

Spring/Summer Bulletin

June 2026



Ville de / Town of
BARKMERE

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

In a way, it is just a number. But there is something to be said about a Town celebrating its 100th anniversary. It is a time to remember the past, the early beginnings and the reasons for the Town's existence. But it is also a time to think about the future, the 100 years ahead, and the reasons why the Town should continue to exist.

This extract of the preamble of the *Act to Incorporate the Town of Barkmere* explains some of the reasons for its creation:

Whereas [the petitionners] have represented that (...) a great many families of the City of Montreal and elsewhere possess properties at Bark Lake, in the township of Arundel and Montcalm, in the county of Argenteuil, within the limits of the rural municipalities of Arundel and Weir;

That these properties are occupied by their owners in the summer season;

That the present municipal organization does not meet their needs and it has become necessary to take fuller measures for administering the said territory;

These petitioners wanted a permanent road to reach the Lake (but no other roads!), to protect their summer residences from theft and fire, to protect the Lake from very intensive forestry operations, and agriculture close to its shores. The original Act even granted the new municipality *the power to control the waters of Bark Lake*.

Needs have evolved since then, but they did not change all that much. Nowadays, the Town is trying to be more inclusive of the permanent residents on its territory, to work in collaboration with the neighbouring municipalities, and to deal with modern issues like invasive species and internet services, for example, not to mention accelerated residential development and climate change.

The necessity of having our own local municipal administration and implementing our own measures for the protection of our people, the environment and our way of life did not go away. We can imagine with a bit of horror what would have happened if the Eurasian milfoil emergency would not have been dealt quickly by our Town. We probably could not be able swim in the clear waters of Bark Lake anymore. Looking at old pictures of the Lake and the forest surrounding it from 1915 and seeing that it looks a lot the same (but much better) nowadays is something that we can be very proud of, as a community functioning as a Town.

And being a lake-bound community, we face specific challenges that are not necessarily shared by other communities. Our beautiful little place in the Laurentians will be under threat in the future. The milfoil is certainly not the last invasive species to make it here. Risks of forest fires will increase as the climate changes will create extremes in extended drought periods, alternating with heavy precipitations that will throw the water levels of the Lake out of balance. Already in recent years, rapid defrost followed by colder spells in early Spring have caused the waters to become infested with microscopic algae that make the waters smelly and unpalatable.

Going forward, we can expect a lot of pressure from the provincial government and surrounding municipalities to make small enclaves like ours disappear, under the pretext of saving costs overall. This really means collecting the tax income of Barkmere while removing its administration and reducing the services. We would certainly not gain anything by going this way. The Town has built up a sound financial situation over the past two decades, which allows us to deal with our particular environmental and legal issues, and to invest in our protection and our particular infrastructures like wharves, shelters, etc.

I wish that Barkmere will be around for another hundred years, and that looking at pictures from 2015 in 2126, future generations will be able to see that nothing will have changed much but simply improved. I hope that our community will stand strong and united to face future challenges.

Happy Anniversary to Barkmere and its Barklakers!

*Luc Trépanier,
Mayor*

Lessons from Chalet Bar-B-Q for Barkmere's 100th Anniversary

By: Stephen Lloyd



In late May, I went for lunch with my mother Nancy to Chalet Bar-B-Q on Décarie. For those who don't know, the Chalet is a legendary rotisserie restaurant which has served exactly the same delicious chicken, fries, coleslaw and BBQ sauce since its founding in 1944. The interior and exterior décor, along with the chicken, has also not changed at all in over 80 years. But the formula works and the place is always full.

Chalet Bar-B-Q was also my father's favourite restaurant. My mother and I went for lunch there this spring to commemorate the 24th anniversary of his death in 2002.

This particular time, I noted a sign on the wall, near the take-out counter. It states, poignantly:

"It's true that time flies. But never forget that you are the pilot."

I can't dispute that time flies. We are celebrating Barkmere's 100th this summer. In 2001, we were celebrating Barkmere's 75th. My Dad was the Mayor in 2001 and I was super proud of him. It was a great moment; the whole community came out for a terrific party at the Landing. It was essentially my Dad's final gesture as an elected politician, because he fell sick a few months after the ceremonies.

I was also around in 1976, when Barkmere celebrated its 50th. Everyone was there, at the Landing of course. As a young kid I vividly remember looking up to the Town's Fire Chief, Gordon Miller, who was in charge of "piloting" the Barkmere fire truck. The same fire truck that Gordon later used to give a ride to our own young kids at the 75th in 2001. The Mayor in 1976 was Don Henry, a steady hand who had already been Mayor for 10 years by that time.

