

*Established in 1967
Celebrating our 28th year*



*Volume 23, No. 1,
Winter 1996*

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage

Presidential Appeal

by Jennifer Roseburgh

HO is busier than ever — and quite frankly we need more hands on deck! As you'll see in the following pages, we are actively championing a number of Ottawa sites in peril of the wrecker's ball. The Korean Embassy has reactivated a demolition permit for a pre-confederation worker's cottage in Lower Town. The oldest structure on the Central Experimental Farm, the Booth Barn, has been slated for demolition unless Heritage Ottawa and other interested parties can quickly come up with a use for it. The clock is nearly run out on the recently-designated second oldest Francophone school in New Edinburgh, St. Charles. And, we continue to negotiate with the National Capital Commission over the fate of five old houses on the Nicholas — Waller triangle, between the University of Ottawa and the Canal.

As you can imagine, these preservation and restoration campaigns, as

well as other projects detailed inside the newsletter, require a considerable devotion of time and effort. When, as has been the case, the same very small core of volunteers takes on so many commitments, energies and capacities are stretched to nearly the breaking point.

We KNOW that among our membership there exist a number of you who would be interested in becoming more actively involved in saving Ottawa's architectural heritage! Don't let lack of experience or professional training deter you. Nor have fear that you don't have vast amounts of spare time. Like most of us, you can pick up what you need to know through the help of the other volunteers, and you can give however many minutes you may have available.

Whether your interest be lobbying politicians, stuffing envelopes, taking

minutes at meetings, staffing booths at public events, helping produce this newsletter, researching buildings, sharing expertise, fundraising, office work, or balancing our books, there is a way you can help! Volunteering for Heritage Ottawa (even an hour every couple of months!), will renew your sense of accomplishment, give you a chance to meet some other heritage preservationists and have fun in the process!

Please call our office answering machine, and let us know of your interest. Remember: your volunteering can make all the difference in what Ottawa looks like one year — or one month — from now! ☐

St. Charles School — Trusting the Trustees?

by Stéphanie Hoffman

The History

The historic St. Charles School at 24 Springfield Road in New Edinburgh has recently received designation as a heritage building under the Ontario Heritage Act. Saint Charles School was designed by two well known Ottawa architects, Moses Eddy 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 centrally located double doors below a pavilion with a carved stone panel inscribed with the building's name.

Saint Charles School was constructed at a critical juncture in the history of the Roman Catholic 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. Saint Charles School was



INSIDE

Presidential Appeal	1
St. Charles School	1
Dial Against Destruction	2
A New Ontario Heritage Act	3
Developing the Parliamentary Precinct	4
Your Comments	4
One View	4
Guidelines for Sparks St./W. Terrace	5
Experimental Farm's Booth Barn	6
S. Korean Embassy	6
Art Competition and Exhibition	7
Wallis House Success	7
Heritage Ottawa Annual General Meeting	8
Invitation to a Lecture	8

continued on page 2

St. Charles School – Trusting the Trustees?

continued from page 1

built in 1910 by the Roman Catholic Separate School Board to serve the French population of New Edinburgh. The question of language rights was a dominant issue. In 1912, the English branch enforced Provincial Regulation 17 forbidding any teaching in French. From then until 1915 riots occurred, culminating in the occupation of the Guiges School and a negotiated settlement. By the 1920s, the situation had been resolved and the Board went back to its two streams. Originally centred in Lowertown, Sandy Hill and New Edinburgh it has become more decentralized through the post-war suburbanisation. This resulted in the closure of the school in 1972. Despite its venerable past, the school is once again threatened with demolition.

Last spring, le Centre multi-service à l'enfance d'Ottawa-Carleton had proposed to buy the school from the Roman Catholic Separate School Board (RCSSB) and set up a non-profit child care centre. The architects they had retained had advised their client that the school would have to be demolished to accommodate the new centre and applied for a demolition permit in the name of the RCSSB. This prompted the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) to put forward a motion for the heritage designation of the Saint Charles School. LACAC, Heritage Ottawa and the New Edinburgh Community Association (NECA) argued for the heritage designation before the Planning and Economic Development Committee. The matter was eventually debated at City Council, with Heritage Ottawa and NECA convincing a majority to confer heritage designation to Saint Charles.

