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# ACORN

FALL 2018

## THE CRAFT OF CONSERVATION

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**ISSUE 2**

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Sandstone restoration at 135 St. George Street, Toronto. **Photo** The York Club, 2018

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

If we could read walls, what would they tell us?

*The principles discoverable in the works of the past belong to us; not so the results. It is taking the end for the means.*

— Owen Jones<sup>1</sup>

A friend recently spoke with me about the grammar of stone. He pointed out the proportional relationships of bond stones, the snecks and the dressing (textures) of a wall like the one illustrated below, built by Augustus Butterfield. After that conversation about stone walls, I began to notice how walls could be *read* and how the choices of experienced and enlightened craftspeople and designers communicate much more than their structural integrity and function.

In this Fall 2018 issue of ACORN I am joined in a multi-perspective conversation about the value of craft to heritage conservation by architects, artisans, historians and conservationists. All contributors to this issue celebrate the value added to our experience as viewers of amazing windows, buildings and walls by the honed craft and experience of the artisans and the architects. The architect Owen Jones, quoted

here, was inspired to write the *Grammar of Ornament* because he was dismayed by the confabulation of visual elements and an observed disregard for the principles of design emerging in Victorian-era architecture and design. He attributed the trend to a lack of visual literacy among designers, craftspeople and especially the public. Our authors in this issue of ACORN articulate an appreciation of the grammar of design and craft.

Let's look more closely at the example below. Although a contemporary wall, it was constructed with knowledge of and references to historic stone construction processes and materials. I see that the proportional relationships of the stone shapes give visual and functional balance, as well as a rhythm to the composition. The dominant horizontal lines are unifying elements; however, as I look carefully, a couple of those lines are almost diagonal and perhaps even ironic signifiers. While the colours and tonal values of the stones also move the eye around the composition of the wall, there is contrast in the texture and a few of the stones are trapezoidal. Could this wall have a dynamic composition instead of the common homogeneous coursing? Indeed, as the viewer's eye follows the subtle variations of the negative spaces



**F. Leslie Thompson**

ACO President and Chair

Photo Matthew Plexman

made by the absence of mortar, the path functions as a minor movement that supports the lone cobblestone as a point of emphasis. That design choice and the references of the material contrast with the sandstone that derives from the same whirlpool formation that Em Cheng describes for the Ancaster Old Town Hall in this issue. The builder-artist's choices both invite the viewer to *read* the wall and ask what his choices mean. I read a sense of play in the design elements chosen that, when juxtaposed with the physical stability of the wall and its historic references, question notions of permanence.

The demonstration of the grammar of craft and design witnessed in the windows, walls, and buildings described in this issue of ACORN invite us to read tangible heritage. Maybe it is just me; but as I read the walls, they are talking.

— Leslie

<sup>1</sup> Owen Jones (1809-1874), *The Grammar of Ornament* (London: Day & Son, 1856. From the Ivey Press Ltd. 2001 Edition)



▲ Raewynn's Wall constructed by Augustus Butterfield. Photo Augustus Butterfield, 2009

# CARNEGIE'S LEGACY RESPECTED

By John Rutledge

During the late 1800s and early 1900s over 100 libraries were built in Ontario with grants from Andrew Carnegie's library program. Two of these were in Seaforth and Brussels. An interesting sidenote is that James Bertram, who administered Carnegie's grants from Pittsburgh, married Janet Tod Ewing, originally from Seaforth, and both are buried in Maitland Bank Cemetery near Seaforth.

The guidelines for the Carnegie grants generated architecturally similar library buildings with almost all of them including an exterior staircase (to ascend to knowledge) and symmetrical façades with rusticated plinth bases, classical columns, pilasters, entablatures, and traditional detailing.

The 2014 expansion of the 1909 Brussels Library had to meet the requirements of the Huron County Library which operates the facility and the Municipality of Huron East, which owns it. The library wanted a facility with no interior walls. The municipality wanted barrier-free accessibility without the costs of an elevator. The general public wanted the lowered ceilings and boarded-up transom windows reinstated for more natural light. Everyone agreed the historic architectural character was to be respected.

The library sits on a corner lot and the municipal sidewalks varied from five to seven feet below the main floor level. An addition with an interior ramp was proposed but the increased size and cost eliminated that idea. Several proposals were investigated using an exterior ramp

and new entrance off the side street, with none of them meeting anyone's approval. After much deliberation it was decided that the entrance should be off Turnberry Street, Brussels' main street, adjacent to the town's commercial core.

This approach favourably generated the final design leading to resolution of the addition's floor plan and a 60-foot-long exterior entrance ramp. This created a welcoming entrance along the side of the old building into a new rear addition. The library's original corner entrance with its classical pediment became a new adult reading room. Most of the building's original interior was visually open with rooms separated by large panes of glass set into wood wainscoted and framed panels. We were able to maintain all of the original glazed panelled walls, while also opening up three smaller rooms that had had solid walls with wide open archways, and adding another large open archway between the original building and the addition.

During the 1970s the ceiling was dropped to potentially make the building easier to heat. The original transom windows above the double-hung windows were boarded up to accommodate the lowered ceiling. This previous renovation decreased natural light levels in the building. The public was happy when we raised the ceiling back up to almost its original height, with additional insulation, and reinstated the windows with their "spider" transoms. Maintaining the building's original interior glazed partitions, woodwork, ceiling height, windows, and transoms preserved and



▲ The 1910 corner pediment of Brussels Library on the left with 2015 addition on the right. Photo Dan Schneider, 2018



▲ The new ramped entrance creates a brick base for the original building. Photo Dan Schneider, 2018

respected the original architectural style.

New interior trim for the addition has the same overall size as the original trim although a different profile section was used. This trim was painted with a solid colour that is similar to the colouration of the dark brown stained original wood trim, contrasting and distinguishing new from old. Here too the similarity between new and old creates a congruent architectural balance.

Growing up in Brussels, I thought I had a solid understanding of the building's architecture. I believed that the original vocabulary of the building was a symmetrical repetition of identical elements. After numerous

unsuccessful attempts at various window types, shapes, sizes, and arrangements, I realized the original architectural vocabulary was not what I had thought. In reality, the original windows are variations of the same double-hung window, each topped with a single or double “spider” transom window. What seems to be a regular, symmetrical repetition of identical elements is



actually an irregular composition that only implies regularity. Designing more variations of the existing original window configurations and placing them irregularly around the new addition’s exterior with an informal relationship to the addition’s interior rooms, I slowly realized an architecturally sympathetic design for the building’s addition was emerging with its own vocabulary — one that had grown out of careful analysis of the original architecture. Kolbe brand wood-framed windows with pre-finished exterior metal cladding were used for authenticity, low maintenance, and increased energy efficiency.

We lucked out when it came to brick choice. Instead of using reclaimed brick, we found that a new brick, Lancaster Red Stock #4930 manufactured by Ibstock Brick, was a successful match in size and colour. Bear in mind that historically red brick buildings in Ontario were laid with mortar that was coloured. Therefore, when using red brick for an addition to an old red brick building, the mortar also has to be carefully coloured in order to achieve a successful brick match.

New details similar to the old in overall size, shape, and proportion were designed and developed using variations of building materials instead of problematic duplication. Additions should be sympathetically congruent and contextually in harmony with their parent buildings. I hope the work done to the Brussels Library has

◀ New windows in the addition are variations of the original windows. **Photo** Dan Schneider, 2018



▲ Replacement windows with “spider” transoms and relocated original bookcases help to restore the original interior. **Photo** Dan Schneider, 2018

achieved this.

I leave you with a question regarding architecture and craft. Is it appropriate to add onto a building with an architecturally sympathetic addition that is congruent with the building’s original architecture; or, should one juxtapose a completely different style for the addition?

### About the author

John Rutledge is an architect based in Blyth who restores, renovates, and upgrades old houses, small public buildings, and old churches in Southwestern Ontario. John has done numerous ACO Preservation Works! reports.

# BACK TO FRONT: FINDING WHERE HERITAGE VALUE LIES

By Paul Goldsmith and Edwin Rowse

The back wing, rear addition, rear extension or tail are all terms used in Ontario for an extension at the back and at right angles to the main body of a house. The terms are used interchangeably and sometimes inaccurately. There is often a presumption that the extension was built at the same time as the house or later, and this easily leads to wrong conclusions when evaluating cultural heritage value and interest, as this article will illustrate.

Recently, we investigated two buildings that clearly contradict this presumption about the typology. Extensions were typically used to provide space for a summer kitchen separate from the main body of the house, or for servants' quarters, storage or additional bedrooms. We will see through two detailed case studies how the presumed "addition," identified by a familiar use, may actually be the original building on a site to which a front addition was added, often nearer to the street.

The process of discovering and identifying the patterns and characteristics of construction and style is gradual, painstaking work and difficult to describe as vividly as it is experienced. Evidence of age and construction does not necessarily emerge in a neat logical sequence as the layers of generations of change are identified. Case studies are the best means to describe the process.

## **Case Study #1: 1615 Brock Street South, Whitby**

The first study was in Whitby where Paul Goldsmith was hired to demolish a heritage house, with an assignment to salvage heritage materials from the "front façade" and record any heritage details that were discovered during the course of the work. The main house, situated within a few hundred metres of Whitby Harbour, had once served as a post office.

The building, known as the Abner Nash House, was built in 1840 in brick and had a wood-framed back "addition." The property was once owned by the Scadding family and prior to that by John Graves Simcoe. A dilapidated and more recent lean-to porch and much debris in the interior obscured the character of the so-called back addition; however, careful inspection determined without doubt that the wood structure described as a back addition was, in fact, the original structure and the 1840 brick building was the later front addition.



▲ Original pre-1840 wood-framed structure attached to 1840 brick building in Whitby. Photo Paul Goldsmith, 2016

It was the geometry and modest size of the older back building that first suggested a different story. Measuring just 5 metres by 6.5 metres (16 by 22 feet), it had a one-and-a-half storey timber-framed structure, just a step up from grade to the ground floor, on a foundation separate from the attached 1840 building. It was several steps up from there to the ground floor of the front brick house and its attic-like second floor had a very low



▲ Interior and exterior views of wall facing the 1840 building.  
Photos Paul Goldsmith, 2016

ceiling height, both odd features if built with, or after, the 1840s house.

Despite its small size, its main framing was constructed of heavy, adzed timbers, mortice-and-tenon jointed and dowelled together, with good wind bracing. What was unusual, however, and really spoke of its age, was that all the studs and floor joists were also mortice-and-tenon jointed, without the use of any nails. The familiar marks of pit sawing on the lighter framing members also suggested early construction.

