



Heritage Conservation Educators Roundtable

Heritage Canada Foundation

September 25, 2008, 8:45 am-12:30 pm

Morrin Centre, Quebec City

Meeting Notes

Present:

Ronald Bean (Conestoga College), Natalie Bull (HCF), Christina Cameron (Université de Montréal), Peter Delefes (HCF, Board of Governors) Helen Edwards (CAHP), Masha Etkind (Ryerson University), Andrée Faubert (Parks Canada), Rick Goodacre (Heritage Society of BC), Shelley Huson (Willowbank School), Andrew Jeanes (Ontario Ministry of Culture), Keith Knox (HCF, Board of Governors), Yew-Thong Leong (Ryerson University), Brenda Manweiler (Parks Canada), Tania Martin (Université Laval), Andrew Powter (HCF, Board of Governors), Odile Roy (HCF, Board of Governors), Robert Shipley (University of Waterloo), Brenda Weatherston (University of Victoria), Don Wetherell (Athabasca University), Chris Wiebe (HCF)

Agenda:

1. Introductions, Roundtable Agenda and Goals

Bull welcomed participants and explained an important goal of the meeting was to refine the relationship between the Roundtable and HCF: (1) by examining how the goals and assets of the Roundtable intersect with those of HCF; and (2) to develop mutually compelling action items and outputs. The participants then introduced themselves and their programs. Wiebe provided some background on the goals established at the previous two Roundtables and how most of these had been achieved.

2. Discussion of Progress in Roundtable Priority Areas

a. Research and Publishing

Shipley began by saying that he envisioned the Roundtable as more of a subcommittee of HCF than as a separate entity. He then reported that over the past year with the help of research assistants he has compiled heritage articles and theses (currently around 300 documents) with the aim of making these available online. The aim was to have this material incorporated into the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN). There is a thirst for research material from the heritage advocacy sphere and there is graduate student research capacity available at university level that could be better utilized. He suggested that this capacity

could be directed by soliciting research questions from the heritage community via a survey form, thereby compiling an inventory that could be approached strategically.

Bull saw the need in the heritage sector for a database of evidence that would make advocacy arguments more effective. But she said she hoped this material could be accessible through Waterloo and HCF rather than through CHIN.

b. Ethics and Professional Competencies

Huson began with some sub-committee questions: should they be looking at ethics from the perspective of educational institutions and their curricula, or in a broader context? Should they be looking at standards like the US organization National Council on Preservation Education (NCPE)?

Cameron recalled the competencies priority identified at the 2007 Roundtable was predicated on the growing issue of heritage expert vs. heritage expert at municipal hearings: this grew out of conservation's character as a sort of soft science that could develop arguments in different ways.

Bull said Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) should be involved in any discussion. Etkind said ethics should be about a definition of values and need to be based on strict criteria. Jeanes observed that the professionalization of the heritage sector has led to people being for hire who end up on opposite sides of questions of heritage value, and that universality of value was far from self-evident. Shipley said that while universal value may be elusive at this point we did have the law and planning regulations – designation gives heritage a matter of fact and legal standing.

Leong said we cannot rely on people's goodwill to be ethical, and that these need to be mandated and enforced for the profession via a reward and punishment model. Roy pointed to professional mechanisms for the regulation of architects in Quebec. What, she asked, is the minimum behaviour or expertise you would expect from a conservation architect, urbanist, or craftsman? Cameron said the biggest current threats to heritage are about degrees of intervention or treatment and these are increasingly getting soft. There is lots of talk around the intangible which leads away from materiality.

Wetherell said it is a difficult subject to handle because we are not on the same page, and that the heritage field is a community of practice not a neatly circumscribed profession. Heritage conservation is now connecting across boundaries that used to be firm – from heritage buildings to intangible heritage – and this is where the ethic issue arises. There are many codes of practice in existence for other fields, but how to reconcile them all? Jeanes suggested that the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines could be used as a pan-Canadian reference.

