



Association Historique de
Morin Heights
Historical Association

Newsletter March 2017

Dear members:

We hope that you've been having an excellent winter. It's certainly been a busy one for the directors of your association. Our big news is that we'll likely be moving into our own building this summer.

New home for MHHA

The Municipality of Morin Heights has been very supportive of MHHA, allowing us dedicated and serviced space in St. Eugene's building, rent free, for the last several years, and by providing annual financial support to defray operational costs. The Town lease on that building will end as of August 31, 2017 as the building is up for sale by the Church, and if not sold by then, will be closed down.

You are probably aware that the Town is renovating the Bellevue Hotel across from Basler Park to become the new Community Centre. The Town had promised the Association that they would support us in finding a new location, and we had hoped that it would be in this building, but Council has decided that the entire building will be multiple usages, with no organization having dedicated space. As we need space for administration and for archives, it was necessary to find a new place for these activities.

About 3 years ago, Mr. Bunny Basler had offered to donate to us the ski patrol building behind the Basler Enterprises building on Chemin du Lac Echo, but the availability of the St. Eugene space seemed more practical at that time. The Board of MHHA recently asked Mr. Basler whether or not his offer still stood, and we are pleased that he replied positively. The building needs some repair, but the space would be completely suitable for our operations. The cost of a major upgrade to the building is estimated at \$31,200, including a new septic system. The Town has agreed to cover more than 70% of that amount and to provide an annual subsidy of \$3,500 a year—for a minimum of five years-- to cover operating costs. The MHHA Board of Directors has decided that this is the best available option, and is proceeding with the acquisition.

Since our founding in 1997, it has been the hope and objective of the Morin Heights Historical Association to establish a museum to display the history of our storied town. To that end, members have paid fees, bought publications and made donations. The Association has been very frugal in its operation, so that money has accumulated toward our goal. At the same time we have organized a substantial archive of documents and artifacts, we have hosted successful events related to our history, published 10 issues of our journal, "The Porcupine," and participated in various community events.

The Town has suggested that we set up permanent and special displays in the common areas of the new Bellevue Community Centre. This is an excellent opportunity, as the space will be visible to whoever visits or uses the building. A challenge that unfortunately exists for small museums is the attraction of visitors, especially younger folks, but this facility will draw people for a multitude of reasons who will then see our displays. In effect, we will have our display space for a fraction of the cost of a suitable building, in a location with high traffic that is maintained by the Town and requires no staffing. We will invest some of the money you have given us in the establishment of excellent displays, while being able to continue our “behind-the-scenes” work in a suitable and necessary new space.

The Board hopes that you share in our excitement about this next step in our development. We welcome any comments, as well as any volunteer help with renovations.

That’s not all

Of course there are other interesting things coming up this spring and summer too. Save these dates:

- **Sunday April 23, 1:30. “History of the Shawbridge Boys Farm”**

Dave Brown will lead this interesting look at one of English-Quebec’s most noted institutions. Meet at St-Eugene at 1:30 and hop on our special bus for a tour of the heritage (1907) Batshaw campus in Shawbridge as well as a presentation on its history.

- **Saturday May 6, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Morin Heights Elementary School Fair.**

We will have a table—great opportunity to get copies of old Porcupines and notecards.

- **Sunday June 4, 1:30, St-Eugene. Annual General Meeting.**

Please book this date now; we need you for this important once-a-year meeting where we will present the annual report, elect directors, answer questions and hear your suggestions for the future. Director Doug Simon will be our special guest speaker with a new audiovisual presentation on highlights of Morin Heights history.

We will also mount an **exhibit** for the official opening in August of the town’s new community centre at the old Bellevue Hotel--date to be announced. Then in September we will participate at the town’s **Journées de la culture** event, as well as hosting our second annual **Heritage Awards gala**. Events not to be missed!

Enjoy spring as the snow melts and the temperatures soar. We hope to see you at our spring events.

The Board of MHHA appreciates your continued support.