The best evidence for understanding a building's evolution is often at the junction of old and new. In this case the exterior brickwork of the 1840 building was constructed up to the junction, thus leaving the west wall of the older building directly abutting the interior framing of the east wall of the 1840 construction. Part of the exterior wall at attic level remained in place, creating a time capsule of a section of the elevation as it would have looked in 1840, including a window frame and part of a door jamb. It was also evident that at one time an exterior landing and handrail had been cut away, so originally there would have been an exterior stair and direct exterior access to the second floor.

The original finish on the exterior wall was painted clapboard siding. The last paint colour was white, but there were traces of other colours visible in the

protected area below the window sill, suggesting the building was painted at least three times and the paint had mostly weathered away before the 1840 building was constructed. Even with intervals of 12 to 15 years between the three painting episodes — a modest life for lead-based paint — a construction date at the start of the nineteenth century seems reasonable. Interestingly, there was also a faint rectangular shadow on the exterior siding suggesting that a sign had hung on the exterior wall for a second commercial purpose, possibly related to the harbour.

As the great age and rarity of the back building emerged, the decision was made to label and carefully dismantle it for possible future reconstruction in another location, rather than demolish it. During the dismantling, two previous chimney locations and the stair location between the ground floor and attic space were discovered.

On the south side of the building, below the eaves and facing Port Whitby, an image of a three-masted ship scratched into a siding board was found. One can imagine a workman sitting on the scaffold, perhaps eating his lunch, and scratching an image of a ship he could see at Port Whitby in the distance.

The evidence all points to a significantly earlier date than 1840 for the small back building. Comparison of tree ring data with wood in the

building could reveal that the older building was old enough to be part of the original town that grew up around Whitby Harbour, and thus dates from as early as the turn of the nineteenth century.

### Case Study #2: Old Bronte Road, Oakville

The discovery of unusual curved rafters at the back of an 1875 two-storey brick building on Old Bronte Road in Oakville led to a similar careful re-evaluation of the evolution of this house.

From the site evidence, it was quickly determined that the one-storey back kitchen was the original building on the site and that the 1875 building on the east side and storage area on the west side were later additions. With smaller north and south side additions and alterations, the original structure is now at the center of the building and in good condition.

As with the Whitby building, it was the building geometry that first suggested a different evolutionary sequence. The one-storey middle structure is the only area with a cellar and its stone foundation is clearly independent of the adjoining structures. The wood structure exposed there includes sill plates of heavy adzed timbers and floor joists of round logs, many with bark remaining and cut flat on the top face to accept floor boards.

The clear signs of early Ontario construction continue above. The main frame of the one-storey structure is constructed of similar

heavy timbers, mortice and tenoned and dowelled together, with substantial wind braces. Studs, joists and rafters show the marks of pit sawing and were fastened with handmade rosehead nails. In the attic, the building is framed independently from the adjoining structures. The roof rafters are widely spaced, small, inconsistent in size and framed without a ridge board, all characteristic of early nineteenth-century Ontario construction.

To add to the interest of the building, some of the split plaster lath was made from recycled painted wall panelling. The addition on the south



▲ One-storey back kitchen on Old Bronte Road. Photo Paul Goldsmith, 2018



▲ Painted, recycled split lath. Photo Paul Goldsmith 2018



▲ Original cedar roofing enclosed within the attic of the later annex. Photo Paul Goldsmith 2018



▲ Curved rafters from the porch of the original building. Photo Paul Goldsmith, 2018

side was clearly added early in the history of the building as an annex and is probably the second oldest part of it. When the annex roof was constructed, it enclosed part of the roof of the original building. Some of the original roof shingles, typically thin because of the quality of first growth wood, remain within its attic.

It is difficult to determine the exact age of this original building, apart

from saying that it is consistent with early nineteenth-century construction. We reviewed the historical tax and census records at the Oakville archives; there was only one famed building under two storeys listed on the 200-acre property between 1808 and 1839. This small building could be the original pioneer home.

The curved rafters turned out to be part of a small enclosed porch at the north side of the original building. The original land owner, Benjamin Smith, migrated from the U.S. in 1789 and in 1806 was listed as the town carriage maker. It is not difficult to imagine him adding this nice little feature.

### A Picton Example

We are aware of another significant example of an older back wing predating the main house in Picton, Prince Edward County. In this case we have only been able to gather anecdotal information.

The circa 1835 Washburn House in Picton had a brick back “addition” that was described by Tom Cruikshank and Peter John Stokes in *The Settler’s Dream: A Pictorial History of the Older Buildings of Prince Edward County* as original, but with a later alteration of a mansard roof to the second storey. During a recent renovation, the age and significance of the back extension was not recognized, possibly because of the late-nineteenth-century Empire Revival Style mansard roof, and approval was given for its replacement by a new addition in a “classical” design. During demolition, it became clear that the addition was



▲ The rear of Washburn House showing an earlier wing on the circa 1835 residence. Photo from *The Settler’s Dream: A Pictorial History of the Older Buildings of Prince Edward County* by Tom Cruikshank and Peter John Stokes.

structurally independent of the main house and the ground floor walls were constructed of a small brick without a frog, recognized for their great age by a local engineer expert in heritage structures.

A farm lease of 1804 between Ebenezer Washburn and two Quebec City merchants states that he leased his 400-acre lot “with the dwelling houses and all houses ... being or to be built.” The now lost back “extension” was likely one of those houses then standing on this same property. This story shows how easily the magnificence of the later 5-bay Georgian house with its elegant Greek Revival details, drew all the attention and led to wrong assumptions about the relatively humble back “addition.”

In our experience, the important lesson to be drawn from these examples is that careful attention must be given to back structures, especially to the construction techniques and craftsmanship, to ensure that buildings of great age and significant cultural heritage value are not inadvertently lost.

### About the authors

Paul Goldsmith was trained in England under a 5-year City & Guilds apprenticeship as a heritage mason and has 35 years’ experience working on heritage buildings. He is the President of Historic Restoration Inc., a Toronto based company, that specializes in the restoration and alteration of historic structures. Edwin Rowse is a founding partner in ERA Architects Inc. with 43 years of experience as a heritage architect. In 2017 he was the recipient of the Eric Arthur Lifetime Achievement Award from the ACO. Paul and Edwin have worked together on projects for more than 20 years and undertake detailed site investigations together of under-appreciated vernacular historic buildings. The authors are grateful to Amanda Sherrington for her help with archival research.

# THE SIGNATURE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

By Alexandre Krucker and Christian Tice

*During the summer of 2017, Christian Tice, Amielya Gilmore and Alexandre Krucker took part in the restoration of the metal façade on the Petrie Building at 19 Wyndham Street in downtown Guelph, Ontario.*

*Built in 1882 for Alexander Bain Petrie and designed by architect John Bain, the four-storey building originally housed a drugstore and pharmacist's workshop. It is one of the oldest examples of machine stamped metal façades in Canada.*

*Christian and Alex sat down to discuss what craftsmanship meant to them and how they found it relevant to the work they undertook in the Petrie Building. Here are excerpts from that conversation:*

**Christian:** Looking back at our experiences working on the Petrie Building, what was your favourite part of the restoration process?

**Alex:** For me, it was the feeling of being part of a larger process for that building's history. Not just in the context of the restoration but, more importantly, as another hand that helped physically shape the building. Uncovering the names of previous workers, painters and bricklayers, gave me a sense of pride and connection to the past. It was in those moments that the building felt like a timeless place.

**Christian:** Actually seeing the dates 1893 and 1902 beside those names gave me a sense of wonder. I really enjoyed working on the façade, especially, when I was touching the



▲ Lion's head sculpture on the Petrie Building, 19 Wyndham Street, Guelph. Photo Alexandre Krucker, 2017

surface. Being up close and personal with certain features, I was awestruck by the details of the corn, the lions and seeing the artistry that went into making them. I found it to be a very intimate relationship working on revitalizing the façade.

**Alex:** Agreed, by looking at what was done before, you are following in the footsteps of previous craftspeople. It is important to respect that you aren't the first one or the last to have a role in this building. We found that quite literally when we were uncovering the walls and finding the signatures of the painters and bricklayers, don't you agree?

**Christian:** Absolutely! It was fun to be part of the story and seeing the people who have shared in that

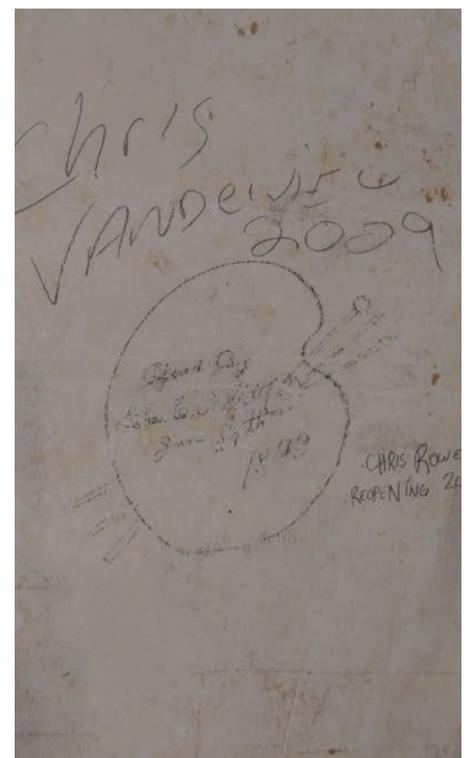
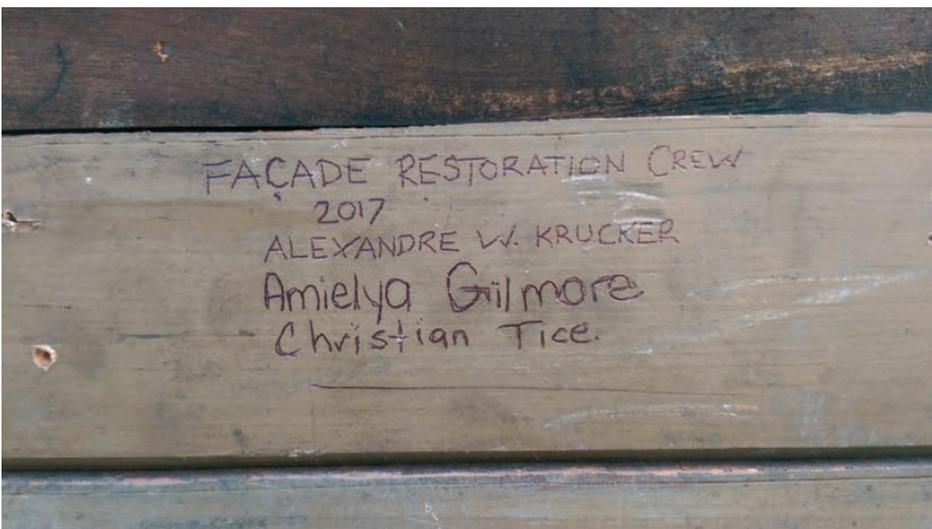
building's history. By signing our work as well, I feel that our contributions have now joined the work of the previous craftspeople.

