



Friends of the Gardens Newsletter

Winter 2009



Jardins de Métis

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The 2008 season will be remembered for being exceptional in many ways – exceptional weather (most of it bad) and exceptional bloom throughout the summer. The cool temperatures and ample rains made the plants happy, but the season saw a significant decline in visitors as Quebeckers flocked to the 400th anniversary celebrations in Quebec City and took advantage of generous exchange rates to travel to the United States and abroad. The Gardens still welcomed more than 55,000 visitors, 250 tour buses and 7,000 children. With the present economic uncertainty likely to linger for some time, the Gardens are preparing for a slow season with a beefed-up program of events and activities – the highlight of which is the 10th anniversary edition of the International Garden Festival. This newsletter provides information about some of the high points of the past season and information about the projects presently underway.

Gardens Ranked Among the Best in the World

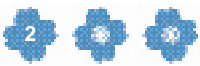
The Gardens have been selected for inclusion in books under preparation on the best gardens in North America – and the world. *Great Gardens of the World* is being prepared by Britain's Automobile Association and *Best Gardens of North America*, the work of journalist and author Tim Richardson, and both will be out next year. The *Ottawa Citizen* identified Les Jardins de Métis / Reford Gardens as the "best contemporary garden in Canada" and *Gardens Illustrated* dubbed the International Festival one of the "top garden shows of 2008".

Dining Out



Chef Ferry's morel stuffed with guinea fowl liver and parsley flower oil
© Catherine Jacob

Chef Pierre-Olivier Ferry and his team in the kitchen and cafés have established a reputation for both quality and quantity. They served more than 20,000 meals this summer, including more than 4,000 lunches and dinners to visitors in the dining rooms and catering to 1,400 guests at weddings, special events and celebrations. Our kitchen provides valuable revenues for the Gardens and our chef and his team have over the past four years contributed to the enhancement of our reputation as both a tourism and culinary destination. Winner of the culinary innovation prize from the Gaspésie tourism association in March, our restaurant has received generous praise from guidebooks and patrons. Pierre-Olivier has also pioneered a project to transform our daylily collection into a unique and



delicious new product – harvesting and transforming daylily buds into a spicy accompaniment – an addition to any garden salad!

Linda Rutenberg’s “The Garden at Night” Wows Visitors

Montreal photographer Linda Rutenberg began her exploration of the wondrous beauty of gardens at night at Les Jardins de Métis during the summer of 2005. While on a photo shoot for the American magazine, *Landscape Architecture*, she and her husband Roger Leon began to explore the pathways of the Gardens, flashlight in hand. So began an adventure that has since led her to gardens throughout North America and England and the publication of two books, *The Garden at Night* and *After Midnight: Through the Seasons at the Montreal Botanical Gardens*. A third book *The Allure of Night: Private Views of English Gardens* will be published next spring. Linda Rutenberg returned to the Gardens this summer with a beautiful exhibition of 21 photographs. In August, she gave a talk and led a tour with more than 60 members of the Gardens, explaining her work and the techniques she employed in photographing gardens in the early hours of the morning and allowing participants to see Elsie Reford’s garden in new ways. The Gardens have acquired two of her photographs for permanent exhibition in Estevan Lodge.

Photographs by Gaspésien photographer Marise Bélanger were also exhibited this summer. Her beautiful composite images of the Gardens and local landscapes entranced visitors and illustrated the beauty of the local landscape in all four seasons.

Hydro-Quebec presents “Le Bon Arbre au Bon Endroit”



© Louise Tanguay

The decade-long collaboration with Hydro-Québec resulted this year in a new garden that explored and explained Hydro’s program – *Le Bon Arbre au Bon Endroit* (the Right Tree in the Right Place). Designed by Mathieu Casavant of the Montreal firm of landscape architects, NIP paysage, the garden featured more than 5,000 birds on a wire, each wire illustrating the height certain trees attain and the reach of their branches. Large spools used to transport the various gauges of Hydro wires were ingeniously adapted to act as supports for interpretive signage. The garden sprouted to life in September

when the hundreds of sunflowers burst into bloom, providing sustenance to dozens of real birds. Hydro-Québec has been a partner of Les Jardins de Métis and the International Garden Festival since 1999.

Normand Laprise and his team from Toqué!



The team from Toqué! prepare a floral dish © Robert Baronet

Normand Laprise and his business partner Christine Lamarche returned with their team of 30 staff from their Montréal restaurant Toqué! on August 17th to provide guests with an extraordinary meal in the spectacular setting of Estevan Lodge. The 110 guests enjoyed a six-course meal of culinary delights, featuring delicacies from the Gardens and from Toqué!’s special suppliers from the region and throughout Québec. The president of the Fondation des Jardins de Métis, architect Renée Daoust, welcomed the guests who included deputy premier of Québec and minister of municipal affairs, Nathalie Normandeau, and MNA for Matapédia, Danielle Doyer. The event raised more than \$15,000 for the Fondation des Jardins de Métis and the International Garden Festival. The event was the third time Normand Laprise and his team have made the trek to Métis. Their first visit was made famous because of its inclusion in the documentary *Durs à cuire* that was released in 2007 to popular acclaim. Toqué! has confirmed its return for a 4th special event in August 2009. More than 60 tickets have already been reserved – so please contact us at (418) 775-2222 if you would like a ticket.

