

QUEBEC ANGLOPHONE HERITAGE NETWORK

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Potton Heritage Association

Year of Award:

2019

Richard Evans

At its 2019 convention, held in Knowlton, June 1-2, QAHN presented the prestigious Richard Evans Award to the Potton Heritage Association. Representing the association for the occasion was its hard-working president Sandra Jewett.

Founded in 1990, the Potton Heritage Association will celebrate its 30th anniversary next year. A major focus of the association's energies recently has been the restoration of the Mansonville round barn. Over the last ten years, this historic building had been deteriorating, and, despite this, a group of dedicated citizens continued their efforts to secure the necessary funding for the barn's much-needed restoration.

Donations and a grant from Canadian Heritage, now totalling \$645,000, enabled the beginning of the restoration last November. Future plans for the building include exhibition space, markets for local produce and crafts, a community garden, and meeting space for a variety of activities.

In 2017, Potton Heritage produced the exhibition "Tourism in Potton at the Turn of the 19th Century," which was a full year in its preparation. In 2016, the association mounted an exhibition on covered bridges. These productions required a large effort on the part of volunteers, and were expensive to mount.

A bilingual publication, *Histoire Potton History*, is published by the association twice annually, and features articles of local interest written by local authors. This publication is now in its sixth year. Over the years, Potton Heritage has produced an impressive array of other print publications on a range of topics pertaining to the history, lore, and built heritage of the local villages and hamlets around Potton Township.

Currently, volunteers are working to upload materials to the association's website, and there are plans to digitize the collections of archived photos. The organization hosts regular activities in summer and winter. These include excursions such as snowshoe treks and ice-fishing, with lunches included. Since 2011, Potton Heritage has participated in the selection of winners of the Culture and Heritage prizes awarded annually by the Potton Cultural and Heritage Committee. A project for funding has been submitted to the municipality for 2019. The association already has the basis for some excellent "virtual" exhibits of the type that may be seen in the Merry House in Magog.

According to QAHN Executive Director Matthew Farfan, the Potton Heritage Association and its volunteers are "tireless advocates for the preservation of local heritage and the dissemination of local history." QAHN, he said, "salutes the value of the work being done by the association, and we wish them continued success in the years ahead."

