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Spring, 1991

Byward Market Saved

When City Council voted unanimously on February 6 to create a Heritage Conservation District in the Byward Market, Heritage Ottawa had won its greatest victory since its inception in 1967.

The Market could soon be the largest commercial Heritage Conservation District in Ontario. According to Stuart Lazear of the City's Heritage Department, the proposed area comprises 50 acres of prime downtown real estate, including 15 city blocks and 160 separate buildings. Assuming Council passes the corresponding bylaw, it will go the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) for approval.

The wait has been painfully long. In 1972, the City decided that the Market area deserved special attention. Since then, 36 buildings have been demolished. In 1986, Council approved a 17-storey hotel that would have cast a shadow over fruit vendors in the Market's core. In 1990, a land assembly plan to place an eight-storey building between York and Clarence seemed well on its way.

Only as a Heritage Conservation District will the Market finally be preserved from inappropriate development.

But is the battle really over? Market landowners Sam Zunder and Arthur Loeb plan to appeal the bylaw to the OMB. They argue that they have supported the Market for years and deserve unrestricted use of their land and buildings. We argue that on a sunny Saturday the Market can attract thirty to forty thousand people, most of them taxpayers.

The rights of two property owners must not take precedence over the rights of thousands of people to enjoy the Market's heritage.

HERITAGE DESIGNATION FOR ROCKCLIFFE AIR BASE ?

Victoria Angel

Meetings between a committee of military officials and representatives from Heritage Ottawa have led to a very interesting heritage designation project.

Over a year ago, Defence Minister Bill McKnight made a tentative announcement to close a number of military bases across Canada, in response to changes in DND policy. Among those that could cease operations by 1992 is Canadian Forces Base, Ottawa North (Rockcliffe). *cont'd on page three*

CATTLE CASTLE POOP

Fern Graham

Brisbin Brook Benyan, Architects could begin work on the Aberdeen Pavilion as early as July, provided the cost of the Lansdowne Park redevelopment project is on target.

Late last year, the restoration of the Cattle Castle was pushed back yet again, as City Council debated a complicated series of motions and counter-motions concerning the hiring of an architect for both new construction at Lansdowne and the infill portion of the Pavilion. The contract for its exterior restoration had already been awarded to the firm of Tom Blood, Architect.

On December 19, Council finally accepted the recommendation of City staff and awarded the job to Brisbin Brook Benyan. With the management firm of UMA Spantec Ltd., the architects will develop both the concept plan for the park, and combined, detailed estimates for the entire project. The plan and estimates will be submitted for approval on June 19. In the meantime, no work has been done on the building and it continues to deteriorate.

The Cattle Castle's survival is not yet certain, as the delicate balance of support on Council may change due to the mayor's resignation. The sheer length of the debate is causing frustration and impatience, even among some aldermen who favour restoration. Continued public support is critical.

Related good news involves the Horticulture Building, designed by Francis Sullivan, which was featured in the last newsletter. Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd., part of the Brisbin (et al) team, will be responsible for the restoration of Sullivan's building. It is very gratifying that the preservation of this little gem was never an issue.



courtesy, City of Ottawa Archives

Central Canada Exhibition, Lansdowne Park, Circa 1900

TOWARD A NATIONAL HERITAGE STRATEGY

Marc Denhez

For years, the federal government's efforts concerning heritage were split between two departments. Anything that was not movable, such as mountains and buildings, wound up under the Department of Environment (DOE). If it could be moved — archaeological artifacts, museum specimens, folklore — it gravitated toward the Department of Communications (DOC), unless it was warm and fuzzy, in which case it went to DOE again.

Even more distressing is the list of federal agencies that are absent from heritage initiatives. Canada Post, for example, has refused to be bound by federal policies on heritage buildings. On the subject of tax treatment of rehabilitation expenses or donations, Finance Canada and Revenue Canada have been an outright hindrance.

I recall a breakfast meeting with a former Deputy Minister of Finance who was asked how he could say no to issues of fundamental national priority. "It's easy," he answered. "I

purse my lips, exhale, and it comes out 'NO'." He obviously enjoyed telling other departments, including DOC and DOE, where they could stick their proposals.

With this state of affairs, many heritage fans despaired of ever seeing a national heritage strategy that would allow the feds to stop taking two steps forward, one step back. In a surprising initiative, however, DOE and DOC have joined forces to produce just such a strategy.

It is not clear what political breakthrough, if any, gave rise to this fast-moving initiative. On short notice, DOC and DOE assembled the largest meeting ever of heritage experts in Canada, and covered every subject from buildings to archives. That October 25-27, 1990 meeting in Edmonton displayed uncanny agreement. Many speakers put forth the same recommendations independently of one another, including specific tax changes, training programs, and economic impact studies.

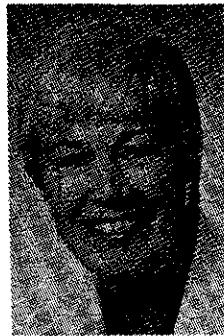
There was talk of a major task force to review issues with all interested local and regional groups, but non-governmental organizations insisted that it was time for action. Heritage activists insisted that they had already submitted umpteen briefs, such as the Applebaum-Hebert Commission of a decade ago. The problem wasn't that they hadn't been heard, but that nothing was done.

The NGO's are saying they know what they want and the government knows what it wants so the task is to get down to business. "Every day that we wait," said one official from B.C., "is a day where more buildings get torn down."

If DOC and DOE do join forces, this heritage version of tag-team wrestling may produce results which would have been impossible if the departments had been acting separately. In spite of the government's positive actions, most NGO's are taking the advice of one Montreal activist: "Write a supporting letter to 24 Sussex. Now."



