

## Open house launches our new offices

By ERIC WIDDICOMBE

**L'ABRI EN VILLE  
HOSTED ITS FIRST  
EVER OPEN HOUSE  
ON 11 MAY 2017.**

**THE RECENT PURCHASE** of our Montreal property at 2352 Duvernay St. last year was the culmination of a long and difficult search. Once settled in, we were eager to fling open our doors and celebrate.

Some of those present surely must have reflected what a long way we had come: from the small space we rented in 1991 at Catholic Community Services, to our sixth-floor rooms at the Queen Elizabeth Health Complex, and finally into our own spacious, new office and activity space in the old Stelco complex east of Atwater Market.



MEMBERS OF THE L'ABRI FAMILY AND GUESTS ENJOYING THE EVENT,  
AS SEEN FROM THE THIRD-LEVEL LOFT SPACE.


**WE'VE COME  
A LONG WAY!**

As the day waned, supporters, residents, volunteers, board members, staff and neighbours began arriving at our three-floor condo, which includes a bright loft. About a hundred people came through between five and eight o'clock. Wine and cheese, fruit punch and other nibbles were enjoyed thanks to the social committee, headed by **Joan Esar** with **Norma Singerman**. Leftovers were packed up to be enjoyed as snacks by the residents on their bus trip to Ottawa the following Tuesday.

There was a lot of mingling among members of the L'Abri family and guests who came to celebrate with us. A special presence was that of our founder **Eleanor Beattie**. Another highlight was the presence of **Craig Sauvé**, City Councillor for Le Sud-Ouest borough, who dropped in to welcome us to the neighbourhood.

A popular duo in the crowd were **Charles Pearo**, our long-suffering real estate agent—now on our board—and his son **Barnaby Pearo**, who managed the renovations before our move.

Grouped on the second-floor wall, a series of architectural drawings by resident **George Harris** was on display, and every level of the space was brightened by the fruits of residents' and volunteers' artistic talents. (See p. 4 for a few of the donated artworks.)

Many thanks to **Carolyn Harrison** for the bold red banner hung out front, the wall of historical photos surrounding an image of our iconic tree, and the lovely forsythia gracing our interior. 

ERIC WIDDICOMBE HEADED THE OPEN HOUSE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE.

**TURN TO P. 6 FOR MORE PHOTOS OF THE EVENT**



SUSAN PAHL AND CAROLYNE  
HARRISON, VOLUNTEERS AT THE  
PARK APARTMENT.



DENISE HUDON

**Now that our festivities have rendered us officially open, L'Abri en Ville is poised to embrace the future with enthusiasm.**



**Save  
THE DATE**

**Montreal Walks  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

**15 October 2017  
PHILLIPS SQUARE**



[www.mtlwalks.com](http://www.mtlwalks.com)

# A big gift from science students!

By SUSAN PURCELL




SAM BEITEL

**L**IKE KIDS getting a wonderful early Christmas gift, we were surprised and thrilled when science undergraduates at McGill University told us they'd raised a whopping \$12,000 for L'Abri. "One of the biggest problems in the science faculty is mental health issues, especially anxiety caused by competition to get into medicine", explains **Sebastian Morales**, vice president external of the Science

**MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ARE A BIG PROBLEM WITH SCIENCE STUDENTS**

Undergraduate Society. Sebastian and fellow students **Kayla Monaghan** and **Guoyue Xu**

spearheaded this amazing effort. The students were impressed by our work in mental health and held a variety of fundraisers to support us. Among them were a talent show, samosa sales, and a competition among the 19 science departments that included such events as a soccer tournament and a sale of cakes for \$100 a piece! L'Abri sends out a big thank you to these amazing students. 

MCGILL SCIENCE STUDENT **SEBASTIAN MORALES** PRESENTS THE RESULTS OF THE SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY FUNDRAISING TO L'ABRI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **CHERYL LAFFERTY** (AT LEFT) AND BOARD MEMBER **SANDRA BAINES**.

