



Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage

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Adaptive re-use in Ottawa

A conversation with a practitioner –
Dave Longbottom, Flora Hall Brewing

By Hunter McGill

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Flora Hall Brewing, 37 Flora Street

Adaptive re-use of heritage buildings does not seem to be getting the attention or uptake in Ottawa that it deserves. In an attempt to understand the motivation and challenges involved in adaptive re-use, Heritage Ottawa is approaching a number of people who have undertaken these projects or who may be doing this work currently. The conversations form the basis of a series of articles

in the *Heritage Ottawa Newsletter*; previous conversations have been with Leanne Moussa of *allsaints* event space and Steven Beckta, noted restaurateur.

The conversation this month is with Dave Longbottom, owner of Flora Hall Brewing on Flora Street in Centretown. Ironically, as the conversation was taking place at Flora Hall, 498 Bank Street, the

Photo: Hunter McGill

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

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Adaptive re-use – a conversation cont'd.

red brick 1900 building across the street, was being demolished, probably for condos.

Q Why did you opt for adaptive re-use for the building now called Flora Hall? Were there particular advantages and incentives that appealed to you?

A The building was about 100 years old, had been an automobile garage for much of its life, and I was interested in continuing that “industrial” tradition. (note: Previous occupants were Welch and Johnston Engineering, Cycle Salvage and Uptown Automotive.) There were some simple architectural features in the street façade which gave it charm and distinctiveness. While I’m not from Centretown, I’ve lived along Bank Street and I was drawn to the neighbourhood. The building has a certain “brand appeal” and in fact several restaurateurs were also interested when I acquired it. I think the neighbours were pleased that the original silhouette and mass of the building were preserved, though I could have added height.

My background is in business, with training as an electrical engineer, and I had decided I wanted to be in retail, for the long-term, and interact with customers. The brewing dimension of the project is an extra attraction, a distinctive element of the enterprise.

Q What were some of the financial considerations, positive and negative, influencing your decisions? What can you tell us about making adaptive re-use pay?

A I’m taking a long-term perspective, forming relationships with the neighbours. It is not a get-rich-quick project. There are always unexpected developments in a project like this, but I’m happy to be rescuing the building. It may be too soon to say whether the project will pay for itself.

Q Who are the people who made the conversion possible: architects, craftsmen/women, suppliers, community?

A My interest in the design and construction side of the project was influenced by the pride I saw my grandfather, a mason/bricklayer in England, show in his work. I know how important quality is. We sourced a lot of the materials, such as the dining tables, from local suppliers and I was happy to see the skill of the artisans. The renovations of the building were challenging, as there are openings only on the street side, and a new ground level floor had to be poured to take the weight of the brewing equipment. But the original mezzanine was retained and gives a view of the brewing space. The neighbours appreciate the aesthetics, and I gave a lot of thought to the colour of the street façade, and to the Flora Hall logo which mimics the shapes of the front wall windows.

Q As an owner, was demolition ever a consideration, if circumstances had been different?

A No, never an option. As I said earlier, I could have added two storeys to the building, under the approvals given by the City of Ottawa, but I wanted to maintain the original height and footprint.

As implemented, the building has charm and appeal.

Q What are actions that governments could take to make adaptive re-use more attractive and possible?

A I ask myself why the City allows older/heritage buildings to sit vacant for long periods of time. What of the risks from fire as a result of squatters, to

say nothing of the visual impact of a deteriorating building? The City should consistently enforce building standards and zoning controls. It seems that Ottawa does not place much emphasis on built heritage preservation. As for incentive grants, the current level of financial support is not interesting at all for proponents. Make the heritage grants meaningful, so they assist owners with the additional

dimensions that are involved with heritage building repair and conversion, whether for renewing for existing use or for adaptive re-use.

(It should be added that this conversation was helped by the supply of samples of Flora Hall beer, an excellent product.)

Hunter McGill is a member of the Heritage Ottawa Board.

Reviving an Alliance: the family of National Historic Sites

By Andrew Waldron



Former Ottawa Teachers' College National Historic Site

At the old Normal School on Elgin Street (now part of City Hall and a National Historic Site) the *Historic Landmarks Association of Canada* met in 1907. They imagined a Canada protecting its nationally significant historic sites. Their vision eventually was realized with the creation of the *Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada* by the

federal government in 1919. Since then, almost 1,000 national historic sites have been commemorated. Many are owned by Parks Canada and federal departments, but most are privately owned or held by non-profits.

