

**FALLS ON THE COATICOOK RIVER**



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**Articles.** Articles must be submitted by email, preferably in an attached document in Word (.doc or .docx) or LibreOffice Writer (.odt), in 12-point Times New Roman. Email to [editor@TownshipsSun.ca](mailto:editor@TownshipsSun.ca).

**Photos and Art.** Submission of photos or artwork related to the issue's theme are invited for consideration for publication on the inside pages, on the front or back cover of the magazine, or to accompany articles. Email to [editor@TownshipsSun.ca](mailto:editor@TownshipsSun.ca), or send by **WeTransfer.com** in JPG format, in as high resolution as possible (minimum 300 ppi).

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### ***This year, we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of The Townships Sun! We invite submissions for the...***

- ♦ **April 2022** issue, on the theme of *Poetry* or *Disappeared Hamlets* in the Townships. **Deadline: February 25, 2022.**
- ♦ **May 2022** issue, on the theme of *Land: (pottery, environmental art, back to the land movement)*. **Deadline: March 28.**
- ♦ **June 2022** issue, on the theme of *Music* or *Theatre* in the Townships. **Deadline: April 23.**
- ♦ **July-August 2022** issue, on the theme of *Tours* or *Tourism* in the Townships. **Deadline: May 24, 2022.**
- ♦ **September 2022** issue, on the theme of *the culture of schools* or *innovative learning opportunities*. **Deadline: August 3.**
- ♦ **October/November 2022** issue, on the theme of *Townships tales, legends, witches*. **Deadline: August 31.**
- ♦ **December 2022/January 2023** issue, on the theme of *Townships architecture; buildings*. **Deadline: October 31.**

*Thoughtful submissions on Townships issues are always welcome (ex: climate, farming, real estate, history, waterways). Please query the editor at [editor@townshipssun.ca](mailto:editor@townshipssun.ca).*

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# Are We 50 Yet?

by R.A. Garber

Yes, I know it's February 2022. This issue is Volume 49, Number 4, and in July, Volume 50 of the *Townships Sun* will begin.

But look through the first 10 years of the archives, do a bit of arithmetic, and we arrive at the suspicion that the publication is only 48 years old. If you count from the *Sun's* first issue, the 50th anniversary will be in February 2024; if you count from its incorporation, it will be in July 2023.

Here's the story. Russell Pocock, one of the founders of the Eastern Townships Social Action Group (ETSAG), recalls that the group must have begun in about 1972. (ETSAG is known as the forerunner of Townshippers' Association, founded in 1979.)

Pocock then was about 21, a student at Bishop's University. Now he's an organic farmer at the Sanders Farm in Compton. We recently had a stroll down memory lane by phone.

"ETSAG had different objectives. One was to do research on the English-speaking population; another was to do what we called social animation. My main interest was to help the English-speaking community adapt to what was going on in Quebec. That was the time of the 'great exodus.' A lot of English speakers were scared, a bit, of the nationalist movement, and a lot of people were leaving.

"My objective with ETSAG was to try and have a dialogue with English speakers about staying and adapting, and to better understand what was really happening."

Pocock said he had an open-line radio show at CKTS in Sherbrooke, with guests discussing issues. He described how Gary Caldwell, a prof at Bishop's University, and Susan Mastine carried out research surveys.

He said ETSAG made a film - an overview of what was happening in the Townships - maybe called *Kaleidoscope Townships*? They'd show the film in various communities and discuss the issues with people "in a positive way."

In this context, "the *Townships Sun* was an idea that came up within ETSAG, some time after it started its activities. The idea was to promote what we were trying to do."

Thus, in July 1973, the *Townships Sun* was incorporated, and on February 8, 1974, the first issue was published.



It was called Volume 1, Number 1. Counting the volume numbers, you see that, unlike a baby, the newspaper was already "1" during its first year.

Indeed, it also turned "2" during 1974. Between February and April, six issues of Volume 1 were published. In July 1974, Volume 2 began. Each July, a new volume started. In July 2021, Volume 49 started, and in July 2022, Volume 50 is slated to start.

So when is the 50th Anniversary? Is it the start of Volume 50 (July 2022)? Is it 50 years after the paper's incorporation (July 2023)? Or is it 50 years past the first issue (February 2024)?

I don't know, so let's just celebrate all year long!

Oh yes - something a bit tragic happened, Pocock said. When ETSAG dissolved, its files and the film, *Kaleidoscope*, seem to have disappeared. Do you know its whereabouts? If so, please call me at 819-640-1340.

## Virtual Webinar with Townships Writers

*The Knowlton Literary Festival invites us to meet poet Carole Martignacco, novelist Meghan Redmile, poet/publisher Angela Leuck, memoirist/poet Tanya Bellehumeur-Allatt, and novelist/editor Maurice J.O. Crossfield. The virtual webinar is on Sunday, February 20, at 2 to 3 p.m., hosted by Lucy Hoblyn and Wendy Seys and featuring candid chats and fun challenges such as the Wheel of Questions, What's My Line and What Did I Just Say. To participate (no fee), register in advance at [knowltonliteraryfestival.ca](http://knowltonliteraryfestival.ca).*

## Heritage Show & Tell

*The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network invites us to celebrate local history and culture with heritage leaders from across Quebec in its Heritage Show & Tell Online event. On Wednesday, February 23, at 1:30 to 3 p.m., making presentations are the Colby-Curtis Museum, Eastern Townships Resource Centre, Richmond County Historical Society, Société d'histoire du Canton d'Orford, Greenwood Centre for Living History, KlezKanada, Canadian Centre for the Great War, Gaspé-Percé Vision Now, Morin Heights Historical Association, Mile End Memories, and the Quebec Genealogical eSociety. Register in advance at [townshipsheritage.com](http://townshipsheritage.com).*

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# Precious Old Photos

by R.A. Garber

Dressed up in her rolling hills, lakes, forests and farms, the Eastern Townships and her people have long been a favourite of photographers, both visitors and those who live here. In this issue of the *Townships Sun*, we take a look at several episodes in this romance.

We are surrounded by photos. The internet and social media serve us a constant buffet of digital images, some stunning and thought provoking, others shoddy and deceitful. Among the most nourishing for Townships history buffs are collections of historical photos offered by the Eastern Townships Research Centre at [etrc.ca/explore-the-archives/exhibitions/](http://etrc.ca/explore-the-archives/exhibitions/) and its Eastern Townships Archives Portal ([townshipsarchives.ca/photographs](http://townshipsarchives.ca/photographs)). Not to mention Matthew Farfan's extensive collection on the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network's webmagazine, [Townshipsheritage.com](http://Townshipsheritage.com).

Closer to the ground are books and museums. Books offer us Townships photos by Louise Abbott, the late Dr. Robert Paulette, and others. Museums present old photos, such as the major photography exhibition, the Wood & Wheeler collection, at the Lac-Brome Museum.

Sally Wood and John Wheeler were both working in Brome County during the years around 1900. The website [lacbromemuseum.ca](http://lacbromemuseum.ca) offers details about the exhibition, which presents Victorian photography equipment and "high-quality exhibition copies of photographs striking by their modernity and beauty." The museum is open from Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., until April 11.

For photography lovers, the Musée de la photographie Desjardins in Drummondville shows written documents about photography, a collection of cameras, and temporary photo exhibits, mostly by contemporary photographers ([museenationaldelaphotographie.com](http://museenationaldelaphotographie.com)).

Historical photos are windows into the past, and museums are the natural refuge for old photo albums. Many have substantial collections of Townships places, events and people. For example, Director-Curator Samuel Goudreau-Lalande, an art historian specializing in regional photography, estimates the Colby-Curtis Museum has some 6,000 photos, including three major collections.

One is a glass-negative collection of large format photos by John J. Parker from 1895 to 1950. Another is the work of Israel Lefond, a photojournalist with *La Tribune* in the 1950s and 1960s, who documented regional events such as the construction of Highway 55. The third is a collection of photos by Orson Wheeler (1902-1990), a sculptor and professor at Concordia University.

