Stephen, the highest peak in the Rocky Mountains at 3 199 metres which towers over the town of Field in British Columbia, which was named after him.

He died on November 29th 1921 at his country home at the age of 92 in his country home in Brocket Hall.

# **George Stephen (1829-1921)**

George Stephen played an important role in the history of Canada.

Son of a carpenter, he was born at Stephen Croft near Croftlass, Scotland in 1829. After his studies, he became an apprentice clothier in Aberdeen. At the age of 21, George Stephen moved to London to work in an important wholesaler of all kinds of fabrics and acquired a precious experience in business trade. In 1850, he immigrated to Canada after being invited by his father's cousin, William Stephen, owner of William Stephen & Co., a wool and cotton manufacturer. He later became partner and owner of the company after William's death. Little by little, he worked his way into the Montreal establishment. In a few years, he became one of the most powerful men in Canada's clothing industry. At the age of 24, he married Charlotte Kane, daughter of Benjamin Kane, commissioner of the Royal Dockyard in Portsmouth England.



His excellent reputation raised him to the presidency of the Bank of Montreal in 1876. He resigned in 1881 and devoted his time and energy to the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. Ltd. created in 1880 with three other Montreal businessmen (Donald Smith, Duncan McIntire and Richard Angus) and was named the company's first president. It is in that same year that started the building his magnificent mansion on Drummond Street.

The construction of the trans-continental railroad did not come without a struggle. In addition to the physical constraints, such as crossing the Rocky Mountains and covering uninhabited stretches of territory, the company faced a number of serious financial crises.



In 1885, George Stephen mortgaged his new house on

Drummond Street to pay his employees and avoid bankruptcy. Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, agreed to loan the CPR \$22 500 000. The last spike was put in at 9:30 am on November 7<sup>th</sup> 1885 at Craigellachie in British Columbia. All their efforts invested ended in success and prosperity returned the next year. The Government was totally reimbursed in March



#### THE STEPHEN'S

The Stephen's first lived in a small stone house located on de La Montagne Street in the middle of a large garden and at the heart of the Golden Square Mile, where the new bourgeoisie settled. The land property extended to Drummond Street with 159 feet in depth and 145 feet in width.

George Stephen's stature demanded the construction of a home worthy of his fortune and fame. Just like his projects, it had to be overwhelming.

In 1880, he chose the most flamboyant building designer of Montreal, Mr. William Tutin Thomas and the well-known General Contractor, Mr. J.F. Hutchison for the construction of his new house to be at 1440 Drummond Street. It took them three years to erect this residence at the fantastic cost of \$600 000. The scale of the project required the services of European artists mainly from Italy and Scotland to conduct the planning and realization of the magnificent interior.

The architecture is very similar of small Italian palaces. The interior has immense rooms, each trimmed with well known wood, oak, walnut, maple, pine and exotic woods, Cuban mahogany, rose wood and Ceylonese satin wood, all hand carved. The house has no less then ten fireplaces, some with onyx, marble, rare wood or hand painted tiles, each graced by beveled glass and solid brass accessories. The lamps, ceiling fixtures, door handles, hinges and even the grids that cover the water heating radiators are 22 karats gold plated. Number of rooms is decorated with a combination of ancient stained and hand painted glass, which make the splendid central stairway even more impressive.

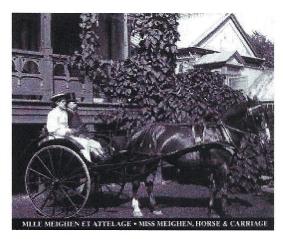


All the materials were used with such meticulous detail that it would cost a fortune in this day of age to reproduce such a marvellous décor. No Montreal home had as extensive exterior and interior decoration as Lord Mount Stephen's house. Nevertheless, the ornaments do not overstep the limits of good taste.

The house resembled a small museum, rare objects, collection pieces, and paintings in perfect harmony with the tapestry and the fine furnishing. Many business meetings and social events were held at the Mount Stephen's palace in 1880.

