



The Ontario Heritage Conference invites students to Peterborough

This year's Ontario Heritage Conference, to be held in Peterborough, 29 to 31 May 2009, focuses on "Heritage in Creative Communities." The theme is meant to engage those interested in living in communities where respect for heritage couples with creative output to generate people-friendly progress. In keeping with this aim the conference organizers are inviting post-secondary students to give fresh thinking to the ways in which heritage, creativity and growth interconnect.

As part of the conference this year we are introducing a presentation competition framed on the conference theme- the relationship between heritage and creativity. The best submissions will be showcased at the conference and judged. A prize of \$500 will be awarded to the entry most effectively conveying, either theoretically or through empirical analysis, how humane space can be created when creativity and history collide.

We are receptive to all ideas that fit under this umbrella. We have defined **heritage** as the built environment that reflects the ambitions of at least one past generation. We also know that some of our most impressive heritage buildings have been modified to reflect the aspirations of several generations. Sometimes the changes are sympathetic; sometimes not. Some buildings have had a dizzying array of fresh uses. Not all old buildings can be museums, restaurants or stores; sometimes their survival rests on fresh uses or imaginative restructuring. But even in the midst of change, the continuity of history should be highlighted.

Taking cues from the writings of urban thinkers such as Richard Florida, James Kunstler, Avi Friedman and Glenn Murray, we have defined **creativity** in diverse ways. Creativity is the impulse of fresh thinking and new ideas to generate growth or to inspire change. Sometimes, quiet, subtle change inspires others and before long a revolution takes place creating jobs and prosperity through the imaginative reuse of space. Creative people create opportunities. Where once the entrepreneur built factories, now those buildings frame specialized niches tied to industries of information, design and service.

The conference theme allows students to explore numerous related concepts: revitalization; the role of culture in place-making; creative energy; urban sustainability; and the rehabilitation of heritage resources into places to celebrate art and culture. Creativity implies actual or potential automatic **growth**. There are different ways to understand growth, and we welcome thought based on all the variations.

Present a proposal

With these considerations in mind we want to invite you to submit a brief proposal. Have classes you have taken presented ideas that you think could be applied creatively in a community that matters to you? Do you have ideas about how to give fresh life to heritage buildings familiar to you? The proposal can be conceptualized as a graphic essay, a video, a PowerPoint or a poster session. The deadline for receiving proposals is **25 March 2009**. Proposals may be sent by mail to: CHO/ACO Conference, Trent Valley Archives, 567 Carnegie Street, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1, or by email to ehanson@peterborough.ca. Inquiries may be directed to Elwood Jones by email, ejones55@cogeco.ca. With your proposal give your name, educational affiliation and degree in progress or completed, address, and brief description of your proposal (600 words plus indications of what to expect in visual elements.).

We ask you to illustrate how communities could, or have, redefined themselves as creative places through the development of historic and cultural resources. Remember, communities can be both culturally and geographically defined. Community space can be a building, a block, a neighbourhood or a municipality- the scale or size will vary by the way your argument is framed. Your project might relate to opportunities missed as well as opportunities gained and can look at untapped potential, or at-risk potential.

Submit a project

If your proposal is accepted we will notify you by the March 31, 2009. The completed project must be installed at the conference venue (Trent University) by 9:00pm Thursday, May 28, 2009. You will need to confirm your AV requirements by May 22, 2009. We will not be able to provide computers so plan to bring your own systems, including projectors and screens as required. Audio components must be limited to sound levels that do not disrupt neighbouring presenters. Entries will be judged on relevance to theme, clarity of message, creativity and fresh ideas, overall content, visual appeal and professionalism in presentation. The judging committee will shortlist finalists, and all conference goers will be able to vote for the winner.

Good luck. We look forward to seeing you in Peterborough!