

*Established in 1967  
Celebrating our 28<sup>th</sup> year*



*Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage*

*Volume 22, No. 1,  
June/July 1995*

## Heritage Ottawa's New President

*by Louise Coates*

Dear Heritage Activist,

I would like to inform you that Heritage Ottawa has a new president!

Jennifer Rosebrugh has been a member of Heritage Ottawa for years and has recently returned home from working abroad. She is very interested in the conservation of heritage architecture and has already proved to be a willing and capable member of the heritage community. Jennifer was one of the stronger voices who managed to save Ecole St. Charles on Springfield Road from demolition!

I will continue to act as the Executive Director of Heritage Ottawa. Our regular meetings, held on the last Wednesday of every month, are open to any member of the public who is concerned about heritage issues. Please feel free to attend.

I would like to say that it has been extremely rewarding and fulfilling to have been president of a such a dedicated group of activists for the past three and a half

years. It has been great fun to set up an "Interiors Symposium", stage lectures on preservation, help organize the auction of architectural drawings, gather members to rally and share ideas with others on the future of our past. I have met a great many people who share the passion to save, care for and make use of Canada's historical architecture. While there are many fascinating aspects to the heritage field, I feel Heritage Ottawa's primary role is still to prevent any further demolition of our older building stock. After all, how can we appreciate our past if it has no visible record?

I am immensely pleased to be passing the torch to such a dedicated and enthusiastic person as Jennifer. Please help welcome her to the vibrant world of heritage preservation in Ottawa! She can be reached through our office at 230-8841 or at her residence at 744-3764. ☐

Sincerely,

Louise Coates

## Membership Alert!

Call it summer malaise, call it mailbox overload... What ever the reason, Heritage Ottawa's membership rolls need rejuvenating! If each recipient of this newsletter introduced ONE NEW MEMBER, we would meet the obligations of our (shoe-string) 1995 budget and continue the fight to protect Ottawa's built heritage. Can you help spread the word? Friends, neighbours, colleagues... We need YOUR assistance. Annual dues are \$15.00 (student/senior), \$20.00 for individuals, \$25.00 for a family and \$50.00 for a patron membership. Can we count on you to please help?

## Arson suspected in burning of historic building

On Tuesday, May 30th the double house at 137-139 Guigues Street caught fire. The two-and-a-half storey gabled house was built in 1869 and had such tenants as a shoemaker and a launderer. A week later, the houses at 141-143 and 145-147, which were similar in style and era, also burned. Both incidents are being investigated as

possible cases of arson. A Fire Marshall's order was issued against the buildings.

This is the second case of fires destroying buildings on Guigues in the past year. The street is within the Lowertown West heritage conservation district. ☐

## INSIDE

Saint Charles School, Saved?.....	2
Heritage Day Awards .....	3
Membership Drive .....	3
Heritage Conservation Studies .....	4
Books, Bones, and Bombers .....	4
Tribute to Louise Coates .....	5
Art Competition .....	5
Volunteer Service Awards .....	5
Book Review .....	6
43 Gilmour Street .....	6
The Elgin Theatre .....	7
500 Wilbrod .....	8

# Everyone is Welcome at 500 Wilbrod

by Landon French

Since its restoration by Maharishi Heaven-On-Earth Development Corporation, the Paterson-Fleck house has regained its stature as a jewel of exterior and interior design, and is now hoping to turn this asset into funding. To this end, rooms in the distinguished turn-of-the-century mansion are now available for rent as conference and meeting space, with limited capacity as bed and breakfast quarters.

Manager Gerard Morris says that meetings held in the mansion flow easily due to the ambiance of the Arts & Crafts style house, and says "the environment in which we live can influence the way we feel". The gracious and comfortable surroundings of the Paterson-Fleck house provide a positive atmosphere for any occasion. Conferences and training sessions can host upwards of 75 people, who are surrounded by history, beauty and serenity. To complement meetings, catered teas and luncheons are served in the dining room, sun room and gardens. All proceeds go towards the upkeep of the buildings and grounds whose primary function is to serve as a home for the Maharishi's college.

