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THE MAGAZINE OF THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF QUEBEC, FOUNDED 1824



Number 18 ■ Winter 2007/08

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LIBRARY HOURS

Please note that the Library will be *CLOSED* Sunday *DECEMBER 23* to Friday *JANUARY 4* inclusively

> Sunday 12:00PM-4:00PM

Monday **CLOSED**

Tuesday 12:00PM-9:00PM

Wednesday 12:00PM-4:00PM

Thursday 12:00PM-4:00PM

Friday 12:00PM-4:00PM

Saturday 10:00AM-4:00PM

Front page: Quebec City's Masonic Temple, photo: Patrick Donovan

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The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec is a non-profit organization whose mandate is to foster English-language culture in the Quebec City region and share its diverse heritage. The LHSQ manages the Morrin Centre.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members and friends,

This is the last edition of the Society Pages before the beginning of 2008, the year marking the 400th anniversary of the founding of our great city.

During the period leading up to the celebrations of the 300th anniversary, the Society played a key role in initiating the movement to convince the federal government to establish the Plains of Abraham as the National Battlefields Park. One hundred years later, this magnificent site is a jewel of the city's landscape and stands out as one of Canada's great urban parks. We may remain proud of the Society's role in this achievement to this day.

In 2008, the Society is taking part in a project entitled "Voices from the Crossroads / À la croisée des voix" in which many community organizations will participate. The aim of this initiative is to celebrate the contribution of English-speakers to our city. Our special calendar of events will begin with performances of Frances Brooke's Rosina, an operetta by the author of North America's first novel who lived in Quebec City during the 1760s. Programming also includes a heritage symposium, the launch of the Morrin Centre's permanent exhibit, talks about

anglophone writers linked to Quebec City, a special English-Community weekend hosted by Voice of English-speaking Quebec, celebrations of the Plains of Abraham centenary with our partners at the National Battlefields Commission, a heritage symposium, self-guided Anglo-themed tours, and a bigger & better Celtic Festival. The 400th anniversary will allow Quebec's English-speaking community to showcase its dynamism and consolidate its profile in the city's cultural landscape. Have a look at the newly-launched Voices From the Crossroads website http://400voices.morrin.org.

I encourage you all to support this initiative and to participate in as many of the celebratory events as you are able to throughout the year.

I wish you all a happy Christmas and a fabulous 400th anniversary New Year. Thank you for the continued support of your Society.

Warmest regards

David F. Blair, President

RENTAL CAMPAIGN

DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2008

Time is running out to participate in the LHSQ's first rental campaign! The deadline is January 31st, 2008!

As a member and friend, you still have time to support the development of rentals at the Morrin Centre by participating in the first ever rental campaign. Each time someone you have referred to us rents one of our rooms; you receive a gift

certificate at a nearby restaurant and earn an extra chance to win our special prize at the end of the campaign. The special prize will be awarded during our LHSQ anniversary event on March 16th 2008. Three beautiful spaces are available for dinner parties, dances, meetings, weddings and other occasions:

College Hall: the most spacious rooms in the Centre can accommodate up to 225 people.

LHSQ Library Reading Room: this charming space can easily accommodate 30 seated or 54 standing.

Presidents' Hall: the first place you see upon entering the building, with a capacity of 40 people.

Hurry up! Time is limited!
Contact us at rentals@morrin.org
or call (418) 694-9147 to plan an event today!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

WINTER 2007 UPDATE

by France Cliche, executive director

Over the past few months, the LHSQ has been hard at work on the million-and-one projects planned for the 400th anniversary of Quebec City. There are now more people than ever working for the LHSQ, and our membership continues to rise. We recently made it over 400—just in time for Quebec's anniversary!

SOME NEWS

Staff, Interns, Volunteers: Three new staff joined our team since the last issue. Gisèle Bouchard, a Ph.D candidate in ethnology, is working on our oral history project. Hailing from Saint-Isidore, Alberta, she has done similar work with Francophone communities out west (see page 6 for details). Valérie Deslauriers joins us as an administrative assistant. Finally, Jessica Boutin joins our team as a special 400th anniversary project assistant. Jessica recently completed her B.A. in ethnology and has work experience in the heritage sector.

