



The Townships Sun

Townships Life and Culture, Past Present and Future



*"The Blossoms and leaves in plenty
From the apple tree fall each day;
The merry breezes approach them.
And with them merrily play."
-Heinrich Heine (1798-1857)*



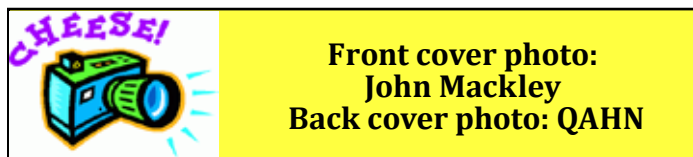
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Table of Contents

Letters to the Sun.....3
Room 4129 versus 4376, Hotel Dieu
Barbara Heath3
Shaking Things Up!
Linda Knight Seccaspina.....5
Happy 100th Birthday!
to Naomi Jervis-Read 6
Silver Streak
John LeBaron..... 7-8
A Picture at an Exhibition
Ann Holloway.....8
Apple Tree Rescue
John Mackley 9-11
Living in Alpha
Kathleen Rattigan 11
Remembrance of Lake Brome, Part 3
Bob Miller 13
**James William Wiggett:1843-1885): Brewer,
 Businessman and Mayor**
Gérard Coté and Jean-Marie Dubois14
Rigolet, Labrador
Anne Holloway14

Poetry You Can Understand
WHWN.....15
The Life of a Mohawk Fisherman..
John Viau..... 17-18
Hospitals
Casey Vriesendorp.....19
Aging with Vitality: Off the Scale Victories
Anita Duwel.....20
Historical Views: a Wealth of Stories...
QAHN21
Editorial May 9, 2021
Barbara Heath.....22
From Leading Actress to 2 bit Player
Ann Louise George22
Correction-Fool's Spring (April, 2021).....23
The Walker
Rita Morin23



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Letters to the Sun



Hey Barbara,

I just saw your article when I went to go to my web site. It's terrific. Thank you, I am just about to send it to my children and Jan's. They'll all be so pleased.

— Jill

I read your article concerning your stay at the hospital. I experienced a bad situation there as well. I filed a complaint, and it did make a difference. I urge others to speak up.

—G. Cote

I read the article and I am able to attest that the hospital situation you described is true, in fact, probably a little understated.

—Ann B.

As you are a prompt respondent, I assumed you were otherwise occupied, but sorry to hear it was health again. That was quite a tale of the night in the latest edition (thanks for it), which sounded like a nightmare, and on top of it, that pain and distress of a major injury. (I love the magnolia bloom on the cover - best yet, and very appropriate for an 'on again- off again' spring.) I hope you are recovering -

—Ben

Thank you for returning my article about the hospital. I am sorry to read in the April issue about your stay at the hospital, I and I understand that you recognize my thoughts as they appear. In the April issue I read an article by John Viau, "Strange Happenings," I look forward to reading the May issue. Another English publication did not publish my article but I spoke my mind and so did you and I thank you sincerely.

— Casey V

I am always happy to see the Sun in my mailbox. I enjoy it very much. Keep up the good work.

—Audrey Jervis-Read

(And thank you, Audrey, for renewing your subscription on the occasion of your 100th birthday [see page 6] and being such a faithful subscriber to *The Sun!*)

Room 4129 versus 4376, Hotel Dieu

by Barbara Heath

A little update on the amazing difference a different section of the hospital can make. In April I entered the CHUS-Hotel Dieu; what I thought would be a two-day stay turned into 10 days. I entered through emergency, and had called Dr. Lemay's office the day before to make him aware of my return to the hospital. I waited until around 4 o'clock before I saw Dr. Menard. Even with the phone call and my informing Emergency, they were not aware of my being at the hospital.

Dr. Menard started the necessary procedure immediately. The day nurses only responded to me, "I do not speak English." However, the two night nurses (Michel and Antoine) were excellent. I was not accustomed to this. It made the experience so much better. When they moved me to my room I was apprehensive. "Not 4th floor," I thought, and braced myself for the worst. What a surprise! Same floor but a different section. The professional care staff there made me feel safe, and well cared for. They spoke English, and they paid attention. Excellent care from all the staff.

The day I was sent to the CHUS-Fleurimont for a procedure, a nurse was assigned to me who spent the day with me. Wow, was that a surprise! I experienced things which required an official complaint, but I also want to be sure to praise the positive aspects.

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Shaking Things Up!

by Linda Knight Seccaspina

Last night I had a dream about a former neighbour's salt and pepper Shaker collection. That is a pretty strange thing to remember in the back of your memory files, but the late, great Mrs. Wilson played a large part in my preteen years. Meg Wilson lived next door to us when her daughter Verna was going to Cowansville High School in the late 50s and early 60s. My mother was nearing the end of her life during those years and Mrs. Wilson was like a guardian angel for our whole family. She cooked, she cleaned, and she kept the family together.

If I had a problem, she was always there with her firm but kind words. I played sick a lot more times than necessary. After she had made us lunch I always went over to her home to play Yahtzee. She made wax candles and waxed leaves, and best of all she had this amazing salt and pepper shaker collection.

It didn't matter how many pairs she had on her shelves, the pair I was most attracted to was the milkshake shakers. One was brown for chocolate and the other was pink for strawberry. Set in glasses with a silver holder it reminded me of the milkshakes at the Bus Terminal on South Street in Cowansville.

We had a lot of great restaurants in those days on South and Main Streets, but my father always loved to go to the old Bus Terminal, a hop, skip, and a jump from the train station and the Vilas Furniture Co. I could never figure out why he loved that place so much, as it was very small and busy. We could have sat in a nice booth at the restaurant across the street, but we always went to the terminus.

My Dad liked conversation, there is no doubt about that, and this was one place he could indulge in his favourite pastime. He would always greet strangers with a firm handshake and a very loud greeting,

"Hello, Arthur Knight from Cowansville!"

It didn't matter where he was located, the greeting was always the same, and he had this habit of talking with his eyes closed. I never understood why he did that until I met other people who did the same thing. They say that closing your eyes while speaking is a way of going inside to connect with your inner

feelings. It is a common gesture that was seen in philosophers, which my dad definitely was, as he had an opinion on everything.

They kept things simple at the Bus Terminal Restaurant. Restaurant staff scribbled your order onto a pad of paper; asking for substitutions from a limited list of straightforward mains, sides and desserts would have gotten you a dirty look. I cannot remember much of what I ate there but I always ordered a milkshake similar to Mrs. Wilson's salt and pepper shakers. A tall glass with a straw, the traditional tall stainless steel cup was served to you. Another thing I seem to remember is the traditional small glass of water they served everyone. The water seemed warm;

I would bet it came with a great amount of pollutants from the public water system. I think whatever my Dad ate there certainly involved fries served with a side of smoke. It was common in those days for eateries to be shrouded in a veil of cigarette smoke as diners puffed throughout the meal – and my Dad was one of them.

Conversation was always centred around the counter and banter would be continuous between the tables and counter as people loved

to flock there for a cup of coffee, read the newspaper, and have a sandwich and a cold Coca-Cola on tap at the fountain. Around Christmas time the counter folks would be eating that traditional roast turkey dinner which cost a mere 75 cents in those days.

The jukeboxes blared above the conversation and you had to wonder how anyone understood anything while the younger crowd controlled the countless song selections. I always took my time sipping that milkshake as I watched people purchase tickets for the daily Voyageur buses, and throw some change on the counter– as there were no credit cards– amid boisterous goodbyes.

One day I heard my father talking with the owner of the Bus Terminal who was saying that he was worried that times were changing and he might have to close. Eavesdropping, I heard conversation about how the



owner was going to put air conditioning in, hoping to draw in customers, especially during hot summer days.

Then there was the fact that the soda fountain business was slowing down because of others doing the same things. Ice cream sodas and egg creams were on the wane and TV dinners were now available in every grocery store. People just began eating out less in the 60s. But the worst thing, he said was that transistor radios were putting jukeboxes out of business. As I sat in the car with my tiny ear buds in, listening to my transistor radio, I thought he had a point. But there was my father throwing his hands up in the air saying there was no way that was going to happen.

