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National Roundtable on Heritage Education 2011

**Friday, October 14, 2011
Sidney Room, Victoria Conference Centre
720 Douglas Street, Victoria, British Columbia**

Sponsored by the Canadian Forum for Public Research on Heritage (CFPRH)

Present:

Ronald Bean (Conestoga College), Rebecca Bishop (Vancouver Heritage Foundation), Christina Cameron (Université de Montréal), Joy Davis (University of Victoria), Kayla Jonas (Heritage Resources Centre, University of Waterloo), Stephen Fai (Carleton University), Julia Gersovitz (McGill University), Adair Harper (University of Western Ontario), Barb Hogan (Yukon Government), David Holdsworth (City of Edmonton), Berdine Jonker (BC Heritage Branch & University of Victoria), Ned Kaufman (Pratt Institute), Alastair Kerr (University of Victoria & Hong Kong University), Judy Larmour (Athabasca University), Richard Linzey (BC Heritage Branch), Hilary Meyer (Concordia University), Judy Oberlander (Judy Oberlander and Associates), Susan Ross (PWGSC & Carleton University), Julian Smith (Willowbank), Angela Specht (Athabasca University), Jim Stiven (Vintage Woodworks), Nadia Thorpe (University of Victoria), Michael Tomlan (Cornell University), Tom Urbaniak (Cape Breton University), Brenda Weatherston (University of Victoria), David Woodcock (Texas A&M University), Chris Wiebe (Heritage Canada Foundation).

1. Introductions

2. Educating Curatorial Managers of the Built World – David G. Woodcock (Director Emeritus, Center for Heritage Conservation, Texas, A&M University)

I've been interested in the changing face of heritage conservation education for a long time. This presentation will focus on the interface between heritage conservation and sustainability, the integration of heritage conservation principals into the broader field of education for the design profession, the relationship between heritage education and training and the outreach to the general public. This presentation grows out of a 2009 APT Bulletin article "Academic

Preparation for Preservation Practice,” which was a follow up to a 1998 article surveying preservation education. My 2009 article identified five challenges to preservation education through the lens of APT and I would like to focus on them in this presentation.

Challenge 1: Interdisciplinary Education While Preserving Disciplinary Rigour and Quality.

There are 26 graduate degree programs in historic preservation in the US, and a similar number of graduate certificate programs. There are roughly a dozen universities/colleges offering programs or course components offered in Canada. In the US, the National Council on Preservation Education (NCPE) has been the focus for developing standards. NCPE has identified four foundational preservation education components: history of the built environment; history and theory of preservation; documentation and recording; and internships (eg. 2010 University of Vermont workshop to discuss common interests between preservation and civil engineering). Note APT’s first president Charles E. Peterson stressed that you cannot use technology without having a philosophy.

Sustainability has been on the preservation agenda particularly since the 1987 Brundtland report. A current driver of interest in sustainable preservation is dwindling resources (financial and material) and trying to use existing resources more wisely, but the message is still not clear for some. For instance, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) award programs measure all design submissions on quantitative data like energy use, green building metrics, but there is no reference to reuse or rehabilitation. Life-cycle analysis – measuring construction materials from extraction to disposal – and the construction side of facility management people also need to be brought to the table. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) has carved out a very broad mandate including sustainability, urban sprawl, and, as a result, the organization has gotten into trouble in the political arena.

Challenge 2: Integration of Practice and Education: Connecting to the Real World.

What are the incentives for educational institutions to respond to practice needs? Does practice actually assume, demand, or even welcome concern for cultural heritage and existing buildings? France has been expanding the range of people qualified to work on heritage properties, but in the US there is a reluctance to adopt specializations for heritage practice and no official recognition for a preservation architect. The focus on general practice has influenced the National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB) Student Performance Criteria: for example, the “Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills and Knowledge” criteria make no mention of existing buildings. However, the pressure for architects to understand precedent in building design and to embrace “evidence based design” is growing.

It often takes some convincing that observing and gathering data through preservation documentation is also “research.” Involving people with the educational institution’s campus has tremendous potential; Texas A&M is beginning to do this in managing its historic buildings and

streetscapes. Advocacy in education is always a difficult subject and needs to be handled carefully. Advocacy involves dealing with values and there are troubling case studies; for example the Diorama building at Gettysburg which pitted the building, diorama, and the site against each other - where did value lie?

Challenge 3: Expanding Professional Education

There are few organization aside from APT – with has technical committees for engineering, building codes, modern heritage, etc. – where trans-disciplinary exchange can occur.

Challenge 4: Develop Preservation Contractors

Preservation movement and educators need to do a better job of connecting engineering and construction management spheres (including facility management and contractors).

Challenge 5: Access to Preservation Education

On the matter of access to preservation education, an 1987 American study, *A Heritage At Risk*, promoted K-12 education in heritage. At Texas A&M we have not found it very easy to work with our College of Education and Human Resources, but have done some work with high school social studies classes (gifted and talented schools). Historic American Buildings Survey reports that the biggest users of its material are K-12 teachers.

Future Challenges

These include: the various ways of understanding heritage such as the intangible; modern movement preservation; maintenance and recycling; designed and cultural landscapes; land use management; climate change; disaster planning. And finally, establishing the role of the academy in heritage conservation: heritage conservation's role as curator and creator.

3. Discussion - The Changing Face of Heritage Conservation

Davis: How can we measure and evaluate our effectiveness as educators? Woodcock: It is very difficult to gauge whether a particular course or program has had a lasting effect for a student until they are out for a few years; an important emphasis is to keep a record and follow the careers of students who have come through your program – this is very difficult to do in practice. At Texas A&M, we make sure that when a graduate achieves something of significance it is posted on our website, highlighted for university administration, etc. Tomlan: I've had the challenge of evaluating projects I've been involvement in countries where professionals have limited heritage understanding; because not Judeo-Christian, environmental, etc. Without a base line in -economic, social, physical context - there is no way to evaluate a project over the long term. Davis: It is very important to ensure that the work environment students are entering after a program are receptive to and value the skills being taught in your program. Woodcock: Anthropology, archaeology, recreation and parks, engineering, architecture, have said the cross-

disciplinary discussion and learning was enormously valuable. Interdisciplinary skills are key for educational programs.

Kaufman: David's talk was initially framed in terms of architecture and design but I'm wondering if we are able to broaden this discussion to heritage generally. Also, the challenges were framed from inside the preservation field looking out, but it would also be helpful to look at how the world is changing, how demands on what we do changing, and what might the opportunities and challenges be? Woodcock: Yes, it is key to look at both internal and external challenges. We have assumed for a long time in our field that we know who we are and what we are about.

Gersovitz: It would be great to have an expansion of conservation programs in every university across Canada, but, in lieu of that, getting each Canadian architecture school to teach one conservation course could have a substantial impact on students, planting seeds. For instance yesterday, John Diodati suggested establishing a geology course in the analysis of stone for construction; these kinds of course generate more cross-pollination. Encourage small steps as well as big ones. Oberlander: We also have the opportunity to think about the social agenda – social justice, community development – areas where heritage preservation can be a catalyst. Re-use of buildings can work towards sustainability, homeless housing, fulfilling community functions, not just fixating on high-style design. The other challenge is incorporating field work/internships so that town and gown can meet around issues.

Cameron: A latecomer to heritage education, I was shocked at the great divide between conservation and architecture, which is slowly being bridged. Reaching out to the facilities management sphere is important. At University of Montreal we worked with department of physical education on a project which simultaneously got people walking and discovering the history of the campus. I also had the serendipitous opportunity to incorporate material about conservation of World Heritage in Quebec's Grade 6 reading comprehension tests – a seed planting exercise that would be hard to measure. Speaker: Gave example of one professor at UBC School of Planning who is teaching heritage planning, getting students excited about the subject and keen on specializing in this area. Tomlan: Of those who go into graduate heritage preservation programs in the US, art history and history (often American, Canadian studies, etc.) undergraduates have always been the base (2/3 – 3/4) of students. This has remained consistent, and architecture undergrads seem minimal. Archaeology, anthropology have increased noticeably, as well as urban planning and sociology students. Gersovitz: We do not need to restrict courses to architecture and should emphasize this openness to other disciplines. I have art historians, geographers, planners, coming to my courses. Jonas: I came out of an Environmental Resource Studies and anthropology, and I was exposed to heritage conservation through an anthropology related co-op. Formal education is important but internships and volunteer positions are key as well.

