



Heritage News

Central Okanagan Heritage Society

SPRING 2020

IN THIS

ISSUE:

- Heritage Conservation Areas - Losing the Plot
- The Fleming House
- 2020 Heritage Award Winners
- COHS News In Brief
- Heritage Grants Program



Heritage Conservation Areas - Losing the Plot

Kelowna's two Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs) were created in 1998, using provincial legislation. The HCAs were created after years of property owner consultation, committee work to create new development guidelines, three public open houses, a public hearing and a significant amount of Kelowna planning staff and volunteer time.



A Heritage Conservation Area is defined as a “distinct district with special heritage values and character, identified for heritage conservation purposes in an Official Community Plan. A community establishes a heritage conservation area when it has identified a distinctive area which it feels should be managed by long-term protection.” (*Proposed Heritage Conservation Areas Bylaw*, City of Kelowna, January 1998)

The objectives of the creation of the two heritage conservation areas were to: maintain the existing single or two family residential and historical character of the Abbott Street and Marshall Street Heritage Conservation Areas; promote the retention and restoration of existing heritage homes; and encourage new development or additions to existing development in a manner which is compatible with the form and character of the existing neighbourhood context.

The objectives of the creation of the two heritage conservation areas were to: maintain the existing single or two family residential and historical character of the Abbott Street and Marshall Street Heritage Conservation Areas; promote the retention and restoration of existing heritage homes; and encourage new development or additions to existing development in a manner which is compatible with the form and character of the existing neighbourhood context.

Beginning in the early 1900's these historic areas were slowly subdivided and filled in. The architecture styles in the areas reflect the different phases of development. The Abbott Street area became Kelowna's most prestigious residential area during the 1920s and 1930s due to its proximity to the lake and downtown.

Many of these homes were associated with the fruit industry, belonging to packinghouse owners and managers, as well as early developers, bankers, doctors, and shopkeepers. Today, Abbott Street is a unique area with its well-used pathway system, character lighting and interpretive signage. In large part it is the unique mix of heritage housing styles that also attracts many people to want to live in this area.

Sadly, since the creation of these two unique areas, development pressure has eroded their authentic character, especially the Abbott Street HCA. Some people are more interested in purchasing a lot with its development potential that would allow a large new house using the 'guidelines' with character elements on a new home design.

The 90+ year old Captain Hayman House, 188 Beach Ave, while not on the heritage register, is an excellent example of a house demolished in 2017/18 to make way for a larger house. The Captain Hayman House was large, impressive and immaculate.

(Front page: Captain Hayman House, c. 2017 the McLean House and the Stone House 2020. L. Dauncey)

Heritage Conservation Areas - Losing the Plot

Another very recent example is the loss of the historic 1909 Groves House and garage, an arts and crafts bungalow at 409 Park Avenue. It too was taken down to make way for new construction.

There are many other character and heritage houses that have been lost since the HCAs were created, including the early 1950s suburban style house at 176 Vimy Avenue and a house at 2050 Long Avenue, both demolished in 2018. This is only a sampling of demolitions since the creation of the HCA.

In other cases, there are owners who undertake renovations on their character/ heritage house in order to get a 'new' looking house with large additions which use incompatible modern materials. Two houses on the Heritage Register that have undergone major renovations are the 1910 Edwardian-era Meugens House at 450 Cadder Avenue and the 1936 Treadgold House, rustic vernacular cottage style, at 1908 Abbott Street. Both of these houses have been irreversibly changed and have lost much, if not all of their heritage value.

The edges of the HCA are also at risk of being eroded. In 2014 another Heritage Register house located at 434 Royal Avenue was demolished, along with two other properties to create a hospital parking lot.

The Murchison House lot, at 1781 Abbott Street, is in the process of being redeveloped in order to create new housing by moving the 1939 heritage house to the front of the lot. The house may be turned into a commercial use, similar to what is being done on upper Bernard Avenue. The win is that the house will be restored and maintained.

Yet there are many who fall in love with a heritage/ character house and do their best to conserve and lovingly maintain them. Some excellent examples in the HCA's are:

- ◆ Stone House, a 1922 Craftsman Bungalow located at 1806 Abbott St
- ◆ Loane House, a 1937 Moderne heritage designated house at 1858 Abbott St
- ◆ Fumerton House, a unique 1933 Storybook style at 1922 Abbott St
- ◆ MacLean House, 1942 Georgian Revival home at 1869 Maple St
- ◆ Gaddes House, 1939 Interwar cottage style house at 1857 Maple St
- ◆ Reekie House, 1907 Craftsman Bungalow at 429 Park Ave
- ◆ Arthur Dawson Residence, a 1935 Foursquare house at 368 Cadder Ave
- ◆ Anne Stirling House, a 1910 Tudor Revival house at 2178 Pandosy St
- ◆ Cadder House, a 1908 unique style house at 2124 Pandosy St

Irreversible changes are becoming common in these areas. At the current pace, the heritage areas will become the same as any other neighbourhoods and will lose what makes them unique, and interesting places to live and visit.