My father argued that jukeboxes were a test market for the record companies and that 75% of the records produced during that time went to jukeboxes first. He kept telling the owner over and over not to worry. I sat there feeling sad as I knew all my friends walked around with transistor radios and they were not going anywhere. With my head down I also knew it was the beginning of no longer relying on the jukebox for music.

After that day we never seemed to go to the Bus Terminus to eat, and things were changing quickly. The last time I went to the South Street Bus Terminus was a year later when my father put me on the bus to Montreal where I was beginning a new era in my life. A few years later my Dad drove me out to see Mrs. Wilson who was living on the Hadlock Farm near Frelighsburg with her daughter and son-in-law. Things had changed, like the Bus Terminal



Restaurant, but she still had her salt and pepper shakers. There were still some familiar ones, the ones family gave her and the ones she got on vacation. But there sitting on one of the shelves were the milkshake salt and peppers that I loved. Even though life sends lots of changes, you learn to take life with a grain of salt, and even though things come and go in the era of a head shake and a handshake, I still prefer a milkshake.

**May 31, 2021:
HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY
NAOMI JERVIS-READ!**

She was born and raised in the Townships, originally coming from Granby before going to Bishop's University and then settling in the area where she taught for many years. She started off as Audrey Walker but her alias after marriage was Naomi Jervis-Read. Her happiest moments in recent years have been working with children at the elementary school in Sawyerville, which she did right up until Covid shut everything down last year. She was a member of the CFUW club and was always on hand to help with the big Book Sale. She is an avid supporter of local initiatives. A little known fact about her is that she doesn't drink milk or water and takes her coffee black...the secret to longevity? Perhaps.



Silver Streak

by John LeBaron

French language fluency among Anglophone Townshippers in the 1940s and 50s was more the exception than the rule. At that time, I grew up in an Anglo bubble in Sherbrooke Québec, home of the world renowned Sherbrooke Athletics, a C-league baseball farm team of the major-league Philadelphia Athletics, so-named in those days.*

According to pre-adolescent rumour of the time, the ball players freely voided their bladders in the outfield whenever the urge called, without the slightest concern that such behaviour might be deemed, um, off-base. I never actually witnessed such a spectacle but the players' alleged outfield comportment rendered a whole new meaning to the familiar baseball term, "fly ball."

At the time, my father was a co-proprietor of a small printing business and my mother, like so many of her contemporaries, was a full-time home-maker. Considering the nature of her progeny, the child-rearing aspect of home-making was an immense challenge. Here, I speak only about the singular test that I presented because I had already attempted car theft at age ten. My two sisters had not yet begun generating their own entries in the local police blotters.

My car "liberation" escapade involved a General Motors dealership at the corner of King and Argyll streets, a frigid winter day, a patch of ice, a nasty spill, and my coat collar yanked sharply upward by a very cranky car salesman. Following this episode and the corrective guidance of my father, I learned the joy of sawing firewood by hand for thirty freezing after-school afternoons. I proved so adept at this task that my parents installed a fireplace in our living room to consume the wood that I was commanded to saw and split into burnable 18-inch logs.

The 1950s were more innocent days, an era when used car lots left their inventory sitting idle with keys left in the ignition. Doubtless, my partner and I were at loose ends one Saturday morning, bored and seeking some harmless adventure. (I am simply calling my companion "Bobby D" in case the statute of limitations has not yet expired on a car theft having occurred 60-plus years ago.)

In our attempted escape, Bobby managed to avoid that patch of ice and scampered away, free as a barn swallow, leaving me to face the music alone in the dealer's sales salon. Bobby and I had sauntered down Vimy Street, along Arras, and down Argyll to the corner of King Street, where we came upon the inviting fleet of used cars behind the dealership.

"Did you know that all those cars still have their keys in them?" inquired Bobby slyly.

"You mean we could just hop into one of them and drive off?" I asked.

"Yep, easy," Bobby replied.

"Wow, great!" I ventured, "but wait, I don't know how to drive."

"I do," said Bobby. "I've watched my dad up close, and I know exactly what he does to move his car."

"But how do we reach the pedals?" I asked, "Plus, we're too short to see through the windshield. And how do we stop the car?"

"Are you up for DRIVING the car, or only STOPPING it?" snapped Bobby, a question that made perfect sense at the time to my sophomoric brain. "Anyway, my dad's as short as we are."

We scoped out the used car lot from a safe distance on the opposite sidewalk, eventually fixing upon a shiny late-model Pontiac Silver Streak pleading for us to take her out on a joy ride. If you've lived long enough, you recall those Pontiacs of yesteryear with the five parallel chrome stripes adorning the hood and trunk in audacious self-promotion, promising two callow boys unprecedented flights of fancy on wheels.

While I posted look-out in the back seat by peering out the rear window, Bobby managed to edge the car forward straight into the bumper of the parked car directly in front. From my look-out I suddenly spied two porcine salesmen tearing around the corner of the dealership yelling "TABARNAK! MOODZIE!! ARRÊT-TOIE!!!"

That's when Bobby and I flung open the doors and made a bee-line for the woods beyond the lot. That's when I was sent spinning on that infernal ice patch. That's when I was caught. That's when Bobby got away. I was roughly frog-marched into the dealership. Realizing that I was an English-speaking urchin, one of the salesmen menacingly barked, "Oo h'is yor FodDER!?"

Terrified to the point of emulating a Sherbrooke Athletics outfielder, I was on the verge of involuntarily voiding my own bladder. I caved immediately to some intense interrogation, revealing not only my Dad's name, but also his place of work, street address and phone number. The only reason that I failed to divulge his social insurance number is that Canada's social insurance programme hadn't yet been launched in 1949.

(CONT'D ON PG. 8)

But I have digressed. My topic today is French language learning in Québec during an era when only a few Anglos were bold enough to stray outside their unilingual bubbles for the occasionally awkward field trip to “Francophonía.” My father, an imposing figure with whom anyone daring to trifle never made that same mistake twice, perpetually grappled with the essential challenge of living as an Anglo in a francophone-majority milieu. He enrolled in after-work French lessons.

As best I recall, Dad failed to sustain this effort. I never heard him speak a word of French for which I hardly fault him because I too, now a brain-petrified Anglophone codger, have tackled French language learning late in life with only marginal success. Unlike Dad, however, I often tap my expertise for making a fool of myself equally well in either of Canada’s two official languages.

As a businessman, my dad occasionally dealt with overseas clients, one of whom, an elegant, articulate Parisian, was visiting Canada on business. After a meeting at father’s firm, this fine European Francophone was headed to Montréal. Since my Dad was driving there the next day for his own commerce, he invited his guest as a travel companion in the midst of a cold Québec winter.

Near a small town midway between Sherbrooke and Montréal, the car malfunctioned, requiring expert mechanical repair. With my Dad fretting behind the wheel, the car lurched its way to a nearby garage. The two travellers presumptuously presumed that the repairman spoke no English. “No problem at all,” thought my father, “I’ll have my Parisian client explain the problem. He’ll be well understood and we’ll be on our way in a jiffy.”

In full Gallic sonority, the client explained the issue to the mechanic in exquisite Parisian French. The repairman looked puzzled, scratched his head, and to the Parisian’s astonishment kindly replied, “H’excuse me, m’sieur, but h’I t’ink dat you h’are ‘aving trubble wit’ your French?”

* Today this major league team is called the Oakland Athletics of California, each member of which observes the more sanitary practice of using the gent’s room for urgent bladder relief.

A Picture at an Exhibition

by Anne Holloway

The museum is hanging the sun on its walls with this exhibition of Orientalism” read the publicity on the website for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

So on a fine spring day in 2015 I was on my way to see this latest exhibition, Marvels and Mirages of Orientalism: From Spain to Morocco, Benjamin-Constant in his Time. As I walked along Sherbrooke Street the sky was blue, I could feel the welcome warmth of the sun, the last dirty dregs of snow had gone and the leaves on the trees were starting to show.

I remember that on entering I was amazed and somewhat overwhelmed by both the immense size of the pictures and the vivid Mediterranean colours of the scenes covering the walls. The deep blue of the sky, the sand brown of the buildings, the lavish brilliant costumes of the rich and the dull colours of the poor. But there was one very different picture that remains all too firmly in my memory.

It is a small sketch, perhaps the inception of a later, larger work in oils. Not prominently displayed, easily overlooked when passing through room after room of paintings filled with light and colour. But a mere glance drew me closer. There were no bright colours here.

Salome is reclining on her bed, propped up by one elbow, leaning forward to examine the head of John the Baptist which, as she had requested, has been served to her on the platter that now lies close beside her. A reward for her dancing and her revenge. He does not stare at her with eyes full of accusation or of fear. His eyes, half closed, look down. His long hair rests gently on the platter.

Her face is a little plump and ringed by long curls. She looks at this platter of human flesh and bone not with triumph or with horror. There is no pity. She does not question her own actions, or that of her mother in suggesting the gift, for this is the man who condemned Salome for harlotry. Her face shows only curiosity.

ARLIE C. FEARON



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Apple Tree Rescue

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gray dormant stems
future blossoms and crispy fruit
biding their time

I'm thinking pies, cakes, apple crisps, apple sauce, and ciders, to name a few.

Apple trees can be a source of great quantities of delectable fruit for a wide variety of highly nutritious uses.

On many a rural or urban property in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, at least one old gnarled and overgrown apple tree can be found. You may even be fortunate enough to have one or more on your own land, or maybe a small orchard.

Most varieties of apple trees can live and continue to produce for many decades, some approaching a century or more. Often though, it is not uncommon to see many older trees that have been allowed to become overgrown and neglected, leading them to produce smaller, harder and less tasty fruit.

What is to be done? Can an ancient, seriously neglected tree be rehabilitated?

For many trees, the answer is a resounding YES.

Unless you have the means and the need to hire a professional horticulturalist or tree surgeon, you may want to take on the job yourself. I assure you, it can be done.

How to rehabilitate an overgrown apple tree

Many experts recommend pruning apple trees in winter, but Quebec winters are too cold and long. The preferred time for pruning is in the early spring while the tree is still dormant. Some pruning can continue safely up until the fruit is set following flowering.

The first step to rescuing an old overgrown apple tree is simple observation. Go out and take the time to patiently look at your tree. Walk around it and see it from all sides and as many angles as possible. Make note of, if even just mentally, its particular characteristics.

1. Does it have more than one trunk? A tree with a single

trunk is preferable, but should it be a very old tree with two large, fairly equal-sized trunks, it need not be written off. A double-trunked tree can still produce plenteous, healthy apples, year after year.

2. Has the tree grown well beyond the reach of the tallest ladder you own, or would ever consider climbing? Apple trees reaching for the stars will eventually cease to produce good or even adequate crops. They will end up only good for ornamentation, feeding wildlife or adding to the winter firewood supply.

3. Is the tree congested, thick with crossed, bunched and finger-thick branches? Over-proliferation forces the branches to compete with each other for sunlight, water and nutrients from the roots of the tree, and also cuts down on the passage of fresh air blowing through the canopy. Lack of fresh air contributes to mould, diseases and harmful insect infestations. Was the foliage of your apple tree so thick last summer, when the leaves were out, that you could not see blue sky through the branches? If so, chances are the tree has become overgrown and is in dire need of thinning.

With proper pruning, thinning, shaping, and maintenance, any type of apple tree will, within a season or two, begin to produce larger, juicier, sweeter and more abundant fruit, to the benefit and delight of all.

Now that you have assessed the condition of your tree, avoid the tendency to feel overwhelmed. This is a process that is best done in stages, each of which is completely manageable.

STEP ONE: First Clean-up

For safety reasons, it is advisable to clear the ground all around the tree prior to beginning work on the tree. A clean circle should be maintained at least as far out from the trunk as the reach of the farthest branches of the tree. Removing all bushes, saplings and other vegetation allows water and nutrients in the soil to be available for the fruit tree.

A ten foot (3 metre) radius circle is generally recommended, but should another important tree be within that distance, I would not insist that it be sacrificed. Grass can be allowed to grow, and its mowing



Apple Tree
An overgrown apple tree in its second year of rehabilitation

(CONT'D ON PG. 10)

MAY 2021 | page 9

will help inhibit the growth of other vegetation. Raking up leaves, twigs and fruit residues removes hiding places for harmful insects and disease organisms.

Now that the ground is clear, you can safely begin work on the tree.

STEP TWO: Dead Branches



Dead branches

Look up at your tree. Do you see any dead limbs and branches? Look for ones with no bark or with the bark starting to

crack and peel. Dead branches will never come back to life. So they are best removed completely, no matter how large or small. Whenever possible, branches should be cut all the way back to where they are attached to live, healthy wood. A good sharp saw or pruning tool should be used. Without cutting into the healthy wood, prune as close as possible to the joint with the live branch or trunk. If a knob of dead wood is left sticking out the tree will have to grow around it leaving an open wound for years longer than necessary.

Apple wood makes a very good hardwood for fires or woodworking. Newly removed dead branches should be cut up and moved far away from under the tree before pruning more. You don't want to trip over them while you work.

where it joins the next larger branch or trunk. Then, while avoiding contact between the sick branch and any other parts of the tree, dispose of that branch far away from any trees that could potentially become infected by it. Burial would probably be the most environmentally acceptable method of dealing with it, as burning is not always allowed or advisable. Diseased tree branches should not go in your compost pile, either.



Water sprouts

If your tool comes in contact with any diseased or suspected tree parts, wash it with hot soapy water and a bit of household bleach to reduce the chances of pathogens being spread to other parts of the tree or other trees.

STEP FOUR: "Water Sprouts" and "Suckers"

At the base of any apple tree, it is common to see small, thin shoots with dark red, shiny bark. They are sometimes called "suckers."

They grow out from the base of the tree, low on the trunk, or up through the ground, somewhat away from the tree but clearly originating from the root system of the tree itself.

These annual growths use vital energy that the tree could otherwise use to produce fruit and new fruiting growth further up in the canopy of the tree. They should all be pruned away, and removed from the area. So long as they are healthy, they make good food for rabbits, goats or deer: Just something to consider should it be an option for you.

"Water sprouts" or "water shoots" are terms used to designate similar new, branches vigorously growing higher up on the tree trunk or main branches. As first year growths, they will not produce blossoms or consequently any fruit. Like suckers, they only serve to drain energy away from the rest of the tree.

Left to their own devices, these side shoots will eventually mature and contribute to the unproductive over-crowding that is characteristic of neglected old apple trees. Removing them on sight is much easier and more beneficial than needing to rehabilitate the same tree all over again in future years.

STEP FIVE: Shaping

Once the first three steps are completed to your satisfaction and the ground under the tree is once again clear, take another look at your tree from multiple angles. Is your tree much taller than you are comfortable reaching with your tallest secure ladder? Has it grown



Bad Stub

STEP THREE: Diseased Branches

Apple trees or their fruit can be susceptible to a number of possible diseases. For the most part, here in Quebec, with our long, cold, dry winters, a reasonable amount of care and maintenance can usually keep them in check. But that's a topic for another day. If a particular tree appears to be especially sickly or infested, it should be assessed by a professional arbourist.

It would not be unusual to find a branch or two with a small amount of black mildew, rot or aphid infestation. In those minor cases, it is usually possible to carefully prune the affected branch back to

into a tear-drop shape with a high point at the top where the very best, but fewer, apples grow?

It has been determined over centuries of apple tree husbandry that the best fruit tends to grow on older more horizontal branches. Tall pointy trees may be their natural tendency, but smaller, harder and less sweet fruit is generally the result of apple trees being allowed to “do their own thing.”

