

HERITAGE Vancouver Newsletter



Chinatown Millennium Gate Approved

The Millennium Gate Society is happy to announce the City of Vancouver approved their Millennium Gate project on September 20th, 2001. A sod turning ceremony and construction are just around the corner. Heritage Vancouver, a major partner in this project for the past year is launching a new series of walking tours with John Atkin on October 20th, 2001 to celebrate the history and revitalization of Chinatown.

Chinatown, which is as old as Vancouver itself, symbolizes our history and urbanity. Block 17, bounded by Pender, Carrall, Taylor and Keefer Streets is the epicenter of a major rebirth of Chinatown. During the past *Year of the Snake*, several new initiatives have been introduced to enhance and revitalize this Heritage district.

At the very core of the revitalization is the Millennium Gate. Spanning Pender Street at Taylor, the Gate, patterned after traditional Beijing City gates, will boast three arches, feature traditional lions at its bases and tiled depictions of

musical instruments along its upper rooflines. The Gate adheres to classical proportions and observes the principles of *feng-shui*- the art of proper placement.

There is a long tradition of celebratory gates in Vancouver's Chinatown. All have been ephemeral markers to focus on pride of place and achievement. None remain to mark Chinatown-the place or the destination. Vancouver's Gate will stand as a tribute to Chinatown, past present and future. It will serve as a visual reminder that a person is entering or leaving Chinatown and will extend a welcome or a *see-you-again-soon*.

The gate will take its place among several other new projects that *return history to the streets* in Chinatown. The Silk Road a formal pedestrian route marked with brightly coloured banners now links Library Square via the Keefer Steps to Chinatown. In June, a delegation from Vancouver's sister city of Guangzhou presented the City with a replica of a 2,200 year old Han Dynasty Bell. The bell sits as the centerpiece of

see **Chinatown Gate** page three

Meet Us at the Church on Time
Sunday, October 7
1:15pm (tour begins at 1:30pm)

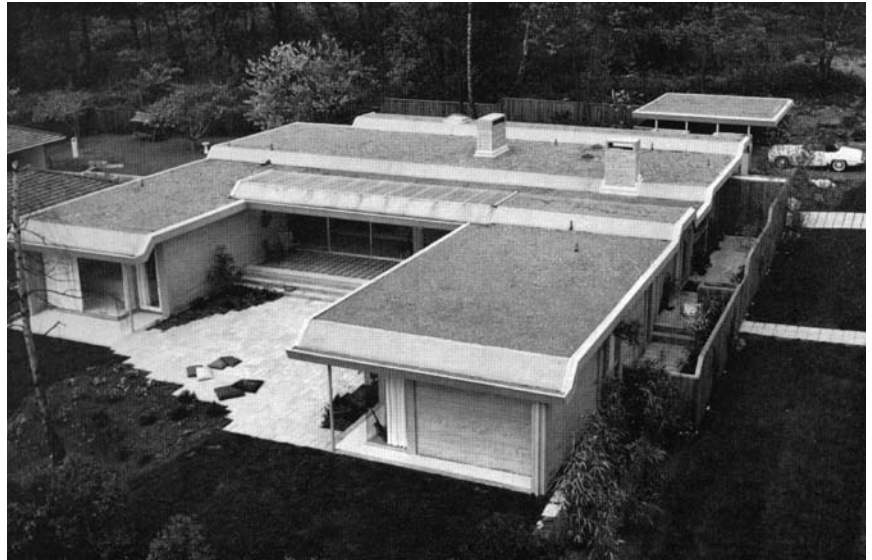
Come out and see two of Vancouver's most spectacular churches. HV has arranged guided tours of both Christ Church and Holy Rosary Cathedrals. We'll begin at Christ Church Cathedral for an insightful look at this historical building. Then, we'll walk over to Holy Rosary Cathedral. We will spend approximately 45 minutes in each church. Meet at the corner of Georgia and Burrard Streets in of church \$5 for member \$10 for non-members

Chinatown by Night
Saturday, October 20
9:00pm (Rain or Shine)