Each of these sites has its own conservation, financial and

promotional challenges. Parks Canada sites, such as Laurier House or the Rideau Canal, have substantial budgets and resources to turn to, but the small-town sites, the rural sites and districts, or once well-kept places now abandoned have greater needs with very little support.

Being a national historic site doesn't get you much. The responsible Minister designates your site; you hopefully will receive a bronze plaque at a future date; and, if you are a non-profit you can raise funds to be eligible for a small amount of cost-sharing funds (though you compete against your sister sites for a piece of the pie). Admittedly, a designation can be a catalyst for more attention. Being nationally significant evokes a rare 'brand' and is associated with a quality of experience and integrity.

Around twenty years ago, an enterprising group of national historic site owners worked with Parks Canada to create small

networks to share their knowledge. These 'alliances' cropped up in different regions of the country, with the strongest in Ontario. In recent years, however, federal leadership evaporated and national historic sites returned to seeking support by other means.

Today, we are trying to change that by reviving this network. As we know, diversity is better than homogeneity. Networks work better when there is a variety of organizations that stimulate each other. There are few national organizations in Canada and most heritage advocacy and outreach at the national level is led by the National Trust for Canada.

The goal of the Alliance is to bring mutual support and cooperation through a family of national historic sites. There is no national organization at this time that speaks directly on behalf of non-federally owned national historic sites. Consider the recent challenges with creating an appropriate addition to the Chateau Laurier National Historic Site. The Alliance spoke out about the addition's failure based on its reasons for national significance while most federal authorities were silent or undermined its protection. Reviving an Alliance will give these sites a stronger voice.

A new Alliance will provide more support and advocacy for sites than in the past. It will be a network that has a unified national voice yet promotes the diversity and uniqueness of each place. It will listen to needs, share best practices, and improve conservation standards while tapping into the collective knowledge of all sites. It will help increase revenues, raise funds and prevent waste by developing efficiencies and avoiding



Old Stone Mill National Historic Site, Delta, Ontario 2006

duplication. Many more benefits will come with being organized, but not through traditional organizational hierarchies, instead through closer peer relationships and in more soulful ways.

We have already begun to re-build our family of national historic sites through informal discussions and meetings, shifting to a

national non-profit organization and developing a more accessible web presence. These actions take time and energy, well beyond the everyday management of historic sites. In the coming year our small team of dedicated managers of national historic sites will be reaching out to build a family that creates real benefits for these unique places.

Ottawa is blessed with many national historic sites, mostly in federal hands, but look beyond the Parliament Buildings and you'll see wonderful destinations in other parts of Ottawa, Almonte, Delta, or Smiths Falls – and they all need help.

Andrew Waldron is Heritage Conservation Manager, BGIS. He worked previously with Parks Canada, and is an architectural historian, adjunct professor with Carleton University and author of Exploring the Capital: An Architectural Guide to the Ottawa-Gatineau Region (Figure1, 2017).



Matheson House National Historic Site, Perth, Ontario 2012

From Textile Mills to Nuclear Bunkers: Heritage Ottawa's Second Annual Field Trip

By Nicole Sammut

Photos: Nicole Sammut



Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte

To mark the 2017-2018 sesquicentennial year Heritage Ottawa organized an exclusive field trip to Perth. This event was met with such great acclaim that a second annual field trip to Almonte and Carp within eastern Ontario was organized in early June for members of the community and Heritage Ottawa volunteers.

Our visit began with a guided tour of the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum in Almonte. The rubble stone building was constructed as a mill in 1872 and is a National Historic Site. The mill once functioned as one of Canada's largest textile manufacturing complexes, producing both wool and cloth within the community. Technological innovations in machinery for producing, cleaning and refining wool and cloth, as well as mill working conditions for employees in the late nineteenth century were explored throughout the tour. The two story building is a rare example of a well preserved mill

within the Canadian landscape, as many of these spaces were converted for adaptive reuse.

Following our visit to Almonte, the group travelled to Carp for a guided tour of the Diefenbunker, Canada's Cold War Museum and National Historic Site. This four-story underground bunker was designed and built from 1959 to 1962 to shelter Canada's emergency

government in the event of a nuclear war. The tour was given by museum volunteer and former member of the Heritage Ottawa Board of Directors, Doug Beaton. The group received an exclusive tour, exploring the Prime Minister's Suite, the situation centre for Canadian civil defense, the Bank of Canada Vault and finally, government work spaces in the event of a nuclear war.