With the designation of the Saint Charles School, le Centre multi-service à l'enfance d'Ottawa-Carleton offer to purchase the school was withdrawn and with it the application for demolition. Shortly thereafter, the RCSSB applied for a demolition permit. The City's Heritage Planning Department reviewed this application and recommended that Council withhold approval. On September 6, 1995, City Council turned down the application giving the Saint Charles School a 180 day reprieve from demolition. Unless a compromise can be reached within

this six month period the school board will be within its legal rights to demolish the school. LACAC and Heritage Ottawa have offered their assistance to the RCSSB in finding a prospective buyer who would be interested in conserving and reusing the Saint Charles School. The RCSSB responded with a letter stating that the offer for assistance will be forwarded to any potential buyers. During a New Edinburgh Garage Sale, Heritage Ottawa collected 150 signatures on a petition to save the Saint Charles School, demonstrating the neighbourhood's support for the preservation of the school.

The Future

The precarious status of the Saint Charles School is a result of the twenty-year-old provincial legislation govern-

ing heritage conservation. Under the current statute for Heritage Conservation in Ontario, the Heritage Act of 1974, the responsibility for preserving heritage is the sole responsibility of the municipalities. A municipality may pass a by-law designating the property under the Heritage Act. All alteration to a designated site must be approved by the council which may refuse such permission indefinitely. The municipal council is given ninety days to decide whether it favours demolition. If it decides against demolition, it can refuse to issue a demolition permit for an additional 180 days. If a consensus to preserve the building is not reached at the end of that delay, the building can be demolished. At this point, a municipality's only recourse is to expropriate the building. We urge Heritage Ottawa members to "Dial Against Destruction." ☐

Dial Against Destruction

There is something you can do to help save St. Charles school from demolition – right from the comfort of your home! In the absence of a change of mind on the part of the Trustees of Ottawa's Roman Catholic Separate School Board, Ottawa's second oldest Francophone school is scheduled for the wreckers ball as soon as its protection under the Ontario Heritage Act expires in March. We urge Heritage Ottawa Members, and everyone interested in preserving our heritage, to contact the elected trustees to let them know that you are opposed to the needless destruction of this historic Ottawa and New Edinburgh landmark, a structure whose importance was recognized by Ottawa City Council when they designated it under provincial legislation as an important structure, worthy of preservation. Urge the Trustees to respect the City Council, the province and the New Edinburgh Community Association's view that the Board should find a sympathetic use for the stately building (Heritage Ottawa Development Incorporated has formally offered their assistance), instead of demolishing it in order to try and sell a levelled parcel of land. **ACT NOW BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!**

Below are the Trustees' names and phone numbers. Please call as many as possible, beginning with the Chair and Vice Chair, and those Trustees representing your district. If you have any questions, please call Heritage Ottawa.

Zone 1 (West)

Jim Kennelly
(Chairperson):
523-4886
John Chiarelli:
225-9276
Frank Dalton:
224-4999
Bonnie Kehoe:
828-4931
Don Murphy:
733-8434

Zone 2 (South)

Kathy Ablett:
523-3443
Patrick J. Mullan:
731-9732
Patricia M. O'Rielly:
739-5657
Paul Sweeny:
738-8033

Zone 3 (East)

Robert Allen:
731-6167
Richard Goulet:
737-1164
Sandra LaVigne:
230-2024
Therese Maloney Cousineau:
235-2024

A New Ontario Heritage Act – Blowing in the Wind?

by Marc Denhez

For over seven years, civil servants in Toronto have been working away on a new Ontario Heritage Act, to update the current statute which was criticized as obsolescent almost from the day that it was enacted in 1974. They have deliberated, consulted and toiled until April 1995, when a draft act was distributed – and was promptly overtaken by the June election. As the winds of political change blow over Queen's Park, will a new Act finally see the light of day, or be lost in the shuffle?

The question is problematic because the existing draft has a flavour which may be unpalatable to the new government. Virtually the entire draft focuses on how to protect property by government regulation – not on how to co-opt the private sector into doing so willingly. Indeed, the draft arguably starts from the implicit assumption that since heritage is uncompetitive, designation must be fed to owners like castor oil.

