

The Charbonneau House and Farm

“Let us make use of the hidden treasures near us and cultivate our lands, which are priceless resources for us,” asserted Monseigneur Ignace Bourget.

To ensure their own survival during the long winter months when provisions were hard to come by, the first settlers had to use considerable ingenuity in the way they cultivated their plot of land, which was divided between growing crops and raising animals. While most villagers only managed to meet their family’s needs, others did a little more and made the most of a farm located in the middle of a village.

This house, with its mansard roof, was built in 1889 by Edmond Bisson on his own land.

Paul-Émile Charbonneau bought it in 1931 and in it, raised his four children.

He cultivated 90 acres of land in oats, wheat and buckwheat to feed his family and his animals, and had a large vegetable garden, as well.

His livestock included 25 cows, two horses, four pigs and 500 chickens. As a dairy farmer, he delivered milk throughout the village and, at the same time, other products from his farm: eggs, vegetables, potatoes, wheat, barley and buckwheat. From the age of 18, his son Gérard took over distribution of the products from door to door. A horse and buggy rig was used for deliveries.

On October 30, 1947, Gérard married Thérèse Levert. His father, Paul-Émile, separated the house into two separate dwellings so his son would be near his work on the farm.

When Gérard, in turn, became owner of the farm in 1954, he continued his father’s work while keeping his parents in the home... as was the custom at that time.

Paul-Émile and his wife Amanda Boivin lived there until their deaths: Paul-Émile’s in 1962 and Amanda’s in 1980.

Gérard stopped farming in 1967 and sold the property in 1984 to take up residence on rue Labelle.

Research and writing: Société du Patrimoine SOPABIC, heritage society
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Legend: Paul-Émile Charbonneau and his wife Amanda Boivin.
Source: collection of Gérard Charbonneau