

# QUEBEC HERITAGE NEWS

MARCH 2001 VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3 PAGE 1

Town takes over Edmund Eberdt's legacy

## New life for Sutton communications museum



*The general store: Room No. 2 at the Sutton Museum of Communications and History.*

### SUTTON

Edmund Eberdt's dream has become Sutton's reality. Two years after his death, the museum Eberdt created to hold his personal collection has reopened under community management and is back in its place at the centre of preserving the heritage of Sutton. Edmund J.O. Eberdt was a communications engineer. His lifetime and career

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## President's Message

# A lot of worthy heritage-related work going on

The Board recently had to make a tough decision to move the June 2001 Conference from the Gaspé to Macdonald College campus near Montreal. Cost was almost entirely the deciding factor. There will, however, be some other advantages, with all activities to be held in one building and plenty of residence facilities immediately adjoining; also food services on hand and quick. This will also allow more free time to visit exhibits, socialize, catch up with old friends and make new ones. There is a good chance for special tours for spouses and friends. The Conference theme will be 'For a Living Heritage: Research, Planning, Conservation, Show & Tell'. Details will soon be mailed out. We hope to include Quebec's version of the Antiques Roadshow, *Le Patrimoine à Domicile*.



We recently met, as a Board, with Paule Doucet of the *Regroupement des organismes du patrimoine franco-ontarien*. They are in many ways an Ontario counterpart of QAHN, working in the French minority groups in Ontario. Director Pat McCaffrey and Communications Coordinator Valérie Bridger visited our Franco-Manitoban counterparts in mid-March. These exchanges help as an important bridge-building process and in developing shared understanding of the role minority language heritage groups can play.

I was pleased to be a recent guest speaker following the Annual General Meeting of the Historical Society of the Gatineau. It provided a good chance to bring the assembled members up to date on our plans for QAHN, our accomplishments to date, and to suggest to them the importance of their continuing with the good work they have already been carrying out. They have some good publications on the history of the area; they have a strong membership and benefit from close proximity to museums and their staff in the National Capital areas.

Townships area societies, meeting as members of La Fédération des sociétés d'histoire du Québec, recently held one of their regional meetings in Melbourne, near Richmond. They enjoyed a presentation by John Hill on the recent gathering together of local war memorials in one improved, better lighted and better protected spot. Citizens of the community raised more than \$18,000 for this worthy project and were given encouraging support by merchants.

We will be instituting a membership drive in April and May in advance of the June Conference. In the meantime, we hope organizations will plan for strong representation and to put up exhibits showing off your areas and your activities.

In June, the Quebec Community Groups Network will be holding their annual meeting in the Magdalen Islands. That will provide delegates a chance to visit their two museums.

There continues to be a lot of worthy heritage-related work going on across Quebec. One of our goals at QAHN is to help everyone keep more aware of all that is happening. Don't forget, those of you who are on-line, to visit our website regularly. You can have your upcoming events and activities included on our Calendar of Events.

■ **Richard Evans**

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THE BULLETIN OF THE QUEBEC ANGLOPHONE HERITAGE NETWORK

## QAHN Conference 2001

June 15-17<sup>th</sup>, 2001

Macdonald College campus of McGill University, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue

### For a Living Heritage: Research, Planning, Conservation, Show & Tell

<b>Friday June 15<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Morning: Exhibit set-up Afternoon: Regional Showcase talks Evening: Cocktail and Banquet
<b>Saturday June 16<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Morning / Afternoon: Exhibits and workshops Evening: BBQ and entertainment
<b>Sunday June 17<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Morning: Annual General Meeting Noon Luncheon Afternoon departure

All exhibits, meetings and meals will be in the Centennial Centre. Residence rooms (singles and doubles) will be in nearby Laird Hall. Please plan your exhibits and representation accordingly.

Since we need to commit to residence rooms and meals by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2001, our registration deadline will be on May 25<sup>th</sup>. Official mailings and invitations will be sent in April. Come one, come all!