The obvious question, however, is this: if heritage is so uncompetitive, why isn't the legislation doing something about that? Why can't it actually come to the rescue of owners, by making heritage more attractive to investment? By casting the issue in that light, a new statute would be far more likely to get onto the new agenda at Queen's Park. Objectively speaking, it would also make more sense.

The measure of legislation is found in the quantity and quality of the problems that it solves. Ideally, legislation

- avoids relying primarily on direct governmental intervention (when-ever possible); and
- individuals can solve problems themselves, with intervention present only as a last resort.

By that reasoning, the objective of new heritage legislation would be:

- to establish a credible protective regime, but only as a last line of defence;
- the first line of defence would be to take all necessary measures to make these properties more competitive, whereby they would enjoy not only

defacto protection, but would also become instruments of investment for Ontario.

This would mean that, in the case of the public sector, "protective" mechanisms for heritage property would be accompanied by a series of preliminary administrative procedures. The intent of these procedures would be to assure that properties are routinely screened, and guided toward rehabilitation even before the necessity arises for protection under the "heritage" label. The comprehensiveness of these preliminary procedures (assessments, directives to property managers and fund recipients, etc.) is essential not only to the proper working of the system, but also to the credibility of the entire package to the private sector and the general public. It would be hazardous to allow even the perception that there was a lower standard of care within the public sector than what was being imposed upon the private sector.

THE OBVIOUS QUESTION, HOWEVER, IS THIS: IF HERITAGE IS SO UNCOMPETITIVE, WHY ISN'T THE LEGISLATION DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THAT?

In the case of the private sector, the objective above would mean that Ontario would be doing everything within its jurisdiction to assure that owners would want to do "the right thing" with their properties, rather than merely being compelled.

By this reasoning, heritage protection can be likened to health protection:

- One priority is to assure the highest quality treatment, in cases of emergency or breakdown; but
- an even higher priority is to encourage "wellness" so that such

treatment is not called upon whenever avoidable.

By the same token,

- protective mechanisms for heritage need to be as advanced and as forthright as possible, but
- an even higher priority is for the new Act to create an Ontario context where most properties can "take care of themselves", and heritage designations are viewed primarily as a) educational tools and b) a form of "safety net" available whenever other routine behaviour (as guided by the Act) breaks down.

To correspond to this scenario, the draft act would need to undergo changes in both substance, and format.

In terms of substance, it would not only need protective mechanisms which are less porous. It would also need to recite a series of measures to improve the competitiveness of older buildings. This does not mean "incentives": it means

- amending or abolishing existing disincentives, and
- adopting the same strategic responses (for the rehabilitation of the older building stock) as one would expect from any other industry.

From the standpoint of format, it is not only important that the legislation be helpful to owners and renovators; it must also be seen to be helpful by these prospective investors. Measures to make older buildings more competitive should not be merely optional, not buried in the small print or the transitional provisions. They must be decisive, conspicuous and eloquent. No one who even glances at this Act should be left in any doubt as to the thrust which it makes in support of investors in older properties.

This is a tall order. However, the remaining work ahead

- exists not only to respond to the evolving political and strategic complexion of Ontario, but
- more importantly, because it is simply the right thing to do. ☐

Developing the Parliamentary Precinct

by David de Belle

West Terrace, Parliament Hill — between the West Block and the Confederation Building.

One million people visit Parliament Hill every year. Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) wants to develop a new visitor service facility for Parliament Hill, and is prepared to enter into an agreement with a private sector consortium to finance, develop and manage the complete facility.

The West Terrace site is a highly visible area within the Parliamentary Precinct, and the surrounding buildings and landscapes are central to Canada's heritage. Proposals for the West Terrace must respect the sensitivity of the site and maintain the dignity of Parliament. Within these limits, PWGSC will encourage the private sector to explore revenue opportunities and present creative proposals which will minimize overall cost to the government.

The West Terrace project will involve planning, design, construction and management of a new facility which will address the needs of tourists and business visitors. With the agreement of PWGSC, the private sector team will derive revenues from parking, gift shops and food concessions and may manage the visitor facility. The provision of tours and public information may also be included.

The West Terrace is the preferred location for a staff dining area, needed to replace an existing 250 seat cafeteria in the West Block courtyard which must be closed in 1998. PWGSC is calling on the private sector's experience and expertise to provide food service for staff and visitors.