Heritage Ottawa would like to extend thanks to all our volunteers for making this trip a success! Additionally, thank you to all participants who joined Heritage Ottawa for this exclusive, special event. This trip was made possible by your enthusiasm and keen interest.

For upcoming information and notices of additional field trip opportunities, please visit our website <https://heritageottawa.org>.

Nicole Sammut is a member of the Heritage Ottawa Board of Directors and works at Algonquin College.



Bank of Canada Vault with museum volunteer and former member of the Heritage Ottawa Board of Directors, Doug Beaton

Another Successful Walking Tour Season

By Martin Rice

Photo: Carolyn Quinn



Walking Tour St. James Cemetery

Heritage Ottawa walking tours invite both residents and visitors to the capital region to become more familiar with the origins and development of the city's many unique neighbourhoods and districts. However, these walks also raise awareness which strengthens efforts to preserve our architectural heritage and cultural places.

In 2018, the 23rd year of our walking tours program, we offered tours in both English and French, covering rural and urban Ottawa neighbourhoods, as well as occasionally the Quebec side of the National Capital Region. Our walking tours traditionally have been on Sunday afternoons but we recently began to include some Saturday afternoon and summer weekday evenings.

Tour guides are extremely knowledgeable, in many cases having published books and articles on their area. They also volunteer their time for these walks out of a desire to share their knowledge and affection for their neighbourhoods.

We are very fortunate to have several guides whose tours retain their popularity over many years – Judy Deegan's Sandy Hill East, Linda Hoad in Hintonburg, Martha Edmond in Rockcliffe Park, Nancy Miller Chenier's Lowertown East and Janet Uren's walk in New Edinburgh. Heritage Ottawa's president, David Jeanes, has led a variety of tours over the years, this year introducing one on the Rideau Street Arts District.

Rounding out the thirteen tours conducted in English this year are Danielle Jones' walk through Briarcliffe, Neil Thomson's tour of Beaverbrook in Kanata, Glenn Crawford's Village Legacy Project presentation, François Bregha in Sandy Hill West, an introduction to Ottawa's brutalist architecture by Sarah Gelbard and heritage apartments in Centretown, led by Carolyn Quinn and Richard Belliveau.

We are pleased to have expanded our offerings in French with four walks this year: Sandy Hill West (François Bregha), Orléans (Diego Elizondo), Lowertown (Mark Farine) and the St. James Cemetery in the Hull sector of Gatineau, led by Michel Prévost.

We wish to acknowledge our sponsors – Andrex Holdings Ltd. and its president, Sandy Smallwood as well as Jeffrey Rosebrugh, Janny Mills & Shan Cappuccino of Royal LePage Performance Realty. We also want to acknowledge the ongoing support of the City of Ottawa, which provides us with a yearly operating grant in support of our activities and the Ontario Ministry of Culture for its financial support.

Martin Rice is a member of the Board of Heritage Ottawa and chair of the Walking Tour Committee.



Walking Tour of Hintonburg-Bayswater

Photo: Zeynep Ekin

Updates

Congratulations to The Opinicon!

The Opinicon (owner Fiona McKean) has been awarded the Peter Stokes Restoration Award (Corporate) by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.

“For bringing an abandoned fishing resort ... back to life and in doing so, revitalizing a community. ... McKean took great care to incorporate heritage aspects, the desires of the community, and the sustainability of the business to ensure that the cultural heritage embodied in the sprawling grounds was preserved.” see *Heritage Ottawa Newsletter* (vol. 44, no. 3, September 2017).

Budget 2019

Our priorities for heritage in the 2019 Budget – deliberations begin in January – will be to see an increase to the Heritage Grant Program for

Building Restoration that provides funding for just 1% of Ottawa’s eligible heritage properties to a maximum of \$5,000, an amount that has not changed in over 15 years.

We will also be urging the implementation of a heritage tax relief program, allowed in the *Ontario Municipal Act* since 2001, to encourage owners of heritage properties to invest in repair/rehabilitation. It has been used successfully by many municipalities in the province since its inception. Protecting heritage buildings needs both sticks and carrots. The time is overdue for Council to take advantage of this opportunity to reverse the many examples of demolition by neglect in our neighbourhoods.

Demolition by Neglect

The Heritage Watch List, created in 2016 by the Mayor’s Heritage Matters Task Force as a tool to monitor designated heritage buildings that are vacant or at risk, is now available on the City of Ottawa website. There is a photo of each building

and a note on its present status – for sale, development proposed, not threatened. Visit: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/heritage-conservation/heritage-watch-list>.

Heritage Ottawa encourages members to monitor these buildings as well as other heritage properties in your neighbourhood. Please report any concerns to 311, or in the case of the vacant designated buildings to heritage@ottawa.ca

Centretown Heritage Study

A comprehensive review of the heritage resources in Centretown is scheduled to begin in 2019. The study will identify and evaluate heritage resources, develop a plan to ensure the conservation of significant resources and to manage change as redevelopment and intensification occur. This review may lead to the creation of new Heritage Conservation Districts and recommendations for Part IV designations.

Women Of Architecture | WOA

By Zeynep Ekim

Women of Architecture | Capital Region (WOA!) was created by a group of emerging professionals dedicated to championing women throughout their careers in architecture & related fields. WOA! encourages women to build on their skill sets through opportunities for professional development, networking, mentorship and guidance, and creating a platform for open conversation. WOA! works to promote the achievements of women in the local architecture, design,

development and construction industries. By engaging this larger community, WOA! endeavors to foster a culture of equity and diversity within the profession starting first in Ottawa-Gatineau.

Since its founding WOA! has put together two very successful events. The next event is scheduled to take place in January 2019. For more information on our events and to sign up to our mailing list please visit: <https://womenofarchitecture.ca/>.

WOA! would like to reach out to Heritage Ottawa members to inquire about information regarding women in Ottawa architecture. Do you know a woman architect/engineer/tradesperson that contributed to the architecture of the city? Do you know any stories where women actively worked to better our built environment? Any women authors that wrote about the architectural history of our city? Please send your stories to hello@womenofarchitecture.ca.

Zeynep Ekim is a member of the Heritage Ottawa Board and Intern Architect at ERA Architects Inc.

From the President

By David Jeanes



Heritage Ottawa congratulates former Board member Glen Gower on his election as councillor for Stittsville Ward. We look forward to working with all the newly elected and re-elected members of Council to ensure that heritage remains a council priority.

Programs

Another successful walking tour season has come to an end (see the

article on page 6) and our 2018-2019 lecture series is off to a good start. Planning for the Heritage Forum to be held in March is beginning.

Advocacy

Two new Heritage Conservation Districts in Sandy Hill were approved by Council in August: Russell Avenue-Range Road and Besserer-Wurtemberg. The statements of Cultural Heritage Value and Interest for the HCDs notes their well-conserved, tree-lined streetscapes containing a variety of family housing types in a range of architectural styles, which distinguish them from other parts of Sandy Hill.

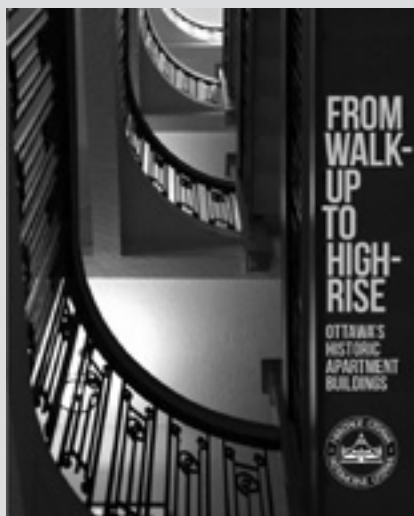
Heritage Ottawa continues to monitor the Sisters of the Visitation Monastery to ensure that the restoration of the heritage building, vacant since 2010, proceeds before new construction is permitted.

A Zoning By-Law Amendment to permit the restoration of most of the designated building and the construction of the attached nine-storey apartment (approved in August) will be considered by Planning Committee in early 2019.

Somerset House continues to suffer from demolition by neglect, to the frustration of Heritage Ottawa and many others. The owner recently announced that he does not intend to proceed with the plans for restoration and redevelopment approved by the City. The City has issued work orders requiring the owner to protect the interior of the building from the elements and to protect or repair heritage elements of the building.

I hope to see many of you at our December lecture, “Tempting Values for Early Shoppers: The Birth of Ottawa’s Department Stores,” on December 12 at Dominion-Chalmers.

David Jeanes, President, Heritage Ottawa / Patrimoine Ottawa



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