This spring the Colby-Curtis plans an exhibition of oral history records, some old, some recent, said Goudreau-Lalande. Photos and objects will show the scenes and events described in the testimonies.

"Every small town museum has a fantastic collection of historical photos," he noted. "In the Townships this wealth of relatively old photos is very well cared for. The Musée des beaux arts de Sherbrooke has over one million photos. They're easier to store properly than large objects, such as a stagecoach!"

"At the Colby-Curtis Museum, we love to receive donations of photographs," Goudreau-Lalande remarked. "Old photo albums tell us what was important for people. This is really precious historical material."

Then he put his finger on a big problem. "The challenge is that basically people stopped printing their personal photographs after the year 2000."

If a hard drive is donated, it could contain 20 years of photos, maybe 100,000 pictures. It's difficult to work through because there are too many photos. A photo album that contains 100 pictures is easier to manage.

"So there's a danger that the visual documentation of regional life will be lacking if people don't donate printed photos," he said. "This is really a challenge. People tend to think that archival work is about preservation, but really it's about throwing out, determining what will be kept, and what won't."

"Museums collect photos that are generally 70 or 80 years old, so it won't be before the 2040s or 2050s that these donations of digital files will come to us, and who knows what technology will look like then?"



Samuel Goudreau Lalande

# Documenting the Townships

by Louise Abbott

One morning last March, I accompanied a crew to a sugarbush in Way's Mills. I'd followed them with my video camera while they were readying plastic pipeline for the sap run. Now I was going to film them as they prepared to gather sap in the old-fashioned way, hanging metal buckets and adding covers—shaped like little peaked roofs—to keep out leaves, rain, and snow.



*Stan Holmes Jr. prepares to tap a maple tree at Holmhurst Farm in Way's Mills.*

Stan Holmes Jr., the leader of the crew, was at the wheel of the tractor. His brother-in-law, Tony Schoolcraft, Tony's brother, Brady, and I rode in the wagon behind, keeping clear of the sugaring equipment at our feet. Tony's husky, Alaska, ran out in front.

It was bitterly cold as we bumped along the rough wooded trail leading from the Holmes's farmland to the sugarbush. The nested buckets and covers clattered on the bed of the wagon. The spouts jostled in bright blue and orange pails. I cradled my camera and ducked to avoid being slapped by branches and then showered in snow. Yet I couldn't have felt more contented. I remember thinking: This is what I was born to do. By this, I meant documenting rural life.

I discovered my vocation as a documentarian in 1981 on a trip to a small windswept island called Iona in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland. I'd frequently photographed on the streets of Montreal, where I was living as a young adult; however, I'd rarely experienced anything more than fleeting encounters with my subjects. On Iona it was different. People had—or made—time to chat and answer my questions. I wandered around the island every day for two weeks, gaining an understanding of the islanders and photographing them.

I became intent on exploring other closely knit communities that were tied to the seasons and to the land and sea. Slowly but surely, I chronicled life in villages on the Lower North Shore of the St. Lawrence as well as on the Port-au-Port Peninsula in Newfoundland. I concentrated on capturing activities and cultural artifacts that I sensed would soon vanish.

Besides publishing my photos, I exhibited them. In reviewing a show of my Newfoundland series at an art galley in St. John's, a local critic questioned why photographers like me sought out the unfamiliar—"the antipodes," as he put it—instead of looking in their own backyards. The remark stung yet also made me reflect.

Lake Memphremagog and its surroundings had been my childhood haunt—my parents had owned a cottage and then a farm on the lakeshore. In my early career as a freelance writer-photographer, I'd occasionally made trips to the Townships on assignment. Then I'd met my future husband, Niels Jensen, and settled in Tomifobia in the mid-1980s. But even after that move, I'd largely pursued work elsewhere.

It was time for a change of course. In the late 1980s, I began to focus on the region closest to my heart. Over the ensuing years, I've produced photo essays, exhibitions, books, and films about the Townships.

Sometimes I've visited a place only once to observe, conduct interviews, and photograph or film. More often, I've returned to the same location and collaborated with the same people over a long stretch of time. Many of my collaborators have been farmers; some have become fast friends.

The first time that I photographed farmers in the Townships extensively was in the 1990s while I was in production on *The Pinnacle* and *The Poet*. This short documentary traced the struggle to preserve Mount Pinnacle in Frelighsburg from private development. The footage consisted of photos that were animated with pans and zooms; the soundtrack featured interview clips and poems by Sutton writer Richard Sommer. It was important to include farm scenes in the film because preservationists like Richard feared that the proposed resort on the mountain would not only destroy natural habitat but also bring an influx of city dwellers, drive up property prices, and threaten local agriculture.

After finishing the film in 1995, I became determined to do more to commemorate farmers in the Townships—



*Samantha Holmes gives a hug to Noodle, a senior cow in the Holmes family's Holstein herd.*

especially deeply rooted English-speaking farmers. A passage in Michael Ignatieff's *Blood and Belonging* had resonated with me: "In Quebec history where anglophones figure at all, they appear as the colonial elite.... There wasn't much room in the story for the small farmers of the Eastern Townships. They didn't quite fit the picture of the master class."

I crisscrossed the Townships from Missisquoi County to Megantic County to get to know English-speaking livestock producers and growers, and portray their farm life, their profound attachment to the land, and their participation in county fairs, ploughing matches, and other community events. As I witnessed the transformation of agricultural practices and decline in small family farms, I became increasingly aware of how many old barns were being torn down or abandoned. I set myself an additional goal to document historical barns.

I can still recall driving down Holmes Road over twenty years ago to photograph the round barn that William Henry Holmes built on his farm in 1907—the only round barn in Quebec that still houses dairy cattle. I've lost track of how many times I've driven down that road to the Holmes farm since then. I've witnessed the sun lighting up the red roof of the barn in the morning and steam rising out of the chimney of the sugarhouse at night. I've filmed family members carrying out their daily and seasonal chores; the resident Holsteins ambling back

from pasture to the farmyard with full udders; the dairy truck operator pumping raw milk into the tank and then leaving for his next stop.

Even now, however, I make discoveries on every visit to the Holmes farm or to other farms that welcome me. There's always something more to learn, something more to document.

It's said that familiarity breeds contempt. But after decades in the Townships, I love the region more than ever and am only too happy as a documentarian to assist in conserving its rich agricultural heritage.

**Louise Abbott is the author of *The Heart of the Farm: A History of Barns and Fences in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and Memphremagog: An Illustrated History* (volumes 1 and 2). Three of her recent Townships documentaries (*Ayer's Cliff Fair: Then and Now*; *The Sugarmakers*; and *Niels Jensen, Cabinetmaker*), will be broadcast on WNED PBS (Buffalo-Toronto) in March 2022. (Photos: Louise Abbott)**



# Yousuf Karsh: Eminent Photographer

by Gérard Côté & Jean-Marie Dubois

One of the greatest portrait photographers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Yousuf Karsh (1908-2002). Karsh took some 11,000 portraits during his career. It was here in Sherbrooke that all this began!

A recent exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts presented no fewer than 112 photos by Karsh: [mbam.qc.ca/en/articles/the-world-of-yousuf-karsh-a-private-essence/](http://mbam.qc.ca/en/articles/the-world-of-yousuf-karsh-a-private-essence/).

Yousuf Karsh came to Sherbrooke in the middle of a snowstorm (he had never seen snow before!) on New Year's Day in 1924 when his uncle, portrait photographer George Nakash (1892-1976), arrived with him in Sherbrooke. A native of Mardin in the Ottoman Empire, Nakash met the 16-year-old Karsh in the Halifax harbour where Yousuf landed after sailing from Syria. His mother, Bahia Nakash, had sent him from a refugee camp there to join his uncle. The family had previously fled their birthplace to escape the genocide in Armenia.

Yousuf lived with his uncle in his photography studio across the street from the Sherbrooke Court House (now City Hall). In 1923, Nakash lived on Wellington Street, south of the Bank of Montreal building. Young Karsh went to Cambridge Academy (now Mitchell School) and helped his uncle in his studio at the present day address of 81 King Street, which was above Nicolas Scheib's shoe store. In his spare time, he took pictures with a small Brownie camera. One of these pictures won him the first prize of \$50 in a Timothy Eaton Store photo contest. He sent the amount to his parents in Syria.

