

# **Report for Senate Review of Heritage Resources Centre**

**Prepared: September 2006**

**By**

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**Heritage Resources Centre  
Centre des ressources du patrimoine**





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September 30, 2006

Professor Alan George  
Vice President, Research  
University of Waterloo  
Waterloo, Ontario

Dear Professor George:

**Re: Five-year Review of the Heritage Resources Centre**

In accordance with your request of March 14, 2006, please find attached our Report for the Five-year Review of the Heritage Resources Centre. In the report, and according to the Guidelines for Review which you provided, are statements describing our activities and how these projects have contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the HRC. As well, there is a listing of the funding we have received over the last five years and an outline of our future plans.

We have asked a number of our project partners and university colleagues to write letters directly to you explaining the nature of their interaction with the HRC and explaining the ways in which they have found our cooperation useful.

I will make myself available at your meeting on Monday October 16<sup>th</sup> to answer questions. We hope that this report fulfils our obligation and provides the information you require to assess the progress of the Centre.

Yours Sincerely

Robert Shipley, PhD, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Heritage Resources Centre



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

- Established in 1984 through the efforts of Professor Gordon Nelson and in co-operation with Parks Canada, the HRC has flourished and established a pre-eminent record of service in the heritage field
- The word “heritage” is used in a broad sense involving both natural and cultural heritage
- The HRC encourages research, education, and information exchange activities among a wide range of groups and individuals
- In 2003, following Professor Nelson’s retirement, Professor Robert Shipley was appointed Director of the Centre

## Administration and Funding

- The HRC is administered by a committee assisting the Director
- The Centre has no regular funding source but operates on grants and contracts
- In the last six years, the HRC has received a total of \$133,298 towards its work
- Suitable overheads have been paid on these funds
- These funds have been used primarily to engage co-op students and graduate research assistants on a number of projects
- HRC has no regular staff but receives generous support from the Faculty of Environmental Studies in the form of office space and technical assistance and from the University through Office of Research accounting and other help

## Accomplishments in the Last Five Years

- Within the last five years HRC has completed more than a dozen technical reports for the federal, provincial and regional governments and for overseas clients
- From these reports, several peer reviewed articles have been published
- One of the Centres’ publications has received an Award of Excellence from the Canadian Association of Professional Heritage Consultants
- Another report played a part in bringing about significant changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act*
- Three very successful special workshops were held and the annual Heritage Planning Workshop continues to be well attended

## Future Plans

- Negotiations with the federal government are underway for agreements that will lead to more extensive work on heritage issues and will provide higher levels of funding for longer periods of time
- The Provincial Ministry of Culture has just concluded an agreement to fund the first year of a project to assist municipalities in nominating heritage sites to the National Register of Historic Places
- Plans are underway to expand the services offered through the HRC web site and to offer the popular Heritage Planning Workshop in other locations away from Waterloo



