



# Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage

Spring 2004 Volume 31, No. 1

## President's Report

# We're still alive!

### **H**ere's what happened.

It has been over three months since I filed my report for the last issue of our Newsletter. We had hoped to have this issue out to members by early March however, the editor and myself decided to wait until after the City of Ottawa's budget meetings from March 24 to 26 so I could report on this matter. **I am pleased to report that Ottawa City Council have reinstated all of the arts and heritage programs that were cut in the draft 2004 budget release on February 11, 2004.** These reinstated programs include the funding envelope from which Heritage Ottawa usually receives a yearly operation grant.

Approval of the 2004 City of Ottawa Budget was the culmination of three months of hard work by arts and heritage advocates in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa's Universal Program Review (UPR) undertaken in November identified cost-saving options many of which, if accepted, would have serious impacts on our ability to undertake and deliver heritage programs and services in the City of Ottawa. In early January, a group of heritage activists met under the auspices of the Council of Heritage Organizations in Ottawa and formed the **Strong Voice Coalition for Heritage** to plan a comprehensive and coordinated response to the options outlined in the UPR. The Coalition was composed of representatives from various museums as well as historical and heritage societies, including Heritage Ottawa.

Throughout January many of us appeared at numerous public consultations where we pressed for the retention of the city's museums, archives and heritage programs and services. We were told by the Mayor and Councillors, as well as staff, that they wanted to know our wishes and what we felt was important in the upcoming budget. We stressed the "investment" aspect of the City's support for culture and demonstrated the multiplier effect of municipal funding in support of thousands of hours of volunteer effort and the ability of heritage organizations to use the City's support to leverage funding from other public and private sources.

We stressed the need to have support for arts and heritage services identified as a base budget responsibility of city government and a surprisingly high number of those who attended these meetings also expressed a willingness to see the property tax mill rate raised to protect funding for these programs and services. Despite this, the draft budget that was released on February 12 proposed, among other things, the elimination of \$1.4 million of the entire \$1.8 million heritage budget. The sole survivor was the City of Ottawa Archives, whose base operation is mandated by Provincial regulation. Even the Archives lost that part of its budget earmarked for community development and outreach.

The same Councillors who had urged us to "speak out" indicated that our views were merely those of groups with "special interests," and that they really wanted to hear from "ordinary citizens." The debate over proposed cuts to essential health, social services, community services and arts and heritage funding soon dissolved into a debate over property taxes and the increase generated over the past few years by increased property assessments and the transferring of an increased share of tax revenue from the commercial to the residential base. These significant increases in taxes, however, did not result in any benefit to City coffers because the increased residential revenue was credited to commercial properties. As well, Council had not raised the property tax mill-rate for nearly a decade.



David B. Flemming

Concluded on page 2

## President's Report concluded...

The taxation debate soon degenerated into a distrust of City staff and perceived waste and inefficiencies in the City's operation. Cultural funding, and much of the community services funding, was branded as "frills" or "non-essential," support for which the already over-burdened taxpayers should not have to bear.

And so, for the months of February and March we attended yet another round of public consultations and Standing Committee meetings, espousing our cause. By early March, many of the tax-freeze Councillors from last year's election campaign were beginning to see the challenge of trying to balance a budget by destroying essential elements of the quality of life in Ottawa. The Health, Recreation and Social Services Committee heard over 250 depositions, nearly all of which called for the reinstatement of the arts, heritage and health and community support programs. The Committee recommended that almost all of the arts and heritage programs recommended for reduction or abolition be reinstated. On March 26, after three days of heated and sometimes acrimonious debate, Council also agreed to reinstate these programs that they had proposed to eliminate a mere six weeks earlier.

Thanks to overwhelming support from the community and effective lobbying of the Mayor and Councillors, we won. But did we really?

- We still have a population divided over the perceived inability of its elected representatives to run the City effectively.
- We have a growing urban-rural split within the community, which all-too-often focuses on city spending on culture as the preserve of the elite.
- We have a distrust of a Mayor and the majority of Councillors who ignored the city's financial crisis for three years, only bringing the matter forward after last year's municipal election, an election in which all current members of council, save one or two, campaigned on a continuation of the 10-year tax freeze.

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***"I am pleased to report that Ottawa City Council have reinstated all of the arts and heritage programs that were cut in the draft 2004 budget release on February 11, 2004."***

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The challenge for us all will be to deal with these elements of discord and to prepare for the next budget debate that will be all-too-soon.

