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Magnum

The Newsletter of the Montreal Branch of the International Wine & Food Society

May 2013

"Food without wine is a corpse; wine without food is a ghost; united and well-matched they are as body and soul, living partners"

A Message from our President



The Montreal chapter celebrates 50 years!

Our branch was founded in 1963, thirty years after Andre Simon, a marketing representative in the UK for Pommery, founded the Wine and Food Society, which was later renamed the International Wine and Food Society. The Society was the world's first association of amateur gastronomes who were not associated commercially with the wine and food trade.

The branch was founded by Henry Moore. Henry was born in the UK where he received his training through the Masters of Wine organization. He remained president and CEO until 1978. We have had twelve other presidents over the years: Ian Hutchison (1978-1981), Lee Hambleton (1981-1984), Ted Pearson (1984-1987), Barbara Potash (1987-1990), Jean-Pierre Jolin (1990-1993), Michelle Julien-Shiller (1993-1996), Harvey Romoff (1996-1999), Arthur Yelon (1999-2002), Sylvia Vogel (2002-2005), Barry Shiller (2005-2008) and Louis Vogel (2008-2011).

Henry Moore periodically communicated with members via newsletters; the *Magnum* succeeded them in 1980. Henry was the initial editor. He was replaced by Judy Yelon and Gail Morrell. Barbara Potash during her term as president also served as editor. Barry Shiller, Louis Vogel and Victor Salem have been editors more recently.

Some members thought that we needed a cellar so that we could have more good wines with some age on them. The Wine Cellar Committee was created during Ted Pearson's presidency and Arthur Yelon became its first chairman. Jean-Pierre Jolin joined the committee at the beginning. He eventually became cellar master, and Harvey Romoff replaced him.

The chapter has always been very vibrant and many different activities were organized over the years: dinners at members' homes or summer cottages, co-op dinners where members brought dishes they had cooked, wine tastings, weekend events, etc.

I would like to thank all the members mentioned above and all the others who served on the Board or Cellar Committee, or volunteered to comment on the wines or contribute articles to the *Magnum*, for their very good work over the years. You might have also noted that most of the members are still with us and our friends.

Fifty years later, our chapter is one of the most dynamic gourmet groups in North America. Join us to celebrate this important landmark on June 17th!

Louis Villeneuve



Editor's note

After spending most of the winter in Florida I always look forward to my return to Montreal. Springtime in Montreal is magical and one never knows if you can chuck your coat or have to wear your woolies.

For me it's also the time that I start to prepare for the publication of the current *Magnum*.

I have been very fortunate to be your Editor/Publisher and Photographer in the past and want to acknowledge & thank all those who have helped in publishing this magazine.

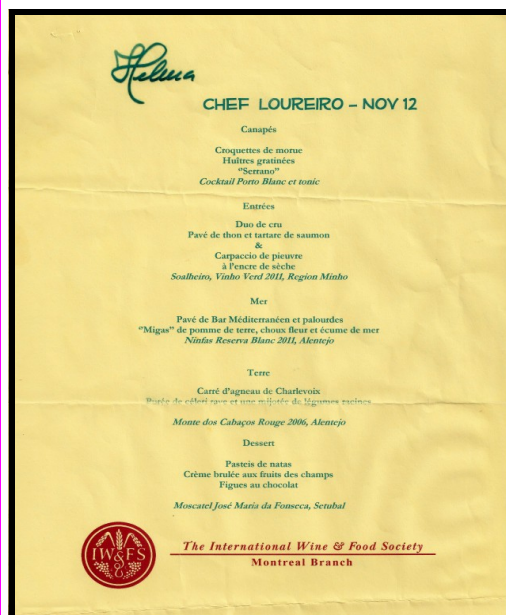
I would specifically like to thank Judy Yelon for her work in the preparation of our reviews.

I would like to introduce our new Editor/Publisher Mark Lazar who has accepted this task and will fly solo on the next edition.

I want to thank the membership at large for your input and ask you to support Mark Lazar in his new endeavors.

I am confident that Mark will surpass all expectations.

