

21st Annual General Assembly – March 20, 2011

POTTON HERITAGE ASSOCIATION GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS HELD MARCH 20, 2011 IN THE TOWN HALL OF MANSONVILLE

Minutes

1— Opening of the Assembly

President Hans Walser declared the meeting open at 10 a.m., having established the presence of a quorum according to the dispositions of *Article 4.3* of the General Bylaws, requiring the presence of at least 10 persons. Forty-five persons were in attendance.

2— Agenda

It was moved by Bernard Sansoucy, seconded by Jean-François Boulais and unanimously resolved to adopt the agenda as proposed.

3— Adoption of the Minutes, March 13 2010

It was moved by Robert Joly, seconded by Micheline Fortin and unanimously resolved to adopt the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on March 13, 2010.

4—President's report - H. Walser

The President thanked the membership for their presence and noted that Mayor Jacques Marcoux and Councillor Michael Head were in attendance. He thanked both for their support of the mission and activities of the Association.

The President introduced himself and presented the Board of Directors : Michel Bastien, Jean-Louis Bertrand, Carol Bishop, Jacques Huppertz, Sandra Jewett, Yolande Lamontagne, Serge Normand. He noted that Édith Smeesters was absent for cause. He thanked the Board for their enthusiasm and hard work on the Board in the past year.

The President repeated that the Association's mission is to publicize, promote and protect heritage within the Township of Potton, for the benefit of all its citizens. The Association, he noted, is in good shape, as witnessed by the many achievements of 2010. Membership numbers are stable. Our relationship with the community of Potton and its Municipal Council is excellent.

In 2010, we continued production of our quality publications. We helped in the transfer of the Round Barn project to the Municipality and to the Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton. We donated 10 000 \$ to the Municipality for the purpose of preliminary stabilization of the Barn. In three years, the Association has invested more than \$14 000 in the Round Barn project, and this, without factoring in more than 500 hours of volunteer labour.

We worked closely with the *Comité culturel et patrimonial de Potton*, participated in the Multicultural Festival, and organised the first annual *Cultural Days in Potton (Journées de la culture de Potton)*. A Committee of Association members among others, is in the process of writing a heritage policy for the Municipality, for completion in 2011. We launched our Association website, a project which had stagnated for several years.

In 2011, we will finalize the updating of our publications, the layout of a heritage tour of Potton, access to the Jones sites: the *Indian* rock and mill site, as well as clarifying the archeological status of each.

5—Secretary’s report - Jean-Louis Bertrand

The Association Secretary noted that the Board of Directors had met 11 times in 2010. Some 34 projects were managed by 11 Board members and 30 Association members, at a minimum 9000 hours of work, equal to \$85 500 at \$9.50 per hour, according to the norms of the MRC de Memphrémagog. We are indeed rich in volunteer resources!

The most important committee functions concerned the Round Barn, finances, our website, communication with membership, a heritage Policy, publications, excursions and conferences, the Multicultural Festival, Heritage Day, our 20th Anniversary gala, Cultural days, Autumnfest and Oktoberfest.

Publications concerning Owl’s Head, Knowlton Landing, Vorokhta and the Russian Monastery were completed and 2,000 of each printed. Two hundred copies of a short story, *Imagine*, written by Sandra Jewett, were published as a complement to the Reilly House Exhibit on rural schools in the municipality. Fifty copies of *Portraits de nos vingt ans /Portraits of our Twenty years*, a special souvenir album celebrating the 20th anniversary of the founding of our Association were also printed.

The Administrative policies of the Board, as well as the General Bylaws of the Association were revised and submitted for approval at a Special General meeting, to be convened in 2011.

6— Report from the Webmaster - Serge Normand

The Association has two websites, an English one : *pottonheritage.org* and a French one : *patrimoinepotton.org*. Both of these sites have been up and running since September 2010. Webmaster Serge Normand invited the membership to check these sites regularly for reports of Association activities and regular updates. He noted that a calendar of events and activities, excursion photographs, our publications and our archived photos are available on the site. The technical platform for the sites, WordPress, is most efficient, witnessed by its adoption for use by a national telecommunications network.

