



# Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

*Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage*

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## Ottawa Cabin Camps and Motor Courts

By Ken Elder

**A** dominant element of the roadside architecture of the 1930's and 40's was the cabin camp/motor court. Ottawa, being a tourist town, had its fair share, almost all located at the three main entry points to the city; the Prescott Highway on the south, Montreal Road on the east, and the Pembroke Highway on the west. As quickly as these tourist facilities appeared, they disappeared. An examination of this almost forgotten type of overnight lodging is surely due.

In the years following World War I, cars became more affordable and roads improved. At the same time motor camping was growing in popularity. Enterprising individuals conceived the idea of utilizing spare areas of ground, installing an outdoor stove, supplying tents, blankets, etc. to tourists. In many private camps supplies of milk, tea and food were also available. A fee, of course, was charged. Pembroke constructed a tourist camp and shelter building in 1925. In 1926, the City of Ottawa opened a temporary, municipally operated motor tourist camp at Lansdowne Park. Unfortunately during the Central Canada Exhibition in the fall, the campers had to relocate to a poorly drained Preston-Carling site near Dow's Lake.

In the late 1920's, pressure was building for better roadside accommodation in the Ottawa region.



The celebrations surrounding the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1927, followed by the World's Poultry Congress held at Lansdowne Park from July 27 to August 4, saw a great influx of tourists. The Suburban Roads Commission of Ottawa, counted the number of automobiles which passed along the five main roads leading to and from Ottawa during one day. Over one road approximately 300 automobiles an hour or five per minute passed by, and over two other roads, the count was 155



*One of the last motor courts to be built in Ottawa, and certainly one of the most unusual was the Wigwam Motor Court on Montreal Road. Postcard. C612 Wigwam Motor Court, Montreal Road, Route 17, Ottawa, Ont. Carle's of Montreal, c. 1955.*

## Ottawa camps...

and 188 an hour respectively. At the time, this was considered heavy highway traffic. Between 1929 and 1933 Highway 17 was extended from Pembroke to North Bay and in 1929 the Prescott Highway/King's Highway 16 was fully paved.

Entrepreneurial minded families and business owners saw an opportunity in catering to these travelers by establishing camps with rustic, box-like cabins offering a bit of privacy and protection from the outdoors. The typical cabin was modest, with a double bed, a table and chairs, a small heater, and a washbasin. Very soon the simple cabin camps began to evolve into more sophisticated full-service motor courts with standardized layouts. Due to increasing land values and the need for more economy, individual cabins lining the road were no longer practical. Many of the new motor courts tended toward a U-shaped design, with cabins set perpendicular to the road. Semi-circular drives, often featuring a central common area with lush landscaping, allowed motorists easy access to their room after a

Advertisement. Reliance Cabins & Trailer Village, Royal Visit Ottawa Valley Tourist Guide 1939-1940

quick check-in at the centrally located office. Most of the cabins were equipped with indoor plumbing and electricity and bedding was provided.



Postcard. A Clear View of Cabins 5, 6, 7 & 8 Reliance Motor Camp 80 Montreal Road, Eastview. Photogelatine Engraving Co. Ltd., c. 1932

Home cooked meals were available in an adjoining family run restaurant and a gas station/garage was on the premises to take care of the frequent punctures that plagued the automobile traveller.

A strong candidate for the earliest private tourist camp in Ottawa is the

Reliance Motor Service and Tourist Camp, located at 80 Montreal Road, in Eastview. In July, 1930 cabins, restaurant and garage were built on the site

Postcard and Advertisement: K. Elder collection

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Postcard: K. Elder collection



Postcard. Green Valley Cabins, Prescott Highway, Ottawa, Ontario. Photogelatine Engraving Co., Limited, c. 1939-1942

was struck by a truck and died in hospital. The business was purchased by Cecil Teskey, who opened Teskey's dining and dance hall on the property. A service station, drive-in restaurant and tourist cabins were also operated. Teskey's Drive-Inn Restaurant/Miss Carleton Restaurant, was put for sale in 1953.

Waldorf John Stewart, opened the Green Valley Tourist Camp, a restaurant and motor court, on the Prescott Highway, at what is now Baseline Road on

and the proprietors invited the Ottawa citizenry and the traveling public to visit and inspect their new tourist camp and cabins. By 1939 the business name had changed to Reliance Cabins and Trailer Village, reflecting the rising popularity of the house trailer. As the business matured double and triple cabins were added and a courtyard planted with elaborate flower beds and lawns. By 1947, 44 cabins had been built.