In addition to its turn-of-the-century design, the heritage value of 500 Wilbrod is also reason for opening its doors to the

public. Often heritage enthusiasts are intrigued by the colourful sandstone exterior of the building. Yet those responsible for its upkeep eagerly wish to share its interior with residents of Ottawa. Once inside, guests discover the history behind the decoration, the challenge of its restoration, and the importance of heritage to community

and culture. In short, 500 Wilbrod is both a cultural experience and a beautiful space.

Tours are free and should be pre-arranged. An advertising campaign is in the works, but for information and bookings contact Gerard Morris or Jacy Chevalier at 565-2030 ex. 220. ☐



## Saint Charles School, 24 Springfield Road – Saved?

by Stephane Hoffman and Heritage Ottawa Staff

In May 1995, application was made to designate the historic Saint Charles School at 24 Springfield Road as a heritage building under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Designation will grant a temporary nine-month reprieve from demolition to the school. Le Centre multi-service à l'enfrance d'Ottawa-Carleton had proposed to buy the school from the Roman Catholic Separate School Board and set up a non-profit child care centre. They had retained Otto, Bryden, Erskine, Martel Architects to design the new facility. The Architects said the Saint Charles School would have to be demolished to accommodate the new centre.

Surprisingly the Department of Planning, Economic Development and Housing of the City of Ottawa, including some members of its heritage staff, supported the demolition of this historic building! Fortunately, the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) put forward a motion for the heritage designation of the Saint Charles School. LACAC, Heritage Ottawa and the New Edinburgh Community Association argued for the heritage designation before the Planning and Economic Development Committee, while the City of Ottawa Planning Department, the School Board and the Architects wanted its demolition. The

matter was eventually debated at City Council, with Heritage Ottawa and the New Edinburgh Community Association convincing a majority to confer heritage designation to Saint Charles. The only Council members opposing the designation were Councillor Brian Mackey and Mayor Jacqueline Holzman. (The Mayor also voted to demolish the Aberdeen on several occasions.)

The Saint Charles School was built in 1910 by the Roman Catholic Separate School Board to serve the French Catholic population of New Edinburgh. The history of the school is a reflection of the history of

*continued on page 8*

# HERITAGE DAY AWARDS

by Tracey Spack

Heritage Day 1995 was held on Monday, February 20. The 1994 City of Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards, Designation Plaques, and the Heritage Day Prize were presented by His Excellency, the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada.

For the category of restoration (returning a heritage resource to its original form, material, and integrity) both the Langevin Building and the Marshall Building were awarded.

The Langevin Building was built in 1889 and designed by Chief Dominion Architect Thomas Fuller in a combination of the Italian Renaissance Revival and Second Empire styles. Its restoration involved the reconstruction of its distinctive copper roof.

The Marshall Building is a 19th century commercial building. Its restoration involved the masonry repair and rejuvenation of its distinctive windows.

For the category of adaptive use (modification of a heritage resource to contemporary functional standards while retaining its heritage character) the Carlington Community and Health Services Building was awarded.

The Carlington Community and Health Services Building was built in 1922 as a school. Modification involved the gutting of the building's interior, construction of a new entrance and the installation of new windows.

For the category of infill (an addition to a heritage building, or all-new construction within a historic context) the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre and the Clarence/Dalhousie Redevelopment Project were awarded. Both buildings are noted for their characteristic styles that blend into the streetscapes and atmospheres of their neighbourhoods.

The Clarence/Dalhousie Redevelopment Project is located at the site of a 1991 fire.

Heritage Designation Plaques were approved for: The Minto Bridges, The Shouldice Hotel at 62 York Street, The Strathcona at 404 Laurier Avenue East, Fréchette House at 87 Mackay Street, Henderson House at 34 Alexander Street, 46 Cartier Street, The Horticulture Building at Lansdowne Park, and Arbour house at 84 Bradford.

The City of Ottawa Heritage Day Award was established in 1990. It is presented to an individual who conducts an original research essay or project on Ottawa's built Heritage. The 1994 award went to Sherry Macdonnell, author of "The Magee House, Hintonburg". Her project provides an in-depth analysis of a 19th century stone structure located on Wellington Street.