When it came time to plan the 75th ceremonies, we could rely on the experience from 1976. The main question was whether we would run the axe-throwing competition again (we did). And this time, in 2026, we can rely on the experience in 2001 (no axe-throwing, though). Both my Dad and Gordon are gone, but the ceremonies for Barkmere's 100th will be strikingly similar, in substance and in spirit, to the ceremonies for the 50th and the 75th. And that is a good thing.

Like Chalet Bar-B-Q, Barkmere has not changed much at all over the last 75 years. We still drink the water. We are still a nature-based, conservation-first Town. Mayor Trépanier is a veteran who has things well under control. And we still have a strong community spirit, whether in the village or around the lake.

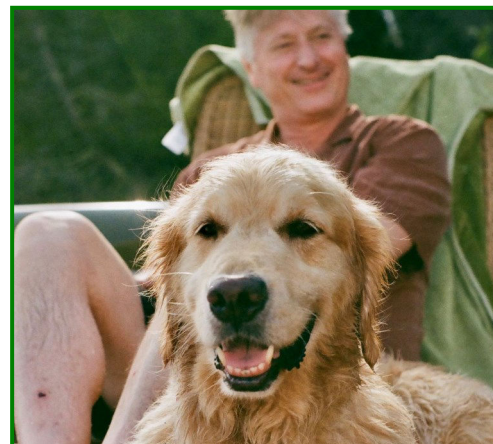
That community is what has kept Barkmere flying in a straight line throughout the years. We need the community to keep us on the same track for at least another 25. So hats off to the whole organizing committee for the 100th. It is a huge endeavor and we are very grateful for their efforts. Axe-throwing or not, it will be an amazing day on July 25. Make sure you come out in force and that you thank the volunteers. They are the pilots who are guiding Barkmere steadily forward, as time flies...



*Stephen Lloyd,
Councillor*

Barkmere Residents Share Their Stories

By: Charles Morgan



In February, Barkmere held its winter carnival under radiant blue skies to celebrate its 100th anniversary, providing an opportunity for Barkmere full-time residents and cottagers to experience the lake in Winter (many for the first time). In July, we will joyously come together again for the historic centennial summer celebrations. The collective efforts of the planning committees for both events and the overwhelming participation of town's residents provide an eloquent testimony to strength of our community.

For me, however, the most profound and long-lasting tribute to the hundredth year of Barkmere's founding will be the publication of a collection of family stories that has been written over the past year, *An Anthology of Family Recollections*. Over one hundred and forty current Barkmere families have contributed to the book! The contributed stories span several generations. They are enriched by historical maps, photos and excerpts from the memoirs of past residents who beautifully capture lyrical images of life on the lake since the early 1900s.

What emerges from these individual family stories is the collective history and ethos of Barkmere, founded on strong community bonds, interdependence, a great and enduring respect for the environment and a realized desire to move more slowly in a frenetic world.

As a relative newcomer to the community, it has been a great honour and privilege to have been invited to join the group of long-standing Barkmere residents (Stuart Jack, Sarah Robinson, Nonnie Balcer, Marc Fredette and Chantal Raymond) who have lovingly collated and edited this extraordinary anthology. The rich, "living" history of Barkmere has been captured and will continue to be shared and experienced for decades to come.

Charles Morgan,
Councillor

By: Chantal Baron



As we approached our centennial, meteorologists had predicted an “old-fashioned” winter. The cold certainly lived up to expectations. The overall impression of cold was heightened by the fact that winter arrived early, in November. Precipitation levels were normal, though snow fell steadily rather than in storms, resulting in a beautiful and long season for winter sports. The winter carnival warmed up the atmosphere, and our lake thawed on April 23, a few days before the 100-year median (April 27).

As I write this, spring is settling in VERY slowly in Barkmere, even though June is just around the corner. Hail, strong winds, and ground frost regularly remind us that we’re in the Upper Laurentians. And if we’d forgotten, the arrival of mosquitoes as the first buds burst open overshadows the joy of our loons’ return—but all of this is temporary. What isn’t temporary is the desire to live in Barkmere or return here year after year. Since our charter was founded in 1926, the citizens of Barkmere (residents and vacationers alike) have shared a common passion: the fierce protection of the exceptional natural beauty of our great lake and its forests. Why have newcomers joined forces with third- and fourth-generation descendants to protect this place for over a century? In 100 years, so much has changed, but not that.

Barkmere is the Sedona of Quebec. There is no scientific evidence to support the existence of energy vortexes in either of these places. No abnormal magnetic or electric fields have been measured there. The feelings of well-being or tingling are caused by the visual stimulation of the environment and the proven benefits of nature. Here, you feel connected to the earth, to nature, to life, for a moment outside of time, protected, surrounded by family and community, closer to balance and happiness. It is a sanctuary, a pause in time and space, sheltered from the frantic pace of modern life, where one can return to the essentials with simplicity and recharge one’s batteries.

