



Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage

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Heritage News Now

Demolition by Neglect Wins Again



Photo: Linda Hoag

The demolition of 234 O'Connor was approved in April 2017 by Planning Committee and City Council in spite of earlier Built Heritage Sub-Committee and staff recommendations to refuse the application to demolish this building located in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District.

Ottawa is Hosting Another Heritage Conference

CAPITALizing on Heritage
National Trust and APT Conference
Community, Government
and Savoir Faire

October 11-14, 2017

Ottawa is the place to be for the Canadian Confederation's 150th anniversary celebrations.

For more information check the website:
<http://www.nationaltrustcanada.ca/get-involved/conferences>

50 YEARS | 50 STORIES We're Celebrating Our Anniversary!

By Carolyn Quinn

In celebration of our 50th anniversary this year, Heritage Ottawa is sharing the stories of 50 buildings that the organization has helped to try and save and preserve during 50 years of advocacy work championing the city's historic architecture.

The idea for the project came about a couple of years ago. Heritage Ottawa board member Ken Elder gamely undertook the required research, and the stories soon began to take shape. It was

agreed that in order to reach the broadest audience, we would post the stories on our website.

Launched on March 1 with the story of the former Union Station, new entries are rolling out each week to an enthusiastic response. They will continue coming all year until we reach "50" in December.

At the time of writing, fifteen stories—each accompanied by a slideshow of fabulous photos—have been posted on our web site



Union Station 1922

Credit: Ken Elder collection

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

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Heritage Ottawa acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Ministry of Culture

50 Years | 50 Stories cont'd.

at heritageottawa.org. And thanks to a grant from Ontario150 in support of the project, we are achieving our goal of making all the entries available in French.

The stories selected for the project range from such grand structures as the East Block of Parliament Hill and the landmark Aberdeen Pavilion to the more modest Windsor Smoke Shop and Bolton Street double in Lowertown.

While capturing the history of Heritage Ottawa's half century of work on behalf of the city's built heritage, the stories also share interesting tidbits about each of the buildings featured and some of the fascinating people who were associated with them.

In the years leading up to Canada's Centennial, for instance, some people in government thought the demolition of the East Block in favour of a modern replacement was the best way to handle a historic building that needed to be brought up to date. To help raise awareness about the building's value as a national treasure, the Heritage Committee of A Capital for Canadians (forerunner of Heritage Ottawa) organized and administered tours of the interior. It was the first time in the building's history that it was opened to the public.



Lamira Dow Billings 1873

It seems hard to believe today that the home of two of Ottawa's first and most important settlers, Braddish and Lamira Billings, was nearly lost. Saving the Billings Estate from demolition was a long and emotional struggle and one that galvanized public support and recognition for Heritage Ottawa. Thankfully, enough members of City Council

understood the importance of the building to Ottawa's roots that today it operates as a city-owned museum. As our co-founder, Bob Phillips, recalled when writing about the issue in 1981, "Conservation was becoming strangely respectable."

One of the first noteworthy public buildings to follow the construction of the Parliament Buildings was the Carleton County Gaol on Nicholas Street. Although we shudder at the conditions inmates were subjected to at the time, when the gaol opened in 1863 it represented the latest innovations in penal reform. That trend did not include an end to public hangings however. It was here that Patrick Whelan, the convicted assassin of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, was hanged before a crowd of 5,000 people, the last such hanging to occur in Canada. Today, thanks in part to the efforts of Heritage Ottawa's early activists,

the former Carleton County Gaol operates as the HI-Ottawa Jail Hostel, offering 21st-century visitors the chance to spend the night in an authentic jail cell.

Not all historic structures that Heritage Ottawa was involved in preserving were buildings. The Pretoria Avenue Bridge, completed in 1918, was designed by the internationally renowned Strauss Bascule Bridge Company of Chicago, Illinois. By the late 1960s, time and rust damage meant costly repairs were needed. Plans for repairs were soon being replaced by plans for two high-level arterial spans, one on each side of the Queensway, that would cut through the Glebe and Golden Triangle neighbourhoods. The proposal ignited a battle that lasted for ten years. The campaign to save the historic bridge attracted such Heritage Ottawa activists as architectural consultant Harold Kalman and conservation architect John Leaning. In the end, the right decision was made when the city opted to replace the bridge with a heritage-sensitive design. A careful dismantling of the Nepean sandstone allowed its

reconstruction, widening the deck and replicating the bridge's unique lift mechanism.

