

Preserve

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

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 37, Number 2, Summer 2010

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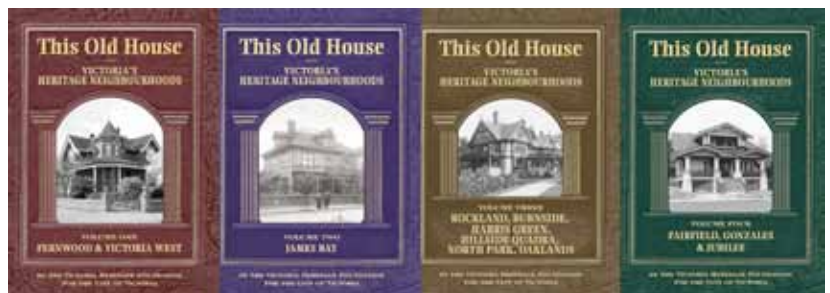
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Keeping you aware of current events in the heritage world.

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Louis Award won by Victoria Heritage Foundation

The winner of the Louis Award is the Victoria Heritage Foundation for the completion of the four-volumes of *This Old House*. The series is a complete revision of the earlier *This Old House* that was first published in 1979 (with later editions in 1984 and 1991) and has been over a decade in the making.



Each volume starts with a chronology of local history, and essays on the birth and growth of each neighbourhood. Much of this history is spelled out in the introductory essays, but some can be intuited: in reading individual building descriptions, the reader also absorbs the influence of the developer/contractors such as Luney Brothers or Bungalow Construction Co., and architects such as Samuel Maclure, John Teague and E.E. Green. One can also follow many people as

they prospered, moved into bigger homes, and grew families.


The books include a guide to local residential styles and glossary of architectural terms, a bibliography, maps, complete indexes of names and addresses, and, on the VHF's new website, companion indexes to architects and builders, and a chronological index of

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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. 

Deadline for articles and advertising for the Autumn 2010 newsletter is July 31, 2010.

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Notice of AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, September 13, 2010 at the James Bay New Horizons Centre at 7:30 pm. Our guest speaker will be out-going President Nick Russell who will speak on "Glorious Victorians." 

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 reserves 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

A woman was weeping on my doorstep, the other day. She was totally distressed by a developer's plan to put a very large house on a very tiny lot beside her. And I'm sure that by the end of our long conversation she thought I was in the developer's pocket.

She was hoping that Hallmark would intercede—at the public hearing the following day. But I'd overlooked the meeting and was going to be out of town on business that day, and --realistically-- it was MUCH TOO LATE for protest. We wrote a fast letter, but I'm sure Council must sometimes think, "Oh no, not them again!"

At best, it's optimistic to hope that any group is standing by, ready to don the Superman suit and fly to the aid of the distressed. But, frankly, we had thought this --151 Oswego @ Simcoe-- was a done deal two years ago, when we had voiced our concerns. So this unexpected visitor just underlined the fact that people—especially people who are not members of the Hallmark Society-- tend to be unaware of the processes involved in building approvals – the applications, committees and hearings, not to mention the jockeying and lobbying, involved. Because of that, they may also be a bit optimistic about Hallmark's abilities in the miracle department. And above all, people are most concerned about their own back yard. It's hard for citizens to get excited about issues across town, when they are worrying about the day-to-day issues of the cost of gas or job security or the HST. Until the threat is next door.

But there is a much bigger issue here, too: How come developers can buy "next door" and sub-divide it, without any difficulty or meaningful opposition?

The answer, of course, is the wretched Duplex zoning, with which so much of the city is cursed (or blessed, in the developers' view) and if that doesn't work for them, the City's willingness to spot-zone.

So the developers have two weapons easily and widely available to them: Duplex zoning which allows them to turn a single-family property into a double, and Spot zoning, which allows them to block-bust anywhere they can persuade Council to approve.

