

Executive Director's Message

Let me begin this message by thanking all those who took the time to comment on the draft strategic plan sent to members in the autumn. While I have replied individually to each of those who responded, I did want to thank everyone here for the valuable questions and comments submitted, as this input has been most helpful in refining both the plan and our approach to its implementation. As part of the process, and with the welcome financial assistance of the Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program (CAHSP) of the Department of Canadian Heritage, we have developed a case study designed to serve as a practical tool to assist heritage groups across the country with their own strategic planning exercises. This valuable resource is now available for free upon request in hard copy, electronic or CD-ROM formats. If you would like one, please contact the office by phone, fax or e-mail.

Along with our second annual list of worst losses for 2004, and flowing from the strategic plan, we are this year also including a top ten endangered places list. We very much want input from our members in developing and maintaining this annual listing, so if you know of a structure or site that is particularly at risk, please provide us with as much detail as possible so that we can consider it for inclusion on the 2005 list. We feel that by shining a national spotlight on our endangered places, we may be able to generate public and political support for saving them. Anything you can do to help in this matter, then, would be most appreciated.

I would like to remind you of our awards and prizes program and the need for nominations from our members in that regard. The program consists, as you know, of the Prince of Wales Prize, the Gabrielle Léger Award, the Lieutenant Governor's Award, the Achievement Award, the Corporate Prize and the Journalism Prize, and its success is entirely dependent on the quantity and quality of nominations from our members. The deadline for the next set of awards and prizes is March 31, 2005—not that far away—so please visit our Web site to review the criteria and consider making a nomination. If you have any questions at all about the awards and prizes program, please do not hesitate to get in touch by phone, fax, mail or e-mail. I look forward to a bumper crop of nominations over the next months, and thank you in advance for your contribution to this important program of recognition.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the late Pierre Berton, who died late last year. Pierre was a founding member of the Board of the Heritage Canada Foundation, serving first as its Vice-Chair and then as its Chair, and gave unstintingly of his time, talent and energy. He not only made a major contribution to the Foundation during his term of office, but manifested a profound and lifelong commitment to its work. Those of us who had the pleasure and privilege of knowing him greatly mourn his passing.

Brian Anthony