

Introduction

In its vocation as an historical society devoted to the documentation and dissemination of the elements of local heritage, the Potton Heritage Association has produced and assembled a documentary collection consisting primarily of photographic archives and printed materials.

The collection of printed documents include, among others, the following: ten folders, nine brochures, thirteen copies of *Histoire Potton History*, le Répertoire toponymique | *Place Names of Potton and More* and a copy of *Potton d'antan | Yesterdays of Potton*. Various documents relating to heritage (reports, studies, documentation) complete this collection.

The photographic archives total nearly 1,500 individual items, resulting in part from the digitization of raw photographic images as well as the photo montages used in the 15 plus exhibitions produced by the Association since 1996.

In its January 24th edition, *Le Devoir* published an article entitled *Dans le même bateau numérique*, wherein Nathalie Thibault, directress of document management and archives for the Musée nationale des beaux arts du Québec, (MNBAQ) explained that “*more and more, what is hoped for, is to make our material and images accessible to the widest public possible.*”

The Potton Heritage Association is a stakeholder in this shift to the digital. We are convinced that our collection offers a rich potential for the development of new broadcast platforms which could easily be integrated into projects such as the Heritage Interpretation Centre envisioned for the Round Barn in Mansonville.

Below is an appraisal of materials already in hand presented with our vision of the possibilities these offer.

What we have done thus far

- The folders, brochures and other documents in our collection are digitized in PDF format. The administrative archives of the Association (minutes, slide presentations etc) are part of this collection that comprises 238 titles or headings.
- The thirteen (13) issues of *Histoire Potton History* magazine are digitized and 136 articles are accessible as separate publications
- Le Répertoire toponymique | *Place Names of Potton and More* regroup 368 headings, digitized with geolocation indication.

All of these documents are accessible publicly on the web sites www.patrimoinepotton.org and www.pottonheritage.org.

What we are in the process of doing

Cataloguing and indexing our collection of photographs to facilitate access by on-line search portals. *Dublin Core taxonomy* was chosen to respect recognized indexing standards.

Digitizing the elements of our former exhibitions in order to render them accessible on-line. We are experimenting with the *OMEKA* portal for management and publication of the contents.

What might be accomplished ...

In the chapter of heritage promotion, the digital wave presents certain advantages that encourage the production of contents and to maintain dissemination.

Below are some randomly presented ideas to illustrate a potential worthy of pursuing ...

A new beginning for our brochures and folders employed in interactive digital modules ⁽¹⁾.

Imagine! You are in the round barn; a virtual map of the Township of Potton unfurled on a table before you : where images associated with the various hamlets of Potton (Dunkin, Highwater, Vale Perkins, etc.) are displayed; a touch of the screen ... an illustrated or narrated video clip begins...

(1) Similar interactive screens are used in the Merry House in Magog

The history of some of Potton's families constitute an element of local heritage

Again, in the round barn, a portrait of Mr. Laplume hangs on the wall. A simple touch activates an audio clip wherein a Laplume youngster tells the story of maple sugaring in his grandfather's day

To produce all this would involve the school children.

On another wall – a nice photo of Jewett's Store. A touch on the screen and here's Sandra talking ...

History of fishing! History of hunting!

Still in the round barn, and here's a replica of a hunting blind. Step inside to watch a video relating all that you could imagine ...

The glory years on the Lake

Let's stay in the round barn – where a replica of a wharf has been built, behind which is a mural of photos of the Lake, and in the back ground the Mountain House hotel ... Advance onto the wharf and there, before you -- an animation of the Lady of the Lake navigating its approach to the hotel rolls on the screen before you ...

The répertoire toponymique *Place Names of Potton and More* already lends itself to less static use. All that remains is its integration into an app to discover its tourist potential.

Conclusion

May these few remarks help you envision a place for digitization in the promotion of the elements of our local heritage.

Serge Normand | February 2019 | Translation | Sandra Jewett

Examples | Links

- Le Chemin des Cantons - Guide virtuel et GPS
<https://m.baladodecouverte.com/?id=162#tourDetails?id=162>
- Circuits patrimoniaux - Ville de Sutton | Town of Sutton
<https://sutton.ca/decouvrir-sutton/patrimoine/circuits-patrimoniaux/>
- Répertoire toponymique | Place names of Potton and More
<https://patrimoinepotton.org/bibnum/pn-0>
- Digital Library | Potton Heritage Association
<https://patrimoinepotton.org/appnum>
 - Histoire Potton History | Reprints
 - Expo 2016 | The Covered Bridges of the Eastern Townships
 - Expo 2017 | Tourism in Potton at the turn of the 19th Century