



Volume 17, No. 3
September, 1990

FREE

MARY-ANNE PHILLIPS

Wishing to pay tribute to a valued benefactor, we asked Bob Phillips to recall some of her contributions to Ottawa's heritage—Editor.

When Mary Anne Phillips died on March 19, Heritage Ottawa lost an enduring link with its beginnings.

The time was 1967. In the fervour of the centennial, the Local Council of Women created a beautification Committee to persuade citizens to improve the appearance of their properties. It did a fine job of public sensitization. As the committee members sought community enhancement, they realized that

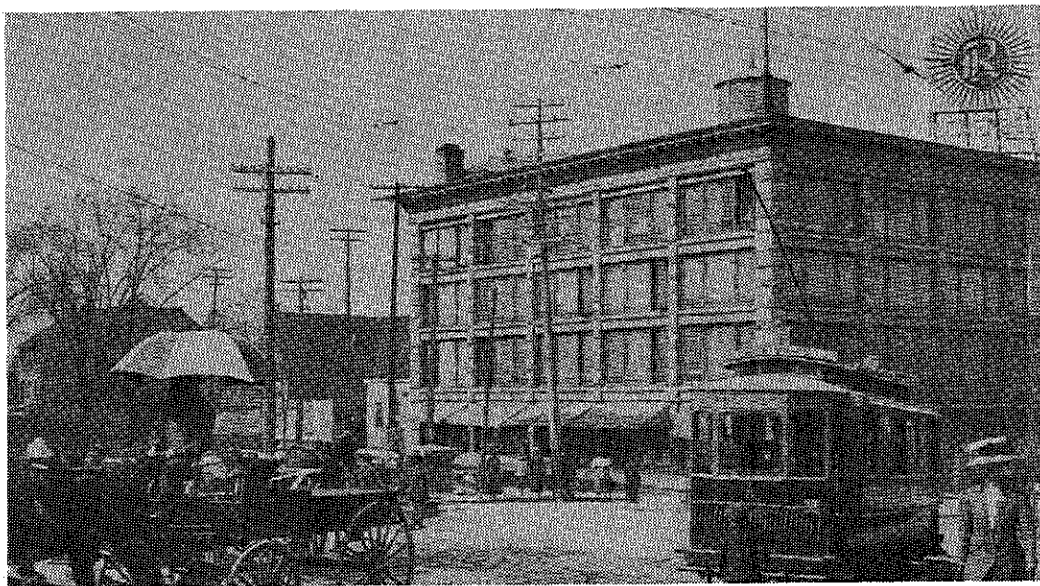
their greatest potential was neglected heritage.

They were not women of notable power, but most knew people who made decisions, and they knew how the voluntary sector worked. Thus, when the Union Station was slated for demolition, they wrote letters, phoned people, harangued their families and friends. The Union Station was not demolished: it became the National Conference Centre.

When centennial year ended, people like Gladys Blair and Eleanor Polk (no longer living), Gertrude Holt and Mary Roaf (still in Ottawa), Kay Ransom (in Victoria) and Mary Anne felt strongly they should continue as a committee to defend our heritage.

When they first met in the living room at 8 Graham Avenue

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DALY BUILDING

The future of the Daly Building is bleak. At present, its cladding is half-gone, the window bays resemble empty eye sockets, and, for some inexplicable reason, the developer had all the interior floors removed. The building looks beaten-up,

and held together with piano wire.

Leaked reports, prepared by experts hired by the N. C. C., conclude that the building is structurally sound and can be restored. Nonetheless, developer Bill Tresham wants to tear it down. Andree Beland, V. P.--Real Estate Development,

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DALY BUILDING, from page 1

maintains that a compromise between heritage "needs" and developers' "wants" must be made. A decision is expected by the end of August.

With a reported rent of one hundred dollars a month for the entire 300,000 square feet of the Daly Building (payable to the N.C.C.), an extremely soft rental market, and no project deadline, Tresham is under no pressure to make a move.

If the N.C.C. settles for anything less than a complete restoration, they will be abrogating their responsibilities as the custodian of nationally-owned historic properties, as set down in the National Capital Act. What else is new?

TROUBLE IN PERTH

Ten years ago, Heritage Canada opened its offices for its pilot "Main Street Program" in the Thomas Building on Perth's Gore Street. Dating from the 1840's, this now-abandoned, stucco-covered stone building is situated across from the Toronto Dominion Bank and Town Hall. Among the oldest structures in Perth's downtown core, it is threatened by destruction to accommodate the proposed Riverwalk Development.

Last fall, the Perth Local Architectural Advisory Committee (LACAC) reached an agreement with the developer to have the facades of the Thomas Building and Harry's Cafe restored and incorporated into the Riverwalk project. On June 4, the Riverwalk architects met with LACAC and the Site Plan Committee to discuss the Thomas Building and other elevations for the development. At that time, LACAC learned that the developer had not informed the architects of the agreement concerning the facades, nor had he undertaken the promised feasibility study concerning the Thomas building's structural soundness.

On June 26, LACAC and the Site Plan Committee were informed that the agreement to preserve the Gore Street facades could not be honoured because of demands by proposed tenants.

Although Riverwalk had planned to begin construction on 1 July 1990, they have yet to present comprehensive plans for various approvals. Riverwalk has not met previous construction deadlines and there is no sign of work on the site.

Riverwalk has not met any of its promises to the people of Perth.

Envied for its attractive 19th Century downtown, Perth has proven that heritage structures can be revitalized to accommodate modern businesses, at great economic benefit to the Town. Residents have a history of investing in their built heritage. Currently, several downtown businesses are taking steps to repair and improve their 19th Century buildings because they appreciate Perth's richness and uniqueness.

"Friends of the Main Street," formed to preserve the architectural integrity of Perth's downtown core, cannot understand why an outside developer is reluctant to do the same.



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LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AWARDS

Annually, the city of Ottawa honours outstanding achievement in architectural conservation. Bronze plaques can be seen throughout the city, affixed to superb examples of building restoration, adaptive re-use or in-fill. Because of Ottawa's increasing appreciation of heritage architecture, the City has proposed that certain areas be recognized as heritage districts.

Consistent with this acknowledgement of the urban landscape as a heritage concern, the City's Heritage and Urban Design Section has joined efforts with Heritage Ottawa to develop landscape conservation awards, as part of the Architectural Conservation Awards program. Stuart Lazear, Senior Heritage Planner with the City, is being assisted by Nelson Edwards, a landscape architect on the board of Heritage Ottawa, in developing this new award.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Richard Cannings

For fifteen years, we have all struggled under the burden of The Ontario Heritage Act. Some experts have described it as the worst protection for historic buildings in the Western World. Now, after being involved in three years of consultation and public participation, Heritage Ottawa is dumbfounded at the drivel the Province has released as its *Proposals for Legislation*. For some reason, they found it necessary to lump folk-dancing with the preservation of our architectural past.

If these proposals become law, not one building in Ontario will be permanently protected. Nor will there be any interim protection for buildings in Heritage Conservation Districts. For those on a heritage registry, only sixty-day interim protection would apply.

To be fair, the proposals have some redeeming aspects:

- Local Architectural Conservancy Groups (LACACs) can approve grants
- legitimacy is given to a heritage register
- developers must make Heritage Impact Statements before starting work
- cities can designate properties as heritage
- regional government has a heritage role, though it has not been defined

Lack of permanent designation is the greatest omission, since historic buildings will still be fair game to developers. Obviously, the Ontario government values development more than its built heritage.

LOWERTOWN BLUES

The National Capital Commission owns all but one of the properties in the western third of the block bound by Sussex Drive, Bolton, Parent, and Cathcart Streets. They feature a mix of clapboard and brick homes built in the late 1800's, or at the turn of the century.

Recently, the N.C.C. revealed long-term plans to demolish a number of the clapboard homes and convert the remaining "better-maintained" homes into small "non-government offices." One of the first slated for demolition is at 44 Bolton, the most easterly of the N.C.C. properties. It is to be replaced with a parking lot or green space.

One of the older buildings, 44 Bolton features a brick-veneer facade as well as wood-siding. The N.C.C. claims that because of the type of construction, the building is too expensive to maintain, although in the last eight years the Commission has provided only a new roof and a new furnace. Next door, 42 Bolton is a heritage-designated private home.

The N.C.C.'s plan to ruin one of Lowertown's older and better-preserved residential blocks must be opposed. Concerned citizens should call Peter Spaull, N.C.C. property manager for Sussex Dr., at 239-5493.

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, September 18 at 7 P.M.

**To be held in The Commonwealth Room
In the Centre Block of the House of Commons**

Our Guest Speaker will be:

Carleton University Professor of Architecture Trevor Boddy

His Topic:

"Modernism in Ottawa: The Best and the Worst Since 1920"

CHARLESFORT RISES TO OCCASION

Heritage Ottawa is always on the look-out for creative projects that satisfy the goals of a thriving, growing community, while featuring architecture and land use compatible with heritage buildings and districts. The redevelopment of 219-221 St. Patrick St. in the Byward Market demonstrates these qualities.

According to the City of Ottawa Directories, these semi-detached houses were built around 1907-1908. The Assessment Roll of 1911 valued the property at \$4,400.00, the land being assessed at \$1,500.00 and the improvements at \$2,900.00. The owner, Joseph Gaulin, resided at 221 St. Patrick until his death in 1928. His son, Arthur Gaulin, an employee of the Government Printing Bureau, continued to live there until he died in 1973. The Gaulin family sold the property in 1974.

For years, Doug Casey of Charlesfort Developments had wanted to create loft-type housing for a specific housing-market sector, and he decided this property's location was ideal. Although land-use density would have to be substantially increased, he wanted his building to "fit in" with the street. To this end, he sought commentary from the Lowertown Community Association, Heritage Ottawa, and the City's Heritage Branch.

All three recommended that Casey save the building and he willingly cancelled his plans for demolition, despite the fact that the rotting structure would have to be completely rebuilt

to current building codes. The challenge for Casey's architect, Barry Hobin, was to save the existing structure and design a condominium building that would sit comfortably alongside it, while providing all the program requirements of 22 modern apartments. The most difficult problem with the latter proved to be parking.

Although the basement would provide substantial parking, it could not provide a space for each unit. To solve this, Casey bought the neighbouring structure, 207-209 St. Patrick, his team having come up with a clever plan to use the rear yard for the additional parking space. The division of 207-209 St. Patrick into apartment units is on hold while Casey seeks heritage restoration grants.

Hobin's creation is an ordered melange of elements, influenced by the neighbourhood. The profile, for example, blends two adjacent roof forms. Although several minor variances were required to proceed with the project, Casey feels the result will be very much in the spirit of the neighbourhood.

For example, while the landscaped green-space is less than the zoning called for, it is consistent with the Market area. States Casey, "By-laws are made for new sub-divisions, not for hundred-year-old areas where the pattern of things was established long before the laws were written."

The keys to the effort are respect and compatibility. Although one might argue with its size, the development does enhance the streetscape. Comments Casey: "We went to the players (the City and the community) and said, 'Here's what we'd like to do.' We listened to what they wanted, then married the ideas."

In the end, one must judge the project carefully. To merely reject it as "facadism," for instance, would be naive. The issues here are not so much architectural, but of urban design. From that perspective, the project supports the fabric of the district.

Was it worth the bother? Surely there will be different opinions. At the end of the summer, when the project is complete, passersby will be able to judge for themselves. Pre-sales of 95%, however, speak volumes.

AUCTION

On April 22, Heritage Ottawa held its annual auction at Arts Court. The event was sponsored by Ottawa Mayor Jim Durrell. In a letter to the business community, he had asked store owners to donate surplus merchandise to our organization. Many merchants responded generously, as did members of Heritage Ottawa, who contributed household items.

Collected merchandise included many fur coats (a donation from the Ottawa Furriers' Association), several hundred books, antiques, and art objects, as well as other articles. The expenses for organizing the auction were covered by generous cash donations from Heritage Ottawa board members.

On a Sunday afternoon, many people gathered at Arts Court in search of bargains. The auction was conducted with humour and professional efficiency by Peter Walker, the most respected auctioneer in the National Capital Region. Mr. Walker refused to accept any remuneration for his efforts.

Most of the merchandise was sold and \$1800.00 found its way into our treasury. Donors were issued receipts for the selling price of their merchandise, which can be used to claim tax deductions. We thank all donors for their kind support.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

The office continues to operate on a volunteer basis. At the last executive meeting, however, it was proposed that further attempts be made to secure casual administrative help. Primary responsibilities would be referring telephone messages and correspondence.

The board has decided to postpone the Annual General Meeting until the Fall because of the absence of key executive members.

ONTARIO SPEAKS

The Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communication issued a flurry of descriptions concerning its overhaul of heritage policy and new heritage legislation. The following publications, released on May 9 by former Minister Christine Hart, indicate that both the province and municipalities will change not only how they deal with heritage, but even how they think about it:

- *A Vision of Heritage* (a glossy overview)
- *A Strategy for Conserving Ontario's Heritage* (a longer glossy overview)
- *Proposals for Legislation* (a summary of guiding principles for new legislation)

The third document is by far the most important. It discloses that the province is considering:

- a) radically expanding the definition of heritage "to include immovables and movables, tangibles and intangibles"
- b) expanding the mandate of Local Architectural Conservancy Advisory Committees to take on these new categories of heritage
- c) increasing the controls on heritage property and enforcing them with stronger penalties, and using "environmental impact assessments," specifically for heritage, to insure closer integration with conventional planning
- d) trying to substantially improve the economics of preserving and rehabilitating heritage properties
- e) expanding provincial administration and increasing municipal supervision of provincial heritage properties

During the three years that the Ontario Heritage Policy Review was preparing the Ministry's position, Heritage Ottawa presented detailed recommendations. Like other groups across the province, Heritage Ottawa complained that existing legislation was too weak. (Ontario is the only province whose heritage legislation provides no permanent protection; municipal designation can only stave off a building's demolition for 270 days.) Heritage Ottawa also insisted on "carrots," as well as "sticks," in order to attract greater private sector support for the rehabilitation of buildings.

The *Proposals for Legislation* are rather vague because they are statements of principle, rather than an actual draft. For instance, the document suggests, but does not state clearly, that designation will guarantee permanent protection. Ministry officials, however, have publicly affirmed this.

These "trial balloons" are more specific when they deal with economic measures. In particular, the Ministry has released a long paper, with the cumbersome title, *Background Study of Economic Measures for Historic and Heritage Building Conservation and Restoration in Ontario*, prepared by Ottawa lawyer (and former Heritage Ottawa president) Marc Denhez. It outlines some forty experimental techniques to improve the economic climate, from property tax rebates to access to RRSPs. As it prepares its latest Official Plan, the City of Ottawa is exploring many of these techniques, again in response to Heritage Ottawa's submissions.

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BYWARD MARKET MEETING

Julian Smith discussed his Byward Market Study at the Ottawa School of Art on July 23. He examined several issues related to the creation of a Heritage Conservancy District, and outlined his recommendations.

The first issue examined was whether or not enough vernacular stock exists to make a district worthwhile. Smith argued that there is enough.

The second issue related to community support for the boundary area of the district. An assessment of this support led to a reduction of the district proposed by Mayor Durrell in February. The area will include Dalhousie but not extend toward Notre Dame.

The third issue concerned the administration of the district, in terms of supporting renovation and guiding development. A joint committee was proposed, consisting of various governing bodies, businessmen, and Local Architectural Conservancy Committees (LACACs) that would report to the City Planning Committee.

The balance of the discussion focussed on the task of setting up an administrative committee, and on the types of controls to be established. Discussion of the feasibility of controls as a means to create good urban architecture set in motion the debate over whether proscriptive controls or performance criteria are more valid.

Another document, scheduled for release in July, will address the economic, social, and environmental implications of an overall heritage strategy. It is being co-authored by Denhez.

On June 6-8, Local Architectural Conservancy Committees (LACACs) from across the province met in Guelph and started to come to grips with the province's initiative. The conference organizers' main objectives were to inform LACACs of some important economic issues and to lay the groundwork for a province-wide network of LACACs.

Much of the private discussion, however, was about the sudden departure of Christine Hart from the Ministry, in the midst of a political controversy. She was replaced by Minister of Mines (and former Minister of Tourism and Recreation) Hugh O'Neill, who assured the assembly that he would keep the initiative on track.

A week later, the Ministry staged a symposium in Toronto for province-wide organizations involved in various aspects of heritage (museums, buildings, archaeology, genealogy, etc.). Participants expressed overwhelming approval for the Ministry's proposed "holistic" definition of heritage, but there was some uneasiness about lumping heritage buildings, archives, museums, and other heritage resources into the same statute.

The Ministry plans to hold more consultation sessions. Officials have frequently expressed the hope that a new statute will be ready for presentation at Queen's Park by the end of the year, despite the probability of an intervening provincial election.

Members of the heritage community are strongly urged to order the relevant documents, which are available free from the Ministry.

THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF OTTAWA

Heritage groups and historical societies from across the city have been meeting together to explore areas of common interest. Archaeological and genealogical societies, museums, and speciality heritage groups have found that they have similar concerns and objectives.

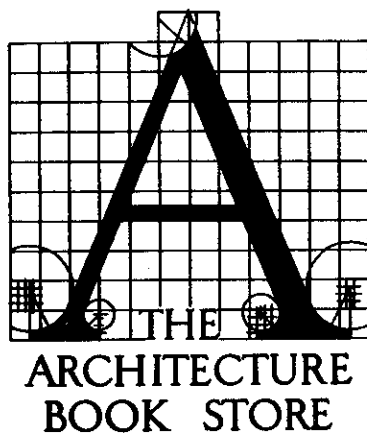
The purpose of the recently-formed Heritage Council of Ottawa is to promote preservation and appreciation of local history and heritage in the Ottawa area, and to unite various organizations into a mutually supportive council. The Heritage Council would enable member groups to share ideas, information, and resources. It would also provide a unified, collective representation that can have the clout of a large membership when expressing itself on heritage issues.

The Heritage Council plans to incorporate as a non-profit organization. In the meantime, there have been eight general meetings involving representatives from eleven interest groups. An interim executive has met several times and is charting a course for the council.

The council plans to create a newsletter which will inform all members of the diverse activities and projects through articles and calendars.

Much that has been discussed will surely be of interest to Heritage Ottawa members. Antique train rides, archaeological digs, special Bytown Museum exhibits, heritage garden walks and talks, re-enactment events, and historical building preservation concerns have all been brought forward by the various groups.

Heritage Ottawa and its members can only benefit from the exchange of ideas and information, and the support the Heritage Council of Ottawa will offer. We'll keep you posted.



116 Third Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1S-2K1. tel.(613) 233-7654

MARY-ANNE PHILLIPS, from page 1

(Mary Anne's home), others of both sexes had been persuaded to join this new movement. (It was at first part of an umbrella group called "A Capital for Canadians," but that is another story.) Mary Anne was elected Secretary of the Heritage Committee.

