



Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage Summer 2002 Volume 29, No. 1

Heritage Ottawa Addresses the NCC's Board of Directors. President's Report

Carolyn Quinn

The National Capital Commission invited local interest groups to present ideas to assist the commission in fulfilling its three-part national mandate: *Communicating the capital to Canadians; safeguarding and preserving national symbols and treasures; and creating a meeting place for all Canadians. The following is a modified version of our response presented to the Board of Directors of the NCC by President Carolyn Quinn on May 2, 2002*

J'aimerais commencée par vous remercier pour cette occasion de présenter nos idées en ce qui concernent la réalisation du mandat de la Commission de la Capitale Nationale.

En bref, notre message de toute première importance c'est de ne jamais oublier de considérer la forte impression que vos décisions ont sur les résidents de la capitale et sur notre patrimoine locale.

For this over-riding precept – a respect for the citizenry of the National Capital Region – to guide all NCC plans, there must be transparency of the decision making process and increased consultation with the local communities and their representatives. This evening is a good beginning. Let us hope it is just the start of a more permanent practice. Greater representation from the national capital area on the NCC's Board would be welcome. A regular meeting of the

Mayors of Ottawa and Gatineau is essential. When communicating the capital to Canadians, it is the actual nature and history of the capital that must be the focus. The city is the product of the life of the local citizens, the Ontario-Quebec bilingual character, the cosmopolitan lifestyle of immigrant and diplomatic communities and the political climate as the seat of government.

Your mandate must balance the civic realm and the capital realm more effectively. The 'town versus crown' dichotomy has tended to work against those sites whose history is perceived as of too local significance. Federal urban planning sets priorities that aim at achieving national objectives that often jeopardise municipal heritage.

Your preference for a vision of the capital that favours it as visitor showcase, 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 Centre Block of Parliament Hill.

Both these destructive developments ignore the historic significance of Sparks Street as an important local cultural landscape – by severing it in two. You have used the phrase "reclaiming a historic downtown street for public and private use". It has always had public and private uses, and it is not yours to reclaim.

The City of Ottawa has designated parts of Sparks Street a Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act to preserve its history. What you propose is to transform Sparks Street, a weasel word used in describing your plans for LeBreton Flats.

Similarly, the creation of a public square runs contrary to the design of Parliament Hill. The High-Victorian Gothic Revival design of our Parliament Buildings was chosen over the Neo-Classical style because it reflected our non-revolutionary past and our feeling for the picturesque. The sheer delight of this architecture is meant to surprise the visitor, not to impose itself from the distance of a wide open space. Jacques Gréber understood this important aesthetic consideration when he planned the widening of Elgin Street to create an angular approach to the Hill.

The NCC mandate, as a public trustee of the region, must protect the physical evidence of the multifaceted evolution of the heritage character of Ottawa. The graceful low-key and quiet character of the city with the vibrant life of its resident communities, is admired equally by residents and visitors. This very character must be communicated to Canadians without added pretensions.

Your mandate is to communicate the capital as history has made it, not as Paris or Washington would have planned it. To fulfil this mandate to oversee the protection of our natural,

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President's Report...

architectural and cultural symbols and treasures, you must stop the transfer of public lands into private hands. Some development must be part of the planning of federal lands, but it should be done in such a way that is responsive to tax payers and your own heritage policy.

Your vision of the capital as a meeting place for all Canadians should include a respect for the living spaces of the city's residents. It is a local place that has a history that is older than the country. Anything less is not only unfair to the people of this city, it results in a misrepresentation of the city's evolution to visitors.

We, the residents of this city are proud of what our forebears have built. We are proud to be of the Nation's Capital. And when Canadians visiting from other parts of Canada view their capital and go home, it is us, the residents, who are left to make this city work and to treasure its past.

Please, don't destroy the shrine to make way for the pilgrims.