Lindsay: Are we reaching out to the engineers? There are 27,000 professional engineers in BC working on building envelopes, 107 BC Hydro energy managers working on the upgrades to provincial buildings, are we reaching that audience because they are going to be spending millions of dollars in the next decade? Kerr: Reflecting on teaching conservation at the University of Hong Kong, there is a difference between those university-based students looking for a degree vs. those coming for continuing education reasons seeking a certificate. For instance, a professional group of women in land development/management took this certificate course as they were looking to do development differently rather than conservation per se. A lot of their work is adaptive reuse, but others are instances where they are trying to knit new development into existing communities. They are looking for a broader context in which to understand their work. I find this encouraging, as they are self-selecting into the conservation sphere. Weatherston: I think of it more as community-based outreach and the focus on entry-level programs is very important in terms of integrating heritage principles into other practices. Even if we aren't actively reaching out, we are certainly being found by sociologists and environmentalists looking at heritage in a more critical and effective way than we have internally. Those from other programs are finding potential in preservation.

Woodcock: Assuming an "evangelical" posture is dangerous. Must know that what the conservation community has done is good but it is a *value-added* service, so when doing outreach it is important to maintain an open mind. Kaufman: A twist on converting people would be to say, how can we get other people to do our work? I suggest we might follow the curricular model of the Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico in which every architecture student takes a course about working with existing buildings. In US, around 70% of architectural work is with existing buildings. It is necessary for preservationists to get a basic preservation course integrated into other disciplinary programs. This would leave preservation programs, which will always be small, as places with value-added content, cultural, ethnography, cognitive mapping but also to maintain a specialty program for those who are interested.

Smith: I believe that "professional" has been defined in highly specific terms and that Willowbank defines "professionals" as those with professions, not necessarily an extensive education: our professionals are more likely to be carpenters and masons than planners or architects. I would argue that the younger generation is not as concerned with professional certification but interested in more practical skills. I question whether the future of heritage conservation is within or outside the university. University applications are declining and community college application rose 40% last year. The design-build sector of the industry in the fastest growing part of construction – without architect or engineering involvement. Same with planners: largest drop in real estate values in the US happened in communities designed by professional planners. There is a questioning of expertise. And I would say that expertise has to

do with theory *and* practice. ICOMOS has so far resisted including trades in the professions. I question the role that theory plays in these programs given the attitudes of a new generation. Ross: The focus on moving away from the professions here is interesting in light of the discussions at the APT conference around the need to better connect with engineers. I am concerned because there will be some professions, like engineering which will have a critical role to play as we face dilemmas around non-viable buildings in the age of peak oil and climate change. We will be facing new pressures. Smith: I would argue that engineers are quantitative and that young folks are absolutely moving away from this. Engineering students haven't embraced this notion that they should be green; UBC's sustainability course for engineers, for instance, is terrible. Ross: Engineers can play an important role in the profession. And I know engineering courses at UQAM teaching heritage well. Gersovitz: I believe Julian is misinterpreting the term "profession". The word he means is "job" which should be considered equally but distinctively. Theory and ethics based courses seem to produce more adaptive professionals, otherwise you have many people who know how to repoint, but don't know whether they should or not.

4. Education/Training Programs and the Promotion of Heritage Conservation to the General Public. Facilitator – Judy Oberlander, Judy Oberlander and Associates Inc.

Judy Oberlander: Spoke about heritage education for the wider community with summaries of the major programs in Canada and alternate programs. Today we will be looking at three programs that have excelled at bringing together professionals and "the community" together in training. Unfortunately, Heritage Montreal couldn't be here as their program has been a model for the past 30 years. Two questions:

- What are the opportunities for heritage educators/trainers to help broaden the heritage movement and promote conservation to a wider constituency?
- How can general audience courses and more specialized high-level programs work together to expand the reach and effectiveness of heritage conservation training?

I think it is really important for us to think about all the things we do to interact with the public that doesn't fit within a formal program:

- Community open houses and public consultation projects, heritage commissions, design review panels.
- Graduate students undertaking research in communities and internships.
- Sharing knowledge through publications (juned and not) and op-ed, letters to the editor, media interviews, these and other informal education methods can contribute to the general public's knowledge of heritage preservation issues
- Networking with professionals through their continuing education programs. We need to look not just at those entering the professions but those in mid-career.

Rebecca Bishop – Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Old School Program.

- "Old School" Courses – accessible and affordable public courses.