I wish to thank those members who wrote letters and e-mails to the Mayor and Councillors on this matter. This whole exercise was really a "numbers game" and I am proud that we were able to achieve the reinstatement of these programs.

Despite this distraction, Heritage Ottawa continues to advocate on behalf of our built heritage. Over the past three months I have made our views known on a number of proposed developments in the city.

Work is progressing on our expanded **Walking Tour** program for 2004, including at least one new tour in the Hintonburg/Westboro area. The schedule should be posted on our website by mid-May as well as in the next issue of the Newsletter.

In late December, Heritage Ottawa, as the principal partner in a collaborative with the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Regional Society of Architects, received an Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant of \$31,500 over two years to develop and implement a fundraising campaign for **Doors Open Ottawa**. This campaign is well underway and much progress has been made over the past two months. This grant, coupled with the reinstatement of City of Ottawa funding for the event, will assure that Doors Open Ottawa 2004 will be held on June 4 and 5.

Heritage Ottawa has also received a \$961 grant from the Ontario Ministry of Culture to assist with our operation.

A **workshop** entitled *Restoration-Renovation Demystified* will be held at the Jim Durrell Recreation Centre on Wednesday, April 14. This is a collaborative effort of Heritage Ottawa, the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee and Historic Ottawa Developments Inc. (see notice on pages 6 & 7). Heritage Ottawa will be the beneficiary of any revenues realized from this event.

With the proposed increase in our activities, we require the active participation of more members. We currently have openings for members of the **Program Committee**, **Membership Committee** and a requirement for someone to assist in the development of a **Strategic Plan**. Please call the office at 230-8841 and leave a message on the answering machine, or email [info@heritageottawa.org](mailto:info@heritageottawa.org) to offer assistance in any of these activities. ♦

David Flemming

## Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Heritage Ottawa is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Ottawa's built heritage.

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# Heritage, Churches and Parking – A Lowertown Story

By Donna Owens, Lowertown resident

**I**n January 2003 the Ottawa Roman Catholic Archdiocese announced it would centralize its operations at Notre Dame Cathedral on Sussex Drive. The plan called for construction of a new building and enlarged parking facility. But the plan needed financing, therefore the Archdiocese applied for rezoning to expand the current 85-space parking lot by another fifty-six. The result of this rezoning would be the demolition of two buildings and perhaps Ottawa's oldest stone wall.

Here is what has happened in this strange affair during the past year, a project that has aroused deep concern among local residents and heritage lovers across the city.

The buildings at issue are 60 Guigues and 90 Parent. They are located in the Lowertown West Heritage Conservation District (LWHCD) designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. These buildings were constructed in 1958 to serve the needs of the Archdiocese to the designs of Auguste Martineau, Ottawa architect.

Should you venture along Guigues (Church Street until the late 1920s) you could very well pass No. 60 without noticing it, tucked as it is in behind the cathedral to the west and that historic stone wall to the north. It is a flat roofed, 3-storey stone building that was designed as a rectory. It is physically attached to the church and was thus not designated separately.

The neighboring property, 70 Guigues, commonly known as 90 Parent, is more central to the demolition debate. It was the headquarters of the Catholic Conference of Bishops for forty-four years. Its historical importance has grown with the expanding administrative needs the Lowertown Catholic Community generated by post-World War II population growth.

According to the Heritage Survey & Evaluation (McClelland, 1992)

The massing of the building relates to contemporary issues of expressed function in architecture, with the stairwell recessed to express its distinct use. The coursed ashlar is used as planes expressing the shear walls within the design, and the offices are in part sheltered by a roof projection which acts as brise-soleil (sun baffle) emphasizing their function as places where people work. The building is finely detailed and uses high quality materials. This is a distinctive, thoughtfully designed building which contributes to the variety of the area.

The 1992 Heritage Study ranked 90 Parent as a 3 on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 meaning little or no heritage significance. It could receive a higher rating today, as it is now over forty years old.



60 Guigues looking west.

An important element of the Guigues streetscape is a stone wall that has defined the edge of the Cathedral property for over 100 years. This wall's commemorative plaque reads:

Here was erected in 1848 The College of Bytown  
Cradle of The University of Ottawa  
To Commemorate  
The Centenary 1948  
L.J.C. ETMI.

The City's Development Services Department told the Planning and Development Committee that the additional 56-space lot would be landscaped and screened by the wall that would be retained or rebuilt, depending on its condition. The wall would be incorporated into the site plan, thereby "ensuring that this historic feature will continue to be a component of the cultural landscape of Lowertown."

During the rezoning debate, Planning and Development Committee members opposed to the demolitions noted the buildings have fitted with their surroundings for a half-century. Members also noted that they could not support the demolition without plans for a replacement building. As well, the increase in parking would only produce one-fifth of the funding required for the redevelopment.

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# Heritage, Churches and Parking...

Photo: Brook Burchfiel



90 Parent looking west on Guigues and concealing 60 Guigues.

Committee members who spoke in favour of the rezoning application noted that the Archdiocese has been in Lowertown since the founding of Bytown. And they were satisfied with the commitment to redevelop the site in an "appropriate manner." The then Councillor Madeleine Meilleur supported the project despite residents' concerns and calls to see the site plans. Since then, Meilleur has been elected to the provincial legislature and appointed Minister of Culture, whose mandate is to protect Ontario's heritage.

On July 23, 2003, the Planning and Development Committee supported changes at Guigues/Parent that allowed a three-year temporary parking by-law to be approved. But the use of the temporary parking lot would be limited to Cathedral employees and the congregation. In other words, no revenue could be generated. They also made demolition approval contingent upon site plan approval.

Six months later, residents met with their new Councillor Georges Bedard and city officials to review a site plan that was to have incorporated their concerns noted in July. The outcome according to local media reports was polite in saying, "Residents nix revamped parking lot." What residents saw again was a plan lacking information regarding safety, lighting, landscaping, information on the future of the stone wall and no plans for a replacement building in apparent violation of the Ontario Heritage Act.

In anticipation of a motion going to the Planning and Environment Committee to approve the incomplete site plan, residents came together to form the "Lowertown West Heritage Petitioners" and began delivering key messages along these lines:

- There are over 5,000 parking spaces located around the Market, 400 spots at the Rideau Center and the National Gallery has 350 spaces. Is this really about needing more parking or is it revenue generation?
- The Church's proposal and the rezoning process was a departure from Ottawa's Official Plan as the site plan will encourage traffic congestion, erode the character of the neighborhood, run roughshod over community concerns, and make a mockery of the public consultation process.

- And also they echoed comments provided by the NCC that rezoning would create a large opening at the back of the Basilica and alter the cultural landscape or the historic pattern of building disposition and land use.

On February 24 of this year, the Planning and Environment Committee had a motion put before it by City staff recommending approval of a site plan that the community did not support. The night before the Committee meeting, citing delays and an alleged lack of parking in the area, the Archdiocese filed an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board to demolish the buildings and replace them with a parking lot. Church officials dismissed the community opposition as "a few cranky neighbors." The story continues.

Should readers wish to reach the Lowertown West Heritage Petitioners, call Donna Owens (241-2321) or Brook Burchfiel (244-0144) ♦

## TERRA COTTA

### A Heritage Ottawa booklet containing two Walking Tours

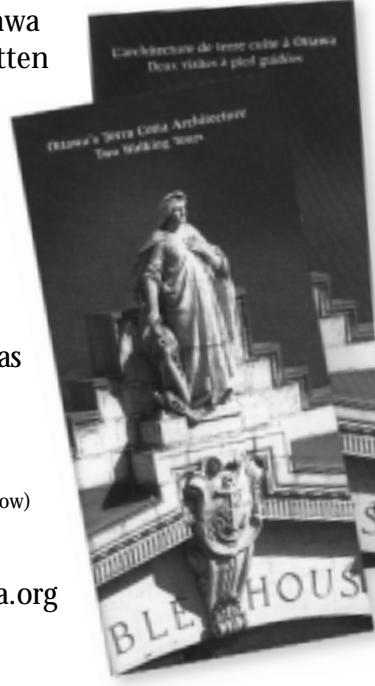
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With descriptions  
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HERITAGE OTTAWA  
2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa ON K1N 6E2

# New Online Features at Our Website

The Heritage Ottawa website ([www.heritageottawa.org](http://www.heritageottawa.org)) has been up and running in its current format for the past three years. Since inception the main goal of the site has been to provide an overview of the organization, our key priorities and programs, and information about Ottawa Ottawa's heritage.

We must be doing something right, since current tracking statistics show that site visitors now conduct about twelve thousand individual sessions on the site each year.

Like any website, the Heritage Ottawa site is a permanent work-in-progress. In recent months, two new features have been added.

The first new feature is a complete archive of every Newsletter published by Heritage Ottawa since the newsletter began in 1974. It's a treasure trove of information about the organization, and heritage issues, over the past three decades.

As well as providing interesting reading for anyone, we're hoping the archives will attract interest from teachers and students in urban studies for use as a learning and research tool. Heritage Ottawa veteran Board member Gord Cullingham is writing a series of introductions and overviews of the earliest numbers.

The second new feature is a "Heritage Update" section. This is an area where our President and others can publish event notices, up-to-date information about the latest heritage issues and statements, and breaking

news. Our hope is that this section will allow us to remain a bit more up to date between newsletter issues.

When you visit the site, you will be presented with the following information choices:

- The home page gives you news and features from Heritage Ottawa. Much of the material for this section comes from the Newsletter, and from policy statements and speeches from Heritage Ottawa spokespeople.
- "Who We Are" and "What We Do" sections of the site describe the history of the organization, and our advocacy and educational role. There is also information on our walking tours, as well as membership application information.
- "Heritage Features" offers selected feature articles from our newsletters highlighting the history and architecture of heritage buildings and structures in the area. The "Saved and Lost" feature profiles heritage buildings we've helped save, and some we couldn't save.

At the site, visitors can also sign up for "email updates" so they can get email notices about breaking news, and new material on the site.

If you've not visited the site, you are invited to do so. It's at [www.heritageottawa.org](http://www.heritageottawa.org)

Peter O'Malley, Web Master

*Below is a shot of our current home page*

**Home Page**

**— Heritage Ottawa News and Features —**

**Special Guide: Saving Ottawa's heritage from City Council cuts!!!**

Heritage Ottawa President David Flemming has written to all members of Heritage Ottawa to ask them to let the Mayor and

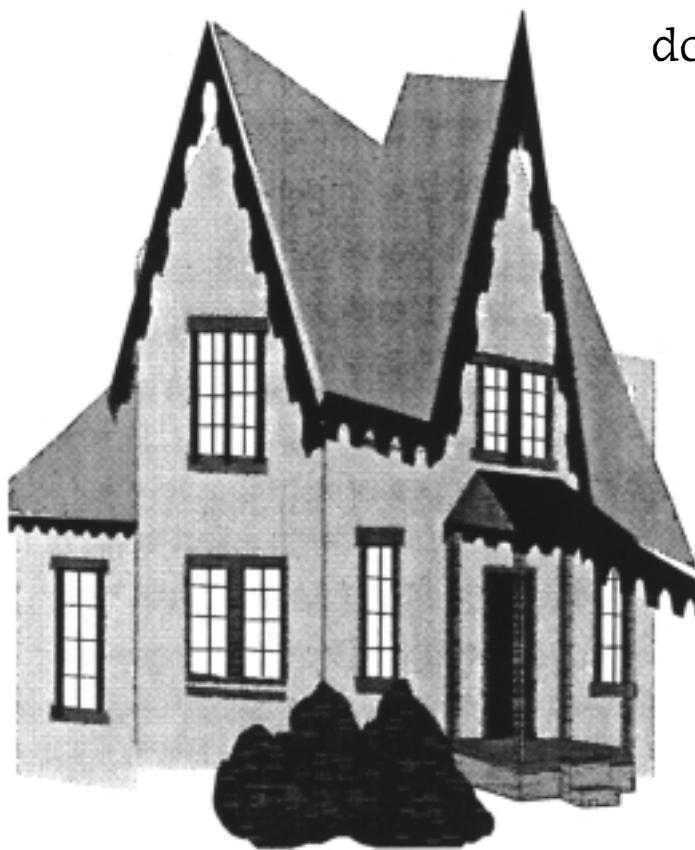
Heritage Ottawa Update

Heritage Ottawa President David Flemming has written to all members of Heritage Ottawa to ask them to let the Mayor and



# Who can help me with this old house?

It's a diamond in the rough,  
but I don't know what to  
do with it!



Homeowner's Workshop

Cost:

\$5 per person  
(donated by the organizers to charity)

When:

Wednesday, April 14th  
7:00 PM  
(registration desk opens at 6:30)

Where:

Jim Durrell Recreation Centre  
1265 Walkley Road  
(two blocks east of Bank)

Information: Ottawa-Carleton Home Builder's Association 723-2926

So you're thinking of fixing up your older home (say pre-1940), and you want to let its character shine through. So where do you start?