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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Canada's Round Table on Historic Places Concludes with Three Part Action Plan

Kerry Edmonds

Canadian Heritage Minister Sheila Copps and a cross-section of experts from a variety of disciplines concluded the first Minister's Round Table on Historic Places with commitment to a three phase plan of action.

Phase 1 – Work will move ahead quickly to complete a new Canadian Register of Historic Places, conservation standards and a rigorous certification process.

Phase 2 – Participants concurred with the Minister's emphasis on the need to “complete putting our federal house in order,” and agreed on the requirement for new legislation to provide heritage protection for key federal buildings and to provide new protection for archaeological resources under federal jurisdiction. Participants also reached consensus on the need for financial incentives to spur the restoration and preservation of historic buildings.

Phase 3 – Participants also agreed to work together towards the establishment of a new Canadian Trust for Historic Places. To assist with the work, Minister Copps announced that she would establish three Ministerial Working Groups. **Skills, Municipal Outreach and Broader Sustainable Development Issues.** “We have an incredible array of Canadians with the dedication and the knowledge essential to ensure a renaissance of Canada's historic places”, said the Minister. “I intend to ask those talented individuals to volunteer their services for the conservation and celebration of

our heritage. I am delighted that the initial response is overwhelmingly positive.”

The **Skills Group** will bring together, among others, architects, labour representatives, engineers, tradespeople, artisans and contractors with the aim to ensure Canada provides enough young people with the know-how to restore heritage buildings.

The Municipal Outreach Group will work to engage both large and small communities in a campaign to push forward a national strategy on historic places. This group, led by elected municipal officials, would also advise the Minister on how tax incentives might be used for heritage protection of single family dwellings.

The Sustainable Development Working Group will seek to link work on historic places with the work of organizations such as the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. “We must strive to be as inclusive and as pan-Canadian as possible,” stated Minister Copps. “Governments must work together to give the private and voluntary sectors the tools they need to conserve and celebrate Canada's extraordinary array of historic places.”

Further information can be obtained from: Kerry Edmonds, Director of Communications, Office of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, (819) 997-7788. (Also available on the Internet at www.parksCanada.gc.ca under, What's New)

The Architecture of Ottawa's Central Union Station

by David L. Jeanes

The Government Conference Centre, formerly Union Station, was designed in May 1908 by Ross & MacFarlane, a three-year old partnership of young Montreal architects. Their beaux-arts concept impressed city council and newspaper reporters as “strikingly beautiful” and “so completely different” from the rejected Gothic designs of New York architect Bradford Lee Gilbert. A central union station, planned since 1891 but delayed many times, had become a personal project of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Ottawa Mayor D’Arcy Scott and Grand Trunk Railway President Charles Melville Hays.

By 1909 George Allen Ross and David Huron MacFarlane assembled their team for the station. Designer Louis-Joseph Théophile Décary and the firm’s chief draftsman Robert Henry MacDonald led 30 architects, engineers and draftsmen, almost all Canadians, who had apprenticed to leading Montreal

