

QUEBEC ANGLOPHONE  
HERITAGE NETWORK  
QAHN



RÉSEAU DU PATRIMOINE  
ANGLOPHONE DU QUÉBEC  
RPAQ

# Strengthening Heritage Institutions and Communities Together

A Brief submitted to the  
2016 Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations  
Department of Canadian Heritage

**Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN)**  
**Ottawa, December 8, 2016**

## **Background:**

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network was established in 2000 by a coalition of volunteer-driven, English-speaking grass-roots groups, many of them based in under-populated areas of the province, reacting to the fact that Quebec's English-language heritage sector, a sector increasingly experiencing the challenges posed by the demographic decline in the regions, had no voice of its own. Reflecting a growing public awareness that collaboration was essential, QAHN was created as a way of providing the community with a common voice. QAHN's inaugural convention, where over 130 individuals representing some 40 different organizations from across Quebec participated, was the result of months of consultations with the English-language heritage sector to assess the community's needs and goals. The message (then as now) was loud and clear: Quebec's English-language heritage sector needed a common voice. QAHN has served eloquently as that voice ever since.

QAHN is a non-profit, non-partisan organization engaged in promoting the heritage of Quebec. In particular, QAHN aims to foster understanding of the heritage of Quebec's English-speaking communities by informing and connecting people through its activities. QAHN encourages cooperation and communication among members of the heritage and cultural sectors, and assists groups with their activities. The nearly 100 institutional members, for whom QAHN serves as a spokesman and partner, include museums, historical societies, archives and libraries, foundations, cultural groups, educational institutions, and community organizations. Several hundred individuals are also members.

QAHN's core operations have evolved to meet a range of needs within Quebec's English-speaking community. Special projects have allowed us to focus on issues outside the normal scope of our operations: heritage tourism; conservation; best practices; fundraising; digital media; education; volunteerism; youth engagement; and others. We have forged strong relationships with a range of partners in both the English- and French-speaking communities. QAHN has a proven track record of providing excellent value to the heritage and cultural community and the general public -- and this despite a relatively modest operational budget. We are also known for bringing dynamic, collaborative projects to fruition.

## **Funding:**

QAHN's primary sources of operational funding are the Department of Canadian Heritage (Cooperation with the Community Sector -- Community Life, Development of Official Languages Communities), and, to a lesser extent, self-generated revenue from memberships, advertising, registration fees, sponsorships, and merchandise, with occasional support from foundations. Additionally, QAHN receives funding on a project basis, and through various envelopes, from Canadian Heritage, and on occasion, the Ministère de la Culture du Québec. We are grateful for the support we receive, as it is enabling us to continue to refine the services we provide on behalf of the heritage community.

## **Heritage Sector Service:**

In its 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, developed following in-depth consultation with Quebec's English-language heritage sector, QAHN has made it a key part of its mission to provide meaningful service to the community. We do this through various core- and project-funded activities, all developed in close collaboration with a range of partners in regions across Quebec.

## **1. STRENGTHENING THE HERITAGE SECTOR, ITS INSTITUTIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES:**

Strong institutions are essential for community vitality. This is especially true in outlying regions where institutions play such a key role in local communities. QAHN's programming is geared towards supporting the institutions that safeguard and promote the heritage of our communities. With the aim of increasing capacity among volunteers and staff at local museums, historical societies and other organizations in communities around Quebec, our conferences, workshops, and resource materials have focused on issues that are crucial to building vitality within local institutions and, by extension, the communities they serve. Here are some examples:

- Heritage Awareness and Stewardship Training Initiative (HASTI): training in heritage awareness and heritage conservation.
- Quebec Heritage Web: helping organizations promote heritage online.
- Cemetery Heritage Inventory and Restoration Initiative (CHIRI): heritage training for volunteer cemetery custodians.
- Inspiring Heritage Renewal and Identity Together (INHERIT): fostering collaboration among youth, teachers and local heritage institutions.
- Heritage Online Multimedia Initiative (HOMEDI): promoting heritage tourism online as a means of increasing visits to regional heritage sites.
- Spoken Heritage Online Multimedia (SHOMI): increasing capacity among heritage workers to record, preserve and disseminate oral history digitally.
- Security for Heritage Outreach and Workshop Initiative (SHOWI): security of heritage sites, collections and personnel.
- Fostering Organizational Renewal through Enriching Volunteer Experience and Recognition (FOREVER): strengthening volunteerism; building community vitality.
- Diversification of Resources to Ensure the Advancement of Mission (DREAM): funding diversification strategies for heritage-sector organizations.
- Professional resource materials produced by QAHN: Cemetery Heritage Handbook; Inherit Handbook: Learning Projects for Schools and Communities; Heritage Field Guide Series (10 bilingual handbooks for heritage-sector workers and volunteers); Volunteering Matters Field Guide Series (8 bilingual handbooks for heritage- and community-sector volunteers); Emergency Planning (CD); Oral History Guide; Templates for creating exhibition banners (online resource); Volunteer Recruitment Guide; and so on.
- Speakers' Bureau: online directory of heritage professionals; referral service.
- Networking opportunities for the heritage sector: annual heritage convention (in a different town each year); meet & greets; open house, and so on.
- Ongoing collaboration with the Francophone heritage sector: In 2017, we are co-hosting an event with the Fédération Histoire Québec to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary.
- Advocacy: speaking on behalf of the heritage sector for better awareness, preservation and funding of Quebec's English-language heritage; supporting the efforts of grass roots organizations and municipalities; consulting with various levels of government on heritage preservation, legislation, funding programs, and so on; participating in public consultations that could influence government policy and budget decisions affecting investments in heritage; and collaborating with multiple partners to secure support for the work of the non-profit heritage sector from all levels of government.
- Committee work: collaborating with other organizations to advance issues of common concern. In addition to working with organizations such as the Quebec Family History Society, the Chemin des Cantons, ELAN, Townshippers' Association, the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, the QCGN, Bishop's University; the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, and others, QAHN is also active on a number of formal

