

Heritage Matters

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Building communities: Heritage conservation districts

In this issue:

Heritage conservation districts: The most popular tool
in the heritage toolkit? | How districts change |
Grassroots heritage: The stewards of New Edinburgh

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A message from the Chairman



Over the past three decades, more than 100 heritage conservation districts have been established by municipalities in Ontario, protecting over 18,000 properties across the province and ensuring the preservation of the broader historical context of neighbourhoods, streetscapes, green spaces, industrial landscapes and more.

Heritage conservation districts protect and encourage the conservation of special areas in cities, towns and rural locations. They are also catalysts for cultural tourism and economic renewal. Indeed, it has been demonstrated that heritage conservation districts tend to be more stable and property values

tend to increase faster than non-designated areas and neighbourhoods.

Through the establishment of heritage conservation districts, municipalities are promoting economically stable, healthy and livable communities that possess a unique sense of place and integrate private property interests with the public good. They are to be lauded for realizing the potential of this significant conservation tool.

I hope that this issue of Heritage Matters may foster a better understanding of heritage conservation districts and how they are being used across Ontario to steward a diverse range of cultural landscapes.

Tom Symons

Thomas H.B. Symons, C.C., O.Ont, FRSC, LLD, D.Litt., D.U., D.Cn.L., FRGS

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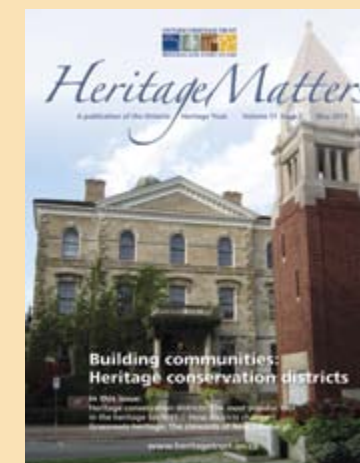
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Cover image: Downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake – a frequently visited heritage conservation district.

Recognizing heritage conservation efforts in Ontario

By Dawson Bridger



The 2012 recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards. Photo: Tessa J. Buchan

The Ontario Heritage Trust launched its first recognition program in 1996 and continues today to reward the efforts of individuals, groups and entire communities to preserve, protect and promote heritage conservation through the Young Heritage Leaders program, the Heritage Community Recognition Program and the Community Leadership Program.

The Young Heritage Leaders program recognizes youth 18 and younger for exceptional heritage volunteerism, with top nominees receiving awards from Ontario's Lieutenant Governor. The Heritage Community Recognition Program rewards adult volunteers for their service to the province, with a special nomination category for those with 25 years or more of service, which is also awarded by the Lieutenant Governor. And the Community Leadership Program recognizes holistic approaches to heritage conservation in four population sub-categories, which are also awarded by the Lieutenant Governor. All Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards are presented annually at Queen's Park in Toronto.

The Community Leadership Program recognizes municipalities for demonstrating an integrated approach to heritage conservation and stewardship. Heritage conservation districts (HCDs) can be an effective tool to deliver on this objective. Since the Community Leadership Program began in 2008, 11 of the 16 municipalities recognized have had at least one designated HCD. Communities can also demonstrate leadership in heritage conservation through: the use of other heritage bylaws and policies; support of heritage organizations, institutions and festivals; support and recognition of heritage volunteers; and the implementation of commemorative and interpretive activities.

The Trust looks forward to receiving nominations for all three of its recognition programs, and encourages all municipalities and heritage organizations to partner with the Trust to recognize deserving heritage conservation efforts.

Nomination criteria and forms are available at www.heritagetrust.on.ca/recognition.

Dawson Bridger is a Community Programs Officer (Acting) with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Districts Open Ontario

By Mike Sawchuck

It's no surprise that most of the province's heritage conservation districts (HCDs) are located within Doors Open Ontario communities. In fact, all but one of Ontario's 110 designated HCDs exist in a community that has participated in the Doors Open program. With so many important and fascinating neighbourhoods and heritage landscapes located throughout the province, there's no better time to visit than during the Doors Open Ontario season.

Nearly half of this year's 55 Doors Open Ontario events occur in communities with at least one HCD. In total, these events feature 92 separate HCDs. In some cases, Doors Open events include special guided tours that facilitate unprecedented access in and around designated districts. Doors Open Toronto will feature special tours of the Fort York HCD, the only single-property HCD in the province, while Doors Open Collingwood will provide tours of the Downtown Collingwood HCD and Doors Open Pickering will offer a rare glimpse into rural village life during its Whitevale HCD walking tour.

While special tours may not be available in all HCDs, that doesn't mean that visitors can't venture out on their own to do some exploring. Doors Open visitors in Ottawa, Kingston and Niagara-on-the-Lake will pass through the Byward Market, Market Square and Queen-Picton Street HCDs in those communities. You would be hard-pressed to find a better spot to stop for lunch or do some shopping than in these districts.

To coordinate your next HCD visit with an upcoming Doors Open Ontario event, consult the list of current HCDs on the Trust's website (www.heritagetrust.on.ca/hcd) and then visit the Doors Open Ontario website at www.doorsopenontario.on.ca.

Mike Sawchuck is a Community Programs Officer with the Trust.



The clock tower of Collingwood's Town Hall features prominently in the Collingwood Downtown Core HCD.

To discover which Doors Open Ontario events are happening near you, visit the Doors Open Ontario website at www.doorsopenontario.on.ca, or call 1-800-ONTARIO (1-800-668-2746) for a copy of our new program brochure.

Telling our stories on Facebook and Twitter

By Natasha Williams

Our history has always been shared through storytelling. These stories keep our heritage alive, adding a vibrant and interactive human dimension to the collective experience.

