

Lowertown *(((echo)))* de la Basse - ville

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FEATURE STORY

Building a new wall of condos in the ByWard Market

By Allen Brown

Last November 15th, the City of Ottawa’s Planning and Housing Committee approved without discussion Claridge Homes’ 16+ storey addition to the Andaz Hotel. This is the latest phase of Claridge Home’s controversial hotel-condo complex that will build a “wall” between York and George Streets.



Zoning Bylaw Amendment Application Image
(Photo: Claridge Homes and Fotenn Planning + Design)



Union du Canada
(Photo: rmpicton on Urbangeography)

Union du Canada demolition

This sad saga begins with the 2014 demolition of the former Union du Canada HQ at 325 Dalhousie Street, and its replacement by the 200-room

Andaz hotel. Strenuous efforts by the Lowertown Community Association’s Heritage Committee to protect this important example of local modern architecture and Francophone culture were met by refusals of city and provincial officials to even consider a heritage designation.

Problematic design

Even before the Union du Canada building was demolished, serious design concerns about the Andaz project

were raised by the City’s independent Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP). Among other issues, the Panel described it as “a major over-development of the site,” which makes little “effort to fit into the context of the ByWard Market...” It also criticized the overall design for “strongly favour[ing] the proponent’s interests at the expense of what is good for the City of Ottawa and the ByWard Market.” Despite these reservations, and a supporting intervention by the LCA

Heritage Committee, construction of the Andaz hotel was completed without any significant design modifications, and it opened in 2016.

By itself, the Andaz hotel exhibits a lack of sensitivity to the heritage character of the ByWard Market and Lowertown West, where low-rise buildings are the norm and the City’s own guidelines for the ByWard Heritage Conservation District (HCD) advocate a height limit of four stories for new buildings. However, when all phases of this Claridge Homes project are complete, their combined impact will be much, much worse.

141 George Street Condo

An adjacent 22-storey condo building will be almost four times the size of the Andaz and five stories higher with 282 residential units.

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COMMUNITY FEATURE

At Elina Patisserie, a pastry chef puts her soul in every creation

By Scott Lemoine

“I saw this place and I thought, if it’s not here, I don’t want to be anywhere else,” recalls Elina Olefirenko. She has stepped away from her workbench for a few minutes, and we are sitting at a table in the window of her shop, Elina Patisserie, on the western edge of Lowertown.

Open since November 2022, it’s near the National Gallery of Canada – a fitting location for a pastry chef as talented as Olefirenko to share her creations, which are both beautiful and delicious.

I ask her how she decides what to make and she laughs. “I only do what I personally like to eat. Very selfish!”

The results are truly indulgent tastes and textures: classic tiramisu; crispy éclairs filled with pillowy hazelnut buttercream; Basque cheesecake; Black Forest cake reimagined as a cherry-shaped mousse, with a delicate chocolate stem.

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The counter at Elina Patisserie has many offerings, which can change day to day. (Photo: Scott Lemoine)

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Lowertown *(((echo)))* de la Basse - ville

The *Echo*, a non-profit community newspaper, is supported financially by its advertisers and the Lowertown Community Association. Opinions expressed are those of contributors and advertisers and do not necessarily represent those of the volunteer editorial staff.

In 2024, the *Echo* will be published in February, April, June, September and November. Copies are distributed free of charge to residents of Lowertown, and can be picked up at the Routhier Centre, the Lowertown Community Resource Centre, the public library, the ByWard Market Building and various public and commercial locations in Lowertown.

The *Echo* welcomes articles, letters, photographs, notices and other material of interest to its readers in the Lowertown community. Name and telephone number of the contributor must be included.

If you'd like to write articles, draw cartoons or other illustrations for stories, or take photographs on assignment, please email and leave your name and telephone number at editor@lowertownecho.ca. No age restrictions. The *Echo* reserves the right to edit in part or in whole all contributions.

L'*Echo* est un journal communautaire à but non lucratif dont les seuls revenus viennent des annonceurs et l'Association communautaire de la Basse-Ville. Les textes n'engagent que leurs auteurs et annonceurs respectifs et ne reflètent pas nécessairement l'opinion de l'équipe de rédaction, qui est composée de bénévoles.

En 2024, l'*Echo* sera publié en février, avril, juin, septembre et novembre. Des exemplaires sont distribués gratuitement aux résidents de la Basse-Ville et peuvent être récupérés au Centre Routhier, au Centre de ressources communautaires de la Basse-Ville, à la bibliothèque publique, à l'édifice du marché By et dans plusieurs commerces du quartier.

Tous les articles, lettres, illustrations, photos et autre matériel qui peuvent intéresser les lecteurs de la Basse-Ville sont les bienvenus. Leurs auteurs doivent indiquer leur nom et leur numéro de téléphone.

Les personnes qui aimeraient collaborer avec l'*Echo* sont invitées à envoyer un courriel au editor@lowertownecho.ca en indiquant leur nom et leur numéro de téléphone. Nous apprécions la contribution de tous, quel que soit leur âge. L'*Echo* se réserve le droit de modifier en tout ou en partie les documents.

Deadline: Reserve your advertising space or submit your contribution for the next issue by March 25, 2024 to editor@lowertownecho.ca

Questions regarding delivery? The *Echo* is delivered free to all residents of Lowertown. Please email editor@lowertownecho.ca if you are aware of anyone or any business in our neighbourhood who is not receiving their community newspaper.

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Questions au sujet de la distribution? L'*Echo* est distribué gratuitement dans la Basse-Ville. Veuillez envoyer un courriel à editor@lowertownecho.ca si vous connaissez quelqu'un qui ne le reçoit pas.

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Various graphics: Unsplash, Canva.

Get involved! Have your say! Help shape the future of your community newspaper!

Since 2010 the *Echo* has been keeping the Lowertown community informed about local news, promoting local businesses and celebrating community initiatives five times per year. To increase its viewership, the *Echo* is looking at doing a refresh. This might include a new look and feel to the newspaper and a new digital presence. The *Echo* will always have the same great content, relevant sections and local writers.

As we ponder what a refresh will look like, we want to hear from you. What colours and images symbolize Lowertown? What feelings? What captures the spirit of Lowertown? Answer our survey and have your input. This is your community newspaper. Fill out our survey at <https://forms.gle/EVjtrMC4LY5UP-JJJ6> or by scanning the QR code to the right.



FEATURE

Building a new wall of condos in the ByWard Market

Continued from front page

When the George Street Condo is built, the complex will form an immense wall overshadowing an entire city block between York and George Streets. Indeed, when initially approving the project, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) explicitly urged that its immense "wall effect" along Dalhousie be addressed during the site plan control approval process. Somehow, this OMB recommendation was completely ignored.

Also ignored were Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) recommendations to reduce the massing of the tower and to step down its north end to clearly separate it from the mass of the hotel, and not form a continuous high wall in the heart of Market. Despite this, however, the City thought it appropriate to award Claridge Homes with a Brownfields Rehabilitation Grant of up to \$1,850,518 over 10 years and an exemption from paying future municipal development charges

up to a maximum of \$819,060 for the project.

Today, this project would likely not be approved. If the 2018 Ottawa City Guidelines for tall buildings (over 10-stories) were applied, the design would require drastic revision to "ensure sensitive development which respects the character and scale of nearby heritage buildings." Also, "an effective transition in height and massing," could require the condo to halve its currently-approved 22-storey height to 10- or 11-stories as per Figure 1-3 of the guidelines. The current project allows for absolutely no height transition between the one- to three-storey buildings on Dalhousie, and a neighbouring 22-storey condo being built to its east as part of the 126 York development.

Andaz 2.0

One new change was recently approved to Claridge's original plans for the complex – a 106 room addition to

the east side of the Andaz hotel. While the City approved demolition of an existing four-storey building on York to build the addition, a greater concern for the community is that the separation distance between the addition and the George Street condo will only be 15 metres, rather than the 23 metres recommended by City guidelines. This smaller gap will greatly diminish the quality of life for Lowertown residents by increasing both shadow and wind impacts, and obliterating the sky-view from the ByWard Market. Incidentally, a revised site plan also calls for diverting 26 parking spaces in the condo to serve the Andaz hotel, which was built with insufficient parking.

Community engagement lacking

It is a concern that the developer has made no effort to engage the community to mitigate the many negative impacts of this project. At the same Planning and Housing Committee meeting that approved rezoning for Andaz 2.0, the Dow's Lake Resident's Association highly praised its cooperative relationship with another developer – the Katasa Groupe. That developer worked closely to address community concerns with its new 22-storey condo at Bronson and Carling Avenues, agreeing to reduce the building's height, increase setbacks and reduce underground parking to allow trees to grow.

Encroaching condo canyon

Unfortunately, the Claridge development is just one of many now planned or under construction in the Lowertown and ByWard Market area. What is clear, is that the city block bounded by George, Cumberland, York and Dalhousie is ground-zero for the intrusion of condo towers into this heritage neighbourhood. In fact, the prospect of such a dense concentration of tall buildings led the UDRP to advise: "If the [Claridge Homes] development is to move forward, the Panel recommends a subcommittee be established to review the entire block and assess the compatibility of development going forward." To our knowledge, no such subcommittee has yet been formed.

Ottawa's heritage neighbourhoods are at risk by projects like Claridge Homes'. Preserving the historical significance, ambiance, and integrity of the oldest part of Canada's capital city demands that we not surround it with walls of high-rise condo towers.



Rendering of York Street view of Andaz 2.0. (Photo: Neuf Architects and Claridge Homes)

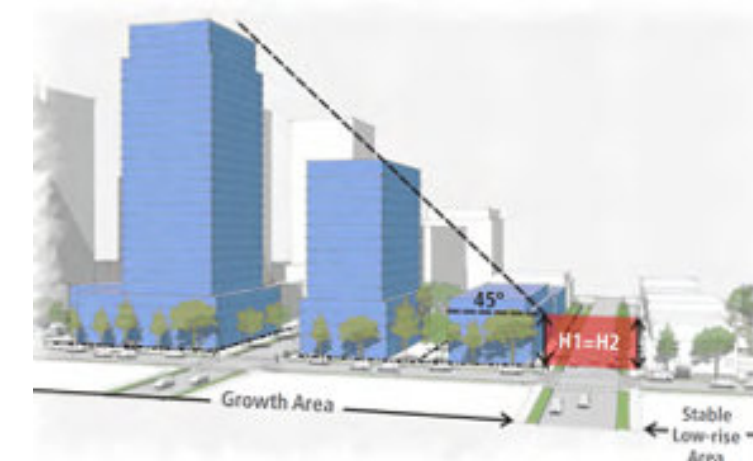


Diagram 1-3: A conceptual illustration of a possible application of an angular plane. The street is the boundary between the stable low-rise area and the growth area and a consistent building height is deemed to be desirable for enhancing the character of the street. The angular plane is measured from the edge of the right-of-way (ROW), at a height equal to the buildings (or the zoning provisions) across the street. Buildings in the growth area may be under different ownership and subject to a master plan, a CDP or a Secondary Plan.



Proposed development in context. "Ground-zero" of condo towers. (Photo: Bray Heritage)

COMMUNITY NEWS

Social ramifications of more new condos and high-rises in our neighbourhood

By Catherine Mageau Walker, Special Projects Coordinator, Lowertown Community Resource Centre

The Ottawa cityscape is changing. Sometimes it even feels like the cranes are permanent fixtures – but then you blink, and they've moved down a few blocks.

We cannot welcome new residential developments without considering the expected and unexpected social and community effects on the neighbourhood. In my mind, there are more questions twirling about than answers landing. Perhaps compiling them here will provide a space for communal reflection on the broader implications of more humans living in this condensed space that is Lowertown . . .