committees, including: the Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of History in Quebec (ComeECH); the Comité du patrimoine de la Fédération Histoire Québec (FHQ); the Eastern Townships Chapter of the FHQ; the Arts, Culture and Heritage Working Group (PCH); and others.

- Awards Program: the Marion Phelps and Richard Evans awards provide public recognition to individuals and groups of volunteers.

## **2. COMMUNICATIONS: BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER:**

A variety of tools have been developed to enable Quebec's English-language heritage community to share information about local history and heritage, current events, legislation, funding programs, and so on.

- *Quebec Heritage News*: acclaimed quarterly print magazine, distributed across Quebec, serves as the source of information about the heritage of English-speaking Quebec.
- QAHN.org: a key source of information about the heritage network.
- Quebec Heritage Web: 5 bilingual regional heritage webmagazines (Townships Heritage; Laurentian Heritage; Gaspesian Heritage, Outaouais Heritage and Montreal Mosaic) serve as platforms through which Quebecers and Canadians of all ages can explore and share the heritage and culture of English-speaking Quebec.
- 2 thematic websites: Mapping the Mosaic: Montreal & Its Diverse Neighbourhoods; English Speaking Quebec in 100 Objects.
- Heritage Line: bi-weekly e-bulletin; serves as an important source of information on news of interest to the English-speaking heritage sector of Quebec.
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter feeds inform and connect members of the community.
- Outreach: participation at local and regional events around Quebec, including festivals, heritage fairs, school activities, conferences, professional gatherings and so on, and at events outside of Quebec, sponsored by organizations such as the National Trust for Canada, Ontario Heritage, and others. Outreach is one of our most effective ways to interact with our constituents, and with the larger community.

## **3. SHARING STORIES ABOUT OUR COMMUNITIES:**

Special projects and media have enhanced the ability of the English-speaking heritage community to share its stories.

- StoryNet: project enabled the commission of short stories, audio recordings, and documentary films that told the stories of local communities and people all across Quebec.
- Significant Objects for Telling Identity: English-speaking Quebec in 100 Objects (SOFTI): project entailed the production of stories about local heritage, as seen through objects housed in local museum collections.
- Mapping the Mosaic: Montreal and Its Diverse Neighbourhoods: online platform enabled Montrealers to build a digital map of local neighbourhoods.
- Quebec Heritage Web: 5 bilingual webmagazines that celebrate Quebec's regional heritage.
- *Quebec Heritage News*: QAHN's flagship print publication; an important source of information about local history.
- Heritage tourism: several projects, including Quebec Heritage Web and HOMEI, have focused on the benefits to local communities and economies of promoting local heritage attractions.
- Traveling exhibitions: the 2015-2016 exhibition "Housewife Heroines" told the story of the wartime domestic contributions of Anglophone women in Montreal during World War II.

#### **4. EDUCATION: BUILDING AWARENESS AMONG THE NEXT GENERATION:**

Initiatives have focused on: increasing awareness among youth and educators of Quebec's English-language heritage and history; providing career-related internships; fostering a connection to local heritage and attachment to place (youth retention); and increasing youth engagement in local heritage.

- Heritage Essay and Heritage Photo contests: programming for elementary and high school students through annual province-wide competitions; including prizes and publishing opportunities for kids.
- Internships: career-related training and publishing opportunities for university students.
- Collaboration with educational organizations to enhance programming: partners include universities, elementary and high schools, and groups like the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations, the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, Community Learning Centres, the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers, and others.
- Several projects, such as INHERIT, have been specifically youth-oriented.
- In 2015, QAHN received an "Outstanding Achievement Award in Education" from the City of Sherbrooke (Lennoxville), where we are based.
- The Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of History in Quebec, of which QAHN is a member, is currently working with other organizations to improve Quebec's high school history program, so that it better reflects Quebec's cultural diversity.