Fleming House –at Brent Grist Mill Heritage Park



Reverend Everett Fleming standing in front of the Brent homestead—Okanagan Historical Society photo

In the vast majority of cases, historic homes are named after their first owners, or in some cases significant individuals or families who lived there.

While it is true that the Fleming house was built by (for) Frederick Brent in 1870, an Okanagan pioneer, the house has come to be called the Fleming House, due to the desire to see it restored to its appearance while owned by William H Fleming and subsequently by his son the Rev. Everett Fleming.

During the late 1990s' the Brent homestead was coming under increasing development pressure with the extension of Leathead Rd. In order to preserve the buildings a plan was needed to move them to a new home. In June 1999 Kelowna City Council approved a ten acre parcel at the corner of Leckie Place and Dilworth Drive.

For the next several years a COHS volunteer committee worked with Don Luxton, a Vancouver based Heritage Consultant, city staff and others on all aspects of the move.

On December 5th, 2001 the Conservation and Feasibility Plan created by Don Luxton was presented to Kelowna City Council. A Dec 10th City file states in part:

“AND FURTHER THAT the Brent’s Grist Mill relocation and site development costs (servicing, parking and foundations) be included for consideration in future City of Kelowna budget considerations.”

Council comments from that same meeting state “security and fire protection will be essential from the start once the buildings are moved onto the City-owned site.”

The buildings were successfully relocated in 2002 and settled onto new foundations.

On February 17th, 2003 a sod-turning ceremony took place at the newly named, “Brent’s Heritage Homestead and Grist Mill Park.” Mayor Walter Gray, MLA, Al Horning and other dignitaries were present.

In May, 2003 COHS sent a letter to the City of Kelowna, requesting the city to “commence with the planned on-site servicing of the site at the earliest possible opportunity.” The letter went on to say “having the buildings sit empty without a resident caretaker on site increases the risk of damage and or destruction.”

Fleming House



Sod turning ceremony 2003 - COHS funds

In 2008, Don worked with locally based Urban Systems as well as community members including COHS staff and volunteers to create a comprehensive park plan. In the closing paragraph of the Executive Summary Don stated “It is now timely to move towards implementation of the restoration plan for the buildings.”

During the next period of years COHS raised \$55,000 through fundraising and grants for restoration of the Fleming House. While the Grist Mill building is vitally

important, it was felt that by having the house with a resident caretaker on site a level of protection would be present.

“This was no small task as we were raising funds for three derelict buildings sitting in an empty field. There was no indication from the City of Kelowna when servicing and the park plan would come to fruition” says Janice Henry past executive director of COHS.

The monies raised for the Fleming House were used for a series of repairs including the installation of a new split shingle roof. The work also stabilized the small adjacent dairy barn.

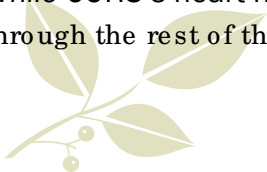
The City of Kelowna in the mid to late 2010’s had a Civic Properties Manager named Randy Cleveland. A manager who was not afraid to explore and even support heritage. Randy held a series of meetings with civic groups to get a better handle on the city’s own heritage inventory and looked for community direction in helping to set city priorities. Brent’s Grist Mill came out on top.

In March of 2014 the city issued a Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) on three City owned Heritage Sites. The Surtees property in the lower Mission, St. Aidan’s Church in Rutland and the Brent’s Grist Mill, house and dairy barn.

The City’s 40 page REOI includes phrasing such as; “Heritage is a key component in creating and maintaining a community’s sense of place, i.e., in connecting its citizens to the collective memory of the community, to the people and events that have shaped who and what we are today. Heritage buildings are the physical manifestation of our history.”

The REOI goes on to say “The city owns a number of heritage assets that have significant meaning to the citizens of Kelowna.” in addition to “the city wishes to maintain these assets.”

While COHS’s heart had been with the Brent project for over twenty five years, it became apparent through the rest of the REOI process that COHS was not what the city was looking for.