Traditionally, whether in longhouses, kitchens or opera houses, people gathered to share stories. They wrote them down and recorded them in poetry and song. Today, social media provides a new channel for these conversations, broadening the audience from the local to the global community.

Having already experienced the power of social media – through Ontario's Black Heritage Facebook page, social media sharing capabilities on the Doors Open Ontario website, and collaborative efforts with other organizations' social media channels – the Trust was eager to expand its social media presence.

In February 2013, the Ontario Heritage Trust launched comprehensive social media initiatives on both Facebook (www.facebook.com/OntarioHeritageTrust) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/@onheritage>), immediately gaining a sizeable following that continues to grow.

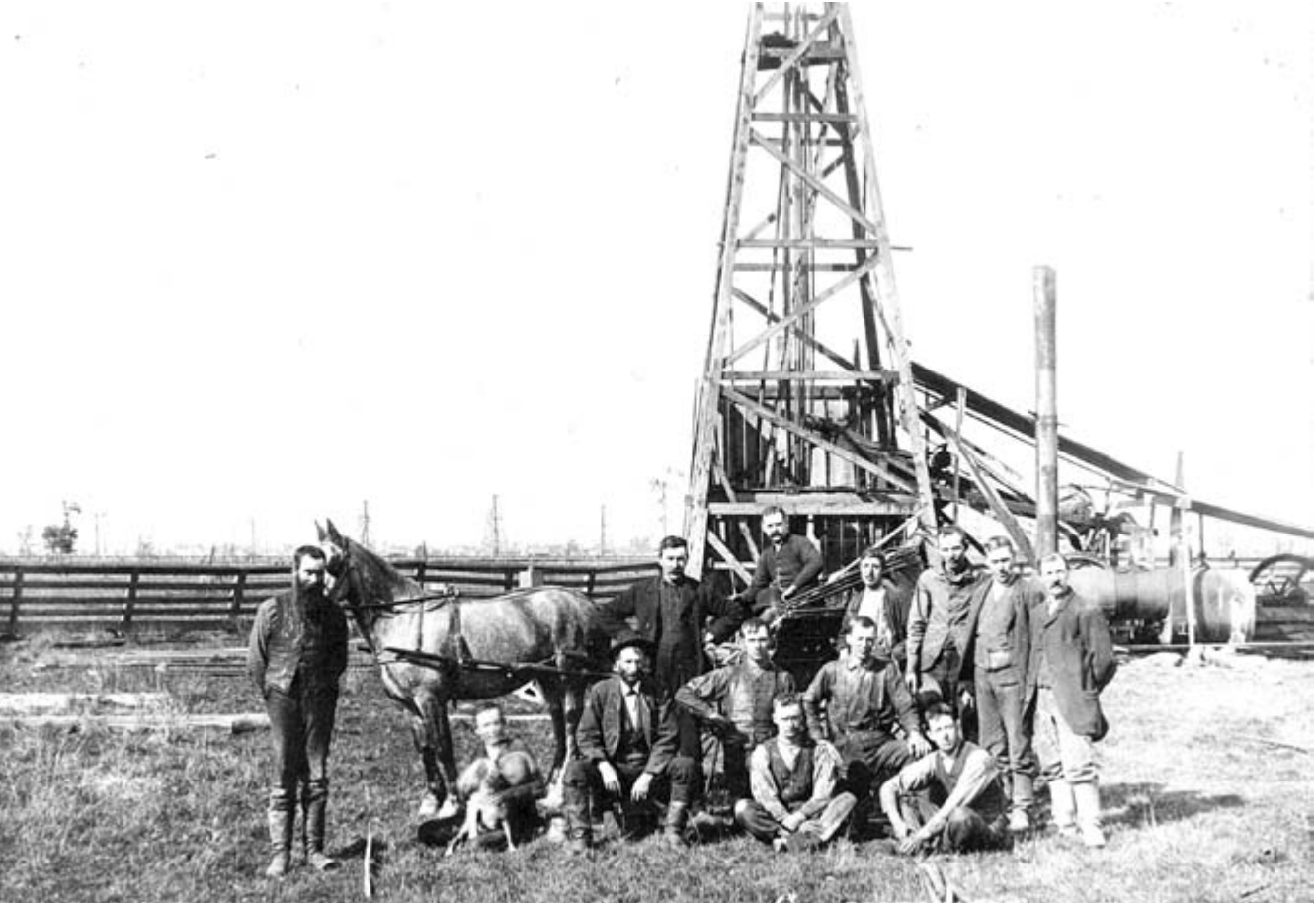
Social media contributes content that is spontaneous, interesting, diverse, relevant and genuine. It is also about listening, and not just broadcasting. Through social media, our collective stories become mainstream and can be placed in the palm of your hand.

Natasha Williams is a Marketing and Online Communications Intern with the Trust.



Oil Springs Heritage District: Working from the ground up

By Robert Tremain



A drill crew at Petrolia in 1910, standing before their steam-powered drilling rig. Photo: Oil Museum of Canada.

"In tracing the roots of the world's petroleum industry, one is inevitably led to Oil Springs, Canada West, in 1858." (Dr. Emory Kemp, Professor Emeritus, Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology at West Virginia University)

In the mid-19th century, southwestern Ontario was Canada West's last frontier, where lines of travel, civility and comfort faced the untamed. From these impassable wetlands would emerge an energy source that defines the modern era.

