



# SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 21 ■ AUTUMN 2008 ■ \$2,00



■  
IN SEARCH OF  
QUEBEC'S  
WELSH  
HERITAGE

By Patrick Donovan

■  
THE NAVAL  
REVIEW OF  
1908

By Charles-André Nadeau  
■



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

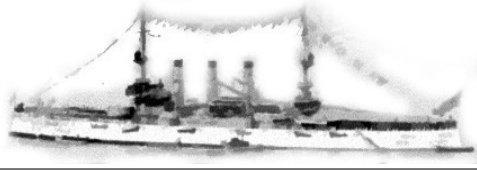


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## LIBRARY HOURS

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 cover: Welsh Flag, Wikipedia

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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

## THE CARING GARDENER

*“Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted;  
Suffer them now and they'll o'ergrow the garden.”  
-William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*

Dear Members and Friends :

As you may know, a book auction will be taking place this fall. Some have expressed concern about this event and I would like to reassure you that this is not a “mindless” sale, but the result of a well thought out process.

Preserving and sharing heritage has always been at the heart of the Society's mission. For this reason, about 10 years ago, the Society embarked on its most important preservation action ever: the restoration of its 200-year-old home to create the Morrin Centre, an English-language cultural centre showcasing the contribution of English-speakers to the history of this beautiful city. This project has involved an incredible commitment from staff and volunteers and has repositioned the Society and the building in the forefront of the city's cultural scene.

At the heart of this project lies our Library, which has been a major part of the Society's commitment to its members and to the community since its creation in 1824, over 184 years ago. We continue to meet the needs and interests of users by regularly adding new material to our collections. Like other lending libraries, the Society also regularly weeds its collections. In recent years, our extra efforts have allowed us to substantially increase both our membership and library book circulation.

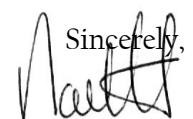
Our commitment to preserving heritage is showcased through our Special Collections, where our most significant books are kept. Books within these collections focus on the history of Canada and the former British Empire. The collections contain many first-person travel narratives that are difficult to find in other libraries. The Society also retains all

books linked to its own history and to the Quebec City region. For example, we are committed to preserving the Quebec Library Association book collection in its entirety, which contains books from Canada's first public library. These are the jewels of our collection and are not considered in any of our weeding processes.

The books to be sold in the upcoming auction were removed according to principles similar to those used in other small historic libraries. Weeding criteria were established with the help of two experienced librarians with Masters Degrees in Library Science, and later approved by our fifteen-member Council as well as by the honorary librarian. One of our devoted members, who managed a historic collection in Maine for several decades, personally went through every book removed from our collection to ensure we were respecting our mission.

The main objective of this book auction is not to raise funds, nor to free up space. Our objective is rather to provide members and visitors alike with a Library that preserves the finest items from its past while remaining a relevant resource for the present. All proceeds will directly benefit the collections. They will ensure that the Library is a relevant cultural resource that complements other libraries in the region. They will also go towards the conservation of significant books that deserve our care and respect, many of which have lain forgotten and neglected among weeds for decades. A library is like a garden, we need to tend it carefully to make sure it continues to grow and to enlighten.



Sincerely,  


David F. Blair  
President

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

## AUTUMN 2008 UPDATE

by France Cliche, executive director

Summer has seen our office bursting at the seams with students, providing much needed help on a variety of projects.

## SOME NEWS

**Staff, Interns, Volunteers:** Our accounting assistant **Marie-France Paré** recently left the Morrin after a three year part-time internship. I want to convey my thanks for her great work and wish her luck in the future. **Barry McCullough** was hired in June to work on financial planning and has taken over most of the accounting tasks. With a degree in Business Administration and experience in cultural organizations around the country, he is a great addition to the team.

