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*Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage*

## **IS LANSDOWNE PARK A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE TO THE REGION?**

*Read on for two views presented by Fern Graham and John Leaning.*

The brief history of Lansdowne Park included in the Canderel proposal to the City downplays the significance of the grounds by skimming through its early years and denigrating its first buildings as "simple farmlike buildings". The "park" is also criticized for not being a real park, because it was "only an indifferent collection of mainly wooden buildings set in worn out grass with few trees..." etc. This does not do justice to the grounds, and worse, it completely misconstrues the intended purpose of the "park".

The Ottawa Agricultural Society (OAS) was formed in 1868 "to establish united action among the different counties of Central Canada in the interest of Agriculture". This society was the predecessor of the Central Canada Exhibition Association (CCE). Two decades before the CCE was formed, the OAS was talking about a regional mandate. The singly most important means for the society to achieve its goals was the annual agricultural exhibition, which required a permanent site.

The site that the society chose for their fairgrounds was ordnance land, and they spent five years negotiating with the government, with the help of the Secretary of State, to get a good price. Ultimately they struck a deal "in consideration of the object for which [the grounds] were designed—for a merely nominal sum"—i.e., the bargain price was a direct result of the intended public use.

The first annual fair was held in 1869, at the "splendid new grounds near the city". The society had built a display hall, entrance gates, ticket office, a show ring, barns and pens for the competing livestock—hardly a few poor farm buildings.

Within a few years major improvements had been made, and by 1874 a new main display building was being planned. This octagonal building with radiating wings was designed by local architect James Mather, the winner of a competition for the design. Dismissed as a "rustic octagon" by Canderel, it was the centrepiece of the grounds that were described in 1879 as "the finest, with a single exception, in the Dominion".

In the Main Building were displayed works of the household arts, as well as the latest in small manufactured goods. Other buildings on the grounds included an art gallery, halls for the display of horticulture, stoves, machinery, and carriages, a dance hall and refreshment booth, telegraph office, grandstand and show ring, a dairy and a dozen barns and stables for livestock. There were two gates on Bank Street and one at Elgin, as well as separate docks for exhibitors and the public. The society had offices and a council room on site, as well as police quarters. This was no dog & pony show—the OAS held an annual fair from 1869, and hosted three Provincial Exhibitions and two Dominion Exhibitions.

With additions and changes, the grounds were constantly adapted to meet the needs of the exhibition. Eventually they grew from 19 acres to 66, expanding to the north into an area that had been laid out for residential development. This writer is unconvinced, however, that any land was added to Lansdowne that had actually been built up. Many plans of the area show farm lots subdivided for development, but much of it lay empty for

## **President's Report**

*By Carolyn Quinn*

### **The Union Mission**

It is with sadness and frustration that Heritage Ottawa must report the upcoming loss of 53 Daly Avenue owned by the Union Mission. On October 14<sup>th</sup> City Council (with the exception of Councillor Richard Cannings) voted in favour of granting permission to demolish the 1872 building despite not having the requisite plan for a replacement residential building consistent with city policies. It is slated to come down this December.

Some nine months ago, council placed a moratorium on the application to demolish, allowing the community the desperately needed time to put together a rescue package for the site. That obligation was admirably fulfilled. Many individuals and organizations contributed time and expertise to the project proposal and its future development. (See Vol. 25, No.2 of this publication for more information).

After being approached by Heritage Ottawa, the Strategic Planning Initiative Committee of the Ottawa-Carleton offices of Investors Group submitted a proposal to their head office making the organization of a fund-raising campaign for the rehabilitation of the site into a 12 bed facility their priority proposal for 1998. Investors Group's Winnipeg Head Office responded by committing \$45,000 to the project over a five-year period as well as making a commitment to use their extensive resources to fund-raise for further financing.