The English bourgeoisie considered themselves as members of the British Empire and imported everything. George Stephen never really adapted even though he accomplished many great things for Canada. He returned to England with his family in having lived less

then four years in his magnificent mansion. Of inestimable value today, the splendour of his home marks all of those entering it for the first time.

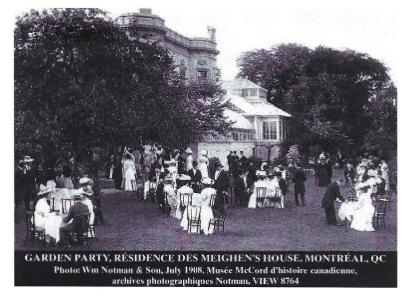


#### THE MEIGHENS

When Lord Mount Stephen left for England, he left his house to Mr. Robert Meighen, president of the Lake Wood Milling Company and husband of his sister Elsie.

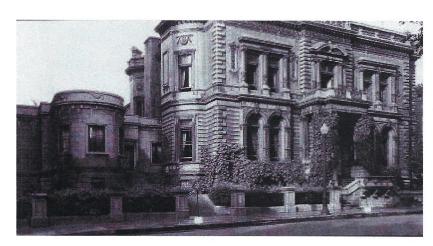
The Meighens bought the residence on October 4<sup>th</sup> 1900. They had three children and lived in the house until their passing in 1911 and 1917 respectively.

Excellent and trusted businessman, Mr. Robert Meighen, participated in the development of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1882 by negotiating the right of way in Ontario and Quebec.



The family lived royally and hosted the aristocracy on passage in Montreal. In 1890, they organized a memorable reception for the duke and duchess of Connaught and Lord Northcote, retired Governor-General of Australia, in 1907. A garden party was held for the Count and Countess Roberts of Kandahar, visiting the Quebec Tercentenary in 1908 and was the occasion for the famous picture taken at the back of the house.

The son, Frank S. Meighen, occupied the house after the passing of Robert Meighen and Elsie Stephen-Meighen. In 1919, he was the host of a dance given for the Prince of Wales, to become Edouard VIII.



After the First World War, the well-known district of the Golden Square Mile was diminishing. Most servants had joined the army. Many were killed or seriously wounded, and others who had tasted freedom worked in munitions factories or were travelling Europe. It was then impossible to maintain the property with minimum staff. The economic crisis and house taxes forced the owners to abandon their houses.



#### THE MOUNT STEPHEN CLUB

Don Mar Realty Limited acquired the Meighen's house in 1926, at a time when many old houses were being demolished. All the furnishings were moved at Mrs Robert Reford, daughter of Robert Meighen, and his son Eric Reford. The land was divided into lots and sold separately for the construction of future business sites.

Now surrounded by huge buildings, the residence has lost some of its imposing image. Nevertheless, everything as been done to preserve the original atmosphere and appearance of the house.

In 1926, a private business Club for men exclusively, was founded by Noah Timmins, J.H. Maher and J.S. Dohan to protect this sumptuous house. They gave it the name of Mount Stephen Club in memory of George Stephen.

A few scrupulous transformations have been done to improve the services offered at the Club. Only the basement, kitchen, washrooms and the winter greenhouse have been modified. All this modernization was carefully done, keeping in mind the beautiful appointment of the house.

In 1927, the windows of the winter greenhouse were replaced by grey limestone, a second front entrance was built in and the back of the building was extended. Those new quarters were reserved for the ladies, who were not allowed in the Club. In 1964, a new bylaw authorized the wives to come in by the main entrance on Thursdays only. It was only in the mid 70's that the rule was abolished and they had definite access

Many well known politicians have been at the Club since it's constitution, Princess Margaret, Princess Benedikt of Denmark, John Diefenbaker, Honourable Pierre-Elliot Trudeau, Honourable Lucien Bouchard, René Lévesque, Honourable Lionel Chevrier, Ms. Louise Harel, Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque, Brian Mulroney and artists like Marjo, Marie-Denise Pelletier, André Gagnon and Ginette Reno. For the past few years, the Club has become a privileged site in Montreal for film productions. Movie stars like Alec Baldwin, Eric Roberts, Pierre Nadeau, Keith Marson, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Richard Chamberlain and many more were among us for just a brief moment.

