

GREENWOOD CENTRE FOR LIVING HISTORY



FALL NEWSLETTER 2025

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the world seems to be spinning ever faster, so has the summer season at Greenwood come to a close. It was a busy season.... both inside and outside the house. The gardens were spectacular this year for Art and Music on the Lawn, and we once again hosted a very successful and well-attended Gourmet Dinner.

With the change of season comes new beginnings at Greenwood. We have sadly said farewell to Sandy Racicot and we wish her the very best for the future. We are very pleased to welcome Karen Molson as the new Executive Director, beginning October 1st.

We will be celebrating Old Fashioned Christmas and the Greenwood Singers concert in December. Planning for 2026 season is already underway.

A huge thank you to our many volunteers, both in the garden and in the house. You make Greenwood the very special place that it is. Thank you for all your dedication and hard work!

Looking forward to seeing you all very soon.

Warm regards,

Deborah Woodhead, President
Greenwood Centre for Living History





WITH GRATITUDE FROM OUTGOING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Serving as the Executive Director at Greenwood has been an incredibly fulfilling experience. I feel privileged to have contributed to its vibrant history, and I am deeply grateful to all the volunteers, staff, members and visitors who have made each day at work truly memorable. I eagerly anticipate returning as a volunteer, and I am delighted that Karen Molson will be stepping into the role of Executive Director. Looking forward to seeing everyone at Greenwood soon!

Sandy Racicot



**From left to right, Sophia von Bauer (intern), Sandy Racicot,
Olivia Richardson (volunteer)
Sara Hitchen (intern), Simon Zacharias (intern)**



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Dear friends of Greenwood,

I feel humble and privileged at the same time, to have been asked to become Executive Director following Sandy Racicot's decision to step back. For the past year and a half, Sandy has steered us through challenges with inspired leadership, as well as recognizing and seizing opportunities to benefit our museum. While we are sorry to see her go, we are also most grateful that she is staying close and staying on as a volunteer. Good luck, Sandy, in your new employment!

My own commitment to Greenwood is deep and longstanding. The Canadian Heritage of Quebec, the private non-profit foundation that owns the house and property, was begun in 1960 by my grandfather, Jack Molson, and his partner James Beattie. When Mr. Beattie's grandson Adam Rolland left the Greenwood board, I was asked to replace him as the representative for the CHQ. Thus, I have been on the board of directors for 25 years, and took the position of Associate Director four years ago. My father Robin, and later my brother John, succeeded my grandfather as president of the CHQ.

My background is in history; my passions include old houses, stories, and travel. After 25 years of commuting to Hudson from North Glengarry, Ontario, I am finally moving to Hudson in the spring. The search is on!

I am more grateful than I can say for the support of the board of directors, the encouragement of all. I have a vision for the future of Greenwood, and am developing ideas and plans to enhance our museum in the years ahead. I look forward to sharing these and consulting with the board, volunteers and members. I pledge to do my very best to keep things running smoothly, to help lead us in a positive direction, and maintain an environment where we can thrive. Greenwood Museum, this historic treasure, this beautiful, beloved, utterly restorative place, deserves no less.

Sincerely,
Karen Molson





SUPPORT GREENWOOD WITH A DONATION

In these trying times, organizations like Greenwood face significant challenges. With minimal support from government or public sources, we rely heavily on donations and revenue generated from our activities to sustain our operations. We kindly ask you to consider making a tax-deductible contribution to Greenwood this year. Your generosity enables us to uphold and enhance our mission, as well as maintain this historic site. We are immensely thankful to the individuals and businesses whose generous contributions have made it possible for us to run various programs, exhibitions, and activities. Please remember that the deadline for donations for 2025 is December 31! Tax receipts will be provided for all donations.

JOIN THE GREENWOOD COMMUNITY

We invite you to become a member of Greenwood. Your annual membership demonstrates your commitment to supporting our diverse programs and activities. With your assistance, we can continue to preserve the charm of this nearly 300-year-old vibrant historic homestead.

Annual memberships are available for \$35 (individual) or \$50 (family), with corporate memberships at \$150. Benefits of membership include complimentary house tours, a free tea service, discounts on select events, and voting rights at our annual general meeting. Membership fees are eligible for a full tax receipt.

We encourage you to consider becoming a member of Greenwood today or renewing your existing membership.

