

# QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS

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## PIONEER FARMING & FOOD



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## PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE

# The significance of time and place is very personal

Part way through this year's QAHN general meeting in the Théâtre de la Poudrière, I realized that it had been almost exactly thirty years since I was last in that room. I also realized that the person who had been standing where I was now hadn't been wearing any clothes.

You might think that I would have been struck by the antiquity of the place (over 180 years) or by the historical significance of the St Helen's Island fort to the Fraser Highlanders and to the presence of English-Speaking peoples in the Saint Lawrence valley. Instead, I remembered seeing a British farce. This just goes to show how the significance of time and place is a very personal thing.

I love the thumbtacks of history: it happened right here, one hundred years ago last Tuesday, etc. I get a thrill being at the place where something occurred

long ago, even if we're just talking about where Charles Dickens spent the night or where Darcy McGee breathed his last. But historical thumbtacking doesn't have to be about the great events or the great battles or even the great people; it's really a process that is quite central to our everyday lives.

I came by an interest in history (and, I suppose, trivia) naturally, growing up with parents who were forever pointing out places where significant things once happened to them. They were both Montrealers (my mother since the age of 20) and both had moved around a great deal, so former homes and hangouts tended to pop up with some frequency. In my father's case, most of the homes had since disappeared, making the reminiscence partly a task of historical reconstruction. At one point in the 1940s my mother shared an apartment across the street from the Monkland Theatre and it was the height of daring-do on a Saturday night for the four working girls to put coats over their pyjamas and scarves over their curlers and cross the street to catch the late show - after which they could go straight to bed. Going along



Monkland Avenue as I frequently do, I often picture them dashing and, no doubt, giggling. In point of fact, this routine did not represent the most fun one could have at this time: I remember being seriously impressed when my parents showed me (the outside of) Rockhead's Paradise, a Saint Antoine Street nightclub they, like many in their day, used to haunt. (I say "impressed" even though the area is now only a shell of its former glory, having fallen victim to the Ville Marie expressway.)

Commemoration was also big in my family, even apart from the usual birthdays and anniversaries. "Where were you a year ago?" was a question that always agreeably tested the RAM - providing, of course, that the one who asked was playing fair and knew something interesting was there for recall. My father once remarked that it had been one year since he was at the Cannes Film Festival, which was true in that the previous year he had been on the French Riviera in May. The following year he announced "This is the

second year in a row I haven't been at the Cannes Film Festival!" and this became a yearly ritual, eventually leading to "It's been seventeen years in a row that I haven't been at the Cannes Film Festival!" suggesting tremendous insensitivity on the part of the festival organizers for having failed to send him an invitation. I'm sure we could all adapt that one if we worked at it.

Our personal histories, just like the larger ones, are thumbtacked onto the places we move through by the memories we have. Sometimes this is all we have. There was a period when my father could drive his oldest brother, who was rapidly succumbing to Alzheimer's, around town and point out places where he had lived or done something significant seventy or eighty years before; my uncle was still able to remember these places even though he couldn't have said where he lived now nor the name of the person driving him around. History is truly not just names and dates, but a crucial part of our brain. Remembering is one of the greatest pleasures, even if the memories are bittersweet. Forgetting is one of the greatest fears. Sooner or later, those tacks fall out.

**Rod MacLeod**

**On the cover: Turning the Harrow, by Horatio Walker.**

### QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS

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## LETTER

### Help wanted: Massawippi mill ruin fails to excite locals

Dear Editor,

Governments pay lip service to heritage, but I myself have given up trying to convince fellow citizens that the past is worth saving after trying repeatedly, and in vain, to interest local municipal groups in the ruins of an 18th-century water-powered mill complex.

Massawippi Village in the Eastern Townships was settled in 1799, and a stone grist mill was erected along the brook that runs past what is now the junction of provincial highways 143 and 208. The mill was in operation until 1922, when electricity was introduced to the area and the mill became obsolete. One of the old millstones, I believe, eventually became a tabletop in the rear of the garden at nearby Springmount Farm. Until five years ago, one could still see where the waterwheel shaft was anchored to the banks of the brook. Today, trees, shrubs and weeds are

growing out of the original structure's two remaining walls, gradually obliterating an important part of our community's

pioneer heritage. I have tried to get people interested in cleaning up the site, but to no avail.

About 400 metres downstream of the old grist-mill site the traces of a water-powered saw mill dating to the same period are also visible. One can still see where the brook was diverted into a channel by the mill operators to drive the mechanism.

Perhaps some of your readers or other members of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network would be interested in doing something to preserve these remnants of early Townships colonial history before they are lost forever.

**Tom Schopflocher, Hatley, QC**

*For more on old mills see Townships Heritage Web Magazine  
www.townshipsheritage.com.*



The Massawippi ruin. Photo Matthew Farfan

## LETTERS

### Metro anglos sought for study

Dear Editor,

I am a doctoral PhD student from the University of Cambridge, England who has come to Quebec this year in order to study the English-speaking population in and around Montreal. I am especially interested in how life for Montreal anglophones has changed over the last 40 to 50 years or so and what impacts these changes have had on the identity of the city's English speakers.

One area that fascinates me in particular is oral history. The opportunity to contact members of your organization would be very much appreciated, and I would relish the chance to speak with English-speaking Montrealers in person about their lives and their communities. I look forward to hearing back from some of them via the email address below. Thank you.

**Paul Daanen,**

**Cambridge University, pd285@cam.ac.uk**

### Exhibition dedicated to diving historian

## Jacques Boisvert never forgot HMCS Magog veterans

Dear Editor,

In regard to the profile of the late historian Jacques Boisvert that was reprinted in your most recent issue ('An express with Jacques Boisvert and Memphré' March-April 2006) readers may be interested to note that, in addition to being Quebec's best known 'dracontologist' Mr. Boisvert volunteered for many years to keep alive the memory of Canadian sailors who served aboard the fighting frigate, HMCS Magog during World War II. Mr. Boisvert helped organize a very successful reunion for the ship's crew in 1989 and remained a faithful friend to all of the surviving veterans, myself included, until his death.

Mr. Boisvert annually laid a wreath at the Magog cenotaph in memory of three sailors who were killed when the ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat in October 1944.

**Herb Montgomery, Lachute, Quebec**

### Lake Memphremagog exhibition

(communiqué) With the collaboration of the Galerie des Artistes du Canton in Magog, the Potton Heritage Association presents an exhibition dedicated to the fond memory of Jacques Boisvert who, for years, explored and promoted Lake Memphremagog:

#### Part 1: History, Legends and Archaeology

This exhibition will highlight various facets of the Lake's rich history which, for over 150 years, has remained a pole of attraction not only for the residents along its shores but also the local population and tourists.

The Lake has a fascinating past. At first, the Amerindians plied its waters for fishing and to reach other river networks. Several artefacts such as arrow heads, spearheads and pottery were recovered from the bottom by Jacques Boisvert and other divers.

Around 1850, Lake Memphremagog became one of the first tourist destinations in the Province of Quebec and impressive hotels were built all the way around the lake. In 1865 in Magog, two hotels were built, the Battles House or McNamara Hotel and the Park House. In 1884 in

Georgeville the Camperdown was constructed then, in 1891, The Elephantis.

In Potton, two hotels were famous through the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the luxurious Mountain House and the Château da Sylva or Revere House. In Knowlton's Landing, Pine Lodge was built around 1828 by Levi Knowlton and became a stagecoach inn on the Montreal-Boston route. Except for the latter, now called L'Aubergine, a country inn, the other hotels have all disappeared.

In the 1820s, before the advent of steamboats, there were "horse ferries" on the lake. These were barges equipped with paddle-wheels powered by horses treading on the deck. The first horse-ferry linked Copp's Ferry (Georgeville) to Knowlton's Landing. In 1850, the Mountain Maid, the first steamboat was launched. The second and most famous was the Lady of the Lake. Built in Scotland, it was shipped in parts to Montreal, then by train to Sherbrooke and by horse carts to Magog where it was assembled and launched in 1867. Given the terrible road conditions of the time, the first railways and the ferries, with landings at different points along the lakeshore, provided safe transportation for vacationers wanting to reach their hotels. The last ferryboat on the lake was the Anthemis which sailed from 1909 until 1951.

The exhibition, produced by Gérard Leduc assisted by Peter Downman and Brian Waldron, presents old photographs of vintage buildings, ferries, artefacts from the lake bottom, old maps, illustrations of local fishes and people.

The exhibition is at Galerie des Artistes du Canton, 30 Place du Commerce, Magog (parking lot across from the Liquor Store Bar).

The exhibition will run July 1 to August 25. The gallery will be open every day: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday, Friday and Saturday, from 10 to 8. Free admission.

Information: 819-868-1881.

## HERITAGE AT WORK

# Exposition Judeo-Québec 2008: History in the making

By Lorraine O'Donnell

here is a wonderful new historical project starting in Quebec City that I would like QAHN members to know about. TEntitled 'Exposition Judéo-Québec 2008, it will uncover the history of the city's Jewish community and then present it in an exhibit at the train station, in time for Quebec's 400th anniversary celebrations.

The story starts, as far as we know, with Esther Brandeau. She was a young French Jew who managed to make her way to Quebec City in 1738 by disguising herself as a boy by the name of Jacques La Fargue. New France was officially Catholic and, as the Dictionary of Canadian Biography article on Brandeau puts it, "a non-Catholic immigrant in New France could look forward only to conversion or



deportation." A year after her arrival, Brandeau had not obliged officials by converting and Intendant Hocquart wrote, "Her conduct has not been precisely bad, but she is so fickle, that at different times she has been as much receptive as hostile to the instructions that zealous ecclesiastics have attempted to give her; I have no alternative but to send her away." He did so that same year, 1739, and this, plus

Esther Brandeau's own tale told to colonial officials, is just about all we know about her. It is enough to be the stuff of legends, though. Many have been told about her: there is a children's novel, *Esther*, by Sharon E. McKay, a novel by Pierre Lasry, recently released in English under the title *Esther: A Jewish Odyssey*, and even an art installation by Wendy Oberlander called *Translating Esther*.

We can bring Quebec City's Jewish story almost up to date by looking at another adventurous Jewish woman, Lea Roback. Born in Montreal in 1903, Roback moved with her family to Beauport, near Quebec, where she lived with her parents and eight brothers and sisters. They were the only Jewish family in town. Lea Roback went on to live in Montreal, New York and Berlin, where she began a life-long involvement with the workers, women's and peace movements. She travelled to the Soviet Union during the 1930s and, back in Montreal, organized unions and opened the city's first Marxist bookstore. Lea Roback died in 2000 at the age of 96 in Montreal.

In between these tales are many others, equally fascinating, of merchants (the Gradis family of France and Samuel Jacobs in

the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and Maurice Pollack in the 20<sup>th</sup>, to name just a few) and politicians (Ezekial Hart and Peter Bercovitch), not to mention the remarkable story of 19<sup>th</sup> century man-about-town and diarist Abraham Joseph, or of engineer Sigismund Mohr, who helped bring electricity and telephones to Quebec City. One of the province's most famous Jews, Aaron Hart, lived mostly in Trois-Rivières but was also a founding member of our own illustrious Quebec Literary & Historical Society, as its 1831 charter indicates. These and many others helped form a growing Jewish community with its own synagogues, social networks and charitable organizations.

The story continues today, of course. Quebec City still has a small but strong Jewish community, with a synagogue, a Cercle Hillel at the University and, significantly, the stewardship of the Judéo-Québec project itself. Simon Jacobs, who is active in the community in his role as vice-president of Quebec's Beth Israel Ohev Sholom Synagogue, got the project off the ground. Mr. Jacobs, a musician with the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec and a member of our Society, is Judéo-Québec's President. Local community members including Arthur Aaron are on its Board of Directors. The project's committee of experts in the fields of Jewish, Quebec and Canadian history includes Pierre Ancil (University of Ottawa), Ira Robinson (Concordia University), Jean-François Royal (Musée des religions in Nicolet) and Roch Samson (Parks Canada). I am the project historian. A summer student and museologists will soon round out the team.



