

♦ BUILDING ♦ HERITAGE ♦

A Newsletter Celebrating the Register of Historic Resources in Edmonton

Two New and Exciting Additions to the Register

When the owners of the Balfour Manor and Lambton Block approached me at the Planning and Development Department to discuss the merits of their 'older' buildings, I was most excited and thrilled to hear that they felt that their buildings were historically significant to the city's history. Subsequent research proved that both buildings merited being on the Register of Historic Resources in Edmonton. The Historic Resources Review Panel then had the opportunity to review the two applications to amend the Register and deemed that both the Balfour Manor and Lambton Block be added to the "A" list.

Balfour Manor, located at 10139 – 116 Street, in the Oliver neighbourhood, was originally built as Fire Hall No. 4 in 1911. By 1921, the Fire Hall was closed due to the motorization of the department. From 1922 to 1934 the building operated as a garage with an apartment on the upper floor. From 1935 to 1939, the building was used a garage/bus depot for the Midland Bus Lines.

In 1939, the building was remodeled and modernized by Edmonton contractor Joseph N. Cote to become the Balfour Manor, a new ten-unit apartment building. At that time all front suites had venetian blinds on the living room windows, which are very large, as are the other windows throughout the block. Each of the spacious apartments contained a large living room, with rough cast fireplace, coved ceilings, wide windows, six electric outlets and a radio outlet, and doors of a modern design, finished in mahogany and pale ivory trim. Today the Balfour Manor continues to operate as an apartment building virtually untouched since 1939.



The Lambton Block located at 11035/11045 – 97 Street, in the Boyle McCauley neighbourhood, was built in 1914. This oddly shaped apartment building, with its six sides, contains 23 suites. Originally, the building's ground floor was reserved

as four commercial retail spaces, but it is estimated that it was converted to apartment suites soon after it was built. Each store had separate access to the basement. The second and third floors housed bachelor and one-bedroom apartments. The exterior was clad in clinker brick. When the storefronts were removed, they were filled in with new clinker brick that closely matched the original, but a closer look reveals the subtle differences in colour

of the two types of brick.

The owner retained prominent Edmonton architect Roland Lines to design the building. Mr. Lines was only in Edmonton from 1906 until 1915, but his influence is still evident today. He designed several schools including Alex Taylor, Norwood and the impressive Strathcona Collegiate. Lines enlisted in the military during World War I and unfortunately was killed during action in France.

The original owner of Lambton Block was John Robert Boyle, who came to Edmonton in 1894 and became a lawyer 1899. He named the building Lambton Block in honour of Lambton County in Ontario where he was born. In 1905 he became an alderman to Edmonton's first City Council and was later elected as a Liberal MLA in Alberta's first Legislature. Boyle became Minister of Education, Attorney General and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alberta. He died in 1936.

■ Robert Geldart



Top photo: Lambton Block,
11035/11045 – 97 Street
Lower photo: Balfour Manor,
10139 – 116 Street

Photo credit: City of Edmonton
Planning and Development

Helen LaRose Retires From the Historical Resources Review Panel

As City Archivist, Helen LaRose has played an important role on the Edmonton Historical Board. Since her retirement in 1993, she has served on the Historic Resources Review Panel. After eight years of service, Helen decided it was time to retire from the Review Panel to pursue other interests.



Helen has been involved and passionate about preserving Alberta's history since the mid-1960's. Born in Denzil, Saskatchewan, she came to Edmonton in 1955. In 1967, with a young family of three in hand, she was asked, as a Walderdale resident, to keep an eye on the John Walter site. She soon started to work for the City of Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department and coordinated

the first public programs of the John Walter Museum, researched the Fort Edmonton site and began to catalogue city artifacts. She has made an enormous contribution to the historical and archival world in her professional career and as a volunteer.

A graduate of the Archives Management Course from the University of Alberta, Helen officially became the City of Edmonton archivist in 1973. From then until 1992, through her management and vision, the City of Edmonton Archives developed into one of the premier research facilities in the province. Just weeks before her official retirement, under her leadership the Archives reopened in a new location at the Prince of Wales Heritage Centre.

