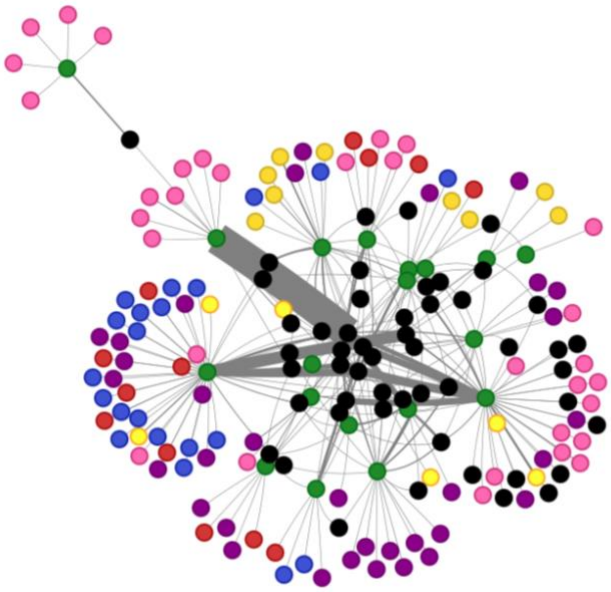
UWCM

University Women's Club of Montreal

MAY 2025



"Plant-Pollinator Interaction Network"
presented by Stéphanie Gagnon at our April dinner.
https://rpubs.com/Steph_ggn/1227554

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CLUB DINNERS

We are in exploration mode

As previously reported, we are looking for a new monthly club dinner venue. To find one that is the right fit, the ad hoc committee is inviting members to try out different "candidate restaurants" every month or two.

You can help

If you have venue ideas or comments on our April dinner at the University Club, please communicate with Acting President Leah Trineer, wanda.leah.trineer@sympatico.ca.

Next dinner

On Wednesday, May 28, we will get together at Café Il Cortile, 1442 Sherbrooke St. W., H3G1K4. Map here. Cost is $60, including taxes and tip. Details to follow.

From the restaurant's website: "Café Il Cortile evokes the generosity, humor and simplicity of Italy."

Il Cortile
Image source: https://cafeilcortile.com/index.html

MAY DINNER SPEAKER

Mélanie Walsh

Trained as a psychologist, Mélanie Walsh has always had a strong interest in mental health, social justice, women's rights, and diversity in all its forms. Her commitment to the community sector stems from a desire to pursue meaningful work aligned with her core values. Since the fall of 2018, she has served as Executive Director of Auberge Madeleine, a shelter for women experiencing homelessness. The organization welcomes over 300 women each year and supports 60 women in housing to help ensure residential stability and prevent a return to homelessness.

In 2024, Auberge Madeleine proudly celebrated its 40th anniversary. Mélanie is deeply involved in developing services tailored to the needs of women, especially the most vulnerable, with the firm belief that a human-centered and inclusive approach can lead to lasting social change.

Photo courtesy of Mélanie Walsh

GREETINGS FROM ACTING PRESIDENT

By Leah Trineer

May has arrived and so, finally, has spring! Winter did seem to hang on a little longer than usual this year, but it is going to make us appreciate the longer days and sunshine even more! To wake up to the sound of robins and cardinals outside my window always starts the day off well.

MNA Isabelle Poulette welcomes attendees at the Quebec Council meeting. Photo courtesy of Olga Shevchenko.

Three of us attended the AGM of the Quebec Council of CFUW on April 26. The meeting was hosted by our sister club CFUW Montreal South Shore. We were welcomed by local MNA Isabelle Poulet. Once you have attended a couple of these meetings, it becomes a great opportunity to connect with the members of the other clubs that you have met before. The meeting was lively as we shared news about each of our six clubs, the Advocacy Committee, and the financial statements of the Council. Following the business at hand, guest speaker St. Lambert mayor Pascale Mongrain gave a profound presentation on harassment in the workplace. Our hosts served a lovely lunch, and the afternoon session gave us an opportunity to learn more about the preliminary plans for the national AGM that is scheduled to be held in Montreal next summer. For more information and photos, see page 10 in this newsletter.