It's time to take a different look at Chinatown. HV, with John Atkin will explore the history and architecture of this unique area in a new series of evening tours. Chinatown at night is a world away from the bustling daytime streets. It's a chance to explore and experience this historic area in a whole new light. Don't forget to bring your flashlight. Meet at 50 E. Pender; the Chinese Cultural Centre courtyard, by the gate \$5 for members \$10 for non-members

Sequins and G-Strings Galore:
Striptease Staged at the Penthouse
Cabaret, 1945-1980
Wednesday, November 21, 6:30 pm

Join Heritage Vancouver for an offbeat evening at *The Penthouse*, Vancouver's oldest cabaret. Experience the ambience of the Penthouse as UBC Sociology and Women's Studies teacher and author Becki Ross takes us on a rollicking journey through the history of striptease at the Penthouse. Stay on and see a show at 8:00pm, 1019 Seymour St. Members free non-members \$5. *Note: This meeting is in place of our regular monthly meeting at the Vancouver Museum*



Erickson eclectica

Danto house
6095 Balaclava Street, Vancouver
Arthur Erickson 1961

As Canada's most famous and arguably greatest architect, Arthur Erickson is best known for his large-scale projects like the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Robson Square in downtown Vancouver, and the Canadian Chancery in Washington, D.C. But before his career took off in the mid-60s with the innovative Simon Fraser University, Erickson completed several eclectic houses in the Vancouver area to wide acclaim.

Of these houses, the Danto house is the most formal in appearance and introverted in personality. Responding to a corner site in an older residential neighbourhood, Erickson created a rather closed, inward looking environment. From

the street only the garage and roofline are visible, elegantly stepping down the sloping site. Inside, the house focuses around a central living area opening onto an outdoor courtyard flanked by bedroom wings. The inside and outside spaces are further merged by strategically placed floor-to-ceiling windows, which visually extend the interiors outward to the fences and thick plantings enclosing the perimeter of the site. The sense of formality continues through the interiors, a procession of carefully framed perspectives and viewpoints, and is emphasized by the use of split-faced concrete block for both interior and exterior walls rather than the expected wood.

Built to house a family of four and costing some \$50,000, the Danto house was a finalist in the 1964 Massey Medals for Architecture competition.

HV Updates

HV Launches New Website

www.heritagevancouver.org is now up and running and ready for your viewing. (if the site is still under construction see www.vcn.bc.ca/hrt-gvanc) The Executive of Heritage Vancouver would like to recognize the following volunteers; Eilidh Singh and Kathryn Gagnon for the many hours put into developing our new site and Albert Lunshof for volunteering to be our web master. Albert is busy adding to the site on a daily basis and is looking for more photographs. Check it out and let us know what you think. Your comments and suggestions are welcome!

Heritage Commission Appointment

HV congratulates Richard Keate, who was appointed by Vancouver City Council, as our representative on the Heritage Commission on September 18. Richard, an interior designer, has headed up the firm Keate & Co. Designers Ltd. since 1974. He has had works published in *Western Living*, *Canadian Homes*, *City and Country Home*, *Canadian Interiors*, *Showboard*, *Architectural Digest* and a variety of local publications. Winner of two City of Vancouver Awards, Richard was selected to serve as a juror for the awards in 1999. Having served as a member and then as chair from 1989-2000 of the First Shaughnessy Advisory Design Panel, Richard is a familiar face both in the heritage community and at city hall. Thank you, Richard for taking on this important liaison role.

Fight to Save 600 Blk Granville

Although demolition has started HV has been working behind the scenes with the developer and city staff to save some of the facades. To date the developer has agreed to temporarily retain the important facades pending a review of cost of retention and possible heritage incentives. Stay tuned.

HV Newsletter Editor Changes Over

Our current editor, Janet Hansen, is (reluctantly) stepping down to pursue a career opportunity on Vancouver Island. Janet joined HV in December of last year and has since become a regular on our board. In addition to doing an outstanding job as editor, Janet is always there to help out, collecting money at our walking tours, volunteering at the Heritage Fair booth and painting houses for the Pride Parade. In her usual efficient manner, Janet has found a replacement for herself. HV is pleased to announce Maida Price, a regular contributor to the HV newsletter, has agreed to take on the role of newsletter editor. We welcome Maida, a writer and editor by trade, and wish Janet well. (Note from the outgoing editor: *It's been my privilege to work with HV and my pleasure to know such talented and dedicated people. I know you'll keep up the good work!*)

Chinatown Gate from cover

the restoration of Shanghai Alley, the very birthplace of Chinatown. In July, people gathered to witness the unveiling of the *Century of Change* mural. Covering an entire building wall, the Mural depicts key dates in the history of Chinese Canadians from the first arrivals to the building of the CPR to the granting of citizenship to the appointment of the first Chinese Lieutenant Governor.

