

# HERITAGE Vancouver N e w s l e t t e r



Kerrisdale Elementary



Lloyd George



Lord Bing



Maple Grove



Sexsmith



Strathcona

## BACK TO SCHOOL

Fall triggers memories of school, so join us in celebrating the rich architectural heritage of Vancouver schools. The HV website has the pictures in full colour; they illustrate how significant a loss it would be to lose these structures to demolition. Please voice your opinion wherever possible to challenge threats of demolition of this heritage.

### Schools & Seismic Upgrading

The schools pictured above are among the ‘most vulnerable’ schools in the event of an earthquake; all are on the City’s Heritage Register. Everyone concerned with heritage and education anxiously awaits the results of the BC Seismic Risk Task Force assessment, to be concluded this October, and the government’s plan to address the issues.

### Schools & our Heritage Soul

It’s possible that a chunk of Vancouver heritage — the heritage buildings of Little Flower Academy (LFA) — will shortly disappear without a trace. At risk are two buildings — the Convent

and Foundress Hall. An article by Rhiannon Coppin, “A School’s Spirit,” in the Vancouver Courier August 11, 2004 issue, sets out all the details.

The Convent, built in 1910, is recognized as a B structure in the City’s Heritage Register; initially, it was used by the Sisters of St. Ann to teach young women music, art, and commercial studies. In 1927, part of the Convent was formally converted into a private Catholic school, the Little Flower Academy. In 1931, construction of Foundress Hall provided additional space and more buildings were added in the 1950s. Thousands have graduated from the school.

Unfortunately the gymnasium, housed in one of the 1950s buildings, does not meet provincial tournament regulations. The LFA Board does not feel it has the financial resources both to update the old buildings and build a new gymnasium; its present decision is to demolish the old buildings and build brand-new facilities.

Heritage Vancouver is dismayed at this prospect. The Convent and Foundress Hall are still beautiful and functional — and safe — buildings. John Atkin, one of HV’s co-founders, articulates

See page 2 **SCHOOLS**

our concerns: “Good memories,” he says, “reflect the physical structure of a place — buildings aren’t just physical objects that exist without memory or emotion. They embody the values of their builders, their residents and their larger communities.”

Atkin is particularly distressed at the possible loss of Foundress Hall, “a living piece of culturally significant architecture.” Designed by Sister Mary Osithe, a member of the Order of St. Ann’s — an impassioned painter, a skillful architect, and a committed teacher — Foundress Hall is one of the few remaining examples of her work and exemplifies what she “was all about”. Why, asks Atkin, does LFA want to knock down “the very symbol” of what the school stands for? “It may sound a bit trite but I think they lose a piece of their soul when they demolish buildings like that.”

# Hollywood Theatre Birthday Party



Don Luxton



Marjorie Koers

Harold Cullerne

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**T**he Hollywood Theatre is a success story in heritage — a great building that survives intact and still serves its original function.

Located at 3123 West Broadway, the Hollywood opened on October 24, 1936. The exuberant stuccoed concrete façade, ticket booth, marquee and neon signage are all original — the small neon sign, “Pick o’ The Best Plays,” recalls the days when movies were called “photo-plays.” At the time of its construction, neighbourhood theatres were much more common than they are today. Typically these theatres were of a modest scale, and often in a mid-block location as they didn’t require the more expensive corner frontage.

The Hollywood was designed by architect Harold Cullerne (1890-1976), who was born and trained in England. He arrived in Vancouver

in 1912, and for many years was in partnership with J.H. Bowman. Upon Bowman’s retirement in 1934, Cullerne established his own practice. Cullerne was an accomplished designer who embraced the new modernism of the 1930s, as shown in the sleek lines and stylish decoration of the Hollywood. This is one of his more important surviving works, and it is listed on the City of Vancouver Heritage Register.

At a time when we have lost so many of our small local theatres — or only their façade remains — the Hollywood is a true heritage treasure. It is particularly unusual in that it has survived in a single-screen format, and is still operated by the family that built it.

Every October, the Hollywood celebrates its birthday. Heritage Vancouver plans to be there — details will be provided early October (email, website, etc.)