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## Lansdowne Park ... continued

decades after it was surveyed. For example, a plan of 1879 shows the area on the northern edge of the grounds completely divided into town lots, but a bird's eye view done the same year shows that it was still open farmland. Most of the Glebe was not intensively developed until after Lansdowne expanded to its present boundaries by 1908.

The Canderel analysis of Lansdowne's character as a park is based on the assumption that it was intended to be pleasure grounds, like Strathcona Park or Major's Hill with shady footpaths, playing fountains and flowerbeds. This is simply untrue—such a park would be unsuitable for an agricultural exhibition. Lansdowne has always been an events-oriented park, with facilities for presenting a wide range of goods and competitions to large gatherings of people. A grandstand and sports facilities have been part of the grounds since the 1870s. In particular football in Ottawa dates back to Confederation, and Lansdowne was home to the RoughRiders since early this century. Frank Clair Stadium stands on the oldest part of the park, apart of the original 19-acre ordnance purchase.

The Agricultural and Industrial Arts Exhibition is an event with a long and



Heritage Ottawa is a non-profit organisation dedicated to advocating the preservation, restoration, and adaptive re-use of the National Capital's built and natural heritage.

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prominent history in Canada. Elsewhere in the country, cities are beginning to recognize the importance of that heritage by preserving the buildings and the grounds—but there are few left to preserve. It is rare enough to still have the grounds—consider Kingston and Hamilton, for example. At Lansdowne, the grounds have been in continuous use for the purpose for which they were originally designed for nearly 130 years. The site is a significant component of the urban and regional cultural landscape.

I have been asked to argue this point as a heritage issue. Clearly it is also an economic one. A piece of publicly owned property of this size in the urban core is an extremely valuable resource. My position is that in view of its history and its significance to the heritage of the entire region, it is vital that every possible effort be made to maintain Lansdowne intact as a public events facility. If we fail to recognize its historic character, and to explore fully its potential as a regional public events venue, we risk losing a unique asset forever.

By Fern Graham

*Editor's Note: Fern Graham is a consulting architectural and landscape historian.*

Except for the Aberdeen Pavilion, the Horticulture Building and the Coliseum, the two former of which are to be kept, [in the Canderel proposal], there is nothing of heritage or history left at Lansdowne Park, it was destroyed in 1966. When the 1909 stadium was demolished in 1965, much history went with it. The claim for the memory of the Ottawa Rough Riders is also dubious history since they did not even begin at the Park. They began at the Metropolitan Grounds of the University of Ottawa in 1876, only getting the title of Rough Riders in 1896, and not winning their Grey Cup until 1939. They disappeared in 1996 due to mismanagement. In 1966 the old stadium was replaced by the present out of scale and ugly Frank Clair Stadium and an enormous and environmentally disastrous, yet totally inadequate parking lot. The removal of all that and its replacement by housing and parkland can only be an improvement.

By John Leaning

*Editor's Note: John Leaning is a local architect and member of Ottawa's Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee. ♦♦♦*

## President's Report ... continued

The Union Mission could then have contributed the approximately \$30,000 it has to pay for the building's demolition in a more positive way. The Board of Directors' decision to reject these commitments came as a shock to those involved.

At a time when the heritage community is working hard to create new partnerships with sectors like business, tourism and education the rejection of Investors Group's offer of financial support is particularly disappointing. Recycling and reusing a heritage building makes economic and ecological sense. This could have been an occasion to show leadership in bringing together the private sector and community services.

The loss of 53 Daly will of course have a negative impact on a historic streetscape that can easily be described as one of Ottawa's jewels. Hopefully it will not become the example to be followed by the owner of the neighbouring building to the east that has suffered from a similar lack of maintenance and care over several years. Will it be next?

### Pooley's Bridge Rehabilitation

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton has initiated a study to reassess the condition of Pooley's Bridge and to consider various options with respect to the continued use of this crossing as a pedestrian-cycling facility. The Region is also co-ordinating repairs to five other stone arch bridges over the aqueduct in the Lebreton Flats area on behalf of the existing owners who are, apart from the Region, the National Capital Commission and the City of Ottawa.