- What will be the effect on the demographic profile of the neighbourhood in terms of age, ethnic and socio-economic mix, and household composition?
- The tax base will be larger.

- There will be greater demand for existing infrastructure. Will there also be more investment in the neighbourhood's infrastructure?

- There will be more residents and therefore more money spent in local businesses. What types of businesses will benefit? What will be the effect on businesses serving less affluent residents? Might condominium towers be a new form of gentrification (a.k.a. "condofication") contributing to economic divisions?

- What will be the effect on the calculation of average income? Will there be more income disparity? We might conclude that residents' conditions are improving because average household income will have risen, but the number of people living below the poverty line will not change.

- What will be the effect on social cohesion? How can we help create and foster a sense of belonging among new residents in high-rise buildings? It's important to welcome them and tell them about the history of the neighbourhood and its current realities.

- More residents could mean more people to get involved in Lowertown. Perhaps there will be more people asking for real solutions rather than measures that will further marginalise those who are already facing challenges?

Time will bring answers to some of these questions. At the Centre we are concerned about improving the quality of life of ALL the residents of Lowertown with a particular focus on those facing inequities. With changes in demographics, come changes in needs. We will consider them with forethought vis à vis impacts to be able to respond accordingly. It is something our team holds to heart and mind.



Photograph of Catherine Mageau / Photographie de Catherine Mageau (Photo: Catherine Mageau)

Les implications sociales de la construction de nouveaux condos et de nouvelles tours dans notre quartier

Par Catherine Mageau Walker, coordonnatrice de projets spéciaux, Centre de ressources communautaires de la Basse-Ville

Le paysage urbain d'Ottawa est en constante évolution. Parfois, il me semble même que les grues soient devenues des installations permanentes – mais il suffit de cligner des yeux pour constater qu'elles se sont déplacées de quelques rues.

L'accueil de nouveaux développements résidentiels exige une réflexion approfondie sur les effets sociaux et communautaires, qu'ils soient prévus ou imprévus, sur le quartier. À mon avis, il y a plus de questions en suspens que de réponses qui atterrissent. Peut-être qu'en les regroupant ici, nous pourrions créer un espace de réflexion collective sur les implications plus vastes de la présence d'un plus grand nombre d'humains dans cet espace déjà dense qu'est la Basse-Ville...

Quels seront les impacts sur le profil démographique du quartier en termes d'âge, de mixité ethnique et socio-économique et de composition des ménages ?

- La base imposable sera plus importante.

- Les infrastructures existantes seront davantage sollicitées. Y aura-t-il également un accroissement des investissements dans les infrastructures du quartier ?

- Avec plus de résidents, il y aura une augmentation des dépenses dans les entreprises locales. Quels types d'entreprises en bénéficieront ? Quel sera l'impact sur les entreprises et les commerces desservant les résidents moins favorisés? Les tours de condos pourraient-elles constituer une nouvelle forme de gentrification (soit "condofication"), contribuant ainsi aux divisions économiques ?

- Quel sera l'impact sur le calcul du revenu moyen ? Y aura-t-il une augmentation des disparités de revenus ? Nous pourrions conclure que les conditions des résidents s'améliorent en raison de l'augmentation du revenu moyen

des ménages, mais le nombre de personnes vivant sous le seuil de pauvreté pourrait ne pas changer.

- Quel sera l'effet sur la cohésion sociale ? Comment contribuer à créer et à favoriser un sentiment d'appartenance chez ces nouveaux résidents ? Il est important de les accueillir et de leur raconter l'histoire du quartier ainsi que ses réalités actuelles.

- Avec plus de résidents, il pourrait y avoir une augmentation de personnes qui s'impliquent dans la Basse-Ville. Peut-être que davantage de gens demanderont de véritables solutions plutôt que des mesures qui marginaliseraient encore plus ceux qui sont déjà confrontés à des défis ?

Le temps apportera des réponses à certaines de ces questions. Au Centre, nous nous préoccupons d'améliorer la qualité de vie de TOUS les habitants de la Basse-Ville, en mettant particulièrement l'accent sur ceux confrontés

POLITICS

Stéphanie Plante: Retour sur ma première année de conseillère municipale du quartier 12

Par conseillère Stéphanie Plante (Rideau-Vanier)

À la fin de l'année 2023, j'ai pris le temps de réfléchir à ma première année en tant que conseillère du meilleur quartier de la ville. Cet article est un extrait d'une version plus longue que l'on peut retrouver en intégralité sur mon site Web: Stephanieplante.ca.

Dans l'article complet, vous trouverez une liste exhaustive de tous les événements que nous avons organisés en 2023, des motions que j'ai présentées au Conseil et dont je suis particulièrement fière, de quelques-unes de mes grandes et petites victoires, ainsi qu'une réflexion sur les thèmes sur lesquels je veux travailler et sur ce que nous pouvons attendre cette année.

Durant cette première année, j'ai été en rapport avec des personnes en désarroi, qui appelaient mon bureau à intervalles réguliers parce qu'il leur fallait un logement et qu'elles avaient besoin d'aide dans les plus brefs délais. Souvent, puisque bien des problèmes portés à mon attention ne relèvent pas de la compétence de l'administration municipale, je n'ai pu que prêter une oreille attentive. Pourtant, dans bien des cas, mon personnel et moi avons pu mettre à leur disposition les ressources dont elles avaient absolument besoin.

Ces conversations avec les résidents nous rappellent simplement que nous connaissons des temps particulièrement difficiles. Notre système est sursollicité. Les listes d'attente pour les logements abordables sont trop longues. On relève des lacunes dans les services, ainsi que des doubles emplois inutiles. Je reste fidèle à l'engagement que j'ai pris dans ma campagne : me consacrer aux solu-

tions à apporter aux nombreuses crises qui se recourent. Je sais que vous êtes nombreux à penser que ce qui a été fait auparavant ne donne pas de bons résultats et que nous avons aujourd'hui atteint un point de bascule.

Cette année, l'une de mes grandes priorités consiste à commencer à parler honnêtement et ouvertement de la crise des opioïdes et de la crise de l'itinérance. La surconcentration des services sociaux dans le cœur du centre-ville n'est guère utile à ceux et celles qui font appel à ces services. Elle crée aussi un environnement hostile pour les personnes qui vivent à proximité. Les familles, souvent celles dont les revenus sont faibles, sont privées des commodités et des programmes offerts dans les arènes dans les centres de jour. Cette année, je crois avoir réussi à entamer le dialogue sur la nécessité d'harmoniser la sécurité et le bien-être de la collectivité. J'ai consulté des personnes qui ont vécu et qui vivent chaque jour cette expérience, et elles sont d'accord avec moi.

J'ai été très heureuse de constater que cette année, les autres conseillers municipaux et moi avons travaillé dans le respect et dans l'efficacité. J'ai été particulièrement enthousiasmée de travailler en collaboration avec Rawlson King et Ariel Troster, conseillers municipaux, à l'occasion de notre assemblée publique conjointe sur les transports en commun, qui a eu lieu au printemps : ce dialogue se poursuivra en 2024 dans le cadre de l'examen des circuits d'autobus. Il va de soi que chaque quartier a ses propres besoins. Toutefois, surtout lorsqu'il s'agit des transports en commun, il est logique de travailler de concert plutôt

qu'isolément. Je me réjouis à l'idée de continuer de travailler de concert avec mes collègues en 2024.

Je suis très fière d'avoir réussi cette année à faire aménager deux couloirs scolaires. (Vous trouverez ci-après plus de détails sur mon site Web.) J'entends bien assurer la sécurité dans les alentours des écoles et prioriser le transport actif. Nos deux couloirs scolaires respectent parfaitement ces priorités. Si vous ne l'avez pas déjà fait, je vous invite à consulter notre carte pour la modération de la circulation, créée d'après les données socio recueillies dans le cadre d'une consultation publique et dans mon infolettre.

Un temps fort dans le budget 2024 pour la Basse-Ville est \$2,300,000.00 pour améliorations apportées à Parc Bingham!

Voici ce que j'attends avec impatience dans la Basse-Ville en 2024 :

- Le retour de la parade du Père Noël dans le quartier 12!
- L'organisation de notre deuxième collecte de fonds annuelle Bingo Drag au profit de l'église St. Brigid. Joignez-vous à nous le 11 février, de 14 h à 16 h, au Brigid's Well Pub. Les billets sont accessibles sur mon site Web.
- L'aménagement d'une deuxième microforêt. Nous en avons planté une avec la York Street Public School en 2023. Si vous souhaitez la voir, rendez-vous dans la rue York, comme vous l'aurez deviné!
- Aller encore plus loin pour sensibiliser et informer les résidents

au sujet du règlement municipal sur le bon voisinage. L'idée est de créer un règlement qui obligerait les refuges et les centres d'injection sécuritaires à appliquer des normes de propreté et de sécurité dans leur environnement immédiat, plutôt que de voir leur responsabilité s'arrêter à leur porte.

- Le déménagement permanent du centre de jour de la Côte-de-Sable dans la Basse-Ville, avec une ouverture au printemps 2024.

Comme je le dis si souvent, mon quartier réunit vraiment les meilleurs résidents. Je vous remercie, toutes et tous, d'être aussi mobilisés, attentionnés et de rendre mon travail aussi intéressant. Je suis fière de compter tant d'amis parmi vous et j'ai aussi la chance de vous avoir à mes côtés pour travailler. Que 2024 soit une année encore plus fructueuse!

N'hésitez pas à visiter mon site Web et à vous inscrire à ma lettre d'information afin que nous puissions rester en contact! Je vous offre mes meilleurs vœux pour 2024.

Un temps fort dans le budget 2024 pour la Basse-Ville est \$2,300,000.00 pour améliorations apportées à Parc Bingham!



Stéphanie Plante: Highlights of my first year as your councillor for Ward 12

By Councillor Stéphanie Plante (Rideau-Vanier)

At the end of 2023, I took the time to reflect on my first year as Councillor for the best ward in the city. This article is a highlight reel of a longer version that can be found in full on my website at Stephanieplante.ca. In the full article you will find a complete list of all the events we organized in 2023, the motions I presented at Council that I am most proud of, some of my big and small wins, as well as a consideration of what I want to work on and what we can look forward to this year.

During my first year I dealt with people calling my office regularly in crisis, in need of housing, and time-sensitive requests. Often, as many of the concerns brought to me are outside the responsibility of the municipal government, the only thing I was able to offer was a listening ear. However, many times, my staff and I were able to connect people with the resources that they so badly needed.

Having these conversations with residents has just emphasized that times are especially tough right now. Our system is overstretched. The waiting lists for affordable housing are too long. There are gaps in services, as well as unnecessary duplications. My campaign commitment of working towards solutions to our many overlapping crises remains the same. I know many of you feel that what has been done in the past is not working and we are now at a tipping point.

One of my main priorities for my first year was to start honestly and openly talking about the opioid and homelessness crises. The overconcentration of social services in the downtown core is not helping people who use those services. It is also creating a hostile environment for people that live nearby. Families, often low-income families, are losing amenities and programming in arenas and daycares. I think I have been successful this year in starting the conversation about the need to balance community safety and well-being. I speak to those with lived and living experience every day and they agree.

I was pleased with the way my fellow councillors and I worked together respectfully and effectively this year. I was especially excited to work with Councillors King and Troster on our joint Transit Town Hall in the spring, a conversation which will keep going as we do the Route Review in 2024. Of course, each ward has specific transit needs, however, especially when it comes to transit, it made sense to work together. I look forward to continuing working together with my colleagues in 2024.

