



Association du patrimoine de Potton

DEPUIS 1990

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Potton Heritage Association

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26^e Assemblée générale annuelle

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**Allocution bilingue
de la présidente Sandra Jewett**

26th Annual General Assembly

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**Bilingual President's address
by Sandra Jewett**

Bonjour

Each of the Directors already give an individual report. Our accomplishments of the past year were many and a portion of our meeting will be given over to discussion of our [survey results](#). This sondage was a first for our association. It was designed by Serge and *c'est lui qui fera la presentation des résultats. Le Conseil d'administration entend respecter les opinions exprimées et nous désirons vous remercier d'avoir pris le temps d'y répondre*. The Board sincerely thanks each of you who took the time to respond and give such positive suggestions. We should be having an interesting discussion in few minutes, during la période de questions.

A survey of Heritage Institutions

Last week, as I was mulling over what I intended to say today – which I will tell you concerned with maintaining the relevance of history in the age of social media where it seems our entire world is populated by 30-somethings apparently concerned with only the immediate. I am still working on it - so perhaps next year – if I am still here!

At any rate, thankfully I received the e-mail results *de la plus récente Enquête du gouvernement du Canada sur les établissements du patrimoine qui a recueilli des informations sur l'exploitation et les données financières des institutions à vocation patrimoniale à but non lucratif, pour l'année 2013* — the latest Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions (GCSHI), which collected financial and operating information on not-for-profit heritage institutions for the 2013 data year. *L'enquête a recueilli des données concernant plus de 62 % de tout le secteur du patrimoine*. To be candid, my first interest was casual, but on second look, some statistics intrigued me and made me realise that comparatively speaking, our Association, which had participated in the survey, is ahead of the statistical curve in many ways.

We may be *comparativement petit – mais néanmoins puissant!* The accomplishments of our association of two hundred members and volunteers, is nothing short of inspiring.

I read that providing online access to our rich cultural heritage is becoming an increasingly vital service offered by heritage institutions across the country; and of the 1 600 institutions canvassed had converted almost 10% of their material and archives to digital formats. We are well over that figure. Our collection does not rival say, the McCord Museum or others, but nonetheless our treasury is rich and its availability to the wider public is free for the asking.

There were over 146.2 million online visits to all heritage institutions, an increase of nearly 5 %. And the number of Research requests received, which grew by 10,5 %, demonstrates that Canadians consider museums and other heritage institutions to be trusted sources of information. In all of these categories we are ahead of the curve! Much to our credit. How we compare to the statistical average is in Serge's domaine, not mine!

This reference as a trusted institution must be true, for over our years on the Board, both Jean-Louis and I have fielded many, many requests emanating from readers of our websites. *Une grande majorité de ces requêtes porte sur la recherche d'ancêtres ayant habité Potton, sur leurs présences dans un de nos cimetières ou sur les lieux qu'ils habitaient.*

I have many examples but will offer only a few which might interest you. In all cases, the queries were addressed to l'Association. A woman from North Carolina, and now a member of our association, was researching her family's roots in Potton. I gave her what info I could find but she, being an accomplished genealogist, has helped me a number of times with other queries. Another example came from a lady with the barest of information about a relative who had settled in Potton. This one was a hard nut to crack. All she could offer was a name and a date on photocopy of research confirming some of the earliest known burials in the Skinner Cemetery. Her relative did indeed live here in 1803, and is buried in the Cemetery, although we have never located the gravestone. But through our exchanges over the years, we have pretty well fleshed out her Potton connection through her relative, one Bela Bell. This woman is from Washington States on the West Coast of the US. Only yesterday did I receive more pertinent, verifiable information from her about a number of Potton's earliest colonists. And quite incredibly, as a personal bonus, I have found that this very Bell family has a connection to one of my uncles, and most surprisingly, that one of my great grandmothers, Mary Jane Knott is also a close part of her family as well. *Comment le monde est petit!*

En 2014, une auteure a communiqué avec nous pour situer une maison à Potton. Je pouvais non seulement la situer, mais aussi lui fournir une photo. Depuis, j'ai appris que cette personne est historienne et archiviste à Bibliothèque et Archives du Canada à Ottawa. Elle nous aide dans nos recherches pour connaître les premiers récipiendaires des concessions des terres à Potton de 1763 à 1890. Information que notre Jean-Louis traduira en un prochain article dans notre magazine.