Recognizing his talent, Nakash sent Yousuf to train with an Armenian compatriot in Boston, the portrait photographer John Garo. His two years with this mentor, from 1928 to 1930, had a major impact on the rest of his life.

When British Prime Minister Winston Churchill came to Canada in 1941, as Karsh told the story, he had organized with then-Prime Minister Mackenzie King to set up his equipment in the speaker's room so that he could take a photo of the Roaring Lion when he stepped out of the

House of Commons. Entering the room, Churchill, who had not been informed beforehand, was quite upset and would not put down his cigar. Having pretended to do a final focus, Karsh raced up to him, snatched away his cigar and clicked the picture that would make Karsh famous.

Karsh also took photos of both Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. He wrote that he had received a letter from someone in Vietnam wanting Eleanor's picture. "For what reason?" he asked in his answering letter. The veteran replied how impressed he had been when she visited his hospital in the South Pacific, and she had promised to phone their fathers, mothers or sweethearts upon her return!



*Karsh's portrait of Winston Churchill, entitled **The Roaring Lion**, 1941 (Public domain, Wikipedia).*

The range of people photographed by Karsh is impressive. Monarchs, statespersons, religious leaders such as Pope John XXIII and Mother Teresa, actors, artists, celebrities, fellow photographer Edward Steichen, and writers including Archibald Belaney (also known as Grey Owl), whose picture by Karsh was featured on a 2016 Canadian postage stamp.

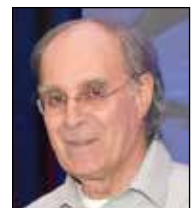
Karsh's powerful portraits, with refined theatrical lighting techniques, were groundbreaking in the field of photography, and we can gratefully claim this immigrant as an outstanding citizen of the Eastern Townships.

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*Gérard Côté (Lennoxville and Ascot Historical and Museum Society) and Jean-Marie Dubois (Université de Sherbrooke) also wrote about Yousuf Karsh in the January-February 2018 issue of The Townships Sun.*



# Early Photography in the Townships

by Jody Robinson

What are the earliest photographs in the Eastern Townships Resource Centre's collection? There is no clear answer. The vast majority of early photographs very rarely include dates. The best we can do is estimate the age of the person depicted in the photograph, coupled with the time period based on the type of photographic process used.

Among the earliest photographic processes was the daguerreotype, introduced in 1839 and named for its inventor, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre. Although the daguerreotype's popularity was short-lived, spanning just more than two decades, it was the first photographic process that could be practically and effectively used.

To create a daguerreotype, the image was processed directly onto a plate of highly polished copper, coated with silver and silver iodide (the chemicals needed to produce the image). After processing, the plate was placed under glass and in a frame in order to protect the image. The resulting photograph is mirror-like when held at different angles and is almost always laterally reversed, which can make wedding bands appear to be on the right instead of the left hand.

In the early days of photography, people of the Eastern Townships wanting a portrait of themselves (and possessing the money for this luxury) had to wait for a travelling photographer to visit their area.

The earliest newspaper mention of a photographer visiting the area appeared in 1843, when E.F. Bucknam advertised his "pop-up" studio at the Magog House in Sherbrooke. Patrons could procure a miniature daguerreotype

for the price of \$3 to \$10, equivalent to \$100 to \$300 in today's money. In the 1840s, various travelling photographers visited the Townships, setting up in a town or village for a few weeks before moving on to another location, usually touring some of the more populated areas before returning to their home base, typically the United States.



*A daguerreotype of Paulina and Parthenia Cutler, ca. 1840s. (Courtesy ETRC, P157 Cutler family fonds)*

With all that being said, let us take a look at two photographs that are among the earliest at the ETRC and likely taken by travelling photographers. The first is a daguerreotype most likely taken in the late 1840s, showing Paulina and Parthenia Cutler as young women. They were born in Dunham in 1824 and 1826, respectively, to Roswell Cutler and Lydia Wood.

Born in Vermont, Roswell Cutler came to Lower Canada with his family in 1797 and settled in Shefford. His father, Anthony Cutler, Sr., was one of Captain John Savage's associates in the settlement of Shefford Township. Roswell was a farmer and an apparent jack-of-all-trades of sorts, pursuing various economic avenues, including work on the local schoolhouse, pasturing others' animals, and transporting goods and people. Considering the price of a daguerreotype during this era, it seems likely that the Cutler family was financially comfortable.



*A daguerreotype of John Hallowell, ca. 1852. (Courtesy ETRC, P006 Minnie Hallowell Bowen fonds)*

The second photograph, showing John E. Hallowell, is the smallest daguerreotype I have come across. Measuring only 12 millimetres in diameter, it can fit on the tip of a finger. Son of James Hallowell and Margaret McKay, John was a lawyer and prominent member of Sherbrooke's upper class who married into another prominent family. His wife was a daughter of Eleazar Clark(e), who was, over his lifetime, Justice of the Peace, High Constable, and mayor.

Over the course of the 1840s and 1850s, the Eastern Townships experienced a population boom and significant economic growth, which made it more profitable for photographers to establish permanent studios in the region. Among the early studios were those of John C. Robinson in Sherbrooke, H.S. Taylor in Stanstead and Charles S. Henry in Lennoxville.

Nonetheless, travelling photographers continued to serve the region throughout the 1850s. This was made easier by the arrival of the railway and the evolution of photographic processes and equipment. By the 1860s, however, the heyday of the travelling photographer had passed, replaced by permanent studios, and what had been a rare luxury of the 1840s had become more accessible — financially and geographically — to more of the population.



*Jody Robinson has been archivist at the Eastern Townships Resource Centre since 2006 and, some days, spends way too much time researching photographic processes.*



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# History Meets High Tech in the Townships

by John Mackley

Father and daughter gingerly venture across a swinging suspension bridge, high above a babbling brook. Their faces exude sheer joy.

You may have seen that photo on the front cover of the September 2021 issue of *The Townships Sun*. It shows Joel Barter and his daughter Lily.

Many people living elsewhere can trace their roots to the Eastern Townships, and many living here are from away. Yet a significant number of families have remained firmly established in the region since their ancestors first arrived centuries ago. Joel Barter is among them.

The Barter family history says his ancestors arrived in Lower Canada on the sailing ship “King William” from Downton, Wiltshire, England, as part of the “Downton Mass Exodus.” They arrived the week of May 28, 1836, and settled as farmers on Lot #10 on Victoria Road in Bury Township.

Joel Barter’s paternal grandmother descended from Gilbert Hyatt, who established Hyatt’s Mill at the confluence of the Saint Francis and Magog rivers in the early 1790s. Hyatt’s Mill was renamed Sherbrooke in 1818.

As a boy, Joel became interested in history when he read the story of Donald Morrison, “The Megantic Outlaw,” and discovered a military uniform in his parents’ attic. Joel’s family descends from a long line of United Empire Loyalists.

He joined the Bury Historical and Heritage Society and became a member of the Board of Directors in 2019, where he and I are both archivists.

On November 7, 2021, Joel laid the first ever “British Home Children” commemorative wreath at the Bury observance of Remembrance Day, and did so again on November 13 at the Gibbs Home, a former “Distribution Home” for the resettlement of British children sent to Canada as a solution to poverty.

Taking history virtual, Joel set up the “Bury, Quebec, News, History, Past and Present” private Facebook Group in 2012 and quickly amassed more than 1000 members.

Then, two years ago, Joel set up a new, public Facebook Group, “Eastern Townships Roots,” bringing together a wide variety of history, culture and heritage-minded Townships residents - present, former, and aspiring. It has a whopping 21,000 members.

The group description reads the “#1 Anglophone/Bilingual Network/Group in Southern Quebec. Eastern Townships Roots is for anyone presently living in The Eastern Townships or used to live here.”

