

Presentation of the 350th Anniversary Benches of Île Perrot

By artist Fabienne Legrand

Based on Lise Chartier's research, President of Société d'histoire et de généalogie de l'île Perrot

Introduction

I would like to thank the Île Perrot 350th Anniversary Committee who invited me to participate in the "Île Perrot 350th Anniversary Benches" project. This project came to life for the 350th anniversary of the concession of Île Perrot intendant Jean-Talon to François-Marie Perrot, on October 29, 1672.

I had to work with constraints that were foreign to me in order to create the drawings that illustrate each of the stories on the benches; that is to say to create exclusively linear drawings. This meant no shadows nor light, as I usually do with acrylic or watercolor. It was therefore a challenge which compelled me to develop a technique never before explored.

Île-Perrot: at the intersection of Boulevard Perrot and Grand Boulevard

Frequented for centuries by First Nations traveling on the Ottawa River and the St. Lawrence River, Teionnhonskwaronte (the triangle-shaped island) was granted in 1672 by the intendant Jean Talon to François-Marie Perrot, governor of Montreal. Bartering with the First Nations began in the vicinity of this intersection. Antoine Lafresnaye de Brucy held a fur trading store near the Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue rapids. He became the owner of the place called "Brucy stronghold" in January 1676. De Brucy also owned two other trading posts: one in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, and the other in Montreal, but the initial one was by far the most important of the three.

In the middle of the 19th century, John Scraire became the owner of the lot you are standing on now. Originally, it was a farm that more or less extended to Sainte-Rose-de-Lima church. The surface design illustrates the gas station operated by Hector Scraire in the 1920s. The family also operated a grocery store at the "4 corners" and lived close by in the family home, near 6th Avenue. The Scraire family have undoubtedly contributed to the growth of the city; until 1962, Grand Boulevard was called Boulevard Scraire. This was the main road across the island to the two ferries, then between the Galipeault and Taschereau bridges in 1926, until the opening of Highway 20 in 1940. The last illustration shows a bit of all this.

I illustrated the original *4-corners*, along with a few workers' houses, and then again, the gas station, and in the forefront, a stone house. I represented the swamps, further north, that were regularly flooded by spring waters on this part of the island, which delayed the development of this part of the island marked by the arrival of the Perrotois in the mid-19th century.

NDIP: opposite the old cemetery of the Sainte-Jeanne-de-Chantal church

You are now standing on the magnificent grounds of the Sainte-Jeanne-de-Chantal church, a place full of peace and beauty, but also history. This lot, on which the church was built, was ceded by Lord Jean-Baptiste Leduc in 1753. But it will take another 20 years before the beginnings of any further construction! Indeed, the mayhem connected to the Seven Year War and the British conquest, as well as the death of Bishop Pontbriand in 1760, will delay construction of any kind. Consequently, Holy Masses only began to be celebrated in 1774.

I chose to illustrate the church as we know it today, but in an earlier era, on a slope instead of the terraced style cemetery; bordered by a path down to the river. Through the trees that border the land, you can see *La Perrot Damoise*, an Inn built in 1754. that has changed both in architecture and raison d'être many times since! You can also see parishioners walking to church, welcomed by the priest.

The following illustration represents Jeanne Pilon who ran the general store inherited from their parents, along with her sister Lucienne. This business, located at an angle from the church, existed for 100 years. The store also boasted a postal and bank outlet, as well as the bus stop to Montreal in the 1960s. Johnny Angel was one of its regular patrons, a farmer from Grande Anse who spent a lot of time at the store, playing cards, but especially courting Jeanne Pilon, whom you see sitting on a stool, behind her counter. Jeanne remained single just like her sister.

As she and her family marked the hearts of Île Perrot residents, a flower was created in her honour: *Mademoiselle Jeanne*, a daylily. Next to this, in memory of the Angel family, a trunk for traveling with a postage stamp from London dated 1860. Johnny Angel was the great-grandson of John Angell, who is identified as the first English-speaking immigrant to have settled on Île Perrot during the mid-19th century.

Pincourt: Bellevue Park, Daoust Bay

This bench honors beautiful Daoust Bay, facing the *Quinchien* Rapids, an indigenous word meaning "Where there are rapids". If you go back to the time of the lordship, you find yourselves in the Moreau stronghold. Hence, it was Lord Jean-Baptiste Leduc who granted the land to his son-in-law in 1780, cooper Valentin Moreau.

Later, the stronghold was divided into two lots. The one where the bench is located was bought by Gédéon Daoust after whom the bay was named; the Bay was located in front of his land. The Daousts built their house on this spot which is now known as Bellevue Park. They lived there for many years. The surface design represents the house which was deemed too costly to restore; it was demolished about ten years ago after the Town of Pincourt bought it.

Real estate development boomed everywhere in the 1950s and 1960s. During this decade, Pincourt approved a subdivision called Bellevue Estate, with its typical period homes that cost less than \$20,000 at the time. You

can also see the century-old house of the LaFlèche family and Jean-Paul LaFlèche, owner of land at the end of which LaFlèche point is located. Today, the lively bay itself is the pride and joy of the folks from Pincourt!

Terrasse-Vaudreuil: Gilles-Dicaire park

Terrasse-Vaudreuil is my home. We know that this part of the island was granted by Lord Jean-Baptiste as a stronghold to his son in 1780. Leduc's son died in Western Canada and it was Jacques Franche / Laframboise who bought the stronghold 10 years later: hence the name *Fief Laframboise*. The surface design represents my vision of the ferry operated by his son François, nicknamed “French” Laframboise.

Until the opening of the bridges in 1925, the tip of Gilles-Dicaire Park saw a number of people crossing the river using a barge, a ferry, or a rowboat and landing near Trestler house, or even on the bridges for the trains.

The locals nicknamed this place “pointe au Brayard”. This word from old French describes the sound a barge makes when docking, a sound that can be compared to someone crying (brailler)! There were several buildings on this site: cabins for storing the equipment necessary for ferry operations, a bakery, a cellar and even two small wooden houses for the Laframboise family and their employees.

The second illustration represents several eras at once. On top, you can see the Powder Magazine with many buildings. The Powder Magazine was the stage for several tragic accidents; the most serious in 1908 left 10 widows and 45 orphans. But there were many others. The one that sealed the end of the factory took place in 1917, at the end of World War 1. Although there were no deaths, it left more than 500 workers jobless. This gives you an idea of the size of the site...

Below, I illustrated from my imagination dentist Alphonse Girouard at the moment when he dreamed up this town 25 years after the explosion. A man with a vision, he bought the CIL land that no one wanted for the symbolic sum of \$1. Then, he devided and sold lots, opening the way for this municipality to take shape. Right next to it, you can see the point and the shoreline, which must have seen a number of indigenous, residents, travelers, villagers and *Terrassois* coming and going.

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