Do you have stories of your own about Quebec City's Jewish community? Maybe you are Jewish yourself, or you had Jewish friends at the Quebec High School, or you shopped at Pollack's on rue Saint Joseph. Maybe you heard stories from your grandparents about the Ortenberg trial or waves of Yiddish-speaking immigrants arriving early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. If so, please consider yourself invited to contact the team at (418) 688-8046. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Lorraine O'Donnell, Ph.D., is a Quebec City-based historian. She was director of QAHN's recently completed Prospecting for Heritage project.*

*Lea Roback in 1997, photo by Louise de Grosboi., Aaron Hart, miniature by Dominic Boudet, about 1830-40.*

## HERITAGE ISSUES

### Beauchamp: We won't impose freeze on church sales

Culture Minister Line Beauchamp says she doesn't plan to follow a key recommendation by a parliamentary committee on Quebec's rich but dwindling religious heritage.

Beauchamp said the National Assembly Culture Committee's report, *Croire au patrimoine religieux du Québec*, Believe in Quebec's Religious Heritage, is "a very interesting tool and an excellent source of inspiration which will give direction to our actions in the coming months and years."

The report followed extensive National Assembly hearings. Mme. Beauchamp said in a press release June 19 that it is a good reflection of concerns and proposals raised by heritage and church organizations. "Now we have to find the right measures to ensure the conservation and development of religious heritage."

The committee recommended a temporary stop to the sale of deconsecrated churches, which are often being sold off quickly and without warning to the public, before local heritage and community groups can organize to preserve them. Parishes and congregations, mostly Roman Catholic, are closing by the hundred throughout Quebec. Heritage groups had called for a freeze but Mme. Beauchamp said a forced moratorium isn't needed and would be heavy and intrusive and infringe property rights. She said voluntary moratoriums "based on concertation and partnership would give various interveners time to plan for changes and find viable solutions."

Mme. Beauchamp urges church and municipal authorities to work with her to find a way to exchange and work together so expected property transfers and modifications can take place within two years, the public can be consulted and appropriate solutions can be found. The press release says the Culture and Communications Department will support this process, and will continue to support the Fondation québécoise du patrimoine religieux

in working together with the various religious authorities and in using the Cultural Property Act and the new Quebec cultural heritage fund, Le Fonds du patrimoine culturel québécois, to the best advantage.

Mme. Beauchamp praised the committee for defining four main areas of action – knowledge, protection, transmission and management – which provide a logical order for suitable management of heritage as a cultural field. She

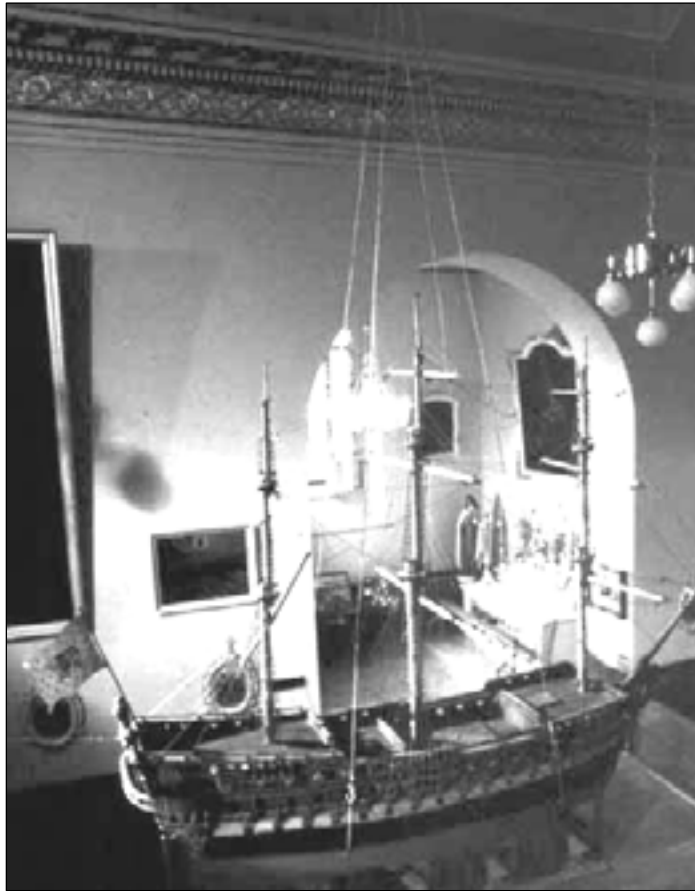
said this will lead to efficient work plans and organization of resources.

Most recommendations involving one of the four thrusts of the report will be relatively easy to carry out, says the communiqué, and many of them are already being developed with "serious partners".

In the area of knowledge, the 2002-2003 "inventory of inventories" by the company Patri-Arch will be easy to update, as will the religious property inventory, which already includes all buildings dating from before 1975. Mme. Beauchamp also considers an inventory of intangible heritage (*patrimoine immatériel*) to be an urgent priority, says the release, and discussion is underway with the

Canada Research Chair in Ethnology at Laval University so it can begin as soon as possible, using recognized scientific methods and designed for broad distribution.

The cultural heritage fund Le Fonds du patrimoine culturel québécois, to be set up this summer, will be a powerful support for protection of "significant elements" of religious heritage. Together with the support program for restoration of religious heritage (Programme de Soutien à la restauration du patrimoine religieux) administered by the *Fondation*, the new fund will provide support for renovations, recycling, restoration and improvements which would not have been eligible until now. The cultural Property Act will also continue to be a major legal tool for protecting property, whether through the Department or



Above: Notre Dame des Victoires, Quebec City. Opposite, Old Hull Methodist Chapel, (1827). Photo: Matthew Farfan.

the municipalities, which will be further encouraged to use the Act by the new Fonds du patrimoine culturel. As for transmission of the message, for many years religious heritage has been the subject of publications, tours, lectures and animation all over Quebec, often with the Department's support through agreements with municipalities. The Culture and Communications Department will encourage and give priority to such projects, says the communiqué.

Finally, in the field of management, Mme. Beauchamp intends to "mobilize" the Department to develop the report's various recommendations and put them into practice. As well, amendments to the Cultural Property Act will specify the roles and responsibilities of various interveners, whether they represent religious traditions or communities, civil society, municipalities or government. The process of ownership transfer (*alienation*) and the idea of heritage value (*charge patrimoniale*) may also be subject to analysis and recommendations.

*The following is adapted from the Globe and Mail, as reported by Rhéal Séguin.*

Drive through city neighbourhoods, or through the towns and villages that dot Quebec's countryside, and often the most distinctive feature is the church steeple, a reminder of a not-too-distant past when religion dominated people's lives.

But many of those churches are falling apart. And with fewer Quebecers going to church regularly, there is less money in the collection plate to cover the costs of upkeep and repairs.

Congregations are merging and once-magnificent structures are being boarded up, listed for sale or demolished.

Pipe organs, sculptures and paintings that once adorned churches are being sold to the highest bidder.

A National Assembly committee recently gathered within the walls of Saint-Roch Roman Catholic Church, one of Quebec City's architectural jewels, to release a report calling for a moratorium on the sale of all churches until January of 2008.

It also proposed creation of a Council on Religious Heritage to help save the province's estimated 4,000 places of worship, convents, monasteries and other religious sites, which it said were worth between \$3-billion and \$4-billion.

It recommended that the government contribute \$15-million a year to the fund, which would also be financed by gifts from private donors.

"This is a national priority, it is the identity of Quebec and of its diversity," Parti Québécois committee co-chairman Daniel Turp said. "These measures should be adopted very soon . . . it's time to act and I hope the Quebec government

and the Ministry of Culture understands that there is an emergency."

A half-century ago, eight in 10 Quebecers regularly attended mass.

Today, that number is less than one in 10. The number of priests in Quebec has dropped by 1,500 in the past decade, and the average age of priests and nuns in convents and monasteries is over 85.

Rémi Gagnon, who is responsible for church councils in the Quebec City diocese, said congregations have barely been able to protect their valuable possessions and if nothing is done soon, most of them will be lost.

"We have here churches, works of art, religious orders that are extremely costly to maintain. And we simply can't afford to do it alone," Mr. Gagnon said.

"We need help from charity groups, as well as from the government.

"We need long-term stable funding, to preserve and protect our religious heritage."

Even Saint-Roch, Quebec City's largest church, which has undergone a \$2.5-million facelift, still requires \$200,000 to cover the cost of further repairs.

Saint-Roch parish priest Réal Grenier said the pipe organ needs to be restored and the foundation repaired.

"We rent office space in the basement to community groups and that helps generate revenues," Father Grenier said.

"But at the other parish church we haven't been so lucky. We may have to shut down Notre-Dame-de-Jacques-Cartier Church," Father Grenier continued, "because building regulations prohibit us from renting out space that would generate much-needed revenues."



Father Grenier said attitudes toward churches are slowly evolving.

"Churches no longer belong exclusively to religious orders, but they belong to our cultural heritage that must now include the involvement of governments and the entire community," he said.

"And this conversion must also include proper funding and not just some pipe dream filled with good intentions."

Over the years, some churches have been converted into condominiums, libraries, office space and even concert halls. In Quebec City, in one remarkable instance, the Saint-Esprit Church has been transformed into a school to train circus performers.

In some cases the architectural value of the buildings and some of the assets left by artists, architects and masons were preserved. But in other instances, everything was gutted and none of the history remains.

"If we don't do things soon, it is going to be too late," said Mr. Turp.



## HERITAGE ISSUES

# Mobile workshops bring conservation to the people

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network has taken its heritage preservation program on the road, presenting awareness and conservation workshops in 13 English-speaking communities across the province.

About 250 heritage enthusiasts, activists, regional and municipal officials and bureaucrats attended the half-day meetings, which were held in four regions – Laurentians, Ottawa Valley, Montérégie and Eastern Townships. The workshops were jointly sponsored by local historical societies. Discussion included the nature and definition of heritage, useful laws and regulations, the process of recognizing and protecting local heritage properties, sources of funding and technical assistance. Participants focused on local issues and sites, and were urged to work together.

Bottom line: the municipality is your best friend.

Municipalities have the power and responsibility to protect heritage sites, properties, buildings, neighbourhoods and even landscapes. They can order that designated properties must be preserved, and require that renovations and new buildings meet standards of construction, style and harmonious appearance. For their part, citizens and community groups must participate in local zoning and advisory committees and become involved in municipal affairs if they want their

community to be heritage minded. They must also take ownership of important local sites and properties if needed and partner with other individuals and groups sharing their interests.

Several participants said that communities which enact heritage programs are perceived as being opposed to development. However heritage planning and conservation can go hand in hand with successful and sustainable development. Developers can be encouraged to create harmonious projects that fit in with existing landscape and

architecture, especially if guidelines are created before development pressure leads to confrontations between developers and communities.

The problem of large and inappropriate development and its unwelcome impact on nature and local communities arose often. At the other extreme, the economically depressed region of Pontiac has a net loss of people moving to other areas of the province and Ontario. Participants there were eager to learn more about the ways that heritage could be used to promote sustainable communities and encourage families to come and live in Pontiac.

The fully-bilingual workshops took place in Mansonville, Philipsburg, Stanbridge East, St. Andrews East,

Shawbridge, Arundel, Montfort, Hudson, Grand Calumet Island, Wakefield, Richmond, Stanstead and Cookshire. The project was headed by Josiane Caillet, PhD. Workshop leaders were Sylvia Fendle, Jonathan E. J. Murphy and Charles Bury.

QAHN is the non-profit umbrella group for English-language historical societies, cultural and heritage groups and individuals. It is dedicated to promoting and conserving anglophone heritage in Quebec. Last year QAHN announced its endangered-heritage policy, based on the provincial legislation, especially the Cultural Properties Act, the Municipal Code of Quebec & the Cities and Towns Act.



Many requests have since come in from individuals and heritage groups seeking to preserve threatened historic sites and monuments. These heritage alerts clearly demonstrate the need in all regions of Quebec for municipal and county governments to take a greater role in stimulating local heritage conservation. Although municipalities have had the legal power to cite historic monuments and to constitute historic sites since 1986, this power is little known and rarely used outside large centres. Many town councils are still reluctant to adopt conservation policies.

