



## HCF's 2013 Top Ten Most Endangered Places List

The Heritage Canada Foundation released its ninth annual Top Ten Most Endangered Places List on June 26, 2013.

The selection—presented here from the West to East Coast—was compiled from the results of HCF's call for nominations as well as those stories and news items followed throughout the year.

### **MAIN POST OFFICE – 349 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC – VANCOUVER'S POSTAL TEMPLE DESTINED TO BE “LOST IN THE MAIL”**

**Sold by Canada Post with no heritage protection to an investment firm, Vancouver's massive mid-century modern “Taj Mahal with escalators” faces demolition for new development.**

#### **Why it matters**

Built in 1953-1958, this monumental downtown Vancouver property is the finest example of International Style architecture in the city and one of the federal government's most distinguished post-war buildings. The 5-storey structure—capped with an oblong 3-storey slab—covers an entire city block (1.2 hectares) and encloses a total floor area of almost 16 acres (686,000sq ft). Designed by the firm McCarter Nairne & Partners, the building was constructed of sumptuous materials, used state of the art technology, and contains numerous commissioned artworks. It was called a “Taj Mahal with escalators” when built.

#### **Why it's endangered**

The Main Post Office was sold in January 2013 to the British Columbia Investment Management Corporation (bcIMC). Canada Post will be moving all operations to a new processing plant in Richmond scheduled to open in 2014.

The building is listed on Vancouver's “Recent Landmarks” inventory, and Heritage Vancouver included it on its Top Ten Endangered Sites in 2012 and 2013. Unfortunately, the Main Post Office has never been afforded the protection of municipal heritage designation, as municipal bylaws have no legal standing for properties owned by a higher level of government. Moreover, as Canada Post is a crown corporation and not a federal department, there was no obligation for it to participate in federal heritage processes overseen by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO), which could have helped put heritage conditions on the sale of the building. In fact, no FHBRO evaluation of the property's heritage significance was conducted, as it requires the owner's consent.





Photo: Heritage Vancouver

Real estate insiders say the Main Post Office is one of the few remaining sites in downtown Vancouver that can accommodate large format retailers and that demolition and a new, mixed-use residential development is the likely outcome without government intervention.

### Where it stands

In a January 2013 newspaper article bcIMC said that, “the status of the existing building will be considered as part of the whole development planning process.” The immense size, large open floor plates, and above average ceiling heights would seem to bode well for adaptively reusing

the building, but the temptation to demolish the building, rezone, and maximize the height will be strong. To date, no redevelopment plan has been tendered by the developer.

## **ROSSDALE POWER PLANT – 10155 – 96 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta – PLUG MAY BE PULLED ON DOWNTOWN EDMONTON’S HISTORIC INDUSTRIAL LANDMARK**

**The City of Edmonton is balking at the cost of rehabilitating the decommissioned industrial site and contemplating stripping it of its heritage status and demolishing.**



Photo: Jack Clark

### Why it matters

Prominently situated on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River below the downtown core, the Rossdale Power Plant was designated as a Provincial Historic Resource in 2001 after an application for partial demolition by then owner EPCOR Utilities Inc. The power plant consists of three separate but interrelated structures: the Low Pressure Plant, including the Turbine House and Boiler House, the Administration Building, and Pumphouse No.1. Constructed between 1931 and 1954, these buildings represent the history of electrical power generation in Edmonton and Alberta. It is the last steel and brick building of its size remaining in Edmonton and it is the only power plant from this period of this scale in Alberta.

### Why it’s endangered

For the past several years, the City of Edmonton has touted a rehabilitated Rossdale Power Plant as the centre of its plans for a showpiece riverside arts and cultural centre. Transferred by EPCOR to the City of Edmonton in spring 2013, the City is now balking at a report which says \$4.5 million in immediate repairs are needed just to keep it stable, with a further \$87.3 million needed to upgrade the facility and the 1.8 hectare site for commercial tenants. The City is opening contemplating requesting that provincial heritage designation be rescinded and the plant demolished. The plant does not have a municipal heritage designation.



