

## Connecting Heritage Sites Across the Country: The Canadian Register of Historic Places

by Ellen Cunningham *Canadians now have a chance, as never before, to learn about and value our country's recognized historic places. And ironically, it is modern technology that is giving us better access to our traditions and history.*

*The Canadian Register of Historic Places is an online searchable database of historic places of significance to communities, cities, provinces, territories and the country. It is part of the Historic Places Initiative, a national program that has all levels of government working together to enable Canadians to learn about, value, country's historic places.*

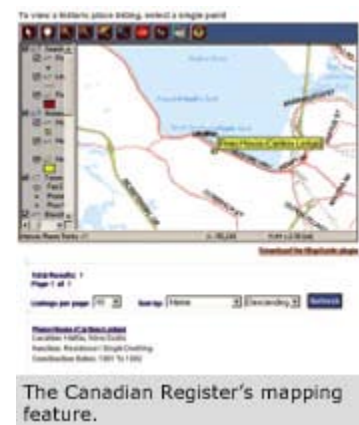
### Historicplaces.ca

For years, much of the documentation historic places has not been readily available; it has been stored away in government filing cabinets and in provincial, territorial and federal databases. With the new Canadian Register of Historic Places you can now easily access this information by visiting [historicplaces.ca](http://historicplaces.ca). Working together, Canada's various levels of government created this national register. It is flexible enough to work with the range of heritage programs across the country and uniform enough to make it possible to search for any one of Canada's 17,000 recognized historic places. The Canadian Register does not replace existing heritage designation and recognition programs already in place across the country. Nor does it replace local, provincial, territorial and federal databases, some of which are available online. Rather, it complements them. In fact, the Canadian Register brings these separate databases together into one single database. Now travellers, educators, researchers, planners and conservation specialists can search recognized historic places in any location in Canada. Another benefit is the Register's uniform documentation — you can search by name, location, keyword or other search tools, making the quest for information about Canada's historic places simple and straightforward. Not the least of the Register's benefits is that separate listings for historic places that have been recognized by more than one level of government are linked. For example, the Halifax Public Gardens in Nova Scotia are listed twice on the Canadian Register, once as a National Historic Site and once as a Municipally Registered Property, and a link connects these two listings. This innovative feature helps people understand the many values that are ascribed to individual historic places.



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### A Work In Progress

The Canadian Register is a work in progress. The current listings — approximately 2,000 — on the Register represent only a fraction of Canada's recognized historic places. Every week provincial, territorial and federal registrars nominate new places to the Register. This takes time because the information required for each historic place may not be immediately available or may need to be updated. Across the country, research is being done and documentation is being prepared to ensure the Canadian Register's information is as current and accurate as possible. Over the next few years the Canadian Register will grow to include the nation's 17,000 currently recognized historic places. This number will increase even further as Canada's various levels of government continue to recognize more historic places.

### Why List a Historic Place on the Canadian Register?

Listing a historic place on the Canadian Register means that information about Canada's abundance of heritage is available to everyone. The Register increases awareness and appreciation for Canada's historic places, thereby encouraging the conservation and restoration of these places. Furthermore, the heritage values associated with each historic place are detailed in the online listings in a section called the Statement of Significance, which means that valuable stories of why our places are important are widely available. At the community level, the Canadian Register helps promote visits to local historic places and assists local governments develop heritage tourism, which has significant economic spin-offs. It also assists government authorities, land-use planners, developers and others involved in conserving historic places to plan by providing accurate information.

In some cases, as with the Government of Canada's Commercial Heritage Properties Incentive Fund ([www.pc.gc.ca/commercialproperties](http://www.pc.gc.ca/commercialproperties)), financial incentives are tied to being listed on the Register. The Canadian Register is an information tool, not a regulatory mechanism, and therefore imposes no legal restrictions or obligations.

### **What is a Historic Place?**

The Canadian Register's historic places can be structures, buildings, groups of buildings, districts, landscapes, archaeological sites or other places recognized for their heritage value. The key is that the historic places have some type of value of importance to a community, city, province, territory or to the entire nation. A historic place may have a range of values associated with it including aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual. These values are documented in the Statement of Significance, which is included with every historic place listing on the Canadian Register.

