



FOR RESIDENTS, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & SUPPORTERS OF L'ABRI EN VILLE

L'Abri family brainstorms shape of our future

By SUSAN PURCELL



SAM BEITEL

THERE WAS A FESTIVE air in the Unitarian Church dining room as residents, volunteers and staff of L'Abri en Ville met on May 9, 2023 to brainstorm about our future needs, and to celebrate our volunteers with a dinner of appreciation.

Board president **Pepita Capriolo** began by explaining that, in view of the worsening economic situation and our overburdened healthcare system, as well as changes at L'Abri and in society at large, we need the community's input on how to better

We need the community's input on how to better serve our residents

serve our residents. Tables were organized by apartment, and with the aid of a facilitator at each one to guide discussion, residents and volunteers set to work. In their hands were a few guiding questions focusing on living costs and housing options, quality of physical and mental healthcare, and how L'Abri can support the wider community.

Executive director **Star Gale** and others dropped by each table at intervals, to get the gist of discussion. Graphic recorder **Sara Heppner**, standing before a huge white board at the head of the room, received their reports and rapidly told the unfolding story in lively images and words.

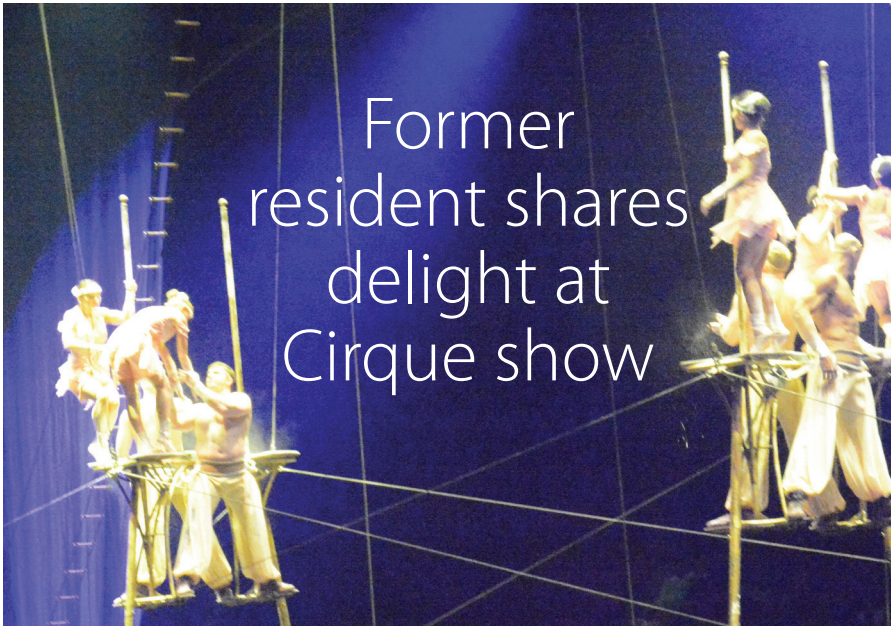
ABOVE, GRAPHIC RECORDER **SARA HEPPIER** HAD TO BE ON HER TOES TO KEEP UP WITH THE DISCUSSION. BELOW, RIGHT, NEW BOARD PRESIDENT **PEPITA CAPIRIOLO** SURPRISED **CECILY LAWSON** WITH A BOUQUET OF THANKS FOR HER HARD WORK DURING FOUR YEARS AS PRESIDENT.

Most residents said they can cover rent and grocery costs, in large part due to rental costs split between roommates, but some worried about further hikes. Asked how they'd feel about one possible hedge against rent hikes — L'Abri buying a property to house two to ten three-bedroom apartments — some thought being near other residents would reduce isolation, but others would not want to leave the community where they live now. Little worry was expressed about stigma, that is, neighbours opposing a building for people living with mental illness. As to the idea of one-person apartments in a single building, one resident had strong feelings against, saying, "We join L'Abri to have a family."

Many residents were satisfied with their doctors and other community supports, and many praised the help given by coordinators to navigate the healthcare system. Ideas to help others included collecting clothes for the unhoused, offering internships to students in psychiatry, and teaming up with libraries for mutual benefit. After much discussion everyone thoroughly enjoyed a delicious catered dinner, followed by residents' tributes to their volunteers, and thanks to all who help make L'Abri work.