Commercial orchard trees have been pruned and maintained in what is referred to as an “Open Goblet” shape. This is a more or less flat top with the main limbs spreading outward in every direction toward the horizon, rather than toward the sky.

Do not attempt to completely rejuvenate an older apple tree all at once, particularly if it has been seriously neglected for years. The rule of thumb is that no more than one-third of the total volume of a tree should be pruned away in any one season. Be selective with which large branches you intend to remove, so as to avoid unbalancing the tree or leaving too little of the tree for it to thrive.

It is better to space out the pruning over three years. This practice will also improve the chances of getting an acceptable harvest each year, in spite of the pruning. Too radical a pruning can potentially thwart fruit production.

STEP SIX: Crossed, Rubbing and Touching Branches

With the major pruning finished for the year, look closely at the tree. Among the remaining branches, are any crossing each other? Are they touching in such a way



Crossed branches

that they rub against each other when the wind blows? Also, when the fruit matures, the added weight might pull

a branch down, rubbing against another branch.

If one or more branches are in such a situation, they should be selectively pruned out to prevent this from occurring. Remember to follow the branch back to its original connection to a larger branch, limb or tree trunk and cut it there, rather than anywhere along the offending branch.

STEP SEVEN: Quit While You're Ahead

Even if you don't think your tree is in a picture-perfect



Good stub

condition, it is much better for the tree and its future health and productivity if you are patient with it. Take a break from your pruning activities. Give the tree and yourself a rest until next year. Next year, you will both have a new perspective on the situation and how best to proceed. The best of luck to you both!

In case you are in need of any additional incentive to care for your precious fruit-bearing trees, here is one of my favourite recipes to inspire you.

Old Fashioned Apple Crisp

Ingredients:

6 cups tart cooking apples, cored and diced (or whatever kind you have available). The apples may be cooked peeled or un-peeled. Apple peels are highly nutritious, but if the trees are sprayed, peeling the fruit is advisable.

1 cup firmly packed brown sugar

1 cup uncooked old-fashioned oatmeal

1/2 cup all-purpose flour (or substitute your preferred flour)

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/4 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 cup cold butter, margarine, vegan margarine or coconut oil

Directions:

Place diced apples in a casserole dish. Sprinkle with brown sugar.

Blend butter (margarine), flour, oatmeal, cinnamon and vanilla with a fork. Crumble over apples.

Bake in pre-heated 375°F. (190°C) oven until topping is golden brown.

Serve hot or cold with cream, whipped cream or ice cream. Whatever tickles your fancy!

All pictures courtesy John Mackley.

Living in Alpha

by Kathleen Y. Rattigan)

"Love is a state of consciousness"

No mental mayhem, no buzzing brain, only a constant calm – a peaceful processing of your surroundings. A gentle joy permeates your whole being no matter what is occurring around you. This begins to describe "Living in Alpha". How do we get there?

First – what is Alpha? This is a natural brainwave we produce when relaxed, such as: Being in nature, producing creative arts, listening to soft music, meditating, gardening, and even soft exercise. Our body and mind are relaxed and focused in the present moment. The most important way to achieve this is being in a state of natural relaxation. Most people live in "Beta" which is a high frequency brain wave that indicates a busy brain that is somewhat like a loud radio station!

The "relaxation response" is a term coined by Dr Herbert Benson from Harvard Medical School. In short, it is the human way of reversing the effects of stress and the physical stress response. Dr Benson looked at top performers to understand why it is that they can remain cool as the proverbial cucumber while under pressure. He found that an ability to access the relaxation response – characterized by alpha brain waves – was beneficial to mind and body - and not just when under stress, but at any time required.

"In 2005, the National Science Foundation published an article summarizing research on human thoughts per day. It was found that the average person has about 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts per day. Of those thousands of thoughts, 80% were negative, and 95% were exactly the same repetitive thoughts as the day before. We can see that one of the tendencies of the mind is to focus on the negative and 'play the same songs' over and over again. There was another interesting study (Leahy, 2005, Study of Cornell University), in which scientists found that, firstly 85% of what we worry about never happens. Secondly, with the 15% of the worries that did happen, 79% of the subjects discovered that either they could handle the difficulty better than expected, or that the difficulty taught them a lesson worth learning. The conclusion is that 97% of our worries are baseless and result from an unfounded pessimistic perception. These baseless worries are a major source of stress, tension and cause of exhaustion not only for the mind, but also for the physical body".

So you see – EVERYTHING begins in your brain! And – our thoughts create our emotions! Constant negative thoughts – stress and unhappiness- positive thought; you are on your way to living in alpha. Simple and yet not so easy, eh?

"Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seed, you can grow flowers or you can grow weeds" Whitney Hess (2015).

Love is a natural high. When love is present we are flooded with the "feel good" *chemicals* like serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin and experience a lightness of being. It does go further than just love for another being, as in reality we can "love" many other things; nature, good food, our pet companions, hopefully our jobs, our home and so on. So you see that love permeates our life on so many levels that we can love our life and most importantly – love our own self!

"What I realized was that I now have a choice, in each and every moment, what kind of thought I wish to have. And that choice was the choice for happiness, for silence, for coherence, for fulfillment. I was no longer a "victim" to my circumstances; I could choose to be uplifted and happy whenever I wanted to." (Vidya Ishaya)

Love has 4 letters – so does hate; friends has 7 letters – so does enemies, truth has 5 letters- so does lying, positive has 8 letters - so does negative, joy has 3 letters and so does cry. Every thought has its' opposite, the choice is ours to make as to which side we focus on.

Overtired, yet unable to put our mind on pause, we self-medicate by popping pills and sleep aids like M & M's, often using the addiction to drugs and/or alcohol to try to cope, and then wonder why we seem to live in a fog, with stress nibbling constantly at the edges of consciousness. Why do we keep looking outside of ourselves for enjoyment and fulfillment?

Remember back to a time, perhaps you were lazing near a beach, listening to the water caress the sand. Feeling loose, limp and lazy, your mind was wonderfully empty of any pressing thoughts and life at that moment was very, very good. THIS is the feeling of MEDITATION. Mother Nature provides everything for us to have a calm and peaceful mind and surrounds us with the wind in the trees, the buzz of bees, the songs of our feathered friends and the soothing sounds of water, all of which can put us in a natural state of relaxation.

In an ideal world, we would go to our Doctor and complain that we are exhausted, stressed and short tempered, unable to sleep and so on. The Doctor would pull out the prescription pad and write the prescription – "Learn to Meditate, 1x daily, repeat; for Life. There would be the inscription: Warning – Side effects include relief from stress, good night's sleep, lowered blood pressure, cheerful countenance, joie de vivre – in other words "Living in Alpha".

Remembrance of Lake Brome, Part 3

by Bob Miller

First Milking Machine and the Cement Cooling Tank

In the barns, or anywhere outside the house, lanterns were used for light. We used two lanterns in the barn and it was just enough light to get around without bumping into things.

We milked by hand until 1943, when Dad bought a milking machine run by a Briggs and Stratton engine that was very noisy in the barn. We also had a gas engine that ran the water pump in the barn and the same engine ran the turnip grinder. We fed each cow about ten pounds of sliced turnips each day all winter when they were not on pasture.

We had a wood stove in the milk room with a 15 gallon boiler on top to heat water to wash the cows' udders and to wash the milking machines, pails and strainer. Milk was all handled in 8 gallon cans. Canada uses imperial measures. An imperial gallon weighs 10.6 pounds for milk (a U.S. gallon weighs 8.5 pounds for milk), so these cans would hold 10 U.S. gallons. Each can weighed about 105 pounds (85 pounds of milk in a 20 pound can.)

The milk cans were cooled with ice. We had a cement tank in the milk house that could hold up to 12 cans of milk. The big tank was filled with water about 8 inches below the tops of the cans. This water was hand pumped and carried in pails to fill the tank. A chunk of ice, about 100 pounds, was put in the water daily and it cooled the milk to about 40°F.

