



Key Elective Course: Conservation of Interiors

Date: Saturday, October 30, 2010, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Location: Cecil Green Park House, 6251 Cecil Green Park Road, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver

Instructors: Cheryle A. Harrison, Conservator and Principal, Conserve-Arte; Ann Merling, DAHY, Bed, MASA, Manager, Cecil Green Park; Eric Pattison, MAIBC, Principal, Eric Pattison Architect

Overview of the Course

Over the years, the interiors of older buildings are modified to accommodate both changes in use and the whims of fashion. This course will address why is it important to understand the evolution of a building's interior, its current condition and future potential prior to embarking on its conservation, repair, renovation or rehabilitation.

The Cecil Green Park House designed by Samuel Maclure in 1912, will be used as a "lab" for both for the investigation and discussion of its interior conservation and the ongoing work since its major renovation in 1989.

This course will be of specific interest to building contractors, renovators, planners, architects, engineers, interior designers, conservators, building managers and inspectors, realtors, local government staff and homeowners.

Learning Objectives

The objectives of the course are to:

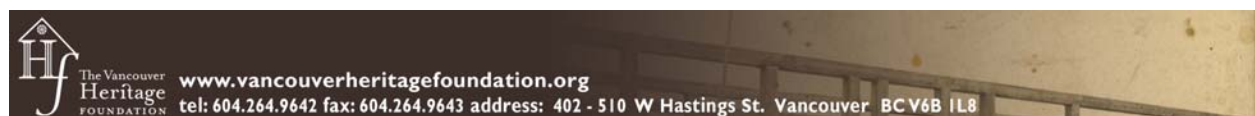
- understand the use of interior decorative features and building materials using the Cecil Green Park House as a case study
- demonstrate the importance of a systematic methodology to investigate and analyze a building's interior
- outline the steps in creating a conservation plan for an older building's interior
- facilitate the link between heritage conservation principles and practice—making decisions *in situ* as time and budgets permit

Course Outline

8:00 Coffee and self-guided tour of Cecil Green Park

8:30 – 8:40 am Welcome and Introductions

Key aspects of this course:



- a “hands-on” approach to learning whenever possible including the use of Cecil Green Park House as a case study throughout the course
- a values-based approach to conservation which links theory and practice

8:40 – 9:40 am Session One: Overview of Current Issues Related to Conservation of Interiors

- the big picture... from National Historic Sites to 20th century residences in southern BC
- interior conservation trends over the past 30 years—creating house museums vs. liveable homes
- interior building components, architectural styles and terminology in Western Canada
- the “life and times of a building”—its use in different eras
- economic realities—considerations for conserving interiors in stages
- cultural and social changes—the impact of aesthetics and design
- environmental challenges of creating healthy and sustainable homes in older buildings
- extending the life of older buildings; balancing values and contemporary uses

9:40 – 10:30 am Session Two: Reading the Building: Interior Building Features

This interactive session will take place in small groups and it will begin with an overview of Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as they relate to building interiors. How do these *Standards and Guidelines* impact conservation work?

A group visual identification exercise is designed to illustrate the need for a systematic approach to gathering information about the condition of a building interior and to explore visual clues in order to develop a strategy for its future conservation

- Building elements: walls, ceilings, floors, doors, windows, columns, stairs, decorative elements
- What to look for inside a building? its structural condition? clues to deterioration
- Changes to the interior rooms and the building's structure; tips and clues to guide future work
- Site investigations and archival research
- Application of the *Standards and Guidelines* to guide future work on the building

10:30 – 10:45 am Break

10:45 am – 11:00 Debrief of “Reading the Building”—what did you discover?