All in all, Heritage Day 1995 was a huge success. Hopefully the City of Ottawa's commitment to preserving Ottawa's built heritage will continue into 1996 and beyond. ☐



## FUNDRAISING

### Billings Bridge Shopping Plaza Membership Drive

by John Kowalski, Treasurer

I would like to make a few comments about our membership drive. On Friday, May 26 and Saturday May 27, Heritage Ottawa staffed a booth at the Billings Bridge Shopping Plaza. The purpose of this booth was to acquire new members and meet the public. This was a great opportunity to distribute our newsletters, discuss heritage issues with the public, and generally do the outreach work of our organization that is so important. Of course, earning a few extra memberships and that financial support weren't turned down!

The Rideau Centre and St. Laurent Shopping Centre are being considered as possible locations for a future membership drive.

Interested in meeting the public and helping out? If you'd like to meet other heritage aficionados and donate a few hours, please contact John Kowalski at Heritage Ottawa at 230-8841.

### Nevada Tickets and Heritage Ottawa

Have you ever bought a Nevada ticket? Also known as "break-open" tickets, they can be bought at local retail outlets. Their purpose is to raise money for various charities. For a number of years, they have proven to be a successful and easy way to raise money. The sale is regulated by the provincial government and requires a license from the municipal government.

On the ticket, if symbols match, ticket owners can win from \$1.00 to \$100.00. Not bad for less than the price of a cup of coffee!

The way it works is that a charity signs up with a broker, which is a privately operated business. The business's job is to match up retailers who are willing to sell the tickets with charities searching for a store to sell on their behalf. After charity and retailer have been matched, the broker delivers tickets to the store and collects the proceeds from the sale. Then a cheque is issued to the charity for their share of the proceeds.

Heritage Ottawa has been selling Nevada tickets for about nine months. To date, we have received about \$1200.00. Our tickets

are being sold by "Downtown Taps", a bar located at the corner of Bank and Slater.

Our appreciation goes out to "Downtown Taps" for their efforts to raise money on our behalf! It's always great to find a heritage supporter in the downtown community!

## Heritage Ottawa Needs your help with Nevada Tickets

Having said all that, we are now looking for a new location to sell our Nevada tickets. Since our license with "Downtown Taps" expires soon, we want to find another busy and popular spot to place these gamblers'

delights! Do you know a local businessperson who would like to carry Nevada tickets in their store? Ideally, we want a spot that has a busy traffic flow, such as a corner convenience store, a pub or bar, a busy restaurant and so on. If you have ideas for contacts, please let John Kowalski know, at 230-8841. ☐

## EDUCATION

### Heritage Conservation Studied at Carleton

by Landon French

One of the best kept secrets at Carleton University is its courses in Heritage Conservation. These courses are offered through the Graduate Department of the School of Canadian Studies and are instructed by Julian Smith. The program was started in 1989 by Smith, former chief architect for Parks Canada, who became a heritage architect with a private practice. Since there were only a handful of Heritage Conservation M.A. programs in Canada, Smith constructed the program to meet what he saw was a need for a Canadian understanding of Canadian issues in the heritage field.

Although issues surrounding heritage buildings are important aspects of the core course, an architecture background is not required. Topics such as cultural tourism, cultural landscapes and documentation methods are on the agenda and attract geographers, interior designers, musicians, and historians among others. The core course is complemented by workshops on the technical side of heritage buildings, urban heritage conservation, and the architectural history of Canada. Smith teaches the technical workshop while sessional lecturers from Parks Canada instruct the latter two.

The strength of each of these courses is in their flexibility and the wealth of expertise and information resources available in the National Capital. Assignments in each course easily adapt to the interests and creativity of students within the parameters of course themes. Another advantage of these courses is the limited size of the classes,

ranging from seven to 12 students. As a result they are informal and open to participation from everyone.

Guest speakers from the heritage community account for roughly 25 per cent of class time, which exposes students to different perspectives and provides an opportunity to meet practising professionals. Site visits to heritage properties at their various stages of intervention ie. rehabilitation, restoration, are arranged in order to give hands-on experience in heritage interventions.

The key to the success of the Carleton Heritage Conservation program is Julian Smith, whose first-hand knowledge and relaxed academic style make for an enjoyable learning experience. For those who care about heritage, or cultural resources in any form, this program is excellent preparation for work in the field.

(Landon French is a student in the Heritage Conservation Program and a new Board Member of Heritage Ottawa.) ☐

## Books, Bones, and Bombers

by Paul Stumes

One of the main events of the 1995 winter season was an extremely successful lecture series organized by HERITAGE OTTAWA.

