

Heritage Award 2020

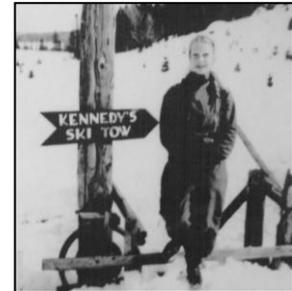
Lifetime Achievement Award goes to Barbara Traill

Morin Heights Historical Association bestowed its highest honour to Barbara Brown Traill, given the Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020 at the annual Awards dinner on February 26 (held late due to COVID restrictions).



She was one of the original members of the Association (along with Shirley Captain, Dawn Nesbitt, Charles Vaillancourt, Kathy Weary and Sandra Stock, amongst others.) When Sandra resigned in 1999, the group convinced Barbara to take on the President's job, believing "we can't let this go." She headed a dedicated team. Charlie Vaillancourt, himself president for many years, said "keeping it going was the hardest part, and Barbara continued to provide great support over the years." During her years, the group held exhibits, played an essential role in the dedication ceremony to name parks and bridges, held an auction of memorabilia and a popular antique evaluation day at the old Trinity Community Center. Barbara is modest about her achievements: "There are so many deserving people; teamwork is what kept the Association together. When we don't work together, things can fall apart."

Barbara was a local girl, born during the Great Depression into one of the original families of Morin Heights and brought up on the Brown family farm on Christieville Road near the train tracks (today the 364). Like many others she was related to half the town, including the Watchorns and the Seale families. She recalled her early years in a great article she wrote for *The Porcupine 10* entitled "The Years that were: Life on the farm in the 1940s." As a girl Barbara was a great skier, racing for the Laurentian Zone.



Barbara left Morin Heights to pursue higher education and graduated from Montreal's General Hospital as a nurse in 1956. She joined Air Canada, where she met her husband, a pilot, and the family moved to Vancouver where she lived for over 30 years. Sailing was a family passion. Barbara's life experience covered a lot of territory: she drove a tour bus for Vancouver's Expo 86, lived in Jamaica helping set up the national airline there, lost a son and sister in an airline crash. She has three children and four grandchildren.

Barbara returned to Morin Heights in 1993 to help her aging parents, and soon got involved in local affairs. She worked as Administrator of The Residence, the senior apartments on rue Glen, for a dozen years, a job she particularly enjoyed and excelled at. "We had a lot of laughs," she said. The most memorable event was the time lightning struck the septic field; the back lawn was covered in it." Back in Morin Heights she got involved in many community activities. Besides the historical association, she helped with the Laurentian Ski Museum, served on the executive of the Legion, and volunteered for 10 years with the local Entre Aide Bénévole.

"It makes me happy to contribute to the community. History should be a prime concern for every municipality," she says. "Anywhere you go, local historical associations are important. The younger generation isn't always aware of where we come from. Kids need that background to appreciate where they live."