

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT:**

A Happy New Year to each of you.

At the executive meeting of January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1974, it was agreed to produce the first Hallmark Society newsletter and to outline last year's activities for members and non-members who are interested in heritage preservation. We are hopeful that the positive response we have received in Victoria will encourage other groups and individuals in the province to join their voices to ours in a provincial heritage movement with growing impact and influence.

Preservation has been going on in other countries for a long time. Britain's National Trust began with only three persons in the 1890's, and received government sanction in 1913. In the late 1880's, Denmark, Norway and Sweden began their famous outdoor museums to which were brought humble farmhouses, barns, wind and watermills, even cowsheds, which had been built of local materials in the local or 'folk' style and which constituted the heritage of the common people.

Canada is only beginning to wake to the realization of having a heritage at all, now that it is almost too late to do anything about it, and remains apologetic for being so 'idealistic' as to hope for any success in the face of 'realistic' development and 'progress.' I cannot resist quoting Mark Twain in this context who pointed out that a man can progress down a pier and off the end into the water without materially benefitting either him or the water. Real progress must be with it real benefits, and we must continue to reject the suggestion that the devastation of our neighbourhoods and our heritage architecture is synonymous with progress. Real progress will retain the best of the old and cherish it. It is realistic to demand that our cities be livable, and since we are throwing terms around left and right, let us claim that it is anachronistic to assume that because a developer stands to make money out of something that gives him the right to ignore all other claims. There has long been the realization that a country's national identity resides in its architecture as much as in anything else. There are tools available for heritage preservation, but tools need people if the work is to be done. Let's invent a mathematical formula:

## **PEOPLE + PUBLICITY = LEGISLATION = FUNDING**

When we lose our apologetic and defeatist attitude, and speak out strongly to all levels of government, we will succeed in retaining those buildings which constitute our history and architectural inheritance. We have tried to include in this newsletter the kind of information we would have found most valuable when we began. Copies of legislation will be made available upon request for a small charge to cover our costs of copying. Further information about the Hallmark Society or information of any kind may be had from the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. Don Reksten, 2636 Lincoln Ave., Victoria. Membership forms are also available.

Please write or telephone and let us know of your particular concern or interest.

Best wishes,  
CAROLYN SMYLY  
President.

## **AIMS OF THE HALLMARK SOCIETY**

- a) To work toward a public awareness of heritage buildings in the Capital Region district.
- b) To establish criteria for judging the historic and/or architectural merit of buildings in this area.
- c) To inventory those buildings which are considered to be of particular historic or architectural interest in the Capital Region district.
- d) To publish as soon as possible that inventory in whatever form and under whatever conditions as may be decided upon by the membership.
- e) To mark with an emblem those inventoried buildings in order to encourage public interest in and awareness of the historic and architectural heritage of the Capital Region.
- f) To study methods of heritage preservation and to make recommendations from time to time to the appropriate municipal or provincial authorities regarding heritage preservation in the public interest.
- g) To co-operate with individuals, groups or organizations whose aims are similar to those of this Society.
- h) To conduct and arrange exhibits, tours or other cultural, educational or recreational activities that will promote and stimulate public interest in heritage buildings.
- i) To raise such funds as are necessary for the provision of a building inventory, building markers, and the ordinary business of the Society.

## **HOW TO BEGIN**

You will notice that the Hallmark Society does not intend to acquire and maintain buildings themselves. Past experience in Victoria and elsewhere has shown that the financing, maintenance and operation of real properties requires full-time salaried staff, and that until an organization has grown to self-sufficiency (not dependancy on government grants) the purchase of any property is a false step. However, read on.

HISTORIC SAVANNAH FOUNDATION, Inc.

A non-profit corporation in Savannah, Georgia, raised an initial revolving development fund of \$200,000. Of a professional inventory made of 2800 buildings in the historic area, some 1100 were judged to be architecturally or historically important to the city and worth saving. They ranged from simple clapboard frame houses to simple row houses, elegant examples of Greek revival, Georgian, English Regency and Victorian Gothic. Of the 1100 worthy structures, 850 units have already been restored or are in process or awaiting restoration. The properties are saved, then re-sold, with expert rehabilitation advice offered to all purchasers. Savannah has been revived as a 'living' City, not as a museum town. Derelict buildings are restored to beauty and usefulness and the Foundation does not care how a building is used as long as its architectural authenticity is preserved.