# Table of Contents

**Introduction to the Centre**

**Purposes – To Study, Learn and Serve**

**Leadership Transition - 2003**

**Previous Accomplishments**

**Activities over the Last Five Years**

**Major Projects**

**Lost Buildings in Ontario**

***Ontario Heritage Act* Review**

**Bridge Study – 1945-1965**

**The Carpathians: Assessing an Ecological Planning Initiative**

**Cultural Heritage Landscape Policy Development**

**Evaluating Management Effectiveness in Protected Areas**

**Governance Principles for Heritage Sites and Institutions**

**Preparing Heritage Landscape Guides**

**Analysis of Successional Invasion of Oldfields from Remnant Forests**

**Assessment of Ecological Restoration in the Region of Waterloo**

**Assessment of Habitat for Potential Ecological Restoration**

**Assessment of Urban Street Trees in Degrading an Urban Forest**

**Comparison of Leopard Frog Populations - RIM Park**

**Special Issue of *Alternatives* journal on Heritage and Sustainability**

**The Townscape Heritage Initiative in the United Kingdom**

**Workshops**

**Heritage and the Ontario Municipal Board**

**Fryfogel Inn Heritage Conservation Workshop**

**Heritage Planning Workshop**

**Publications**

**Community Service and Outreach**

**Funding**

**Management and Organization**

**Future Plans and Directions**

**Appendices**

**Appendix A – Press Coverage and Award**

**Appendix B – List of People Involved with the Centre**

**Appendix C – Publication and Report Samples**





## **Introduction to the Centre**

The Heritage Resources Centre (HRC) was established by the Senate of the University of Waterloo in 1984. Its creation grew from an arrangement with Parks Canada which began in 1981. This cooperative initiative was largely funded by the Federal Government in the first instance, although it led to the securing of relevant grants and contracts by members of the University of Waterloo. In 1983, Parks Canada was compelled to terminate the agreement because of the cost-cutting measures that were underway at that time in the federal government. At that point the HRC was created so that we could continue to develop a broad range of work with various federal and provincial agencies, private sector organizations, other universities, and groups in the heritage field.

The HRC has operated continuously since its approval in 1984. During that time it has undergone four Senate reviews and received strong endorsement in every case. The record of the HRC has, in our view, remained strong in the last five years and we anticipate that many opportunities exist for it to continue to make important contributions into the future. This is especially true in light of the renewed interest that Parks Canada has shown in cooperating with the Centre to accomplish important new work within its mandate.

In this review, we will report on the transition in leadership, on previous and ongoing activities and the future plans and prospects for the Centre.

### **Purposes – To Study, Learn and Serve**

The purposes and objectives of the HRC have remained the same since its establishment in 1984. The Centre takes a broad view of heritage as outlined in its original statement of purpose:

“The Heritage Resources Centre (HRC) encourages research, education, and information exchange activities among a wide range of groups and individuals. Participants come from university, government, and private groups in Ontario, elsewhere in Canada, and the international community. The word “heritage” is used in a broad sense involving both natural and cultural heritage. The HRC’s activities encompass geological, biological, archaeological, cultural, historical, marine and geographical aspects of heritage, as well as policies and institutions for heritage planning and management. The term goes beyond these more tangible things as well: to include the ideas, beliefs, and ways of life that people value and use when faced with change. To the extent that its resources permit, the HRC aims to serve those who wish to understand, conserve and use their heritage.”

### **Leadership Transition – 2003**

The last Five-year Review included the report of a Special Committee that recommended a leadership transition strategy in light of the retirement of HRC founder Professor Gordon Nelson. According to that plan, Professor Robert Shipley was appointed Director of the Centre in June of 2003 and has endeavoured to carry on the inspirational work of Professor Nelson and to maintain the high standards he established. A new Advisory Board consisting of three other Environmental Studies Faculty colleagues has assisted in the oversight of the HRC meeting monthly with an AGM held each January.

## **Previous Accomplishments**

Under the direction of Professor Nelson, the Centre carried out an intense and wide ranging research program that reflected his interests and addressed many topics and challenges in the heritage field in the broad sense of its statement of purpose. Certain themes or lines of research however, received more attention than others. These included the Heritage of the Grand River Basin; Parks and Protected Areas and Landscape and Bioregional Planning at the local, provincial, national, and international levels; Coastal Zone Planning; Management and Decision Making; Environmental Inventories and Assessments; and finally Heritage Landscape Guides at the community and regional levels.

## **Activities over the Last Five Years**

With the change in leadership, there has naturally been some shifting of emphasis reflecting the interests and expertise of the new Director. Professor Shipley's work is primarily in the area of the built environment, the economics of heritage, cultural heritage landscapes and tourism. The involvement of Professors Roger Suffling, Stephen Murphy and Brent Doberstein, the associates who comprise the Advisory Board has, however, allowed the Centre to maintain its long tradition of researching topics across the widest spectrum of heritage. Professor Nelson also continues to contribute.

It is also important to note that while the HRC carries out its research in the traditional way through the efforts of individual researchers and research teams, including students, it also continues to conduct its research and learning activities through workshops and other meetings. These offer interactive opportunities to bring the professional researchers together with concerned or affected citizens and organizations at the provincial, regional and local levels, and provide for the inclusion of their learning, experience and perspectives in the research.

