

Who Can Help Me with This Old House?



Our first Introductory Workshop, *Who Can Help Me With This Old House?*, held October 14, 2023, was a great success. The event gave participants access to professional experts who shared their knowledge and practical know-how.

The day-long workshop included six sessions, each developed by professionals in their fields, covering a range of topics on the conservation of older homes.

Each presenter recommended reading material that we have combined into a **Resource Package** organized according to the six workshop sessions. (The list is not intended to be comprehensive, nor does it represent an endorsement of any organization by Heritage Ottawa).

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Researching your Older Home Page



General Information

[Ontario Architecture](#) for general information on popular architectural styles, and defining features.

If you know the architect of your house, [Dictionary of Architects in Canada](#) has info on their lives, and the buildings that they have become known for.

If your house has been designated, then [Historic Places](#) may provide information on what are the defining features of your home.

[Canadiana](#) is a non-profit dedicated to preserving Canada's heritage and making it accessible online.

[Modern Realtor](#) has information on mid-century modern houses that may be useful in researching your home.

The [Building Technology Heritage Library](#) is primarily a collection of American and Canadian, pre-1964 architectural trade catalogs, house plan books and technical building guides. These sources can be helpful in the preservation and conservation of older buildings.

Maps

Maps are useful for seeing how your home has evolved throughout the years. Aerial photos and street view has photos of your home from different years.

[Google Maps](#) Street view allows you to see changes to your house throughout time.

[GeoOttawa](#) for aerial maps, at different points of times, to see the changes done to your property over the years.

Books and Articles Collections

[Society for Study of Architecture in Canada Journal](#) has made back issues for their papers available freely online. This is a great resource for specialized architectural research with useful illustrations.

[MacOdrum Library](#) is a great resource for architectural history, and their research services are available to members of the public. Books and articles can also be borrowed by members of the public, if you set up an account with MacOdrum library.

The [Ottawa Public Library](#) has valuable resources for the research of your home. At their main downtown branch, they have the Ottawa Room, which houses many sources for the history of Ottawa.

Newspaper Resources

When researching your house, looking at newspapers can be useful. Evidence of social events that may have happened at your house or businesses that were run out of your house may be found in newspapers archives. Newspapers can be used to research local events that happened in your neighbourhood that may be important to your home's history. These archives available online may have information related to your home.

[Newspaper.com](#)

[Google Newspapers](#)

[Ottawa Public Library Newspapers](#)

Creating a Landscape for Your Older Home



General Websites

[Cultivating Canadian Gardens](#)

[Old House Gardens](#)

[Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada](#)

Landscape Planning

How to plan a garden – expert layout and planting advice

If you're wondering how to plan a garden, this expert advice will help you create an outdoor space full of interest and beauty.

<https://www.homesandgardens.com/advice/how-to-plan-a-garden>

Victorian garden design – 5 key elements for your backyard

Use features of Victorian garden design to inspire the planting and ideas for your modern home garden.

<https://www.homesandgardens.com/advice/victorian-garden-design>

Edwardian Garden Style

The Edwardian garden became a rural idyll crafted around the house, with natural materials, formal design and ebullient planting.

<https://theenglishgarden.telegraph.co.uk/expert-advice/design-solutions/design-edwardian-garden-style/>

Modernist Garden Design Guide: how to design a high impact garden

<https://www.gardenninja.co.uk/modernist-garden-design-guide-how-to-design-a-high-impact-garden/#:~:text=Modernist%20gardens%20rely%20heavily%20on,of%20plants%2C%20textures%20or%20materials>

The Cultural Landscape Foundation

<https://www.tclf.org/category/landscape-style/modernist#:~:text=Modernism%20embraced%20a%20diverse%20palette,extend%20the%20living%20space%20outdoors>

11 Things That Make Your House Look More Expensive, According to Designers

These easy swaps can help your home appear way more luxurious.

<https://www.veranda.com/decorating-ideas/advice-from-designers/a45401387/how-to-make-your-house-look-expensive/>

Native Plants / biodiversity

[The Corner Pollinator Garden](#)

[A Cultivated Art](#)

[Ontario Invasive Plant Council](#)

[Grow me instead!](#)

City Resources for Designated Homes

If your home is designated, the following resources and grants may be of use. If you are unsure if your home is designated, you can use the heritage layer on [GeoOttawa](#).