#### **Conclusions:**

Working in close collaboration with a wide range of partners in both the heritage sector and the community at large, and in regions across Quebec, is at the heart of QAHN's strategic plan, and is key to everything it does. We are committed to serving as a leader and spokesman for Quebec's English-speaking heritage community. As a network, we work collaboratively with other community organizations: to strengthen the heritage sector, its institutions, and local community vitality (through conferences, publications and other programming); to serve as a link among the sector's members (through a range of media and outreach); to disseminate the history and heritage of Quebec's English-speaking community (in print, online, and through exhibitions and outreach); to foster an appreciation of our history and culture among Quebecers and Canadians, both English and French; and to instill in our youth a greater connection to their heritage.

Speaking on behalf of that broad constituency we serve, therefore, our recommendations during these 2016 Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations are that any new multi-year official languages plan should reflect the vital and ongoing role of Quebec's English-language heritage sector -- in fostering a sense of pride, identity, and connection to place, particularly among youth and in outlying regions of the province; in sustaining the local institutions of Quebec's official minority community; and in contributing to local community vitality in all of its forms.

It is our view, then, that future funding programs should reflect the important contributions of the heritage sector of English-speaking Quebec, and should enable that sector and the community at large to continue benefitting from enriching, institution-strengthening, community-building programming.

**Appendix: QAHN Core & Affiliate Member-Organizations (2016):**

Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives  
 Atwater Library  
 Aylmer Heritage Association  
 Beaconsfield Public Library  
 Beaufort-Beaconsfield Historical Society  
 Bibliothèque et Archives nationales  
 Bishop's University Library  
 Black Community Resource Centre  
 Brome County Historical Society  
 Canadian Centre for the Great War  
 Canadian Heritage of Quebec  
 Canadian Jewish Congress-Archives  
 Canadian Railroad Historical Association  
 Cascapedia River Museum  
 Chaleur Bay Military Museum  
 Chateauguay Valley Historical Society  
 Christ Church Rawdon  
 Coasters Association  
 Committee for Anglophone Social Action  
 Corporation de gestion du Chemin des Cantons  
 Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders  
 Cowansville Historical Society  
 Dalkeith Historical Society  
 Douglas Community Centre  
 Eastern Townships Resource Centre  
 Eaton Corner Museum  
 English Community Organization of Lanaudière  
 English-speaking Catholic Council  
 Exposition Shalom Quebec  
 Fairbairn House Heritage Centre  
 Gaspé Jersey-Guernsey Association  
 Gaspesian British Heritage Village  
 Gatineau Valley Historical Society  
 Georgeville Historical Society  
 Grand Cascapedia Women's Institute  
 Greenwood Centre for Living History  
 Harrington Harbour Tourism Assoc.  
 Haskell Free Library and Opera House  
 Hemmingford Archives/Archives Room  
 Heritage Gaspé  
 Heritage Huntingville  
 Heritage Lower St-Lawrence  
 Heritage Maritime Canada  
 Heritage New Carlisle  
 Heritage Sutton  
 Hudson Historical Society  
 Irish Heritage Quebec  
 Irish Protestant Benevolent Society  
 Laurentian Club of Canada

Lennoxville-Ascot Historical and Museum Society  
Literary & Historical Society of Quebec / Morin Centre  
Malvern Cemetery Company  
Marcil Women's Institute  
Megantic English Speaking Community Devel-Corps  
Mile End Memories  
Miner Heritage Farm / Ferme Héritage Miner  
Missisquoi Historical Society  
Morin Heights Historical Association  
Mount Royal Cemetery Company  
MRC d'Argenteuil  
Mulgrave & Derry Historical Society  
Musée de la Civilisation  
Musée de la nature de Sherbrooke  
Musée des beaux-arts de Sherbrooke  
North Shore Community Association  
Norway Bay Historical Society  
Old North Church Cemetery Association  
Park Extension Historical Society  
Patrimoine Ascot Heritage / Little Forks UELAC  
Pettes Memorial Library  
Potton Heritage Association  
Quebec Family History Society  
Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations  
Quebec Historical Corps  
Quebec Protestant Education Research Project  
Rawdon Historical Society  
Richmond County Historical Society  
Sainte-Anne-du-Bout-de-L'Ile Historical Society  
Scotch Road Cemetery Association  
Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC  
Site historique du Banc-de-Pêche de Paspébiac  
Société d'histoire de Pointe-Saint-Charles  
Société d'histoire de Sherbrooke  
Société d'histoire et de généalogie des pays d'en Haut  
South Shore Community Partners  
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church  
St. Patrick's Society of Montreal  
St. Patrick's Society of Richmond and Vicinity  
Stanstead Historical Society / Colby-Curtis Museum  
Theatre Wakefield  
Townshippers' Association  
Trafalgar School for Girls  
Université de Laval - Bibliothèque  
Uplands Cultural & Heritage Centre  
Walbridge Conservation Area Foundation  
Westmount Historical Association  
Westmount Public Library