SUSAN IS A MEMBER OF THE L'ABRI BOARD AND EDITOR OF L'ABRI TIMES NEWSLETTER



Former resident shares delight at Cirque show

JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS 2022, 16 residents and seven other members of the L'Abri community were delighted to attend Cirque du Soleil's production, *Corteo*, at the Bell Centre. Ten people from sister organizations Les Toits d'Emile and Our Harbour also attended, using the reduced-rate tickets negotiated by executive director **Star Gale** and coordinator **Lori Goodhand**.

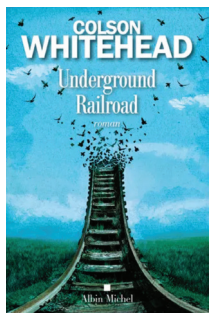
Among the L'Abri delegation was former resident **Sean Cahill** (at right), taking in the show with coordinator **Michelle Mills**. Previous residents are often invited to attend L'Abri activities, something Sean has particularly

appreciated since the passing of his wife **Renée Drouin** (another former resident) a year and a half ago. He frequently joins residents for classical music concerts and summer visits to Île-Saint-Bernard. "I'm really grateful they still invite me", says Sean, who lives in the Benny Crescent complex near our five apartments there.

Another way Sean keeps in touch with L'Abri is by meeting long-time Park apartment resident **Terryann O'Neill** for coffee in a downtown plaza, something he and Renée did regularly. "I still suffer from isolation and loneliness, but these things keep me occupied, and remind me of happy times in the past." | **SP**



SAM BEITEL



« **Underground Railroad** », roman de Colson Whitehead, traduit de l'anglais par Serge Chauvin, 416 pages, Éditions Albin Michel, 2017

Underground Railroad ~ fuite de l'esclavage

Par MARIE-JOSÉE PICHÉ

LE CHEMIN DE FER CLANDESTIN était un réseau de routes, d'itinéraires et de refuges utilisés par les esclaves fugitifs Afro-Américains jusqu'à la fin de la Guerre Civile en 1865. Dans le roman *Underground Railroad*, Cora, une esclave de seize ans, s'enfuit avec l'aide de Caesar, un autre jeune esclave, d'une plantation de coton en Georgie.

Les chasseurs d'esclaves sont à leur trousses, pour montrer aux autres l'exemple de la punition qui les attend : le fouet à mort. Cora et Caesar parviennent à s'établir en Caroline du Sud, mais Cora réalise que le gouvernement de l'état planifie de stériliser les femmes noires. Avant qu'ils puissent s'échapper, un chasseur d'esclaves arrive, et Caesar se fait tué. Cora s'enfuit à nouveau, cette fois seule.

Arrivée en Caroline du Nord, Cora doit se cacher pendant des mois chez Martin, un allié opérateur de gare. Eventuellement un raid est mené sur la maison, Martin et sa femme sont exécutés, et on s'empare de Cora pour la ramener à son maître. Heureusement, des esclaves attaquent le convoi et elle réussit à reprendre le chemin de fer clandestin avec Royal, un noir qui l'a sauvée. Dans une ferme de l'Indiana elle entame une relation avec Royal malgré des souvenirs de viol dans son enfance. La police est averti de leur présence et la ferme est incendiée.

Mais le destin de Cora ne s'arrête pas là. Elle remonte dans des charriots voyageant vers l'ouest, conduit par un homme noir.

MARIE-JOSÉE EST LECTRICE AVIDE. ELLE HABITE À L'APPARTEMENT BRASILIA

Sugar shack serves up a sweet welcome

By CECILY LAWSON

FOR OVER 15 YEARS, L'Abri residents have enjoyed a Spring visit to their favourite cabane à sucre, but the three-year hiatus caused by Covid made this year's outing even more special. Arriving at La Goudrelle in Mont-Saint-Grégoire on a sunny April morning, our group was greeted by the owners, the Gingras family, welcoming everyone with delicious cones of maple sugar.