Many dynamic young students worked for us this summer thanks to grants from **Young Canada Works** and **Service Canada**. Graphic designer **Julie Brouillette** returned for a second summer to work on the Celtic Festival and long-term design standards for the Morrin. **Stephanie Cotnoir**, studying Public Relations in Michigan, lent a hand on many communication tasks. Art history student **Camille Dufour-Truchon** worked on the Celtic Festival and did some planning work for our restoration project. You may have seen **Iphigénie Nshutinyayo** working in the library - she spends the rest of her year studying environmental science in Minnesota. **Maria Fernanda Zaldivar Turrent** also helped in the library, and will be pursuing Doctoral studies in linguistics this fall while continuing to work part-time for us as a library clerk. Finally, English literature student **Dominik Parisien** worked on event planning, translation, and recruited great writers for readings next spring. Thanks also to graphic designer **David Dupuis**, who completed his contract with us in July and was responsible for the design of the *VoxTours* brochures.

**Restoration project:** You may have noticed the new chandeliers in the library and College Hall, which

were installed in June. They are a contemporary take on the original 19th century models (see inset).

You should see many workers in the building as of this fall. They'll be working on the elevator, prison cells, the former chemistry lab, the Children's Library, and generally doing lots of fine tuning to make the place look great while keeping the traces of time.

**Fundraising:** Many major pledges were received over the last few months. The launch of the public phase of our major campaign should happen this fall. More info coming soon!



Detail from 1879 Engraving depicting original chandelier in College Hall

**LHSQ Library:** This fall, members will have access to a computerized catalogue of all our circulating collections (see page 7 for details).

The inventory and recataloguing of special collections is also moving ahead, with 50% of all books entered in the catalogue.

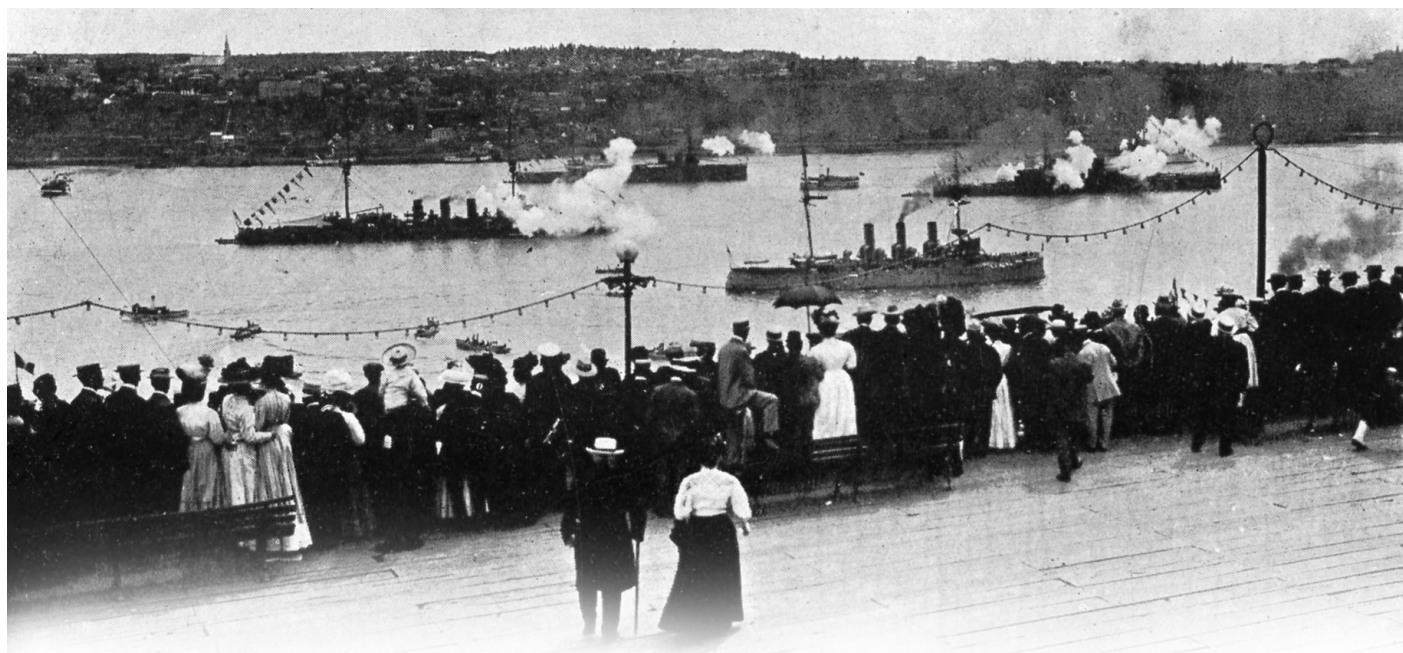
**Rentals:** We continued to rent out our library and College Hall throughout the summer. The Centre is attracting many national and international heritage groups. We hosted a cocktail in the library for delegates from ICOMOS this June, in Quebec to examine new proposals for the World Heritage List. The Heritage Canada Foundation will be hosting parts of their annual conference at the Morrin Centre from September 25 to 27.