**Alex:** I have had this realization and hope that someone, years from now, will find value in the work that we have added and that they will choose to keep and restore it. Working around or with existing craft instead of removing it feels to me that you are giving it due reverence.

**Christian:** If we don't appreciate what has come before us then I feel that we may lose our connection to our past, our communities, and our stories. That ties back into the importance of craftsmanship and heritage conservation. The effort, the materials, having something for people to talk

about, looking to our past to see where we came from.

**Alex:** That is the interesting connection between heritage conservation and craft. In the Petrie Building we are seeing that played out in the architectural, in the woodwork, in the plaster, the metal façade, and how the building sits within the city. It has certainly made a lasting impression on me as a major part of my journey into a career in heritage restoration.



▲ The team of craftspeople that restored the façade. Photo Christian Tice, 2017

▲ Signature and drawing of the painters dated 1873. Photo Christian Tice, 2017



**Christian:** I believe these buildings bring a vibrancy of street life to the area, especially with the Petrie Building and its unique features. I found it interesting how it sparked interest in the community by being in the newspapers and on social media. It helps give the city a sense of self by engaging the people, generating interest and promoting conversations.

**Alex:** I think you will find people who love old buildings, but may not point to exactly why they do, which is why we need to build awareness just like the Petrie Building did.

**Christian:** That is one of the reasons why I think Kirk Roberts and Peregrine Wood deserve credit for their work with the Petrie Building. They were always finding ways to promote interest in the restoration process.

§

**Alex:** Since this is your first time working on a heritage building, what does craftsmanship mean to you?

**Christian:** I think that craftsmanship is unique. It's a way of putting your own stamp or experience on your work. It is like wisdom — hopefully, with time you get better. Part of craftsmanship to me is also always learning, listening, going above and beyond what is required no matter the cost. The craftsman takes the time to put more effort into their trade by caring about what they are doing, lending their unique skills and applying it to whatever project they are working on to get the best result.

**Alex:** I really like the comparison that you make with wisdom

**Christian:** Thank you. How about you, what are your thoughts on craftsmanship?

**Alex:** For me, craftsmanship is an approach, a mentality that you take on. I agree that it is about care for materials and method, but it is also about artful solutions to design problems. I believe it's important to recognize the craftspeople who have honed their craft over the years, as well as the newcomer

▲ The Petrie Building after the completion of the façade restoration. Photo Christian Tice, 2018



▲ Corn detail on Petrie façade. Photo Christian Tice, 2017

◀ Detail showing ornament before (left) and after cleaning and coating (right). Photo Christian Tice, 2017

who exhibits that mentality of care and appreciation. The idea of craftsmanship being a qualification that is hard to achieve is what keeps people from really engaging with it. **Christian:** Or it could do the opposite — engage those people who are looking for a challenge. By making it too easy, you could be diminishing the value of craft and artistry.

**Alex:** Not necessarily, I think there is an authenticity to craftsmanship that shows itself in the work that can't be faked. The work is the end result of a process which does require experience and skill but, more importantly, it requires an attitude and approach such as care, understanding, knowledge, wisdom and art.

**Christian:** I believe we instantly recognize a work of craftsmanship through the quality and skill behind its uniqueness.

§

**Alex:** You had been a painter for some time before the Petrie restoration.

With this being a unique experience for you have your thoughts changed on what craftsmanship means?

**Christian:** Yes, I definitely look at buildings differently now knowing what is involved and the care taken by other trades. By watching what Jan Suchomel (Empire Restoration) did with the metal façade, Jen Weber (Iconoplast) with the plaster moldings, and Mike Sharp (Sharp Contracting) with the woodwork, my appreciation for quality restoration work has increased tenfold. Getting the opportunity to see the process, I can see the craftsmanship shine through in the quality of the end result.

**Alex:** Craftspeople have a lot to teach us about how to approach the task at hand. Perhaps we should use them as an example for heritage conservation.

**Christian:** Being a student and having had the opportunity to work on a unique heritage building, have these experiences changed your perspective on heritage conservation

and craft?

**Alex:** What I have taken away from working on the Petrie is that more can be done to recognize the craftspeople who built our historic places as well as our current craft professionals who work on the restoration. Seeing the signatures puts a name to people we don't usually talk about — we should try to unearth their stories.

### About the authors

Christian Tice is the owner/operator of a Guelph-based painting business with over twenty years of experience while Alex is currently finishing a diploma program in heritage conservation at Willowbank School of Restoration Arts in Queenston, Ontario.

# FROM FOOTINGS TO WINDOW FRAMES IN FOUR YEARS

By Sarah King Head

For the first time in more than 150 years, willing suspension of disbelief was *not* required when local artists gathered “en plein air” to render their impressions of historic Beaverdams Church in Thorold, Ontario. By contrast, their predecessor, the watercolourist John Wesley Cotton, felt compelled to illustrate the meeting house style building replete with 26 twelve-over-twelve, double-hung windows in 1913 — several decades after seven of the upper storey windows had been blocked in.

The restoration of the windows to a pre-1875 appearance is something that has been eagerly anticipated by the Friends of Beaverdams Church since the organization took ownership of the building in 2014. Although it is not known precisely when, archival photographic evidence indicates that window frames had been adapted to accommodate a two-over-two sash configuration before the end of the nineteenth century.

Completion of the window restoration represents a second important step in an ambitious project that began with replacement of the stone foundation between 2016 and 2017.

The Friends are extremely fortunate to have the restoration process overseen by Mark Shoalts of Shoalts Engineering, based in Fenwick, Ontario. A well-seasoned heritage engineer, Shoalts has decades of experience in heritage conservation. His work is characterized by well-

tuned historic sensibilities and a creative approach to the management of existing resources. This is evident in his work throughout Ontario, from the Sharon Temple to rebuilding the roof of Trinity United Church in Thorold.

At Beaverdams Church, Shoalts’ acuity was first demonstrated with the foundation restoration. Recognizing that the structure required stabilization before work could begin, a non-invasive and easily reversible support system was designed and installed by attaching Krinner ground screws to each of the building’s posts<sup>1</sup>. Importantly, the solution did not require excavation and therefore did not disrupt the archaeological strata. After receiving the go-ahead from Archaeological & Cultural Heritage Services in August 2016, Heritage Brick and Stone of Ancaster began work that October.

The first step was to remove the stone foundation and the deteriorated portions of the timber sill — thus leaving the massive 40 by 50 square foot building supported solely by the Krinner screw system. Once the new Douglas fir sills were installed and the structure levelled, a reinforced concrete footing and block foundation was installed prior to facing the whole area above grade with salvaged stone. The work was completed by April 2017.

With the foundation complete, the Friends’ attention shifted to the next priority: replacement of the

26 windows. Key to the building’s history is appreciating the impact adaptations of the interior space in the late nineteenth century had on the structure’s appearance. As the church’s primary function shifted from a liturgical to a more pastoral role in the community, the great interior expanse was partitioned. A false ceiling was added separating the second storey gallery and its grand elliptical ceiling above; at the same time one of the two staircases was decommissioned and seven of the 26 windows boarded up. An upper room was created with the removal and relocation of the pews and addition of a wall. Here and in other ad hoc rooms, private Methodist “class” and later Sunday school meetings could be held.

Again relying on the expertise of Shoalts, the Friends hired Webwood Windows of Newton, Ontario, to build 26 windows. Old Order Mennonites,



▲ *Beaverdams Church* by John Wesley Cotton, circa 1913. Courtesy of Toronto Public Library



▲ The restored Beaverdams Church foundation following repair in 2017. Photo Courtesy of Mark Shoalts



▲ The restored windows in 2018. Photo Sarah King Head

the company does not have a website and recommendations come solely word-of-mouth. From a first meeting in April 2017, it took slightly more than a year to complete the bespoke window order. In addition to emulating the twelve-over-twelve style that would have been used from the time of the church's construction in 1832 until replacement with larger double paned-sashes at the end of the nineteenth century, each pine window relies on a window configuration with beaded stops and stools typical of the pre-1850 period in mostly original frames.

Installation of the windows into their 185-year-old frame apertures was done by carpenters from Square Roots — just in time for the Friends' annual Yard Sale in early June 2018.

Next up for the Friends is fundraising for replacement of the weatherboard siding. Heavily deteriorated over nearly 200 years by extremes in temperature and weather as well as by persistent incursions by nesting honeybees, only the siding on the north end above the height of the doors is original, and it is in poor condition. The rest of the siding has been subjected to community-driven remediation since the late nineteenth century. This has involved installation of new boarding at different times on three of the elevations. The building has also been repainted at least twice in the twentieth century. Fundraising to cover the predicted \$90,000 cost was launched in May and it is hoped

the heritage community, private and corporate donors, and the local community will continue with their generosity.

If you would like to donate to this important cause or learn more about the restoration projects, please contact the Friends at [beaverdamschurch@gmail.com](mailto:beaverdamschurch@gmail.com).

<sup>1</sup>See Mark Shoalts, "Timber Frame Supported," *Good Footings: The Newsletter of the Ontario Chapter of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals* (2017), no. 3, pp. 1–2.

### About the author

Sarah King Head is a historian based in Fonthill. The research on which she based her book *Where the Beavers Built Their Dams: A Unique Cultural Heritage Landscape in Thorold, Ontario* (2017) earned her the ACO's Margaret and Nicholas Hill Cultural Heritage Landscape Award in 2017. Her desire to ensure the rich cultural heritage legacy of the Niagara region is not lost has seen her participate many local initiatives, including the restoration of historic Beaverdams Church (1832), the Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial, and the Landscape of Nations 360° National Education Initiative.