# OUR NEW CO-PRESIDENT A CALM & CARING COUNSELLOR

BY CECILY LAWSON

**E**IGHTEEN YEARS AGO, L'Abri en Ville's new co-president, **Eric Widdicombe**, had just completed a Masters degree in Counselling Psychology, when he was hired as a coordinator at L'Abri. The organization was expanding and needed another staff person.

"Eric was terrific from the start," says **Marianne Metrakos**, his fellow coordinator. "He had a wonderful, calm way about him, was very accepting, never got ruffled. And all the female residents wanted him to be their coordinator."

It was a busy time for L'Abri. During his 18 months with us, Eric recalls helping with the opening of three new apartments—taking the organization from six to

nine three-bedroom units—as well as the move of two of the existing apartments. In addition to these responsibilities, Eric was training in group psychotherapy at the Montreal General Hospital.

In 2000, Eric left L'Abri to take a post in behaviour modification at the Douglas Hospital. "We were all really sorry to see him go,"




JOS BROSNAN

commented Marianne. Fortunately, he stayed in touch and in many ways remained part of L'Abri. Eric joined us many times for our late summer stay at Camp Kinkora, bringing along his son, Noah, and filling his car with others who needed a lift. While at the Douglas, he also completed training in marriage and family therapy.

In 2006, Eric became a member of L'Abri's board of directors and chaired a committee on mental illness and aging. He stepped down from the board in 2009, but was enticed back in 2015 and elected co-president in March of this year.

Eric's career took him from the Douglas to the McGill University Counselling Service to Pavillon Foster, where he did independent therapy with substance-dependent clients. He currently provides psychotherapy services to students at Concordia University.

Now 50, Eric considers L'Abri to be in a period of consolidation. He would like to attract more board members of his generation, and feels that it's important for L'Abri to reach out to younger volunteers. That idea was borne out in our recent presence at a mental health forum at Concordia.

We welcome Eric to his new position, and look forward to a fruitful collaboration. 

**FROM COORDINATOR TO CO-PRESIDENT, ERIC WAS TERRIFIC FROM THE START**



# Life amid debris

By JEROME KIERANS

**LAST JUNE**, the owners of the duplex housing the Bessborough apartment, where I live, replaced our windows and front door. Then in January, five walls in four rooms were knocked down and replaced, adding thicker insulation. The aim was to modernize the building and make it more energy-efficient.

It was quite an experience to live through all that dust and noise! At the time, I was living alone in the apartment, which was probably a good thing. I was offered a chance to move out, but preferred to stay put and help see it through.

The work began in the fall of 2016, when the company that had installed the windows had to return to reposition them, in anticipation of the insulation work.

Before the walls came down in January, my bedroom was emptied and a lot of my things were put in storage in the basement. And so began two months of sleeping on the living room couch. During that time, I watched the landlord demolish and rebuild the five walls. Unfortunately, the work dragged on with frequent delays, as the rooms were completed one at a time.

SAM BEITEL



## Three cheers for Peter Starr and the Rotary Club of Westmount painters for the terrific job they did refreshing the walls of three of our apartments!

To help out, I moved furniture around, covered it and cleaned up—over and over again. The idea was to protect everything from all the plaster dust. And there was a lot!

The most interesting part of the work was the transformation of a bedroom on the north-west corner of the duplex—the part that gets all the cold wind during winter. The coldest room in the apartment was converted into the warmest!

The bathroom wall was rebuilt and we have new tiles in our shower. Members of the Rotary Club of Westmount (*pictured above*) added the finishing touches by repainting all our new walls and some other rooms as well. Now I get to live in a beautiful, cozy apartment—and have a new roommate to share it with. 🌱

JEROME KIERANS IS A RESIDENT OF THE NEWLY REFURBISHED BESSBOROUGH APARTMENT.