*The Townships Sun*, The Bury Historical and Heritage Society, and the Bury’s *IMAGE* community newspaper, among other organizations, share announcements of their events and activities on “Roots.” When CKTS Radio made its broadcasting return to the Townships airwaves in 2021, the news broke on Eastern Townships Roots. The virtual group also serves as an active community gathering place where long-lost connections with family and childhood friends have been reestablished.



Joel Barter lays a wreath in memory of the British Home Children in Bury, November 2021.

Many Roots followers actively share fascinating old photos, personal memories, family histories and historical information. Joel has organized the photos, videos, and uploaded files into albums, sorted by people, places or events for ease of access. This resource is invaluable for history buffs, students and researchers.

But his feet are still on the ground. Joel’s daughter Lily accompanies him on excursions in search of historical sites such as remnants of former village sites, architectural ruins, abandoned homes and buildings, old lime and brick kilns, abandoned mines, lost cemeteries and family burial plots.

“I like going on vacation with my dad, like exploring new places and going to see people. I also like spending time with him in nature. Like going to see waterfalls and hiking,” she said. “He’s the greatest dad ever!”

Joel’s goal for Eastern Townships Roots? To reach 25,000 members. You can help him reach his goal by joining the group.



**John Mackley** lives in Maple Leaf, Quebec. *Ol’ Tom Stories*, his book of fiction based in Bury, is soon to be published by Shoreline Press. (Photos by John Mackley)

## Recreating Ourselves

by Norma Husk

How has Covid changed us in the Eastern Townships? This is a huge question and each of us will no doubt have our own responses, based on the circumstances of our individual lives.

Covid has brought us together as it has kept us apart. It has given us the virus as our common enemy and we have, for the most part, tried to take up the task of preserving health and lives. We have put the larger community first but we have also acted individualistically: concern with ourselves and how the pandemic is affecting us as individuals has resulted in selfish behaviours as well. The pandemic has brought to the fore the many inequalities in our world, both locally and globally.

Ah, Covid! The virus that keeps on giving! In response to Covid, we have all been forced to adapt in so many ways. We have learned to use new technologies to work, communicate, learn and share. Some of us adapt more easily than others; some of us have the means to adapt more readily.

We are learning more about health and science than we may ever have wanted to know. We are relearning that, in working together, we can accomplish great things (vaccine creation, for example). We are relearning that we need each other, especially in times of crises – be these pandemics or climate disasters.

We are, I hope, learning that pandemics and climate change are linked and that our planet is in a precarious state. Humanity is in a precarious state – in part because we waffle between the needs of others and our own needs, and in doing so, forget that our needs are all human needs. We are learning about the interdependence of all aspects of nature.

It is my hope that Covid has, most of all, changed us in a positive way: to see ourselves as worthy of a better world and in so doing, allowing us to work towards that noble goal of recreating ourselves and our world – for all our sakes!



*Norma Husk is president of the Richmond County Historical Society. She is a retired nurse and teaches in the Department of Sociology at Bishop's University.*

## Covid Conversation with Claudia

by Claudia Ferland, with R.A. Garber

What is a museum guide to do when no visitors are allowed into the museum? This was the dilemma of the Richmond County Historical Society in early 2020.

The solution? The historical society decided to document the many aspects of our lives that changed as a result of the pandemic. "How else could we ensure that decades from now," wrote Norma Husk, "locals and non-locals alike would be able to understand what we were, and are still, living through?"

During 2020 and 2021, the project was carried out by student/researcher Claudia Ferland, a Bishop's University sociology student. "She was tasked with seeking out the thoughts and feelings of the local population," wrote Husk. "Claudia interviewed, from a 2-metre distance, business operators, employees, the mayor, older folks, and children and their parents during the summer of 2020. From these interviews, Claudia put together an exhibit for the museum."

Claudia Ferland and I spoke together about her experience by phone from Stanstead, where she is sojourning with her parents.

**Among your Covid Conversations research interviews, what did you find the most interesting?**

What struck me most was observing how Covid has sown division. I was surprised to see how many people had an opinion without listening to each other and without feeling for the other.

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*In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer. - Albert Camus*

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I talked to a woman who lost her life partner overnight, five days before his long-awaited retirement. New grandparents who had hoped to witness their grandchild's first steps. Workers, breathless from carrying the weight of our destiny in their hands. Entrepreneurs with revenues in the red, for a third time. Children and teenagers disoriented by loneliness.

So I decided to name the exhibit **Covid Conversations**, for those who remained in the middle of the fray in silence, not taking sides, as much as for those who stood firmly on the "yes" side and the "no" side, and for those who vacillated depending on who they were with.

It was as if all the opinions were coexisting in the same room, but no one was looking at them, because you know, if you discuss Covid, it's going to create division. I was observing either confrontation or a big silence about people's feelings.



*In the Covid Conversations exhibit in the Richmond County Historical Society's Museum in Melbourne. Vampires, 2020, by Claudia Ferland, moulded plastic and acrylic, approximately 74 x 74 x 30 in. (photo by Claudia Ferland, courtesy RCHS).*

***How has this experience changed you or how you see the world?***

My rose-coloured glasses that I used to wear proudly while looking at the world have lost some of their colour in favour of an urgency to act: to change the injustices experienced by some, to listen, to keep company with those who experience so much loneliness.

On the personal side, I have added the word “fragility” to my definition of what life is. Being young means that although we often hear the warnings of older persons, we continue to believe in a certain invincibility. The

certainty of a future “as planned” no longer exists for me. I agree to play this game of doubt, surprise and challenge that is life. I thought the pandemic would be over sooner; I was expecting to go back to school, go back to work in the restaurant sooner, and yes, spend a semester abroad, living my youth properly. I count myself lucky that those around me are still healthy. After going through a kind of depression and probably one of my most difficult years, I am also happy to enjoy life in a different way now.

This is something the pandemic has changed in me: I think maybe we should just appreciate every day more, rather than being excited for the future, when you don’t know if it will happen. Life is the sum of moments.

What’s changed is that I’m trying to be present a little more in my day, not thinking about the next project. To enjoy the presence of my colleagues, to be with them, to interact with them. Before, I was more focused on trying to be efficient, being a good worker. “But all you have in the end is people,” my friend likes to say.

This is what I observed in the research: People realized they could enter the hospital tomorrow, and never see their friends or family again. That was never so close to happening to them before.

This is a realization we might have when we grow older, facing death, but for people my age, maybe this experience is giving us some wisdom earlier.

I am 25 now, and I’m in the process of reconsidering what I want to do with my life. I used to try to control things I couldn’t control. Now I am just going with the flow. I am learning to have a Golden Retriever attitude - to just walk and play around, be happy anyway! And to appreciate the people around me.

***Is there one thing you’d like to add?***

I hope for more open-mindedness, more loving, more tolerance. Because in the end, all the struggles we see across the earth, all the divisions, are a lack of listening, a lack of empathy. I wish for us to put ourselves in the shoes of our neighbours, the one next door and the one in the “next country.” We all have the same struggles.

***Claudia Ferland*** grew up on a farm in Stanstead-Est, recently graduated from Bishop’s University, and is headed for graduate school in communications next fall.



# Omicron Turkey

by Bernice Angeline Sorge

Crawling under the veranda in the front of the house got me thinking. I was doing this silly thing, not to get away from a disagreement with my husband, but to find the outlet in the cement basement wall where the old dryer used to exhale.

My heart had been warmed by the thought of everyone coming for Christmas; it is symbolic and important that we all get together at least once or twice a year. It was perfect because things seemed to have calmed down with Covid-Delta. We seemed to be going for a pause in closures and confinements.

This act of generosity, helping my husband with the myriad things he does outside all the time, was inspired by the fact that I was helping to save the turkeys. I had finally procured them after a lot of phoning and online searching to get a bio-turkey for this big family Christmas get-together. One son told me his three kids eat a lot more than they used to and reminded me that he did, too. So I bought two turkeys when I got to the farm, as they had extras available, just a bit smaller than what I ordered.

A little glitch in the plan, though: the turkeys were not frozen after all, the farmer informed me. "They are fresh nice-looking birds," she said, "with lots of meat." Whereupon she feigned licking her fingers. Of course, I took them.