Consumers at the time clamoured for an affordable, safe and bright-burning fuel. Existing lamp fuels produced carbon threads, foul smells, yellow light or were prohibitively expensive for most North Americans. Indeed, many people continued to burn labour-intensive tallow candles. Laboratories had produced kerosene from oil shale, but in limited quantities — and at huge expense. The production of kerosene in commercial quantities still awaited the discovery of a resource stock that was cheap and abundant.

When the Geological Survey of Canada crew explored the newly established County of Lambton in 1849, they mapped several bitumen beds of hardened petroleum. Without any known application for the material, two fortune-seekers snapped up 566 hectares (1,400 acres) of

land in the remote Enniskillen Township. Mineral prospectors Charles and Henry Tripp from Woodstock had become the world's first petroleum land speculators. The honour of being credited as the "Father of the Petroleum Industry" would ultimately fall to James Miller Williams, who established North America's first commercial oil well and Canada's first refinery in 1858, setting off a sequence of events that established the world's petroleum industry.

The remarkable legacy of the world's first oil field was recognized by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as a National Historic Site in 1925, and a bronze marker was erected there in 1938. In 2005, the same body confirmed the Oil Museum of Canada and the privately owned Fairbank Oil Properties as a single National Historic Site.

Dr. Emory Kemp of the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology was introduced to the site in the 1990s and spent several summers conducting archaeological mapping. The Fairbank Oil Property was a treasure trove for Kemp, who enthused that for him it "was equivalent to a paleontologist discovering a living dinosaur!" The results of his fieldwork, which were deposited in the Library of Congress and Library and Archives Canada, was the first Historic American Engineering Record ever undertaken in Canada.

Encouraged by growing public and private support, a steering committee that included the County of Lambton, oil producers and several local municipalities and their Heritage Advisory Committees was formed in 2009 to conduct a full inventory and asset mapping, and to prepare a Resource Management Plan. The effort was municipally driven and community led, but facilitated by MBHC Planning/Wendy Shearer Landscape Architect.

The assets themselves were scattered across several municipalities in central Lambton. The then-Ministry of Tourism and Culture — a guiding partner throughout the process — encouraged the local municipalities to delegate their responsibility under the Ontario Heritage Act to the County of Lambton, an upper-tier municipality and owner of the Oil Museum of Canada. This collaborative approach to establishing a heritage conservation district (HCD) was necessary to address the hundreds of historical oil assets spread across several municipalities.



Field wheels (shown here) and jerker lines operate on the Fairbank Oil Properties today, much as they did in the 1860s. Photo: Oil Museum of Canada.



A view of some of the 1,100 three-pole derricks used at Oil Springs around 1910. Photo: Oil Museum of Canada.

The resulting study cited the rarity of the "continuing heritage landscape" of the oil fields — which still produces oil using technology invented on the Fairbank property 150 years ago. This is Ontario's first and only designation of an HCD based on a working industrial landscape.

The final Lambton Oil Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan was recognized in 2010 for its innovative solutions to scope and responsibility, receiving awards from the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals.

After completing the HCD study and plan, the County of Lambton and MBHC Planning produced a Commemorative Integrity Statement to highlight the key assets and "universal human value" of the district. It is the intention of the district's partners and stakeholders to seek UNESCO World Heritage Designation in recognition of the area's contributions to the history of the world's oil industry.

It is gratifying to see that the industrial birthplace that emerged from the forested swamps of southwestern Ontario has received local, provincial and federal recognition. Maybe, in the near future, it will achieve international acclaim.

"To visit Oil Springs is to make a pilgrimage to the place where the petroleum age began." (Charlie Fairbank, Order of Canada, 4th-generation oil producer and resident of Oil Springs)

Robert Tremain is the General Manager of the Lambton Cultural Services Division. He was previously the Director of the Oil Museum of Canada. His leadership was instrumental in the Lambton Oil Heritage Conservation District designation.

Grassroots heritage: The stewards of New Edinburgh

By Joan Mason



The Bell House at 151 Stanley Street, New Edinburgh. Photo courtesy of Joan Mason.

Located in the City of Ottawa at the confluence of the Rideau and Ottawa rivers is the historical community of New Edinburgh. With its roots going back to 1834, it is arguably Canada's oldest planned community. And, since 2001, it has been a designated heritage conservation district (HCD).

The design of New Edinburgh was influenced by the 18th-century mill town of New Lanark in the United Kingdom. While the woollen and lumber mills that once dominated the area (due to the power generated by the Rideau Falls) have long since been demolished, the homes of the mill workers and owners remain as a distinct community.

The district has 391 properties, many of which date from the Victorian era. Unlike other areas in and around Ottawa, New Edinburgh boasts alleys and quiet lanes with backyard gardens – part of its unique character. These same features are under tremendous pressure from intensification, lot creation and infill development. With a district plan that predates the 2005 changes to the Ontario Heritage Act, we realize that an update of our plan is long overdue.

The New Edinburgh Community Alliance is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization that advocates for the preservation, protection and promotion of the buildings, community and stories of the New Edinburgh HCD. The Alliance's Heritage and Development Committee is consulted by city staff, property owners and developers regarding potential alterations and infill in the district.

Preserving New Edinburgh is more than bricks, mortar, applications and permits. The Alliance has a well established walking tour and we

are actively undertaking new research into the fascinating history of the district. The Alliance believes that HCDs are important hubs for tourism and we are taking steps to promote the New Edinburgh HDC as a local attraction. The Alliance publishes and delivers the New Edinburgh News five times per year to everyone in the district. We are also preserving the stories of the district's people, events and themes with the assistance of the online tools provided by the Heritage Resources Centre at the University of Waterloo.