# ADVOCACY UPDATE

## Heritage Vancouver writes . .

Heritage Vancouver has articulated its position to the City on the status of three of the 2004 “Top Ten Endangered Sites”. Below you find the letters concerning the former VGH Nurses’ Residence and the Imperial Oil Station on Cornwall Avenue; these letters are addressed to City Planning Staff and should come before the Heritage Commission in September. The third letter, which sets out the HV position on the proposals for the Woodward’s site, is included as a separate insert .

**September 1, 2004**

**Mr. Rick Michaels  
Development Services,  
City of Vancouver  
453 West 12th Ave  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4**

**Dear Mr. Michaels:  
Re: DE 408504 – 2851 Heather St.  
Formerly the VGH Nurses’ Residence**

We wish to express our concern regarding the development plans for this site. Featured this year in Heritage Vancouver’s Top Ten Endangered list, the Nurses’ Residence was designed by Townley & Matheson, pioneers of modern architecture in Vancouver, and the architects of City Hall (1936). The City’s Recent Landmarks List ranks the site in its ‘B’ evaluation category, making it eligible for inclusion in the Vancouver Heritage Register. The Nurses’ Residence is a prime candidate for Register status, which would enable the project to qualify for incentives offered other listed sites. As a further incentive, the VGH (CD-1) rezoning permits greater floor space in a development retaining the existing building.

### Overall Design

Built in phases between 1949 and 1951, this landmark building is one of Vancouver’s most significant examples of Streamline Moderne, a key transitional style linking Art Deco and Modernism. Emphasizing the streamlined forms of twentieth-century technology, the building features curvilinear surfaces and horizontal shadow-banding suggesting speed and movement. The main elevation features an undulating, butterfly-shaped podium flanking the principal entry. The Nurses’ Residence was conceived in

its entirety as a ‘U’-shaped complex formed by a central block flanking Heather Street, with north and south wings flanking 12th and 13th Avenues respectively. This composition frames a landscaped courtyard and pavilion lounge. We believe that token retention of the central block façade does not adequately recognize the heritage significance of this landmark modern building, would result in the loss of an important modern interior (see below), and should not benefit from additional floor space.

Given the possible application of heritage incentives, including floor space, we believe a much higher level of conservation can be achieved and urge City staff to work with the developer toward solutions for adaptive re-use of the entire complex.

### Interior Design

The interior ground floor common areas are among the most fully realized and well-preserved examples of early modern interior design in this city and must be retained as a condition of development approval. If necessary, the significant interiors should be protected through formal designation. The entrance foyer ceiling is finished in gold leaf, and the lobby areas are detailed in wood panelling, chrome ribbon fascia, and rippled glass. Ground floor interior doorways are richly embellished with projecting geometric shapes, and period indirect lighting is used throughout. We believe that the interior ground floor spaces, including the pavilion lounge, would be an asset, not a detriment, to a residential conversion.

Modern architecture is now internationally recognized as an endangered species and a valuable heritage resource. As the treatment of this important Recent Landmark will set the standard of conservation for modern architecture throughout the City, all efforts must be made to save this significant early example in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors, Heritage Vancouver

cc. Mayor Campbell and Council;  
Gerry McGeough, Senior Heritage Planner;  
Richard Keate, Vancouver Heritage  
Commission; Marguerite Ford, Heather  
Heritage Society

**September 1, 2004**

**Mr. Gerry McGeough, Senior Planner  
Heritage Group/City of Vancouver  
453 West 12th Ave  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4**

**Dear Mr. McGeough:**

**Re: Development Application DE  
4080632202 Cornwall – former  
Imperial Oil Service Station**

We wish to go on record as opposed to the proposed demolition of this B-listed heritage site. Featured this year in Heritage Vancouver’s Top Ten Endangered list, this 1930 Mission-style service station — designed by Townley & Matheson, the architects of City Hall — has great significance as one of the very last remaining period revival buildings of its kind.

Cursory examination of this site indicates there are likely a number of opportunities to retain the original wing (currently oriented east-west) as part of a larger redevelopment scheme. This may require additional density, parking relaxations, and other incentives. The north-south wing currently occupied by Malone’s Restaurant is a 1970s addition, and could be demolished to provide site area for new development.

