



National Roundtable on Heritage Education 2014

Breaking Down Silos: Disciplines, Institutions, Generations, and the Heritage Workforce

Thursday, October 2, 2014

Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST Building), Room 318
Holland College (300 Kent Street)
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

Presented with the generous support of:



Present:

Victoria Angel (Carleton University), Miranda Angus (University of Victoria), Robert Buttle (Nova Scotia Community College), Christina Cameron (Université de Montréal), Claire Campbell (Bucknell University, USA), Peter Coffman (SSAC & Carleton University), Luc Cyr (Nova Scotia Community College), Bruce Dawson (Govt. of Saskatchewan), Mathieu Dormaels (Université du Québec à Rimouski), Hilary Grant (SSAC, NL), Barbara Hogan (Yukon College & Govt., of Yukon), Shabnam Inanloo Dailoo (Roundtable Co-Chair, Athabasca University), Marc Johnson (Historic Joinery), Liz Kyte (Nova Scotia Community College), Judy Larmour (Athabasca University), Andrew MacAdam (Nova Scotia Community College), Nancy Oakley (ICOMOS Canada & Yukon Historical & Museums Association), Andrew Pamerter (Algonquin College), Larry Pearson (Govt. of Alberta), Lisa Prosper (Willowbank School of Restoration Arts), Nicholas Roquet (Université de Montréal), Robert Shipley (University of Waterloo), Josh Silver (Holland College), Angela Specht (Athabasca University), Tom Urbaniak (National Trust Board & Cape Breton University), Chris Wiebe (Roundtable Coordinator, Heritage Canada The National Trust), Shelley Withers (Nova Scotia Community College).

Goals for the Meeting:

- To map the disciplinary and institutional barriers that continue to challenge heritage conservation education and practice. To identify key barriers where the Roundtable can collectively work on building new relationships.
- To identify a pilot project(s) that allow the Roundtable to test out these new kinds of relationships.

1. Welcome, Background, and Goals for the Roundtable Meeting (Facilitator – Chris Wiebe)

Wiebe provided a brief overview of the Roundtable’s origins in 2004, its purpose, evolving goals and scope of activities. He underscored its key goals, including identifying and building the heritage workforce, promoting heritage conservation education, and breaking down barriers between disciplines and institutions. Please see Appendix A attached.

2. Subcommittee Updates & Discussion

Three action items were identified at Roundtable 2013 in Ottawa with subcommittees struck to move these areas forward.

a. Interdisciplinarity: Breaking Down Silos and Barriers – Bruce Dawson and Robert Shipley (with contributions from Susan Ross)

Dawson provided a brief overview of the Provincial Roundtable on Heritage Conservation Education and Training in Saskatchewan held in March 2014. Saskatchewan’s economy is booming and the construction industry is a key part of this growth. However, a by-product of this growth was that owners who wish to repair or restore their historic buildings report tremendous difficulties in finding design professionals, contractors, tradesworkers and craftspeople who have the time or proper heritage conservation skills to undertake these projects. As a result, work was not being done well or in a timely fashion, leading to increased costs and, in some cases, either the loss of these buildings entirely or the historic character-defining elements that make them special.

As Ross was unable to attend the Roundtable, Dawson then presented her ideas about the challenge of interdisciplinarity for heritage conservation. Ross identified two basic visions for breaking down barriers:

- That there is a whole and bringing it back together;
- That there are separate pieces and trying to make a new whole in which they fit.

There are challenges in understanding or representing the problem: quantities (many players and discipline types); types of educational training; time (stages or processes in which these disciplines engage with heritage); the objectives of the disciplines (heritage, conservation, or...). To organize and make sense of this complexity, the key question is at which stage(s) do the “silos” happen or between which stages? Who is involved?

She said then that in each area heritage educators need to ask questions about our objectives, our role(s) in relation to the larger ideas of heritage and ‘complete’ processes of conservation. A matrix was then offered as a way to compile the information around who is involved at each stage.

	Public	Trades	Academia
1. Maintaining	Critical	Critical	---
2. Understanding	Critical	Important	Critical
3. Planning	---	---	Critical
4. Intervening	---	Critical	Important
5. Using	Critical	Important	---
6. Monitoring	---	Important	Critical

b. Trades Education: Giving Value to the Trades (Andrew Pamerter & Josh Silver)

How to give value to the trades? Recognize how critical they are? Pamerter pointed to Historic Scotland’s landmark report *Traditional Building Skills: A Strategy for Sustaining and Developing Traditional Building Skills in Scotland* (2011) and English Heritage’s *Skills Needs Analysis 2013: Repair, Maintenance and Energy Efficiency Retrofit of Traditional (pre-1919) Buildings in England and Scotland*.