Victor Salem



HELENA

12 NOVEMBER 2012
- BY JOHN BREITNER -



Chef Helena Loureiro's new restaurant on McGill St. was host to our November gathering. Helena, born in Serra de Santo Antonio near Fatima in central Portugal, became chef-owner of PortusCalle, a Portuguese fine cuisine restaurant, in 2003. Expectations for the evening's food, wines and ambience were therefore high. For the most part, these expectations were fulfilled or exceeded.

Our evening began with an apéro of white port wine and tonic water over ice. This refreshing concoction, a novelty for most of us if a little on the sweet side for some, was accompanied by several canapés that were mostly well received. Seating was in a large room that was partitioned in two. Chef Helena greeted us from the partition itself but faced mostly toward the forward chamber. I was disappointed by not being able to hear and understand her rather lengthy French commentary from my seat in a corner of the back area. (Oh, and please, Helena, next time you or anyone else gives such a talk, won't you first turn off the background music? As it happened, my corner was next to a loudspeaker.)

The culinary treats began at 7:30 pm with a bevy of seafood items including a delicious seared pavé de thon accompanied by seasoned seaweed. This was partnered with a minced tartare de saumon that was thought by most to be something of an afterthought. The duo plate was followed up by a carpaccio de pieuvre, thinly sliced and delectably flavored.

The seafood entrées were accompanied by a very pleasant 2011 ContactoVinhoVerde from the Minho region. This was much appreciated, with its refreshing and vibrant flavors – a perfect complement to the food – although a few wished it had a bit more acid or 'grip'. Quite a number commented on the short pours (only one or two ounces in some instances) and refills were slow to appear, resulting frequently in empty glasses.

Next came a very fine pavé de bar méditerranéenne et palourdes "Migas" de pomme de terre, choux fleur et écume de mer. This lovely ensemble was served after a notable delay, but it seemed well worth the wait – an excellent example of regional cuisine raised to a very high level of refinement. Especially noteworthy were the chilled clams in brine served alongside the warm bar and the sauce that was delicious yet remained well in the background. Overall, this combination was quite special. It was accompanied by a delicious Ninfas Reserva Blanc 2011, Alentejo.

After another lengthy entr'acte, the meat course appeared at 10 pm. The carré d'agneau de Charlevoix was served with a purée de céleri rave et un mijoté de légumes racines. This course was again first-class and was well accompanied by a robust (but not overpowering) Monte dos Cabaços Rouge 2006, again from Alentejo. Happily, our glasses were now promptly refilled as we enjoyed this excellent red.

For some, the preceding cuisine – excellent as it was – was outdone by a dessert selection that approached perfection, capping the evening with an explosion of marvelous flavors. The pasteis de natas confections literally burst with a fabulous cream filling (by this time I had enjoyed too much wine to make note of its flavors – I must return to Helena to repeat the experience and find out what they were!)

The figues au chocolat were whole fruit somehow infused with a potent and delectable burst of chocolate. The crème brûlée aux fruits des champs was a bit different from the traditional crème brûlée. Its surface was a familiar looking crisp layer of burnt sugar, but underneath was a custard that was unexpectedly liquid and filled with warm cooked fruits. At our table there was a lively discussion as to which of these three items was most noteworthy. Suffice to say, there were no weaker brethren among them. The desserts were accompanied by a very pleasant non-vintage Moscatel José Maria da Fonseca from Setubal.

Clearly, the quality of Helena’s food is exceptional. If there was room for discussion about the overall evening’s experience, it came from a sense that the restaurant staff were not quite prepared to accommodate a crowd of our magnitude. It appeared that they ran out of both plates and cutlery between servings, resulting in a request that some of us retain our plates or knives and forks for the next course. Despite the excellent food, the slow service was a burden, resulting in a week-night meal ending close to midnight. I suspect that, for now, this relatively new restaurant will do better with individual tables seated at varying times. Certainly, given the quality of Helena’s food, I hope to return to her restaurant soon to learn whether this suspicion can be confirmed.



For those who missed out!

HELENA

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LE BEAVER CLUB
3 DECEMBER 2012
- BY CANDI SHATILLA -



Our long anticipated black tie dinner was organized by Lou Vogel and Sleiman Zaroubi working with Beaver Club manager Jean Le Dour and head chef Martin Paquet. Founded in 1785 by merchants carrying the Indian trade in Canada the Beaver Club is a Canadian icon on the restaurant scene in Montreal and in Canada .It serves the best in regional products, blending traditional and contemporary fare to produce an extraordinary fresh cuisine. Truly it deserves the highest distinction that it displays on its walls. They can now add the IWFS certificate of excellence.