Photo: Jack Clark

### Where it stands

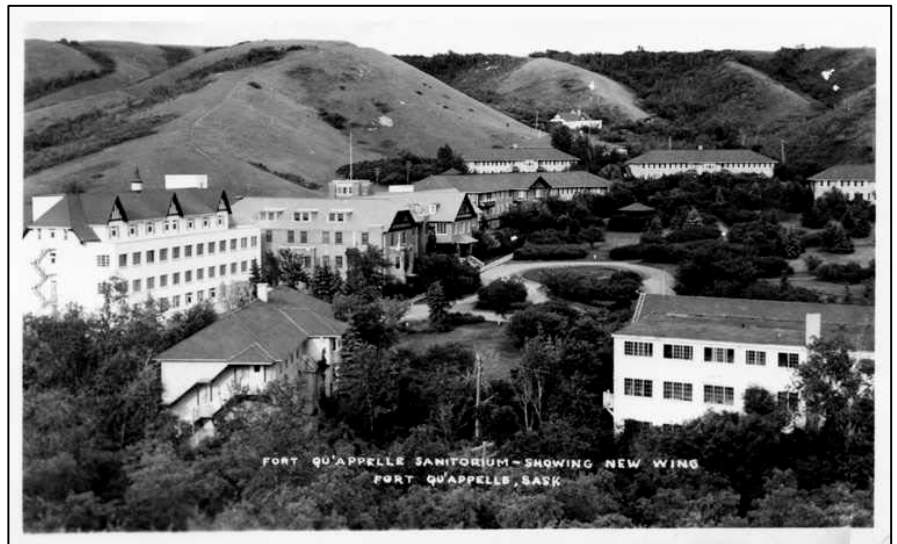
While some have openly mused about leaving the plant as an industrial ruin, heritage advocates are calling for the City to maintain provincial heritage designation and commit the required funds to stabilize the buildings and allow time for a repurposing plan to develop. The Alberta Minister of Culture has said they will not support the idea of de-designation until all options have been considered. A further report on the viability of the plant rehab is expected in July at which time City Council will make a decision on its fate.

## Fort Qu’Appelle Sanatorium – Fort Qu’Appelle, SK – SASKATCHEWAN’S LAST TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM: A SOLUTION FOR ITS FUTURE NEEDED BADLY

**Sold by the Province in 2007, the once beautiful “Fort San” complex is in need of a redevelopment plan**

### Why it matters

Picturesquely situated in a coulee on Echo Lake a few kilometres from the town of Fort Qu’Appelle, the Sanatorium (known as “Fort San”) operated as a tuberculosis sanatorium from 1912 to 1971. The 184-acre property contained numerous Tudor Revival and Arts and Crafts-style buildings designed by two of Saskatchewan’s most distinguished architects on a beautiful, uplifting campus containing a bandstand and pleasant pathways. At its peak, Fort San was the primary tuberculosis treatment centre in the province accommodating over 350 patients at one time. The property was later adapted for other uses: from 1967-1991 it hosted the Saskatchewan Summer School of the Arts and from 1992-2004, the provincially operated Echo Valley Conference Centre.



### Why it’s endangered

In 2007, the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation sold Fort San to Echo Valley Resorts Ltd. The Qu’Appelle Valley community has long recognized and supported the heritage value of Fort San. That same year, the Resort Village of Fort San designated four sanatorium buildings – the Main Lodge, Dr. Jenner’s Residence, Administration Building, and Nurse’s Residence – and the broad, landscaped front lawn as Municipal Heritage Property. The undesignated buildings on the property have since been demolished. In the intervening years, there have been concerns from the surrounding community about the slow pace and transparency of redevelopment efforts on the property, as well as concerns that the site has not been properly secured and suffered from vandalism and lack of maintenance.

## Where it stands

The Resort Village of Fort San has identified the retention and redevelopment of the historic Fort San property as a key policy objective for 2012-2016.