Article by Alan Herbert, member of the Board of Directors of the Chinatown Millennium Society and Janet Leduc, President of Heritage Vancouver and member of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the Chinatown Millennium Society.

A Walk in Shaughnessy



Admiring the 1929 Tudor Revival style Fleck House, 1296 The Crescent

Vancouver's Mayor Philip Owen took heritage enthusiasts for a walking tour of the *estate like* area of Shaughnessy on Saturday, September 22nd.



Mayor Owen gives an informative history of Shaughnessy and his years of living and growing up in the area.



Richard Keate (see HV Updates) gives details on the 1912 Neo-Classical Revival style MacDonald House (a.k.a. The Hollis), 1388 The Crescent

Who Says Heritage is Dull?

Dear Members,

October is the month of our AGM and marks the beginning of a new year for HV. It's also a good time to celebrate what we have accomplished over the past year. And, what a year it has been! Here's a few of the highlights.

Our Heritage Vancouver Talks Dirty series brought members and visitors out in large numbers to hear topics ranging from brewing to prostitution, to opium, to garbage dumps, and dirty buildings.

In March, our Top Ten Endangered Building List was a feature article in the Vancouver Sun. The same month, HV took up gambling-for a good cause-as volunteers spun the wheel in our booth at the Heritage & Antiques Fair. Decked out with our new HV T-shirts, banner and balloons, it was no contest, we had the most interactive and fun booth.

June saw HV's second annual city councilor reception. This time, at Lynne Kennedy's home in the West End. This *Who's Who* of heritage in Vancouver event proved to be the perfect opportunity to discuss the heritage issues hot on our minds.

Speaking of hot, during the dog days of summer we stirred up the press and brought out 90 people to our Vancouver's Forgotten Treasures walking tour. This stroll down the 600 block of Granville St. proved there is no shortage of heritage pride in Vancouver. Unfortunately this time it was too little, too late as the demolition of some of the old buildings in that block began shortly after.

Who can forget the August long weekend when volunteers wearing rainbow painted houses were chased through the streets by a giant wrecking ball, alias greedy developer! Our debut in the Pride Parade did not go unnoticed as evidenced by the cheers for HV members and jeers for the evil developer.

Never a dull moment and so much fun! Thanks to our board members and the many volunteers who made it all possible.



Janet Leduc
President, Heritage Vancouver

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Postcard Row Nearing Completion

The first few houses to be rehabilitated in Mole Hill are nearly complete, and they are spectacular! Architect Sean McEwen gave a tour to VHC sub-committee members and City staff to show off the successful results of years of hard work. The houses look outstanding in their new paint colour schemes: rich black, burgundy, green and butter yellow. Inside, we were especially impressed by the clever retention of many original walls, doors, plumbing fixtures, wainscoting, millwork, and refinished wood floors. New black metal egress stairs at the back are surprisingly subtle among mature trees. The mailbox kiosk will also serve as a venue for interpretive information. With a number of various suite sizes in each house, the rehabilitation has done an excellent job of incorporating both heritage and social housing goals. The first residents were due to move in at the end of August.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tales of the Theatre

October 17, 7:30pm

Heritage Vancouver welcomes **H**Norman Young theatre historian, heritage buff and raconteur as guest speaker at our annual general meeting on October 17. Norman, a life long Vancouver resident has been extremely active in the theatre business for most of his life. Don't miss this insider's take on Vancouver's theatre scene and famous theatres.

Election of officers takes place at the AGM and nominations are accepted from the floor.

Many memberships expired the end of September. Please renew at the AGM or mail your membership form to Heritage Vancouver at P.O. Box 3336, MPO, Vancouver, BC V6B 3Y3