We continue to welcome volunteers and interns. This autumn, Cassandra Knihnisky and Russell Wakeford, two full-time volunteers from the Katimavik programme, have provided invaluable help with our the inventory and processing of our collections. Hong Liu, student at the Eastern Quebec Learning Centre, returned for an autumn internship, doing data entry and putting our files in order. The centre continues to be supported by many regular volunteers (see page 7 for details).

Restoration project: Preparatory work for Phase II of the restoration project is presently being done by the architects and engineers. We look forward to completing the restoration of the building soon!

Project Grants: New project grants have come in since the last issue. The Department of Canadian Heritage's Museums Assistance Project provided us with funds to develop a collection management and development policy. This grant will also allow us to computerize our artefacts inventory and work on our special library collections. Canadian Heritage has also provided us with a grant to develop a

communication plan through the Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program.

Fundraising: As a member of the Society, you have recently received an invitation to contribute to our annual campaign entitled *The Story Continues*. Thank you to all who have donated so far. Many other initiatives aiming for the long-term financial stability are under way with the support of the LHSQ council and campaign cabinet.

Events: Autumn events at the Morrin Centre were broad and varied, including everything from a Halloween ghost hunt to an in-depth look at Yeats and his poetry.

The next few months promise to be even more exciting due to the numerous events planned as part of the *Voices from the Crossroads* 400th anniversary initiative. This series of activities will be launched in January with *Rosina: an operetta* (see page 6 for details) - the first in our year-long *Written Voices* series of literary events. We will also be commemorating our role in the creation of the National Battlefields Park with a centennial tea in March. Complete details of *Voices from the Crossroads* programming is available at http://400voices.morrin.org

In addition to our 400th anniversary programming, we hope to continue our *Writers' Series* next spring. John Ralston Saul has confirmed that he will participate, among many others. Stay posted!



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TRANSACTIONS

MASONIC CONSPIRACIES AND OTHER DEVILISH SECRETS

by Patrick Donovan

Freemasonry and its discontents

The first time I became aware of Freemasons was in my late teens. My interest in history had led me to

Jules-Paul Tardivel's science-fiction novel *Pour la Patrie*. Written in 1895, Tardivel's novel is a preachy tale set in an independent 1950's Quebec with wondrous electric cars and telegraphic pens. The novel's bad guys are a group of Freemasons, described as devilworshipping "ouvriers des ténèbres" seeking to undermine the nation. Though arguably the ravings of a religious fanatic, it still piqued my curiosity about Freemasons.



Pediment of the Quebec City Temple (Patrick Donovan)

Opposition to Freemasonry began in the nineteenth century. The Catholic clergy accused it of all evils. To this day, Catholics who become Freemasons can be excommunicated—Benedict XVI, claims their teachings are still "irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church." This is why many Masons have traditionally been Anglo-Protestants. Recent immigration has diversified the order, and Quebec's current Grand Master is a Punjabi Sikh. Opposition to Masons was not the sole preserve of Catholics—the "Anti-Masonic Party" in the United States was a major player on the political scene for some years.

Suspicion of Freemasons was related to the fact that many influential individuals were part of the order. High-ranking Freemasons have included revolutionaries such as George Washington, Napoleon, and (closer to home) Louis-Joseph Papineau. Intellectuals such as Benjamin Franklin and Voltaire were also part of the organization. A look at the membership roster in Canada reads like a who's who from Canada's past: Lord Durham, John A. Macdonald, Peter McGill, John Molson, Samuel Bronfman, etc.

The group's secrecy also fuelled suspicion. Masonic beliefs are progressively revealed to its adherents by "degrees," with the 32nd degree being the highest. Whereas Freemasons claim they are a moral and benevolent order that give to charity, others claim

that the secrets revealed at the higher levels are more evil than Tardivel's most paranoid nightmares.