The aim is to get them back into use as ongoing structures.

As a result, tourism in Savannah has doubled and is expected to double again - from an income of \$14 million in 1966 to \$70 million anticipated for 1976.

## **SO MUCH FOR THE ECONOMICS OF PRESERVATION!**

In April of 1973, the Hallmark Society began with six members. Within a few days of its inception, the Provincial Government passed the following amendment to the Municipal Act:

19. The Act is further amended by inserting, after section 714, the following as section 714 A,:

714A. (1) The Council may, by by-law, subject to the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, designate any buildings, structures, or lands, in whole or in part, as heritage buildings, structures, or lands for the purpose of preserving evidences of the municipality's history, culture, and heritage for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations.

(2) A building, structure, or land designated by the Council shall not be demolished or built upon, as the case may be; nor shall the facade or exterior of the building or structure be altered, except with the approval of the Council.

(3) In exercising the power under this section, the Council shall have due regard to the following considerations:

(a) The need for preserving heritage buildings, structures, or lands, which collectively represent a cross-section of all periods and styles in the municipality's historic and cultural evolution:

(b) The costs and benefits of the preservation:

(c) The compatibility of preservation with other lawful uses of the buildings, structures or lands.

(4) The Council may, by by-law adopted by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of all the members thereof, establish a Heritage Advisory Committee, whose members shall serve without remuneration and who shall advise the Council on those matters coming within the scope of this section as may from time to time be referred to the Heritage Advisory Committee by the Council, and, in particular, may make recommendations to Council respecting designation of heritage buildings, structures, and lands and the demolition, preservation, alteration, or renovation of those buildings, structures, and lands.

(5) In the by-law establishing the Heritage Advisory Committee there shall be set out

(a) the composition of the Heritage Advisory Committee and the manner in which Council shall appoint the members; and

(b) the procedures governing the Heritage Advisory Committee.

(6) The Council shall include in its annual budget such sums as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Heritage Advisory Committee.

THE HALLMARK SOCIETY has written to each of the core municipalities recommending that they make use of this legislation and that they set up a Heritage Advisory Committee where necessary. It is possible for a Council to designate without such a Committee of course

TO DATE: Oak Bay received a brief from the Hallmark Society in July 1973. Of the dozen or so examples of heritage buildings illustrated in the brief, two have since been demolished, a Maclure house on Beach Drive, and a vernacular style farmhouse and McNeil and Monterey. However, since then, Oak Bay has appointed a Heritage Advisory Committee, and has begun the designation of the Tod House on Heron Avenue, the oldest known residence in B.C. Oak Bay is also handling applications for demolitions permits in a way that ensures that no building is demolished before Council is advised of its heritage potential. Normally, Council would not hear of demolition permits, as these are a day-to-day function of Municipal Hall staff.

Victoria City received a brief from the Hallmark Society in August, 1973. It has since established a Heritage Advisory Committee who have undertaken the enormous task of putting together a detailed inventory of all heritage buildings in the City, beginning with Old Town. Recommendations have been made to Council regarding the Roccabella Guest House on Blanshard, and the stone warehouses on the Wharf Street waterfront.

Designation of a building is not a permanent solution to the long-term preservation of heritage buildings. It simply gives Councils some measure of control over demolition of heritage buildings; a control they did not previously have.

Once a building is designated, it means the owner must apply to Council for permission to alter it or demolish it. Council may give that permission if it feels the heritage value of the building is outweighed by economic considerations. If permission is withheld, the owner would have to prove that the designation was injurious to him (causing him an actual loss as opposed to simply disappointing his hopes), and if he was successful in proving such a loss, Council would be obliged to offer compensation or seek to buy him out altogether. In any case, there seems to be a guarantee of individual property rights to the extent that no land will find himself locked into supporting a property which he can no longer afford and is unable to re-develop. In short, designation should not be a burden any more than a change in zoning should be a burden.

The disadvantages of the legislation seem to be:

*Lack of machinery to notify owners of designation, to record against title so that future owners are aware of heritage restrictions, to assess the effect of designation on a property.*

The terms under which compensation may or may not be paid should have been spelled out precisely in this section or else reference should have been made to other sections of the Municipal Act, which deal with compensation.