# MAKING SILVER INTO GOLD

By John Wilcox

Conservation is craft; we are preserving the handwork of others past. The minimum requirement of learning a craft is often the thoughtful repetition of a series of tasks, culminating in intimate material knowledge acquired through frustration, defeat and eventually confidence. Before an artisan is expected to conserve even a portion of an historical artifact, years are spent learning how mistakes are made on their own new creations, teaching the hand and mind what not to do. Before being allowed to have the past placed in our care, we must first make all of our mistakes within the present.

The skills in development should not place heritage in danger. These skills can be accumulated whilst creating new current craft and art, allowing the mistakes to be experienced without damaging historic artifact. The craft skills required for creating or conserving that thin and luminous protective veil of melted sand we call stained glass are many and varied. Of all these crafts within the craft, it is the actual painting and staining of glass craft that I find most alluring.

In Ontario, we generally refer to all leaded glass windows as stained glass, but only glass that has been treated with silver can truly be described as stained glass. To be an actual stained glass window, silver must be applied

and fired over 500°C on at least one piece of glass. The resultant effect is a golden transparency variable from pale straw to golden orange. Discovered for window glass in the fourteenth century, the existence of silver stain assists in dating medieval windows.

The most sympathetic conservation follows a philosophy of minimal intervention, utilizing every possible piece of existing material as per original intent. Repair rather than replace at all cost. Whether as a result of the slip of a mason's hammer, flying storm debris, the general fatigue of the lead came support, revolution, or war, glass breaks. Occasionally a piece of glass can be broken out of a stained glass window and lost forever. These holes can be replaced with a dated and signed replica of glass and paint and stain. A replica can never match the original exactly, nor should it. The newly inserted piece should be indiscernible at viewing distance yet identifiable to the trained eye upon close inspection. It is in the replication of these pieces that a craftsman can develop their own skills through experimentation of material and technique, attempting to understand the methods utilized centuries ago.

Before the glass can be treated, a match in colour and texture must be found from old stock or new



▲ Hart House caricature, artist unknown. Photo John Wilcox, 2018



▲ Of the many shards from a damaged laylight, only two small pieces were intact enough to be included in the final piece. Photo John Wilcox, 2016

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production. This is proving more difficult by the day. The craft of sheet glass manufacture for stained glass is not healthy. Each year it seems another coloured glass maker closes shop — victims of digital print and plastic laminate hawkers selling their foreign temporary wares as the new deal, nearly declaring war on Canadian stained glass craft. Without the experimental field of new stained glass commissions, it will be difficult for next generations to hone their craft well enough to be able to produce required replicas.

The Massey family were legendary stained glass patrons, acquiring various styles of stained glass from a diverse group of studios. Massey Hall has hundreds of stained and leaded glass windows presently under restoration. Massey Mausoleum contains many opalescent windows. Hart House has cheeky painted portraits of scholars. When Lillian Massey was creating a women's studies institute at the University of Toronto, she commissioned a Henry Holiday (1839-1927) stained glass window created from a watercolour design shipped from England.

Not too long ago, a very unfortunate incident resulted in the necessity for a full replication of a large painted and stained glass laylight for a Massey heritage property. Portions of this project will be described here.

Original watercolour "vidimus" designs are valuable in reconstructing wholly and partially missing stained glass windows, where they exist; however, most do not exist and a reconstructive cartoon, or inked working drawing, must be created.

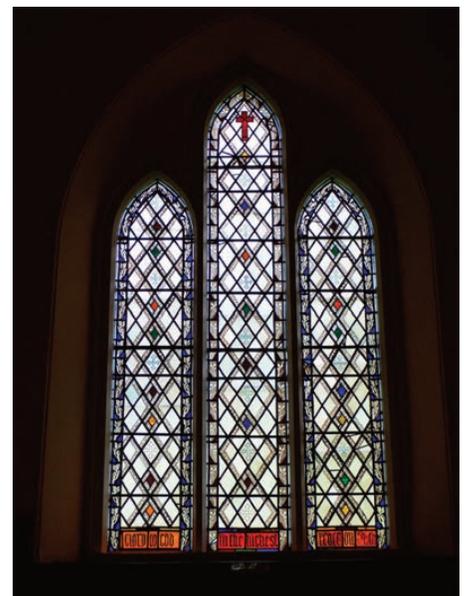
During this particular replication project, the cartoons for the laylight recreation were developed from existing photographs and partial reconstructions from a box of glass shards salvaged from site. Of the many shards, only two small pieces were complete enough to be included in the final piece.

From the cartoon glass was cut. The coloured and textured glass industry is in a bit of a freefall due to a series of circumstances, such as digitally printed enamels and films, but a close match for the textured clear was available from the Paul Wissmach Glass Company of West Virginia. Rather simple cutting was required for this window because all the finesse came from the next transformative treatment: paint and stain.

Painting a stained glass window is the reverse of painting on surfaces. Covering our glass with metallic oxides to block the light, our paint creates darknesses to model the light into form. The oxides are mixed with finely ground "soft" glass and, after a controlled firing of about 600°C, the

paint fuses permanently to the glass.

First to be applied are the trace lines. They are thick opaque brush lines building out the form, blocking light completely. The hand of artisan is evident in the opaque trace lines in what I would like to believe is our first "Canadian" painted leaded glass — a wonderfully lacey grisaille window created by Elizabeth Posthuma Simcoe and her seven daughters. The three-lite east window arrived from England in mid-1830s as tribute to their dear friends back in Upper Canada — the Sibbald family. It was eventually moved from the original



▲ Opaque trace lines of the Simcoe window, St. George's Sibbald Point built 1876-77. Photo John Wilcox, 2011



▲ Megan Albinger of vitreous glassworks cleaning trace lines. Photo John Wilcox, 2016

wooden structure to the “new” St. George’s Sibbald Point built in 1876-77.

Next in the process, the same general paint ingredients are mixed into a slurry and badgered smooth or stippled over the trace lines. With needles and sticks the paint is diapered out, remaining only where desired. This muddy wash can range from pale blur to deep shadows. Matte holds back only some of the light and is therefore instrumental in dimensionally modeling the forms.

Of all the techniques in the stained glass artisan’s kit, painting/enamelling — and especially silver staining —

has to be the most captivating and elusive. Legend says a member of the clergy in the fourteenth century was loading a kiln to fix the painted enamel onto the glass. Unbeknownst to him, a silver button had fallen from his garb and onto the glass as it entered the firing chamber. Imagine the delight the following day when the cooled glass was removed from the kiln and glowed with the warm transparency of golden honey!

Whether the account is true or not is still being debated; however, there is no question about the resultant vigor with which the artisans of the day responded to this extended palette. Windows with yellow stain



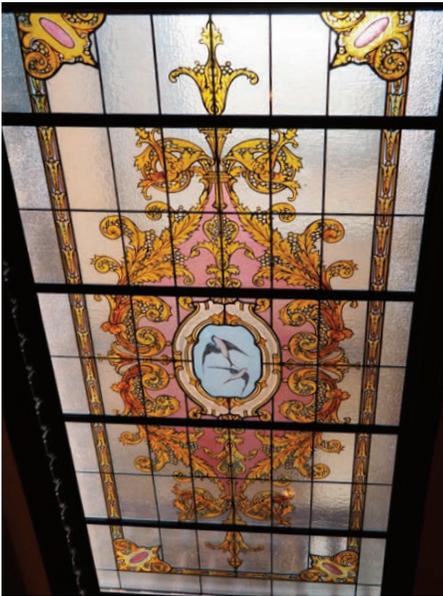
▲ Testing silver stain. Photo John Wilcox, 2017



▲ Stain replication. Photo John Wilcox, 2017



▲ Pink and blue enamels prior to firing. Photo John Wilcox, 2017



▲ Present replication window created by vitreous glassworks. Photo John Wilcox, 2017

fit roughly into a timeline of the last 500 years. Prior to this, artisans could only add browns and blacks or reveal underlayers of the coloured glass. Silver stain could now be utilized to produce varying hues from pale straw to golden orange. When applied to blue glass the stain magically transforms into green.

Painting and staining have long been the penultimate technique for the stained glass artisan's craft. Around these parts, all leaded glass windows are erroneously labelled "stained glass" at present, even though many of them have never tasted the silver. The silver stain I use most is called Ancient Walpole. It is crafted by master alchemist Cliff Oster in New Hampshire who also happens to be the storied mixologist behind the flavours for Vitamin Water!

The final glass treatment for this particular laylight involved firing coloured enamels. Glass colour is created by melting particular metallic oxides with sand before the melt or batch. Gold creates pink; cobalt creates deep blue; and the ubiquitous iron creates the green hue we are familiar with within our modern "clear" glass. Enamels are a bit of a cheat. Glass enamels are pulverized "soft" coloured glass fired onto the surface of sheet glass. Although they are not as lustrous, true and permanent as batch colour, they do allow the stained glass artisan to add colour within each piece.

Finally, another set of skills is required, and the panels are leaded up, weatherproofed and installed.

The intangible knowledge required for tangible glass conservation work is informed through experience. This experience is becoming harder for the nascent artisan to find. The blind acceptance of cheap digitally printed frit and films — more suitable for bus shelter ads — as a replacement for traditional stained glass has created an oncoming catastrophe for stained glass craft. An increasing number of recent stained glass commission designs are transmitted electronically, created by computer and shipped back to Ontario. The subsequent loss in opportunity will become a crisis for the development of hand skills. The recent cancellation of the provincial GreenON program for heritage window refurbishment also denies the next generation access to developing these skills. Destructive revolution and war should

not be our hope for maintaining craft skills. Whether it is in the loss of coloured glass manufacturers or the loss of opportunity to practice and experiment hand skills, the next generation of glass artisans might not exist.

The one aspect that will always remain true in my craft is, glass breaks.



▲ Trace, matte, stain and enamel techniques were combined to create this replica laylight. Photo John Wilcox, 2017

### About the author

John Wilcox combines over twenty years of professional glass experience with extensive training in art and architecture. He is the principal at vitreous glassworks, an award-winning, full-service stained glass and heritage glazing studio dedicated to sound design and quality craftsmanship that offers custom art glass for all environments. He has been a member of ACO for almost 30 years.

# ARTISANS RESCUE TRINITY UNITED TREASURES

By Susan M. Burke, photography by Karl Kessler

On June 10, 1906, the evening service was cancelled at Berlin's St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church "as a gesture of good will," so the curious Presbyterians could worship with the Methodists and experience for themselves the impressive new church that had risen the previous winter at one of the most prominent locations in town. (One year later, a few blocks away, those same Presbyterians would be dedicating a new church of their own by the same architect.)

