

# Beet it! New de-icing product being tested on Quebec highway

By SHIRLEY NADEAU

The Ministry of Transport has been doing a study this winter on a 40-kilometre stretch of Highway 20 near Rivière-du-Loup, between Notre-Dame-du-Portage and Cacouna. Being tested is a new, environmentally friendly de-icing and anti-icing product made from an extract of sugar beet juice mixed with road salt.

Actually, the ingredient being mixed with the road salt is a by-product of sugar beets—a de-sugared liquid usually fed to animals or simply flushed down the

in a pond which thereafter never froze.

The pilot project will permit the Ministry of Transport to evaluate the advantages of this product compared with the usual de-icing products, salt, sand or a mixture of the two. The Ministry will also analyse various technical aspects of the application procedures.

This particular section of Highway 20 is a good one to test the product on, because of its climate and geography. It is in a rural area exposed to strong winds, one of the factors that contributes to ice formation on the roadbed.



Sugar beets used in bio-degradable GEOMELT



Photo courtesy of GEOMELT

Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

drain—that can withstand freezing temperatures down to -34C. Legend has it that the vegetable's unique quality was discovered by a farmer who dumped his beet residue

This product has been used on Ontario roads for the past eight years. In Quebec, the Lower St. Lawrence region is studying this 100% organic and biodegradable

product for the first time. Use of the product on roads is not harmful to vehicles as it consists of a 50-50 mixture of extract of sugar beet juice extract and rock salt. The resultant mixture is therefore less corrosive to vehicles than the usual untreated salt. It will also cause less damage to cement and metal structures

such as highway overpasses. The product will not stain the bodywork of vehicles; a simple wash will remove any trace of splashes.

According to the company manufacturing the de-icing product, GEOMELT alone reduces the corrosiveness of salt by from 50% to 60%. Costs of materials, labour

and fuel are lower because each load of the mixture goes 30% further, and the residue helps prevent further ice and snow from bonding to the pavement for the next two or three days.

The main objectives of the pilot project are to increase highway safety, first of all, by preventing the formation

or adhesion of ice to the roadway, and secondly, by the product's ability to melt snow and ice. There will also be ecological benefits with this plan as use of the salt and beet juice mixture will mean that less untreated salt is used.

## Saint-Grégoire – Culture across the bridge

By CHRIS LEPAN

Beyond the factories of Trois-Rivières, just across the Pont Laviolette to the other side of the St. Lawrence River, lies the small village of Saint-Grégoire, a place where history is never forgotten.

A streak of lightning magnifies the lustre of the bronze steeples of the church, possibly the beating heart of the

village of Saint-Grégoire, and announces our arrival, after a \$30 cab ride from downtown Trois-Rivières.

Saint-Grégoire, located in the department of Beauce, Quebec, was the first amalgamated city in the province and the largest territorially until 2003. Though the population of the town itself is quite small, its Acadian presence is unmistakable. Inside the old

windmill, located behind the church, the official historical tour begins (\$5).

No longer accepted by the British in Nova Scotia, Acadians started to settle this area in 1755. Follow the series of red, blue, and yellow signs from the windmill to the church and onward through history in the neighbourhood of petite cottage homes, many decorated with kitschy knick-


knacks. In front of some you will find information panels with remembrances and photographs of the town of old.

Try to count the Acadian flags throughout the town. Find the home of local celebrity and jack-of-all-trades, Jacques Désillets, the former owner of the Telephone Company, florist, restaurateur, hotel owner, and barber.




Photo Chris Lapan

CONTINUED ON 3


  
**COTÉ TASCHEREAU  
 SAMSON DEMERS**  
 Notaries, title attorneys  
 and legal advisors  
**STUART WRIGHT, L.L.L.**  
 871 Grand Allée W., suite 100, Quebec, G1S 2L1  
 Tel: 688-9375 Fax: 688-9967

**BMO Nesbitt Burns**  
  
 Tel: (418) 647-5987  
 Fax: (418) 647-1775  
 1-800-680-3124  
 arthur.aron@nbpcd.com  
**Arthur Aron MBA**  
 Senior Investment Advisor  
 Membre de BMO Groupe financier

The answer to your printing needs  
 Tous vos besoins sur papier  
  
**Bobby Irving**  
 1985-B Ave. du Sanctuaire  
 Beauport, Quebec  
 G1E 4E2  
 Tel: (418) 666-3670  
 Fax: (418) 666-1747  

- Business cards
- Pamphlets
- Circulars
- Letterheads
- Envelopes
- Invoices
- Printed forms
- Etc.