## 24 and 28 King Street East, Gore Park, Hamilton, Ont.—THREATENED DUE TO QUESTIONABLE CITY DEAL WITH DEVELOPER

**City of Hamilton plays fast and loose with Victorian-era commercial buildings that are key components of historic Gore Park street wall.**



## Why they matter

Numbers 24 and 28 King Street East make up part of an intact row of historic buildings that line Gore Park, located at the heart of Hamilton's civic and commercial core. Although modified at street level, the buildings—dating from 1876 and 1874 respectively—have intact upper floors that contribute to the unique downtown street wall which includes pre-confederation commercial structures. Together they help define the character of Gore Park and are considered by many to be integral to the area's rejuvenation.

## Why they're endangered

The Municipal Heritage Committee, with support from the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO), made recommendations that the entire block be designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA). However, the City reached an agreement with the owner, Wilson-Blanchard, not to designate the block in exchange for a promise not to demolish numbers 18-22 (according to the owner their façades would be retained), while full demolition of the two Victorian-era buildings could proceed—despite there being no immediate site plan for redevelopment. A demolition permit has been issued.

## Where things stand

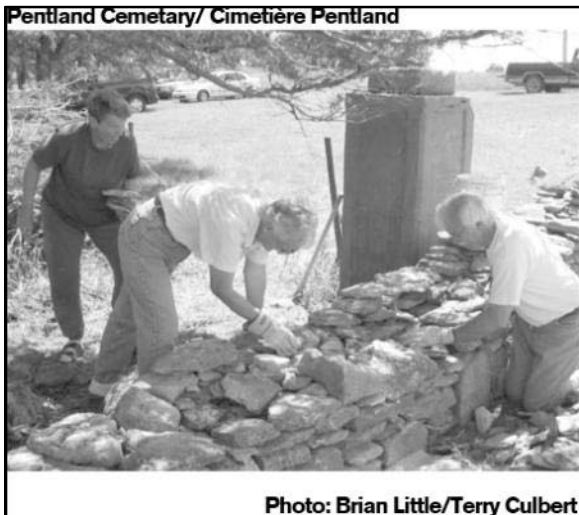
ACO has written five times to Michael Chan, the Ontario Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, who has the power under the OHA to intervene, but to no avail. Last month, David Blanchard told CBC Hamilton that he would be open to saving the façades if the City came forward with financial support, but by mid-June he reported that no action had been taken.

A demolition crew has been hired and hoarding will soon be installed.

A [petition](#) has been created asking City Council to call an emergency meeting to require that Wilson-Blanchard retain the façades so they can be incorporated in future designs for the site.

## Amherst Island, north-eastern shore of Lake Ontario, Loyalist Township, Ont.— CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE, SITE OF PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINE PLANT

## Why it matters



Situated along the north-eastern shore of Lake Ontario just west of Kingston, Amherst Island is 20 km long and 5 km wide. Because the island is only accessible by ferry, the pastoral features that have contributed to its value as a cultural and natural heritage landscape have been preserved over time. Three properties on the island are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA): Neilson's Store Museum and Cultural Centre, Trinity United Church, and Pentland Cemetery. Loyalist Township has identified Amherst Island's rich collection of Irish Stone Fences under Section 39 of the *OHA* for their cultural heritage value. The Loyalist Township Heritage Committee has initiated the Dry Stone Fence By-Law and is documenting over 100 historic structures of cultural heritage significance on the island.

As well as the existence of significant historic structures, the island's clearly defined geographic areas and landscape features reflect the original settlement, including the roads, farm lot layout, farmsteads and villages—remnants of early Irish-Scottish settlement—most of which have remained almost unchanged over the past 100 years.

A recent archaeological assessment of the island by Stantec Consulting Ltd. concluded an elevated potential for significant archaeological deposits of integrity.