Resources for Designated Homes

[Government of Ontario Heritage Toolkit](#)

[Recommended Treatments for Heritage Homes](#)

City of Ottawa – Heritage Planning

[City of Ottawa Heritage Conservation](#)

[City of Ottawa Heritage Grant Program](#)

[City of Ottawa Planning Primer Courses](#)

[City of Ottawa Planning Primer - Heritage Planning Outline](#)

Contact:

Phone: 613-580-2463

Email: heritage@ottawa.ca

Financing and Insuring an Older Home



Insurance

The [Insurance Bureau of Canada – Risk Prospectus](#) is a particularly useful tool to structure all the information needed to address the most common questions insurance companies will ask. In the current context, doing the legwork yourself ahead of time can greatly help your chances of obtaining insurance (and possibly even at lower rates. The IBC [pamphlet](#) is also useful to read.

Although specific to the legal and policy context in Quebec, the information on the [Amis et propriétaires de maisons anciennes du Québec](#) website is useful (en français)– they have been very proactive on the insurance file.

The [Community Heritage Ontario website](#) includes a few interesting links – including one to a session at their conference – that address the insurance issue.

The [City of Toronto](#) produced a useful information sheet on insurance for older homes.

Buying an Older Home General Resources

[What You Should Know About Buying an Historic Home](#)

[What to look out for when you're shopping for an older home](#)

Maintaining your Older Home



[Old House Journal](#) – this American magazine’s website has many articles on general maintenance and on specific issues.

Another American source for homeowners that want to do the work themselves, is [Fine Home-building](#). Full access to all articles requires membership, but they do post articles on a regular basis that are freely accessible.

The Region of Waterloo in Ontario created a [Heritage Conservation Tool Box](#) on their website with fact sheets for the most common questions (eg insulation, hardware, plaster, roofing etc) that give practical information and include additional links.

Parks Canada’s [Building Resilience](#) gives info on the inherent sustainable traits your home may already have. Broken down into sections (walls, windows, roofs, etc.) for information on the relationship each part has with overall sustainability and best practices.

Istore contains a vast amount of resources (on many topics not related to homes), but we specifically mentioned that it houses the archived copies of the [Bulletin of the Association of Preservation Technology](#) international, that covers many conservation issues in detail.

There is a lot of excellent advice on insulating a roof / attic on the [Natural Resources Canada website](#). It also contains more [general advice](#) for improving energy efficiency.

There are professional association websites dedicated to specific roofing materials such as [copper](#), or [sheet metal](#), and while directed to professionals, they give important guidelines and information. Similar websites exist for all types of roofing materials.

The [Green Building Advisor website](#) – while geared to professionals – contains articles and blog posts that are relevant and useful for homeowners looking to reduce the carbon impact of their home.

Hiring Professional Services



General Resources

[Making your Renovation Work](#) is a step-by-step guide to planning your renovation, and serves as a tool to help you plan your project, up to hiring the right contractor for you.

[A Homeowner Guide to Renovation Contracts](#) serves as a guide to creating a project between you and a contractor.

Professional Organizations

Heritage Ottawa is not able to recommend a tradesperson. We can recommend where to look for a qualified professional. Please note that not all professionals will have experience in heritage conservation. It is important when hiring a professional to ask for references and to see prior projects to see if they have the experience you require.

- [Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals](#)
- [Ontario Association of Landscape Professionals](#)
- [Ontario Association of Professional Archaeologists](#)
- [Ontario Association of Architects](#)
- [Greater Ottawa Homebuilders Association](#)

Workshops

Listed below are workshops that may be of interest. Heritage Ottawa is not associated with any of these organizations and participants are encouraged to reach out directly to workshop organizers with their questions.

[Old Home Living Workshop with Dr. Christopher Cooper](#)

[Kawartha lakes workshop](#)

[Fraser Valley - Home Inspection and Maintenance Workshop](#)