

Daycare wins conservation award

The 2019 award for heritage conservation goes to Val des Neiges daycare (CPE) centre in the old center of the village. Their attention to detail when adding several additions over the years to the 111-year old Seale home merits particular commendation, as they have added several adjoining wings to the old house that are architecturally identical to the original—a model for how older buildings can be adapted to new purposes without destroying their heritage integrity.



Mary Weekes, director of the Centre de Petit Enfant (CPE) for nearly 30 years, received the award on behalf of the directors of the non-profit organization. There's space for 57 children (from babies to 5 years old) with 19 employees. This is the only bilingual CPE in the Laurentians. Kudos also to the architects



who managed to keep the same original look while designing the additions—Scott Miller for the earlier changes, and Mario Allard for later additions. Mary said, “We wanted it to feel like a home, not an institution, and we wanted to keep the original look.”

The house was built in 1908 by Joseph Seale, mayor for many years, owner of the sawmill that was the town's only major employer for decades, and proprietor of the general store that stood beside the house on what's now the daycare parking lot. It gained fame in the 1970s as Rose's Cantina, one of the legendary coffee house music venues of the era. (See *The Porcupine* issues number 5 and 9 for in-depth articles about it)



The Morin Heights Historical Association has been presenting heritage awards since 2016. Previous winners have been Andrée Gauthier and Dirk Schmeckel for preserving the pioneer character of their 1880s square log home on rue Jonathan, Réjean and France Belisle for maintaining the original character of the 1899 Belisle farm and roadside cross on Fourth Range Road, and Hillside Chapel on chemin du Village which has remained virtually unchanged since 1895. Details can be found in *Porcupine* 11.

A more complete version of this building history will appear in Porcupine 12, due to be published in 2021.