The well known preservation journal and television series This Old House recently declared New Edinburgh one of the best places to buy a heritage house. The residents take great pride in such accolades and we are extremely protective of our neighbourhood. HCDs are like communes. The people who buy properties in them agree to play by the rules and abide by the architectural manners of the neighbourhood for the benefit of current and future generations. It is important for everyone to understand that the care and cost of our shared heritage is borne by individual owners who act as stewards for the benefit of the general public.

Joan Mason has lived in a historical house in the New Edinburgh HCD since 2005 and is a past president of the New Edinburgh Community Alliance. For more information on New Edinburgh, visit www.newedinburgh.ca.

Heritage conservation districts: The most popular tool in the heritage toolkit?

By Jim Leonard



The largest HCD in Ontario is currently South Rosedale in Toronto, comprising over 1,100 residential properties. The smallest district, and Ontario's only single-property HCD is Fort York National Historic Site (shown here), also in Toronto. Photo courtesy of Doors Open Toronto.

When the Ontario Heritage Act came into force in 1975, municipalities across the province suddenly had the authority to protect and enhance "groups of properties that collectively give an area special character" by designating these areas as heritage conservation districts – also known as "Part V (section 41) designations" or simply HCDs.

The scope of the act has evolved beyond architectural heritage. The contextual value of a property and the compelling importance of cultural landscapes are now widely recognized. The concept is reflected in legislation and policy documents used to promote good planning practices. The term cultural heritage landscape is defined in the Provincial Policy Statement under the Ontario Planning Act. Heritage conservation districts are cited as an example of cultural landscapes in this definition. In addition, the second edition of the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, published in 2010, unequivocally declares that a heritage district is a cultural landscape.

District designation protects these landscapes by first framing a clearly defined geographical area and then describing that area's dynamic, prevailing character and sense of place. It identifies the interrelated features and attributes that contribute to this character and place, including the built form and surrounding features – such as trees and vegetation, streetscape characteristics, views and vistas, road patterns, landforms and open spaces.

A district designation also establishes an informed heritage planning framework through a district plan to promote conservation and to manage change. Municipalities appear to be relying on this coordinated and holistic approach to heritage conservation more than ever.

Heritage Conservation Districts: The most popular tool in the heritage toolkit? *continued*



The cenotaph in Thunder Bay's Waverley Park, part of the Waverley Park HCD, and Ontario's second-oldest municipal park. Photo courtesy of the City of Thunder Bay, Heritage Advisory Committee.

Individual property designation is a well established conservation tool. More than 250 municipalities have at least one Part IV (section 29) designation bylaw in place. As effective as this type of designation can be, it can sometimes lead to a conservation patchwork. Isolated landmarks are protected while the surrounding streetscapes or context slowly erodes or disappears. District designation, on the other hand, focuses on distinct areas.

Data from the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) Register indicates that the rate of individual heritage designations peaked in the 1980s at roughly 230 bylaws per year. Between 2000 and 2009, the average number of new designations dropped to 141 bylaws per year; this trend appears to be continuing.

By contrast, the number of new HCDs has surged in the past decade. Ontario currently has 110 districts in full force. Almost half of these came into being after the year 2000, suggesting that municipalities, property owners and residents are increasingly seeing the merits of this type of protection.

The Trust estimates that, in Ontario, close to 18,000 properties fall within the boundaries of an HCD, compared to no more than 8,000 individual heritage designations. Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton have the most HCDs with 20, 18 and seven respectively.

While every district is unique, they can still be grouped and generally categorized. Districts are found in both rural and urban areas. The two most prevalent types of districts are residential neighbourhoods – such as the West Woodfield neighbourhood in London – and downtown commercial areas – such as the downtown cores of Stratford, Cobourg and Cambridge. In fact, 80 per cent of all district types in Ontario are either residential areas or historical downtown cores. Rural settlement areas are another large category and include such districts as Brampton's Churchville area and Pickering's Whitevale.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the designation of industrial sites. One of the more interesting new



St. Mark's United Church in Kingston, part of the Barriefield HCD. Barriefield is an example of a small rural hamlet being protected within a larger urban environment.

districts to come into force is the Oil Heritage Area in Lambton County, recognizing its historical importance and the district's influence on the development of the global oil industry.

Modernist heritage areas are also being recognized as districts – the most recent example being the 2012 designation of Ottawa's Briarcliffe neighbourhood, a 1960s-era residential enclave noted for its bold, sleek, low-profile ranch houses on heavily treed lots.

Geographically, districts tend to be most heavily clustered in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, followed by southwestern Ontario. A small number of districts are spread across southern Ontario, mostly along the 401 corridor between Toronto and Kingston. There is another cluster in Ottawa. Few districts, however, exist in central and eastern Ontario. Northern Ontario has one district, located in Thunder Bay (Waverley Park). Potential new districts exist in virtually every village, town and city in the province.



The Gordon Block is in the heart of Stratford's Downtown Core HCD.

Since almost all heritage districts focus on multiple properties, the effort required to establish a district tends to be on a higher order of magnitude compared to an individual property designation. This fact may explain why more than 250 Ontario municipalities have passed at least one individual heritage designation bylaw, but only 39 municipalities have established one or more HCD.

The district designation process requires public consultation and engagement. It tends to run more smoothly when it starts as a grassroots effort in response to an issue that galvanizes a well established neighbourhood. A broad level of public consensus may already be established, too. The demolition of a familiar landmark, for instance, or the threat of incompatible infill development in a historical neighbourhood often triggers a call for a heritage district. Many of the districts in Toronto, for example, exist because a proactive neighbourhood group approached the city requesting designation (e.g., Cabbagetown, whose district has remained active through local stewardship).