The Association membership totalled 233 on December 31, 2010 of whom 125 were French speaking (54 %) and 108 English (46 %). Using on-screen graphics, Serge Normand demonstrated that membership has fluctuated very little since 2005, the year in which we reached 250 members. On average each year, 15% of lost membership is replaced by an equal percentage of new members.

7— Report from Vice President Édith Smeesters and Activities Director, Carol Bishop.

Carol Bishop reported that eleven winter and five summer excursions were offered to members and friends during 2010. Snowshoe outings in the winter are growing in popularity. Outings and excursions allow the discovery of lesser known treasures of Potton’s natural heritage, the exploration of the Missisquoi river, Lake Memphremagog with its many historic sights as well as parts of the Green Mountains. To those occasions, Ms. Bishop noted a St. Valentine supper, active participation in Neighbour’s Day, the Multicultural Festival and our much appreciated photography

contest, a corn roast, crowned this year with a superb rainbow, were part of this year's activities.

The Municipality sponsored for the first time this year *Cultural Days / Journées de la culture* in Potton. We contributed largely with conferences, an exceptional music concert, excursions and much more.

Autumnfest at Owl's Head is always a great success. Guided tours of the Jones site, the natural Masonic chamber atop the Mountain, as well as our information are always popular. Finally, Oktoberfest knew its usual success. 2010 activities ended with two beautiful excursions to greet the winter solstice at the White site and atop Owl's Head.

Carol Bishop invited Jean-François Boulais to present details of the Association's 2011 photography contest. The theme chosen is *My best photo of Potton / Ma plus belle photographie de Potton*. Mr. Boulais outlined contest rules and invited the members to consult the Association's websites regularly for updates.

Carol Bishop ended her presentation by noting that a dinner-talk was being organized in order to present the folders and brochures of the Association. Speakers will be Sandra Jewett and Jean-Louis Bertrand. Excursions, the Multicultural Festival, Heritage Day, Cultural Days, and Autumnfest are scheduled for 2011.

8—Treasurer's Report - Yolande Lamontagne

The Treasurer deposited the audited financial statements for 2010, prepared by Ralf Bushenbaum, services financiers. She explained the various revenue and expense accounts, concluding that the 2010 results versus 2010 budget for the Association were good. The Association registered a deficit on 2010 operations of \$7 391 relating mostly to the 20th Anniversary celebrations of the Association, absorbed, as foreseen, by previous years' surplus, which nonetheless stands at \$4 597.00 on December 31, 2010. She compared actual 2010 results with budgeted 2011 figures.

It was moved by Michel Trudel, seconded by Bernard Sansoucy, and unanimously resolved to adopt the Treasurer's report and approve the Auditor's report.

9— Nomination of auditor

Treasurer Yolande Lamontagne requested that the accounting firm of Ralf Bushenbaum, services financiers, of the Township of Potton, be named auditor for the year 2011.

It was moved by Madeleine Soucy, seconded by Denis Lamontagne and resolved to name the accounting firm of Ralf Bushenbaum, services financiers, of the Township of Potton, as auditor for 2011.

10—Election of Board of Directors

The Secretary of the Association presented the nomination of Board members for re-election : Jean-Louis Bertrand, Carole Bishop, Jacques Huppertz, Sandra Jewett, Yolande Lamontagne, Denis Lamontagne, Serge Normand, Édith Smeesters, and Hans Walser. He confirmed that no other nominations had been received by March 10, 2011, the last date for reception of same.

It was moved by Jacqueline Robitaille, seconded by Ralph Milot, and unanimously resolved to elect the each of those nominated to the Board of Directors.