When I got home the plans had changed. Legault had a bad day at home, or he was using science to decide that there would be no such get-togethers as we were planning. Or was it that someone my grandson knew had a cousin who had Covid and he had been with him recently? It is a bit of a muddle. Memories shift, dates change, and my anamnestic abilities have waned slightly.

All I knew is that I now had to freeze the turkeys because the freshness would not hold long enough for the first of maybe several smaller celebrations of the holiday with family. The "best before" date on the turkeys was just on the cusp, so they might have to be frozen and then start thawing the next day. Of course I put them both in the freezer, our precious freezer.

Thinking about it scared me. Everything depends on hydroelectricity. Those people who work there with all their belts, boots, giant gloves, hard hats, little solid trucks all neatly packed up; seeing the workers hang onto swaying poles by the side of the road melts my heart, essential workers at work. But of course, there is the water, the water we depend on to turn the wheels of life.

All that invisible stuff going on in nature. I'll stop there.

The birds had been in the freezer two days, probably not quite frozen yet, as they were large. That's when it happened! A *panne de l'électricité*. That's the best-sounding way to say it; it has a drum roll. After several hours of getting the wood stove fired up and getting out the camping stove and discovering that its "O" ring was missing, we decided that this might last longer than we thought. We made tea on the wood stove and were settling in to relax when I remembered the turkeys.

Next move: get the generator going, just in case. It was a fancy one we bought during the eleven days of the ice storm way back. It got shipped to us by the son of a friend who was living in Alberta.

It was because of the turkeys that I got nervous, and that's why I was helping my husband get the generator going. We had to hook up the freezer in the basement to the generator in the shed. We had to save the turkeys. The outlet I was looking for under the veranda was a hole in the cement wall that went directly to the room where the freezer was.

I was just rubbing my head after bumping into a two-by-six underneath the veranda when my husband yelled, "What are you doing under there? There's no time for beautiful found objects. Let's just get the job done. I'm cold." That made me swear to myself. My knees were covered with little gravel stones and my head was pounding. I thrust the wire into the hole, which was plugged from the inside to keep little critters out. I had to get out from under the veranda and go into the house and down to the basement to unplug the old opening that was filled with pieces of everything, including the clean skull of a mouse. I carefully put it aside to pick up later.

Back under the veranda, I pushed the plug in further and it dropped to the inside of the basement. Success! We hooked everything up. Well, my hubbie did. I stood by to learn, just in case, as we always say. I stuck an empty yogurt container into the hole, which fit perfectly beside the wire to stop up this little passageway.

In the end I had to get the small turkey thawed out with little warning, so it was not totally thawed and it took two hours longer to cook than was planned. One of my three sons, who managed to be home for Christmas with his wife and little two-year-old daughter, decided to turn the oven up to 400 F to help me out. He had not seen his wife put her delicious blueberry pie into the oven on the top rack.

(CONT'D ON PG. 17)

# Chaos Theories of Goodness

Book Review by Steve Luxton

## Chaos Theories of Goodness

by Tanya Bellehumeur-Allatt

Shoreline Press, 62 pp., \$15 (paper)

In her poetry collection about the Covid epidemic, *Chaos Theories of Goodness*, Tanya Bellehumeur-Allatt remarks that if you'd predicted during the cheerful New Year's celebration of 2020, what actually was about to happen, she would never have believed it, let alone imagined it. But it did, and so now, with her wings and ours too, clipped, she shows how the use of imagination gave her a path through the ordeal.

Stuck unexpectedly at home, she dealt with her cabin fever by writing a daily poem.

*Chaos Theories* is a series of poetic commentaries about her—and our—life while flapping dispiritedly within the cage of Covid 19. She discusses the details, both inner and outer, of suffering enforced domesticity.

There's no shrill outrage or bellyaching here, just her sincere, quietly earnest voice expressing real anxiety at this contemporary plague. In her poem "Passover Prayer," she writes: "May the angel of Death/on its gruesome flight/over nation, province, village/pass over us."

Like all of us, she deeply longs for the bug to be gone, when she'll happily join the rest of us with "the whistles, warbles and shouts/of our communal cheer."

But she also recommends a little proportion. In the poem "Plague," she describes a huge East African cloud of locusts blocking daylight, so voracious they'll "eat the tongue/right out of your mouth." While in another piece, aptly entitled "Perspective," she tells how monstrous African floods have displaced and left thousands destitute.

So, count your blessings.

She proposes that one way to do this, when your

secure routines are swept away, is first to accept and even ratify the change, as in "Looking at Caravaggio's Entombment": "You are right where you belong." Then, to seek nourishment in and note the small, meaningful things, which she describes in "My List of Small Things." Also, she reminds us that mass dislocations—particularly epidemics—while painful at first and isolating, have paradoxically permitted the time for learning and great bursts of creativity in the arts and other fields.

Bellehumeur-Allatt writes: "I sign us up for lessons online:/ ... We will emerge from our quarantine like Shakespeare/ And Newton, with theories and plays and solutions."

The poet is not into unchecked moaning and groaning! Her fine sense of humour shows in "Dishevelment: A Sonnet," where she laments how with the hairdressers shut due to the lockdown, our hair, grown out and self-styled by our own amateurish hands, is such a sight, the only solution is to "turn our mirrors to the wall."

Bellehumeur-Allatt's poems are serious but also, when life urgently requires it, comic and even light-hearted. Moving, intelligent, always accessible, they eloquently speak to and for us in this abnormal and surprising time.



**Steve Luxton** lives in Hatley, Quebec, and is currently Writer in Residence at the Lennoxville Library.

## Omicron Turkey (CONT'D. FROM PG. 16)

She had worked on it for an hour, with decorated dough. We had all picked those luscious organic blueberries last summer. The smell of burning dough wafted through the kitchen into the living room where everyone was relaxing and playing.

The turkey never did get cooked properly. The homemade wine was great though, and the potatoes and carrots and cranberry sauce.



**Bernice Angeline Sorge** is a visual artist and poet living in Dunham, QC, with her partner. [www.bernice-sorge.ca](http://www.bernice-sorge.ca)

# Hope and Resilience

Book Review by Shanna Bernier

## Hope and Resilience in the Time of Covid

Edited by Rebecca Welton (2021)

Amazon KDP, 291 pp., \$31 (paper) or \$4.99 (e-book)



*Hope and Resilience in the Time of Covid* is a collection of community writing and visual art works, all inspired by individual and collective experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic which has turned our world upside down for the past two years.

The pandemic has made us all experts in taking an existing project and evolving it into something new. The creative

writing workshops offered by the Bishop's University Lifelong Learning Academy (BULLA) had to shift online. Like so many community programs, BULLA found that space was vital for connection and creativity. Out of this adaptation was born a collection of reflections, poetry and art which take emotional freeze frames of relatable moments from the past two years.

I feel like the phrase "unprecedented times" has lost almost all of its meaning. Now that we are two years into this pandemic, nothing feels unprecedented anymore. It makes sense when creating an anthology of experiences that one would write in a reflective tone, but because we are not yet "out of the woods" so to speak, the past-tense writing feels weird sometimes.

"It was a scary and unsettling time." It remains a scary and unsettling time.

The human species has lived through plagues and pandemics before, and we know about them largely because people wrote down their experiences in reports, journals, prayers and propaganda. It is very human and very relatable to want to share our momentous and mundane happenings, almost as though we need to check if indeed we are not alone in this weird life. An anthology of this nature is relevant because it allows us to immerse ourselves in a particular moment of time.