This project's timing couldn't have been better. Last fall, the National Assembly's standing committee on culture conducted broad public consultations on the future of Quebec's religious heritage. The hearings

**Laurentians region workshop leader Sylvia Fendle discussing one of the finer points of heritage conservation with a participant in the final HASTI meeting, held at Montfort, near Sainte Adèle.**



# Quebec nixes sanitized version of history for high schools

Historic French-English conflicts won't be dropped from Quebec high-school textbooks after all. The Conquest, the Patriote Rebellions, the Act of Union, the repatriation of Canada's Constitution and referendums on Quebec sovereignty have returned to the province's official secondary-school history program, following an uproar over proposed curriculum reforms that sought to gloss over them.

The proposed changes to compulsory Grade 10 Quebec and Canadian history classes, which were leaked to media outlets in April, sparked criticism from some prominent historians who described the reform as "ultra-federalist" propaganda.

An advisor to Quebec's Ministry of Education, history professor Jean-François Cardin, defended the proposed changes as an attempt "to offer a more unifying history" rather than the traditional framework, structured around conflict between English and French.

But many historians, unions and politicians were quick to criticize what they saw as a move to downplay basic truths about Quebec's past. Laurent Lamontagne, president of the Society of Quebec History Teachers, and historian Félix Bouvier, panned the changes in Montreal's *Le Devoir* newspaper in April, saying political tensions are impossible to ignore.

"There is the point of view of Quebec within Canada, where Quebec gets its due," Lamontagne told the *Canadian Press*. "That could be true. But there is also another option, the Quebec sovereignty movement. And this one we seem to brush aside."

Quebec's Ministry of Education responded in mid-June by unveiling the new version of the curriculum, this one with the traditional French-English conflicts intact. An account of the Conquest, for instance, which was barely mentioned in the draft reform, has reappeared in a section called *Empire Change 1760-1791*.

And whereas the story of New France was only touched on

**Continued from previous page**

revealed many concerns about heritage preservation that were not strictly limited to religious architecture. Here is a sampling of some of the recommendations put forward during the hearings:

- Establish internet links with access to heritage databases;
- Offer practical advice concerning priorities when restoring heritage properties (and especially what sorts of 'restoration' to avoid);
- Establish a heritage classification system;
- Provide a comprehensive list of government funding programs available for local conservation;
- Give examples of local heritage conservation strategies;
- Provide a list of heritage professionals by region;

in the first version of the curriculum reform, the final text treats it as a bona fide historic period whose study will be mandatory.

Among other things, the history program will from now on include study of a chronological time-line that lists significant historic facts, including conflicts, in Quebec history. These facts are "indisputable" and teaching them to students will be considered compulsory, according to the Ministry.

In Quebec, politics and education have always made for a potent brew.

Quebec's education minister, Jean-Marc Fournier, reacted swiftly to the most recent controversy. Fournier asked his bureaucrats to rework the departmental document after he heard media reports about its contents, before he even had the chance to read it, his spokesperson said.

Fournier told reporters last week he would never support curriculum changes that "rub out" historical conflicts. Though the content apparently still has to be finalized, widespread changes to Quebec's high school history courses are scheduled to be implemented by September 2007.

But for some, insisting that strife between French and English take centre stage in any overview of Quebec's past is dangerously reductive.

There's a "hell of a lot that happened that wasn't strife between French and English," said Graeme Decarie, a professor of Quebec and Canadian history at Concordia University. "For that matter there was strife between English and English and French and French."

Focusing too much on conflict gives students the wrong impression about history, says Decarie, himself a former high school teacher.

"History is not a matter of learning what is true. History is a matter of learning to understand what you see, and to understand the many ways it can be understood."

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• Offer bilingual documentation on heritage preservation in Quebec;

• Sponsor public information sessions and seminars on local heritage conservation.

The Heritage Awareness and Stewardship Training Initiative (HASTI) developed by QAHN and supported by a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage, responded to many of these recommendations. *Bright Futures Begin in the Past* (*Parlons de notre patrimoine*), the bilingual workshop guide developed for this project, is now available for consultation on QAHN's web site [qahn.com](http://qahn.com). It is a valuable reference for anyone interested in preserving their community's heritage landmarks.

# PIONEER FARMING

## The Levines of Trout Lake:

### Their enemies were frost, fire and human frailty

By Joseph Graham

Each family has a claim to a rich past, the knowledge of which often dies with the oldest members. This lost knowledge is more than a personal family recollection, of little relevance to those outside the family. It is a perspective upon the past of our culture and a part of the history of Canada.

There are rich rewards for those of us who take the time to talk with the elders and write down what we learn. Perhaps this should be the theme of this publication.

Alter and Sima Levine arrived in Montreal in 1903 along with their seven children. They met others here who, like them, had fled the pogroms in Russia. Their new country was full of hope and freedom. There was no dark authoritarian presence watching their moves. There were no pogroms, random massacres of Jews, and the immigrants could freely share their stories, hopes and fears. Almost drunk with a sense of freedom, a number of these new Canadians decided to establish a commune off in the countryside where they could farm and reorganise their world. In Russia, it was illegal for Jews to be farmers.

What could challenge their vision in this new land where only hard work stood between them and their ideals? No society had yet experimented with the ideas of Karl Marx and intellectuals everywhere believed that we could achieve utopia simply with a social system.

The family names of these social pioneers are still with us today: Ofner, Gillitz, Corn, Shuldiner, Smith, and a family by the name of Levine who were too numerous to join the commune, but managed to acquire a separate farm nearby. These communists believed that they could create a new society in Les Pays d'en Haut, the great north, where functioning farms with open, grazed fields could be purchased reasonably. The purchase price of the farms in Sainte Agathe should have been warning enough that their project was ill starred. Unlike the French Canadians, who had walked through almost uncharted woodlands and

hacked down and burned the forest, these new pioneers arrived by train and beheld rolling, green fields, fenced pastures and roads.

Bucolic and practically free, the stony green fields soon revealed their dark secrets. The soil is generally nutrient-poor and very thin, sitting on glacially compacted rocky

gravel leaving crops vulnerable to drought even while small lakes and brooks shimmer in the hot sun. The frost-free season is short: It is unlikely to freeze between the 12th of June and the 1st of September, a period of only 80 days, but it has. While they could not rely on the weather in summer, watching helplessly as crops baked in dry fields or froze before they could

be harvested, they could count on being stranded for days at a time in the heavy snows of mid- to late winter and would watch the thaw turn to torrents in the spring, cutting through roads as the water rushed away for the season. The commune lasted less than five years.

Sir Mortimer Davis, who had extended credit to the commune, ended up with the farm, and he turned it over to a doctor and helped him set up the Mount Sinai Hospital for the treatment of tuberculosis. Alter Levine, who was older than the commune members, and had acquired his

own farm nearby, could not leave as easily. While he had wanted to be near the commune, he had a whole family to feed. Now, with eight children, they must have practically formed a commune themselves. Alter fell into a deep depression after the failure of the

commune. Instead of heading the family and diligently farming, he became a suicidal burden. Sima, his wife, assigned her 16-year-old son Leo the task of checking up on his father to make sure that, in his depressed state, he did himself no harm. One day, Leo cut his father down from the rafters of the barn where the elder Levine had tried to hang himself. Another time he found his father bleeding in the woods and dragged him home, helping his mother nurse him back to health. Leo always remembered



what his father told him while he was healing: "Next time you won't find me."

Sophie Levine Gross, the youngest and only child born in Canada, remembers the hardships of those early days. She has no memory of her father. He made good on his promise and his body was never found. Her mother Sima Levine was left with eight children ranging in age from 25 to 2 who, with her, were learning the local languages, on the 278-acre farm. They had fifteen acres of fields under cultivation, a barn, a horse, a small herd of cattle and 50 chickens. Sophie's earliest memories include receiving a new birth certificate because the farmhouse burned down and all their papers were lost.

Her mother began to take in boarders in their new building, people who were visiting family at Mount Sinai Hospital, or others who had come to Sainte Agathe for the tuberculosis cure and could not find room at the hospital. Over time, their home evolved into the Trout Lake Inn and her brothers ran it together with their mother. The inn was on the north side of the lake and became a popular destination, finally bringing the family some prosperity.

Fire was a constant danger in those days. There was no safe heating source, and the structures were made from wood that dried thoroughly in walls that let the wind through during the long, cold winters. Everyone had experience with fires. Chimneys, stoves and fuels were not standardized and daily chores occupied all of people's time. At the Trout Lake Inn, Leo had been responsible for the fire insurance and so it was Leo who was blamed when fire destroyed the inn and they discovered that the premium had never been paid.

Even so, the family managed to rebuild, but Leo did not join them. Never fully forgiven for the fire, he managed to buy a parcel of the Larivière farm to the south. In time, the Trout Lake Inn closed and the others moved on to other careers, but Leo, who had secretly married against his wife's family's wishes, persisted and eventually built a new hotel that he called Sun Valley Lodge. One legend that Leo never outright denied is that his wife, Sophie, was forbidden from seeing Leo, and feigning acquiescence, she accepted to marry the man her parents chose, organizing their honeymoon at Trout Lake. When the groom picked her up to carry her over the threshold of their honeymoon cabin, he shoved the door open with his foot and there found Leo sitting with a shotgun on his lap.

Leo and Sophie, both of small stature, made up in determination what they lacked in size. They furnished farm produce and rooms to their guests, many who first came simply to visit family members



at the hospital. Sun Valley Lodge became a popular hotel and soon they found other opportunities to make money. When Sir Mortimer Davis died in 1927, his estate was liquidated and Leo purchased a number of the outbuildings and dragged them behind a team of horses around Lac des Sables and over the hill to set them on foundations on his farm. These houses were rented to his guests for longer periods and in time were purchased as summer cottages. Because the road ran along the lakeshore, they were placed up the hill, overlooking the lake, and the Levines kept a very deep setback of land between the road and the cottages. Rumours were rife that the government was going to widen the road and they wanted to receive the expropriation money. Thwarting their plans, a new road was built behind the

mountain, eventually becoming the Route 117 that we know today. It would be years before their son could work through the papers to transfer all of these huge front lawns to their rightful owners. Unfortunately for the Levines the fields could no longer produce, being filled with cottages, and with most of their customers preferring the idea of renting or buying a small cottage, the hotel became redundant.

Undaunted, the Levines set up a summer camp for the many children. They themselves had one son whom Sophie home-schooled, telling everyone that her 'Sonny' would one day become a brain surgeon.

Over time, the Levine farm grew into the small Jewish country community that still exists around Trout Lake. While all of the other Levines moved away and established careers elsewhere, Leo and Sophie persisted. Eventually they sold the balance of the mountain to the Gentemens who created Chanteclair Estates, a development based on Swiss chalets, all with views from different locations on Leo's fields, and all sharing his beach on the lake. Leo told all who would listen that the mountain had been stolen from him. Predeceased by Sophie, Leo passed away in 1989 at the Mount Sinai Hospital, a tough little man to the end of his ninety-nine years. He and Sophie are survived by their son, Dr. Mark (Sonny) Levine, neurologist, his wife, three children and nine grandchildren who all live in California.

The community that grew up on their farm consists largely of city people who came to Trout Lake for a variety of reasons, the dream of a commune long forgotten.

*Information from original sources, with thanks to Sonny Levine and Jack Wolofsky Contact Joe Graham at joseph@doncaster.ca.*

# PIONEER FARMING

## First families started in sod huts

# Agriculture in the Laurentians: Farming among the rocks

By Sandra Stock

The earliest 19<sup>th</sup> century settlements in the Laurentians were intended to be agricultural, in spite of the unpromising terrain and the very short growing season. There were two major thrusts of pioneer farmers into the hills. The first (1830 to 1860s) were mostly Irish and Scots emigrants that arrived from Montreal via barges up the St Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers, disembarked at Carillon, and seeing the good rolling country already farmed around St. Andrews East (Saint-André-d'Argenteuil) and Lachute, initially were optimistic about their land grants further into the bush.