**Visit our website to donate! <https://www.greenwoodcentre.org/>
or send a cheque to our address: 254 rue Main, Hudson, Qc J0P 1H0
or send an etransfer to: history@greenwoodcentre.org**

UPCOMING EVENTS



**NOËL À
L'ANCIENNE
Greenwood
OLD-FASHIONED
CHRISTMAS**

**NOVEMBER 30 NOVEMBRE
DECEMBER 7 DÉCEMBRE**
13H30 - 15H
15H30 - 17H

TICKETS | BILLETS
25\$
WWW.GREENWOODCENTRE.ORG
OR BY CASH-ONLY PURCHASE
OU COMPTANT SEULEMENT:
QUE DE BONNES CHOSES
484-D RUE MAIN, HUDSON

254 RUE MAIN, HUDSON

Greenwood Centre Hudson
1732

Greenwood
Singers

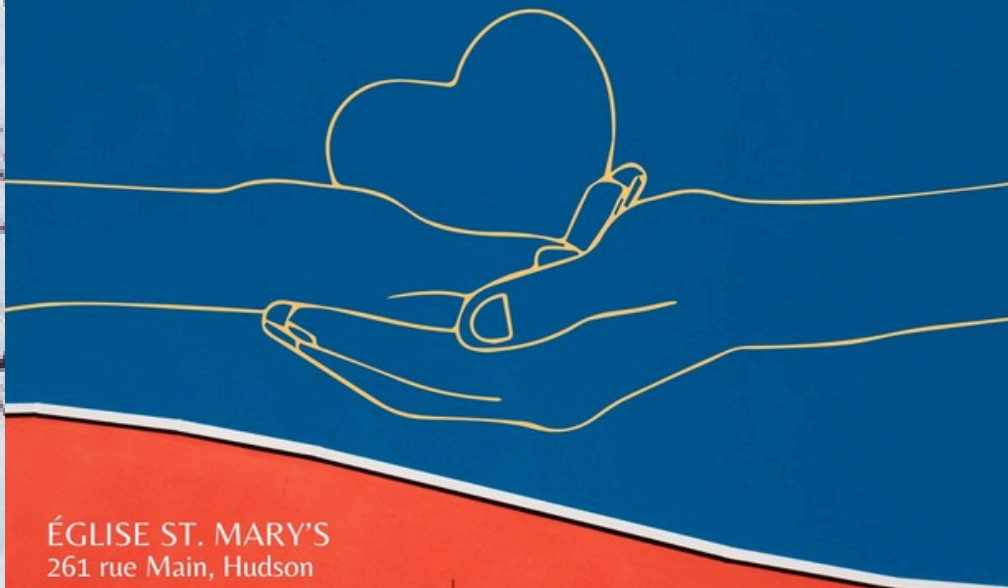
Concert

Au profit de / to benefit
Greenwood Centre for Living History



NOEL C'EST L'AMOUR

Vendredi 12 Decembre – 19h
Friday, December 12 – 7pm



ÉGLISE ST. MARY'S
261 rue Main, Hudson

Billets / Tickets \$30
www.greenwoodcentre.org,
Que de Bonnes Choses, 484-D rue Main, Hudson, Qc

ADOPT-AN-ARTIFACT PROGRAMME 2025

Greenwood's Adopt-an-Artifact programme has been running for 26 years, and, to date, has conserved over 75 artifacts from Greenwood's collections. Donors agree to sponsor the conservation of an item, individually or with others, and in return they receive a tax receipt for their contribution.

Currently, the programme is featuring three pieces for your consideration: Firstly, an oil painting circa 1902, portraying a country road near Haddington, Scotland, by the artist W. D. McKay (1844-1924), a prominent regional artist. Percy Nobbs was born in Haddington, which is probably why the painting is in our collection.

The second is a small watercolour of a steamboat on the Ottawa River, artist unknown. The Shepherd family was heavily involved with steamboats and owned the Ottawa River Navigation Company.

Lastly, we have a document, decorated with beautifully illuminated calligraphy, paying tribute to Captain Robert Ward Shepherd for his services to the Prince of Wales Regiment in which he served. This regiment originated in 1859 as a volunteer rifle corps and was the antecedent of the Canadian Grenadier Guards of Montreal.

If you are interested in "adopting" one of these items, and paying for the conservation, please contact Greenwood.