Having been involved in two previous AGMs hosted in Montreal, I can only say that I hope that you are looking forward to it as much as I am; there will be lots of ways to volunteer depending upon your time and talents. Plans are not yet finalized, but it seems that it will probably be held during the third week of July, 2026; pencil that week into your calendars.

Since our own AGM will be held in June this year, we are continuing the tradition that was started during COVID of having one of our outreach recipients come to speak to us at our last speaker evening of the season. This gives us the opportunity to learn more about each of these organizations and how our support assists them in fulfilling their mission. This month's speaker will be Mélanie Walsh, General Manager of Auberge Madeleine. They celebrated their 40th anniversary last year and she is looking forward to bringing us up to date on their achievements and goals for the future (see more information on previous page).

We held our semi-annual wine and cheese last week and once again it was quite a success! We had a great mix of members and a number of guests who were interested in learning more about the Club. I especially want to thank Olga Shevchenko, Barbara Lewis, Maria Masi, and Colleen Cattiny for their help making the evening the big success. We have a few photos from the evening for you to enjoy on page 12.

On the weekend of May 10, there was a "Crafted for Courage" exhibit held at Place Ville Marie. Hundreds of volunteers contributed over 5,000 knitted and crocheted squares which had been turned into 334 blankets. The proceeds from donations went to support three of our own outreach partners (Chez Doris, Auberge Shalom, and the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal) as well as Fondation Chainon.

If this might interest you, check out their website at https://notabenecourage.ca/.

Photos from the Crafted for Courage Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/people/Ouvrage-de-CourageCrafted-For-Courage/61570087905397/

A CENTURY OF EMPOWERMENT

Notes from the Centenary Committee

By Susan Button

In 1918, McGill's Faculty of Medicine permitted the admission of women. At the 1922 Spring Convocation, five determined young women – Eleanor Percival, Jessie Boyd, Lilian Irwin, Winifred Blampin and Mary Childs – received their M.D.,C.M. degrees alongside their 121 male peers. (By contrast, at the 2022 Spring Convocation, the Medicine Class consisted of 180 students, 56.1% female and 43.9% male.)

To celebrate this milestone in 1922, Dr. Maude Abbott (pictured to the right on stamp) – who had fought her entire career to advance the place of women in medicine – hosted a reception for the five graduates at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Dr. Jessie Boyd later wrote: "It is difficult to convey the joy and triumph of Dr. Abbott at that graduation in the spring of 1922 when McGill bestowed for the first time her regular medical degree of M.D.,C.M. on five women medical graduates." (From her chapter on Maude Abbott in "*The Clear Spirit: Twenty Canadian Women and Their Times"* edited by Mary Quayle Innis).

In 1927, Dr. Abbott was among the founding members of the University Women's Club of Montreal, along with these trailblazing doctors, Jessie Boyd, Mary Childs and Eleanor Percival, the women she had celebrated at their graduation in 1922.

Maude Elizabeth Seymour Abbott had not had an easy start to her life. She was born on March 18, 1868 in St. Andrews (Saint-André-d'Argenteuil), Quebec. Her father abandoned the family shortly after her birth and her mother died in 1869, so she and her older sister lived with their maternal grandmother.

Maude was a cousin to Sir John Abbott, the third Prime Minister of Canada. Maude obtained a B.A. in 1890 as a member of the third class of female students to attend McGill University. She was valedictorian and took home the Lord Stanley Gold Medal for academic achievement. Maude wanted to attend McGill's Faculty of Medicine, but was refused admission as women were not accepted into the program. This refusal was not only happening in Montreal as there were many obstacles for women wishing to enter the medical profession. In 1865, Emily Stowe was denied entry into the Toronto School of Medicine because she was a woman. She went to the United States and enrolled in the New York Medical School for Women. In 1867, she graduated and returned to Toronto to open a private practice – becoming Canada's first female physician to practice medicine.