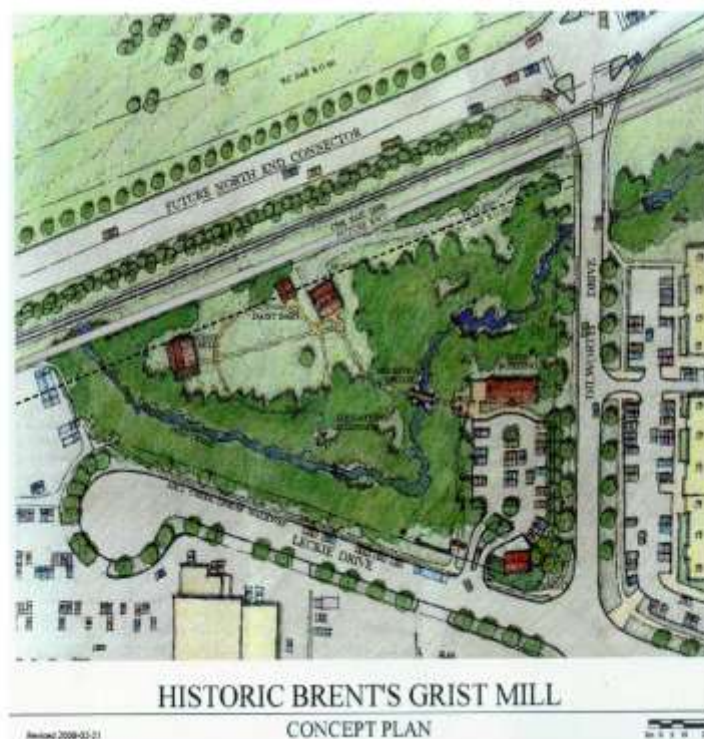
Fleming House

No Proposals came in to the City on Brent's Mill due to the significant amount of money and expertise required to undertake such a project. It would be wrong to think that this in any way was a sign of a lack of community interest. On the contrary there was significant community interest.

COHS hosted a packed meeting at Reid Hall on June 23rd, 2014. A range of speakers including Duane Thomson with the new Okanagan Rail Trail group spoke about the potential of the Mill site with the angle of tourism. UBC Professor James Hull talked about the historical importance of Grist Mills. Those in attendance were keen to see Brent's Grist Mill brought back to life.

As a result of this public meeting, COHS was asked by a city staff member to create a proposal for how to move the Brent's Mill project forward. Five weeks later, with limited resources, COHS delivered a document called "A Solution for Brent's Mill." An opportunity for the City and COHS to partner once again on this important project.

The report showed how with an annual city expenditure of \$100,000 a year for three years combined with gifts in kind secured from community groups the Brent's Grist Mill project would be well underway.



Fleming House – What Now?

The City took the work done by COHS and started to undertake the first few steps laid out in the plan (which we are grateful for) with no further contact with COHS.

Fast forward to 2018 when the Fleming House saw its first fire. The roof was completely destroyed. The City was going to tear it down, but on further reflection and with input from local heritage experts, it was agreed to clean it up and put on a metal roof which would preserve the interior of the building till a way could be found to do a proper and complete restoration.

On April 22, 2020 a second fire has all but destroyed the Fleming House.

To say we “value our historic buildings” and then let them sit wasting away for close to twenty years has created the situation we find ourselves in today.

Will the City of Kelowna take action and dust off old reports, site drawings and park plans, and work with the community to settle on a solution once and for Brent’s Grist Mill?

While the City has many competing interests for community tax dollars, allocating some money to preserve one of the few remaining city-owned designated heritage assets is not unreasonable.

The location of the mill and outbuildings along the Okanagan Rail Trail corridor brings hundreds of people right past the door step of a significant piece of Kelowna and BC heritage. Tremendous potential exists for Brent’s Heritage Homestead and Grist Mill Park to become one of the most used and visited jewels in the city’s parks system.



Fleming House 2018 COHS funds



Fleming House 2020 J. Henry

2020 COHS Heritage Award Winners

The 2020 Heritage Awards were presented at a ticketed luncheon event on February 19th at Reid Hall located at Benvoulin Heritage Church.

The Distinguished Service Award was presented to Shui Lee. Shui's family history in Kelowna goes back to the beginning of the last century. His great grandfather Lee Yick Wee came to Kelowna in 1904. Lee and his fellow countrymen worked to build the Kettle Valley Railway. After the First World War, he was then required to pay a \$500 head tax to stay in Canada. This and other wrongdoings by the Canadian Federal government and prejudice towards Asians were hardships Shui's family and other Chinese had to face.