Another early arrival was the Clearview Tourist Camp. In August of 1931, Alexander Scott MacKey opened a 64-foot-long and 30-foot-wide swimming pool and a refreshment booth at his summer home on the Prescott Highway near Black Rapids. A number of small tourist cabins were already on the property, and more were to be added. The Clearview poultry farm supplied the refreshment booth with all the fowl and eggs they used. A. S. Mackey died March 30, 1951 and the camp was put up for sale in April, 1959. At the time, the 3-acre wooded site included 9 cabins, 2 cottages, a canteen and a 3 bedroom bungalow.

In 1932 James W. Montgomery opened a garage, refreshment bureau and tourist cabin camp at Hog's Back on the Prescott Highway. In 1938, he



Postcard. Reliance Motor Court (Eastview) Ottawa, Ontario, Photo Graphica Ltd.

May 31, 1935. He had moved to the city's outskirts in 1933 and built a playhouse for his daughter. When passing tourists persistently came in and wanted to rent the cabin for the night, he decided to capitalize on the opportunity and built a number of tourist cabins. The motor court, with 24 cabins, was discontinued in 1967.

On August 2, 1941 Dayton's, a dining room, grill and curb service restaurant set up business at Carling Avenue and Richmond Road in Britannia Heights. It is likely the tourist cabins were built at the same time. Mary Drachinsky, founder of the Dayton Chain of Restaurants, died in 1944 and

Alexander Dayton,

her only son, succeeded to the business. Dayton's Motel Villas and Restaurant was sold for \$100,00 in October, 1958 to a syndicate headed by Ottawa contracting executive R. A. Crain.

In September, 1947, Austin F. Cross of *The Evening Citizen* and Gerald Geldert of Ottawa's Industrial and Publicity Department, reviewed four Ottawa Tourist Courts. In the article prepared by Austin Cross for the *Citizen*, each tourist court visited was identified by capital letters to preserve their anonymity. But, the code was obvious: "D cabins" refers to Dayton's Tourist Villas in

Postcard Photograph: J. J. Klave, c. 1949, K. Elder collection



Postcard. Dayton's Villa, Britannia Heights, Ontario, PhotoGraphica.

Britannia Heights, "M cabins" to Macies Cabins on Carling Avenue, "GV cabins" to Green Valley Tourist Camp on the Prescott Highway and "B cabins" to Blue Top Tourist Court on Montreal Road. Their observations are particularly valuable for the point-in-time descriptions of the interior furnishings. In the case of Dayton's Tourist Villas, the attractive exteriors of the cabins, a Swiss chalet style with high gables and individual paint schemes in bright colours stood out. On the interior they noted limed elmwood furniture, Simmons mattresses, Murray Bay blankets and Hudson's Bay blankets used as bed covers. Another feature that caught their eyes was the radio, operated by a quarter inserted in a slot and a dial to select a program. The owner regretted that he had not been allowed to outline the cabins in neon tubing as this was considered dangerous by the hydro electric authorities.



Postcard. Dayton's Tourist Villas, Entrance to Canada's National Capital, where Highways 15 and 17 meet. Photo Graphica Ltd.

Screened-in porches defined Macies Cabins as well as extra windows which provided cross ventilation. Six-foot-deep cupboards, hardwood floors, beds and bureaus in maple and showers encased in aluminum completed the units. The \$8 per night charge for a single room, however, was considered excessive in that all that separated the two beds was a curtain and pole. Tourists also objected to the outside locks which were easily opened with a skeleton key.

In the case of the Green Valley Tourist Camp the older cabins were faulted for having no toilets (a problem of supply) and unsightly old stoves, a reminder of earlier times. The newer cabins were praised for knotty pine walls, lights over the bed and tile floors in the showers. The owner stated his intention to construct new "Motel" type tourist



Advertising card. Macie's Chalet, Carling and Highway 17, Ottawa, Canada. Photogelatine Engraving Merivale Road, Ottawa, Canada, n.d.



Postcard. SP 19 Macies Exclusive Tourist Court, Highway 17, Ottawa, Canada. Photogelatine Engraving Co., Ltd. c. 1949-1954



Postcard. Blue Top Tourist Court, Montreal Rd., Ottawa, Ont., Arthur Lane Studios, c. 1953

cabins, built in units of cinder blocks. The adjoining air conditioned restaurant with its clean and smart features was highly praised.

