



Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage

February 2025 Volume 52, No. 1

**WORKSHOP
MARCH 6
ATELIER
LE 6 MARS**

www.heritageottawa.org

Doing the Groundwork: Preparing Your Home's Landscape for Severe Weather

Extreme weather events are a new reality. Find out what you can do yourself to mitigate damage and prepare your property by participating in our upcoming Workshop. See page 8.

Préparer le terrain : Pour un aménagement paysager qui résistera aux intempéries

Des phénomènes météo extrêmes font partie de notre réalité. Découvrez ce que vous pouvez faire vous-même pour préparer votre propriété en participant à notre prochaine atelier. Voir page 8.



The Central Canada Exhibition Display Homes

By David Jeanes



Photo: City of Ottawa

8 Robert Kemp Street front

Designation of 8 Robert Kemp Street – the 1958 Display Home

Ottawa City Council approved designation on 27 November 2024 of this house at 8 Robert Kemp Street, a one-storey detached bungalow on a corner lot in the Kempark subdivision in Gloucester.

The reasons for the designation presented in a report by heritage planning staff include the heritage value of the home as a representative example of Modernist residential architecture, the work of prominent Ottawa Modernist architects Balharrie, Helmer and Morin. In addition, the home displays

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

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Display Homes continued...

a high degree of craftsmanship and maintains the postwar suburban character of Kempark through its modern architectural expression, large lot and long frontage, and consistent setback typical of contemporary houses in the subdivision.

Central Canada Exhibition Display Home Lottery

However, the most fascinating factor in determining the heritage value of this home is its connection with the Central Canada Exhibition Display Home lottery. The Central Canada Exhibition (CCE), an annual exhibition fair in Ottawa took place at Lansdowne Park from 1888 to 2010. It drew hundreds of thousands of visitors every year to experience the latest innovations in technology, science, arts, architecture, and more.

This is one of five CCE lottery homes built at Lansdowne Park and relocated to Kempark in the late 1950s to mid-1960s.

The Display Homes were built at Lansdowne Park by a skilled team of local contractors personally selected by Leonard Coulter, chair of the CCE's Display Home Committee, for their expertise and experience. This house was the grand prize at the 1958 fair, and like all CCE lottery homes, it was built for display at Lansdowne Park and later moved to its permanent location.

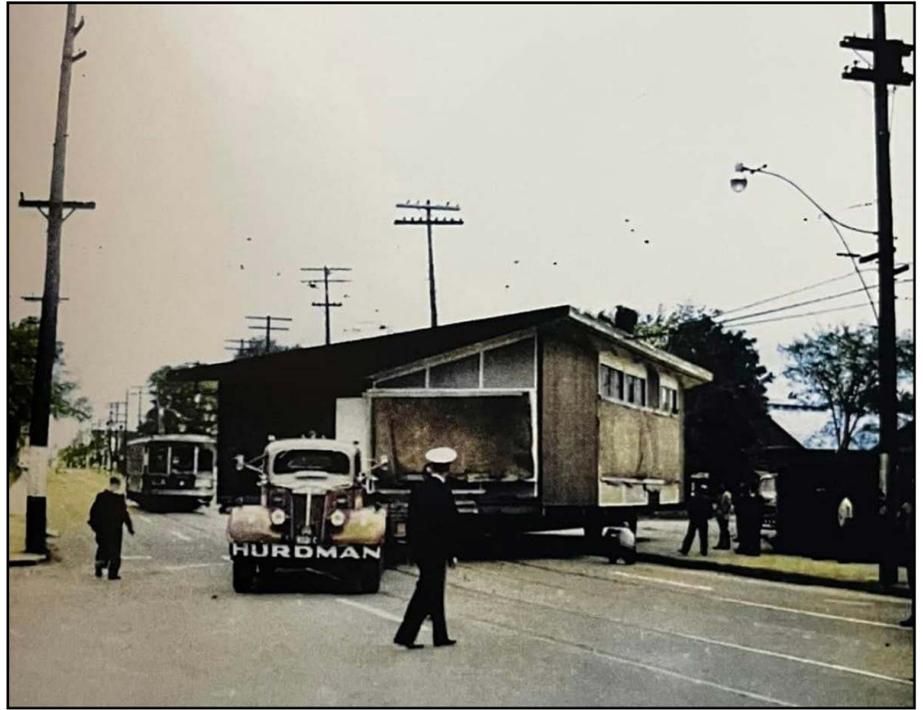


8 Robert Kemp Street west elevation.

Photo: City of Ottawa, August 2024

This is one of five CCE lottery homes built at Lansdowne Park and relocated to Kempark in the late 1950s to mid-1960s. These houses are similar in design and quality, all designed by prominent Modernist architects and built by a large team of skilled contractors.

The Modern style was popular internationally in the 20th century and especially during the postwar period. The house features typical elements of Modernist residential architecture including the low horizontal profile, asymmetrical façade, vertical wood siding, large windows and clerestory windows, butterfly roof, overhanging eaves, and exposed wood beams.



Moving the 1957 Display Home from Lansdowne Park.

Photo: Central Canada Exhibition



Photo: David Jeanes

Living room and study of the 1957 house in 2008, with some of the original furniture.

During the construction of the previous year's 1957 home at Lansdowne Park, CBC Television's "Mr. Fix-It" program recorded every step of work by about 65 contractors and suppliers. Every visitor to the house was given a brochure listing the new products and the many companies which had donated materials, furniture, appliances, light fixtures, and even a car, a boat and a fur coat. All were included in

the lottery prize sponsored by the Ottawa Shrine Club and Ottawa-Hull Richelieu Club. Visitors paid only \$1.00 for a lottery ticket.

Living in a Display Home – a personal connection

My personal connection to the display homes was that my parents bought the 1957 home, a year after its construction. It was moved from Lansdowne Park to Rothwell Heights to land donated by Ben Rothwell. Like the 1958 Display Home at 8 Robert Kemp St. the 1957 home was designed by D'Arcy Helmer of the firm Balharrie, Helmer and Morin. It was similar in style to Helmer's own home, also in Rothwell Heights.

Rothwell Heights was then a new subdivision and the display home started a trend there of architect designed modernist homes, later including the adjacent subdivision of Briarcliffe, which became the first modernist heritage conservation district in Canada.



Photo: Central Canada Exhibition

The 1957 Display Home on the new lot in Rothwell Heights showing the butterfly roof carport and the car included in the lottery prize.

The house was small but its open plan of connected living room and study, with cathedral ceilings, dining room, kitchen and front hall provided enough space for large family gatherings, including my parents' 50th and 60th wedding anniversaries. And there were parties for the entire neighborhood, particularly at New Year and Halloween. My parents lived there for 50 years.

The display home had only two bedrooms, plus a study which could be separated from the living room by a new style wooden folding door. So my father had the basement completely finished to add three bedrooms, 1½ bathrooms and a large recreation room. As a first-year engineering student in 1966 I did the drafting for a screened porch, between the dining room and the

carport, using a door which was originally provided for exhibition visitors to walk the length of the house. The porch was done in a style that complemented the original architecture, but subordinate and distinguishable, though at the time I knew nothing of heritage conservation guidelines.

The home was the centre of our family life until 2008, when my father moved out and my sister, brother and I had to prep the house to be sold. Unfortunately the buyer decided one year later to demolish and build a monster home on the valuable corner property.

The display home lottery at the Central Canada Exhibition was an important cultural event, showcasing

the work and products of many Ottawa businesses, and introducing new designs and products for the house building market. The first display home was actually built in 1956 and also went to Rothwell Heights, but it too has now been demolished. So the Kempark subdivision is now the showplace for the heritage designated home at 8 Robert Kemp St., the oldest surviving display home, and the other 1950's and 1960's display homes which were moved to the same area.

David Jeanes is a long-time member of the Heritage Ottawa Board, a former President and a passionate researcher of the architectural and other heritage of Ottawa.



Photo: David Jeanes

The house in 2008.