# UN TRAVAIL VALORISANT

Par ALYSS NORAH CHASSAGNE



FATOUmata BAH

**EN MARS**, j'ai commencé à faire du bénévolat deux fois par semaine à la boutique Dix Mille Villages sur la rue St-Denis. La boutique vend des produits du commerce équitable. C'est à dire que le but de ce magasin—et d'autres à Notre-Dame-de-Grace et à Pointe-Claire—est de permettre aux artisans

défavorisés et vivant dans la pauvreté de créer des œuvres et objets, et de gagner un revenu provenant de leur travail. Cela permet à des familles vivant auparavant dans des situations précaires, d'envoyer leurs enfants à l'école, et aussi d'avoir accès à des services de santé.

Les objets à Dix Mille Villages proviennent de pays à travers le monde tels qu'Haïti, l'Inde, la Bolivie, le Pakistan et les pays de l'Afrique. Tous les produits sont faits à la main et artisanaux. Les murs sont garnis de colliers, de bracelets et de foulards colorés. Sur

les tables il y a des accessoires cadeaux, des décorations, du café en vrac, du chocolat et bien plus. La boutique est vraiment belle.

Je travaille comme conseillère en ventes. Quand les clients entrent dans la boutique, je les salue et je leur demande s'ils voudraient déguster un thé ou un café. J'explique au besoin la

mission de l'entreprise. Je les laisse regarder et faire le tour de la boutique, et je leur dis que s'ils ont des questions ou ont besoin de conseils pour un cadeau, je suis là pour les aider.

C'est un plaisir de travailler dans un endroit où l'ambiance et le climat de travail sont relaxants et conviviaux. Et contribuer à la mission d'entraide du commerce équitable est bien sûr valorisant. 🌱

ALYSS NORAH CHASSAGNE EST RÉSIDENTE DE L'APPARTEMENT BAHAMA. ELLE EST AUSSI MEMBRE DU CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION DE L'ABRI.

« Je suis là pour aider les clients. »

## FAMILY ALBUM

# SPLASHES OF COLOUR

## ARTISTIC EXPRESSION LIGHTS UP L'ABRI'S NEW SPACE

BY SUSAN PURCELL



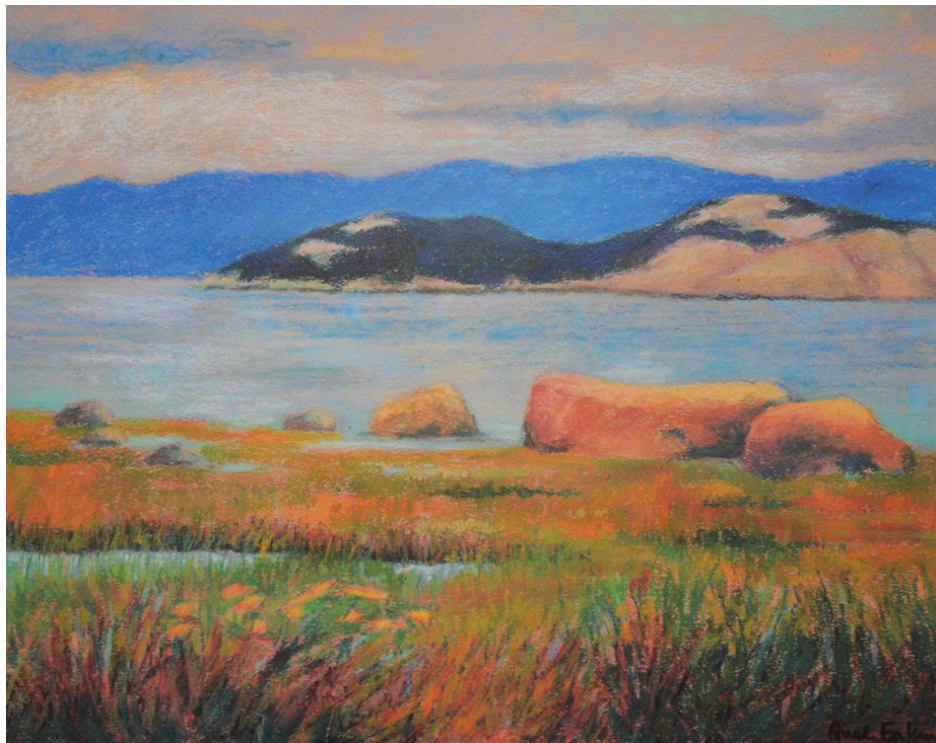
SAM BEITEL

### EILEEN KELLY | 'Sunflowers', acrylic |

Eileen took up painting at a day centre in the Laurentians for people with mental health challenges, and has been attending a similar art centre in downtown Montreal since soon after joining L'Abri in 2003. She previously painted two very popular designs for the residents' 'hasty note' project. She says painting "helps me forget my troubles." Eileen is a resident of the Park apartment.



**MARY-MARTHA GUY** | 'Ice and Snow #2' (2014), acrylic | "This is a view of Lake Massawippi seen from my former country house in early December, when part of the lake is frozen and snow falls on it. Part remains open water with icy edges where the sun reflects. Landscape is one of my favourite subjects." Mary-Martha is a former volunteer and a good friend of L'Abri.



**GAEL EAKIN** | 'Bas St-Laurent' (2010), oil pastel | "This artwork was created at Notre-Dame-de-Portage beside the St. Lawrence River, and shows one of the Pilgrim Islands near Rivière-du-Loup. My great-great-grandfather took the train from Ottawa to his country home there in the 1800s, along with our first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. I have a need to go back now and then, even if only for a few days." Gael is a volunteer and co-president of L'Abri's board of directors.





**NANCY GRUNDY** | 'Abstract', oil | After living at L'Abri for many years, Nancy is doing well on her own. Trained in Fine Arts at Concordia University and the Atelier d'artisanat centre-ville, she is a talented weaver and painter, and contributed a sculpted head to the new L'Abri office. Like Renée (see above, right), Nancy lives at Benny Crescent and still keeps in touch with us.

< **CAROLYNE HARRISON** | 'The Sybil', acrylic on canvas | "My approach for any abstract work is to layer many colours and shapes until the whole begins to talk to me," explains Carolyné. "What emerged here was a sylph-like, feminine figure. It seems entirely appropriate that L'Abri should have a presiding household goddess called Sybil on its third floor." Carolyné is a volunteer with the Park apartment.



**RENÉE DROUIN** | 'Colour Explosion', acrylic | Renée studied art at Dawson College and has attended art classes for 14 years at La rue des femmes. She says painting "makes me feel wonderful!" Renée is a former resident who now lives with her husband Sean—another former resident—in the Benny Crescent complex near many of our apartments, and likes to share her art with friends.



**RICCARDO (RICK) OTTONI** | 'Coloured Forms', watercolour | Rick has lived at L'Abri since our early years in the 1990s. He is a self-taught artist who likes to "have fun" when he paints. Rick says, "I never know what will come out. It's a

*tabula rasa*. I just say a prayer to God to guide me". Asked if this painting is of flowers, he replies, "Who knows? Your mind has to fill in the blanks."



# OPEN HOUSE DRAWS LIVELY MIX

RESIDENTS  
VOLUNTEERS  
BOARD MEMBERS  
STAFF  
SUPPORTERS  
NEIGHBOURS



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT)

Renée Drouin (L.) with Eileen Kelly | co-president Eric Widdicombe with Cheryl Lafferty, Executive Director | co-president Gael Eakin with past president Campbell Stuart | volunteers Mary Murphy (C.) and Suzanne Herscovitch (R.) share a laugh with Norma Gilmour, a L'Abri supporter and Suzanne's sister-in-law | resident Beverley Hartley greets visitors as they arrive.



SAM BEITEL

## UNSEEN HANDS

### EDITOR

Susan Purcell

### EDITORIAL TEAM

Sam Beitel  
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Cheryl Lafferty  
Cecily Lawson  
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### We'd love to hear from you!

Please send your comments/  
suggestions to the Editor at:  
suepurcell@videotron.ca

## GOVERNANCE 2017-18

L'ABRI EN VILLE'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS was introduced at our Annual General Meeting held on 13 March 2017 at Unitarian Church of Montreal.

(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) Charles Pearo | Christian Nielsen | Gael Eakin  
Alyss Norah Chassagne | Afric Eustace | Campbell Stuart  
Suzanne Herscovitch | Susan Purcell | Carolyne Harrison | Sandra Baines  
Dale MacDonald | Sheila Woodhouse | Eric Widdicombe

Contact us to obtain your copy of the 2016 Annual Report.

SEE ABOVE FOR CONTACT DETAILS.



STAR GALE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CO-PRESIDENTS	Gael Eakin Eric Widdicombe
VICE-PRESIDENT	Cecily Lawson
TREASURER	Sharyn Scott
SECRETARY	Susan Purcell
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT	Dale MacDonald
PAST PRESIDENT	Campbell Stuart
PERSONNEL CHAIR	Sandra Baines
BOARD MEMBERS	Sam Beitel* Alyss Norah Chassagne* Afric Eustace Carolyne Harrison Suzanne Herscovitch Christian Nielsen Charles Pearo* Sheila Woodhouse

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

Robert Bassett  
Eleanor Beattie, PhD  
Susan Grundy  
Marc Laporta, MD  
Marjorie Sharp, BCL, LLM

\*New member

## NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

# Happy times, indoors and out!

By CHERYL LAFFERTY

DECEMBER/2016

### HOLIDAY PARTY

Pianist Alan Greig (LEFT) of Mountainside United Church set a festive tone for our potluck event with his musical skills, as he accompanied the crowd in singing holiday songs. Volunteer Nancy Grayson and friend (BELOW) joined in. By evening's end, resident Rick Ottoni (BOTTOM) of the Benny apartment and all of us were in the **HOLIDAY SPIRIT**.



SAM BEITEL

FEBRUARY 2017

### RESIDENTS MEETING

Now that we have an office with ample space for meetings, we are taking full advantage of it. Our residents met for a **PIZZA AND SALAD LUNCH MEETING**, enjoying access to our full kitchen. This was their annual get-together to decide what activities will be paid for from their residents' fund—money they have raised by selling cards and calendars. New fundraising ideas were also explored.

MARCH 2017

### MCGILL PROJECT

The L'Abri office hosted residents for an all-day meeting with McGill University students, who invited them to participate in a **UNIQUE RESEARCH STUDY** we will talk about in our fall newsletter. The researchers appreciated having the space to run their project, and the residents enjoyed the presentation and refreshments.

MARCH 2017

### OKA DAY TRIP

Our annual day trip to Oka featured perfect weather for cross-country skiing. Twenty-two **RESIDENTS, VOLUNTEERS** and our McGill University **STUDENT**, André-Louis Noël, all took advantage of the fresh air, then settled in for a hearty lunch followed by game-playing or a quiet sit by the crackling fire.

APRIL 2017

### CABANE À SUCRE

At the first sign of spring, we hopped on a bus and headed off to La Goudrelle in Mont-Saint-Grégoire to **SAVOUR THE DELIGHTS** of a *cabane à sucre*, followed by a visit with baby farm animals.



STAR GALE

MAY 2017

### OTTAWA DAY TRIP

Our day trip to Ottawa included a tour of the **PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**, a stop to feast our eyes on tulips in a local park, and a picnic near Ottawa's City Hall.

