

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

For the past three years the SSAC *Bulletin* has been edited by Susan Algie in Edmonton. In October a change of employment caused Susan to tender her resignation as editor of the *Bulletin*. On behalf of the SSAC I want to thank Susan for her valuable contribution to the society in her capacity as editor and to wish her well in her new position.

With Susan's resignation as editor the *Bulletin* has moved to Winnipeg where it will be under the charge of its new editor, Don Lovell. Since Don will be setting the course of the *Bulletin* during the coming year I feel it is appropriate that he should receive something of a formal introduction to our membership.

Don was born in London, Ontario and received his post-secondary education at Royal Roads Military College in Victoria, and at Royal Military College, Kingston, where he graduated with an Honours B.A. in Canadian history in 1974. After receiving his commission with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry he served in Calgary with the 1st Battalion of the PPCLI until 1979. In that year he left the service and enrolled as a graduate student in architecture at the University of Manitoba. He hopes to graduate this May with a Master of Architecture degree.

Don's interests in architecture centre on the conservation and restoration of heritage architecture, and the retro-fitting of older buildings. He has been a member of the SSAC since 1978 and a member of the SSAC board since May 1982.

As editor of the *Bulletin* Don faces a difficult and time consuming task, as any of our previous editors will readily attest. However, we can all render assistance to him by notifying him of events, meetings, conferences and publications which may be of interest to SSAC members. Let him know of any interesting research pertaining to architecture in Canada of which you may become aware. Consider, too, submitting a short article on an aspect of Canadian architecture, or, if you are actively involved in research prepare a brief report of your work and send it to Don for his consideration. The *Bulletin* needs your input if it is to function in its intended role within the society.

At the same time that Don accepted the board's invitation to take over as editor the board voted to publish the *Bulletin* on a quarterly basis rather than on a bi-monthly basis as was done previously. This step was taken in recognition of the difficulties of adhering to a bi-monthly publication schedule when working with an all volunteer staff. The cost of mailing has increased dramatically over the past year and it was felt that the SSAC could best employ its resources using the quar-

terly format, with additional special issues if, and when, warranted.

Finally, I want to extend an invitation to all our members to join us at the forthcoming SSAC annual meeting which will be held in St. John's, Newfoundland in late July this year. Gerry Pocius and Shane O'Dea have organized what promises to be one of our most exciting meetings; one which will offer something to all interests in the field of architecture. I am sure that this meeting in Newfoundland will be one which few of us will want to miss.

Next year the SSAC will be meeting in Guelph in conjunction with the Learned Societies conference. The time of this meeting has not yet been definitely established but I expect it will be held in the first week of June. When further details are known they will be published in the *Bulletin* and mailed out to you. Make plans to join us—both in Newfoundland this year and in Ontario in 1984.

Sincerely  
John C. Lehr  
President, SSAC

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### Editor's Desk

To all SSAC members I extend my thanks for the appointment as Editor of the *Bulletin*. You will notice that the format has remained unchanged and this reflects the adage: if something works leave it alone. I would like to echo the President's words by extending my appreciation to Susan Algie for the very successful execution of her task as Editor. The momentum has been created and it now has to be maintained. The *Bulletin* serves not only as a forum for architectural debate but also as a newsletter keeping each member in touch and up to date on events in Canada. Thus I encourage every reader to view the *Bulletin* as their notice board and to actively participate in its effectiveness.

The editorial comment on page 3 is a reflection on the conservation movement in Canada. The principle article for this issue concerns the commercial buildings of downtown Montreal and is written by Denis Lessard and Pascale Beaudet. Additions to archival collections, book reviews and regional events are intended as regular features.

Issues are planned for May, August and November, 1983 with deadlines for contributions being 4 April, 4 July and 3 October, 1983. I look forward to your correspondence.

Don Lovell

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#### COVER:

One of a series of drawings of *Toronto Old City Hall*. From the "Toronto Collection" Series A: Landmark Buildings. Drawn and composed by OPUS. For information write to Opus Associates, 125 Trinity St., Toronto, M5A 3C7.

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 EDITORIAL

# Architectural Heritage— A Three Dimensional Statement of Culture

Of all North American traits the pre-occupation with newness has been most significant in the formation of our culture. This desire stimulates invention, exploration, growth, conquest of the elements and the attempt to dominate nature. The positive and negative aspects of this pull-down and build-over mentality have left their mark on all areas of our country whether urban or frontier. The decade past has witnessed a turn around in public thinking and perception of things old. Age now represents quality, of times gone by, where craftsmen and pride in one's work produced products of value. Such attitudes have led to an unheard of appreciation of old buildings and a fostering of conservation, preservation and restoration movements.

Nevertheless the value of the built environment as cultural heritage has not been well understood. In fact the recent Applebaum-Hebert Committee on Canadian Culture was content to examine cultural manifestations across Canada in the way Canadians write, sing and dance. Indeed their initial publication made no mention of architecture in any sense. Over its tenure the committee faced twenty-six groups who made presentations asserting the importance of architecture in the formation of Canadian art and culture. Phyllis Lambert of the Canadian Centre for Architecture pointed out that the architect shapes material like a sculpture or as a choreographer develops a dance. Architectural solutions, then, are testaments to the technical and creative abilities of society.

Architecture as culture is the way people relate to each other socially, intellectually and indeed in every aspect of life. Buildings are a search for expression of human thought and this expression becomes distinctly national. Jacques Dalibard of Heritage Canada defines our built heritage as the uniquely Canadian juxtaposition of structures often derived from other cultures. Architectural heritage becomes a Nova Scotia fishing village, a small Saskatchewan town with grain elevators or the warehouse district of Winnipeg. Not simply the part but the sum of the parts. These become the cultural landscapes of our Canadian built environment. The value of cultural landscape has been recognized. Professor Fitch, of Columbia University, cites several examples where this importance has been met by saving entire areas, Charleston, the Chartres Cathedral and its old village and Salt Lake City temple area. Canadians have also responded; Vancouver's Gastown, Victoria's Market Square and Old Quebec are examples.

Today the economics of expensive energy, high cost for money, unemployment and increased material expenses are encouraging the reuse of old. Interestingly, the Government has responded to this in part by their fall 1981 budget by modifying the section of the Income Tax Act which previously gave developers a financial incentive to demolish buildings. The tax revision states that its intent is to "lend support to the preservation of historic buildings."

It would appear that the campaign to establish conservation as a viable option to new construction has been won. In the eighties the question will increasingly be what to preserve and why. Concerns exist as to the cultural implications of retrofitting older buildings for new use. Philosophies must be developed as to the criteria for evaluation of culturally significant buildings. The dialogue to establish a foundation for national and regional conservation approaches is underway and the SSAC BULLETIN might well serve as one forum for this debate.

## CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE STAMP SERIES

Steve Otto, a member from Toronto, has drawn attention to a series of U.S. stamps which commemorated significant American architectural works. Buildings by Wright, Gropius, Saarinen and Mies van der Rohe were examples of the subject matter chosen. Any SSAC member interested in proposing a similar theme issue to the Canadian Post Master General should contact John Lehr, SSAC President, Dept. of Geography, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

## PRESERVE AND PROTECT

The Ontario Association of Architects has prepared, with the assistance of Geoff Hunt an SSAC member from Toronto, a document encouraging the preservation and protection of architectural records and drawings. The brochure answers such questions as to; why architectural records are important, what materials should be preserved and the practical benefits to those involved. The trace is an important step by a provincial architectural organization and certainly a lead for other provinces to follow. Copies are available from the Ontario Association of Architects, 50 Park Road, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 2N5 phone (416) 929-0623.