Celebrating Heritage Day in Canada

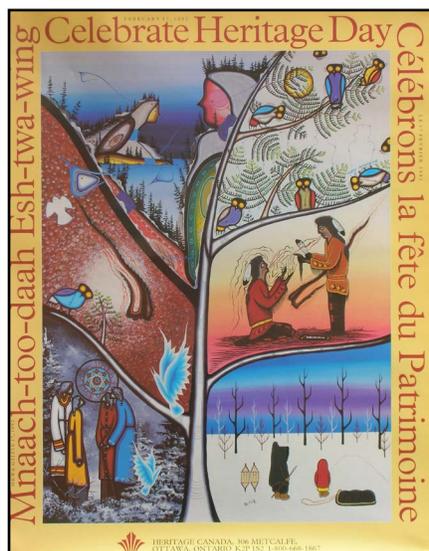
By Patricia Kell and Chris Wiebe

Heritage Day, which falls on the third Monday in February, is an annual event to celebrate the importance of heritage to communities and to our country. Since at least 1973, there were calls to make this day a national holiday. Many communities also celebrate heritage week and heritage month in February.

Efforts around Heritage Day began shortly after the creation of the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF) - now known as the National Trust for Canada - in March 1973. In December of that year, the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs presented a report to the House of Commons recommending that a national holiday named Heritage Day be established on the third Monday of February and that a joint Senate-Commons committee be tasked with choosing its theme each year. Although support for the report was unanimous, no government action was taken.

HCF then took the initiative to invite municipalities to proclaim February 14, 1974 as Heritage Day, and Ottawa, Charlottetown, and Fredericton signed on. Adoption of the day grew rapidly in subsequent years. As a Winter 1975 article in HCF's *Heritage* magazine noted: "Holidays... are an extremely useful method of focussing attention upon something we consider worthwhile. Holidays mythologize. They formalize. They enshrine. They provide a rallying point. A beacon..."

For many years, the National Trust chose a theme for Heritage Day, leaving the theme intentionally broad to allow easy use by groups across Canada. The National Trust



Heritage Day poster 1992.

discontinued providing a theme for Heritage Day in about 2015. In recent years, more effort has been put on encouraging people to visit heritage sites during the month of July, when there is a considerably lower risk of frostbite.

In many places, a February celebration of heritage is thriving. The Ontario government designated the third week in February as Ontario Heritage Week back in 1985 and the party continues. Amongst other events, a celebration will take place at Ottawa City Hall at noon on February 18th, 2025.

While the federal government never adopted the third Monday in February as a holiday, giving a curt wave to heritage by naming February 15 as National Flag Day, many provinces have. These include Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan, where it is a statutory holiday known as Family Day. Many jurisdictions have also adopted the first Monday in August as a civic or provincial day,

such as Saskatchewan Day, British Columbia Day, Nova Scotia's Natal Day and Ottawa's Colonel By Day.

The federal government has, particularly in the past few years, established a series of days and months to recognize specific cultural communities. Black History Month was one of the first and is celebrated in February. It grew from recognition of Black History Month in 1979 in Toronto, to provincial recognition in 1993, and was adopted by a motion introduced in the federal Senate in 2008.

While the singularity of Heritage Day has perhaps waned over the years, the multiplicity of heritage days and months – from Canadian Islamic History Month (October) to Mennonite Heritage Week (second week of September) to Sir John A. MacDonald Day (January 11) and many others – reflect the extraordinary richness of Canada's cultural mosaic.

Given the dilution of Heritage Day since 1973, is there still something to celebrate? You can bet your beaver lined long johns! Heritage Day continues to provide a platform for Canadians to deepen their understanding of the past. It serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving heritage and it encourages Canadians to take pride in our collective heritage as Canada continues to evolve. It's a day to celebrate the beauty of culture in all its diversity and the dedicated people who work tirelessly to preserve the value of our past. Happy Heritage Day!

Patricia Kell is Executive Director of the National Trust for Canada. Chris Wiebe is the Manager, Heritage Policy and Government Relations for the National Trust.