The Quebec City Temple

My curiosity about Freemasons resurfaced when I realized that a Masonic Temple existed close to home. Built in 1861, the four-storey neoclassical limestone building stands on the corner of Des Jardins and Saint-Louis streets, a few blocks from the Chateau Frontenac. Topped with a copper roof, the three symbols of masonry are engraved in stone within its pediment: the volume of sacred law, the compass, and the square.

The temple itself occupies the upper floor, while the lower three floors have always been rented out to other occupants. Morrin College, Quebec City's first English-language institution of higher learning, had its headquarters in the Masonic Temple building from 1862-1868. In fact, it was through a loan from Dr. Joseph Morrin that the Masons received the funds to build their temple. The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, along with its library and museum, also moved into the Masonic Temple during the same years, after suffering two fires in less than a decade. Later in the nineteenth century, Quebec's wealthy uptown Jewish community rented rooms for their synagogue for a while. Today, these rooms are rented out to private law firms, with two restaurants on the ground floor. All four floors were initially connected by an elegant curving staircase with 66 steps (representing the total number of books in the bible), later replaced by an elevator.

Masons continue to hold their rites on the fourth floor of the building today. Their vaulted meeting room is lined with dark-stained chairs from the late nineteenth century, all elegantly upholstered with blue velvet. The central chair is the hand-carved Throne of Solomon used by the Grand Master. The altar with its holy book sits in the middle of the room.

Masonic History, Masonic Myths

Freemasonry in Quebec has both an official history, and another shrouded in myth. Most historians consider everything up to the eighteenth century suspect. Some Masons claim that the order is as old as the art of building itself. Others say the order was founded by the builders of King Solomon's Temple, or the pyramids of Egypt, or the Druids of Stonehenge, but even Masons tend to see these as allegorical foundation myths.

Some believe that France's Freemasons are direct descendents of the Knights of the Order of Malta, which date back to the medieval era and the

crusades. It is believed that Champlain was a Knight of Malta (and by extension a Freemason). Montmagny, the second governor of New France, was definitely part of the order. During his reign, a stone with a Maltese Cross carving was added to his mansion. This stone, dated 1647, was later discovered by archaeologists and integrated into the Chateau Frontenac.

Theories that Masons descend from guilds of stonemasons, who eventually developed rituals and allegories, are more widely believed. If the order did exist before the eighteenth century, its activities were obscure and private.

Masons come out of the shadows and into the history books in 1717, with the creation of the Grand Lodge of England, grouping several independent factions (or "lodges") within London. This British Freemasonry came to Quebec with the conquest in 1759. Before the construction of the Masonic temple in Quebec, the city's numerous lodges met in taverns, barracks, and hotels. A single Grand Lodge of Quebec was formed in 1869 with its headquarters in Montreal. Today it oversees all 91 lodges in the province, with over 4,500 members. Most of these are in the Montreal area, but some are also found in Quebec, Gatineau, and the Eastern Townships. Eleven of these lodges are Francophone.

Though the link between Freemasons and the Knights of Malta may be a complete fabrication, it is conceivable to think that Francophone Freemasons existed in Quebec before the British conquest. Freemasonry in its modern form began to spread as

early as 1725 outside the British Isles, particularly France. It is likely that this filtered through to New France, but there is no conclusive proof. Many claim that both Generals Wolfe and Montcalm were devout members of the same Masonic organization. One of the earliest monuments erected in Quebec City, the Wolfe-Montcalm obelisk, commemorates both victor and vanguished at a time when most citizens still took sides. The fact that local Freemasons played a major part in the erection of this monument may explain the origins of the story. To Masons, it is more likely that this memorial was about reiterating the brotherhood between Masonic Wolfe

Montcalm than it was about bolstering Canada's creation myth of two founding peoples.