Monday, December 3, was a perfect night. No snowstorm was anticipated. With no boots to take off we could all feel elegant in our tuxes and evening dresses .As we arrived at the door, the attentive staff greeted us and promptly took our coats. As we walked farther into the room, the name cards and table numbers could be seen and most important, the bubbly was being served. We were greeted by an excellent glass of Domaine Chandon Brut from California, which we were later told, by the wine reviewer was a combination of pinot noir and chardonnay grapes. This wine was a great choice with the appetizers - cornets of lobster, scallops and smoked goose tartar. All I can say is wow! I could have feasted on these tidbits all night long, but I held myself back. I knew there was more to come.

As we took our seats, I was impressed by the warm and inviting atmosphere of the room; it was not a crammed, noise, filled area but a spacious and gracious place to spend an evening.

Wine was poured - a Kuhlmann Platz Riesling Rosacker Grand Cru 2010 from Alsace. It was a great accompaniment to the oysters and tuna. What a presentation! The dish was served on a bed of illuminated (yes!) ice surrounded by thin tiles of red and white tuna. Exquisite! Next, served was a glass of Passito di Pantelleria a dessert wine that married well with the pan- seared duckling foie gras from St-Louis-de-Gonzague. The apricot and cranberry garnish, brought out the festive season and enhanced the flavour of the wine.

The main course came next. The wine was a Cotes Rocheuses, St- Emilion, Grand Cru, 2009. It was a young wine and as such was decanted to soften the tannins. It had a lovely nose and rich colour. The filet mignon of bison enhanced with Canadian whiskey and served with autumn root vegetables, was the piece de resistance. Was that really possible? No, the entire meal so far was exquisite. How could bison meat be so tender? It melted in my mouth.

As we neared the end, we were served a glass of Guigal St- Joseph Blanc 2011. Once again the wine experts got it right, serving a ball of goat cheese that melted on your plate as you cut into it. Lastly, the sweet dessert, a mille-feuille of raspberries, was served with grapefruit and ginger lemonade. I normally shun desserts, but this was (if I may say) to die for...Judging from our faces, laughter and conversation, we all enjoyed a very fine dinner. Many thanks to all who participated in making this event one to remember.



The Story of the Beaver Club

There were the wealth of early Montreal and those who traded in them were the most colorful of its citizens. Woodmen, Trappers, Explorers, these far traders made their headquarters at Beaver Hall which is commemorated by Beaver Hall Hill, a few blocks east of The Queen Elizabeth. The Beaver Club, the social group, had no permanent quarters.

Founded by French Canadians and Scots, the Club limited its membership to men by unanimous vote only and limited to those who had journeyed to the Northwest and wintered there. Accordingly, members had to be both vigorous and socially acceptable. Once a fortnight when ice locked the island waterways closing the fur routes until spring, the Beaver Club held its banquets.

Before the meal a cook formally presented to the Club's president the calumet, an elaborately decorated pipe of peace. Each member, after puffing, passed it to his neighbor. With a minimum of five formal toasts obliging, members were in fine fettle when it came time to re-enact the Great Voyage to the Northwest and feast until the wee hours of the morning.

Yet these occasions were more than routine. Alexander Mackenzie was knighted for his explorations; the University he founded perpetuates the name of James McGill. Testaments were there men as no invitation was more coveted than that to a banquet of the Beaver Club.

—♦—

Jean-Yves Le Dour
Gérant/Manager, Beaver Club

Martin Paquet
Chef Beaver Club

To Whet the Appetite

Corne de bœuf, émincé à l'aragon
Pâtisseries Printemps & l'huile de truffe
Terrine d'oeufs Jambé au bûle d'ail
Lobster crevice with a tartagon emulsion
Printemps scalope with truffe oil
Smoked goose terrine with corn

* Domaine Chateau, Bost, California

The Menu

Huitre en gelée au tobaco sur mosaïque de thon blanc et rouge sur épices du Bolivi levain
Billet corder with tobaco on white and red tuna mosaic with oriental spices