It is important to provide residents and property owners in a proposed district with consistent, accurate and clear communications in order to dispel any misconceptions about the implications of district designation. A district is not an urban conservation cure-all. Nor do districts have negative impacts on property values. Most significantly, districts are planning tools for managing change and not legal straitjackets designed to freeze properties in time.

Lingering misconceptions about districts tend to dissolve, however, when one considers how many districts are in place across

Ontario already, not to mention the thousands of people who have lived and worked within them for decades. The best evidence supporting the merits of heritage district designation remains the districts themselves.

Fortunately, the heritage community has amassed an array of counter-arguments built on years of research, observation and reflection. Recent research compiled by the Heritage Resources Centre at the University of Waterloo on behalf of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario refutes several myths about heritage districts.

Consider the positive economic and tourism benefits of heritage districts supported by demographic data from many studies. People seek the sense of place that can be found in vibrant downtowns that possess specialty shops, antiques stores and places with ambience and authentic heritage character. Downtown heritage districts in Port Hope, Unionville, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Stratford, Perth, Cobourg, Port Perry and Kingston illustrate this potential.

OHA Register data can also shed light on some common myths. Some people believe that designation makes it impossible to alter a designated heritage building. An analysis of almost 500 heritage permits sent to the Trust by 28 different municipalities since 2010 suggests that councils, in fact, approve more heritage permits than they deny. A full 97 per cent of all heritage permits sent to the Trust were either consents or consents with conditions.

Despite their effectiveness, HCDs still face challenges – including unsympathetic infill, encroaching development, demolition by neglect or even catastrophic loss, as was

How districts change

By Mark Warrack

Meadowvale Village – a once-small, rural village – is located on the Credit River at the north end of the City of Mississauga. In the late 1960s, the village residents recognized the heritage value of their small community in light of a quickly growing city. They formed an association, which continues to this day, with a focus on how to seek protection of the village’s cultural heritage. Twelve years later, in 1980, Meadowvale Village became Ontario’s first Ontario Municipal Board-approved heritage conservation district (HCD).

When Meadowvale became an HCD, it was a small rural village with farmers’ fields to the south and east and conservation lands along the Credit River to the north and west. The village is characterized by large lots with small, simple vernacular homes within the original land divisions of 1856. The HCD maintains the character of narrow roads, overhanging trees, mostly residential use (with only one commercial property) and a generally transparent transition from the public to private realm.

Heritage conservation districts were new to Ontario at the time, so the Meadowvale Village HCD Plan was created without the benefit of models or examples on which to build. Therefore, this HCD Plan became the model for others that soon followed.

You might ask why an HCD would change. Are not HCDs created to monitor and direct change? There are a number of factors that have had an influence on Meadowvale Village as an HCD. These pressures, too, would not be specific to Meadowvale Village.

Today, there is suburban housing adjacent to the village on two sides. Prior to the surrounding development, the HCD was very stable with a core of long-term residents. Properties did not come on the market. An aging population, however, changed all that. As the older, original families left, new families moved in – many from these new, adjacent subdivisions. In many cases, the new residents were looking to renovate and enlarge these small homes, adapting them to 21st-century lifestyles.

As an HCD, Meadowvale Village has seen changes in lot severances, increased traffic and vehicle needs, service upgrades, encroaching subdivisions and evolving adjacent landscapes. There has been a shift from conserving built or architectural details to ensure that the overall cultural heritage value of the village is preserved. This interest is aligned with a more recent acknowledgment of the importance of cultural heritage landscapes.

The 1980 HCD Plan is currently under review, to be updated with improved design guidelines by the end of 2013. The minor changes to the village have been for the few new lots and houses, but the bigger change over the last 30 years has been the evolving expectations of the community. The current desire to incorporate modern subdivision amenities into the Meadowvale Village HCD is a focus of change that will be a heritage conservation challenge for the next generation.

Mark Warrack is a Senior Heritage Coordinator with the City of Mississauga.



Barberry Lane streetscape in the Meadowvale Village HCD. Photo: City of Mississauga.



Toronto currently has 20 HCDs in full force – the most in Ontario. This streetscape, shown here, is part of the Yorkville-Hazelton Avenue HCD.

demonstrated by the 2011 Goderich tornado. Any of these challenges can be made more difficult if there is no district plan, or if the plan is ineffective or outdated.

Every council decision has a tangible, cumulative impact on a district. A comprehensive and current district plan – tightly integrated within the broader land-use planning framework – helps guide, inform and manage the array of complex and unforeseen issues that can affect a district. Fortunately, the Ontario Heritage Act includes mechanisms to adopt new plans where none previously existed, or to amend old plans to meet current standards.

Local decision-makers seem to recognize that heritage districts contribute to sound municipal planning and support vibrant, stable communities. A casual stroll or a drive through any of Ontario’s districts vividly demonstrates this point. Most property owners see the merits, too, recognizing that coordinated heritage guidelines and policies benefit their properties.

It should be no surprise that over the past decade, more heritage conservation districts have come into force than in the previous 25 years. Heritage conservation districts may very well be the province’s most popular – and powerful – tool in our heritage toolkit.

Jim Leonard is the Ontario Heritage Act Registrar with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Changes to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2005 require that district plans be developed to guide heritage conservation districts and to address the integrated use and complementary planning guidelines going forward. A strong district plan can support preservation by discouraging incompatible development, while at the same time properly managing and addressing the change that is inevitable as communities grow and evolve over time.



50 West Street, following the tornado and since it was restored.
Photos courtesy of Bob Davis.



The Goderich story: A lesson in survival

By Denise Van Amersfoort

For the past 18 months, West Street in Goderich has been as much a construction site as it has a place of service and retail business.