I am proud of achieving two School Streets this year (read more about School Streets on my website). I am committed to safety around schools and prioritizing active transportation. Our two School Streets were a perfect combination of these priorities. If you have not already,

check out the traffic calming map on my website which we crowd-sourced at our public consultation, and through my newsletter.

A highlight in the 2024 budget for Lowertown included \$2,300,000.00 for improvements to Bingham Park!

In 2024 in Lowertown I am looking forward to:

- Bringing back a Santa Claus parade to Ward 12!
- Holding our second annual Drag Bingo fundraiser for St. Brigid's. Join us on February 11th from 2 – 4 pm at Brigid's Well. Tickets on my website.
- Looking to plant a second tiny forest (We planted one with York St. Public School in 2023! Look for it on, you guessed it, York St.).
- Doing more outreach and education about a Good Neighbour Bylaw. The idea is to create a bylaw that would require shelters and safe injection sites to enforce standards of cleanliness and safety in their immediate radius, rather than have their responsibility end at the door.
- The eventual move of the Sandy Hill Daycare to Lowertown opening in Spring 2024.

I say this often, but I really do have the best residents. Thank you to all of you for being engaged, for caring so deeply, and for making my job fun. I am proud to call many of you

my friends and am so lucky to have you working alongside me. Here's to an even better year in 2024!

Please visit my website and subscribe to my newsletter so that we can stay in touch! Wishing you all the best in 2024.

A highlight in the 2024 budget for Lowertown included \$2,300,000.00 for improvements to Bingham Park!

Message from the Honourable Mona Fortier

By the Honourable Mona Fortier, Member of Parliament (Ottawa-Vanier)

Dear residents,

As the month of February begins, the House of Commons has resumed its session following the holiday break. I am embarking into the next year with a lot of positive energy and ambition to serve the residents of Ottawa-Vanier.

Despite geopolitical instability, the cost of living, and the adverse weather conditions experienced due to climate change, we managed to stay strong in these challenging moments last year. We looked out for our neighbours and were there for each other. Throughout 2024, we will

continue to roll up our sleeves and find solutions to support the issues and challenges we will face. Whether it's the cost of living, pressures on the healthcare system, or climate change, I am confident that by working together with our colleagues from the provincial and municipal governments, we will implement the necessary measures for a better economic and social future in our community.

We will continue to support the middle class by creating good jobs, building more housing, and preserving our clean air. We will also continue to provide targeted relief from inflation to families who

need it most, including the implementation of \$10-a-day childcare services and the Child Care Benefit which is indexed to consider inflation. We are also establishing the Canadian Dental Care Plan that will benefit Canadians, including youth under 18 and seniors, and we are also working together to build more housing, faster.

In our unwavering dedication to offering crucial assistance to Canadians, we are proud to support the establishment and maintenance of the 9-8-8 helpline by investing \$158 million over the next three years. This 24/7 hotline serves as a vital connection

for individuals contemplating suicide or self-harm, linking them with highly trained professionals who are always available to lend a compassionate ear and provide assistance. If you or someone you know is grappling with suicidal thoughts, don't hesitate to call 9-8-8. Your call can make a life-saving difference!

As always, my team and I are at your service to address your questions and requests regarding federal programs and services. You can reach us by contacting our office at 613-998-1860 or by email at mona.fortier@parl.gc.ca.



Message de l'honorable Mona Fortier

Par l'honorable Mona Fortier, Députée (Ottawa-Vanier)

Chers résidents et résidentes,

Déjà le mois de février qui s'amorce, et de mon côté, la Chambre des communes a repris ses activités après le congé des fêtes. Je débute la prochaine année avec beaucoup d'énergie positive et d'ambition pour servir les résidentes et les résidents d'Ottawa-Vanier.

Malgré l'instabilité géopolitique, le coût de la vie qui nous préoccupe et les mauvaises intempéries vécues par les changements climatiques, nous avons su rester forts dans ces moments difficiles l'an dernier et nous avons veillé sur nos voisins et nous avons été là les uns pour les autres. Au cours de l'année 2024, nous allons continuer à nous retrousser les manches et trouver

des solutions pour soutenir les enjeux et défis auxquels nous ferons face. Que ce soit le coût de la vie, les pressions sur le système de santé, les changements climatiques, je suis convaincue qu'en travaillant ensemble avec nos collègues des gouvernements tant au provincial qu'au municipal, nous mettrons en place les mesures nécessaires pour un meilleur avenir économique et social.

Déjà nous allons continuer à soutenir la classe moyenne en créant de bons emplois, en construisant plus de logements et en gardant notre air pur. Nous allons aussi continuer à offrir des allègements aux familles qui en ont le plus besoin pour aider à combattre l'inflation par la mise en place

de services de garde à 10 dollars par jour et l'Allocation canadienne pour enfants (ACE) qui est indexée pour tenir compte de l'inflation. De plus, nous avons instauré le Régime canadien de soins dentaires qui profitera aux gens de chez nous, y compris les jeunes de moins de 18 ans et les personnes âgées. De plus, nous travaillerons ensemble pour construire plus de logements le plus rapidement possible.

Dans notre engagement indéfectible à offrir une assistance cruciale aux Canadiens, nous sommes fiers de soutenir l'établissement et la pérennité de la ligne d'assistance 9-8-8 en investissant 158 millions de dollars au cours des trois prochaines années. Cette ligne d'urgence 24/7 joue un rôle

vital en connectant les personnes envisageant le suicide ou l'automutilation avec des professionnels hautement qualifiés toujours disponibles pour écouter de manière compatissante et offrir de l'aide. Si vous ou quelqu'un que vous connaissez êtes aux prises avec des pensées suicidaires, n'hésitez pas à appeler le 9-8-8. Votre appel peut faire une différence qui sauve des vies!

Mon équipe et moi sommes à votre service pour répondre à vos questions et demandes au sujet des programmes et services fédéraux. Vous pouvez communiquer avec notre bureau par téléphone au 613-998-1860 ou par courriel à mona.fortier@parl.gc.ca.

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1 - 3 pm. 13h à 15h.

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LOWERTOWN BASSEVILLE

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION COMMUNAUTAIRE

The Alexandra Bridge – LCA urges NCC to preserve a historically significant landmark

Josiah Frith is Chair of the LCA's Alexandra Bridge Sub-Committee, with this group being part of the LCA's Transport Committee. We are reprinting a portion of his recent letter to the NCC about the bridge, with his permission.

Urgent considerations have emerged within our community regarding the upcoming plans for demolition of the Alexandra Bridge, and construction of a new "signature" bridge. Strong support exists in our community for conserving the current bridge, while keeping it open to active use, as it is now. The sentiment is that while the discussion of a new bridge progresses, we should actively explore options to return the original bridge to its historical use as a rail bridge and active-use pathway. It is crucial to note that there is reluctance among community members to agree to the destruction of this historically significant landmark, not to mention the effects of its destruction on the surrounding ecology.

Urgent considerations for the project team: Our urgent plea to the project team is to carefully reconsider the decision to demolish the existing bridge. There is substantial community support for preserving the bridge, with suggestions to explore renovation options and address structural concerns without demolition. We understand the need for progress, but the cultural and historical value of this landmark warrants a thorough examination of alternatives that prioritize conservation over destruction.

Inter-provincial traffic: The lack of political will and decisive action concerning the adverse impact of inter-provincial traffic on our community is disheartening. We propose leveraging the discussions around the

Alexandra Bridge, which will impact overall traffic, to urge all stakeholders, with the NCC taking a leadership role, to address and mitigate the impacts of truck traffic on the MacDonald-Cartier Bridge to King Edward. We recommend conducting a comprehensive study of the entire corridor, from Hwy 148 in the Pontiac to Hwy 50 and Hwy 417 in Hawkesbury, to divert traffic at crossings further west and east, thereby proactively alleviating safety, environmental, and community concerns associated with inter-provincial traffic.

Rail transportation and future planning: Considering the desire within our community to preserve the bridge, we advocate exploring the potential of returning it to its original use

as a rail bridge and active-use pathway. Aligning with proposed projects such as the Gatineau light rail or the National Capital Region Loop, the original bridge could play a pivotal role in enhancing sustainable and efficient rail transportation. Integrating these projects into the existing bridge's structure could maintain its historical significance while contributing to the evolution of public transportation infrastructure in the region. It would also remove the need for salt, which we are told would greatly improve the maintenance cycle on a bridge of this design and material composition.



Le Pont Alexandra – L'ACBV exhorte la CCN à préserver un monument d'importance historique

Josiah Frith est le Président du sous-comité sur le Pont Alexandra, groupe qui fait partie du Comité de transport de l'ACBV. Nous partageons la lettre qu'il a écrit à la CCN à ce sujet, avec sa permission.

Des considérations urgentes ont émergé au sein de notre communauté concernant les prochains plans de démolition du pont Alexandra et la construction d'un nouveau pont "signature". Un soutien important existe au sein de notre communauté pour la préservation du pont actuel, tout en le maintenant ouvert à une utilisation active, telle qu'il est actuellement. Le sentiment général est que, pendant que la discussion sur un nouveau pont progresse, nous devrions activement explorer des options pour retourner le pont original à son utilisation historique en tant que pont ferroviaire et sentier actif. Il est crucial de noter qu'il existe une réticence parmi les membres de la communauté à accepter la destruction de ce repère historique, sans oublier les effets néfastes sur l'écologie environnante.

Considérations urgentes pour l'équipe du projet: Notre appel urgent à l'équipe du projet est de reconsidérer attentivement la décision de démolir le pont existant. Il existe un soutien communautaire substantiel en faveur de la préservation du pont, avec des suggestions pour explorer des options de rénovation et résoudre les problèmes structurels sans recourir à la démolition. Nous comprenons la nécessité de progresser, mais la valeur culturelle et historique de ce repère justifie un examen approfondi des alternatives qui privilégient la conservation plutôt que la destruction.

Trafic interprovincial: Le manque de volonté politique et d'actions décisives concernant l'impact négatif du trafic interprovincial sur notre communauté est décourageant. Nous proposons de tirer parti des discus-

sions autour du pont Alexandra, qui auront un impact sur l'ensemble du trafic, pour exhorter toutes les parties prenantes, avec la CCN prenant un rôle de leadership, à aborder et atténuer les impacts du trafic de camions sur le pont MacDonald-Cartier jusqu'à l'avenue King-Edward. Nous recommandons de mener une étude approfondie de l'ensemble du corridor, de la route 148 dans le Pontiac à la route 50 et à la route 417 à Hawkesbury, afin de détourner le trafic aux passages plus à l'ouest et à l'est, atténuant ainsi de manière proactive les préoccupations en matière de sécurité, d'environnement et de communauté liées au trafic interprovincial.

Transport ferroviaire et planification future: Tenant compte du désir au sein de notre communauté de préserver le pont, nous préconisons

d'explorer la possibilité de le ramener à son utilisation d'origine en tant que pont ferroviaire et sentier actif. En alignement avec des projets proposés tels que le train léger sur rail de Gatineau ou la Boucle de la région de la capitale nationale, le pont d'origine pourrait jouer un rôle essentiel dans l'amélioration du transport ferroviaire durable et efficace. L'intégration de ces projets dans la structure du pont existant pourrait maintenir sa signification historique tout en contribuant à l'évolution de l'infrastructure de transport en commun dans la région. Cela éliminerait également le besoin de sel, ce qui, selon nos informations, améliorerait considérablement le cycle d'entretien d'un pont de cette conception et composition matérielle.