The collection is organized into broad themes, which reinforces the sense that while each person's experiences and circumstances are different and individual, they make up larger patterns of experience. I find myself drawn to the final sections, on hope and moving

(CONT'D ON PG. 19)

# Her Life Depended On It

Book Review by Jacqueline Korschun Hyman

## Inward Bound: Variations on a Virus, Poems

by Teri Coburn (2021)

Self-published, 40 pp., \$10 (chapbook)

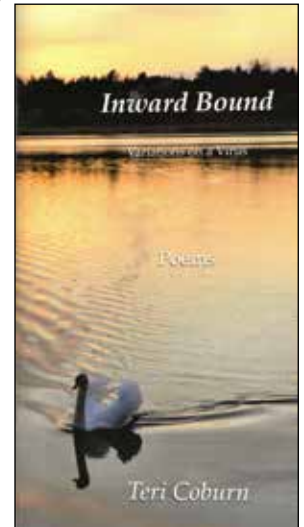
Teri Coburn's slim volume of thought-provoking poems is a journey through the seasons of the pandemic. Dedicated to all the frontline workers who "serve and save," it was written during the first year of the Covid pandemic. These short and very readable poems encourage us to recognize feelings we all share.

As I read her work I felt I was with her on a journey through the stages of grief for a world that's gone haywire. Denial, anger, depression and finally acceptance, are responses we have all felt. Her own way of keeping herself whole is to write, and to notice the beauty of the natural world, unmoved by Covid. Her beautiful descriptions of the natural world encourage us to do this too.

In her poetry, she monitors her own emotional pulse during the pandemic. Poems written in November 2020 describe anxiety, and she finds herself "composing poetry as if her/life depended on it."

By February 2021, Teri's poems show an ability to find life-affirming joy in the beauty around her: "how on earth can we /rise above it all/ if not on beauty's wings?" As I read her poems, I recognized only too well the feelings she experienced and thank her for expressing them for all of us.

**Jacqueline Korschun Hyman** is a retired professor and dairy farmer in Sawyerville.



# All Will Be Well—or Will It?

Book Review by Angela Leuck

## The Madness of Crowds

by Louise Penny

Minotaur, 436 pp. \$36.99 (hardcover)

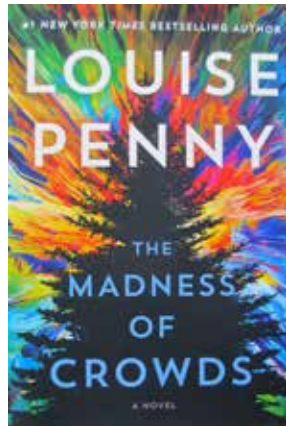
Louise Penny dedicates this, her seventeenth book in the Gamache series, to the pandemic's front-line workers. Today, it is still premature to speak of the pandemic in the past tense, but for Inspector Gamache of the *Sûreté du Québec* and the good folk of Three Pines, it is officially over.

In the book's opening pages, we learn the residents have already gathered to hear the names of the dead read out, trees have been planted in their honour and the doors of local businesses have been flung open in jubilation. They have celebrated their newfound freedom with a community potluck, complete with games for the children and later a bonfire and dancing (along with some hugging and kissing) on the village green.

In truth, isn't this what we are all waiting for? Don't we believe that once the pandemic is over, all will be well? But in life—and especially crime fiction—things are rarely so simple. In *The Madness of Crowds*, when people can once again gather in numbers, a disturbing new phenomenon has been triggered by an unlikely source: a quiet-spoken professor of statistics appointed by the federal government to write a report about the way ahead.

Her findings lead her to argue that the only way to recover from the financial losses incurred during the pandemic and keep the support network viable is to rid the country of those who are a drain on its resources, the aged and disabled—to, in a sense, continue the work which the pandemic had begun. The government refuses to release her report, but her views spread quickly on social media and polarize the community.

When the professor is invited to speak at the Université de l'Estrie, Gamache, given the task of protecting her, is immediately conflicted. He is duty bound to protect the professor, yet his infant granddaughter has Down syndrome, and would be one of those the professor advocates having their lives terminated so "all will be well."



Penny shows how even such a pure sentiment can be twisted by those without conscience. While this book, like its predecessors, is a brilliantly conceived and crafted page-turning "whodunit"—the author's devoted fans will not be disappointed—Penny herself has never been satisfied to simply solve the crime. She delves into the deeper questions of human motivation and takes us to some pretty dark corners of the human soul, but also to places of light. As this particular murder investigation runs its course, we encounter along the way a young Sudanese girl who has survived rape and other horrors and is a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize, and a tormented researcher who worked with the infamous Donald Ewen Cameron at Montreal's Allan Memorial Institute.

Take my word for it, Penny's latest is the perfect book to read by a crackling fire during these long, dark winter days.

**Angela Leuck** is a poet and publisher. She is the editor of *Emergence: Contemporary Women Poets of the Eastern Townships of Quebec* (Studio Georgeville, 2021).



## Hope and Resilience in the Time of Covid

(CONT. FROM PG. 18)

forward. I am aware that even as my whole family is vaccinated, and even with all of the privilege of living in a country with health care and a government that believes in science, we are all far from being done with Covid 19.

I hope that someday, not so far away from now, I can read this collection again and truly recall the moments of emerging from the darkness and moving towards better and brighter times. For now, this book is a living, breathing moment that we are in, provoking emotions and art and our deeply human need to tell our stories.

**Shanna Bernier** is a parent, United Church youth worker, and lover of children's literature. She regularly writes Kid's/YA book reviews for *The Record*. Shanna can be found baking cookies or hot-gluing pom-poms to things in her spare time.



# Dining Out Returns

by Beverly Taber Smith, Judy Keenan, & Sarah McConnachie

After 20 months, the CFUW Sherbrooke & District's Dining Out Group resumed in December by visiting the Persepolis Restaurant in Sherbrooke for dinner and Auberge McGowan in Georgeville for lunch. Both restaurants followed the Covid health protocols.

**Persepolis**, 305 Rue King O, Sherbrooke,  
[restaurantpersepolis.ca](http://restaurantpersepolis.ca)

The menu was large and interesting, and the staff explained the items well to our group of 14. All dishes were seasoned with Iranian herbs and spices that we found very appealing. We had two appetizers, Salade Shirazi made with cucumber, tomato and lemon, and Kashk Bademjan made with grilled eggplant. The main course was various kebabs of chicken and beef and also lamb shanks, with dessert choices of Iranian ice cream and a mango float. All dishes were delicious and well seasoned.

You may bring your own wine and the restaurant accepts cash, Visa, and MasterCard. Table d'hôte prices range from \$26 to \$40.

**Auberge McGowan**, 51 Copp, Georgeville,  
[aubergemcgowan.com](http://aubergemcgowan.com)

Formerly a home dating from the mid to late 1800s, the restaurant was completely renovated in 2021, in keeping with the architecture of this historic community. Parking is in the lot in front of the inn with a second lot nearby. Inside, enlargements of historical photographs adorn some of the walls. Models of small craft and other artifacts are displayed throughout, and a refurbished rowboat is suspended above the fireplace.

Our group of 16 was comfortably seated at four separate tables in two adjoining alcoves in the dining room, with wonderful views of Lake Memphremagog on this blustery day.

Our set menu (for our group only) offered three choices of entrees. Prices ranged from \$24 to \$27. Starters of soup, salad or fried calamari (\$7 to \$14) were extra, as were desserts (cheesecake, an opera slice or chocolate pie) and coffee or tea. Alcoholic beverages were available.

Meals were beautifully served and delicious. The veal liver drew raves from several in our group, and the fish and chips were extra crispy. The duck was rich and satisfying. Desserts were several notches above the regular. Service was attentive throughout, and because of our spacious seating arrangement and the high ceilings, conversation flowed easily.

Both restaurants were welcome treats after a long period of relative isolation!

**Beverly Taber Smith, Judy Keenan and Sarah McConnachie** are part of the Canadian Federation of University Women (Sherbrooke & District) with members in Sherbrooke, Ayer's Cliff, Eastman, Ste. Etienne de Bolton, Richmond, Magog, Mansonville, and North Hatley. The group is engaged in the community by promoting education and life-long learning ([cfuwsherbrooke@gmail.com](mailto:cfuwsherbrooke@gmail.com)). A university degree is not required for membership. The Lampe Foundation supports education of men and women and encourages the continuation of studies ([www.lampefoundation.org](http://www.lampefoundation.org)).



