

# “To dream the impossible dream”

A memory of Townshippers’ Association

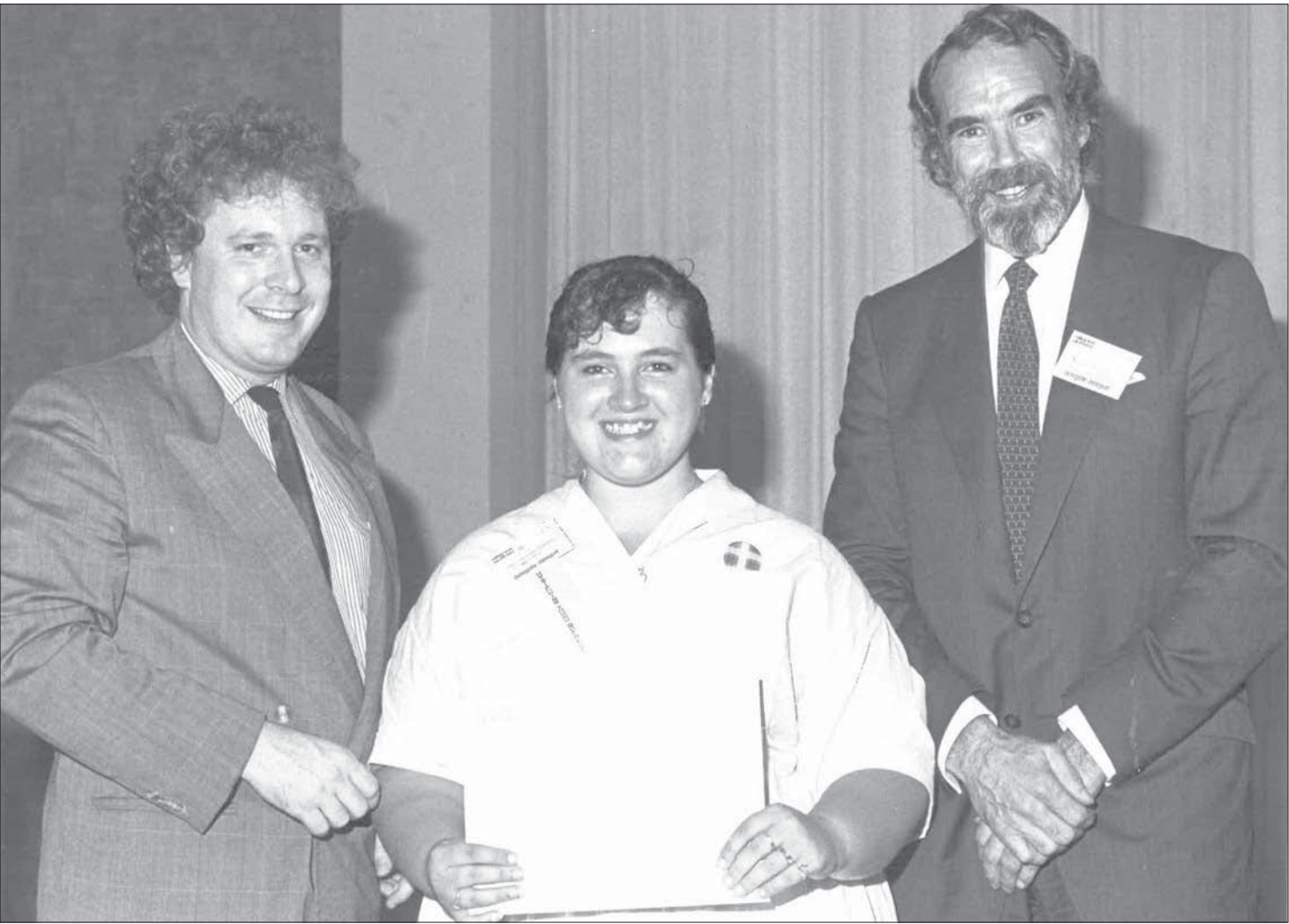
By Mable Hastings

*“To dream the impossible dream  
To fight the unbeatable foe  
To bear with unbearable sorrow  
To run where the brave dare not go”  
written by Andy Williams*

In 1987 I had been working for Citizen Advocacy (now the Centre D’Action Benevole de la Missisquoi Nord-CABMN) in Mansonville as a Youth Director for about a year. I had been blessed with the opportunity by my employer to adjust my job title and responsibilities with the organization to allow me to live my dream job in working the with youth of Potton and surrounding areas; a job I maintained for 27 years.

Through the efforts of Townshippers’ Association and then Townshippers’ Vice-President, Heather Keith and others, I was nominated as an “Outstanding Young Quebecer” by Alliance Quebec, a province-wide English-language lobby group in light of my youth work through Citizen Advocacy, a then rural outreach mission of the United Church. The description used at the time of my nomination along with 23 other Outstanding youth honored by the group said, “Hastings’ creative and fresh approach to doing things has made her something of a legend.” My then achievements listed included: my volunteer activities as a Sunday School teacher, leading a youth group and writing a regular column in The Sherbrooke Record (News from the Owl’s Head). Noted as well were my achievements as a local amateur theatre participant with the then Potton Players directed by the late great Bernice Leigh Smith and my poetry writing.

