

Our work 2017



 Heritage
Vancouver

To the members & donors of Heritage Vancouver

For the past few years, we have been pushing the city to recognize heritage as a central part of the planning of our city and not a peripheral consideration.

2017 was marked by our efforts to inspire people with the idea that significant and irreplaceable aspects of Vancouver's cultural heritage—both built and intangible—provide our communities an immense social benefit worth protecting for present and future generations.

This idea is reflected in the understanding and approach of historic urban landscapes (HULs). The HUL approach was adopted in 2011 as an UNESCO recommendation and integrates broader planning concerns like livability, affordable housing, population growth, and environmental impacts together with culture and local identity to arrive at an expanded understanding of what heritage is- the management of change in living communities. For the past few years, we have been pushing the city to recognize heritage as a central part of the planning of our city and not a peripheral consideration. In fact, the HUL approach places heritage as the basis for which planning decisions ought to be made from.

This way of thinking about heritage is reflected in our 2017 Top10 list, this year's Shaping Vancouver Series, as well as the projects that we undertook.

Our 17th annual Top10 list this year had a focus on highlighting threats to the physical, social and cultural fabric of historic urban landscapes (HULs), special areas and community landmarks. We highlighted two HULs as number one on the Top10. With character homes and neighbourhoods, we tried to make the point that the character is made up of multiple elements in addition to the character house. Planning needs to address all these elements together. Similarly, as many who value Chinatown have made clear, including the social and cultural context holistically into development cannot be ignored.

Returning to the list are False Creek South with uncertainty surrounding the leases and Japantown where we risk losing not only built heritage, but also the irreplaceable value of the visual memory and stories of the Japanese-Canadian community. The four buildings that make up Sinclair Centre was number 6 on our list but also made it on to the National Trust's Endangered Places across Canada. To round off the list, we wanted to raise awareness for lawn bowling clubs which represent both built and intangible qualities of our cultural heritage.

The ideas surrounding HULs and diversity of cultures as a key asset for social and economic development was a theme of Shaping Vancouver. Our third year focused on the underrepresented aspects of our heritage with a focus on reshaping the conversation by looking at how we can expand how we have been defining heritage to make it more inclusive and representative. The series continues to be popular and well regarded for its thoughtful discussion and wide coverage of issues. We wish to thank SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement for their support in making this series possible. We are proud to report that we once again received a Heritage BC Heritage Education and Awareness Award. This year however, we have received the top prize in the category- Outstanding Achievement. We are currently planning for our fourth season.

Commenting

Once again we were very active participating and presenting our work and representing heritage publicly. At Heritage BC's conference in Victoria we conducted an interactive discussion on connecting heritage to the future by examining meaning and significance. We also returned to the National Trust Conference in Ottawa for two presentations: one co-presenting with Youth Collaborative for Chinatown on heritage in Chinatown and one on creative approaches to policy through inspiration from other fields

that could be applied to heritage. It was very heartening to receive extremely encouraging compliments for our ideas from a wide range of stakeholders including planners, academics, students, and community development staff.

Early in the year, we were part of a segment on neighbourhood character on CBC's the National. We also continue to be active at public hearings speaking to council on rezonings such as Gabriola House, First Baptist Church, and the much publicized proposed 105 Keefer development in Chinatown. We are pleased too that our voice for the landmark Burrard Bridge has contributed to the recent upgrades and refurbishment and the return of historic elements to the Art Deco structure.

We were also very fortunate to be able to make a speech on contemporary understandings of heritage in front of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Melanie Joly. Recently, we were invited to a roundtable with the Associate Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage on strengthening neighbourhoods through culture and heritage.

Projects

We've also had the opportunity to take on several important projects this year. One is research on San Francisco's Legacy Business Program which is a program that aims to offer assistance to longstanding businesses

important to the identity of the city. The City of Vancouver is interested in learning more about this and commissioned research around this program; LOCO BC under Amy Robinson was selected as the lead on this project with Heritage Vancouver doing part of the research on the San Francisco Program and examining what a definition of such a business might be in our city.