In six consecutive Tuesday evenings in January and February, 12 illustrated lectures were presented by world-famous experts on the preservation of museum artifacts.

The lectures were held in an auditorium at the National Library on Wellington Street. Co-sponsors consisted of several international and national organizations, including: Heritage Canada, International Council of Monuments and Sites, Society for Industrial Archeology, and the Association for Preservation Technology.

The title of the series: BOOKS, BONES, AND BOMBERS, symbolized the wide range of subjects which were presented by the following institutions:

National Aviation Museum  
National Museum of Science and Technology  
Canadian Museum of Nature  
Historic Conservation Branch, Parks Canada  
National Seed Gene Bank  
Canadian Conservation Institute  
National Library  
Canadian Museum of Civilization  
Public Works Canada, Historic Restoration Branch  
National Archives  
National Gallery  
National War Museum

This was the first time the general public has had an opportunity to learn in such detail about the work of such important, national conservation-oriented institutions. In addition to this success, the lecture series also provided a net profit of \$1,000.00 for Heritage Ottawa. ☐

# A Tribute to Louise Coates, President of Heritage Ottawa 1991-95

by Jean Palmer

Heritage Ottawa President, Louise Coates is stepping down, but not far down more a step to the side, because she is staying on as Executive Director of the society. Her leadership since 1991 has been crucial in helping to save some important Ottawa buildings. Not afraid to tackle top brass in government or elsewhere, Louise has fired off letters, written to the press, and arranged meetings with influential figures. She has also organized the rest of us to follow her out to the picket line to stage a demonstration. "Hands Around the Aberdeen" springs to mind and the

chilly demonstration in front of Wallis House. One cannot overestimate Heritage Ottawa's role in the survival of both important historic buildings.

With a Journalism degree behind her Louise is on good terms with the media and knows how to alert the press when an issue should be raised. This is a useful network for Heritage Ottawa because she is often sought out and quoted on heritage matters. Our effectiveness depends upon keeping a public profile, and Louise has kept our voice front and centre.

The Heritage Ottawa video made by Channel 22 for their community series won an award and shows our departing President at her effective best - on site at the Aberdeen Pavilion restoration discussing with passion the advantages of heritage conservation while looking great in a construction worker's hard hat.

So from everyone at Heritage Ottawa, welcome aboard Jennifer and thanks Louise for keeping us on course these four tough years!

## Heritage Ottawa Art Competition

by Jean Palmer

Having awarded Heritage Essay prizes to Lisgar Collegiate for its 150th Birthday in 1993, Heritage Ottawa is once more mounting a competition for high school students in the Ottawa area.

The Heritage Ottawa Art Competition is for line drawings of Ottawa's built Heritage to be used as designs for note cards. Three prizes of \$50.00 will be awarded for the best designs, which will then be reproduced

as Heritage Ottawa note cards. Selected drawings will be displayed in an art exhibition for Heritage Week, 1996.

Since the survival of heritage architecture depends on a continuing dedication to its preservation, we believe in the importance of involving students in heritage issues. We find that teachers are very supportive of our efforts and our cause.

Posters and an information letter went out to schools late in May. Deadline for entries is October 31st, giving students time to work in the fall term.

Watch for news of prize-winners, and the venue and date of the exhibition.

Heritage Ottawa's Art Competition Committee is Jean Palmer, Marian Heringer, Stuart Lazear, and Jennifer Jimmo. ☐

## The Volunteer Service Awards



The Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation hosted its annual Volunteer Service Awards on Wednesday May 17 at the Museum of Nature.

Congratulations go out to Heritage Ottawa's own Marc Denhez, a lawyer, writer, and past president of Heritage Ottawa. Marc was one of 11 people in the province of Ontario to receive the Outstanding Achievement Award For Voluntarism.