## WINTER QUIZ, FEBRUARY 2022

**Q1. What is the oldest active Snow Shoe club in the world?**

A. The Sherbrooke SnowShoe club is the oldest active Snowshoe club in the world ([100objects.qahn.org](http://100objects.qahn.org)).

**Q2. What famous Olympic Figure skater came to Sherbrooke in 1952?**

A. Barbara Ann Scott. ([pressreader.com/canada/sherbrooke-record/20161214](http://pressreader.com/canada/sherbrooke-record/20161214))

**Q3. Where was one of Canada's first Woolen Mills located? ([patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca](http://patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca))**

A. The Paton Manufacturing Company was located on Belvedere Street in Sherbrooke ([townshipsarchives.ca](http://townshipsarchives.ca)).

**Q4. What was the name of Canada's first Olympic Gold medalist in Alpine skiing at Squaw Valley in 1960?**

A. Anne Heggtveit, at age 21, became the first Canadian skier to win Olympic gold, taking the victory in the slalom by 3.3 seconds. ([olympic.ca/games/1960-squaw-valley/](http://olympic.ca/games/1960-squaw-valley/)) After the Olympics she was a ski instructor at the Hillcrest Ski Resort in North Hatley.

**Don (Buddy) Martin** is a history buff whose heart is still in the Townships. He enjoys sharing its rich history.

# Home Sweet Home

by Kathleen Y. Rattigan

*"Home is a shelter from storms – all sorts of storms."  
William J. Bennett*

What a storm our world has been through and is still experiencing! I wish I could hear your stories and experiences as many of you left your work, your school, friends and families, and went home to shelter in place from an invisible invasion that is a first time event in our lifetime!

"Shelter in place" is a warning that we usually hear over our news sources in events of dangerous situations such as toxic spills, extreme weather, bomb threats or other unusual dangers. The majority of us were sent home and we watched as our streets, schools, businesses, and life as we knew it shut down - and went to a standstill.

The exception was, and still is, our hospitals. Our own health "storm troopers" continue to struggle with the onslaught of the victims of this horrifying invisible war while being overwhelmed, shocked and stretched beyond their normal capacities. We all witnessed our health care workers — our front line defense system — exhibit astonishing courage and endurance as they were swept into a tsunami of terrifying proportions that was impacting our whole planet and is presently increasing with the Omicron variant.

And now –here we are. We have learnt – and are still learning – how to survive and hopefully thrive as this pandemic grinds on.

How are you? Pause for a moment and check in with your inner being. How – are – you?

As many of you know, I am a counselor and when I ask this question it is meant seriously and not superficially. Now just imagine for a moment that you are with someone important to you and that they are asking you this same question. How would you sincerely answer them, going

beyond the social niceties of "I'm fine"? How are you really coping with this new reality of yours?

Being home might present many challenges to some of us. Others are experiencing it as a welcome relief. When I travel about in my village, I hear from both sides of the coin. Some are bitterly resentful and angry at these restrictions, whilst others have made a smooth transition to being home-bound.

However, the bottom line is the mental and emotional health of each and every one. This is of equal importance, and perhaps linked, to the state of one's physical health. Mental health is a hot topic today and I am happy that it is even more out in the open and being recognized as such an important part of our overall health and well-being! Many of my clients come from our younger generations. They are very comfortable with openly and honestly talking about their anxieties, and using the many tools available. Cognitive awareness works!

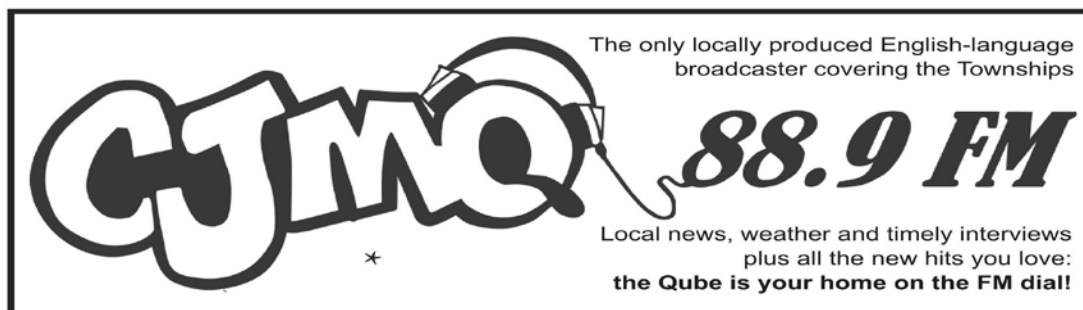
So welcome home. Home sweet home also means being comfortable in your own skin, for no matter where you go – here you are. Perhaps one of the most important life lessons this pandemic has given us is this chance to reconnect with our inner self.

Our own body is the ultimate home of all that we are. Perhaps appreciating our home is also teaching us a greater awareness of the importance of loving our bodies and treating them better. I know that I have lived this truth, dropping extra weight, working out every day and giving up sweets. I practice what I preach.



Blessings on your journey – live well.

**Kathleen Y. Rattigan** has been a counselor and motivational speaker for over 30 years. She lives in the Chateauguay Valley (Ormstown). (Photo courtesy of author)



# Aging With Vitality: Laughter and Your Health

by Anita Duwel

**D**oes laughter have an impact on your ability to age well? Yes!

Science is showing that individuals who laugh and are positive about life often tend to be healthier and can fight disease better than others who have a negative frame of mind and don't laugh as much. When we laugh, we feel as if a load has been taken off of our shoulders, which makes us feel lighter emotionally and feel better at the same time.

What's beautiful about laughter is that it has so many benefits. It's contagious, it doesn't have to take a lot of time, and it doesn't have to cost anything! As Audrey Hepburn once said, "I love people who make me laugh. I honestly think it's the thing I like most, to laugh. It cures a multitude of ills. It's probably the most important thing in a person."

Here are some of the amazing benefits of laughter.

**Reduces Stress.** Many of us are leading hectic lives. Just living through the last couple of years has been very stressful. Laughter can help reduce stress as it lowers the levels of stress hormones (cortisol and epinephrine), making you feel better both emotionally and physically. If you don't reduce those hormones, you may be more prone to illnesses and infections.

**Strengthens your Immune System.** Laughing can help increase your production of antibodies and T-Cells in your blood. This is important as they help protect you from infections and help keep you healthy.

**Triggers the Release of Endorphins.** When you laugh, you produce endorphins, which are your body's natural feel-good chemicals. They can help you feel focused, temporarily relieve pain, and put you in a better mood.

**Lowers Blood Pressure.** Laughter can help lower blood pressure by improving blood flow. High blood pressure puts you at risk of stroke or heart attack. So take time to find laughter in your life!

**Enhances Blood Circulation.** Increased blood flow that results from laughter will help improve your circulation. This will have a positive effect on your heart health and will help to reduce stress.

**Eases Muscle Tension.** A good laugh will contract muscles and relieve physical tension and stress. Did you know that after a good laugh, your muscles can remain relaxed for up to 45 minutes?

**Reduces Depression.** Laughter can play its part as a mild anti-depressant. It increases the production of serotonin which is known to be a natural anti-depressant.

**Brings Energy Into Your Life.** Laughter helps you to energize your mind and your body. This gives you better focus and more spunk in your step!

**Laughter may add years to your life.** According to a study in Norway, people who had a great sense of humour lived longer than those who did not laugh as much. If you are in need of a laugh, check out this video: [Baby Laughing Hysterically](#)

How can you incorporate more laughter into your life?

- Read or watch something funny.
- Don't take life too seriously.
- Hang out with people who have a good sense of humour.
- Hang something up in your office that will make you laugh.
- Go to a comedy show.
- Do a laughing yoga session.
- Make a pact with a friend to tell each other something funny every day.
- Put a smile on your face and just start laughing. (Try it!)

Note: If you are having high levels of mental distress or depression, please refer to the [Government of Canada, Health and Wellness Page](#) for information about strategies or resources that can be helpful.

Laughter is important for living a healthy life. You don't need people to laugh but know that connecting with others and laughing together is wonderful.

It is so contagious! So feel free to share a joke or funny video with others. It will not only help you to feel better... it will help them as well.