Just like George Stephen, the Mount Stephen Club pursues the tradition of creating in Montreal a highly praised business place where many local and international decisions are taken. The membership allocations help preserve and maintain de building, which is now part of the Canadian heritage.

Several private dining rooms of great charm will accommodate any number of people from two to over a hundred. This accommodation is at the disposal of members for business meetings, private luncheons or dinners, receptions and cocktail parties. The members benefit the Club's unsurpassed cuisine that can be served in the Main Dining Room, the Bar or simply in private.

The Club organizes social events during the year such as the President's Cocktail, Food Festival, Armistice and the Golf Tournament where members, their spouses and guests are invited. Members are kept in touch with all the various events and activities through the issuance of the Club Bulletin. Membership in the Mount Stephen Club entitles all members to the rights and privileges to affiliated Clubs around the world

Classified as an historical monument since 1975 by the Quebec Ministry of Culture, the Mount Stephen Club now shares history with the public. Musical brunches take place every Sunday followed by a guided tour of the house.

# **ARCHITECTURE**

#### **EXTERIOR**

This impressive Victorian residence is a fine example of Italian Renaissance architecture. The exterior walls are made of Montreal grey limestone beautifully sculpted.

The house has a basement, first and second floor and the attic. A stoned fence along side Drummond Street supports 108 feet of railing ornamented in wrought iron. Two elegant lampposts in wrought iron, converted from gas to electricity, stand at the Main Entrance

The façade is perfectly symmetrical. It has a central section and two

similar lateral sides. The main entrance is made of two flights of stairs joining a third one under a porch formed of four pillars and two pilasters. A balcony made of stone and wrought iron surmounts the porch.

The basement windows are at the lower arch framed with moulded frames and key vaulted. The ground floor windows are framed with pilasters and embellished with a wrought iron handrail. Two ornamented panels on both sides of the twin windows of the upper floor and surrounded with pillars rest on an entablature. The bay window on

the south side has remarkable well-rounded angles. The walls of what used to be the winter greenhouse blend in nicely with the rest of the building.

The doors of the main entrance are beautifully sculpted in red Cuban mahogany. They are 5 inches thick and all its ironwork is 22 karat gold plated.

# **INTERIOR**

In those years, the houses had principal rooms for specials functions for which they would have no use in our modern lifestyle.



#### WINTER GREENHOUSE

The winter greenhouse was attached to the house like any other room. The access was through the south wall of the main dining room. A cast-iron framework covered in glass rested on a stone or cement footing. As it was heated in the winter, it was used to grow exotic plants, which could not otherwise withstand the frigid winters. The greenhouse was crowned with ventilation domes in the shape of cupolas or pagodas. The décor was refined and included rattan furniture, a fountain, a basin and floors covered with ceramics or marble.

#### THE ENTRANCE HALL

The hall was the room beyond the vestibule, which led to all the other rooms of the house. It included the main staircase leading to the upper floor. Guests were greeted here and one could sit and read or simply relax.

# THE DRAWING ROOM

Located on the ground floor it was used for social functions and large family gatherings. This room is the most representative of the era, the largest and most ornate. This room was almost exclusively masculine domains. The library was also the study or office where business meetings could be held. It was also the only place where the master of the house kept his book collection.





#### THE DINING ROOM

The room was used for the noon and evening meals. The size was relative to the master's interest in fine fare

#### THE KITCHEN

The kitchen was located in the basement. Meals were prepared and brought to the ground floor either by the servant's stairway or in a dumbwaiter, which led to a small pantry room before being served.