Cold Job of Harvesting and Storing Ice

Ice was cut in late January or early February from ponds or the lake. The chunks were cut of a size to weigh about 100 pounds. There were ice cutting crews that had a saw run by a gas motor mounted on a low horse-drawn sled. They would cut a long cut about 100 or 200 feet long about 20 inches wide, with the power saw, then they would mark off with a hand saw the size of chunk that would weigh about 100 pounds. This marking size depended on how thick the ice was. Most common ice thickness at that time of year was between 18 and 24 inches. Once marked, they had a splitter that was a very narrow and wide axe. The splitter was held in the sawed mark and struck with a maul. The chunks usually split off quite straight. Then these blocks had to be pulled up out of the water with ice tongs and loaded onto horse drawn sleds to haul home.

We usually hauled about 20 blocks on each load. The standard price we paid the cutters was \$0.05 per block.

We could only haul two or occasionally three loads each day. We stored about 300 blocks each year in an ice house where it was buried in sawmill sawdust about one foot thick. The 300 blocks were always enough because little or none would be needed for four months of the winter. Putting up ice was a strenuous cold job that lasted about ten days each winter. You often got your legs wet when loading the ice on the sled, then you had to ride the open sled home in the cold two or three miles and drag the 100 pound chunks up a slide into the ice house. Hot soup, hot cornbread and hot chocolate never tasted so good as when you came in from hauling ice. Ice storing was usually done in the coldest part of winter. One reason was because that was when the ice was the thickest, but also the colder the ice was when it was buried in sawdust, the better it kept. The 100 pound blocks stored in late January or early February would still weigh well over 90 pounds when winter arrived the next November. The ice house was not insulated. The sawdust was the only insulation. Sawdust was free for the hauling from the many lumber mills in the area.

The Day Electricity Came

In 1951, I turned 18 years old, and that summer electric lines were installed throughout our community. The whole neighborhood had all its buildings wired and ready for electricity on the promised date of September 15th. It didn't happen. The electric company blamed it on some legal dispute over crossing some land to connect our lines. They said it would soon be resolved. By December, we were snowed in and had totally given up hope of electricity until springtime.

Without any announcement, at 5:00 pm on Christmas Eve, the neighborhood lit up like the proverbial Christmas tree. What a Christmas it was!

I think the whole neighborhood turned on every light they had because there was no extra charge. For three years, we had a flat electricity fee of \$15.00 every three months. After three years, meters were installed. The electric system must have been very well built, because once the lights came on, I never remember a single power outage.

James William Wiggett (1843-1885): Brewer, Businessman and Mayor

by Gérard Côté (Lennoxville and Ascot Historical and Museum Society) and Jean-Marie Dubois (Université de Sherbrooke)



Photo : Gaudreault, Amédée (1954) Les maires de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, p. 13

James William Wiggett was born in Waterville, January 16, 1843. He was the son of Ann Moore and of William Wiggett, who had come from England with his father to settle in Waterville. James followed commercial studies in Lennoxville at Bishop's College School. In 1860, he graduated in Sherbrooke as a common law teacher.

On December 8, 1864, he married Eliza Johns in Lennoxville's St. George's Anglican Church. They had nine children: William James (1865-after 1953), Arthur William (1867-after 1881), Walter John (1869-1960), Frank (1872-after 1898), Henrietta (1873), Louisa (1874), Isabella Eliza (1877-1970), Stephen Hubert (1881-1970) and Clarendia Gertrude

(1884-1970). Some of the children had been born deaf mute. James became an active member of the McKay Institute, serving as secretary-treasurer for a time. He first worked in Lennoxville for John Prentice Cushing. He was a shareholder of D. McManamy & Co., a wine and alcohol firm, and was one of the founders of the Sherbrooke Permanent Building Society. In 1873, he settled in Sherbrooke where he ran the brewery of Charles H. Fletcher for ten years. In 1880-1881, he was a Sherbrooke alderman. In 1882, he was, for a year, the 10th Mayor of the city. In 1883, with his brother John, he started the Wiggett Bros Co. They produced alcohol, beer and soft drinks (Abenaki mineral water). The company ran into financial problems, bringing on the early death of James on March 3, 1885. His funeral was held in St. Peter's Church in Sherbrooke. Wiggett Street was named for him in Sherbrooke prior to 1945, and rebuilt around 1948 when the name first appeared on a city map.

Rigolet, Labrador

by Ann Holloway

He was travelling on a small ship that had been built as an icebreaker by the Russians, then sold to Finland, and now was repurposed as a cruise ship. That afternoon the tour group, as usual, were taken in small rubber dinghies to reach the dock and wander around the village. It was a warm but grey day, the sea a darker shade than the sky. The water was calm. This once thriving town, clinging to the edge of the land and surrounded by dense forest, had succumbed to the demise of the fishing industry. As the Zodiacs approached land he could see a long boardwalk that stretched along the edge of the water and into the distance. The wood used to build this was coming from abandoned houses.

A few hours later they were on their way back to the ship and as they crossed the water a whale, then another, and then still more were all around them, leaping and diving, as if they had been organised for their entertainment. The immediate reaction was to

grab cameras and try to capture the whales. They were minke, our guide informed his group, and then he added "Don't try and take photos. Just enjoy the moment." Then he stretched the moment into almost an hour.

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Poetry You Can Understand

Here are some more poems from "Write Here, Write Now." They are poems that are not difficult to understand and are about the coming of spring to the Townships. Thanks to our editor for including them!

Poem Celebrating the Ordinary

Jan Draper

I know this:
the ordinary brings contentment:
Light of dawn through an east window.
Making a fire in the stove,
Warmth in a cold room.
Putting on clothes softened by age,
Wool socks.
Boiling the water for tea.
Feeding the dog, the cat and birds.
Washing the dishes,
Hands in warm water.
Jazz on the radio.
Writing a poem
Everyday.
Silent, dark night
With stars and
the joy of the moon.

Planting Season

Gillian Eastley

Tender pepper plants and
kale
Parsley, rosemary and thyme
Italian tomatoes,
English cucumbers,
Cabbages, and sprouts,
That perhaps,
Since the groundhog was
relocated,
Will thrive, unmolested.

Life

Lee Sullivan Lapp

Enjoy the views

Pass the tree line

The obstacles.

Overcome

The mountain

Climb

Ode to the Dandelion

Gillian Eastley

The dandelion is much
maligned,
accused of being unrefined,
pervasive, bold, a pesky
weed,
that spreads with irritating
speed.
Each golden bloom a tiny sun
that looks if it had been spun
from vivid golden silky
strands.
Though much abused, it
proudly stands.

A plant the ignorant despise.
The ancients were perhaps
more wise,
for leaves and stem, the roots
and flowers
were found to have
medicinal powers.
A source of food in leaner
times,
a fragrant tea, a dry white
wine,
more rich in vitamins than
kale.
Let's not deride, but learn to
hail
this clever plant of cheerful
hue,
appreciate what it can do.....

Descend

The mountain

Less to see

Trees obscure views

Flatlands ahead



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Write Here, Write Now part of the Bishop's University Lifelong Learning Academy is proud to present a workshop on Writing Local History by Nick Fonda, an award-winning journalist who has been documenting life in Quebec's Eastern Townships for years. He is the author of three books on non-fiction as well as a collection of short stories. The workshop will be presented on Zoom on Saturday, June 29 1:30 - 3:30. (For more details and coordinates please email "Bishop's University Lifelong Learning Academy" <bullaa@ubishops.ca>)




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The Life of a Mohawk Fisherman: You've Got to Love It

by John A. Viau

It's late January and "high winter" has arrived on the frozen wastes of Lake St. Louis. The thermometer registers 23 below zero Celsius and the wailing wind rolling across miles of windswept ice makes it seem like the high Arctic. A solitary figure dressed in a bulky camouflage suit moves swiftly as he pulls his nets through a large cut in the 2 feet thick ice. The nets are laden with fat perch and other pan fish, and as fast as he folds them into the large fiberglass tub on the sleigh behind his snowmobile, the nets and fish both are almost instantly frozen into one heavy icy mass.