The West Terrace project must organize and provide facilities for bus arrivals and deal with challenging traffic conditions in the area surrounding the proposed visitor facility. Existing traffic patterns and roadways will require redesign.

The design of all buildings and landscapes in the Parliamentary Precinct is guided by a 1987 development plan report: *The Parliamentary Precinct Area, Urban Design Guidelines and Demonstration Plan for Long Range Development*. An update, specific to the West Terrace, will be provided at the Request for Proposal stage. An excerpt from the original report has been provided with the call for Expressions of Interest, to outline planning and design principles.

In keeping with the 1987 development plan report, PWGSC intends to remove surface parking from sensitive areas of upper terrace of Parliament Hill. In addition the West Terrace parking structure must compensate for surface areas lost to construction.

Within urban design and environmental limitations, PWGSC wishes to rationalize parking and respond to market demand in establishing the overall size and nature of the parking structure. ☒

Your Comments Please ...

by Paul Stumes

Parliament Hill is not only the place where our elected representatives ponder Canada's business, it is also a symbol of the Nation. It is the centre of visitation by foreign tourist and a site of pilgrimage for Canadians from all parts of the Country. It is very commendable that the Government intends to improve the amenities of the Parliament District to make the visitors' experience more meaningful, more enjoyable and the access more comfortable.

In the present period of our history, when the heavy burden of billions of dollars of deficit suffocates Canada's economic progress, it seems to be wise to let private enterprise finance the needed developments. Competition and profit motive can have beneficial results if its excesses are well controlled by authorities.

Heritage Ottawa certainly supports the initiative to improve the Parliamentary District with the help of private investors. However, we are deeply concerned about the controls and guidelines that should form an integral part of the development process. A loose interpretation of the

terms of the proposed contract could result in inappropriate development blossoming just opposite the Parliament Buildings.

The proposed improvements in the Parliamentary District includes the redevelopment of the north side of the Sparks Street Mall by private investors. Without strictly enforced guidelines, this proposal might open the door for grand-scale demolishing or defacing of many of the most interesting buildings on the mall.

We would like to ask the members and friends of Heritage Ottawa to express your view in these matters by writing to your City Councillor, with a copy to Heritage Ottawa. If you prefer, send your comments to the Heritage Ottawa office and we will forward your letter to the appropriate authorities.

One View

by Jed Braithwaite

The mall is a privately owned place operated by an owner who is able to dictate the behaviour of both buyers and sellers. A street is a public space. It is owned by no one in particular, but

is cared for by all. The public life of the street is different in kind then, from the private commercial existence found in the mall.

The Sparks Street Mall appears, then, to be an oxymoron. A street cannot be a mall, nor a mall a street. By trying to be two contradictory things, Sparks Street is neither. Thus, the Public Works Department's plan to "divest itself of control and management of its Sparks Street properties", may be seen as a lost opportunity to turn Sparks Street back into a street. In the government's effort to "reduce its exposure to future costs related to the properties" Sparks Street may be left to founder even further. The plan, as it stands now, is to offer long term leases for each city block on the north side of Sparks Street from Bank Street to Elgin Street. The ideal situation for the government would be to have one developer lease all three blocks. This is clearly the most efficient answer for the government, however, not for Sparks Street. If there is only one owner of the north side of Sparks Street the situation will be similar to that of a mall with none of its benefits. Sparks Street must decide what it is. ☒

In October, a representative from the Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada gave a presentation to the Board of Heritage Ottawa regarding proposed development of the Parliamentary Precinct area. It was decided that a Sparks Street/West Terrace Committee should be formed to evolve some guidelines that — with any luck — will be used to plan projects that are interesting and respectful of the fabric of the building and their environs. The following is the result of that Committee's efforts.

Heritage Ottawa's Guidelines Relating to the Sparks Street/West Terrace Project

These guidelines are intended to encourage imaginative approaches to the re-development of the Sparks Street/West Terrace area. If guidelines are to be effective, they must be an integral part of the planning, economic, and social development policies for the Sparks Street/West Terrace area.