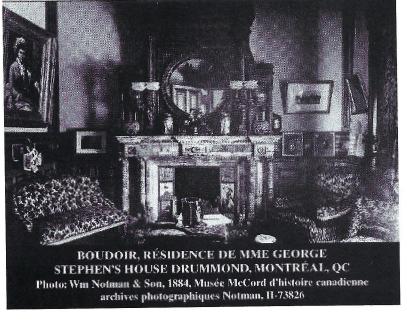
#### THE PANTRY

A small room adjoining the dining room where servants made the final arrangements to dishes before being served. Tea was prepared here and this is where the butler gave instructions

#### THE BEDROOMS

The bedrooms were located on the second floor. In the nineteenth century, the master and his wife had separate bedrooms. You could find the husband's room, the wife, the children, the boudoir and a bathroom for each bedroom.





THE BOUDOIR

#### **GROUND FLOOR**

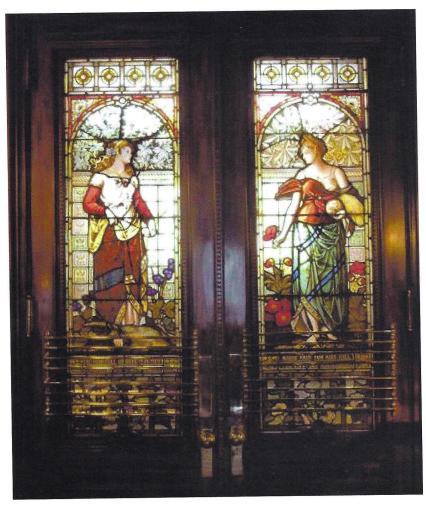
After the house was transformed into a private Club, the rooms were assigned to a different vocation. Names, in reference to personalities in close relation with Lord Mount Stephen, were given to identify each of them. Some of the names have changed during the years. Most of the rooms are now used for meetings where meals can be served.

#### THE VESTIBULE

The ceiling of the vestibule is panelled with mahogany and is 18 feet above the ground. The walls and the floor are of white Italian marble finely chiselled.

A door on the right gives direct access to the library, known today as the Roger's Room.

The vestibule is separated with a partition ornamented with ancient stained glass giving access the Entrance Hall



#### THE HALL

Four Shakespearian scenes are represented on the stained glass windows of the hall's doors, (Romeo and Juliet, Richard III, Cymbeline, As you like it). Above the doors stand Lord Mount Stephen's coat of arms and the famous phrase «True friendship laws are by this rule exprest, welcome the coming, speed the parting guest» which later became the Club's maxim.

The walls and ceiling are panelled with Cuban mahogany. Above the enormous fireplace made of onyx and marble, sits one of two reproductions of the Royal coat of arms borne by the Canadian Pacific train on which King George VI and Queen Elizabeth traveled when they toured Canada in 1939.

The floors and the rest of the house, are made of oak with walnut mouldings

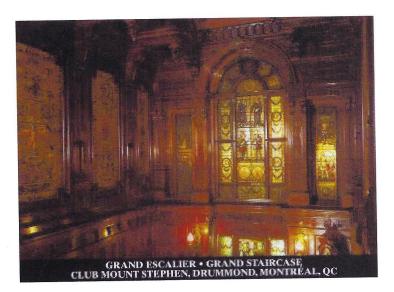


#### THE STAIRWAY

The stairway is the masterpiece of the house. It has two flights of stairs and consists of one major and two intermediary landings. The stairway cage is of Anglo Swiss inspiration. The tapestry panels on a gold-leafed raffia base represent the Roman goddess (Juno, Amor, Venus, Diane, Minerva) and are surrounded with Cuban mahogany panels.

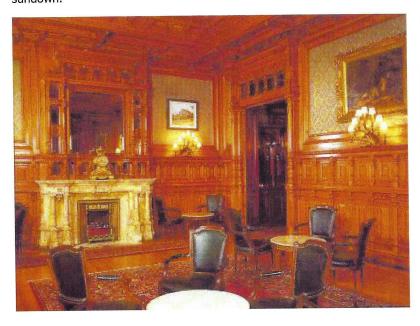


The stained glass windows on the first intermediary landing are over 300 years old. An Austrian artist who never revealed the secrets of his technique made them. The scenes and quotations are of Shakespeare. The central panel represents the six steps of the evolution of man. The "Taming of the Shrew" is represented in the lower window.