The fisherman's name is Eric McComber, a proud member of the Mohawks of Kahnawake, and he's keeping alive an ancient tradition that has been practiced by his people for untold generations. Eric is a big man, with not an ounce of fat on his powerful physique and it's not hard to tell that he's in a trade that requires lots of muscle power. But even muscles are not immune to bone chilling cold, and Eric decides that he's had enough for today. There's one more net to check but it will have to wait until tomorrow. He knows that it's just too dangerous to continue any longer. Like Eric says, *"There's a line I just won't cross! If I think my life is in danger I back off and that's that!"*

But danger doesn't always announce itself before arriving and sometimes a dangerous situation can arrive almost without warning. When you're a commercial fisherman you're out on the water or ice all year around, and danger lurks around every turn. In early winter the thickness of ice must be gauged carefully and caution observed, if you don't want to go for a sudden frosty dunking. As the winter progresses, the danger is from hypothermia and sudden squalls and total whiteouts where visibility is reduced to zero in a matter of seconds.

In spring, summer and fall Eric nets sturgeon in the territorial waters of the Kahnawake Mohawks which stretch all the way from below the Lachine Rapids upstream into Lake St. Louis around St. Nicholas Island and beyond. These waters are not for novices or faint of heart. When you fish below the Mercier Bridge your first mistake could very well be the last mistake you'll ever make!

The rock and boulder strewn waters of the Lachine Rapids are just minutes away downstream and beckon loudly to vessels in distress. No matter how well you know the channels, currents, rocks and eddies, (and Eric

knows them as well as anybody in Kahnawake), things can change. The River transforms itself from year to year. Every spring after the ice goes out huge boulders of a ton or more can be moved hundreds of feet or more downstream from their last location and wait silently in wait for unsuspecting fishermen. In these waters if you break a shear pin or lose a prop it could mean your death.

Eric tells me that some of his best fishing spots are in the very fast currents where the waters swirl and cascade wildly, washing food up for large schools of foraging sturgeon. When you're netting in fast water it can be dangerous, but that's where the sturgeon are and that's where you have to fish for them. An average day's work for Eric starts around 8:00 a.m. and, depending on how big the catch is, can sometimes end long after midnight.

Eric, like many other Kahnawake Mohawks, worked in high steel for many years. From 1979 until 1998 he worked in New York City, Detroit and many other U.S. cities. The pay was great but you were hardly ever home and there was very little family life. At the time Eric had 6 kids whom he loved dearly and he felt that he just wasn't spending enough time with his family. So in 1998 he made what was his biggest personal decision of his whole life. He quit the high steel and took up commercial fishing as a full time business.

He had always loved the water and the outdoors and his father Jimmy had taught Eric everything he knew about the river and all the different varieties of fish when Eric was growing up. So he started out fishing. He knew pretty well where to find perch and walleye so that was no problem. In the beginning he did quite well netting for perch and walleye but the income wasn't really enough to live on. Then one day when out netting for walleye he discovered a major spawning area for sturgeon. Now everything had come together. He made himself some new nets specifically for sturgeon and soon was making some very respectable catches.

Now with the walleye, perch and sturgeon he had the nucleus of a successful business and McComber Fisheries was born. Eric and his employees now produce fresh and smoked sturgeon, walleye and perch fillets and fresh and smoked wild Atlantic salmon from the Mikmaq Indians of Restigouche. Eric says one of his long term goals is to open either a fish market or a sea food restaurant on the reserve. McComber Fisheries now employ up to 10

people full time which helps to create employment in Kahnawake. To keep the tradition of a native fishery alive on the reserve Eric is now teaching one of his cousins and a nephew all the tricks of the trade and some of his own boys will be coming into the business as well.

Eric lives and breathes fishing. The name of his 3rd son when translated from Mohawk means "He Hunts Fish!" The name of his 4th son when translated means "Sturgeon" and the name of his 5th son when translated means "In the Fast Water" (which is where Eric fishes). Eric is married to Paula and has 5 sons and 2 daughters, doesn't drink and doesn't smoke and lives a clean and healthy life in the outdoors. He says to him his family is everything. He's now 44 years of age and says he hopes to fish for another 25 or 30 years. If anybody can do it I really believe he can!

Eric says that he is proud to be preserving his heritage and sometimes he says he can hear his ancestors calling out to him in approval. Apart from fishing Eric's greatest passion is Lacrosse, hunting ducks and geese and being out in the marshes in the fall.

Eric loves the water and the outdoors and his job and, like he says: *"It's a dangerous and tough job but when you're in the great outdoors, you've got to love it."*



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Hospitals

by Casey Vriesendorp

From the perspective of my 40 years as a hospital worker and patient, I would like to share my observations.

As a young man of 20 plus I had seen lots of suffering, sickness and accidentally handicapped people. That inspired me to aim for a care-giving career. The best place to start is by applying for a hospital job or at a health clinic. I did not have education for this sort of work, so, I applied for a job at a big hospital, Ottawa Civic. I told human resources about my interest in caring for people. I was hired and my first job was as a porter, which was taking care of patients' belongings in a secure locker. I was also a messenger between departments as well as someone who delivered drugs and supplies from the hospital pharmacy.

After some time doing this, I asked to transfer to the position of orderly or nurse's aid, moving to different wards as need required. I observed and learned by experience. After a few years I became certified by the government as an Orderly Nurses Aid, which meant I could get an orderly job in any kind of hospital or clinic. 7 years later I found a better-paying job working in a hard rock mine 23,000 ft underground. What a change that job was in northern Manitoba. The miners' union called a general strike for better benefits from the company. However, during this time, my growing family found a place to stay in Winnipeg. It was difficult to find schools and I had to get a job. The strike might last for months. My search for a job took me to WPG hospital. My certificate certainly came in handy! The mining strike lasting 8 months and made the town a ghost town but with the reopening of the mine, things came back closer to normal.

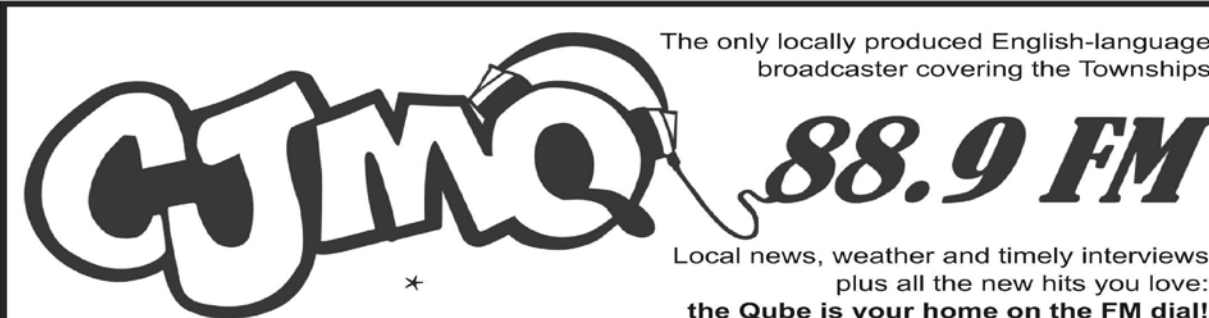
I did not return to mining. I took a job in the local hospital with approx. 60 beds. The average age of patients was between 18-40. As this was a mining town, accidents involving broken bones etc. and maternity cases were

what we dealt with mostly. Through this I gained experience with wheel chairs, braces, crutches, splints, etc. Since retiring, I have become a volunteer caregiver and I assist in all sorts of residences. Now I am a senior and sometimes in the hospital as a patient myself!

Since I have been a patient I have had plenty of time to observe. I'm not complaining, just stating facts. In my day hospital workers wore uniforms which had to stay in the locker room and never left the hospital for reasons of hygiene. Upon arrival at work you went to the locker room and changed your clothes. This distinguished the worker from someone on the street. All nurses wore white with caps and name badges. Everyone working as an orderly or in maintenance wore some kind of uniform. Nurses were proud to gain a stripe on their caps; proud and professional. Male nurses wore a black strip on their uniform.

