

EX8.1.54

## **Community Statements of Support for Heritage Toronto**

### **Gee Chung, President, Greater Yorkville Residents' Association:**

GYRA has been a staunch supporter of Heritage Toronto for many years and will, of course, continue to support Heritage Toronto's vital role in heritage. City support of Heritage Toronto is essential to ensure the preservation and recognition of Toronto's history is not further diminished, but enhanced.

GYRA has had the pleasure of working in collaboration with Heritage Toronto regarding the Davenport Road panels unveiled earlier this month, the Yorkville Town Hall plaques, and what is most dear to me the 'Yorkville Music of the 60s: A birthplace of Canadian Song' with the unveiling of the first in a series of four plaques. You will recall the buzz and excitement when Canadian singer-songwriters appeared at the unveiling of THE RIVERBOAT plaque, led by Gordon Lightfoot. GYRA was instrumental in putting in place the funding for the 100th anniversary plaque for the Yorkville Lending Library.

### **Gerald Whyte, President, Riverdale Historical Society**

When a group of Riverdale residents established the Riverdale Historical Society in 1999 the objective was to assist our community to gain an increased awareness of the history and heritage of Riverdale. Our work has included the creation and leading of Heritage Toronto walks, the erection of Heritage Toronto Plaques to mark buildings of historical importance, talks on Riverdale history and writings related to our local history. The success of our efforts would have been impossible without the unfailing encouragement, advice and support of Heritage Toronto. The eight Heritage Toronto plaques we have funded include the Don Jail, the William Peyton Hubbard House and the Music Hall / Allen Danforth Theatre. Through the Heritage Toronto newsletter we are able to keep informed on heritage activities in the City. Former Mayor David Crombie has noted that cities that promote their heritage are more successful when facing difficult times. Heritage Toronto is a major contributor to the promotion of our heritage.

### **Mary Louise Ashbourne**

#### **President, Weston Historical Society**

To the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Toronto

As President of the Weston Historical Society, a Tour Group Leader and participant on walks planned and executed by other like-minded volunteers, I ask you all to obtain a copy of the new brochure outlining the Walks for the rest of the summer and fall. Choose a walk - preferably from your own ward - and enjoy learning about your neighbourhood.

And then you should acknowledge this could not happen without the leadership and organization of Heritage Toronto. These "Walks" are tremendously successful every year. I am sure you are all aware, successful events do not "just happen".

The financial support of Heritage Toronto by the City of Toronto is repaid many, many times in the gathering and sharing of knowledge of our storied past and the building of civic pride and optimism for the future. The walks are city-wide and provide an

opportunity for the citizens of every part of Toronto to get to know each other better. They constitute only a small part of the work of Heritage Toronto.

Your continued financial support of Heritage Toronto is an investment in the future of the City and to date that support has produced great returns.

**Paul Litt**  
**President, Toronto Historical Association**

The Toronto Historical Association is an umbrella organization of volunteer heritage organizations across the city of Toronto. Since our founding in 1998 we have worked very closely with Heritage Toronto to promote heritage and preservation issues. Our member groups find the relationship with Heritage Toronto invaluable. The staff at Heritage Toronto are always available as a resource when a professional opinion is required or someone needs help to network with others in the field. The relationship between Heritage Toronto and the volunteer sector is mutually beneficial. Heritage Toronto supports many of the causes we undertake. As well many the groups rely on Heritage Toronto to promote and co-sponsor things like walking tours. In turn Heritage Toronto is able to leverage their relationship with the volunteer sector - either through the connections to the local neighbourhood issues, or drawing from the extensive volunteer pool itself.

There is no doubt that any sort of cuts or reduction to Heritage Toronto's services would have a mushroom effect to the work that volunteer heritage groups do across the city. Volunteerism and community activism is a trademark of Toronto residents. These qualities require the continued nurturing and support of the city through agencies like Heritage Toronto. The relationship that has been forged between the volunteer sector and Heritage Toronto is valuable and any funding cuts to the latter would prove detrimental to the city as a whole.

**Cathy Nasmith**  
**Built Heritage News**

The William Kilbourn Lecture and Heritage Toronto Awards evening is one of the highlights of the year for us. We appreciate both the varied topics on Toronto, and being able to applaud great work done by colleagues, and to take a bow from time to time too.