Amherst Island is also an important natural landscape. It is located on the Atlantic Migratory Flyway and is internationally recognized for concentrations of wintering raptors (hawks, eagles and a wide variety of owl species). The Owl Woods nature preserve was established by the Kingston Field Naturalists, two landowners and Loyalist Township. Important Bird Area or IBA Canada (an international conservation initiative coordinated by BirdLife International) has identified Amherst Island as an Important Bird Area of Global Significance.



## Why it's endangered

Algonquin Power/Windlectric is proposing the development of an industrial wind turbine power installation that will be spread across the island comprising 36 wind turbines of 51-storeys with a 2-acre blade sweep area. The project includes a number of individual access roads, a cement plant, a transformer substation, and a network of overhead power lines.

## Where things stand



Photo: Brian Litle/Terry Culbert

The final public open house took place last March. A series of renewable energy approval reports submitted by Windlectric have been reviewed by Loyalist Township and other stakeholders. With the ability of municipalities to regulate renewable energy undertakings having been removed by the Province in 2009, a Renewal Energy Approval process was established under the *Environmental Protection Act* instead. Final approval authority rests with the Ministry of the Environment. A municipality's role is limited to an advisory capacity.

In April, Loyalist Township sent a copy of the completed Municipal Consultation Form to the Ministry of the Environment and Windlectric wherein it recommends against a Renewable Energy Approval of the project until a number of substantive issues are addressed, including those dealing with natural heritage and cultural assets.

### **Kingston Collegiate Vocational Institute (KCVI) – 235 Frontenac Street, Kingston, Ont.—SCHOOL BOARD RECOMMENDING CLOSURE OF OLDEST SCHOOL IN ONTARIO IN FAVOUR OF NEW CONSTRUCTION**



Photo: Andrew MacKinnon

**The Limestone and District School Board has recommended closure of The fully enrolled KCVI—a vibrant downtown neighbourhood school—in favour of a new composite high school, which is dependent on provincial funding.**

#### **Why it matters**

Kingston Collegiate Vocational Institute (KCVI) was founded in 1792 and moved to its current location in 1892. It is considered the earliest secondary school in Ontario. The oldest remaining wing dates to 1915 (the original was destroyed by fire) and building modifications and additions were made in 1932 and the 1960s. It is the only high school in Kingston built in the distinctive Collegiate Gothic style, known for its craftsmanship and

elegance of design. It is the only secondary school located in the downtown area within easy walking distance to residential neighbourhoods. It is a local landmark and an integral part of the broader institutional precinct that includes Queen's University, Kingston General Hospital and related elementary schools.

In 2012, KCVI was ranked as the top performing school in the Limestone District School Board by the Fraser Institute and in the top 10% of public schools in Canada.

#### **Why it's endangered**

In 2011, the Limestone District School Board undertook a program and accommodation review that has resulted in a recommendation to close KCVI (fully enrolled with a waiting list), along with another secondary school, in favour of the construction of a new composite high school.

## Where things stand

Although there has been little capital investment in KCVI over the past 10 years, the building remains in fair condition, according to an engineering report. The Kingston Municipal Heritage Committee has recommended that the school be designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, but City Council decided to defer that decision until after the school closure process has concluded.

The board's recommendation for closure will be incorporated into a business plan and included with its application for provincial funding in October. Should the provincial funding for new construction not come through, a secondary board recommendation would see KCVI remain open, but would require provincial funds for rehabilitation work. With enrolment at capacity, the school plays a vital role in the vitality of the downtown area. Enormous community support (including Queen's University) favours retention of KCVI. Advocacy groups *Save KCVI* and *Save Kingston City Schools* have active awareness raising strategies in place.

## POW Camp 30, 2020 Lambs Road, Clarington, Ont—LOSING THE BATTLE AGAINST TIME AND VANDALS

### Why it matters

In 1925 John Jury donated 106 acres of land to the Province of Ontario for the construction of a reformatory school, on the outskirts of Bowmanville. During WWII it was transformed into a Canadian-run POW camp for hundreds of captured German officers, including such notable officers as U-Boat Commanders Otto Kretschmer and Wolfgang Heyda. Known as Camp 30, it is the last intact POW camp in Canada. After the war it was home to a succession of private schools that took advantage of the ready-made campus, playing fields and generating plant. The last school, Darul Uloom Islamic University vacated in 2008. The following year it was purchased for private development.