Additionally, we have been working with BC Artscape on their Sun Wah project in Chinatown. BC Artscape has secured a long-term lease in the Sun Wah building with which they can offer affordable lease rates to organizations and artists doing relevant work in the context of Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside. BC Artscape is interested in how their project can respond to the heritage of Chinatown and we have been working with them on how to make their project respond to the values important in the neighbourhood.

Annual retreat

One of our most important undertakings this year was a facilitated retreat by Marie-Claire Seeböhm with the board and major stakeholders on the governing principles of the organization. (These principles will be discussed at our holiday gathering and will be communicated on our website and to our membership and supporters) This retreat was a culmination of earlier discussions by the board on Heritage Vancouver as an organization in a context where heritage as a discipline has evolved tremendously over the past decades.

Across the country, various heritage organizations such as Ontario Heritage Trust have been adapting. At the retreat, with the guidance of Marie-Claire, we were able to gather input from major stakeholders on how Heritage Vancouver can continue to grow as an organization and be forward looking as an

independent voice for heritage in the city. We will be presenting on the takeaways from this session at our annual holiday gathering and believe that they pave an encouraging path forward for the next several years.

Web content and communications

We discussed at last year's gathering the need to turn our website into a robust online resource and to make it better reflect who we are as an organization. A great deal of work this year has been done on improving our messaging and to make our website a strong resource. One initiative was our page on VSB candidates responses to heritage schools for this year's by-election. At the moment, we are taking the results from our facilitated retreat and input on our governing principles to craft a message on who we are and what we have been doing. Our assistants Aly Bousfield, Haroun Khalid, and Annie Lee have been working hard throughout the year putting together content on heritage thinking, heritage best practices, and summaries from our talks. We are also fortunate to have board member Sarah Irwin put together a strategy to better tie our work together with our website content and social media . We are extremely excited about rolling this out for 2018.

Looking on towards 2017

Our ideas and detailed observations on heritage, placemaking, and social outcomes remain one of our key strengths. We have continually pushed for more integration of heritage into broader city issues both at a policy level and in our engagement with anyone who is interested in a better, more livable, and affordable city for all and how heritage fits into that. This past year, we have had opportunities to play a role in adopting contemporary approaches to heritage –that heritage is values-centred and the basis for overall planning decisions. This is what we have attempted to do with our work on

researching “legacy businesses” and creating a definition that works for our city. Working with BC Artscape, we will actually in the next year have a hand in “designing heritage” into the building and making this heritage play out on the ground. This is transcending theory and moving into practical application.

Our core programming such as Shaping Vancouver, the Top10, Tour&Talks will of course continue. But we have and will continue to come up with compelling new ideas. Some of which we are currently looking for funding for.

We also continue to look forward to collaborating with such groups as Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, BC Artscape, and LOCO BC for greater impact and strengthen place through heritage. If you are looking at community development through heritage, please contact us to see how we can help.

Aly who has had a small paid position with us has moved back to Ontario to study heritage. We are hoping to extend this position to the two regular dedicated volunteers Annie and Haroun and bring on some additional regular volunteers in their place.

Lastly, we would like to express our gratitude to all our volunteers, members, supporters, and donors who have made our work possible. We are very appreciative and depend on your support.

When we speak in public, we aim to provide fresh, hopeful ideas on heritage. And very often, people have come up to us and told us that we have engaged them, made them think, helped them learn something or see heritage in a different way, or even given them inspiration. We intend to do much more of this. But we are also taking advantage of opportunities that have presented themselves to apply heritage and try and change the city for the better.

Changing the city for the better through heritage is a necessary challenge that we are taking on. We believe in a large social role for heritage and we hope that you will continue your support and consider making a donation to help us in our efforts.