The Wellington Street development is crucial because of its relationship to Parliament Hill and its natural and man-made environs; and to the urban sector south of it. Sparks Street's historic buildings and pedestrian characteristics are also to be considered. The development of the Sparks Street/West Terrace area offers an opportunity to link private and community life and will encourage the preservation, development and harmonious adaptation of a historically important and unique part of the Canadian cultural landscape.

The conservation of the buildings will play a role in stimulating the economic development of the area because these historic buildings offer attractive living and working environments.

Existing Buildings

The buildings on Wellington and Sparks Streets are physical survivors of our past and shall be valued and protected as an important part of our cultural heritage and our national identity.

Small-scale development of the buildings on Wellington and Sparks Streets shall be encouraged.

The valid contributions of all periods shall be respected.

An effort shall be made to provide a use for the building that requires minimal alteration — the fabric and envelope of the building shall inspire its use, not limit it.

Preference shall be given to utilizing existing buildings and spaces before considering alterations, additions or new construction. Accommodation of planned parliamentary uses and residential units shall be encouraged in this context.

Each of these historic buildings has unique characteristics which warrant being identified in the City of Ottawa Heritage Reference List and, in some cases, classified or recognised by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO). Achieving a proper balance between the special interests of the building and the proposals for development can be facilitated by:

- Ensuring that prospective development groups have experience in heritage restoration or that they consult with professional conservationist.
- Involving FHBRO at an early stage in the review and approval of any interventions/changes to federally classified and recognized buildings.
- Consulting Heritage Ottawa and the City of Ottawa Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) at an early stage regarding changes to any buildings identified on the City of Ottawa Heritage Reference List.

Prospective development groups shall consider the option of sub-contracting the re-development of individual historic buildings to developers specializing in the re-development of historic buildings.

Facadism shall be avoided. The distinguishing qualities, the formal appearance, interior and exterior; as defined by scale, size, style, construction, materials (including heating systems, walls, ceilings, floors, windows, doors, etc.), colour and decoration, of each building

shall be respected when proposals for alterations are put forward.

The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive feature shall be avoided.

Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced. The replacement of architectural features shall be based on historic, physical or pictorial evidence. Repairs and replacement materials shall match the original material in composition, design, colour, texture and other visual qualities.

Archaeology

Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, any acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction or construction project.

Infill

When it is necessary to construct new buildings or adapt existing ones, the contemporary designs shall be compatible with the size, scale, colour, material, and character of the building, neighbourhood and environment, but should refrain from being merely historicist copies.

Alterations and additions shall endeavour to preserve the significant historical, architectural or cultural material and shall leave the integrity of the structure intact.

Heritage advocates want historic buildings to be maintained and used. Realistic and imaginative approaches to the alteration and development of the Sparks Street/West Terrace area can achieve these aims and, at the same time, promote economic prosperity. ☐

Cultural Landscapes

The Experimental Farm's Booth Barn

by Jean Palmer

A new Ontario guideline affecting heritage preservation stresses the value of "cultural landscapes" which "provide an important physical record of the struggles and aspirations of past and present communities". It explains further "The significance of these resources arises from their ability to contribute information, to add to our understanding of our heritage".

Just so. And the significant cultural landscapes of rural Ontario, that provide points of interest along the highways are the clusters of farm buildings grouped around a farm house: the large barn, the silo, the machine shed, the smithy, the chicken coop, the dairy shed.

These outbuildings, added to the farmyard as need arose and money allowed, defined the work area of a farm family. Paths led from the barn where the cows were milked to the dairy shed where milk was separated from the cream and stored in large cans. Other

paths led from the house barn to the harness room, from the house to the chicken coop.

Sadly these outbuildings are disappearing. Even when the farmhouse remains, restored as a weekend retreat by city dwellers, the ramshackle outbuildings are usually demolished.

One remaining cultural landscape in our area is the cluster of buildings on the Experimental Farm near Baseline road, a "model" grouping to demonstrate the techniques of good livestock practice.

The oldest building is the Booth Barn, over a hundred years old, its post and beam construction solid enough to last another hundred years. Two sites stand next to the barn and a U-shaped courtyard is formed by an assortment of smaller wooden outbuildings: a horse barn which housed the great Clydesdale, a cow barn, a bull shed, an office with a loft for storage.