The second major population movement started a bit later by French speaking, native born farmers from the adjacent north shore regions above Montreal. This was to become a huge internal migration when the famous Curé Labelle, Le Roi du Nord, started the push for northern expansion in the 1870s to 1890s. His motivation was partly to stem the growing flow of French-speaking Catholics to what was perceived as the corrupting world of the New England textile mills in the United States. Also, Labelle was competitive by nature and didn't like to see all that crown land going to the "newcomer Anglo-Protestants". In reality the English-speaking emigrants were a very mixed lot – the majority were Irish Protestants but there were also Irish Catholic settlements like St. Columban (very early, 1830s), and along the Rouge River and into the Laurel and Lost River area, mainly Highland Scottish settlers, many of whom spoke Gaelic.

Not all these settlers came from an agricultural background either. Especially among the Irish, many were skilled labourers and even city tradesmen. The Irish Potato Famine of 1845 had devastated the whole economy of Ireland in the towns and cities as well as on the farms. Many formerly prosperous people lost their livelihood and saw a new beginning in Canada. This lack of former farming experience may not have been all that important in reality as the extremely harsh climate of the Laurentian Mountains required a very different approach from the balmy and mostly treeless Irish countryside. Potatoes, for example, only gave one crop a year in the Laurentians, not the three that had been possible in Ireland.

Settlement followed the rivers – the Rouge and the North and then their smaller tributaries. These rivers were not navigable for very long stretches, but served as guides for the first trails along their banks. Official surveyors, under the leadership of Augustin-Norbert Morin, the minister for colonization in the government of Lower Canada, portioned out this wild and uneven landscape into long, narrow, neat, mathematical ranges and lots like the gentler, flatter St. Lawrence plain.

The pioneers trekked in on foot, as it was impossible to bring a horse through the thick trees and the many swampy sections.

There was also nothing to feed large animals until crops could be produced. There were no wheeled vehicles in the more remote areas until the 1870s at least as there were no real roads. Heavy loads were hauled by travois or what was locally called a stone boat. Roads have always been challenges in this area, even today. Until a sod house, or dugout into the side of a hill, could be made the newcomers slept in tents beside the lakes and rivers, in the dark, deep forest full of unfamiliar, and probably frightening, flora and fauna.

The first crops were barley and root vegetables as these are hardy and good keepers over winter. The trees were cleared with axes and the logs were used to build houses and barns. The ashes of hard wood trees like maples and oaks were made into potash that was taken to larger towns like Lachute or Saint Jérôme and served as a source of cash to buy various necessities. Small domestic animals like pigs and chickens were kept, and, as more pasture was made available, sheep, cows and finally the farmer's friend, the horse, could be added. Hunting game and gathering wild fruits and berries supplemented the diet. Native plants like crab apples, raspberries and especially blueberries were abundant but labour intensive to amass and preserve for the long winter.

The tilling of the land was done mostly by hoe as there are so many rocks, and, at first, because there were the stumps and remnants of trees in the fields. Fences were made from the smaller fieldstones and then heightened by cedar rails. Many of these old boundary lines still remain, many now surrounded by a second growth forest like the one from which they came.

Throughout the Laurentians, farmers could never really prosper beyond a subsistence level if they depended solely on agriculture. The development of the lumber industry with the coming of railways provided more lucrative employment at the mills and winter lumber camps. Many settlers, especially of the second generation, who had started as farmers, left the farms and worked full time with forestry. This work was hard but seasonal, with often-lengthy breaks at certain times of year. This was unlike farming which was, by comparison, 'twenty-four/seven' and perceived as rather dull, with the farm family essentially trapped in the daily rounds of feeding and tending animals and doing repetitive chores.

By the 1890s, the Laurentians were becoming less isolated and in the summers, middle class people from Montreal started coming for vacations away from the city. This initiated a new form of farm economy – the boarding house-farm. These were, from what we read and know of this period, almost without exception run by women. In Morin Heights, for example, these establishments were referred to as Mrs. Charlie Seale's or Mrs. Annie Kennedy's or just a family name, Watchorn's Farm or Campbell's Farm,



HAY MAKING TIME, MORIN HEIGHTS, QUE.

with the presiding CEO always a woman. At this period, and well into the 1950s, there was a strong cultural, almost religious, belief in the moral, as well as the physical, health benefits of the countryside as opposed to the town. Clean air and water and locally grown food, the so-called simple life of country people and the contact with animals and plants were viewed as morally improving, particularly for children.

Many of the farms that were located close to lakes benefited the most from this new influx of visitors. The farms provided dairy products, eggs, fresh chickens and vegetables to the part time residents. Also there were many specialty items that arrived weekly by horse and cart and later by truck from traveling vendors: butchers, bakers, fish sellers and so on. These arrivals were always greeted with interest and viewed as rather antique and quaint by people from the cities. However, by the 1960s, the easier access to stores, facilitated by family cars and better roads, eliminated both the traveling salespeople and the local farm dairy businesses. Also, by this period the Laurentian economy had become much more diverse and many young people found work in other sectors such as the tourist trade, construction and service industries. Many farms ceased operation altogether and much of the original land had been, and was being, sold as building lots.

Since the terrain was so difficult, so full of rocks, swamps and steep hills, the mechanized large-scale farming of the twentieth century was impossible for the Laurentians.

Some areas, considered as in the Laurentians, most notably Lachute and its district bordering the North River, continued to

prosper agriculturally. The moderating effects of the Ottawa and North River basins, plus the smoother, better soil was an advantage. The Argenteuil Agricultural Society, established in 1826, has held the Lachute Fair every summer, making it one of the oldest farming events in Canada. The emphasis in recent years has tended to be on family entertainments and the display of special breeds of animals like Percheron show horses and fancy types of fowls. Historically, the Lachute Fair did encourage participation from farms throughout the Laurentians but now, due to changing conditions and the dwindling of the family farms, has mutated into more of a local carnival and community celebration.

A few other, exceptional, more level, areas, such as the plain around Arundel, have managed to remain partly agricultural. In Arundel, where eighty percent of the municipality is still zoned for agriculture and forestry, the situation is presently changing. The only farms that are really doing well are the organic operations, not the traditional (mainly beef) farms. The organic farms cater to a growing demand for specialty produce very often for restaurants and health spas. One farm like this has done well with harvesting elk antlers (renewable-no harm to the animals) for natural medicines. Others provide a direct market and a farm visit experience for the public. The old belief of the restorative and healthful influences of anything close to the natural world still holds its attraction.

*Sources: Morin Heights Historical Association collection: photos, Gail Lister Kilpatrick, the author.*

## EDIBLE HERITAGE

### All aboard the Ark of Taste

# Slow Food Canada launches epicurean rescue mission

By Julian Armstrong, food editor, the Gazette

**F**rom the Montreal melon to Red Fife wheat, heritage foods get trampled in the fast lane.

Time-honoured pleasures of the table are in danger, say members of a group of heritage food crusaders. If no protective action is taken, specialty cheeses, regional recipes, and species of animals, birds and plants may soon disappear into a wasteland of mass-produced meals.

Led by the man who caused McDonald's to drop plans to open next to the Spanish Steps in Rome back in 1986, Canadian members of the Slow Food movement are embarked on a campaign to save our best foods from oblivion, protect endangered species, keep variety alive by resisting the standardization foisted on us by agribusiness and the food industry, and protect the environment as well.

The Slow Food organization rejects food in the fast lane, and the food industry's takeover of so much of our eating with factory-made, heat-and-eat or takeout products. Take time, it converts urge, to relish the original, good-tasting products, and to return to dining habits that gave so much pleasure at the table over the centuries.

Meeting here recently at their first national conference, Slow Food members from coast to coast were exhorted to come up with 10 products or species needing protection, one from each province. Four of these "forgotten flavours," as they call them, have already been granted approval by the international headquarters of the movement in Italy - and two of these are from Quebec. The Montreal melon, neglected for a century until revived here a few years ago, is one. The other is a nearly extinct breed of dairy cow that produces extra-rich milk that's ideal for making specialty cheese.

An example of the cheese - Pied-de-Vent from Iles de la Madeleine - was served at the Montreal conference. Vache canadienne is the name of the breed of cow. It was first imported from Normandy by early settlers and is now nearly eclipsed by the Holstein, which makes up more than 80 per cent of Canada's dairy herd.

The 25 Slow Food leaders, who represented 14 groups, called conviviums, from Halifax to Vancouver Island, were warned that their American counterparts have already

registered 300 products or species, 40 of them apple varieties, in what's called the Ark of Taste. Named after the biblical rescue ship, the Ark is Slow Food's directory of endangered foods or species - and there's only so much room on board. Italy, headquarters of the movement, has 400 entries in the Ark and Italian members have been told to cease nominations.

Pepping up delegates at the Montreal conference was Carlo Petrini, founder of the Slow Food organization that now numbers 83,000 members worldwide, 1,000 of them in Canada. Although the movement has been seen as elitist in promoting often expensive specialty products, Petrini stressed this food had modest beginnings. All the world's famous cuisines came from people - mostly women - striving to prepare simple, local ingredients creatively, he told the conference.



Besides identifying specialties that need protection, Petrini urged members to work toward ensuring producers are adequately paid for their labour so they can run viable enterprises, and that they practise environmentally responsible agriculture.

Canada's other two approved Ark entries are Red Fife wheat, imported from Scotland to Ontario in the 1840s and almost extinct until growers were persuaded to grow it again, mostly on the Prairies, and wild herring spaw

harvested on sea kelp, a traditional food of West Coast Indians.

Remote from your dinner table? Interviews with conference delegates produced an assortment of potential Ark candidates, including varieties of things we eat every day like apples, chickens and vegetable oil (see "Canadian foods worth saving," at right).

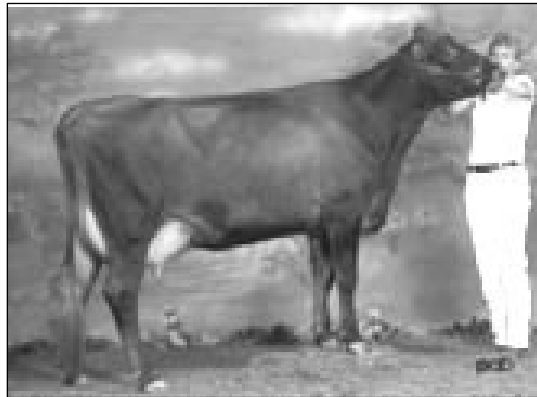
It shouldn't be hard to think up some Ark nominees from Canada, said Sinclair Philip, co-owner of the celebrated Sooke Harbour House hotel on Vancouver Island. Philip, the movement's Canadian representative on Slow Food's international board of directors, said this country is rich in authentic and pristine wild foods. "We have a great potential with wild foods, but we have to be careful that we don't cause over-harvesting and endanger these plants," he said.

Slow Food's role is also to take note of time-honoured dishes before their recipes, rarely written down, disappear. Mary Bailey, who heads the Edmonton convivium, described a meeting last fall to revive the art of apple-pie making. Gathering in a member's apple orchard, seven women picked the apples and made a total of 60 of their family apple pies. "We had an assembly line going, and an expert crimper for the pastry." Future plans include making old-style chutneys and saskatoon-berry jam. Some convivia are working to promote small producers. During the visit of Slow Food founder Petrini, the Quebec group arranged for about 30 specialty food producers to gather at the Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec and discuss their products with Petrini and Toque! chef Normand Laprise.

Beaton, who runs two Calgary cheese shops called Janice Beaton Fine Cheese, described "kitchen parties" her group puts on where specialty food producers are invited to get together with chefs. Vancouver teacher Jim Pearce said the makeup of the Vancouver convivium is about 40 per cent food producers, who are encouraged to bring their seasonal foods to meetings.

**Opposite: Chantecler rooster from a painting by Robery Tracy. See [tracyfineart.com](http://tracyfineart.com). Above: Popular for centuries, the Canadienne is now extremely rare.**

*The Ark of Taste so far includes  
four heritage food products  
from Canada:  
the Montreal Melon  
La Vache Canadienne  
Red Fife wheat  
herring spawn on kelp*



Membership in the Slow Food organization costs \$90 a year and includes the international quarterly magazine..