“The Sycamore” – 178 Cambridge Street North or How my House was Designated

By David Seaborn

The Designation:

In autumn 2023, the City Heritage Planning Branch produced a list of priority properties from the Heritage Register which they hoped to protect by designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* before the then provincial deadline to do so, of December 2024. On that list was 178 Cambridge North.

Over four decades, I had researched the house’s history and become intimately aware of every aspect of the house’s construction. In March 2024, knowing that the Heritage Branch was hard pressed, I offered my research to them. I was asked to submit an application, (but not the usual fee). Over the summer, heritage planners and I discussed my information, what their additional research had turned up, and to what, exactly, the designation should apply.

The Heritage Branch often emphasised the social context and accepted only what could be corroborated by written documents as required by the Act. You can read their report here: <https://pub-ottawa.escrimetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=204803>.

I was more focused on the architectural and construction evidence, and did not discount the oral evidence. So this is my version of the story.

The Architecture

The house was built in the Queen Anne Revival style in 1899 in Ottawa’s Dalhousie Ward.



178 Cambridge Street North front 2023

A crest inscribed “The Sycamore” embellishes the front facade.

The house features multiple materials; a range of gabled ends and bay windows; and an octagonal turret. Additionally, there is a dentilled wood cornice; a fan shaped motif surrounded by pattern laid shingles in the front gable; two side gables with round windows (one with wood ‘compass points’); cedar shingle porch skirting; and leaded and

coloured glass windows on the first and third floors.

Under the red paint, the ground floor brick cladding is orangey-pink laid in common bond with a double string-course bracketing the windows. The second floor stucco was originally pink, but was overlaid with greyish white stucco in the 1950’s. A pattern-laid cedar shingle skirting separates the stucco from the brick. The wood trim was once painted

Photos: David Seaborn



The Sycamore Crest.

maroon and cream. The foundation is ashlar-coursed, rough-dressed, local limestone founded on bedrock. With few exceptions, the original wood windows and storms remain.

A one-storey remnant of squared timber construction from the modest c1875 predecessor house supports the back wall of the balloon-framed 2 1/2 storey 1899 house. Two small single-storey additions were attached at the rear southwest corner in 1950's.

The Builder (and The Architect)

Herman J. Hayner (1853-?) was a US born carpenter/contractor who built houses locally. He was a founding

member of the Carpenters Union. He bought the modest 1870's predecessor house c.1887. By 1902 he had left for a senior construction administrative job with New York City. Edwin Forest Hayner, his son (1874-1926), also US born, was a local designer and later an Architect in New York state. It seems probable that the son helped the father with the design of the replacement house. Some of the finished carpentry components were likely imported from the USA.

The Occupants

We know Dr. Louis-Napoleon Mongenais lived in the house in 1899 as two invoices (\$1 and \$4) were found under the floor boards. Three generations of the Vaughan family, civil servants, owned it from 1905 to 1946. The 1950s saw the house divided into three apartments. In 1982, the present owners converted it back to a single family dwelling.