Another small and delightful watercolour by Percy Nobbs was discovered this summer in a file of his letters. It has been conserved and framed thanks to a donation from Pat MacGeachy. It shows a kilted bagpiper playing, instead of his bagpipes, a large teddy bear. What artistry Percy had, and what a sense of humour! This drawing is now on display, appropriately enough, in the Nobbs Room.



**Oil painting circa 1902, portraying a country road near Haddington, Scotland,,
~By the artist W. D. McKay (1844-1924),**



**Small watercolour of a steamboat on the Ottawa River,
~Artist unknown**



"Henshaw's chosen feed"
12 Aug 1910.
Dr. Lane M. Locklan M.B.
in native garb.

NEEDLEWORK CONSERVATION AT GREENWOOD

Needlework has been a part of Claire G  linas' life since childhood. Watching her mother – Barbara Henshaw G  linas – sew on her old Singer machine, creating beautiful clothes from bolts of fabric, seemed like magic. But using the sewing machine would have to wait until Claire was a bit older.

Her Aunt Helen (Henshaw Hunter) was the one who showed Claire how to knit at age 13. This began a lifetime of making mittens, scarves, sweaters and hats. During the Covid pandemic, knitting was a salve which helped to reduce Claire's stress by doing repetitive stitches.

Up-cycling has always been a way for Claire to save money by mending her family and friends' clothing, thus avoiding the need to purchase new. From hemming pants to knitting new heels on worn-out socks or repairing zippers on jeans, she derived satisfaction knowing less clothes were ending in landfill.

When Claire became part of Greenwood's board of directors in 2024, she discovered that many items in the old house needed mending. Her first project was to mend the upholstery of a sofa that had been eaten by mice. Luckily, there was some extra fabric found that was used to mend the hole.

Historically, women needed to be able to sew, knit and mend the clothing of their families, as was true of the many women who lived at Greenwood. That is where Claire had the idea of offering a knitting workshop. The first workshop was held on the porch at Greenwood on a warm Saturday in October 2025 with five participants. There was much enthusiasm as the novice knitters started to become comfortable with their newfound and, hopefully, lifetime skill.



ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH: PERCY NOBBS AND THE WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL MONUMENTS

By Terry O'Shaughnessy

Over the years I have come to learn that writing about Greenwood's Percy Nobbs presents a formidable challenge. Because how can Percy's endless talents, achievements and honours possibly be squeezed into just one article? At least we have Percy's memoirs (Clear Recollections, 2015) to fall back on, and all the other sources of information at Greenwood, McGill University and online. As a former executive director of Greenwood and a McGill alumnus, I've grown accustomed to running across mentions of Percy everywhere, from architecture, painting, design and the Arts and Crafts movement to his involvement in Montreal's Pen and Pencil Club, a salon of sorts where Percy met regularly with other luminaries such as poet John McCrae, painters James Morrice, Clarence Gagnon, Edmond Dyonnet and Robert Harris, architect Ernest Cormier, and of course, Stephen Leacock.

On a recent trip to Europe's great battlefields, however, I discovered an aspect of Percy I had not known about: his work as part of the effort to honour and memorialize the astonishing valour and contribution of Canada in World War I. Percy himself contributed to the war effort in many ways, not least being in charge of bayonet training at Valcartier, Quebec. As a former Olympic fencer, the nascent Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) felt Percy was uniquely poised to help train the rapidly growing cadre of recruits. But what is somewhat lesser known is his involvement post-war as well.

In 1919, the Battle Exploits Memorials Committee, a Special Committee of the House of Commons in the UK, was formed to identify the war's principal battle sites and assign memorial space to the appropriate countries. The Committee recommended that a competition be open to all Canadian architects, designers and sculptors, and further suggested that an honorary commission be set up to preside over it.

In September 1920, the Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission was established and Percy Nobbs appointed to it. Canada had been granted eight sites and a country-wide artistic competition was held. The winning entry was for Vimy by Walter Seymour Allward and, in second place, the Brooding Soldier by Frederick Chapman Clemesha to be erected at St. Julien in Belgium. In addition to these two big sites, the remaining sites were to be less massive and placed under Percy's direct supervision at Bourslon Wood, Le Quesnel, Dury and Courcelette in France, and Hill 62 (Sanctuary Wood) and Passchendaele in Belgium.

Situated on the key points of the battlefields they memorialize, Nobbs and his committee chose a design of stark simplicity: 13-tonne cube-shaped blocks of white-grey granite quarried near Stanstead, Quebec, placing within Europe these enduring pieces of Canada itself. Each site is simply adorned, and a brief eloquent statement about the battle rendered in both French and English on each monument.

