

Preserve

Your voice for heritage in the Capital Region and the Islands since 1973

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 34, Number 1, Spring 2007

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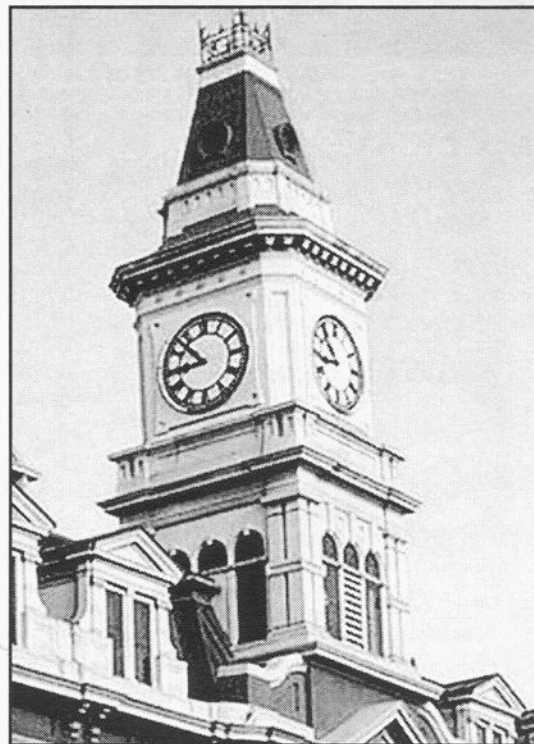
Restoration of City Hall Clock Tower Reveals Mysteries of Bullets and Bells – Two mysteries solved and two more revealed

by Richard Linzey, Heritage Planner, City of Victoria

A National Historic Site, and a municipally designated heritage building, City Hall is the best example of large-scale Second Empire public architecture in Western Canada, and the oldest surviving municipal hall in British Columbia. The clocktower of City Hall has recently been restored to its authentic 1890s appearance, complete with replacement decorative features that have decayed and disappeared over the past 116 years.

The City of Victoria, assisted by a grant of \$25,000 from the Heritage Legacy Fund, has restored Victoria City Hall's 32-metre (105 feet) clock tower, and the adjacent bell house. Designed by noted Victorian architect John Teague – arguably, in his finest hour – the tower houses the impressive McKillican Clock (that has chimed the hours and borne witness to the growth of the city for 115 years. The clock, and

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Mandate

The Hallmark Society was registered on April 18, 1973. We encourage the preservation of structural, natural, cultural, and horticultural heritage within the Capital Regional District. We accomplish these goals through education, public speaking, advocacy, tours, exhibitions, and the annual Awards Night. We are a non-profit society, financed principally by membership dues and members' contributions. 📷

Photo credits

All photos are by Helen Edwards except as noted. 📷

Deadline for articles and advertising for the Summer 2007 newsletter is May 15, 2007.

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Editor's Message

Your Board is **still** entertaining possible new names for our newsletter. We do not want to change a name just for the sake of doing it, but feel we need a short, pithy name that reflects the new role of our society.

We have received a few suggestions, but have not yet found the ideal title. It is possible that **you** can think of a better title. Let us know! Perhaps we can find an appropriate reward. Remember, this is **YOUR** newsletter! 📷

Preserve welcomes submissions, both written and photographic, on topics related to the preservation, conservation, and restoration of heritage from a local, provincial, national, or international perspective. The Editor reserve the right to edit material for consistency and length, and to reject articles.

Please submit manuscripts to the Editor, *Preserve*, 810 Linden Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8V 4G9, deliver to #18 Centennial Square, or send via electronic mail to newsletter@hallmarksociety.ca. 📷

Nick's Notes

by Nick Russell

It was sort of nice that the federal Auditor General singled out the Admiral's House as a heritage building that needed special protection. But only "sort of." Why that building, of all the 1,600 buildings at CFB Esquimalt?

Certainly the Admiral's House is important: Designed by John Teague in 1885; a two-storey building with double-thick brick walls and stone quoins. It's been home to more than 20—that's 20—Admirals over the years. And it's the only building on the entire base that has federal heritage designation. But my sources say the building is well maintained and in good shape. For family reasons, the present admiral is unable to live there. But in six months, his replacement may take up residence. So, Sheila Fraser, by all means bird-dog the place, especially if it remains empty, but it's not the only vulnerable structure on CFB Esquimalt.

