



## President's Report

*Carolyn Quinn*

Recent media attention to the loss of Canada's heritage buildings reminds us that one fifth to a quarter of the country's heritage building stock is gone; the same sort of figures normally associated with wars and disasters. Yet, a Polaris survey commissioned by the Heritage Canada Foundation indicates that 91 per cent of Canadians care about what happens to their historic properties.

There appears, however, to be a significant gap between what Canadians value and the legislation that exists for its protection. The rules remain tilted in favour of demolition and Ottawa is no different in this respect than elsewhere in Canada. If anything, the recent economic boom in the region has left many heritage buildings under siege by developers in a hot real-estate market.

Typically, a historic building's future becomes threatened when its original purpose or function is no longer viable. Sometimes long periods of neglect ensue leaving buildings more costly to restore and by default, vulnerable to demolition. Increasingly, the challenge has become convincing owners of heritage properties, who are often developers with larger plans for their sites, of the advantages of incorporating their heritage buildings into

new construction and finding an adaptive re-use for them.

The former Ogilvy's Department Store on Rideau Street is one of the more recent examples of the difficulties associated with convincing owners of the added value the retention of an historic building can bring to a site. A significant compromise was negotiated between the owner, Viking-Rideau Inc., and the city that resulted in the loss of a five-storey landmark building on the corner of Rideau and Nicholas in exchange for the retention of one third

**T**hose developers who have been successful with restoration tell us that there experience has shown that there is almost always a way to retain and restore most or all of a heritage building at the same cost, or less, than replacing with new construction.

of the original facade to a height of only three storeys, bringing the facade back to the original 1907 version of the building.

After meeting with Viking-Rideau on the issue, Heritage Ottawa pursued a more aggressive compromise by working with Councilor Elisabeth Arnold at Planning Committee. We ensured the adoption of three additional conditions to the building's demolition that include ensuring the owner attempt the restoration of the original facade material – as

opposed to a dismantling with probable use of the materials at a later date, as was originally negotiated; that the issuance of a demolition permit be conditional on an approved site plan control application; and the demolition of any portion of the subject facades be subject to a failure to comply clause that would reflect the cost of retaining the wall on site. This is an example of what amounts to a victory for heritage buildings – especially those in the core.

Too often the demolition of a historic property is the result of a developer simply not having the skills necessary to solve the preservation problem. Many architects approach old buildings with trepidation – it is the professionals trained in the many aspects of architectural preservation who need to be part of any development team working on a site that involves a historic building.

Those developers who have been successful with restoration tell us that there experience has shown that there is almost always a way to retain and restore most or all of a heritage building at the same cost, or less, than replacing with new construction. It takes experience, ingenuity and desire and we should expect nothing less from the stewards of our civic heritage.

Fighting a rear-guard action continues to mean the loss of valuable heritage properties throughout the city. The time is long overdue for the implementation of federal tax incentives as promised in the February 2000 federal budget.

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## President's Report...

A similar program in the United States has saved hundreds of buildings from neglect and eventual demolition. Similarly, the new City of Ottawa needs to take advantage of provincial legislation that empowers municipalities to provide financial incentives to heritage property owners as is done elsewhere in the province. The conditional heritage grants or tax-back grants provide owners of heritage properties with the incentive to rehabilitate a building; freezing property taxes at the pre restoration level for a period of say 5 years does not impose new costs on the municipality.

It is clearly in the community's best interest to retain privately owned heritage buildings; it is time municipal, provincial and federal financial policies began to work in favour of them. Mayor Chiarelli has organized the Ottawa 20/20 Smart Growth Summit from June 14th to 18th that will focus on such crucial issues as how to make our city "livable"; transportation; housing; arts and heritage; environmental impacts of growth; the role of the N.C.C. in urban planning; developing the urban/suburban core and more. Heritage Ottawa will be participating in the Summit and we encourage members to attend the 'Town

Hall' meetings and propose the need for legislated financial incentives that will help to preserve our heritage fabric and, by so doing, contribute to making our city a "livable" one. (For more information on the Mayor's Summit contact Alf Chaiton at 580-2424 ext. 28923 or visit the web site at [www.ottawa2020.com](http://www.ottawa2020.com)).