I have also appreciated the way HT helps other organizations by partnering, and offering assistance in various forms to fledgling efforts, such as Save St. Stephens and works with community groups setting up heritage districts. Having a charitable organization linked to the city is valuable; as they are much more nimble in handling monies on behalf of community organizations.

Over the years I have worked with HT on many different projects, and they anchor and support so many other organizations.

**William Greer,  
Former Chief Architect, the Toronto Historical Board**

Heritage Toronto is an important source of information about the City's cultural heritage and effectively provides public education, through its outstanding plaque program and walking tours conducted by volunteers and sponsored by the private sector.

In a city with a large immigrant population there are many with little knowledge about our cultural heritage and therefore Heritage Toronto is needed to continue its roll functioning as a city-supported 'arms length' agency.

It would be able to continue its role of providing heritage information to the public and increase its promotion of the City's vital heritage programs leaving the City's Heritage Preservation Services to administer all building and planning issues and heritage listing applications and designations under the Ontario Heritage Act.

**Madeleine McDowell,  
Heritage Advocate**

Every time I go on a Heritage Toronto Walk one or two or six people tell me about how important it is to them to learn about their city - its roots and theirs. Today, Sunday, it was a Refugee from Iran, a South Asian, an ordinary person from north of Steeles who has moved here, a descendant of Jacques Baby and a bus driver - a usual cross section of citizens. Heritage is the birth right / citizen's right of all Torontonians. It is our roots. It is who we are! It is why people come here. It is our form of government. It is both built and natural - our ravines, streets and parks, our public libraries, our right to vote, and the men and women who have died for all of these. Toronto's heritage **is the core** of the city, not merely a core function.

**David Wencer, West Toronto Junction Historical Society**

The West Toronto Junction Historical Society is extremely proud of our relationship with Heritage Toronto, and is very grateful for the help that they have provided for us. Our group focuses on a neighbourhood outside of Toronto's downtown core, and Heritage Toronto has been invaluable at raising the profile of our community. There are many in Toronto who think that all of our valuable and compelling history happened downtown, but over the past few years the Heritage Toronto walking tour of the Junction, beginning at the intersection of Runnymede and Dundas, has drawn close to (and in some years, more than) 200 people, many of whom do not even live in the community. Heritage Toronto's publicity and organization has no doubt been a major factor in producing these numbers. Heritage Toronto also does an excellent job of regularly providing walking tours of other neighbourhoods outside the downtown core, including walks of Thistletown and Agincourt Village. There are few other institutions in this city which include these neighbourhoods, and their ability to promote and inform the public about these communities is immensely valuable to Torontonians.

Thanks to our local walk, the heritage plaques, the Heritage Toronto website and the preparation of the Heritage Voices report, we believe that Heritage Toronto is providing an incredibly valuable service to this city, and is part of a growing movement to celebrate all parts of our city, not just the downtown core. Our Executive feels it is important for us to be vocal in support of Heritage Toronto, and we are willing to do anything we can do to ensure that Heritage Toronto remains a visible Toronto institution which can continue to provide a high level of heritage programming.

**Denise Harris, President, Etobicoke Historical Society**

Heritage Toronto performs several unique functions - public walking tours, downloadable iPod tours, heritage plaques, a public heritage award program and more. If cut adrift with no funding or direct connection to the City, there is a great danger that any or all of these services will be lost – to the detriment of heritage preservation and economic development.

The Etobicoke Historical Society (EHS) has always been very supportive of Heritage Toronto's activities, and we have been very pleased to work collaboratively with you to add more focus on Etobicoke's heritage. Some recent examples include:

- In 2011, Heritage Toronto offered three walking tours in Etobicoke as part of their tour program: Humber Bay, Thistletown, and St. Philip's Cemetery. A fourth tour (Islington Village & Its Murals) will be proposed by EHS for 2012.
- EHS was involved with Heritage Toronto in the development of plaques for The Shared Path project, Toronto's new Discovery Walk and first Historical Park, in the Humber River Valley, launched June 11, 2011.
- EHS was also involved with the finalization of Heritage Toronto's newest ipod walking tour of Islington Village, now ready for launching.