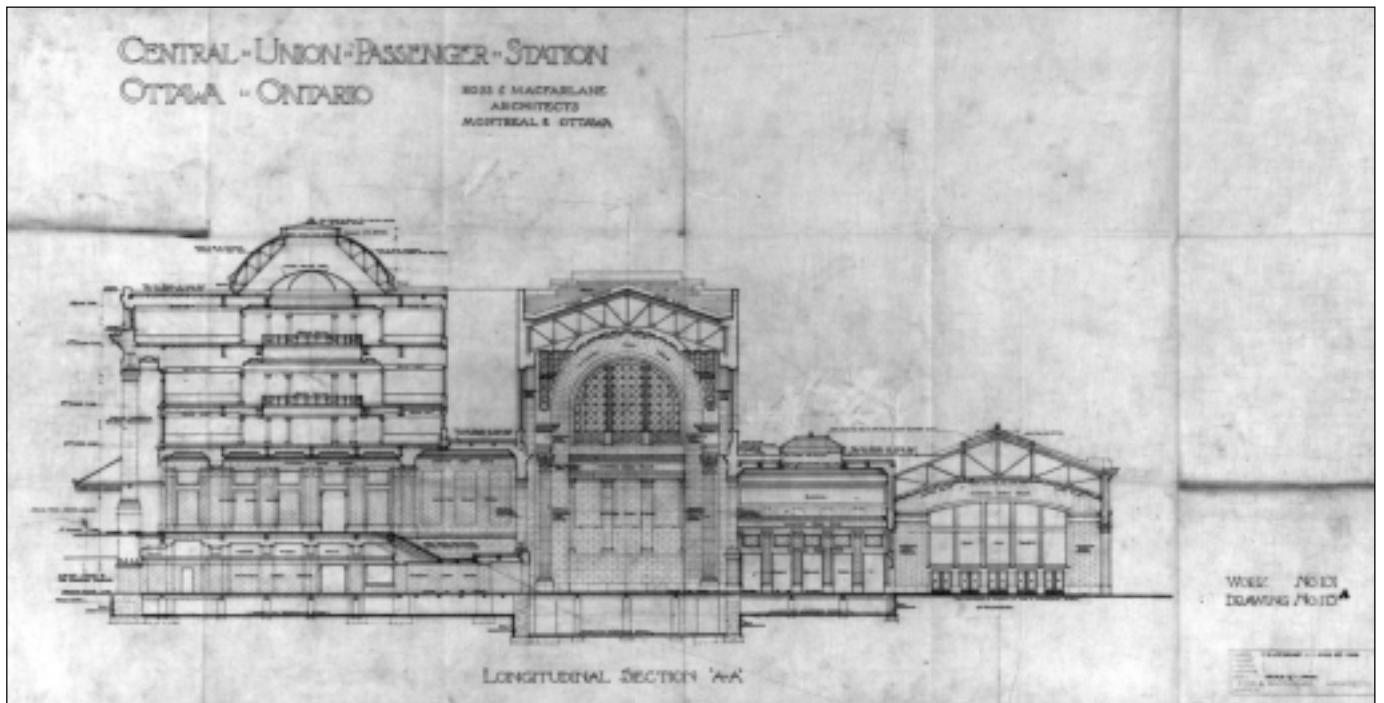


Photo by: W.C. Whittaker, collection of F.D. Shaw

Ottawa's Union Station and Bush train shed in action, June 1956.

architects, studied at Bishop's, McGill, the École Polytechnique, M.I.T. in Boston, or the École des beaux-arts in

Paris, and worked for leading beaux-arts architects in Boston, New York or Montreal.



Louis-Joseph Théophile Décary, Architect. Longitudinal section, Central Union Station, Ottawa, 1909.

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Union Station...

National Archives of Canada C-047167



Chateau Laurier, Daly Building and Union Station framing Rideau Street before 1955.

Ross & MacFarlane were the Canadian associates for the 1907 proposed Toronto Union Station by the American firm Carrère and Hastings. They had designed Montreal beaux-arts banks, offices, and schools, all costing under \$150,000, but the Ottawa station and Chateau Laurier would be a

\$2.5 million megaproject, their first of many.

The Indiana limestone walls and Doric columns “in antis”, facing Rideau Street and the canal, hid a modern steel frame designed by civil engineer Gilbert Townsend. He had trained at M.I.T. and worked for the

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engineers of New York’s new skyscrapers and for the leading American and Canadian bridge companies. Bridge trusses hidden in the waiting room and concourse roofs supported false plaster ceilings and stone capitals above false columns.

The building plan and great waiting room copied McKim, Mead & White’s Pennsylvania Station, then under construction in New York. The barrel and groin vaulted ceiling, arched “thermal” windows, hollow Corinthian columns, and Roman travertine walls formed a half-scale replica of the New York waiting room. It was an enlarged re-creation of the “frigidarium” of the Roman baths of Diocletian, preserved as Michelangelo’s church of Santa Maria degli Angeli.