### Heritage tree contest:

## Big or small, old or new -- classroom favourites could win

Does your community have a special or unusual tree? What makes it special? Is it very large or very old? Was it planted to commemorate a special occasion? Is it the only tree that survived that great fire or flood way back when? Is this tree recognized by your community in a special way?

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network is holding a contest for schoolchildren in grades 3 and 4 (class project), and grades 5 and 6 (class or individual project). We're asking for a one-page picture (drawing or photograph, but not computer-generated) accompanied by a one-page story, hand-written or typed, of that special tree - or grove of trees, or planting of trees, or even that tree that is no more. There is no special tree in your community? How about planting one, and telling us the story of its planting?

Cash prizes will be given to the schools and the winning and outstanding entries will be published on our website and displayed at our Annual

Conference at Macdonald College this June 15-17. We would also like to offer the winning students a visit at the Conference to see their work proudly displayed, then to the nearby Morgan Arboretum, the Raptor Centre and the Ecomuseum, but funding for this has yet to be confirmed.

This contest was announced to the schools in mid-March. The deadline for entries is May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Entries will be judged according to the following criteria: presentation, impact, originality and creativity, and theme. Evaluations will be done between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of May, and the official announcement of the winners will be on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Any help in publicizing this contest or collaborating at the school level would be encouraged and appreciated. We are also looking for a panel of retired teachers to judge the entries. If you would like more information, please get in touch with Valérie Bridger at (819) 564-9595 or by e-mail at [home@qahn.org](mailto:home@qahn.org)

## John Allen Martin 1926-2001

We note with sadness the passing of Allen Martin of Canterbury, Quebec, at the age of 74. Allen was a member of the Steering Committee which laid plans for the formation of QAHN and which planned the June 2000 inaugural conference. Through his retirement years, Allen played an important role in the area of church and cemetery preservation. He led the development of the Megantic-Compton Church and Cemetery Association, a group whose aims were to aid in the protection and restoration of these important aspects of local heritage.

Even though he underwent periods of serious health difficulties, Allen kept involved in his favoured causes. He oversaw restoration work to the St. John's Anglican Church, an historic Church near his home and with important links to his family.

Allen always viewed with good humour, though with occasional frustration, the tendencies of some people to view with suspicion those who, like him, so actively pursue heritage preservation. He recognized that such suspicions are built on the idea that some personal gain for one's self or one's friends must be behind such an interest. Rather than be angry he would shrug, smile, and accept such criticisms as part of taking a publicly visible position; particularly when at the community level, people may become actually divided for and against.

Working with Allen over the years was a pleasure and he will be missed by many. Donations in his memory may be made to La Société d'histoire et du patrimoine du Haut St-François, PO Box 972, Cookshire QC J0B 1M0.

## NEWS & NOTES FROM AROUND QUEBEC

THE TOWNSHIPPERS' ASSOCIATION WILL FORMALLY LAUNCH ITS WEBSITE 'VIRTUAL MUSEUM' AT UPLANDS IN LENNOXVILLE ON MARCH 29TH. THIS WILL PROVIDE WEB BROWSERS WITH A DIRECTORY TO HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE GROUPS IN THE REGION.

AT THE RECENT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU, WELL-KNOWN LOCAL HISTORIAN ERNIE MAHONEY WAS ELECTED TO ANOTHER TERM AS PRESIDENT.

THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION FOR SAGUENAY-LAC ST-JEAN (CASL) HAS JUST MAILED OUT VOL. 2, No. 2 OF ITS NEWSLETTER, THE BLUEBERRY CONNECTION. THEY INCLUDE SOME INTERESTING ITEMS OF LOCAL HISTORY AND HISTORIC PHOTOS.

ONE PHOTO SHOWS ARTHUR VINING DAVIS, FOR WHOM ARVIDA WAS NAMED, IN 1925 STANDING IN A FIELD WHERE THE GREAT ALUMINIUM SMELTER WAS LATER BUILT. BY THE 1960S, THE DAILY CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRIC POWER BY THAT SMELTER WAS EQUIVALENT TO ALL THE POWER USED IN THE CITY OF MONTREAL. ALL THAT POWER WAS DEVELOPED BY ALCAN, MOSTLY BY DAMS ON THE PETIBONCA AND SAGUENAY RIVERS.

IN MISSISQUOI COUNTY, PEOPLE ARE GETTING READY FOR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MAPLE FESTIVAL, A POPULAR TRADITIONAL EVENT IN THAT AREA. LOTS OF SWEET STUFF WILL BE CONSUMED.

IF YOU HAVE ANY NEWS ITEMS TO ADD TO THIS FEATURE, PLEASE PASS THEM ON TO US!

## Museums combine strengths for joint project

# Lake Memphremagog: Crossroads of history and legends

In collaboration with other historical societies in the Memphremagog MRC and the North of Vermont, the Colby-Curtis Museum at Stanstead will present an exhibition on Lake Memphremagog, to be inaugurated in the Museum's exhibition rooms at the Annual Meeting of the Stanstead Historical Society, on May 26, 2001.

Other exhibitions on the same theme will take place during the months of June, July and August in several other historical and heritage societies such as the Magog Historical Society, the Georgeville Historical Society, the Potton Heritage Association Inc., the Cultural Committee of Austin, the Abbaye Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, and thanks to the participation

of our neighbours to the south, The Lake Memphremagog Historical Society of Newport and The Old Stone House Museum, Brownington, Vermont.

In order to present a diversified image, each participant will develop a particular aspect of Lake Memphremagog. Among these: Lake Memphremagog and the artists, Myths and Legends; History of Navigation; Archeology; Discoveries; Wharfs and Landings; Summer Activities, etc. For further information call (819) 876-7322 or e-mail [mccrcip@interlinx.qc.ca](mailto:mccrcip@interlinx.qc.ca) - Sent in by Monique Nadeau-Saumier, Director, Colby-Curtis Museum, Stanstead.

## Revenues to be shared among contributing members

# Heritage photos sought for QAHN fund-raising calendar

As mentioned in our December newsletter, we are continuing to elaborate the Heritage Calendar joint fund raising effort in which most profits will go to our collaborators, be they members or other supporters.

We are still on the lookout for pictures. We require 16 pictures of different regions and themes that will give a balanced coverage of the whole Quebec territory. The Calendar will cover October 2001 through to January 2003. We are looking for black and white photographs of historic buildings, sites and monuments, preferably portraying an unusual building or focussing on a concurrent activity, e.g. hotel with clients, mill with mill-workers, etc. Each picture will need a brief text citing copyright permission, source, location and a description of the picture.

We've set a deadline of April 15th for photo submissions. Many of you have shown interest in providing pictures, but we haven't been deluged with them at the office yet! Please, take a trip down memory lane, pick out your favourite and send it in to the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, 9 Speid St., Lennoxville QC J1M 1R9. All photos and

reproductions will, of course, be duly returned.

By the time of our June Conference, we will be in a position to present a draft product and we will be calling for commitments from members and others who wish to participate in selling it. Copies will be available in early September to take advantage of sales in advance of the busy Holiday season.

We are hoping to be able to supply the Calendar at \$5 per copy, which would then to be sold by the members at \$10 apiece. This, as you've already calculated, means a profit of \$5 per copy for the member, a 100% mark-up! In order to do this, we need to sell at least 3,500 copies across the province. A probable minimum order would be 50 copies per member society. More details will be available at the time of the Conference.

By participating in this joint effort, members can draw province-wide and national attention to our shared concern for our anglophone heritage in Quebec. With a successful launch, this project could become an annual feature.

If you would like more information, please contact Valérie Bridger at (819) 564-9595 or by e-mail at [home@qahn.org](mailto:home@qahn.org).

*'It's amazing how much people are interested in the old days'*

## Sutton: Community takes over heritage museum

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spanned much of the 20th century, a time when communications in Canada grew from a rustic network of hand delivered mail and hand-cranked telephones, through radio, television and signals by satellite, to computerized uploads and downloads, and the day of a phone in every pocket.

He was born in Germany but worked mainly in Montreal before moving to the Eastern Townships. Once established in Sutton, became fascinated by how important communications are in small towns and the countryside. He started gathering old apparatus, photographs and stories.