Another example of buildings of local historic significance coming under threat of demolition can be found along Sparks and Metcalfe Streets. The Central Area West Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, that deals with the identification, protection and management of heritage resources in the central area of Ottawa, and adopted by the former City Council, recommends that the area of Sparks Street between Bank and Elgin be designated a Heritage Conservation District. The Report recognizes the need to balance the civic realm and the capital realm more effectively. In Ottawa, the 'Town versus Crown' contention has tended to work against those sites whose history is perceived as too local in significance. Federal urban planning sets priorities that aim at achieving national objectives that often jeopardize municipal heritage. Arguably, Sparks Street is one of the

few streets that reflects both the history of Ottawa's commercial development at the local level as well as the growth and expansion of the federal government, and the city's stories deserve their place alongside the national ones.

City Council's adoption of this and other recommendations in the report are being challenged this coming July at the Ontario Municipal Board hearings on the matter. Interestingly, the main opponent to the Report that recommends more power to the municipality to protect its heritage assets along Sparks Street, is the N.C.C. The recommendations run contrary to the N.C.C.'s vision that favours the core-as-visitor-showcase approach, that to date includes a proposal that would see the demolition and relocation of heritage buildings in order to facilitate the construction of a four-storey underground parking garage and the creation of a public square opposite the Peace Tower. Both the demolition and relocation of heritage buildings and the creation of a public square ignores the historic significance of Sparks Street as an important local cultural landscape. And Heritage Ottawa is working for the protection of those municipal heritage resources.



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# The Fate of the Stephen Collins House

By Carolyn Quinn

The fate of one of the oldest stone houses in Ottawa is in the hands of the South Nepean Development Corporation (SNDC), a partnership of Minto Developments Ltd. and the Shenkman Corporation. The Stephen Collins house has stood on its site along old Highway 16 for over 170 years without much change. The last time a major renovation was undertaken was in 1884. The grounds around it have several mature oaks, maples and white pine planted in the same period the house was built. It remains an elegant stone cottage that stands as a testament to the ingenuity and artistry of the builders of

and from the Victorian era when it underwent some renovations.

Where once there were hundreds of stone structures along the Rideau Corridor, the Collins House stands as one of the few remaining examples of the period. The property contributes not only to the story of 19th century Nepean Township and its historic rural roots, but also to the story of the construction of the Rideau Canal. It remains a key component of the unique historical environment of the canal/river system that has

last Fall reveal that the August, 2000 application for demolition, submitted by the SNDC, was "a new and unforeseen development in the planning for the Chapman Mill community". This abrupt reversal on the part of the SNDC from a design with protection in mind to full-scale demolition begs the question of where the corporation's commitment to these agreements went?

Heritage Ottawa only heard about the site being threatened with demolition in January, after amalgamation.



## Stephen Collins House...

that the house itself is of no value – it's all about the land. Currently, the city is using a real estate appraiser to provide an independent assessment of the value of the approximately two acres the house now sits on with the aim of negotiating a land exchange agreement with the SNDC or an outright purchase.

As owners, the SNDC has an important role as trustee of this designated heritage property on behalf of the community's interest. They also have a lot to gain by supporting preservation. The people of Ottawa have clearly shown their willingness over the past few months to rally behind this property – if the calls and email to our office are any indication. Heritage Ottawa has worked very hard to try and keep all stakeholders together and meeting regularly on the issue. Our tactic to date has been to stress the advantages of preservation. The developer's support of a restoration plan for the house on site can be translated into huge public relations dollars while the added intrinsic value a magnificently restored Collins House would bring to the subdivision can be further capitalized on.

A land exchange agreement should not translate into a shopping spree for the SNDC. Factoring into the solution the cost-savings associated with demolishing a double-stone wall construction of this type and the servicing of the site for well and septic systems at the same time as the adjoining new subdivision would only be appropriate. Now is the time for the developer to give the Chapman Mills' slogan "building a community of the future with roots in the past" some real meaning.

# Annual General Meeting

by Gordon Cullingham

**H**eritage Ottawa held its Annual General meeting in an exceptional location on Monday, March 26. It was the Rockcliffe Park Public Library on Springfield Road, in a charming room offering all the facilities a group like ours requires.