Spend an evening as we guide you through the basics of planning a renovation with character:

- Learn how to find a knowledgeable contractor, designer or architect and how to conduct a contractor interview.
- Get real insight into how to work with a contractor, draw up plans and contracts and keep the project on track.
- Find out how to present your renovation plan to lenders and how your project can be financed.
- Hear how the building permit process works and what to expect from city officials.

This information-filled evening will provide you with valuable tips to help you renovate your older home, from planning through keeping on budget. A panel of experts will present their insight and answer your questions.

## Who should attend?

If you own an older home and want to repair or renovate while maintaining its character, you should be there. Everyone's heard a "horror story" about a renovation project that went wrong. Or tales of the project that was suppose to take three weeks, but remains unfinished six months later. And too many homeowners get taken in by contractors "doing work on the side" for cash and without a written contract – a risky proposition.

With some knowledge and good information, you can easily avoid these sorts of problems. There is a right way to approach repair or renovation work, especially in an older home that needs some TLC so that it can be a real source of pride once more.

Your home can be made to look the way it was intended. This seminar evening will show you how.

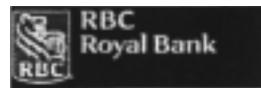


## Who we are sponsored by:

- Historic Ottawa Development Inc. (Non-Profit)
- The Renovators' Council of the Ottawa-Carleton Home Builders' Association
- City of Ottawa Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee
- RBC Royal Bank
- The Ottawa Citizen
- Heritage Ottawa



Historic Ottawa  
Development Inc.



OTTAWA-CARLETON  
Home Builders Association

OTTAWA CITIZEN



# Heritage Notes

*Being odds and ends of heritage interest in Ottawa*

- You can see the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Museum of Civilization until April 12.
- The new Liberal Minister of Culture, Ottawa's Madeleine Meilleur, in an address to the Ontario Heritage Foundation in December, reiterated her Government's commitment to rewriting the Ontario Heritage Act to safeguard Ontario's heritage resources for future generations. She also promised to establish a Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture to create an open and ongoing forum for discussion about issues affecting arts, heritage and library sectors.
- *Doors Open Ottawa* is Saturday and Sunday, June 5 and 6.
- Two distinguished Ottawa residents of the twentieth century are the subjects of a book by Terry Crawley. They were the husband and wife team of Oscar (founder of the Department of External Affairs) and Isabel (writer and historian) Skelton. The book is entitled *Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton: Reinventing Canada* published by the University of Toronto Press at \$29.95 softcover.
- The Ontario Historical Society is producing a *Guide to Heritage Tourism Activities and Events* to be released soon as a supplement in the *Toronto Star* and available on the Star's website.

• Bill Lesurf, an enthusiast for the Smiths Falls Railway Museum, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Railroad Historical Association.

- The Ontario Geological Society annual seminar will be held from May 27-30 at the International Plaza Hotel in Toronto. It will include a session on Ontario's cemeteries.
- A new book on Heritage Walks in Toronto has been released. It is *Sculpture in the City: Twelve Walks in Downtown Toronto* by Helen Nolan, published by Artworks Press at 138 pages and \$14.95.
- This year is the hundredth anniversary of the opening of the famous Peterborough Lift Lock. Events are planned.

## Some Websites of Current Interest

Go to <[www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)> for "Festivals and Events"

Go to <[www.heritagefdn.on.ca](http://www.heritagefdn.on.ca)> for everything about the Ontario Heritage Foundation

Go to <[www.art2life.ca](http://www.art2life.ca)> for this Canadian e-culture website judged best in the world by the United Nations

Go to <[www.ontarioarhitecture.com](http://www.ontarioarhitecture.com)> for a glossary and other aids produced by Mohawk College

Go to <[www.francophoneroute.on.ca](http://www.francophoneroute.on.ca)> for a tourism information guide to Ontario culture and heritage

Go to <[www.historic.places.ca](http://www.historic.places.ca)> for the Canadian Register of Historic Places. A property must be listed here to qualify for a federal restoration grant from the Commercial Heritage Properties Incentive Fund.



Please, forward with payment to:

**HERITAGE OTTAWA**  
2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa,  
Ontario K1N 6E2

Tel: 230-8841 Fax: 564-4228  
E-mail: [info@heritageottawa.org](mailto:info@heritageottawa.org)

## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - BECOME A MEMBER

Individual: \$25

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Family: \$30

Corporation: \$100

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Senior: \$15

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (business) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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