Around the waiting room were separate rooms for men and women, restaurant, ticket office, and a finely appointed Government room with marble fireplace and mantelpiece. They were entered though the spacious foyer and grand staircase, a tunnel from the Chateau Laurier, and the platform concourse from Besserer Street.

A 533-foot train shed, the latest design of American railroad engineer Lincoln Bush, sheltered platforms and tracks along the Canal.

Waiting Rooms – Ottawa and NYC

Canada Science and Technology Museum, CN Collection



Ottawa's Union Station

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

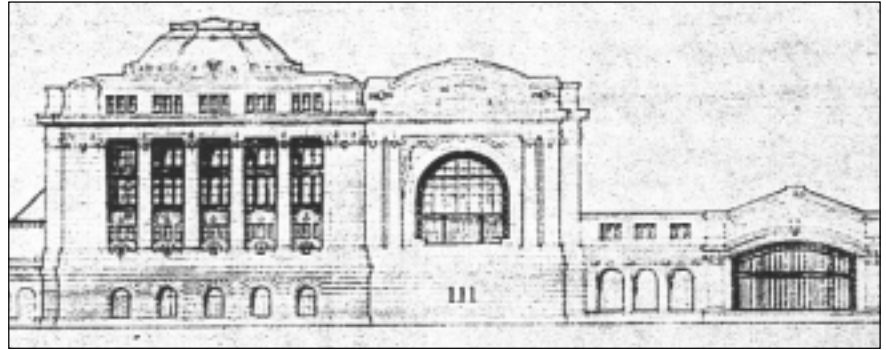


New York's Pennsylvania Station

Beaux-arts stations were also designed in 1904 and 1908 for Winnipeg by other architects, but Ottawa's project enabled Ross, Macdonald and Townsend to create the largest architectural and engineering firm in Canada, building monumental landmarks across the country. Members of the Union Station team led the design of Toronto's great Union Station (1913-1920). Ottawa's station and Chateau Laurier opened 90 years ago on 1 June 1912 and served Canada's transcontinental railways until July 1966. After the trains left, it became the 1967 Centennial Centre and later the Government Conference Centre.

The firm designed Toronto's Arena Gardens, the first 20-storey skyscraper in Canada, Central Technical School, the Royal York Hotel, Eatons and Maple Leaf Gardens; Winnipeg's Fort Garry Hotel; Edmonton's MacDonald Hotel; Quebec City's Price building; Montreal's many office blocks, department stores, university buildings, hotels and apartments; the Halifax reconstruction after the 1917 explosion; and Ottawa's 1913 Daly building expansion, 1941 Lord Elgin Hotel, and postwar buildings at Tunney's Pasture and Rockcliffe air base.

Other Union Station architects went on to varied careers. Décarý worked with Thomas Lamb and



First Proposal for Beaux-arts Station Architects: Ross & MacFarlane, Montréal 1908.

John Ebersson to design and build the largest movie palaces and arenas across Canada, in New York and in Paris. Harry Royden Dowswell collaborated on the Empire State Building. Thomas Dunlop Rankin and Gustave Brault joined Public Works, becoming assistant chief and chief architects, and directed the Confederation and Justice buildings and the conversion of 24 Sussex Drive as the Prime Minister's residence. Harold Lea Fetherstonhaugh designed important Montreal buildings and John Duncan Forsyth created mansions and monuments in Oklahoma.

The original Roman-style dome was removed in 1956 from above the wood-panelled courtroom of the Board of Railway Commissioners, which occupied the upper floors on Rideau

Street for 55 years. The blank northeast wall never received its columns as anticipated by the architects. Yet Union Station remains, inside and out, one of the most beautiful buildings in Ottawa. The proposal for a national history museum dedicated to the prime ministers, many connected with Union Station, the Centennial Centre or the Conference Centre, is a wonderful idea.