Stretched across the courtyard at a right-angle to the large barn is a long rusty blue piece of machinery, a hay-

loader, which once carried the hay off-loaded from the wagons up to the loft in the Booth barn.

It is easy to reconstruct the working scene: the Clydesdales pulling in the loaded hay racks then stopping by the blue loader where the hay was tossed onto the moving track reaching up to the barn loft. The physical record is intact providing information about our rural heritage.

According to the Montreal landscape architect, Vincent Asselin, almost all agricultural museums in North America focus on farm machinery. Few places explain the development of the nineteenth and twentieth century farming nor show how the physical space has been arranged for functional purposes.

With Agriculture Canada planning to demolish 40 of the Farm's 82 buildings, Heritage Ottawa recognizes the urgency of preserving an important cultural landscape on the Experimental Farm. ☒

Monitoring the Korean Embassy Properties

by Landon French

Heritage Ottawa is currently monitoring the status of two buildings on Bolton Street within the Lower Town West Heritage Conservation District. The homes at 171 and 173 Bolton are owned by the Republic of Korea and are situated behind their new embassy on Cathcart Street. The oldest of the two buildings is a squared timber structure, a rarity in the urban core.

The concern is that these houses may be razed to give the embassy space for an Oriental garden. In 1993 the Korean delegation requested a demolition permit for these buildings. The permit was denied. Yet despite these efforts, the threat of demolition within the next 10 months remains very real. Therefore, Heritage Ottawa has formed a Korean Embassy Committee with the purpose of developing a strategy to

convince ambassador Kee Bock Shin of the cultural value of these buildings in our community.

Again, input, particularly from Lower Town residents, is urgently required. Shortly a meeting will be held to gather ideas for alternative uses and restoration suggestions for the two houses.

Now is the time to act so we can positively influence our Korean friends and prevent the needless loss of Ottawa's and Canada's heritage. To become involved, please contact Jennifer Rosebrugh or Landon French at 230-8841.

Korean Embassy Facts

- The property was purchased at an inflated rate with the intention to demolish the two houses.

- The houses were built around 1861 and 1914 respectively.
- According to the City of Ottawa Heritage District Designation, they are "an important part of this grouping of heritage buildings on Bolton Street" and are "early examples of worker's houses in Lowertown."
- In a letter to a neighbourhood resident dated October 10, 1995 the Ambassador wrote "We will make our best efforts to see that the new Embassy blends harmoniously with the environment of the surrounding neighbourhood."
- According to international conventions, any foreign entity must abide by municipal, provincial and federal laws and legislation relating to culture. ☒

Heritage Ottawa Art Competition and Exhibition

by Jean Palmer

The drawings are in and they are beautiful.
The winners have been chosen:

Anna Kouprieva,
for her drawing of Rideau Hall

Kyla Macdonald,
for her drawing of her own house, 102 Lewis

Madelaine Saginur,
for her drawing of a Besserer St. house

Stephanie Shaver,
for her drawing of the Registry Office

Only three prizes were advertised in the competition, but special private donations provided a fourth prize. There is no ranking. All prizes are of equal value, fifty dollars each.

Heritage Ottawa members will be able to see the exhibition of thirty drawings including the winners and honorable mentions, at a special ceremony on Heritage Day, February 19. There will be a presentation of prizes and certificates, a viewing of the drawings, and light refreshments.

Sussex Properties Limited has kindly provided a space for the exhibition in the newly renovated Jeanne d'Arc building at 489 Sussex Drive, a project involving condominiums on the upper floors, and shops at street level. An upper floor gallery, entered via the 1 York Street entrance, is being lent to Heritage Ottawa for the exhibition. The Opening is at 6:00 p.m., Saturday, February 17. Exhibit on view Sunday, February 18, 1996, between 11 am and 5 pm. ☒

The Wallis House – A Real Heritage Success Story!

by Louise Coates

After an eight-month clean-up, Wallis House had its official and splashy October 19 opening. The gala affair (a red carpet escorted guests up the creaky, 122-year old staircase) attracted over 400 people. There was wine, food and speeches, with inspiring words by dignitaries such as Treasury Board President Art Eggleton, MP Mauril Bélanger, MPP Bernard Grandmaitre and Mayor Jacquie Holzman. Regional Councillor Madeleine Meilleur wondered, "what stories the walls of this former hospital and seminary could tell!"