Bull challenged the Roundtable to strike a working group –with CAHP, the Standards and Guidelines working group at Parks Canada, professions, heritage trades, generalist practitioners – to develop a strategy and action plan to tackle this issue. If so wish, could set a working group meeting at HCF’s 2009 conference as a collective goal. Bean said it was important to see the goal of the Roundtable’s work of circulating knowledge and networking around issues like ethics.

c. Heritage Education Resources and Training

Subcommittee member Wetherell reported they had found it challenging to implement the goals from the last Roundtable. Fundamental questions arose such as what resources, training and distance formats fit together, what was meant by “distance”, etc. The subcommittee therefore decided to look at the subject in terms of formal training (sequential, cumulative, ending in formal qualification), and informal training not tied into traditional educational structures. They therefore decided to first focus on compiling a bibliography of informal training materials (attached below).

Weatherston said that CHIN was not an ideal repository for the materials being collected by the subcommittee because of downsizing and focus on movable heritage. She pointed to excellent examples outside Canada where using current technologies to get info out (eg. Getty Institute) and that Canada needed similar initiatives. It was requested that HCF circulate a description of the initiative Heritage Education Resources and Training initiative to participants and place information on its website.

3. Opportunities to Expand the Roundtable Network and Impact

a. Canadian Forum for Public Research on Heritage (CFPRH)

Shiple explained that CRPRH was a SSHRC strategic cluster grant involving 12-people from across the country and abroad - \$2million over 7 years. The purpose was to expand heritage networks, promote research in the broadest sense, and to multiply this pool of money to enable other projects. An invitation was presented for Roundtable members to identify opportunities and move the agenda forward. He requested that a summary of the CFPRH project be posted on the HCF website.

b. Working Forum on Ontario Heritage Education

Jeanes said this provincial initiative met in early 2008 and included educators and other organizations like the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO), etc. The biggest outcome was a matrix of strategies (*Target Area, Target Groups, Goals and Strategies for Heritage Education Initiative*) to coordinate public awareness raising around heritage and integrate its concerns into mainstream skills training. The Matrix provided a useful reference tool to help people see where they fit in, and encourage actions by diverse groups.

4. Identifying the future direction of the Roundtable and establishing its medium- and long-term goals

a. Discussion

Bull detailed the resources HCF had to offer to the Roundtable, and the ways in which the Roundtable's work could help address its current needs. HCF could offer: staff time, teleconference capacity, access to multiple HCF networks, national conference to attach meeting, clearinghouse mechanisms (magazine, website), HCF library and archive. HCF needed: to build participation and membership in HCF (including feedback on how to attract students), harness research initiatives, gather national case studies for HCF to better advocate for sector. The Roundtable initiative is important to HCF for many reasons, including indirect contact with students, the future of the conservation movement in Canada. She suggested HCF's current advocacy work around such things as increased government support for heritage conservation should dovetail with Roundtable interests because a larger heritage industry builds demand for heritage education.

Etkind suggested it would be beneficial to everyone to coordinate HCF efforts with ICOMOS – saving resources, maximizing efforts. Cameron said her program could provide stories for HCF's magazine, including its current research initiative on gathering information on post-war heritage conservation practice in Canada – detailing major conservation projects, players, philosophy and outcomes. HCF, she said, was more of a community-based and broader-based oriented organization and ICOMOS is more professionally based and less interested in the community dimension, so she was not sure if their mandates fit; HCF, as demonstrated by the Roundtable meeting, currently enables the interface between community-members, professionals and government staff. Shipley suggested adopting a Learned Societies approach to coordinate heritage conferences.

Powter said the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia was building their community-based training (1-day workshops) and professional development and was willing to share this material. A central repository of training material would be a very useful initiative. Goodacre suggested that heritage tourism materials currently being delivered by Heritage BC could be made available for use elsewhere. Jeanes said support for travel and accommodation costs is crucial to secure student involvement at HCF conferences. Etkind suggested lowering meeting costs by locating in academic institutions. Bull said APT had a robust student scholarship program and welcomed working with educators to create a similar HCF initiative.