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Chris McGoun

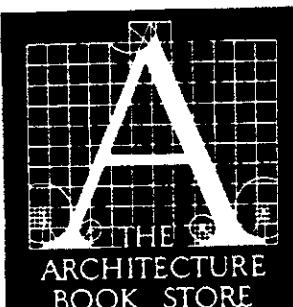
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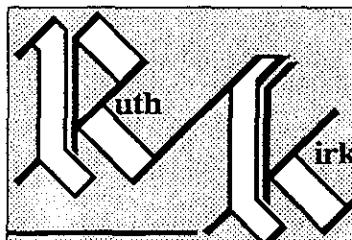
Rockcliffe Air Base cont'd

Located on the eastern outskirts of the city near the Ottawa River, the Rockcliffe Air Base was one of the first five bases established in 1930 by the Air Board. It is one of only two air bases across the country that have maintained continuous operations. Rockcliffe has played a vital role in military activities, including serving as an operations base during the Second World War, participating in the development and testing of radio communications equipment, and conducting photographic surveys that contributed to the mapping of Canada. It was also the only base in the country for both seaplanes and conventional airplanes.

Fearful of losing this valuable testament to Canadian military history, the Royal Canadian Air Force Association (RCAFA) wants designated as heritage buildings the Officers' Mess and Building 69, the current headquarters for the 410

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Wing of the RCAF. The Officers' Mess has not only maintained within its walls the original 1850's farmhouse of the property's first owner, but also served as the Officers' Mess since the opening of the base. Dating from 1942, Building 69 was the base's operations headquarters during the Second World War.

The attempt to designate these buildings as heritage includes a proposal to further integrate them into the community. Details for this plan, as well as a history of the base and the two buildings in question, are being compiled into a report to be presented to the Minister of Defence.

President's Message

Richard Cannings

Heritage Ottawa in conjunction with the NCC has launched an attempt to improve relations between the two organizations.

At first blush, what could be more natural? The largest owner of heritage buildings in the National Capital Region cooperating with the principal organization dedicated to safeguarding our region's built heritage.

Over the past six years, however, the relationship has been strained. Too often the NCC has announced its plans, such as the latest Daly Building proposal, via the media, and Heritage Ottawa's only recourse has been to reply in the same fashion. Often exact plans for projects, such as the 300-space underground parking garage in front of the House of Commons, have been kept secret by the NCC, despite their impact on heritage buildings. The best way to deal with these plans is to expose them to public scrutiny. These are but two of many examples of a lack of cooperation between the two parties.

On February 18, several Heritage Ottawa directors, led by former Member of Parliament Maurice Dupras, met with representatives from the NCC. The NCC group included Chairman Jean Piggot, Vice President Agnes Jaouich, special project coordinator Peter McQuart, and historian Michael Newton.

The meeting was a success. Both parties recognized what they had in common, and agreed to work more closely with each other. The Commission has very generously offered to supply documents, photos, and artifacts for Heritage Ottawa's major exhibit on the industrial history of Victoria Island in June.

Heritage Ottawa would like nothing more than to work in harmony with the National Capital Commission. We hope good intentions can be translated into concrete actions.



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Daly Building:

PETER MCQUART, NCC SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR, SAYS COOPDEV WILL HAVE TO START WORK IN MARCH IN ORDER TO FINISH BY SEPT. '92, FROM WHICH TIME A \$750, 000 RENT WILL BE CHARGED BY THE NCC.

Windsor Smoke Shop:

OWNER PAUL FAYNWACHS WILL RESTORE THE OLDEST COMMERCIAL BUILDING IN OTTAWA, HIRING ARCHITECT JULIAN SMITH AND DEVELOPER ERIC COHEN.

44 Bolton:

THE NCC HAS APPLIED TO THE CITY FOR A DEMOLITION PERMIT, ALTHOUGH THEY CAN LEGALLY PROCEED WITHOUT ONE.

TACKLING THE NATIONAL BUILDING CODE

Over the years, one of the worst problems facing the re-use of heritage buildings has been Canada's national building code (NBC). It is developed by the National Research Council.

Provincial and municipal codes, which direct new construction as well as rehabilitation, are modelled on the NBC. Codes at all three levels, however, were prepared chiefly with construction in mind, rather than rehabilitation, and therefore do not accomodate heritage buildings which were built with different techniques and dimensions.

Applied verbatim, provincial and municipal codes would block economical renovation altogether. The NBC, however, allows a way out. Building inspectors can approve

renovation plans that would result in a building that is *as safe* as a new one built by the book. Unfortunately, many inspectors are reluctant to make this judgement, preferring to follow the code strictly. This posture can kill a renovation project and result in demolition.

California, which is hypersensitive to code issues because of the threat of earthquakes, took the bull by the horns and drafted a new state building code that specified a right and wrong way to rehabilitate old buildings. Ontario followed suit with Part II of the Ontario Building Code, and British Columbia is working on its own response.

But where has the National Research Council been during all this? In the 1990 edition of the NBC

there is almost no information to help clarify renovation practice.

To address this problem, Heritage Ottawa's Marc Denhez has organized an initiative, under the auspices of the Association for Preservation Technology, to update the NBC. A successful funding application was made to a joint project called Affordability and Choice Today (ACT), which is sponsored by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. Work is now underway on proposed amendments to the NBC to allow it to better accomodate the rehabilitation of older buildings. The next edition is expected in 1995.

Membership Application

standard membership	\$20.00
senior citizen or student	\$10.00
family	\$25.00
patron	\$50.00 or more

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