

Chair's Message

The summer season went out with a flourish when Heritage Canada delegates descended on Saint John, New Brunswick, to attend our annual conference Stewardship of Heritage Buildings: Are We Committed? The tone was set by inspiring keynote speaker Anthony Tung, author, urbanist and former New York City Landmarks Preservation Commissioner, who shared his powerful message—using examples from around the world—of the need to develop a “culture of conservation” and to enact “binding” legislation to support it.

The conference proved to be a timely event for Saint John. Council recently appointed members to a new committee to review and update where necessary its existing Preservation Areas By-law. Mr. Tung's message, along with those of the other presenters (including Toronto developer Michael Tippin, whose focus is on rehabilitating heritage buildings), reinforced the historic, aesthetic, cultural and economic values that conservation can bring to our cities and towns. Hopefully, these messages will be reinforced.

The conference program this year included a series of well- attended technical sessions that enabled me to share practical conservation solutions developed during my work on heritage buildings. In addition, delegates were able to sign up for tours of historic Saint John, partake in dinners in historic homes and join in a lively Maritime kitchen party. These were all generously laid on by the local organizing committee chaired by Diana Alexander and sponsored by local architects, heritage trusts and preservation review boards.

I would also like to congratulate our award recipients and thank outgoing Governors Stephen Rowan and Hal Kalman for their years of dedicated service. I extend a warm welcome to Pamela Madoff, newly elected from British Columbia.

My term as Chair is now over. It is with confidence that I turn those responsibilities over to Michel Grenier (Quebec). I wish the new executive well in continuing to chart forward progress for the Foundation through the implementation of our strategic plan which was launched at our AGM.

My best wishes to all as we continue to assist in the conservation of our built heritage.

Jim Bezanson