## **Major Projects**

### **Lost Buildings in Ontario - 2001**

This project was a joint venture in which the HRC partnered with the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and Community Heritage Ontario first to secure Trillium Foundation funding and subsequently to conduct research on how many historically designated buildings in the province had been demolished over the previous 15 years. A research assistant was hired and volunteers in 22 communities assisted. Thousands of buildings were considered and it was determined that more than 400 structures had been demolished in communities studies in spite of having some form of recognition under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This alarming find led to an election pledge by the Liberal Party to strengthen the Act, and when they were elected, they introduced new protective measures that were passed by the legislature in April 2005.

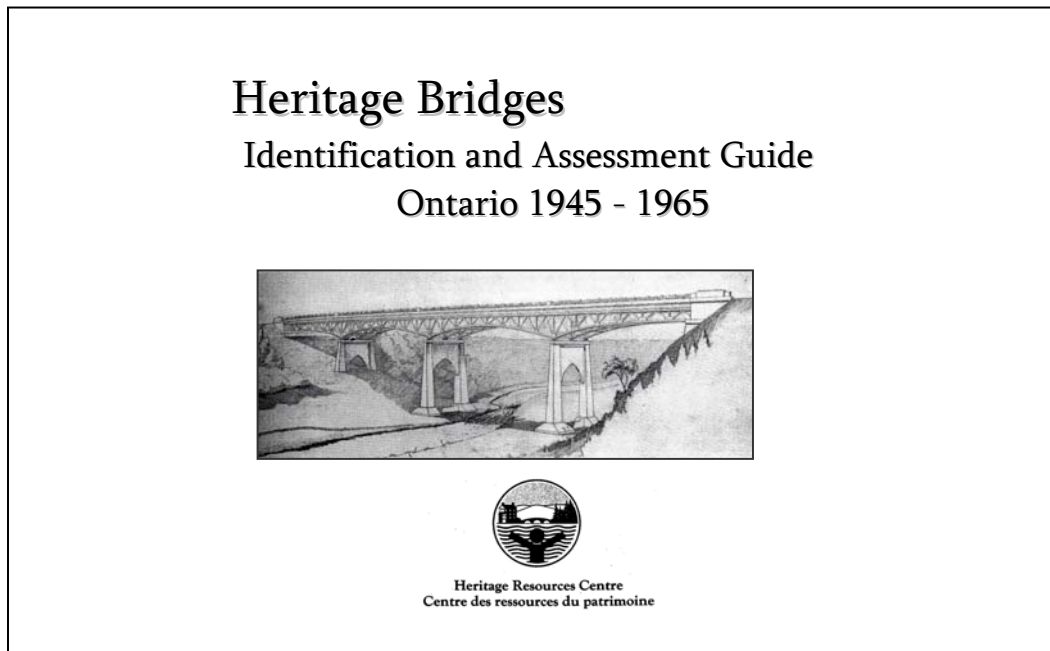
In recognition of the importance of this work, the Canadian Association of Heritage Consultants gave an Award of Merit to those who participated in the research and report creation (see Appendix A). The results of the research were also published in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* in 2004 (see Appendix C).

### **Ontario Heritage Act Review – 2003**

The HRC was asked in 2003 to join with lawyer Marc Denhez, a heritage expert from Ottawa who is now a member of the Ontario Municipal Board, in providing advice to the Ministry of Culture concerning the re-drafting of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The records of many years of previous consultation and stakeholder involvement were examined, critical questions considered, and a set of recommendations made to the Ministry. Most of those recommendations were eventually reflected in the legislation which was passed into law in April 2005 (see Appendix C).

### **Bridge Study – 1945-1965 - 2004**

The Centre was approached in 2003 by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation with a request for assistance on determining the heritage significance of highway bridges built between 1945 and 1965. According to Environmental Assessment legislation, bridges of this age must now be evaluated for their heritage significance when there is any consideration of replacement, modification, or major maintenance. A project was designed, a coop student hired, and an extensive report compiled to assist the Ministry's decision making concerning the disposition of highway bridges. The report not only contains evaluation criteria and recommendations but also a very interesting supplement on the history of bridge design in the province. The latter resulted from the initiative and creativity of the student hired to undertake the work.