Shui has contributed many volunteer hours over the decades to preserve and share Chinese culture. One such site is at the Kelowna Memorial Cemetery where a pavilion and plaque has been installed to commemorate the legacy of Asian Canadians. Shui pushed for this apology and recognition which reads:

"The Pavilion of Eternal Rest is Dedicated in memory of the Chinese & Japanese pioneers who suffered much while contributing to the development of British Columbia and in particular the city of Kelowna."



Shui has been instrumental in assisting the Kelowna Museums Society with accurately portraying the history of Kelowna's early Chinese settlers. In 1909, 15% of Kelowna's population was Chinese, in 2016, less than 2%. The large Chinese residences and commercial enterprises on Leon Ave. have all disappeared.

Shui is the chairman of the Chinese Freemasons Club of Kelowna. Through this club, he has preserved Chinese Freemasons traditions, as well as tangible objects, including extremely rare Chinese Freemasons manuscripts that were handed down to him from his great grandfather. On several occasions Shui has shared these with the Kelowna Museums for exhibition purposes.

Shui Lee has been responsible for helping publish educational books that are available in local schools and libraries. Two noteworthy books are, "Chinese Bamboo Shoots" and "Celebration." Every year he teaches students from Mar Jok Elementary School how to perform the "Dragon" and "Lion" dances.

Shui Lee participated in Charles Chau's documentary about local Chinese history and the commemorative mural on the side and courtyard of the Gospel Mission on Leon Ave. Shui was featured in the film and acted as a consultant for it.

Conservation Project on a Heritage building Currently in Non-residential Use: This award was presented to the City of Kelowna and Worman Commercial for the rehabilitation of Surtees House and Barn in the Lower Mission. This significant heritage site has now been re-purposed as a commercial site and has become an important landmark once again.



Conservation Project on a Heritage Building Currently in Residential use: 1368 Ethel Street. The owner, Lois McCloskey, took on a big job, by first moving the house from 1730 Ethel St. to its new location. It is now on a corner lot in a neighbourhood of similar size houses.



Continued Conservation of a Heritage Building Currently in Non-residential Use: Was given to St. Mary's Anglican Church at 2710 East Kelowna Road, part of the east Kelowna community core.

Built in 1938 as a modest, Gothic Revival Anglican Church, it has served the rural community of East Kelowna for over eighty years. Volunteers built the church under the direction of Hector Maranda, a prominent local contractor. To this day the community is still rightly proud of the church and have kept it intact, both inside and out.



Continued Conservation of a Heritage Building Currently in Residential Use: The Fumerton House at 1922 Abbott St., owned by Jeannette Mergens. This unique house in the Heritage Conservation Area is very well looked after and maintained. Its colour scheme is not considered original, however, it has been these colours for a long time and seems to fit the unique Storybook Cottage design.

Special Heritage Project: The Nellie Duke Project. A grassroots project undertaken by an enthusiastic group of Kelowna residents to create an exhibit of this notable and multi-talented artist's work

Preservation of a Neighbourhood or Natural Heritage Area: This award recognizes an area that has been largely unchanged over time and has been revitalized through rehabilitation. The award goes to the Rail Trail from Kelowna to Coldstream.

From railroad tracks to linear park, this hugely popular trail connects our communities in the Central Okanagan and links some of our most historic sites.



COHS News in Brief



Jim Burkinshaw

Jim joined the COHS as our part-time Managing Director November 4th, 2019. Jim has a wide variety of management experience ranging from residential construction, cabinet and furniture manufacturing, corporate image-wear, wholesale nursery and most recently as Director of Finance for the BC Mennonite Central Committee.

A life-long Abbotsford resident, the family had camped in the Okanagan for 40 years! In 2018 Jim and his wife Joyce made good on a long-standing promise to 'one day retire in the Okanagan.' Jim has a real interest in the history and built-heritage of Kelowna and finds in the COHS a group of people with a wealth of knowledge and passion for heritage. (Coincidentally, for many years Jim's cousin, John Pendray, was a Board Member of COHS)

Benvoulin Heritage Church Sidewalk has real value to the site due to its older style of construction and materials. The sidewalk was likely installed in the late 1930s or early 1940s based on photographic evidence, making the sidewalk approx. 80 years old.

Due to its current state of disrepair and the desire of COHS to handle any repairs in accordance with the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Buildings in Canada*, COHS hired Heritage Consultant Lorri Dauncey to do a report. Four options were presented to repair the sidewalk which are now under consideration by the COHS board.

