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Quebec Heritage News Talks

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Thursday, February 22, 2018

12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Atwater Library

1200 Atwater Ave., Westmount



Drawing the Aberdeen School Strike

by **Rod MacLeod**, Phd., historian, author, *Quebec Heritage News* editor

When six young boys at Montreal's Aberdeen School organized a student walkout in February 1913 to protest anti-Semitism, they could hardly have suspected that their actions would lead, a century later, not only to scholarly analysis but to a festive centenary commemoration, a dramatic reading, and a trilingual graphic novel.

Then again, when Rod MacLeod started work on the Aberdeen School Strike research project he never expected to meet descendants of the strikers either, or witness historical characters he had come to know on paper arguing with each other in the flesh. Nor did he suspect he would find himself writing comic-book dialogue, reviewing an artist's storyboards or helping to provoke a small culture war over which form of Yiddish would best reflect St. Urbain Street slang as it was spoken more than a century ago. The cottage industry that the Aberdeen School Strike Project has become is an example of the creative ways that small-scale history can be adapted to reach readers and audiences in the 21st century. This talk revisits the process of bringing the Aberdeen School Strike to life, and describes the challenges of thinking – and drawing – outside the historical box.

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Caserne 18-30 Centre Communautaire

3622 rue Hochelaga, Montreal (Joliette Metro)



The Heroine of Hochelaga: Sarah Maxwell

by **André Cousineau**, Atelier d'histoire Hochelaga-Maisonneuve

On a mid-winter's morning more than a century ago, Montrealers were shaken by news that a terrible school blaze in the city's east end had killed 17 people – all of them children, except for one. Thirty-one-year old Sarah Maxwell, an unmarried teacher and principal at the Hochelaga Protestant School also succumbed to the smoke and flames that consumed the school building on February 26, 1907. But not before courageously intervening to save the lives of several young pupils trapped in a second-storey classroom.

In a predominantly French-speaking district of Montreal, the Hochelaga school served the neighbourhood's English-speaking children, most of whom belonged to working-class families. In the days that followed the tragic fire, city officials vowed to erect a memorial to honour Miss Maxwell's heroism and to commemorate the student victims. But the story of the blaze faded from memory, as did plans for a memorial. In this talk, André Cousineau will describe the life and times of Sarah Maxwell, drawing on his work with the *Atelier d'histoire Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* to present a glimpse of the social diversity that characterized East Montreal at the turn of the last century. He will also recount how he and other local historians working with the Borough of Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve lobbied successfully to have a local park renamed recently in Maxwell's honour.

Saturday, March 10, 2018

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Brome County Historical Museum

130 Rue Lakeside, Lac-Brome (Knowlton)



The Business of War: Canadian Companies During World World I

by **Caitlin Bailey**, MLIS, director and curator, Canadian Centre for the Great War

Businesses of all types and sizes participated in support of Canada's war effort from the moment the Governor General officially declared war on Germany in the summer of 1914. Private-sector involvement in the First World War is usually portrayed as uniformly corrupt and inefficient, but the nature of this participation was actually much more diverse, with lasting consequences for the future of Canada's industrial economy as a whole.

Originally created as a travelling exhibition in 2017 this talk explores the many surprising ways in which various businesses and industries helped Canada fulfil her obligations to the Mother Country while contributing towards the emergence and development of a sense of Canadian nationhood. Presented by Caitlin Bailey, "The Business of War" brings a fresh perspective to our historical understanding of World War I and its implications for Canadian society. Since its inception, the exhibition has been shown in a number of cities across the country and has been seen by more than 5 000 visitors to date, attracting media coverage in such publications as the Calgary Herald and the Winnipeg Free Press, among others.

Sunday, March 18, 2018

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Stanbridge East Community Centre

5, rue Academy, Stanbridge East



Journey Down the Pike: Reflections on Missisquoi's River Heritage

by **Frederic Chouinard**, MEnvSc, and **Charles Lussier**, agroforestry researcher

Waterways reveal the past and shape the future of life. In their joint presentation, Frederic Chouinard and Charles Lussier explore the rich heritage of the Pike River valley from pre-colonial times to the modern era, sharing their insights into the geography, history and ecology of the river's catchment area.

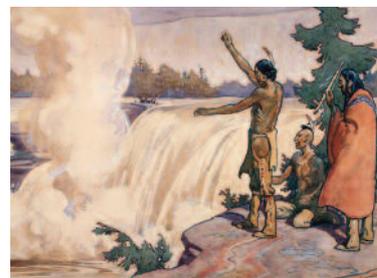
From its main headwaters in Vermont, the *Rivière aux Brochets* winds its way along the Quebec side of the international border through the historic communities of Frelighsburg, Stanbridge East, Bedford and Pike River before emptying into Lake Champlain. Drawing on their work with the watershed management authority, the *Organisme de bassin versant de la baie Missisquoi*, our guest speakers trace the region's ecological and human history, including its importance to Indigenous peoples, the establishment of the Saint-Armand Seigneurie, the growth of forestry and agriculture beginning in the early 1800s, and the river's value as a source of power during the industrial heyday of Missisquoi County, 1860 to 1950. What impacts have these various human activities had on the watershed? What will be the environmental legacy of today's land uses? Highlights from recent water-quality studies promise to help answer these questions. Learn what communities are doing to preserve this natural resource for generations to come.

Thursday, April 5, 2018

7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Wakefield Community Centre

38 Chemin de la Vallée, Wakefield



Anishinabe Heritage of the Outaouais

by **Chief Roger Fleury**, educator-activist and **Wes Darou**, engineer, writer

Tenagagan Sipi – the Anishinabe name for the Gatineau River – once formed part of vast network of trade routes linking aboriginal peoples from Georgian Bay to the upper St-Maurice Valley. Archaeological work at the fork of the Gatineau and Ottawa rivers shows evidence of regular occupation in Western Quebec dating back at least 6,000 years. From history and archaeology the picture of an ages-old semi-nomadic way of life emerges, with Anishinabe (Algonquin) groups coming together in villages during the warm months to trade and socialize, and retreating into one-family forest camps during the winter to hunt. This heritage is a passion for Roger Fleury, Chief of the Quebec Fort Coulobme Off-reserve Algonquins. Chief Fleury will tell the story of the Anishinabe prior to contact with the French, their subsequent alliances with and involvement in the wars between the French and English, and their gradual loss of control over ancestral lands in the aftermath of colonisation.

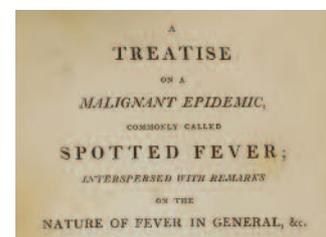
How did the Gatineau Valley's first occupants come to be displaced and moved to far away reserves? Cantley writer and *Quebec Heritage News* contributor Wes Darou revisits the policies of Lower Canada's ministry of settlement which, after 1791, ceased to honour commitments to indigenous peoples, in particular, their land rights. Among those who would benefit directly was a Massachusetts-born timber merchant named Philemon Wright.

Friday, April 13, 2018

7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Uplands Heritage and Cultural Centre

9 Speid Street, Sherbrooke (Lennoxville)



Spotted Fever: An Epidemic in 19th Century New England and Quebec

by **Grant Myers**, vice-president, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network

In late December 1814, Timothy and Sarah Rose of Stanstead County lost five children to a mysterious illness known only as "The Spotted Fever." The personal tragedy experienced by this early pioneer family was part of much wider epidemic that ravaged communities throughout New England and southern Quebec during the first two decades of the 19th century. What was the cause of this deadly disease? Where did it come from?

Hindsight shows us that sudden, unforeseeable threats to human health may arise when pathogens originating in one part of the world are carried by their human hosts into distant lands along trade or migration routes. As contact between Europe and North America increased, so did opportunities for disease to spread from the Old World to the New. Knowledge of the existence of germs and their role in contagion was still decades away. With reference to contemporary accounts, Grant Myers will explore the nature and identity of Spotted Fever and discuss the various factors that fueled the disease's outbreak and its northern expansion up the Connecticut River valley into the Eastern Townships of Quebec.

Sunday, June 3

10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Colby Curtis Museum

535 Dufferin, Stanstead



Elsie's Garden: Putting Trial and Error to Work in Grand-Métis

by **Alexander Reford**, director, *Les Jardins de Métis*

The Edwardian Garden signifies a movement in garden design that celebrated both architecture and perennial plantings and is a happy medium between the floral bombast of the Victorian era and the modernist gardens of the 1930s. Elsie Reford was a gardening pioneer who adapted the vocabulary of the Edwardian period to the unique growing conditions of the Lower St. Lawrence, transforming her fishing camp on the Métis River into one of the largest and most ambitious private gardens of her time. Open today as Les Jardins de Métis, they are one of Canada's premier garden destinations.

Blessed with immaculate timing and a long life, Elsie Reford began to garden in the 1920s, just at precisely the moment when many of the most interesting perennials were being introduced into horticulture by plant explorers in Tibet and the Himalayas. Through decades of trial and error, over time she was successful in incorporating many of these new introductions to her property in Grand Métis. Weaving the story of Elsie Reford's gardens through a unique archive of historic photographs and recently uncovered documents, her great grandson Alexander Reford, director of Les Jardins de Métis (Reford Gardens), will present the unique story of this horticultural innovator.

Our Speakers

Rod MacLeod, Phd., is a freelance historian, author and editor who has written extensively on Quebec social and institutional history. His areas of research interest have included 19th Montreal, the city's "Golden Square Mile"; Mount Royal and Mount Royal Cemetery; the history of schooling and teacher training; and the Home and School Movement. Mr. MacLeod was a founding director of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN), which he also served as president between 2003 and 2008. His books include *Montreal: The History of a North American City* (2018); *Spirited Commitment: The Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation* (2010) and *A Meeting of the People: School Boards and Protestant Communities in Quebec, 1801-1998*. He currently serves as editor of *Quebec Heritage News* magazine

André Cousineau has been a member of the community-based history group, *Atelier d'histoire Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* since 1981. In the 1980s he participated in several research and publishing initiatives on behalf of the Atelier, while at the same time giving courses on local history and genealogy in the Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough. He later conducted research into the history of local businesses. Since 2015 he has served as editor of the Atelier d'histoire's website, in which role he has published numerous articles on the history of local streets, significant figures and landmark events connected with the east-end Montreal neighbourhood. He is also editor of the Atelier's newsletter, *D'une track à l'autre*. In addition to giving lectures on local history, André writes regular columns for the borough's culture blog, *Culture MHM*, for the QuartierHochelaga.com website and the Facebook page, *Robert Carrière raconte*.

Caitlin Bailey, MLIS, has been the executive director and curator of the Canadian Centre for the Great War since 2014. She has staged more than 10 exhibitions since then, two of which travelled nationally, and has grown the Centre from a private collection to a public charity with a professional staff and budget. Educated at the University of Calgary and at McGill University, Caitlin is a western transplant to Montreal. In her spare time, she is the events curator (Montreal) for the Banff Forum.

Frédéric Chouinard holds a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Masters in Environmental Science at the Université du Québec à Montréal. His professional experience includes helping municipalities in the province reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. He is currently employed as a project manager with the *Organisme de bassin versant de la baie Missisquoi* (OBVBM) a post he has held for the last five years. He was the principal author of the Missisquoi Bay drainage basin's "master water plan", and is currently in charge of data collection, analysis and mapping, water-quality monitoring and other activities aimed at preserving and improving watershed ecosystems.

Charles Lussier holds a Bachelor's degree in environmental geography (1990) and a Master's degree in landscape ecology (1992) from Université de Montréal. In 2008 he founded the firm CLG AGFOR which specializes in agro-forestry consulting and field work along waterways in the Montérégie area. He also founded the independent research unit, RAME, (*la Recherche et Développement en Agroforesterie Montérégie Est*) whose work involves collaboration with institutional researchers and focuses on applied agro-forestry projects. Since 2004 he has been studying the ecological history of the Missisquoi Bay and upper Richelieu River watersheds to better understand the origins and natural source waters in the surrounding drainage basins. He has collaborated with the *Organisme de bassin versant de la baie Missisquoi* (OBVBM) since 2002.

Alexander Reford is an historian by training, with master's degrees in history from the University of Toronto and Oxford University. He held the position of Dean of College at St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto from 1987 to 1995. He left to assume the directorship of *Les Jardins de Métis*, a cultural destination and tourist attraction located on the banks of the St. Lawrence in Grand-Métis, Quebec. He was instrumental in creating the not for profit organization which under his stewardship has undertaken a complete restoration of the gardens and historic buildings on the property. He is the author of several books on gardens, including *Des Jardins oubliés 1859-1960* on the lost gardens of Quebec.

Wes Darou received a doctorate in educational counselling from McGill University in 1989, having conducted research with the James Bay Cree of Northern Quebec. He has worked as an education specialist, a risk manager and an employee counsellor with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). He also managed a wellness program, was director of research and training in a street-youth program and trained First Nations managers at the Oo-za-we-kwum Centre in Manitoba. He began his career as a front-line worker with young offenders. Wes also holds a bachelor's and a master's degree in environmental engineering from the University of Waterloo.

Wes's academic and popular writings have explored such issues as First Nations career development and the relationship between First Nations and non-Native professionals, as well as local and family history. He writes a monthly column on bird watching for the *Cantley Echo*.

Chief Roger Fleury was born near Maniwaki in 1942 and raised in Chapeau. He studied at St. Mary's Teacher's College, the University of Ottawa and at Syracuse University. His career has included working as a trapper and tourist guide, teaching history and serving as a provincial-level union representative. In 2011 he was elected Chief of the Quebec Fort Coulobme Off-reserve Algonquins.

Chief Fleury's political activism includes efforts to protect the archaeological site at the junction of the Ottawa and Gatineau Rivers, supporting the rights of the intellectually challenged and contesting Ontario's sovereignty over Calumet and Allumette islands in the Ottawa River. Roger has been a political candidate in a number of regional elections.



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