Up the grand staircase, set in the ceiling a skylight with an inset of windows illustrating the signs of water, food, fire, health, the twelve astrological signs and the compass rose.

The remarkable grandfather's clock is not from the Stephen's era. It is chiselled in a mahogany tree. The clock dial is made of gold. As time goes by, one can observe the sunrise on the east side and the rising of the moon during sundown.





# THE MAIN LOUNGE

Originally known as the Drawing room, it later became the Concordia Lounge to honour Montreal. One can read "Concordia Salus" on the city's flag inscribed on the scroll below the crest. This room is better known now as the Main Lounge. It is the most opulent room of the house. The intricately carved ceiling and walls are fashioned of

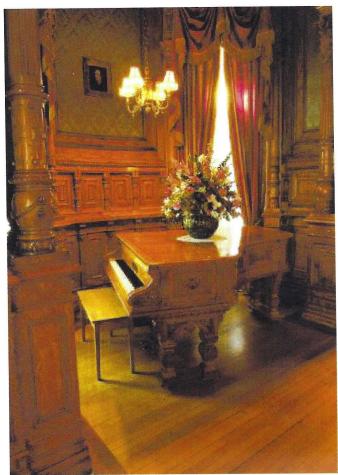
citrus wood from East India also called satinwood from Ceylon. Folding doors between the old and new structure can be closed for private meetings.

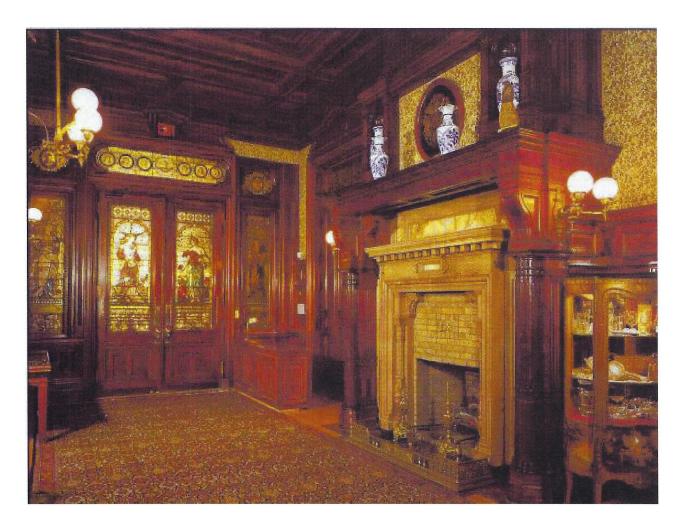
Here is the most elaborate fireplace of the mansion. Made of Italian onyx, it has been exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1897 and was awarded best design. It is mounted with a wooden mantle piece with carved niches designed to hold objects of fine arts. A large mirror surrounded with smaller mirrors tops the entablature. Hand painted tiles surround the hearth of the fireplace. An 1860 baroque clock with a gold plated face sits on top and was given by a member.

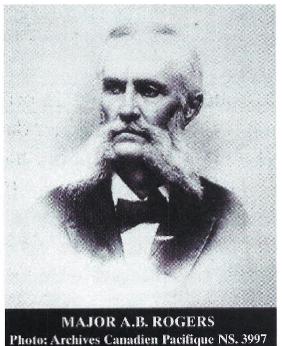
The magnificent piano was custom made to fit exactly in the alcove. It is constructed with the same essence of wood as the walls and ceiling. The well-known Decker Brothers were the authors of this unique and original piece.

The windows are nicely ornamented with stained glass illustrating the themes of poetry, literature, music and embroidery.

The Club's members use the Main Lounge to receive their guests, read, relax and hold cocktails.