Benvoulin
Church c1946
KPA #1398



Historic Benvoulin
Sidewalk 2020 L.
Dauncey

Heritage Week 2020 was a real success due to the efforts of our Heritage Week partners, and the local businesses that supported the various events. Thanks to the following for their financial contributions and gifts in kind to Heritage Week and COHS's Heritage Awards.



Heritage BC



THE DAILY COURIER

Kelowna Heritage Grants Program



This is the thirteenth year that COHS has managed the City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program (CoKHGP) for the City of Kelowna. The program, created to recognize the value of heritage in the community, provides financial support to buildings on the Kelowna Heritage Register. Recent changes

to the program include: all roof projects must include a certified roof inspection; paint projects must use the Benjamin Moore *Historical True Colour's for Western Canada* palette; and first priority will be given to Heritage designated buildings. Grants assist with a portion of the costs in maintaining and conserving the building's exterior, including foundations.

A 2020 CoKHGP Information Session was held on March 5th at Reid Hall. CoKHGP manager, Lorri Dauncey was on hand to answer questions on how to apply for grants and explain changes to the program. A competitive granting process has led to all of the funds being given out early in the year. The first meeting for 2020 was postponed, and is now set for June. Once again they anticipate there will be more applications for projects than funds available.

Handlen House -780 DeHart Avenue: The Handlen House, built c.1920, is a good example of a house built during the inter-war period. The earliest known owners were Thomas and Margaret Handlen, who lived in the house from 1940 until the late 1960s. In the 1920s, Thomas Handlen was a warehouseman for Johnson Coal Company and Campbell Coal Company. Following active service during WWII, Handlen was employed as a packing foreman and then superintendent of Kelowna Growers Exchange.

The Handlen House is valued for its modest 1.5 storey form with minimal ornamentation and detailing. House elements include: medium-pitch roof, projecting gabled front dormer, a projecting partially enclosed porch with three arched openings and the main floor symmetrical windows with curved-arch mullions. In 2018, the white house, was repainted using the True Colours heritage palette. In 2019 a new roof was installed. The homeowner received a heritage grant for both of these projects. (SOS, Kelowna Heritage Register.)



All granting decisions are made by a committee of community volunteers with heritage expertise. The Kelowna Heritage Register can be accessed at: <https://www.Kelowna.ca/our-community/arts-culture-heritage/heritage/heritage-register>

For more information on the program contact ~ Lorri Dauncey at ldauncey.cohs@telus.net

HERITAGE NEWS

Board Members & Advisory Board

President

Don Knox

Vice President

Cheryl Spelliscy

Acting Treasurer

Cheryl Spelliscy

Secretary

Carol Millar

Directors

Mary Browne Clayton

Dave Elliot

Tara Hurley

Janessa Rash

Ernie Park

Advisory Board

Peter Chataway

Janice Henry

Robert Hobson

Lorainne McLarty

Margot Pridham

Michele Rule

S t a f f**Managing Director**

Jim Burkinshaw

City of Kelowna Heritage Grants Program

Lorri Dauncey

Office Administrator

Kathy Hymuik

Site Caretaker at Benvoulin Park

Percy Lujan

COHS News

COHS- is preparing to re-open on June 1st, after being closed for several months. Proper cleaning procedures have been researched and will be used on historic pews and woodwork. Please contact Kathy at 250-861-7188 to book your next meeting or small gathering.

The Hobson Family Fund: The COHS has had a long relationship with the Kelowna Hobson family. Special thanks to the Hobson's for their generous support to us over the years which has continued through the Hobson Family Fund held by the Central Okanagan Foundation.

Sewer Project at Benvoulin: COHS had long had a desire to hook up the Benvoulin site to City Sewer. We are happy to report that under the leadership of COHS President Don Knox the project is now complete!

Benvoulin Gardens: Continue to evolve, with special thanks to Jim Elwood and volunteers who have worked so hard each year. Thank you as well to committee members Mary Browne Clayton, Don Burnett and Alison Mooney for their recent support and expertise.

New roof: The membrane on the Reid Hall annex is nearing the end of its life span of 20 years and will be replaced over the next six months. One more step in the on-going maintenance of these important buildings.

Many Thanks: To the directors and volunteers under the leadership of Carol Millar for their work on the 2020 Heritage Week and awards. Committee members included: Bob Hayes; Mary Browne Clayton, Amanda Snyder, Don Rampone with support of Heritage Consultant Lorri Dauncey.



COHS thanks the **City of Kelowna** for an Arts, Culture and Heritage Operating Grant for 2020

Website <https://okheritagesociety.com>

Office 250-861-7188

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://facebook.com/OKHeritageSociety>

COHS acknowledges the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through a Gaming Grant for 2020