* Kahlman Platz, Rindling Rosacher, Grand Cru, 2010

—♦—

Crémole de foie gras de canard de St. Louis de Gonzague
poêlée au chutney d'abricot et canberge
Duo-morue scaloppini et dancing foie gras from St. Louis de Gonzague, apricot and emonberry-shutney

* Patisserie de la Pastillerie

Filet mignon de bœuf en potimidon Japon Biens au whisky canadien,
mille-feuille de pommes de terre douce et celeri rave,
petites rosettes d'automne et champignons sautés
Filet mignon of buffalo enhanced with Canadian whisky,
sweet potato and celery root mille-feuille
small autumn root vegetables and wild mushrooms

* Cité Robinson, St. Emilion, Grand Cru, 2009

—♦—

Crèmeau de chèvre en bois-cômbre & l'huile de noisette
Crèmeau of goat cheese with hazelnut oil

* Grapel, St. Joseph Blanc, 2011

—♦—

Mille-feuille aux framboises,
au limonade au pamplemousses et au gingembre
Raspberry mille-feuille with a grapefruit and ginger limonade

—♦—

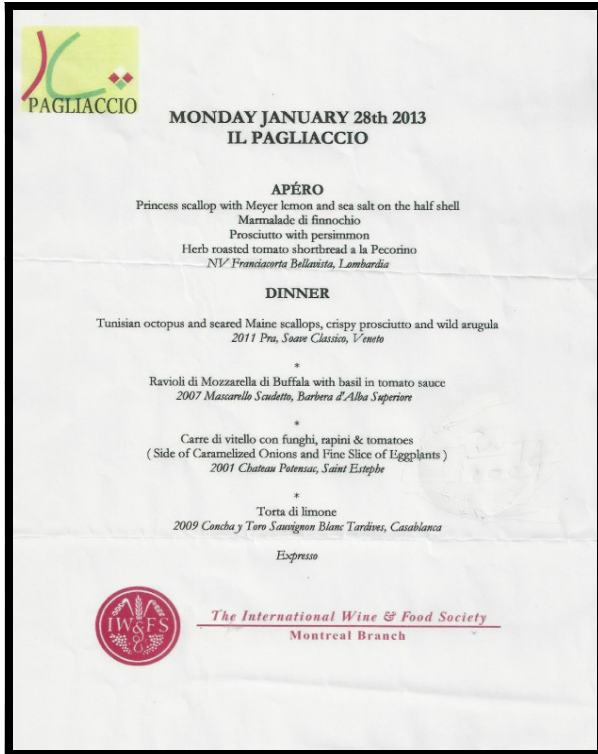
Chef, the iCoffees, Inc.



Louis Vogel (centre) was introduced into Beaver Club membership.



For those who missed out!
LE BEAVER CLUB
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IL PAGLIACCIO
28 JANUARY 2013
- BY NICOLE FORBES -

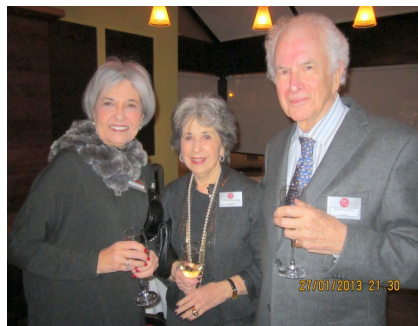


What a joy to be received in such a lovely and warm way on a snowy January evening. Manuel Silva and his lovely staff served us very interesting, delicious and varied canapés. The princess scallops with Meyer lemon and sea salt on the half shell and the prosciutto with persimmon seemed to be the favorites.

I especially loved the herb-roasted tomato shortbread alla pecorino and the marmalade di finocchio was quite innovative. The wine, NV Franciacorta Bellavista from Lombardia, was an excellent choice to accompany the appetizers.

The first course, Tunisian octopus and seared Maine scallops, crispy prosciutto and wild arugula, was lovely. The wine, a 2011 Pra Soave Classico di Veneto, was well chosen to accompany this dish.

The next course, the ravioli di mozzarella di bufala with basil in a light and flavorful tomato sauce, was, according to the survey, enjoyed just as much as the first course. The wine, a very good vintage 2007 Mascarello Scudetto, Barbera d'Alba Superiore, seemed to please everyone.



