

**So, Travel with us Back in Time!  
A Retrospective of Three Decades Plus  
Sandra Jewett**

[Un résumé français est présenté à la page 12]

We thought it might be interesting to describe the Pottton of around the time our Association was founded. Our source document is *Découvrez – Discover Pottton*, a 28-page tabloid style promotional newspaper commissioned by the Mansonville Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Tourist Bureau in 1988-89. An article about Gérard's cairn finds appeared on page 12.

The paper featured "Mansonville Then and Now" descriptions of our historic and iconic landmarks. As well, were suggested places to visit, where to stay, to eat, to worship, contained advertising for local businesses, services, lodging and so forth.

Pottton was then home to the Caisse populaire, the CIBC, 2 elementary schools, a funeral parlour, the Post Office, 4 churches, 4 grocery stores, Boulangerie Perkins, a hardware store, a notions store, called Variétés Hélan, 5 B & B's, and 2 hairdressing salons, 2 service stations, at least 3 bars as well as 3 restaurants, and an airstrip. In the infancy of development, Place Manson was inaugurated in July of 1991.

Why an airstrip? *In the 1970's the Korman family built a 3000' airstrip on chemin de L'Aéroport from which Fred Korman, a certified pilot who owned his own plane, flew to inspect his many job sites in Northern Quebec, during the building of the James Bay project, some places accessible only by air. It is said that Mrs. Korman prepared his lunch, and that Fred returned the same day to his home for supper!*

A full page is devoted to a bilingual description of the Maison Reilly House, "a bustling

*community centre serving the needs of Pottton and surrounding areas", which first opened in 1982. The Tourist Bureau located to the rear of the building, offered typing and photocopy services in addition to providing personalized itineraries for the visitor! A Café rencontre offered family style meals.*

A Youth Centre, used by numerous Citizen Advocacy/Mountain Valley Outreach Mission youth groups was located on the ground floor, as were the Tea Room, and Craft Shop. A Nearly New clothing shop was on the second floor, much as it is now. The New Horizons group for the seniors, met on the lower floor. Active elsewhere in the community were also the Golden Agers and le Club des retraités.

*The Reilly House (built circa 1840) is named for its last private owner, Beatrice Boright Reilly, born in her family's home in 1889, daughter of Henry Boright and Jane Oliver. Her brother, William Nelson, perished at 26 years, in the typhoid epidemic which ravaged Mansonville in 1923. Beatrice had an excellent memory, and was the custodian of extensive family archives including photos that she gladly shared. Many of Pottton's oldest photographs bear hand printed identification in white along the bottom, some of which are in our Association archives. This was a signature gesture of Beatrice Boright Reilly.*

Parrainage civique/Citizen Advocacy/Mountain Valley Outreach Mission, predecessor of the Centre d'action bénévole Missisquoi Nord, "A unique community-based charity offering a variety of outreach programmes addressing

*health and social needs” announces its location on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Legion Building.*

To the north of the Legion Building was the home of Monique and Grant Foster, who operated a quaint restaurant and catering service called *Fête accomplie*. Many supper meetings and conferences sponsored by the Heritage Association were held here. These buildings were demolished and replaced by contemporary generic structures housing the CLSC and the drug store.

*As for the “Legion” building, it was built in 1922 to serve the Catholic school children of Mansonville until 1955-56 when l’école Notre-Dame des Lumières was built. The building was sold to the Royal Canadian Legion in 1962, and then donated to the Municipality in 1986. It served the community needs for meeting space, the library, and for Doctors’ offices. In 2008, this building was demolished to make way for the construction of a new one which houses the CLSC and the Centre d’action bénévole, now back where they began!*

Owl’s Head Development was a major employer and, in this publication, advertised itself as “Skiing at its best – Now a four-season resort” featuring trailside condos, unlimited access to Lake Memphremagog; 80% of the trails covered with artificial snow. They boasted “base chalet doubled in size”, installation of tennis courts, 23 trails, 6 double chairlifts, and announced major investments to come in ‘88-89 ... but made no mention yet of Owl’s Head Golf, folks!! (It celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016 and therefore had not yet been completed.)

Plastiques L.P.A. Ltée, located on Route 243, produced kayaks using a novel process at the time. Its renowned products were shipped worldwide until bought out by a U.S. competitor. It too was a major employer.

The activities available in Pottton were nearly all open air and seasonal. “Le Jeu Élimination” was

a popular paintball game located on Peabody Road. There were four campgrounds, two on Lake Memphremagog and two on the Missisquoi River.