HERITAGE - PATRIMOINE

Like a butterfly's wings, there are two Ls in Papillon!

By Marc Aubin

A lot changes in a lifetime, and here in Lowertown. Yvette Papillon, the current sister superior of the Sisters of the Jeanne d'Arc Institute, is an example of one of those lives. When she was born, along with her two sisters, Lise and Claire, in the early 1940s, Lowertown was still a predominantly French-Canadian neighbourhood, and the Sisters of Jeanne d'Arc were still growing their order.

Yvette's grandfather, Félix J. Papillon, a CNR employee, came to Ottawa after 1900 from Pont Rouge, Quebec, and was said to have been the custodian of Notre Dame Basilica. With his wife, Albina Nadon, they had five children: Omer, Félix, Rhoda, Félix and Albina lived for a number of years in the 1920s at 129 Cumberland Street. Eventually, Félix and his second wife, Blanche, ended up at 259 King Edward Avenue, a little house at the southeast corner with Murray Street.



Papillon Family at Cathcart Square: Félix, Albina (top), Félix Jr., Rose, Rhoda, Valeda, Omer (front)



259 King Edward, home of Felix and Blanche, Yvette, paternal grandparents

Yvette's parents, Omer Papillon and Jeannette Lefebvre, sisters, and grandmother, Anna Lefebvre (born Gauvreau) lived at 261 Murray, directly behind the synagogue that once stood at the northeast corner of King Edward and Murray. From age 17, Omer worked for the O'Keefe Brewery on Wellington Street – the "plant" – working his way up to become a fermentation manager, testing out the beer. He retired at 59 just before the brewery moved to Toronto.

Jeannette Lefebvre was the daughter of Hector Lefebvre and Anna Gauvreau. She loved dancing and working in the dishware section of the Woolworth's Department Store on Rideau Street. In fact, she loved both so much that she delayed marrying until she was 27 years old, which was old for

the time! Omer and Jeannette didn't have children for another five years after that! Jeannette was considered the life of the home, while Omer was the more quiet presence.



Jeannette and Omer Papillon



Yvette, Lise and Claire

Yvette fondly remembers this quiet corner of Lowertown on Murray, and the beautiful large trees that lined the middle of King Edward nearby. She and her sisters would often play in the central boulevard of King Edward and she remembers having many picnics there as well. Yvette specifically remembers the Poirier corner store that once operated at the northwest corner of King Edward and St. Patrick.

The Demers family were the direct neighbours, and the Dorvals lived across the street. As the kids grew up, everyone attended church in different places – Omer was a Basilica man and no one was to sit in his spot, which he took every Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. Jeannette was a fan of the fiery and popular Father Scantland at Ste-Anne's, while the three sisters went to the English-speaking St. Brigid's, since it was the closest to home.

Yvette recalls the mix of families in the neighbourhood, with French-Canadians at both ends of the block, and Jewish and English families in between. Despite the different religious and ethnic groups nearby, Yvette did not see these as divisions. Although she was told by some of her stricter nun teachers to avoid walking by Protestant churches, she questioned such views. In contrast, the spirit of openness in her family demonstrated



Yvette and maternal grandmother Anna in front of 261 Murray Street

itself in the ties they had with the Rabbi and his wife, who lived at the back of the synagogue next door. On Friday nights, after sundown, Yvette or one of her sisters was paid to turn off the lights in the synagogue, since the Jewish congregants and Rabbi were not permitted to do such tasks during the Sabbath, which extended to sundown on Saturday.

Yvette also recalls being permitted to attend Jewish weddings at the synagogue with her sisters. They would view these beautiful occasions from the balcony seats, and Yvette specifically remembers the tradition of breaking glass under a white sheet at the end of the ceremony. If the glass was not properly broken, then there would be a gasp from the crowd, since this was considered a bad sign.



Interior of the Murray Street Synagogue

Yvette and her sisters went to the Routhier School on Guigues Street for grade one and from grades six to eight, and to Duhamel School next door for grades two to five. The schools were operated by both nuns and lay teachers. For grade nine, Yvette went to the Rideau Convent, but the style of teaching and discipline were not for her. At the end of the school year, she came home one day, and her father said, "you don't like it there, do you?" To which she agreed and, in an uncharacteristically assertive move of her father, he said "then you won't go there anymore."

Omer suggested that Yvette follow her cousin, who was attending school at one of the Jeanne d'Arc Institute

schools, where she was having a great experience. Yvette flourished in what she described as a community of openness. As a result of those years at the Institute school, Yvette felt a calling and joined the Sisters of the Jeanne d'Arc Institute in 1961.

This order of sisters was founded in 1919 under unexpected circumstances. A number of years prior to their founding, a small boarding house for women had been operating at 20-22 Water Street (later Bruyère Street) in Lowertown. A French Dominican nun, who later became known as Mother Marie Thomas d'Aquin, in search of a mission to live out her vision of unconditional hospitality and openness, was guided towards taking over the operation of the small boarding house.

It was from this humble start that Mother Marie founded the order of nuns that would operate a boarding house, many educational institutions, and other services for women of many different backgrounds and religions from around the world.

More than half of the remaining five sisters of the order are former Lowertown residents – the Roberts, Choquettes, and Papillons. When Sister Yvette joined in 1961, there were about 100 nuns. The nuns left their Sussex Drive facility in 1989, and lived at a purpose-built facility at 373 Princeton Avenue in Westboro until 2016. The sisters now live alongside many other remaining orders of sisters at the Filles de la Sagesse Convent on Montreal Road.

Today, while remnants of its past French-Canadian families remain, Lowertown is a much more diverse place. In 2019, a commemorative plaque was installed on the old Jeanne d'Arc Institute building on Sussex Drive, in commemoration of the order's 100th anniversary. As Sister Yvette said, while the Institute might be in its final years, the inspiration of this order – that of welcoming everyone from all backgrounds and means – is more important today than ever.



20-22 Bruyère Street, the original convent and residence

The transformation of Kiweki Point

By Michel Rossignol

For more than a century, Kiweki Point (formerly known as Nepean Point) has been a popular park with a great view of the Ottawa River and the Alexandra Bridge. The park has been closed for many months but, in the summer of 2024, visitors will see a brand-new version when the National Capital Commission (NCC) completes its major redevelopment of the park. The Astrolabe Theatre, constructed in 1967, has been demolished and one of the new features of the park, a pedestrian bridge to Major's Hill Park, was installed in September 2023.

This redevelopment is the latest step in the transformation of Kiweki Point over the last century. In the 1930s and 1940s, the area around the

park was a small neighbourhood similar to many other Lowertown neighbourhoods of that period. There was a row of homes, an apartment building, an industrial building, and a park. In my article about Lady Grey Drive in the June-August 2023 edition of *the Echo*, I noted that there were a few homes on the driveway near the park. These homes were between the small apartment building at the northwest corner of St. Patrick Street and Sussex Drive and the hill where the road went down to the shores of the Ottawa River.

In the 1920s, it was not surprising to find homes on the driveway because there were also a few homes on the west side of Sussex between Kiweki Point and Water (Bruyère) Street. The

industrial building near the park was the Government Printing Bureau on the northwest corner of St. Patrick and Lady Grey. This was a big building with five floors where most of the federal government's documents were printed. The building dominated this area until the 1950s when it was demolished after the construction of a new Government Printing Bureau in what is today the Hull sector of Gatineau. The demolition of the homes on Lady Grey and other changes in the 1950s provided easier access to the park.

Another major step in the transformation of Kiweki Point was the construction, between 1983 and 1988, of the National Gallery of Canada at the corner of Sussex and St Patrick. This

removed the last traces of the old neighbourhood and brought more visitors to the area. The old neighbourhood around Kiweki Point, like a few others, disappeared without leaving a trace, but its place in Lowertown's history should not be forgotten.



St. Patrick Street between Sussex and the Alexandra Bridge, 1940. On the left is the Government Printing Bureau on the corner of Lady Grey Drive (Photo: Library and Archives Canada, 4101975)

La rue St. Patrick entre Sussex et le Pont Alexandra, 1940. À gauche on voit l'imprimerie du Gouvernement fédéral à l'intersection de la Promenade Lady Grey. (Photo: Bibliothèque et archives Canada, 4101975)



Kiweki Point (Photo: Canva)

La transformation de la pointe Kiweki

Par Michel Rossignol

Depuis plus d'un siècle, la pointe Kiweki (l'ancienne pointe Nepean) est un parc très populaire où on peut contempler la rivière des Outaouais et le pont Alexandra. Le public n'a pas accès à la pointe Kiweki depuis quelques mois, mais dès l'été 2024, les visiteurs verront une nouvelle version de la pointe Kiweki lorsque la Commission de la capitale nationale aura terminé tous les travaux entrepris dans le cadre d'un important projet de réaménagement. On n'y trouvera plus le Théâtre de l'Astrolabe, construit en 1967, car il a été démolit, mais les visiteurs pourront emprunter un pont piétonnier, mis en place en septembre 2023, pour se rendre au parc Major's Hill.

Ce projet de réaménagement est une nouvelle étape de la transforma-

tion de la pointe Kiweki, un processus qui a commencé il y a plus d'un siècle. Dans les années 1930 et 1940, il y avait dans cette partie d'Ottawa un petit quartier très semblable à plusieurs autres quartiers de la Basse-Ville. Il y avait quelques maisons, un édifice à appartements, un édifice industriel et un parc. Dans mon article dans l'édition de juin-août 2023 de *l'Écho* au sujet de la Promenade Lady Grey, j'ai noté qu'il y avait quelques maisons sur la partie de la promenade près du parc. Ces maisons se trouvaient entre l'édifice à appartements sur le coin nord-ouest de l'intersection de St. Patrick et Sussex et la portion de la Promenade Lady Grey qui descendait vers les rives de la rivière des Outaouais.

Ce n'était pas étonnant de voir des maisons à cet endroit à cette époque

car dans les années 1920 il y avait encore des maisons entre Sussex et la rivière à partir de la pointe Kiweki jusqu'à la rue Water (Bruyère). L'édifice industriel dans le secteur était l'imprimerie du Gouvernement fédéral où on imprimait les documents du pays. C'était un édifice imposant de cinq étages qui a surplombé le parc jusqu'à sa démolition dans les années 1950 suite à la construction d'un nouvel édifice pour l'imprimerie dans ce qui est aujourd'hui le secteur Hull de Gatineau. La démolition des maisons et d'autres initiatives ont beaucoup amélioré l'accès au parc tout en donnant un ton plus paisible aux alentours.

Une autre étape importante de la transformation fut la construction de 1983 à 1988 de l'édifice du Musée des beaux-arts du Canada au coin de St.

Patrick et Sussex. Ceci a fait disparaître les dernières traces du vieux quartier tout en attirant plus de visiteurs dans ce secteur. Le vieux quartier de la pointe Kiweki, comme quelques autres, n'existe plus, mais il ne faut pas oublier sa place dans l'histoire de la Basse-Ville.

Lowertown legend: Ontario's first Francophone judge Louis-Adolphe Olivier (1850 – 1889)

By Curtis Wolfe

Tracing the life and accomplishments of Louis-Adolphe Olivier reveals a story marked by perseverance and dedication that was tragically cut short. His role as the first Francophone judge appointed in Ontario as well as his contributions as a lawyer and engaged community member not only attest to his individual achievements. They also highlight the impact and depth of character found among the historic residents of 19th-century Lowertown.