Heritage Ottawa members are intimately familiar with the Wallis House – after all, many of you rallied around to show support for the building in the cold of February, 1994. The brick and stone restoration and its surrounding site development, is now known – get this! – as one of Canada's largest adaptive re-use projects to date. It's certainly the most significant and exciting in our town. Hopefully, restoring Wallis will breathe new life into the downtown core and perk up a dead part of Rideau Street.

While real estate development has virtually ground to a halt, the Wallis House project had over 250 people requesting information in the first six weeks of advertising. And, to every-

one's surprise (okay, let's be honest: shock) the 47 condominiums, ranging from 700 to over 1700 square feet, sold out within 24 hours. Is heritage regaining popularity?

"The commercial real estate market is absolutely dead right now," said developer Sandy Smallwood, no stranger to heritage circles. "But the interest we've seen in the restoration of the Wallis House has been phenomenal. People want to buy, and the trend seems to be for renovated buildings such as this, in the urban core."

Sandy says the Wallis House's emphasis on reducing, reusing and recycling will please all of us urban environmentalists. "It was an extremely well constructed building filled with long-lost examples of 1870s craftsmanship, and to demolish it would have been a tragedy."

"Magnificent windows, 14 foot ceilings and hallways almost as wide as a city street: we couldn't believe restoration was not feasible. The grand setting of the building, with its formal grounds and park-like arena, cried out after years of neglect."

Andrex Holdings has a reputation as Ottawa's best-known heritage developer. It has restored 500 Wilbrod, the Panet House at Laurier and King Edward and a host of other buildings.

Two nationally renown architectural firms are on the project: Julian Smith and Associates and Vancouver-based Paul Merrick Architects. Julian's firm's work includes Queen's Park and the Aberdeen Pavilion restoration. Paul Merrick has become an expert in loft spaces and is known for Vancouver's sparkling Cathedral Place, reclamation of the Electra office tower into condominiums, and re-adapting Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre.

Two of Ottawa's most creative design teams – Urban Keios and 2H Interior Design – are now busy designing ground floor and mezzanine spaces that take into account both the new home owners' tastes and the unusual dimensions of the building.

What a happy ending for a building slated for demolition by the federal government. The building, named after Admiral William Parry Wallis, a Canadian naval hero famous for capturing an American ship at Boston during the War of 1812, will live on into the 21st century.

And now, what about those old barns and buildings on the Experimental Farm? And the Catholic School Board's Ecole St. Charles. Stay tuned... we'll tell you more through the media. ☒

Heritage Ottawa Annual General Meeting

The Heritage Ottawa AGM will be held on:

Date: Thursday, March 21, 1996

Time: From 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Location: To be announced

For further details, please call the Heritage Ottawa answer machine after March 4, 1996. ☒

Heritage Day

Celebrate your Heritage on Heritage Day. The City's Heritage Programmes Unit celebrates its 6th Heritage Day Celebration at the Dovercourt Community Centre. Twenty-five local and area Heritage organizations will present exhibits reflecting Ottawa's diverse and fascinating heritage. This programme is for all ages and great for families. ☒

Invitation to a Lecture

Heritage Ottawa members are warmly invited to attend a slide illustrated lecture by Alex Cross, winner of the City of Ottawa 1995 Heritage Day Prize. Mr. Cross will be discussing Canadian Residential Tract Housing; comparing the 1995 work of Robert Campeau (Elmville in Ottawa) and a development in Don Mills. The lecture will be held on:

Date: Wednesday April 24

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Meeting Room B, Sussex Pavillion, City Hall

This lecture will be followed by the regular monthly Heritage Ottawa Board Meeting. ☒

Heritage Ottawa Newsletter

Contributors: Jed Braithwaite
Louise Coates
David de Belle
Marc Denhez
M.L. Doyle
Landon French
Stéphane Hoffman
Jean Palmer
Jennifer Roseburgh
Paul Stumes

Electronic Production: M/L Graphic Productions

Editor-in-Chief: M.L. Doyle

Contributing Editors: Louise Breton
M/L Graphic Productions
Tracy Spack

ISSN 0808-0506



Please forward with
payment to:

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

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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.*