Indeed, Hallmark has an official Work Point Directory that lists 10 buildings as "TO BE DEMO" and two more as "ABAND." One of those is the Officers' Quarters, dated 1892, which Defence demolished last year, despite public protests. Some of the buildings are not that historic, but the one that is really vulnerable—much more so than the Admirals House—is Building 1020, the Administrative Building. Hallmark wrote to a previous admiral in 2000, asking to be kept informed about plans for heritage buildings, but his response, in essence, was "Ottawa done it."

Ms. Fraser, in her 2006 Auditor General's report, recognizes that these buildings are the property of the people. She singled out the Admiral's House and several eastern buildings as examples of buildings at considerable risk. But her main point—which we shouldn't lose sight of when we focus on one or two structures—is that the federal heritage policy is in disarray. Or rather, that there isn't a federal heritage policy: Parks Canada does one thing with its 500 heritage buildings; Public Works has a different policy for its 200 heritage buildings; and National Defence does something different with its 300. They operate under different legislation. There's little collaboration. Little in the way of pooled policy or resources. And no agreed priorities.

And what's even worse is, Madam Fraser made very similar criticism in her 2003 annual report.

It took a national campaign to get the government to develop legislation to save heritage railway stations. Now activists have to hit the government over the head with a two-by-four to get legislation protecting

disappearing lighthouses. The Ottawa coffers are overflowing with our taxes: There needs to be a logical, national policy making heritage buildings a priority, and funding their protection.

It's time the federal government got its Acts together.



Photos: Top: Admirals's House; middle: Administration Building, 2003; bottom: detail of Administration Building, 2007 showing lack of maintenance.

Save our Schools: Lampson Street School threatened - again!

Esquimalt's historic Lampson Street School is once again threatened with closure. It is one of two schools in School District 61 that were selected for possible closure by the district's Declining Enrolment Committee; Cloverdale School is the other.

This is the second time that Lampson School has been threatened. It was closed in 1976 when students were moved to Rockheights Elementary, then sat empty until it was restored and seismically upgraded in 1993 to meet an increase in the student population, and now faces an uncertain future. Built on the foundation of a 1903 brick school (the walls were found to be unable to bear any weight) in 1909 with architect unknown, the school featured a simple design with an octagonal tower.

In 1913, William Ridgway Wilson designed a major addition to the school adding six more classrooms and an auditorium large enough to seat 700. The new construction added wings to the north and south with neo-classical entrances for "BOYS" and "GIRLS." To create cohesion between the old and new elements, Wilson replaced the original wooden entrance with a terracotta portico echoing the two on either side, and a grand split staircase. A 1943 wood frame annex completed the complex.

Between 1976 and 1990, the school sat empty with no maintenance and deteriorated. During this time school populations were growing and there was a need for an additional school in Esquimalt. After much community pressure, the School Board became interested in restoring Lampson after studying the costs of recycling versus new construction. Lower costs, a central location, bright

interior space, and tremendous community support helped tip the scales toward re-use.


The entire building was seismically upgraded – and is one of the few schools in this area to have had this work done – and reopened to children in 1993. To meet today's fire codes, two staircases had to be built at the north and south ends of the building. This was accomplished with sympathetic additions at the back of the wing blocks. The use of recycled brick from the site and matching double-hung windows made these additions nearly indistinguishable from the rest of the school. The completed project won a Louis Award, Hallmark's highest honour. Lampson celebrated its 104th birthday in early March. Will it be its last?

