



# North Bay Municipal Heritage Committee

## The Heritage Herald

Summer 2019

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### What is the Municipal Heritage Committee?

The Ontario Heritage Act allows municipalities to establish a Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC). A MHC provides advice to City Council on matters and properties with architectural and/or historical significance. The Committee also evaluates properties that have heritage significance in order to develop and maintain a list of heritage properties in the community.

Members include: Peter Handley (Chair), Jennifer Buell (Vice-Chair), Scott Robertson (City Council), Andrew Bruce-Payne (North Bay Society of Architects), Naomi Hehn (North Bay Museum), Jeff Serran (Community Representative), Ed Valenti (Community Representative), George Maroosis (Community Representative), Margaret Surtees (Community Representative), Caroline Loisel (Ex-Officio), Peter Carello (Secretary-Treasurer), Kealey Ducharme (Summer Student)

## North Bay Municipal Heritage Committee 2018-2022

As a result of the 2018 Municipal Election, the Municipal Heritage Committee was reformed. While many previous members and volunteers of the Municipal Heritage Committee have returned, there are also many individuals who are new to the MHC and are excited for the term to come.

The Municipal Heritage Committee 2018-2022 is as follows:

- Peter Handley - Chair (Community Representative)
- Jennifer Buell - Vice-Chair (Community Representative)
- Scott Robertson (City Council)
- Andrew Bruce-Payne (North Bay Society of Architects)
- Naomi Hehn (North Bay Museum)
- Jeff Serran (Community Representative)
- Ed Valenti (Community Representative)
- George Maroosis (Community Representative)
- Margaret Surtees (Community Representative)
- Caroline Loisel (Ex-Officio)
- Peter Carello (Secretary-Treasurer)
- Kealey Ducharme (Summer Student)

## North Bay Regional Heritage Fair 2019

The North Bay Regional Heritage Fair 2019 took place at Nipissing University on Wednesday, May 15, 2019. There were approximately 100 projects from local elementary schools.

The North Bay Municipal Heritage Committee Vice Chair, Jennifer Buell, had the

honour of presenting the Municipal Heritage Committee Award to a deserving student project. The winning entry was a project entitled "Royal Canadian Air Force" and focused on its importance to the city of North Bay.

The winner, Izzy Desmarais had a

strong family connection to the Royal Canadian Air Force as her father is a member. Desmarais showcased family memorabilia with her project and shared with the judges what it was like to grow up as a military 'B.R.A.T.'.



**Izzy Desmarais' Heritage Fair Project**

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

<http://www.cityofnorthbay.ca/heritage>



## Municipal Heritage Committee Training Session with Larocque Elder Architects

As mentioned, the MHC was reformed as a result of the 2018 Municipal Election. Therefore, in order to welcome the new members and inform them of the duties of the MHC, a Training Session was held for the Committee in June. During this Training Session, Jean Larocque of Larocque Elder Architects Inc. took the MHC through their extensive work on St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church.

The MHC previously evaluated St. Vincent de Paul in 1997 and again in 2012 when it was recognized as a Priority 1 Heritage Site.

In the same year that the MHC recognized St. Vincent de Paul, Larocque Elder Architects Inc. was retained by the parish to prepare a Building Condition Analysis of the church which revealed the overall condition of the building including material components, emergency

exits, fire separations, and functional organization as it existed then. The staff at Larocque Elder Architects Inc. shared their 2012 findings with the Municipal Heritage Committee and then talked through the many ways in which their firm had restored both the interior and exterior of the church without compromising its historical value.

For more information on the renovations of St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church, please contact the Municipal Heritage Committee.

## Municipal Heritage Committee ‘Heritage Diary’ Podcast

During summer 2018, the Municipal Heritage Committee launched the ‘Heritage Diary’ Podcast. The purpose of the podcast is to explore local lore and history not only to reminisce, but also to kindle new interest in area history.

Over the last several months, MHC Chair, Peter Handley, has spoken to many prominent members of the community to explore important aspects of North Bay’s history. The conversations between Handley and our guests have explored well-known area history, local myths and personal stories.