There's undoubtedly a religious edge to all this, but should Quebec's Masonic heritage – the temple, the stone, the monument – be considered part of our religious heritage? For one, Masons themselves claim they are not a religion but a fraternal order. However, religion is defined by some sources as "a set of beliefs and practices held by a group of people, codified in prayers and rituals." According to this definition, it could be argued that Freemasonry is a religion (or at the very least "religious"). Freemasons follow a

moral and spiritual code and have a large amount of iconography and symbolism. Their rituals and prayers are more developed than those of many organized religions. Belief in a superior power (given the ecumenical name "Grand Architect of the Universe") is essential—atheists or agnostics cannot join. The fact that some Masons call their meeting places temples, which include altars and sacred books, certainly gives these places a religious aspect. But then again, it could be argued that many secular institutions have religious overtones, and certainly there is no evidence of biological inheritance of freemasonry. The son of a Mason is not automatically a Mason—and perish the thought of a Grand Mistress.



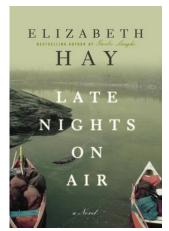
Masonic heritage or hogwash? (www.francmaconnerie.ca)

Quebec City's Masonic Temple can be visited in a virtual 3D tour at www.francmaconnerie.ca. Find out more about the Grand Lodge of Quebec at www.glquebec.org.

LIBRARY PAGES

BOOK REVIEW: *LATE NIGHTS ON* AIR

by Simon Auclair



2007 Giller Prize Winner

I fell in love with a voice, once. It is not unlike falling in love with a book. In fact, I was reading (coincidence?) when the voice came to me, full of northern emptiness, the kind of emptiness you need to fill with details in order to reassure yourself. The sound of branches, of lichen being stepped on; the wind running on nothing but bald stones.

And Elizabeth Hay's novel, *Late Nights on Air*, starts out just like that, with a voice. During the dark hours of the night, Yellowknife in 1975, a man hears its "tarnished silver spoon" sound on the radio. And that's it: his heart takes charge. Let mystery be mystery, but this eventually leads the story into the landscape, where two couples depart on a six week canoe trip. And the impossible happens, under Hay's craft. The tundra fills its mute skies with subtle beauty. Bonds are forged and broken in its silence.

Back to the voice that I fell in love with. I followed its source. And it led me, like the protagonists, into the tundra. And I ended up on a canoe trip, too. But the weirdest part is when you realize that this voice guiding you is not only a character's voice, or Elizabeth Hay's, but also yours – mainly yours. It is what great writers do, they make you fall in love with your own, rusty voice. When we read them, we forget them. They become our voice, and we become theirs. And in Elizabeth Hay's case, "my" voice became so silent, muted by her meticulous sentences, that the tundra was passionately shouting at me.

Simon Auclair manages the LHSQ library since September 2007. He is also the author of Perpétuité de Gibraltar, which earned him the Prix du Jeune Écrivain Francophone in 2007.

Wish List NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

We received many interesting donations over the past few months, but no books targeting Wish List priorities outlined in the last issue. We have therefore decided to target a new priority in order to develop our fiction collection: Nobel Prize Winners.

Samuel Beckett, Murphy Samuel Beckett, Watt Samuel Beckett, Malone Dies Samuel Beckett, Molloy Ivan Bunin, The Village Gabriel Garcia Marquez, The Autumn of the Patriarch Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Chronicle of a Death Foretold Knut Hamsun, Growth of the Soil Yasunari Kawabata, The Old Capital Yasunari Kawabata, Snow Country Pär Lagerkvist, The Dwarf Selma Lagerlöf, The Wonderful Adventures of Nils Doris Lessing, The Four Gated City Doris Lessing, The Golden Notebook Doris Lessing, Memoirs of a Survivor Thomas Mann, Tonio Kröger Thomas Mann, The Magic Mountain Boris Pasternak, Doctor Zhivago José Saramago, The Double José Saramago, The Cave

José Saramago, The Gospel According to Jesus Christ

BOOK DONATIONS

Do you have books that aren't on the wish list above that you'd like to give to the LHSQ? We ask that you contact us in advance. To limit book handling on both sides, we greatly appreciate receiving a list of the books you wish to donate before you bring them to us. We can therefore preselect the books we plan to integrate.