Pooley's Bridge and the five stone arch bridges over the aqueduct were all built circa 1876. Pooley's, built by Thomas Coltrin Keefer in 1873 as an integral part of the waterworks system used to supply water power to Ottawa, has been given a heritage designation by the City of Ottawa and the others are on the Heritage Reference List.

Stanley Consulting Group and Barry Padolsky, Heritage Architect, have been appointed to undertake the study.

The Region initiated a monitoring program in 1970 to assess and record the structural deterioration of Pooley's

Bridge. Due to cracking and loss of stone and the continuous water penetration that has led to deterioration of the mortar the structure has been completely closed to vehicular traffic since 1983.

Five alternative rehabilitation schemes ranging from dismantling and rebuilding to construction of a new modern structure were examined in 1994 but to no end result.

The most recent assessment of Pooley's Bridge reveals continued deterioration along with other possible additional failures. It was concluded that rehabilitation of the bridge using existing materials is not feasible.

Six rehabilitation-reconstruction proposals were unveiled at a public information session on November 16<sup>th</sup>. The alternatives range from a rehabilitation-reconstruction using new elements at a cost estimate of \$3,750,000, to a total removal of the existing bridge redirecting pedestrians and bicycles through the service road to the pumping station and the east arch, at a cost estimate of \$475,000.

The good news is that the five other stone arch bridges over the open aqueduct in the Lebreton Flats area are in much better condition due to the type of stone used in the original construction, and require relatively minor repairs.

If you have any comments or questions please forward them to: V.K. Sahni, P. Eng., Manager, Structural Branch, Environment and Transportation Department at 111 Lisgar Street Ottawa, K2P 2L7 or telephone (613) 560-6001 ext. 1338.

## Walking Tours

Heritage Ottawa is pleased to report a very successful 1998 Walking Tour Season. The program began with architectural historian Fern Graham's excellent tour of the Parliamentary Precinct, where she shared some of the less well known stories about the evolution of the site, and ended with architect Mark Brandt's captivating visit to one of the city's less well known yet very important heritage sites, namely Victoria Island and Chaudiere Falls. And during the intervening weeks six other informative and unique tours kept participants returning



*The September 27th Walking Tour of Victoria Island and Chaudiere Falls  
with guide Mark Brandt*

for more. As a finale to the season, a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary trolley tour, filled to near capacity was organized for October 4<sup>th</sup>. Because of the interest demonstrated, the Walking Tours sub-committee will be looking at further expansion for next year.

I would like to extend a special thank you to all the volunteer guides who helped to make the Walking Tours Program so successful: Fern Graham, Judy Deegan, Paul Stumes, Terry de March, Louisa Coates, and Mark Brandt. I look forward to working with you again next season.

In pursuit of our goal to inform people about the economic, cultural and historical benefits of heritage conservation, Heritage Ottawa will maintain the momentum generated by the Walking Tours by offering a series of lectures and/or armchair slide tours this coming winter. Stay tuned for further information.

## Other News

Heritage Ottawa was invited to participate in the celebration marking the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Aberdeen Pavilion on September 19<sup>th</sup> hosted by the City of Ottawa. As well as participating in the staged events, Heritage Ottawa displayed in photographs and words the story of our organization's involvement in the fight to prevent the demolition of this magnificent building. A special thank

you goes out to David McKay for finding the appropriate material in our archives, setting up the display and being there to interpret the story on the evening of the celebrations.

On October 14<sup>th</sup> Heritage Ottawa, along with twenty-five other arts and heritage organizations, participated in a cultural round table hosted by Mayor Jim Watson to discuss some practical and achievable ideas for managing and distributing the cultural resources of the City of Ottawa. Discussions focused on how to better market arts and heritage and the leadership role the city could take by facilitating access to available resources. A steering committee composed of representatives from the Cultural Leadership Committee, the Council for the Arts in Ottawa, the Council of Heritage Organizations in Ottawa-Carleton and a staff member from the Mayor's office will be meeting to determine a possible strategy. ♦♦♦

# Besserer House - 149 Daly Avenue

## A RE-ZONING HOSTAGE?

by Edgar Tumak

*Editor's Note: Heritage Ottawa learned at the time of printing that the application to change the zoning of 149 Daly from residential to commercial did go before City Council where it was passed unanimously. The rezoning is restricted to chancellery use, and only on the ground floor, and the property is now subject to a heritage easement giving it protection in perpetuity.*

*Such protection, however, can be meaningless if the owner sells the property to an embassy or consulate not bound by the very provincial and municipal legislation created to protect our heritage structures. It seems ironic that the preservation of local heritage seems to depend increasingly on its ownership by foreign mission. Has the City lost control of its own history?*

**B**esserer House, Sandy Hill's most ancient structure, and one of Ottawa's oldest and most significant heritage buildings, is facing an uncertain future. Constructed in 1844 for the founder of Sandy Hill, the gracious stone residence is for sale, with the current owner apparently intent on changing the zoning from residential to commercial on the ground level. Chancery use has been highlighted for the office component.

The property was acquired under power of sale, and has been on the market for several months. Asking up to \$585,000., this price tag is substantially higher than the current real estate market appears to support for Sandy Hill residences which are larger, better maintained and in quieter areas. Besserer House needs costly repointing of all the masonry walls (including the stone garden wall), new roof cladding, and major repairs to the north chimney. For most buyers of upper-end houses, expensive upgrades might also be desired for components such as the washrooms.

The owner Fred Zlepnig has directed his marketing efforts primarily to commercial uses, in the hope of achieving a higher price. Respecting the concerns of the community to retain a residential basis does not appear to be a priority. Therefore, Besserer House, which has served continuously as a residence for more than 150 years, may become a re-zoning hostage with the current owner threatening to demolish the building if a commercial use is not allowed. Although Besserer House is a designated structure, the Ontario Heritage Act only delays demolition for a maximum of 270 days once a demolition application has been submitted.

The application to change the zoning was submitted to the City councillors on the Planning and Economic Development Committee on 23 June 1998. Delegations from the community and the ward councillor Stéphane Émard-Chabot, opposed the change. The greatest concern was the intrusion of commercial uses in a residential area, as this would be against the policies of the Official Plan, and contribute to the erosion of the residential fabric of the neighbourhood which in this area is already challenged by the heavy traffic of King Edward Avenue.

Unlike other areas of Sandy Hill, if any more residential space is lost along this stretch of the road, the current zoning for the whole zone will become questionable. Other concerns were parking problems on a site with little space for the flow of commercial activities, the effect that re-zoning might have on residential property values and community integrity, the "dead" space that occurs outside of office hours, and the concern that the heritage qualities of the structure may be compromised by office use.

The request was unanimously rejected by the Planning and Economic Development Committee, and the owner promptly expressed the desire to demolish the building. Rather than proceed with either the demolition or re-zoning applications (the latter would normally have gone to City Council for a final decision), the owner agreed to delay while alternate options were explored.

Councillor Émard-Chabot organised a meeting with members of the community and heritage specialists, which was followed by a meeting with the owner and his son on 10 September. During the meeting Mr. Zlepnig stated he first

acquired an interest in the property as part of a loan to the former owner, and subsequently acquired the mortgage from the bank when the past owner defaulted on payments. Mr. Zlepnig believes the best way to to recoup his investment is through re-zoning, but did state that if he doesn't get a re-zoning he is prepared to demolish the building and leave the site vacant. By contrast when faced with a property that is not selling, most other members of the community lower the price rather than insist on a zoning change.

Mr. Zlepnig did not respond to the concern that the marketing of the property has not taken advantage of the regular options available to sellers, such as, always having a for sale sign by the building, prominent advertising, and listing with a high profile realtor. Better attention in marketing might sell the property with its residential zoning.