Now there are no uniforms and staff go to work in their everyday clothes. Who knows where they had been before going to work? And this is supposed to be a hygienic institution? With a pandemic raging how do people fight when those in the hospital are getting sick with the virus? I wonder if some deaths are covered up? My personal view is that wearing a mask or social distancing is hogwash, smoke, and mirrors. But I must say, social distancing up to a point is ok. I believe the statements are just for the government to show authority. Do they protect anyone from being infected? I realize I might offend a lot of people, but I would like *The Record* or any other news media to publish my views.

Note: These are the views of the writer and not of The Townships Sun.



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Aging with Vitality: Off the Scale Victories

by Anita Duwel

Are you someone who relies on the scale to tell you how you are doing? Do you get upset when the number is down one day and then up the next day? Is this causing you undue stress?



That used to be me. Over the last 10 years, I realized that it is not the only way to gauge your progress when it comes to your health and wellbeing. In fact, it was a stressor!

Here's why stepping on a scale every day can cause grief. Our bodies react differently to different foods, life situations, water intake, how much we ate that day, amount of salt eaten, how much we exercised, etc. which can cause the numbers on the scale to fluctuate.

I had a client who was so excited because she was down 6 pounds after a few weeks of kicking off her health journey and then the next week, she gained a pound back. She was so upset and stressed by that one pound gain. She was following her plan and doing really well. She was feeling great, had more energy, clothes were looser, even her blood sugar went down.

However, she let that one pound increase drive her crazy and she forgot about all the good habits she had put into place and how wonderful she was feeling. And the thing is, overall she was still down 5 pounds!

Once she realized that and all the other wins she was having along the way, she was able to adjust her mindset, stress less, and feel really good about herself.

Not all progress shows up on the scale. In fact, there are many ways for you to track your results. For example:

- Your clothes are looser or you found something at the back of your closet that you can now fit into. Yay!
- You find yourself getting through the day with more energy and you are not having that 3pm slump.
- You are now being more active and liking how the activity makes you feel; plus it gives you added energy!
- Maybe you find yourself getting to the top of the stairs and you are not huffing and puffing like you used to. Or maybe you are now walking or jogging further than you were.
- Your cheat meals or planned indulgences are healthier than they used to be and you are actually craving good, whole foods.
- You have fewer cravings...in fact, you are no longer

reaching for sweet foods or any highly processed foods.

- Your joints are not as achy as before and you are now more mobile and able to do things you haven't done in a while.
- You don't get that bloated feeling since you have been making healthier food choices.
- Your blood sugar numbers have improved and you are feeling great because your doctor is looking at adjusting your medications...woohoo!
- You find you are not stressed as much and are getting through the day with less anxiety.
- You are getting the sleep you need which kicks off your day in a positive way.
- Your moods are super, your focus is better and you are smiling more!
- People are noticing that you are looking good...lost some weight, healthier looking, more peppy, etc.

I'm sure you could add to this list. When weight loss is your goal, my advice to you is to make sure that you don't rely completely on the numbers on your scale!



Take the time to notice and celebrate your non-scale victories. It's a great way to help you stay motivated and moving forward on your health journey!

Don't let the scale override all the other positive changes that are happening!

For more information, tips, and resources, I invite you to join me in my [Aging with Vitality group](#)...a community of like minded people who are there to support one another. Plus we have fun! The only catch is that you must be 45 years of age or older. Love the life you live,

Anita Duwel is owner of [Love the Life You Live/Aging with Vitality](#). She is a Certified Holistic Nutrition and Wellness coach, Workplace Wellness Consultant and specialized in aging with vitality. Anita's experience and passion is with helping others to increase their energy levels through manageable lifestyle changes so they can truly enjoy life by doing what they love to do. Learn more at www.AnitaDuwel.com

Historical Views: a Wealth of Stories in the Grand Biography of English Quebec

What do forgotten heroes, ancient burial grounds, a famous horse, a fish, a colossal sailing ship, a suffragette, a magician and an unsung genius have in common? They are all stories featured in *Historical Views: Selections from Quebec Heritage News 2000-2020, I & II*, a brand new two-volume anthology published this spring by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) in honour of its twentieth anniversary.

Edited by Matthew Farfan and Rod MacLeod, this stunning collection includes an array of historical articles selected from the first twenty years of QAHN's acclaimed quarterly magazine *Quebec Heritage News*. The collection is available in softcover box sets, or hardcover, but has been published in very limited numbers (only 250 softcover and 25 hardcover sets have been printed). The anthology includes 120 articles by over 60 different authors, and is lavishly illustrated with close to 150 archival and contemporary images in full colour, sepia and black and white.

The subject matter focuses on the history and heritage of Quebec's English-speaking communities, and covers the entire province. Topics are divided into 15 chapters ranging from "Local Heroes" to "Indigenous," from "Settlement and Immigration" to "Burial and Lore," and more. An introductory chapter by Rod MacLeod, "Old News," looks back at how *Quebec Heritage News* magazine has evolved over the years.

This project was almost a year in the making. The result, says co-editor Matthew Farfan, is "a visually stunning, fascinating journey through Quebec history, as seen through the lens of the English-speaking community." QAHN's President, Grant Myers, describes the collection as "a tribute to the many researchers and writers that have dedicated themselves to ensuring that the rich, but often overlooked, history of Quebec's English-speaking communities is preserved."

That statement has been echoed across the heritage community, and by educators and members of the general public, as well. Doug Brown, of John Abbott College, calls the anthology "a testament" to "community of memory," a "celebration of life in Quebec," and "QAHN's gift to everyone for whom that life and heritage have, or will have, meaning."

Mary Ducharme, of the Hemmingford Archives, says, "It takes good storytellers to impart a sense of the meaning of history. The many voices in this anthology bring to light a wealth of stories in the grand biography

of English Quebec." Bev Taber Smith, of the Richmond County Historical Society, calls the articles "informative, entertaining and always well-written." Meanwhile, Raymond Th  berge, Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, says the anthology will "help make the rich history and heritage of Quebec's English-speaking communities more widely known and appreciated."

For those in the Eastern Townships, there is much of interest in this collection. Townships stories take readers from Missisquoi to Stornoway, from Memphremagog to Richmond, with many stops along the way.

Historical Views: Selections from Quebec Heritage News 2000-2020 sells for \$45 (\$40.50 for QAHN members), plus \$20 postage within Canada. For the hardcover edition, the price is \$70 (\$63.00 for QAHN members). To order by e-transfer or Paypal, please make payments to home@qahn.org. By cheque, send payment to: QAHN, 3355 College, Sherbrooke, QC J1M 0B8. Or just make an appointment to stop by the QAHN office to pick up a set!

Co-editor Matthew Farfan with the new 2-volume set, *Historical Views: Selections from Quebec Heritage News 2000-2020, I & II*. Photo - courtesy.



Editorial May 9, 2021

by Barbara Heath

In a previous issue I discussed the need for trust. Trust that air quality of schools was not only acceptable but safe for the students and staff. This concern had been questioned for years. The Quebec Government, according to an article in the Record April 21, 2021, stated air quality in schools is acceptable.

Should we be looking for more than acceptable. If you look at the numbers, things look fairly good. But is this true? According to English television stations, only a couple of weeks later the Quebec Government decided to reverse this statement. I believe anyone working in these schools would be able to tell you good air quality is rare. Their voices fell on death ears. Now are we reaping what we sewed?

Trust is a big word. We rely on our leaders to be honest, evaluate the situation and make necessary corrections. Do you feel this is taking place? Who do we trust? And are they able to tell us how they were able to evaluate the situation in depth in such a short time?

Just something to think about.



Looking for an issue of *The Townships Sun*? Stop by at one of the following locations.

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Colby Curtis Museum - Stanstead
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From Leading Actress to a Two-bit Player

by Ann Louise George

A number. What's in a number besides a mathematical concept? No lucky number have I, for I do not dabble in numerology or have a rabbit's foot standing by. No, not a lucky number, but a special number have I: 1964. It is firmly embedded somewhere in my hippocampus where it dukes it out with other dates, and memories of them, that rear their head with increasing frequency, now, in the winter of my years.

In 1964, sweet seventeen was I and a popular cheerleader, to boot. True to that famous song, it was a very good year, for I was a small town girl who loved soft summer nights when I could hide from the lights of the village green. That was the year I tripped the light fantastic with every other girl's dream: a star football player. Proud wearer of his varsity sweater was I, and a senior cheerleader to crown it all. It was the heyday of the 60s, and I, though no Lady Macbeth, strutted my hour upon a hometown stage at football games, pompoms raised and a silver charm bracelet proudly dangling for all to see. In the crisp autumn air the crowds clamored and the band played while my special football player scored a goal. Vainglorious was I and outrageously oblivious, in that special year, to the world beyond the perimeters of the quadrilateral grid of my small town America. The leading role had I in this cozy unit of seven streets and six intersecting avenues. In this world within a world, a great actress was I, blonde hair swaying and pointy tits on display as I roused the crowd with rah-rahs. Oh! The magic of being naïve and seventeen, too absorbed in myself to even conjure the idea that there existed a world beyond the cozy limits of my existence. So absorbed in myself was I in 1964, little could I imagine the poignant truth of Macbeth's words about tomorrow, for at seventeen only the present counts.

In 2020, seventy-four am I, forlornly aware, like Macbeth, that tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in its petty pace, that life is a walking shadow, that popularity, pointy tits and pompons were all but a vain and doubtful good that would fade and die, not within an hour, but, alas, within mere years. No longer can I strut my stuff. On gray and dreary days, know I that youth is but a fleeting memory. I had my entrance upon the stage, I heard the applause and I reveled in the spotlight with a teenager's naiveté. Today, oh so much wiser, say I, that Shakespeare got it right. All the world's a stage, but at seventy-four, nobody gives a damn for a two-bit player waiting for a cue to say a line in the final act.

The Walker

by Rita Morin

I was sitting quietly in a church (what else do you do in a church, particularly a Catholic church) waiting for the funeral service to start when an acquaintance seated in the pew behind me greeted me in this way: "Bonjour La Marcheuse!" and I was taken aback, then surprised and finally, proud. My moniker was not wife of, or mother of but The Walker and I will attempt to enlighten you as to the significance of the title for .me

I have never been athletic, always felt woefully inadequate and clumsy when attempting a new sport or another, already failed at athletic endeavor. When I lived in Edmonton, I started to run and continued to do so until I married a Quebecer and moved to Sherbrooke. If you know the city of Sherbrooke, it is a lovely little city with steep hills but running in Sherbrooke was like trying to climb Mount Everest (somewhat of an exaggeration but you get the idea) and my knees refused to co-operate so I had to find another activity that would get me off my butt and moving! And that is how walking became my exercise of choice.

But walking wasn't just exercise for me; people always say: "You are so disciplined getting up and walking at 6:00 every morning in all possible weather conditions (rain, snow, sleet, icy sidewalks, -40 degrees Celsius) Well, it does take some discipline but walking has been my salvation so often that I cannot imagine my life without that daily routine.

When my father died two days after I had visited him in Edmonton, my husband and I attended the funeral and returned to Sherbrooke. Everybody adored my dad and I was heartbroken but he had lived a satisfying life so that was somewhat of a consolation.

Shortly thereafter, I was out for my daily walk , and a deer appeared stopped and just looked at me: his dark brown eyes and mine locked together and I had the distinct impression that my dad was telling me he was with his dear Mae (my mother) and I was going to be fine. Had I not been out walking that morning at that particular moment, I would not have encountered the deer and had some sense of farewell and a blessing from my father! It was a gift!

When life threw me some curves that relegated my sanity to a place that I thought I would never recover from, my daily walk allowed me to hurl my despair out loud with no ears to hear those sobs of anguish and though it didn't change the attempted suicides of my child, it did allow me to place one foot in front of the other one, and move ahead. The early morning stillness, the stars visible in

a clear sky soothed my wounded soul and pushed me forward.

Other deaths, diagnoses of mental health disorders, all were not changed by my walking but they were manageable , not always successfully, but the walking grounded me and allowed that window of hope that allows all of us to soldier on in heartbreaking situations.

Walking was not without its own hazards: four fractures in my wrist one year and a fractured humerus two years later while walking and falling on the ice merely illustrated that you cannot throw caution to the wind when you are dealing with nature because nature always has the last word.

And for me, the only thing that has saved me from giving in to unbearable grief and depression has been walking on a daily basis which is why that moniker "La Marcheuse" still delights me today.

CORRECTION



Fool's Spring - Correction!

In my article last month, I wrote I was looking for bearded "irises with purple or blue leaves and orange beards." That was my brain playing tricks on me. I'm really looking for bearded irises with purple or blue petals and orange beards. Like this lovely photo by Sid Mosdell from New Zealand (wikimedia.org). Leaves of green are just fine!

Apologetically,

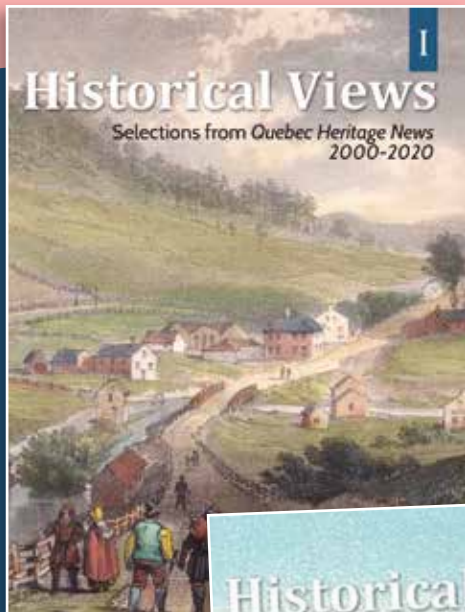
By the way, this issue is gorgeous!

R.A. Garber, rawrites@gmail.com

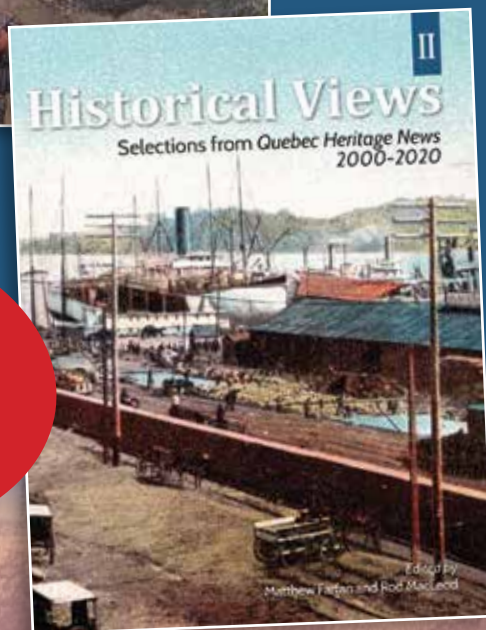
PHOTO: Bearded Iris (8057585814).jpg

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"It takes good storytellers to impart a sense of the meaning of history. The many voices in this anthology bring to light a wealth of stories in the grand biography of English Quebec."

Mary Anne Ducharme (Hemmingford Archives)

"English-speaking Quebec has a long and deep history. But it is not a history that we are usually taught in school. For two decades now, *Quebec Heritage News* has sought to recover this history from obscurity. It is a history that is very much grounded in our communities. With this anthology, we gain a new appreciation of just how rich and varied this history is."

Steven High (Concordia University)

"This anthology... stands as a testament to that community of memory and is a celebration of life in Quebec. It is QAHN's gift to everyone for whom that life and heritage have, or will have, meaning."

Douglas Brown (John Abbott College)

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