



# ANNUAL REPORT 2011

*After marking our 20th anniversary in May, we were faced with the challenge of re-organizing the staffing of L'Abri en Ville due to the anticipated retirement of Marianne Metrakos who has been a full-time coordinator for many years.*

*During the summer months we invited leaders of other community-based organizations to share their knowledge and experiences with us. We also called upon experts in organizational design in order to guide us in developing a model that would best meet the needs of this community. Having created a vital community over the 20-year life of L'Abri, we were particularly focused on maintaining and enriching that strong community of volunteers, residents, supporters and staff. Campbell Stuart, vice president, took leadership in organizing and chairing these exchanges. Board members and staff were active participants. We extend thanks to all who took the time during the lazy days of summer to engage in this process.*

*Our efforts resulted in a decision ratified at our November board meeting to maintain three coordinators, with a Lead Coordinator assuming leadership and supervisory responsibilities. We strive to maintain a collaborative approach to decision making, while mandating the Lead Coordinator to assure effective management of the office.*

*We acknowledge and thank all of the volunteers who contribute so generously to the well-being of residents. The dedicated work of our staff is vital to the healthy life of the community: thank you to Marianne Metrakos, Beverley Kerr, Loraine Jacmain and Susan Charlebois.*

## ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Directors met eight times in 2011, in order to closely follow the financial health of L'Abri en Ville and to assure the continuing vitality of our community. As members of a working board, we took pleasure in hearing from and giving input to the work of standing committees, some of which are mentioned below.

At our AGM in May, we thanked outgoing board and executive member, Juan Vera, and resident board members Nancy Grundy and Pierre Jodoin. Joining the board were Afric Eustace and Cecily Lawson, and residents Eileen Kelly and Dennis Vossos. During the course of the year, we welcomed 5 new residents to L'Abri, and 7 new volunteers, who attended an orientation at which Dr. Marc Laporta, member of L'Abri's Advisory Council, spoke about mental illness. We appreciated the help of McGill Social Work students, Clare Karasik and Star Gale, who did consecutive field placements with us.

The AGM was an opportunity to celebrate L'Abri en Ville's 20th anniversary. Board members and artists Gael Eakin and Mary Martha Guy created a painting of the tree in our logo, with thirty residents beneath, which was used in the invitations and special newsletter. The L'Abri Oral History Club presented a vibrant 15-minute audio-visual collage of people and activities from

years past. Family members and friends of L'Abri joined us for a reception afterwards.

The work of four fundraising committees helped to keep L'Abri financially stable: Foundations under Nancy Grayson, Individual Donors under Audrey Bean (with thank you letters organized by Susan Purcell), Faith Communities under Eleanor Beattie, and the Citrus Campaign under Carol de Koven and Marianne Metrakos.

As mentioned above, we undertook a review of our staff structure, prompted by the announced retirement of Marianne Metrakos. Our deliberations produced a role description for lead coordinator that provides, in the L'Abri tradition, for direction within a collaborative context. It was approved at the November board meeting, allowing the Personnel Committee, chaired by Nancy Grayson, to begin the selection process.

The concerns of residents were the focus of a consultation process by Lise Palmer on the subject of aging. In September she reported that residents are concerned about aspects of their own aging, but also about the aging of volunteers and staff, who provide essential social connections. These insights will be followed up.

Many people made 2011 special. The Special Events Committee under Diana Bennett planned our successful AGM reception and December

Holiday Party. The coordinators organized the many details of the fall camp weekend (with the help of Perveen Khokhar from Our Harbour) as well as the spring overnight outing at Oka. Raymonde Hachey trained the holiday choir, David Rollert assisted us in revamping our website; John Knowles, Paul Carvalho and Caroline Bem gave input on the Oral History presentation, the Concordia Stingers unloaded a truck full of oranges and grapefruits, Gael Eakin hosted games nights, Juan Vera and Grazyna Wilczek held an information session at the Unitarian Church, Barbara Kelly donated the proceeds of her play *Suspended Pieces* to L'Abri, Sharyn Scott continued to do L'Abri en Ville's books, over and above her role as Treasurer.

On October 16th, the third Montreal Walk for Mental Health took place. Many L'Abri members participated, some as volunteers. The Walk was incorporated as a charitable foundation in 2011, and we are proud of our continuing leadership role on the board of directors.

## RESIDENT ACTIVITIES

The residents of each L'Abri apartment participated with their volunteer teams in tasks such as shopping or cleaning, and in social activities like walks, coffee and conversation, or outings. More generally, residents enjoyed games nights, bowling, Concordia hockey games, the Oral History Club, a trip to a cabane à sucre, summer picnics, plays at the Centaur and Fringe Festival, and visits to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Overnight outings to Oka Provincial Park in March, and to Camp Weredale in the Laurentians in September, were opportunities for large groups to socialize. So too were L'Abri's annual holiday party in December, and the AGM and volunteer appreciation dinner in May. Two initiatives by residents continued this year: one apartment hosted a Halloween pizza party; another welcomed fellow residents to a Christmas day dinner.

Cards were again designed and sold by residents to help support the cost of group activities. When needed, residents gathered to help in the office, for example with mailings, and all helped with the distribution of fruit at our annual "Oranges and Grapefruits" fundraiser.