Meanwhile, what weapons do those who want to preserve heritage and streetscapes have? There's always opposition: volunteers can research and then fire off letters and petitions and mobilize protests. But by its nature that's always negative and sometimes seems to be self-serving NIMBY-ism. Hallmark is often accused of being "reactive" rather than 'pro-active.' The developer always takes the initiative, with smart front-persons stick-handling applications through the stages and glad-handing the decision-makers. (Ever notice how many people on council committees and neighbourhood association boards greet the developers by their first names?) This leaves Hallmark and others scrambling to react, with scant resources.

And what can be done anyway? When a developer decides to demolish—say—two modest houses and an abused Maclure house on Richardson, he offers densification, which council is forced to welcome, because of a perceived need for more housing. When he applies to build a four-storey thing beside the tiny Ross Bay Villa, he can do it with impunity, because of the stupid spot zoning already in place. When he wants to sub-divide 151 Oswego, he can do it, and build beside the heritage home, because it's covered by the blanket duplex zoning.

The system has to change: It's currently heavily loaded in favour of the bulldozer boys. They want to level everything. All we want, is a level playing-field!

I don't blame that lady for weeping on my doorstep. It makes ME want to weep.

continued on page 4

To Move or to Demolish?



Three in a row: 1127, 1125, 1121 Fort.

Nick Russell montage

Is it good news or bad news, when an old house is moved?

I guess it's more good than bad!

1121 Fort St is being "saved," but in a new location. It's to be rolled up to Fernwood Rd., where it will sit beside a couple of other distinguished --and designated-- homes.

But --as so often happens-- #1121 is not just an isolated house: It's one of a trilogy --a set of three matching houses, built as a sort of "family compound" for the Bantly family in 1907-9 by a respected local builder, D.H. Bale.

The central house of the trio has a turret, while the flanking pair are pleasant, matched Edwardian Arts & Crafts, 1½-storey houses. When they were built, in 1907-9, they were perfectly suited for their site: Well out of downtown, but well below the Rockland glitterati. (The Bantly story is told in Vol. IV of *This Old House*.)

Owners of #1127 sensibly got their house --which once served as a tearoom-- on the Heritage Register. But none of the trio are designated, so as downtown gets increasingly choked, pushing the boundaries outward, such little houses are threatened. This house had a store-front tacked on, years ago, reducing its street presence, though its basic bones are still intact.

Are we better off to have the house moved and restored elsewhere? Probably. But there can be little doubt that the set of three should have been designated as fine examples of Bale's work and rare examples of a "set" of houses. The Fort Street streetscape will be the poorer for this removal; the two remaining houses will lose a lot of their presence and integrity, and whatever will be built next door will doubtless be unsympathetic, and will overshadow its historic neighbours. 🏠

Awards of Merit 1246 Rudlin Street

Ian McCrimmon and Lynda Robson won an Award of Merit for their work to rehabilitate the landscape of their property at 1246 Rudlin Street.

Last year, Ian and Lynda were faced with the imminent collapse of an ugly concrete garden wall, aggravated by totally overgrown trees. The wall had serious cracks and presented a hazard to passersby. In addition, the foliage behind the wall was unkempt and did not present a “pretty face” to the street. Pedestrians could only imagine what once had been there. Ian and Lynda could have taken the easy way out – either scraping out the dirt behind and just sloping it (as some neighbours have done), or patching it, or replacing it with a cheap and flimsy concrete footing and wood fence.

Instead they chose to hire a crew of very talented stonemasons, Strongback, to spend a



Photo courtesy Ian McCrimmon

month building a beautiful stone wall by hand, and then topping it with a classy wrought-iron fence. The expense of this undertaking must have been horrendous, but the result suddenly reveals a charming house (built in 1908 by McPherson and Fullerton) that was virtually invisible before.

The Awards Jury felt that this project had improved the streetscape, adding to the historic environment and it was a nice gesture to the area. This project will likely encourage other neighbours to improve their properties. 🏡

711-713 Johnson Street

Victoria Cool Aid Society, AIDS Vancouver Island and CitySpaces Consulting win for the rehabilitation of 711-713 Johnson Street from a deserted Bingo Hall to a state-of-the-art health centre.