A more modest but equally important structure to Ottawa's history that was threatened with demolition was Old Ottawa South's fire hall, No. 10 Graham Station. An elaborate Spanish-Colonial style building designed by Ottawa architect Werner Ernst Noffke in 1920, it was named in honour of Ottawa Fire Chief John W. Graham. Graham was known for his progressive ideas and he played a vital role in modernizing the Ottawa Fire Department and introducing new safety measures. By the 1960s, pressure to streamline the service saw smaller fire stations like No. 10 Graham Station decommissioned. Recognizing that a new use for the station would need to be found if the building was to be preserved, Mary-Anne Phillips, a co-founding member of Heritage Ottawa, spearheaded a campaign that was endorsed by then Mayor Lorry Greenberg. With financial assistance from the City, the building reopened in 1977 as the Ottawa South Community Centre.



Pretoria Avenue Bridge 1934



Carleton County Gaol

Credit: Jeff Johnston, Wikimedia Commons

These are but brief synopses of some of the many stories currently unrolling on our website. More detailed versions can be found there, along with several others not included here, and all are accompanied by a range of interesting photographs and illustrations.

Visit heritageottawa.org/50-years-50-stories to read the entries we have posted. And check back regularly as more stories are being unveiled on a weekly basis. Notifications of all new stories are posted on Facebook and Twitter.

Heritage Ottawa is proud to have played a role in preserving some of Ottawa's most beloved and important heritage buildings over the past 50 years. We appreciate the ongoing support of you, our members and friends, as we celebrate our anniversary and look forward to our next 50 years.

Carolyn Quinn is a former president of Heritage Ottawa and current member of the Board of Directors who is enjoying her role in bringing 50 YEARS | 50 STORIES to life.

Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards – overview

By Adam Krajewski

Editor's note: The author, a Carleton University student, undertook to research and write this article as part of a practicum. Heritage conservation is a new interest for Adam, and he offers an interesting perspective on a program we often take for granted.

2017 marked yet another successful awards ceremony for the Ottawa Architectural Conservation awards. Running concurrently with Heritage Day in February every other year, these awards serve to celebrate and exemplify the excellent work in the preservation and restoration of Ottawa's heritage buildings.

The past three ceremonies have taken place in historic renovated buildings: Arts Court on Daly Avenue, the Horticulture Building at Lansdowne, and this year at the Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards. Prior to that, the event was held at Ottawa City Hall, an easily accessible and convenient, yet less inspiring space. The choice of venues showcasing restoration and reuse might be at the cost of lower attendance, as parties associated with the event seemed to comprise the bulk of the attendees.

2017 Awards Ceremony

This year's venue, the Innovation Centre (7 Bayview Road), is a prime example of the preservation of the city's architectural heritage. The Centre breathes new life into



35 Armstrong Street (Richmond Lodge) 1986 Award of Excellence

the abandoned 1941 red-brick City Works building. For decades the building served as offices and repair shops for the fleet of trucks owned by the city, as well as a storage space, before finally being closed down, boarded up, and left forgotten until finally being reinvented as a completely

new space for the promotion of creative thought and innovation. It is now the place where new businesses and unique start-ups can go to develop their ideas and find support. The story of the Innovation Centre is an example of what the Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards strive to celebrate and promote.



189 Laurier Avenue East (Panet House) 1989 Award of Excellence Adaptive Re-use

On the night of the awards, one entered the industrial building and walked up towards a striking red serpentine staircase (evocatively nicknamed "the dragon") into the vast concrete conference space and saw a select group of individuals comprised of experts in fields of architecture and conservation and proud building owners. The awards were attended by Mayor Jim Watson, Councillors Jan Harder, Tobi Nussbaum, and Jeff Leiper, members of the

heritage community, as well as various other distinguished individuals.

The awards were presented in the six categories of Restoration (large scale and small scale), Adaptive Reuse, Infill, Addition, Community Heritage, and the Heritage 150 Award. Some notable buildings that received Excellence awards are the Wellington Building, 180 Wellington Street (former Metropolitan Life Building); Sir John A. Macdonald Building (former Bank of Montreal), 144 Wellington Street; House of Commons, Parliament Hill; and Ravenhill Common, 450 Churchill Avenue.