The meeting was chaired by our ongoing President, Carolyn Quinn, whose Presidential Report recorded the events of an amazing year. It was the year of the birth of the New City of Ottawa from the ashes of the City of Ottawa, ten surrounding municipalities and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton; a big expansion in the reach of our organization. There were the flurries; mostly unresolved or unsatisfyingly compromised over the Ogilvy store, Caplan store, the Nicholas-Waller Triangle, the Collins House and the Central Area West Heritage Conservation District. President Quinn touched on the absence at all levels of government of taxation regimes designed to discourage demolition of heritage buildings, on progress on remaking our Web Site and plans to restructure Heritage Ottawa, making better use of the available talent and resources.

Later in the Meeting the Treasurer presented his report, Jean Palmer reported on the attempt last year to assemble a photo collection of family

dwellings submitted by their owners in the project entitled House, Home, Street: The City in 2000. Many of the photographs entered were presented in an attractive display at the meeting.

The Nomination Committee chair presented the proposed Board Members for the coming year. The successful motion introduced new members David Bullock, David Flemming, Gerard Robarde, Ron Stein, David Ivison and John Arnold. Continuing members were President Carolyn Quinn, Treasurer Daniel Kane, incoming Secretary Barbara McMullen, Past President Jennifer Rosebrugh and Directors Paul Stumes, Gil Sutton, Gontran Bolduc, Jean Palmer, Gouhar Shemden and Gordon Cullingham. The office of Vice President was vacant.

The highlight of the meeting was an address by Brian Anthony, Executive Director of the Heritage Canada Foundation. Mr. Anthony spoke on the plans of his organization to convert itself into a National Trust. Members attending were given a kit explaining that exciting undertaking.

The meeting concluded with marvellous refreshments supplied by Gouhar Shemden. Everyone was pleased with the venue, and grateful to the Rockcliffe Park Library for permitting us to use its facilities.

## British Heritage Website

**E**ngland's rich architectural heritage and sites of historical significance include 400 castles, 200 palaces, 3,000 country houses and 14,000 churches. plus such humble items as telephone

boxes, pig sties and a racing pigeon loft. By the end of the year 2002, 360,000 heritage-listed buildings will be catalogued and photographed by the British National Monuments Record and made available for

Internet users to view at Images of England, a free online photo library.

The first 50,000 of these images can now be seen at

[www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk)

# A New National Trust?

by Douglas Franklin, Director, Policy & Programs Heritage Canada Foundation

For a number of years, Canadians active in the conservation of heritage buildings and historic places have asked whether Canada ought to have a national trust. Canadians have recognized the great success of the National Trust in the United Kingdom, the National Trust for Scotland, and similar trusts in Commonwealth countries. Since the mid-1990s, several federal cabinet ministers have also asked the same question about a national trust for Canada and, in 1998, the Secretary of State for Parks, the Hon. Andy Mitchell, asked this question directly to the Heritage Canada Foundation Board. The foundation responded by initiating discussions within the organization, leading to its year 2000 conference in Calgary, Alberta, "Towards a National Trust."

What do we mean by "national trust?" Although there are various types of national trusts, there is a common pattern among them. For the most part, a national trust is a body, either established as a registered charity or an agency of the Crown in a given jurisdiction, to acquire and/or promote the preservation of historic sites and heritage properties. Normally, a national trust has a membership exercising privileges in electing the trust's governing body and in gaining access to properties owned by, or associated with the trust. Here are some of the features commonly found among national trusts: some, such as those in Australia, are based on state or territorial jurisdictions, as opposed to national ones; some, like the National Trust in the United States, initiate legal challenges to protect heritage buildings and sites; some, such as the National Trust for Scotland, have revolving funds to acquire and preserve heritage properties; while others, such as the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or

Natural Beauty in the U.K., have sizeable holdings of heritage properties. Other national trust functions include: funding, education, research, publishing and merchandising.

The Heritage Canada Foundation was started by the federal government in 1973 to act as a national trust for Canada, based in part on the Scottish and British trusts. In its first decade, the foundation, through a revolving fund, acquired some seventy-seven properties. These properties were restored and sold with protective covenants. Two properties were acquired in trust for the federal Crown, and these, along with two others, continue to be maintained by the foundation.

Other trust functions which the Heritage Canada Foundation has undertaken over the years include publishing, research and development, awards and merchandising. Unlike the National Trust in the United Kingdom, the foundation does not have a significant number of properties, in part because there are other trusts or trust-like bodies, such as the Ontario Heritage Foundation, which acquire and maintain properties.