Bill Yuen
Executive Director,
Heritage Vancouver Society
December 2017

2017 A summary of our work



2562 Wallace Crescent (1939); Special Streetscapes



Simon Fraser Elementary School Annex (1929)

Top10 Watch List of Endangered Sites

This year was our 17th for the list of 10 most endangered heritage sites in the city.

As stated last year, we are achieving a higher level of unity between our Top10 list and our other work such as programming and projects. We find that this is a strategy that is paying off in focusing our efforts and energies and drawing more public attention to core issues in the city. Importantly our presentation in the Top10 of Character Homes & Neighbourhoods, Chinatown, the Powell Street Area False Creek South as Historic Urban Landscapes* provides us a consistent and established framework with which to approach heritage.

This approach is consistent with how we have been presenting and pushing the city for how heritage needs to be addressed – as an integrated part of planning that protects what is valued in our city for present and future generations.

Work on this year's list netted strong media coverage and spawned collateral opportunities throughout the year. We were invited to take part in an Urbanarium debate on character houses, we were part of a CBC The National segment on neighbourhood character, and we were part of repeated media interviews throughout the year on schools, Celtic Shipyards, and Chinatown. We also had the opportunity to provide input to the National Trust and their listing of Sinclair Centre on their national endangered list.

Our Top10 lists since 2001:
www.heritagevancouver.org/top10-watch-lists

Our 2017 Top10 Watch List:

1. **Character Homes & Neighbourhoods**
1. **Chinatown**
3. **David Lloyd George Elementary School**
4. **Celtic Shipyards**
5. **Simon Fraser Elementary School Annex**
6. **Sinclair Centre**
7. **False Creek South**
8. **Wallace Crescent**
9. **Powell Street Area**
10. **Lawn Bowling Clubs**

*Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) is a 2011 UNESCO recommendation on how the growth of urban areas and development needs to be based off of the cultural qualities of the place and how heritage and development can complement each other. Central to the HUL is a values centred approach to heritage which recognizes the necessity of citizen input in understanding the multitude of the values of place. Both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage are core to the understanding and approach to HUL.

Heritage Schools

On schools, we took the opportunity to hold a meeting in conjunction with Vancouver Heritage Foundation with the 2017 Vancouver School Board candidates for this year's civic byelection. The meeting provided the candidates with an update and overview of heritage schools and discussion concerning seismic upgrading, the value of heritage resources, and the future of the Heritage Consultation Committee created in 2016 to consult with VSB management on heritage issues (Heritage Vancouver members Mary Anne Guthrie-Warman and George Challies are both very active on this committee).



On our end, Heritage Vancouver asked three questions on heritage and schools for candidates to share their thoughts and perspectives on heritage schools. Answers submitted from candidates were put up onto our website help inform members and the public prior to the byelection. The three questions were:

1. Do you support retaining heritage schools whenever possible with respect to seismic mitigation rather than replacing them with new buildings?
2. Do you agree with allocating extra funds for heritage retention where funds are raised through partial sale or lease of surplus Vancouver Board of Education properties?
3. In early 2016 a Heritage Consultation Committee was established to consult with and advise management on heritage issues. Would you support retention of this committee?

Anne was also very active in speaking about taking a long view and considering the historic and heritage context of the Little Yellow Schoolhouse on the General Gordon elementary school site. The more than 100 year old building was at risk of being lost in early 2017 with a recommendation by the VSB staff to demolish the building but managed to avoid that fate with the efforts of various heritage and community groups. As of August 2017, the building has been retained and renovated by the Vancouver School Board.

Shaping Vancouver 2017: ReShaping Conversations on Heritage

Early in the year we were once again awarded a Heritage BC Heritage Education and Awareness Award for Shaping Vancouver. This year however, we have received the top prize in the category for season 2- Outstanding Achievement.