### **Canadian foods worth saving**

The Ark of Taste is Slow Food's directory of endangered foods or species, administered by Slow Food headquarters in Italy. The Canadian group has managed to get four foods approved, two from Quebec: Montreal melon, a big, green-fleshed variety with a thin rind, neglected for a century until revived here a few years ago. It was once a favourite in New York restaurants. Vache canadienne, a Quebec breed of cow first imported from Normandy by early settlers. The rich milk is ideal for cheese-making. Red Fife wheat, imported from Scotland to Ontario in the 1840s. Once nearly extinct, it is now being

revived, mostly on the Prairies. Wild herring spawn on sea kelp, an ecological harvest that sees the fish towed to a pond to lay their eggs on seaweed, then released back into the wild.

### **More nominees**

Slow Food Canada members aim to come up with 10 more candidates for the Ark, one for each province. Some ideas being batted around: Heritage fruits. Quebec's apple known as the Fameuse (or Snow in Ontario), the Flemish Beauty pear and the Damson plum. In Nova Scotia, the Gravenstein apple, a native of Germany, is still grown in the Annapolis Valley and California. Rare breeds. Bred in Quebec in the early 1900s by a monk at Oka's Trappist monastery,

the Chantecler chicken numbers only about 1,250 on small farms in Quebec and Atlantic Canada, and still offers superior flavour. Quebec and Nova Scotia members would like it nominated. The Tamworth pig, first imported from Britain in the 1880s, and prized for its lean meat and fine bacon, is another candidate from Ontario members.

Extra-virgin canola oil. Alberta members like this new product called Highwood Crossing. The cold-pressed oil, sold at prices similar to fine olive oil, comes from organic seeds. It is believed to be unique.

*Slow Food Quebec, 7572 Châteaubriand, Montréal, Québec, H2R 2M1, (514) 272-1753 or 282-5153.*

*[info@slowfoodquebec.com](mailto:info@slowfoodquebec.com), [www.slowfoodquebec.com](http://www.slowfoodquebec.com).*



# HERITAGE LIVESTOCK

## Canadienne Cow

### Canada's first cattle came over with Champlain

Like its counterparts the Canadian Horse and the Chantecler chicken, the Canadienne Cattle Breed is unique to Canada. The breed's foundation is based on animals imported from the Normandy area of France by Samuel de Champlain in 1608 to 1610. Later importations came from Brittany and Gascony. There is no indication of what type of cattle were imported and no effort was made to breed the different types separately. The melting pot effect took over. With the population remaining largely closed to breeds they eventually took on an appearance and type of their own and became known as The Canadienne or Black Canadian or French Canadian or Black Jersey or Quebec Jersey breed.

In 1850, the Canadian Parliament was advised that the Canadienne cattle were the only cattle in Quebec except for a few herds of Ayrshires and Shorthorn. In 1853 the Council of Agriculture began to discourage farmers from breeding these cattle so, by 1880 "there was hardly a French Canadian in the Province that thought enough of

his cow to give her more attention than he would a dog". At this time two or three men decided to save the breed from extinction by starting a breed society. In 1886 a herd book was maintained. In 1895 the French Canadian Cattle Breeders Association was formed. This new breed "La Canadienne" remains the only dairy breed today to have been developed on the North American continent.

#### Recent Developments in the Breed

The Quebec Provincial Government has always had a keen interest in the Canadienne breed and, in fact, maintained their own herd until it was lost in a barn fire. In the early 1970s the Ministry of Agriculture became concerned about the level of inbreeding within the Canadienne Cattle Breed and also that they were falling behind the other dairy breeds in the level of improvement in the areas of udder quality and milk production. They made the decision to introduce genetics from the Brown Swiss breed into their herd. Initially breeders were strongly divided over this decision. As the results of the introduction developed,

however, more and more breeders joined in. It eventually reached the point where the Canadienne Breed was at risk of being totally taken over by the uncontrolled use of Brown Swiss genetics.

Fortunately for the breed, this introduction has been stopped and a bull must have 31/32 purity for registration and use as a breeder. To accomplish this, the Ministry of Agriculture has undertaken the financial support for a program known as Project Embryo Plus. The project undertook to identify older 100% pure cows and place them in embryo flushing programs using older (pre 1970) 100% pure bulls as their service sires. The aim was to develop a bank of 100% pure embryos and release them over time. Each year 30 embryos are made available to be implanted in recipient animals in member herds with the resulting calves being raised in these herds. The male calves are to be evaluated and the best selected for semen collection and use as breeding bulls within the breed. The females are also inspected and evaluated for use as embryo donor dams for the program. Once the commitments of the animal

*R.S.Q., chapter R-0.01*

#### ***An Act respecting animal breeds forming part of Québec's agricultural heritage***

##### **PREAMBLE**

*WHEREAS it is appropriate that certain breeds of animals closely associated with the historical origins and agricultural traditions of Québec be officially declared to form part of Québec's agricultural heritage;*

*WHEREAS there is reason to recognize and pay tribute to the perseverance and determination of the breeders who over the years have worked to preserve these breeds of animals;*

*WHEREAS more extensive breeding, and continued improvement in the quality of this unique agricultural heritage, must be encouraged so that these breeds of animals peculiar to Québec may become more widely known and better appreciated;*

**THE PARLIAMENT OF QUÉBEC ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

##### **Heritage breeds**

*1. The following breeds of animals are declared to form part of the agricultural heritage of Québec and may each be designated as a "Québec heritage breed":*

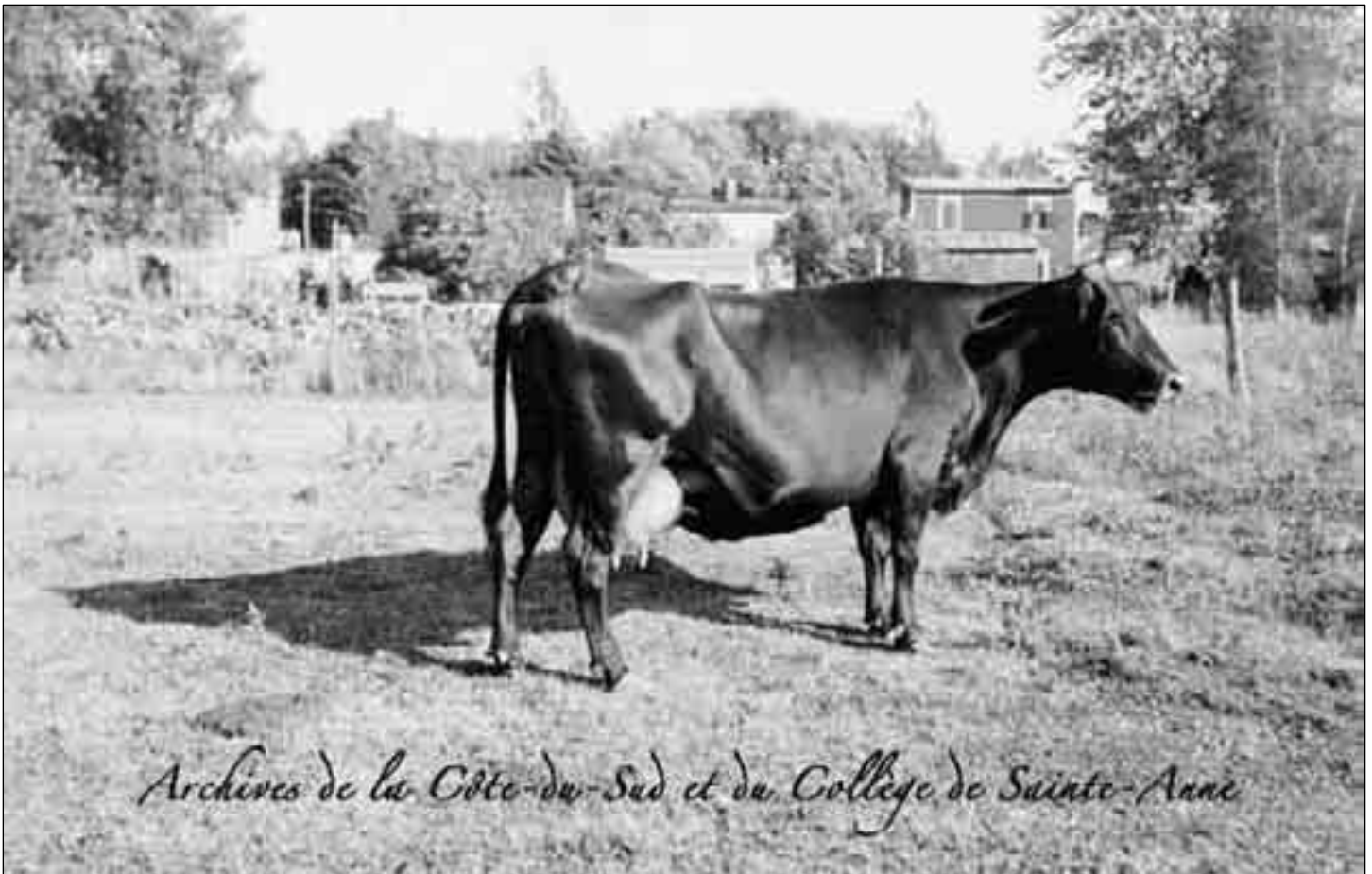
- 1) the breed of horse known as the "Canadian Horse";*
- 2) the breed of cattle known as the "Canadian Cow";*
- 3) the breed of poultry known as "Poule Chantecler".*

##### **Duty of the Minister**

*2. The Minister shall see that the content of this Act is publicized and disseminated to the farming community.*

##### **Minister responsible**

*3. The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is responsible for the*



have been met, they become the property of the member into whose herd they were born.

There is enthusiasm for the breed in Quebec along with a well organized and active breed society that bode well for the breed. It produces well in low input management systems, which makes it appealing to grass fed operations. Its profile has risen due to its official heritage status given to it by the Quebec government in 1999.

#### **Characteristics**

They are similar in appearance to the Jersey and Guernsey cows all of Britain and Norman-Breton origin. Calves are born with a light brown coat which turns dark brown through black at maturity. Some animals remain a light brown, tawny or russet. They are generally lighter along the back line, around the muzzle, and near the udder. Generally the body skin is black pigmented. There may occasionally be white on the udder, stomach and chest.

At birth the calves will weigh about 30 kg. Cows will reach a mature weight of about 450 – 500 kg; males 700 – 800 kg.

The breed is recognized for its superior fertility and calving ease. The Canadian has gained an exceptional rusticity and has adapted to the difficult Canadian climate, soil and herbage and does not require the importation of expensive foods or intensive management. The Canadienne is considered one of the most productive among the very old and hardy breeds of the world. Canadienne is a very efficient milk producer noted for

their high yield of butterfat and protein, giving the milk excellent qualities for cheese making. The Canadienne is well adapted to the It is small (cows weigh 1000-1100 pounds), long-lived and has an exceptionally docile temperament. Canadiennes produce good quantities of quality milk in relation to their own body size and food requirements. The meat tends to be lean, and the light bone results in a high percentage of usable meat in relation to total body weight.

They are also noted for their excellent grazing ability. This, along with the fact that they are one of the smaller dairy breeds, makes the Canadienne an attractive choice for those dairymen interested in making milk using an intensive pasture management system. The Canadienne will allow him to make use of pasture earlier in the spring and later in the fall when wet pasture conditions would result in larger breeds causing damage to the fields.

*The information and photographs on these pages are taken from: ansi.okstate.edu, imh.org, rarebreedscanada.ca, agriculture.technomuses.ca, cfagr.com. Also see Le Société des Éleveurs de Bovins Canadiens, 172, rue St-Jean-Baptiste app. 2, Sherbrooke, Québec J1G 2J3.*

**This placid Vache Canadienne was photographed at the Sainte Anne de La Pocatière agriculture college, now the community college CÉGEP de la Pocatière.**

# HERITAGE LIVESTOCK

*'Such were the horses of our fathers'*

## The quiet Canadian that helped conquer east and west

The Canadian Horse traces its ancestry to the foundation stock brought to Acadia and New France in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The first horses were ultimately caught and carried off in 1616 by Samuel Argall's marauding expedition from Virginia, which also burned the Port Royal habitation. This was the first introduction of French Canadian blood to America's eastern shores. The effective introduction of French horses to New France came in 1665 when Louis XIV sent two stallions and twenty mares from the royal stables to the colony. On the voyage eight of the mares were lost, but the King sent additional shipments; in 1667 fourteen or fifteen horses, and in 1670 a stallion and eleven mares. These horses formed the basis of the French Canadian horse of the Old Regime.