David Jeanes is a long-time resident of Ottawa, an amateur historian, and a new board member of Heritage Ottawa. For the past 20 years he has studied the railway and architectural history of the old Union Station and of other Ottawa train stations. He recently retired from Nortel Networks and a 32-year career in computer and telecom R&D and is currently president of Transport 2000, a national voluntary group advocating public transportation.

The sources for this paper include the Ross & Macdonald archives at the Canadian Centre for Architecture and McGill's Canadian Architecture Collection in Montreal, nomination forms in the Royal Institute of British Architects library, periodicals such as Construction, Canadian Railway and Marine World, Contract Record and Architectural Record, Parks Canada/FHBRO agenda papers, and two recent theses, by David Rose at Concordia and Jacques Lachapelle at Laval, respectively on Ross & MacFarlane/Macdonald's hotel and monumental architecture.



Grand Trunk Central Station 1912.

Ottawa Honours Robert Phillips

by Jean Palmer

In response to the City of Ottawa's request for candidates for a Civic Officiation Award, Heritage Ottawa proposed Robert R. Phillips, an old heritage protectionist and first President of Heritage Ottawa.

The heritage community looks back to the beginning of the heritage movement in Ottawa in honouring one of its early champions, Robert Phillips with the Heritage Officiation Award. Bob Phillips' commitment to Heritage Ottawa goes back at least to 1967 when he and his wife Mary Anne were members of a small committee charged with beautifying the capital for centennial year. Almost immediately it became clear that consultation, not beautification would be the priority.

Union Station was slated for demolition to provide parking for centennial festivities, while there was talk of filling in the Rideau Canal to convert it into a road to the city centre. The committee found itself defending the Union Station and the canal with a barrage of articles to the local newspapers. The Fraser School House became the next battleground; the only fragments surviving the widespread clearances in New Edinburgh. This was

followed by a campaign to save Byward Market, an issue that drew much public attention.

Far from the standing at the end of Centennial Year, the Committee increased its membership and regrouped under the banner, "A Capital for Canadians" and its heritage committee assembled monthly in the Phillips' living room. From 1970 to 1972, under the chairmanship of Bob Phillips, the Committee was instrumental in saving the Billings' house, the Nicholas Street gaol, the Armstrong House and the East Block on Parliament Hill. Empty and dilapidated, the East Block was to be gutted and its interior was to be modernised and reconfigured into offices. Bob Phillips' team organised guided tours of the East Block to alert the public to the tragic loss of the historic fabric. He wrote a scholarly and beautiful work on its architecture; a book still much consulted on the subject.

The Rideau Street convent was the Heritage Committee's next project, it was to lose that battle, but on the strenuous intervention of Bob Phillips' Heritage Committee, both the N.C.C., and the National Gallery cooperated in saving part of the convent's unique

chapel, which was reassembled in the National Gallery 15 years later. We honour Bob Phillips for his many achievements in heritage conservation, some of which are:

- his work on what became The Ontario Heritage Act;
- his work on the Mayor's committee on heritage in 1972;
- his chairmanship of the Heritage Committee of "A Capital for Canadians", leading to its emergence as Heritage Ottawa; and
- his involvement in the discarding of the concept of a national trust, this led to the foundation of Heritage Canada, of which Bob Phillips became the first executive director.

Ottawa has much to thank Bob Phillips for his role in the survival of such historic buildings as the Union Station, Fraser School House, Market Building, Nicholas Street gaol) the East Block) the Rideau Convent Chapel, Friday's Beef House and the Aberdeen Pavilion.

We in Heritage Ottawa were delighted to learn that Bob Phillips had been given the award and were particularly moved to hear him, in his acceptance speech, remind those present, that the building in which they were then standing (The Ottawa Teachers' College) had been saved by his wife Anne.