Maude decided to attend Bishop's College, which had a medical faculty in Montreal, receiving her M.D. in 1894 and winning the prize in senior anatomy and the Chancellor's award for the best examination results in the subjects studied in the final year. After graduation, Maude spent three years in Europe, taking postgraduate courses in a variety of subjects and collecting research data. On her return to Montreal in 1897, she accepted the opportunities for research offered by two McGill professors and with these assignments she proved her capacity for research gaining recognition at McGill. In 1898, Chairman of Pathology Dr. George Adami appointed her Assistant Curator of the Medical Museum and sent her to Washington to study the methods of the Army Medical Museum. During her trip, she met the renowned Sir William Osler at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. Osler would remain a mentor over the years and in 1905 he invited Abbott to contribute the section on congenital heart abnormalities for his encyclopedic *System of Medicine* (7v., London, 1907–10).

Dr. Abbott was appointed Curator of McGill's Medical Museum in 1899 and spent much of her professional career developing it into one of the best such institutions in North America. This museum holds many pathology specimens gathered by William Osler between 1876 and 1884. By learning about museum specimens showing congenital heart abnormalities, she became an expert on the subject and in 1936 published the influential *Atlas of Congenital Cardiac Disease* . The

Museum is now named in her honour.

In 1910, the Faculty of Medicine awarded Maude Abbott a McGill M.D., C.M. (*honoris causa*) "recognizing her work and reputation and there is no doubt that her reputation had some influence on the final decision to admit women to the study of medicine." (From her chapter on Maude Abbott in "*The Clear Spirit: Twenty Canadian Women and Their Times,* edited by Mary Quayle Innis)

Dr. Abbott's devotion was acknowledged on her retirement in 1936 when McGill University awarded her an honorary LL.D., recognizing her "as a stimulating teacher, an indefatigable investigator and a champion of higher education for women." Also in 1936, just before her retirement, Dr. Abbott became the first female member of McGill's Faculty Club. The Club lounge on the second floor is named in her honour.

Maude Abbott passed away on September 2, 1940. In 2000, a commemorative stamp was issued (see illustration on page 6) as part of the Millenium Collection, Medical Innovators.

The history of women in medicine in Canada is one of facing obstacles and challenges, but also striving to overcome them. These doctors mentioned are just a few of the remarkable, pioneering women who paved the way for future generations. According to the Canadian Medical Association, they expect that by the year 2030 women will make up half of all physicians in Canada.

End notes:

Gillian Woodford: *100 years ago.... McGill's first female med grads received their hard-won degrees - Health e-News*. A publication of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. May 26, 2022.

Dictionary of Canadian Biography https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/abbott_maude_elizabeth_seymour_16E.html

Margaret Gillett*: We walked very warily: a history of women at McGill* (Montreal, Eden Press. 1981).

Mary Qualye Innis: *The Clear Spirit: Twenty Canadian Women and Their Times*. (University of Toronto Press. Dec 15, 1966). The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) undertook this project of a biographical account of twenty noteworthy women as their Canadian Centennial 1967 project.

Maude Abbott Medical Museum About | Maude Abbott Medical Museum - McGill University

Next time:
Carrie Derick – founding UWCM member and the first female full professor in a Canadian university.

CLUB UPDATES

April Dinner at the University Club of Montreal

At our April Club dinner, McGill Ph.D. student and biologist Stéphanie Gagnon enthusiasticly gave a great talk on insect pollinators and their relationships with plants at cranberry farms.

You may want to visit two websites she mentioned:

- Plant-Pollinator Interaction Network, to visualize which insects interact with which plants
- Grow Me Instead, to find native plants for your garden

Provincial Council AGM

The Quebec Council of CFUW met in St. Lambert for its annual meeting on April 26. Presidents from each Club, plus the Advocacy Committee Chair and Regional Directors, presented reports.