Photo: Catherine Starr

Acting on the advice of the Ontario Heritage Trust, the municipality of Clarington included the site and six of what were originally 18 buildings, on its Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest.

### Why it's endangered

The property was purchased by Kaitlin Group who wants to develop housing subdivisions on the northern and southern portions of the site. Although the developer has decided not to demolish the POW Camp 30's buildings and has expressed a willingness to donate that section of the property to the municipality, it is far too big a project for the small municipality to take on. In the meantime, Camp 30 has fallen victim to vandalism and fire that has resulted in the demolition of the former administration building.

Officer's Mess/Mess des officiers



The municipality has given Kaitlin Group permission to demolish up to eight buildings that hold little architectural or historic value, such as locker rooms and storage facilities. The main structures—the administrative buildings, dormitories, concert hall and infirmary, however, are worthy of preservation.

### Where things stand

A request to nominate POW Camp 30 has been filed with the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and work is underway to try and establish a stewardship foundation to help restore the site. Clarington has commissioned an Integrated Planning Solutions study

that made a number of recommendations, including converting it into a tourism and convention venue. However Faye Langmaid, manager of special projects for Clarington, told the *Globe and Mail* that the project is far too big for the municipality to handle on its own.

## Cap-des-Rosier Lighthouse National Historic Site — 1331, boul. Cap-des-Rosiers, Gaspé, QC — IMPERIAL LIGHTHOUSE, TALLEST IN CANADA

**Local community left holding the financial bag as federal government seeks to unload a “surplus” heritage lighthouse.**

### Why it matters

Cap-des-Rosiers Lighthouse was erected between 1854 and 1858 atop a rugged cliff near the village of Cap-des-Rosiers, an important area for Gaspé marine traffic where the St. Lawrence River meets the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Standing 34 metres high, this monumental lighthouse is the tallest in Canada. Built of regional limestone and faced with white marble, it has a gracefully tapered circular design and a large glass lantern and is a prominent visual landmark in the local area owing to its scale and silhouette. It is considered a showpiece of the Quebec agency of the Canadian Coast Guard (a special agency within the Department of Fisheries and Oceans) and remains an operating light essential to marine safety. The lighthouse was recognized as a National Historic Site in 1973 and as a Classified Federal Heritage Building in 1994, the highest heritage category for federal property.



### Why it's endangered



In 2008, through the efforts of Senators, Members of Parliament, heritage organizations and volunteer citizens, the *Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act* (HLP) was passed into law promising protection to these vulnerable federal heritage sites. In May 2010, however, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) declared

surplus virtually all its lighthouses, numbering close to 1,000. This action effectively emasculated the HLP and shifted the responsibility for lighthouse protection entirely onto local communities.

The Act allows lighthouses that are declared “surplus to operational requirements” to be designated under the HLP, but only if a person or body submits a written commitment to buy or otherwise acquire them and protect their heritage character in the event that they are designated.

Canadians had until May 2012 to nominate lighthouses that matter to them for designation under the *HLP*. In the end, 347 lighthouses, including Cap-de-Rosiers, were nominated for designation.

However, all of them will require an acceptable business plan from an organization or group willing to acquire and invest in them, or they will not be eligible for designation. Cap-de-Rosiers—like other high-profile and unquestionably iconic and historic Canadian lighthouses—is a large and complex structure that will need regular investment and special conservation skills and equipment. It will be a huge challenge for the small local community to take on the responsibility for upkeep without help from outside funding. While Cap-des-Rosiers is a popular destination with seasonal tourists and welcomes over 7,000 visitors each year, revenue potential is limited at this relatively remote site.