The horses from the Royal stables came from Normandy and Brittany, at that time the two most renowned horse breeding provinces of France. The Breton horse, although small, was noted for its soundness and vigour. The Norman horse closely resembled the Breton, but gave more evidence of infusion of oriental blood. This strain came from Andalusian sires brought in to Normandy and La Perch (habitat of the Percheron breed) for breeding purposes, some direct from Spain and others, between the latter part of the 16th century and the end of the War of Spanish Succession, from the Spanish Netherlands. Influence of the Dutch Friesian is apparent in the notable trotting ability of the Canadian, the feathered legs, abundance of mane and tail, and general appearance.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries there was no standard type in either the Norman or Breton breeds but rather several types in each, being bred with one another in their home province according to the features popular at the moment. Among the



horses brought from France in to Canada there were various types; some were distinctively draft in type; others were just as distinctively trotters, a type of horse for which France had enjoyed a reputation for generations. Still others were pacers, not descending from the Narragansett Pacers as is often implied, but coming from France with that talent. A gross error is made by those who attribute all of the credit for the American trotters to the horses of England.

Although the Canadian horse exhibited several types due to varied breeding practices of the time, there was no other blood infused in to the breed for nearly 150 years. Many owners bred for the lighter, more refined type, and it is said that the pure breed as it existed in 1850 was scarcely altered from its prototype of a hundred years before.

Canadian Horses cleared and worked the land, carried children to school, pulled the cutters and carriages and provided great entertainment for their masters in the form of racing. They endured many hardships - from brutally cold



winters to hoards of mosquitoes and flies during the summer, poor feed and long hours of work with little rest. They survived it all, but became smaller in size - thus the title: Little Iron Horse. They gained quite a reputation for their hardiness and stamina and many stories were told of their courage and ability. One such story was told in the *Breeders Gazette* of Chicago in 1914: A wood merchant, owner of a Canadian Horse weighing approximately 1050 pounds harnessed it on the same pole beside another horse,

two hundred pounds heavier. The Canadian Horse has always kept his harness traces well stretched and never showed as much fatigue as his heavier mate. After two years of common work, the heavy horse died. Questioned on the cause of death, the driver answered, "It is the Canadian Horse that made him die of overwork"! Another heavy horse teamed with the same Canadian Horse died after a year and the Canadian was still in perfect condition.

Little wonder that with such a reputation the British settlers would start to demand the Canadian for use in crossbreeding with their own horses. Canadians had the quality of breeding up in size as well as giving the foals their pluck, vigour and iron constitution. They were described as being long-lived, easily kept, and capable of great endurance - heavy enough for the purposes of the farmer or as a roadster while also being a good riding horse. The breed produced both trotters and pacers. Thus Canadian Horses found a ready market in the United States and were also shipped in great quantities to the West Indies.

Very little care was given to the early Canadian breed, and it is a testimony to their hardiness that they survived. In summer, when the horses were little used, they ran loose in the woods, where they were tormented by flies against which they had no defence due to the French practice of docking the tails. In the winter they were usually given no shelter at all, especially the young stock which were not in use. The inhabitants cured no hay so their horses existed mostly on straw. They seldom received enough grain but were required to work hard. When the owners took to the road they thought nothing of driving the horses as fast as they would go for a dozen miles or more, then leaving them to stand uncovered for hours in blizzard conditions. It was their opinion that harsh exposure was an excellent way to toughen an animal.

New France furnished the horses taken to the western settlements at Detroit and in the Illinois area. Many of these horses were allowed to run loose in large herds and were only brought in when needed for work. Great numbers are known to have escaped to run with the mustangs of the American plains - an ancestor never mentioned in writings of the American Mustang.

After the war of 1812, the trade in French Canadian horses grew rapidly. American dealers collected droves each year, mostly at Montreal and Quebec City. In 1830 it was reported

that most of the trotters then in the northern United States were of French Canadian origin. Beneficial result of crossing the Canadian on the ordinary stock of the adjacent states was universally admitted.

The popularity of the crossbred horses of northern New England among the stagecoach drivers of Boston is legend.



The stallions brought from Lower Canada were not entirely responsible, however, for the infusion of Canadian blood in to the horses of the United States. Part of it came from both purebred and part bred Canadian mares, which were mated to American horses. The Canadian Pacer was a horse bred from the Narragansett Pacer and the old strains of French-Canadian. This breed then returned to the United States and contributed greatly to

development of the famous American Standardbred.

Many purebred French Canadian horses were entered in to the early studbooks of the Morgan, Standardbred, and American Saddlebred. Foundation sires of these breeds were often pure Canadian or were mated to Canadian mares. The Tennessee Walking Horse and Missouri Foxtrotter can also claim Canadian ancestry.



So great was the drain in to the United States of the pure Canadian horse, particularly during the Civil War, that numbers at home were reduced alarmingly. Another factor involved in the demise of the breed was the importation of heavy draft horses for farm work. The Canadian was never considered- a work horse although it was worked hard, and it also never qualified as a light breed, being a more medium type (a description also given of the Morgan). By the end of

the 19<sup>th</sup> century the breed was in extreme danger of extinction. Under the leadership of Dr. J. A. Couture, DVM, a few concerned admirers of the "little iron horse" banded together to try and preserve what remained of the breed.

Their efforts produced a first stud book in 1886. Progress was slow however, and it was not until 1895 when the Canadian Horse Breeders Association was formed that any real expansion took place. In 1907 under the leadership of Dr. J.G. Rutherford, the federal government livestock commissioner, a new studbook was started with improved standards. In 1913 the Federal Ministry of Agriculture set up a breeding program at Cap Rouge, where Albert de Cap Rouge, one of the foundation studs was bred. The operation



was later moved east of Quebec City to St. Joachim. During this period the Canadian was bred into a taller, more refined animal, suitable as a hunter or jumper. When the federal government, occupied with the war, closed down the operation in 1940 and sold off the breeding stock, the Quebec government re-established the stud under the provincial department of agriculture at Deschambault. The balance of the St. Joachim horses were sold to private breeders. In 1979 the Deschambault herd was sold at auction and the Canadian was once again threatened with extinction numbering less than 400 registered horses. However, thanks to the efforts of committed breeders all across Canada, the breed struggles on and at present (1997) numbers approximately 2500 registered horses. It is still classified as 'critical' on the American Livestock Conservancy list.

The Canadian Horse can be called a general utility animal. The mares are extraordinarily fertile and reproduce regularly



until the age of 20 or older. Generally the Canadian Horse is black, but colors also range from bay to light chestnut. Stallions should weigh from 1050 to 1350 pounds and mares 1000 to 1250. Desired height is 14 to 16 hands. As a general



purpose animal, the Canadian shows a well-proportioned body, good setting of limbs, high quality of bones, and good feet. The forearm and gaskin are especially well muscled. The mane and tail are thick, long and usually wavy. The head shows intelligence, spirit, and no excess of nervousness. The



animal is generally very easy to handle. The Canadian's strength and docility make it ideal for farm work, ranch work, driving, hunter/jumping, packing and endurance riding. True to its heritage the Canadian demonstrates its versatility by performing superbly in all equestrian disciplines. Willingness, adaptability, and an even temperament make the Canadian ideal for use in competition, for working, or as a family horse.

The historian Taillon depicts the old Canadian Horse as follows: "Small, but robust, hocks of steel, thick mane floating in the wind, bright and lively eyes, pricking its sensitive ears at the least noise, going along day and night with the same courage, wide awake beneath its harness; spirited, good, gentle, affectionate, following his road with the finest instinct to come surely home to his own stable. Such were the horses of our fathers."

*The information on these pages was taken from the web sites [ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/horses](http://ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/horses), [clrc.on.ca](http://clrc.on.ca), [raresteed.com](http://raresteed.com). Photos © Oklahoma State University. For more information, contact: Canadian Horse Breeders Association, Société des Éleveurs de Chevaux Canadiens, Jean-Yves Chateaufort, 946, avenue Eymard, Québec (Québec) G1S 4A1, Telephone : (418) 682-6269, E-mail [secc@globetrotter.net](mailto:secc@globetrotter.net).*

# HERITAGE LIVESTOCK

## Canada's first poultry breed

### Quebec's official chicken is built to beat the climate

Like its official colleagues the Vache Canadienne and the Canadian Horse, the Chantecler, Quebec's national chicken is a fine example of a multi-purpose breed. Unlike them however, the Chantecler finds its origin in the depths of ancient mythology rather than the isolation of early New France.

Brother Wilfrid Chatelain first thought of the idea for the Chantecler when he was walking through the Oka Agricultural Institute's poultry flocks with his visiting father and they realized there was no breed of chicken from Canada; all of the breeds being used in Canada originated in Europe or the United States. He wanted to create a breed of chicken that could stand the harsh climate of Canada, and that could be used for both egg and meat production.

Under the supervision of Brother Wilfrid, the monks of the Cistercian Abbey sought to create, "a fowl of vigorous and rustic temperament that could resist the climatic conditions of Canada, a general purpose fowl." Although work began on this breed in 1908, it was not introduced to the public

#### Dual-purpose chicken has roots in ancient fable

Brother Wilfrid wrote a letter in 1941 explaining how he chose the name Chantecler. The name was taken from a hero in the French poet Rostand's fable, popular in Paris about 1910, about the love between the rooster Chantecler and a golden pheasant hen. He thought that the name, derived from two French words, "chanter" – to sing and "clair" – bright, was ideal for his new breed. But the story of Chantecler was anything but new. Indeed it's one of the oldest stories known.

Aesop's Fable Odo of Cheriton first laid down the story of Chantecler, which was later taken up by the 12<sup>th</sup>-century poet Marie de France, then in Geoffrey Chaucer Nun's Priest's Tale, and in the Chantecler, by Edmond Rostand, author of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. It is an animal allegory about a rooster who believes that his song makes the sun rise. It may also be the origin of the name Sinclair or Sainte-Claire.

until 1918, and admitted to the American Poultry Association Standard of Perfection in 1921.

The Chantecler was created by first crossing a Dark Cornish male with a White Leghorn female, and a Rhode Island Red male with a White Wyandotte female. The following season pullets from the first cross were mated to a cockerel from the second cross. Then selected pullets from this last mating were mated to a White Plymouth Rock male, thus producing the fowl as seen today. Although this produced a pure White Chantecler, Dr. J. E. Wilkinson of Alberta, Canada, decided to create a similar chicken with a color pattern more suited to range conditions, one whose color pattern would blend with its background. He crossed the Partridge Wyandotte, Partridge Cochin, Dark Cornish, and the Rose Comb Brown Leghorn, to create the Partridge Chantecler. The Partridge Chantecler was admitted into Standard in 1935.

The breed is noted for having nearly no wattles and a small cushion comb – the comb appearing much like a small round button sitting low on the head. The small comb and wattles allow this breed to withstand the cold Canadian winters without worry of frostbite. Not surprisingly, the breed is noted for being very hardy, is an excellent layer of brown eggs with a reputation as a good winter layer, and has a broad well-fleshed breast.

The Chantecler can still be found in both of its original colors, White and Partridge; both having yellow flesh and legs. It is an excellent choice for anyone wanting a productive fowl that will excel in a wintry climate. The







breed is noted for being calm, gentle, and personable.

An association, started in 1918, adopted strict rules to control breeding and ownership. A member could not sell, lease, lend, give or exchange any living bird of the new breed nor sell hatching eggs to anyone who was not a member of the association. It was also a requirement that the Association be given a full list of birds owned by members. This might not be a bad idea today especially with rare breeds of poultry.