A new national trust for Canada would obviously draw on the strength of other models, but it would also have to be distinctly Canadian, respecting the existing government jurisdictions and other heritage trust bodies. One model of note, described at the 2000 conference, is the Australian Council of National Trusts, Australia being a federation similar to Canada. Whatever structure is used, 93 per cent of current Foundation members, and 76 per cent of the general public would like to see the Foundation become a national trust.

In addition to the issue of jurisdiction (a perennial one in Canada), there are other matters that would need to

be addressed before a national trust be created, or an existing organization converted into one. Capital gains tax is certainly an important issue; an individual who wishes to donate a heritage property, other than a private residence, to a custodial body, be it a charitable foundation or a government agency, would face capital gains tax. In many prospective cases, the cost of philanthropy outweighs the value of the gift.

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Here, the Heritage Canada Foundation has urged the federal government to waive capital gains, giving the same tax treatment to immovable heritage property as the government gives to movable heritage property. Another problem is legal advocacy; many heritage groups would like a national champion to challenge the findings of quasi-judicial tribunals, that affect heritage property. However, unless such a body were sanctioned under law, it could not take cases to court. In summary, a new national trust would need to be designed carefully, with the full cooperation of the federal and provincial governments.

For its part, the Heritage Canada Foundation is continuing discussions with all levels of government, heritage organizations, professionals, volunteers, potential donors of heritage property, and many others. Although the foundation is pleased with its progress in its first 28 years simply stated, it needs the other half of the toolbox in order complete the task it set out to do in 1973.

# Towards a New Ottawa LACAC

by Stuart Lazear

The Heritage/ LACAC Transition Subcommittee for the City of Ottawa began as a coalition of the nine existing LACACs which met in early March, 2000 on the invitation of the Nepean LACAC to discuss the implications of amalgamation. A working group evolved from that meeting consisting of the chairs and representatives of the nine area LACACs (West Carleton, Goulbourn, Nepean, Rideau, Gloucester, Cumberland, Vanier, Rockcliffe and Ottawa) together with senior planners from Ottawa and Cumberland. Following a written request to the Transition Board at the end of April, the Transition Board Development Services Team invited the LACAC Working Group to become a sub-committee of their group. The sub-committee met once a month in different locations in an effort to expose the different LACACs to the diversity of built heritage within the new City. The Sub-committee reviewed the delivery of services associated with the operation of LACACs across the new City including time devoted by staff and volunteers. The Sub-committee also consolidated existing inventories of designated heritage resources to be used in the new City as part of the review of applications for development. January 1, 2001 brought with it official amalgamation and the creation of a new City of Ottawa. The nine LACACs of the former area municipalities continue to exist in the short term, but applications are currently being solicited for a new city-wide LACAC. The Terms of Reference for the LACAC will be reviewed by City Council within the next few weeks and will follow closely the recommendations of the Heritage/LACAC Transition Sub-Committee.

## The proposed Terms Of Reference are:

The Committee shall advise and assist City Council generally on all matters relating to Part IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 18, as amended.

## The specific duties of LACAC are to:

1. Propose criteria for the evaluation of properties of architectural and/or historic value or interest;
2. propose criteria for the preparation and maintenance of a list of properties and areas worthy of conservation;
3. advise Council on means of conserving heritage properties and areas;
4. advise Council on current heritage conservation legislation as well as available funding sources and to assist council in the preparation of municipal legislation to conserve heritage properties and areas;
5. act as City Council's liaison on heritage matters under the Ontario Heritage Act;
6. advise and assist City council in the preparation of criteria for programs of financial assistance for the restoration of heritage properties;
7. implement City Council- approved programs and activities and to increase public awareness and knowledge of heritage conservation issues;
8. establish an appropriate yearly work program with measurable objectives clearly identified and consistent with the City's planning process.

The LACAC can also set up sub-committees that would have responsibility for the following in specific geographic areas :

1. recommending properties or areas within the local community which should be considered by the LACAC for heritage designation;
2. listing Heritage Properties or Areas for review and discussion by the LACAC;
3. researching properties being proposed for listing or designation as Heritage Properties or Areas, public programs and other preservation-related issues;
4. providing for public awareness and promotion of issues relating to Heritage Properties or Areas in cooperation with other heritage groups as required;
5. arranging to erect plaques/ markers on community sites of local interest;
6. providing for local community activities recognizing the efforts of citizens to protect, preserve or promote Heritage properties;
7. providing comments to the main LACAC on major planning issue, such as rezonings affecting heritage resources;
8. performing other assigned duties relating to heritage preservation issues.