On August 21, 2011, an F3 tornado devastated the Town of Goderich. At the epicenter of the damage were the town's two heritage conservation districts (HCDs) – The Square and West Street. The damage to Goderich's HCDs is considered by heritage professionals to be unprecedented in the history of the province.

Eighteen months later, Goderich has replanted, rebuilt and moved forward. This article opens a small window into the amount of dedication, hard work and energy that private landowners, the Heritage Committee, town council and the community at large have put forward to rebuild "Canada's prettiest town," and West Street specifically.

West Street has been home to many success stories following the storm and, as the town planner, I am happy to share my perspective on a few of the many inspiring stories.

Found at 37-41 West Street, the Masonic Lodge has presided over West Street with a stately and impressive presence since 1913. On August 21, 2011, one-third of its three-storey Italianate façade was torn away from the building, with bricks scattered up and down the street. Interestingly, the Lodge was one of the properties that had opted out of the HCD in 1993 and yet, despite the lack of designation, the caretakers of this building applied for heritage permits, consulted with the Municipal and Marine Heritage Committee, and demonstrated a genuine commitment to the heritage review process. The restoration of this building included restoring the street façade, re-creating the corbelled brick cornice, installing a new roof, conducting significant interior renovations and making other structural repairs. The result is stunning. The masonry is perhaps my favourite detail as the owners opted to retain as much of the original brick on the façade as possible, creating a distinct line between the old and new. In doing so, they have enabled the building itself to tell the story of the destruction and resilience that occurred throughout the town.

Across the street, two other examples of jobs well done can be found. While 46 West Street suffered the collapse of a chimney, roof damage and severe interior damage, 50 West Street was pummelled with debris from neighbouring buildings, causing extensive damage to the side of the building in addition to broken windows, destroyed signs and significant damage to the interior. The restoration of both buildings has significantly contributed to the streetscape in that high-quality examples of both Second Empire and Georgian styles have been maintained.

A further highlight of the transformation is that of the north streetscape of West Street, where, prior to the storm, four one-storey buildings lined a section of the street. These buildings predated the HCD District Plan for West Street, which supports two-storey development for the traditional commercial district, as does the town's zoning bylaw. Three of the four one-storey buildings were demolished as a result of the tornado and, while there was certainly a will to put everything back as it was before, an opportunity was recognized and town council and property owners stood together behind a recommendation for buildings along West Street to be rebuilt at two storeys, not one. Today, two of the three sites are home to new, two-storey buildings and the owners of the fourth building, which was not demolished, have opted to add a second storey to their building. The skyline of West Street has been transformed and the heritage character enhanced despite the massive loss. This example shows how a combination of HCD planning, land-use planning and the will of property owners have resulted in a significant win in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

So, what's next for the West Street HCD? In March 2013, town council – with the help of a Creative Communities through Prosperity Fund grant from the provincial government – has initiated a new HCD District Plan and Study project for downtown Goderich that proposes to encompass the two existing districts and potentially expand into other areas of the downtown core.

It's my opinion that the significance of the heritage conservation districts and heritage planning in general have been recognized and promoted in the months after the storm. For the town of Goderich – and for West Street specifically – the results are nothing short of incredible. Come and see it for yourself!

Denise Van Amersfoort is a planner with the Huron County Planning and Development Department in Goderich.

Heritage conservation people

By Stephen Ashton



Port Hope was a recipient of a Community Leadership Award in 2008. The award was presented to Councillor Karen O'Hara by Lincoln M. Alexander, former Chairman of the Ontario Heritage Trust, and David C. Onley, Ontario's Lieutenant Governor. Photo: Tessa J. Buchan.

Growing up in Port Hope fostered a belief that every community had an amazing main street. That ignorance was shaken when I returned from university with a classmate who exclaimed, as we were driving down Walton Street, "You didn't tell me your downtown looked like this!" Afterwards, I appreciated the beauty of my hometown downtown even more. So much so that our family started a business in downtown Port Hope and I was on council from 1998 to 2000. During this time period, members of the community undertook tireless hours of research as they prepared a Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study that was approved in 1997. These efforts will ensure that the character of Walton Street is conserved for generations to come.

District designation, however, wasn't the beginning or the end of the story. This is a story about people who have worked tirelessly over the years to support the town's activities. People like Clay and Carol Benson, who invested in Smith's Creek Antiques and convinced fellow

antiques dealers to relocate there. Or people like the Rumgays, who restored their private residence, began a publishing business in Port Hope (Century Home Magazine), and restored the once-vacant building at 1 Walton Street into a hotel/restaurant because, as they said, "if we don't do it, then who else will?!" And how can we forget local pharmacist Dave Watson, who loves owning one of Canada's oldest pharmacies and has invested considerable personal money into the restoration of his building, a part of the Tempest Block.

It's a story of the local Kinsmen Club, whose members volunteer to put up lights every year for the Christmas season. Or the Holtons, who, while still running their local florist business, would water the street's hanging baskets before the town took on this responsibility itself. It's also about volunteers like my Grade 4 teacher, Peter Bolton, who offers his time and energy at the downtown Capitol Theatre, an invaluable cultural venue.



Dave Watson, a fourth-generation pharmacist, stands in front of his Port Hope pharmacy. Photo: Stephen Ashton.



Peter Bolton volunteers at the Capitol Theatre, a private non-profit organization that benefits from the donations of local industry, individuals and the municipality. Photo: Stephen Ashton.