Our third series of engaging and diverse talks focused on reshaping the conversation to expand how we have been defining heritage to make it more inclusive and representative. The talks this year were:

- The Future of Heritage in Vancouver
- Undefined Heritage - Diversity, Inclusivity and Understanding
- Subcultural Heritage – Emergence of Social Diversity and the Creation of Heritage

This third season was particularly rewarding in that we had wonderful feedback on how important it was that we have been focusing on the underrepresented – heritage that tended not to be immediately thought of as heritage. We were able to explore diverse topics such as the legacy of the LGBTQ community, alternative music which shaped culture in the city, Habitat 76, modernism, and immigrant communities.

We are busy at work preparing a talk on Indigenous Heritage for next year along with another series.

Conferences, presentations, talks

We were once again very active in conferences and presentations this year including:

- Conducting an interactive discussion on connecting heritage to the future by examining meaning and significance at the 2017 Heritage BC Conference.
- Presenting on the idea of heritage at a UBC Asian Canadian and Asian Migration Studies class and to a Kwantlen University Anthropology class
- Presenting on the concept of cultural landscapes to members of Social Planning at the City of Vancouver and other community stakeholders
- Making a speech on contemporary understandings of heritage in front of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Melanie Joly and contributing to roundtable discussion with the Associate Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage on strengthening neighbourhoods through culture and heritage
- Giving two presentations at the 2017 National Trust Conference in Ottawa. Bill Yuen along with Doris Chow from Youth Collaborative for Chinatown presented on heritage in Vancouver Chinatown with Vancouver Chinatown Under Threat: Observations on Heritage from a New Generation. Bill also presented on Getting Creative with Policy: Rethinking the Policy Space for Heritage which examined multidisciplinary approaches to heritage policy

One of biggest rewards of presenting and speaking for us is the people that we meet and form connections with afterwards. On some occasions, we have been fortunate to be able to grow opportunities out of these connections. We have been approached about the creativity and fresh ways of thinking we bring to heritage on numerous occasions. We are very happy to be able to distinguish the organization in this way.

Commenting and Media

Our letter writing to Council and public hearing appearances to respond to heritage related matters continue to be a critical part of the work of the Society.

We often receive questions during our appearances and we are proud to be regarded as a source of expertise and knowledge in heritage.

Some of the major issues this year included Gabriola Mansion, the Main Post Office, the Character Home Zoning Review, and First Baptist Church. Chinatown and the multiple proposals, extended public hearing and extended development permit board hearing for 105 Keefer garnered considerable public attention with hopes that the rejections have a positive effect on planning in our city. Throughout the many versions of the proposal, we have felt that exceptional things could be done with that site as an anchor site that strengthens the cultural heritage of the area. We spoke both at the public hearing as well as the development permit board hearing on 105 Keefer.

Chinatown media coverage has been a place where we've been featured. The buildup to the demolition of the Electric House, or as we put it in the Globe and Main, "an example of everything that is broken in Vancouver", allowed us numerous opportunities to give statements. Additionally, heritage schools, the Top10 and Celtic Shipyards were other topics we were asked by the media to speak on. As mentioned earlier, President Javier Campos' appearance on CBC's the National speaking on neighbourhood character was also a highlight.

Something very recent which we spoke to media about is the Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) proposal for 35 West 6th which has the infill swallowing up the heritage house which is an interesting case in applying an HRA for this type of "retention". Upcoming will be important review, inquiry and commenting on Heather Street Lands, Northeast False Creek, and the second proposal for the New Fountain Hotel & Stanley Hotel at 33 West Cordova.

Projects

Opportunities arose for us to take on several compelling projects this year.

Legacy Business Study

The City of Vancouver is in the beginning stages of studying the importance of legacy businesses to people in Vancouver and what a strategy might look like. We are part of the project team under the lead of LOCO BC and our part in this is the research on San Francisco's Legacy Business Program which is the North American "prototype" of a program that offers various forms of assistance to longstanding businesses that are considered to be of value to neighbourhoods or the city. We are also tasked with examining what a definition of such a business might be in Vancouver.