LACAC responsibilities are based on the guidelines developed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (and posted on its web site) and a synthesis of the Terms of Reference of the nine existing area LACACs. The responsibilities for the geographical sub-committees were based largely on those of the LACAC Community Panels in Toronto. The Heritage/LACAC Transition Committee has developed a model for geographic representation on these sub-committees

and it is something that should be reviewed by the proposed new LACAC.

There will be 15 citizen-appointed members of LACAC as well as two non-voting members of city council. LACAC will report to City Council through the Planning and Development Standing Committee of Council. It will receive administrative support through the Department of Corporate Services, which provides similar support to all 16 Advisory Committees of Council. The Department of Development Services will provide professional heritage planning advice to LACAC.

Ottawa City council has also approved the establishment of a separate Heritage Advisory Committee in addition to LACAC. This committee will advise Council on heritage matters outside of the Ontario Heritage Act, such as museums, archives interpretive programming, etc. The Terms of Reference for this committee are in the final stage of production.



**HERITAGE**  **OTTAWA** 

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

Membership fees: Individual \$25  
Family \$30; Student/Senior \$15  
Patron \$50; Corporation \$75

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## The Rideau Waterway: A Canadian Heritage River

The Rideau Canal National Historic Site of Canada, the core of the Rideau Waterway, was built between 1826 and 1832. It is the oldest continuously operating canal in North America and is today managed by Parks Canada.

The Rideau Waterway, a canalised river, linking the Rideau and Cataraqui rivers via the Rideau Canal to the Ottawa River, is unique to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) in that it is the first waterway based on a Heritage Canal to be recognized as a Canadian Heritage River.

Historically the canal played a key role in the defensive strategy of British North America, by providing a safe and secure transportation route between Ontario and Quebec, away from the American border. While it was never required for war, the canal played a significant part in the settlement and development of eastern Ontario. It remains remarkably intact to the present and represents one of the greatest engineering achievements of the 19th century.

Villages, small towns, cities, farms, cottages, and private residences form the distinctive and appealing cultural landscape of the Rideau Waterway. A healthy natural environment is the backdrop for recreation and heritage appreciation. The Rideau system is one of Canada's finest recreational waterways, providing extraordinary boating, cottaging, camping, fishing and hiking opportunities for around million people.

In 1998, the Rideau Waterway Coordinating Committee began work to seek the designation of the Rideau Waterway as a Canadian Heritage River. In November 1999, its nomination as a candidate Canadian Heritage River was accepted and its designation was formally approved in the year 2000.

The Rideau Waterway was considered for CHRS recognition from Ottawa to Kingston for its outstanding historical and recreational values. Originally built for military use, it quickly became the highway for early settlement and commercial traffic. It has a unique assemblage of historical buildings and operable engineering structures that is unequalled anywhere in Canada.

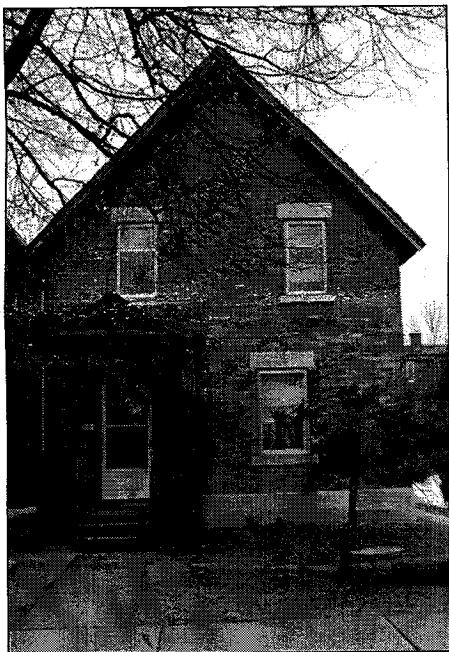
Sound and sustainable economic development throughout the corridor is at the heart of the CHRS recognition. Rideau residents, lake associations, environmental groups, municipalities and other levels of government all actively participate in safeguarding the well-being of the Waterway's rich heritage and scenic shorelines.

The Canadian Heritage River status for the Rideau places it in the company of 28 other designated Canadian rivers that have been recognized for their role in shaping our nation. Today, over 9 000 km of Canada's river heritage is recognized through the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Program.