Attending the morning dedication service that day were more than 1,100 proud Methodists who, although they had built one of Berlin's first churches in 1841, had actually been churchless for over two years. Forced to worship first in the Berlin Opera House, then the Salvation Army Barracks, eventually they purchased two lots, demolished the houses there, hired a Methodist architect from London, and by August 1905 had laid the cornerstone for their new church.

Architect Hubert Carroll McBride (1860-1943) designed for them a handsome neo-Gothic church of "red pressed brick with stone facings." Twin entrances in its double towers led to a gracious auditorium, with a gallery on all three sides and lit by small lancet windows. The enormous window with elegant Gothic tracery that overlooked the street held the promise of glorious light-play for morning services once funds could be found to commission appropriate

stained glass artistry. The cost of \$31,227 included a new organ, furnishings and decoration.

Among the many donations made to the church at the time of its dedication were two stained glass windows donated by the Ladies Aid, *Christ leading his flock* and *Simply to the cross I cling*. These were centred by a third, *The Good Shepherd*, dedicated by their family to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. P. E. W. Moyer. These three windows would be among the last of the sacred treasures to be removed from the church before its demolition.

This proud congregation had been beset with financial struggles as membership dwindled and costs to maintain its century-old building rose. As it celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2016, the congregation's dilemma became reality, and the way forward into the next stage of its life, clear. The most precious of its sacred art — thirty-four stained glass windows and a magnificent 1928 Woodstock pipe organ — would be preserved, and the building would be sold to a developer, with the balance of its contents dispersed by online auction.

The work of removing, stabilizing and crating the windows for storage was entrusted to Sunrise Stained Glass of London, a full-service window company with close to forty years' experience. A skilled team of dedicated professionals, Sunrise designs, executes and installs new

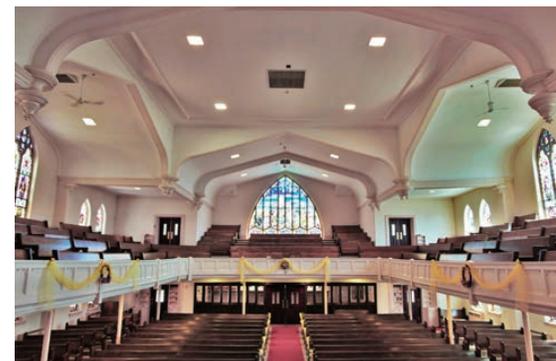
windows, but specializes in cleaning, repairing and restoring vintage stained glass, returning windows to their reconditioned mounts, or fashioning light boxes for them so they can be enjoyed in a non-traditional setting.

Sunrise's \$20,000 contract with Trinity



Trinity Methodist Church, Berlin, Ont., Canada

▲ A postcard documenting the as-built 1906 Trinity Methodist Church, designed by architect Hubert McBride. In 1925, it joined the United Church of Canada. Courtesy of rych mills.



▲ The interior with its wrap-around gallery, seen from the chancel looking toward the big 1994 Gothic window. Photos Karl Kessler, 2018

involved removing all thirty-four stained glass windows, stabilizing them for transport to their workshops in London, building crates for potentially long-term storage and returning them to a storage unit in Kitchener. The condition of each window had to be carefully assessed before its removal.

The congregation had good reason to treasure its stained glass art; not only did the windows, installed 1906-1994, chronicle its occupancy of the McBride church, they marked major steps forward in the growth of Trinity's ministry. Of equal importance to local historians, the windows also helped to trace the trajectory of one of Berlin's (now Kitchener's) longest continually operating family businesses, Bullas Glass Ltd.

The three 1906 windows that center the five panels in the narthex were the work of a little-known Toronto glass house, Crown Art Stained Glass Co. Ltd. Meanwhile, almost in Trinity's backyard, a team of glass artists led by brothers Joseph and Jack Bullas – newcomers to Berlin – had just completed a commission for twelve full-sized liturgical windows for the Lutheran church. Joseph and Jack had apprenticed in London, England, emigrated to Canada in 1904, and chosen the thriving industrial town of Berlin as home for their new business. As Methodists themselves, the Trinity commission would have been an important one for the new firm.

We'll never know why they were not awarded the commission. The family certainly developed strong ties to the congregation; memorial panels in several of Trinity's windows honor all three generations involved in the Bullas business.

In the early 1950s the lovely lancet windows of the nave were transformed by a major commission for memorial stained glass by Luxfer Studios, Toronto. The more than two dozen colourful, jewel-like windows both delighted and inspired, depicting New Testament stories on the ground floor, Old Testament in the gallery. J. Humphrey Bullas, who had joined the family company in 1933, chose this moment to memorialize his grandmother Mary, and his parents Joseph and Polly Bullas with the Window of Baptism.

Humphrey's son Joe Jr. had already lived up to the family's artistic legacy



▲ Three of five side-by-side stained glass windows in the narthex. These, by Toronto's Crown Art Stained Glass Co. Ltd., were in place when the church was dedicated in 1906.

when he designed his first stained glass window at age 16. By 1980, as full partner in the company, Joe completed the narthex series at Trinity by designing two bracketing windows to complement the three traditional figurals donated in 1906 at the dedication service.

But the largest window in the church, the enormous east-facing window with its original wooden Gothic tracery, was still a blank canvas awaiting some talented stained-glass artist. Joe Bullas undertook this last commission in 1994, naming it *I am the beginning and the end*, and he and his brother Thomas dedicated this major work to their parents, Humphrey and Marie Bullas, and to a partner in the business, Viola M. Yanke.

Figural windows are composed of many pieces held in place with strips of grooved lead called cames which are soldered at the joints. Although a window's mount keeps the glass composition rigid, over time the lead cames degrade and fatigue, putting stress on the joints, weakening the window. Happily, the 1950s Luxfer windows were mostly in good shape. Their removal consisted of prying out the wooden window stops, removing the tie wires, carefully chiseling out the putty in which the windows were set, gently tilting the window panels in and lifting them out. The earlier windows in the narthex posed different problems and had to be stabilized with tape before they

could be transported. Set nails had weakened the putty, causing warping and deformation. The large window in the gallery, the most recent to receive its decorative stained glass, should have been the most stable. However, the glass panels had been designed and installed to fit the original 1906 Gothic wooden tracery that was likely in questionable condition at the time. It was further weakened by set screws that passed through the lead came directly into the wood.

The June 1906 dedication service was covered in minute detail by the local press. The Berlin Daily Telegraph reported that “the music by the choir was excellent ... the anthems, perfectly rendered ... and Miss Zoellner acquitted herself in a very pleasing manner ... on the beautiful new organ.”

The organ was a Breckles and Matthews instrument, built by the D.W. Karn Co. in Woodstock, among the largest and most prestigious organ manufacturers in Canada. Some twenty years later in 1928, to update their organ the church elders commissioned the Woodstock Pipe Organ Builders Co. (1922-1948). Further significant upgrades followed: additional pipes acquired from Casavant Frères Ltée in 1957, and in 1963 a reconditioned 1924 Casavant console from Christ Church Cathedral in Hamilton was acquired. In 2003, a major fundraiser paid for renovations to the instrument, assuring the congregation that the organ would “lead worship for another 50+ years.” Clearly Trinity throughout its history had made major investments in its musical future. Although psychologically ready in 2018 to sacrifice the church building to progress, the congregation was simply not prepared to abandon its beloved organ.

Dodington & Dodington of Aylmer, Ontario, the trusted family firm, had for many years been tuning and maintaining Trinity’s organ, along

with 300 other instruments across Ontario. The firm sourced out a congregation in Guelph willing to purchase the ‘Woodstock’, lock, stock and console, for a price that would include the rebuilding of the organ in its new environment. The complete instrument with its 2,500 pipes would be a bargain compared with a new organ of similar size, which could cost upward of \$750,000.

Trinity was satisfied knowing their prized organ would live on to delight a new audience, and that the deal struck with the Dodingtons would swell the coffers. Meanwhile, Jim Dodington and son Dylan, assisted by Mark James, began the painstaking job of dismantling the ‘Woodstock’ piece by piece. By April 24, 2018, the online auction had run its course and within days the 1,000-plus items sold had disappeared from the auditorium, leaving a strange echoing space around the chancel where the Dodingtons would work.

They began by testing the pipes and checking wind pressure, then Mark started stripping the console. The

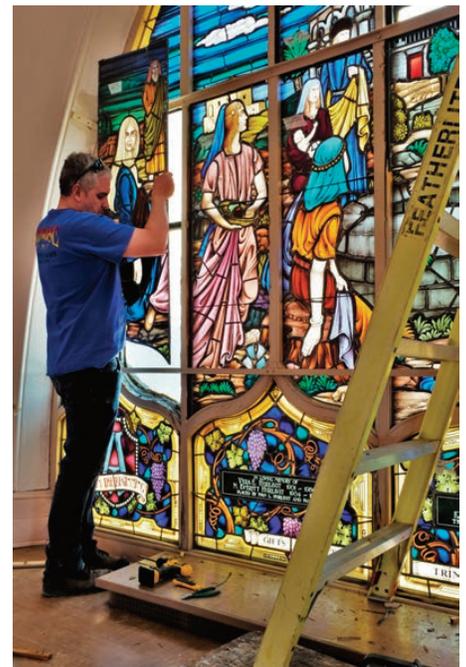
other two team members worked together, lifting out pipes one at a time, carefully placing them in custom-made carrying/storage boxes. Pipes are made in sets called ranks which share a common timbre and volume. The team boxed these together to facilitate re-installation.

The pipes are a study in beauty all to themselves. Each hand-made in metal or wood, the pipes in the ‘Woodstock’ ranged in size from just over an inch to 16 feet in length. The largest, activated not by the keyboard but by foot pedals, produced the lowest pitched notes and extended down a half storey below the chancel. A full storey down was the original hand-stenciled Woodstock blower, powered by an electric motor.

At the end of day five of dismantling, with the biggest pipes still standing, among them the 16-foot Trombone rank and some big, beautiful woods, word came that the recipient congregation had pulled out of the arrangement. Work ceased, and the



▲ Wearing a respirator and protective gloves, Adam Frazee of Sunrise Stained Glass is using a hammer and chisel to free a section of one of the larger 1950s Luxfer windows.



▲ Adam Frazee lifting out one of the many panels that compose the 1994 window *I am the beginning and the end* by Joe Bullas of Bullas Glass, Kitchener.