These starkly elegant monuments that commemorate Canada's most valorous battles of the Great War now stand side-by-side in my mind with Percy's most memorable work.



PERCY NOBBS AND THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING PLAQUE

Earlier this year, it was discovered that the burial plaque for Percy Nobbs and his wife Cecil - the parents of Phoebe Nobbs - was missing from Mount Royal Cemetery in Montreal.

The plaque was made of bronze, and was installed flush to the ground. Percy and Cecil were buried together in the Torrance family plot as Cecil's mother was a Torrance. Percy died in 1964 and Cecil in 1971. When she was interred in the plot, Percy's original plaque was replaced with a new plaque to commemorate the two of them. The plaque was there in 2018 when their grandson, Peter Nobbs, was buried nearby. At some point, however, the plaque disappeared - either taken by someone who wanted a memento of the respected Percy Nobbs, or - more likely - for the value of the bronze.

The disappearance of the plaque was particularly unfortunate as 2025 marks the 150th anniversary of Percy's birth in Scotland. Four family members - Susan Bronson, Claire Gélinas, Penny Mundell, and James Robertson - took it upon themselves to arrange for a new replacement plaque to be created and installed. The new plaque is now installed, marking the final resting place of Percy and Cecil Nobbs. All's well that ends well!



STORYFEST: BEHIND THE SCENES



For twenty-four years now, Greenwood has been hosting a literary festival here in Hudson, called StoryFest. It has grown in reputation and popularity over the years, bringing almost 200 Canadian authors to local audiences. Not only is this a great opportunity for readers to get to know the writers, but also for them to be exposed to great works they might not otherwise have heard about, and to buy copies of books. And for Greenwood, it is wonderful for us to bring people together and to benefit from the fundraising rewards.

Of course, our wonderful sponsors help make this event possible, both corporate sponsors and private supporters. The work behind the scenes is equally valuable, all organized and carried out by volunteers. These people – board members, StoryFest committee members, Greenwood interns and other friends – make sure all the necessary elements get to the community centre, they set up all the chairs, have the tickets and books ready to sell, the lists of those who have already bought tickets, they bring the flowers, the banners, tablecloths and more, and they put the chairs back and return all the props afterwards. These unsung heroes, after all these years, have developed a system that makes everything run smoothly. Cheers to our generous sponsors and our dedicated volunteers!

Greenwood
STORYFEST
2015

Starts Oct. 2
Début
le 2 octobre

www.greenwoodstoryfest.org

THE SAGA OF GREENWOOD AND FAR EASTERN MEDICINE

Ginseng has been used in traditional medicine in China and Korea. Currently, the total value on the global market, including roots and processed products, is estimated to be \$2.085 billion, and is projected to continue growing due to the perceived health benefits and their use as a dietary supplement. The sale of ginseng root and ginseng at Asian and naturopathic stores is not surprising – but did you know that it was offered for sale at Greenwood two hundred years ago?

The story begins in Russin, Switzerland, with the Delesderniers family, who were French Huguenots. Gideon Delesderniers and his wife Madelon Martine, emigrated to Halifax in 1750, among the earliest settlers after its founding. They had five sons, the fourth of which was John Mark Crank Delesderniers, who was born in 1754. He married Elizabeth Atkinson in 1783 at Miramichi. In 1795, having sold up all his property, he moved his family to Lower Canada, and settled at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, at the tip of the Island of Montreal. Delesderniers was appointed as Agent for the Iroquois and Algonquins, presumably based on his experience dealing with Indigenous people in New Brunswick and his facility with native languages.

Meanwhile, the father of Elizabeth Delesderniers had purchased land just east of Greenwood. In the early 1800s, the Delesderniers re-located to this area, and opened a general store. This was more convenient for trading with the Indigenous people at Oka, and it also served the growing population of white settlers in the area. Among the goods that were offered for sale was crystallized ginseng!

The history of ginseng in Quebec begins with the discovery of American ginseng (*Panax quinquennialfolius*) near Montreal by Jesuit missionary, ethnologist and naturalist Joseph-Francois Lafitau in 1715-16. He was familiar with the value of the Chinese plant and suspected that a similar species might exist in North America. American ginseng is native to eastern North America, where it thrives in the full shade environments of deciduous hardwood forests. It is a flowering plant, of the ivy family, whose epithet means “five-leaved,” referring to the number of leaflets per leaf.