The possible loss of this Kitsilano landmark highlights once again the vulnerability of undesignated heritage resources in this city, and the need to employ stronger protective measures in cases where incentives are not sufficient. We urge City staff to work with the developer to find an alternative solution to that proposed in the current development application.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors, Heritage Vancouver

c.c. Richard Keate, Vancouver  
Heritage Commission; Rick Michaels,  
Development Services, City of  
Vancouver

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Heritage Vancouver Events

@ Vancouver Museum  
@ 7:30 p.m.

Sept 16:

#### *Heritage Vancouver Looks*

##### *Back to Its Roots*

Join Michael Kluckner and John Atkin, two of our founding Directors, to look back at our beginnings, celebrate our accomplishments, reflect on our losses, and recognize all the work that has been done and is yet to be done.

Oct 21: Annual General Meeting

It's time to elect a new Board, appoint Committee members, and plan for the coming year. We are actively seeking new Board and Committee members. This is an exciting time to join Heritage Vancouver as we are in the midst of strategic planning for our future. Besides, we're a fun bunch! If you are interested, please phone Heritage Vancouver's message centre at 604-254-9411 or contact a Board member.

Oct. 24

See article on  
Hollywood Theatre Birthday Party

### HV Advocacy

Woodward's — please note change of dates from July/August newsletter.

Thursday, September 23/6-8 p.m./W  
Room, 101 W. Hastings Street.

Open House (Overview of staff recommendation to Council). Public welcome to attend.

Tuesday, September 28/2 p.m./ City Hall,  
Council Chamber.

Council Meeting - Report Reference.  
No delegations

Wednesday, September 29/2-6 p.m.; to  
reconvene at 7:30 p.m. if required/Council  
Chamber.

Special meeting of Council (to hear "delegations," that is, individuals who wish to speak to the issue)

If you want to speak to Council on  
Wed. Sept. 29, you may:

1. mail a written request to:  
City Clerk's Office  
Third Floor, City Hall  
453 West 12th Avenue  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V4

or

2. fax your request to the City Clerk's Office  
at 604-873-7419, or  
3. call the City Clerk's Office at  
604-873-7276, or  
4. e-mail your request to  
info@city.vancouver.bc.ca

### Talks/Lectures & Courses

September 23/7:30 p.m.  
VHS@Vancouver Museum  
"Billy Miner: Folk Hero or Sly Fox?"  
Speaker: Greg Dickson, CBC, Director,  
BC Almanac

September 23/7:30 p.m./Vancouver Public  
Library (Peter Kaye room, 350 Georgia Street)  
"Great Walks of Vancouver" with author  
Charles Clapham

October 16 (+ 3 subsequent Saturdays)/10  
a.m. to 12:30 p.m./UBC Continuing Studies  
course "Neighbourhoods Explained"  
Leader: John Atkin. To register, go to <http://www.johnatkin.com/> and follow the links to  
UBC Continuing Studies.

October 28/7:30 p.m.  
VHS@Vancouver Museum.  
"Women of Vancouver: The Early Years"  
Jolene Cumming, Historical Interpreter

November 25/7:30 p.m.  
VHS@Vancouver Museum  
"Vancouver: Early Film Footage of our City"  
Colin Preston, CBC Archivist; Reuben Ware,  
City of Vancouver Archivist; John Atkin, Editor,  
British Columbia History

### Tours & Expeditions

September to October 28/Tours of Arthur  
Erickson Garden/Reserve at 604-738-4195

September 22/7 p.m. (rain or shine)/"Neon  
and Twilight," a walking tour with John  
Atkin. Meet @Hornby Street entrance to the  
Vancouver Art Gallery. \$10.00 per person  
\$5.00 for Museum members

September 25 & 26/10 a.m.-4 p.m./Town Hall  
Seattle, 1119 Eighth Ave. at Seneca St./2004  
Bungalow & Craftsman Home Fair & Lectures.  
Cost: \$5 members; \$10 general public  
<http://www.cityofseattle.net/commnty/histsea/events/#fair> or 206.622.6952 ext.234.

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YES

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