In 2005, Cool Aid and AIDS Vancouver Island joined together to acquire the former Bingo Hall property for the future home of ACCESS. Throughout the rehabilitation process, careful attention was paid to the heritage aspects of the building. As the many commercial uses over the years had obliterated the original heritage features on the interior, it was gutted and seismically upgraded. On the exterior, however, special attention was paid to the windows. All frames were refurbished or, when necessary, replaced by new ones, fabricated using the existing sash as templates. The rear courtyard was refurbished as a quiet oasis in the midst of downtown noise and congestion. Historic painted signage on the east façade was preserved.



Helen Edwards photo

The ACCESS Health Centre brings together under a single roof the services of Cool Aid’s Community Health Centre, AIDS Vancouver Island, VIHA Mental Health & Addictions Services, and other providers of health services for the Capital Regional District. Not only has this project provided long-overdue social services to those who need it most, but it also shows that a successful rehabilitation can celebrate heritage features at the same time. 🏡

the buildings. There is also a brief explanation of the City's Heritage Program and its main components.

Each entry includes images – many from private collections – that have never before been seen in print. The Hallmark Society made its entire collection of photos available to the Victoria Heritage Foundation – at no cost – to ensure that the properties were as well documented as possible. To date, the VHF has sold almost 6,000 books; volume 4 sold almost 850 copies in its first month. While it is logical to assume that those whose houses are featured or are interested in heritage preservation would want to purchase a copy, the books have a wider audience. Book signings were well attended.

Steve Barber, Victoria's Heritage Planner noted: "Prior to the commencement of this project, there was very little information in City files on the hundreds of houses on the Heritage Register. It was very difficult for the

Heritage Planners, when faced with a rezoning or proposed alterations of these properties, to respond with little or no background of the history of the house in question. Due to the enormous research efforts of this dedicated team, the City now has an accurate, easy to access base of information to assist its heritage planning efforts. These books will continue to play an important role into the future of heritage conservation activities in the City of Victoria. The work of the volunteers and staff of the Victoria Heritage Foundation in the research and publication of the four volumes of *This Old House* has been of great value to the City of Victoria heritage program."

This Old House set out to document all the registered houses in the residential neighbourhoods. In the process it has documented the growth, development and diversity that make these areas so pleasing. The series has made the concept of "heritage" much more accessible, and they are each a good read! 🏠

Mark Madoff Award

The winner this year is Colin MacLock. As his nomination states, "not all heritage preservation initiatives result in success." Such is the case with the Officers' Mess – Building 1027 – at Work Point Barracks. Sadly, this wonderful building was demolished in 2006. However, one individual should be recognized for his almost super human effort, innovation and creativity, dedication to the cause, work *in extremis*, and what amounted to one of the longest running and media-saturated campaign to preserve a very important national monument in the history of the heritage conservation movement in Victoria.

Conceiving and promoting this idea over a period of over five years, Colin was indefatigable in his efforts to achieve the objective. The April 2002 document *Capital Project Adaptive Re-use: Work Point Barracks as Studio and Gallery Space*, was largely his work – and all his design and production – in

association with Keay & Associates Architects. It contains a comprehensive overview of the elements of the campaign; the design itself, a list of agencies and individuals which he brought on board to form the Work Point Arts Project Society, the list of stellar Victoria arts and heritage experts he attracted to the cause, the results, of federal, provincial and local lobbying to line up political support, and the technical feasibility studies which he coordinated. As a follow-up, he produced a meticulously researched report and compendium on the history and significance of Work Point.