I remember being recognized by Townshippers’ and Alliance Quebec as a validation that through my work at the Citizen Advocacy (the CABMN), I had found my calling and the fact that others were noting it made me realize that I was headed in the right direction. Youth became my passion and my purpose and I have never regretted that calling a single day of my life. I was able to have an impact on children, youth, families and my community



COURTESY

Jean Charest and Peter Blaikie presenting Mable Hastings with the Outstanding Young Quebecer award in 1987

and every one of those youth had an impact on me. Who gets to live their dream and be rewarded ten-fold by each experience?

I had worked with Heather Keith previously in Potton and in fact, I remember her telling me once that, “limits exist in your own mind” and since that time I have pushed the limits in doing all I can to bring positive to the youth and my community as a whole.

As a kid who grew up in poverty with an overactive imagination, little experience and minimal knowledge of the world I can remember going to the awards ceremony held over a two-day period in the city where the other youth from other areas nominated also

gathered. I’d never stayed overnight in a hotel room, I’d never eaten at a place setting with more than two utensils and I’d surely never been told to “dress appropriately for attending a ball!” The ceremony was magical with then Alliance Quebec President, Michael Goldbloom giving a speech I will never forget based on the song, “Dream the Impossible Dream.” I was presented with my award by a young Jean Charest and Peter Blaikie and as I stood frozen with a bewildered smile on my face, the two assured me I was going to do great things in my future.

The photo pictured here hangs prominently in my office today. Mr. Charest and Mr. Blaikie cheering me

on as I continue at the CABMN as the Executive Director. The measure of doing “great things” is something each of us must determine on any given day in our own heart and mind.

Was I an “outstanding” young Quebecer? I can’t be sure but I keep Michael Goldbloom’s reminder close and I strive to serve and make better a community and population that I absolutely love.

*“And the world will be better for this  
That one man, strong  
and covered with scars  
Still strove with his last ounce of courage  
To fight the unbeatable foe  
To reach the unreachable star”*

## Past Outstanding Townshippers

Frances Scott	1999	Kim Bailey	2004	Shirley Tipper	2008	Kathryne Pette	2014
Frances Dewar	2000	Leonard (Somen) Goodman	2004	Alice Gunhouse	2009	May Lechasseur	2014
Richard Evans	2000	Geoffrey Grant-Page	2004	Denis Palmer	2009	Pierre Laplante	2015
Theda Lowry	2000	Thérèse Maguire	2004	Maureen Quigg	2009	Ruth Atto	2015
Donald Martin	2000	Gary & Bev Crandall	2005	Judy Ross	2009	Johanne Bilodeau	2015
Janie Trew	2000	Lt. Col Jack Garneau	2005	Martha Shufelt	2009	Sharon McCully	2015
Evelyn Beban Lewis	2001	Sarah Hoblyn	2005	Heather Keith	2010	Johanne Bilodeau	2016
James Ross	2001	Gladys Mackay-Beattie	2005	Kelli Ann Ferrigan	2010	Shirley Beakes	2016
Douglas Smith	2001	Robert Paulette	2005	Mary Purkey	2010	Joey Notargiovanni	2016
Aline Visser	2001	Marion Standish	2005	John Douesnard	2011	Clement Forest	2017
Evelyn Courville	2002	Jean-Charles Godreau	2006	Wendy Durrant	2011	Nancy Robichaud	2017
J. Hardy Craft	2002	Mr. & Mrs. Allan Nourse	2006	Joe Kelly	2011	JoAnn Oberg-Müller	2017
Malcom Fraser	2002	Bruce Patton	2006	Margaret Logan White	2011	CFUW, Sherbrooke and District	2018
Evelyn Harvey	2002	Marion Phelps	2006	Doreen Page	2011	Miranda Coté	2019
Jane & Robin Mallory	2002	Charles Catchpaugh	2007	Vivienne Galanis	2012	Jane Loiselle	2019
Royce Gale	2003	Stewart Deacon	2007	Frances Goodwin	2012	Anne Rothfels	2019
Marjorie Goodfellow	2003	Roseleen George	2007	Marion Greenlay	2012	Melanie Cutting	2020
Louise Hall	2003	Fred Gilman	2007	Garnet & Sandra Morrison	2013	Spencer Wilson	2021
Stewart Hopps	2003	Donald Parsons	2007	Everette Taylor	2013	Gayl Rhicard	2021
Curtis Lowry	2003	Dennis & Irma Chapman	2008	Emma Stevens	2013	Corey Morin	2021
Mona McGee	2003	Yvan Monast	2008	Adelaide Lanktree	2014		
Robert Pincott	2003	Joan Thomson	2008	Louise Penny	2014		