



L'ABRI
EN VILLE

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

In 2013, L'Abri en Ville continued the process of administrative renewal, while cleaving to the community values and focus on volunteerism that have made us a recognized leader in Canada.

In the spring we engaged a new Lead Coordinator, Cheryl Lafferty, and a new Coordinator, Cathy DeChambeau, who with Coordinator Loraine Jacmain completes our core staff. Former Lead Coordinator Marianne Metrakos helped ensure a smooth transition. Sincere thanks are due to all of them, as well as to administrative assistant Susan Charlebois, for a successful year.

In the past year we focused attention on updating and streamlining our fundraising, in particular with regard to foundations. As a result of hard work by members of our fundraising committee, we now have an expanded database of foundations that share our goals, and an improved online system for tracking applications.

We placed a new emphasis in 2013 on the inevitable ageing of members of the L'Abri community, even as we mourned the premature passing in December of our beloved board member and volunteer, Roni Simco. As a result of reflection by our new Community Belonging Committee, we have renewed our resolve to make sure that volunteers and residents limited by health problems can remain within the L'Abri family as long as possible, and that once they can no longer participate or live within our community, we maintain social and emotional ties with them.

We have been enriched by new faces and new ideas. McGill student Ada Posner began formatting our bi-annual newsletter in 2013, giving it a bold new look. And largely due to word of mouth among our volunteers, several people heard about our L'Abri family and joined apartment teams.

ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

The board of directors met eight times in 2013 to keep abreast of new developments at L'Abri en Ville, to monitor its finances and to improve its operations. Particular attention was paid to hiring decisions, relations with residents and forging closer links with funders.

In addition to the hiring of new coordinators outlined above, we elected three new directors at our AGM, held for the first time in March due to a change in our year end date: Jerome Kierans, a resident, Chad Lubelsky of Santropol Roulant, and Marianne Metrakos, our experienced former coordinator. Susan Purcell assumed responsibility as board Secretary.

Staff members sat on a housing com-

mittee at CSSS Cavendish, and attended conferences on mental health, including several at Douglas Hospital on topics including mood disorders, changes in diagnostic methods, ageing and depression. A particular focus was to strengthen our connections with organizations that could refer new residents to us, such as St. Mary's Hospital department of psychiatry, Lakeshore Hospital, Old Brewery Mission and Ometz.

Though individual donations increased over previous years, payroll costs were high due to having two Lead Coordinators during the training period. Improved outreach to foundations became a major focus.

The Americana and Wellington

apartments were closed in 2013, due to problems with building maintenance. We opened a lovely new apartment in Ville Emard which now houses the men from Wellington. With a grant from the Echo Foundation, L'Abri embarked on a horticulture therapy project in collaboration with Action Communiterre, an NDG non-profit. Four residents regularly tended crops in a collective garden, enjoyed the harvest and shared part of it with the NDG Food Depot.

Members of L'Abri and its supporters were kept informed through spring and fall newsletters. In addition, coordinators issued their first internal newsletter, to keep volunteers and residents up on developments at the office and at other apartments.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES

With their volunteer teams residents had shopping excursions, help with cleaning and chores, coffee and tea times, cooking and jam-making sessions, birthday celebrations and poetry readings. Outings included a visit to the Chihuly exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Concordia hockey games, summer picnics, games nights, shopping at a holiday bazaar and plays at the Centaur Theatre.

A September stay at Camp Weredale in the Laurentians brought together L'Abri residents, staff and volunteers. The AGM, the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and the L'Abri Holiday Party were much anticipated occasions for the community as a whole to gather. The residents of a Benny Crescent apartment hosted a Hallowe'en pizza party, always a popular event.

Green-thumbed residents enjoyed participating in the NDG community garden, gaining skills and reaping benefits with a harvest of fresh fruit and vegetables. Two members of our Oral History Club participated in a broad-

cast on CKUT of Radio Moon, a monthly program created by Forward House about mental health and illness.