### **The Carpathians: Assessing an Ecological Planning Initiative - 2004**

This document was prepared by Professor Gordon Nelson at the request of the Carpathian Ecoregion Institute in Vienna and is a prime example of the international reputation the Centre has developed over the years. The volume documents the work that began in 1990 in the Carpathian Region of Central Europe. The Region stretches across seven different countries and shows how an ecological approach can be an important agent for international cooperation.

### **Cultural Heritage Landscape Policy Development - 2004**

A project was begun in 2004 in cooperation with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo to identify significant cultural heritage landscapes and to develop guidelines for their protection. A senior undergraduate student from the Environmental Studies Faculty took on the project as a program requirement and helped to organize a conference in which planners from across Southern Ontario gathered for a workshop in the fall and together produced a working document setting out the process for policy development concerning cultural heritage landscapes. Material from the workshop was combined with the results of work carried out by other students working for the Region. This information was used to construct a document that is now being purchased by various municipalities to help them in their own policy development.

This collaboration led in part to an SSHRC application by HRC Director, Robert Shipley, which was successful and is continuing the process of cultural heritage landscapes identification and facilitating consultation with citizens of the Region prior to the introduction of new policies.

### **Evaluating Management Effectiveness in Protected Areas - 2004**

This project, funded by the University of Waterloo SSHRC Seed Grant program was conducted by advisory board member Professor Brent Doberstein. The research gauged the utility of rapid assessment and monitoring tools for evaluating protected areas management. Big Lake Natural Area (BLNA), recognized as one of the 20 most important waterfowl habitat units in Alberta, was selected as a case study site. Although BLNA was declared a provincially protected area in 1999, this study was the first attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of management efforts. A doctoral student hired through advertisements placed on the HRC website conducted the bulk of the research (interviews, secondary data collection and site observations). The results of this study will be published in an international journal dealing with natural heritage.

### **Governance Principles for Heritage Sites and Institutions - 2005**

The Historic Places Program, a branch of Parks Canada, approached the HRC in the fall of 2004 with a request that the Centre undertake a review of previous work in the field of governance and develop a set of good governance principles for historic places, institutions and agencies. A graduate student researcher was hired and a study made of governance principles. The resulting report has now been translated and appears both on the HRC and the Parks Canada web site to serve as a guide for good governance. Presentations based on the work were made at international conferences in Europe in 2005 and an article based on the work has been submitted to an international journal.

### **Preparing Heritage Landscape Guides - 2005**

This manual for urban and rural communities in Ontario was prepared by Professor Gordon Nelson and Dr. Susan Preston with the assistance of Community Heritage Ontario and Ontario Ministry of Culture. Heritage Landscape Guides tell the stories that are frequently very enjoyable and useful, but unfortunately often remain untold. The manual codifies what has been learned from the preparation of various local guides over the last decade (Appendix C).

### **Analysis of Successional Invasion of Oldfields from Remnant Forests - 2006**

A graduate student was hired to work on an empirical study that will inform a predictive model in assessing whether native or exotic trees are colonizing abandoned farmlands. The implication of the future predictive model for conservation and management is that it will test whether active ecological restoration and other interventions are needed to assist native forest regeneration.

### **Assessment of Ecological Restoration in the Region of Waterloo - 2006**

A graduate student was hired to assess the outcomes of ecological restoration at Natchez Hills ESPA (Kitchener), Foxwood Golf Club (Wilmot Township), and the Schneider Property (Wilmot Township). All three locations had different reasons for restoration - Natchez is a classic case of urban encroachment with mountain bike damage; Foxwood was a result of construction damage; and the Schneider property was a response to an old restoration attempt on the Waterloo Moraine that saw the establishment of a pine plantation. The results of the study indicated that the Foxwood site is responding well to a legally mandated restoration; the Natchez Hill property is severely damaged and restoration will take more time; and the Schneider property's restoration is hampered by acidic pine duff from the older restoration initiative. A second student assessed whether three different native spring wildflowers could speed restoration at Natchez Hills.