It was Colin's dedication and enthusiasm which kept the pot boiling, often in the face of community indifference. Colin never wavered from his position that the building could and should be saved, even when facing insurmountable odds. While the Officers' Mess was demolished, the Hallmark Society is pleased to recognize the efforts of Colin MacLock who went far beyond the normal bounds of volunteerism. 🏠

President's Award

Generations of Victorians learned to swim at the Crystal as well as learning the social graces at afternoon teas and dances. ... The building has a special resonance for us all, even those of use who only knew it in its second life, as a tropical conservatory. So it's a special pleasure to honour the THREE joint winners of the President's Award - the City of Victoria, the Provincial Capital Commission, and the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

In 2008 the City of Victoria completed a \$6.8 million transformation of the Crystal Garden, a former 1925 salt water swimming pool built by the Canadian Pacific Railway, into a first class conference and banquet facility for the Victoria Conference Centre. The facility will also be used for trade shows, presentations, conferences, etc. Subtle references to the building's history include a glazed wall and lighting showing a portion of the former stepped seating area beside the original swimming pool and a



Photo courtesy City of Victoria

mock high diving platform with mannequins in period swimming costume. The carpeting for the floor was specially selected with lines simulating the swimming lanes of the pool.

The combined efforts and contributions from the Provincial Capital Commission, the Province of British Columbia and the City of Victoria in rehabilitating and revitalizing one of Victoria's most significant heritage buildings are an outstanding example of a collaborative endeavor that will guarantee the continued enjoyment of the Crystal Garden into the next century. 🏡

Michael Williams Award

The winner of the Michael Williams Award for downtown Victoria rehabilitation is the Hotel Rialto.

The painstaking restoration and rebuilding of this major Victoria landmark is of great consequence, not only in terms of the building itself, but also for the revitalization of this area of town. Built in 1912 by Lim Bang, the Hotel had had a series of facelifts, each diminishing the original quality and style of the architecture. Attending to several structural issues, poor space planning, and obsolete building services, within very fixed space constraints, required highly integrated solutions to fitting in the services and equipment which are expected in a modern hotel.

With reference to energy conservation, it should be noted that the project encompasses several major elements of "green" design. Throughout the course of the project, it was essential to minimize the impact on the heritage fabric. The result is a complete



Photo courtesy John Keay Architects

restoration of the exterior of the ground floor, with highly detailed and exquisitely finished interiors for the ground floor and basement, and complemented by one floor of completely rebuilt hotel rooms and private dining room, with the upper floors to be completed under a later phase. The Hotel Rialto is now a major asset to the downtown core, and fulfills its role as an expression of the owner's commitment to the building and his vision for the City. 🏡

536 and 538 Yates Street

Helen Edwards photo



Aaron Usatch won 2 Awards of Merit for his work to refurbish the buildings at 536 and 538 Yates Street.

Throughout both projects, Aaron demonstrated creative financing – he learned how to do much of the work himself. What began as an emergency repair at 536 Yates soon became a full façade restoration. The parapet wall belonging to the front facade

was discovered, on inspection, to have several major cracks, running both horizontally and vertically. Work included dismantling the entire façade from just below the roof line up, cleaning and salvaging what brick they could, removing all the rusted steel and rebuilding.

Next door at 538 Yates, the extensive work involved in the façade restoration began with cutting out all mortar joints 1 inch, vacuuming and washing down the façade. The bricks were then re-pointed. Spalled bricks were replaced. The top four courses on the right upper column were re-built. Work then turned to the upper and lower cornices. All surfaces were scraped and sanded to remove rough edges, the bent bracket was repaired and the cornices were painted.

Aaron has demonstrated that a “developer” does not have to be an enemy to heritage projects. His work has resulted in a fresh face on Yates Street that returns the façade to its original detailing while providing functionality to the structure. 🏠

169 Beechwood Avenue

Photo courtesy John Langston



John and Carol Langston win an Award of Merit for their work on their home at 169 Beechwood Avenue. The Langtons purchased this home because it had retained all its original character and they wanted to have a home that could be restored to its former beauty and to be a place they and their neighbours could be proud of for years to come. They also wanted to include a legal secondary suite in the ground floor while retaining the charm of the home and complying with City

by-laws and applicable building codes.