The Gingras clan first established themselves at Mont-Saint-Grégoire in 1948. Their sugaring-off business launched a couple of decades later, growing as it was passed down through succeeding generations. Now, having just completed its 54TH season, it is a large operation complete with farm animals on site. L'Abri visitors appreciate the way it has remained relaxed and rustic over the years.

Maintaining a special relationship with community organizations such as L'Abri "was important to my grandfather and to my father," says **Camille Gingras**, a member of the current generation, "and it is important to me."



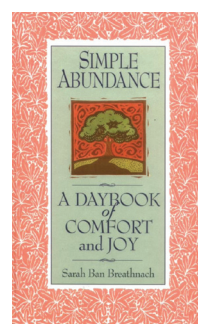
In the *blade marks* of the greats



A HANDFUL OF RESIDENTS had a tour of the Bell Centre in early February, visiting the rink area, locker room and media room on a non-game day. Photographer **Sam Beitel** sent us this photo with a tongue-in-cheek caption: "Ready to answer questions from reporters after the game!" *From left, Michelle Mills, coordinator, Kevin Hummel, McGill social work intern, Luke Gruber, Vanessa Perez and Christian Nielsen.* | [SP](#)

Inspiring thoughts for every day

By IRENE TYL



Simple Abundance is a guide to life, offering advice for each day of the year. For example, for every January 5, it suggests you "be the woman you were meant to be." On another day, "be conscious of strangers, look at them and smile; it could be an angelic encounter."

Simple Abundance is like a little Bible to me. It deals with all different aspects of living and growing, and helps me see myself better. It's a feel-good book, and I really recommend it to you.

Simple Abundance: A Daybook of Comfort, by Sarah Ban Breathnach
528 pages, Warner Books, 1995

IRENE LIVES AT THE BRASILIA APARTMENT



As ever, this year's visit began with a trolley tour through the sugar bush (*above*). Then it was down to the business of feasting on all things maple syrup, from beans to eggs to maple taffy. Resident **David Seymour** (*top*) has a first taste!

CECILY IS L'ABRI'S IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT, AND AN APARTMENT VOLUNTEER

Board group photo is first in years

Our new Board of Directors for 2023-24 was introduced online in March at our Annual General Meeting, but members gathered in person for the first time at our community meeting and dinner on May 9.



*Pictured from left, front row, Dale MacDonald, Pepita Capriolo (President), Cecily Lawson, Richard Dufour**

At rear, Sam Beitel, Susan Purcell, Luke Gruber, Maxene Rodrigues, Jane Bourke, Sandra Baines, Afric Eustace, Gulam Sohrab*

Missing from the photo are Charles Pearo, Sharyn Scott and Campbell Stuart

*New members

REMEMBERING & HONOURING

Gifts to L'Abri en Ville
in recognition of loved ones

In memory of...

Beth Armour
Cecily Lawson

Mary & Bob Bassett

William Bonnell
Madeleine Mitchell
Ramona Randall
Armgard Stanger

Audrey Bean

Anonymous
Martha Bell
Maureen Lafrenière

John Bridgman

Dan & Sally Tingley

Sylvia Cruess

Cecily Lawson

Deceased volunteers of L'Abri

Patricia Philip

Renée Drouin

Eileen Kelly

Raymonde Hachey

Ursula Kraye-Krauss
Maureen Lafrenière
Beverlea Tallant

Jacquie

Margot Adair

Margaret Le Gallais

Anonymous

Geraldine Macaulay

Beverley Hutchison

Mary Quinlan

Nancy Grant

In honour of...

Sandra Baines

Carol Baines

Karen Bassett

Robert M Bassett

Eleanor Beattie

Harriet De Wit
William Gilsdorf
& Susan Joiner

Janice Harvey

Jean-Claude Klein

Sally Cooper

Peter Roberts

Eli

Bonnie Shemie

Joan Esar

Christiane
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Sylvie Tousignant

Mary Martha Guy

Ann Macaulay

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Graeme Hamilton

Sandra Hendlisz

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Merle Wolofsky

Marianne Metrakos

Uwe Natho
Jennifer Symansky

Campbell Stuart

Alain Morissette

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ONLINE	Secure donations may be made on our website through "Canada Helps" at labrienville.org



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