11— Updating on *Mansonville Round Barn* and *pont de la Frontière* projects

Michel Bastien, architect, noted that as of January 2011, the Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton (GBMP) had assumed primary responsibility for these projects from the Association. This Group is a non-profit organization, formed at the request of the Municipal Council, to manage these projects, in addition to the walking trails within the Municipality. The Board of Directors is comprised of: Michel Bastien, President; Hans Walser, Vice President; Bernard Sansoucy, Secretary; Jacques Huppertz, Treasurer and Frank Ruiz, administrator responsible for the walking trails. .

The Municipality has earmarked \$50 000 for the renewal of the now crumbling buttresses of the *Pont de la Frontière*. The GBMP will also oversee secure safe accessibility for the pathway to the Mud River.

The Round Barn project has progressed in 2010. The sum of \$35 000 was secured from Pacte Rural for technical studies. The report prepared by Blitz culture has been deposited. This report, available in its entirety on the Association website, proposes a broad outline for future uses of the Barn. This study was essential for the presentation of a grant request to the Ministère de la Culture du Québec.

Works to temporarily stabilize the barn were undertaken in 2010, at a cost of \$29,000. This operation permits the respite necessary for the preparation of a business plan and finalizing funding requests. Mr. Bastien estimates that \$800 000 will be required for the structural repairs and renovation. Half of this amount will come from government subsidies, and the remaining \$400 000 will be collected from the population and businesses of the area. He ended his presentation with cut-away diagrams of the Barn in addition to a short presentation of the future uses for the three storeys of the structure.

Mr. Bastien answered questions from the floor. A meeting with the population of Potton will be organized by the GBMP in 2011. He noted that the recent works were only for immediate stabilization and protection of the building. The next phase will see foundation repair to acceptable standards.

12— Departure of Board Director Michel Bastien

Hans Walser thanked Michel Bastien for his presentation. He noted, with appreciation, Mr. Bastien's professional contribution to the works of the Association during 2010, particularly in the matter of the Round Barn. While Mr. Walser expressed regret for Mr. Bastien's departure from the Board, he noted that it was entirely understandable given his desire to devote his attention to the advancement of the Round Barn project, and the considerable time this would require.

On behalf of the Association, Mr. Walser presented a copy of Louise Abbott's magnificent book, *The Heart of the Farm*, in appreciation and for inspiration in his work!

Mr Bastien thanked the President and noted that the continued support of the Association and its membership would be required, for the Barn project to be successful. He noted that his term as Board member had allowed the opportunity to better understand the importance of heritage in Potton – to the point that he is fully committed to the promotion and protection of heritage within the Township of Potton.

13- Question period

Madeleine Soucy asked if dates for Heritage Day and Cultural Days had been established. (*Journée du patrimoine and les Journées de la culture*), to which Mr. Walser answered that these events would take place September 30th, October 1st and 2nd, 2011.

Mayor Jacques Marcoux, thanked the Association for its donation of \$10,000 for the preliminary stabilization of the Round Barn. He informed the membership that a recreational-tourism policy was being presently being prepared by Michel Trudel, an

Association member, the cost of which was being underwritten by the *fonds de soutien aux municipalités en décroissance*. (Aid to Municipalities in decline) Many projects are underway in Potton. The Mayor thanked the members of the Association for their continuing support and active participation in most of these.

14— Resolution of Congratulations

Jean-Claude Fortin moved that the Assembly warmly congratulate the Board of Directors for the excellence of their achievements in 2010, and for their devotion as volunteers. This resolution was unanimously seconded and followed by a rousing ovation.

15— Adjournment

Jean-Claude Fortin moved, seconded by Jean-François Boulais, and unanimously resolved that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, March 21, 2001

Jean-Louis Bertrand, Secretary

Translated to English by Sandra Jewett.

Annex 1 : Minutes of the General Assembly of members held March 13 2010.

Annex 2 : Presentation Documents

Annex 3 : Audited financial statements for 2010