



**BOB *and* MARY ANNE PHILLIPS**  
HERITAGE OTTAWA FOUNDERS

## Phillips Memorial Lecture | Honouring Bob and Mary Anne Phillips

Bob and Mary Anne Phillips are two remarkable pioneers of heritage conservation in Ottawa, and co-founders of Heritage Ottawa.

Bob and Mary Anne comprised a formidable team in preserving our built heritage. Bob was founding executive director of the Heritage Canada Foundation and spokesman for heritage preservation through his work, writing and speeches. Mary Anne worked as effectively if not more so organizing the public advocacy required to save buildings and to change the minds of politicians, bureaucrats and developers whose lack of vision would have robbed us of many vestiges of our built heritage.

It began in 1967 with Mary Anne's establishment of the Heritage Committee of A Capital for Canadians. The group met regularly in the Phillips' living room at 8 Graham Avenue, the nerve center for the battles to save the East Block, Billings Estate, Nicholas Street Gaol and Court House, the Ottawa Teachers College (Normal School), the Sunnyside Fire Hall and the Rideau Street Convent chapel. In the early 1970's, Mary Anne organized a skate-in on the Rideau Canal to convince the NCC to open this historic waterway (now a World Heritage Site) as a winter attraction for Ottawans and visitors to the City. The rest, as they say, is history.

With the help of a small group of activists, Bob and Mary Anne saved the heritage committee by incorporating it in 1975 as a separate organization called Heritage Ottawa. Bob served as its first president and Mary Anne its first secretary.

Bob and Mary Anne recognized the importance of Ottawa's built heritage to its residents, to Canadians for whom Ottawa was their capital and internationally as a capital city of one of the richest nations in the world. Their success in blending these important aspects of heritage preservation is a legacy which we can all regard with pride.

Over the years, their dedication to the heritage movement and their influence on a generation of heritage activists who followed continues to be part of their legacy. Every year in February, Heritage Ottawa honours their achievements at the annual Bob and Mary Anne Phillips Memorial lecture.