Current podcast episodes include conversations with:

- Barry Burniston about the Capitol Centre
- Nestor Prisco about the Court House
- Captain Doug Newman about the BOMARC Missile
- Vic McClenaghan about the Barry Building Explosion
- George Maroosis about Main Street
- Peter Chandler about North Bay’s Railroads
- Bill Church about George W. Lee and the Golf Street Crossing
- Roy Summers about North Bay’s Natural Landscape
- Colin Vezina about Journalism & Local Politics
- Bill Vrebosch about North Bay’s Musical History
- Natasha Wiatr about the Dionne Quintuplets
- Randy Sawyer about North Bay’s Indigenous history
- Patti Carr about the Chamber of Commerce

If you have an idea for a future podcast episode or want to make a suggestion, please email the committee at [peter.carello@cityofnorthbay.ca](mailto:peter.carello@cityofnorthbay.ca).

You can find the MHC’s Heritage Diary Podcast on Apple Podcast by searching ‘MHC Heritage Diary’.

## Number of Recognized Heritage Sites Rising

The Municipal Heritage Committee’s primary responsibility is to evaluate and document properties throughout North Bay that have heritage value to the community. With the property owner’s permission, members of the Municipal Heritage Committee conduct a site evaluation. Properties are scored based on a series of criteria, ranging from architectural features, construction materials, historical context, etc.

Based on the scoring a property achieves, it is given a priority ranking. Buildings scoring in the highest priority category are denoted with a glass plaque that commemorates their status and importance to the community.

There are currently forty-four Recognized Heritage Sites in North Bay. The most recent sites to be evaluated include the Tuncali/Gould Residence, the Colgan-Liddle Building and the former Demarco’s Confectionary.

More information on both sites can be found at [cityofnorthbay.com/heritage](http://cityofnorthbay.com/heritage).



## MHC Youth Photography Contest

In November, the Municipal Heritage Committee launched the second Heritage Photography Contest for local youth, aged 18 and under. The purpose of the contest was to determine which aspects of local heritage are most important to the youth of North Bay.

Participants were encouraged to explore and capture the culture and heritage of North Bay in a way which was unique to their own interpretation of it. They were challenged to think about what they saw and provide a short caption explaining why their photo was important to them. Youth participants were also asked to consider how their photograph relates to one of three broadly defined categories, the first being "Built," the second being "Natural" and the third being "Human."

Local school boards, clubs and other service providers throughout the City of North Bay were invited to share details of the photography contest and encourage participation among local youth. The MHC offered prizes of DIA Gift Cards for the winners of the contest. First prize was worth \$100, second prize was worth \$50 and third prize was worth \$25.

After receiving many outstanding entries to the Youth Heritage Photography Contest, winners were chosen by members of the Municipal Heritage Committee, led by Caroline Loiselle. The results are as follows:

First prize was awarded to Bobbie for her photo "A Lifetime in my Grandmother's Hands" (Fig. 1). Second prize was awarded to Katelyn for her photo "Evolution of Rail" (Fig. 2). Third prize was awarded to Sina for her photo "Mixed Emotions" (Fig. 3). Photos are shown below. The 2019-2020 Youth Photography Contest is now open – details can be found on our website.



**Bobbie – "A Lifetime in my Grandmother's Hands"**

*"My Grandmother is a survivor. Through all that she has lost, my Grandmother is still trying to reconnect with parts of her lost culture. The goose wing she is holding in the photo is a cultural item that my parents were wed with. This is symbolic of her refusing to lose her grasp on her heritage and how current generations can help rebuild that connection. There is a lifetime in her hands and the wrinkles tell stories of her triumphs and struggles. She is a beacon of my heritage."*



**Katelyn – "Evolution of Rail"**

*"The photo of the Heritage Railway and Carousel Company is significant because it shows both an old handcar and the modern trains in the back. Having both of these trains in the same photo shows the evolution of rail transportation over time which is significant to North Bay because the city was built as a railroad town. This photo highlights the built heritage of North Bay because not only were the trains built and worked on by hardworking people, but the city was built to serve as a railway city. As you can see the photo shows the history of North Bay overtime by showing the evolution of one of North Bay's highly important heritage pieces, the railroad and rail transportation."*



**Sina – "Mixed Emotions"**

*"I was by the waterfront to take photos when I noticed that there were many inuksuks everywhere. Also, there was a storm coming in from the left side so half the sky was sunny and the other half cloudy."*



## Message from the Chair

The Municipal Heritage Committee began what we call our Heritage Site Plaque Program shortly after the province decided to change our committee designation from a LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) to an MHC (Municipal Heritage Committee), which has a much broader mandate with regard to history and heritage.