BC Artscape Sun Wah Heritage Values Project

We have also been working with BC Artscape on their Sun Wah project in Chinatown with which they can offer affordable lease rates to organizations and artists doing relevant work in the context of Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside. BC Artscape is interested in how their project can respond to the heritage of the area and we have been helping them try to design in ways to bring out some of the important values in the neighbourhood which strengthens its character.

We are very excited about this work because they allow for us to apply best practices in heritage -values-centred conservation including tangible and intangible aspects of heritage- to try and manage change in living communities.

Burrard Bridge

Heritage Vancouver Society has been very vocal and active since 2001 over the various proposed changes to the bridge, with some proposals causing serious detriment to the bridge's historic designs, with the historic Burrard Bridge occupying a spot on our annual Top10 Threat list seven times.

Completed in 1932 to provide a high-level crossing to the western neighbourhoods, the bridge designed by architects Sharp & Thompson, is a triumph of civic architecture and a key gateway structure.



Being involved as a key stakeholder during the bridge's recent upgrades and refurbishment in restoring Vancouver's Art Deco bridge, we're extremely happy to be able to be a part of:

- Bringing back replicas of the historic concrete lamp standards, bronze light fixtures, and sconces and setting them back in place to their original positions. These were removed in the 1960s and initially not part of the upgrades the City was considering. These lamps restore the visual link between the central bridge massing and the end brazier pylons.
- Restoring the internal brazier lighting in the two lantern pylons at both ends of the bridge. Replication of a flickering fire at both ends of the bridge's entrances is in honour of the soldiers who fought for our freedoms that we enjoy today.
- Allowing a redesign of the means prevention fencing so that it is much more in keeping with the overall bridge's aesthetic. When a sudden last-minute addition of a barrier was decided on, initial designs were visually heavy and without design reference to the bridge. The robust cement lamp standards that were brought back now visually break up the segments of fencing and allow for thinner fencing and an elegant deco-type of design.

Now at 85-years young, the venerable Burrard Bridge is one of Vancouver's true landmarks and it is very rewarding to know that our vocal efforts for the past 16 years against unsympathetic interventions to the bridge have paid off.

Connections, collaborations and representation

We continue to participate on:

- False Creek Flats Advisory Committee
- The Heritage Action Plan Advisory Committee
- The Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee
- The DP Advisory Group
- The Sign Bylaw Review Committee
- The Vancouver Heritage Commission
- False Creek South Community Association (*RePlan community planning sub-committee)

Fostering connections with other groups have been important for us and our list is growing as we speak. This year we've collaborated with:

Youth Collaborative For Chinatown, a network of youth doing awesome things in, for and with Vancouver's Chinatown. We've been working with them on projects surrounding intangible heritage and placemaking in Chinatown as well as co-presenting at two National Trust conferences.

LOCO BC, an organization that aims to build stronger communities with applied research of the policies and practices of a fair and just economy. They work largely in the area of independent businesses and buying local. We've partnered with LOCO BC to work on the Legacy Business Research commissioned by the City of Vancouver.

BC Artscape, a non-profit organization developing cultural spaces in BC. They are creating a community cultural space in Vancouver's Chinatown. With their Sun Wah project they are bringing together a diverse mix of artists, cultural producers, community groups and the public to create a community asset for Chinatown that enriches its unique sense of place. We are helping them identify what that sense of place is and how to enhance it with their project.

Our ongoing project: Historic building permits database

Launched Nov. 2011, and recipient of the City of Vancouver **2015 Heritage Award of Honour**, our ongoing Vancouver Building Permits Database, currently contains over 40,000 manually transcribed, searchable online historic permits from handwritten original City ledgers, dating back to 1901.