Helen has been interested in almost every aspect of Edmonton and its region's history. She has been dedicated to the art of records management, the preservation of historic buildings, working with museums especially Fort Edmonton Park and as an active member of the Historical Society of Alberta, twice serving as the Edmonton and District Chapter President (formerly the Amisk-Waskahagan Chapter). As City Archivist, she played a key

role in the workings of the Edmonton Historical Board and continued to volunteer on the Board's committees until this year.

Helen has published articles in historical journals such as *Urban History Review* and the *Alberta Museums Review*. She has received recognition for her achievements including the Commemorative Medal for the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, 1992; the Edmonton Historical Board Recognition Award (1993); Honourary Membership Award, Alberta Society of Archivist, (1993); and the Amisk-Waskahagan Chapter Annual Award.

On May 25, 2002 Helen was made an Honourary Lifetime Member of the Historical Society of Alberta. She received the award from President Ron Williams and Past President, Marianne Fedori.

Helen LaRose has provided not only meritorious service to the Historic Resources Review Panel, but has set an important example of what can be accomplished to preserve our past through dedication and commitment. She is dearly respected by her colleagues and friends in protecting our built heritage.

■ **Marianne Fedori, Vice-Chair,
Edmonton Historical Board**

Jasper East Village Main Street Project



Over two years have passed since the Jasper East Village (JEV) Main Street Project began, a project that is managed under the auspices of the Downtown Development Corporation (DDC). While visible results are beginning to materialize, it has been a slow start due to the nature of the buildings encountered. As many Main Street Projects in the province deal with smaller buildings, the JEV Main Street Project faces issues on how to deal with buildings that are considerably larger and extremely expensive to restore – so much more expensive, that Main Street grant levels cannot act as stand-alone incentives to persuade owners to restore their properties.

The solution, they have found, is to work with property owners on the benefits of historic restoration and to assist them in obtaining alternative sources of funding, namely municipal or provincial resources, through designation. JEV Main Street assists by preparing plans and work schedules for the owners and aids with the application forms to obtain Historic Designation, either provincially or municipally.

The Ernest Brown Block and the Lodge Hotel, on Jasper Avenue between 96th and 97th Street, are the first visible projects to occur through this process. Thus, JEV Main Street assistance and financial

contributions have helped leverage significant funding levels from the City of Edmonton's Heritage Resource Program, and possibly from the Province for longer-term maintenance matters.

While the larger projects consume a lot of effort, JEV Main Street is also working with smaller building owners to develop plans and budgets to renovate or restore their buildings. The Stovel Block (10333 – 97th Street) and Kingston Powell Building (Fix & Smith 10277 – 97th Street) were submitted for addition to the Register, and subsequently approved by the Edmonton Historic Board, with the end goal to achieve designation. The above properties and the Cowen Block (9656 Jasper Avenue), and most smaller properties on 97th Street, have also had plans prepared and now depend upon finding resources to proceed. Edmonton Community Loan Fund (10249 – 97th Street) benefited from the first small restoration project and now proudly sits in the refurbished unit that sat vacant for over 5 years. It is hoped that the Hub Hotel on Jasper Avenue will also come on board, which will secure all the historic buildings on this block as Municipal Historic Resources.

JEV Main Street is slowly increasing public awareness to the fact that there are great buildings behind the dilapidation most people perceive, and that they are working hard with owners to turn their buildings into historic assets rather than just another 'old building'.

For more information on these and other buildings in the Jasper East Village, or to obtain a JEV Walking Tour brochure, please call Deanna Conrad 424-9001.

■ **David Holdsworth**

Character and Heritage Homes – To Buy or Not to Buy?

As a realtor who specializes in character and heritage homes, I am often asked if purchasing a character home is a good financial decision or a bad one. First we must look at the differences between heritage and character homes in general. I classify character homes as those that have some of the distinguishing features such as hardwood floors, coved ceilings, archways, original windows and doors, original brass and glass hardware, plaster walls, stained glass, and special detail work such as crown moldings, chair rail, and half paneling with plate ledges.