**Events:** Many successful events took place over the last few months, including our usual summer Candlelight series. The launch of our *VoxTours* ([www.voxtours.ca](http://www.voxtours.ca)) walking tours attracted special reports on CBC Radio-One, CKIA, the QCT, and a seven-minute prime-time feature on Radio-Canada's television station, broadcasted throughout the province. We hope you were able to participate in the third edition of our Celtic Festival, which continues to grow and attract more sponsors with every passing year. ■

## TRANSACTIONS

## THE NAVAL REVIEW OF 1908

by Charles-André Nadeau



French, British and American warships firing a gun salute in honour of the Prince of Wales, on July 25th 1908

Between July 14<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of 1908, some of the most powerful warships in the world anchored below *Cap Diamant* to participate in a naval review, on the occasion of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Québec*. More than 6,000 officers and sailors from three countries were onboard. The honored guest was the Prince of Wales, the future king George V. What is a naval review? Who attended the event 100 years ago? And what did the crews of these men-of-war do during the tercentenary celebrations?

The tradition of a naval review dates back to 1415. Before leaving England to do battle against the French at Agincourt, Henry V inspected his ships. Over the following centuries, the custom of assembling the nation's fleet on mobilization endured. The event also became a way to mark special celebrations, particularly coronations, royal jubilees or significant anniversaries. In these later cases, warships of other countries are usually invited.

During a review, the vessels are anchored in lines and *dressed overall*, that is flying all flags and pennants. The crews *man the rails*, all officers and men lining up on the upper decks, wearing their best

uniforms. The reviewing authority embarks in a designated ship which slowly moves along the rows of cruisers, destroyers, and frigates, receiving the salutes and cheers of their crews as he passes. Besides this formal ceremony, other activities such as parades, fireworks, demonstrations, and, of course, social gatherings usually take place ashore.

In July 1908, eleven warships sailed up the Saint Lawrence to Quebec City: eight British, two French, and one from the United States. The American participant was the newly commissioned, 16,000-ton battleship, *USS New Hampshire*, armed with 24 guns, and carrying a complement of 825 men. The French group included the battle cruiser *Léon Gambetta* and the heavy cruiser *Amiral Aube*, with companies totaled 1100. The largest unit of the British squadron was the battle cruiser *HMS Indomitable*, 567 feet long, 17,500 tons, and possessing eight 12-inch guns mounted in four turrets. The vessel had just entered service. Because of the arms race with Germany, she had been built in the utmost secrecy. In company were four battleships, *Exmouth*, flagship of the commander of the Atlantic fleet, *Albemarle*, *Duncan* and *Russell*. Built in 1901, these ironclads had a seven inch armored hull. Also present were the heavy



cruiser *Minotaur*, and the two light cruisers *Venus* and *Arrogant*.

Vice Admiral Jauréguiberry commanded the French group. Rear Admiral Cowles, representing the US Navy, was the brother-in-law of then president Teddy Roosevelt. Vice Admiral Curzon-Howe, great-great uncle of Princess Diana, was the senior British officer. These three men had rather lackluster careers. Rear-Admiral Jellicoe, on the other hand, second in command to Curzon-Howe, would lead the Grand Fleet during the first World War, and gain a strategic albeit unspectacular victory against the German High Seas Fleet at the Battle of Jütland, on May 31<sup>st</sup> 1916, the largest naval combat in history between armored ships.

The first vessels to arrive in port were the four British battleships and the *Arrogant*, on July 14<sup>th</sup>. They conducted a ceremonial anchorage, a rather spectacular maneuver where all ships drop anchor at the same time, and dress overall. The *Venus* was delayed two days, having to render assistance to the squadron's collier which had run aground near Cap Chat. *Venus* had an incident of her own on arrival, colliding with the anchored *Russell* while proceeding to her mooring. The two French units arrived on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup>, and the *New Hampshire* on the 20<sup>th</sup>. The *Indomitable*, carrying the Prince of Wales, came in on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, escorted by *Minotaur*. These arrivals and many of the events that followed were occasions for gun salutes and various ceremonies which attracted the citizens of Quebec.

The naval review took place on Saturday morning, the 25<sup>th</sup>. The Prince of Wales, who was lodging at the Citadel, went to the King's Wharf at 10 o'clock. He was met by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Louis-Philippe Brodeur, and the usual guard of honor. The *Arrogant*, being the smallest vessel, acted as the reviewing ship. She had left her mooring earlier and taken position just in front of the quay. A launch carried the royal guest to the cruiser, and a

salvo of 21 guns from the fleet greeted his embarkation. The warships had been formed in two lines since their arrival. Closest to Levis, and starting from the east were *Amiral Aube*, *Gambetta*, *New Hampshire*, *Albemarle*, *Duncan* and *Venus*. *Arrogant* proceeded upriver, passing between the south shore and the row of moored vessels, reviewing the French units first. After passing *Venus*, she turned around and came back between the two lines to review the units on the Quebec side, *Russell*, *Exmouth*, *Indomitable*, and *Minotaur*. Salutes were exchanged, bands played *God Save the King*, and ship's companies cheered. Once back in front of the Customs Building, *Arrogant* turned towards the King's Wharf and moored. The prince debarked as more gun salutes filled the air.

The sailors of the three world powers visiting Quebec participated in many events marking the city's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, they led the grand military parade along *Grande Allée*, *Côte de la Fabrique* and *Côte d'Abraham*. The next day, they participated in the 18,000-man military review on the newly-created Battlefields Park. Ship's bands gave concerts on Dufferin Terrace in the evenings. Balls were held ashore and onboard ships. Sailors enjoyed a picnic at Lake Saint-Joseph. Regattas took place, as well as a simulated naval combat and fireworks. British tars pulled field guns up *Côte de la Montagne* to participate in naval displays and demonstrations.

After two full week of activities, the British squadron was the first to leave. The Prince of Wales embarked on the *Indomitable*, on the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup>, with due ceremony. The ships departed quietly at three in the morning. The *New Hampshire* left, one hour later. The French stayed two extra days, although the *Amiral Aube*, having lost her anchor and cable, delayed departure until early August in a vain attempt to recover the expensive equipment. ■

*Charles-André Nadeau is a member and active volunteer of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.*



## TRANSACTIONS

## RED DRAGONS AMONG US

## A LOOK AT WELSH HERITAGE IN QUEBEC CITY (AND BEYOND)

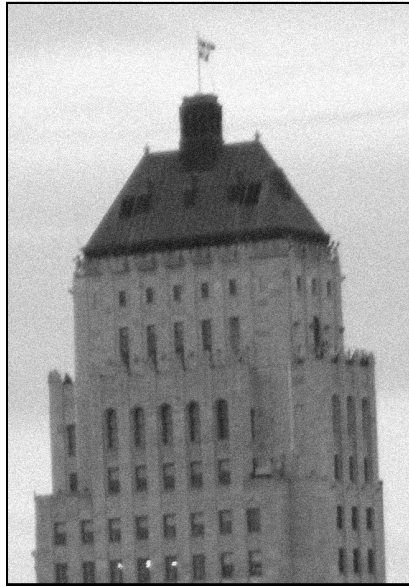
by Patrick Donovan

Since there's nobody around to represent Quebec City's Welsh heritage, I've decided to step up and declare myself an honorary Welshman. Having lived and worked in Cardiff longer than the Prince of Wales himself, I consider myself fit for the title. Ireland may be the land of my ancestors but I only spent two rainy weeks there. Besides, the Irish and the Scots get enough airplay. So let's switch channels, look at Wales, and its little known impact on Quebec. By the end of the article, you'll all want to be Welsh like me.