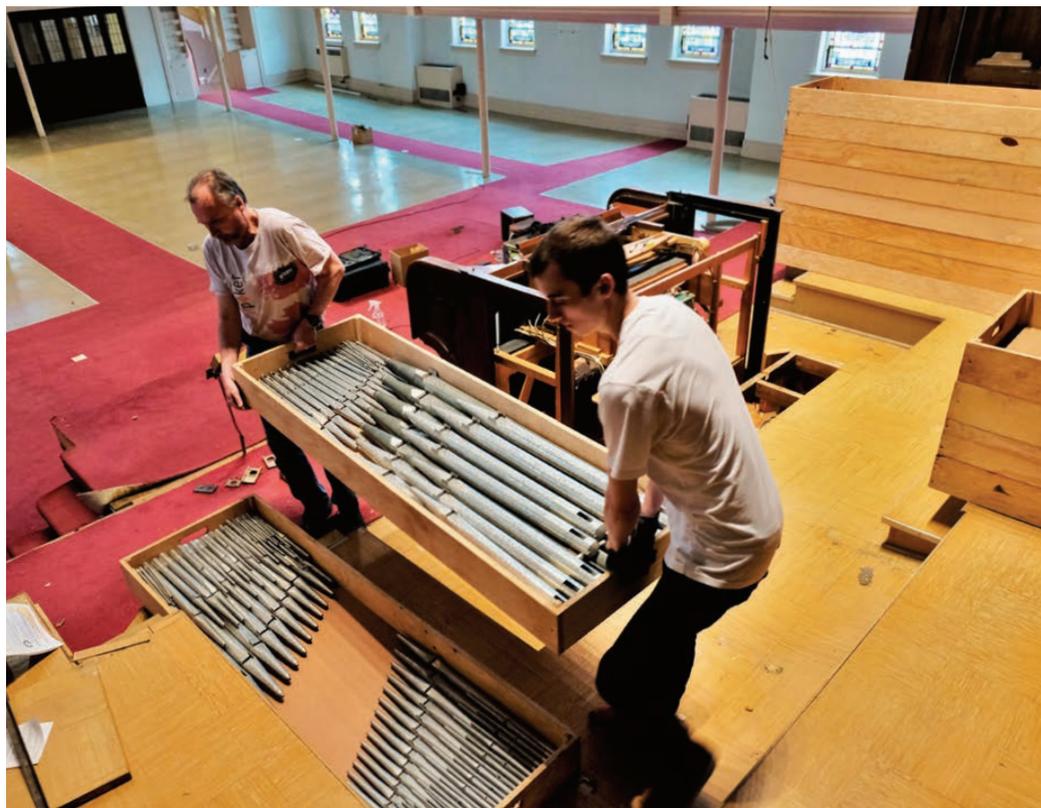
Dodingtons determined to cut their losses. The console would certainly find a new home. As for the pipes, they would go into storage and in time find use as replacement parts in a variety of instruments.



▲ Rank upon rank of pipes – both flues and reeds, metal and wood – were among the hundreds of pipes in the Swell division, one of four pipe divisions in the Trinity organ.



▲ Mark James stripping the organ console. Four of the dozens of Luxfer Studios lancet windows can be seen on the left. Behind Mark on the right is the grille fronting the organ chamber.



▲ Father and son Jim and Dylan Dodington stacking boxed ranks of metal flue pipes, the type most commonly associated with pipe organs, and sometimes displayed decoratively outside the organ chamber.

## About the authors

Susan M. Burke's expertise includes built heritage, material culture, and folk and decorative art, developed over four decades as a curator, manager, and researcher at living history museums. Much of her career has been dedicated to the restoration and programming of Joseph Schneider Haus National Historic Site (Kitchener). She is the education coordinator for ACO North Waterloo Region.

Karl Kessler is the coordinator of Doors Open Waterloo Region, a heritage researcher and writer, and a member of ACO North Waterloo Region.

# ADDISON'S TEMPLE OF TREASURES

Article and photography by Richard Longley

Where did the Canary sign go, when the Canary Restaurant at Front and Cherry Street closed in 2007 and the spiffy new Canary District began to grow up north of it, with nothing to explain why there's a yellow bird on its logo? Katherine Taylor, maker of her marvelous blog "One Gal's Toronto," knew the answer: "It's at Addison's at 41 Wabash. When you go there you might have a hard time finding it but you'll have fun looking and you'll be in for a treat." The Canary had flown

way west of its original home but off I went.

When I arrived at the old factory building, south of where College Street merges with Dundas West, there was a notice taped to its door:

*It is with deep sorrow that we inform you that on Sunday, June 11, 2017 Jim Addison passed away peacefully in his sleep. Jim was 74 years old and still doing what he loved 6 days a week. Jim's life*

*passion for the last 50 years was Addison's Inc. He worked hard day in and day out to service the needs of his valued customers and built friendships and relationships along the way.*

But the door still opened.

Jim Addison emigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1965. He was a plumber with a passion for collecting. Starting with the rads, bathtubs, toilets, basins, faucets and showerheads he removed as he worked on his renovations, he evolved into an accumulator of antique everything, with a determination that was a boon to movie set designers and restorers of heritage buildings. When Jim died his four daughters, Teresa, Pamela, Cora and Beckie, inherited Addison's Inc. They are determined to keep the business



▲ Pamela, Cora, Beckie, and Teresa, daughters of the late Jim Addison, founder of Addison's Inc., 2017



▲ Canary Restaurant sign, 2017



▲ Pony rescued from by Jim Addison from a fairground carousel, 2017

going but it won't be easy in its present location. Like everywhere in downtown and near-downtown Toronto, this neighbourhood is gentrifying fast.

Where there was once a sock factory a condo is going up next door. Across Wabash, the Canadian Linseed Oil Mill, the last industrial building — standing on what is now a park that teems with dog walkers — will become a community centre. North of Dundas,

the Tower Automotive Building is being transformed into the new Museum of Canadian Contemporary Art. The Drake Commissary has already moved into the building south of it that housed T. A. Lytle, manufacturer of Pickles, Catsups, Sauces and Fountain Goods before it was taken over by Scythes & Company Ltd., manufacturer of oiled clothing, tents, tarpaulins, canvas, banners and flags. There's also a craft brewery and the House of Anansi Press. This is a changing post-industrial world with soaring rents and too little accommodation for businesses like Addison's Inc.

But for now, it still stands; it's still open and Cora and Beckie are running it. Visit Jim Addison's treasure house; it's not a junkyard; it's a reliquary of bygone craft. Explore it, get lost in it and don't dream of leaving it empty-handed. You'll find a gallery of toilets



▲ A gallery of toilets and ceiling lights, 2017

and bathtubs, stacks of old plumbing fittings, a cell from the Don Jail, the ponies of a fairground carousel and all you need to set up as a dentist. The only thing you won't find is the Canary. It's complicated and it's taking a long time but, if all goes well, the yellow bird will soon be on its way back to the Canary District where it belongs.



▲ Among the treasures at Addison's is an antique dentist's chair and tools, 2017

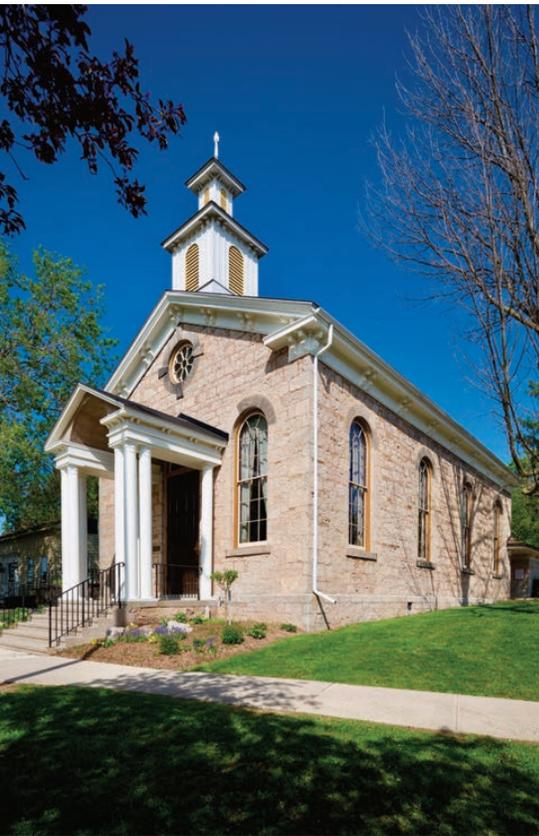
### About the author

Richard Longley has been a member of ACO since 2005 and served as president from 2013 to 2015. He photographs and writes about Ontario heritage regularly and is a frequent contributor to ACORN.

# ANCASTER OLD TOWN HALL: A PLACE TO CELEBRATE

By Em Cheng

During the Paleozoic Era, in the geological period Silurian, a stone we now call Whirlpool Sandstone came into being. It is a light greyish-white, grained sandstone with thin, dark-greenish-gray shale clasts. Later,



▲ Ancaster Town Hall at 310 Wilson Street East remains a desirable location for important celebrations. **Photo** Richard Seck, 2017

during the same geological period, a stone known as Eramosa Dolomite — a massive, brownish-gray carbonate mineral with a tendency for cavities lined with crystals and fossils — also formed. For over 400 million years, both stone formations remained embedded in the landscape, primarily in the region spanning from Hamilton, Ontario to Medina, New York. Growing in the same area, in the past half-millennium or so, are eastern pine trees, the kind immortalized in the paintings of the Group of Seven.

In 1871, the sandstone, dolomite, and pine were given an anthropogenic purpose. That is to say they were culled and formed by masons and millworkers to serve as materials in the construction of a Georgian-style town hall for a southern Ontario village called Ancaster. The town hall still stands today and features the dolomite as its primary exterior wall material, while the sandstone is used for its window sills and vousoirs. Fabricated from the pine trees are a dozen double-hung arched windows whose surprisingly slender muntins and stiles easily span the height of two men. A three-foot-diameter rose window of the same pine adorns the front façade above the porch.

From raw material to a built form, the stone and pine have since borne

witness to the important cultural activities of Ancaster's townsfolk. The hall was erected around the time it became clear that Ancaster would not expand nor flourish to the same extent as its neighbouring town, Hamilton, which had access to the new railway system. This arrested urban development accounted for the modest scale of the town hall, but also had a positive impact on how it was used. Ancaster depended on its town hall to be the primary social centre precisely because there were not a lot of other assembly spaces for its close-knit population.

