

LA FONDATION  
**HÉRITAGE  
CANADA**



**HERITAGE  
CANADA**  
FOUNDATION

## **HCF 2009—Worst Losses List**

### **Alma College, St. Thomas, Ont. – HOPES OF PRESERVING GO UP IN FLAMES**

Included on HCF's 2006 Top Ten Endangered Places List, this heritage-designated Victorian landmark was as good as lost when the City's decision to disallow demolition was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board by the owner. A negotiated settlement would have reduced the once remarkable building to its central tower. Local MPP and Speaker of the Legislature, Steve Peters, met with Premier McGuinty's chief of staff to press for preservation just hours before it was lost to arson.

### **Arlington Apartments, Edmonton—DEMOLISHED DUE TO NEGLECT AND BUREAUCRATIC WRANGLING**

The 99-year-old Arlington, a provincially and municipally designated building, was damaged by arson in 2005. The following three years of negotiations to preserve parts of Edmonton's oldest apartment block, fell through and the owner was granted the demolition permit he had been seeking. None of the original brickwork will be used in the new condos planned for the site.

### **BENS Deli Restaurant, Montréal—DEMOLISHED FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Included on HCF's 2008 Top Ten Endangered Places List, this classic example of Streamlined Modern Design was torn down in favour of a 14-storey boutique hotel with, ironically, a restaurant on the ground floor. It was lost to rising real estate values and the inaction of the municipal council. Memorabilia from the famous restaurant are displayed at the McCord Museum.

### **Erie Street United Church, Ridgetown, Ont.—LOST DUE TO INTRANSIGENT OFFICIALS**

The 1876 heritage-designated Gothic Revival-style church was demolished due to unwilling trustees, a town council ignoring its own Municipal Heritage Committee, and the Minister of Culture refusing to issue a stop-work order that would allow time to consider its reuse as a local library. It took several failed attempts and five broken cables to pull the reportedly rotten steeple off its perch.

### **Marygrove Resort, Muskoka, Ont.—SUCCUMBED TO DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES**

Formerly the Glen Home Hotel, Marygrove was demolished last May despite calls for its designation from the Muskoka Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario. All members of the Muskoka Lakes Heritage Committee resigned over municipal council's refusal to act. Designed in the Streamlined Modern style by Horwood and White in the 1930s, the landmark was one of the last remaining old resorts in the area. Subdivided into lots, it gave way to the pressures of skyrocketing land values and tax assessments.

### **Souris Valley Hospital, Weyburn, Sask.—LOST TO LACK OF VISION**

Dating from 1921, the massive 46,500-square-metre Souris Valley Hospital (formerly the Weyburn Mental Hospital) was consigned to landfill this year. Once said to be the largest building in the Commonwealth, it was the site of cutting-edge medical experimentation, including the use of LSD and insulin therapy. In 2005 the Province transferred ownership to the City of Weyburn with the caveat that a long-term solution for the site be found by September 2008, or it would pay for demolition. With heat and hydro shut off, the building succumbed to mould and vandalism, eroding its potential. Unable to finance its rehabilitation, Weyburn began demolition last year.

### **The Violet Clark Building (Sweet Basil Restaurant), Halifax—SCAPEGOAT IN DEVELOPMENT DISPUTE**

The last wooden "sailortown" structure on Water Street was part of a grouping of historic properties at risk from new development. After city council disallowed a demolition that would leave only the façades intact, the owner, Armour Group, unearthed a clerical error in the building's registration process that resulted in a court ruling entitling Armour to declare that it had not been registered as a Heritage Property under the provincial Act. Down it came. The building was lost because city council was unable to enforce its own planning code that allows it to determine standards for scale and compatibility of new construction around registered historic sites.