Franz Eemil Sillanpää, The Maid Silja/Fallen Asleep While Young

In special circumstances the LHSQ may provide income tax receipts for books. The donor must pay for an independent evaluation by a recognized dealer recommended by the LHSQ. It may not be worth your while for donations of limited market value. All book donations are acknowledged inside the volume.

VOICES From the Crossroads—À la croisée des VOIX

REVIVING ROSINA: AN OPERETTA

By Edwina Carson

Canada's first novelist, Frances Brooke, adored Quebec: "it is the loveliest work of creation...all is so gay as never was, the sweetest country in the world".

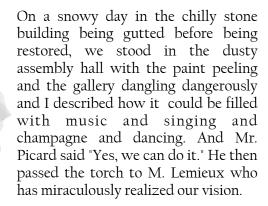
When she was obliged to return in 1768 to the dirty, wicked London depicted in Gay's "A Beggar's Opera", she wished to "transport this fairy ground to England", so she created a new Eden in her charming little opera, "Rosina."

"Rosina" was a hit from its premiere at Covent Garden on New Year's Eve 1782 and for 100 years "the darling of the playhouse." Swiftly reaching the New World, it was produced in

Halifax in 1794. The Overture of her "much admired" opera was played in Quebec in the 1790's, but there was no production.

So I was delighted to find a 1966 recording by conductor Richard Bonynge and then a production score by Musica Britannica in the library at Laval. I had to share this good news with the Morrin Centre. To my astonishment, Director France Cliche responded immediately, "We will do it. It will be the

perfect project for the 400th." And would I meet with the Director of the Conservatoire? With pleasure.



The merry, positive spirit of Frances Brooke is in this production—the first in Canada since 1794 - celebrating the joy and beauty of Quebec. So is mine with you.

Edwina Carson has devoted her professional life to promoting Canadian culture: the Guelph Spring Festival, The International Bach Piano Competition, etc. She does only what she believes in and she believes in Frances Brooke and "Rosina".

ECHO[E]S

LIVES OF ENGLISH-SPEAKERS IN QUEBEC CITY

The LHSQ is currently producing a documentary about Quebec's English-speaking communities. Enter the lives of people from different walks of life to see how time has changed the way English-speakers relate to this city.

Copies of the LHSQ's documentary are on presale at the low price of \$15 until its official launch in March 2008. As of the day of the launch, it will sell for \$20 per copy.

Please fill out the following coupon and mail it to our office with a cheque. You can also buy a copy for a friend! Documentaries will be sent upon completion in March.

Order your copy now!		
Есно	[E]	S

LIVES OF ENGLISH-SPEAKERS IN OUFREC CITY

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SPECIAL THANKS

FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS

By Caroline Lamothe

"I can no other answer make but thanks, And thanks [...]" -William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night

As we celebrate the Morrin Centre's first full year of operations in 2007, we would like to thank the volunteers who made this success possible. From fundraising to governance, as support in the events and activities held at Morrin Centre, and with every day services at the library, your time and support has been invaluable.

Denis Angers
Dennis Apedaile
Gill Ayre
Chelsea Baker
Jason Beaulieu
Claude Belleau
Marie-Claude Belley
Louise Bertrand
Barbara Bignell
Hugh Bignell
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Miriam Blair David F. Blair Peter Black Linda Blythe William G.K. Boden Lucie Bouchard Patrick Bourassa Marc Boutin Lesley Brooks Jason Brunwald Lila Bujold Geneviève Bureau Francis H. Cabot Steve Cameron Marie Cantin Jill Carette Fabien Caron Eleanor Carruthers Marjorie Chabot Sovita Chander Pierre Chartray Beth Clibbon

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On behalf of the LHSQ, Thank you!