In 1963 Mr.

and Mrs. Eberdt bought the Lucius Billings house, said to be on the oldest property in Sutton, and converted it into an inn and restaurant. The place had a spacious coach house and before long he was

filling it with his personal collection.

### HERITAGE SUTTON

By the 1980s the coach house had become Eberdt's personal museum. He called it Heritage Sutton and it was open to the public every summer. The only museum in town, it gradually grew to include heritage materials of every type.

Though nominally managed by a group of volunteers, the building and its contents remained Eberdt's private property. That changed when he died in 1998, leaving the museum, his entire historical collection and extensive personal archives all to the town of Sutton. The town hired a

consultant to evaluate the huge bequest and come up with some advice on how to handle it.

Meanwhile, professor Jean-Pierre Kesteman had been offering local history courses at the University of Sherbrooke's extension "campus" in Sutton. One such course, an ongoing workshop on how to run a local museum, evolved into La Société d'Histoire de Sutton. On September 23, 2000, members reopened what they now called the Sutton Museum of Communications and History.

Along with Dennis Cowan, one of the Heritage Sutton originals, Marc Clerck, Serge Poirier, Georgette Gagné-Bazinet and other history buffs set

up a provisional board of directors consisting of Bazinet, also a town councillor, Poirier and Sutton Mayor Kenneth Hill. A permanent board will be elected as soon as the paperwork is complete, says Guylaine



*Left to right at the museum re-opening: Winston Bresee, mayor of Township of Sutton, Kenneth Hill, mayor of town of Sutton; Guylaine Beaudoin, project officer, Sutton Economic Development Corp.; Michel Barrette, president, Brome-Missisauoi cultural policv committee.*

Beaudoin, project officer for the Sutton Economic Development Corporation.

Beaudoin, also a member of the museum working group, says Sutton's history and heritage are a key part of the town's success as a tourist destination. Those attracted to the area by skiing and bicycling come back to relax in the well-kept "Loyalist" and Victorian surroundings.

"A big reason people keep coming here is the historical character of the place," Beaudoin said in an interview. "It's so beautiful. And of course they want to know about the history. It's amazing how much people are interested in the old days."

Communications, region and family on display at Sutton museum

## Three-pronged approach to collection, development

### SUTTON

Like its collection and its building, plans for the Sutton Museum of Communications and History are divided into three parts, says Guylaine Beaudoin, a member of the museum's working group.

"Our first phase is to find out exactly what we've got here," Beaudoin says. "We have a volunteer group led by Marc Clerck, working on a complete inventory and sorting out the archives."

Second, "We want to put together a program for the schools, so they can bring the children here for a taste of what history is really all about. As part of this, we want to make the museum interactive, so visitors can touch things and make things happen, things they can hear and see and feel."

Finally, the museum will install some brand-new communications equipment - so visitors can learn the history of themselves. "We have a room upstairs where we want to install a few computers we'll set up so people can use the Internet to explore their genealogy, find out about where their own families come from."

As for the building, each of its three main spaces will house one element of the collection.

Room number one, the entrance foyer, will contain reception facilities, a display introducing museum

founder Edmund Eberdt, and a standing exhibit of railway artefacts, relating the importance of the iron road to the development of Sutton and the Townships.

The second exhibit room is decorated as the interior of a general store and post office, complete with century-old packaging and two centuries of local history. This area also includes some firefighting equipment, and tells the story of the day the town burned down - April 14, 1898, when 36 houses and shops were razed along Sutton's Main Street. A pair of antique fire trucks are stored in an adjacent garage.

The third exhibit room is devoted to communications, mainly of the electric and electronic kind. The walls, counters and cabinets are lined with telegraph machines, telephones, teletypes, telexes, radios, televisions, and an early computer or two. All that's missing are jungle drums, Indian smoke signals and semaphore flags. History enthusiasts are never satisfied. To add to the museum's properties, several of professor Kesteman's students are collecting an oral history of Sutton through dozens of taped interviews with local elders on subjects as varied as early schools, farming, and country life.

## Quebec Women's Institutes Observing Anniversaries

Stanbridge Women's Institute in Missisquoi County is preparing to observe its 80th anniversary, an event which encourages reflections on both its past with their accomplishments and the future with their aspirations.

Not long ago, the Women's Institute of Megantic County observed their 80th anniversary and decided because of lack of members to terminate activities. Their final action was to have a supper and evening out for remaining members. In Sherbrooke County, the Milby WI is about to observe its 70th anniversary and is one of three branches still active in the county.

Through so much of the 20th Century, the Women's Institutes have been an important part, particularly of rural life, across Quebec. Social change, aging populations, shifting populations and women adapting to full-time employment outside the home have radically altered the outlook for WIs.

Whatever the future holds in store, these women and their associations have been an important part of the heritage of our community all across Quebec. The legacy of their contribution can be felt in everything from community projects to community attitudes and the impact of their presence will be evident for some time.

# The Outaouais: A heritage scorecard

Well-known Ottawa Valley heritage activist Bob Phillips writes a regular column in the Ottawa Citizen entitled *The Outaouais*. This one appeared on Saturday, March 8.

## By Bob Phillips

Thirty years ago the Heritage Canada Foundation proposed a national holiday every Heritage Day, the third Monday of February. The federal government slipped into its comfortable "all assistance short of actual help" mode, and so it has not happened yet.

Heritage Day and Heritage Week, have, however, become the time to review and celebrate our rich inheritance.

This year in the Outaouais, it was a time for some satisfaction and some real concern. Concern comes from the impending merger of Gatineau, Hull and Aylmer into one city. Aylmer is worried. While Hull and Gatineau have been exceeded only by Afghanistan in their eagerness to destroy ancestral treasures, the mighty efforts of Aylmerites have saved a city of visible quality.

Must small Aylmer now fight a continuing battle against the mighty forces of mediocrity outside its old borders? What are the chances of a partnership between the new council and voluntary groups of the kind that brought Aylmer positive results? Not always. Aylmer's had great losses, notably its council's failure to seize the brilliant concept of a national explorers' park on the site where more explorers over four centuries launched their voyages into the unknown than at any other place in North America.

Instead, we hear that Hull is studying an explorers' park somewhere that no explorer ever saw, let alone set foot upon.

In 1993 Aylmer council also failed to lift a finger to save the dwindling British Hotel, the most historic working hostelry west of Old Montreal, which could have been a much-needed cultural centre; the hotel is still dwindling, and there is still no cultural centre. Council did support recycling the Redemptorist monastery into a fine home for senior citizens. Alas, developers of a Montessori school

were allowed to butcher the interior of the outstanding adjoining residence of the first mayor of Aylmer, built in the 1840s.

Aylmer council enabled the Aylmer Heritage Association to occupy the 1827 Methodist chapel on the Aylmer Road, which has now become its fine headquarters. Would that sort of thing happen when anti-heritage councillors from Hull and Gatineau call the tune? Pending questions for an early agenda are a permanent home for the splendid little Aylmer Museum, and the effective use of the dramatic Symmes Inn, on whose magnificent restoration three governments spent a fortune decades ago.

This year heritage conservationists look also at less tangible moves.

Francophone and anglophone archivists in the Outaouais have come together on their own to share information and ideas. Under the aegis of Canadian Heritage Minister Sheila Copps, a Quebec Heritage Network has been organized to support anglophone culture across the province.

Happily, the past year has not been marked locally by any disasters such as the loss of the magnificent Hammond House on Hull's Boulevard St. Joseph, which a Chrysler dealership demolished in 1997 for a parking lot. Au contraire, even doubters watch with pleasure the progress on recycling the Wakefield Mill, which this spring will welcome its first guests for dining, meeting and sleeping.

Less visible is the continuing strength of the Historical Society of the Gatineau, now adding the information revolution to its dimensions. The much younger Buckingham Historical Society is a welcome new instrument of public education and conservation around that historic city.

The real source of optimism is the strength of the voluntary movement.

Adversity does not entirely discourage it, nor even unwanted urban amalgamation.