Were you intending to linger, overnight stays were offered at l’Aubergine Relais de campagne Inc. situated in Knowlton’s Landing, or at the venerable Glenbrook farm on Lake Memphremagog, both noted for their meals? Le Pied à Terre, a B & B, owned by Heather Keith Ryan, then a Councillor in the Jacques Marcoux administration, offered five rooms for 12 guests. For an excellent evening meal, reservations were required. This establishment was located in what is now known as the Manson House.

If neither of these choices suited, L’Auberge Petite Europe, located on Route 243 just north of the village and owned by the Cervinka family, offered a 2-night stay (lodging, breakfast and dinner) from \$56.00 pp/day. B & B La Chouette on Route 243 north, later purchased by Jacques Thouin, our former president, and his wife Terry, also offered accommodation. A lighter meal choice? No problem ... On the west side of la rue Principale, opposite le Magasin Giroux, tasty diner fare was available at the Soleil Rouge. Jean-Jacques Jauniaux operated a bar to the rear of the Soleil Rouge, which was also the terminal for bus connection to Montreal.

*That building now belongs to Rona-Giroux family. It was built around 1870, and is a building with a storied past. It has been used as a tea room, an ice cream parlour, a bakery, and a gas station. Part of the building was also once used for a casket making and housed a tinsmith’s shop.*

For the adventuresome soul with rustic taste, Foggy’s Famous Mexican Food was the menu at the popular Auberge Glen Sutton, noted for live music. Lodging was available at “Chez Dora” for “hikers, bikers, and skiers”.

Had you a taste for cooking your own meal, supplies were available from Épicerie Jacques Ducharme (now the Marché Richelieu), or the Axep store owned by Yves and Francine Hamelin (now the Euro Deli) or Marché Daniel (now the Bonisoir). Travel 8 kilometers to Vale Perkins, where Jewett's Store offered choice meats, veggies and cheeses. Up the hill from Jewetts was Boulangerie Perkins' Bakery famous for its 'Alligator' bread, made with Brome Lake Duck eggs. Had you wanted to explore, you were invited to Verger Provencher Orchard, located on chemin Province Hill, where there was a choice of raspberries, or

apples to pick, cider to buy, and maple syrup and sugar products for sale – depending on the season. A service station was operated by Jauniaux & Jauniaux, and a gas bar with service by Marcel Marcoux at the Shell station.

Interested in buying property? How about a post and beam home? 1000 square feet – yours for \$132,500 + land, natural beach, swimming pools, shuttle to Owl's Head. Just one example!

Residential developments were taking root around the Municipality – notably at Sugar Loaf and in Leadville.

### C'était... il y a 30 ans!

Au moment de la fondation de l'Association, notre village n'était pas tout à fait le même. On y comptait alors quatre épiceries, deux salons de coiffure, quatre églises, deux stations-service, trois bars et trois restaurants!

Le site du Familiprix était alors occupé par le restaurant Fête accomplie, où l'Association organisait des activités et tenait parfois son assemblée annuelle. Les gourmands pouvaient aussi se régaler à la mexicaine à l'Auberge Glen Sutton ou savourer un goulash à l'Auberge Petite Europe, située sur la 243 au nord du village. En face de la quincaillerie Giroux et Giroux, on s'attablait au Soleil Rouge; juste devant le restaurant, s'arrêtait l'autobus qui nous menait jusqu'à Montréal.

En 1990, l'épicerie Ducharme existait déjà, mais on pouvait aussi faire ses courses chez Axep, devenue depuis l'Euro Deli, ou encore au marché Daniel, aujourd'hui transformé en Bonisoir. Huit kilomètres plus loin, à Vale Perkins, le magasin Jewett offrait - et offre toujours - de tout, du fromage fin aux chaussettes de laine. Une fois nos provisions faites, on empruntait le chemin Owl's Head pour visiter la boulangerie Perkins, célèbre pour son pain Alligator, à base d'œufs de canards des Canards du Lac Brome.

À l'époque, le Bureau touristique logeait derrière la Maison Reilly. Terre de plein air, Potton comptait alors quatre terrains de camping. Pour sa part, Fred Korman développait la station de ski Owl's Head, qui s'annonçait ainsi : « Le ski à son meilleur! Maintenant un centre de villégiature quatre saisons! », grâce à la proximité du lac et à l'ouverture imminente du terrain de golf.

Potton était bien doté, en matière d'hébergement : on pouvait dormir au gîte La Chouette, sur la route 243, ou au Pied à Terre, réputé pour sa table et qui occupait l'emplacement actuel de la Maison Manson, ou encore à la ferme Glenbrook, sur le lac Memphrémagog, sans compter l'Aubergine, à Knowlton Landing...

Et, preuve de l'inexorable passage du temps, l'Auberge Petite Europe accueillait alors les villégiateurs pour deux nuits, déjeuner et souper compris, au fabuleux tarif de... 56\$ par personne, par jour!