In 1850, Louis-Adolphe, the youngest of seven siblings, was born in Saint-Joseph (Maskinongé), Canada East (now Québec), to parents Elie Olivier and Émérance (also known as Émérance and Amarande) before moving to Gloucester Township the following year. This period of Louis-Adolphe's life was cut short when his father, Elie, died in 1860, leaving behind his wife and a young family.

In 1875, one of Louis-Adolphe's brothers, also named Elie, bought and likely arranged construction of 95-97 St Andrew Street. Louis-Adolphe lived at this address for several years, along with other adult family members, including Ottawa Ward Alderman, J.L. (Joseph Lactance) Olivier.

During this time, Louis-Adolphe was able to pursue an advanced education. This is notable and quite remarkable for two reasons: he could not rely on the financial support that his father

would have provided, and this was a time when French Canadians in Ontario faced discrimination and pressure to conform to English-Canadian society.

Louis-Adolphe completed an education in classics at the bilingual Ottawa College (now the University of Ottawa) and pursued his legal studies at Osgoode Hall in Toronto. Following an apprenticeship with law firms locally and in Toronto, he successfully completed the requirements to be called to the Bar in 1879, obtaining full administrative requirements to work as a lawyer.

Locally, he started work with Georges Taillon, among the few French-speaking lawyers in the city, at Mosgrove & Taillon and at Georges Taillon and Associates. Throughout the 1880s, he maintained a law office at 569 Sussex Drive near Rideau Street, now demolished. He litigated a wide range of cases, including domestic disputes, liability from a sidewalk fall, estate auction sales and a more complicated insurance case that went to the Supreme Court.

Louis-Adolphe was active in his community in several ways. He was elected as an Ottawa city alderman in 1882. He was involved in the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste and the Institut canadien-français d'Ottawa, and he was onetime president and an active and loyal member for ten years of the

Ottawa local Liberal-Conservative Party, the party of Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald.

In 1888, he became the first French-speaking judge in Ontario when he was appointed to the L'Original Courthouse in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell. The same year he became a judge, he was awarded the Ottawa College's first honorary doctorate in recognition of his appointment.

A reporter in Cumberland noted the judge treated his first official business in a dignified and patient manner. The local English population was lukewarm to the appointment of a Francophone judge: they "sighed at the notable changes in languages." Apparently, there was a feeling that the English community "was on the wane, if not quite passed away, never perhaps to return."

Whatever these exaggerated language concerns were, they did not endure with Judge Olivier specifically. Regrettably, his tenure in L'Original ended abruptly as he passed away one year later after giving a speech as president of the university alumni association.

Just like his own father, he left behind his wife Edouardina Rivard, whom he had married in 1883 in Joliette, Quebec, and their five young children.



Louis-Adolphe Olivier, no date (Photo: University of Ottawa/Centre for Research on French Canadian Culture)

Bigger and taller come to Lowertown East in the 1960s

By Nancy Miller Chenier

Before 1960, the tallest structures visible in the Lowertown East skyline were the steeples of Ste. Anne church and the Good Shepherd convent. The following decades saw major changes in this small-scale low-rise neighbourhood east of King Edward Avenue. Demolition and redevelopment were central to the planned urban renewal activities in the area. Single family homes as well as commercial sites were viewed as prime locations for replacement buildings and the demand for apartment and office towers was strong.

In September 1963, C. A. Fitzsimons and Co. Ltd. Realtor-Insurance advertised the six-storey Lorraine Apartments at 345 Clarence Street, now Barber Street. It had 110 units at moderate rents in a new building featuring an elevator. The same year, the *Ottawa Citizen* outlined plans for Macdonald Manor on the site of the old Ottawa Transportation Commission streetcar barns between Cobourg and Augusta streets. Supported by Mayor Charlotte Whitton and businessman Reuben Palef, the building for elderly people on low incomes

would be six storeys along Cobourg with seven sloping down to Augusta.

By 1964, two much taller structures joined the scene. The 12-storey Seigniorie apartments advertised luxury units overlooking the Rideau River on Wurtemburg Street. With a different purpose in mind, the 11-storey E. A. Bourque Memorial Building offered spaces for federal government employees in offices at the corner of Rideau Street and King Edward.

The Bourque Building, now adapted to be Theo student housing, was the project of Laurentian Realities. The company owners and operators, Édouard, Pierre and Bernard Bourque, intended it as a tribute to their father, Edouard Adeceus Bourque (1886-1962), former Lowertown resident and Ottawa mayor in 1949 and 1950. In 1964, Ottawa media reported that it was to be the largest building in Ottawa, with the maximum allowable building code height, and a cost of \$4,500,000.

The firm hired George E. Bemis to design the Bourque commercial building. As Bemis's first large office structure, it was seen as the beginning of a

trend away from smooth modernism to a more textured building. Described as having a two-storey commercial podium topped by a nine-storey tower, exterior finishes included a mixture of precast concrete ribs and concrete panels with glass, all elements indicating a clear vertical emphasis. The interior was to be fully air-conditioned and serviced by four high-speed elevators.

The Seigniorie at 111 Wurtemburg Street was the first venture of Cadillac Development Corporation in Ottawa. In January 1964, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that Cadillac Construction Associates were nearing completion on their 12-storey apartment building costing \$2,500,000.

Early advertisements from the company used the slogan: "THE PEOPLE WHO PUT THE ART IN APARTMENT LIVING." Rents were proclaimed to be remarkably modest – \$110 for a bachelor, from \$120 for one bedroom, \$148 for two bedrooms and \$245 for three bedrooms.

John H. Daniel had joined the Cadillac Development Corporation as an architect in 1961 and within a few years his "Seigniorie" design was ad-

vertised as "the most advanced, most distinctive apartment home ever built in Ottawa." This white glazed luxury apartment building with balconies oriented to the Rideau River on one side and Macdonald Park on other had a uniformed doorman, sauna steam room, heated underground parking, roof deck solarium and other amenities. Descriptions pointed to the exterior with the impressive portico and gracious fountain while the interior featured a rotunda lobby with antique mirrors and crystal chandeliers identified as French Provincial décor.

The modernist styles of all the buildings represented a significant break from earlier Lowertown buildings. All were the first of their size and height and style in the area. These structures marked a change in the character and appearance of the community and the beginning of a trend that continues to this day.



The Bourque Building (Photo: Wikimedia)



The Seigniorie at 111 Wurtemburg Street (Photo: Apartments.com)



The Seigniorie advertisement published in the *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 October 1964.

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CONTENT DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

February

Content deadline - 25 January
Distribution begins - 16 February

April

Content deadline - 25 March
Distribution begins - 16 April

June

Content deadline - 25 April
Distribution begins - 14 June

September

Content deadline - 25 August
Distribution begins - 13 September

November

Content deadline - 25 October
Distribution begins - 15 November

CLIMATE ACTION

Your quick guide to net-zero retrofits for older homes in Lowertown

By Bridget O'Flaherty, EnviroCentre

Revitalizing older brick and stone homes in neighborhoods like Lowertown for enhanced energy efficiency involves a strategic approach that combines modern sustainability with the preservation of architectural charm.

Net-zero homes produce as much clean energy as they consume annually using on-site renewable energy systems and can be up to 80% more energy efficient than typical new homes.

Here's a simple guide to achieve net-zero goals with your home:

Going net zero with smart upgrades

Make your home energy-efficient by using modern technologies like advanced insulation, energy-efficient windows, and updated heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Integration of renewable energy sources, like solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, further reduces reliance on conventional energy, aligning the home with net-zero objectives. Considerations include building orientation, roof size and structure capacity, and site impediments. Conducting a site assessment can help determine the viability of PV for your home.

Keeping moisture in check

Older homes can be prone to moisture issues, so it's essential to manage them carefully. Addressing external water management, foundation drainage, and repairing water damage within the home are crucial

before pursuing any upgrades to the building envelope. This helps prevent issues like mold and structural damage.

Tackling insulation challenges

Balancing insulation and maintaining your home's aesthetic can be tricky, especially in those homes made from moisture-absorbing materials like brick and stone. Understanding the placement of the insulation layer within the wall assembly is crucial for addressing energy efficiency and potential moisture-related concerns. Use breathable insulation materials like mineral wool or cellulose, especially for homes made of materials that absorb moisture. This will help mitigate risks to structural integrity and long-term durability, ensuring energy efficiency and preventing potential moisture-related problems.

Upgrade windows and doors

Swap out windows and doors for better energy efficiency with sensitivity to the historical context. Consider custom solutions that replicate the original design with improved insulation. For those aiming for net zero, opt for advanced thermal windows. Make sure to comply with historic preservation rules before making exterior changes. For more information visit City of Ottawa resources.

Efficient heating, cooling, and hot water

Consider upgrading your HVAC (heating, ventilating and air conditioning) and hot water systems for enhanced energy efficiency. Options such as the ductless mini-split air-source heat pump (ASHP) systems and combination ASHP hot water systems offer discreet and highly efficient solutions. These solutions reduce carbon emissions and can achieve up to 300% efficiency, drastically reducing energy consumption.

Get financial assistance

Take advantage of financial support programs like the Better Homes Ottawa Loan Program, which offers low-interest loans for energy-efficient upgrades, including insulation improvements, window replacements, and HVAC enhancements. Initiatives such as the Canada Greener Homes Loan also provides interest-free funding up to \$40,000, incentivizing investments in energy-efficient retrofits like enhanced insulation, window replacements, and high-efficiency heating systems. These programs make sustainable retrofits attainable while contributing to the preservation of the historic charm of Lowertown.

The retrofitting of older homes for net-zero energy efficiency goals requires a thoughtful blend of preservation and modernization. From managing moisture to incorporating renewable energy solutions, the process encompasses a range of con-

siderations. Experts in the field and financial assistance programs can make sustainable retrofits a reality for homeowners and landlords alike. For more information visit Better Homes Ottawa today!



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OPINION

City wants nine-storey building heights on minor corridors

By Allen Brown

Last November, Ottawa City Council approved a motion (19-2) asking Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra, to institute a higher nine-storey height limit for buildings along minor road corridors. This would replace the four-storey limit Council had approved in its 2022 official plan. Rideau-Vanier Councillor, Stephanie Plante, voted for the motion.

In a controversial decision in 2022, former Ontario housing minister, Steve Clark, had more than doubled the height limit. Last December, Calandra, Clark's successor, reversed the higher limit. The new Ottawa Council wasn't happy with this, and the province is now reviewing the City's motion to reinstate the higher limit.

Council also refused a request by the Federation of Citizens Associations of Ottawa-Carleton (the umbrella group for community organizations) to refer the issue to the Planning and Housing Committee where public concerns could be raised. Committee Chair, Jeff Leiper, defended the refusal because of overwhelming Council support for adding "new density where it makes sense - on corridors and the edges of communities." In any case, he said, "the change in height [was] fairly minor." Many Lowertown residents would beg to differ.

Council's motion has denied Lowertown residents the chance to weigh in on a decision that is likely to increase building heights along the minor corridors of Dalhousie and St. Patrick Streets in the heart of the By-Ward Market and Lowertown West Historic Conservation Districts. Even the building of nine-storey structures on just the existing vacant and parking lots on these two streets would irrevocably alter the historic streetscape of the oldest part of the nation's capital.

The decision potentially subjects Lowertown to a much higher density than other parts of the city. This could worsen the impacts of traffic, noise, and lack of green space, while diminishing the area's historic character and built-heritage - trends that are already negatively affecting our neighbourhood.



Map of Lowertown area that could be impacted by new buildings. (Photo: City of Ottawa)



Shepherds of Good Hope building under construction on Murray Street (Photo: Allen Brown)

Community safety means housing for all

By Nick Grover

It's no secret that the homelessness crisis is most visible in Sandy Hill and Lowertown, even more so since the pandemic. The response to it has ranged from lackluster to hostile.