- Theory and practice of making decisions about the repair and rehabilitation of heritage buildings
- Taught by local professionals including architects, government officials, heritage consultants & trades people
- Potential stepping stone into diploma and degree programs
- Courses can be taken towards a certificate or individually; the first class is “Heritage 101”
- Material first presented in lecture, then in a field study and hands-on workshop format
- 15 unique courses have been developed, with 700 seats filled since launch, 430 unique registrants, 25% are professionals, 12 certificate graduates, most students are from Vancouver
- Financial structures: courses range from free to \$125 for a one-day course, professional development credits costs 25% more; instructors are paid based on an hourly rate of \$100/hour or \$500 for a full day course; funded through grants and donations; expenses are \$30,000/yr revenues - \$45,000/yr
- Marketing: printed newsletter and bi-weekly emails; paid newspaper ads; free event print and online listings; credit providers’ distribution; social media
- Old School courses qualify for professional continuing education for architects, planners, landscape architects, appraisers, engineers, etc.
- Challenges & future discussion: long-term feasibility of financial model ; finding new audiences; instructor fatigue and a small pool of qualified effective instructors; partnering with local post-secondary institutions.

David Holdsworth - This Old Edmonton House Public Seminar Series, Edmonton

- Runs annually during February, March and April; they provide a “Heritage 101” course that aims to give owners enough information to maintain the heritage integrity of their houses.
- Target audiences are the owners of heritage inventory listed properties; also owners in mature neighborhoods (will sometimes target a specific area), realtors, some students.
- 3 topic areas: 1) how to research properties and the administration process for getting on the inventory, 2) practical restoration practice, 3) design.
- Instructors are preservation professionals or in the trades; there is always a heritage professional on hand to maintain a focus on heritage preservation.
- Instruction format includes handouts, models for demonstration and an overall emphasis on heritage. After instructive time there is a question and answer period as most people come to the course when they have an issue with their house.
- House doctor: A walk around an old heritage house identifying issues and discussing options for repair and preservation.
- Initially offered for free but people wouldn’t show up, now a minimal charge to ward against cancellations. Instructors either teach for free or a small honorarium.
- Has attempted to make ties with educational institutions, but this has been variably successful.

Kayla Jonas - Heritage Resources Centre Heritage Workshops, Waterloo

- Based out of the University of Waterloo, they offer 6 workshops (five 2-day courses, one 4-day). Their goal is to be financially self-sustaining but accessible to public.
- First day of a class is all theory and the second day is a practical field course in community.
- Instructors are HRC staff.
- Attendees: municipal staff; heritage committee members; architectural conservancy of Ontario members; students; historic building owners.
- 7 – 25 attendees at workshops.
- They are connected to research and this is emphasized in workshops (conservation district workshop, architectural styles workshops, cultural heritage landscape workshop).
- Promotion through social media, networking events, website, professional organizations.
- No core funding; money comes through research contracts or small projects.

5. Discussion

Smith: While Willowbank has a diploma program which is internally focused, we have just set up a Centre for Cultural Landscapes as a way to connect externally to a much wider audience. The annual lecture series, the short courses, workshops and conferences will all be handled through that centre along with consulting and advocacy. The school is not in a good position to advocate because it represents all its students and instructors who may have many different views on any given subject. With the cultural landscapes centre we think we can advocate for policy change or goals that are not necessarily specific to one project. One target audience we have is the development community because it turns out they are very keen to get good information on the heritage field. They are interested in understanding where cultural resource management, natural resource management, and good design converge. We are hoping that out of that will grow a course specific to the development industry.

Urbaniak: This is a request for advice. We started with experimenting with a new model at Cape Breton University which is our housing applied research group which has been working in demonstration projects in housing revitalization. Essentially it is a citizens commission model: we've done it as both a design competition and as a single group where the student members (from various disciplines from the university and a community college) they meet with practitioners and subject area experts and spend some time on on-site work. In the end they complete the exercise with a series of recommendations, many of which are implemented. These are still early days with a model that is experimental so if others have insights or similar experiences I would be grateful.

Berdine: At the Heritage Branch we consider ourselves trainers with local government and community members. Attending other sectors' conferences (eg. Planning Institute of BC, Cascadia Green Building Council, Building Sustainable Communities) and integrating into what others are doing, can be a method for interdisciplinary communication.

Kerr: I really appreciate this discussion around the integration of heritage training at various levels. In 1989 I was Chair of ICOMOS Education and Training Committee, the subject of the conference that year. Today, the conservation education field hasn't grown very much (similar pattern in the US) and I think there are a number of factors: we are a big country, with a limited level of demand. Perhaps we have reached our limit. Of educators, the question then is, given this level of demand how we can improve what we are doing within this context. We should be proud that we are still here and our level of impact is growing.

6. Closing Remarks.