

Barry and Linda Coutts, Grimsby, Ontario for the restoration of Nelles House

Barry and Linda Coutts spent the past 40 years lovingly restoring their home, Nelles Manor, successfully returning it to its original Georgian-era roots. The two-storey house, with its solid stone walls, broad end chimneys and louvered windows was built between 1788 and 1798 by Colonel Robert Nelles, a United Empire Loyalist, and was occupied by a descendent of Robert's family up until its sale to the Coutts in 1971.

The house saw many changes over the years. Cut up into 8 apartments in the 1930s, Barry and Linda have returned the house to a single family home as part of their extensive restoration strategy. Today, Nelles Manor is a focal point in the community and serves as an anchor for the character and charm of Main Street West.



Motivated by their respect for the area's heritage and their desire to preserve the Nelles family's history, Barry and Linda have spent countless days uncovering, repairing and replicating the many outstanding features of the home, including its original black walnut floors and paneling, the hidden plaster walls, and the house's seven fireplaces. Their pride and joy is the drawing room, where Colonel Nelles worked during his years as a British military man, storekeeper, mill owner and justice of the peace.

Nelles Manor is one of the oldest continually inhabited homes in the province and one of the few houses in the Niagara area to have survived the battles and skirmishes of the War of 1812.

Barry and Linda were presented with an Achievement Award at the Ontario Heritage Conference awards banquet on June 2, 2012. The award was co-presented with Janice Hogg of the Grimsby Heritage Advisory Committee.