"The first of all considerations is that our meals be fun as well as fuel"



The main course, carre di vitello con funghi, rapini & tomatoes with a side of caramelized onions and fine slice of eggplant, was praised as one of the best ever for its outstanding quality... it melted in the mouth like butter. The wine, a 2001 Château Potensac, was perfect.

The dessert, torta di limone, combined with a 2009 Concha y Toro Sauvignon Blanc Vendanges Tardives, Casablanca put a lovely finish to our meal.

For a small restaurant the service was excellent; the team embodied the spirit of Manuel, who spent the evening making sure that everyone was happy.

In general, the comments expressed satisfaction; many will return to this warm and charming restaurant on Laurier.

Many thanks to Rhoda Pinsky and George Remus for a beautifully organized evening.



For those who missed out!

IL PAGLIACCIO

365 Avenue Laurier Ouest, Montreal, H2V 2K5

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**NAPA VALLEY MEETS SMOKING
VALLÉE
18 MARCH 2013
- BY DORIS MANZO -**



Le Smoking Vallée was the venue for our Vertical Tasting of Chateau Montelena 1998-2003.

Our wine of the evening has a very prestigious past. In 1976, at the “Judgement of Paris,” in a blind tasting pitting French white Burgundies against California Chardonnays, Montelena Chardonnay 1973 was proclaimed the winner!

Vertical Tasting 1998-2003

1998

Colour Dark purple
Nose – fruity, smoky, cassis
Tannins very pronounced
Evolved during evening
Rated 14

1999

Dark Montelena colour
Nose – faint cassis, berry present
Austere and very tannic
Rated 12

2000

Colour – dark ruby
Nose – complex
Firm acidity
Rated 16

2001

Colour – dark ruby
Nose – Although faint, cherry and earthy
Well balanced between acid and fruit
Rated 17-19

2002

Nose – dried fruit dark berries
Well balanced
Good finish – Better in 10 years
Rated 19

2003

Colour – bright purple
Nose – light with hints of black cherry and smoke
Body – light
Rated 17



“Whether half-full or half-empty, half a glass of wine is still half-glassed and needs to be re-filled.” - Anonymous

Carola stressed during the tasting that these were quality wines, although comments varied. It was difficult to provide an overall consensus, as different groups had greatly varied scores. Our thanks to Carola Price, our cellar master, who co-organized the evening with Louis Villeneuve and skilfully handled the tasting.

Canapés assortis & Apero

The Chateau Montelena Chardonnay 2005, which rated “a point,” avoiding the characteristic oaky flabbiness of a Californian Chardonnay, was elegant — 67% rated excellent. While the 2008 Ravine Chardonnay, Niagara was rated even better by some with many of the characteristics of fine white Burgundy.

The canapés were a great way to start the evening. However, some noted they were awkward and difficult to manage, while the arancini rated delicious.

Dinner

The tarte fine de champignons, truffes et œuf poché presented a perfectly poached egg resting on a bed of greens, “a true feast for the eyes.” It was rated by some as best dish of the evening, though it would have been better if the stems had been removed from the greens.

The 2001 Casa Ermita, Syrah Monastrell, Jumilla was full bodied, fruity on the palate, rated just right to drink, and was well paired with the first course.

The trou normand mandarine et vodka was a nice touch and enjoyed by a majority.

The pièce de résistance was the macreuse de bœuf Mao Tao, served with a salad of fèves germées et noix d’acajou. The beef, delicious and fork tender, was extremely flavourful and widely enjoyed. However, comments also included, “There were too many ingredients” and “The dish was too heavy and portions too large.”

The 1998 Ebenezer, Cabernet Merlot, Barossa wine was full bodied, leathery, woody, nutty and well balanced – 75% rated very good and a fine match for the dish.

Dessert

Dessert was a chocoholic’s dream – a D.D.F. (“Directement dans les fesses”!). The chocolat du moment, a chocolate tart, rated a very good to delicious, with some comments about it being a little too rich.

The NV Coteaux du Tremblay Vin Fortifié, Ste-Croix Léon-Millot, Compton of Les Cantons de l’Est, had aromas of plum jam and red fruit. It was well balanced with the finale of a dark chocolate. This wine was deemed an appropriate accompaniment to a rich chocolate dessert.