Let's start off with a quick geography and history lesson for those who are already lost. Wales is a small mountainous country to the west of England. Nearly three million people live there today. It was absorbed under the English crown in 1282, a relationship that had its ups and downs. Around the time of the Durham report in Canada, which adopted a patronizing view of Francophones and recommended Anglicization as a solution, a similar report in Wales noted that the lazy, immoral, and ignorant Welsh-speakers could only be freed from their depravity with the introduction of English. This spurred the rise of Welsh nationalism, which also had ups and downs over the years. Although the country is traditionally associated with coal mining and slate quarrying, these industries have largely died out. Wales is now as prosperous as the rest of the UK. As in Scotland, devolution in recent years led to a Welsh National Assembly and considerable autonomy within Great Britain.

So why do we so rarely hear about the Welsh in Quebec, two states with a shared history of struggle for self-preservation under British rule? First of all, Wales was never as populous as Ireland or Scotland, leading to a smaller pool of potential immigrants. Secondly, Wales did not suffer events like the Irish famine or the Scottish highland clearances that spurred mass emigration. In the 2001 census, only

0.1% of the population of Quebec province claimed Welsh ethnic origins - 4.1% claimed Irish origins, 3.1% claimed English origins, and 2.2% claimed Scottish origins. Many people are unaware of their origins, so real percentages are probably higher, especially when you consider the prevalence of Welsh surnames like Jones, Davies, Griffith, Evans, and Meredith. Nevertheless, other sources also indicate a lower proportion of Welsh immigrants. The Dictionary of Canadian Biography includes 727 immigrants born in England, 542 born in Scotland, 328 born in Ireland, and only 17 born in Wales.



Should we call this building  
*Yr Ap Rhys Adeiladaeth?*

Despite this, the Welsh still had an impact on Quebec City. In fact, the tallest building in the old city, the Price Building, has a Welsh name. The name "Price" comes from "ap Rhys," meaning "son of Rhys" in Welsh. The Price dynasty in Canada was founded by Welshman William Price, who came to Quebec and flourished as a lumber merchant, later owning much of the Saguenay. The company expanded into newsprint, building the largest pulp and paper mill in the world. The family's descendants still live in Quebec City today - the Auberge Saint-Antoine, recognized as Canada's finest hotel, was developed by Martha, Evan, Llewellyn and Lucy Price.

Earlier Welsh immigrants to Quebec City include Jenkin Williams, who fled Wales in 1767 to avoid a lawsuit for forgery. Despite this, he rose to the highest positions in Quebec's colonial government. He was known as a progressive influence, critical of the seigneurial system, and deplored the attitude of imperialists demanding a return to English law after the Quebec Act.

Moving beyond Quebec City, Wales' impact during the age of discoveries is greater than many assume. Folklore tells of a Welsh prince Madoc who came to

America in the 1170. The continent of America itself, long thought to be named after Amerigo Vespucci, may be named after Welsh explorer Richard Amerike - a case that has neither been proved nor refuted. The first known Welshman to have definitely set foot in the province was Thomas Button in 1612. Button was seeking the Northwest Passage and explored Hudson Bay, giving his name to a few islands in Quebec's extreme north. David Thompson was a better known Welsh explorer, mapping 3.9 million square kilometers of North America in the 1700s. Thompson is known as the greatest mapmaker that ever lived.