11:00 am – 12:15 Session Three: Characteristics of Interior Building Components and Materials: Approaches to their conservation

- Wood structure and decorative features; wainscoting and floors
- Plaster and lath
- Masonry, ceramic and brick fireplaces
- Glass and tiles
- Decorative metal
- Lighting fixtures and energy conservation
- Wallpaper and decorative surface treatments
- Systems behind the walls—plumbing, heating and ventilation; thermal upgrading
- Minimal intervention to the building fabric: What are the goals for the interior? Rehabilitation? Restoration of specific components? Reuse or replacement of existing elements? Updating?
- Overall condition of the interior; structural condition; moisture; insects; wear and tear; temporary and permanent alterations over the years
- Care and maintenance of the interior structure and decorative elements
- Do's and don'ts; “before and after” the work on the interior spaces; making spaces liveable

- Consideration of green features when conserving interiors

12:15 pm - 12:30 pm Questions and Discussion

12:30- 1:00 pm Working Lunch

1:00 – 2:15 pm Session Four: Conserving Building Interiors—Identifying the Options

- Planning the steps of the conservation process; research; interior condition; analysis of the building fabric; phases of work; budgetary realities; new additions; accessibility; creating a vision for the interior spaces; use of green building materials and “sustainable” design features
- What are the key questions to guide the conservation of building interiors?
- Building regulations; permits; up-grading the plumbing and electrical systems; sprinklers
- Moving from “principles to practice”; translating the spirit of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as it relates to conserving the interior building fabric
- What questions to ask? Whom to ask? And when? Who will do the work? Cost estimates
- How does all this information fit into a Conservation Plan?

2:00- 2:15 pm Break

2:15 – 3:00 pm Session Five: A Case Study of Cecil Green Park House

- **A Visual Tour: Past, Present and Future**

Cecil Green Park House is an exceptional example of Tudor Revival domestic architecture of the early 20th Century. This session will include a visual tour of the building and a discussion of the work done on the interior spaces over the past two decades (during the renovations in 1989) as well as plans for the future.

What are the unique features of the building’s interior? How has the structure evolved? What are its values and its character-defining elements? How do principles of sustainability influence the decisions related to the future conservation of the building’s interior? What are its current and future uses and how does this influence its conservation?

- **Setting Priorities: Balancing Integrity and Conservation of Cecil Green Park**

In order to link theory and practice, participants will be divided into small groups and given the opportunity to engage in an analysis of the character-defining elements and assess what is “recommended” and “not recommended” using the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* for the future conservation of the interior spaces at Cecil Green Park. The afternoon’s preliminary condition report will be undertaken within a framework suitable for integration into a Heritage Management Plan.

Small groups will complete a preliminary condition assessment on different interior rooms; by dividing the building into sections and assigning a group to specific room, it will be possible to do an initial assessment of the interior spaces within a short period of time and also to identify areas for further investigation and possible probing/testing in the future.

3:45 – 4:00 pm Concluding Discussion; Course Evaluations

Selected Reference Materials for the Course

Chase, Sara B. *Painting Historic Interiors*. Preservation Brief no. 28. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services Division, Technical Preservation Services, 1992. <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief28.htm>

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Jandl, H. Ward. *Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings: Identifying Character—Defining Elements*. Preservation Brief no. 18. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services Division, Technical Preservation Services, 1988. <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief18.htm>

Harrison, Cheryle. Articles on Conservation Techniques from *Preview Magazine*.

MacDonald, Mary Lee. *Repairing Historic Flat Plaster: Walls and Ceilings*. Preservation Brief no. 21. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services Division, Technical Preservation Services, 1989. <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief21.htm>

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Grimmer, Anne E. *A Glossary of Historic Masonry Deterioration Problems and Preservation Treatments*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, Technical Preservation Services, 1984.

Moss, Roger, W., *Lighting for Historic Buildings: A Guide to Selecting Reproductions*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1988. Reprinted Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996. ISBN 0471143995.

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Nylander, Richard. *Wallpapers for Historic Buildings A Guide to Selecting Reproduction Wallpapers*. Second Edition. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1992.

Park, Sharon C. *Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings*. Preservation Brief no.39. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services Division, Technical Preservation Services, 1996. <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/brief39.htm>

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