The unique brick columns on the front of the house had to be retained regardless of cost as they were a major part of the character of the house. This required masonry repairs to the brick and mortar as well as a new footing/ foundation for each pillar all as proposed by a civil engineer. The lower floor foundation walls and floors all had to be replaced due to their deteriorated state. They wanted to have eight foot ceiling height for this floor so the original floor had to be lowered to accommodate a new, compacted base for the new works. Since they didn't want to raise the house or disturb the pillars, this meant “suspending” the house while the excavation work was done. The exterior was designed to be compatible with the main floor and general architecture of the house. This has been a long and painstaking project, but the Langstons plan to live there for many years, so they feel it has been well worth the effort. This is a wonderful neighbourhood with many beautiful vintage homes. 🏠

Communication Award


Dr. Patrick Dunaewins a Communication Award for his work to bring historical documents and information to a world-wide audience. Patrick served as the editor on the highly successful viHistory.ca, which is a teaching, learning and research tool. This website is principally about the history of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, but it is also a vehicle for exploring the larger field of Canadian history during the late 19th and early part of the 20th centuries. In this endeavour he was ably assisted by his son Alexander.

On this site, you can search over 100,000 nominal census records of Vancouver Island residents, native and non-native, from 1871 to 1901. You can also search directories for the cities of Nanaimo and Victoria, and property tax assessment rolls for the same period. Directories provide the names and street addresses of business owners, employees, and householders; tax assessment rolls show

the names of property owners and provide information on the location, size and value of city parcels. The combination of directories, census records and maps provide “one-stop shopping” for researchers.

A second project is The Homeroom which documents the history of education in British Columbia including its remarkable early school buildings.

Patrick’s current project is Towards a 3-D Virtual Victoria. This site presents a bird’s eye view of Victoria in 1891. Using census data, directories, building footprints, and other material, the site provides a valuable look at Victoria over a century ago. Links to external sources make this a most interesting resource.

Without dedicated persons like Patrick Dunaewins who “push the envelope” in technology, we would not have these research tools that are used by students and adults around the world. The Awards Jury called this “an obvious winner.” 

Calendar

- May 27, 2010** Victoria Historical Society meeting, James Bay New Horizons Centre, 7:00 pm. Speaker: Ken Johnson on the Royal Theatre.
- June 3-5, 2010** Heritage BC Annual Conference, Victoria, BC See <http://heritagebc.ca> for details and registration form
- June 13, 2010** Tour of Fort Rodd Hill, jointly with the Victoria Historical Society, 2 pm. RSVP to office@hallmarksociety.ca or via phone 250-382-4755.
- August 22, 2010** Bicycle tour of Heritage Victoria. More details later..
- September 13, 2010** Hallmark Society Annual General Meeting. Guest speaker: Nick Russell on Glorious Victorians.
- September 30 - October 2, 2010** Heritage Canada conference, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. Theme: “REVITALIZE! Economic Renewal. Quality of Life. Heritage Buildings.” See <http://heritagecanada.org> for details and registration forms
- December 6, 2010** Hallmark Society General Meeting. Guest speaker: Guy Besner on Modernism in Victoria.

Modern Heritage in Victoria: The Next Architectural Legacy

by Guy Besner

Photo, Hallmark Society Archives



Victoria possesses a unique collection of Modernist buildings noted for their innovative design and social significance. Their architectural legacy is a relatively new concept in the heritage field and their preservation a challenging step, one that demands fresh perspectives in order to evaluate accurately their legacy.

In 1988 DOCOMOMO INTERNATIONAL (Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the MODern MOVement), along with its national working parties, was founded to bring new attention and appreciation to Modernist architecture. In Canada, three regional groups cover the country: DOCOMOMO Quebec,

DOCOMOMO Ontario and DOCOMOMO BC. At the government level, Parks Canada and municipalities of major cities - where Modernist buildings are predominant - have engaged in the legacy and preservation of Modern architecture in Canada.

Only recently has the subject of Modern architecture in Victoria has been approached by several groups of architectural historians, heritage consultants and curators. The work of DOCOMOMO BC and a few publications have also contributed to this knowledge by including and acknowledging Victoria's Modern Heritage. For its part, the City of Victoria has been in the process of classifying Modernist buildings located in the downtown area for heritage designation.

As such, The Hallmark Society, whose main mission is to encourage the preservation of architectural heritage, is greatly involved and supportive of these initiatives in defining Victoria's next architectural legacy: buildings of the post-war era which dominated the design of the urban fabric of our region from 1945 to 1975. Stay tuned for more on this new topic.