The Municipal Act amendment does not apply to Vancouver, which has its own charter, or to buildings in unorganized territories.

There is no indication whether a designation becomes void if a building is removed to another municipality.

There is no provision of funds under this section for the purchase and re-sale of heritage properties by Council.

It will be interesting to see whether municipalities make effective use of this tool. Have you written to your Council to ask what steps they are taking to preserve heritage buildings under this legislation? Have you expressed your support for the principle of heritage preservation?

## **OTHER HALLMARK ACTIVITIES**

June - 1973 - We purchased a copy of the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB), which is a computer print-out of those buildings inventoried by a group sent from Ottawa for the purpose. We have found it useful to a certain extent but there are many large gaps and omissions. Despite statements that led us to think that every building before 1914 was included, it appears now that the inventory was a "selective sampling". Too bad.

July, 1973. We arranged with a bus touring company to share a trip to Port Townsend. Those who went enjoyed the trip, but the subsequent confusion over who was responsible for other tours, the Hallmark Society or the bus tour company, means that we shall only be arranging Hallmark charter tours in future.

We had hoped that one of the tour companies would realize that there is money to be made through heritage tours and would take it on on a regular basis. Unfortunately, the local companies seem totally unaware of the richness of the architectural heritage in this city and unwilling to change their pattern from the tourist traps to the real tourist attractions.

Hallmark Bus Tour - Aug. 25 and Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1973. We decided last fall to take one busload of interested people on a tour of heritage buildings in the City. The price was \$1.50 to cover the cost of the bus, and the tour included entry to Point Ellice House and Higgins Hall. The tour was so popular that in the end we filled four buses to capacity and were chagrined to have to turn away as many people again. We have decided on a Spring Tour for April. Those Hallmark Society members who wish tickets for the Spring Tour, please BOOK WELL IN ADVANCE. A notice will be sent in March notifying date and itinerary.

Hallmark Photo Display- City Council of Victoria kindly gave permission for the the Hallmark Society to set up a display of photographs in Bastion Square. On several Saturdays, the display was erected and proved popular. We filled a scribbler with the names and addresses of visitors from many foreign countries, the U.S. and Eastern Canada, all of whom agreed with our efforts. The only person in disagreement (who was courageous enough to come forward) was a local architect whose plans for a new development had caused the demolition of Fernwood.

September Annual General Meeting. A new slate of officers was elected at the annual meeting in September. These people will serve until September 1974., President - Mrs. C. SKyly Vice-President - Mr. George Radford Corresponding Secretary - Mr. Don Reksten Recording Secretary - Hrs. M. Hutchison Treasurer/Membership - Mrs. Mary Graham Executive Members at Large - Mrs. T. Heksten, Mr. Peter Church Mr. Garth Mayhew

We also set up several committees, the busiest of which is probably the Inventory Committee . Mrs. Millhouse volunteered to head up a Social Committee, and for that we are very grateful. All we need now is a publications committee to write articles for the

newspaper. Garth Mayhew has been carrying that load all by himself and doing a fine job.

Nov. 1973. We invited Mr. S. Bawlf, Alderman of the City of Victoria, Chairman of the Victoria Heritage Advisory Committee, and restorer-extraordinaire in his own right to address the November general meeting. We have a very enjoyable followed by a lively discussion. Excellent turnout.

January, 1974. A brief was presented to the Historic Sites Advisory Board of the provincial government. It made these

6. Increasing the stock of professional and trade skills required for restoration.

ALSO the Board of Governors decided to allot one million dollars to property acquisition and restoration in the next two years.

WHAT BUILDINGS do we have that have both architectural and, if possible, historical value which we feel could be adapted to a modern use? Let's hear your suggestions. We will want to make at least one presentation to Heritage Canada proposing their purchase of a B.C. building.

HERITAGE CANADA has also announced an awards system for governments, organizations and individuals active in heritage preservation. Some of these awards involve a travel grant, others involve cash awards. More about this at the next general meeting.

Without a doubt, Heritage Canada seems to have got off to a flying start. They need our continued support. Next year, those of you who joined the Hallmark Society this year will have a reduction in your fees. How about pledging the difference to supporting Heritage Canada through an individual membership? I find belonging to a cross-Canada heritage movement an exciting, stimulating and strengthening experience. Hope you feel the same way. Their address is: P.O.Box 1358, Station "B", Ottawa, K1P 5R4.