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CONTESTS

THE NEW ANGLO: FACT MEETS FICTION









WHAT ARE TODAY'S **ANGLOPHONES REALLY LIKE?**

TÊTE CARRÉE?

RICH IMPERIALIST?

Let's put these stereotypes aside and try to think clearly for a second. If you were writing "the great Quebec City novel," how would you depict its Anglophone denizens on the eve of city's 400th anniversary? In 500 words or less, write an excerpt from your imaginary novel introducing a character that you think embodies today's Quebec Anglophone.

First prize: \$500 prize from QWF

Youth prize (18 and under): \$100 prize from the

LHSQ & free family membership

Send all entries to info@morrin.org

Deadline: June 30, 2008

Contest jury presided by Louisa Blair, author of The Anglos:

The Hidden Face of Quebec City.

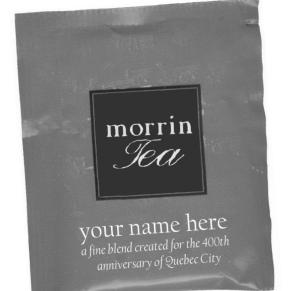


The LHSQ reserves the right to use excerpts from all submissions in its interpretation programmes or to reprint them in publications.



In partnership with the Quebec Writers' Federation







In partnership with J.A. Moisan, Épicier

Tea blend launched for Quebec's 400th anniversary

named after **\7**

We need your help, whether it be a secret that has been passed down through generations, or an aromatic mix of cloves, apple oil, pine needles and Assam tea concocted yesterday. An expert panel will taste your creation and a winning entry will be chosen. You will also be given the opportunity to name your tea, a chance for you or your loved ones to join Earl Grey in the pantheon of tea legends.

Contest deadline is February 15, 2008

FIRST PRIZE teapot valued at \$100

SECOND PRIZE gift basket of teas valued at \$50

\$20 gift certificate for J.A. Moisan épicier THIRD PRIZE Prizes offered by J.A. Moisan Épicier. Contest details available at LHSQ library and J.A. Moisan.

BULLETIN BOARD



You can now make online donations! CanadaHelps is a registered charity that manages an e-donations portal, allowing donors to make secure credit card donations to us. anadaHelps.org Visit www.morrin.org for more information.

RAND PIANO

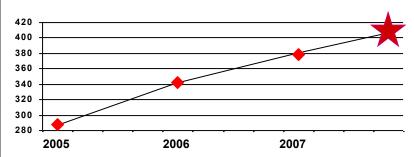


Call for donors: Looking for a grand piano to add to the College Hall. This would be used for musical events (or to add music to events). Charitable receipts may be issued based on an independant professional evaluation.

The BAnQ recently received boxes of archives from the Women's Canadian Club of Quebec and would like to have more information about this organization. Any information will help. Contact Christian Drolet at 644-4800, extension 6414.

THE LHSQ NOW HAS 408 MEMBERS

A historic high!



For most of the 19th century, the LHSQ had 50 to 200 members. The 20th century saw memberships hover between 200 and 300 individuals and families, dipping above the 300s for a short while. Over the past two years, our membership has been rising faster than the Canadian dollar, breaking past 400 this fall! Thank you for helping us to grow through your support!

LHSO CHRISTMAS GIFT MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE—ASK AT THE LIBRARY DESK AND WHY NOT ADD A CALENDAR! &

MARK YOUR AGENDAS: NEXT AGM - MARCH 18, 2008



Recycle your copy of the Society Pages by giving it to a friend (and tell them about all our great cultural activities and library)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

TO ASSIST AT EVENTS



Sunday, January 13 at 20:00 Sunday in Song

Thursday to Saturday January 24-26 at 20:00 Rosina: an Operetta

Sunday, January 27 at 14:00 Rosina: an Operetta

Sunday, February 10 at 20:00 Sunday in Song

Friday, February 22 at 19:00 Cockloft's Cursory Observations

Sunday, March 9 at 20:00 Sunday in Song

...and we're always looking for volunteers who can commit to a regular schedule at the library desk.





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