In the Heritage community, other volunteers who received awards included Nancy Smith of CHOO, Veronica Vaillancourt of Heritage Canada, and Paul Stumes and Louise Coates of Heritage Ottawa. Each recipient received a signed certificate and a gold pin as an award for their donation of time and work, either over a five or ten year period. A great many groups were represented at the ceremony and the Ontario government is to be credited for hosting such an important event and encouraging the participation of volunteers within communities across Ontario. ☐

### Heritage Ottawa Newsletter

Contributors:	Louise Coates Sean Darcy Landon French Stephane Hoffman John Kowalski Stuart Lazear Michael Lebrun Marc Lowell Jean Palmer Tracey Spack Paul Stumes
Design & Layout:	MfL Graphic Productions
Editing:	Louise Coates MfL Graphic Productions Tracey Spack

ISSN 0808-0506

## BOOK REVIEW:

# “Canadian Architecture done Right”

by Harold Kalman

*Reviewed by Michael Lebrun*

Harold Kalman has produced a solid, complete chronicle of Canada's Architectural history. His recently published two-volume work, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, (Oxford University Press), is well worth acquiring. He writes in a clear straightforward manner about a very complex subject: our architectural heritage. Kalman follows the events in Canada's history and shows us through words and more than 800 photographs how our built environment evolved.

Volume one begins with a look at the dwellings of Aboriginal people, progressing on to the contributions of the Europeans who came to settle in Canada:

the Norse, the Basque, the French and the English. The author then looks at the early colonialization of the East, the prairies and the West coast up until the 1870's. Volume one ends with the anticipation of the great expansion and growth that was soon to happen across Canada.

Volume two begins with Confederation and the construction of the transcontinental railway. Canada grew at a remarkably rapid pace from this time on. Kalman illustrates this growth through railway structures, the architecture of ethnic groups in the West, and the municipal, religious and commercial structures that sprang up. He shows us that Canadian settlers brought their own traditions and building techniques with

them and adapted their styles to the conditions they found.

Kalman's book is a complete chronology of Canadian Architecture, beginning with its prehistory and ending today, in the 90's. Since he is a former resident of Ottawa who was actively involved in the architectural community of the region, Kalman represents Ottawa and the area well, not only federal government architecture but also through many local buildings as examples of architecture important to Canadian society.

Mr. Kalman's book shows that Canadians have a fine architectural heritage and that the practicality and adaptability shown in our architecture also reflects the general nature of the Canadian people. This book is a must for anyone interested in Canadian Architecture. ☐

*Michael LeBrun is an architectural technologist and Board Member of Heritage Ottawa.*

## Researching 43 Gilmour Street

by Marc Lowell

When was your house built? This simple question can lead one down an exciting path of discovery. Discovery of an entire history of unique characteristics, stories, and traditions specific to one house and maybe, if you're lucky, the discovery that your house qualifies for heritage designation. Such is the case with 43 Gilmour Street. Here is a condensed version of a four-week-plus research into that house. Hopefully this will benefit others researching the story of their own home in the Ottawa area.

If you are an amateur sleuth, locating data on the history of a house can be quite a challenge. It takes time, persistence and patience in locating useful information. I, myself, am not from a background that qualifies me as a bona fide researcher but through trial and error I was able to find more than what I had originally anticipated.

For all you potential Sherlock Holmes', I suggest starting by checking the address of your residence with the Taxation Department at the new Ottawa City Hall. If

the lot is still active, the Department can inform you of the lot number on which your house is located. Next, go to the court house on Elgin Street where the Land Registry office is located. For a \$5.00 fee you can see the lot abstract which shows all the previous and present owners of that lot.

According to the Land Registry Abstract, 43 Gilmour Street was the home to several different owners throughout the years but for my own research purposes I concentrated solely on the first owners. The focus of my project was to find out when the house was built.

My next step was to visit the National Archives on Wellington Street where I obtained a research pass and proceeded to the fourth floor to locate Fire Insurance Plans on microfiche. If you are lucky you can determine when the home was built by checking various dates. By locating the key index, you can ascertain what the original construction materials were. Furthermore, any changes in construction over the years are always recorded.

There are many other resources available at the National Archives. Photographs, names of architects and census may provide valuable information about your house. Another useful source is the City Directory. Both the City Archives and the National Archives have City Directories in book form, and the Ottawa Public Library has them on microfiche. The directories provide information about the social context of your research as well as the builders of the era.

The National Archives also has a collection of the Who's Who volumes as well as an extensive genealogical section. One can track down births, marriages, and deaths through the card index at the main branch of the Ottawa Public Library.