Another thing the 2 towns have in common is their commitment to preserving their starry skies by enforcing very strict lighting regulations, making them ideal places for stargazing. For enthusiasts and those looking to discover the wonders of the night sky, 2026 will be a year full of celestial spectacles not to be missed.

The year began with a “planetary parade”—the simultaneous appearance of six planets in the same section of the sky: Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

The year 2026 will be an excellent time to see the Northern Lights. Since they’re very difficult to predict in advance, keep your eyes peeled!

Get ready to make your wishes—the annual, recurring, yet always impressive meteor showers are coming:

- August 12–13: Perseid meteor shower
- November 17–18: Leonid meteor shower
- December 13–14: Geminid meteor shower

Not to mention a partial lunar eclipse (August 27–28), the magic of the full moon every month, and a partial solar eclipse (August 12).

Barkmere: earth, sky, air, water, and life. It’s hard to imagine what things will be like 100 years from now, but let’s hope that the essentials will remain the same—it’s a rare and cherished place, so let’s continue to preserve it.

*Chantal Baron,
Councillor*

By: Grant Eliot



Any summer in Barkmere is special, but this year is truly extraordinary as we celebrate the town's 100th anniversary. Even before Barkmere was officially incorporated in 1926, residents worked to protect and enjoy this gem of the Laurentians. Today, we proudly carry that tradition forward and invite everyone to take part in a summer filled with centennial celebrations.

The festivities begin with Boat Bingo on July 4 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Goulden Island. Now in its second year, this unique event has quickly become a favourite on the water, offering prizes, laughs, and beautiful lake views.

On July 11 at 10:00 a.m., Goulden Island will host the Boat Rally. Participants will follow clues leading to fun challenges around the lake before returning to the island. Space is limited to 12 boats, so interested participants should register early by emailing barkmere100@gmail.com. Spots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tours of distinctive Barkmere cottages will take place on July 18 in the village and around the lake. Current owners have graciously agreed to open their homes, showcasing the craftsmanship, history, and character preserved by generations of families. As space is limited, a registration schedule will be shared in advance.

The highlight of the summer will be Centennial Day on July 25, a full-day celebration of Barkmere's history, community, and heritage at the Landing and Community Centre.

From 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., residents and visitors can enjoy presentations, commemorative dedications, historical exhibits, field games, and other activities. A catered lunch will be provided, ensuring everyone has the energy to enjoy a full day of festivities.

Following a short break from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., the evening celebration begins with live music and dancing. At sunset, commemorative LED tea-light lanterns will be held aloft, creating a memorable tribute to a century of Barkmere summers.

To accommodate Centennial Day preparations and equipment, the usual parking areas at the Landing will be unavailable from Thursday, July 23 through Monday, July 27. Residents are encouraged to make alternative parking arrangements in advance. Details regarding temporary parking will be communicated closer to the event. Loading and unloading at the municipal pier will remain available but must be completed promptly to keep the area clear. Please also ensure roads remain unobstructed to allow traffic to flow safely throughout the celebrations.

[Happy Birthday](#), Barkmere! Here's to the next 100 years.

*Grant Elliot,
Councillor*



Message From Marie-Hélène Lemarbre



After more than a hundred years of life around the lake — and many more cottages than there once were — the fact that our lake and its surroundings remain so natural is something we can truly be proud of.

Barkmere, as you know because you experience it too, is an extraordinary and rare place. Its value and uniqueness do not come from spectacular development, but from a collective decision to preserve a territory deeply rooted in nature. Today, this continuous commitment to protection is part of Barkmere's DNA.

Barkmere feels almost like a legendary place, hidden from the outside world, a kind of “imaginary land” set apart from noise and the ordinary pace of life. The founding choice to limit road development around the lake has protected its natural heritage and preserved the sounds of nature. The forest, the lake, and the wildlife offer us a truly unique experience.

I see our community as the guardians of this place we know to be different and exceptional. We are its fierce defenders, so that we can pass on to future generations not only a territory, but a distinctive way of living in and understanding nature. Our mission continues, and this summer will be no exception. We will honour all the work that has been done in the past. We will continue to monitor and control Eurasian watermilfoil, stay on the lookout for other potential invasive species, watch over the health of our shorelines, which are essential to the wellbeing of our lake, and test the water to ensure its quality. All of this is so that we can take care of what has been protected for us, and one day pass it on in turn.

Happy 100th, everyone!

Marie-Hélène Lemarbre,
Councillor

The Inspector's column

By: Annie Larocque



Hello everyone,

I would like to take this opportunity in the newsletter to share a few important reminders:

Important Fire Reminder:

If a fire gets out of control, do not wait: call 9-1-1 immediately before taking any other action. Every minute counts.

Any fire, including a campfire, requires strict precautions and rules to follow to ensure everyone's safety.

To prevent the worst, the Town strictly regulates outdoor fires under Burning Bylaw Number 138.