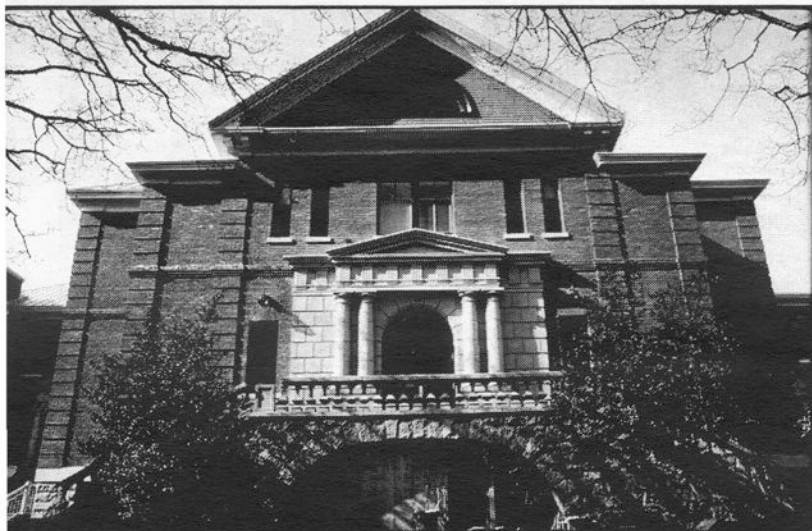
That there is still strong support from the community is proven by the following comments from a public hearing Monday, February 5, 2007:

The Ministry of Education determined that 700 schools in BC required some level of seismic work – in this District alone there were 29 high risk and there were only 5 at low risk with Lampson being one of the 5. This committee has reported that we send our children to a school that has been deemed a high risk. Although several have been placed on a priority list, none have been funded before 2009. Why should we take our students out of Lampson School and risk their safety? The Greater Victoria School District is committed to each student's success in learning within a responsive and safe environment. Please consider our children's safety.

A heritage building is more than a set of walls – Lampson is a home away from home for many and is a safe, trust, nurturing place"

Letters to the Editor and phone calls to media outlets are running very much in favour of saving the school. It has been designated as a "safe harbour" in case of an earthquake. If the school is closed, where do citizens go for safety?

There is still time to save this heritage school. Comments may be sent to the Greater Victoria School Board who have assured everyone that community input is being strongly considered. Take the time to make your views known. If Lampson closes again, it may never re-open and that would be a shame for the students of Esquimalt and the community as a whole. If we don't know our past, how do we know where we are going in the future? 



Save our Lighthouses: Senator champions bill

Bill S-220, an Act to protect heritage lighthouses, was tabled in the House of Commons the week of February 5, after passing third reading in the Senate in December 2006. This Private Senator's Bill, sponsored by Senator Pat Carney, would prevent heritage lighthouses that fall under federal jurisdiction from being altered, sold, or destroyed without public consultation. It will also require that existing lighthouses with heritage designation, and the stations at which they are located, be reasonably maintained.

Canada has 583 surviving lighthouses, many of which are disintegrating and in danger of disappearing. In British Columbia, only nine of the province's 52 light stations are currently designated as protected heritage buildings, but under current legislation even these buildings are decaying.