The bulk of my investigation took place over the telephone. Having located the names of the first owners of 43 Gilmour Street, I began to search for any living relatives. The original owners had a very common last name and even after calling all 283 of them, I did not locate even one living or known relative in the Ottawa area. Next, I checked the cemeteries in the Yellow Pages. The Ottawa Room at the Public Library has listings for both the Beechwood and Notre Dame Cemeteries.

I, through sheer luck, located the first owner's death notice which gave me the name of a relative in Toronto. However, I have not yet located this relative.

If you are looking for specific architectural data, try Parks Canada, Heritage Division located in Hull, Quebec. There, with the assistance of staff, numerous directories,

and research studies, you may find clues as to who the builders, architects and brick layers were. There is also a card index with photographs and descriptions of many addresses in Ottawa.

Another useful source are the records of various utility companies (ie. gas, hydro, telephone, water). Unfortunately, the

Ottawa Waterworks destroyed most of its customer service files in the 1960's. Fire stations and Police records may also help, but the City Archives has limited records of fires in the Ottawa area.

So far I have found out the names of all the residents and owners at 43 Gilmour, have discovered that the house was built in 1898, and have learned that its roof is unique in this area. I hope to write a follow-up article on 43 Gilmour Street in the next Heritage Ottawa newsletter to update readers with any new information.

I hope this information is useful to those of you who are interested in discovering the past of your home or any other building. ☺

## Contacts

City Archives	742-5014
National Archives	995-5138
National Library	995-9481
Main Library Ref.	598-4008
Ottawa Room	598-4008 ext. 254

Bytown Museum	234-4570
Taxation (City Hall)	244-5300 ext. 5656
Land Registry Office	239-1230
Parks Canada-Hull	994-2867
Consumer Gas	741-5800
Waterworks	560-2050
Ottawa Hydro	728-6400

## The Elgin Theatre

by Sean Darcy

The Elgin Theatre first opened its doors on the evening of November 15, 1937, screening the movie "Stand-In" starring Leslie Howard and Joan Blondell. The Theatre coined itself "The Show Place of Ottawa", according to the Ottawa Citizen on November 17, 1937.

Theatre architecture of the 1930's exemplified a fetish with the modern with its machine-operated design. Toronto architects Kaplan & Sprachman's design of the Elgin theatre exemplifies this trend. The Elgin featured a fire-proof building with the latest in indirect lighting, sound, air-conditioning, and "deluxe cushion seats designed especially for this Theatre." This indirect lighting technology provided not only a clear view of the screen, but emitted a 'restful and pleasurable effect'. The advertisement for opening night gave particular emphasis to the Elgin's modern Howard Air-conditioning system, stating that the Theatre would be the "most inviting spot in the city on hot July days". The Elgin, it was stated, "epitomiz(ed) comfort as well as modernity."

The idea behind the genesis of the Elgin was alluded to in the opening night advertisement. It stated that the Elgin was the "only movie house in that part of the city".

This suggests that a fundamental change had taken place during the 1930's in centretown that merited a Theatre being built on Elgin. Elgin street was slowly developing into a mixed residential/commercial street. The residential housing began as single unit dwellings, but by 1935 the number of apartment buildings on Elgin equalled that of single residences. The construction of the Elgin soon saw the introduction of two restaurants on Elgin, the Rainbow Coffee Shop and the Manhattan Tea Room. Soon more convenience stores appeared on the street, such as the Normadie Soda Bar Confectionary. The Economy Drug Company Limited Soda Foundation encouraged patrons of the Elgin to "drop in (to their Soda fountain) after the Theatre".

By 1947, business was successful enough to warrant the construction of an additional Theatre known as the little Elgin. It is noteworthy that the "dual Elgin" was the first dual theatre in North America, according to Alain Miguélez, an activist who tried ardently to save the building as a theatre.

By 1960 the character of Elgin street changed fundamentally. The number of residential dwellings decreased, moreover, the types of businesses that emerged along the street were not aimed at providing services for the local residents, rather, they suggested that Elgin was turning into a shopping strip of restaurants and stores geared to attract outsiders to centretown.

