

Bill and Joan Ryan - 651 Battery Street**title**

In Victoria, it is not often that one family occupies a home for three generations without making substantial changes. This award recognizes and pays tribute to the Ryan family for their continued stewardship of a home through three generations. It tells the story of the house and the family who has lived there since 1913.

Designed by architect J.C.M. Keith, better known for his institutional work including the South Park Annex, Sir James Douglas School, Christ Church Cathedral, and the former Victoria Police Station, 651 Battery Street exemplified the more fashionable type of development in James Bay - "living near the sea and park." This Edwardian Vernacular Arts and Crafts dwelling was built for Thomas Ryan and his wife Dr. Helen Ryan who had retired here from the east.

Thomas Ryan was a government agent and financial manager who had been one of the first mayors in Sudbury, Ontario. His wife Helen earned a teaching certificate before entering medical school in Kingston. On her graduation in 1885, she was the first woman to be granted membership in the Canadian Medical Association. She practised in Toronto and then Mt. Forest until she married Thomas in 1890 and moved to Sudbury. She continued her medical practice while raising five children - Harold, Horace, Aimée, Bessie and Grace. In 1907, they retired to Victoria, living at 20 Dallas Road (now Paddon Avenue) until this house was completed.

Fortunately, members of the family - Amiee and Horace in particular - were avid photographers who carefully pasted family photographs into albums, identifying most of the people and scenes. It is from these albums that the images in this presentation are largely drawn. In one book in particular Horace pasted the photo in the centre of the page and drew the rest of the scene around it. He also wrote comments about what

was in the photo, including his *bon mot* regarding the old Chinese bell in Beacon Hill Park.

As is usually the case, family photos can be used to catch glimpses of other buildings. In a series of photographs taken from the upper balcony on the rear of the Battery Street home, we can clearly see the homes directly to the south and west, while a photo shot in front of the home shows the homes across the street.

Aimée, like her mother, followed a medical career, training as a nurse at Royal Jubilee Hospital. She carefully documented her activities here in photographs, resulting in images of the old Administration Building and Nurses Home, both now demolished.

Horace went overseas with the Canadian Artillery in 1917. Here we see the parade which preceded the troops' departure on the Adelaide on July 4th.

Horace lived in the house with his mother after Thomas' death in 1921. Horace married Blanche Ebbs-Canavan who started life just around the corner at 30 Douglas Street. Their wedding in 1944 ensured that the ownership of the house would continue in the family. Their two children, Bill and Joan are the current owners of the house.

21) They consider it a privilege and a pleasure to live in a house that has been in the family for three generations. It is also a duty and a responsibility. According to Joan, their father Horace, had a strong sense of duty and maintaining the house - choosing painting over holidays - was often the case. As Joan and Bill get older maintenance does become an issue as they relish the notion of climbing 40' ladders less and less. Joan feels that the experience of living in a piece of "living heritage" influenced her from an early age, as she assisted her father with home maintenance, and resulted in her training in heritage conservation through the Cultural Resource Management Program

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at UVic. Joan was occasionally tempted to have a fresh start in an environment of her own design but loves the house very much. Luckily, there was never any temptation to consider selling for development as all generations of the family have loved the house dearly.

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The Ryans were front and centre at the Battery Street rally. Joan represented the Ryans, as the longest-standing residents of Battery Street. The Ryans hosted Gretchen and John Brewin on a tour of the house. Horace Ryan participated from his favourite chair on the front porch of the house. Led by a piper, local citizens²⁶ walked down the street to Pinehurst where they listened to speakers including John Adams²⁷ and Gretchen Brewin.

When asked "Why is the preservation of this house important to you?" Joan replied²⁸ that it is important from a social history point of view in terms of the continuity of family ownership, architecturally and for its significance as part of the Battery Street Heritage Conservation area.

Title
The Hallmark Society salutes the Ryan family for their dedication to the preservation of their family home.