

Executive Director's Message

In February, the 2003 report of the Auditor General of Canada was tabled in the House of Commons. One particular element of this document has attracted a great deal of attention, and in so doing it has unfortunately obscured another section of the report that is of great significance to the heritage community. Chapter Six, entitled "Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Federal Government," is a critical assessment of federal stewardship of built, archival and published heritage, and identifies significant weaknesses and deficiencies. This is a landmark development. It is the first time an Auditor General has reported on this key area of federal responsibility.

Shortly after the release of her report, I met with Auditor General Sheila Fraser and two of the senior officials involved in the preparation of the heritage chapter, and congratulated them on their excellent and welcome appraisal. Ms. Fraser and her officials assured me that the recent critique of the heritage stewardship capacity of the federal government was only a first step, that subsequent reports will also contain sections on this matter, and that they propose to take a comprehensive, cross-governmental approach to this task. I was consulted in the developmental stages of this first review, and look forward to further collaboration as they move forward in this important undertaking.

This spring edition of Heritage includes the brochure for our 2004 annual conference. Dr. Anthony M. Tung, author of *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, is our keynote speaker. Do make plans to join us for this important September gathering.

Brian Anthony