

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH/APRIL 1978

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W.E. Keenan, President

Joan Mackie, Editor

## APRIL MEETING

DATE Sunday, April 23, 1978  
3:00 p.m.

PLACE Machzikei Hadas Synagogue, corner  
of King Edward and Murray Streets.

Members will have an opportunity to view the astrological murals painted on the face of the women's balconies before they are removed, and to learn more about them and the history of the synagogue.

In May, the Annual Meeting will be held at a time and place to be announced in the next Newsletter.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATING COMMITTEE

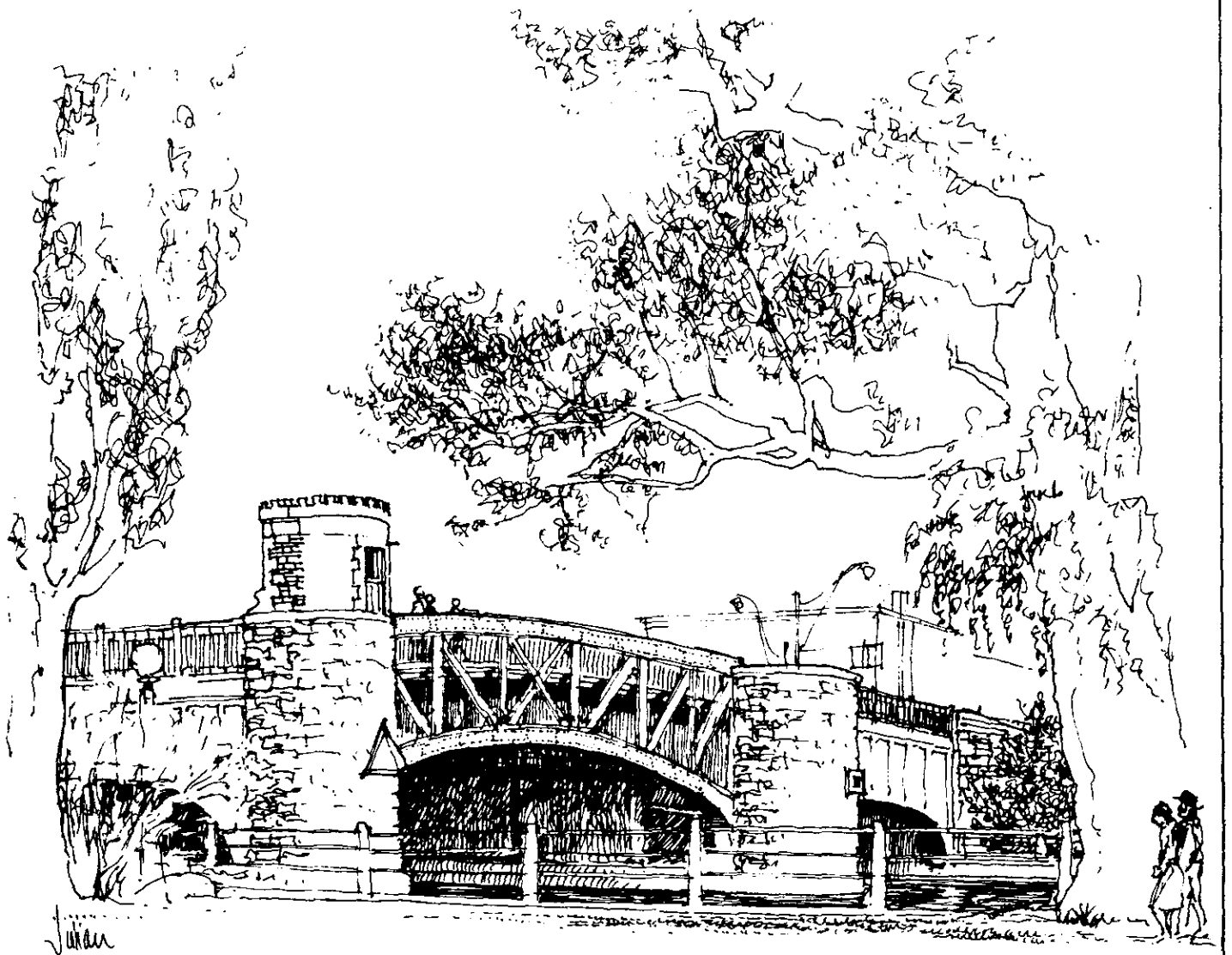
The Nominating Committee is inviting members of Heritage Ottawa to propose persons for election to the Board of Directors. Names of potential directors should be submitted, in writing, to the Nominating Committee, Heritage Ottawa, P.O. Box 510, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario.

## PRETORIA AVENUE BRIDGE UPDATE

Heritage Ottawa continues to be represented on the Pretoria Bridge Replacement Committee. Consulting engineers for the new bridge are C.C. Parker and Associates of Hamilton, and Peter John Stokes of Niagara-on-the-Lake is the consulting architect. At its most recent meeting, on 29 March, the Committee considered a number of preliminary designs for the new structure. The discussions kept in mind Regional Council's resolution that the new bridge should "simulate" the design of the existing bridge.

Construction of the new bridge will begin in the fall. An alignment for a temporary bridge has been selected north of the Queensway, but it is possible that no temporary vehicular bridge will be provided. The Ottawa East Community Association requested at a recent public meeting that, in this event, a temporary pedestrian bridge be built, and this is being given serious consideration. Ottawans are getting a taste of things to come as the bridge closes for a week in April for temporary repairs.

H.D.K.



## HERITAGE OTTAWA FEBRUARY MEETING

Members of Heritage Ottawa who attended the monthly meeting on Heritage Day, February 20th, were treated to a fascinating look at the history of Lowertown. The lecture was presented to a full house at the historic LaSalle Academy on Sussex Drive by Michael Newton, historical researcher with the National Capital Commission.

Introduced by Martin Weil, Past-President of Heritage Ottawa, Mr. Newton traced the history of Bytown from the arrival of the British Colonel By in 1826 to the turn of the 20th Century. He talked about trade routes, conflicts between Upper and Lower Canada, and the way New Yorkers by-passed British tariffs by shipping goods through the British colony of Canada. He described events leading to the decision to build a canal and reasons for its present location.

The land, owned by the government for the purpose of constructing the canal, was leased out for a small sum of money. Speculators, including Colonel By himself, leased most of the property and then rented it for a much larger amount to immigrants working on the canal. Many of these men died, some from injuries sustained at work, others from disease, leaving their wives behind to pay the high rents and feed the children. This being a heavy burden for a woman at the time, rather than starve, many of them turned to prostitution. Small outbreaks of violence in retaliation for the high rents were the foundation of greater unrest leading to the Stoney Monday Riot in 1849. Thus was the cruel beginning from which Lowertown grew.

It was an interesting, well-researched presentation with a touch of humour. The ease with which Mr. Newton presented the facts made the audience feel very much a part of this old world.

Mr. Newton will take his extensive knowledge and abundant enthusiasm to the City's Heritage Advisory Committee Meetings as a representative of Heritage Ottawa.

Jennifer Roddick

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST

Authors wishing to participate in this annual essay contest, with prizes totalling over \$1000., may choose any subject pertaining to the history of the Gatineau Valley. Compositions which should not exceed 3000 words, may be submitted in French or English, and may be illustrated by photographs, maps, etc. Manuscripts, which must clearly indicate the name, address, and age of the author, must be mailed on or before September 15, 1978 to the Secretary-Treasurer, Historical Society of the Gatineau, Old Chelsea, Quebec, JOX 2N0. The results will be announced not later than November 15, 1978.

## HERITAGE OTTAWA CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION

On February 17, Mayor Lorry Greenberg proclaimed Monday, February 20 to be Heritage Day in Ottawa. In a special 11 o'clock ceremony at City Hall, the Mayor presented Heritage Ottawa Certificates of Recognition to three citizens for their contributions to the preservation of the heritage of our city.

Receiving awards were Mary Roaf, for her participation in Action Sandy Hill, the Sandy Hill Planning Team, and the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee; Dr. Robert H. Hubbard, O.C., Chief Curator, National Gallery of Canada, and Cultural Advisor to His Excellency, the Governor-General, for his recent book, Rideau Hall: An illustrated history of Government House, Ottawa, from Victorian times to the present day; and Le Jardin Restaurant, for the preservation of 127 York Street, and its sensitive adaptation into a restaurant.

## HERITAGE OTTAWA HOUSE TOUR - SEPTEMBER 23, 1978

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a special insert (and ticket order form) outlining Heritage Ottawa's Tour of Heritage Properties in the Capital. Don't miss out on this opportunity to tour the Billings House (1827); "Maplelawn" (1830), 529 Richmond Road; The Belgian Embassy (1867), 395 Laurier Avenue East; 445 Daly Avenue (1897); 25 Charles Street (1889); St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church (1866); and the log house on Riverside Drive (ca. 1829). Tickets are \$6.50 and include lunch which will be served at St. Bartholomew's Church. The demand for tickets will be great, so order early.

