joists. Very little remains of these joists, as they have completely rotted away (Fig. 4).

Cell Block 2 held further surprises and mysteries. Running along the walls of all of the cells and the common area we found the ends of large beams of 12 x 12" pine seen in other parts of the building, but these had been mysteriously cut off. Also found embedded in the mortar was a United States one-cent coin dated 1827, showing very little wear. It was quite common for coins to be left in mortar in this fashion to help future workers date the time the construction had taken place (Fig. 5). The fact that it came from the USA is not surprising, as a common currency had yet to be established in Quebec City and, being a major port, many different currencies were being used.

I hypothesize that these 12 x 12" wooden blocks were the original floor of the cells, and that soon after 1827 had to be cut away to be replaced by a more stable base of mortar and stone. Further research may reveal why and when, but for the moment it could be attributed to fire or rot.

This created a major unexpected problem, as these beams had been placed before the three-foot-thick stone walls had been built, which suggests that the walls were built directly on top of the wood. Today, two hundred years later, that wood has rotted away, leaving a space of about a foot under each side of the wall (Fig. 6). After an assessment by the engineers (and a few heart-stopping moments for me, wondering if the walls would all collapse), it was decided to pour concrete into the space left by the wood and fill all the

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cracks that were appearing in the ceilings due to the instability of the walls.

Half of the floor boards in cell block 2 were presumed to be in good condition, but once dismantled, we realized that most of them had dry rot in the bottom half. Rather than replace the entire floor and start from scratch, it was decided to cut off the bottom of the old boards, leaving just the top wood. This was possible because the boards were originally three inches thick. But the groove was cut away in this process as well, so we had to glue them directly onto a new plywood subfloor. All missing boards have since been replaced by new red pine boards. In cell block 1, all missing planks or sections that had rotted away have now been replaced by new wood, cut in a similar manner to the originals.

Graffiti

Before dismantling the floor, we had to carefully take note of all the graffiti and map their location. After dismantling, each plank or board was carefully numbered, then scrubbed and washed in a chlorine solution before being left to thoroughly dry. Now that the grime and dust of the centuries has been washed away, we have found graffiti we did not know existed, such as the initials of inmates and the beautiful etching of a ship (Fig. 7).

Since it was thought that the floors in the cell block 2 were installed after the prison closed, it was presumed that the graffiti could only date from the time of the college. We now have to reassess this hypothesis, given what was revealed by the restoration. The checker boards engraved into the floors take on a more melancholy role, as they served as a pastime for inmates waiting out their sentences.

Some questions answered, more questions raised

One of the joys of doing restoration work is making new discoveries. Being an administrator, it is also one of the terrors, as each new discovery may have unexpected financial implications. The latest discovery is the existence of the original stairwell as shown on Baillargé's plan, leading from the ground floor to the cellar. This was probably mortared over when the new sub-floor was put in place, but may also have given rise to this block being called the black hole. As I write, I am still waiting to see what type of a hole this will make in our budget.

Thanks to our sponsors

The restoration of the jail cells is being undertaken with the generous support of Parks Canada, the City of Québec, the Office of Tourism, the Bureau de la Capitale nationale, the Ministry of Tourism and the Centre local de développement de Québec. We are especially grateful to the R. Howard Webster Foundation and the Jeffery Hale Foundation, without whose support we would never have been able to find our government partners. ■


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


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ST.-JOHN THE EVANGELIST CEMETERY
ON THE ST MARGARET'S RANGE FOUND

By Steve Cameron



Between 1820 and 1840, many settlers came to the St. Sylvestre area southwest of Quebec City, mostly from Ireland. A number of Irish settlers settled on the St. Margaret range, both Catholic and Protestant. By the late 1880s, most of the families had moved on to other locations, leaving behind various signs of their presence. One of these is the St. John the Evangelist Anglican Cemetery (Church of England).

The cemetery appears to have been a functioning entity between approximately 1845 and 1885. Over the years, awareness of its existence seems to have diminished. A few months ago, there were only a few individuals of the remaining anglophone community who had ever heard of it. A record of its existence is included in Canon H. Brazel's summary of existing Anglican Church histories, but it notes that neither it, nor its accompanying church, was found during a tour of the area in 1983. For all practical purposes, it was lost and forgotten. While doing research on a local murder of a St. Margaret resident (Robert Corrigan) that occurred in 1855, I came upon reference to an Anglican church on the range in trial transcripts, a church that I had never heard about. This tangential investigation culminated in finding the cemetery and some remains of the church's foundation. The following is a brief overview of the Church and Cemetery.