Many new homes are showing more and more of these features and therefore, in a sense, can be considered character homes. However, the homes I am talking about are typically built earlier than 1950 and are in mature neighbourhoods with tree-lined streets. As we study the changes in architectural and interior design over time, we will notice that each decade features some interesting evolution in trends. Most of Edmonton's most outstanding character and heritage homes are built between 1910 and 1940. To those of us who cherish the uniqueness and charm of these homes, we wouldn't have anything else.

Heritage homes are character homes that have been selected and designated, either municipally or provincially, as being particularly significant in importance to our social and architectural history. These homes have the prestige of being preserved and protected so that they will continue to be a reminder of the evolution of our built heritage, giving future generations a means to appreciate their 'roots'.

Heritage homes may be recognized at several different levels, both municipally and provincially. First, there is The Register of Historic Resources in Edmonton, initially completed in 1993. These include city properties and structures that have been divided into the "A" List, those with priority, and the "B" List. All properties on these lists are flagged as *worthy* of designation, for which an owner can then apply to the City. Once municipally designated as an Historic Resource, the owner is then eligible to apply for government grants to assist in the restoration of the property.

Should a property have sufficient provincial historical significance, there are "Registered Historic Site" and "Designated Historic Site" awards that may be applied for. For these select properties, there can be significant matched government funding available to assist with maintenance and restoration. A wealth of information is also available through the advisors at Alberta Community Development and Historic Sites. In all cases of designation applications, it is up to the owner to do the research and prove the significant historical (social and architectural) importance of their property.

If you are the proud owner of what you believe may qualify as a heritage home, and wish to do some research, the City Archives, located in the Prince of Wales Armouries at 10440 – 108 Avenue, is a good place to start. The staff will be



happy to assist you in searching for the original building permit, the name of architect, contractor and original owner. From there you can use the Henderson Directories, available at the Archives, to determine subsequent owners, their year of purchase, and, in many cases, their occupation. These basics will provide a wealth of information and lead to further research using the Archives' collection of photos, newspaper clippings and other documents all filed away like buried treasure. You may seek additional information at the Provincial Archives located at the Provincial Museum at 12845 – 102 Avenue.

Should your research unearth information that you believe makes your home significant in the history of Edmonton, the next step is to contact the City Heritage Planner, Robert Geldart (496-6123). Should you be lucky enough to have a home with significant history as it relates to the Province of Alberta, you should contact Alberta Community Development (427-2565).

All heritage homes are character homes but not all character homes qualify by today's standards as heritage buildings. Both are good investments and will hold their value as long as they are structurally stable, well maintained and in a good location. Studies have indicated that heritage properties continue to hold their value in times of recession while other properties may feel the slump.

Should you wish to sell your heritage home and get the best price with a quick sale, present your home clean, tidy, organized and uncluttered; do all the minor repairs and touch ups, and perhaps even give it a fresh coat of paint... and, of course, get yourself a good realtor who is knowledgeable in these homes!



■ Leslee Greenaway, MSc.,

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Photo credit: Leslee Greenaway