2100 Marlowe Ave (Queen Elizabeth Health Complex), #650, Montreal, Quebec H4A 3L5 (514) 932-2199 Fax (514) 932-2676

[www.labrienville.org](http://www.labrienville.org) [info@labrienville.org](mailto:info@labrienville.org)

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A number of residents were involved in presentations about L'Abri, sharing their personal experience with mental illness – in churches, and to students at McGill, Bishops University and Dawson College. They received warm feedback about the powerful impact of their message. Three residents participated in a film about recovery made by the Douglas Hospital and three others were photographed for the McGill "Community Captured" exhibit. Many residents joined the annual Walk For Mental Health.

Nine residents took advantage of a bursary (up to \$200) from the Shelagh Coinner Travel and Education Fund to join family or friends on trips. For some, this was their first time away in many years. One resident attended a two-week Peer Counselling Training program.

Two residents worked full time; six worked 20 hours a week in paid volunteer positions, and 10 volunteered in unpaid roles for up to four days a week. Most residents have personal passions – arts and crafts, exercise at the Y, music classes and performance, architectural drawing, and church attendance – to name a few.

#### COLLABORATIVE DISSEMINATION

L'Abri en Ville and our sister groups, Our Harbour in St. Lambert, Les toits d'Émile in Chateauguay and Ancoura in Ottawa continued to be in working contact, discussing and supporting one another on common issues, including periodic meetings of coordinators.

In the spirit of collaborative dissemination, two Our Harbour residents and their coordinator, Perveen Khokhar, joined Marianne Metrakos and L'Abri residents and volunteers in taking part in a special service and a workshop at the Unitarian Church in North Hatley on Sunday, September 18th. A L'Abri board member generously offered her house near Magog so that we could leave on Saturday to enjoy an unhurried drive on Sunday morning.

During the service, four residents spoke of their experiences within Our Harbour. A volunteer spoke of her connection to L'Abri en Ville and how it has

touched her life. L'Abri residents responded in telling their stories. A parent spoke of her joy of the community that is offered to both the residents and the volunteers, and many members of the church spoke of their joys and sorrows around mental illness.

In the workshop, Dr Natasha Bird described the growth of support in the Eastern Townships for those with mental illnesses. Marianne spoke of the work of L'Abri followed by Catherine Gillbert, the founding president of Our Harbour. Many questions were voiced and answered. Out of this gathering, a professor at Bishop's University invited members of L'Abri to speak in his course, "Community Psychology."

Another joint project takes us back to our beginnings: L'Abri en Ville was first inspired by the number of homeless men on the street, many obviously suffering from a mental illness. Two decades later, an opportunity has presented itself to return to these roots and to share our experience and expertise in creating community with a venerable Montreal group, Nazareth House. Sheila Woodhouse, the director, wishes to create deeper community for the men who are residents of Nazareth House. With the remainder of our grant from the J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, we began to study how we can exchange experience and grow through this project.

Finally, the Collaborative Dissemination Committee joined with the L'Abri's Oral History Club in creating a 15 minute visual and oral presentation to celebrate L'Abri en Ville's 20th anniversary. We were supported in this by a number of friends of L'Abri. Our collaborative work was greatly appreciated when shown at our AGM in May.

#### Mission Statement

Our mission at L'Abri en Ville is to provide a stable and fulfilling environment for persons with a mental illness through safe, affordable housing and inclusion in a supportive community.

We believe in a society in which persons can be full, contributing members despite a mental illness.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

##### President

Sandra Baines

##### Vice-president

Campbell Stuart

##### Treasurer

Sharyn Scott

##### Secretary

Roni Simco

##### Immediate Past President

Audrey Bean

##### Members

Eleanor Beattie, Carol De Koven, Gael Eakin, Afric Eustace, Nancy Grayson, Mary-Martha Guy, Suzanne Herscovitch, Eileen Kelly, Cecily Lawson, Dale MacDonald, Lise Palmer, Maurice Prendergast, Dennis Vossos

##### Advisory Council

Robert Bassett, Susan Grundy, Marc Laporta, M.D., Ann Reid, Marjorie Sharpe, BCL, LLM

##### STAFF

##### Coordinators

Loraine Jacmain, Beverley Kerr, Marianne Metrakos

##### Administrative Assistant

Susan Charlebois



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

Revenues	JAN-DEC 2011	JAN-DEC 2010	Expenditures	2011	2010
Individuals	\$27,575	\$41,761	Salaries & Benefits	\$146,335	\$141,323
Faith Communities	5,905	7,671	Administration	37,737	31,150
Community Organizations	300	–	Apartment Expenses	12,818	15,600
Foundations	102,210	135,324	Insurance	9,274	9,210
Corporations	6,118	3,187	Professional Fees	3,873	3,725
Citrus Campaign	12,734	12,682	Payroll Fees & Bank Charges	1,772	1,600
ADRLSSS*	44,406	43,404	Applied Dissemination	9,778	14,035
Miscellaneous	828	1,078	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$221,587</b>	<b>\$216,643</b>
Applied Dissemination	–	75	<b>NET RESULTS</b>	<b>(\$5,462)</b>	<b>\$39,909</b>
Investment income	16,049	11,370			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$216,125</b>	<b>\$256,552</b>			

\*Agence de développement de réseaux locaux de services de santé et de services sociaux