- Graphic design
- Photocopies

**MARIE FRÉDÉRIQUE** dentistry  
**RIQUE**  
  
**Doctor Marie Frédérique Caron**  
 dental surgeon  
 915 RENÉ-LÉVESQUE WEST, SUITE 109  
 QUEBEC (QUEBEC) G1S 1T8  
 Appointment: 681-0649

  
**W. Rourke Ltd.**  
 Founded in 1928 and incorporated in 1946, Is proud of  
 its continued service to the community  
 for the past 75 years.  
 (418) 687-2440  
 • Building • Buying • Selling • Renovating • Renting •

  
**La Maison Anglaise**  
 et International  
 English and Spanish Books  
**Your Anglo Book Store**  
 Place de la Cité, 164-2600, Laurier blvd.  
 Quebec city (Quebec) G1V 4T3  
 Phone : 418 654-9523  
 Outside : 1 800 228-5818 Fax : 418 654-2091  
 collectivites@lamaisonanglaise.com www.lamaisonanglaise.com

# Homage to haggis goes off without a hitch

By MICHAEL BOURGUIGNON

Depending on whom you ask, you can call him Robbie Burns, Rabbie Burns or simply 'the Bard' – just as long as you don't call his followers late to supper. More than 60 such devotees honoured the memory of Scotland's national poet during this year's annual Robbie Burns Night at the Quebec Garrison Club.

"It's an important event because Burns is the most important poet to Scottish people," said Marc Lestage, an Officer of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, Fort St. Andrew's Garrison, the organizers of the Jan. 22 soirée.

Lestage, who has attended every local Burns Night since the first one was held in 2003, exemplified the cross-cultural nature of the crowd, a nod to the Scottish blood that courses through the veins of many a Québécois. "My mother was a Ross," he said. "I'm proud of that."

Lestage had the honour of delivering a French version of the Address to a Haggis, the traditional recitation of Burns' ode to the otherwise oft-maligned dish of organ meat mixed with oatmeal, spices and such all stuffed into a sheep's stomach. "It was a poor man's dish,

leftovers mainly from sheep; it's best not to know what's in it," quipped Hamish Williamson, a born-and-bred Scotsman, long-time Quebec City resident and Robbie Burns aficionado.

The son of a coal miner, Williamson left his hometown of Fife in 1961 to settle in Quebec City, where he enjoyed a 35-year career as a naval architect. In recent years he has parlayed his knowledge of Burns' poems and the rites of the traditional Robbie Burns Supper into a steady annual engagement.

"I've sort of become an expert, though I would never call myself that," said Williamson, whose animated performance of the Address to a Haggis helped set the festive tone of this year's event.

Burns was by no means the only poet to come out of Scotland but, to Williamson, he was the master.

"Burns had a way with words, as much in English as in broad Scots," he said. "He had a gift."

The annual supper gives the city's English-speaking community an opportunity to celebrate that gift, along with its own history and heritage.

"The major problem in Quebec City for anglophones is that we've become a real minority," Williamson said when asked

about the changes he's seen over the decades. "We have to make ourselves heard and seen. Events like this are one way to keep our language, culture and customs alive."

Even if everyone is Irish on Saint Patrick's Day, or so the saying goes, not everyone becomes a Scot on Robbie Burns Night.

Guest speakers Stephen Burke, Chair of the Central Quebec School Board, and Deputy Mayor Michelle Morin-Doyle proudly mentioned their Irish roots as they recited their toasts to the 'laddies' and the 'lassies' – another Burns Supper tradition and one of this year's highlights thanks to the repartee between the two school board colleagues.

Both drew laughs for their respective selections of famous and not-so-famous quotes about men and women, though it was Morin-Doyle – a newly minted Honorary Miliady of the 78th Fraser Highlanders – who plunged the dagger into the heart of the haggis, so to speak, with this gem: "Men are like grapes, and it's the women's responsibility to stomp on them and keep them in the dark until they mature into something we want to have dinner with."

Pre-supper ceremonies



**CITED FOR SERVICE** – Capt.-Lt. Edward (Ted) Gunn, left, accepts the 78th Fraser Highlanders' Meritorious Service Medal from Commanding Officer Erik Plourde, recognizing his ongoing commitment to promoting the Scottish contribution to life in Canada.

included the presentation of a Meritorious Service Medal to Capt.-Lt. Edward (Ted) Gunn, a key organizer of the supper

and long-time promoter of all things Scottish. "I'm very pleased with the event," said Gunn the following

day, adding with a laugh, "Today, I'm just going to take it easy."

## COMMENTARY

# "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"



Ice Canoe Racing Team practicing for the main race during Quebec's Winter Carnival

By BILL COX

This is what came to mind when I saw the canoe on the St. Lawrence River at the Immigration Wharf (Cap-Rouge) or, more specifically La Plage Jacques Cartier. They were practising for the Winter Carnival race to be held at the end of this month and a second race in February. They will be crossing the river and back from Quebec to Levis.

The canoeists had been on the river for two hours paddling in open water but mostly grappling over rugged ice floes. I followed their progress until they arrived at the wharf.

I heard them at first while walking along the beach pathway. They were calling

signals to one another as their canoe moved doggedly up current over ice and very little water on their course. I wasn't sure of what I was seeing when I first spotted them, they looked a little like seals perched on top of a small iceberg. They moved steadily up river but at times, although they made continuous progress on the ice, they remained at the same spot hardly moving. I could imagine the effort these men were making reach their goal – a good lesson of life I believe.

Ice canoeing is one of the toughest sports in the world when the conditions are as they were on this day. The thick ice floes were flowing downriver while the canoe-

ists were going against the current trying to reach the Cap Rouge river tributary and then the wharf where I was waiting with my camera.

Today ice canoeing is only a sport, but years ago it was a means of transportation during winter months before ferries and icebreakers existed. It is still practiced today at Isle-aux-Coudres and other small islands along the St. Lawrence. Rarely do we hear of an accident in this sport because of the experience and security measures taken by the team members.

Calgary is the only City outside Quebec that sends a team to participate in the Winter Carnival races.

I'll see you at the Carnival.

# Saint-Grégoire – Culture across the bridge

CONTINUED FROM 2

Discover who built the inkshuk, the rock formation of an Inuit man.

Bring your best French. The village has a peaceful and relaxing atmosphere but it appears that most residents are not accustomed to a lot of English-speaking visitors. I would not recommend speaking too loudly either, and please, resist the temptation to speak English with your normal outdoor voice. One English sign located in the front window of a house – "NO DOG POOP" – can surely be appreciated.

Nearby, the large 24-hour restaurant offers visitors a wide selection of food. Try the soft ice cream with a generous portion of chocolate-covered vanilla. The poutine is nothing to complain about. The club sandwich is adequate, though the bread and spaghetti sauce are less than fresh.

If you don't have reason enough to cross le Pont Laviolette, add to the list of attractions La Fromagerie l'Ancetre and l'Auberge Godefroy. Bring your credit card to order the best of their typically Canadian menu.



Photo: Chris Lapan

## Dental and Implantology Clinic DR. GEORGES POULAKOS General Dentist



- Friendly practice
- McGill University alumnus
- Certificate in a hospital residency (MGH)
- Member of *Association chirurgiens dentistes du Québec*
- On the board of Directors of *Société dentaire du Québec*
- Complete dental care

Where technology and continued education meet, for the wellbeing of our patients.

4010 Blvd. des Cimes  
Quebec, Qc  
G2A 1M1  
Tel. 842-4005