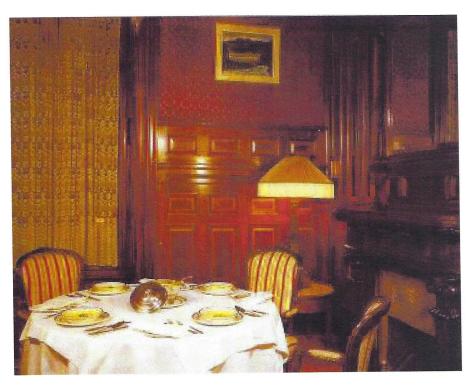


# **RODGERS' ROOM**

An important figure in Canadian history, Major A. B. Rogers, an Engineer, is credited in discovering the Rogers Pass in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Although a passage already existed much to the North, the challenge was to find one closer to the American border in order to prevent the Americans from taking over the transportation of Canadian goods and passengers.

It is said that Major A. B. Rogers went straight to Lord Mount Stephen's home to deliver the exciting news in person, making the announcement in this very room. Thus, the Mount Stephen Club later baptized Lord Mount Stephen's secretary office the Rogers Room in honour of Major A. B. Rogers' great discovery.

When one visited Lord Mount Stephen on business matters, one would not enter into the main hall but pass through a door on the right hand side of the vestibule, leading to the secretary's office. The Rogers Room has walls and ceilings built with English walnut and contrasting panels in burled bird's eye maple. Above the wainscoting an Italian silk tapestry replaces the old, following the same model as the original. The beautiful fireplace and bookcase are both made of rosewood, an exotic fragrant wood of a violet colour. The window shutters are of English walnut while the windowsills are of grey marble. Hanging on the walls one can see a signed photograph of Major A. B. Rogers himself. Also, hanging is a portrait of Lord Mount Stephen himself as well as lithography of Robert Burns, a Scottish poet of the 18th century.



# RÉVÉRAND ALBERT LACOMBE Photo: Archives Canadien Pacifique NS, 5322

This small salon has a room capacity of twelve. It is the most popular of the Club. The walls and ceiling of sculpted into English walnut. A Burgundy tapestry covers the upper walls. A beautiful marble fireplace is on the North side of the room surmounted with a wooden English walnut mantle piece. Stained glass windows on both sides of the fireplace represent dramatic Art Muses (tragedy, comedy, music and poetry).

#### **PÈRE LACOMBE**

The Père Lacombe Salon was originally George Stephen's home office. It was named after Reverend Father Arthur Lacombe, a member of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a Roman Catholic missionary order. His influence and the deep respect of the native people helped the Canadian Pacific in the negotiations of the lands with the Indians. In 1883, during a business diner on the train heading to Calgary, George Stephen resigned from the Canadian Pacific Presidency and nominated Father Lacombe. For a brief moment in history he became the President of an Empire. He continued his mission until 1916, year of his passing. He was 89 years old.



#### THE MAIN DINING ROOM

The Main Dining Room bears the name of William Cornelius Van Horne. Descendant of Dutch immigrants, he was born in Chelsea Illinois 1843. He made his first start in the railway business starting as an office boy in 1857. At the age of 26, Van Horn was already superintendent for the Chicago and Alton Railroad. His devotion and perseverance brings him to the position of General Manager for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad.

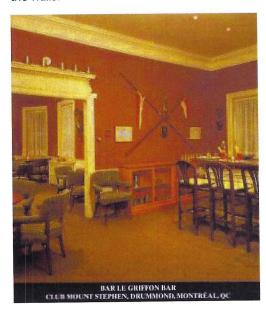


James Hill, executive member at the Canadian Pacific, was

assigned to recruit a candidate for the engineering supervising the construction of the railway. Van Horn accepted the position on December 31st 1881. William Cornelius Van Horne is for a great part responsible for the success of the Canadian Pacific. His perseverance, enthusiasm, futurist visions and his inexhaustible energy accomplished an amazing project. He was the right hand man of Georges Stephen and succeeded to the presidency in 1888 through 1899. This great man has contributed in the commercial success of the company and made it a Canadian institution. Van Horne passed away in 1915. The man has gone but left a great Canadian heritage.