The story of Welsh immigration is also that of thousands of working class people who carried their traditions across the Atlantic. Alongside the Irish, Welsh immigrants worked on Montreal's Victoria Bridge in the 1850s and organized a traditional Welsh Male Choir called *Côr Meibion Cymraeg*, performing at the opening ceremonies. This group later fostered the Saint David's Society of Montreal, named after the patron saint of Wales. Both the Society and the choir still exist today.

Such strong Welsh community organizations did not exist in Quebec City. The Scots, English, Irish Catholics, and Irish Protestants all had their own benevolent groups, but not the Welsh. However, they fit in obliquely under the Saint George's Society and its mission to help settlers from "England, Wales, and the Channel Islands." Needless to say, a Society named after Saint George, the patron saint of

England, suggests that Wales was not their primary focus (let's not forget that Saint George is best known for slaying a dragon, national symbol of Wales).

The Welsh aren't bombastic, but perhaps that's part of their appeal. Recent years have seen books entitled *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* and *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. The Welsh don't claim to have saved or invented much, but they're too humble for their own good. Let's take language, for instance. Few people in Scotland and Ireland speak the country's traditional Celtic language, and its cultural use rarely extends beyond folklore. Welsh, however, is still a dynamic language spoken by over a fifth of the population. And we're not just talking about elderly folk in distant hamlets who sing in male choirs. Young people from Wales are bringing their culture into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Take the Super Furry Animals, an electro-rock band whose excellent Welsh-language album *Mwng* was described by critics as "a vital antidote to the preservative-pumped junk that curdles music's bloodflow."

My time in Cardiff fed an appreciation for a nation of underdogs that has lots to show for its small size. And they don't make a vulgar show of it, or of themselves, which I appreciate even more. So I'll just sit here and remain quietly happy as the self-proclaimed honorary Welshman that I am. At least until I visit the Isle of Man—I hear they're even MORE wonderfully obscure! ■

## ...AND WHAT ABOUT THE GREEKS, CHINESE, INDIANS, CORNISH, AMERICANS, RUSSIANS ...?



The heritage of English-speakers is often narrowly defined when in reality it suggests a great family of cultures bound by a shared language.

Explore this diversity at the **Roots 2008 summit** on October 11, hosted by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) at the Morrin Centre. In addition to examining Quebec City's Irish, English, and Scottish roots, the picture will be rounded out to include Jews, Chinese, Greeks, Blacks, Indians, Americans, and others. Community leaders,

historians, and ethnologists will share their stories and explore how different communities define their identity. On October 12, you can delve even deeper with a symposium on Jewish history that builds on Shalom Quebec's summer exhibition.

A special 400th anniversary issue of the **Quebec Heritage News** will serve as an introduction to the Roots 2008 summit, featuring original articles by Louisa Blair and other local historians. This issue will be given to all participants at the event. If you are unable to attend, you may obtain the issue by purchasing a one-year six issue subscription to the Quebec Heritage News before October 1st.

To register for the summit(s) or obtain your subscription, call QAHN at 1 (877) 964-0409 ■



## LIBRARY PAGES

## COMPUTER CATALOGUE LAUNCHED

by Simon Auclair

Finally! After years of hard work, the LHSQ has completed the computerization of its current collection catalogue. With that will come the launch of our new computer-based services in the upcoming months, including public access to our catalogue and lending services. The days of browsing through endless piles of cards to track down borrowed books are soon behind us.

Shortly, you'll be able to find the book you are looking for through a simple search engine on a public terminal in the library. You will also be able to know if a book is out. This will greatly enhance the efficiency of our library.

Even if you've never used a computer in your life, a quick five minute training session is all it will take to master our search engine. Short training sessions will be offered this fall (schedule to be advertised soon). If you can't make it, employees are always on hand to answer your questions about the database.