Many thanks to the **Foundation of Greater Montreal** for making this trip possible! 🌱



## A TRIBUTE

## Gerry LeGrove

By SANDRA BAINES

KINDNESS  
& WISDOM

Gerry was trained as a nurse, raised a family of six adopted children, and later worked in pastoral care. Frank and Gerry's home in NDG became the 'go-to' place for the holiday get-together for Americana residents and volunteers. Residents' birthday celebrations always included one of Gerry's homemade cakes. Gerry also took part in Montreal Walks for Mental Health, as well as our initiative to help other communities start up projects like L'Abri, and our annual citrus fundraiser.

Gerry's dedication to L'Abri will be remembered by all whose lives she touched. 

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LEGROVE FAMILY

We were saddened to learn of the death in January of Gerry (Geraldine) LeGrove, a volunteer at the Americana apartment, then housing three men. With her warm smile and gentle manner, she was a source of support and friendship, guidance and wisdom to residents. The late Father Fitzpatrick—a good friend to L'Abri—introduced Gerry and her husband Frank to us when he was their pastor at St. Ignatius Church.

## REMEMBERING &amp; HONOURING

Gifts to L'Abri en Ville  
IN RECOGNITION OF LOVED ONES

## IN MEMORY OF

## AUDREY BEAN

Cecily Lawson  
Diane Marie Plante  
Sandra Tucker

ANTONIO  
CHIACCIARELLO

Nicolas Chiacchiarello

JEANNINE  
GINGRAS-NIELSEN

Anita Nevins  
Alice Valade

## GERALDINE LEGROVE

Mary & Robert Bassett  
Jean F. Poddubiuk

## ALLEN LOBO

Nancy Grayson  
George Harris  
Riccardo Ottoni  
David Seymour

## GERRY MACDONALD

Reda MacDonald

## CONSTANCE MOISAN

Huguette Gingras  
Cecily Lawson  
Dr. John London

## MARY QUINLAN

Audrey H. McLeod

## ELIZABETH TREMAIN

James Tremain

## IN HONOUR OF

SANDRA BAINES &  
DONNA THOMSON

Carol Baines

## ELEANOR BEATTIE

Grant P. & Mary Brown

## NORA BURNIER

Claude Thibault

JOAN ESAR'S  
74<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
FOR THE RESIDENT'S  
SOCIAL FUND

Rhoda Blostein  
Christiane  
De Tonnambour  
Luc De Tonnambour

## ARMAND GAUTHIER

Jocelyne Gauthier  
& Jean-Claude Landry

## NANCY GRAYSON

Mary Fuller

NANCY GRAYSON'S  
80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Johannis Meyers

## MARY MARTHA GUY

Dr. Walter  
& Erica Bloom  
Nancy Grayson  
Pamela Iny

## RICCARDO OTTONI

Sandra Morais  
Diane & Rémi Perron

## SHARYN SCOTT

Joseanne Brunelle  
& Tristan Tondino  
Carol Kouri

NORMA  
SINGERMAN'S  
80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Joan Esar



*"I would like  
to support  
L'Abri."*

We thank you  
sincerely for your  
generosity.

NAME	
ADDRESS	APARTMENT
CITY	PROVINCE
TELEPHONE	POSTAL CODE
TELEPHONE	EMAIL
MY GIFT OF \$	<input type="checkbox"/> IN MEMORY OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN HONOUR OF
4 WAYS TO MAKE A DONATION TO SUPPORT L'ABRI EN VILLE	
CREDIT CARD	<input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD   NAME ON CREDIT CARD
CARD NUMBER	EXPIRY
TELEPHONE	CALL 514 932-2199 TO DONATE BY CREDIT CARD
CHEQUE	PAYABLE TO "L'Abri en Ville"   MAIL TO 2352 Duvernay St., Montreal QC H3J 2X1
ONLINE	SECURE DONATIONS MAY BE MADE ON OUR WEBSITE THROUGH "CANADA HELPS" AT <a href="http://labrienville.org">labrienville.org</a>