PLEASE, forward with payment to:

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

230-8841, fax 564-4228

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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Address: _____

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E-mail: _____

Ashcroft Proposals Challenge Official Plan for Centretown

by David Flemming

Two recent development proposals from Ashcroft Homes have elicited opposition from the Centretown Citizens Community Association, many Centretown residents and from Heritage Ottawa. The first proposal is for a 20-storey apartment building to be built at 330 Gilmour Street, former headquarters of the Ottawa Board of Education. The initial proposal was to incorporate the oldest portion of the structure (a municipally designated Heritage building), in the proposed development; however the developer has since applied under the Ontario Heritage Act for a demolition permit for the entire building to make way for the new development which would also include four stories of retail and commercial space. The site is currently designated as “Medium Use” under the Official Plan provisions relating to Centretown development but with the Heritage provisions for the area would limit any new building to a maximum height of about six stories.

Another Ashcroft proposal, for 320 McLeod Street, former office of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, calls for a similar development in another “Medium Use” area which, with the heritage zoning provisions of the current Zoning By-Law would limit any new development to two stories.

The developer has applied for amendments to the Official Plan and the Zoning By-Law to enable these projects to proceed.

Four public meetings have been held (two for each proposal) at which Ashcroft President, David Choo and his planning staff have outlined their “vision” for Centretown which includes high-rise accommodations such as those that he is proposing. Those opposed to these developments support the “vision” as outlined in the current Official Plan and feel that the current Zoning By-law is appropriate for this part of downtown

Ottawa. At one of the meetings for 330 Gilmour Street, those in attendance voted that the developer return with a proposal that meets the existing guidelines. At the second meetings for each of the sites, the developer reduced the proposed height of both buildings to 15 stories.

In addition to the application to permit the demolition of the former Ottawa School Board building, the developer has applied for amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law to allow these projects to proceed. Both proposed amendments will eventually be considered by the Planning and Development Committee of City Council and will recommend a course of action to a full meeting of Council, however the application for demolition must be dealt with by Council before it can consider the proposed amendments. The application for demolition will be considered by the Ottawa Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee on June 4 and will be considered by Ottawa City Council on June 26. If the demolition application and the proposed amendments are rejected by Council, it is expected that the developer will apply to the Ontario Municipal Board for approval of his proposals.

Heritage Ottawa is opposed to both the application for a demolition permit and the planning and zoning applications because the proposals far exceed the current provisions of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law for the area. It is also opposed to dismantling the Official Plan in a piecemeal way through specific applications for amendments which far exceed the current massing and height for both sites. A new Official Plan is being developed for the City of Ottawa and any major changes in use for areas such as this part of Centretown should be addressed in this process.

Heritage Ottawa urges anyone who wishes to support the vision for Centretown as contained in the provisions

of the current Official Plan and Zoning By-Law and opposes the Ashcroft applications, to make their feelings known to the Mayor and their City Councillor as soon as possible.

N.B. Heritage Ottawa is not opposed to all new developments for Centretown. It does however, support initiatives which conform to the vision of downtown Ottawa as contained in the current Official Plan. Hartman1s Independent Grocer1s proposal for a residential/grocery store mixed use development for Somerset Street West, not only conforms to the current planning and zoning requirements but will provide affordable housing for the area in an appropriate setting.

Update on Above

The current status of the applications, according to Mr. John Smit of the City’s Development services Department is as follows:

330 Gilmour (OBE Site)

Ashcroft is reviewing “other development options to respond to concerns expressed by the community and by staff.” When a revised proposal is submitted it will be reviewed by staff and in consultation with the Ward Councillor determine the need and timing for any further public meetings.

320 McLeod (CNIB Site)

Ashcroft has amended its rezoning application and is now requesting permission to allow for the construction of a nine-storey building, which fits into the current Medium Profile Residential Area designation which allows for buildings from five to nine storeys.

Staff have requested that Ashcroft refine its proposal and provide additional information to allow staff to adequately assess the application. As in the Gilmour Street application, staff will consult with the Ward Councillor about the need and timing for further public meetings. It is anticipated that the 320 McLeod St application will go to the Planning Committee sometime in the fall.