With thanks to a Vancouver125 Grant for making the project launch possible, and volunteers for ongoing transcriptions!

permits.heritagevancouver.org

This searchable online database, covers the three pre-1929 historic boundary districts:

City of Vancouver (1901-04; 1909-21)

Municipality of Point Grey (May 1912-1927)

Municipality of South Vancouver (Nov 1911-24)

As transcriptions are completed, additional years will be uploaded online.

Interested to help transcribe?

The more volunteers that we have to transcribe, the more data we can publish and share. Details: patrick@heritagevancouver.org





Designed by Samuel Maclure in 1900, Roger's 'Gabriola' Mansion on Davie Street in Vancouver's West End, will soon be restored, converted to rental apartments.



About Heritage Vancouver Society

We're an independent non-profit society, encouraging the community to preserve, restore, and appreciate Vancouver's heritage, and are dedicated to "Creating a Future for Vancouver's Heritage". We carry out a wide range of activities to create greater appreciation for our rich historical legacy and work with the community to conserve Vancouver's heritage.

Our heritage sites are community landmarks and are tangible expressions of our past that contribute to the character, attractiveness, and quality of life in our neighbourhoods. They define our communities, connect us to our history, and create a legacy for future generations.

Heritage Vancouver creates relationships with the architectural, business, arts, historic, cultural, conservation, and development communities. Together we create ideas, initiatives, and enterprises that contribute to creating a future for our heritage.

Support Heritage Vancouver Society

Donate

All donations are tax deductible and help preserve Vancouver's heritage and support Heritage Vancouver's programs. Donations of any size are welcome and make a difference. Please send cheques payable to Heritage Vancouver Society to: 1020 Denman St., PO Box 47036 Denman Place, Vancouver, BC V6G 3E1 or make a secure gift online at www.heritagevancouver.org. Thank you for your support.

Become a member

Members benefit from reduced event tickets, advanced notification of events, regular updates, and opportunities to become involved. All membership fees support the on-going services and programs of Heritage Vancouver Society. Individual, Student, and Corporate Memberships available:

Join online at www.heritagevancouver.org/membership.html
or contact: membership@heritagevancouver.org

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See heritagevancouver.org for links

Donate



YES! I want to help Heritage Vancouver create a future for heritage!

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A donation each month adds up to a big difference and is an affordable way to create sustainable revenue for Heritage Vancouver.

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Thank you for your support of heritage in Vancouver

*You may cancel your monthly payment at any time by calling Heritage Vancouver Society at 604-254-9411

How your donation helps

Heritage Vancouver is dedicated to “Creating a Future for Vancouver’s Heritage”.

We create greater appreciation for our rich historical legacy and work as a community to conserve Vancouver’s heritage.

Just a few of our activities made possible through your support:

- Input to Heritage Action plan and educational updates about the Plan
- Protecting at-risk heritage sites
- Publication of annual Top10 Watch List of Vancouver’s most endangered heritage sites
- Identify and recommend sites to be listed on the City of Vancouver’s Heritage Register— assess and comment on public policy regarding heritage conservation
- Work with community groups to explore actions to protect specific heritage sites
- Prepare position papers to inform the community about threatened heritage sites
- Host forums to engage the community in conversations about opportunities to protect heritage sites
- Free online search function to find out when your house was built through historic building permits
- Increasing community appreciation of our built heritage:
- Events in heritage buildings, talks on our heritage sites and neighborhoods, tours of historic neighborhoods
- Reports on the history, significant features, and importance of individual heritage sites
- Assisting individuals, businesses, and community groups in initiatives to conserve community heritage
- Developing community relationships to create a future for our heritage

Heritage Vancouver may recognize donors on our website or newsletters or I would like to remain anonymous

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Heritage Vancouver Society, PO Box 74123, Hillcrest Park PO, Vancouver, BC V5V 5C8

To donate online, monthly or one time, including options to honour a person or a special occasion and send them an e-card, and get an instant tax receipt: **visit www.heritagevancouver.org** and click DONATE

Heritage Vancouver Society

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