The Masonic Connection

The torches and wreath carvings on the oak clad front door, and the



Front Door carvings of torches and wreath

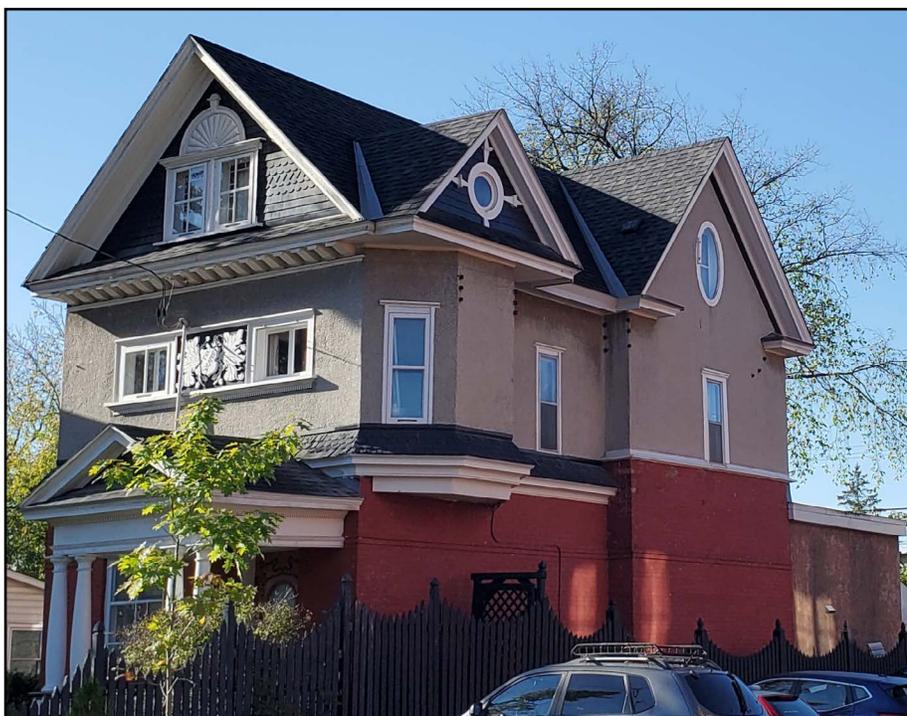
double, classical-columned and pedimented front porch (Temple of Solomon) are symbols of the Masonic Order. Edwin Hayner had a known involvement with a local Masonic Order.

Why "The Sycamore"?

Sycamore trees do not grow in Ottawa; they do grow in the eastern United States. Putting a name on a house is more of an American than a Canadian thing. Until 1912, one of the Masonic lodges in Ottawa was called "Sycamore Lodge". The shield in the centre of the spray of oak leaves and acorns on the facade has two layers. The second applied layer is where it says "The Sycamore". A neighbour, born in a house across the street c.1905 and still living there in the mid 1980's, claimed that there was once a sycamore tree in front of the house

Take your pick!

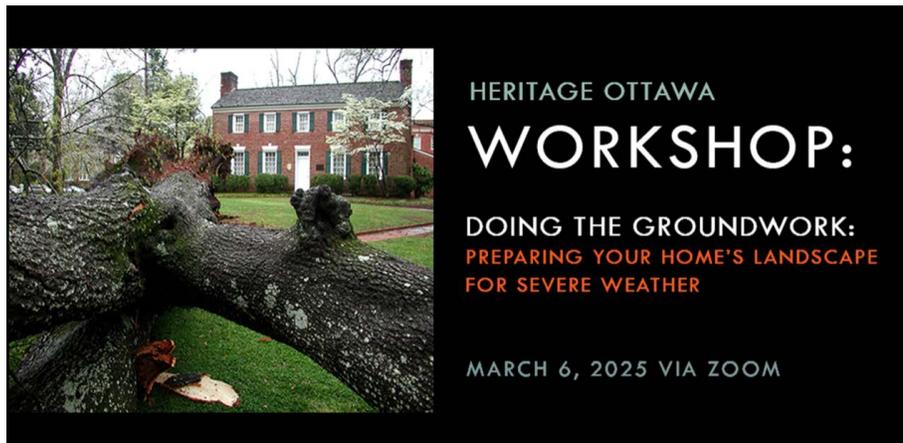
David Seaborn is a retired architect and a long-time resident of Dalhousie Ward, active in many community issues.



South East corner 2023

Extreme Weather and your Older Home

By John Zvonar



It isn't an overstatement to say that extreme weather events are becoming a common occurrence here in Ottawa. In the past few years alone, our summers have seen more days of extreme heat and higher-intensity storm events with heavy rainfall, hail and strong, damaging winds. Our winters have been characterized by dramatic freeze-thaw cycles and heavy snows that bring their own risks. Massive disruptions are becoming the norm.

Governments at all levels are revising emergency preparedness programs and implementing major public infrastructure projects to both prepare for the effects of climate

change and to reduce their carbon footprint. Billions of dollars are being spent on strategies to manage stormwater and wildfires, on expanded public transportation, and on resilient power grids – to name just a few.