Starting in 2010 and working closely with TWG Communications and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Leisure, twenty-three 2' by 3' HSPs have been installed around the city - many in the downtown and waterfront areas, but other examples as far away from the city center as the top of Thibeault Hill, Trout Lake Road and Cassells Street. Originally created, with script and photos, to let viewers see a structure that no longer exists, that has been lost - like the original city hall, the Carnegie Library and the CourtHouse among others - the program was expanded to tell stories unique to North Bay - like commerce on Lake Nipissing, the Empire, the Capitol Theatre, the Barry Building explosion or Donald Kelly and the North Bay Jail.

The 24th HSP, to be installed here in 2019, is unique in that it tells several different stories and blends them all together in what we hope is an interesting and informative way. It will be located on Memorial Drive beside the Trans Canada Trails kiosk where the original Toronto highway curved toward the Stanley Street bridge and the infamous Golf Street crossing - just a few yards away from the George W. Lee cobblestone cairn. The original idea for this plaque came a number of years back when the MHC was asked by the city to take a look at the Stanley Street Bridge and make some suggestions as to its future. The committee hoped it would be restored but realistically knew that was not feasible so suggested that when the bridge was closed off and dismantled, that some items be saved such as a sampling of the decorative cement spindles, and that they be assembled at the edge of the Kate Paceway right beside the site, with an explanatory HSP. The city decided to block off the bridge but otherwise leave it intact, so that idea came to naught.

In 2017, a former member of the LAC AC and longtime teacher, Bill Church, approached the MHC with an impressive dossier concerning the late George W. Lee and a suggestion that we create an HSP in honour of the former Chair of the ONR (T&NO at the time). Despite being impressed by all that George W. accomplished during his lifetime, the committee decided that we should not break precedent and create an HSP solely to honour one individual but we could certainly include him in a larger story. That larger story logically grew to include the much maligned Golf Street railroad crossing and the Stanley Street bridge - the original access to West Ferris and what developed into the Toronto highway, North Bay's initial link to parts south. This was next to what became Lee Park and right across the road from North Bay's oldest sporting field, Amelia Park - named after Amelia Parks who, some could say, in her own way was as important to North Bay's development as was George Lee, but who has largely been forgotten as time rolls on.

In order to piece these pieces and pictures together many sources were sought, examined and mined - starting with Gordon Rennie of the Department of Highways (and another former committee member); the city of North Bay Engineering and Planning Departments; Naomi Hehn, North Bay Museum Curator; an interview with the late Dinty Parks which gave us a lead to his grandmother; as well as Wilston (Bill) Steer - "Backwoods Bill" himself - interesting material gleaned from his books "North Words" and "Boosting the Bay". We would be remiss if we did also not credit the late historian Bob Surtees, Steve McArthur, Jeff Fournier and his "Bit of the Bay", Nugget files, the McCutcheon-Parks web page, Google and of course Bill Church as well as his neatly put together info package on Mr. Lee. It truly does take a village.

Peter Handley

## Future Projects

Since its inception, the MHC has recognized over sixty structures and sites for their heritage characteristics.

The North Bay Municipal Heritage Committee is currently working together to commemorate past and current heritage sites within

the area through the Heritage Site Recognition and Heritage Glass Plaque Programs.

The Municipal Heritage Committee's last Heritage Site Evaluation was the Colgan-Liddle Building located at 114-124 Main Street East which earned a Priority 1 ranking and a glass plaque.

The Municipal Heritage Committee has also recently completed its 2019 Heritage Site Plaque commemorating the Golf Street Crossing and George W. Lee and has determined that the 2020 Heritage Site Plaque will tell the story of the Jack Garland Airport.

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