Highlights for 2024/25:

- 6 member Clubs with a total of 400 members (36 new)
- Donations: $150K for scholarships and awards; $16K to outreach partners

Upcoming:

- The Sherbrooke & District Club is scheduled host the fall Council meeting (to be confirmed)
- The Quebec clubs will act as hosts for the CFUW **2026** AGM tentatively scheduled for the third week of July, 2026
- Clubs are invited to organize pre- and post-CFUW AGM events, as well as sponsorships for giveaways and funds.

Information sources: Provincial Council and Donna Jensen.

PHOTOS

Top right: Guest speaker Pascale Mongrain, Mayor of Saint Lambert
Above: Participants from the six Quebec clubs
Top left: CFUW President Linda Sestock (in forefront)

Photos from Olga Shevchenko and Leah Trineer

Women's Issues

The Women's Issues interest group met as usual in the McGill Faculty Club in April.

Convenor Olga Shevchenko came up with this great topic: "Friendships and aging: Do you think friendships change as we become older? Losing friends, making new friendships when you get older – issues and challenges."

Photos courtesy of Olga Shevchenko

Wine & Cheese

By Barbara Lewis

Our May 7 get-together was lovely with great company, drinks and nibbles. Thanks to Olga Shevchenko, Maria Masi and Colleen Cattiny for organizing it, and to the volunteers who helped with preparations.

Photos courtesy of Olga Shevchenko and Barbara Lewis

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

June 17

Women Beyond Bollywood

Our final UWCM fundraiser of the year is June 17. Details in the poster on this page. Tickets are $55. Pay directly using the QR code (see right) and receive an immediate $40 tax receipt from Canada Helps. Also accessible through this link.

June 18 - AGM

Our AGM will be held on Wednesday, June 18 at Maison Forget, 1195 Sherbrooke Street West. Details will follow.

July 11-13, 2025

CFUW's 2025 virtual annual general meeting takes place July 11 to 13. Since it is online, members can easily attend. Check this link for more information.

July 2026

CFUW AGM in Montreal

Next year, CFUW holds its 2026 in-person AGM in Montreal. This is tentatively scheduled for the third week of July, 2026.

NETWORK NEWS

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

GWI Triennial in Zambia: Call for delegates

From the CFUW May 2 newsletter. Deadline to apply to be a delegate: May 30.

GWI continues its Triennial planning from Geneva, as Zambia awaits our arrival, and the members of Graduate Women Lusaka plan our welcome!

CFUW's International Relations Committee and sub-committee have been planning CFUW's involvement in the September 11-13, 2025 Triennial by submitting resolutions modified for the global scene, offering constitutional amendments and suggesting agenda items for the General Assembly where new global policy will be decided. We are pleased today to circulate a CALL FOR VOTING DELEGATES AND OTHER ATTENDEES to come to the Triennial at Lusaka, Zambia.

Zambia. Image source: Wikipedia.

Any CFUW member may attend and participate in the Triennial; members of Clubs who support GWI by paying the international dues in their home Club, or in another GWI-supporting Club, may apply to be voting delegates.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at Lusaka in September!

Grace Hollett
VP International Relations

GWI UPDATE

By Donna Jensen

From February 24 to April 4, Graduate Women International participated in the Human Rights Council meetings (HRC58). In the April 9 GWI newsletter, the 1995 Beijing Declaration is described where "one in three women globally still experiences violence, and over 800 women die daily from preventable pregnancy-related causes."

GWI attended the Annual High-Level Panel Discussion on Human Rights Mainstreaming, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It brought together UN agencies and member states to reflect on three decades of progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment.

Key challenges discussed included gender-based violence, maternal mortality, limited access to education, intersecting forms of discrimination based on disability, race, age, and sexual orientation, backlashes against reproductive rights, impacts of climate change and geo-political conflicts.

Speakers urged governments and international institutions to move beyond symbolic gestures toward structural, transformative change.