The City of Ottawa's affordable housing budget - for new non-market builds - has been increased from \$16 million last year to \$30 million this year. That is a clear step in the right direction to put a dent in the years-long waiting list for public housing, and was only realized thanks to the tireless advocacy of community groups like ACORN and Horizon Ottawa, and councillors like Ariel Troster. But does this funding actually match the severity of the city's stated "housing emergency?"

\$30 million is a drop in the bucket compared to what the city spends on policing, itself largely a response to poverty and homelessness, especially

downtown. The police budget was just increased again, bringing total funding to \$415 million - plus another \$245 million for the first year's lease on a new station in the ByWard Market.

This might seem appropriate given the uptick in break-ins at various By-Ward businesses, and how many merchants and residents alike report feeling unsafe there. But we've already been throwing vast sums of money at the police for decades with little to show for it. They have been unable to prevent crime, only respond to it after it's happened or, in too many cases, leave someone dead who was in a bad spot. We spend millions to move the unhoused out of view, put those struggling with addiction in prison, send armed officers to respond to a mental health crisis, and criminalize petty theft rather than fund stable, affordable, supportive housing. And so, nothing changes except that the al-

ready desperate and vulnerable are left overpoliced and worse off.

It all feels like a bit of a scam. The city claims it can't afford to build housing or fund better services because it must keep taxes and spending low. And yet it costs far more to police, shelter, and repeatedly hospitalize homeless folks than it does to simply house them. Yet all this money spent managing the symptoms of poverty gives the city a new excuse to say "we can't afford to do more." It seems the real crime, as far as the mayor and city council are concerned, is anything that would lower property values. So, we must make a choice, because if we truly want a safer city, we must break this cycle.

Over in Finland, homelessness has been nearly eliminated. Anyone living rough receives a small apartment and counseling - without any precondi-

tions. Four out of five people make their way back into a stable life.

Ottawa must go all in on public housing, co-ops, and Housing First programs like Options Bytown alongside robust social services so no one is left behind, drawing from the massive police budget to pay for it. When people speak of "defunding" or "de-tasking" the police, this is what they mean: redirecting money into social investments that tackle the root of crime and make the police less necessary to begin with.

When a person is priced out of housing, deprived of the resources and support they need, unable to find a job without a permanent address, and then dragged away by the cops so residents aren't bothered by their presence - to me, that is not safety. That is callousness being done in our name.

ARTS & CULTURE

A zine called *These Days* fosters human connection, throughout and beyond the pandemic

By Ben Ladouceur

In late 2021, many residents of Lowertown (and some other Ottawans) found copies of a little book-like thing in their mailboxes. It wasn't in an envelope, and it didn't have an address; it could only have arrived by hand. It featured pages of insights on life during the pandemic, including this gem:

"Have you spoken with children lately? Don't they seem just a little wiser for their age than you remember being? Maybe I'm imagining it, but amidst the chaos and attention-grabbing news, it seems to me that quietly we're learning to be better to each other."

This observation was one of many provided by regular contributors to *These Days*, a zine that Lowertown resident, Jeff Blackman, began during the pandemic. That issue focused on lessons learned through the early days of COVID-19. Like every issue, it was printed, folded, stapled, and hand-delivered to a network of friends, neighbours, and community members.

"I started it within days of the lockdowns," says Blackman.

"I had lots of artistic plans that had been put on hold - performances and events. I thought, I'm going to make a little quaran-zine. I got my friends to make things."

There are now 25 issues of *These Days*, and counting.



Blackman tabling at a recent small press book fair, with many issues of *These Days* on display. (Photo: Ben Ladouceur)

Some contributors, including Blackman's son, have ages in the single digits. These junior contributors are responsible for some of the most engaging and entertaining work - which gives credence to the anonymous observation, quoted at the start of this article, that children are wiser than ever.

Blackman is a prolific poet and editor, with 15 chapbooks to his name. He might hold the record for shortest poem ever to be published in the popular "Best Canadian Poetry" annual anthology (four lines total). The title of the zine came from a line in one of Blackman's own poems, featured in the first issue.

He also has a lot of experience with small magazines - and to him, the fact that *These Days* is a physical product matters. "There are a lot of online magazines," he says.

"[A handmade magazine] felt like something that would connect me to people I cared about. Not just friends and family, but people who I knew from the larger arts community and who I'd see once a month or so at readings and events in Ottawa."

"We almost forget it now, but during that year of no touching and no hugging, a physical thing helped to transcend the digital divide at that time." For many contributors and readers - some of whom help to keep the magazine cost-neutral with Patreon donations - the magazine was a source of genuine human connection during those long, isolating months.

But how does the zine look now that the pandemic is over? "I've been bringing in guest editors and collaborators," says Blackman.

"I keep this going because it's a way to continue to nurture the community. It's also fun and silly - a way to play with my friends, but also to respond to whatever is happening these days."

Visit linktr.ee/these_days to subscribe and get zines.



A piece of collage from an early, mid-pandemic issue #8. (Photo: Jeff Blackman)

DROP IN AND SAY "I SAW YOUR AD IN THE ((echo)) ... THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!"

Books by or about Lowertowners

By Nancy Miller Chenier

Barbara Fradkin, Inspector Green Mystery Series, Dundurn Press, eleven titles from 2000 to 2021.

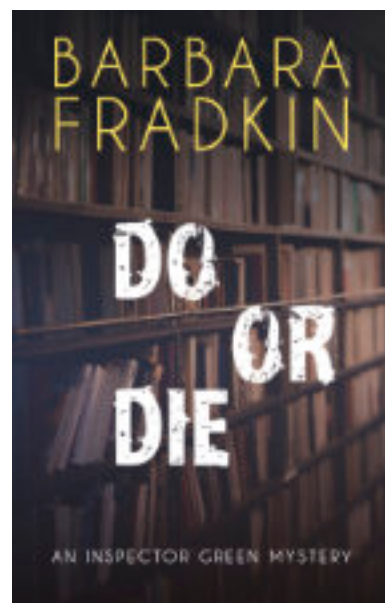
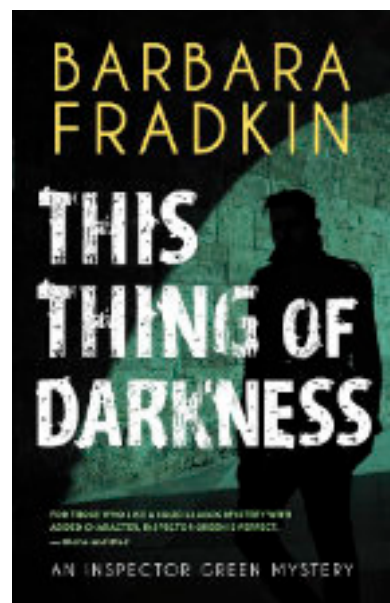
Inspector Michael Green, the key character in this series, is a former Lowertowner who excels at detective work with the Ottawa Police Homicide Division. The son of Holocaust survivors, he grew up in a small brick double on the Lowertown side of Rideau Street where rickety fire escapes, low rooftops and narrow laneways were his playground. He has little attachment to Jewish traditions except his commitment to smoked meat, bagels and Nate's Delicatessen.

The author is Barbara Fradkin, a retired psychologist, who currently lives in Ottawa and apparently loves plotting murders. In the Inspector Green Mystery series, Fradkin has created an Ottawa Police Inspector who exasperates his family, frustrates his friends, and annoys his superiors. Inspector Green finds it hard to resist an investigation and along with his longtime and sometimes irritated friend, Brian Sullivan, an Irish man from Renfrew, he digs deep into cases that others at the police department wish could be left alone. He works too much and plays too little, a situation that cuts into family time with his second wife, a dedicated psychiatric nurse named Sharon, his young son, Tony, and his resentful

teenage daughter from a previous marriage, Hannah

In this series of books featuring Green, Fradkin gives us locations – buildings, streets, landmarks – both inside and outside the city that are familiar. She also transports us to other national and international places. The first book, Do or Die, focuses on academic competition at the University of Ottawa and introduces Green and the other recurring figures important to the subsequent stories. For readers wanting to live some of the grittier side of the ByWard Market, the seventh book, This Thing of Darkness, takes us along familiar streets with its diverse residents and the too frequent occurrence of murder.

Fradkin provides significant insight into the dark side of human nature. She explores the Holocaust in book 2; the reality of incest in book 3; religious fundamentalism in book 4; the murky world of peacekeeping in book 5; the pressures on young athletes in book 6; contentious psychiatric approaches in book 7; and in her most recent book, Inspector Green's daughter, Hannah, now with the police force, takes the lead in a domestic violence case. Her website suggests that a twelfth book is coming soon, so stay tuned for another good read.



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Interview with Alexandra Badzak, CEO of the Ottawa Art Gallery

Alexandra Badzak – gallery director, artist, and a resident of Lowertown

By Robin Etherington



Alexandra Badzak is Director and CEO of the Ottawa Art Gallery (OAG), the big white cube that stretches from Mackenzie King Bridge to Daly Street beside the renovated Arts Court and Le Germain Hotel.

She was born in Regina and graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Masters in Continuing Education. Alex served as Head of Public and Professional Programs at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon and as Executive Director of the Diefenbunker: Canada's Cold War Museum in Ottawa. She joined the Ottawa Art Gallery in 2010 and worked miracles to achieve OAG's expansion by 2018 – working with three levels of government, developers, architects, engineers, and community champions, as well as leading the very successful capital fundraising campaign.

Alex also serves as Past President of the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization (CAMDO). She is an Adjunct Professor at Ottawa University, and is a member of International Women's Forum and the Association of Art Museum Directors. Alex received the Victor Tolgesy Arts Leadership Award in 2019 from the Ottawa Arts Council and City of Ottawa, and the New Visitor Experience Award from Ottawa Tourism, also in 2019.

Alex is a resident of Lowertown and recently sat down for an engaging conversation focussing on the complexities of guiding a major art gallery and about her own art practice, as well.

What has been the greatest challenge for OAG?

When I first started at the OAG, the regional art scene had been overshadowed for decades by the "National" (National Gallery of Canada) and we had to fight hard to convince people that, yes, Ottawa deserves its own world-class art gallery. A new, stand-alone gallery for Ottawa was a long-time dream for the arts community, but many didn't believe it would actually happen. When we opened our

new facility in 2018, it was hailed as one of the most important cultural infrastructure projects in a generation and there were definitely tears of joy! Today our challenge lies in recovering from the pandemic that hit cultural institutions hard. There was an initial investment in the OAG and other arts organizations before COVID, but now we need to revitalize that commitment to Ottawa's culture, including visual arts, music, theatre, and heritage, in order to have a vibrant downtown core and a healthy and prosperous city.

How challenging was financing the new build?

Financing the "new build" was a challenge as it was the first time OAG did a major fundraising campaign. We had to shape expectations and work with the City on a financial model that mitigated risk. This involved working with Arts Court, a hotel/condo development, other levels of government, and the community. We built this amazing community gallery for a modest \$36 million which is remarkable compared to other galleries across Canada. Scaling the rebuild realistically ensured its success.

What are the funding resources/streams for the OAG?

As the designated municipal art gallery, we have an arms-length relationship with the City of Ottawa and receive operating funding from it and other levels of government, through the Canada Council for the Arts and Ontario Council for the Arts. Like all registered charities and not-for-profit organizations, OAG annually applies for government and foundation-based project grants. And, we have revenue generation activities, such as the Jackson café, gallery shop, facility rentals, and seek support from donors and sponsors. This includes our popular annual art auction. All this helps to keep OAG "free and accessible," which is a huge commitment to the community.

What partnerships are happening that are unique and future oriented?

OAG believes in partnership and collaborations, and has worked with both public and private partners including Le Germain Hotel, University of Ottawa, The Royal Ottawa, the Ottawa Mission, and a number of cultural organizations such as the Ottawa Black Arts Collective. In 2024, we will launch the first phase of the arts

corridor project – a downtown renewal initiative supported by a "Heritage Strategic Initiatives" grant from Canadian Heritage, which will include a number of cultural and business partners.

OAG constantly partners with the University of Ottawa's Visual Arts Program, exhibiting the Masters students' artworks annually. In 2024, there will be a major exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the program.

We are also leaning into the wellness needs of our community, with programs such as "Creative Spaces" with The Royal Ottawa, and the Ottawa Mission.

How do Ottawa artists and the community use OAG?

OAG unabashedly believes that regional artists are central to gallery mandate and activities, and have developed innovative approaches to the way we work with artists in our community as exemplified through the exhibition "83 'til Infinity." We also support artists at all stages of their careers, from emerging to established, through exhibitions, collecting their artwork and through educational programs. During our anniversary year in 2023, we inaugurated the Seniors Investiture Program, to recognize established artists who have made considerable contributions throughout their careers. Norman Takeuchi was a recipient of this honor, and you can see his legacy through the retrospective exhibition "Shapes in Between" on until March 24th.

How do you see OAG in 5 years?

Five years from now, OAG "will hit its stride," firmly establishing itself as an innovator, connector, and cultural anchor for the community. OAG will work with others to elevate Ottawa's artists and cultural scene to national heights.

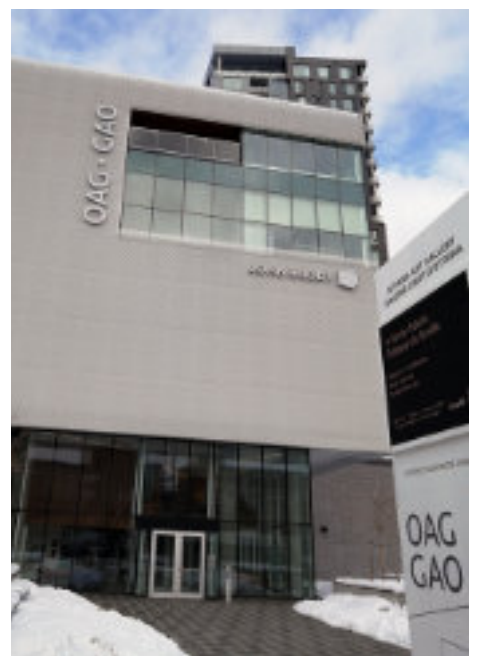
Please talk about living in Lowertown: challenges and opportunities.

My husband and I live in a Lowertown heritage home and have the advantage to be able to walk to the ByWard Market and local places. Although this area is experiencing some social, economic and health challenges, Lowertown still is a beautiful part of Ottawa and I look forward to the actualization of a reinvestment in this area including through the ByWard Market Renewal Plan, especially

given its upcoming 200th Anniversary in 2026-2027. Lowertown and the Market have such a rich heritage and are central to Ottawa's vibrancy. As we look to the future, I hope to see that artists are central to our vision for this area – with more art studios, murals, and public art. Many people don't realize that you can easily walk to the National Gallery of Canada, la Nouvelle Scene, the Bytown Museum, the National Art Centre, Ottawa's Little Theatre, and of course the Ottawa Art Gallery and Arts Court, so let's celebrate this by visibly linking all these cultural assets!

Please tell us about your art practice.

I am trained as a visual artist and artmaking will always be an important part of me, and, of course, informs my work as the Director and CEO of the OAG. Currently in my downtime, I create bespoke jewelry that affords me an opportunity to explore colour and form, which I gift to friends.



Ottawa Art Gallery
(Photo: Robin Etherington)

Arts & culture corner

Cultural happenings for you to enjoy

By Robin Etherington

Winter is finally with us as are winter festivals and cultural activities – all within our reach in, or with a short walk from, our vibrant Lower-town area.

Galleries

Karsh-Masson Gallery
110 Laurier Avenue West
Tenuous Systems, works by Emily DiCarlo,
February 1 to April 14
<https://ottawa.ca/en/arts-heritage-and-events/art-centres-galleries-and-exhibition-spaces/galleries-and-exhibition-spaces>

Ottawa School of Art
35 George Street
Breathing Words | 날숨, an exhibition of works by Joonwook Park
Until February 18 2024
<https://artottawa.ca/>

City Hall Art Gallery
110 Laurier Avenue West
A Glimmering Feel Towards the Now, works by Atticus Gordon, Megan Kyak-Monteith, and Alex Sutcliffe
February 23 to May 12
<https://ottawa.ca/en/arts-heritage-and-events/art-centres-galleries-and-exhibition-spaces/galleries-and-exhibition-spaces>

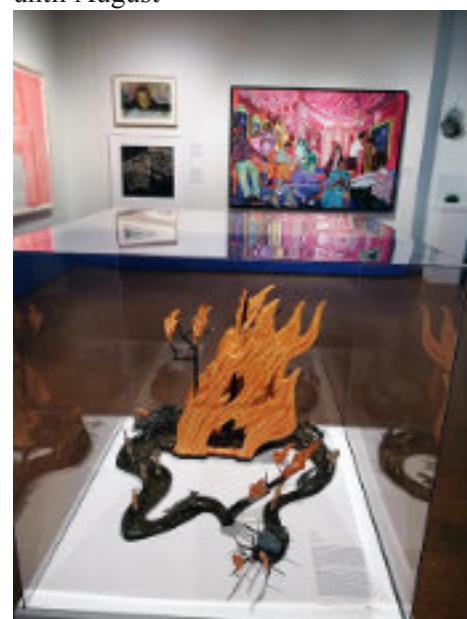
National Gallery of Canada
380 Sussex Drive

The Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts 2023, until March 3

Nick Sikkuark: Humour and Horror
σδϙ ρδϙ Δϙϙ ϙϙϙ ϙϙϙ ϙϙϙ
bϙϙϙ ϙϙϙ ϙϙϙ, until March 24

Riopelle: Crossroads in Time, until April 7

The Black Canadians (after Cooke), until August



View of the exhibition, *Rising Tide*, at the City Hall Art Gallery. (Photo: Robin Etherington)

Stan Douglas 2011 (insert does not equal symbol) 1848, until September
<https://www.gallery.ca/>

Ottawa Art Gallery
50 Mackenzie King Bridge

Shapes in Between, Norman Takeuchi, A Retrospective, until March 24

Chickadees and Flowers by Mairi Brascoupé, until June 13, 2025
<https://oaggao.ca/>

Museums

Canadian War Museum
1 Vimy Place
Canadian Forces Artists Program, - Group 9, until March 17

Canada, Korea and the War, until March 31

Legion National Foundation's Poster and Literary Contest Winners 2023, until October 13
<https://www.warmuseum.ca/>

Canadian Museum of History
100 Laurier St, Gatineau
Canada's Got Game presents a collection of objects from Canada's Sports Hall of Fame, until 6 October
<https://www.historymuseum.ca/>

Vanier Muséoparc
300 des Pères-Blancs Avenue
Totally renovated. Enjoy wonderful bilingual exhibitions and programs, as well as the rebuilt Sugar Shack.
<https://museoparc.ca/en/>

Musée Bytown Museum
1 Canal Lane
Three cheers for this community museum that won an Ontario Museum Association Award of Excellence in 2023 for a permanent installation that presents Indigenous murals and labels in Algonquin. Open by appointment during winter.
<https://bytownmuseum.com/>

Performances

Ottawa Little Theatre
400 King Edward Avenue

Murder on the Orient Express, February 28 to March 16

Grand Horizons, April 3 to 20, 2024
<https://www.ottawalittletheatre.com/>

The National Arts Centre
1 Elgin Street
<https://nac-cna.ca/en/>



Ice sculpture during Winterlude. (Photo: Robin Etherington)

Special activities

Winterlude 2024
Various locations
February 2 to 19
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/winterlude.html>

Senate of Canada Building and House of Canada Free Tours
https://lop.parl.ca/sites/Visit/default/en_CA/Senate
<https://rts.parl.ca/>

ByWard Market District Authority's website for events and cultural activities throughout the year:
<https://www.byward-market.com/>

Department of Canadian Heritage website for activities:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/winterlude.html>

Parks Canada in Ottawa:
<https://parks.canada.ca/voyage-travel/region/ontario/itin/ottawa>

COMMUNITY FEATURES

At Elina Patisserie, a pastry chef puts her soul in every creation

Continued from front page

Her production schedule runs six days a week. Many of the desserts include multiple components and take a few days to prepare.

A dessert that looks just like a pear until cut open starts with cooking and freezing pears in small bowls before placing them in the centre of a Baileys mousse. The next day, like a sculptor, Olefirenko shapes the dessert by hand. Once it sets, she finishes it with a cocoa butter and white chocolate glaze, and places it on a crunchy base.

When I ask whether even an expert like her has challenges making pastry, she tells me that she always keeps an eye on the thermostat and the weather.

In a heat wave last May, the central AC malfunctioned. It became impossible to work with chocolate, and she had to close the shop.

A dry day outside can cause plans to change: low humidity is one of the secret ingredients required to get a perfectly smooth dome on a macaron.

Olefirenko's first teacher was her grandmother, and those memories and flavours shape her pastries, like the sour cherry and wal-

nut honey cake that is a staple in her shop.

She studied hospitality at university in Kyiv, Ukraine, but imagined herself abroad.

"I really wanted to go to Le Cordon Bleu, because back then in Ukraine it was absolutely something unreachable, something you can only dream of, and we thought it was only in France."

She moved to Vancouver, studying business management and working in restaurants to develop her skills. Then, in 2016, she came to Ottawa, specializing in pastry at Le Cordon Bleu in Sandy Hill.

I ask her what someone who has never visited her shop should know, and she says she hopes people take a chance on her.

"I put the quality and time into what I do and [that] can build the trust."

Elina Patisserie is located at 443A Sussex Drive. (near Murray Street). Open Tuesday to Saturday from 11am to 6pm and Sunday from 11am to 5pm. Feast with your eyes before stopping by at www.elinapatisserie.ca or @elina.patisserie on Instagram.



Olefirenko prepares treats behind the counter of her Lowertown patisserie. (Photo: Scott Lemoine)

I ask her how she decides what to make and she laughs. "I only do what I personally like to eat. Very selfish!"



Some of Olefirenko's delicacies: Earl Grey macaron, honey cake with walnut and sour cherry. (Photo: Scott Lemoine)



If you see this sign, on Sussex Dr. near Murray St., delicious cakes and tarts are in your midst. (Photo: Scott Lemoine)

LOWERTOWN
BASSEVILLE
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION COMMUNAUTAIRE

The LowerTown Community Association meets the second Monday of every month September - June. Until it is possible and safe to meet in person the meetings will be conducted via ZOOM. Check the website <https://lowertown-basseville.ca> for the link. All are welcome

L'association communautaire de la Basseville se réunit le deuxième lundi de chaque mois de septembre à juin. Jusqu'à ce qu'il soit possible et prudent de se rencontrer en personne, les réunions se dérouleront via ZOOM. Consultez le site Web <https://lowertown-basseville.ca> pour le lien. Tous sont invités à assister

Love grows at Shepherds of Good Hope community kitchen

By Bernie Forestell, Senior Manager, Communications, Shepherds of Good Hope

On Saturday nights, the Shepherds of Good Hope Community Kitchen bustles with energy. People arrive early for a warm meal, a place out of the cold, and a smile from the volunteers graciously serving them.

Isabel M. is one of those smiling volunteers. She's there, without fail, every Saturday.

"I started during the pandemic. I was looking for something to do," says Isabel.

Neither the cold, the wind, nor a trucker convoy, could keep Isabel from showing up for her dinnertime shift.

"I like serving meals. I was single and didn't like not having plans on Saturday night," says Isabel.

Isabel's life changed last September when she met Tom G., a retired trade show manager and local musician who grew up and worked in and around Ottawa all his life.

Tom's wife passed away a year earlier. He wasn't sure he'd ever find someone else.

"You're at that age where you don't think you're going to have this kind of relationship again," says Tom. "It wasn't part of my expectation to meet someone where I'd have this kind of romantic relationship. Isabel is very beautiful. I was very attracted to her. We've been happy ever since we met."

When they first met, Isabel told Tom about her commitment and growing connection to the people she serves at Shepherds. Tom was curious, joining Isabel one Saturday night. They've been volunteering as a couple ever since.

"He's very calm, and I'm very energetic," says Isabel, as Tom nods his head in agreement. "I like his company, and I'm very happy to have found someone at this stage in my life. It's a blossoming relationship."

Isabel was nervous about bringing Tom to Shepherds. But she knew, if the relationship was going to grow, Tom would have to accept that Saturday nights with Isabel would start at the Shepherds kitchen.

Turns out Isabel didn't need to worry at all.

Mary, who has been working at Shepherds since 1999, welcomed Tom, like she does all volunteers, making him feel like part of the Shepherds family.

Tom and Isabel learned more about each other with each passing weekend.

"You see a part of the person you wouldn't see anywhere else," explains Tom. "It's a charitable situation. You're seeing a nice side of your partner that you may not see in a public context."

Picking up on Tom's comment, Isabel adds "We had to learn to be supportive of each other very quickly. Sometimes the exchanges with clients aren't always easy."

"It's not always perfect," she adds. "We learned we could work well in that type of environment, and we liked it."

Throughout the year, over 200 volunteers support Shepherds at locations across the city. Barbers cut hair. Aestheticians give manis and pedis. Sandwich-makers make sandwiches. Whenever there's a need, volunteers step in, just like they have since Shepherds first started in the basement of St Brigid's Church on February 7, 1983.

Nurturing a budding relationship takes commitment and trust. Developing that trust in a secure, supportive environment, like a community soup kitchen, creates a solid foundation for any couple.

"You can find happiness in your sixties," says Tom.

Luckily for Shepherds of Good Hope, and the people they serve, Tom and Isabel will continue sharing their newfound happiness every Saturday night in the community soup kitchen.

Interested in volunteering at Shepherds of Good Hope?

Visit www.sghottawa.com/volunteer



Volunteers Isabel and Tom share a moment with staff member Mary (middle) at Shepherds of Good Hope community kitchen. (Photo: Bernie Forestell)



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"The staff here, especially Mary, were nice towards us. It was a very welcoming environment to bring somebody new. That was a nice thing for both of us. They made us feel like teenagers."

Winterlude unleashes frosty fun in Ottawa's ByWard Market

By The ByWard Market District Authority

As the chilly winds sweep through the charming streets of Canada's capital, Ottawa is transformed into a winter wonderland during the 46th annual celebration of Winterlude. This year, the ByWard Market stands as a focal point for frosty festivities, hosting an array of events to delight locals and visitors alike. Among the highlights is Winter-Stewed, a pay-what-you-can culinary event for charity taking place each weekend in support of the Lowertown Community Resource Centre.

A new addition to the ByWard Market is the Indoor Busking Zone, a space for performance artists to showcase their talents throughout the year. Debuting during Winterlude, this zone, situated in the foyer of Gallery 55 on the second floor of the Market Hall, will turn the iconic space into a lively theatre venue for the public. This indoor busking zone not only offers a performance space during winter but also serves as a sheltered venue for artists on rainy days during the market season.

As Winterlude begins to wrap up, the excitement in the ByWard Market shows no signs of slowing down. On Saturday, February 17th, families can enjoy the 43rd Annual Accora Village Bed Race for the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa and a visit from the Ice Hogs adding a dash of whimsy to Winter-

lude, while Cundell Stables resumes its Horse Drawn Wagon Rides, providing another opportunity for a magical winter journey through the heart of the city.

A wood carving demonstration invites visitors to witness the transformation of raw wood into intricate works of art, showcasing the talent and skill of renowned artist, Josh Dagg. Finally, Tim Hortons presents ice-carving demonstrations where skilled artisans carve breathtaking sculptures from blocks of ice, adding a touch of elegance and beauty to the winter landscape.

Winterlude in the ByWard Market encapsulates the spirit of the season, blending cultural richness with winter festivities. The diverse lineup of events ensures there is something for everyone, from horse-drawn wagon rides to immersive cultural experiences. So, bundle up, embrace the winter chill, and join the celebration in Ottawa's heart, where Winterlude comes to life in the captivating ByWard Market.

For more details on ByWard Market events and business information, visit byward-market.com, or on Instagram/Facebook via @bywardmarket.



(Photos: Byward Market District Authority)

Plastic webbing on Lady Grey Drive

By Allen Brown

If you have walked down Lady Grey Drive recently, you may have noticed that its beautiful limestone cliffs have been covered up with plastic netting. For the uninitiated, Lady Grey Drive is one of Lowertown's best kept secrets – a nearly hidden road hugging the Ottawa River from the Macdonald Cartier bridge to the National Gallery.

But, not to worry! The netting was installed last summer to protect workers installing new steam pipes to the Pearson Building. The National Capital Commission says the netting will remain in place until at least 2026 while work to rehabilitate the drive's 113-year-old retaining wall is underway. When completed, the cliffs will be restored to their original glory.



Patricia Balcom: Copy editor par excellence

By John Chenier

One of the things I learned in my role as Editor of the *Echo* was that our community is home to many talented people. Some were the subjects of the stories we printed, and others got involved in the production of the newspaper over the years. However, none were more important to the final quality of the *Echo* than the copy editor, Patricia (Pat) Balcom. Now, after six years of correcting text and ensuring the accuracy of what we published, she has decided it is time to pass the task on to someone new.

I asked Pat to reflect on her time with the *Echo*.

Q. How did you learn that the *Echo* needed a copy editor?

When I first moved back to Ottawa after 26 years away, I began attending Lowertown Community Association meetings. There was an announcement about the *Echo* at a meeting, and I went to speak to the editor afterwards.

Q. Did the "job" turn out to be what you expected?

I had years of editorial experience working at the *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* (CJL), the *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *Linguistica atlantica*. One thing I learned over all those years is that in publishing there are always surprises.

The *Echo* was my first foray into local news. A local newspaper is very different from a scholarly journal, but the editing skills involved are transferable. I also found that my 40 years of teaching writing proved very useful in helping me to maintain the voices of the wide variety of writers who submit texts to the *Echo* while ensuring their texts were clear, organized, and accurate.

Q. Were there any surprises along the way?

One very pleasant surprise was the high quality of submissions to the *Echo*. Another pleasant surprise is how the *Echo* is truly a community newspaper, with regular articles from the Lowertown Community Resource Centre and Shepherds of Good Hope, among others. One thing I did not expect, however, was the amount of fact-checking required.

Q Like many volunteers at the *Echo*, you travelled a lot, yet you carried on from wherever you were. How did that work out?

I have edited copy from different places in the southern U.S., including Houston, TX, Jacksonville, FL and Las Vegas, NV, though to be precise – and as a copy editor I must be – I am currently editing from Paradise NV, an unincorporated town in Clark County which includes most of the Strip. As long as there is strong, fast, reliable internet I can work from anywhere.

Q. There are several diverse sections in each edition of the *Echo*. Was there one where the stories interested you the most?

I really like the Heritage section. I love reading the articles and then walking around the neighbourhood and seeing a building with new eyes. I particularly enjoyed Nancy Miller Chenier's 2018 article about the Major Building on York Street ("Marie Corinne Lebel Major," Issue 9-4) because I always

love a story about a widowed woman who takes over her husband's business, just like La Veuve Cliquot. Coincidentally, another favourite article of mine was in the same issue, Liz MacKenzie's "Environmental and cultural costs of demolition," which taught me so much about the restoration versus demolition debate.

Michel Rossignol's well-researched and well-written articles are always a pleasure to read, in both official languages.

Q. In addition to copy editing, you also wrote articles from time to time. What prompted you to do that?

A quick search of the *Echo* archives and my own memory showed that I wrote 12 articles over the years I served as copy editor. Most dealt with the arts or the environment – two of my passions.

Writing articles was sometimes prompted by a suggestion from the managing editor, for example "Meet your neighbour: Rev. Ernie Cox" (2020, Issue 11-3) and "Even in a pandemic people need art: How private art galleries are doing in the time of COVID" (2020, Issue 11-4). Otherwise, I just wanted to inform people about issues important to me, sometimes related to the theme of an issue, for example l'École Ste-Anne's designation as an "éco-école" and the convenience of using Vrtucar (now Commu-nauto) as an alternative to car ownership.

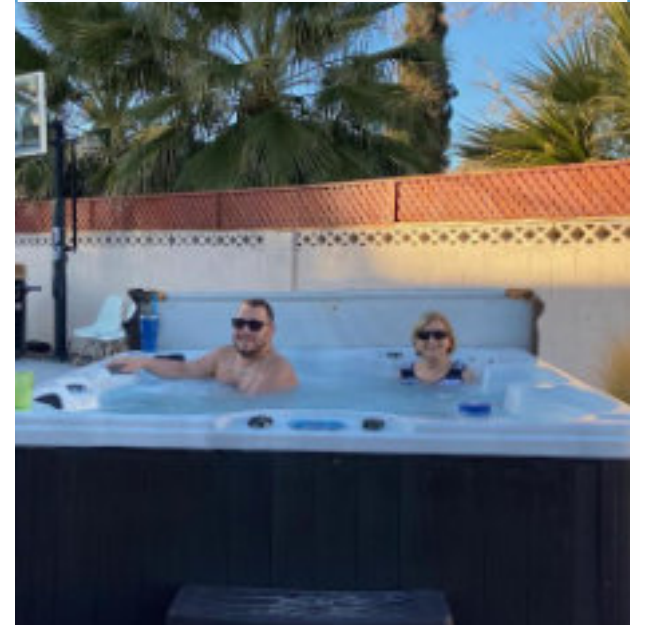
I wrote my most recent article – "A Moroccan bazaar in the ByWard Market" (2023, Issue 14-5) because I was so excited after my first visit to Marrakech Crafts. When I took a few paper copies of the issue to co-owner, Mohammed Echchaji, I was thrilled to learn that one customer told him they had visited because of my article.

Q. What aspect of your involvement with the *Echo* did you find the most rewarding ?

The most rewarding aspect is the great people I worked with. I enjoyed the meetings, especially the in-person get-togethers at John Chenier and Nancy Miller Chenier's home and later at Ideal Café. These helped cement the team spirit needed to get an issue from Word documents and e-mail messages to final electronic and paper versions.

In the now often-used phrase, "We thank you for your service," Pat, and sincerely hope that you will continue to contribute articles to future issues of the *Echo*!

THANK YOU, PAT!



Pat taking a break from copy editing, in the hot tub with her son. (Photo: Patricia Balcom)

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