

Townshippers Association

Clear skies and clearly living in harmony: Townshippers' Day Magog

Thousands gathered at Merry's Point at the heart of the City of Magog Saturday, September 18, for Townshippers' Day, the annual one-day festival celebrating the English-speaking community of the Eastern Townships.

After a summer of bleak and rainy days, morning clouds quickly parted, bringing sunny skies. Despite the chill, visitors basked in the rare sunshine. Mount Orford and other surrounding mountains glowed with emerging Fall colours and Lake Memphremagog glittered and danced.

"When I saw those clouds, I was a bit worried," admitted Melvyn Bryant, a Co-Chair of the Townshippers' Day Organizing Committee. "But it didn't take long for the main tent to fill and the crowds to gather around the dance stage, and when I realized the turnout, I thought 'This is awesome!'"

T-Day is very much a homecoming for many English-speaking Townshippers. As one Townshipper put it, "It's about getting together with old friends from far-reaching areas for one special day when we would otherwise not see each other." Present and former Townshippers, many returning from big cities, the US, and outlying regions of the province, were reacquainted and the English-speaking presence of the Townships was made apparent.

T-Day has a new personality each year, one that reflects the character of the host city or town, then T-Day 2004 in Magog certainly reflected its theme, "Living in Harmony - Vivre en Harmonie." Over the years, T-Day has increasingly attracted visitors from the French-speaking community and both languages could be heard from one end of Merry's Point to the other. "There was a real sense of togetherness," someone commented. "I enjoyed the contributions of both communities to the day," said another.

"People really responded to the call 'Living in Harmony-Vivre en Harmonie,'" said Bryant. "That's what we do here and that's why I think we are an example for the rest of the province and Canada."

"It isn't possible - and not desirable either - to live in isolation. Quebec's different cultural groups have a great deal to learn from each other," said Heather Bowman, President of Townshippers' Association, the non-profit organization that spearheaded the creation of the first Townshippers' Day in 1980. "We can create a win-win situation by working together. We can build something great together, a harmonious open society."

Another special aspect of this year's Day was the 25th anniversary celebration of the Association. It included a line-up of nine past presidents, a flight of doves and an anniversary cake.

People were especially pleased with the location and having all of the activities, entertainment and exhibits on one beautiful site. The enormous white main tent, which resembled the sails of a ship, housed the majority of artisans, exhibits, a silent auction and entertainment area and added to the feeling of intimacy of the day. The overall feedback from visitors and participants was that the event was well-organized and lacked nothing in the way of things to do, see, eat and learn.

For more information about Townshippers' Day, contact Townshippers' Association at 566-5717, toll free 1-866-566-5717, or email ta@townshippers.qc.ca

Source: Tanya Bolduc

"Townshippers Day" keeps on getting better, year by year, and the 2004 event at Magog had to be the very best yet!



The environment was on everyone's mind....



At the senior citizens booth older people got good information....



Jacques Gaudreau explained role of handicapped people....



In the children's tent youngsters had a great time....

Mayor Poulin extended welcome

When the 25th annual Townshippers Day officially opened on Saturday, Sept. 18th, Magog Mayor Marc Poulin was one of the featured speakers. He thanked the English language community of the Eastern Townships for choosing Magog to celebrate their 125th anniversary and congratulated them on their splendid achievements through the years. His talk was thus:-

"As Mayor of this city, I wish everyone a happy Townshippers' Day on behalf of Magog citizens and our municipal administration. It is a great honor for us to have Townshippers marking their 25th anniversary here in our beautiful surroundings, and indeed a great privilege, realizing that your association was founded here 25 years ago."

"Describing Magog, its complexities and people, Mayor Poulin said, 'Magog has many distinguishing characteristics. Ours is the city having beautiful parks and the longest usable waterfront of all municipalities in the Eastern Townships Ours is one of the fastest growing communities in Québec and the year round home for many of the province's most renowned achievers in business, academics and culture. Magog has gained national and international acclaim as a touristy and holiday center, and is noted for its 'but-stretched hand of hospitality to all who come here to visit or reside.'"

The Mayor stressed Magog's rapid expansion in business and as a manufacturing metropolis, and eluded to the fame brought to the city by the infamous lake monster "Memphré". He ended his short address by saying, "Yes, all these wonderful privileges and advantages, besides being the center where your respected association, the 'Townshippers' had its beginning 25 years ago. We are sincerely grateful for what you have done for the Anglophones of our region, and for identifying with Magog as you have and are doing here today. Remember, you are always welcome here in our fair city, where the 'Townshippers Association' had its beginning 25 years ago."

Mayor Poulin's warm welcome was indeed, a great spark of enthusiasm for those who organized and managed this special day of celebrations.



So proud to be a United Empire Loyalist....



The Cavel family came from Ottawa and the USA to meet....



Ted Rogers explains role of veterans....



Global TV was everywhere at Townshippers' Day....



Lillian and Donald Whitehead were busy feeding people....



...all kinds of pamphlets and good reading given away.



Cloggers were a big hit with crowd....