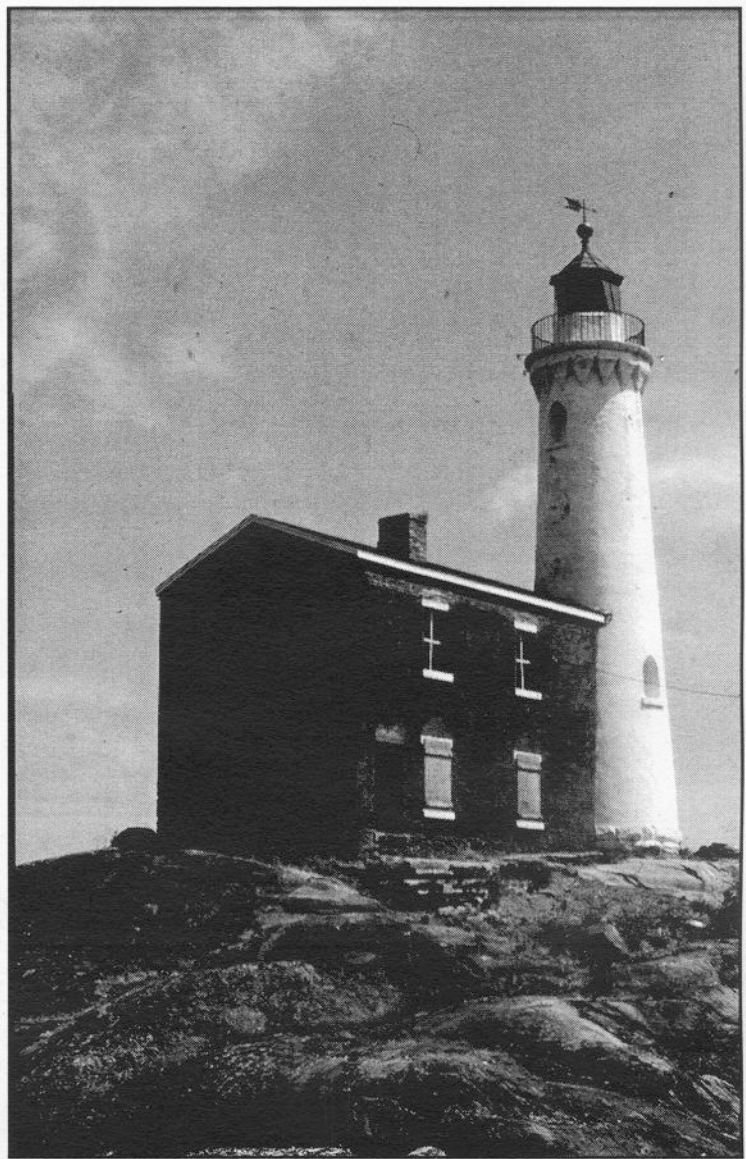
People on both coasts care deeply about our light stations. Without the protection of Bill S-220, we risk losing them, says Carney.

Locally, the Race Rocks light station, a federally designated heritage site, is in real danger. Evidently, the heat was cut off in 1990 and the deterioration began. Now the sandstone on the upper portion of the lighthouse is crumbling and the orange paint is peeling badly. The also-designated Fisgard Lighthouse has similar problems.

The problem is that federal heritage designation carries with it no funds for restoration or even maintenance. Keeping the lights and foghorns working is the responsibility of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, but care of the structure is not a priority. What happens if the lighthouse collapses taking with it the light is a moot point. The Department of Canadian Heritage does not have a budget for maintenance of heritage buildings.

As we all know, heritage buildings without preventative maintenance soon start to fail. Even modern buildings, with or without the potential to one day be heritage sites, can deteriorate with no heat or maintenance.

The case is even worse for a light station that is exposed to the worst weather and is constantly pounded by salt water – the enemy of stone. According to Carney, no one department wishes to take responsibility for the maintenance. With the change to automated stations, the sites no longer had on-site residents who looked after routine items and their future became problematic.



Fisgard Lighthouse. Hallmark Society photo

Senator Pat Carney spoke to a Victoria meeting sponsored by the Heritage Canada Foundation held at the Maritime Museum on February 8, 2007. Carney lives on Saturna Island and known lighthouses first hand. Her passion for their preservation is evident in her remarks. Lest naysayers point to the fact that the bill has gone to the commons before, only to see Parliament rise or the government fall before the legislation makes its way through the lengthy process, just look at railway stations. It took many efforts before they were protected; now former stations serve a variety of new uses and are once again productive. Will perhaps this be the time for light stations as well?

Make your views known to your Member of Parliament. Let's make this issue a priority. 🗣️



the separately housed bell, were purpose-made by Gillett and Johnson of Croydon, England. According to historian Janis Ringuette, the Victoria jeweller who had the contract to order and install the clock, Charles Redfern, decided unilaterally to name the clock after the chairperson of the city's Hall Committee, Alderman McKillican. He did this even though the new hall was due largely to the efforts of the previous chairman. Janis also laid to rest that rumour about the clock traveling mistakenly to Victoria Australia – it didn't. But fear not, there are other mysteries to unravel

Microscopic analysis of the layers of paint on the tower revealed that when completed in 1890, although entirely clad in galvanized sheet steel, it was painted to look like a stone tower with a patinated copper roof. In the 1990s, heritage consultant Stuart Stark identified that and the cresting atop the tower and parts of the clock face were gilded – and these elements have now been painted with a gold automotive paint to approximate the original design.

