



Cabbagetown Preservation Association

Newsletter

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Fenestration

This time I'd like to talk about the proper fenestration of Cabbagetown's Victorian-era houses. Improper window replacement does more than anything else to destroy the particular charm of Cabbagetown -- that of being an almost-intact Victorian neighbourhood of the late 1800s. Having succumbed to the glamour of improper windows myself, I feel I can criticize with a clear conscience. In fact, there are five different types of windows on my own house.

The common sins of window replacement are: removal of stained glass; use of standard-sized stock windows which necessitates alteration of the building facade; and replacement of sash windows with non-period substitutes such as fixed windows with one expanse of glass, modern half-sliders or colonial-inspired imitation multipaned windows.

Windows have great psychological importance. The new Cabbagetown homeowner may survey his or her century old house with feelings of insecurity when confronted with window rot or shrunken, storm-rattling, window sashes. Immoveable sashes due to umpteen layers of paint may cause claustrophobia. Unsightly non-period aluminum storm windows also may not please. New homeowners are easily seduced by the glossy brochures of name-brand window manufacturers.

...This time I knew I wanted proper sash windows...

When the time came to replace the upper floor bay window on my own house (which is, incidentally, a 1920s replacement of the original small dormer) I visited the showrooms of the major window manufacturers only to find their stock windows did not come in the proper sizes. A Spruce Street friend, however, provided the name of a made-to-measure window maker. Eventually new appropriately sized, double-glazed windows arrived from Napanee -- and cost less than the price of the glamorous name-brand windows.

A few years later, work began on the lower level and this included the restoration of the living room bay and the dining room window. This time, I knew I wanted proper sash windows and so new

Upcoming Elections

The Association's constitution calls for annual election of Officers and Directors. This year, the following positions are open: President, Treasurer, Secretary and three (3) one-year directors. Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting. Any member of the Association may serve on the Board.

Be sure to attend the Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 2, 1989, at 8:00 p.m. at the St. Martin School on Salisbury Avenue (just east of Sackville).

**Elect Directors and Officers
Hear about "House Designation"
Vote on Constitution Changes**

double-glazed sashes were ordered for the bay. A new sash window, appropriately twinned to the middle of the living room bay, was ordered for the dining room. All were copied from the originals by my ever-accommodating window manufacturer, again for less than the price of new stock windows.

The original frames of the front bay were stripped of paint which exposed the original beading around the windows and allowed access to the little doors which concealed the weights. After proper weighting, the new sashes were hung and proved to operate as beautifully as any modern window. They can be raised with one finger. More importantly, the windows look as if they belong, except for the perfectly smooth modern glass which lacks the character of the wavy Victorian original.

I think that you should think carefully when considering window replacement. Take a walk down the south side of Geneva and observe numbers 1 to 35. There, installed on the same 1885 houses, you will see fixed windows, modern half-sliders, aluminum storms and restored, double-glazed sash windows. Take a look also at some lovely restorations such as those at 342 through 346 Carlton Street.

Finally, on a practical note, during a normal Toronto winter, the sash windows are the only windows on my house which do not freeze shut.

Jennifer Bush

Fences Make A Statement

A familiar Victorian era feature of many Cabbagetown streetscapes is the decorative iron fences which surround and define our properties. Both wrought and cast iron fences can be found in Cabbagetown. One of the main differences between the two is cost of production; wrought iron is handcrafted by a blacksmith, while cast iron can be mass produced in a mold and is therefore relatively inexpensive. The technological developments which led to the widespread availability of cast iron meant that even home owners of modest means could afford to decorate their properties in a style previously reserved for those with more substantial incomes.

One outstanding example of period fencing can be found at 37 Metcalfe Street bordering the Hampton Mansion Building. Unfortunately, a great deal of the original fencing in the Cabbagetown area has been lost. Much of our iron fencing was sold as scrap iron to provide the raw materials for the World War II war effort!

The greatest enemies of iron are moisture and salt. Therefore, every effort should be made to minimize the effects of these elements. Ground moisture (e.g., ground to iron contact) and de-icing salts are particularly harmful. Care of ornamental iron work is relatively simple. Corroded spots should first be removed by careful scraping or brushing with a wire brush, followed by light sanding with steel wool. Rust treatment chemicals which convert rust to a stable iron compound, eliminate the need for thorough scraping and sanding. Protective priming should be carried out using a rust-inhibiting base coat. Initial surface preparation and protective base coat treatment should be followed by application of a paint which contains a rust-inhibiting agent. Remember, a little annual maintenance of your iron fence will preclude the need to undertake major repairs in the future. In addition, keeping your fence in good repair may also endear you to your neighbours by maintaining this valuable feature of our Cabbagetown streetscape!

Pat and Steve Poulin

The Treasurer Reports...

Assets		Liabilities	
Cash	\$6,509.44	O.H.S. Dues	\$ 100.00
		Contingency Fund	6,409.44
	<u>\$6,509.44</u>		<u>\$6,509.44</u>
Revenue		Expenses	
Membership	\$1,455.00	Fund Raising	\$ 190.00
Fund Raising	5,317.23	Printing	203.10
Interest	130.31	O.H.S. Dues	100.00
		Surplus	6,409.44
	<u>\$6,902.54</u>		<u>\$6,902.54</u>

A useful resource book for the do-it-yourselfer is The Old House Journal Compendium, The Overlook Press, Lewis Hollow Road, Woodstock, N.Y. 12498 (ISBN 0-87951-080-3). *Ed.*

What is the CPA?

The Cabbagetown Preservation Association exists to "preserve the integrity and historical character of our neighbourhood".

CPA Helps Stop Polaris Project

The Archives of Ontario is microfilming all land use documents and then destroying the original material. This initiative is called the Polaris Project. Representatives of the Cabbagetown Preservation Association attended a press conference on January 18, 1989 to express concern that important information relevant to our mandate may be irretrievably lost in this process. Following the Press Conference, the destruction of land use documents by the Archives of Ontario was temporarily halted pending further investigation.

CPA on exhibit!!

The first accomplishment of the Education Committee has been to prepare a display for the opening of the Heritage Centre in Cumberland Terrace. This Centre provides an open forum for presentation of local heritage issues to the community. Our display consists of a series of photographs of Cabbagetown grouped around issues of concern to the CPA, including renovations, replacement structures and infill housing. Also included in the display are a number of Victorian artifacts. The Heritage Centre is on the third floor, west end of Cumberland Terrace (Bay and Yonge), and is open from 1 - 6 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. *Drop by and have a look!*

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Walking Tour of Cabbagetown

One of the future goals of the Education Committee is to develop an audio-tape walking tour of our neighbourhood. If you are interested in participating, contact Pat Poulin at 923-6934.

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