

I M P U L S E

LE BULLETIN D'INFORMATION DE L'ASSOCIATION MONTRÉLAISE DE SCIENCE-FICTION ET DE FANTASTIQUE, L'AMonSFF

March / Mars 2024 (Vol. 27, No./N° 3)

**NEXT
MonSFFA MEETING:
SATURDAY, MARCH 9****1:00PM-5:00PM****Le Nouvel Hotel
1740 Boul. René-Lévesque O
(corner St-Mathieu)****“Salle Maisonneuve”
(South Tower)****...and concurrently on ZOOM!****www.MonSFFA.ca****ATTENTION!
IMPORTANT NOTICE:****MonSFFA is moving back
downtown to a new meeting hall!**

We'll be meeting in “Salle Maisonneuve” of Le Nouvel Hotel! Le Nouvel is located on a major bus line, and is just a short walk from either Metro Guy/Concordia or Lucien-L'Allier. This new locale is only one block west of our pre-pandemic meeting place, the Hôtel Espresso (corner Guy and René-Lévesque)!

MEETING THEME: *Our meeting precedes St. Patrick's Day by about a week. The city's Irish heritage has long been a part of Montreal's cultural mosaic. MonSFFen are encouraged to wear something green to the meeting, perhaps a shamrock!*

MARCH AGENDA INCLUDES:

- **CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FAN KIND!**—*Our experiences meeting SF/F celebrities*
- **SF BEFORE IT WAS CALLED SF**—*We look at works of proto-SF*
- **NOW SHOWING—Game!**
and more...

**NEW
MEETING
HALL!****MonSFFA MOVES BACK
DOWNTOWN TO NEW
MEETING HALL!**

MonSFFA has opted to end its relationship with the Lachine Legion, site of our monthly meetings these past six months or so, and relocate to a new meeting hall. The club is moving *back downtown*, to Le Nouvel Hotel on Boul. René-Lévesque Ouest! This new meeting space is located just *one block west* of our former downtown locale, the Hôtel Espresso (corner Guy and René-Lévesque)! Those of us who've been around for a few years will remember Le Nouvel Hotel as the site of a couple of the club's ConCept SF/F conventions, circa early-1990s. So MonSFFen are certainly familiar with the neighbourhood and shouldn't have any trouble finding us again after so long an absence!

OUR NEW MEETING LOCALE

Le Nouvel's address is 1740 Boul. René-Lévesque Ouest, corner St-Mathieu.

Beginning with our March 9 meeting, we will be gathering in “Salle Maisonneuve,” one of several conference rooms located on the ground floor of the facility's south tower. From the hotel's lobby, walk down to the end of the long “glass hallway,” then veer left to arrive on the conference floor; Maisonneuve is just past the washrooms.

GETTING THERE

Le Nouvel is easily accessible by car or public transit.

The Guy Street off-ramp (Exit 3) from the eastbound Ville Marie Expressway (HW136) lets out on René-Lévesque, a major Montreal thoroughfare. From there it's a short drive east a block or two to the hotel. Drivers arriving from above René-Lévesque may take St-Mathieu south to the intersection with René-Lévesque; the hotel is on the south-east corner of the intersection. Street parking is available in the area, but of course, it's somewhat limited. The Nouvel offers underground paid parking, however, just as did our former downtown locale, the Espresso.

**HAVE
YOU PAID YOUR
ANNUAL MonSFFA
MEMBERSHIP FEES?**

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the club's normal operation for more than three years! During this period, our regular in-person meetings were suspended, and the payment of annual fees were deferred. The club has now begun again collecting those annual membership fees, this in order to return to a positive cash flow situation, and so cover the monthly costs of renewed operations.

Standard membership remains only \$25 annually. We offer a family rate of \$40. Add \$10 to either of these to enjoy our premium “Platinum” membership level. Please complete the form below, include payment (cheque or money order made out to “MonSFFA”), and mail to:

**MonSFFA, c/o
29 Harold
Kirkland, Québec, Canada
H9J 1R7**

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print legibly. Cut out form and mail as per directions.

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

Complétez lisiblement. Découpez le coupon et postez tel qu'indiqué.

NAME/NOM: _____ AGE/ÂGE: _____ TEL./TEL.: _____ - _____ - _____

ADDRESS/ADRESSE: _____
No. & Street/N° et Rue Apt./App. City/Ville

Province _____ Postal Code/Code Postal _____ E-MAIL/COURRIEL: _____

INTERESTS/INTERETS: _____

Major bus routes run along René-Lévesque, and the hotel is within a 10- or 15-minute walk from either the Guy/Concordia or Lucien-L'Allier Metro station.

ZOOM-CHATS AT MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE

We do not wish to abandon our loyal, out-of-town and online-favouring club members, who effectively kept MonSFFA going through the pandemic years, so we will *continue* to hold our hybrid meetings, combining live, in-person events with an online component. Be assured, then, that the Nouvel get-togethers will include ZOOM-chats so as to allow MonSFFen online to participate.

We are also thinking about scheduling our winter meetings as ZOOM-only events in order to save on operating costs (and skirt any nasty weather!); stay tuned.

THE MonSFFA SNACK TABLE WILL NOT!

Because the Nouvel offers banquet services as part of their business model, any food or drink served during our meetings *must* be provided by them. Period. This is standard practise at pretty much all hotels. Thus, not so much as a box of Timbits or bag of chips may be brought onto the Nouvel's conference floor! This means that we will no longer be able to set up our own snacks-and-soft-drinks corner. The long-established MonSFFA Snack Bar is now history; all good things...

The Nouvel, meanwhile, has kindly cut us a special deal so as to reduce their usual rental fee to something we can reasonably afford while at the same time supplying us with coffee and cookies during our meetings!

WHY WE ARE MOVING BACK DOWNTOWN

There are a number of factors that ultimately prompted our move back downtown to a new meeting hall, but before we get into all of that, it might be helpful to know why we left in the first place.

The short answer is: money. In 2019, we learned that our meeting location of many years, the Hôtel Espresso, was shifting away from meeting-room rentals and repurposing its function space for other uses. We found ourselves looking for a new home. Problem was, the very favourable arrangement we had nurtured with the Espresso over time was simply out of the question at the other downtown hotels we scouted. There was just no getting around that. And, the prices we were quoted for renting space consistently exceeded what our budget would responsibly allow. Community centers and church basements, of which there were *precious few*, and fewer still able to accommodate us, proved a dead-end. We concluded that a move outside of the downtown area remained our only viable option.

But before we could establish ourselves in a new suburban meeting hall, the pandemic blew up and, effectively, interrupted and delayed plans for what turned out to be over three years! Unable to physically meet as we always had due to public health restrictions, MonSFFA, during this period, adapted by instituting a series of online "e-meetings," including ZOOM-chats, accessible via the club's Website. These virtual get-togethers sustained the club through the pandemic, and months of lingering anxiety afterwards.

When we were finally able to return to live, in-person



Entrance to Le Nouvel Hotel on Boul. Rene-Levesque Ouest

meetings, we opted to get together at a branch of the Royal Canadian Legion in the West-Island suburb of Lachine—the club did not wish to extend our dearth of in-person events any further than necessary. Despite the new venue's distance from the downtown hotel to which we had been accustomed, the area seemed reasonably well served by public transit.

In hindsight, maybe it was not. While we recognize that post-pandemic anxieties and the changes wrought by this "New Normal" could also be at play, here, one of the reasons we are now returning to the downtown area centers on difficulties some MonSFFen have reported travelling to Lachine by public transit in reasonable time. The Metro/bus ride downtown four years ago was rather more direct and not so prolonged as is the trip to Lachine today. And, indeed, we have noted a dip in the number of those physically present at our meetings since we began getting together at the Lachine Legion.

Foremost of the reasons for our return downtown, however, is the Legion's way of conducting business, which we soon found to be in marked opposition to the club's expectations. Almost immediately, and without prior notice, a "bar fee" was added to the price we had negotiated for rental of the meeting room. We had not requested that the bar be opened during our meetings, but nevertheless, it was, and the bartender, apparently, had to be paid, preferably in cash, no less! That bar fee was soon increased to the point where any savings we had managed by moving out of the downtown area were now erased. The financial argument for abandoning the downtown area has evaporated!

Most problematic, however, was the Legion's seeming inability to properly communicate with us, and to book and confirm our room more than a month in advance, despite our requesting of them, both verbally and in writing, several months of dates, and alternate dates. Frustratingly, sometimes we didn't know for certain if we actually had the room reserved until a week, or even a few days before the scheduled meeting was to take place! This made it near-impossible for us to properly plan meetings or book guest speakers.

Without casting aspersions on the Legion, who clearly have their own, unique internal procedures, regrettably, it seems their customary way of doing things simply does not mesh smoothly with our needs and expectations. In the end, unfortunately, things just didn't work out as well as we had hoped.

And so do we part company, with our thanks proffered for their hospitality and efforts on our behalf.

RETURN OF THE CLUB'S SCI-FI BOOK SALE

We expect to, *at long last*, hold our fund-raising Sci-Fi Book Sale in the fall—the Executive is currently discussing an October or November date; stay tuned. Le Nouvel will serve well as the site of the book sale, not the least reason of which is that it's just a block away from the familiar former site of the sale, so patrons should have no trouble finding us. After some five years absence, the book sale, we are given to understand, has been sorely missed.

Visit MonSFFA on the Web / Visitez l'AMonSFF sur internet: www.MonSFFA.ca

Impulse is put together monthly by Keith Braithwaite of behalf of MonSFFA and is available on MonSFFA's Web site courtesy Cathy Palmer-Lister. Contact Keith in regards to this publication by any of the following means: In person at a MonSFFA meeting • E-mail: Keith1958@live.ca • Voice mail: 450-692-8831 • Via the Impulse mailing address: 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9

Impulse est préparée une fois par mois par Keith Braithwaite au nom de l'AMonSFF. Il est disponible sur le site internet du club grâce à Cathy Palmer-Lister. Pour toutes questions concernant cette publication, contactez Keith soit: En personne à une réunion du club • Courriel: Keith1958@live.ca • Boîte vocal: 450-692-8831 • Par la poste à l'adresse de Impulse: 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9