The concern about demolition is not something to be treated lightly. If an owner of a property with the heritage significance of Besserer House would even contemplate demolition, it is evident that heritage preservation is not a prominent concern. Losing Besserer House would not be a pity, it would be a cultural crime!

If truly threatened, would the City be prepared to intervene? Expropriation for the purpose of heritage preservation has been used in the past at 503-507 King Edward Avenue (at the corner of Wilbrod Street)—buildings which are historically and architecturally less significant. If Besserer House was seriously threatened, and the City did not respond strongly, would any heritage property in Ottawa be safe?

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## 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION TROLLEY TOUR A GREAT SUCCESS!!

It was a perfect autumn day on October 4th when a full double-decker bus departed from Lisgar Street for the Heritage Ottawa tour of Sandy Hill, New Edinburgh, Lowertown, the Byward Market, the Glebe and the Billings Estate. The tour provided an opportunity to celebrate the preservation of so many of Ottawa's heritage buildings and districts over the past 30 years and also to remember the preservation failures that remind us of the importance of our advocacy work.

Many thanks go out to long-time members Marian and Dick Heringer for their hard work in organizing the tour and to Carolyn Quinn and Gordon Cullingham for their entertaining commentary.

Heritage Ottawa thanks our Guest of Honour Mayor Jim Watson for his participation as well as Councillor Inez Berg and the many members and new friends who shared this event with us.



*October 4th Anniversary Trolley Tour showing from left to right: Gordon Cullingham, Carolyn Quinn, Councillor Inez Berg, Mayor Jim Watson and Jean Palmer.*

### 149 Daly Avenue ... continued

Some might ask whether the municipal governments should take a responsibility that would incur financial commitment? Local government does bear responsibility for 1960s municipal planning that caused the current traffic problem for Besserer House. At that time King Edward Avenue was envisioned as the King Edward Freeway and, accordingly, the Inter-Provincial Bridge was constructed to accommodate high speed and high volume traffic. Perhaps the City should acknowledge that the site has been compromised by past municipal activities and offer

assistance through tax reductions or, because of the extreme heritage significance, offer special preservation incentives beyond the current modest heritage grants.

As always it will be the community's passion which will be the critical factor in preserving its heritage properties, and in ensuring appropriate uses. Numerous other sites in Sandy Hill have been protected by this passion, and one could presume that with the outstanding heritage pedigree of Besserer House, Sandy Hill and the City's heritage community as a whole will be extremely concerned.

For the sake of the building and everyone involved, however, here's hoping

the preservation of this heritage treasure is uneventful. Contentious situations always prove costly in terms of time and money. In the case of Besserer House, delays in attending to the substantial work required on the masonry will result in further deterioration and devaluation of the property. If the structure is unheated during the winter, or ignored for an extended period, deterioration will progress exponentially as is the nature of failing masonry construction.

*Editor's Note: For a history of 149 Daly, please see "The Heritage of Besserer House" in this issue. ♦♦♦*

# THE HERITAGE OF BESSERER HOUSE

## *The Genteel Spirit of Pioneering, or Combatting a Rude Environment with Elegance*

By Edgar Tumak

Constructed in the rough and rude pioneer years of early Bytown, Besserer House in Sandy Hill is a building of exceptional pedigree. In 1844, when it was charitable to call Ottawa a "sub-arctic lumber town" (the lumber industry was still relatively small), Louis-Théodore Besserer commissioned the construction of the elegant stone house that still bears his name.

Today, located along the busy King Edward Avenue in the central area of Ottawa, many people may not appreciate the bold spirit of Besserer as a gentleman pioneer. Besserer was a notary and member of the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada in Québec City from 1833 to 1838. In 1839 he left his comfortable life in what was then Canada's most gracious town, to occupy and develop the remote land that was granted in 1828 to his brother, Lieut. René-Léonard Besserer, for service in the War of 1812. Louis-Théodore was the heir-at-law as his brother died in 1823.

The Bytown that greeted Besserer, and in which he erected a genteel stone residence, lacked basic services and institutions. Although Besserer was accustomed to due process of the law and legislative participation, Bytown at this time was a garrison town controlled by the British Ordnance, where military, not civil, authority was the basis of the local government. The Ordnance controlled and prevented development in the land between Bank and Waller streets (the latter being Besserer's western property line) until 1848, and the municipal incorporation of Bytown was resisted by the Ordnance until 1850. Furthermore, it was not until the 1850s that the local economy benefitted from a vibrant lumber industry, and the town's new status as the capital of the Province of Canada (Ontario and Québec).

Besserer also had to make due with primitive religious facilities—then considered essential institutions. For a Roman Catholic like Besserer, the Cathedral of Notre Dame on Sussex Street (renamed Sussex Drive in the 1960s) was only started in 1839, and the first bishop of the diocese, Joseph-Eugène Guigues, was consecrated

in 1848 in the still unfinished Cathedral. Besserer, who lived until 1863, never had more mundane services such as safe water, sanitation, and fire protection during his life in Bytown.

Besserer initiated the development of Sandy Hill in 1838 with the help of a dynamic agent, William Stewart. Stewart laid out a street plan for Sandy Hill in the area bounded by Rideau Street, the Rideau River, Laurier Avenue East (originally called Theodore Street) and Waller Street and began to sell lots in a businesslike manner.

When Besserer arrived in Bytown he resided on Rideau Street. To spur development of his land, Besserer, with his second wife Marguerite Cameron, had Besserer House prominently located on the brow of Sandy Hill. With the expectation that people would purchase property near a church, Besserer gave land to several religious denominations. In 1845 St. Paul's Presbyterian, at the corner of Cumberland and Daly, became the first permanent church in Sandy Hill (the current St. Paul's Eastern United Church is a later structure). In the same year Besserer also gave several lots to the Roman Catholic Church for the purpose of erecting a college thereon, although the church controlled College of Bytown (later University of Ottawa) did not relocate to the site until 1856.

Besserer did not greatly profit from his land holdings because the development of Sandy Hill remained slow until the arrival of the civil service in the 1860s. Even late in life Besserer was forced to sell several hundred lots to settle a debt of just over £2000. After Besserer's death the family sold the house in 1866 to William McDougall, a Father of Confederation. In 1867 McDougall was responsible for the purchase of the great Northwest from the Hudson's Bay Company, which doubled the land mass of the new Dominion. McDougall lived in the house until 1870, and since then the residence has been occupied by a succession of prominent government officials, military officers, and businessmen. One of Ottawa's most promi-

nent historians and a scion of the Woods Manufacturing Co., Shirley Woods, jr., lived in the house as a boy.

Besserer House is one of Ottawa's foremost heritage resources because of its association with the early town life of Ottawa. The Billings Estate Museum, while an invaluable resource, only became a town building when urban development surrounded it in the 1950s. Many years ago demolition deprived Ottawa of the residence of Nicholas Sparks—the other key developer of current central Ottawa.

Besserer House also has immense architectural significance. The classically based, Georgian styled building has walls of roughly finished stones set in regular courses, with the corners finished by smooth quoins. Prior to the 1918 addition of the stone wing at the rear, the kitchen of Besserer House was located in the basement. This was a common household plan in Ottawa until the end of the 1870s, because the warm air rising from the ever-burning kitchen fire helped heat the storeys above—a centuries old form of fuel conservation. Reportedly the great bake-oven fireplace is covered over but still extant. Another reminder of pioneer Ottawa are the exposed, and unfinished tree trunks supporting the ground floor.

The ground level originally consisted of three grand spaces extending from the front to the rear: the wide central stair hall, and the parlour on the south and the dining room on the north each measuring approximately 17 by 28 feet. The transfer of food and dishes from the basement kitchen was aided by means of a dumb waiter. In 1964 the large formal dining room was divided to create a library/den at the front of the house, and a still commodious dining room at the rear. Unfortunately all the mouldings on the ground level were changed in 1964.

Insurance plans, early photos, and careful viewing of the stonework and windows, show that originally Besserer House had a ground-level verandah on all sides, and a widow's walk at the top of the truncated

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# THE FATE OF THE FRESCOES

By Jean Palmer

**It's good news.** The frescoes of the Franciscan Monastery on Stanley Street will not be flattened by a bulldozer. Our last newsletter carried a story lamenting the probable loss of the wonderful frescoes and mosaics done by Ugo Chyurlia in the late 1950s.

The last of the elderly priests left the monastery in May when the church and monastery were sold to John Doran, a local developer who planned to build condominiums.

The Heritage Ottawa Board viewed the art works in May and our representative worked with City Councilor Richard Cannings, community supporters, arts community activists and the artist's son, Jerome Chyurlia to save the frescoes. Efforts were made to find other uses for the church, even if the rest of the monastery had to be demolished. In the end there was no purchaser for the church, but help came from another quarter.

Ian Hodkinson, Professor Emeritus of Art Conservation from Queen's University, and a local restoration firm, Craig Johnson Enterprises, have succeeded in removing nearly all of the frescoes and mosaics using time-tested methods. The job will be completed before the demolition date.

Jerome Chyurlia explained the process for fresco removal, a particular challenge since the painting is done on wet plaster and is not on the surface but embedded in the plaster.

First the colour is consolidated, and then a water soluble, enzyme-based adhesive is applied to the surface and covered with a linen canvas. When dry, the linen and fresco come off in one piece ready for storage. On a new site, a concrete wall is covered with wet plaster and the fresco is quickly installed against it. All that remains is to remove the canvas and soluble adhesive revealing the original fresco.

Some of the art works have already found homes in local churches, but until places are found for the remaining pieces they are the property of Jerome Chyurlia and will be stored in a local warehouse.

This is not a perfect solution. The art works are most impressive when seen as a group in their own architectural setting, but legally they could have been bulldozed to make way for upscale condominiums.

The artist's son is particularly grateful to Professor Hodkinson who has spent most of the autumn at the abandoned monastery directing the removal, and to Craig Johnson, the hands-on technical expert assisting him.

John Doran, the developer, has been co-operative from the beginning, to the point of contributing toward removal expenses. Doran is already familiar to the heritage community for turning the demolition-threatened St. Charles School in New Edinburgh into an award-winning condominium project.

So it's fresco limbo for most of the art works, but remembering that the Rideau Chapel spent sixteen years in plastic bags before being re-erected in the new National Gallery, we won't give up hope that sometime in the future Ugo Chyurlia's legacy of frescoes and mosaic will once again delight and inspire Ottawa viewers.

## REMEMBERING

### Ann Faulkner

Preservationists the world over mourn the passing of Ann Falkner, a farsighted leader and tireless achiever, who lost her brave fight against cancer on 23 September, 1998. Her achievements in life were numerous and always had a significant impact.

Included in Ann's many achievements were her role as a member of the pioneering group that developed the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings. This unique archive of thousands of buildings became the foremost resource for every major study of architecture in Canada.

The esteem of her colleagues was best demonstrated when she was invited to accept the position of Executive Director of the Association for Preservation Technology (A.P.T.), an international society of dedicated professionals and amateur heritage conservationists. There, Ann organized several conferences with hundreds of participants from all corners of the globe. In the meantime the A.P.T. BULLETIN became the most important forum for the exchange of knowledge in the technology of monument restoration. It would take pages to list all the seminars, courses and study tours that were held while Ann was at the helm.

Ann also found time to write *Without Our Past* a comprehensive set of guidelines for professionals, amateurs and public officials involved in the wonderful world of building preservation-restoration.

Ann did not forget the home ground either. She cooperated with ICOMOS, Unesco, Parks Canada, Heritage Ottawa and other organizations to present public lectures and courses at the National Gallery, Foreign Affairs, the National Research Council and elsewhere in Ottawa converting many to the preservationist cause.

The restoration of the historic garden at Maple Lawn on Richmond Road was Ann's latest venture. The thoroughness of her research into 19th century gardening practices was rewarded when the garden was declared a National Historic Site. Fittingly, Ann Falkner's life was celebrated at Maple Lawn on 28 September by her family and over one hundred of her closest friends.

# CELEBRATE HERITAGE DAY!!

Monday, February 15, 1999

In celebration of Heritage Day, an evening of entertainment will be presented by the City of Ottawa's Heritage Programmes Unit, the Council of Heritage Organizations in Ottawa, Laurier House National Historic Site, Action Sandy Hill, and All Saints' Anglican Church, Sandy Hill—a recently designated heritage building.

The event will occur between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., on Monday 15 February 1999 in the parish hall of at All Saints' Anglican Church, Sandy Hill, at 10 Blackburn Avenue (the church is located at the corner of

## Laurier Avenue East and Chapel Street).

Activities will focus on life in Sandy Hill and Ottawa, ca. 1899-1900 at the time when All Saints' was established. The evening's programme will feature music by Lisgar Collegiate Music Department, and the All Saints' organ and Ottawa's only chime (9 bells) and the annual "Great Ottawa Challenge" Heritage Day quiz where City councillors compete with media personalities. There will also be exhibits, tours of the church complex, and an illustrated presentation of the houses of the founders of all

Saints' and their significance to the history of the City as a whole, such as: the church's chief founder and benefactor Sir Henry Newell Bate, the city's grocer-king and, from 1899-1917, the first chairman of the Ottawa Improvement Commission (later National Capital Commission); Sir Robert Borden the eighth Prime Minister of Canada; statesman Sir George H. Perley; and lumber industry and military outfitter Lt.-Col. James W. Woods. Admission is free, and refreshments can be purchased. The refreshments will be organized by Ottawa's culinary historian Kathleen Walker. ♦♦♦

## Heritage ...

continued

hipped roof. From this vantage point one would have had commanding views of the Ottawa River and the Gatineau Hills. The verandah on the north (now enclosed by glass) is accessed by floor-length casement windows. Similar windows in the south parlour would have also led to the wrap-around verandah. The current front porch dates from the close of the 19th or beginning of the 20th centuries. It is a solid Georgian revival design, with high quality woodwork and enduring roof cladding of lead.

Looking at Besserer House one sees a proud structure which, with its gracious form and commanding location, defied the rude qualities of early Ottawa. Now it faces the even greater challenge of the intimidating

traffic of King Edward Avenue, and the threat of neglect or demolition.

What Besserer House needs now is someone who again is prepared to use gentility to improve an imperfect urban environment—much like Besserer, or more recently the people who led the early heritage movement in Sandy Hill. By saving decaying venerable structures, these people did much to revitalize the neighbourhood. Similarly, the restoration of Besserer House might serve as the catalyst to activate long-delayed plans to make King Edward Avenue a more liveable street. When more people demonstrate their concern about the appearance of King Edward, more attention will be directed to this thoroughfare by politicians and planners.

Besserer House needs someone who can see the glories not the deficiencies of the site,

someone who can appreciate this wonderful heritage inheritance and who knows that the thick stone walls shut out the noise of the busy traffic. Perhaps that someone may even create a mid-19th century heritage showpiece by re-creating the residence's original configuration, such as the two great rooms on the ground level, the wrap-around verandah, the roof top widow's walk, and a multi-purpose large stone kitchen in the basement leading directly onto a walled garden.

*Editor's Note: Edgar Tumak is an architectural historian and heritage specialist who lives in Sandy Hill. Historical sources used in the writing of this article will be distributed by Heritage Ottawa upon request. ♦♦♦*



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