Shipley returned to the question of where the heritage research database he was compiling should be located. He said the database should include bibliographical information, PDFs (no broken link issue), and searchable by keyword. Wetherell said this was also a question for the Resources and

Training initiative; how a database would be maintained and how the initial work itself would be done owing to time constraints on Roundtable members. Fundraising was necessary because maintaining the database would not be sustainable through volunteers or HCF staff. Weatherston said the architecture of the database was important and the public profile and accessibility of it. If not a popular and well-built site then there would be issues; any database needed to be well-structured and she was willing to advise HCF on this. Etkind believed these kinds of knowledge repository portals could get external funding. Leong worried about CHIN sunsetting and said that sustainability of the host site was an important consideration.

b. Next Steps

Bull summarized discussion with the following suggestions:

1. Heritage Research & Heritage Education Resources and Training Databases: craft a seven year plan for accessing CFPRH funding to collect and make available research and training resources.

Etkind suggested building in material currently being digitized by post-secondary institutions?

2. Develop a multi-disciplinary working group on standards for heritage conservation practice: it would include educators, PCA, CAPH, professionals, and unaffiliated practitioners.

Wetherell suggested the professional competency and ethics subcommittee should look at one or the other; he suggested looking at competency first and then move onto ethics. Huson suggested a working committee day at the next Roundtable meeting in Toronto to address professional standards; this would include all of the key stakeholders.

3. Strategy to Involve Students in HCF conferences: plan for developing a scholarship program.

Brenda suggested bursaries like CMA which support continuing education for those in the field. Masha said effective way to attract students is through a charrette associated with a conference. Tania took a contrary view, arguing that sensitization to approaches around heritage take time to develop and charrettes can give the impression that issues can be solved with a quick design flash. Etkind and Martin were pencilled in as leads on this student scholarships and involvement initiative.

Shipleigh made a further suggestion:

4. Use the public awareness matrix developed by the Working Forum on Ontario Heritage Education Public as a national model

Shiple explained the Ontario matrix provided a framework for thinking about public awareness and was an attempt to develop a self-organizing system to co-ordinate action. This matrix could be posted on the web and people could see how they fit within its list of action items. Wetherell said the matrix could be the tool to meet the public awareness objective the Roundtable identified in 2007. Jeanes said the matrix would ideally be housed online so that it could continue to evolve and attract participants.

Actions:

Initiatives

- The Roundtable will continue to develop the heritage research database. HCF will explore hosting this database on its website. The Roundtable and HCF will search for external funding.
- HCF will circulate a description of the Heritage Education Resources and Training initiative to gather more information on informal training. HCF will explore hosting this information on its website. The Roundtable and HCF will search for external funding.
- The Roundtable will develop a multi-disciplinary taskforce on professional standards for heritage conservation practice and examine the idea of a 1-day working group meeting on the subject at HCF 2009 in Toronto.
- A Roundtable working group will develop strategies to involve university students in future HCF conferences.
- HCF will post on the web the public awareness matrix developed by the Working Group on Ontario Heritage Education.

Meetings and Communications

- Continue bi-monthly steering committee meetings (ensure meeting times work for all participants)
- Distribute steering committee minutes to entire Roundtable
- Establish an internet tool (eg. Writeboard, etc) to be a repository for Roundtable documents and enable members to modify these documents.

Unable to Attend:

Victoria Angel (FHBRO), Jack Brink (Royal Alberta Museum), Lyse Blanchet (PWGSC), Ian Brodie (Cape Breton University), Joy Davis (University of Victoria), Claudine Déom (Université de Montréal), Claude Dubé (Université Laval), Julia Gersovitz (McGill University), Mehdi Ghafouri (Vanier College), George Kapelos (Ryerson University), Jessica Kerrin (Government of Nova Scotia), Gregory Monks (University of Manitoba), David Osborne (Algonquin College), Michael Ripmeester (Brock University), John Scott (Algonquin College), Julian Smith (Willowbank School), Herb Stovel (Carleton University), Rod Stutt (SIAST), Tom Urbaniak (Cape Breton University), Francois Varin (Rue Principales),