The White Chantecler gained a lot of publicity at The First Canadian National poultry Conference in 1919 and was



**The Chantecler of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature – and postcards – was quite the rakish rooster. ‘Don’t cry over spilt champagne!’ — ‘Oh, you Chantecler Kid’. The Chantecler Curling Club wears its borrowed emblem with pride. On the other hand, the real chicken looks rather bland by comparison.**

officially declared a breed in 1921.

### **Recent Developments in the Breed**

In the 1990s there was an acrimonious discussion in the Canadian poultry press as to whether or not the original Chantecler was extinct. One faction said that they were extinct and that the current Chanteclers were a reconstituted version using Brother Wilfrid’s formula. The other side of the coin (breeders in Quebec) insisted that their birds were descended from the original birds from Oka. Whatever the truth, the breed is enjoying a resurgence in interest and most young stock is sold well in advance of the hatching season. In December 1999 the Quebec government officially designated the Chantecler as a provincial heritage animal.

The increased interest today has resulted in one breeder setting up four families of Chantecler and with careful attention to detail is bringing this bird back to the original Standard as visualized by Brother Wilfd. This is not an easy task, and following in the steps of Brother Wilfrid, heavy culling is an ongoing task.

The standards call for the males to weigh between 3.4kg to 3.9kg depending on age, and the female to weigh between 2.5kg and 3kg depending on age. (American Standards of Perfection, 1985).



A good strain will lay up to 210 eggs per bird in 1 year’s lay and the eggs should weigh about 58 to 60 grams. The egg colour is a light brown.

The world population size is estimated at 1750 to 2250. Most of the birds outside Canada are in the U.S.A. Current Canadian population size is 1000 to 1500 (estimate, Andre Auclair, April 2003). The greater part of this population is based in Quebec in small farm flocks:

*Contact the Association Promoting and Breeding the Chantecler Fowl, Secretary: Andre Auclair, 2400 Rang St Louis, St Paulin, Quebec, JOK 3G0, 819-268-2037*

*The information on these pages is taken from Linda Gryner’s book, The Chantecler and Other Rare Breeds, and the web sites featherfancier.on.ca, albc-usa.org (American Livestock Breeds Conservancy).*



# NEWS & NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

Star-crossed Jean-Paul Lasnier dies

## Sir John Johnson: Site of family vault changes hands

Missisquoi County United Empire loyalists have had both good news and bad recently, with the death of a strong supporter and some new owners for the burial vault of famed loyalist leader Sir John Johnson.

President Jean-Paul Lasnier of La société de restauration du patrimoine Johnson has died after a long illness. Mr. Lasnier was mayor of Sainte-Brigide d'Iberville for more than 30 years, being acclaimed on ten consecutive occasions. Mayor Lasnier's relationship with the Johnson tomb went back to the 1940s when he was a heavy-machinery operator. He got the job of levelling an area that included an old stone structure in an overgrown apple orchard on Mont Saint Grégoire, which is also called Mount Johnson.

During the American Revolution, 1776-1784, Sir John Johnson led several thousand colonists loyal to Great Britain from the colony of New York to refuge in Quebec. Baronet Johnson had been Superintendent of Indians of the now-separated colonies. He later became seigneur of Monnoir, settled at the foot of the mountain, and when he sold it, reserved a patch of land for a family cemetery.

The old stone structure that the young Mr. Lasnier bulldozed turned out to be the Johnson mausoleum. Over

the years Lasnier grew to regret the incident so much that in the 1990s he became a leader of efforts to have the graves officially identified and protected.

In 2002 the Quebec Department of Cultural Affairs engaged an archeologist who confirmed that the site contained the remains of a wealthy family in its burial vault which dated from the Johnson period.

The hillside property has always been privately owned by farm families only vaguely interested in the Johnson vault and definitely not interested in any form of recognition which might attract attention or visitors to the quiet spot. Now though, the Verger Monnoir has been bought by a local conservation group.

CIME- Mont Saint-Grégoire is a 25-year-old non-profit organization founded in 1981 and dedicated to the conservation and reclamation of natural heritage in the Haut-Richelieu area. Both CIME, (Capital et Innovation de la Montestrie Économique), and the tenant farmer M. Boutin are interested in cooperating with the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch of the loyalist association and La Société de restauration du patrimoine Johnson in preserving and commemorating the site.

## New granite museum open for business in Stanstead

By Matthew Farfan

The long-awaited grand opening of the new Granite Exhibit and Museum of Stanstead, or GEMS for short, took place recently at the museum, located at 14 Notre-Dame-Ouest in downtown Stanstead.

Several hundred dignitaries and guests were on hand for the event, which was hosted by GEMS President David Bourgon. Three years in the making, the new complex is part industry showroom / conference centre and part museum. It will be open to visitors seven days a week, and will be a much welcome addition to the list of attractions in this area.

Bourgon, together with his wife Sandra Bergeron, board members Robert Sheldon and Raymond Bédard, and local funders, addressed the crowd before officially opening the centre. Bourgon said, "Stanstead is the granite capital of Canada.

This complex will help people discover an important part of their history, and the expertise involved in an industry whose origins date back to the 1800s, and which has had to adapt to society's ever-changing needs."



Granite has been the mainstay of the local economy for over a century. The museum's artifacts, photographs and audiovisual material certainly testify to that long history.

With exhibits touching upon a range of themes, including the formation of granite, quarrying, cutting, polishing, sculpting, engraving, transportation, and major public monuments, visitors will learn everything they need to know about this durable stone.

By the reaction of the crowd at the grand opening, the exhibits and accompanying documentation are of a very high calibre. And if the comments that were passed – "classy," "beautiful," and "first-rate" – are any indication, the region's newest museum is well on its way to achieving the success it deserves.

The Granite Exhibit and Museum of Stanstead is supported by the CLD Memphremagog, Memphremagog MRC,

the Town of Stanstead, the Caisse populaire de Stanstead, the Fonds de Solidarité de la FTQ, local granite companies and artisans, and many local donors and volunteers. For more information call (819) 876-7704.

# THE CANADIAN SCENE

Still a fight for survival after more than two centuries in Nova Scotia

## Black Loyalist Society rising from the ashes after fire

Close to \$12,000 in donations has been received by the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, which lost an office building in Birchtown to fire on March 31.

Thousands more are continuing to pour in according to the society's treasurer, Hank Falk. Some of these funds are coming from the most unexpected places.

A former resident of Shelburne, now a British Columbia corporate lawyer, and a scooter-bound senior who passes by the site on a regular basis are just a few who have contributed to the cause as of June 8.

"It's really surprised us. It's community support and it's coming from all over," said vice-president Richard Gallion.

The destroyed building served as the hub of the society's research projects, archives and meeting centre. Since the fire, staff and volunteers have been working at establishing offices upstairs in the nearby gift shop.

The society is also working toward becoming part of the Nova Scotia museum family. "It has to be done in steps," said Gallion. "It would be the first African Nova Scotian museum in the province."

The Black Loyalist Heritage Society has been a flurry of activity since the fire.

"I thought we had a lot of meetings before but it's getting even worse now, but as long as we get back on track and something comes out of the ashes; that's the main thing," said Gallion.

The society is arranging for a trust fund at the Bank of Nova Scotia for nationwide donations. Here is the address for anyone wishing to send donations: Black Loyalist Heritage Society, PO Box 1194, Shelburne NS, B0T 1W0, (902) 875-1310.

Here is some background:

### The American Revolutionary War:

It was 1775 and Lord Dunmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, had a strategy to subdue the rebellious Colonists. He offered freedom to any slave who would escape from his rebel master and fight on the side of those loyal to the British Crown. More than 300 Blacks immediately found their way behind British Lines and formed The Ethiopian Regiment. Black Soldiers fought in the belief that they were securing freedom, not only for themselves, but for all enslaved blacks. The British were confident, because



slaves made up 20 per cent of the American population, that if they could convince them to join the ranks, the Colonial uprising would be squelched.

By 1779, the British saw another reason for luring slaves from the plantation. Their departure from rebel-owned estates would seriously undermine the southern

plantation's economy. British extended their offer of freedom to include grants of land and provisions to the former slaves once the rebellion was defeated. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 slaves had taken refuge behind British Lines. By the summer of 1782, it became evident that the Americans were winning the war and the British began to make preparations for their departure.

They left a number of blacks behind as they retreated, who were recaptured into slavery. Other Black Loyalists were resettled in Florida, the West Indies, and British North America (Canada). More than 3,500, the largest group of Black Loyalists, were transported to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The Loyalist colonies were not equipped to maintain the influx of thousands of new

citizens. A priority system was established to serve the newest citizens to British North America. White officers and Gentlemen were served first in terms of rations and land grants. Ordinary Privates and Laboring People, among the Whites, had to wait. The Blacks, coming up last, rarely received the land or rations promised to them.

With a population of more than 2,500, Birchtown Nova Scotia became the largest settlement of free blacks outside Africa. There were 649 male heads of families in



Birchtown during the muster of 1784. Out of bureaucratic incompetence and racial inequality, only 184 heads of families received the promised crown land. Their granted lands measured an average of 34 acres. Other Black Loyalists settled communities at Port Mouton (Later Liverpool); Brindy Town (Near Digby); Tusket & Greenville (Near Yarmouth); Little Tracadie (Guysborough County); Preston (Halifax County), Annapolis Royal, Halifax and Saint John, New Brunswick. In the eight years that followed the Black Loyalist settlement in Lower Canada, the communities suffered. Harsh climatic conditions, soil unsuitable for cultivation, high unemployment, and unfair treatment from authorities were some of the hardships endured.

Either Black Loyalists were located in exclusively Black settlements with farms too small to ensure self-support, or they were scattered as landless members of the white Loyalist settlements. Many Blacks were able to work as day workers for Whites. In desperation their employers easily exploited the Blacks. Wage rates for blacks averaged one-quarter of what was acceptable for Whites. Shelburne saw the violent outcome of this system as it became the location of the first race riot in North America as disbanded white soldiers drove Blacks out of their homes in order to secure employment for themselves.

When the Sierra Leone Company entered the scene in 1791, it is unsurprising that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick saw the exodus of almost half of the Black Loyalist community. The British formed company offered blacks more land, and a chance to



establish their own governing policies in the West African country. Dissatisfied with the Canadian Government's failure to provide land, support, and equality amongst the races, 1,200 Blacks boarded ships for Sierra Leone. The Black Loyalists who stayed in British North America, numbered approximately 2,500. Economically, the Black Community's position showed improvement within the decade. Many Blacks completed their indenture terms and more Blacks working as



apprentices began to qualify for trades. By 1812, employers could not find enough Blacks to fill available work and wages rose accordingly. During the war of 1812, Blacks volunteered in militia and formed three separate Black Corps. The Black Loyalists, although still a disadvantaged class, were watching as slavery and racial distinctions were beginning to erode and economic advance was in sight.

*Information on these pages is taken from The Coast Guard, Shelburne N.S.(by Carla Allen), the Black Loyalist web site blackloyalist.com and collections.ic.gc.ca*



**Opposite: When the Black Loyalist complex burnt (remains can be seen in the background), 'It was like losing an old friend,' says Society registrar and archivist Debra Hill. Only two black families remain in Birchtown, she says. During the American Revolution, freed and runaway slaves formed entire regiments in the British army. This page: Blacks who had revolted against their masters to help the British capture their plantations were often returned to slavery at the end of the war. Blacks in New York at the end of the war were often simply captured and sold off as slaves. 'Negro Frolicks' were banned in the town of Shelburne. Many of the black loyalists returned to Africa. The penniless 'free' blacks who chose to stay in Canada had to fend for themselves, finding work where they could.**

## HERITAGE AT SCHOOL

# Saguenay student wins QAHN writing contest

(Communiqué) – Jessie Roy’s account of a deadly mudslide that devastated the Saguenay Valley town of Saint Jean Vianney in the spring of 1971 has placed first in a province-wide writing contest for English schools, sponsored by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN).

“Congratulations to Jessie and to all the other students who made the effort to learn and write about a part of their community history,” said QAHN president Rod MacLeod. Jessie, who attends the Riverside Regional School in Jonquière in the Saguenay Valley, was one of 33 elementary-school students from across Quebec who entered the Hometown Heritage Writing Contest.