## RIDEAU AREA PROJECT

The Rideau Centre project, which lay dormant for many months, has apparently resurfaced. The Honourable C.M. Drury announced his interest in revitalizing the project immediately upon becoming Chairman of the National Capital Commission earlier this year. The Rideau Area Project, as it is now named, has published a newsletter to introduce the Rideau Area Project Team (headed by architect Lloyd Sankey and including staff from the N.C.C. and City of Ottawa) and to invite the public to visit the project office at 531A Sussex Drive. The newsletter announces the intention to develop "a phased approach for the redevelopment of the Rideau area." That area is defined as being bounded by the Canal on the west, King Edward Street on the east, St. Patrick Street on the north, and the Mackenzie King Bridge on the south. This includes the historic Byward Market area, whose conservation is the mandate of another multi-level committee, chaired by Alderman Georges Bedard (see Heritage Ottawa Newsletter, September and October 1977).

## CENTRETOWN SUMMER PROJECT

The Centretown Citizens' Community Association has applied to the Secretary of State Department for financial support to hire two students this summer. The students would be responsible for assembling material which could form the basis of a published walking-tour guide of Centretown. It is proposed that the guide will concentrate on the heritage aspects of Centretown, other historical components of the community, and the contributions which the various cultural groups make to Centretown and the institutions associated with them.

The Association would like to learn of students who would be interested in being associated with this summer project. At the same time C.C.C.A. is looking for assistance from other members of Heritage Ottawa in a voluntary capacity. It is hoped that persons with an interest in and experience about heritage matters in Ottawa and in Centretown particularly,

will be willing to serve on a small advisory committee. This group would provide professional guidance and assistance to the students undertaking the work. It is anticipated that the advisory committee would meet with the students three or four times during the summer months.

Any members who would be interested in participating in this project or learning more about it are invited to contact John Banks at 236-7379 office, or 232-0131 home, or Charlene Milne at 232-2543.

John Banks

## HERITAGE CANADA ANNUAL MEETING

Heritage Ottawa is pleased to have been asked to operate a "Hospitality Desk" for participants at Heritage Canada's Annual Meeting, the weekend of September 30. Please volunteer to help by telephoning Stella Kirk at 745-0551.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Shirley Leishman Books, 88 Metcalfe Street, very kindly lent the following books to Heritage Ottawa for review purposes. Members wishing to purchase these books may do so either at Shirley Leishman Books, or at Books Canada in Confederation Square.

Norman Levine. In Lower Town. Ottawa: Commoners' Publishing, 1977. unpaginated, \$3.95 (paper)

This short book, composed mostly of recent photographs of Lower Town, and a short story by Norman Levine, is of little interest to those who are interested in the history and heritage of this community. Levine has done little to give any dignity to the area in which he grew up. Instead, what is offered is a rather defeated look at an area he considers is dying, and one would gather from the theme of the book, the writer is glad to be away from the place.

It is just such a defeatist attitude which should irritate those who are fighting to preserve heritage in this city and country. One can say little to recommend this short essay, and since I am not a literary critic, but an historian, I would put the book under the category of fiction. It is a distortion of what is in Lower Town, and a stigmatized view of its history which is given. The photographs, which are at best amateurish, do nothing to reveal the essential charm of the area.

The theme of this booklet is decay and defeat. Heritage lovers beware of such writers of doom, for they do nothing but hinder the cause, and do nothing for its betterment.

Michael Newton

Diane Aldred. Aylmer Québec Its Heritage. Ottawa: Love Printing Service Ltd., 1977. 199 pp., many illus., \$6.00 (paper)

Madame Diane Aldred deserves congratulations from all Heritage Groups for her interesting book, as she sets a worthy example to be followed by more heritage minded people.

Being a native of the area and a descendant of one of the pioneers, Madame Aldred knows the place well from her childhood and from what she was told by her parents, grandparents and old relatives. She also had access to a wealth of information from old local families and she used it for the benefit of her readers.

For those not well acquainted with the town of Aylmer, four plans showing the early subdivisions help to follow the evolution of its history. A street map shows the location of heritage buildings studied and a reader may walk along and see the particular buildings of interest to him or her. The large number of rare and unknown illustrations gathered from old family albums is an asset.

Such a book for Aylmer people makes their everyday life more interesting. When they pass and look at a heritage building, knowing who lived in it and what they have done in life, there is a great satisfaction.

When looking at John Egan's cottage on Main Street, you think of the active and progressive life of the builder, who emigrated from Ireland in the 1830's and became Aylmer's first mayor, a member of the Legislative Assembly who struggled for the advancement of the town, and was the host for two Governors-General in 1853 and 1856 etc. Voilà une réelle joie de vivre, en silence!

Lucien Brault