### **Assessment of Habitat for Potential Ecological Restoration - 2006**

This ongoing project is examining five decommissioned sites (building, road, farm fields) at Bruce Peninsula Park. Funded by Parks Canada, the study has so far revealed that, beyond the expected problems of soil compaction and low nutrients, the sites are in good shape for restoration as there are few pernicious invasives.

### **Assessment of Urban Street Trees in Degrading an Urban Forest - 2006**

This study assessed whether urban street trees are producing offspring that are invading and degrading an urban forest (Breithaupt Park, Kitchener). Species like Norway maples were planted 50 years ago in the park as they were thought to be pollution and urban tolerant. These trees have reached the end of their lifespan and their tolerance may indicate that they have invaded adjacent remnant forests.

### **Comparison of Leopard Frog Populations - RIM Park - 2006**

After a two year-period of testing, the research project concluded that RIM Park, Waterloo, does not support ponds that house breeding populations of leopard frogs due to inadequate pond design. In contrast, the Waterloo Forested Hills ESPA and even several stormwater ponds in the municipality supported breeding populations.

### **Special Issue of *Alternatives* Journal on Heritage and Sustainability - 2006**

Working with *Alternatives* journal, the HRC, with funding support from the federal government's Historic Places Program, has produced a special issue on the subject of Heritage and Sustainability. This effort brought together specialists and will present research which shows the links between good stewardship of the natural and the built environment.

## **The Townscape Heritage Initiative in the United Kingdom - 2006**

Since 1999, Dr. Shipley has been working with a team of colleagues at Oxford Brookes University in the UK evaluating the effectiveness of a lottery funded assistance program that helps in the regeneration of historic towns. The first five-year review of target sites has begun and this work is being facilitated through the HRC which allows some of the benefits, both financial and academic, to flow back to the Centre.

## **Workshops**

### **Fryfogel Inn Heritage Conservation Workshop**

On July 18, 19 and 20 of 2003, the HRC, in connection with the Perth County Historical Foundation, put on a workshop in the historic Fryfogel Tavern just outside of Stratford. The workshop was attended by more than 20 individuals from a variety of fields and backgrounds. Amateurs and professionals, students and retirees, architects, artists and planners all found the opportunity informative and useful. The workshop was led by Phillip Grover, an expert in historic conservation from Oxford-Brookes University in England. In addition to Mr. Grover's excellent first-hand knowledge, the workshop featured many opportunities for interaction among the various participants, a chance to examine a historic building in the midst of a major restoration, and the opportunity for social activities.



*Attendees at the heritage conservation workshop in the Fryfogel Inn near Stratford.*

### **Heritage Planning Workshop**

Each year, interested citizens, planners and students from other universities are able to attend the HRC's Heritage Planning Workshop which is held in conjunction with the regular course PLAN 414/641 (cross listed with REC 425). Over the last five years an average of five people from outside the University have attended these lectures. It not only provides interested members of the public and planning profession a chance to improve their knowledge, but exposes the regular students to people with first-hand experience in heritage planning issues at the grass roots level.

### **Heritage and the Ontario Municipal Board**

On Saturday, October 25 2003, the HRC presented *Understanding the OMB: An Ontario Municipal Board Workshop*. Led by Gregory Daly, the workshop focused on providing municipalities, planners, community groups and any other interested party with the tools required to present their case to the OMB without the need of a lawyer. Katherine Kirzati of the OMB was also on hand to discuss the procedures of the OMB. The maximum number of fifteen participants signed up soon after registration was opened. The workshop was held at the historic Brubacher House Museum at the University of Waterloo. It was hoped that similar workshops could be held in the future and include Mock Hearings in which participants would be able to simulate presenting their position to the OMB.