Estevan to Enjoy the Return of Several Treasures

Visitors to Estevan Lodge next summer will enjoy the return of some of the furniture that once adorned its rooms. When Lord Mount Stephen built Estevan Lodge in 1887, he ordered all of the furniture from a Montreal cabinetmaker, William Parson and Son from its showroom on Notre Dame Street. The maker’s stamp on the back of each piece of furniture has helped us identify and acquire several items original to the house over the past fifteen years. Before the Gardens were sold to the Government of Quebec in 1961, much of the furniture was sold – and the balance was kept by Brigadier Bruce Reford for his new cottage at the Pointe-aux-Senelles. Some of this furniture is coming back to Estevan Lodge as a gift from Stephanie Reford, the widow of Robert W. Reford, Bruce Reford’s eldest son. The pieces include some of the

original bedroom furniture from Estevan made for Lord Mount Stephen. Among the most interesting items is Elsie Reford's four-poster bed. After minor restoration work, the furniture will be on display for visitors next summer. If any readers have any furniture purchased from the sale in 1961, please get in touch with us. We are eager to complete our collection with pieces original to the house.

The Robert W. Reford Garden Pavilion Inaugurated



© Jardins de Métis

A new pavilion in the Gardens behind Estevan Lodge was inaugurated in August. Built in memory of Robert W. Reford, it was financed by donations from his friends and family. Robert "Bob" Reford was the eldest grandson of Elsie Reford. Journalist and specialist in international affairs, Robert Reford grew up in England, but spent most of his working life in Canada. He died in 2006 just days after his 85th birthday. The new pavilion was built by local artisan Gervais Pineau of St. Léandre, near Matane. It was designed to provide a venue for concerts, wedding ceremonies and other events. A weathervane by Etienne Guay, an artistic blacksmith from St. Jean-Port-Joli, completes the ensemble. The weathervane is in the shape and form of the *Mauretania*, one of the Cunard vessels that used to ply the waters of the St. Lawrence. One of Robert Reford's tasks as a boy was to lower the flag in front of Estevan Lodge to acknowledge the salute of the passing Cunarders. His reminiscences about his summers at Estevan Lodge, *Metis Memories*, will be published by Heritage Lower St. Lawrence next June.

Coming Soon to a Theatre Near You

The new documentary on the gardens is nearing completion. Directed by Montreal film-maker, Philippe Baylaucq, produced by Garry Beitel and Barry Lazar, and written by Montreal Gazette columnist Donna Nebenzahl, the film will cover the gardens over 12 months and the creative process involved in the design and creation of the gardens of the International Garden Festival. Filming began in June 2007 and has continued over the winter, spring and summer. The film will be premiered at the Gardens in August, 2009 and will later be broadcast on Télé-Québec before hitting the film festival circuit.

Work Completed on the Beautification of the Villa



© Robert Baronet

If you thought that Estevan Lodge was already beautiful – it will be even more so when you return for your first visit next summer. The last phase of work was completed on Estevan Lodge in October. A new work of art by Rimouski artist Fernande Forest will be unveiled in June. The work completes the renovations commenced last year that included painting of the Villa, new shutters and improvements to the exhibition room. The renovations were financed by a grant of \$400,000 from Québec's Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine and a contribution of \$90,000 from Les Amis des Jardins de Métis.

The 9th Edition of the International Garden Festival

The 9th edition of the International Garden Festival presented 15 gardens, the largest number in the history of the Festival. The gardens were created by 40 designers from Italy, France, Germany, the United States, Ontario and Québec. This year's line-up of gardens offered every imaginable experience, planting, watering, listening and swinging and many opportunities to partake in the beauties of one of the world's leading contemporary design events. The new gardens were: *Bon arbre au bon endroit* by Montreal designers NIPpaysage (Mathieu Casavant, France Cormier, Josée Labelle, Michel Langevin and Mélanie Mignault); *Round Up* (after Monet), 9 large and living haywains, by the Canadian-American trio from Austin, Texas, and New York City Andrea Legge, Deborah Lewis and Murray Legge; 100 non-aromatic little trees that formed *Terrain de jeu géant or Passe-moi un sapin Rita* by the Montreal threesome Rita (Karine Corbeil, Stéphane Halmaï-Voisard and Francis Rollin); the garden of sprinklers *Poule mouillée!* by A4 (Claudia Delisle, Karine Dieujuste, Philippe Nolet and Sami Tannoury) and; *Réflexions suspendues – Sospese riflessioni* – Suspended Reflections by Italian designers, Francesca Moretti, Federico Brancalion, Rodolfo Roncella and Mirando Di Prinzi, a garden that featured polished reflective balls suspended from cables amid the forest of spruce trees.