Editor's note: At our December meeting, Guy will present an illustrated lecture on modernist architecture in Victoria.

RIP Bernice Packford

The Hallmark Society was saddened by the death of long-time member Bernice Levitz Packford at age 95. She was most supportive of our goals and even added a note to her last membership renewal apologizing for "not being able to do more." Bernice was dedicated to many causes and wanted the world to be a better place. To this end, she was prepared to do whatever it took to achieve this goal. Her sparkling smile and enthusiasm will be sorely missed. 🏠

Thank you sponsors

Awards Night would not be possible without the support of our sponsors.

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THE HALLMARK SOCIETY NEEDS YOUR HELP!

As a result of the recent government policy changes, Hallmark's funding sources from Provincial Gaming has been completely eliminated. This has left the organization reliant upon the membership for funding.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Our expenses are low but we are currently using up the surpluses from prior years.

PLEASE DONATE NOW TO KEEP THE ONLY HERITAGE ADVOCACY GROUP IN GREATER VICTORIA ALIVE!

Send a cheque to the "Hallmark Society" #18 Centennial Square, Victoria, BC, V8W 1P7, and make your commitment to **Heritage and Neighbourhood Preservation**

South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Fair results

Selected for Provincial Fair

Jeremy Westendorp.....North Saanich Middle School.....Whaling on the BC Coast
Emma KinakinReynolds SecondaryDoukhobors
Kaylee Jung.....Hillcrest ElementaryChinese Head Tax
Sarah CoreyReynolds SecondaryEmily Carr
Sydney MacIsaac.....Hillcrest ElementaryAlexander Graham Bell
Michelle WattMount Douglas SecondaryJohn Sebastian Helmcken

BC Power Pioneers Award

William Brown.....St Michael's University SchoolJudge George Curtis

United Empire Loyalists Award

Matthew JippHillcrest ElementaryJames Cook

Historic Places Award

Michelle WattMount Douglas SecondaryHelmcken

PCC Capital Award

Will DarlingMount Douglas SecondaryCanadian Scottish Regiment

Canada's History Award

Sam NortonReynolds SecondaryThe Theatre
Lucille Kewley.....Reynolds SecondaryHome Children

Historical Passion Award

Sydney ShefferHillcrest ElementaryThe Zipper
Domenic Woo.....Hillcrest ElementaryThe Mask that Changed it All

Honourable Mention

Lillian LiHillcrest ElementaryButchart Gardens
Erin FletcherReynolds SecondaryFairmont Empress Hotel
Alysh Haas &
Colleen Ten Have.....Reynolds SecondaryChinese Immigration
Elizabeth Underhill.....Reynolds SecondaryMedical Memoirs
Keenan ManhasSt Michael's University SchoolPaldi



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- Corporate Life (20 yrs) \$400.00

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All members are entitled to voting privileges at Annual and General Meetings, receive four Newsletters a year and access to the Society library and archives which contain information on over 10,000 buildings in the Capital Regional District. Memberships are due September 30th and are tax-deductible. The Society also offers special events and tours for members. New memberships are pro-rated quarterly. The Hallmark Society collects personal information about you only when you voluntarily provide it, and only for the purpose for which it was intended, and in handling such information we comply with the provisions of the British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. We do not sell, rent or trade our membership / donor information to or with others. The Society makes all reasonable efforts to ensure that personal information collected from you is protected against loss and unauthorized access. If you wish to change information on file, please contact us.

In the interest of timely communication, we may occasionally send you electronic messages regarding current issues or reminders of meetings. If you do not wish to receive such messages, please let us know and we will remove your name from our email list. We would appreciate being advised of changes to your address, telephone number, email address, etc. so that we can continue to serve you efficiently. 🏠

Hallmark Society Annual General Meeting

Monday, September 13, 2010 - 7:30 pm

James Bay New Horizons Centre

234 Menzies Street

Guest speaker: Nick Russell on "Glorious Victorians"