### **Publications**

Over the last 15 years the HRC has produced a large number of studies and reports, now numbering almost 100. A complete listing of these publications is available on the HRC website along with information for ordering copies. There is a steady stream of requests for these publications which is handled by part-time staff working in the Centre.

### **Community Service and Outreach**

The HRC regularly receives requests for information, advice and assistance. The Centre's web site contains a number of useful links as well as directly available information such as pdf versions of recent publications. Specific requests for information are answered within the constraints of our available time.

### **Management and Organization**

Since 2003 when Professor Shipley assumed the role of Director, the HRC has been managed by an advisory group consisting of Professors Nelson, Suffling, Murphy and Doberstein. While Professor Shipley has taken the primary responsibility for day-to-day management, the members of the advisory group meets, as far as is practicable, on a monthly basis. As well, there has been an annual general meeting to which all those interested in being involved are invited. For much of 2005, both Dr. Shipley and Dr. Suffling were on sabbatical and during that time Dr. Murphy assumed the role of Acting Director.

The Centre receives the generous support of the Dean of Environmental Studies in the form of office space. The Office of Research provides administrative support for grant fund allocation and the HRC contributes suitable overhead from all of its funded projects.

## Project Funding

The following table indicates the nature, purpose, and sources of funds which have been received by the HRC over the last 5 years.

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Heritage and Sustainability, Forum	2006	\$8,964	Parks Canada
Heritage Townscape Initiative	2006	\$7,640	Oxford Brookes University
Heritage Property Valuation	2006	\$1,512	Halifax Regional Municipality
Preparing Heritage Landscape Guides	2005	\$30,000	Ontario Ministry of Culture & CHO
Governance of Historic Places	2004/05	\$7,392	Parks Canada
The Carpathians: Assessing an Ecological Planning Initiative	2004	\$15,000	Carpathian Ecoregional Initiative & WWF
Evaluating Management Effectiveness in Protected Areas	2004	\$5,500	SSHRC
Cultural Heritage Landscapes Workshop	2004	\$4,865	Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Evaluating Costs of Building Renovation in Ontario	2004	\$18,500	Trillium Foundation
Assessment of Heritage Bridges	2004	\$5,500	Ontario Ministry of Transport
OMB Workshop	2003	\$1,200	HRC
Fryfogal Inn Workshop	2003	\$3,225	Perth Country Historical Society and the HRC
Ontario Heritage Act Review	2003	\$10,000	Ontario Ministry of Culture
Historic Building Demolition in Ontario	2001	\$14,000	Trillium Foundation
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$133,298</b>	



## **Future Plans and Directions**

Given the commitments of the HRC associates in terms of sabbaticals, international travel, and other obligations it was decided in 2004 to adopt a three-point approach for the operation of the HRC in the interim period. The strategy consisted of:

- Adopting a low key model – business as usual
- Expanding operations to include more people and projects
- A growth strategy aimed at achieving base operating finances, regular staff and programs, and a greater presence

This approach suited the period of the last two years and efforts undertaken within the strategy have now begun to come to fruition.

Two projects currently under negotiation will move the Centre toward the ambition of “achieving base operating finances, regular staff and programs and a greater presence.” An agreement with the Provincial Ministry of Culture will establish the Centre as a base for teams, which will consist of coop students and/or recent graduates, to undertake the documentation needed to add heritage properties to the National Register of Historic Places. Having these teams work from the HRC while offering their services to municipalities within the Grand River region will assist in having regular staff available in the Centre. This initiative builds on the long standing involvement between the Centre and the communities within the Grand River watershed which began with the nomination of the Grand as a Heritage River under the direction of Professor Nelson.

At the same time the HRC has applied to the Federal Historic Places Program for what will hopefully be the first of a multi-year Contribution Agreement. Under such an agreement, the Historic Places Program will assist with the overall program of the Centre as well as with specific initiatives as it has done over the past three years. The funding will allow us to engage a graduate student each term who will act as “research director” coordinating and contributing to the Centre’s research and outreach. This returns to the original roots of the HRC which was born of a cooperative arrangement with Parks Canada. It is expected that this initiative will be in place by November 2006.