Father Lafitau promoted trade of the ginseng root, and by 1720 the French Company of the Indies was exporting ginseng to the Far East. For a time, ginseng exports were second only to furs in economic importance to New France.

In the early 1800s, it appears that wild ginseng still grew abundantly in the woods around Oka and Cavagnol. The Indigenous population brought ginseng to Delesderniers' store to trade for other goods, and ginseng root was prepared in quantity by Mark Delesderniers to be sent to the Far East.

In 1820, Delesderniers purchased the neighbouring lot from the Sabourin family, and moved his general store to the house on this lot, now known as Greenwood. His son, Peter Francis Christian Delesderniers, moved into the house and operated the store for many years, continuing the trade in ginseng at this location.

Over time, however, over-harvesting and habitat loss led to a near-depletion of wild ginseng in Quebec. The trade gradually moved south to areas like Albany, New York, and eventually to the southern Appalachian states. Today, American ginseng is classified as a threatened species in Quebec and endangered in Canada. The wild harvest and trade of American ginseng are prohibited in the province, while only cultivated ginseng can be legally traded in Canada. Most of Quebec's historical populations of wild American ginseng have been extirpated or are threatened: there are just 15 viable populations in the province at the current time, with most of the plants being concentrated in just two of these colonies, the others being small and fragmented. As the location of the sites are kept confidential, it is not known if any are in Hudson or Oka. There is anecdotal evidence of ginseng plants being found near Greenwood at least until recently.





THE 2025 SEASON IN REVIEW

Greenwood had another busy and successful season in 2025, with a myriad of activities and events filling the house and garden.

On May 9, the Greenwood Singers gave its annual spring concert at St. Mary's Church, with a reception afterwards at the museum.

Greenwood's Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday, May 25, at the Hudson Community Centre. In spite of the beautiful weather and numerous competing activities, the meeting was well attended. Jeanna McClintock was presented with the first Eleanor Shepherd Abbey Volunteer Award - a well-deserved recognition of all her contributions to Greenwood. Frank Hicks shared anecdotes and his encyclopedic knowledge of antiques and collectibles. Liz Rozon prepared her famous cupcakes, and Larry Cool provided entertainment and organized the sound system.

On May 31 Greenwood launched the summer season with an open house and performance by Josee Brault.

The 2025 edition of Greenwood's StoryFest got off to a strong start on June 18 with journalist and columnist Andrew Coyne and his book "The Crisis of Canadian Democracy". The event was sold out.

As the season kicked into high gear, there were numerous activities. A series of health and wellness workshops was given at Greenwood by Diana Perez, physiotherapist and yoga therapist, on three Saturdays in June, July, and August. At the end of June, Doggy Day Afternoon was held with canine guests enjoying romping, splashing, playing games, and socializing in the garden. Later on the summer, painting in the garden was organized on Thursdays.

Music in the Garden was held at Greenwood throughout the summer and into September, featuring various musicians: Chains of Love, The Caleb Collective, Frim Fram, Zale Seck, Brianna Doyle and The Breeze, Jennifer Dahl and her band, Wineberries, and Brian Gallagher. The Ditchflowers held a fundraiser for Greenwood on June 22.

On July 13, Greenwood's famous Traditional Tea was held. This year a second seating was inaugurated to accommodate more people. On August 14, Greenwood hosted a special gourmet dinner, with guests enjoying a delicious dinner and wines in the ambience of a lovely summer evening at the house

On August 11, a special event was held for Greenwood members to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Percy Nobbs, the noted architect and Renaissance man. Percy was the father of Phoebe Nobbs and designed a number of renovations as well as furniture and other items at Greenwood. Susan Bronson, a conservation architect and member of the original planning committee for Greenwood, gave a fascinating talk about Percy's designs for buildings on Montreal and especially at McGill University.

The Hudson Players gave a staged reading of Charley's Aunt for three performances in August. This continuation of the long tradition of theatre in the garden at Greenwood is a much appreciated annual event.

On September 20 Greenwood hosted Treasures in the Kitchen on a beautiful sunny day, the last Saturday before the end of summer. There was a raffle held for a beautiful stained glass created and donated by Alice Lenko-Cristofaro.

StoryFest kicked into full swing in October, with a range of stimulating and fascinating authors speaking about their books: Andre Alexis, Eric Andrew-Gee, Caroline Anderson, Brian Stewart, Brendan Kelly, and David Bergen.