Pamerter had spoken with a number of Algonquin graduates, contractors and colleagues – there did seem to be some energy to continue a conversation and support some action in nurturing the trades in heritage specifically and heritage in general. Key insights:

- Need to counter our current economic models which make heritage trades uncompetitive (e.g. Carbon tax on demolition?)
- Explore heritage certification through Unions
- Guild system
- Locating knowledge (making it accessible)
- Use title of “Conservator“

During conversations with Algonquin graduates, tradespeople and employers working in the field of the conservation of built heritage, he had encountered a number of common statements:

- There is a demand for tradespeople with an understanding of the requirements of historic buildings
- Provide training – colleges, on the job-site
- There is often a challenge to find acknowledgement of this need through wages, consultation and relations with clients and professionals
- Collaboration on projects produces more effective and economical results
- Job ready workers are a challenge to produce/find
- Provide job experiences – internships, co-op, work placements
- Recruit effectively for quality candidates
- Acknowledgement of skill set through certification/guild may be a way to promote, recruit, validate, differentiate practitioners
- Greater understanding across disciplines should be fostered – trades/consultants/specifiers/architects/planners/engineers etc.

c. University/College Heritage Action Successes (please see document attached)

A document illustrating recent initiatives by heritage conservation programs/courses to use student ideas and energy to generate solutions for endangered Canadian heritage sites.

d. Discussion - Key barriers? Where do we go from here?

- Heritage Action Successes – Profiling this activity helps university programs demonstrate/justify what they do. Should do more of this.
- Silver – Heritage programs need to raise their profile, get more material online. The challenge is to quantify the impact of heritage interventions – tourism numbers? Other data?
- Roquet – Useful to have a source of courses given at different university or college levels online (makes comparing offerings easier) and to have a clearing house for employment opportunities. On the subject of institutional collaboration, Canadian heritage education providers should look at sharing resources (e.g. providing credits for field trips or work experiences).
- There needs to be more visibility for the heritage education sector, and this can be achieved through more sharing and collaboration between institutions. Heritage Canada’s education listings need to be updated.
- On the subject of bringing value to the heritage trades, collaboration between the schools primarily involved (Algonquin, NSCC, Holland College, Willowbank) would be invaluable. Need to publicize stories of students getting jobs. Need a common language for accreditation to give value to trades: CAHP could be key for this, but could also work within existing regulatory bodies (Red Seal?) rather than creating a new regulatory body.
- Angel – How do we see heritage education reflecting the expansion of the field from heritage buildings to notion of the historic environment? Everything is expanding and there is a movement away from using “heritage” language, even though pursuing heritage goals. Prosper – Ideas around landscape are driving expansion. Roquet – Is the opening up of heritage a threat or an opportunity? Campbell – There needs to be more disciplinary blending, for example heritage and environmental history.

3. Roundtable Pilot Project Development (Facilitator - Chris Wiebe)

a. Review Heritage Action Projects (see document attached).

What were the next steps in these projects that you may not have had the time or resources to undertake? Using these projects as inspiration, are there opportunities to undertake a new project(s) as a Roundtable?

b. Defining 2 or 3 projects with greatest potential impact to actively address these barriers (e.g. institutional, community, corporate collaboration)

c. Next Steps – identifying goals, committing to actions

Discussion

Defining a Project

- Silver -Need to integrate industry into any pilot project model as there is hypersensitivity around perceptions that projects are taking away work.
- Oakley pointed to collaborative models like the one developed by the Canadian Museums Association during its Whitehorse 2013 conference.
- Pamerter – At Algonquin, people are approaching them, emphasizing the need for help saving older buildings and seeking to harness educational power.
- Campbell – Would be useful to choose a site and then have students from different disciplines looking at it. Define projects not just by site, but by the programs available to participate.
- Pearson – Suggested nomadic courses that could seize on opportunities throughout Canada, play to the strengths of local/regional institutions, and expose students to different regions.
- Withers - Could integrate distance learning students as well. Some students would need to be on-site and hands on while others could work remotely.
- Dawson – Would need to link supply and demand. How do you hook up projects that are not commercially viable for private sector to bid on? Would this be the focus?
- Coffman – Stressed focusing on what students need to get out of any field school project. How to ensure academic credits?
- Roquet – There would be great value in interdisciplinary learning: e.g. connecting architecture students with masons.
- Working out the funding and the length of the program will be key.

Potential Models

- Prosper identified the need for research. Where do field schools already exist? Tania Martin (ULaval) currently runs a [Field School in Built Heritage and Cultural Landscapes](#) in the Gaspé each year in May/June.
- Hogan pointed to archaeological field schools in the Yukon which run in 6 week cycles and students get a university credit.
- Angel pointed to E.R.A.'s "Culture of Outports" program as a potential model: winter involves research oriented activities, while summer brings students on site to work with communities. Urbaniak pointed out the need to leverage the social dimensions of any projects.
- Historic Corps in the US uses volunteers to restore National Parks properties. Katimavik in Canada. The key would be to have meaningful results that inspire students, institutions, and funders.

Next Steps

- Who is going to take on this work? It was suggested that Heritage Canada could help prioritize projects and seek geographical partners. For instance, Parks Canada is in need of partners. A link with Heritage Canada's Main Street program could also be possible. Potential partnership with Ontario Trades organizations?

- Need to explore getting academic credits. Need an institution to consistently host a course, credits can then be transferred to other institutions.
- That the Roundtable's current subcommittees be dissolved and a new one created on Pilot Projects. These members volunteered to participate: Inanloo Dailoo, Silver, Oakley, Pamentor, Shipley, Angus, Grant, Withers. Others would be invited to join.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. Wind up current Sub-committees (Interdisciplinarity and the Trades) and create a new subcommittee on Pilot Projects to further develop a project(s) with the aim to launch in 2015.**
- 2. Update Heritage Conservation Program and Course Listings on the National Trust website. Find a way to include links to student research and activities.**

Appendix A:

National Roundtable – Overview 2014 (only available in English)

Appendix B:

University/College Heritage Action Successes (only available in English)