### **What Places Do You Value?**

We can all take an active role in determining what places we value and wish to conserve. In doing so, we become better informed about our history and more involved in documenting and safeguarding the places that matter to us. This approach helps remove the perception that conserving Canada's heritage is elitist. Our heritage belongs to everyone and it is the responsibility of all individuals and communities to conserve it. Do you know of a place that is already recognized that you would like to see listed on the Canadian Register? Contact your provincial, territorial or federal registrar regarding its eligibility for nomination. If there is a place not yet recognized, you may seek designation either at the local, provincial/territorial or national level.

### **Contact Us**

Provincial, territorial and federal registrars

Alberta: [alberta.crhpi@gov.ab.ca](mailto:alberta.crhpi@gov.ab.ca)

British Columbia: [heritage@gov.bc.ca](mailto:heritage@gov.bc.ca)

Government of Canada (Federal): [adpf-dfhd@pc.gc.ca](mailto:adpf-dfhd@pc.gc.ca)

Prince Edward Island: [heritageplaces@gov.pe.ca](mailto:heritageplaces@gov.pe.ca)

Manitoba: [hrb@gov.mb.ca](mailto:hrb@gov.mb.ca)

New Brunswick: [rhp.rlp@gnb.ca](mailto:rhp.rlp@gnb.ca)

Nova Scotia: [registrarhpi@gov.ns.ca](mailto:registrarhpi@gov.ns.ca)

Nunavut: [historicplaces@gov.nu.ca](mailto:historicplaces@gov.nu.ca)

Ontario: [historicplaces@mcl.gov.on.ca](mailto:historicplaces@mcl.gov.on.ca)

Québec: [registraire.biensculturels@mcc.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:registraire.biensculturels@mcc.gouv.qc.ca)

Saskatchewan: [historicplaces@cyr.gov.sk.ca](mailto:historicplaces@cyr.gov.sk.ca)

Newfoundland and Labrador: [info@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:info@heritagefoundation.ca)

Northwest Territories: [culturalplaces@gov.nt.ca](mailto:culturalplaces@gov.nt.ca)

Yukon: [HPI.Registrar@gov.yk.ca](mailto:HPI.Registrar@gov.yk.ca)

Canadian Registrar: [historicplaces@pc.gc.ca](mailto:historicplaces@pc.gc.ca)

### **Special Features of the Canadian Register**

## **Mapping Canada's Historic Places**

Heritage tourism has become one of our fastest growing areas of tourism and the mapping tool linked to the Canadian Register supports this activity. Travellers recognize that one of the most enjoyable ways of learning about Canada's history is through our historic sites. Places can be located:

- From the Register search page by clicking on "view map of historic places." This launches the map, showing all historic places on the Canadian Register. Click on individual places to go directly to a listing.
- From an individual listing, click "map it" to launch the map and view the location of the historic place.

The mapping tool is interactive. Features such as rivers, railways and ferries can be turned on and off. Zoom in to street level or zoom out to see historic places from coast to coast to coast. This tool is of enormous benefit to tourists wishing to experience Canada's historic places first-hand — and it only takes the click of a mouse!

## **Past/Present Monthly Themes**

One of the goals of Canada's Historic Places website is to encourage Canadians to learn about and value their nation's historic places through the stories and experiences of others. Canadians are encouraged to tell their stories about the places that matter to them in a section of the site called Past/Present. The website focuses each month on a theme (such as homes, gardens and post offices) and features two or three Canadians describing historic places listed on the Canadian Register. If you have a story to share about a recognized historic place in Canada or if you would like to propose a monthly theme, please e-mail us at [historicplaces@pc.gc.ca](mailto:historicplaces@pc.gc.ca).

## **Building Canada's Culture of Heritage Conservation**

The rich content of the Canadian Register of Historic Places — and the innovative features of Canada's Historic Places website — mark a new era in heritage conservation in Canada. We will be better able to understand, safeguard and enjoy the places that illustrate our history, define our communities and enrich our lives. With this body of knowledge and these tools, we can build Canada's culture of heritage conservation so that future generations can benefit from these special places as we do today. As part of Parks Canada's Historic Places Program team, Ellen Cunningham co-ordinates communications for the Historic Places Initiative.

For general information about the Canadian Register of Historic Places or the Historic Places Initiative, contact:

Email - [historicplaces@pc.gc.ca](mailto:historicplaces@pc.gc.ca)

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