

Dufferin Terrace mural depicts Sherbrooke 100 years ago



Inside the window of the Beckett General Store are a number of local products including Colonel Chevalier's Mathieu's Cod liver oil, a cure-all home remedy that was the first regional product to sport a bilingual label. Also displayed are bottles of Bulls Head ginger ale and Silver Springs beer brewed by Mr. Bryant in the Abenaki Street plant that now houses the bowling lanes. Also displayed are cigars manufactured by the Sherbrooke Cigar Company, now the Falaise St-Michel restaurant on Meadow Street.



Standing in the doorway is prominent local businessman Carlos Skinner who owned and operated Skinner's Jewelry store and the People's Telephone Company further down the block. The clockmaker was fond of everything mechanical and when the telephone was invented in the 1880s, he began operating an outlet for Bell Canada. Before long he had a falling out with Ma Bell and he and his son Albert began operating the People's Telephone Company which undercut rates from the growing telephone monopoly. The People Telephone company, which eventually became Eastern Townships Telephone, still operated a number of rural telephone circuits until 1953 when they were purchased by Bell.

A humorous fresco shows a cranky woman in her curlers on her front balcony complaining of the noise below as her diapered baby looks on from the doorway.



Lumber and paper baron Frank McCrea, a Sherbrooke town councillor who became Sherbrooke's Liberal MP from 1911 to 1925, and Irish businessman Daniel McManamy, are surely debating the merits of municipal control of electricity with Englishman Richard Heneker, Commissioner of the British American Land Company that controlled all of the dams and dikes on the Magog River. The powerful Heneker, a director of the Eastern Townships Bank, is a supporter of English Protestant initiatives including the recent creation of the Sherbrooke Hospital.



The mural includes a variety of eye catching vignettes including this trio of a beer-bellied man in a wife-beater shirt, a cat on the roof spying the fluttering laundry below, and a musical rat playing the trumpet.

PHOTOS: PERRY BEATON/SPECIAL LAYOUT: REFA LEGAULT, JAMIE ZACHARY



George Foote Foss and his Fossmobile - the first gas-powered car in Canada - catch the attention of Robert Davidson, who was both police and firechief for two decades at the turn of the last century.



Alice E. Stewart, the superintendent of Sherbrooke Hospital, passes in front of The People's Telephone Co where operators are hard at work. Known as "La Skinner", the local telephone company that competed head to head with Ma Bell, was the biggest in Sherbrooke at the turn of the last century. In front, a paperboy for the Sherbrooke Daily Record - the city's one and only daily newspaper in 1902 - sells copies of the paper which reports on the Boer War in Europe.

A Page of History



PERRY BEATON/SPECIAL

Jacques Quintin, who performed his one-man play during the inauguration of the mural on Dufferin Terrace, points to George Foote Foss and his Fossmobile with a copy of his Sherbrooke Daily Record. For story please see Page 5