As for our Special Collections, cataloguing is well on its way. We are now working on data entry, reshelving, and Dewey Decimal System standardization. We hope to have all this information in the computerized database by the end of the year. Next step: online catalogue access and services ■

## Wish List LITERARY CLASSICS

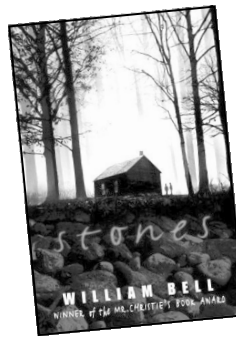
We are currently trying to build up our collection of literature by acquiring the following books missing from our collection. If you have any of these books, please consider donating them to the Society. We also accept financial donations destined to Wish List purchases. All donations will be acknowledged in the *Society Pages* and in the books themselves:

*Fictions*, Jorge Luis Borges  
*Poems*, Paul Celan  
*Berlin Alexanderplatz*, Alfred Döblin  
*Absalom Absalom*, William Faulkner  
*Gypsy Ballads*, Federico Garcia Lorca  
*Dead Souls*, Nikolai Gogol  
*The Devil to Pay in the Backlands*, Joao Guimaraes Rosa  
*Hunger*, Knut Hamsun  
*The Sound of the Mountain*, Yasunari Kawabata  
*Zorba the Greek*, Nikos Kazantzakis  
*Complete Poems*, Giacomo Leopardi  
*The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing  
*Diary of a Madman*, Lu Xun  
*Children of Gebelawi*, Maguib Mahfouz  
*Buddenbrooks*, Thomas Mann  
*The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu  
*Metamorphoses*, Ovid  
*The Book of Disquiet*, Fernando Pessoa  
*Pedro Paramo*, Juan Rulfo  
*Blindness*, José Saramago  
*Confessions of Zeno*, Italo Svevo

## A YOUNG ADULT GOLDMINE

by Simon Auclair

We have loads of new books in the Young Adult section! Having recently received a grant that allows us to acquire books for teens and young adults, the library bought more than 300 books. These range from fantasy classics, such as *The Dark Elf trilogy* or the *Dragonlance Series*, to the more poetical verse novel *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins, which deals with addiction to crystal meth.



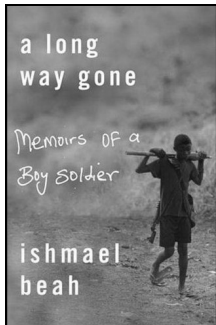
Some recent acquisitions cannot be overlooked. *Stones*, for example, written by the Canadian William Bell (winner of the CLA Young Adult Award) tells the story of young and lonely Garnet Havelock who meets the woman of his dreams in his final year of high school. Now, the hard part : he has to get her to talk to him. But there's also a mysterious edge as Garnet ends up meeting Raphaella (aka: mysterious girl), and they discover a horrible chapter of their town's past.

Many other great stories await your discovery at the LHSQ Library! Just come in and browse through our collection. ■

## LIBRARY PAGES

BOOK REVIEW: *A LONG WAY GONE*

by Dominik Parisien



Autobiographies are, especially in this day and age, a mixed blessing. They see the light of day, more often than not, to feed our hunger for the sensational. They are seldom written to fulfill a benevolent purpose, and often fall into obvious moralizing when they do.

Ishmael Beah's *A Long Way Gone* is unique in the genre. It is a detailed first-person account of a former child soldier's war experience, offering an insightful glimpse into the horrors of civil war in Sierra Leone. It manages to sensitize the general public on the situation of child soldiers without moralizing.

*Gone* begins in a manner that speaks directly to Western perceptions of foreign wars: "There were all kinds of stories told about the war that made it sound as if it was happening in a faraway and different land." Beah's introduction immediately captures the distance most of us feel in regards to atrocities occurring around the world. Events quickly escalate, thrusting a youthful Ishmael into a world of violence where he and his friends are

wrenched from their families and forced to fight for their survival. He and other young boys are "recruited" into the army as child soldiers. Here Beah writes one of the most foreboding passages in *Gone*: "there were no indications that our childhood was threatened, much less that we would be robbed of it."

After two years of chaos, death and all manner of drugs, Ishmael is removed from the army and placed in a UNICEF rehabilitation camp for child soldiers. It is during this time that the extent of the trauma suffered by child soldiers becomes clear. It is the most chilling, if not heart wrenching, part of *Gone*.

