

Association du
patrimoine de Potton

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Potton Heritage
Association

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Letter from the President | December 2019

Warmest greetings to all!

With snow now on the ground and the holiday season nearly upon us, it is the time to quickly review the year nearly past and to prepare for the beginning a New Year in a very few days.

Last February I subjected you to a very lengthy epistle in which I spoke of the factors which could influence the future of our Association. I promise a shorter letter today - no doubt to your great relief! The circumstances previously described still exist, and new opportunities have cropped up. It may be helpful to refer to a [copy of the February letter](#). (All transactions of our Association are recorded and easily accessed, courtesy of the wizardry of our indefatigable webmaster.) Our most recent annual report to Council may be found here in French only, by simply [clicking on this link](#).

Though well attended, our April 2019 AGM was less focussed than it could have been, (precipitated regrettably by me), and this has perhaps prolonged what I perceive is a crisis of existentialism plaguing the Board. Better said, I see us in a state of flux that seems to have removed much of our former collective sense of purpose and a good share of our social adhesion leaving a type of self-imposed marginalization. Serious determination has displaced cheerful industriousness! However, all things change – and the wiser among us would tell me that we must adapt to new realities!

Throughout the past months Serge has diligently established a most professional [digital library](#) wherein are stored our many publications and authored works, This library is most assuredly a positive step in establishing credible liaisons with other associations and institutions in the future. Book marks with the printed QR code have been placed throughout Potton.

These past months I have witnessed with admiration the enormous work and tremendous effort which has surrounded the preservation of the Round Barn. As that gargantuan project draws to a close, I have a better perception of the monumental and unceasing efforts of the frontline volunteers. The determination, tenacious leadership and courage of conviction has been without parallel! Nonetheless, Newton's law of physics holds that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction – as true in *motion* as in *emotion*. The Round Barn has exacted its toll.

Culture and heritage are elements of economic importance to Potton, attracting numerous visitors annually. Our Barn is nearing completion, and when coupled with other similar ongoing projects, as well as the development at Owl's Head, management strategies will necessarily change. Inevitably ever more visitors will discover Potton. The primary elements of culture and heritage, will not only retain importance but will also need expansion. Volunteer management and financing must be replaced with more dependable standards, and dare I say – professional standards.

This notion then explains why representatives of the *Comité Culturel et Patrimonial de Potton* (CCPP), the *Groupe bénévole municipal de Potton* (GBMP) and the *Association du patrimoine de Potton* (APP) were convened by our Mayor to a September meeting, in order to define the future procedures to manage culture and heritage in the Township. Our discussions were constructive, though not always agreed by all!

From these, the Mayor distilled certain orientations which I repeat here to be considered by the Council in early January, I believe. Insofar as the *management of municipal assets* is concerned, these include:

- an increase in culture and heritage budgets;
- assigning various organizational duties to a municipal employee on a contractual or other basis;
- attracting more interested volunteers in order to lessen burnout and fatigue;
- renaming the Culture and Heritage Committee, and better define its mission (Currently, the CCPP is concerned with heritage in name only);
- entrusting to the *Association du patrimoine de Potton* certain heritage aspects according to an agreement to be defined with the municipality;
- entrusting management of cultural elements to the municipal committee to be renamed (above), and the management of heritage elements to a municipal resource assisted by the APPHA.

I anticipate there will be thorough discussion of the above at our AGM in early April if not before.

Other elements to keep in mind are *nominations to the Board of Directors*. Sadly for us, *four of our current members have advised they will not seek another term*, and therefore we must recruit replacements for nomination at our AGM. My personal thanks go to Janine, Chantal, Robert and Serge for their unfailing support and dedication to the Board, and the APP.

I will try to keep you apprised of any changes – or any need for consultation! Meanwhile, I wish good health and very happy holidays to everyone!

Sandra Jewett

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandra Jewett', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.