Part of land lot #18 was donated to the Church of England by Hugh Russell on Nov. 22, 1847, for the building of a church. This partial land lot eventually was designated as lot #212 (of St. Severin). In 1847, materials were prepared on site for the building of a church. The Church Society of the diocese of Quebec granted £12 towards the completion of the church. The Reverend William King, Hugh Russell, Samuel Russell and William Suitor signed the petition asking for the consecration of the church and cemetery by the Rt. Reverend George Jehoshaphat Mountain on Oct 12, 1857. In the 1860s, services were held every two weeks by the Rev. King. By the late 1880s, services were held once per quarter, as fewer than 5 families were still living nearby. By 1895, St. John the Evangelist was not even noted as being part of the area's mission. Today, one can see partial remnants of a foundation on lot #212. No locals know of the existence of the church, nor has local folklore made references to it.

Part of lot #17 was donated to the Church of England by William McRae Jan. 3, 1845, for the cemetery. This partial land lot was never given its own designation, and is currently a very small part of lot # 216 (of St. Severin). It is well off the road and deep in the woods. As of July 2010, no headstones have been found, but no physical intervention on the site has yet been undertaken. There are records in

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the Anglican archives that refer to a series of burials in this cemetery between 1845 and 1865. To date, records of members of the Corrigan, Cromwell and Stevenson families have been found. While no local Anglophones knew where the cemetery was, there were a number of francophone elders who knew of its existence. Francophone oral history suggested the cemetery was either a family plot or that it was there as a result of an epidemic that affected a particular family.

Along the north side of the cemetery is an extended stone wall hundreds of feet long. Reminiscent of those still seen in Ireland, it is in very good shape and is a treasure in itself, still standing after 135 years or more. It is one of the few local examples that remain.

Preliminary discussions have been undertaken with archaeology experts at Université Laval and the city of Québec as to how to best approach potential on-site interventions. Permission has been granted by the current owner to undertake minor interventions, as deemed necessary, as well to allow for the installation of a commemorative plaque on site.

Measurements and more specific on-site assessment were completed in Sept, 2010. Coirneal Cealteach, an Irish Heritage group in neighboring Ste-Agathe, completed an upgrade to the site in Sept, 2010. The upgrade included general clean-up (both inside and outside the walls) as well as clearing a road of 550-600 feet from the main road to the site through the woods. Coirneal Cealteach will be initiating contact with potential interested parties (heritage/historical groups, municipalities, etc.) to advise of this find and provide the required documentation to assure the cemetery is not lost again. It will also document the specifics of the site as they become available, and will publish any further insights.

Coirneal Cealteach has financed the work and plaque but we would welcome any contribution by interested readers to help off-set our costs. ■

Steve Cameron is co-founder of Coirneal Cealteach and Member of Council of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.



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LORD DALHOUSIE'S RACCOMMODEMENTS
DÉRAISONNABLES

By Louisa Blair

Article based on an address to the Literary and Historical Society, December 7, 2010

When eminent philosopher Charles Taylor cancelled out at the last minute, I was asked to be one of the keynote speakers instead. It was a daunting prospect. What did I know about either philosophy or the intended topic of his speech, which was reasonable accommodation?

What I was beginning to know a little about was Lord Dalhousie, the founder of this Society, as I was deep in his archives on behalf of Parks Canada. I wondered if I could find links between Dalhousie's mandate in Quebec, to rule over British North America on behalf of Britain, and Charles Taylor and Gérard Bouchard's Reasonable Accommodation Commission. Canada's entire history, after all, is one of either accommodating others, or not accommodating them. I concluded that a better label for Dalhousie's job was *Les Racommodements déraisonnables*, or Absurd Patch-Ups. He was trying valiantly to mend something that was unreasonable and ultimately unmendable: a colonial government in Lower Canada.

George Ramsay, the Earl of Dalhousie, was a minor Scottish aristocrat. He had ten brothers and sisters, and had inherited a falling-down castle near Edinburgh. He wanted to do renovations, and needed money to pay the builders. In the early 19th century, if you were a minor Scottish aristocrat with a falling-down castle, you could raise a regiment and go off to fight in the Napoleonic Wars. Then the bosses in London gave you a peerage (he became a baron) and a job in the colonies. It seemed like a good idea.

In 1819, Lord Dalhousie was appointed Governor in Chief of British North America. He was taking the place of a keen tennis player who had just died after being bitten on the hand by a rabid fox. In some ways it shouldn't have been a hard act to follow. But the mandate was daunting: he was to govern a territory of 3.5 million square miles and about a million people, some of whom were not pleased with the way things were going.

Dalhousie had high hopes. "It is a country in its infancy," he said in 1817, "showing in every corner the promise

of becoming one day a valuable and powerful state." When he got here, however, he found that the kind of power it promised was not the kind he had in mind.

He found difficulties on all sides. The Colonial Office in London wanted to control everything, down to the amount he should spend on snow removal near his residence, the falling-down Château Saint-Louis. Worse, every Tom, Dick and Harry at Downing Street kept sending him their no-good relations to find jobs for. He was already managing a crowd of such people in the form of his lieutenants: the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada was the former Governor-in-Chief's son-in-law, the registrar of PEI was the Lieutenant Governor of PEI's son-in-law, etc. That's how it worked. Then there were the sinecures: people who were "employed" in the colony, thanks to connections in the right places, but who stayed in London collecting their salaries. Such was the case with both the Lieutenant Governor of Gaspé, who never set foot in the place, the Lieutenant Governor of Lower Canada, and a number of lowlier officials.

Finally, the Colonial Office kept sending him homeless people. At least 10,000 very poor people arrived every year, people who were inconveniencing the Brits by their destitution. London told Dalhousie to find them somewhere to live, and preferably near the American border so they would provide a sort of human shield.

Next down in the pecking order after himself and his lieutenants were the executive council (a kind of Cabinet) and the legislative council (Upper House, or a kind of House of Lords), which were appointed, not elected. They were mostly anglophones and mostly wanted everything in English, as well as English laws, and the Church of England as the church of state, just like in England. The councils were not accountable to Assembly, whose elected members felt, quite reasonably, that there was not a lot of point to having elections if elected representatives had no real decision-making power. As for John Caldwell, the receiver general (chief treasurer), it turned out he was not accountable to anyone at all. This may be why, when he felt strapped for cash, he borrowed £96,000 from the public purse, more

TRANSACTIONS

than the whole budget for Lower Canada, and didn't pay it back.

Dalhousie also had his difficulties with the Assembly. Faster than any other British colony, the Assemblymen, led by Papineau, had grasped the rights enshrined in the fairly new 1792 Constitution and were using its potential to the full. One tool they had for gaining a measure of control over government was the requirement that they approve the civil list (the public payroll). They decided to examine it item by item, and in the process discovered a number of scandalous sinecures, as well as how many Anglican and Presbyterian clergy they were paying for, a detail Dalhousie had neglected to mention. The Assembly repeatedly refused to vote the civil list through, and Dalhousie, in response, repeatedly dissolved parliament. He was finally so maddened by the situation that he conducted a purge of everyone who opposed him among the colony's militia and its magistrates. Such posts had provided a reasonable income for people running for office.

When Dalhousie arrived, he was open to both French and English, and determined to be impartial. By the time he left, he spoke of the Canadiens as "truly in character Frenchmen – there is not a spark in them of British honour, or honesty, Loyalty or Patriotism – a half dozen of democratic attorneys lead by the nose a set of senseless ignorant fools."

He also had difficulties in another quarter: the American settlers in the Eastern townships wanted a vote; and wanted the English system of land tenure. Was this an *accommodement raisonnable*, when the Eastern townships had been intended as a forest buffer *against* the Americans, and land tenure had been based until now on the seigneurial system?

The Sink of Abomination

Dalhousie may have believed the British Crown should have the final word in the colonies, but he did understand the desires of the Canadiens for their own system of law, language, religion and land tenure. When Scotland joined with England to become Great Britain (the Act of Union, 1707), these were exactly the things that Scotland fought successfully to keep.

He was also influenced by the astonishing broadening of the Scottish mind known as the Scottish Enlightenment: an explosion of science, literature, political theory and philosophy. Edinburgh, just down the road from Dalhousie Castle, had once been known as the "Sink of

Abomination." In the words of Edinburgh historian James Buchan, it was "dirty, old-fashioned, alcoholic, quarrelsome and poor." But in Dalhousie's youth that all changed. People stopped bringing their daggers to the table, and "men discovered there were ways of charming women this side of abduction." As for intellectual activity, Edinburgh became known as the Athens of Great Britain, with a better reputation than Oxford and Cambridge. It was a centre of education, and not just higher education. Because of the Reformation, Scottish Protestants believed that everyone should be literate so that they could read the Bible for themselves. In 1750, about 75% of Scots could read and write.

Since this unipolar enlightened moment, however, there had been the French Revolution, the American Revolution, and the Napoleonic War. The liberal awakening had been stamped on, and people in Scotland were looking back to the good old values of law, order, authority, and the strict rules of the Presbyterian church. Thus Dalhousie had inherited two very different traditions: on the one hand, he read David Hume and Voltaire, and was deeply interested in education, scientific experimentation, and the arts. On the other hand, he was still very much the laird and the soldier, with deep-rooted feudal attitudes to authority, *noblesse oblige*, honour and the royal prerogative. When he was appointed to Quebec, he wrote to his friend in Shakespearian terms: "I must stand the cast of the die, prospering, do honour to myself, or failing, I must lose the little share of my country's praise which I have already received."

A liberal - authoritarian tussle

The two traditions fought for supremacy in Dalhousie's breast. Thus it was the liberal in him who appointed Papineau as speaker of the house, and the laird-soldier who closed down the newspaper, fought with the Assembly over the civil list, prorogued parliament over and over again, and ruthlessly purged the opposition.

He must have known that the end of colonial rule was to come. When he read David Hume's history of the Stuart kings, he identified with King James who, says Hume, should have realized that "neither his character nor the circumstances could any longer support the authoritarian exercise of royal prerogative." He also read French diplomat Abbé Dufour Pradt, who declared that in post-revolutionary Europe, it was only a matter of time before the colonies would become independent. The liberal in him was reading the writing on the wall, but the authoritarian in him just couldn't change his attitude and help the inevitable along.

TRANSACTIONS

While his intransigence hurried along the Rebellion, the main physical legacies of Dalhousie in Canada are a testament to the liberal in him: Dalhousie University, the Wolfe-Montcalm monument, and the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

It was the soldier in him who first wanted to raise a monument to Wolfe. "Hey, where's the Wolfe monument around here?" he asked when he first arrived. "Um, sir..." said his private secretary, "not everyone around here sees him as a hero." Without a moment's hesitation, the liberal in him took over and decided to raise a monument to both Wolfe *and* Montcalm. And to be fair to everyone, they'd write the inscription in Latin.

The liberal in him also believed in education for all. He founded a university, and sent money and books to rural libraries. He tried to bring the Roman Catholics into the public education system, and when that failed, he approved the *fabrique* schools law, which established a semi-public system of Roman Catholic parish schools.

He started agricultural societies, experimental farms and herbariums. He planted oats on the Plains, and bred a famous pig. He was a keen patron of the arts, and hired his military aides on the basis of their artistic abilities (one of them sketched a portrait of the pig). And in continuity with the Scottish liberal tradition of learned societies, he founded the Literary and Historical Society. The laird in him thought this would help cultivate an aristocracy, a ruling class fit to govern, a class that would be curious, cultured and honourable. Then if the rest of the people were educated too, they would naturally vote for the right people! The Society got busy

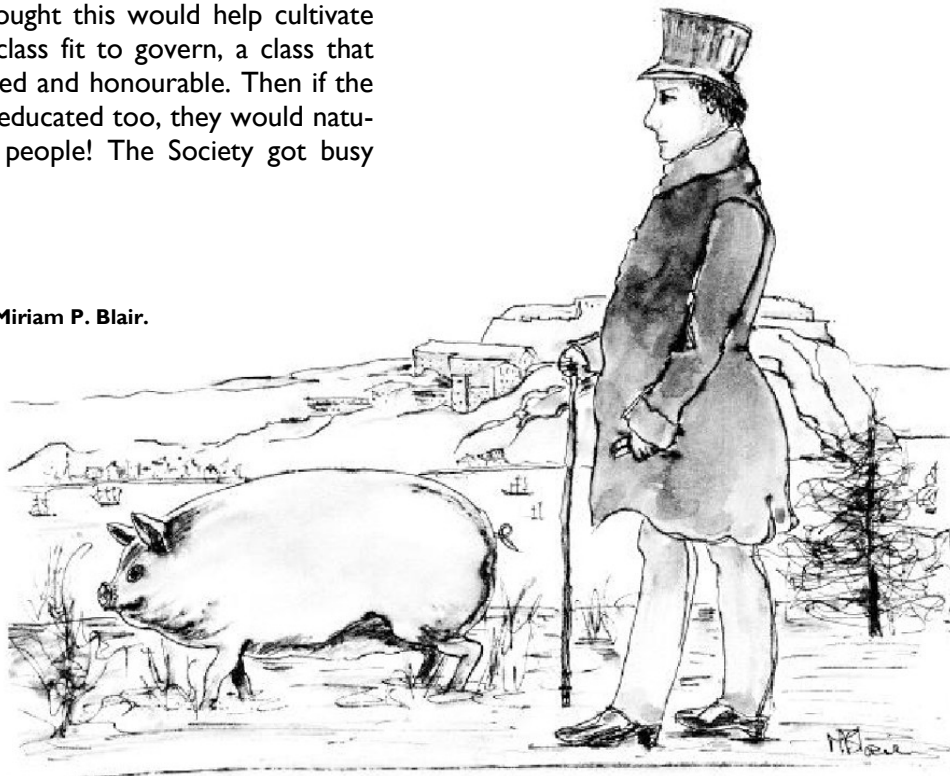
collecting archives, publishing research, collecting plant and mineral specimens, and gave silver medals for history, poetry, oil painting, science, and natural history.

And when Lord Dalhousie beheld all this, he thought that it was Good. So good, in fact, that when he left Quebec he said, "There is no act in the whole period of my administration of the Government in this Province which has afforded me so much satisfaction as that of having accomplished the formation of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec."

As for the rest, his time in Quebec afforded very little satisfaction, for himself or the people he ruled. It was going to take more than a strict father figure to smooth things out. He was locked in a kind of Bermuda triangle between the Colonial Office, the Councils and the Assembly, and he wasn't enough of a man of vision to see his way out.

So finally it was London who moved him out, in 1828, after receiving a petition with 86,000 signatures on it from people who wanted him gone. ■

Lord Dalhousie and his Pig, by Miriam P. Blair.



LIBRARY PAGES

CHANGE & CONTINUITY AT THE LIBRARY

By Virginie Haustrate

A new librarian

I met some of you already, but for those I haven't met yet, let's say it right away: I have an accent! A European one... A fairly new Canadian, I originally come from Belgium where I studied the mysterious "library sciences." Last November, I was warmly welcomed by the members and staff of the Morrin Centre — I felt integrated as a family member. That's on the personal side. Now let's talk about the library, the Morrin Centre's library, *my* library, *your* library...

Book committee

Recently, I've been asked a lot of questions about the LHSQ's book acquisition process. So let me explain how it works. A committee of members, staff and volunteers, is responsible each month for reviewing and selecting new acquisitions for the library. Book recommendations made by members are also evaluated during each monthly meeting. That's why it is really important for us to have your input.

Changes and improvements

We are currently working on improving the children's section. To begin with, we are creating new categories for the junior non-fiction books. Right now these books are filed on the shelves using the Dewey classification system, but it seems to us that we could set up more obvious or user-friendly categories, starting with the inspired "Rainy-day activities." Do you like this idea? Please feel free to give us your feedback.

Be part of it

When I say "we," what do I mean? I mean that keeping up the library is a real team effort. Thanks to staff members Danielle ("Rainy-day activities"- that's her!) and Cheryl, and thanks to Katherine, Jean, Shirley and many other volunteers whose help is so appreciated, the library is working pretty well. But the library is also *your* library. There is no doubt that the library is a historic treasure, but it is also a living place. To be alive, it needs to reflect the needs of the members, so please, feel free to be part of it. Maybe you won't see an immediate reaction to your input, but be assured that we are open to new ideas. In a few words, do you have suggestions for improving the library or for new book acquisitions? Did you enjoy a book that you would recommend? Tell us!

I'm looking forward to seeing you in your library!

WISH LIST

Graphic novels are underestimated. Most readers think graphic novels are for kids or only for very light reading. And sometimes they are — as are non graphic-novels sometimes too — but more and more can be classified as great literature.

In order to help the library readers discover the graphic novel, we are looking for some classics.

V For Vendetta, Alan Moore

From Hell, Alan Moore

Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History, Art Spiegelman

Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451: The Authorized Adaptation, Ray Bradbury and Tim Hamilton



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

By Valérie Chabot

As I am writing these lines, winter seems shy and has not yet brought us a lot of snow. From what I hear, we barely got a white holiday season either. But that's all hearsay, however, as I only recently came back from Panama where the sun was bright and shiny, providing on average 30 degree weather.

Hard to imagine good cross-country skiing conditions within reasonable driving distance. Let's not even think about snowshoeing! Although a lack of snow is sad for outdoor activities, it is perfect for walking around old Quebec without falling off a slippery sidewalk, or down an icy hill. Parking spaces are easier to find as the streets are not buried under tons of snow.

Under these ideal circumstances, come to the Morrin Centre! We have plenty of activities sure to entertain you while keeping you warm. Our internet calendar gives you a complete listing of our future events, but here is a sample of some scheduled for the upcoming weeks.

Quebec, The Fortified City: The Evolution of Quebec's Defence System in The Colonial Era

Throughout the colonial era, Quebec was the main stronghold under both the French and British regimes. As part of our historical conferences, on Wednesday February 9th **André Charbonneau**, Ph. D., will recount the evolution of the city's defence structures from the construction of the first habitation by Champlain in 1608 up to the departure of the British garrison in 1871. Over the years, the fortifications of Quebec became a major component of the landscape of the old city. Likewise, their state of conservation was one of the rationales justifying the inclusion of Quebec's historic district on UNESCO's world heritage list.

André Charbonneau has been at Parks Canada for many years, where he is currently the Senior Historian for Quebec. Mr. Charbonneau has conducted numerous research projects over the years, particularly in the area of military history. He is co-author of *Québec, ville fortifiée, du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* and *Military History of Quebec City, 1608-2008*. In addition, he has authored books on the work of military engineers in Canada and the history of fortifications. He is also a specialist in

commemoration and cultural resource management. The conference starts at 7 p.m. and costs; \$10 for non-members and \$8 for members.

During the month of February, we will also be hosting several musical events:

Songwriters' Circle With Randall Spear and Guests

Don't miss out on our Third SongCircle in a series of four on Sunday February 20th, at 2 p.m. This time, Randall Spear will proudly welcome Cisco Herzhaft, a French bluesman who has been playing guitar for more than 40 years.



Cisco Herzhaft

Guitarist, singer, author-composer, Cisco Herzhaft is a pioneer of blues in France. He is regarded as one of the last authentic acoustic "blues pickers". He has been a professional musician for 30 years, getting his inspiration from Big Bill Bronzy and Muddy Waters, and playing with John Lee Hooker in the sixties. He

has developed a very personal acoustic folk-blues music, a perfect mix of crazy ragtime and simple blues. The quality of his music, the originality of his composition, his well-known energy as well as his passion for music have made him one of the most acknowledged and sought-after professionals of the blues scene.

If you haven't attended this kind of event before, you may wonder what a SongCircle is all about. It is as simple as it sounds, i.e. songwriters get together and present their songs with an acoustic guitar and a few words. The audience gets to hear the songs in an intimate setting and usually hears the inside story of the song.

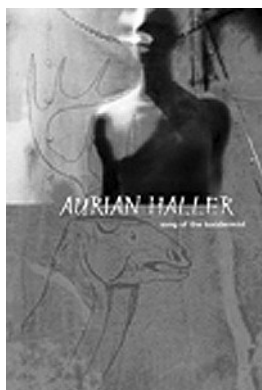
SongCircles are popular in the United States and the rest of Canada. Randall hopes to bring the tradition here to Quebec City, right at the Morrin Centre.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

What are you waiting for? Pencil this activity into your calendar and reserve your ticket if you want to take advantage of the pre-sale price of \$10. Tickets at the door will be sold for \$15.

Last but not least, I want to mention that we are happy to welcome an active member of our community who will be launching his first poetry book on March 3rd, at 8 p.m. The event is free, but be sure to reserve your place as the library has limited space available.

Aurian Haller's Book Launch: *Song of The Taxidermist*



In a collection which draws equally upon the works of neuroscientists, poets, and, yes, taxidermists, Aurian Haller's *Song of the Taxidermist* is a riveting and often unsettling poetic exploration into humanity's simultaneous fascination and unease with the body's resistance to the self's colonizing imperative. Like his compatriots Erin Mouré, Roo

Borson and Michael Ondaatje, Haller's words push beyond the constraints of the short lyric or narrative 'moment' and boldly experiment with larger thematic forms. Section I, "Dwelling," explores the many ways in which flesh may interact and inhabit the spaces around us. "Speechless" celebrates the connections between glossogeny (the origin of language) and biological developments in the human body, charting a poetic theory for the origin of language. The serial poem "Song of the Taxidermist," based on archival research and personal interviews, draws on the stories of famous taxidermied specimens such as the celebrated French giraffe, Zafa, pairing each poem with black-and-white photographs of mounted animals and their manikins.

In Haller's hands, life and death are held to equal measure, the difference between swimming and drowning is the merest of breaths, and carousel ponies haunt the dark veldts of our memories. This stunning new collection, so carefully executed in image and phrasing, so agile in its metaphors, is both astonishing in scope and lush in its imaginative landscape.

About the author

Aurian Haller is an award-winning poet and singer songwriter. He is the lead singer in the Aurian Haller Band, whose unique blend of folk, rock and jazz is supported by Haller's haunting lyrics. Haller's poetry has appeared in *Arc*, *Descant*, *The Antigonish Review* and in his acclaimed collection, *A Dream of Sulphur*. He has won numerous national awards, including a National Magazine Award for poetry and the Malahat Review Long Poem Prize. Haller grew up in the foothills of the Rockies and now lives in Quebec City.

Other events happening in March include:

The continuation of our Arts Matters series with a visit from conductor Julian Kuerti conductor and pianist Anton Kuerti. These talks are moderated by Simon Jacobs and are always highly regarded amongst classical music lovers.

The last SongCircle of the season, which will take place on Sunday, March 27.

Needless to say these activities could not run as smoothly as they do without the help of our dedicated volunteers. If you would like to lend a hand, be it to greet people, track attendance or take tickets, please contact me and I will make sure to find the perfect task for you. In addition to having the chance to mingle with others, you get to attend the activity free of charge! ■

valeriechabot@morrin.org



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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

Québec 2010

imagiNation

Writers' Festival • Festival d'écrivains

After a successful first run, we are busy preparing for ImagiNation 2011: Writers' Festival. This year's line-up is promising a variety of events with some of Canada's best authors. Here are some of the authors who will be part of this year's line-up.



Roch Carrier is most famous for *The Hockey Sweater*, one of Canada's best loved short stories. His book *Prayers of a Very Wise Child* (Penguin, 1992) won the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour in 1992. His collection of short stories *Jolis deuils* (Stanke, 1964) won him a province of Quebec award, Les Concours littéraires du Québec (1965). Carrier's first novel *La*

guerre, yes sir! (House of Anansi Press, 1998) is his best-known and most widely studied work. Carrier was the National Librarian of Canada from 1999 to 2004.

Sheree Fitch is the author of numerous children's books including the award winning *There Were Monkeys in my Kitchen!* (Doubleday, 1992). This book won the 1992 Mr. Christie's Book Award for Best Canadian Children's book. In 2005, she decided to try her hand at young-adult fiction, and wrote *The Gravesavers* (Seal Books, Random House, 2006). This book was a Red Maple Honour Book, and was shortlisted for the CLA Book of the Year Award. Fitch is also the recipient of The Canadian

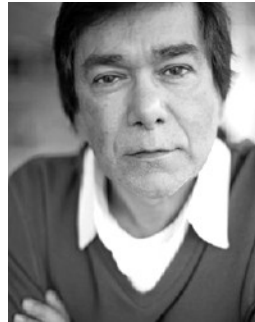


Author's Association Marianna Dempster Memorial Award for her contributions to children's literature.



Todd Denault is a freelance author, researcher and member of the Society for International Hockey Research. His work has been published in a number of print and online publications. His book *Jacques Plante: The Man Who Changed the Face of Hockey* (McClelland & Stewart, 2009) is the first full-length autobiography of one of the most important men in the history of hockey. His second book, *The Greatest Game*, is scheduled to be released this Fall by McClelland & Stewart.

Rabindranath Maharaj is the author of *A Perfect Pledge* (Knopf Canada & Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), a finalist for the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. His novel *Homer in Flight* (Goose Lane Editions, 1997) was a finalist for the Chapters / Books in Canada First Novel Award. His collection of short stories *The Interloper* (Goose Lane Editions, 1995) was nominated for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book. His most recent novel is *The Amazing Absorbing Boy* (Knopf Canada, 2010).



This is just a selection of the authors that will be present for interviews, special events and book signing. Don't miss this great opportunity to discover what is happening on Canada's literary scene. This year's event will be held from April 13th to the 17th. For more information, please visit www.imagination.morrin.org. ■

NEW MUSIC AT THE MORRIN CENTRE

By Delia Fagundes

Randall Spear, one of Quebec's best folk musicians, has been the motivating force behind the Morrin Centre's Songwriters Circle Series, a series of events showcasing some of the city's best musicians. On a given Sunday afternoon, musicians are invited to share a few songs with the audience in a relaxed, acoustic setting. It is an opportunity for the musicians to get feedback from each other and to try new things while the audience benefits from an intimate show with talented artists. At the second show in a four-part series, I. No, one of the most promising acts in town, wowed guests with songs such as *Mon Chéri*, a beautiful ballad written for a friend who passed away, as explained by the group's lead singer Amélie No. The next show in the series is scheduled for February 20, 2011, and promises to be just as exciting as the first two. Guest performers will be announced on the Morrin Centre's website. Stay tuned! **Tickets: \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door.**

THE LITERARY FEAST 2010

By Marie Rubsteck

THE LITERARY FEAST RAISES \$17,000 FOR THE MORRIN CENTRE

The second edition of our annual fundraising event, *The Literary Feast*, took place on December 7th at the Morrin Centre. Our keynote speakers, Dr. Donald Fyson and Ms. Louisa Blair, graciously accepted to fill in for Dr. Charles Taylor who had to cancel at the last minute due to illness.

While we were pleased with the level of turn out for an early December event, we are hoping to increase the number of attendees next year and hold the event earlier in the fall. This year there were many familiar faces but also some first-time attendees. When they entered the library, where the cocktail took place, a smile spread across their faces as if they had just gone through the pearly gates. Our surprise visitor that evening, the Honourable Christine Saint-Pierre, Minister of Culture, wore the same expression on her face when she walked into the library to hand-deliver a letter confirming the Morrin Centre was granted **\$136,000** for the last phase of the restoration project. Barry McCullough, the Morrin Centre's administrative director, strictly forbade me from counting the amount towards the results of the evening! While the Minister wasn't able to stay very long that evening, she promised us that she would be back soon and take her time to visit the Morrin Centre. We hope to see you soon at the Morrin Centre and why don't you plan to be at the third edition of *The Literary Feast*?

