

Heritage Award 2017

Historic Belisle farmhouse retains original look

by Audrey McDonough

The 2017 award for *Conserving local heritage buildings* went to Réjean and France Belisle for preserving the heritage Belisle farm on the 4th Range Road.



As one rounds a curve and reaches the top of the summit on the 4th range road, one suddenly comes to a breathtaking vista. On one side of the road is a typical simple turn of the century farmhouse (1899) including its outbuildings, and across from it is a beautiful roadside cross.

Réjean and France Belisle, 6th generation of the family to live there, have lovingly restored the original homestead over the years. The home is true to the original in color “*sang-de-boeuf*” popular at that time. In 1948 the house was almost doubled in size as the then owner fathered nine children. Over the years, the family raised cows, chickens, horses, sheep and goats. They also planted hay, potatoes and other life sustaining crops. They had—and still have—a maple stand and a maple shack. The farm had been kept in the family by lineage of father to son and now by a nephew, Réjean and his wife France.



Roadside crosses were popular in Catholic Quebec in bygone days, but not many of these simple demonstrations of a family’s faith remain.

This is the third replacement of the cross since the first erection in 1947. Exposure to the elements and being made of wood explains the need for multiple replacements. Réjean and France’s son Benoit replaced the cross with a hand made true replica in 2016. Both Benoit and his sister Sophie are true Québécois artists as is

their mother. Examples of their works are found all over the family farm.