This year's Festival also featured a garden designed by the Gardens' assistant director, Jean-Yves Roy, as well as the first-ever garden by a university student, Maria Debye-Saxinger, a senior at Cornell University in New York, who



Passe-moi un sapin Rita by the Montreal threesome Rita, © Louise Tanguay

ingeniously transformed vestiges of previous gardens into a colourful viewing point.

Gardens from past editions continued to amuse and interest visitors, featuring the work of designers Hal Ingberg, Chris Reed, Jasmin Corbeil, Stéphane Bertrand and Jean-Maxime Dufresne, Steve Bates and Douglas Moffat, Pete and Alissa North, Cédule 40 (Julien Boily, Sonia Boudreau, Étienne Boulanger and Noémie Payant-Hébert), Atelier Le Balto (Marc Pouzol, Véronique Faucheur and Marc Vatinel). The garden by Angela Iarocci, Claire Ironside and David Ross, *Pomme de parterre*, was voted the most popular garden for the second year in a row, closely followed by the gardens designed by Rita and Jean-Yves Roy.

Festival Welcomes New Artistic Director

The Festival welcomes a new artistic director for its 10th edition – architect and journalist Emmanuelle Vieira. Emmanuelle has covered the Festival as a journalist since 2002 for various Quebec and international publications. The author of several books on contemporary Quebec architecture, Emmanuelle has been active in design and architecture circles for the past decade. For the 2009 Festival, she is working to offer a range of “festive gardens” created by leading designers from around the world. She is also responsible for curating an exhibition celebrating the designs and designers of the first ten years of the Festival. The exhibition will be displayed on the Festival site and will then travel to the Centre de Design of the Université du Québec in Montréal and then to exhibition spaces across the country and abroad.

Designers Compete to Participate in the 10th Edition

The International Garden Festival received 127 proposals from 17 countries for the competition for the 10th edition of the International Garden Festival. This year’s jury included the Festival’s artistic director, Emmanuelle Vieira, landscape architect Claude Cormier, Toronto author, Rachel Gotlieb, and Scott Burnham, independent curator. The jury president was Monika Gora, a well-known landscape architect and artist based in Sweden. The new gardens for the 2009 edition will be: *Every garden needs a shed and a lawn!* by Deborah Nagan (naganjohnson architects & designers - London, United

Kingdom); *Seedling* by Carolina Cisneros, Victoria Marshall & Mateo Pinto (New York, United States); *Hayground* by Craig Verzone, Christina Woods & Dragos Ivanet (Verzone Woods Architectes - Rougemont, Switzerland). And from Canada, *Dymaxion Sleep* by Jane Hutton & Adrian Blackwell (Toronto); *forest.grass.square.sky.water* by Suresh Perera (Studio Perera - Montreal); *HA HA!* by Eduardo Aquino & Karen Shanski (spmb - Winnipeg), Ralf Glor & Matt Baker (BLDG architecture office - Winnipeg) & Martin Gagnon (Ambiances Design - Montreal). To celebrate the Festival’s 10th anniversary, Claude Cormier’s now famous *Blue Stick Garden*, exhibited at the first edition of the Festival in 2000, will be re-created and given a permanent home.

Gardens host Fundraiser for the CLAC

The Gardens hosted a fund-raiser for the Carrefour de la littérature, des arts et de la culture (CLAC) to raise money for their efforts to bring the love of books and literature to schools and school-children throughout the region. Sponsored by Karl Desjardins, the owner of the IGA in Mont-Joli, the event attracted 130 residents of the region and raised more than \$3,000 for the CLAC. Guests enjoyed an array of interesting wines and a selection of Québec cheeses. The Gardens partner with the CLAC every year with the presentation of authors and musicians at literary teas. The 2008 line-up featured novelists Michèle Plomer, D. Y. Béchar, Lise Tremblay, Michel Vezina and Patrick Sénécal and theatre critic Robert Lévesque and attracted more than 500 people from June to October.

Be Our Guide

Are you passionate about history? Interested in acting as a guide or docent? We are looking for retirees to help build a team of guides and docents to offer tours to visitors and guides next summer. Please contact us for further information.

Donate to our Piano Fund

Every summer, the Villa plays host to musicians from the region and beyond. To provide them with a better instrument, we are trying to raise \$3,000 to buy a new upright piano for the Villa. If you are interested in contributing to our piano fund, please contact us.

New Board Members Sought

Les Amis des Jardins de Métis is seeking new board members from the region, notably from the business communities of Rimouski or Matane. Anyone interested in joining the board of the organization is encouraged to contact Alexander Reford at (418) 775-2222, ext. 222.

Les Amis des Jardins de Métis is a not for profit corporation founded in February 1995 by Les Ateliers Plein Soleil and members of the Reford family. The board of directors is composed of: Guy D'Anjou, Alexander Reford, Lewis Reford, Jacqueline Roy, Jean-Yves Roy and Sally Tingley.

La Fondation des Jardins de Métis is a not for profit organization dedication to the presentation and development of the International Garden Festival. The board of directors is composed of: Renée Daoust, Lesley Johnstone, Alexander Reford, Lewis Reford and Stuart Webster.