### When the town disappeared

By Jessie Roy, Riverside Elementary School

Years passed and little particles of rock that glaciers had ground as fine as flour drifted down to the sea floor, forming layers of clay. This clay is normally stiff, but when it is disturbed, say by an earthquake, it can become a moving liquid.

The community of Saint Jean Vianney was situated near Shipshaw, not far from the city of Arvida. The Aluminium Company of Canada established the region’s first aluminum smelter here in the 1920s. Slowly this little suburban community grew, and by 1971 Saint Jean Vianney had a population of 1,308 residents. Many people worked at the aluminum plant and a nearby paper mill.

It rained heavily throughout the month of April that year. But instead of running off down the river, much of this water soaked deep into the earth, where it dissolved a pocket of sand and clay lying far beneath the ground. The villagers didn’t know that their little town sat on top of soft clay.

On May 4, 1971, the people in Saint Jean Vianney noticed that their normally well-behaved pets were anxious. Dogs were barking and sniffing the ground. They seemed to know that something was not right. That night nearly everybody in the community had their television sets tuned into the Stanley Cup hockey playoff match between the Montreal Canadiens and the Chicago Blackhawks. All of a sudden, at around 10:45 p.m., the lights of the village went out and the TV screens went black. People looked out of their windows into darkness, and realized that the houses that were normally in view were gone. An hour later, ambulance men reached the scene.

What the survivors didn’t know at that time was that the liquefied earth upstream from the town had sunk 100 feet and formed a canyon half a mile wide. A river of clay had flowed through the canyon, west from Blackburn Hill toward the Saguenay River. If the villagers had known dog language, maybe they would have been saved.

When it was all over, the five-minute landslide had swept away about 38 houses. In all, 31 people died, though only six bodies were ever recovered.

Soon after, the Canadian government declared the entire area unfit for habitation. The survivors, at no cost, were established in a new community in Arvida with the same neighbours.

Even today, the curious still visit the spot where the town disappeared.

After much deliberation, the judges agreed that the Jessie’s essay contained the most outstanding combination of research, organization, and clarity of writing. The award comes with a cash prize of \$150.

Jesse Clarke of Grosse Ile School in the Magdalen Islands placed second with his essay about Trap-Setting Day. The award comes with a cash prize of \$100. Ashley Schroeders of St. Francis Elementary in Richmond won third place with her story about the Richmond Fair. The award comes with a cash prize of \$50. The three winning entries are published below.

### Trap Setting Day on the Magdalen Islands

By Jesse Clarke, Grosse Ile School

Trap setting day is the most important day on the Magdalen Islands, since lobster fishing is the major industry on the islands. It is an exciting time of year as everyone prepares for the big event. Lobster traps must be hauled and baited. The boat must be loaded and this all takes hard work.

Years ago, trap setting day was a whole lot harder because fishermen had to put traps on the beach and haul them to the water’s edge by hand and haul them up the side of the boat by hand. Now they use mechanical winches. But the excitement way back then was the same as it is today. The children had no school and were able to go out fishing with their father or other relatives.

I like trap setting day because I get to go out on the last load for a sail with my father. I eat my lunch in the boat like other fishermen. After the traps are set, the vision of eating fresh lobster on Monday is all I can see! The day is just as long and tiring as it is exciting. When the day is over I go home and have a good sleep hoping for a good catch on Monday.

### Richmond Fair still going strong after 150 years

By Ashley Schroeders, St. Francis Elementary School

I am writing about the Richmond Fair. This fair has been a tradition for 149 years. This year is our 150th! Our first fair ever was held at our very own St. Francis school. There were signs that said, ‘Don’t tie your cows or horses to the trees.’ Of course, the fairs then were definitely not the same as today. For one thing, there weren’t any midway rides. But farmers still come here from all over the countryside to show off their cattle and horses and other livestock, and the fair is well known for its baking contests.

Today the Richmond Fair is different. There are rides and a Youth Fair added to that. There are also different kinds of horse shows, dancing, arts and crafts, vegetable and floral displays, and the tractor and pick-up truck pull contests. One year the fair organizers even held a smash-up derby. Of course, there are tractors that are for sale and you can sit in them to see if you want to buy them. The tractor pulls and pick-up truck pulls consist of tractors or pick-up trucks pulling as much weight as they can pull and as far as they can get down the track. Anybody who has a tractor or a pick-up who wants to compete can enter this competition.

The Richmond Fair is now located at Route 243 in Cleveland Township, which is funny because it’s called the Richmond Fair. The fair lasts four days every year: Thursday to Sunday every second weekend in September. The Youth Fair is where kids can enter anything in their age group.

The one thing that has stayed the same for 150 years is that everyone enjoys themselves.

## Magdalen Islander Byron Clark receives Phelps award

BORN AND RAISED in the Magdalen Islands, Byron Clark is an avid genealogist with a keen interest in the history of the English-speaking people of the archipelago. Throughout the years, he has built an impressive collection of photographs, historical documents and genealogical records in paper, microfilm and microfiche including copies of birth, death and marriage certificates from 1793-1900; early census records; Lloyds of London Registers tracing information on merchant vessels and shipping casualties; and the Anglican Clerical Dictionaries.

Recognized as a pre-eminent local historian and expert on the English-speaking community, Mr. Clark is a published author of two commemorative (1975 and 1990) albums chronicling the historical development of the Anglican Church on the Islands as well as a general history of the local English-speaking community entitled *Gleanings on the Magdalen Islands* (2000). He has been consulted and cited in numerous books written about the Islands as well as appearing in the bibliographies of various historical publications. Byron Clark was recently named a Member of Honour on the committee that advised Quebec's prestigious Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS) in the preparation of a formal academic history of the Islands. His advice and information are widely sought from across Canada, the US, and as far away as Great Britain.

Mr Clark's interest in history goes beyond research and writing; he is also actively involved in the protection and preservation of historical sites and cemeteries. He was instrumental in having a monument erected in 1975 to mark the spot of the first Anglican Church in Grosse Ile as well as a commemoration of its first priest, the Rev. Felix Boyle. In 1990, he spearheaded a movement to

recognize a pioneer cemetery of graves of forbearers who died before the Church was established. He has also led crews of volunteers to restore and repair tombstones in the Anglican cemetery in Grindstone (Cap-aux-Meules), the site of a deconsecrated church and vestige of an early English-speaking settlement.

Upon his retirement as a fisheries officer nearly 20 years ago, Mr. Clark became very active civically, serving as mayor of Grosse Ile for a term in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He was also the driving force and founding general manager of the Cape Dauphin Fishermen's Cooperative, a major employer on the Islands.

When he is not engaged in other historical pursuits, Mr. Clark restores and refurbishes antique pump organs, an instrument that once occupied a prominent place in the parlour of many an English-speaking home on the Islands. Long neglected and unappreciated, these instruments making a comeback among Magdalen Islanders, thus keeping this year's Marion Phelps Award recipient quite busy.

Recently, Mr. Clark traded in his trusty typewriter, on which he prepared the original manuscripts of his earlier publications, for a computer. He is currently working on a book about the history of Bird

Rock and its lighthouse keepers. This place, a rock in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is located 32 km northeast of Grosse Ile and has been referred to as the "most difficult place in the Dominion to erect a lighthouse." It was the scene of much marine drama throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

Byron Clark lives in Grosse Ile in the Magdalen Islands and is married to Vera Goodwin. They have one daughter, Kim.



**Byron Clark flanked by the Official Languages Commissioner's Quebec representative Charles Taker, who nominated him for the Phelps award, and QAHN president Rod MacLeod.**

## Vincent Massey students win heritage video contest – again

(Communiqué) – For the second year in a row, students from Vincent Massey Collegiate high school in Montreal have won a province-wide history competition sponsored by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN).

The prize, which comes with a cash award of \$250, was won by a team of students who produced a short film about Quebec-born scientist Dr. Armand Frappier, a public-health advocate and pioneer in the field of immunology who led the fight against tuberculosis in Canada from the 1930s onward. Last year, a group of Vincent Massey students took home the prize for their video about Marguerite Bourgeoys.

Judges praised the winning team's creative effort and technical skill in re-enacting highlights of Frappier's scientific career and the role he played establishing Montreal's reputation as a world-class centre for medical research. In 1938, Dr. Frappier founded the Institute of



**Vincent Massey Collegiate video wizards Ugo Mancini, Nicholas Berlingieri, Denis Dao, Xio He and Enzo Romano (probably not in order).**

Microbiology and Hygiene, the first French-language school of hygiene in the world. "It was interesting to see how the students blended elements of human drama to underscore the importance of Frappier's scientific work, not only for Quebecers, but for all North Americans," QAHN executive director Dwane Wilkin said. "We were also impressed with the overall high quality of the staging, camera work and editing."

The Heritage Video Contest seeks to encourage Quebec youth to learn about local history. Students from English high schools across the province were invited to submit their own 60-second hometown history vignettes.

This year's winning entry was produced by Ugo Mancini, Nicholas Berlingieri, Denis Dao, Xio He and Enzo Romano. The prize was presented to them June 3 during QAHN's annual general meeting at the Stewart Museum on Ile Sainte-Hélène.

## HERITAGE ISSUES

# \$13.5 million for Quebec Community Groups Network

Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages Josée Verner has announced the signing of a cooperation agreement with the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). Under this agreement, the English-speaking communities of Quebec, represented by the QCGN, will receive an increase in funding of 11 per cent, for a total of \$13.5 million for 2005-2009.

“The Government of Canada recognizes that linguistic duality is one of the most unique characteristics of Canada’s history and heritage,” said Minister Verner. “I am delighted that this new framework of cooperation between the Quebec Community Groups Network and the Department of Canadian Heritage provides the foundation for enhanced efforts within the English-speaking communities of Quebec to ensure their long-term vitality.

The agreement defines the values, principles, and rationale for cooperation between the Department of

Canadian Heritage and the QCGN. This agreement describes the implementation mechanisms and the responsibilities of each party, as well as the results anticipated by both the organization and the Department in supporting the development of Quebec’s English-speaking communities and meeting their particular needs.

The QCGN is an incorporated, non-profit organization representing 24 English community organizations in Quebec. It supports the ongoing development and enhanced vitality of English minority language communities. The QCGN promotes a coordinated approach in carrying out its community development initiatives.

Funding is provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage under the Development of Official Language Communities Program, which seeks to foster the vitality of English and French minority language communities and to help them participate fully in all aspects of Canadian life.

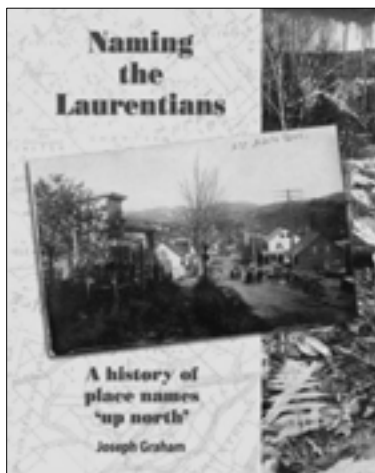
## BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

### Naming the Laurentians, By Joseph Graham

Naming the Laurentians is an anthology of stories about Laurentian places and how they got their names. It covers centuries and involves peoples and nations from far and wide. Choose a name, read about it, and you will be spun into a web of stories that connect us all.

Names from the earliest Algonquin settlements share geography with others that reflect the growth of democracy, the rivalry of the Institut Canadien and the Catholic Church, the role of the British Empire and rising influence of the United States.

Each section is introduced with a map and the book is complemented with over 80 illustrations taken



anthology of stories about Laurentian mostly from early postcards. There is a detailed bibliography and an index that locates names, places and ideas.

To order, send a cheque for \$33.70 (\$24.95 plus taxes, postage and handling in Canada - please inquire for foreign orders) made payable to Naming the Laurentians, 1494 6th Range Road, Sainte Lucie des Laurentides, QC J0T 2J0. The ISBN number is 0-9739586-0-X.

If you are a retailer, or wish to order from any other country, please contact [distribution@ballyhoo.ca](mailto:distribution@ballyhoo.ca). If you have any

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