By the Mid 1970's, not only had suburban theatres taken away many patrons from the downtown theatres, mall theatres had arrived, beginning with the Odeon Theatre at St. Laurent Shopping Centre. By the 80's the Elgin was forced to compete with mall theatres. This movement of theatres suggests a fundamental shift in city culture. Theatres such as the Elgin had been located in areas surrounded by apartments and along major city transportation routes. The Elgin, for example, had been accessible to city dwellers by streetcar and bus. The movement of theatres to suburbia reflected the car culture that had emerged. The Aladin and Auto Sky Drive-ins built during the 50's were visible testament to the power of car culture in North America.

During the second week of November 1992, Famous Players announced that they would be closing the Elgin Theatre on November 17, stating that the "city core (could) not support the number of theatres it now has."

Since the closure of the Elgin Theatre several business people have noted that the area's night life has decreased. George Georgiopoulos, who owns a restaurant next door states that "We've gotta find a way to bring people to Elgin. There's no room for more restaurants." A clerk at Tony's Smoke Shop across from the Elgin observes that "It's terrible the way it is now. Its like a ghost town."

It is interesting to see how the various interest groups determine "heritage value". Alan Miguélez had approached the City of Ottawa to designate the Elgin Theatre as a heritage sight but the city wrote back, stating that "heritage designation (could) not be used to preserve the use of the building" and urged that it was "important that other uses be found for the building that would restore the pedestrian and retail ambiance

of the street that has been missing since the closure of the Elgin.

Perhaps, what is more fundamental to the heritage of Elgin street, is not simply a call to protect old buildings for their inherent 'oldness'. Rather, we should be made aware of the history of cultural activity upon this historical landscape. While buildings may stand as reminders of the past, it is cultural action that determines how they

evolve over time. Recent developments such as the closing of the Elgin Theatre, suggests that Elgin street is evolving from its original intention, as a strip that catered to local Centretown residents, to a street that attracts outsiders from around the Ottawa region. ☐

*(Sean Darcy is a student in the Heritage Conservation Program at Carleton University.)*

## Saint Charles continued

Ottawa's Francophone population. Originally this population was centred in Lowertown, Sandy Hill and New Edinburgh but became more decentralized through post-war suburbanization. This resulted in the closure of the school in 1972.

Saint Charles School was constructed at a critical juncture in the history of the Roman Catholic Separate School Board. From 1856 until 1910, Ottawa had one Roman Catholic School Board operating two systems: English and French. There were many disputes between the systems. The question of language rights was a predominant issue. One notable example was in 1912 when the English branch enforced provincial Regulation 17, forbidding any teaching in French. From then until 1915 riots occurred,

culminating in the occupation of the Guigues School and a negotiated settlement. By the 1920s, the situation had been resolved and the Board went back to its two streams.

The Saint Charles School was designed by two well-known Ottawa architects, Moses Edey and Francis Sullivan. The school is a two-and-a-half story, red brick structure with a stone foundation and dressed stone string course, window sills and keystones. A rectangular structure, it features a symmetrical five-bay front facade with large windows and double doors centrally located in a pavilion above, which sits on a carved stone panel inscribed with the building's name. The building has a modest cornice with a central pediment.

Heritage Ottawa finds it highly frustrating to have some members of the City's Heritage Branch actually vote for the demolition of a building such as the Saint Charles School. There should be support by each heritage staff member to preserve older buildings in Ottawa, whether this means designation, or clearly stating that older buildings should no longer be demolished. That is part of the Heritage staff's role at the City and they can exert enormous influence over City Council. Can we trust them to work in support of the heritage community, or will they again support demolition if they don't think a building is important enough? We found this an astounding vote on their part. ☐



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Please forward with payment to:

Heritage Ottawa  
2 Daly Avenue  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1N 6E2  
Telephone:  
(613) 230-8841  
Fax:  
(613) 564-4428

Individual: ..... \$20.00  
Family: ..... \$25.00  
Student/Senior: ..... \$15.00  
Patron: ..... \$50.00 or more

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
no. and street \_\_\_\_\_  
city and province \_\_\_\_\_  
postal code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
home number \_\_\_\_\_  
business number \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer. Please contact me. .....

*Heritage Ottawa memberships are for one year from date of purchase; you will be contacted during the month in which your membership expires. Please renew promptly.  
Heritage Ottawa newsletters will be sent to your home address, unless otherwise indicated.*