Throughout the season, Greenwood was open for tours and teas, and hosted visitors from Hudson and beyond. People enjoy seeing our historic house, which looks and feels like it has been lived in by many generations. Topping off their visit with tea on the veranda overlooking the beautiful Ottawa River with homemade baked goods remains popular.



All of these events and activities are designed to introduce and attract people to Greenwood and its beautiful setting, either for the first time or for repeated visits. Visitors appreciate the care and attention that is apparent throughout the house. Greenwood's volunteer Conservation Committee is responsible for maintaining its collections, and mounting exhibits and displays about the house and its inhabitants. Over the past year, the Committee has been carefully going through cupboards and closets in an ongoing effort to care for the house's treasures.

Greenwood's volunteer bakers provide a rich and scrumptious selection of baked goods to serve visitors and at events throughout the year. The time, energy and skills of these talented cooks is much appreciated, and contribute to Greenwood's unique attraction. The beautiful grounds and gardens of Greenwood are maintained by Helen Hodgson and an energetic team of volunteers: many supporters and visitors admire the beautiful flowers throughout the season and enjoy wandering around our historic site and appreciating the house from the riverfront.

Our vintage garage continues to offer a wide variety of items for sale, thanks to the generosity of donors and the efforts of a small band of volunteers who curate and price items. Many people who stop in to check out the garage stay on for a tour of the house or tea. The garage is an important source of funds for Greenwood, and has been augmented this year by the posting of some sale items online.

Greenwood was fortunate to receive funding for three interns this year. The returning young people - Sarah Hitchen, Sophia von Bauer, and Simon Zacharias - made enormous contributions by providing tours and teas to visitors, helping to plan and conduct various events, and working on special projects.

Greenwood was honoured this year to be the recipient of a community award from Peter Schiefke, MP of Vaudreuil. In the spring, the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums posted on social media a feature about Greenwood's Conservation Committee and its work.





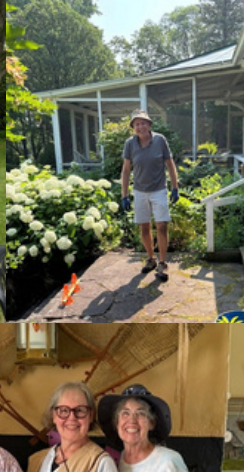
2025 Season





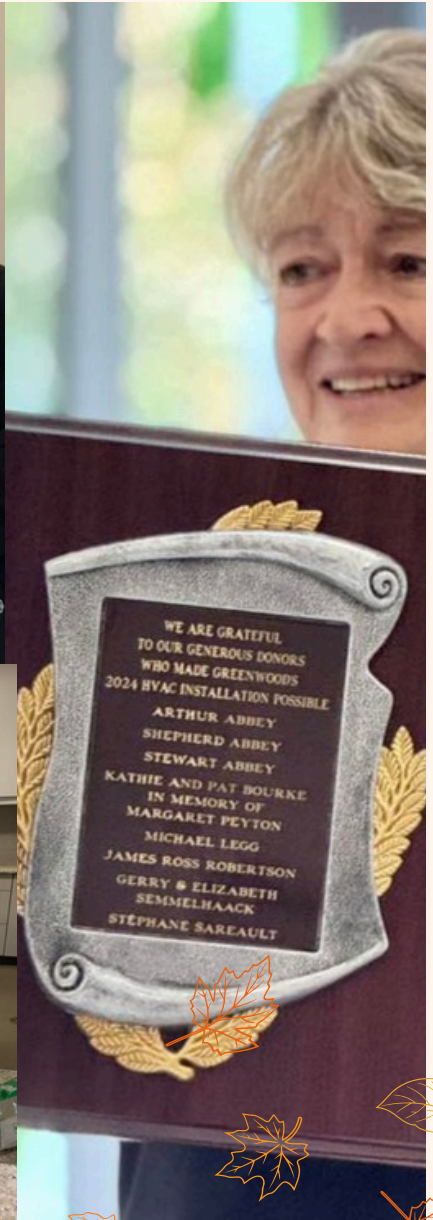












COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



Greenwood was honoured on October 26th with a Community Service Award, gratefully accepted on behalf of the whole Greenwood “family”. Congratulations to all the other individuals and organizations who were also recognized for their service to the community. Thank you to Peter Schiefke, MP of Vaudreuil.