But what should the owners of older homes be doing to prepare their properties and how can older homes be part of the solution?

As part of its “Help for Your Older Home” workshop series, Heritage Ottawa is developing a two-part workshop to help owners prepare their older homes for extreme weather events. The first part “Doing the

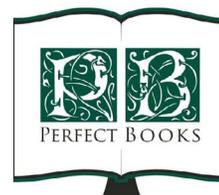
Groundwork – Preparing your home’s landscape for severe weather” will be held on **Thursday March 6th, 2025** and will focus on the landscape elements of your home. It will provide insight into improving the resilience of your home’s landscape through the maintenance and modification of the living (trees, shrubs) and the built (hard surfaces, drainage) components.

The second part “Building Resilience – Preparing your older home for severe weather” will be centered on the key components of older homes – both their building envelopes, as well as their internal systems, will be held in early April.

Registration for Part 1 of the workshop is \$25.

For more information on the workshop series, visit our website: <https://heritageottawa.org/heritage-ottawa-workshops>.

John Zvonar is a Heritage Ottawa board member, a Landscape Architect working in the field of heritage conservation, and is interested in how to prepare for extreme weather events.



Heritage Ottawa gratefully thanks **Flora Hall Brewing** and **Perfect Books** for supporting the publication of this Newsletter.

Patrimoine Ottawa remercie sincèrement **Flora Hall Brewing** et **Perfect Books** de leur appui à la publication de ce bulletin.

Dominion Observatory Complex Now a National Historic Site

On January 15 2025, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, announced the designation of the Dominion Observatory Complex as a national historic site under Parks Canada's National Program of Historical Commemoration.

The Dominion Observatory Complex is located within another national historic site, Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm, on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people. This complex of distinctive buildings conveys the federal government's forward-looking vision, at the turn of the century, to

establish national scientific institutions in the capital. (see *Newsletter*, August 2021, vol. 48, no. 3)

Heritage Ottawa congratulates the Dominion Observatory Preservation Committee and the Ottawa Center of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada who promoted this recognition. We remind readers that recognition does not offer legal protection from alteration or demolition. Bill C-23 (*Historic Places of Canada Act*) would have established a basis for the protection and conservation of the heritage value of these places but the prorogation of Parliament ended consideration of this Bill. (see *Newsletter*, November 2022, vol. 49, no. 4)

Hold the Date: Heritage Ottawa Spring Field Trip

Following successful coach day trips to Prescott and Brockville in 2023 and Merrickville and Smiths Falls in 2024, Heritage Ottawa is planning a field trip to historic locations in Glengarry County, from Maxville and Alexandria to Williamstown. The planned date is Thursday June 19th. More details about activities, meal options and price are coming soon.



Dominion Observatory, Ottawa

Photo: S. Odell 2021

Soybean Breeding on the Central Experimental Farm – a 100 year history

By Elroy Cober, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Soybean research in Canada has been ongoing for more than 100 years; indeed, ongoing scientific research is one of the reasons for the designation of the Central Experimental Farm as a National Historic Site of Canada. William Saunders reported the first soybean trial on the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa in 1897. These first soybeans were grown as alternative forage crops. Soybean production for grain began in earnest during the 1940s as a result of a need for vegetable oil.

Award winning research

Past Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) soybean breeders, F.W. Dimmock (1927-1961), Lorne Donovan (1961-1974), and Harvey Voldeng (1974-1996) at the CEF, emphasized early maturity and high yield in narrow rows. The introduction of cold tolerance from Swedish germplasm provided protection from cool nights and allowed for expansion of soybean production. Until the 1970s, most of Canada's soybean production was

limited to five counties in southern Ontario. Since then, Canadian soybean production has greatly expanded, from 190 000 hectares in 1973 to over 2 million hectares currently as a result of the movement of soybean production into new shorter-season areas – mostly in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. The research conducted at the CEF, in a prime short-season area, contributed to this expansion and the research of AAFC soybean breeder Harvey Voldeng was recognized with an Order of Canada.



Photo: Elroy Cober AAFC

Combine harvesting soybean yield trial plots along Baseline Road on the CEF.