The remainder of the book follows Ishmael on his path to regaining his humanity, as well as his admirable implication on the international stage as a spokesperson for child soldiers.

Beah's prose is simple, direct, and delivered with heartfelt honesty and deadly effect. *Gone* is unforgettable; an exploration of human nature and a testimony that "children have the resilience to outlive their sufferings, if given a chance." ■

## TESTIMONIALS

## KIDS LOVE THE BOOK QUEST

By Iphigénie M. Nshutinyayo

For the third year in a row, a summer 'Book Quest' was organized for readers between ages 5 and 12. A number of books on Native Americans were selected with the aim of teaching children about Native people, but also how to read fast and effectively.

Aside from all the gifts and special events offered, participants found the Book Quest enjoyable and had many things to say about it. "The story was so interesting that I finished it in one night" said an ever smiling and loyal reader. "I really liked the names that native people used. They were very different. For example, Nimoosh was so outstanding" said 8 year old Anne-Marie Laroche in

reference to *Maple Moon*, the most read book in the Book Quest. "Native people believed in many gods too," she quickly added.

Some participants read many books and even picked favourites. Gabrielle Laroche's favourite book in the Book Quest was *Sweet Grass*. "I liked it because I usually read big books. It was long and enjoyable." When I asked her if she would take part in a similar club again, she gave me a definite yes.

We thank you for making this year's edition of the Book Quest a great success. Watch these pages for information on next summer's edition ■

## HERITAGE CORNER

### PHOTOGRAPHY AT MORRIN COLLEGE

By Leah Blythe

In addition to serving as a prison between 1813 and 1868, the Morrin Centre once housed Morrin College, the first English-language college in the city. Founded thanks to Dr. Joseph Morrin's generosity in 1860, and affiliated with McGill University, the college shared the building with the LHSQ from 1868 until the early 1900s when it closed due to lack of funding. The few students who attended the college studied classical languages, religion, philosophy, mathematics, physics and chemistry, the last of which were taught in a science lab on the fourth floor. Interestingly, one of the things left behind in this lab appears to be a rudimentary darkroom.

The second half the nineteenth century witnessed a photography craze. From the time it was invented in 1839, photography was popular on both sides of the Atlantic. Several individuals set up professional photography studios in Quebec City; the Livernois studio on rue St. Jean was one of these. With the invention of the cheaper Kodak camera in 1888, many amateurs also took up photography as a hobby. In the case of the Morrin College darkroom, however, it probably would have been used for educational rather than artistic purposes. After all, some of the French language educational institutions such as the *Séminaire de Québec* gave lessons in their physics classes about the primitive camera, the camera obscura (meaning dark room in Latin). Consequently, Morrin College may very well have taught how to develop negatives during chemistry classes.

We may not know why or exactly how the small darkroom was used, but we do know what it looks like now. The interior is painted black and a square-shaped opening on one side suggests that a filter may have been used to let in just enough light. Inside are



Darkroom in the Morrin College Chemistry Lab

two wooden shelves and a sink with running water, an absolute necessity seeing as how negatives had to be rinsed during the developing process. At the time, however, negatives were usually made of glass instead of plastic and it is therefore safe to assume that the glass plate process would have been the one used in the Morrin College darkroom. As far as the actual equipment is concerned, photography was so popular that it would have been fairly easy to get one's hands on the materials needed. The Livernois family, for example, owned a photography equipment store in addition to their studio where one could purchase cameras, chemicals, printing paper, dry plates, and basically everything needed for a

professional or amateur darkroom.

Although there is reason to believe that the wooden, box-shaped 'room' in the old Morrin College lab once served as a darkroom, we unfortunately have no written proof of this. Consequently, several unanswered questions remain: Are we really dealing with a darkroom and if so, was it used by the Morrin College physics and chemistry department or was it rather built after the college closed by some photography enthusiast of the Society? Alas, deciphering the past can be a difficult task and the historian is often left with as many questions as answers. ■

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