Rules that must be strictly followed:

Campfires

A burning permit is not required for a campfire (1 meter by 1 meter).

Large Fires and Open Burning (Permit Required)

Anyone wishing to light a fire between March 15 and November 30 to destroy dry hay, straw, grass, brush, branches, trees, shrubs or plants, light soil or muck, tree trunks, slash, or any other natural wood anywhere within the municipality must obtain a burning permit in advance from the Town.

For All Fires

Burning Bylaw Number 138 applies at all times.

Before lighting a fire, always check the fire danger rating] and current restrictions on the SOPFEU website.

Outdoor fires are strictly prohibited on days when wind speeds exceed 25 km/hour.

The person responsible for the fire must supervise the fire at all times and ensure the fire is completely extinguished with water before leaving the area.

Obtaining a fire permit does not release the permit holder from their standard responsibilities if expenditures or damages result from the fire.

You must comply with all safety regulations (cleared fire pit area, continuous supervision, full extinguishment, garden hose nearby, etc.).

As soon as a drought warning or a fire ban is in effect, all fires are prohibited without exception.

Anyone who sets a fire and fails to take the necessary measures to prevent it from spreading from their land to neighboring property commits an offense under this bylaw and is subject to all penalties provided by law.

Permits and Certificates of Authorization

I invite you to check with the urban planning department to find out if your projects require a building permit or a certificate of authorization, and to learn which documents must be attached to your application. I will be happy to answer your questions and assist you with your projects.

However, it is [Highlighted: mandatory to complete your procedures properly and in advance] to avoid financial penalties, as these are stipulated by the regulations in the event of an infraction.

Shoreline Protection

I would also like to take this opportunity in the newsletter to remind everyone that protecting Lac des Écorces requires a collective commitment to preserve this fragile ecosystem. Respecting shoreline vegetation regulations and limiting wave-induced erosion are essential actions. By adopting eco-friendly habits in our daily lives, such as using phosphate-free products and reducing boat speeds, we actively contribute to maintaining the quality of our water.

In closing, I wish you an excellent season and a happy 100th anniversary!

*Annie Larocque,
Inspector*

Prevention - Our First Line of Defense

By: David Castonguay



As we celebrate Barkmere's 100th anniversary, many of us are reflecting on the generations who have protected this remarkable place. Today, our responsibility is no different. We all share a role in preserving Barkmere's forests, our lake and, above all, the safety of our community.

Last winter, I introduced the idea of reviving the Consultative Committee for Public Security (CPS). I am pleased to say that this initiative is now underway. Five members of our community have volunteered to join the committee, and I would like to sincerely thank them for their willingness to contribute their time and knowledge.

Our objective is simple: to make Barkmere stronger and safer by working together. Together, we will work with our public safety partners, invite emergency responders to share their expertise, improve communications with residents, and continue developing practical measures that help our community prepare for emergencies before they happen.

One of the committee's ongoing projects will be the renewal of Barklake's fire pump system. The pump renewal activity will most likely materialize in a new and improved system, yet to be determined and to be discussed at the CSP. Our goal is to ensure our equipment serves the community directly while enabling and accelerating the fire service response.

You may have heard that this spring, the territory of Barkmere experienced two fires. Fortunately, both were contained quickly.

This is an important reminder that while emergency response plans, evacuation procedures and firefighting equipment are essential, **prevention remains our most effective defence**. Every resident can help reduce the risk by respecting fire bans, checking the daily on the [SOPFEU](#) website, using campfires responsibly (with covered fire pits), and remaining vigilant during drier conditions.

Preparedness at home is equally important. Smoke alarms, accessible fire extinguishers and a family emergency plan can make an enormous difference. Several Barklakers also own water pumps that may prove invaluable during an emergency if they are readily available and can be operated safely.

But there is one point I would like everyone to remember above all else.

In case of emergency, call 911 immediately.

Do not assume that someone else has already called. Do not wait to see if the situation worsens. Do not spend valuable minutes trying to determine whether the fire is “serious enough.” Emergency services can always scale back their response, if necessary, but they can never recover the time lost before they were notified.

Public safety is built on a community that understands the risks, prepares in advance, and acts quickly when it matters most.

The best emergency response is the one we never have to deploy.

David Castonguay,
Councillor

INFORMATION ON THE TOWN HALL

OPENING HOURS

Open everyday from 8:30am to 4:30pm

Mayor:	819-681-3374, ext. 5100	maire@barkmere.ca
Director General and Treasurer:	819-681-3374, ext. 5101	dg@barkmere.ca
Finances:	819-681-3374, ext. 5102	finance@barkmere.ca
Communications:	819-681-3374, ext. 5100	communications@barkmere.ca
Urbanism and infrastructures:	819-681-3374, ext. 5103	inspecteur@barkmere.ca

