



**Notes from the Heritage Conservation Educators Roundtable  
Thursday October 11, 2007  
Edmonton, Alberta**

Following on the inaugural Heritage Conservation Educators Roundtable held in Ottawa in 2004, it was the purpose of this one-day gathering to recapture the momentum established at the previous Roundtable by: (1) identifying priority issues for the heritage conservation education/training sector, and (2) exploring the roundtable's interest in forming a network or group that could work to address these priority issues and undertake other initiatives.

The meeting began with each of the participants briefly describing the key aspects of their programs, focusing on the following questions:

- What is your program and what is the marketplace for it?
- What challenges do you have that affect your ability to deliver this program?
- What are the opportunities that have emerged from your program?

Each of the representatives from heritage conservation education and training institutions briefly introduced their program or initiative. Christophe Rivet summarized these presentations by pointing to the diversity of education/training interests identified: there were differences in roles represented as well as regions and professional contexts. He challenged the group to reflect on how a heritage conservation education network might acknowledge and maintain this diversity.

**Group Discussion:**

**1. Issues and Priorities for the Heritage Conservation Education/Training Sector**

Christophe Rivet and Herb Stovel then led a discussion around the key challenges facing the sector and developed a list of suggestions. In order to discover the roundtable's priorities, each participant voted on their top-2 most important issues.

Priority Issues

7 Votes

- defining "competencies" within the discipline - professionalism

- the need for “research” organized strategically, and to publish “grey literature”

*6 Votes*

- use of distance education modules to strengthen collaboration (through distance learning among institutions)

*5 Votes*

- need for small incremental steps: focus on ethics and professionalism

*4 Votes*

- need to speak to those outside the heritage circle

*3 Votes*

- how to maintain ethical standards, especially in private sector

*2 Votes*

- perceived need for “accreditation” (but there are inherent difficulties in achieving this)
- confront tension between “academic” and “applied” approaches in university programmes
- need for concrete collaboration between institutions (eg. credit transferability)

*1 Vote*

- visibility/relevance of heritage conservation to the young
- commitment by employers
- need to strengthen focus on interdisciplinarity of educational programs
- need to work with target groups (eg. planners) whose decisions are key to survival of heritage
- need for a systemic and holistic approach - focus on programs like “Main Street”

Other Issues (no votes received)

- more internship/co-op opportunities in private sector
- clarification the following (to aid educational program marketing, etc):
  - what is a heritage career?
  - what is a heritage professional?
  - what is heritage conservation as a discipline?
- modeling curriculum to meet buyer/market expectations
- context of life-long learning
- need for simple model for communication to ensure community involvement
- maintaining enrolment – limited human resources capacity to solicit trained professionals
- how are we appealing to all component segments?
- inherent obstacles to inter-institutional collaboration

- simplify concepts we are trying to communicate (common language) and thereby increase marketability/acceptance
- recognize we are competing with “big box” promoters, so need to promote the essential nature of heritage (eg. working with elected officials)
- promoting complementarity of programs at different levels
- challenge in meeting emerging complexity of heritage involvement – heritage has different axes of meaning (tangible/intangible; cultural/natural; movable/immovable; national/local; urban/rural; etc)
- design architects vs. conservation architects – the threat of architects who repackage “heritage buildings”

## **2. Opportunities for the Heritage Conservation Education/Training Sector**

Christophe Rivet and Herb Stovel then led a discussion around the opportunities for the sector. The following areas were identified:

- more architects and planners are looking for heritage orientation
- “sustainability” push now happening and is popular – the challenge is the different objectives of Green and conservation interpretations of sustainability
- targets for sensitizing of green goals to heritage conservation – eg. LEED, B.C. Hydro, RAIC (2030 Carbon Neutral)
- now have common tools across the country (Parks Canada *Standards and Guidelines*) which allows streamlining and sharing of course
- recent strengthening understanding/communication of economic and social benefits of conservation
- doing a lot of analysis/program planning in absence of needs assessments
- power of television to provide opportunities for turned-on kids who have discovered heritage
- relevance of aboriginal heritage and conceptual frameworks which embrace long-term land use, continuity, and contemporary value; “sacred landscapes”

## **3. How to Organize as an Education/Training Group and What Initiatives to Undertake?**

Christophe Rivet and Herb Stovel then led the roundtable on a discussion around how an education/training group might constitute itself.

- No interest was expressed in establishing a formal organization.
- There was interest in a formal mechanism for exchange, one committed to achieving finite goals and targets within a limited timeframe. One possibility brought forward was to work as a subcommittee or taskforce of the Heritage Canada Foundation.
- Names for the group were suggested (Heritage Education Committee, National Heritage Resources Brain Trust) but none was settled on.

- HCF: needs to update list of institutions offering heritage conservation training on its website
- There is a need to map Canada's heritage conservation education/training activity

As interest in working as a group was expressed, a core group/steering committee of educators was identified for the network:

Robert Shipley, University of Waterloo (group chair)  
 Victoria Angel, Parks Canada (member ex-officio)  
 Ronald Bean, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning  
 Pamela Blackstock, Parks Canada (member ex-officio)  
 Joy Davis, University of Victoria  
 Helen Edwards, Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals  
 Bernard Flaman, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology  
 Shelley Huson, Willowbank School of Restoration Arts  
 Jessica Kerrin, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage  
 Yew Thong Leong, Ryerson University  
 François Varin, La Fondation Rues principales  
 Brenda Weatherston, University of Victoria  
 Donald Wetherell, Athabasca University

Other issues were raised :

- There is a need to clarify the goals and expectations of the network.
- Need to bring the provinces into the network.
- If HCF not interested in coordinating network, then whom? The Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC)?