Ambiance

The simple ambiance carried the theme well of the smoky industrial sector. Overall comments - “would be happy to return to a good venue for a wine tasting.”

The format of the tasting was expertly handled by Carola. Comments from the tables included “loved the format” and “fun”! Many would have however appreciated beginning the tasting earlier, so the food wouldn’t be served so late. The service was rated as excellent, as were the waiters.

It was a wonderful evening to exchange our opinions on the wines in a very relaxed atmosphere. Kudos to Louis Villeneuve and Carola Price for organizing a great event. Our sincere thanks to Lou Vogel for sourcing and cellaring this world class wine.



For those who missed out!

SMOKING VALLÉE

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USEFUL TIPS FOR JUDGING ANY WINE

JUDGING WINE FOR SCORING

APPEARANCE:

Clarity- Brilliant, crystal, bright, translucent, slightly dull, cloudy, hazy, sediment, watery

Colour- Typical for its age and type, vivid, attractive, lively, off, maderized, brown

AROMA AND BOUQUET:

Varietal characteristics, complex, flowery, fruity, pronounced, developed, clean, pleasant, scented, delicate, fleeting, simple, underdeveloped, defective, off, sulphurous, vinegary

BALANCE:

Sweetness- appropriate to type, sweet edged, slightly lacking, cloying, syrupy, sugary, lacking

Acidity- appropriate to type, balanced, slightly low, slightly tart, flabby, insipid, harsh, vinegary

Bitterness/ Astringency- normal, appropriate for age, citric, slightly bitter, medium, harsh, withered

BODY/TEXTURE:

Appropriate, firm, sound, velvety, silky, smooth, even, slightly thin, heavy, uneven, coarse, empty, thin, rough

TASTE/FLAVOUR:

Complex, mature, varietal correctness, luscious, fruity, robust, multilayered, agreeable, clean, simple, lacking, green, chemical, stemmy, hollow

FINISH:

Appropriate for age, enticing, lasting, nearly correct, tapering, harsh, withered

OVERALL QUALITY:

Noble, distinguished, elegant, grand, character, graceful, skilfully made, nothing exceptional, flawed

IWFS Board of Directors 2013 - 2014

President and Branch contact : **Louis Villeneuve**
 Past President and Branch contact : **Louis Vogel**
 Treasurer : **Sylvia Vogel**
 Secretary : **Aline Bélanger**
 Cellar Master : **Carola Price**
 Director : **Joel Pinsky**
 Director : **George Remus**
 Webmaster : **Pierre-Marc Larivière**
 Magnum Editor & Photographer : **Victor Salem**
 Visit us on the web at : <http://magnum.iwfsmontreal.com>



SAVE THE DATEFUTURE EVENTS**

- May 6, 2013 - EUROPA KITCHEN AT ANDIAMO
- **June 17, 2013 - PRESIDENT BLACK TIE DINNER**
50th Anniversary of Montreal IWFS Chapter
- August 18, 2013 - TBA
- September 30, 2013 - TBA
- October 21, 2013 - TBA
- November 11, 2013 - TBA
- December 9, 2013 - BLACK TIE
- January 27, 2014 - TBA
- March 10, 2014 - TBA
- April 7, 2014 - TBA
- May 12, 2014 - TBA
- **June 6, 2014 : PRESIDENT BLACK TIE DINNER**

IWFS INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- THE GREAT PUERTO VALLARTA ESCAPE - November 17 to 20, 2013
- RHÔNE RIVER CRUISE - June 8 to June 15, 2014
- SANTORINI - May 6 to May 11, 2014

For more information - www.iwfs.org

7th ANNUAL SHUTTERBUG CONTEST

All submissions must be received by September 30.2013.

You may e-mail up to 3 digital photos to bgaphotocontest@iwfs.org



Editor/Publisher/Photographer
VICTOR SALEM
 Email: salemvictor@gmail.com

Commencing May 2013 - Mark Lazar

I would like to thank Victor for his years of service to the Magnum. He has been an excellent mentor and he will not be completely free from advising me from time to time. Also, thank you to Illandra, my assistant who is a wiz at cut and paste.

Please do not hesitate to let us know about new finds in Montreal or around the world - when we have extra space it will be great to share this info with our members. Thank you
 - Mark



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