

**Cameron Forbes**  
**Vice president**  
**Heather & Little Limited, Markham, Ontario**

In some ways, the story of Cameron Forbes is typical. A young man out of high school was looking for a career. He began working at a refinery in Toronto working in different departments first as a production line, refinery operator and finally in the plant maintenance department, but nothing really satisfied him. He remembers thinking, "There has to be something more interesting with a better future."

A relative, who was in the trades, made a suggestion of taking up a trade. Forbes took the advice and began a five-year apprenticeship program to become a sheet metal worker. The course included three terms at George Brown College in Toronto studying practical sheet metal theory, blueprint reading followed by work experience with Heather & Little Limited, a Toronto-based roofing contractor.

During one work term of his apprenticeship, Forbes was assigned to a project at the Canadian National Exposition site in Toronto. The job was restoring roofs, skylights, cornices and soffits on five of the site's heritage buildings.



Restoration of the Peace Tower,  
Parliament Hill, Ottawa

The work was challenging. The task was to reproduce all the metal elements to authentically replicate the original materials. By the time his apprenticeship was completed, Forbes was at the top of the class.

Heather & Little Limited, a company well known for its expertise in architectural metals since 1925, was the company with whom Forbes had served his apprenticeship. Today he is vice president of the firm. Under his guidance, the company has focused



Restoration of the Library of  
Parliament roof, Ottawa

on historic restoration and established a reputation for excellence and innovation throughout North America.



The company tackles projects from start to finish—from bidding to negotiating contracts, project management, coordination, and, of course, architectural metal work.

Heather & Little Limited, a union contractor, is training a new generation of metal workers. At any given time it employs at least three or four apprentices who attend George Brown College, as Forbes did.



Restoring the Château Laurier roof, Ottawa

The intellectual challenge of metal working presents itself with each and every job. For instance, when restoring the copper roofs of the Parliament Buildings and the Peace Tower, heavy gauge copper was the source of problems, as the soldered joints were failing and the concrete was crumbling.

With Heather & Little Limited's understanding of the physical properties of copper. Copper expands and contracts with heat and cold. It buckles. When copper sheeting is joined by soldered joints, any fluctuation in temperature may cause the copper to buckle and eventually fracture.

For the magnificent copper roofs of Parliament, the new roof was designed with sheets of copper joined together by loose locks and minimal soldering. "When you've finished a job—such as the Legislative Assembly Hall in Fredericton, New Brunswick—or the main dome of the Legislative Library in Winnipeg—or the Parliament buildings in Ottawa—when you know that what you have done will be there for another 100 years. That is called job satisfaction," says Forbes.



Restoration of the central dome, Legislative Assembly Hall, Fredericton



Heather & Little Limited

[http://www.heatherandlittle.com/domes\\_cupolas\\_steeple\\_spires.html](http://www.heatherandlittle.com/domes_cupolas_steeple_spires.html)

A Treasure to Explore: Parliament Hill  
(Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)

[http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/text/home\\_e.html](http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/text/home_e.html)