It was a movement to which she committed her formidable energies, for it drew upon her passionate Canadianism, her love of history, as well as her interest in art and architecture. (Mary Anne was a water colour painter of no mean talent.) In the early days, the membership never exceeded the capacity of her living room where it met monthly, but it was a ginger, surprisingly effective group. Among the causes in which it merited a share of credit were:

- saving the East Block of the Parliament Buildings from total gutting
- saving the Billings House from destruction and replacement by apartment blocks
- saving the Nicholas Street Court House and Jail from demolition
- saving the Teacher's College (Regional Headquarters) from replacement by an Ontario government highrise
- saving the Pretoria Bridge from replacement by mediocrity
- saving the First Bishop's Palace from replacement by twin office towers that would have dwarfed the adjacent Basilica

Mary Anne was a leader in all these causes, but there were two others to which she was especially close. One was the Sunnyside Fire Hall (now Community Centre) which would certainly have been levelled but for her dogged, one-person campaign, and enlistment of the invaluable support of Mayor Lorry Greenberg.

The other was the Rideau Street Convent. She was just one of many who struggled mightily, but her romantic imagination influenced the decision to save the chapel, and certainly helped create the heritage movement of the National Capital as we know it. In front of a padlocked doorway of the doomed building, to which the Sisters of Charity had denied conservationists access, Mary Anne chose her moment well. With a large noon-hour crowd, newspaper reporters, photographers, and TV present, she lit a simple, votary candle on the step.

The picture was large on the front pages of both newspapers, accompanied by eloquent prose. It was on every

local newscast and even reached national attention. With the help of a coupon advertisement in the papers, the membership of Heritage Ottawa (as it was later to be called) jumped in a month from 30 to 300.

Though many others played hugely important parts, Mary Anne was the constant moral custodian of that chapel. It was she who discovered that architect Moishe Safdie had unilaterally countermanded the plan to save the chapel in the new Gallery, and it was she who organized the campaign to countermand Safdie; that made it possible for the Friends of the Gallery to execute their magnificent campaign to finance the chapel's deserved place of national honour.

Most of all, Mary Anne touched the conscience of the community. She hated speaking in public, but no one who came near this selfless, committed visionary could fail to be touched. Successive mayors of Ottawa and once-blinkered aldermen did not hesitate to pay her tribute for their conversion to conservation. Doubting businessmen, tourist operators, federal politicians listened.

On 21 February 1983, some of these things were remembered when, over her own self-effacing protests, Mary Anne was honoured by Heritage Ottawa for her long and unparalleled service. She was then living in the Gattineau (in pioneer buildings which expressed her devotion to the present use of the best of the past), but she never ceased to work for Heritage Ottawa.

Just a year before her death, handicapped and in pain, she was invited by a friend to stand at a window near the top of one of Ottawa's higher buildings. There, in the fading evening light, she was made to remember each building and block that she had helped to save. There, in the physical sense, was the community she had helped make better.

What she could not see — but which we all know — was Mary Anne's greatest legacy; new generations of people who care, who believe, who work together to save what must be saved.

In the paraphrased words written in St. Paul's Cathedral about its creator: "If you would see her monument, look about you."

The death notice for Mrs. Phillips invited contributions to Heritage Ottawa, 2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa, K1N 6E2. That fund remains open for those wishing to honour Mary Anne and her friends who founded the conservation movement in Ottawa. Receipts for income tax purposes will, of course, be provided.

ARCHITECTURE WEEK 1990 — SEPTEMBER 21 - 30

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UPDATES

- Patterson House:** The City conducts monthly interior and frequent exterior inspections.
- Bank St. Bridge:** The Regional Government's Design Advisory Committee favours rehabilitation. Discussions by the Transportation Committee are ongoing.
- 90 Flora St.:** Architect Anthony Leaning's plan for saving the worker's cottage has been approved by owner Carmen Argentina.
- Wallis House:** The City Planning Committee is in the process of designating it a municipal heritage property. It is for sale by Public Works.
- City Official Plan:** The City's *Heritage Resource Management Policy Report* is available from the Planning Department.

HERITAGE OTTAWA NEWSLETTER

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ISSN 0808-0506

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