HERITAGE CANADA BOARD OF GOVERNORS will be visiting Victoria on February 14-15<sup>th</sup>. Their time will be taken up with meetings, but the executive of the Hallmark Society will be meeting with them one evening.

WE HAVE a scrapbook full of items of heritage preservation and restoration - mostly from the U.S. and Canada. If any of you happen to take newspapers or magazines from other countries, we would greatly appreciate any cuttings of heritage articles you may come across.

WE HEED PEOPLE to do research in the archives - both city and provincial - to ascertain the dates, owners, history of buildings in the city. We need to locate old photos and occasionally search titles in the land registry office. This is not difficult. Just time-consuming. VOLUNTEERS?

WE RECEIVED a good response to our appeal for help on a social committee. Now we need suggestions as to the kind of social event you would enjoy as a get-together this summer. IDEAS?

WE remind you of two dates: FEBRUARY 6<sup>th</sup>, 8:00p.m. Princess Louise Room, Empress Hotel. Mr. Martin Segger, illustrated lecture entitled "Architectural features of Victoria buildings."

MARCH 22<sup>nd</sup>, 8:00 p.m. Newcombe Auditorium (Heritage Series of Provincial Museum) illustrated lecture by Mrs. Carolyn Smyly entitled "B.C.'s heritage buildings and other demolition sites." Bring a hard hat.

Members of the Hallmark Society have been on television and radio several times - on the news, and interviews with Bud Pauls and Helen Biernes on Channel 10. The President has also given illustrated lectures to a Liberal Party meeting and to a meeting of the James Bay Community Association. Mrs. Reksten took a group from Oak Bay on a walking tour of Old Town out of which has emerged a very fine map and historical guard to the area. These will be printed and on sale to the public this summer it is hoped.

## **HERITAGE MOVEMENT IN B.C.**

Throughout the province, wherever individuals have tried

to preserve a local building important to their sense of place and identity, there are nuclei heritage preservation groups. It is no longer possible for heritage building societies to act in isolation from one another. Heritage Canada acts as a national link. But we need some kind of structure tying together historical societies, museum societies and building preservation societies with the common object of promoting our heritage in the fullest sense of the word.

We feel that our geographical location in the capital city gives us an added duty or responsibility to keep the province in overview while yet concentrating on the many buildings worthy of preservation in this city.

We therefore invite any group or individual in the province who is interested in heritage preservation to make themselves known to us so that an exchange of information can take place and we can move towards working in concert for the benefit of the entire province. We are not claiming to be developing a province-wide sphere of influence, but we would certainly be interested in becoming the local representatives of an affiliation of heritage-minded organizations.

**LETTERS IN AND OUT:** We have received many interesting letters from persons requesting information or offering support.

We have also written numerous letters on behalf of individuals or buildings.

**Higgins Hall:** The Hallmark SOCIety supported Mr. Rudolph's application for permission to open his home to the public. After five years of trying, City Council has finally acquired the necessary changes to the zoning regulations to make this possible.

**Rocabella:** A letter went to the Heritage Advisory Committee of the City of Victoria recommending designation of the Rocabella Guest House (1884). The Committee made recommendation to City Council supporting the preservation of this building and we await results.

**Seaforth Street Gothic.** A letter went to the Wellington Society requesting their cooperation in saving a delightful Gothic Picturesque house on Seaforth St. That non-

profit organization engaged in developing the site for old age pensioners' accommodation promised in a letter and in a public meeting to either re-site the building or to allow time for someone else to undertake the task. We have even lined up a "someone else" willing to become the owner of this charming residence just in case the Wellington Society finds the project too troublesome. It is too bad that the City of Victoria did not think of including the preservation of the house as part of the land use contract for the area, but we look forward to seeing the Wellington Society stand by its promise to retain the house.

Several persons have telephoned requesting heritage buildings to buy. Obviously we cannot go into the real estate business, and once again the local businessmen seem sadly devoid of imagination or one would think that at least one real estate company would specialize in finding sympathetic owners for heritage properties as a public service if nothing else. There are certainly enough persons willing to buy heritage properties, and covenant with former owners to preserve architectural details etc., but at present there is no one real estate firm specializing in matching heritage resources with compatible needs.