#### **4. Message to the Heritage Canada Foundation**

- There is a need for a network of heritage conservation educators and trainers.
- There is a need to map the Canadian heritage conservation education sector to discover who is involved and the current state of training.
- A core group of Roundtable participants have made themselves available to implement 5 project ideas, and to work on a possible session/track for the 2008 HCF conference.
- To move ahead there is a need for HCF to provide staff time to coordinate this education network in their organizational workplan, and to cover the costs associated with teleconference meetings.

#### **5. Recommendations from the Roundtable to the Heritage Canada Foundation Board of Governors**

See "Recommendations of the 2007 Heritage Conservation Educators Roundtable to the Board of Directors of the Heritage Canada Foundation" under separate cover.

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## **Recommendations of the 2007 Heritage Conservation Educators Roundtable To the Board of Directors of the Heritage Canada Foundation**

**October 11, 2007**

At the invitation of the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF), representatives of Canada's heritage conservation educational sector gathered in Edmonton, Alberta on October 11, 2007 for an all-day roundtable discussion of issues, opportunities, common goals and potential action to achieve those goals.

The roundtable began with a brief description by each of the participants of his or her program, its marketplace, challenges affecting program delivery and opportunities emerging from the program. This information was recorded (as was all discussion during the day) for later dissemination to all participants.

The afternoon session featured an open discussion to identify challenges and opportunities for the Canadian heritage conservation educational sector as a whole. Each challenge or opportunity was written on flipchart paper and roundtable participants voted for the five highest priority items by placing dots next to the challenges or opportunities each felt were most significant. The five priorities identified by the vote were:

1. Ethical standards for heritage conservation practitioners
2. An organized approach to research and publication
3. Defined competencies within the sector
4. Communication beyond the heritage circle
5. Distance education to promote collaboration and sharing

The consensus among participants in the roundtable was that momentum had been lost following the 2004 roundtable, and that every attempt should be made to maintain the energy and focus of the 2007 roundtable. To that end, it was agreed that the first recommendation of the roundtable should be that there be another Heritage Educators Roundtable in 2008, probably to be held—as this one was—one day before the HCF's annual conference. It was also agreed that achieving the long-term goals recommended by the roundtable requires an ongoing commitment to participation beyond meeting once a year.

A core group of participants in the roundtable volunteered to form an advisory group—with a pan-Canadian composition and mandate—to carry the recommendations of the 2007 roundtable forward and to coordinate activities designed to achieve the goals contained within the recommendations. The members of the advisory group are:

Robert Shipley, University of Waterloo (group chair)  
Victoria Angel, Parks Canada (member ex-officio)  
Ronald Bean, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning  
Pamela Blackstock, Parks Canada (member ex-officio)  
Joy Davis, University of Victoria  
Helen Edwards, Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals  
Bernard Flaman, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology  
Shelley Huson, Willowbank School of Restoration Arts  
Jessica Kerrin, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage  
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The roundtable participants recognized that thirteen invitees were not present, and that certain provinces and educational institutions were underrepresented or not represented. The recommendations of the roundtable will be heifer achieved by bringing those voices—as well as other potential sector representatives—into future discussion. The advisory group will seek out and where possible draw in additional members to fill gaps in institutional or regional representation.

Another initial task that the advisory group will undertake is to map the capacity and core competencies within the heritage conservation educational sector. The first step in this mapping process is to have a representative of each institution in the sector prepare a two-page summary of his or her program. Much of the information in these summaries would echo the program descriptions each participant in the 2007 roundtable delivered orally to the group.

The advisory group proposes to meet via teleconference four times over the next year, leading up to the 2008 annual conference. It will prioritize the five identified goals, and make recommendations for action to take to accomplish the goals. Members of the advisory group, supported by other participants from the heritage conservation educational sector, will undertake the various tasks that follow from these recommendations.

The advisory group needs the help of the HCF to achieve its goals. By hosting the 2007 Heritage Educators Roundtable, the Foundation has demonstrated its interest in contributing to the goal of a stronger heritage conservation educational sector in Canada. Now it is time to take the next steps that will enable Canada's heritage educators to move from talking together and learning about each other, to working together to accomplish common goals. There are few organizations with the national scope to undertake advancement of these goals, and the HCF is the best positioned to respond quickly and effectively.

The participants in the 2007 Heritage Educators Roundtable ask the board of directors of the HCF to show its support for the heritage conservation education sector by committing to an ongoing role, in collaboration with the heritage educators advisory group, in strengthening the heritage conservation educational sector in Canada. The participants in the roundtable further ask that this commitment be incorporated into the Foundation's 2008 work plan, and that the Foundation actively support the work of the heritage educators advisory group with a contribution of staff time and operating funds.

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Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your participation in the Heritage Educators Roundtable at the Heritage Canada Conference, and for your prompt submission of recommendations to the Board of Directors (attached below). These recommendations were briefly presented to the Board on Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup>. While the board has not discussed your recommendations in detail, we are very pleased to provide a forum and a venue for this initiative, and agree with you that our 2008 conference in Quebec - *Work that Endures: Power to the People Keeping Places Alive* - is a great opportunity to hold the next Roundtable – even more so given the theme of our conference, which accommodates well the issues and opportunities surrounding the heritage workforce and education and training in heritage.

We are also pleased that you have stuck an advisory group to lead this initiative from the educators' perspective. I have been named the HCF Board liaison for this initiative, and Chris Wiebe will be the HCF staff person assigned. For a start, we are more than happy to provide access to our teleconferencing service (and our meeting space as needed) and Chris and I will participate in your discussions as this initiative evolves. Let's talk about next steps and shape the workplan together. It is my hope that in addition to applying HCF resources we can engage student and volunteer effort, and attract funding.

Yours sincerely,

Odile Roy  
First Vice-Chair, Board of Governors, Heritage Canada Foundation