

Minutes QAHN's Annual General Meeting  
Canadian Railway Museum  
Saint-Constant, QC

JUNE 4 2005

Director's present: Rod Macleod, Michael Cooper, Heather Darch,  
Richard Evans, Philip McMaster, William Campbell, Doreen Lindsay,  
Georges Howson

Regrets: Monique Nadeau, Richard Smith

Staff present: Dwane Wilkin, Kathy Teasdale

## **1. Meeting Convened**

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network's president Rod MacLeod called the room to order at 10:20 a.m., welcoming QAHN members to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) and thanking those present for helping to make quorum. Copies of the Annual Report covering the fiscal year 2004-05, including and a proposed agenda for the AGM were distributed, and Rod introduced interim director Dwane Wilkin and QAHN's executive secretary, Kathy Teasdale.

## **2. Approval of the Agenda**

Dick Evans of *Heritage Huntingville* requested that he be allotted a few minutes to address the assembly under the agenda item, "Other Business." There being no objection to this request, Ruth Evans of the *Lennoxville and Ascot Historical and Museum Society* moved to accept the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded by Beverly Prud'homme of the Rawdon Historical Society. All present voted in favour. MOTION PASSED

### **3. Acceptance of the AGM Minutes of June 19, 2004**

Dick Evans of *Heritage Huntingville* moved to accept the minutes from last year's AGM, held at the McCord Museum on June 19, 2004. Michael Cooper seconded the motion, and all present voted in favour.

MOTION PASSED

4. Rod MacLeod presented audited financial statements for fiscal year 2004-05 as prepared for QAHN by Sylvain Bouchard, chartered accountant. Rod noted that QAHN is in good financial shape, while emphasizing that the Department of Canadian Heritage has yet to reveal the amount of the operating grant QAHN will receive in the current fiscal year, 2005-06. This grant constitutes the organization's single most important source of operating funds.

Rod reported that the Department of Canadian Heritage has recently announced that it will spend 19 per cent more on minority English-speaking community groups in Quebec, but cautioned that such an increase would not necessarily translate into a larger operating budget for QAHN in 2005-06. The Quebec Community Groups Network, a province-wide affiliation of non-profit, non-governmental organizations to which QAHN belongs, was to have met with officials from Canadian Heritage to determine exactly how this increase in spending on the anglophone community would affect QAHN in the coming year. The president noted that QAHN has applied to the Department for a much larger operating grant.

Rod also explained that QAHN received a \$15,000 operating grant from Quebec's provincial Ministry of Culture and Communications (MCCQ) in 2004-2005.

## **5. Appointment of an Auditor**

President Rod MacLeod noted that Sylvain Bouchard continues to provide good service to QAHN as the organization's accountant and he invited a motion from the floor to re-appoint M. Bouchard as QAHN's auditor in 2005-06. Georges Howson of the *Châteauguay Valley Historical Society* moved to re-appoint Sylvain Bouchard as QAHN's auditor for another year. Kevin O'Donnell of the *Hudson Historical Society* seconded the motion. All present voted in favour.

MOTION PASSED

## **6. Reports**

### a) *Heritage at Risk*

Rod explained the board of directors' interest in developing a policy of handling issues of at-risk heritage in Quebec. Interim director Dwane Wilkin underlined how important it is for local heritage groups to be prepared and willing to intervene on behalf of their own communities to protect sites and cultural properties that are historically significant. Dwane referred to discussion papers he prepared for the board of directors over the winter that culminated in a proposed set of procedures that QAHN might follow when dealing with enquiries and appeals for help to save endangered heritage. A copy of the proposed motion was circulated.

Doreen Lindsay of the *Westmount Historical Association* observed that apathy and inertia are the main risk factors when it comes to defending our common heritage. “Not enough people take action,” Doreen said. “As I see it,” she continued, “one of the stumbling blocks is that there are not a lot of ideas out there as to what to do with these old buildings.”

Kevin O’Donnell commended QAHN for taking the heritage-at-risk initiative, then related a story from the Hudson area that illustrated how weak municipal bylaws can often lead to the destruction of local heritage. Implying that QAHN might eventually serve Quebecers as sort of support and information service for heritage defenders, Kevin said, “I think it’s really great to have a resource to consult.”

Sandra Stock of the *Morin Heights Historical Association*, which has recently acquired some experience dealing with local authorities to gain protection for heritage sites in the Laurentians region, added this caution: “You’re likely to run into more problems if the site belongs to a private person.” And she noted that any change in the use of a heritage building can threaten its historic significance.

Rod MacLeod said that he hoped QAHN can use its communications centre to publicize issues of endangered heritage and make coherent, sound arguments based on information. Philip McMaster opined that the purpose of the proposed Motion to Adopt Procedures to deal with heritage at risk is to bring QAHN into public view as a protector and as an action-oriented organization involved in preserving irreplaceable heritage properties. “We need to get QAHN’s name into the news.”

At this point, Dick Evans recalled the important powers that reside with municipal zoning and advisory committees, noting that the Quebec government has encouraged municipalities to take the lead role

identifying and protecting historic sites. “Some municipalities have been active, but most councils are scared because they don’t understand their responsibilities,” Dick said. “If you want to get into this,” he added, “you have to know the zoning laws.” It may seem that it’s a bureaucratic maze, Dick said, but you just have to understand the process. He added that, although the process of working with local local zoning advisory committees is fairly simple, the whole process is easily reversed.

With respect to QAHN’s role serving its member historical societies, Dick said, “I hope that what we would be able to do is help get the information to you, because it’s a minefield out there.”

Eunice De Gruchy of the Quebec Association for Adult Learning suggested that QAHN use the newsletter of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network to publicize its heritage-at-risk policy.

#### b) *Quebec Heritage News*

Dwane Wilkin gave a brief overview of recent changes to the look of QAHN’s flagship publication and the reason why they were introduced: to make the magazine eligible for financial support through the Canada Magazine Fund. He also appealed to QAHN members for stories and ideas for future editorial content to ensure that the Quebec Heritage News appeals to readers in all regions.

Kevin O’Donnell commented that QAHN should consider publishing some sort of anthology of past articles from the Quebec Heritage News. Eunice de Gruchy said that she and her husband both enjoy reading the News and she suggested that we get an ISBN number.

#### c) *Quebec Heritage Webmagazine*

Rod McLeod and Dwane Wilkin reviewed the latest developments with the Quebec Heritage Web Portal project, which has been stalled thanks to a decision by Economic Development Canada to withdraw financial support. As reported in the May issue of Quebec Heritage News, however, QAHN's application to the Community Development Fund at the Department of Canadian Heritage for a third regional heritage website has been received favourably. That means work could get underway as soon as the fall of 2005 on a heritage webmagazine for the Outaouais region.

d) *Oral History Project*

Rod thanked Oral History project coordinator Ron Ratcliffe for his ongoing efforts to promote interest in heritage among school-age children. The Oral History project has been without a financial sponsor for several months.

## **7. President's Report**

Rod reviewed the main points of his report, contained in the Annual Report, and underlined his gratitude toward fellow board members and QAHN's many friends and advisors across the province.

## **8. Resolutions**

Rod introduced and read out a motion to establish procedures concerning enquiries and appeals to support people seeking to protect endangered heritage properties. Philip McMaster clarified that QAHN does not seek to become an Applicant responsible for citation requests; but instead wishes to position itself to become an authority who brings these issues to the forefront of public debate. Doreen Lindsay said QAHN

needs to designate a person or persons within QAHN to carry out the responsibility of putting these procedures into practice.

At this point, Sandra Stock moved to adopt the proposed resolution. Seconded by Adelaide Lanktree of the *United Empire Loyalists – Sir John Johnson Branch*. All voted in favour.

#### MOTION PASSED

Dick Evans noted that QAHN members can always act to protect and promote local heritage by becoming involved in the process of naming municipal streets and landmarks. “This is an excellent way for QAHN members to get involved at the local level,” he said. “I strongly urge your organizations to form a local toponymy committee, build a bank of names and go to your municipality with the offer.”

Helen Meredith, an advisor with the Department of Canadian Heritage, commended QAHN for taking the initiative to adopt the heritage-at-risk policy and encouraged QAHN to keep her apprised of issues as they arise, since she can help route our enquiries to appropriate sources.

At this point, Philip and Doreen moved to adopt a resolution creating a permanent standing heritage committee whose first order of business will be to:

1. Establish of a list of municipal and provincial contacts and relevant legislation; and
2. Establish a list of best municipal practices with respect to the protection of local heritage.

The motion was seconded by Kevin O'Donnell. All present voted in favour.

MOTION PASSED

## 9. **Other Business**

Bill Campbell of the *78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders*, Sandra Stock and Doreen Lindsay each spent a few moments promoting upcoming heritage events in their respective communities, as did Sharon Laberee (Moore) of the *Compton County Historical Society*.

Dick Evans spent a few minutes reviewing the origin of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network's name, and reminded the assembly that QAHN's founders had sought to create a network of organizations and not a province-wide history society that would compete with local groups. Dick expressed that the original goal was to stimulate networking amongst member societies, allowing them to share skills and resources; the slowness with which people recognize and act on this potential for networking is disappointing. The network has proven very useful, Dick said. The challenge now is to get people to network.

## 10. **Election of Directors**

Heather Darch of the *Missisquoi Historical Society* served as elections officer, presenting the nominations to QAHN's board of directors for 2005-06. Heather reported the nominations as follows:

Seat 1: Gatineau Valley Historical Society nominated Michael Cooper

Seat 3: The Missisquoi Historical Society nominated Heather Darch.

Seat 5. The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec agreed to nominate someone (as-of-yet unnamed) to fill this vacancy.

Seat 7: The Quebec Protestant Education Research Project nominated Rod McLeod.

Seat 9: Philip McMaster was nominated by QAHN president Rod McLeod.

The directors stepped outside the room briefly to appoint officers of the board for 2005-06.

#### **11. Report of the Election of Officers**

Rod McLeod reported that he will serve as president of QAHN in 2005-06. Michael Cooper was elected vice-president for 2005-06. Heather Darch was elected to serve as secretary and Dick Evans was elected to serve as QAHN's treasurer. The assembly congratulated the new slate of officers with a round of applause.

#### **12. Presentation of the Marion Phelps Award**

Rod made light of the fact that he forgot to bring the plaque that was to be presented to the 2005 recipient of the Marion Phelps Award, Norma Geggie of Wakefield. Everyone had a good chuckle, then Michael Cooper introduced Mrs Geggie to the assembly, describing her as the person in whom his community has entrusted the memory of the Gatineau Valley. Michael thanked Mrs Geggie for all she has done through her research and writing to preserve the Gatineau's heritage.

Mrs Geggie graciously accepted the award and said that she considered it an honour to be in the same company as Miss Marion Phelps and Marianna O’Gallagher, past recipients of the annual award.

“I think you’ll all agree that to delve into our history is rewarding and most enjoyable,” Mrs Geggie said.

### 13. Adjournment

Sharon Laberee (Moore) moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Michael Cooper. All present voted in favour.

MOTION PASSED