Close examination of historic photographs revealed that the tower was originally adorned with twenty decorative urns above and below the clock face. City staff created drawings of the urns and these were turned and moulded in fibre-glass by John Booth of Victoria West. Carlos Flores of the city's paint shop experimented with sanded paint mixes to match the texture of the paint on city halls only surviving (ex-situ) urn, and the application of this coating helped to tone down the gleam of the smooth fibre-glass. The urns were

braced against toppling during an earthquake to the designs of engineer Andrew Rushforth, and Patricia Mallon, of Stantec.

Other work included the removal of unnecessary bird screens from around the bell frame, and the removal of paint from the bell itself. As well as cleaning up the sound of the bell, this process revealed the words H.M.S. Victoria, crudely but painstakingly painted on the bell-metal (can any readers shed light on this?). The clock mechanism was overhauled but a comprehensive re-bushing is required within the next few years if it is to continue to keep good time without daily nurturing. Within the tower some minor joinery repairs were undertaken including the restoration of some missing turned stair balusters.

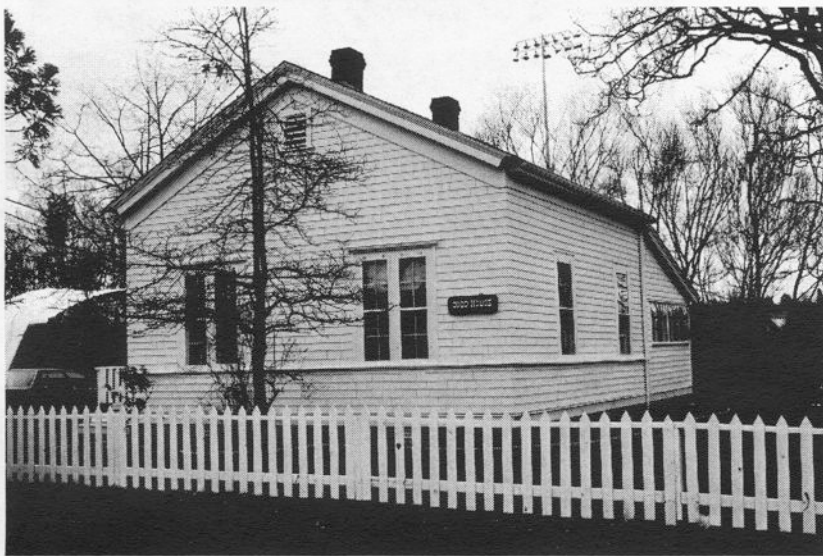
Close inspection of the clock faces while scaffolded revealed an 8mm diameter bullet hole in the hour hand of the south-facing dial. Forensic examination of the angle of the bullet, the location of replaced glass in the clock face, and damage to the ceiling of the dial stage of the tower indicate that the shot was fired at five o'clock from the corner of Pandora and Douglas, outside the Hotel Douglas, either in the evening or the early morning. The build-up of paint payers within the hole indicates that the incident happened three paintings ago, perhaps in the early teens of the last century (anyone with information that leading to the apprehension of this vandal will be duly credited).

On 15 August 2006, the City Hall clock struck noon and the Canadian standard ascended the flagstaff reaching the button as the last chime faded. Mayor Lowe and members of Council were in attendance on the roof to witness the event with other dignitaries and members of the local press.

The repairs and painting were carried out by the City's Engineering staff, with some areas being done by private contractors. The project was managed by the City's Engineering Department, with conservation advice from City Heritage Planners. 🏗️



All photos courtesy City of Victoria. Left: historic City Hall; top right, Richard Linzey with clock face; lower left: Clock tower restoration complete.



On February 24, 2007, a small contingent of Hallmark members - 20 in total – defied the elements and took the Heritage Week tour of historic Dodd House in Lambrick Park. Society Treasurer Ken Johnson led the tour and outlined the history of the building, its donation to Saanich from a developer who also paid for the move to this site, and its restoration. Operated by the Saanich Heritage Foundation, the home, the oldest house still standing in Saanich, is rented to tenants with the proviso that tours be permitted occasionally. This year, we were that tour.

