



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
University of British Columbia, Vancouver
- Instructors:** **Cheryle A. Harrison**, Conservator, 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 building owners.

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 am** **Coffee and Registration (house open for self-guided viewing)**
- 8:30 – 8:40** **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
- the application of the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada – Interior Spaces, Features & Finishes* pgs. 41 - 56
- a values-based approach to conservation which links theory and practice and respects the changes to a building over time.

Cheryle Harrison & Eric Pattison: Historic Interiors, Approaches to their Conservation.

8:45 – 10:00 Session One: Cheryle Harrison

Homes as History

- Homes as History... from early structures to contemporary residences.
- “Life and times of a building” – changes of use in different eras
- Liveable spaces – contemporary homes to house museums

Characteristics of Interior Building Components and Materials

- Interior building components and architectural styles in Western Canada. International influences and re-interpretations.
- At look at examples of period materials and elements, with comparables to Cecil Green Park
 - Wood structure and decorative features; wainscoting and floors
 - Flat and decorative plaster
 - Masonry and brick fireplaces
 - Glass and ceramic tiles
 - Decorative metal
 - Light fixtures (perhaps not relevant here)
 - Wallpaper and decorate surface treatments

Assessing a building and its elements – original and later additions

- Current issues and related to conserving historic buildings and interior elements
- General assessment practices for the condition of the interior; moisture; insects; wear and tear, and alterations to elements over the years
- Defining a buildings use and the affect of activities. Care and maintenance of the interior structure and decorative elements.
- Extending the life of older buildings; balancing values and contemporary uses

10:00 – 10:15 BREAK

10:15 - 11:00 Session 2: Eric Pattison

Historic Houses as Museums and Applying the *Standards & Guidelines*

- Houses as museums – examples & projects
- Case Study: Irving House, New Westminster, B.C.
Applying the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* to historic interiors
- Definitions and Strategies - *Preservation, Restoration (Reconstruction), Rehabilitation*
- Toward consistent and reliable national heritage conservation standards, government, industry and public acceptance, professional heritage practice standards and associations

11:00 – 11:30 Visual Observation Exercise of Cecil Green House

Small groups will undertake a visual identification or “reading the building” exercise designed to illustrate the need for a systematic approach to gathering information about a building interior, and to explore visual clues to develop a strategy for future conservation, and also to take into account the application of the *Standards & Guidelines*.

- Understanding the floor plan/architectural intent
- Identifying building elements, decorative features, fixtures and finishes; historic and contemporary
- Examination of structural, mechanical and other building systems as they affect interiors
- Recognizing changes to interiors over time; clues to guide future work
- Linking on-site investigation to archival research, old photographs and texts

11:30 – 12:15 “Reading the Building” Debrief: What did you discover? Open Discussion

12:15 – 12:45 LUNCH

12:45 – 2:00 Session Three: Eric Pattison

Conservation Plans for Building Interiors and Project Implementation

- Planning the conservation process: historic research; nature of the building; gaining access; interior condition survey; tools & tips; recording findings; establishing Period(s) of Significance; recommended conservation work next steps
- Key questions and objectives to guide interior conservation: Rehabilitation or Restoration; factors affecting conservation; phases/sequencing of work; new work; accessibility; anticipated uses; energy conservation & sustainability
- Principle of minimal intervention to historic fabric; setting priorities, what can change reasonably; reconstruction of lost interiors vs. “false” history
- Systems behind the walls: plumbing, heating and ventilation; structural integrity; upgrades; whole building as artefact
- Sustainability options and environmental challenges when conserving interiors
- Building regulations and permits; “Code” upgrades; sprinklers; acceptable “existing” conditions
- Sourcing and working with specialist consultants; conservation industry knowledge base
- Implementing the plan; finding contractors; Scope of Work; Form of Contract; traditional trades and suppliers; budgets and schedules

2:00 – 2:15 BREAK

2:15 – 3:00 Session Four: Ann Merling

Case Study of Cecil Green House: Past, Present and Future

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

- What are its Heritage Values and Character-Defining Elements?
- What are the unique features of the building’s interior?
- How has the building evolved over time?
- What are the current and possible future uses and how do they influence conservation?

- How do principles of sustainability influence decisions related to future interior conservation efforts?
- Care and maintenance of interior finishes and decorative elements. The challenges and application of a Heritage Management Plan for an active historic house.

3:00 – 3:30 Session Five:

Setting Priorities: Balancing Integrity and Conservation of Cecil Green House

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 & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* for the future conservation of the interior spaces at Cecil Green Park.

By dividing the building into sections and assigning groups to specific rooms, it will be possible to do an initial assessment of interior spaces within a short period of time, and also to identify areas for further investigation and possible probing/testing in the future.

3:30 – 4:00 pm Interior Assessment Debrief, Open Discussion, Course Evaluations

Select Reference Materials

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General Bibliography

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Fitch, James Marston. *Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990. ISBN 0813912725.

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.

Nylander, Jane, C., *Fabrics for Historic Buildings: A Guide to Selecting Reproduction Fabrics*. Revised Edition, Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1990. Reprinted Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1995. ISBN 0471143790.

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>

Respectful Rehabilitation: Answers to Your Questions about Old Buildings. Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press and Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1982. ISBN 0891331034.

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Weaver, Martin, E. with Frank G. Matero. *Conserving Buildings: Guide to Techniques and Materials*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1993. ISBN 0471509450

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