The last visited, Blue Top Tourist Court, was admired for its southern patio style with a central one-acre flower garden. On the interior the modern lights, chenille spreads, steel beds, venetian blinds, battleship linoleum floors and plug-in electric radiators were noted. The larger scale cooking facilities with sink, a full length chesterfield which made into a bed, and the occasional tub instead of a shower also attracted attention.

One of the last motor courts to be built in Ottawa, and certainly one of the most unusual was the Wigwam Motor Court on Montreal Road. For many years I doubted it ever existed, and the postcard mis-titled. A search of Ottawa city irectories and telephone directories had come up empty. Confirmation finally came with the discovery of an article in *The Ottawa Citizen* July 22, 1957, describing a fire the previous day in the rear of a cabin at the Wigwam Motor Court. The cabin, used as an office housed a furnace which provided hot water for the 11 tourist units. The same article revealed that the owners, Mr. and Mrs. George Cziszler, had operated the tourist establishment for the past three years. The Wigwam Village cabin design was patented by Frank Redford of Horse

Cave, Kentucky in 1936 after seeing a Teepee shaped short-order food place in Long Beach, California. At least seven were built to this design in the United States between 1931 and 1953.

What finally led to the demise of the motor court was the advent of the motel. On June 10, 1952 Ottawa's first motel, Alice's Wonderland Motel opened. It was named for Alice, the wife of owner George Cooper, and was located on Carling Avenue/Highway 17, just below Britannia

Heights. It had 12 units designed in an Alice in Wonderland motif with characters from Alice painted on each unit. The in-line rooms shared one foundation along with plumbing and heating systems, were more economical to build than individual cabins. The streamlined design and well-appointed rooms attracted the postwar tourists with money to spend. ♦

Conservation architect Ken Elder is a board member of Heritage Ottawa and a long time deltiologist (collector of postcards).



Postcard. C612 Wigwam Motor Court, Montreal Road, Route 17, Ottawa, Ont. Carle's of Montreal, c. 1955

## *Report of David B. Flemming, past-president of Heritage Ottawa, to the Annual General Meeting held at Grange de la Gatineau, Cantley, QC, on Tuesday, May 25, 2010, (presented by David Jeanes)*

It has been an honour to serve as a member of the Heritage Ottawa executive for a ninth year, six of which have been as your president. Before beginning my report I would like to ask our current board members and active volunteers to stand and for you to show your appreciation to them for their hard work over the past year.

I would like to give a special thanks to David Jeanes, our vice-president, who, in the absence of a president, has taken on additional administrative duties and over the past year has done yeoman service in registering our electronic domain names and website, and enabling us to comply with new Canada Revenue Agency regulations relating to charitable tax status. Thanks also to our treasurer, David Ivison who continues to provide effective management of our finances and to secretary, Bill Price, who, besides his regular duties has managed our heritage keeper program. A special thanks to our volunteer office manager Helga Jeanes who provides regular and essential administrative support for our activities.

We continue to receive operating grants from the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Ministry of Culture and acknowledge with thanks both levels of government for their ongoing support for our activities on behalf of the people of Ottawa.

Our membership has increased by 12% over the past year thanks to the recruitment efforts undertaken during our walking tours and lectures and to the hard work of our volunteer membership secretary Jane Reid. Thank you, Jane.

In 2009-2010, we produced three editions of the *Heritage Ottawa Newsletter* under the able direction of our editor, Veronica Vaillancourt. The newsletter continues to provide the membership with important information on our activities and on issues relating to our built heritage. Thank you, Veronica.

Our website attracts over 2100 visits per month and under the able management of Heather Perrault we have partially redesigned and added more material to our website.

We continue to provide education and outreach programs in support of our built heritage. Last year's 13 walking tours attracted 530 participants and

generated nearly \$4,000 in revenue. I would like to thank Rick Belliveau, Ian Ferguson and Martin Rice for planning and managing the tours and the tour guides, many of whom volunteer every year to participate in this important fundraising and educational activity. Thanks also to those members who helped coordinate these tours and to our sponsors, Sussex Capital Inc., for their 11<sup>th</sup> year of sponsorship, and to our other sponsors, Royal LePage Performance Realty's Jeff Rosebrugh and Janny Mills.

Both sponsors are onside again this year as we offer a series of 14 tours. For the first time we are offering two French-language tours. The schedule was posted on our website in late April and 2000 copies of the bilingual brochure have been printed and many have already been distributed. Brigid Phillips Janssen coordinated the translation of this walking tour brochure as well as the lecture series brochure. This year's walking tour program begins on June 27<sup>th</sup> with John McLeod's popular tour of The Glebe. We still need volunteers to coordinate some of the tours. There is a sign-up sheet at the registration table if you wish to help and participate in a tour for free.

Our seven free public lectures for 2009-2010 drew a record 553 participants, an average of 80 per lecture. The lecture series was ably organized and managed by Leslie Maitland with the assistance of Rick Belliveau, Bill Price and David Jeanes. The 2010-2011 lecture series schedule is nearing completion. Many thanks to Andrex Holdings Limited and its president Sandy



*Heather Thomson, Heritage Planner, Ontario Service Centre, spoke on the Rideau Canal, UNESCO World Heritage Site, at the AGM in May at the Grange in Cantley, Québec.*

*Photos by: Louise C Imbeault*

Smallwood for their continuing sponsorship of our lecture series.

Besides these two major outreach and educational programs, Heritage Ottawa also participated in local events and festivals including Heritage Day, Col. By Day and Jane's Walk (which this year included 12 of our members as tour guides or panelists). Heritage Ottawa continues to play a lead role in Doors Open Ottawa with two of our board members – David Jeanes and Carolyn Quinn – serving on the Doors Open Advisory Council. This year we have “adopted” Lansdowne Park's Aberdeen Pavilion and Horticulture Hall for Doors Open Ottawa in association with the Glebe Community Association's Heritage Committee. Bill Price is coordinating the production of leaflets outlining the importance of these heritage buildings as an integral part of the development of Lansdowne Park. There is still time to sign-up at the registration table as a volunteer to staff these two buildings on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

The past year has seen much activity in our role as an advocate for our built heritage. We lost the fight to save 456 Lansdowne Road North and St. Isidore's Church but were successful in supporting the designation of three properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, including the spectacular Monastery of the Sisters of the Visitation on Richmond Road, and in preventing unsuitable developments in New Edinburgh. Heritage Ottawa has also been represented on a number of City of Ottawa and National Capital Commission committees.

The emphasis on intensification of development in older sections of Ottawa, especially in heritage conservation districts is an ongoing challenge. Our *Newsletter* has kept members up-to-date on the growing number of interventions over the past year to prevent demolitions and unsuitable development in heritage conservation districts.

To more effectively coordinate our activities at a neighbourhood level, we established a network of neighbourhood Heritage Keepers. The first workshop for the Heritage Keepers, organized by Bill Price, was held in October and with the election of the new Board of Directors, we hope to consolidate and expand our efforts at the community level.

I am pleased to report progress on our initiative in urging the city to develop an emergency protocol to intervene with heritage properties neglected by their owner and the formulation of a “demolition by neglect by-law” which will protect buildings at risk in

Heritage Conservation Districts. The emergency protocol has been completed and in the upcoming months, city staff will be holding public consultation on the demolition by neglect by-law. The final draft is scheduled to be considered by council in spring 2011.

We continue to support the hard work of our under-funded and under-staffed Heritage Planning Section of the Department of Planning, Transit and the Environment and continue to advocate for more funding for heritage at each year's city budget consultations and at Community and Protective Services Committee's dealing with the renewal of the *Ottawa Arts & Heritage Plan*.

Last summer we partnered with the Ottawa South History Project to develop a five-month research program to create an up-to-date survey of heritage buildings in Old Ottawa South. Together we were successful in obtaining four grants from three levels of government to hire two students to conduct research on a number of properties in Old Ottawa South. The project was ably overseen by David Jeanes and John Calvert and by Julie Harris of Contentworks who provided office and administrative support for the project.

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*We continue to provide education and outreach programs in support of our built heritage. Last year's 13 walking tours attracted 530 participants...*

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The Heritage Conservation District Study Report which was the result of our partnership with the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and the University of Waterloo's Heritage Resources Centre was completed last summer. The report will assist communities across the Province in the development and effective management of heritage districts. This work was made possible by a grant obtained by our three organizations from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

In anticipation of calling for proposals for the second *Gordon Cullingham Research & Publication Grant* we

*...Continued on page 12*

# Heritage Ottawa Offers Suggestions to City on the Arts & Heritage Plan Renewal

Remarks by David B. Flemming, past-president of Heritage Ottawa at the meeting of Ottawa City Council's Community and Protective Services Committee, April 15, 2010

Today you will recommend approval of the Terms of Reference for the Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan Renewal. You will also receive a progress report on the existing Plan. My comments this morning will focus on the heritage preservation and designation aspects of the plan. The projected images that accompany my remarks demonstrate that many of the buildings located in Heritage Conservation Districts are currently at risk owing to the neglect of their owners or their owner and the inability or unwillingness of the city to enforce its building code by-law and regulations.

The *Progress Report* notes as one of the "accomplishments" that "the City of Ottawa designated 18 properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest" over the past seven years. This is an average of less than three designations per year; hardly an accomplishment in a city which has 16 heritage conservation districts and over 3000 buildings on the Reference List of addresses deemed worthy of consideration for Part IV designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The establishment of only one heritage conservation district over seven years can also hardly be touted as an "accomplishment." In fact the Lorne Avenue HCD is very small, consisting of only one block, and most of the research required for the designation was undertaken by the residents of the district who initiated the process.

Many of the 18 designations were also undertaken in reaction to a perceived threat or at the request of their owners. The city's Heritage Planning Section does not have the resources to be pro-active in designating properties, a shortcoming that should be addressed in the Arts & Heritage Plan Renewal.

The confusion surrounding the recent designation by council of the Monastery of les Soeurs de la Visitation on Richmond Road is a good example of how the city's inability to be pro-active in designating this property prior to its sale to a developer can lead to potential loss of important heritage elements of the site or developmental potential trumping heritage significance. The Heritage Planning section should be given additional resources to undertake designations before there is a potential threat to the site.

Last year, Heritage Ottawa participated in a Province-wide survey of residents of Ontario heritage conservation districts: <http://www.fes.uwaterloo.ca/research/hrc/projects/index.html>. The study included surveys in three Ottawa heritage conservation district neighbourhoods. The results were encouraging and showed strong support throughout the Province for designation, protection and preservation of our built heritage. There is therefore a public eagerness and support for heritage designations and municipal incentives to assist property owners in such preservation activities. This too should be reflected more emphatically in the renewed Plan.

It is unfortunate that the Heritage Planning resources of the city seem to be buried deeply within the Infrastructure Services and Community Sustainability Portfolio while the Heritage Development component (most of the activities covered by the Arts & Heritage Plan) are housed as part of the City Operations Portfolio. Such a division of our "heritage" resources makes it difficult to coordinate activities and priorities and set goals arising from the renewed Plan. I therefore urged this committee to encourage the two Deputy City Managers to establish an ongoing link between Heritage Planning and Heritage Development so that the renewed Plan can reflect the protection and preservation of our built heritage and hopefully prevent the deterioration and loss of buildings that you have seen projected during my remarks.

For over 35 years, Heritage Ottawa, a non-profit volunteer organization, has worked with the community and the city for the preservation of our built heritage. Our participation in the Ontario HCD study noted above and our support for community-based research needed to supplement the modest capacity of Heritage Planning staff will continue.

I wish you well in the renewal of the Plan and offer our continued assistance in its development. We shall comment in more detail on various elements of the Plan renewal at the appropriate time and look forward to working with Heritage Development and Heritage Planning staff on this project. ♦

# Lansdowne Park Diminished by Lack of Vision

The significance of Lansdowne Park is closely tied to its heritage value – historic, cultural and commercial. The city and the developers, ( OSEG), have prescribed a future Lansdowne that squanders that value to car parks, bad faith and damaged history.

Two designated heritage buildings, the Aberdeen Pavilion and the Horticulture building, comprise the centerpiece of Lansdowne Park. The Aberdeen Pavilion is subject to easements that severely restrict alterations to the building or interference with the sight lines that lend distinction to Lansdowne Park and make it a landmark from vantage points around the city.

As for the Horticulture building, the developers propose to flout heritage principles and move it. The city has fully backed the OSEG plan, reneging on its commitment to consider those options that would leave the Horticulture building in place as well as options that would move it elsewhere in Lansdowne Park.

In the midst of the design competition for the non-commercial zone of Lansdowne, the city reversed its earlier instructions, and ordered the five candidate design firms not to submit plans that leave the Horticulture building in situ. With the city's endorsement in hand, the OSEG design for the commercial zone, which was released today, duly

displaces the Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired Horticulture building, designed by Francis Sullivan, to build a parking garage.

"Heritage Ottawa has never tried to stymie the Lansdowne development," said past-president David Flemming. "We have constantly worked to integrate heritage priorities into the OSEG plans because that would produce the richest and most attractive design. But the city has acted in bad faith. While telling the public that heritage concerns were being considered, the city was telling the design candidates to accommodate only OSEG's demands."

In the unveiling of designs for the "urban park", or non-commercial, area of Lansdowne where the historic buildings are located, five concepts showed varying degrees of respect for heritage. Heritage Ottawa commends the teams that resisted the city's edict and persevered with plans for an in-place Horticulture building and an



Original prairie style designs embellish some of the windows of the Horticulture building.



The Horticulture Building, another designated heritage building, was the 1914 creation of Francis Sullivan.

Photo: City of Ottawa archives

Photo: Andrew Elliott

Aberdeen Pavilion that is preserved in its current glory.

Design A (in the anonymously labeled proposals) keeps the Horticulture building in place, with extensive restoration to renew its windows and facades, creating an attractive renovated home for a farmers market. Design B also prefers to keep the building in place. Design C states that: "Once moved, it will have lost much of its heritage integrity." Design D says, "If moving the Horticulture Building and constructing the overlap area were not so heavily favoured by the City of Ottawa and the Design Review Panel, we would retain the building in situ."

According to Design A, "Much of a site or structure's 'meaning of place' is derived from its physical location and context. This is certainly true of the Horticulture building – a central piece of Lansdowne Park." Design A quotes Park Canada's standards: "Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable character-defining elements. Do not move a part of a historic place if its current location is a character-defining element." Design A notes that moving the Horticulture Building is not consistent with this standard, and adds that moving a large masonry structure such as the Horticulture Building would "inevitably compromise the historic fabric of the building and significantly diminish its material integrity."

Three designs for the park area of Lansdowne use water from the Rideau Canal to create inlets or ponds. While water in the Park is superficially attractive, it is unlikely that a breach of the canal walls and potential change of the borders of the canal would be acceptable. The Rideau Canal is a World Heritage Site, a designation that carries rigorous stipulations about the preservation of the site.

Equally, it is not clear that building bridges over the canal, as proposed in several design concepts, would pass the test of UNESCO heritage designation. There were also some significant



This photo visually depicts the Horticulture building's 'meaning of place'. One can clearly see its proximity to the Aberdeen Pavilion.

abuses of heritage, for example Design E proposes major restructuring of the Aberdeen Pavilion by using pieces of its facade in a movable glass and steel greenhouse-like design. Design C reduces the Horticulture building to a "remnant" consisting of a piece of the current building, moved to another site.

Heritage Ottawa has not taken a position on the planned development of Lansdowne Park, arguing only that the development should respect the heritage of the Park's historic buildings, the Park's location adjacent to the canal, a World Heritage Site, and its history as a public space for use as, for example, farmers markets. But neither Heritage Ottawa nor, apparently, other heritage oriented experts and institutions, were consulted in the process.

Mr. Flemming expected that Ottawa citizens and those who care about the value of Lansdowne would feel deceived. "Many will consider that the fix was in, right from the beginning of the city's partnership with OSEG. Enlightened development that uses heritage to create value does not appear to have been an option." ♦



Aerial view of Lansdowne park today.

Photo: Andrew Elliott

Photo: City of Ottawa

## Lansdowne Park Heritage Brief Flawed

Heritage Ottawa is disappointed with the report to the city on the heritage aspects of Lansdowne Park redevelopment. "The City appears to only want a document that responds to a business plan; it is not a strategy for heritage protection," said David Flemming, past-president of Heritage Ottawa.

The City of Ottawa commissioned Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited to "... provide participants in the redevelopment with a clear understanding of the history of the property and an assessment of the impact of new development being planned for Lansdowne Park" (p.3).

Heritage Ottawa had hoped the Lansdowne Park Heritage Brief would provide a sound basis for decision-making with respect to the protection of heritage resources at the site. "The document provides us with little assurance that the heritage importance and traditional use of Lansdowne Park will be reflected in the final development proposal," Flemming said. "Commonwealth is an experienced heritage conservation firm with a track record for excellence but their analysis seems to have been limited by the narrow terms of reference for their work."

Good heritage conservation helps manage change by providing a clear definition of the site based on sound historical research and an inventory and evaluation of resources. The resulting conservation plan should be based on heritage conservation principles contained in widely accepted documents such as The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, which would guide all new development. Good heritage conservation is also an inclusive process, embracing all stakeholders not just Parks Canada, the National Capital Commission and the business community.

The Commonwealth report, based mainly on secondary sources, provides a good chronology of the evolution of the specific buildings and landscape features of the Park, however, the analysis seems to be limited to the area encompassed

by the Urban Park and the Overlap Area, ignoring heritage resources such as the Coliseum building and the Thomas Ahearn monument.

Heritage Ottawa questions the relevance of "Finding a balance between maintaining a public assembly use while maximizing retail opportunities" (p.41) in a brief on heritage conservation. The Brief takes as a foregone conclusion that the objective is to maximize retail opportunities, while other potential uses for the site are only being considered. Retail was only one of several activities in the Park over the years but was never on a full-time, year-round basis.

The report suggests that the Aberdeen Pavilion could include many full-service restaurants. While this may be appropriate, there is no indication of how this use emerges from the historical evidence and past use of the building. Has this document already decided that restaurants in the Aberdeen Pavilion are acceptable, even in advance of the promised cultural heritage impact statements? And where does this leave the Farmers' Market, surely one of the most appropriate uses for the site based on the historical evidence?

"Commonwealth did their best with the marching orders they were given, and elements of this document are promising," concludes Flemming. "If there is time for a full retail study there should be time for a full-fledged heritage conservation plan for the entire site, including those portions of the Park being designed by the Ottawa Sport and Entertainment Group. A legitimate process would provide a true vision for Lansdowne Park and guide its development as a heritage-rich destination for the citizens of Ottawa and for visitors to our city."

Despite these shortcomings, Heritage Ottawa, in its 35-year tradition as a volunteer, not for profit heritage advocacy group, will continue to contribute to the design and planning process and to work with city staff to assure that Lansdowne Park's heritage attributes and significance are reflected in any development plan for the site. ♦

## AGM Report Contd...

established a steering committee to develop guidelines for what we hope will be a yearly award. These guidelines will be published in the next issue of our *Newsletter*. Following Gordon's death last year we received nearly \$4,000 in *in memoriam* donations to this fund.

Since Gordon's death last year, Heritage Ottawa has lost three long-time members whose contributions to our organization date back to its inception.

Mary Roaf was an active heritage advocate and member of the board in the 1960's and 70's before moving to Vancouver where she continued to be active in heritage matters. Myron Rusk was one of the original Heritage Ottawa members in the 1970's who, over the years gave wise counsel to many former presidents including yours truly. Six weeks ago we lost Helmut Schade, a teacher, lecturer and insatiable architectural photographer who for over 40 years was also active in Heritage Ottawa and served his city as a member of the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee and the Arts and Heritage Cultural Advisory Committee. In 2004, he was the recipient of the City's Lifetime Heritage Achievement Award.

Although we mourn their loss, we are strengthened by their commitment.

In closing I can assure you that the upcoming year will continue to offer its challenges and we are always looking for volunteers who can assist with many of our activities. Even a few hours of volunteer time each month by three or four members would help us widen our base of activities and enable us to further our goals and objectives. I urge you to consider adding your name to one of the many sign-up sheets available at the registration desk. ♦

## In Memoriam Helmut Schade, 1924 - 2010

One of Canada's foremost architectural photographers, Helmut Schade, died April 19, 2010, aged 85. He immigrated to Canada from Germany in 1951 and during his long career in Ottawa, he held positions with the federal government and at Carleton University's school of architecture, where, for 18 years, he taught students how to photograph buildings. Schade was a member of A Capital for Canadians in the late 1960's and its successor, the Heritage Committee, in the 70's. He was an early member of Heritage Ottawa and served on the board for about 10 years. He chaired the Awards Committee and Exhibitions committee and was responsible for a number of exhibits at the Fraser Schoolhouse during Heritage Ottawa residency there. More recently, in 2007, Schade delivered Heritage Ottawa's Bob and May Anne Phillips Memorial Lecture.

Among the many honours he received were the Allied Arts Medal of the Ontario Association of Architects, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ontario Heritage Foundation and in 2004, the City of Ottawa's Lifetime Heritage Achievement Award.

His own personal project of photographing major Canadian buildings over many years resulted in one of the biggest collections of architectural photographs in the country. Two years ago, Schade donated 28,000 slides to Library and Archives Canada, a rich legacy to his adopted country.

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