The 2018 conference program is now available online, and it is packed with educational and informative workshops and discussions—a number organized or presented by AHNB members. There is a rich variety of heritage sessions during the three-day conference, with abundant opportunities to network and socialize.

**Thursday**
On Thursday, there are a number of Field Sessions being offered. There is a full-day excursion to Gagetown in cooperation with Queens County Heritage. Participants will be transported by bus in the morning, and will return to Fredericton by late afternoon, in time to attend the AHNB Annual General Meeting. The Gagetown workshops will cover not only issues related to boards and governance, but will also provide valuable insight into attracting volunteers. Participants will be served lunch, and will also tour local historic sites. Please see the full schedule for more details.

In addition to the Gagetown visit, there are also a number of morning and afternoon tours of local heritage sites, including thematic tours of Fredericton’s downtown and a trip to Marysville.

In the evening, all are welcome to attend the Keynote and Opening Reception at the Fredericton Convention Centre.

**Friday**
There is another full day of informative sessions on Friday, and heritage enthusiasts might be particularly attracted to the session entitled “Building Attendance/Engagement at Museum and Heritage Destinations.”

In the afternoon, a well-rounded Spark Session entitled “Historic Sites & Museums” features no fewer than 7 speakers who will present a variety of heritage topics. Each speaker will have a maximum of 7 minutes to present material, which will make this not only a fast-paced but an information-laden session.

**Saturday**
The final day of the conference promises even more useful and beneficial sessions to our membership. In the morning, participants might be interested in the session on covered bridges, entitled “A Bridge too Far”. This session might be especially enlightening given the AHNB’s active interest in this particular aspect of New Brunswick’s built heritage.

In the afternoon, participants might wish to attend the National Trust Learning Lab, entitled “Fundraising for Historic Places & Museums.”

The 2018 conference has much more in store than these few highlights. Please view the entire program at [https://nationaltrustconference.ca/?page_id=9](https://nationaltrustconference.ca/?page_id=9)

*(At the time of the newsletter publication, the French conference schedule was still under construction)*
Escape the Past?

Think you can escape the past? This is an intriguing question, especially when asked as part of a game. Experiences at museums and historic sites can be made more meaningful and engaging when the activities demand interaction.

Museums are gradually beginning to embrace the gaming craze which has been sweeping the globe: The Escape Room. This adult role play game format positions players as the stars of their very own action adventure. Players must work against the clock to crack codes, solve puzzles, and unlock mysteries in order to escape an undesirable fictional fate in record time.

There are a number of Escape Room outfits operating across New Brunswick, and what was originally a form of adult entertainment has begun to spread to families and children. The appeal of the Escape Room format is fairly self-evident, with its emphasis upon mystery and the race against time. The companies which offer escape room entertainment usually offer a few game scenarios, and among them is a mystery set in a museum.

It is only natural that museums would begin to adopt the Escape Room format in its programming. There is no need to dress the space to look like a museum—it already is one and has all the mood and ambiance and artifacts to prove it!

The topic of Escape Rooms in Museums was explored in the May/June issue of the Canadian Museums Association magazine. Perhaps the best known and most natural fit for an Escape Room experience is the Diefenbunker, Canada’s Cold War Museum. Game enthusiasts who participated in the Escape Room challenge returned as a visitor at a later date, having been intrigued by the museum during their interactive game play.

The Canadian Museum of Nature has also augmented its educational programming by introducing Escape room experiences. This type of interactive gaming experience has the potential to generate revenue, and given the growing appeal of the escape room format, museums offering such experiences are opening their doors to an increasingly wider audience. The Canadian Museum of Nature reported a 21% increase in visitorship.

By challenging visitors to solve a mystery, the museum experience has suddenly shifted from passive to active mode, and everyone wants in on the action. Transforming museum visitors into detectives and crack investigators is … well… a game changer.

During the Spark Session being held on Friday, October 19th at the annual conference, I will be presenting my own puzzle and suggesting ways for museum visitors to “escape the past” in a presentation entitled “Detective Perspective: Clues to Solving Museum Mysteries.”

Koral LaVorgna

Conference Bursary

To offset the cost of conference registration, a bursary will be available to a limited number of New Brunswick participants. For those wishing to take advantage of the bursary, they must apply to the AHNB.

The application form will be available on the AHNB website under “Conference”. You may also request a form directly by sending an email to info@amnb.ca.
Since May 2017, 93 cushions have already been registered on the Facebook page. At the Congrès mondial acadien 2019, demonstrations will be held for the general public as well as a frolic to which all groups of hookers from the Maritimes will be invited.

This innovative project not only highlights the importance of hooking as a traditional art craft, but also the volunteerism and mutual aid between the various communities in Acadie. To date, this permanent collection has a value exceeding $40,000 and can easily exceed $100,000 in a few years. The collection "200 hooked cushions for my 200th" is becoming an important collection not only in the field of hooking, but also by the simple number of volunteers who participates in its creation.

For more information, visit the project Facebook page “200 coussins hookés pour mon 200e” https://www.facebook.com/coussinhooke or email us at églisebarachois@gmail.com or coussinhooke@gmail.com
AWARDS

Time to nominate before September 15, 2018

The AHNB requests nominations for Annual Awards to deserving individuals through its Awards Committee.

Nomination may be made by any AHNB Member

Deadline for receipt of nominations: September 15th
Submissions are to be made by mail or by e-mail to:
AHNB Awards Committee
163 St John Street Fredericton, NB
E3B 4A8
or by email to: info@amnb.ca

The AHNB Awards are in the following four categories:

Quarter Century Award – Individual, warded annually
Award of Merit – Individual, awarded annually
Award of Distinction – Project based to an organization, awarded annually
Founder’s Award - Individual at discretion of the Board of Directors

Quarter Century Award
Awarded for outstanding long-term service to the heritage community by an individual volunteer. The AHNB wishes to recognize volunteers whose service over 25 years or more merits special recognition. N.B. Heritage professionals who have given voluntary service are eligible for this award

Award of Merit
Awarded for an outstanding contribution in the heritage field. The AHNB wishes to acknowledge an individual contribution which may not involve long-term service, yet merits special recognition. (i.e. This award may be granted to an individual whose original ideas, research and presentation results in completion of a specific project). Organizations are not eligible for the Award of Merit

Award of Distinction (Organization)
For outstanding achievement (successful completion of a challenging project, or long-term contribution, heritage restoration project or exhibit renewal) by an AHNB member organization. The AHNB wishes to recognize the contribution of member organizations which have made a significant contribution to the preservation of heritage in the province of New Brunswick

Founder’s Award
To be awarded to an individual at the discretion of the Board of Directors for outstanding contributions to the people of New Brunswick. The Board of Directors of the AHNB may from time to time wish to recognize a singular or series of outstanding contributions of an individual to their community or the province at large with the presentation of the Founders Award Consideration for the Founders Award shall not be limited to membership in the AHNB. The Award may be presented to an individual or organization either volunteer or professional. The Founders Award may not necessarily be awarded annually.

The Award forms are on the AHNB website, under Conference.

If you have any questions please contact Koral LaVorgna at 506-454-3561 or Koral.Lavorgna@amnb.ca