Let's spread the wealth of laughter! Remember, laughter is the best medicine!

Love the life you live,

**Anita Duwel** is owner of [Love the Life You Live/Aging with Vitality](#). She is a Certified Holistic Nutrition and Wellness coach, Workplace Wellness Consultant and helps people who struggle with weight and low energy to feel healthy and vibrant so that they can live a life of quality and vitality. Learn more at [www.AnitaDuwel.com](#)



# Poetry Page

## The Endless Green Earth

*by Bernice Angeline Sorge*

the endless green earth  
in a field of weeds  
two brilliant red poppies  
a memory tweaked  
I planted last year like  
the little chipmunks plant  
the oak trees, do they  
remember every tree?  
maybe  
they have a map of  
their movements or a scent trail or  
a sense of direction related  
to their burials or  
do they forget  
some because they  
know I love oak trees or  
is it something  
I cannot see or  
know?

## Scent of Winter

*by Gillian Eastley*

The morning sparkles  
dusted with glitter  
Sugar frosted.  
Gaze skywards  
pale, limpid, clear,  
transparently blue.  
Breathe deep  
cleansing freshness,  
the scent of winter.

## The Photo Album

*by Phyllis Sise*

I feel the ache of Jealousy  
The photos of her family,  
Hardships, struggle, living a life together  
The Joy falls to the page sepia on white  
Three generations carefully mapped in pictures  
Celebrations, marriages  
And she has the key  
True stories that connect the pages  
So much love  
And she boasts of suffering  
Bound in love  
It can only be joy

## Only Memories

*by Lee Sullivan Lapp*

Pictures taken every minute  
What you're eating ,where you're walking, baby's new smile  
Party scenes with all your friends  
No waiting for development  
Instant gratification.  
Delete unflattering ones  
Share the good ones.  
As they age, their life will be theirs to peruse  
I am happy my life was before this age  
Few photos exist from my youth, only memories  
Less embarrassing, details blurred, if not forgotten.

**Bernice Angeline Sorge** is a visual artist, poet, teacher and art therapist living in Dunham. After a childhood in Britain, **Gillian Eastley** in Knowlton is always enchanted by the first snowfall. **Phyllis Sise** lives in Foster and is grateful that writing has taught her to be so much more aware of what surrounds us. **Lee Sullivan Lapp** in Lennoxville is learning to write through the Bishop's University Lifelong Learning Academy (BULLA). All four poets are participants in the **WRITE HERE WRITE NOW** initiative of BULLA.



## Just who are these ETSAG Jokers- Separatists?

My name is Russell Pocock. I was raised in Waterville and my family has been in the Townships for almost two hundred years. They were hard-working, God-fearing farmers and I respect the history and tradition that they've left me. I feel strongly about the Townships and I intend to stay here. These rolling hills, lakes, rivers and trees are as much a part of me as the small villages where one can live without the fear and pollution that plague urban environments. In a time when alienation, pollution and an undirected technology are man's major problems, I feel fortunate to have roots in a place like the Townships. However, I am afraid that before we realize how lucky we are, it may be too late.

The lakes and rivers are more and more polluted every year. Lake frontage is privately owned to the extent that even villages bordering on the water do not have public beaches. The forests are slowly disappearing. For many of us there is no alternative way of surviving, than selling our wood to the American-owned mills or else working in their smelly pulp and paper factories. What's going to happen when all the wood is gone?

The small communities are disintegrating because of regionalization and young Johnny is not content to work in the local factory for a minimum wage. The young have no alternative but to leave.

Farming is becoming more and more difficult, unless you're willing to go big. Those who don't like being in debt are selling out to city people who are letting the good fields grow into bush. The only ones getting rich off the land are the local realtors and speculators. There are young people wanting to farm but they have to mortgage their souls before the government will help them get started.

These are some of the problems I see our community facing. They are very real problems that could mean the end of the Townships as we know it unless they are properly dealt with. Are we ready to deal with them?

We can't afford any longer to lie back and let our development, economic and otherwise, be directed by outsiders. Once our resources are exhausted they

will leave. How long will the asbestos hold out? What's going to happen when high transportation costs make it impossible for the BP Goodrich people to operate a branch plant in Waterville? When the only way for a farmer to survive is by expanding, is he going to be able to compete with wealthy New Yorkers for the farm next door?

Unless we start making decisions at the local level, the only future for the Townships will be as a recreation centre for Montrealers and Americans. Young Johnny will be a waiter at North Hatley's Howard Johnson's.

Are we English-speaking Townshippers aware of what we have to do? Are we ready and

willing to work with our French-speaking neighbors to see that the Townships doesn't suffer the fate of other rural areas? Or do we feel powerless because we're English in Quebec?

The only person who is powerless is the one who still blames everything on the French and the Catholic Church. Too many of us lose sleep over Rene Levesque and the separatist living down the road while respecting the American who pays us a minimum wage to work in his mill sawing up our trees.

It's time for us to put this French-English thing behind us. Quebec is changing and so are its people. It's time for us to tune into what's going on and get to

know our French-Canadian neighbours a little better. It's time for us to realize that we're only 10 per cent of the population here. If you want to have a say in what happens you might have to say it in French. It's better than not having a say at all. It isn't only a matter of mathematics or democracy — it's a matter of respect for the other fellow and his language.

Are we going to do our share? Are we going to help get on with what's important? Let's each one of us do our best in our community to show that we care and are willing to help. The purpose of ETSAG is to help you find out what's happening in the French-speaking community and

how you can better participate. I'm proud that I'm English but that doesn't mean I can't respect and appreciate my French-Canadian neighbours. We're all living here together. We aren't trying to turn English people into French people.

We simply believe that English people can better appreciate French-Canadians and their culture and also participate more in what's going on in Quebec. We believe that the future of the Townships depends on our ability to all work together. We care about the Township — do you? If so, then please contribute to this paper and attend our other activities — if only to say that you care.

— Russell Pocock, ETSAG



## A community newspaper

You are probably wondering how it is that you woke up this morning, checked your mail and found a free newspaper in your mailbox. Well, I'll explain.

We figured that our English-speaking population in the Townships is in trouble. The area is economically depressed, socially divided and the English are leaving. The Federal Government therefore provided funds for a community newspaper — the first community newspaper of its kind.

We are printing 10,000 copies per issue, which are published every second Friday. The paper is distributed through the mail to 9,200 English households in this area. If you didn't receive a copy call me right away at 562-7969, and I'll try to rectify the situation immediately.

Now, you are probably demanding, and justifiably so, to know just what it is that we are doing with taxpayers' money. It's very simple. We are publishing YOUR newspaper. That's right, YOUR newspaper. Not ours. Yours.

The SUN is your mouthpiece. If you have something to say of concern to the community in city centres, rural areas and scattered towns, you can say it and know that at least 9,200 English households will be listening to you. Would you like to know just exactly how the rest of the English Townshippers are feeling? Then here is an opportunity to find out.

Our present budget is low. We do not have a large staff of reporters and photographers. But we do have you. And you

have the SUN.

What would you like to see appear in the SUN? How did you find this issue? Is there too much on farming? Or not enough? Did you like the cover? Do you feel that the SUN is your newspaper? You should. Because it is your newspaper.

Write to us. Send in your article, your beefs, your photos and your letters. Our criteria for printing your contribution are simple. We will not print statements which we believe to be libelous, in poor taste or which are unrelated to the concerns of Townshippers.

Don't worry about grammar or spelling. We will make sure that your article appears in a clear and intelligible form. All contributions must be accompanied by your name and

address. If you do not want your name published with the article we will print it, providing that you have a good reason for being anonymous.

Our deadline for ads and articles is Thursday, noon, of the week preceding publication. Our address is 100 Queen St., Lennoxville, or in small town talk, the house on the corner of the Queen St., traffic lights. Our phone number is 562-7969. Come in and pay us a visit. We'd be glad to see you.

This newspaper is going to be whatever you think it needs to be. And that provides an exciting opportunity for English Townshippers to pull together and re-create the sense of community upon which this region was founded.

— BRIAN OLDING,  
Managing Editor