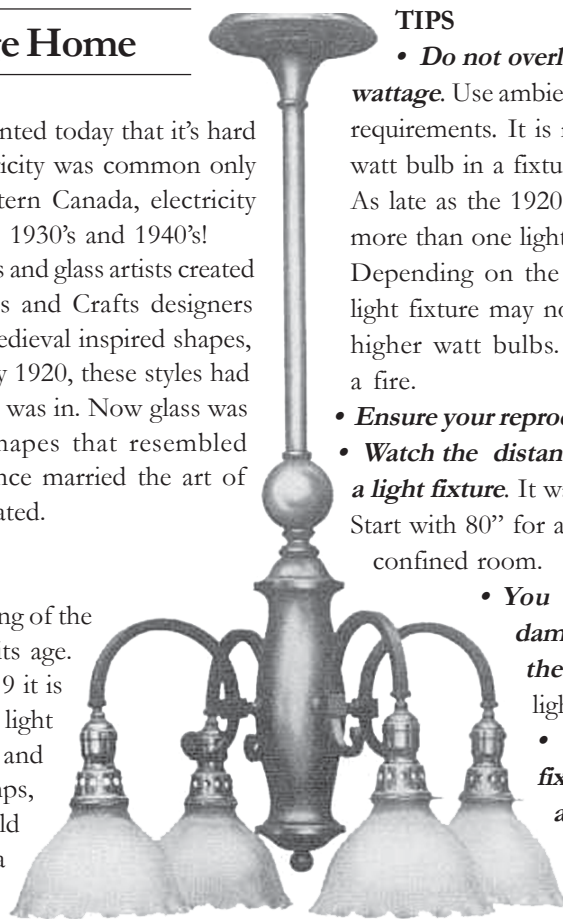
Lighting Your Heritage Home

We take electricity so much for granted today that it's hard to believe that only 80 years ago electricity was common only in the homes of the wealthy. In Western Canada, electricity reached some rural areas as late as the 1930's and 1940's!

At the turn of the century, sculptors and glass artists created botanically inspired light fixtures. Arts and Crafts designers favoured the use of natural wood in medieval inspired shapes, with slag glass and hammered metal. By 1920, these styles had lost much of their favour – modernism was in. Now glass was etched, frosted and sculpted into shapes that resembled sunbursts, crescents and zigzags. Science married the art of lighting and many new styles were created.

IN YOUR HOME

Consider the socioeconomic standing of the first owners of your home as well as its age. For homes built between 1890 and 1919 it is suitable to use electric lights and/or gas light fixtures inspired by the Art Nouveau and the Arts and Crafts movements. Oil lamps, used as is or wired for electricity would also work. If you have a staircase, a newel post "femme-fleur" lamp would give a distinctive period feeling. Simple pendant styles with etched and frosted shades are most appropriate for kitchens, hallways and pantries. Fancy *gasoliers* with crystal pendants and hand-painted shades look best in "public" rooms – the dining room and parlor. *Pan* chandeliers work well for more modest homes. Tiffany and mission style table lamps add ambience and provide task lighting. For homes built after 1920, a more modernistic approach is favoured. Many of the light fixtures of this era used indirect or reflective lighting.



TIPS

- **Do not overload your period fixtures with too much wattage.** Use ambient light sources to supplement the lighting requirements. It is not historically correct to put a 60 or 75 watt bulb in a fixture that originally only had 15 watt bulbs. As late as the 1920's, it was believed that no room required more than one light fixture with a maximum of 15-40 watts! Depending on the design, even with new wiring a period light fixture may not be able to handle the extra heat from higher watt bulbs. This could ruin your fixture or cause a fire.
- **Ensure your reproduction light fixtures are CSA approved.**
- **Watch the distance between the floor and the bottom of a light fixture.** It was much lower in the past than it is today. Start with 80" for an open room and 65" in a smaller, more confined room.
- **You can electrify old oil lamps without damaging the existing parts and rendering them useless as a collectible.** Use these lights to create ambience.
- **Do research on different types of fixtures so that you are aware of the style and appropriateness of a lamp when you see one. Learn how to recognize a lamp that has been "married".**

Early light fixtures are just as much a part of the historical fabric of your home as is the architecture. They are cultural artifacts in their own right and deserve to be preserved for the homeowner of the future!



■ Johanne Yakula

Johanne Yakula served as SPARE's last president. She is the owner of *From Times Past*, an antiques and collectibles store and decorating service now in its new location at 12403 – Stony Plain Road. Contact Johanne at 448-9671 for the audio-version of these articles on home restoration.

Did You Know...



Edmonton opened Canada's first municipal golf course in 1907 and the Victoria Golf Course is still one of the busiest public courses in the country.

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW PANEL - 2002

- Bert Yeudall, Chair
- Catherine Garvey
- Ken Tingley
- David Murray
- Dorothy Field
- Leslee Greenaway
- Johanne Yakula
- Kim Christie-Milley
- Robert Geldart/David Holdsworth

This newsletter is produced in partnership with the Edmonton Historical Board and the City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Please send your responses to:

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www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/planning