A group of residents designed attractive hasty notes, with coaching from volunteer artists, later packaging and selling them to support group activities. On the day in December when we distributed citrus fruit to the customers of our annual fundraiser, residents were on hand to help load the fruit and sell their cards. Residents also lent willing hands in the spring and fall to prepare the L'Abri newsletter for mailing.

Several residents helped combat the stigma of mental illness by appearing publicly. They spoke to McGill occupational therapy students about their personal experience of mental illness, and visited churches to sell cards and chat with congregants. Many joined the annual Walk for Mental Health. Two residents spoke at a conference in June, and also travelled to Halifax in the fall to speak publicly about L'Abri en Ville.

COLLABORATIVE DISSEMINATION

Within the disseminated L'Abri Network of four groups, only Ancoura in Ottawa expanded in size during 2013, adding one townhouse for three residents. Ancoura received an Inspiration Award from the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health in the spring, and celebrated with a gala fundraising dinner in May, attended by a number of L'Abri members. Les toits d'Emile and Our Harbour have had to devote a lot of energy to fundraising this year, a source of concern requiring more thought by us all.

In June, L'Abri made a presentation at the 14th annual Collaborative Mental

Health Care Conference, held in Montreal. This is a forum, co-sponsored by the Canadian Psychiatric Association and the College of Family Physicians of Canada, for exploring ways to partner in support of recovery from mental illness. The five presenters at our workshop, titled "The Restorative Power of Community: A Collaborative Model for Mental Health," described personally and powerfully how the different roles in the L'Abri model work together to create a supportive community. They also spoke about our close collaboration with health care professionals in hospitals and CLSCs, both in finding just the right residents for a community-supported model, and then in helping us to support individuals as the need arises.

In November, a second group of volunteers, staff and residents, including some members of Ancoura, made a presentation in Halifax at the 25th annual conference of the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia. They were warmly received, and were able to have a more intimate conversation the next day with a group of individuals interested in the possibility of starting a project in Halifax based on the L'Abri en Ville model. We are hopeful that this interest will blossom next year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Campbell Stuart

Vice-president

Dale MacDonald

Treasurer

Sharyn Scott

Secretary

Susan Purcell

Immediate Past President

Sandra Baines

Members

Paul Aubin, Audrey Bean, Eleanor Beattie, Carol De Koven, Gael Eakin, Afric Eustace, Suzanne Herscovitch, Eileen Kelly, Jerome Kierans, Cecily Lawson, Chad Lubelsky, Marianne Metrakos, Lise Palmer, Maurice Prendergast, Roni Simco

Advisory Council

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

STAFF

Coordinators

Cathy DeChambeau, Loraine Jacmain, Cheryl Lafferty (Lead Coordinator)

Administrative Assistant

Susan Charlebois

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.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2013

| Revenues | JAN-DEC 2013 | JAN-DEC 2012 | Expenditures | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Individuals | \$45,897 | \$31,103 | Salaries & Benefits | \$156,073 | \$159,200 |
| Faith Communities | 5,625 | 4,461 | Administration | 30,938 | 39,698 |
| Community Organizations | 1,500 | 500 | Apartment Expenses | 15,541 | 23,698 |
| Foundations | 106,587 | 105,789 | Insurance | 9,274 | 9,274 |
| Corporations | 5,500 | 2,600 | Professional Fees | 6,202 | 4,467 |
| Citrus Campaign | 12,193 | 13,329 | Payroll Fees, Visa & Bank Charges | 2,251 | 1,385 |
| MSSS* | 46,398 | 45,541 | Applied Dissemination | 9,875 | 16,122 |
| Walk for Mental Health | 3,438 | — | Miscellaneous | — | 200 |
| Applied Dissemination | — | 25,500 | Total | \$230,154 | \$254,044 |
| Miscellaneous | 828 | 3,401 | NET RESULTS | \$7,415 | (\$11,618) |
| Investment income | 9,603 | 10,202 | | | |
| Total | \$237,569 | \$242,426 | | | |

*Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux du Québec