Paul Grimwood's 1973 chronicle, *Ancaster's Heritage*, describes the town hall as being a place for "meetings, elections, church entertainments, Christmas celebrations, harvest suppers, Agricultural Society's oyster suppers, travelling shows, and other public occasions." Some of the more notable events included a demonstration of the famed Edison "magic phonograph" in 1878, and a performance of a Gilbert and Sullivan production in 1887. When a new town hall was built in 1966, the old town hall was restored thanks to the initiative of a volunteer citizen group. It continued to be used in several community capacities and was eventually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

In 2015, George Robb Architect was retained by the hall's owner, the City of Hamilton, to oversee the restoration of the windows and re-point the adjacent stone walls. Maintaining the value of the building — specifically the cultural and material heritage — was a critical consideration. With Clifford Restoration as the general contractors, the existing dolomite and sandstone were entirely reused, with only the replacement of the mortar. For the windows, as much as possible of the old-growth pine wood was salvaged and, as needed, spliced together with new wood using Dutchman repairs. Custom moulds were created for steam-bending the arched window sash members. Damaged glass was replaced with salvaged heritage glass, and damaged window and door hardware was replaced with both salvaged and new operable hardware. The windows and doors were painted with a linseed-oil-based paint with colours based on laboratory tests that revealed the oldest existing paint layer to be from the 1800s. This project of subtle yet critical improvements to the building received an Honourable Mention award from the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals in 2016.

The town hall is said to have cost \$2,700 to build in 1871. The cultural heritage value has accrued over time. Today, the hall serves as multipurpose

event space. Weddings, community gatherings, and holiday activities are some of the popular hall functions. The ability of the old town hall of Ancaster to remain a desirable



▲ The oldest layer of paint dated to the 1800s. Photo Em Cheng, 2016



▲ Old growth wood was salvaged and spliced together with new wood using Dutchman repairs. Photo Em Cheng, 2016

location for important celebrations for over a century speaks to the value of maintaining heritage buildings.

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#### About the author

Em Cheng is an architect and artist based in Toronto. Her writing and illustrations have appeared in publications about architecture, including *Log*, *The Site Magazine*, and *The Princeton School of Architecture Journal*, *PIDGIN*. Her artwork has been exhibited in Toronto, Calgary, and Melbourne, among others. She is a member of Architectural Conservancy Ontario.

# SANDSTONE STEWARDSHIP

by Guy Burry and Liz Lundell



▲ Originally the George Gooderham House, 135 St. George Street in Toronto has been home to The York Club since 1909. The porte cochère prior to restoration. Photo The York Club, 2017



▲ The parapets showing signs of weathering and damage before restoration. Photo Spencer Higgins Architect, 2017

Standing at a busy Toronto intersection, a property of national historic importance has been screened by imposing red brick walls from the view of passersby for decades. Pedestrians — many of them students at the University of Toronto — have bustled to and from the TTC's St. George Station largely unaware of the efforts of a private club to preserve this important heritage resource; however, hoarding and equipment visible from the sidewalks have drawn attention recently to a significant restoration project.

Designated by the City of Toronto for its architectural value in 1980, the former George Gooderham House at 135 St. George Street at Bloor has been under the stewardship of The York Club since 1909.

The 1980 designating bylaw stated the reasons for designation were architectural, outlining that the building "is an outstanding architectural landmark in Toronto designed in 1890 by David Roberts Jr." George Gooderham's home reflected the Romanesque style made fashionable by American architect H. H. Richardson in the 1870s and '80s. Richardson died in 1886 at age 47, but the appeal of the architectural style associated with his name continued well into the 1900s. Gooderham named his home "Waveney" after the river close to his birthplace in Norfolk, England. Gooderham died in 1905 and The York Club purchased the property from Harriet (nee Dean) Gooderham within a few years.

The exemplary architecture and craftsmanship were the primary reasons for heritage designation in Designation Bylaw No. 355-80:

*The imposing exterior skillfully executed in red brick and Portage sandstone is enriched by the decorative stone carving of Holbrook and Mollington, fine metal-work embellishments and slate roofing. The panelling and magnificent craftsmanship in the fireplaces, light fixtures and plaster work of the main rooms, and especially in the wood carving of the front hall and stairway, are unique. The attention to the refinement of detail on the exterior as well as the interior identifies this splendid house as an excellent example of the period.*

At The York Club's request, Spencer R. Higgins, architect and consultant in conservation of historic buildings, undertook an extensive analysis of the building's condition in 2017. Higgins' "Historic Structure Report" identified that the property was "rapidly developing age-related issues" evidenced "in some of the stonework, which is beginning to crumble, and the roof which although well maintained and not leaking, will require some fairly major rehabilitation in the next decade in order to continue to shelter the club. There are also significant issues with the garden wall related to aging of the ironwork and damage to the bricks from road salt and water."

Higgins assessed that elements of the sandstone exterior needed

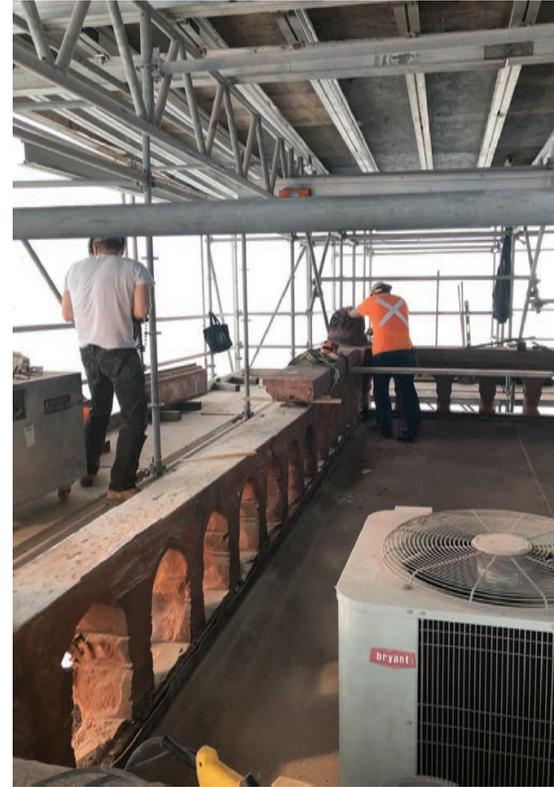
conservation work urgently. Replacement of deteriorated stone in the east chimney and south gable wing were completed in early 2018. The time-worn stone elements were replicated by Traditional Cut Stone Limited in Mississauga and installed by Roof Tile Management.

The next priority became the restoration of the stone pillars and parapets, and installation of a replacement roof over the porte cochère with new lead flashings. The porte cochère stone is, once again, being crafted by Traditional Cut Stone and will be installed by Colonial Building Restoration Limited of Scarborough.

The original stone for the Gooderham residence was Portage Entry Red Sandstone quarried near Jacobsville on the south shore of Lake Superior. Michigan's Upper Peninsula near the town of Jacobsville possessed cliff shorelines composed of desirable sandstone layers that could be quarried and easily transported by ship.

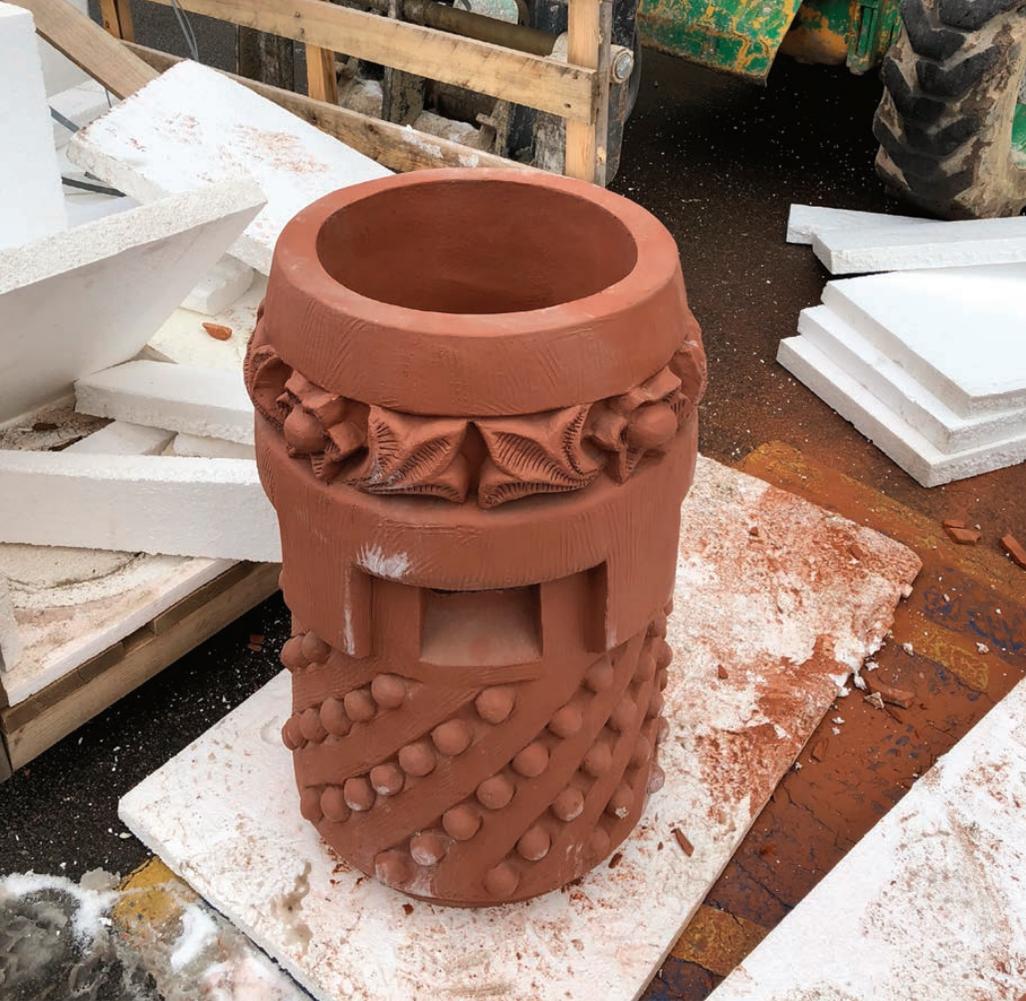
As a result, Jacobsville-area sandstone was used extensively in hundreds of important projects in America between 1880 and 1920 when the quarries closed. These include prominent buildings in Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis and New York City.

Spencer Higgins' report noted the high-quality finish and materials used for the Gooderham residence and described the craftsmen who carried out the work:



▲ Careful removal of damaged stonework. Photo The York Club, 2018

*The craftsmen whose names appear most prominently in the history of the Gooderham house are Toronto's William Holbrook (1842-1925) and his partner, William Mollington (c. 1846 -1887). Their wood-carving decorates the bookshelves and walls of the Library of Parliament in Ottawa, where their preferred carving medium — clear, white pine — showed off their skill to great advantage. The firm of Holbrook & Mollington was formed about 1874. The Ottawa Library job in 1876 led to other prestigious work, including the stone carving on the Western Block extension of Parliament (1877), the new Post Office in Hamilton*



*(1882-87), the Manning Arcade in Toronto (1884-85) and the Bank of Montreal (Yonge and Front streets) in Toronto, to mention projects completed before Mollington's death in 1887. The Gooderham House was constructed in 1889-92 so it can be inferred that the stone carving work was carried out under the supervision of Holbrook.*

The replacement stone selected for the 2018 restoration, Corsehill Red Sandstone, comes from the Annan Quarry in Dumfriesshire, UK. It is a finely grained, Triassic sandstone of medium strength. Corsehill was quarried extensively in the 1800s, closed in the 1940s, but reopened in 1982 to again supply stone for prestigious projects across Great Britain and abroad. The stone's hard-wearing and consistent texture makes it ideal for masonry work, cladding and walls. It is also a very close match for the Portage Entry Red Sandstone of the original Gooderham work.

Traditional Cut Stone's master carvers have been entrusted with the replacement stonework. David Tyrrell, Managing Director, co-founded Traditional Cut Stone with Richard Carbino and master stone carver and artist Lawrence Voaides in 1998 at a time when stone carvers were becoming increasingly scarce in North America. Over the past 20 years, their restoration projects have spanned the United States and Canada and, in Toronto alone, they include projects of high complexity and significance such as the Ontario Legislative Building, St. James Cathedral, St. Michael's Cathedral and Toronto's Old City Hall. The firm's projects have won many awards for excellence in craftsmanship and construction, and aiding architects in achieving their vision.

▲ Traditional Cut Stone has been recreating the damaged architectural features, including highly detailed chimney pots. Photo The York Club, 2018



▲ The porte cochère restoration will be completed in 2018. Photo The York Club, 2018

The York Club's General Manager, Cyril Duport, has followed and photographed the work as it has progressed. M. Duport observes that the membership has been very supportive of the large-scale project. He says, "The York Club is extremely fortunate to possess a clubhouse of historic significance, so it is of utmost

importance to the membership to maintain the exquisite craftsmanship, both interior and exterior." It is a tribute to the organization's stewardship that the work is being carried out so carefully to preserve this important resource for future generations.

### About the authors

Guy Burry is a member of ACO Muskoka and the photography editor for ACORN. Liz Lundell, managing editor of ACORN, is a historian and author of seven books on aspects of Ontario heritage. She is past president of ACO Muskoka and is the branch representative on Provincial Council.

# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

PLACES OF PLAY – ACORN SPRING 2018



▲ Gerry Dunn built his first dance hall in Bala with a slogan of "Where All of Muskoka Dances." This larger pavilion opened in 1942 and is now The Kee to Bala. **Source** Explorer's Edge, accessed 2016

Leisure, amusement, sport, dance and entertainment. Author Edward Bellamy (1850 - 1898) once wrote, "If bread is the first necessity of life, recreation is a close second."

The Spring 2019 ACORN will look at the places where past generations found pleasure, respite and relaxation after work. Articles should be a maximum of either 500 or 1000 words in length and "encourage the conservation and reuse of structures, districts and landscapes of architectural, historic and cultural significance to inspire and benefit Ontarians."

Before commencing work on an article, please send your proposal or questions to [liz.lundell@rogers.com](mailto:liz.lundell@rogers.com) to avoid duplication and ensure photo guidelines are received. Deadline for submissions is January 29, 2018. Submitters are encouraged to look at past issues available on the ACO website: [www.acontario.ca](http://www.acontario.ca).

# IT TAKES A (BIG) VILLAGE

By Devorah Miller

This issue of ACORN delves into the physical and artistic work of preserving heritage structures. Skilled tradespeople are at the heart of our community, and it is through their hard work and collaboration that historic buildings are preserved, restored or transformed. When it comes to advocacy, we could learn a thing or two from glaziers, stonemasons, carpenters and other artisans.

An individual's power to fight for heritage can drain really quickly; this is a tough battle and it's much more effective when approached in a strategic, collaborative way. Mentoring and collaboration create strong teams and get things done. When we stand together, we send a powerful message that heritage matters to many people.

So let's step up. Heritage protection in Canada is far behind where it should be. While historic places can be designated at the federal, provincial, territorial or local level, statutory protection is weak. Most heritage advocates expend their energy trying

to save buildings at imminent risk of being lost, but small groups standing up for individual buildings in their communities is a band-aid solution.

Better legislation tied to enforcement would be a big win. Just imagine how much would be accomplished if we could focus all of our attention on restoring, reusing and celebrating heritage buildings, rather than constantly trying to protect them from demolition.

For now, we will keep our eye on the bigger picture while fighting for every building worth saving. ACO has built a virtual village of heritage lovers across the province. Together, we advocate for better legislation, we support each other in our efforts to save individual buildings from destruction, and we celebrate hard-fought successes when buildings are saved, repurposed, and brought back to life. Let's grow that village.

From the grassroots to the national level, nothing has been accomplished in the world of heritage without the clear voices of concerned citizens speaking up, together. So if you have friends, neighbours, colleagues or family members who care about

heritage as you do, please encourage them to become members of ACO, and to donate to help us strengthen and grow. Let's work to shift the story of heritage in Ontario from one of small community groups fighting individual battles with expansionist developers and some careless property openers, to one of stronger legislation, better upkeep, and an embracing of our heritage structures as integral to our communities, reminding us of the past while looking to the future.

Don't let our children grow up ignorant of our history, and of those whose labour and ambitions built our communities and our province. The building blocks of Ontario should remain visible for all to see, know, and celebrate. There's strength in numbers, so please share, please give, and let's grow stronger together.

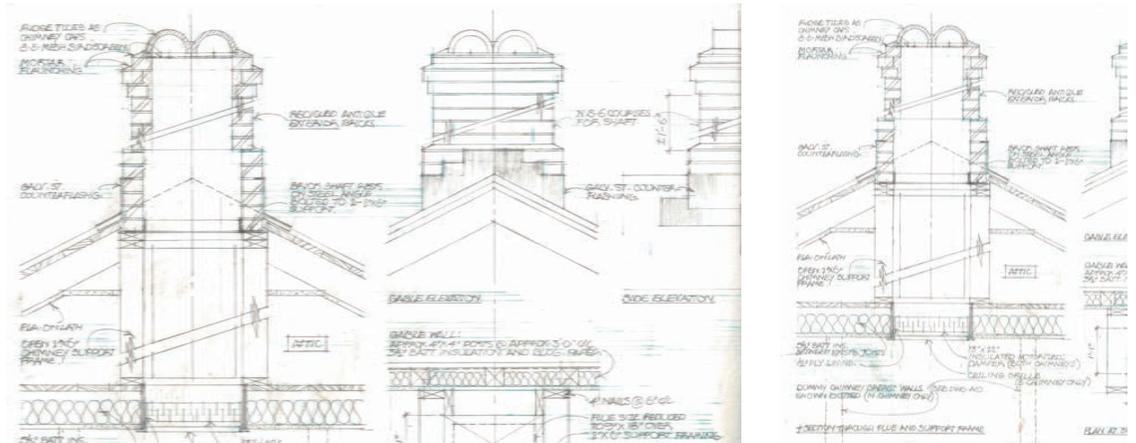
Devorah Miller  
Development Manager, ACO

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Drawings (right and opposite page) by architect Alan Seymour, longtime ACO member and volunteer for ACO's PreservationWorks! program

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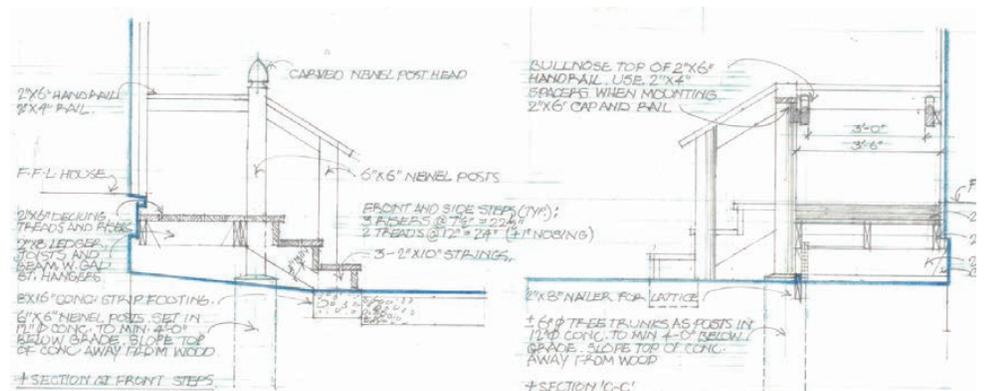
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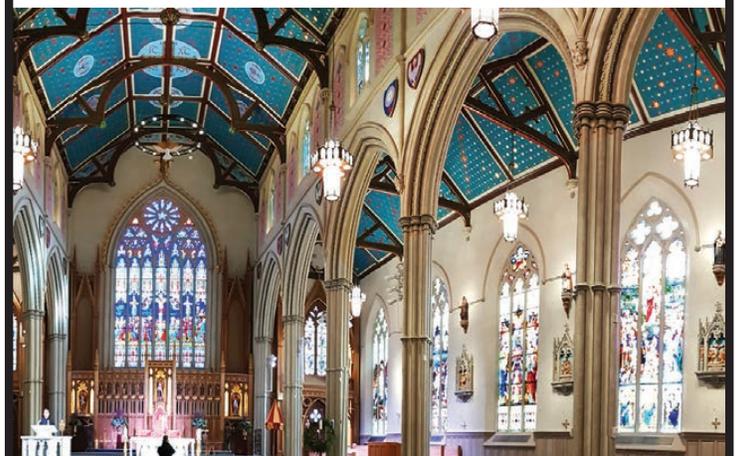
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