



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Renewing and restructuring were important themes in 2015 at L'Abri en Ville. Fresh eyes overseeing our procedures at the office level and collaboration by all, resulted in fruitful changes ranging from more age-appropriate outings for our residents, to reshaped administrative structures.

Efforts began in earnest to switch from surface to online mailings. The transition to new computer programs to manage both tax receipts and the thousands of orders for our annual citrus fundraiser, was handled with aplomb by office assistant Denise Hudon. Residents planning their own fundraising dealt with the technological shift by replacing the hasty notes and greeting cards of the past with a beautiful and timeless alternative.

The men and women living in our ten apartments stepped up to take greater responsibility for matters affecting them. They formed a Residents' Committee which would safeguard funds raised from resident projects, and guide decisions on the best use for these funds – usually an annual bus trip or special outing. When L'Abri for the first time manned a booth at McGill's fall Volunteer Fair, several residents took the time to turn up and answer students' questions. And throughout the year, residents could be counted on to contribute tasty offerings to the potluck suppers that kick off our popular Games Nights at a volunteer's home.

ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

The board of directors met eight times in 2015 to keep informed of the everyday needs of our apartments and office, to monitor our finances and to oversee our life at L'Abri and in the community around us. Much work went into reviewing our structures and responsibilities, and developing new approaches that will ensure our organization functions more effectively.

Our former Lead Coordinator Cheryl Lafferty is now our Executive Director, assuming an expanded role in relation to general administration and staff. Cheryl works in collaboration with the chair of each committee, acts as liaison with other non-profit groups and donors, and ensures good relations with our partners in the psychiatric and social service network. Of particular import is her oversight of all fundraising requests, in partnership with board and executive members.

Collaborating with Cheryl as always are our two coordinators, who now

share increased responsibility for the daily lives of our residents, in addition to interviewing and supporting volunteers, helping interview potential residents, liaising with referral resources and organizing educational workshops for volunteers and residents.

Another big change has been in the responsibilities of our board members and executive council. The Executive's mandate has been widened to deal with the nuts and bolts of administration previously handled by the board. To this end, the council has been enlarged to include the chairs of Personnel and Fundraising, with the option of further expansion. Since the fall, meetings of the Board of Directors have been held only every two months, freeing up board members to concentrate on policy decisions and supervision of major committees.

Fundraising continued to be a priority. Cecily Lawson assumed responsibility for individual fundraising, while Sandra Baines and Sharyn Scott remain

in charge of corporations and foundations. In June we sought advice from a professional fundraiser on ways to attract larger donations, but decided for now to avoid the expense of a major gifts campaign. Our annual citrus fundraiser once again offered a great opportunity to show our face to the community in hopes of attracting donations and volunteer support.

To reduce mailing costs and simplify procedures we have moved to a system of computer-generated tax receipts. Our supporters are gradually supplying their email addresses so receipts can go out online, with the added option of enjoying our bi-annual newsletter online in colour.

After many years, L'Abri was obliged to discontinue operations of our Collaborative Dissemination committee, which had offered considerable help to communities wishing to create supportive housing projects based on our model. While lacking the resources to carry on as in the past, we will always be pleased to advise and support fledgling groups.

The year ended with the departure of coordinator Loraine Jacmain, who will be missed for her patience and kindness over many years. We were fortunate to engage as her replacement, our former social work student Star Gale.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES

Our residents enjoyed outings, walks and dinners with their volunteer teams, whether to mark special days or just to enjoy fresh air and good company. Day trips to Oka Park and to a *cabane à sucre* broke the monotony of winter in the city. As ever, the entire L'Abri community turned out for our AGM, Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, and Holiday Party. Later in the year, a hot dog barbecue in a wooded setting at Parc Angrignon was a huge success.

Summer brought a new experience – two relaxing nights staying at a former convent on nearby Ile St-Bernard. This replaced the Laurentian camp settings of the past. Many of our residents are now 50 or older, and preferred the private rooms and cafeteria meals to the bunk beds and community clean-ups of camp. The change from September to August also meant warmer weather for swimming and boat rides.

Many residents took part in the annual Walk for Mental Health, a source of pride this year as L'Abri en Ville received a \$4,500 grant from the event's foundation, to be used for air conditioning our apartments. Many also lent helping hands in spring and fall, to fold our newsletter and stuff and label envelopes for mailing.

This year as ever, some residents played roles in the community. Though not all residents felt able, some addressed groups about mental illness, or agreed to be resident representatives on our board. Others joined volunteers as the face of L'Abri at a Volunteer Fair.

After years of selling hasty notes and holiday cards to raise funds, residents came up with a new idea. Throughout the fall they created dozens of hand-painted glass Christmas tree bulbs, with the immense help of volunteer Joan Esar. These lovely objects made an eye-catching display at our annual citrus fundraiser, and along with new L'Abri calendars yielded an impressive return, used to fund outings.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

At a strategic planning session in June, the board and executive of L'Abri en Ville agreed that new approaches are needed to address our dwindling volunteer base.

Structural changes under consideration for months relating to staff, board and executive (described above) were formally adopted.

Among initiatives to be explored in future, are more adept use of media, including social media, and an overhaul of our website; attracting students by better outlining the skills we seek; more active recruitment of volunteers generally; and revamping screening procedures with relation to staff, volunteers and potential residents.

A major area of focus that remains unresolved, has been the need to purchase a property from our reserve funds. The Quebec government's *Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires* (PSOC) requires all grant recipients to eliminate reserve funds over a certain amount from their books. The only viable means to this end is the purchase of real estate. Throughout the year L'Abri en Ville made about 20 visits to various properties, beginning with a plan to buy a condo or duplex for our residents, and by year end considering alternatively, purchase of an office with activity space. Meeting this requirement remains a major preoccupation for L'Abri.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-presidents

Gael Eakin
Dale MacDonald

Treasurer

Sharyn Scott

Secretary

Susan Purcell

Immediate Past President

Campbell Stuart

Members

Sandra Baines, Audrey Bean, Afric Eustace, Carolyne Harrison, Christian Nielsen, Heidi Paul, Suzanne Herscovitch, Jerome Kierans, Cecily Lawson, Chad Lubelsky, Kosta Theofanos

Advisory Council

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

Executive Director

Cheryl Lafferty

Coordinators

Cathy DeChambeau, Loraine Jacmain

Administrative Assistant

Denise Hudon

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 community that supports their social, material and spiritual needs. We believe in a society in which persons with mental illness can be full, contributing members. We extend support to others interested in adopting the L'Abri en Ville model.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015

Revenues	JAN-DEC 2015	JAN-DEC 2014	Expenditures	2015	2014
Individuals	\$143,367	\$45,403	Salaries & Benefits	\$173,683	\$165,807
Faith Communities	2,763	5,800	Administration	35,914	41,288
Community Organizations	450	–	Apartment Expenses	21,291	16,328
Foundations	220,144	107,262	Insurance	9,374	9,383
Corporations	3,880	4,200	Professional Fees	9,982	8,513
Citrus Campaign	9823	11,487	Payroll Fees, Visa & Bank Charges	2,744	2,523
PSOC*	47,254	46,888	Collaborative Dissemination	7,819	14,586
Employment Subsidy	1,929	7,604	Total	\$260,807	\$258,428
Walk for Mental Health	3,759	1,971	NET RESULTS	\$185,544	(\$2,618)
Collaborative Dissemination	2,000	20,000			
Miscellaneous	414	803			
Investment income	10,568	9,628			
Total	\$446,351	\$261,046			

*Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires