

Volume 22

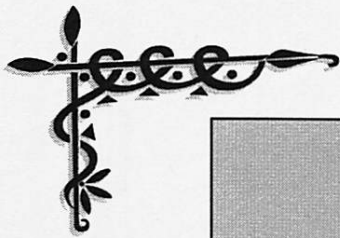
Number 2

Summer 2006

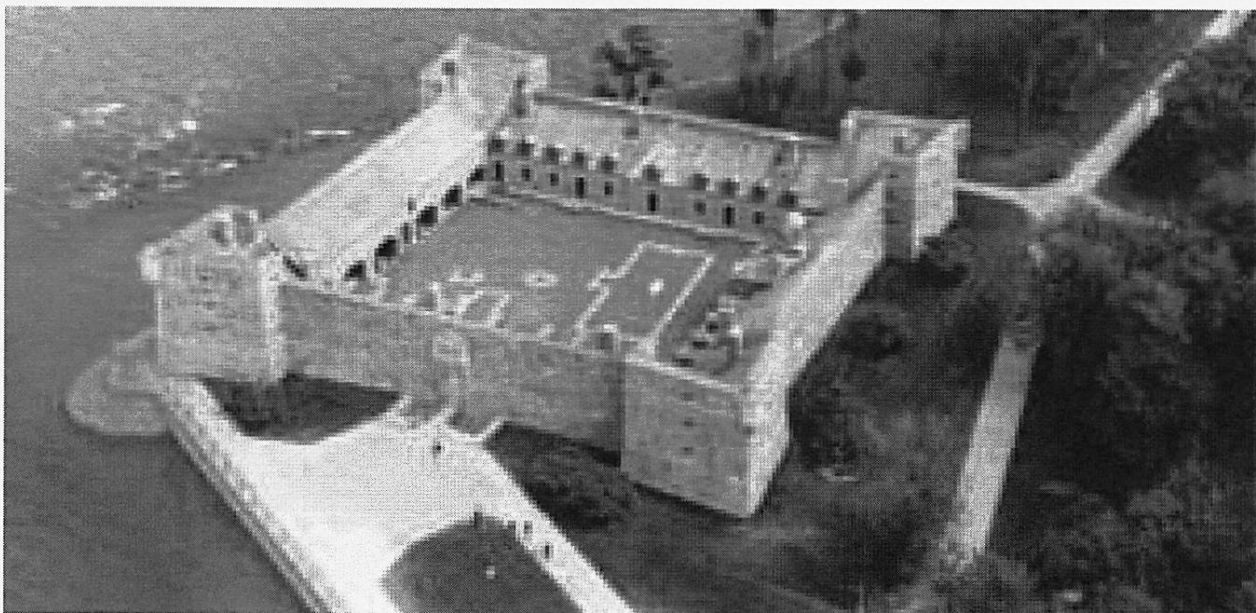
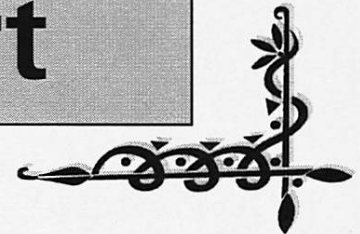


Le Mercien

The Voice of the Merciers of North America



Chambly Fort



(Photo extracted from the web site of Chambly Fort: www.pc.ca/lhn-nhs/qc/fortchambly/index)

The Newsletter of the Association of the Merciers of North America



Coat of arms of the Merciers of North America registered by Mgr Jean-Paul Gelinias in 1986



Coat of arms of the Merciers of England in the 15th century published in the Burke Armorial of London



Coat of arms of Ernest Mercier registered by the Drouin Genealogical Institute in 1954

Honour roll - Governors of A.M.A.N.

Name	Occupation	Residence	Admission
Ernest Mercier	Founding	Président of A.M.A.N.	1999
Pierre-Paul Mercier	Administration	Saint-Lambert, Qué.	2000
Alain Mercier	Communications	Sillery, Qué.	2000
Charles Mercier	Engineering	Québec, Qué.	2000
Christine Mercier	Teaching	Québec, Qué.	2000
Louis Mercier	Actuariat	Saint-Bruno, Qué.	2000
Pierre Mercier	Engineering	Saint-Bruno, Qué.	2000
Suzanne Mercier	Commerce	Montréal, Qué.	2000
Lucienne M-Croteau	Teaching	Bonnyville, Alta	2001

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	Jean-Guy Mercier (#1417), Sainte-Foy	Tél.: (418) 650-3874	E-mail: « claudette@fortin.com »
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	Thérèse Mercier (#455), Montmagny	Tél.: (418) 248-4504	
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Records:	André Mercier (#189), Québec	Tél.: (418) 683-3959	E-mail: « and.mercier@videotron.ca »

This newsletter is named after the kingdom of Mercia which existed from the 7th to the 10th century. It was one of the seven original kingdoms constituting England. The inhabitants of that territory must have been called Mercians (or Mercien in French). We are proud to perpetuate that name today

Membership dues

Annually: \$25.

Life membership, 65 years and older: \$250.

Life membership, less than 65 years of age : \$400.

Governor: \$1,000.

Those amounts are in U.S. currency for U.S. residents and in euros for European residents

AMAN,

P.O. Box 10090, Sainte-Foy Branch,
Québec, (Québec), Canada, G1V 4C6

Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord

Internet: « genealogie.org/famille/mercier »
E-mail: « mercier.aman@hotmail.com »

Editor's page

Jean-Louis, our president, invite you to come and join with him in Chambly for our next annual members' meeting on August 19. The full text of his message is on page 4.

The pleasant site of the Chambly Bassin has been chosen to hold our next annual members' meeting. The Fort of Chambly is strategically located at the foot of the rapids on the Richelieu River as it flows into the Bay of Chambly.

With the current issue, we continue the historical review of the Fort of Chambly that we began in the last issue. This last instalment brings us up to current times.

Last year, we honoured Honoré Mercier at the base of his monument in front of the Québec parliament building. However, we never explored events that lead to the inauguration of that monument. We publish in this issue an official document extracted from the website of the Québec Government which also gives information on the artist whose services were retained for the conception of the monument.

On page 11, we remind members who have not yet forwarded the payment of their annual due to do it now. Individual reminders are no longer mailed, and it is important to follow instructions published in *Le Mercien*.

Our association exists through its members and is at their service. Your membership is precious to us, and we invite you to get in touch with us to express your opinion on ways in which we could best accomplish our mission. You have our postal and e-mail addresses, as well as the telephone number of each member of the board of directors. Better still, come and meet with us on August 19.

We always like to meet with you and to hear from you.

Moreover, *Le Mercien* is open to publish news and events about your families.

Pierre-Paul Mercier

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The President's message

Dear Members,

Another year has already passed, and I wish to thank all the members of the board of directors for their support during the year, as well as all the many volunteers who assisted us in the different activities throughout the year.

I wish you a pleasant summertime. Take this occasion to meet with your relatives and invite them to join the association. The younger generation is important for the survival of our association.

Our next annual meeting will take place in Chambly on August 19, 2006.

I look forward to meeting you on that occasion and thank you for your interest in our association.

Jean-Louis Mercier

Annual Meeting of AMAN (2006) Notice of convocation

The members of The Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord Inc. are invited to attend the twenty-second annual general meeting which will be held on August 19, 2006 at The Fourquet Fourchette Restaurant located at 1887 Bourgogne Avenue, Chambly, Québec.

Agenda

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1- Opening remarks | 7- Ratification of actions by the members of the board of directors |
| 2- Order of business | 8- Election of directors |
| 3- Minutes of the last meeting | 9- Other business |
| 4- Report by the president | 10- Adlournment |
| 5- Report by the treasurer | |
| 6- Appointment of an auditor | |



Short History Lesson About Fort Chambly

The Conquest: Part of a World War

Over the centuries, most of the wars involving New France and the 13 colonies actually began in Europe. However, the war known as the Seven Years' War, and that ended in the Conquest, was an exception.

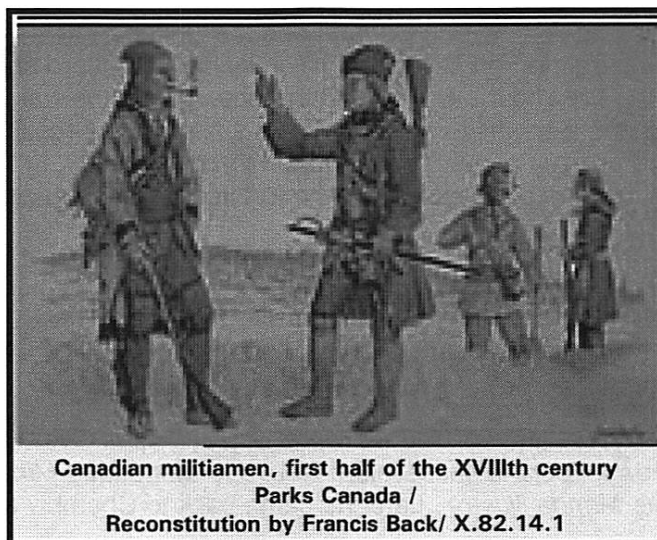
The first clash of this war took place in America, in the Ohio Valley on July 3, 1754. A detachment of French, of Canadians and of Indians took Fort Necessity.

In Europe, the war between France and England started in 1756 and played itself out on various fronts: America, the Antilles, West Africa and the East Indies. It was a war for world supremacy. In America the conflict was over territorial expansion. The English colonies were starting to feel the squeeze on the land they saw as theirs. They wanted to move out towards the west but ran into the borders of New France. Therefore England decided to take drastic measures to chase the French off the continent.

One of the three English offensives followed the tactical route up the Hudson River into Lake Champlain and on to the Richelieu River. Fort Chambly was square in the middle of the conflict. It also provided supplies to forts Carillon and Saint-Frederic to the south of Lake Champlain.

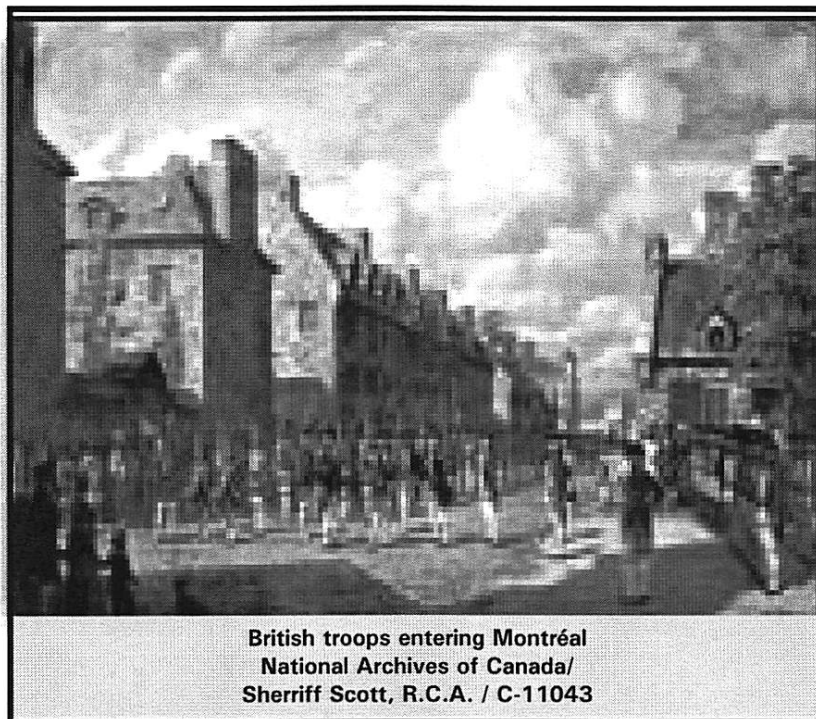
The British forces, superior in number, moved in on the French from all sides. On September 18, 1759, they captured Quebec. On September 1, 1760, they took Fort Chambly after having captured, one by one, all the French forts along the Richelieu River and Lake Champlain. On September 8, 1760 New France capitulated.

The Seven Years' War closed with the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Under the terms of the treaty, France turned over most of its possessions in America, and this marked the beginning of British reign in Canada.



The British at Fort Chambly

After the Conquest in 1760, the British moved into Fort Chambly. At the time, the 13 English colonies to the south were becoming increasingly prosperous and, with the hope of becoming independent, decided to unite forces to throw off the yoke of the British. The threat of invasion swept over Canada. The Americans started their attack on Canada in early September, 1775. They occupied Fort Chambly over the winter of 1775-1776. In the spring, after their defeat at Quebec, the American army had to retreat back towards the south and the British once again took over the post at Chambly.



In 1812, war broke out once again between Canada and the United States. The British sent in troops and built a military complex around Fort Chambly, which included a guard house and barracks for the infantry, the artillery, the cavalry and the Board of Ordnance. During the war, up to 6000 soldiers were stationed at the fort. When the war was over in 1814, fort activities progressively diminished. The British occupied the place sporadically and then abandoned the fort in 1860. In 1876, the military installations at Chambly were all auctioned off, except for the fort itself and the guard house.

Joseph-Octave Dion, A Man of Passion

Joseph-Octave Dion (1838-1916) was born in Chambly and studied at the college there. Around the age of 18, he moved to Montreal and entered the world of journalism. Over the years he would become editor of different newspapers in succession: *Nouveau-Monde*, *La Minerve*, *Étendard*. He also wrote for *La Patrie* and the *Monde illustré*. Later he came back to Chambly as a correspondent for *La Minerve*.

In 1875, Dion started developing an interest in saving the old fort that had greatly deteriorated over the years. He loved history and was a regular contributor to the *Bulletin des recherches historiques*. He also had an interest in horticulture and was an avid promoter of colonization and agriculture.

Joseph-Octave Dion was at the heart of the ideological change that was taking place in French Canadian society. He became an ardent defender of the traditional model of rural Christianity in this land. He would devote the rest of his life to the saving and restoration of fort Chambly. Towards the end of his career, Joseph-Octave Dion was honoured by the Ministry of Public Instruction of France and was named an Officer of the Academy. He died on February 12, 1916, at fort Chambly where he had lived for nearly 35 years.

There is no doubt that without his devotion to saving this precious artefact of New France, fort Chambly would be but a mere memory.



The preceding material and illustrations have been extracted from the Parks Canada website which we encourage you to visit at the following address:
« www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/qc/fortchambly »

Honoré Mercier

Historical circumstances relating to the erection of his monument

Short biography of the man honoured

Collectively, we remember Honoré Mercier as *great patriot*. He was born on October 15, 1840, in Saint-Athanase, in the Iberville County, at a time when the French Canadians suffered the impact of the Union Act. This village was located close to Saint-Denis and Saint-Charles on the Richelieu River where the rebellion of 1837-1838 took place, and time had not erased the memory of very painful events.

The parents of Honoré, Jean-Baptiste Mercier, a farmer, and Marie Timineur, had sheltered some of the patriots and had served jail sentences for their actions. Therefore, Honoré was influenced by the proud and patriotic spirit of his family at a very early age.

In spite of his modest origin, Honoré Mercier underwent classical studies at Collège Sainte-Marie in Montréal. In 1862, he moved to Saint-Hyacinthe and worked as a journalist for the *Saint-Hyacinthe Courier*, a local newspaper. That newspaper will become the first media he used in his political aspirations. At the same time, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1864. He practiced as a lawyer in Saint-Hyacinthe from 1864 to 1881.

His political career began at the same time as the idea of the confederation of Canada was launched. He was first associated with the Conservative Party but left in order to promote the new project of the confederation which was adopted in 1867. His next commitment was to defend the interests of French Canadians within the new confederation. He ran successfully in 1872 and became a politician. He ran again in 1874 but was defeated.

His first major political move was to join the law firm of Henri-Gustave Joly who was the then Premier of Québec. This change in political level gave

him the opportunity to get closer to the general public which already admired him. He was then assigned a prominent role by the premier. The party in power did not a majority, but Honoré Mercier was an efficient speaker and he managed to have many bills passed by parliament. On October 30, 1879, Chapleau came to power. He was a fierce enemy of Mercier. In 1883, Mercier became chief of the opposition. Soon after, Mercier's speeches showed the inadequacies and failures of the Chapleau administration and forced an election in 1886. Honoré Mercier was then elected premier of Québec.

He lead a majority government, but his party ranks included liberals as well as dissatisfied conservatives. In his efforts to unite those two factions, he coined his motto: "Let's cease our fratricidal quarrels and let's be united". From 1886 to 1891, he led the province. Amongst his most important achievements, history will remember the widening of the provincial territory to the north, the reorganisation of the education system through the opening of trade and crafts schools, the colonisation of the territory under the management of Mgr Labelle, the development of agriculture and road work to reach new settlers, his ability to work with the clergy which still had a major influence and, finally, his cooperation with France in order to obtain some of the capital required for his various projects.

In 1892, the scandal related to the Baie des Chaleurs railway development project impacted on his government. At first, he dismissed accusations levelled at him as not serious and unfounded. Ultimately, the many political enemies he had made through his vitriolic speeches ganged up on him and lead to his downfall. He ultimately lost everything: his position, his wealth and the support of the population who had loved him so much.

At the trial that followed, he was declared not guilty for lack of evidence. He had managed to save the

that he still had: his honour.

He then retired from politics but attempted to return in 1893. However, he was no longer the same man. His public speaking ability had almost disappeared.

Just before dying, he said:” I will quit too early or too late. Too early because I did not have time to do all my projects for the province. Too late, because if I had left three years earlier, I would not have had to suffer the moral and physical tortures that I have been suffering since 1891.

Honoré Mercier was voted in 1909 by the Lomer Gouin government some 15 fifteen years after Mercier’s death. Such a decision had been highly contested because of the short period of time since then. The memory of a Mercier disgraced by a scandal and having made many political enemies was still present. Moreover, one of the newspaper reported at the time that Mercier was the father-in-law of Gouin, the then Premier, and this did not sit very well with public opinion. The Honorable Mackenzie, then treasurer of the province, replied that it was most appropriate that the erection of the



He died at the age of 54, on October 1894. Shortly after, Lomer Gouin, his son-in-law, became the premier of Québec and implemented many of the projects engineered earlier par Honoré Mercier

monument took place during the premiership of someone who was close to him and who so effectively implemented many of the programs so dear to him.

The inauguration of the monument

The erection of the monument commemorating

In spite of opposition to the project, the idea moved forward. Three sculptors were invited to submit proposals and a model of the monument: Paul

Chevré, Alfred Laliberté and Philippe Hébert. During the week of November 17, 1909, sketches were published in *Le Soleil* newspaper of Québec City. The model presented by Chevré presented Mercier speaking to a crowd to rally them. At the base, a woman scattering the fruits of plenty and a farmer harvesting a wheat crop. Laliberté's proposal presented Mercier more as a democratic leader. Hébert's model had a striking resemblance with Mercier, but it was not chosen. Upon the recommendation of architect M. Marchand who had a good reputation for his artistic judgment, Paul Chevré of French origin was commissioned to undertake the project. There again, government was criticised for disregarding Québec art.

Paul-Romain Chevré was born in Brussels of French parents. He likely died in February 1914. In 1897, he was awarded a travel award and received a bronze medal during the Paris universal exhibition in 1900. His works included five monuments in French Québec: Champlain in 1898, Mercier and Garneau in 1912. In 1913, he was commissioned by France for a monument erected in Viger Square in Montréal. He also undertook to make a statue of the Holy Heart to be erected in front of the parish church of Lévis. He died before completing the work which his associates and his father finished.

The artist

Paul Chevré completed Mercier's monument in July 1911 and it arrived in Québec City in October. It was erected on November 8 in front of the parliament building and still stands at the same place today, but its official inauguration took place only on June 25, 1912. The event took place as part of a series of events organised by the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society of Saint Sauveur to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of its founding. The Québec City newspaper *La Vigie*, published the program of festivities for that particular weekend: "Sunday 23, 1912, a mass for the patron Saint, Saint-Jean-Baptiste, unveiling of a statue at the Saint-Pierre market place, in memory of Rev. Father Durocher, a patriotic banquet in Saint-Pierre Hall. Monday June 24, solemn opening of the first convention on the French language in Canada in the local military drill hall. Tues-

day June 25, unveiling of a monument erected in the memory of Honoré Mercier in front of the parliament building.

The unveiling of the Mercier monument was the highlight that people had been awaiting for so long. A crowd of close to 10,000 attended the event. The following day, the Québec City newspaper *Le Soleil* reported that people came from everywhere regardless of political party ties and from every walk of life; it was a celebration for the people and everyone took part in it. There were conservatives and nationalists fraternising with liberals to honour the memory of someone who was no longer a party leader but was a patriot, a friend of everyone, loved and respected by everyone who loved their province.

There were several public speeches, as it was a common practice at that time. Alexandre Taschereau, then the Minister of public works in the Gouin cabinet, presided over the ceremonies. He sketched the career of Honoré Mercier and highlighted his achievements. Then Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Sir F. Langelier did the unveiling. Then Messrs C. Langelier, Justice of the Peace, A. Turgeon, Chairman of the Legislative Assembly of the province, M. Delvin, the Minister of Colonisation, Mines and Fisheries, M. Mackenzie, the Treasurer of the province, H. Laferté, a lawyer representing the liberal youth wing, and, at the end, Honoré Mercier Jr, all delivered eloquent speeches.

The preceding article is a translation and adaptation from a French document published on the website of the Québec Government. Its address is:

["http://collections.ic.gc.ca/quebec/monuments/mercier/historique"](http://collections.ic.gc.ca/quebec/monuments/mercier/historique)

A reminder: The annual due

As of June 28, almost two third of the members had forwarded their annual contribution, and we thank you very much.

Those who have not done so yet may use the enclosed return envelope.

We would appreciate your presence at the annual meeting on August 19, if possible. Otherwise use the return envelope to forward your annual due, if you have not already done so.

If we do not receive your annual due by the end of August, your name will be withdrawn from the mailing list of Le Mercien, and we would hate to do that.

There will be no other notice. Therefore, we count on you.

Of course, governors and life members are exempt from the annual dues. This notice does not apply to them.

One member at a time

We are pleased to welcome

Mrs Michaëlle Stetsko of Radium Hot Springs, B.C. (#1478)

Sincere condolences to their families

Diane Garon-Mercier	May 4th, 2006	Sainte-Foy, Qc
Jean-Paul Mercier	May 26th, 2006	Farnham, Qc
Georgette Mercier	May 13th, 2006	Cap-Chat, Qc
Antoine Mercier	May 12th, 2006	Trois-Rivières, Qc
Yvette Blondeau-Mercier	June 17th, 2006	Verdun, Qc



Directions for Chambly

In **Chambly**, there are **road signs** indicating the **fort's location**.

From Montréal:

By Champlain Bridge:

Highway 10 East;
Exit 22 (Chambly - Saint-Jean-sur-le-Richelieu);
Follow Chambly direction; it will lead you to Fréchette Blvd.
At the end of Fréchette Blvd, turn right on Bourgogne St.
The fort will be on your left not too far after the bridge.

By Jacques-Cartier Bridge:

After the bridge, take the exit for Taschereau Blvd.;
From Taschereau Blvd, take the exit for Highway 116 - Saint-Hubert;
Then take the exit 8 for Highway 30 West, Brossard direction;
Take exit 115 Cousineau Blvd.- Chambly Road;
Turn left on Road 112 east direction (Chambly Road);
Turn left on Fréchette Blvd;
At the end of Fréchette Blvd, turn right on Bourgogne St.;
The fort will be on your left not too far after the bridge.

By the Louis-Hippolyte-Lafontaine Tunnel:

Highway 20 direction;
Take Exit 125 for Highway 30 West, Brossard direction;
Take Exit 115 Cousineau Blvd.- Chambly Road;
Turn left on Road 112 east direction (Chambly Road);
Turn left on Fréchette Blvd;
At the end of Fréchette Blvd, turn right on Bourgogne St.;
The fort will be on your left not too far after the bridge.

From Québec:

By Highway 20 West:

Exit 112 Road 223 South;
Turn left on Fréchette Blvd.
At the end of Fréchette Blvd, turn right on Bourgogne St.;
The fort will be on your left not too far after the bridge.

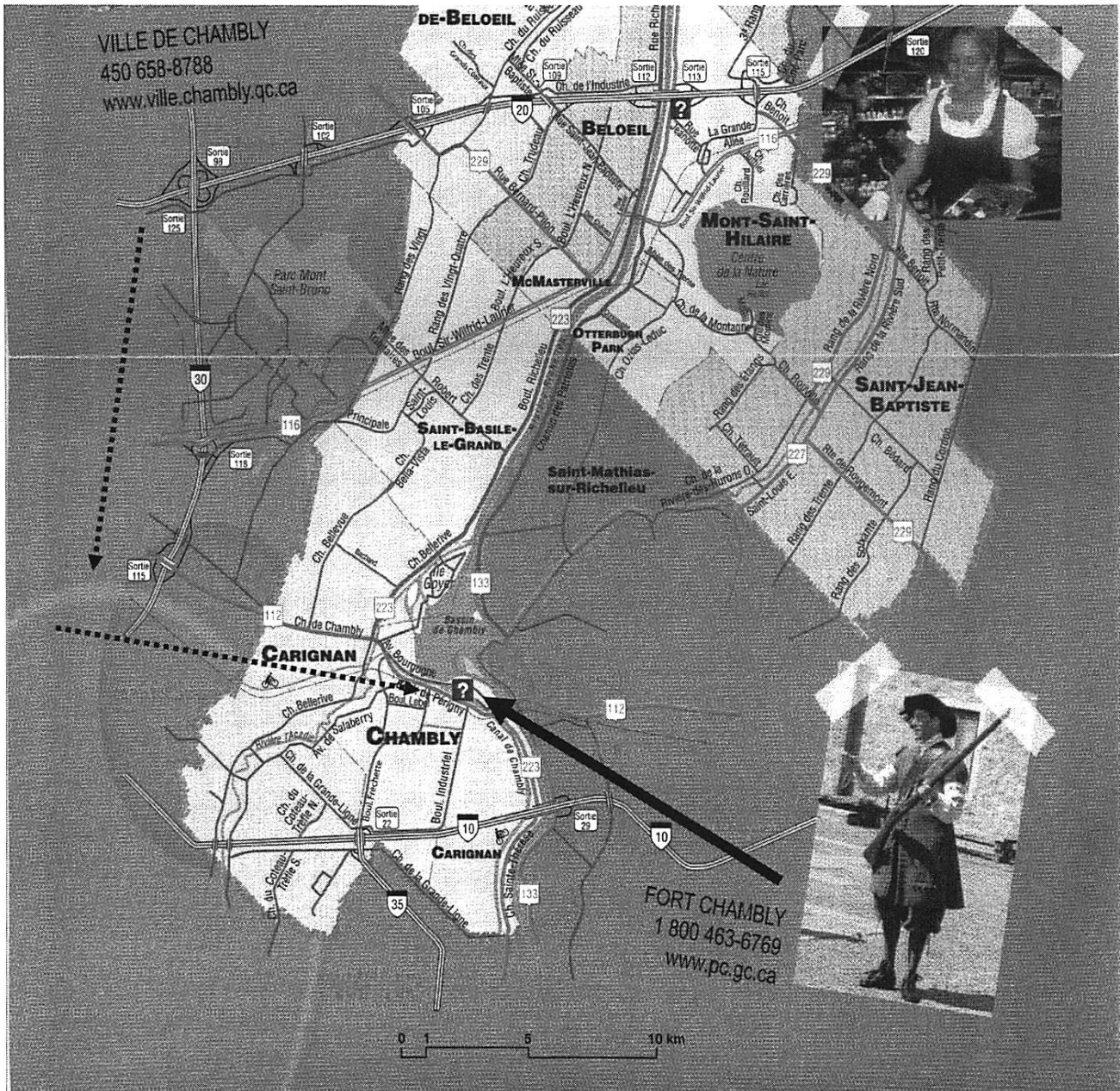
By bus

From Downtown Terminus (Montréal) or Longueuil Terminus
The Conseil intermunicipal de transport Chambly-Richelieu-Carignan (CITCRC) offers a public transit service from Montréal/Longueuil to Chambly. There is a bus stop in front of the fort at the corner of De Bourgogne and Du Fort Streets.

If you want more information about the schedules and fees, check out the CITCRC's web site:
www.citcrc.amt.qc.ca or call them at the (514) 877-6003.



All roads lead to Fort Chambly



(The map above has been reproduced from the Tourist Guide of the Richelieu Valley for 2006-2007)



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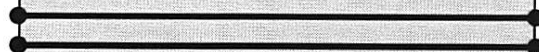
Meeting place

(Around 09:00 hours)
for the annual meeting
and the lunch to follow



After lunch,
we walk
across the parking lot
to Fort Chambly

we meet around 14:00 hours
at the entrance gate

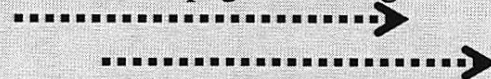


For those who need

Hotel accommodation

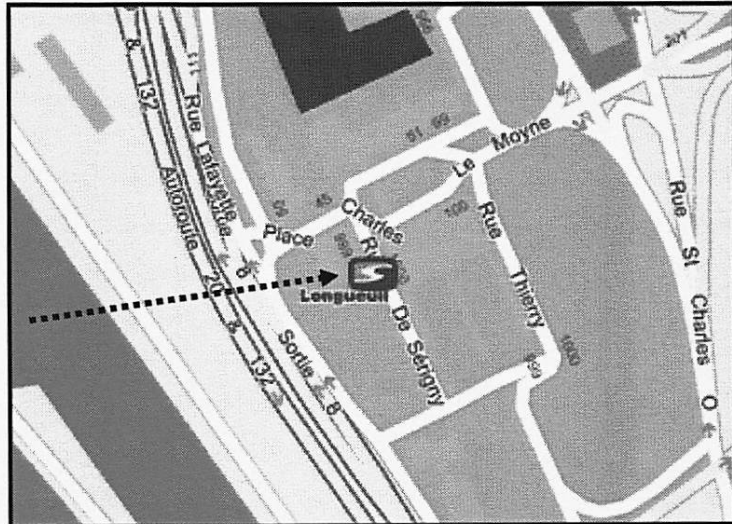
There are two suggestions

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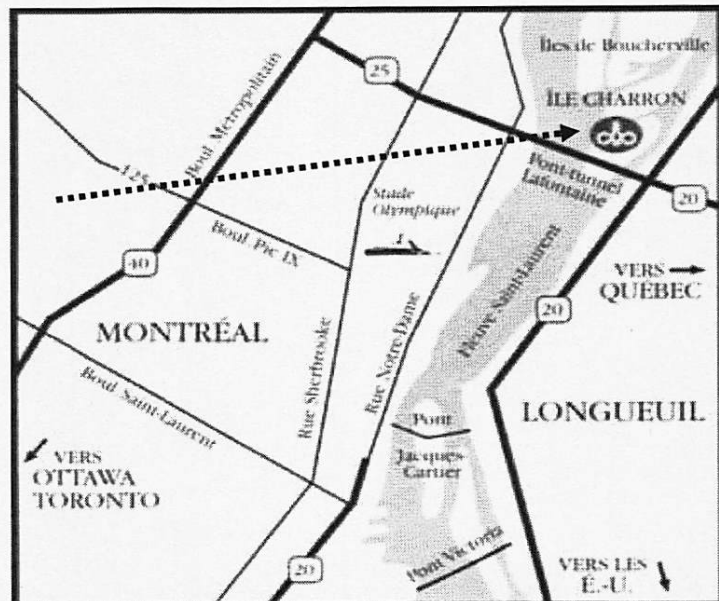


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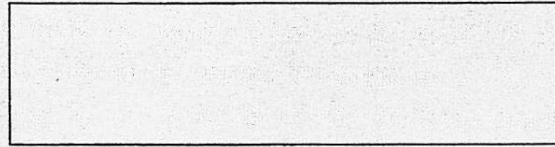


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