# Restored Streetscape Key to Preserving Sunnyside Avenue Housing Stock

by Leo B. Doyle

**T**hirty years ago the newly created Ottawa-Carleton Regional Government began a road "improvement" project on Sunnyside Avenue. This project, which widened the street from 8.84 metres to 10.4 metres has had many negative, unintended consequences for the street's housing stock, some of which is of heritage value.



*The Rodney house, 447 Sunnyside.*

On June 15, 1971, a construction crew proceeded to "improve" Sunnyside by destroying 21 mature elm and maple trees along a 940-metre stretch of road between Bank and Bronson. The decision to widen Sunnyside was intended to aid its conversion from a one-way to a two-way street.

The City of Ottawa consented to the street widening, but not to the destruction of its stately old trees. At the time, City Controller Lorry

Greenberg explained that when council approved the region's plan it "I had no idea it would be like this". He lamented that a pretty residential area had been sacrificed for the sake of moving traffic faster.

The newly widened road blighted the Sunnyside streetscape and reduced the safety and liveability of the street. Many residents, especially those with young children, chose to sell their homes and move. The percentage of owner-occupied homes declined sharply, thus contributing to the deterioration of the Sunnyside housing stock.

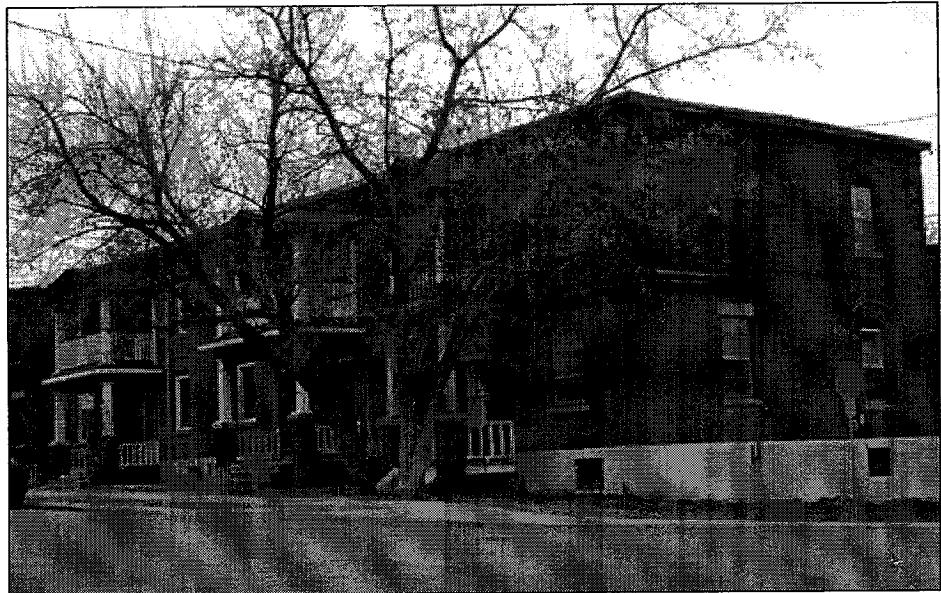
In the Jan/Feb 1965 edition of CMHC's *Habitat* magazine, Eric Minton wrote that the housing stock on Sunnyside Ave., one of the neighbourhood's main streets, is "in excellent condition though built more than forty years ago".

Thirty-five years later much has changed. In its April/May 2001 real-estate edition, Ottawa City magazine speaks glowingly of Ottawa's South's well preserved housing stock. However,

the magazine adds that, "The exception is the stretch of Sunnyside between Bank and Bronson, where many a vintage manor has gone to seed".

This characterization of Sunnyside housing is unfortunate. Laid out in 1891, it is one of the oldest streets in Ottawa South. A 1978 Ottawa South study conducted by the city identified 22 homes and buildings on Sunnyside as having heritage value. Sixty-eight percent of these structures (15) are homes in the section between Bank and Bronson. Some of these homes are in need of repair; at least one is now slated for demolition that will make way for new in-fill housing.

The key to preserving Sunnyside's housing stock and to reducing the likelihood that more homes will be demolished, is to restore its streetscape. Fortunately, with support from the Old Ottawa South Community Associations (OSCA), this process is underway and in the fall, plans for a revitalized Sunnyside will be drafted and presented to city officials.



*350 Sunnyside, a row-house, identified as having heritage value.*