The house is very simple – one storey country Georgian – and features 12-foot ceilings and built-ins. The interior is lined with California redwood that still looks fresh. It is hard to fathom how a young woman

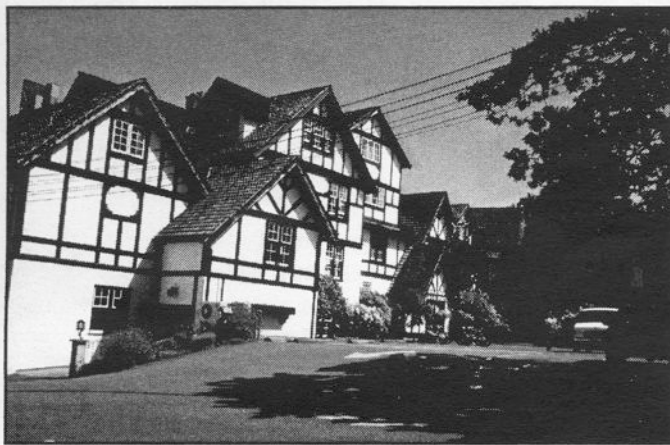
could stand to live so far from downtown but, after her husband’s untimely death, Mrs. Dodd did just that. It is perhaps relevant that she was of aboriginal blood and was likely shunned by the “white aristocracy” that formed the social circle in Victoria at the time.

Thanks to Ken for acting as our tour guide and thanks to the members who attended the tour – look for more to come. 📷

SVIRH Fair 2007

The South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair will be held on Friday, May 4, 2007 at the Royal BC Museum, Clifford Carl Hall. Students in grades 4-9 will present the results of their research into historical subjects. It is often interesting to see what a youngster considers “heritage.” Have you ever wanted to help at this event. We need people to interview the children and make decisions on awards. Some of the work is truly amazing. Come support the preservationists of tomorrow – open to the public from 10am – 2 pm. 📷

Now You See it, Now You Don't Oak Bay Beach Hotel falls to the wrecker's ball.



Oak Bay Beach Hotel, 2003



Oak Bay Beach Hotel, 2007

dilemma

by Nick Russell

The battle to save Mount Saint Angela's illustrates the dilemma facing heritage advocates. Should we compromise? Or should we say that it must all be preserved, as is, where is? Indeed, is Hallmark, as the leading heritage campaigner in Greater Victoria, bound to take the high road, and argue for total preservation (and face frequent disappointment), or should it encourage people to find imaginative ways to preserve and protect our built heritage? Should we hang tough, or admit we can't save everything? Where does Realism meet Capitalism?

St. Angela's College is one of Victoria's most important structures –designed in 1865 by Wright & Sanders, the city's first and arguably most influential architecture firm (Pt Ellice, the Carr House, Fisgard Light, the Synagogue, etc.)

It may be argued that developers have already ruined the Burdett streetscape with the dense towers currently being constructed at Burdett/Vancouver/McClure. But if we concede defeat every time that happens, then we might as well throw in the towel entirely.

As one Hallmark member wrote to me recently:

"We simply cannot entertain the proposal for a five-storey concrete tower on the property, nor any place else on Burdett St. A 'line in the sand' must be drawn at Quadra St."

So, what can we entertain? If a potential developer puts forward a proposal –as he has-- for saving the College and two of its surrounding heritage buildings, but removing the 1911 extension at the rear and putting



two blocks of townhouses behind the college...all blessed by a respected heritage consultant... should we simply say, NO! ?

Of course Preservation and Protection are our first goals. Of course we want to see this charming cluster protected for all time, with its fine buildings, its relaxed ambience, and its great view-lines. So, where's the Fairy Godmother when we need her, to buy it all and preserve it for ever? And lacking that divine intervention --to put it more prosaically-- when does "density bonus" trump the Humboldt Valley Precinct Plan?

The Hallmark Board has concluded that it is our role to advocate for all the heritage components on the Mount Saint Angela's site –the original building, the 1911 extension, and all three contiguous houses: Nobody else will speak for them. This does not mean we are uncompromising and unrealistic, but simply that, as the letter-writer sagely said, somebody has to draw a line in the sand. 🏠

December GM report

The 2006 December meeting was held on December 10th at the James Bay New Horizons Centre with 53 members in attendance. President Nick Russell presented an overview of heritage issues and the "Gone" project. We still need volunteer researchers to help. If you like a challenge, give us a call.