History of the awards

So why and how did the Ottawa Architectural Awards come about? The Ottawa Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) was formed as a response to the vast destruction accompanying Ottawa's growth in the 60s and 70s. As demolition crews moved in on such areas as LeBreton Flats, or heritage buildings like the Sacred Heart Convent on Rideau Street, the lack of proper heritage conservation guidelines became apparent. The unregulated destruction acted as a catalyst and moved Mayor Pierre Benoit to establish a Committee on Heritage in 1972. The committee's mandate stated that "heritage conservation should be the subject of constant consultation between all levels of government operating in Ottawa, so that the City may make known its interests and discharge its responsibilities."

From these beginnings, the Mayor's Committee on Heritage led to the creation of the LACAC in 1975. LACAC made recommendations which formed the basis of official City policies on heritage, and recommended designation of buildings and districts under the new *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Perhaps inspired by the Certificates of Merit awarded by Heritage Ottawa at its 1980 Annual General Meeting, LACAC created the Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards.

These awards fit into a larger scheme of efforts all designed around the same goal of preserving Ottawa's unique heritage. The programme was introduced in 1981, and the first awards were announced on Heritage Day in 1982. Their express purpose, as stated in the LACAC Decennial Report was "to encourage and acknowledge excellent work done

in the field of preservation and restoration of Ottawa's heritage buildings."

The three main categories for the Awards – Restoration, Adaptive use, and Infill - have always remained the same. By 1998 a total of 12 projects were recognised at the Awards, compared to the initial 3 projects recognised in 1982. After the 2001 municipal amalgamation that absorbed neighbouring municipalities, the reach of the awards was widened in scope; LACAC stated in 2002 that the purpose of the awards is to "acknowledge and encourage excellent work in the field of architectural conservation across the new City." The success of the awards is evident through their relative stability across time and municipal change.

Past awards

One must only go as far as the Ottawa City website to



École Sacré Cœur 19 Melrose Avenue 2011 Award of Excellence for Adaptive Use and Infill

view the exceptional winning projects from previous years, but disappointingly, the online database only covers the three most recent award ceremonies, back to the 2011-2012 winners. The more committed can go to Ottawa City Hall, where, on the fourth floor in the great atrium of the planning department, they will find meticulously designed panels commemorating previous award ceremonies and their winners back to 2006-2007. For a complete list up to 1998 one can consult an appendix in *Ottawa: a guide to heritage structures/Ottawa: guide du patrimoine bâti*, published in 2000 by LACAC.

The awards, boasting a long history, help stimulate conversation and interest among property owners, architects, conservationists, and the construction industry; yet they seem to remain a bit of a mystery to the general public. One tell-tale sign of their success remains visible on the façades of the awarded buildings, in the form of commemorative bronze plaques, a tremendously successful campaign providing a tangible mark of the success of the awards.



Ottawa Architectural Conservation Award panels

Today we see the awards going beyond the recognition of projects to celebrate the contributions of different groups and individuals. But despite the growing range of award recipients, and the highly distinguished attendees, the awards seem to be removed from the public eye. Perhaps it is the changing locations, or the biennial nature, maybe a lack of advertising, but the fact is that not many unaffiliated members of the public make it to the event. One must remember that the awards are open to the public and anybody can apply or attend. Public participation should be encouraged, so as to



Ottawa Architectural Conservation Award plaque

facilitate the spirit of competition and civic pride that has shaped Ottawa so far.

In the 1988 LACAC Decennial Report Mayor James A. Durrell states that “the built heritage of a community both reflects its sense of itself and helps to shape its future.” Almost 30 years later, those sentiments are echoed in the words of Mayor Jim Watson: “by recognizing these incredible achievements in restoration and conservation, we are celebrating our history and acknowledging its impact on how we build our future.”

Perhaps the unchanging official perceptions of why the Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards are important are the reason why these awards have such a long and stable history. Let their continued existence remain a testament to our unwavering belief in the importance of architectural heritage.

Adam Krajewski is graduating this year from the History and Theory of Architecture program at Carleton University and will be pursuing his Master's Degree in Architecture at the University of Toronto. Over the past four years he has developed a great interest in the capital's architecture. He wishes to pursue a career in conservation, so that one day he can contribute to the efforts of preservation and protection of historically significant structures. He hopes one day to be an active participant in events such as the Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards.

Walking Tours are in our DNA

By Linda Hoad

Heritage Ottawa has planned a special and expanded walking tour program for Canada's sesquicentennial and our own 50th anniversary. Please check our brochure and look for further information on our website.

Walking tours have been an important means of promoting our heritage from the earliest years of Heritage Ottawa. These examples of walking tours over the years were found in our files due to a recent office move. Even we were surprised at this glimpse of our past tour offerings.

One of the earliest tours was of the East Block, after the struggle to preserve this building had been won. "Since the tours commenced in late June 1972, in excess of 9,000 Canadians and visitors from other lands have been conducted through ... Canada's most historic building" according to the Comité Heritage Committee 1972-73 report to members.

Sandy Hill and New Edinburgh were featured in bilingual self-guided walking tours prepared and illustrated in co-operation with community organizations and individuals to promote their heritage. These 1975 publications were very popular, but are now long out-of-print.

Early guided walking tours were offered of New Edinburgh, the ByWard Market and Sussex Drive, the Sussex Courtyards and "The Mile of History".



Examples of early Heritage Ottawa walking tours.

In 2003 with the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation Heritage Ottawa published English and French versions of self-guided walking tours featuring the history and use of architectural terra cotta in Ottawa. This publication is still available; please see our website for details.

The Glebe: a Walking Tour by John McLeod, an active and long-time member of Heritage Ottawa and walking tour leader, was published in 2013 and is now almost out of print. Heritage Ottawa hopes to publish similar volumes for other popular walking tours.

Heritage Ottawa's neighbourhood walking tours are offered with the assistance of enthusiastic and knowledgeable advocates who have researched or lived the heritage of their community. These tours have been a reliable and welcome source of funds for Heritage Ottawa's other activities since at least 1999, thanks to the support of our sponsors and the efforts of volunteer organizers, tour guides and tour assistants. Heritage Ottawa is always interested in adding to our repertoire of walking tours – there are many Ottawa neighbourhoods still to be discovered.

Please join us this season for one of your old favourites or come and try one of our new tours.

Linda Hoad is a member of the Board of Heritage Ottawa and editor of the Newsletter.

From the President

By **David Jeanes**



As we move from the end of our fiscal year on 31 March towards our Annual General Meeting on May 25th a lot has been happening.

Programs

Our programs are moving into high gear for Canada's sesquicentennial and our 50th anniversary. We encourage members to check out our website publication 50 Years | 50 Stories (see page 1 for more information).

Members and volunteers enjoyed a special bus tour to the Perth campus of Algonquin College arranged by Nicole Sammut in mid-May.

The blockbuster walking tour season (23 tours) began with an orientation and appreciation event for walking tour volunteers. As we wind up a very successful 2016-2017 lecture series, the Lecture Committee is already well into the planning of the 2017-2018 series, starting in September.

Heritage Ottawa is involved in several conferences coming to Ottawa this year – we will offer a walking tours

for the Canadian Archaeological Conference in May, the Ontario Heritage Conference in June and the National Trust/Association for Preservation Technology conference in October.

Advocacy

Our Advocacy Committee continues to deal with the hot local issues and we have attended and presented our positions at numerous Built Heritage Sub-Committee and Planning Committee meetings on matters such as Somerset House, 270 Buchan Avenue in Rockcliffe, and additions to the Heritage Register.

We are represented on the Mayor's Task Force on Heritage Matters, and participate in numerous public consultations such as the Central Experimental Farm, the Rideau Canal, and the redevelopment of the Natural Resources Canada complex on Booth Street. We regularly monitor the meetings of the National Capital Commission Board.

As a member of the Ottawa Cultural Alliance we are working closely with five other organizations to ensure that the City's Cultural Momentum Fund is applied effectively to realize the City's 5-year Arts Heritage and Culture Plan.

Outreach

We continue to collaborate with other heritage organizations and activities such as Welcoming Ottawa Week walking tours, and Doors Open Ottawa. Heritage Ottawa was a sponsor for a very well-organized Heritage Symposium

in April organized by Carleton University students, and we helped with the judging and provided a prize for elementary school students at the Ottawa Regional Heritage Fair.

New Committees

As our website and social media have become a very important means of informing members and others about our activities and heritage issues in Ottawa we have established a Communications Committee to enhance and expand our use of these tools. Carolyn Quinn has joined the Executive as chair of this new committee. Please check out our Facebook page and Twitter feed – and let your friends know about us too!

Office News

After a very complimentary peer review of Heritage Ottawa's programming and operations, the City of Ottawa renewed our Heritage Service Agreement and increased our grant to provide stable funding for the next three-year period at an increased level.

Heritage Ottawa could not possibly function without the hard work of our board members, all our committees and volunteers, as well as the dedication of our manager intern Amber Polywkan. My thanks to everyone.

David Jeanes, President, Heritage Ottawa / Patrimoine Ottawa