### Where it stands

To date, no community group has submitted a business plan to take over the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse has been submitted to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. This leaves the fate of the lighthouse and its heritage designation under the HLP in a precarious limbo. Meanwhile the physical and structural integrity of Cap-des-Rosiers Lighthouse is threatened in the short term: the lantern requires an urgent restoration and water infiltration is occurring around the windows due to cracks in the cladding of the tower. The last refurbishment of the lighthouse facing was done over 20 years ago.

### 15 and 19 Wellington Row “jellybean houses”, Saint John, NB — ARCHITECTURAL ORPHANS WILL SOON BE VICTIMS OF DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT

The two City-owned iconic buildings known as the “jellybean houses,” an integral part of the heritage landscape that survived the Great Fire of 1877, remain vacant, unheated and deteriorating.

### Why they matter



Photo: John Winder



Built circa 1860 and home of the first lending library, this grouping of three Second Empire row houses known as the “jellybean houses” on Wellington Row in Saint John, N.B., are among the rare survivors of the Great Fire of 1877 fire, which destroyed 80% of the city. Their distinctive carved windows and brightly coloured paint make them iconic structures in Saint John’s historic downtown.



### **Why they’re endangered**

The two buildings that are owned by the City are vacant, have been unheated for 5 years, and are in grave disrepair. Pipes have been allowed to freeze and burst, resulting in buckling hardwood floors, falling plaster ceilings and mould. The City bought the houses in 2008 for possible use in the development of the Peel Plaza justice complex, but plans for the project changed, leaving the houses without purpose.

### **Where things stand**

The City has declared the buildings to be surplus property. The façades are in fairly good condition, and the colourful exteriors are still very visible. The fire escapes have been dismantled to keep out trespassers and temporary plywood cladding has been installed, but the buildings remain without power or heat. The third, privately owned blue house (#13) is occupied by several tenants, including Michelle Roy-Carson, who describes her apartment as a “hidden gem” that features marble fireplaces, large archways and brass heaters.

Uptown Saint John Inc., an umbrella organization that represents over 650 businesses and property owners in the uptown’s 20-block Business Improvement Area, has spoken up in favour of refurbishing the buildings.

### **Dennis Building - 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, NS – UNIQUE HALIFAX BUILDING COULD FACE DEMOLITION DUE TO LACK OF MAINTENANCE FROM PROVINCE**

**Once called “the finest office building in eastern Canada,” Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister now says building may be “past its due date.”**

### **Why it matters**

A landmark on the corner of Granville and Georges Streets in downtown Halifax, the Dennis Building was constructed in 1863 to house the dry goods firm T. & E. Kenny, owned by brothers Thomas and Edward, both highly influential in provincial and national affairs. Of stone construction with horizontal string courses and prominent bracketed cornices, it was specifically designed to complement the architectural context of Province House Square. William Dennis, owner of the Halifax Herald, purchased the building in 1900 when T. & E. Kenny relocated. Ravaged by fire 1912, it was almost



completely lost. Prominent architect Henry David Jost was hired to renew the interior and add three stories. He also had the original granite façade reinforced. The Herald later moved, and it was taken over by the Government of Nova Scotia for office space.

There are confirmed tunnels no longer in use that run under some of the buildings in the area, and one of the known entrances lies in the basement of the Dennis Building.

### Why it's endangered



In May 2013, the provincial government evacuated 50 employees for safety concerns after a mould problem was discovered in one of the upper floors. Water leaks and air quality issues are an ongoing concern. Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister Maurice Smith said it is not clear whether employees will be returned to the building, as crews are still evaluating the problem.

Other historic buildings in the vicinity of Province House Square that also followed its classical-

inspired design have been demolished. An unrealized 2006 redevelopment plan included several scenarios for the Dennis building: partial to full demolition that could incorporate the façade into a new building.

### Where it stands

There is no word from the Hon. Maurice Smith on whether or not the mould problem can be fixed, but after years of inadequate maintenance and repair, the building is in poor condition. It was closed earlier in the year due to water infiltration. Advocates for the retention of the Dennis Building fear the condition issue may be used by the Province to abandon it.