Guest speaker Simone Vogel-Horridge gave a most illuminating lecture on historic wallpaper in Victoria. Included were examples from an 1860s house that has now been demolished. After presenting a comprehensive history of wallpaper production, Simone showed us how viewing samples of wallpaper can help us trace the social

history of occupants. It was a fascinating glimpse into the lives of long-gone homeowners, highlighting their lifestyle and their taste in decorating. We also learned about global changes in taste and how they affected our part of the world. A lively question and answer session followed.

A raffle of a framed wallpaper fragment raised money to support the restoration of Ross Bay Villa's interior wallpaper.

Thanks to all who brought seasonal goodies to share! It was much appreciated. 🏠

- May 1, 2007** Hallmark Awards ceremony. St. Ann's Academy Auditorium, 7:30 pm.
- May 4, 2007** South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair, Clifford Carl Hall, Royal BC Museum, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
- May 10-13, 2007** BC Historical Federation conference. Victoria. Hallmark President Nick Russell is a featured speaker. See <http://www.bchistory.ca/conf.html> for details and registration form
- June 1-2, 2007** Heritage Society of BC annual conference, North Vancouver. See <http://heritagebc.ca> for details and registration form
- September 2007** Hallmark Society Annual General Meeting. Guest speaker, John Veillette with an illustrated lecture on Art Deco. Date and more details later.
- October 11-14, 2007** Heritage Canada conference, Edmonton Alberta. Theme: Big Plans for Old Places: Heritage and Development in Canadian Communities. See <http://heritagecanada.org> for details and registration forms

For Sale by Hallmark Office

5 Legal sized filing cabinets, 4 with locks and keys
2 black, 2 putty, 1 green

1 Letter sized filing cabinet, has lock but no key. Bright green

Accepting offers (suggested price - \$25 per unit).

Any units remaining after March 31, 2007 will be donated to the ReStore.

Call the office at 382-4755 to view.



BUILD THIS PORCH?

If you plan to restore a heritage porch like this, here are the parts!

Turned columns, brackets and mounted spindles from 606 Francis. My plans changed.
First \$ 95 gets the lot. Nick: 995-0022

Wanted for office

1/2 inch shelving or plywood
16" x 48"

We need 3-4 pieces to replace weak pressed-wood shelving currently in use.

Call the office if you can help

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Awards Night 2007 – May 1, 2007

The thirty-first annual Awards Night will be held this year at St. Ann's Academy Auditorium, 835 Humboldt Street, commencing at **7:30 pm**. As in previous years, the evening will begin with local municipalities presenting plaques to property owners who have received heritage designation status during the preceding year.

The Awards Jury will be selecting winners from the numerous nominations received. Who will win this year? Will there be a Louis Award? Will there be a winner of the Michael Williams Award? If you do not attend, you will get the news second hand. We are now soliciting sponsors for this important event. If you know of a potential donor, please let us know. Sponsors are mentioned in the awards program distributed at the ceremony and in a special edition of the newsletter, and receive a tax receipt.

Please note: To assist with catering and seat assignment, admittance to this event will be by reservation only. One of the benefits of membership is a seat for the ceremony. Seats will be available according to your membership category: student and individual members - 1 ticket; family membership - 2 tickets; group or corporate membership - 3 tickets. Additional tickets will be available from the office at a cost of \$10.00 each. Reservations will be accepted, and tickets sold, at the office between April 21st and April 30th. Complete the form below and return it to the office, phone 382-4755, fax your request to 382-4755, or send e-mail to office@hallmarksociety.ca. Late reservations may be accepted, depending on availability of seating. Tickets can be picked up at the office or held for you at the door.

**PLEASE DO NOT ASSUME WE KNOW YOU ARE COMING.
EVERYONE WHO WISHES TO ATTEND THE CEREMONY
MUST MAKE A RESERVATION.**

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

I wish to reserve _____ tickets for the Hallmark Society Awards Night.

Payment enclosed (if applicable) _____