The Main Dining Room is remarkable for its panelled ceiling and wainscoting in quarter cut oak with touches of Birdseye maple. An alcove dissimulates a fireplace with its richly sculpted frame. On the south wall and on the left side of the fireplace, was once an arched opening giving access to the winter greenhouse. The replacement panels were taken from the entrance of the kitchen that was not existent at that time. During the fall and winter season, the portrait of Mrs Elsie Meighen-Reford hangs on that wall. It is sent to the Jardins de Métis, former country house of George Stephen, during the summer.

On both sides of the Annexe's entrance hang the portraits of George Stephen and his wife Charlotte Kane. The Annex's doors were removed to increase the Main Dining Room area. Four feet oak panels cover the lower part of the walls.



#### THE GRIFFON BAR

This south part of the house was the winter greenhouse. In 1927, it was completely renovated and reserved for the ladies quarters.

The name of Madeleine de Verchères, symbol of Canadian heroism, was then given to this salon. At the beginning of the 1690, French colonists were constantly harassed by the Iroquois close allies of the British. Madeleine de Verchères had her first encounter with the enemy at the early age of twelve. During her father's absence, alone with her mother, they resisted two days from ceaseless attacks of their rivals. In 1696, she is again confronted with 45 Iroquois, during a stroll in the forest. Madeleine reaches her father fort and alerts its occupants.

Helped by her two younger brothers and two petrified soldiers, they fought for eight days and saved her father's house. Frontenac rewarded miss Madelon by offering 50 écus for her mother's pension and a grade d'Enseigne for her brother. The courage and bravery she demonstrated won her the title of the Quebec Joan of Arc.

In 1994, the Mount Stephen Club transformed Madeleine de Verchères' room into a bar, after reaching an agreement with United Services Club who was closing its doors. The USC was a social and private Club founded in 1922 for the First World War veterans located in the former residence of Senator Louis-Joseph Forget on 1195 Sherbrooke street

Many members contributed to the project. Known today as the Griffon Bar (fabulous animal with a lion body with wing of an eagle) to honour the Brasserie McAuslan who provided equipment and generous financial support and produces the Griffon beer. One can find a sculpture of a Griffon placed at the entrance of the Bar.

Displays of Crests, weapons and other artefacts from the First and Second World Wars are in the Griffon Bar. A charming corner where one can sit alone or with friends to discuss while having an aperitif, smoking a cigar or simply enjoying a meal deliciously prepared by the chef with a well-suggested wine from the cellar.



# THE ELIZABETH AND THE MARGARET

An extension of the Southeast of the building was constructed and reserved exclusively for ladies. The rooms were named after the Queen Elizabeth and Princess Margaret. They served as dining rooms and were elegantly decorated with pastel colours and furnished in French provincial style. Crystal chandeliers and a central fountain embellished the Elizabeth room.

When corporate memberships were offered in 1975, the rooms were converted into conference rooms. Women were then allowed to use the Club and become active members.

The wall panels are of beige colour trimmed with ivory coloured frames and separated with mirrors. A carpet with floral patterns gives it the final touch. A wooden dancing floor  $16' \times 16'$  is located at the front centre.

French style sliding doors give access to the Margaret Room. This one is used mostly for buffet style catering for special events and as a conference room.

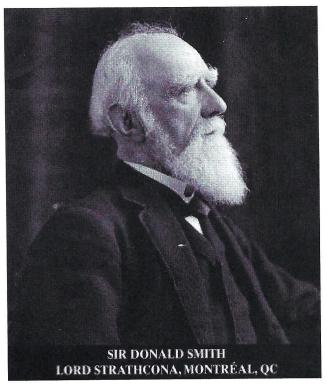
The Elizabeth room has hosted many happy festivities, reunions, weddings and anniversaries.

# **UPSTAIRS**

#### THE HALL

The second floor hall gives access to the former bedrooms now converted into conferences rooms. The ceiling and lower part of the wall are of Cuban mahogany. The upper part of the wall is covered with a beige base floral tapestry. A hug sculpted hall-rack with bevelled mirror and the original George Stephen's rosewood desk. A Japanese temple vase from Satsuma stands on the right hand side of the hall.

The walls and ceiling between the administration office and the Algonquin room are of English walnut and Birdseye maple. The same tapestry covers the upper part of the wall.



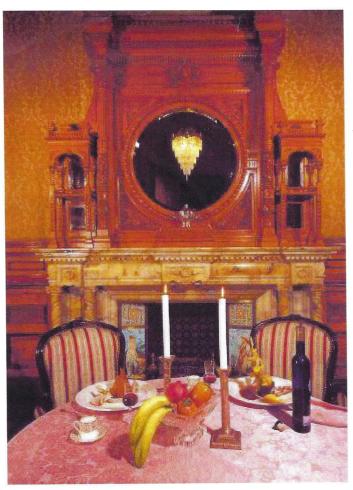
#### THE STRATHCONA

The Master bedroom was named under the Strathcona room in honour of Donald Alexander Smith, knighted in 1886 and elevated to the peerage of Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal 1897.

Cousin of George Stephen, he was born in Scotland in 1820 and immigrated to Canada at the age of 18 upon his uncle invitation, a fur merchant at the Hudson Bay Company. He worked as a clerk and stayed in the company for nearly 30 years. By 1889, he had risen to the position of Resident Governor. He pursued a political career, which brought him in negotiating an agreement with Manitoba's rebels during the Louis Riel crisis. Lord Strathcona was one of the cofounders and shareholder of the Canadian Pacific. The last spike of the transcontinental railway was put in by him in 1885 at Craigllachie. Some of his realisations were the Royal Victoria College for ladies in 1899 for the McGill University, a donation of \$500 000 for the construction of the Royal Victoria Hospital. A monument was inaugurated in May 1907 at the Dominion Square to commemorate a unique cavalrymen in the history of Canada organized for the British Government during the Boers War. Lord Strathcona died in London in 1914.

This majestic room is entirely made out of Birdseye maple and mahogany. In the alcove, bird figures appear on the fireplace's tiles and the stained glass on the windows. The original glassware of Wedgwood and embroidered hand tablecloth from Madeira with George Stephen's initials are exposed in the corner dresser. Official declarations of Lord Mount Stephen knighted by Queen Victoria hang on the walls





#### THE LAURENTIAN

The Laurentian room used to be the boudoir. It has been converted into a conference room with a six guests capacity. No documentation exists concerning the name of the salon. It is believed it was given in relation with the Laurentian Shield where the railroad construction was taken over by William Cornelius Van Horne near North-Bay Ontario.

This room has direct access to the Strathcona room. The walls and ceiling are of Birdseye maple and mahogany panels. Two French doors gives access to a balcony topped with stained glass window depicting the four seasons. Photographies of Lord Mount Stephen and his wife are found on the walls. A magnificent crystal chandelier hangs in the middle of the room.

The fireplace is sculpted into yellow Sienna marble. Feminine figures are hand painted on glazed ceramic tile and flank the fireplace opening. A Ceylon wood coat tops the fireplace with small niches, a central elliptical shaped mirror and two rectangular mirrors on both sides.

#### THE BOARDROOM

The Boardroom is the salon where the Council members meet once a month to vote the Club's bylaws, budget and modifications brought to the memberships. It is also used as a conference room or a private salon.

A floral tapestry covers the upper walls and one can see the pictures of the former Club's presidents. The lower part is made out of Southern pine.

In the alcove at the very far end of the room, a fireplace is surmounted with a pine mantle piece and a large mirror. Hand painted tiles imported from Europe form the earth of the fireplace.

The bronze chandelier from Budapest and the rounded shape gold plated convex mirror supporting an eagle were offered by the Viceconsul of America, Stephen Vaughan, when he was in Berlin during the Second World War.