**Norm McLeod, Swansea Historical Society**

The Swansea Historical Society is extremely upset to hear of the potential effect on Heritage Toronto that will be a result of The City of Toronto budget proposal. Heritage Toronto is a crucial link between the resources of community heritage organizations and the City. Its leadership is identifying areas where more rather than less involvement is necessary. Heritage Toronto's leadership in community walks allows the citizens of Toronto an important look into our rich heritage. Promotion of events and heritage recognition such as the "Shared Path" along the Humber River give our youth a chance to exercise in the natural beauty of the Humber Valley and live history through the interpretive nodes along the walk. The list of their contributions is too extensive for this short note of support. Their contribution is essential as a part of this growing city. We hope the City will not forget the heritage of its past citizens and continue to support Heritage Toronto.

**Audrey Fox, President, York Pioneer and Historical Society**

The York Pioneer and Historical Society (YPHS) has had an excellent working relationship with Heritage Toronto (HT) for many years and in all its incarnations. Founded in 1869, the YPHS is known for its very early work to preserve built heritage (such as Scadding Cabin in 1879); Heritage Toronto has helped the YPHS, and our city, to "preserve the past for the future". Together we have sponsored plaques and cairns and we are currently working with staff on an interpretive plaque to be unveiled in 2012. Our society strongly supports heritage in all its forms -- and we strongly support Heritage Toronto. We ask that City Hall do the same to preserve heritage for the generations to come.

**Rollo Myers, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario**

City support of Heritage Toronto encourages the preservation of the cultural landmarks that make Toronto unique. Much admired, much photographed buildings such as the Flatiron, Old City Hall, Union Station and the Grange were all at one time threatened with demolition, but were saved by public effort. Others were lost and the City has been diminished by this compared to other jurisdictions with the foresight to protect historic buildings and neighbourhoods. The appreciation and preservation of our heritage endowments brings social and economic benefits that is understood in destinations all over the world. Toronto's history deserves to be celebrated. It's what people come here to find out about. It makes us unique, and attracts investment and visitation.

**Geoff Geduld, President, North York Historical Society**

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the North York Historical Society, I am writing in support of Heritage Toronto, who provides a unifying voice to the City of Toronto's heritage community.

The Society, has for over 50 years, been one of the primary historical societies in the now amalgamated City, partners with Heritage Toronto in a number of heritage functions including heritage walks, plaques and markers program and resource centre.

We solicit and welcome their specialized advice and assistance regularly.

The staff and services provided by Heritage Toronto help to ensure that our City and its rich heritage of built and natural features remain a viable set of unique resources. We are enabled by Heritage Toronto to retain status and stature as a major cultural contributor on the national stage for residents and visitors.

One is tempted to ask how much in municipal revenue, how many jobs and what damage to our tourism industry would be the effect of cutting Heritage Toronto or any other of our cultural services. All stakeholders would be significantly poorer should Heritage Toronto be cut or diminished.



Let us not take drastic measures for short-term fiscal relief by harming the long-term services, capabilities and valued functions provided by Heritage Toronto.

**Geoff Kettel and Edith Geduld, Chair, North York Community Preservation Panel**

We write in support of Heritage Toronto and the wide range of services and support they provide, on an already limited budget, to the heritage community, citizens and visitors to the City of Toronto.

Heritage Toronto promotes public awareness of the City's heritage resources and is the primary public access to our rich history:

Walking tours, in partnership with volunteer based heritage organizations, across the City, emphasize our neighbourhoods;

[www.heritagetoronto.org](http://www.heritagetoronto.org) promotes public awareness to our City's past and invites participation;

Plaquing and marker programs provide our residents and visitors with stories of our past.

Heritage Toronto partners with local history societies and preservation panels, for example, the North York Modernist Forum hosted by the North York Preservation Panel, the Mayors Forum co-hosted with the Toronto Historical Association, researching and production of plaques, etc.

*The Heritage Annual Toronto Awards and William Kilbourn Memorial Lecture* is a major cultural event and the photographic exhibit *Building Storeys* attracts a wide audience.

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