Sans nos sites Web et les adresses info@patrimoinepotton.org et info@pottonheritage.org, ces personnes n'auraient probablement jamais communiqué avec l'Association. The time spent answering these, give us good return.

Je pourrais continuer avec des exemples de plusieurs autres contacts de toutes les couleurs. Je souligne que j'obtiens toujours une coopération formidable des personnes de souche de Potton, lorsque je fais mes recherches. Elles sont aussi fières de leurs racines que je le suis. J'en nomme quelques-unes : madame Lucille Deschênes, madame Bailey, madame Norma Sherrer, monsieur John Aiken. Leur absence à titre de membres de notre Association ne signifie pas qu'elles ne s'intéressent pas à notre patrimoine. Au contraire, elles en sont passionnées et elles contribuent à enrichir nos publications. Read the short Stories of Lillian Smith Sherrer dans Histoire Potton Histoty et vous en serez convaincu.

Vous savez aussi bien que moi que notre présence sur l'internet n'aurait jamais été possible sans les travaux de notre trésorier et webmestre, Serge. Il a programmé nos sites web et mis en ligne presque toutes nos archives écrites ou photographiques. Il gère deux sites pour nous. Des sites de très belle présentation et faciles à naviguer. Combien de temps, combien d'heures Serge consacre-t-il à ce travail chaque semaine? Je l'ignore. Il est infatigable. La grande qualité de notre site Web, surtout en son français impeccable, est certainement due à Jacqueline Robitaille, my secret weapon. L'Association, n'a pas les moyens de payer pour leurs services

professionnels. Ils nous sont généreusement offerts par des passionnés! Chapeau à cette équipe! A fantastic team.

Si vous me le permettez, j'aimerais retourner brièvement aux statistiques de l'enquête canadienne.

Les revenus générés par les institutions à vocation patrimoniale se chiffrent à plus de 2,12 milliards de dollars annuellement. Chiffre étonnant par son ampleur. Et encore plus incroyable : Volunteers accounted for over 76% of the entire heritage sector workforce across Canada. Donating over 5 600 000 hours, they played a central role in helping heritage institutions meet their mandate, including devoting time to developing programs that teach history, amongst other subjects. In 2013 these programs were attended by over 123 000 school groups, approximately 6,2 million students.

Le Québec compte pour 26,4 % des recettes, second only to Ontario, 41 %.

These are formidable statistics! And they serve to reinforce to me that Potton Heritage is more than contributing to national heritage efforts, particularly in this age of instant information and expectation of near immediate response.

- Le rapport de l'EGCEP peut être consulté sous la rubrique << Publications >> du site Web du ministère du patrimoine canadien : <http://www.pch.gc.ca/fra/1413470724735/1413470791957>
- The GCSHI Report can be found on the Department of Canadian Heritage website under publications: <http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1413470724735>

Notre Association, founded in 1990 as we know, began as a volunteer driven organization. And dedicated, talented volunteers have sustained this vibrant, forward thinking organization for nearly a generation now. But those volunteers did not, nor do we now, work in a vacuum. They were, as we still are, sustained not only by our own keen interest, but much nourished by the support given from the general membership, a quarter of whom are present in this room right now. You do that not just by being here, but by your questions, your donations and sustained encouragement. Some do it, by opening your homes to receive fellow members and guests for some very bountiful lunches and socializing after excursions, particularly in winter. These are integral to the fabric of our Association and the benefits must never be underestimated. Your welcome is amazing. These occasions seem to run like well-oiled machines, despite the obvious effort expended for these each. This year I attended three of these, each with quite a different tenor and in each home, we were genuinely welcomed. I hope that our hosts understand just how much we appreciate your generosity and count on your continued support.

Before I end, I want to tell you what a privilege it has been, what a privilege it continues to be, to work with my fellow board members. They have helped me stretch my imagination. They are extraordinary people, with whom I am privileged to share some of my life's journey! Thank you to each of you. As a member of this Association and part of an incredibly talented team, I have already received a great deal more than I have ever given from the community of very dear friends who are in this room.

Vive l'Association du patrimoine de Potton! Thank you so much!



Sandra Jewett, présidente — President

Association du patrimoine de Potton — Potton Heritage Association