The story wouldn't be complete without the volunteer members of the local heritage committee who meet with business owners to discuss the details of what type of sign they want to put up. It's about incredibly successful community organizations, such as the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO), Port Hope Branch, which recognizes that it must support heritage conservation by providing grants to property owners, and which has pledged \$250,000 over the next few years for restoration projects in Port Hope's downtown core – including the restoration of the Tempest Block.

Local residents also see the connection between their consumer choices and the requirement for downtown businesses to be successful. Perhaps that's why our shopkeepers have chosen a lifestyle of operating a downtown business supported by endless hours of work. This would include my wife Teri-Jo, who now runs the family business by herself.

Dedication to local conservation isn't overlooked. The success of downtown Port Hope can also be attributed to the late A.K. Sculthorpe, honoured by the ACO with the A.K. Sculthorpe Award for Advocacy. Sculthorpe donated money to the local ACO and other local organizations to assist in their ongoing efforts.

All of these factors (and many more) have combined to make Port Hope and its downtown the benefactor of national distinction, including being one of the Top 10 Communities in Canada (Harrowsmith Magazine), the best destination (Reader's Digest), and TVOntario's best-preserved mainstreet in the province.

Heritage conservation is as much about the culture of a community as it is about the individual buildings. Port Hope is blessed with this culture. In 2009, I attended the Canadian Heritage Conference where a presenter from Port Hope lamented the inability of a community group to sway council's position to support conservation of another local heritage site, referred to as the Pier Buildings. He indicated that people in Port Hope seem to be more interested in people than in buildings. But while this may in some ways be true, as in the Walton Street Heritage Conservation District, our experience has shown that the people are worth investing in if these are the kinds of results we can achieve.

Stephen Ashton is a planner for the Town of Whitby.

WHAT'S ON . . .

. . . the shelf

Full Frontal T.O. – Exploring Toronto's Architectural Vernacular, by Shawn Micallef with photographs by Patrick Cummins. Coach House Books, 2012. For over 30 years, Patrick Cummins has been wandering the streets of Toronto, taking photographs of its houses, variety stores, garages and ever-changing storefronts. Straightforward shots chronicle the same buildings over the years, or travel the length of a block, façade by façade. Unlike other architecture books, Full Frontal T.O. looks at buildings that typically go unexamined, creating a street-level visual history of Toronto. Full Frontal T.O. features over 400 gorgeous photos of Toronto, with accompanying text by master urban explorer Shawn Micallef.

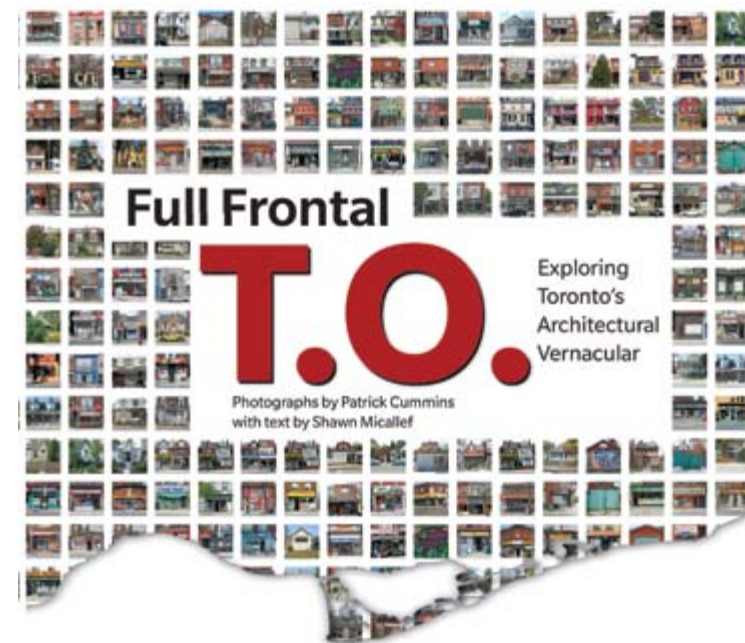
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Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals – www.cahp-acecp.ca – Visit this website to find Ontario consultants with extensive experience developing heritage conservation district plans.

Canada's Historic Places – The Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada – www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes – These guidelines, updated in 2010, have become the Canadian benchmark for heritage conservation practice.

Ontario Heritage Act – www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o18_e – The Ontario Heritage Act provides the scope of study for a heritage conservation district. The act also states what is required for the contents of an HCD plan.

Ontario Heritage Toolkit – www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Heritage_Tool_Kit_HCD_English.pdf – The Ontario Heritage Toolkit is a series of written booklets that help municipal councils, municipal staff, Municipal Heritage Committees, land-use planners, heritage professionals, heritage organizations, property owners and others understand the heritage conservation process in Ontario. They explain the Ontario Heritage Act, the Planning Act and related programs – including district designation.



Ontario Heritage Trust – www.heritagetrust.on.ca/hm – Read about the Cobalt historic mining district – Ontario's first National Historic District – from the Heritage Matters archives (in the June 2008 issue). Also, consult the lists of current and pending HCDs in Ontario (www.heritagetrust.on.ca/hcd).

Strengthening Ontario's Heritage: An introductory guide to identifying, protecting and promoting the heritage of our communities – www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Strength_Heritage.pdf – This guide is designed for anyone who is interested in ensuring that the heritage of his/her community is well conserved. It discusses cultural heritage resources, what they are, and how to manage them wisely. It focuses on three key steps in heritage conservation: identification, protection and promotion or celebration.

University of Waterloo Heritage Resource Centre – Heritage Conservation District Study – www.environment.uwaterloo.ca/research/hrc/projects/heritage_conservation_districts – With funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, branches of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) and historical societies partnered with the Heritage Resources Centre (HRC) at the University of Waterloo to undertake a provincewide research program to determine whether HCDs in Ontario have been successful heritage planning initiatives over a period of time.

In the coming months . . .

Here are some of the events and activities occurring over the next few months. Visit our website at www.heritagetrust.on.ca for more details!

June 1 to October 5, 2013 – Corktown walking tour series, Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, Toronto. Call 416-327-6997 or email enochturner@heritagetrust.on.ca to reserve your spot!

June 4, 2013 – Outside Looking In hosts its 6th annual show, Elgin Theatre, Toronto. Working with indigenous youth in First Nations communities, organizations and friendship centres across Canada, Outside Looking In provides indigenous youth with the opportunity to shine their light as bright as they wish through the art of hip-hop.

June 7-9, 2013 – The Giacomo Variations, starring John Malkovich, Elgin Theatre, Toronto. Hollywood icon John Malkovich portrays the master scoundrel and seducer Giacomo Casanova in The Giacomo Variations. Visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/ewg for details.

June 26, 2013 – Provincial plaque unveiling to commemorate the founding of Georgetown, Georgetown. Although first settled around 1819, the hamlet originally called Hungry Hollow did not begin to grow significantly until the completion of the York to Guelph Road in 1828.

June 30, 2013 – Recognition programs application deadline. Recognize an outstanding individual or group of volunteers who have made contributions to heritage conservation and promotion in your community. For more information, including nomination forms, visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/recognition.

July 28, 2013 – Family Day at Homewood Museum, Maitland. Fun events planned for the whole family – including games, crafts and contests. Call 613-498-3003 for more information.

August 3, 2013 – Emancipation Day celebrations at Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, Dresden. Emancipation Day commemorates the end of slavery in Canada and the British Empire with special musical performances, tours and re-enactments. This year, Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site also marks the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Call 519-683-2978 for more information.

August 7-11, 2013 – Umoja: The Spirit of Togetherness, Elgin Theatre, Toronto. Umoja is a musical theatre experience that transports the audience into the history of South African music and dance. Call 1-855-622-2787 for tickets or visit www.ticketmaster.ca.

August 18, 2013 – Family Day at Inge-Va, Perth. Bring your family to Inge-Va for a day filled with fun activities and explore this early 19th-century stone house. Call 613-498-3003 for more information.

August 18, 2013 – Provincial plaque unveiling to commemorate William Mercer Wilson, 1813-75, Simcoe. William Mercer Wilson emigrated from Scotland and eventually settled in Norfolk County. In addition to his impressive professional, military and political accomplishments, Wilson is credited with founding freemasonry in what would become Ontario.



www.facebook.com/OntarioHeritageTrust



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September 5-15, 2013 – Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) screenings at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre, Toronto. Visit www.tiff.net/thefestival for more information.

September 15, 2013 – Application deadline for the Provincial Plaque Program. For more information, including criteria and application forms, visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca.

September 26-28, 2013 at 8 p.m. – John Cleese: Last Time to See Me Before I Die, Winter Garden Theatre, Toronto. In the Last Time to See Me Before I Die, Cleese will regale fans with stories from his illustrious 40-year career followed by a question-and-answer period with the audience. For more information, call 1-855-622-ARTS (2787) or visit www.ticketmaster.ca.

October 7, 2013 – Chandelier gala for the 100th anniversary of the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatres, Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre, Toronto. Visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/EWG100 for more information.

Museum site summer season

- Fulford Place (Tearoom), Brockville – May 25 to September 1, 2013
- Homewood Museum, Maitland – June 15 to September 1, 2013
- Inge-Va, Perth – June 15 to September 1, 2013
- Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site – May 18 to October 25, 2013

Doors Open Ontario continues throughout the summer and fall with events across the province. Visit www.doorsopenontario.on.ca for more information on events occurring near you! #DOontario



Continuing exhibit: Foundations & Fire: Early Parliament and the War of 1812 Experience at York at Toronto's Parliament interpretive centre now includes artifacts relating to General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, who led the defence during the attack on York. Photo: British sword belonged to General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, c. 1813 (detail).

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Ontario Heritage Trust

Photo: Fulford Place, Brockville

For more information, visit
www.heritagetrust.on.ca/museums
or snap this tag:



ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST



BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE



Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site



Enoch Turner Schoolhouse



Photo: David Lee

Parliament interpretive centre



Fulford Place

MISSING:

Elgin Theatre Chandelier

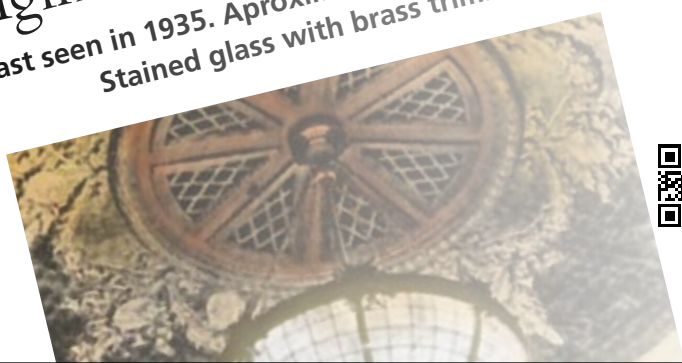
Last seen in 1935. Approximately 100 years old.
Stained glass with brass trim.

Last seen in 1935. Approximately 100 years old.
Stained glass with brass trim.

Please contribute to the Chandelier project.

Visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/EWG100
or call **416-325-5025**.

Illuminate our past. Light our future.



THE ELGIN AND WINTER GARDEN
THEATRE CENTRE



BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE