

The O'Neil house: The Great Move

Thierry Boyer & Élisabeth Veyrat, GVHS, Sept. 2014



The O'Neil house: The Great Move

- The Origins
- The Renovation of the House
- The Great Move!
- Our future Plans
- What We learned

The Origins of the «O'Neil House»

- The former owner of the house was **Charles Kingsbury**
The property is situated on an acre, part of lot 11 in Range 9
(1875 Chelsea's valuation rolls)
- The 1st general session of the Council of the Municipality of the West part of the Township of Hull was held in the house, on March 1, 1875
(1875 Chelsea's first Minute Book)
- The **Arthur O'Neil/O'Neill family** were owners (and hotel-keepers) by 1891.
Arthur O'Neil does not appear in any Chelsea (Hull West) censuses until 1891, in which he indicated that he was born in Ontario

Thanks to Carol Martin for these informations

Until the 1960s: An Inn and a Stop between Ottawa and Alcouve

- When the «temperance hotel» was opened?
- What we know about the place?

Arthur O'Neill had the place painted red, with a sign indicating that it was a temperance hotel with stabling for horses. Ten diners could be accommodated at the long table. The beds upstairs were brass. At some periods, the basement was equipped to hold distinctly non-temperance supplies.

▪ Patrick M.O. Evans,
A Tale of Two Chelseas, 1988, p. 26



Photo courtesy National Archives



Until the 1960s:
A perfect stop between Ottawa & Alcove

The Last O'Neil owners: Jennie & Alice

- 1963: The big fire
- Harold Cooke (on the right)



Courtesy of Sue Cooke



Since 2008:

- A one storey little house on the road
- A perfect home for two archaeologists



First glance on a rainy day
May 2008



- Affordable
- A great potential
- Lot of memory



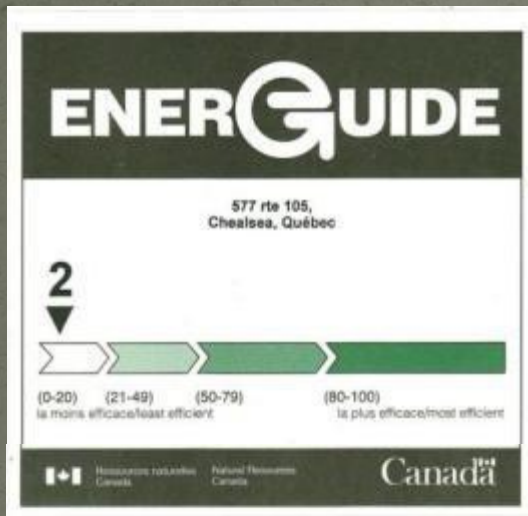
- But some unwanted inhabitants



Not everybody
is happy by us
moving in

B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- First, insulation



August 2008:
Slightly more than a tent!



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- First, insulation of the roof



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- First, insulation of the roof



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- A first step in January 2010



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Wooden floors : The guest room



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Wooden floors : our daughter's room



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Wooden floors : The living room



The wooden floor is rotten



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Access to the basement



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Cleaning the basement



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Rediscovering the bar



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Rediscovering the bar

The slope created by the barman



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Rediscovering the bar



B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

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B. Renovation of the O'Neil House

- Rediscovering the bar



A Victorian House



A Great Mix!

- Mixing 3 cultures: French, Quebec and Victorian



A Great Mix!

- A French touch



2008



2013

A Great Mix!

- Some Victorian features



Brass latches

A Great Mix!

- A Quebec's sideboard brought back to life



C. The Great Move

- Why ? A constant fight against snow plows!



And a wish to rebuild the 2nd storey

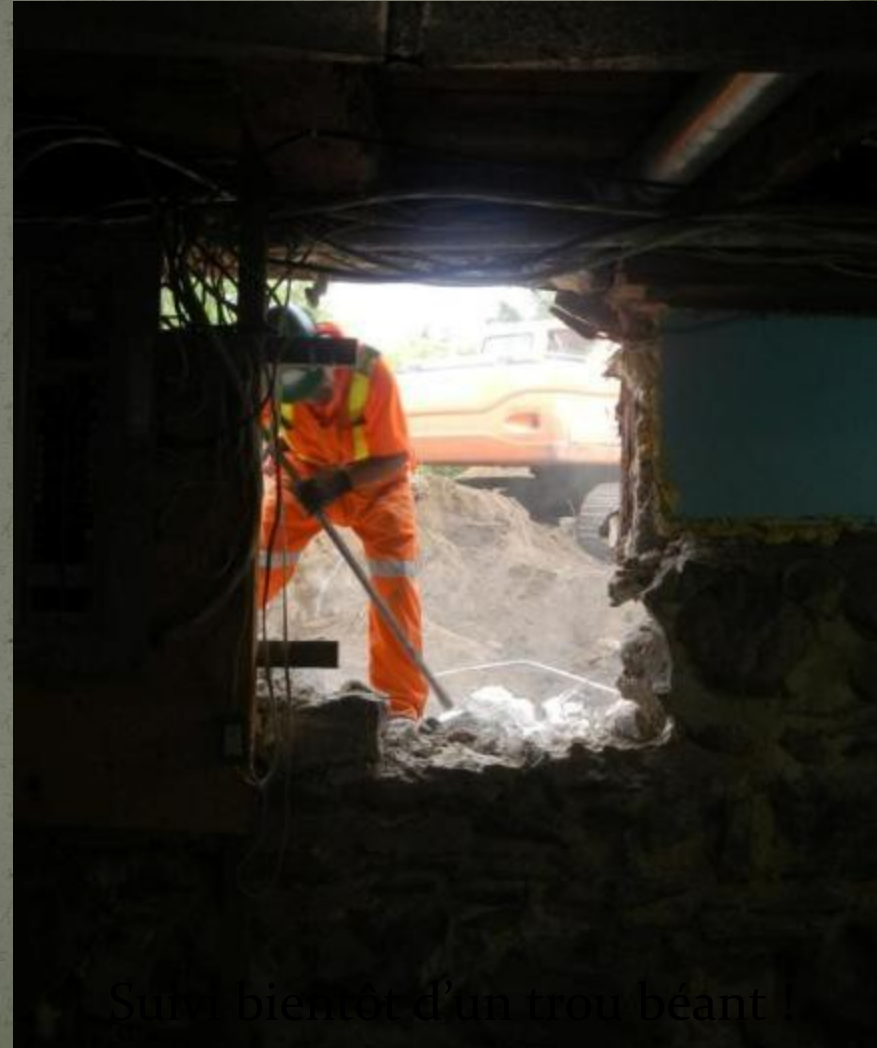
The Great Move: June 5th, 6:00 AM

- CDS Movers team arrival





The first hole in the
basement



Suivi bientôt d'un trou béant !



Followed by several....