City of Ottawa Receives Award of Excellence for Ottawa 20/20 “Smart Growth Summit”

The City of Ottawa, on May 29, 2002, received an award of excellence from the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) for its work on the Smart Growth Summit, held in June 2001.

Presented to Bruce Thom, Ottawa City Manager, at CAMA's annual conference in Hamilton, the Willis Award is a component of CAMA's Excellence in Municipal Administration Program sponsored by US Filter. The Willis Award recognizes one nomination that demonstrates exceptional innovation and meritorious initiative, in the category of municipalities with a population of over 20,000.

The Smart Growth Summit was a major public conference held in Spring 2001 to share perspectives on developing a dynamic and liveable community

in the age of technology and large-scale economic and population growth. Under the direction of Ned Lathrop, General Manager of Development Services, the Smart Growth Summit launched the development of the City of Ottawa's growth management strategy, Ottawa 20/20.

The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) is a national, non-profit association open to all municipal managers, including: city clerks; any person who is employed in a management capacity in the administration of a Canadian municipality; and, any person who is employed in an executive capacity in a national, regional, provincial, or territorial municipal organization dealing with municipal management and administration. CAMA encourages the improvement of the art

of municipal management, to recognize the specific contributions achieved by members of the Association, and to publicize these to other members as well as to the general public. For more information visit www.camacam.ca

Ottawa 20/20 is the City of Ottawa's growth management strategy. It sets out the City's vision for planning where we want to go over the next 20 years, and how we will get there. Ottawa 20/20 protects and builds on the quality of life our citizens value, based on principles they have expressed themselves. Ottawa 20/20 consists of five growth management plans: Official Plan; Human Services Plan; Arts and Heritage Plan; Economic Strategy; and Corporate Strategic Plan. For more information visit www.ottawa2020.com.

Walking Tours for 2002

by Jennifer Rosebrugh

The Sunday afternoon walking tour program for 2002 is shaping up well, with a number of new offerings, additional to our popular tried and true jaunts.

New this year: We look forward to welcoming Martha Edmonds, author of an upcoming book on “Rockcliffe”, to our roster of experts. Martha will share with tour participants new and fascinating glimpses into the architecture and history of life in “the Village”;

Restoration Architect Gouhar Shemdin will show you what she most loves of her neighbourhood, the Glebe; Lace up your walking shoes, and let Carolyn Quinn introduce you to Ottawa's beachside community of Britannia < as it was in days of yore;

Noted architect and author John Leaning is putting together an armchair tour – a 360 degree glimpse of Ottawa's architectural history as seen from the comfort of the glass rotunda of the National Gallery; and In September,

enjoy the last fleeting days of summer in a war canoe. Paddle with architect Marc Brandt across the waters behind the Museum of Civilisation, to learn about the fascinating cultural and industrial history around the Chaudiere Falls and Victoria Island.

Tour schedules will be in the mail to members shortly. The full program will also soon be posted on the new heritage Ottawa website: www.heritageottawa.org



New Ontario Property Tax Relief Announced

Exciting news from the province in 2002. Legislation has been passed to provide property tax relief for heritage properties. This is big news for heritage property owners, municipalities and especially LACACs, who now have a new tool to use to promote heritage conservation.

On February 7th, then Ontario Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Minister of Tourism, Culture & Recreation Tim Hudak, announced the province's new tax relief measure for heritage properties. Amendments to the Municipal Act now enable municipalities to pass by-laws offering owners of heritage properties tax reductions of 10-40%. The initiative is designed as a cost-sharing arrangement between the province and the municipality: the province will cover the education portion of the tax relief, while the municipality will fund its portion of the tax reduction.

MTCR is planning to write to all municipalities and LACACs in the province to promote the new measure. Watch the MOF and MTCR web sites (www.gov.on.ca/fin <<http://www.gov.on.ca/fin>> and www.culture.gov.on.ca <<http://www.culture.gov.on.ca>>).