The evening was made possible thanks to the help and expertise of our organizing committee:

Sovita Chander, President

Steve Cameron

James Donovan

Diane Kameen

Marie Rubsteck, LHSQ Staff

AND

THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

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We are also very grateful to our numerous silent auction sponsors. Thanks to their donations, we made a \$3,100 profit with the silent-auction and an overall profit of \$17,000.

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La Bête Steakhouse
Louis Garneau
Louisa and Miriam Blair
Mary Murphy Robertson
Nathanial Findlay
Paillard
Remparts de Québec
Robert Pelley
Stéphane Modat

SPECIAL THANKS

DEAR VOLUNTEERS,

The key to our success rests in people like you, whose precious contribution makes the Morrin Centre a better place. With gratitude in our hearts, we thank you for helping us grow and build a strong sense of community. We are grateful for all your help throughout 2010 and look forward to your continued involvement in 2011.

Here are the names of those who have made a difference in the life and operations of the Morrin Centre.

We are thankful to the members of Council for their implication in the governance of the LHSQ.

2010/2011 Council Members

David F. Blair (President)
Sovita Chander (Vice-President)
James Haberlin (Treasurer)
Louisa Blair (Interim Secretary)
Barbara Salomon de Friedberg (Honorary Librarian)
William G.K. Boden
Peter Black
Steve Cameron
Judith Dunn
Gina Farnell
Nathanial Findlay
Ladd Johnson
Rob Lemon
Lorraine O'Donnell
Tariq Qureshi
Hélène Thibault

Thank you to those who gave so generously of their time so that we were able to offer a variety of interesting and innovative events. With the help of our library volunteers we were also able to offer great services and opening hours to the library users.

Volunteers

Bélanger, Raynald
Bissoondath, Neil
Blair, Ronald E.
Blair, Miriam
Bouchard, Lucie
Brochu, Johanne
Bureau, Cynthia
Burgess, Katherine
Conte, Andrew
De Haan, Joanna
Deschênes, Jessika
DeSève, Michel
Dionne, Jean
Donovan, James
Dubois, Guy
Ford, Virginia
Fyson, Donald
Girard, Jean
Girard, Maxime
Godon, Lori
Gunn, Louise
Gunn, Edward
Gailis, Lorna
Harris, Jed
Jobin, Jacques

Kameen, Diane
Knowland, Charlott
Kröger, Ronja
Lachance, Pierre-Luc
Landry, Jacinthe
Lebeuf, Renée
Masson, Pierre
McGowan, Lynne
McMitchell, Jake
Mercier, Pierre
Morneau, Richard
Morisset, Guy
Nadeau, Shirley
Nadeau, Charles-André
O'Donnell, Ben
Ouei, Nancy
Plourde, Érik
Racine, Amélie
Rautiola, Annika
Reisner, Meb
Shier, Maureen
Spear, Randall
Thibeau, Michele
Tulloch, Elspeth
Yavorsky, Donna

**We look forward to working with you again.
Thank You!**

Simon Jacobs, Executive Director



MAKE THE MOST OF WINTER

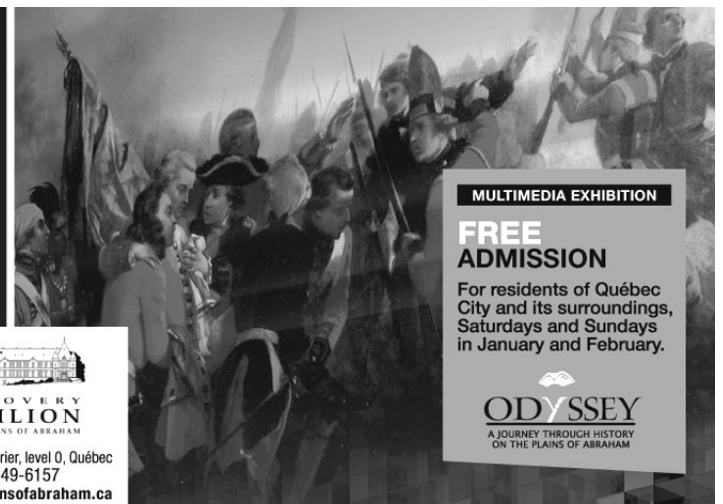
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