The Great Move: June 6th, 11:00 AM

- The house is lifted 3 feet



- In the basement, the now useless pillars are recovered



- In the basement, last glance to the historic granite walls



The Great Move: June 7th, 8:00 AM

- Impermatech begins the excavation work under the house





The Great Move: June 8th

- The technologist Alain Therrien checks the measurements



The Great Move: June 9th

- CDS moves the house 6,76 m off the road



8:00 AM

3:00 PM





- Moving from the ancient basement





- An efficient and careful team



- At 4:00 PM, the house is 6,76 m backyard



June 12th : The new Basement

- The concrete walls are casted by Impermatech



The new
place

The ancient
basement

June 13th : The new Basement

- The concrete walls are curing



June 23th : The House is moved down

- The return of CDS Team



- The house is moved down on its new foundation





June 27th : The Concrete Slab



July 8th : A new entry for the Basement

Before



August 21st : The epoxy painting



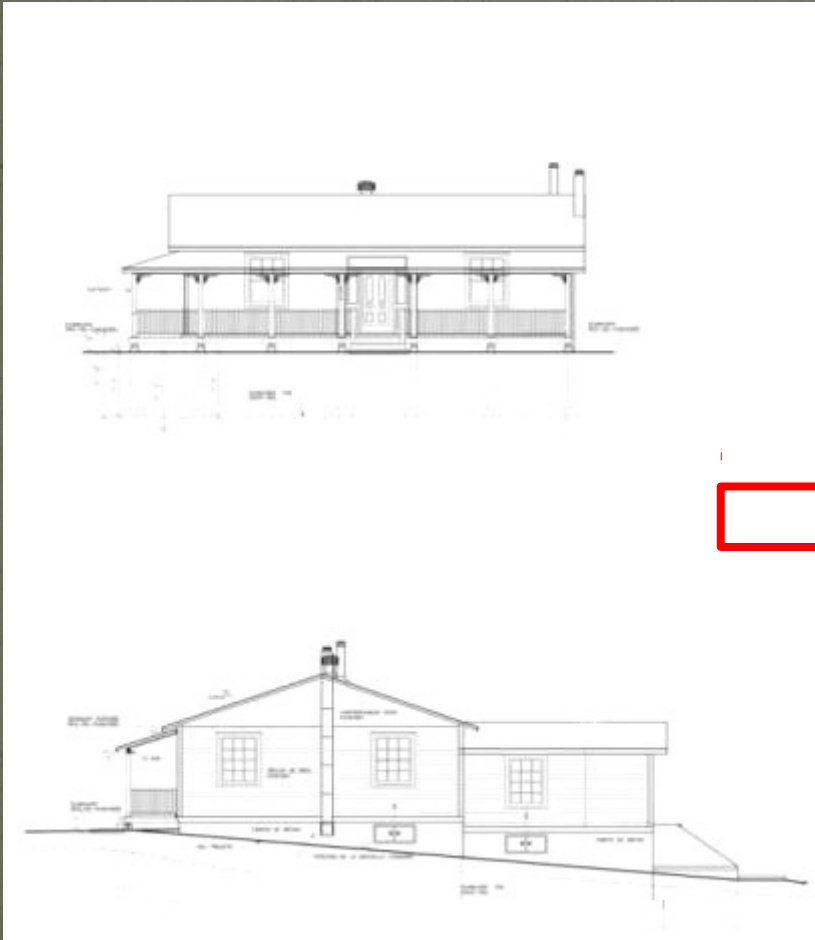
D. For the Future

- A New Gallery



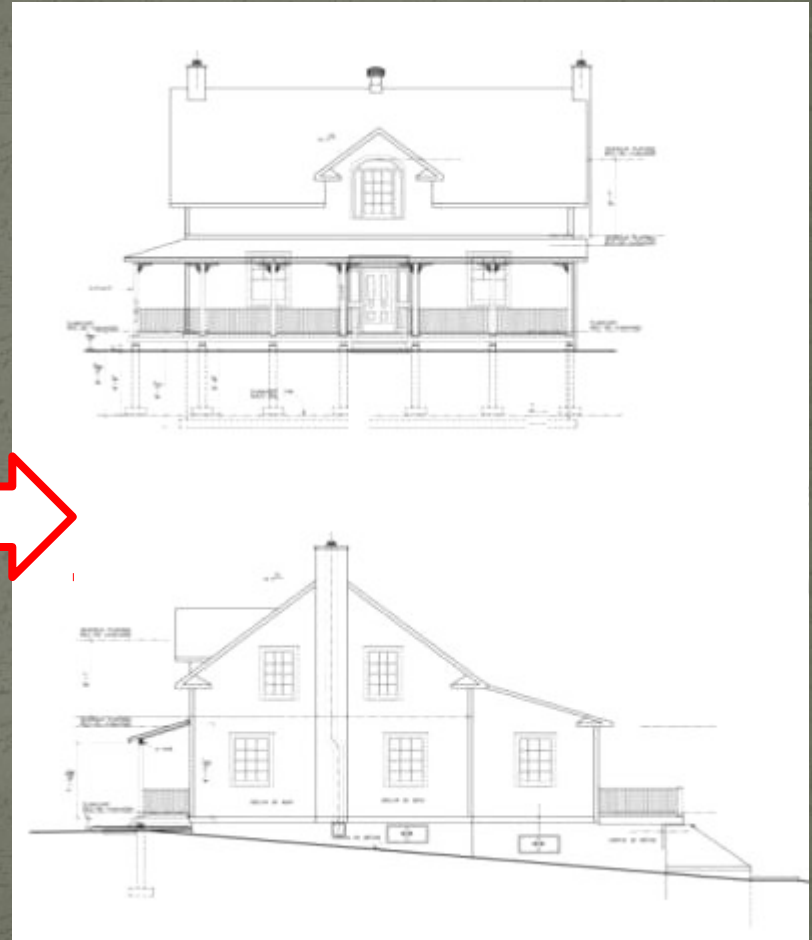
For the Future

- To rebuild a second storey



2008

Plans: Alain Therrien



2015 ?

For the Future

- To gain back the original O'Neil house appearance



E. What We learned

- A small property turned towards the 105
- One acre land only
- A stage coach rest area



Courtesy of Sue Cooke

What We learned

- A judicious topographical choice to build

A gentle slope

A sandy bottom



What We learned

- Some precious data about the ancient O'Neil house



What We learned

- Gathering the artefacts



What We learned

- Some pieces of memory which are brought to us



Sue Cooke



Dolores Fleming House

What We learned

- ... and a daughter who grows up during the work



2008



My home, September 2014



2009