GWISNOG Education head Karen Dunnett recognizes "…the strong calls for renewed investment in gender equality, stronger accountability mechanisms, and greater protection for … human-rights defenders. Reaffirming the ongoing relevance of the Beijing Declaration, participants emphasized that achieving gender justice is both urgent and foundational to the broader realization of human rights and sustainable development."

GWI's full document on Human Rights Council 58th Session Special Edition, can be viewed here.

To catch up on more network news:

Subscribe to the *CFUW Club Action* newsletter here.

Subscribe to the GWI *Update Newsletter* here.

Sign up for the NCWC newsletter here

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Chez Doris benefit cocktail

May 22, starting 6pm: An Evening of Compassion and Commitment

This special evening will bring together philanthropists, dedicated businesses, and community members who are all committed to building a brighter future for women in need.

The Chez Doris 2025 Fundraising Cocktail will be proudly chaired by **UWCM member Elizabeth Wirth** (President and CEO of Wirth-Brand Inc. and Wirth Trading Inc.) and supported by Alexandra Bilhete, MA (Engagement Specialist at the Canadian Society for Association Executives), serving as the event's Vice-Chair. Both women share a deep commitment to our cause and honour us with their valued support.

Tickets start at $350 (See poster below). For information and tickets click here.

Image from Chez Doris website.

INTEREST GROUPS

Bridge *Seeking a convenor*

The Westmount Contactivity Centre (https://contactivitycentre.org) offers bridge courses once a week on Tuesdays from April 15 to June 3). Beginners: 9:45 to 11:45 am. Intermediate: 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Cost is $130 for Contactivity members; $140 for non-members. Membership is $20 a year, or $45 a year if you wish to receive hard copy newsletters by post.

For information or if you wish to lead a Club bridge group, contact Olga Shevchenko, jewellery.olga@gmail.com.

Book Club Buddies

This group is full. It usually meets the third Monday of the month from 4:00 to 5:30 in the Club Room at the Atwater Library. **Due to the holiday, the next meeting will be on May 12**. The June meeting will be on June 16.

Coffee Klatch

This group meets on the second Friday of each month, starting around 7:45 am at Avenue G coffee shop on Greene Ave. Next meeting: June 13.

For information: Leah Trineer, wanda.leah.trineer@sympatico.ca.

Library Lectures & Lunch

For info and to see the full series once it is announced, click here.

Convenor Carly Pepler has no list of participants, but she keeps our members aware of upcoming Atwater Library lectures. After in-person lectures, Carly serves a light lunch for $5 in Room 7 of the library. Let her know if you are going: carolyn.pepler@mcgill.ca.

Carly will provide lunch on:

- May 8: Aphasia research and treatment (Dr. Howard Chertkow)
- May 15: "IMAGINE THIS!" (Concert) **Club member and singer Barbara Lewis** performs songs and tells stories celebrating creativity at all ages.
- May 22: WWII internment of Jewish refugees (Ian Darragh)
- May 29: Antique postcards (John Gallop)
- June 5: Notman Photographic Archives (Heather McNabb, Ph.D.)

INTEREST GROUPS (Cont'd)

Museum & Art Gallery Jaunters

This group takes guided tours at local museums. You are welcome to join the group. For information, contact convenor Pilar Shephard-Cumming, gallery@pilarshephard.com.

Please note: As the activities are tours, groups have to be kept small. Pilar assembles the groups on a first come, first served basis. Thank you for your understanding.

Next visit: June 6
Berthe Weill, Art Dealer of the Parisian Avant-garde

Pilar writes:
"Our next group outing, the final one until the fall, will be at the Museum of Fine Arts. ***ONLY 12 people will be accepted!***

"The Exhibition: "Berthe Weill (1865-1951) Art Dealer of the Parisian Avant-garde." Weill was a visionary woman who played a great role in the emergence of Modern Art. She was most interested in showing the art works of young painters at that time. In the Montreal exhibition, one hundred works are on display. Those of: Pablo Picasso, Raoul Dufy, Marc Chagall, Amedeo Modigliani, Diego Rivera, Henri Matisse and Suzanne Valadon, among many others.

"This is a self-guided tour.
Ticckets: $31 per person
Date: Friday, June 6 at 11 a.m
Meeting Place: main lobby of the Monteal Museum of Fine Arts (1380 Sherbrooke Street West)

"I look forward to seeing you!
Please email me to reserve: gallery@pilarshephard.com.

"The Jaunters will take a summer break and start up again in September."

Outdoor Ladies

This group enjoys a variety of fun walks around town. There are none scheduled for now. To join, if you want to lead an activity of your own, or for information, contact convenor Zofia Laubitz, zlaubitz@gmail.com.

INTEREST GROUPS (Cont'd)

Women's Issues

This group meets over dinner, generally on the last Thursday of the month, at the McGill Faculty Club, 3450 McTavish. We meet at 6:00 p.m. for a cocktail and around 6:45 we go to the dining room. Join us at any time. Parking for $15 is available at the back of the Faculty Club building. For information: contact Olga Shevchenko, jewellery.olga@gmail.com

Next meeting: May 29.

Stay tuned for the possibility of a summer meeting at a member's home. On May 29, we will discuss this and the June meeting date.

BIRTHDAYS

Elizabeth Wirth - May 15
Adèle Hébert – May 21
Marsha Sklar - May 28
Valerie Shannon - June 6
Judith Anne Ritchie - June 16

The birthday list is a work in progress. Let us know if we missed yours.

Image by fineartdaily from

CLUB CALENDAR

May 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				01	02	03
04	05	06	07 Member Wine & Cheese	08 Library Lecture & Lunch Westmount Revitalization (Atwater Library panel discussion)	09 Coffee Klatch	10 Crafted for Courage
11	12 Book Club	13	14	15 Library Lecture & Lunch ***Barbara Lewis concert***	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Library Lecture & Lunch Chez Doris Benefit Cocktail	23	24
25	26	27	28 Club Dinner	29 Library Lecture & Lunch Women's Issues	30 Deadline to apply for GWI Triennial meeting in Zambia	30

CLUB CALENDAR (cont'd)

June 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
01	02	03	04 Board Meeting	05 Library Lecture & Lunch	06 Museum & Art Gallery Jaunters	07
08	09	10	11	12	13 Coffee Klatch	14
15	16 Book Club	17 Fundraiser: *Women Beyond Bollywood*	18 UWCM AGM **NO DINNER**	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	30				

The UWCM meeting room

Atwater Library
Club Room #7
1200 Atwater Avenue
Westmount, QC
H3Z 1X4

Click these icons to stay in touch

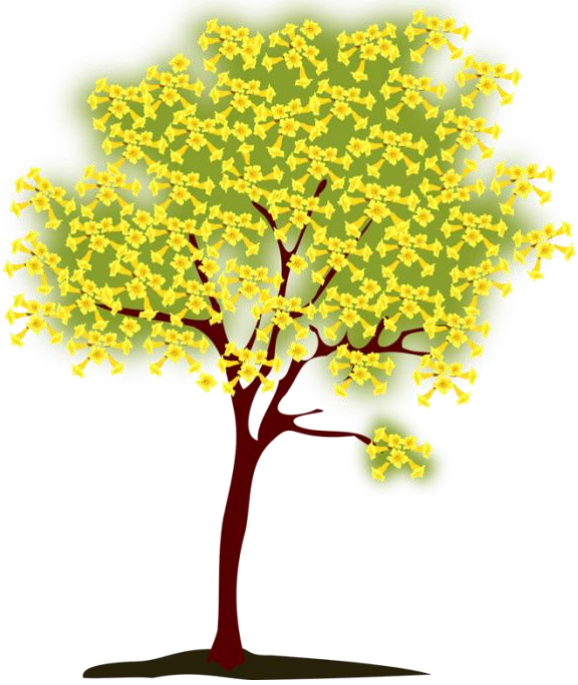

Image by OpenClipart-Vectors from Pixabay

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