Photo: AAFC

Midsummer soybean yield trial plots on the CEF from overhead.

Breeding objectives

There are a number of breeding objectives for the soybean research at AAFC on the CEF which targets short-season areas of Canada. Obviously, early flowering and early maturity are among the most important traits these soybeans need to possess. A good way to attain these traits is to breed for insensitivity to daylength. Soybeans typically have delayed maturity when grown in long days. Daylength insensitive soybeans are not delayed if grown further north where summer days are longer. Initially we grew soybeans outdoors under lights to provide 20 hour days and to select for insensitivity to long days but now we have developed molecular markers which allow us to select for the trait using leaf tissue from seedlings.

Early maturity, however, is not the only trait that matters. Some new production areas also have specific challenges which must be addressed. Iron-deficiency-chlorosis can be a problem in high pH soils in

Manitoba since the high pH reduces the solubility of iron in the soil. In turn, a lack of iron in the plant results in yellow or pale green leaves since iron is part of chlorophyll (the green pigments needed for photosynthesis and plant growth). Some soybeans are more efficient in obtaining iron and therefore do not suffer from iron deficiency chlorosis, so these soybeans can be used as parents for breeding for high pH soils. Testing for tolerance is being done using hydroponics with the nutrient solution mimicking soil conditions which cause the problem.

Typically soybeans grown in new areas suffer fewer pests and diseases. Eventually, however, pests such as soybean cyst nematode (SCN) move into the new area and become established. SCN is a soil-living worm which attacks soybean roots that was first found only in the longer-season soybean growing area of Canada. Unfortunately, SCN has moved into the short-season areas in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. The soybean breeding work on the CEF

now includes breeding for resistance to SCN.

Soybean research on the CEF has an emphasis on specialty types of soy including high protein soybean which can be used for making tofu, and small seeded soybean which is used in the fermented product called natto. Soybean researchers at AAFC on the CEF study end product traits like tofu texture or seed soaking traits important for natto quality.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has a history of over 100 years of soybean research on the CEF, and has contributed to the expansion of soybean in short season areas of Canada. There is no doubt that this production area expansion will continue as the market continues to demand more high-quality Canadian soybean.

Dr. Elroy Cober is an Ottawa Research and Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research scientist working on soybean breeding on the CEF.

The Ontario Heritage Act Turns 50!

The *Ontario Heritage Act* was enacted by the Bill Davis Conservative government on 6 February 1975 and proclaimed on 5 March 1975 in Kingston by Lieutenant Governor Pauline McGibbon.

The Act gave municipal councils the right to designate heritage properties and districts and to delay approvals for alteration or demolition of

designated buildings, and provided for the creation of municipal heritage committees, such as the Local Architecture Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), established in Ottawa in January 1976 (today's Built Heritage Committee).

Major amendments by the Liberal government in 2005 added the right to permanently block demolitions.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Act, Heritage Ottawa is devoting this year's **Phillips Memorial Lecture** to a panel presentation "**The Ontario Heritage Act Turns 50! The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful**" on February 19 at 7 pm via zoom. To register visit: heritageottawa.org

INVITATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

May 15, 2025 at 7:00 pm | Le 15 mai, 2025 à 19 h

Via ZOOM

The Annual General Meeting of Heritage Ottawa members will be held via ZOOM. Pre-registration is required. To ensure we have quorum and to avoid a last minute rush, please pre-register as soon as possible on our website at heritageottawa.org/annual-general-meeting or by emailing office@heritageottawa.org or phoning 613-230-8841.

The AGM will be followed by a special illustrated lecture.

L'Assemblée générale annuelle des membres sera tenue via ZOOM. La pré-inscription est requise. Pour assurer qu'on aura quorum et éviter des difficultés de dernière minute, nous vous recommandons de vous pré-inscrire dès que possible sur notre site Web patrimoineottawa.org/fr/assemblee-generale-ottawa ou par courriel à office@patrimoineottawa.org ou par téléphone au 613-230-8841.

L'AGA sera suivi d'un discours spécial illustré.