

2012 Heritage Canada Foundation National Awards

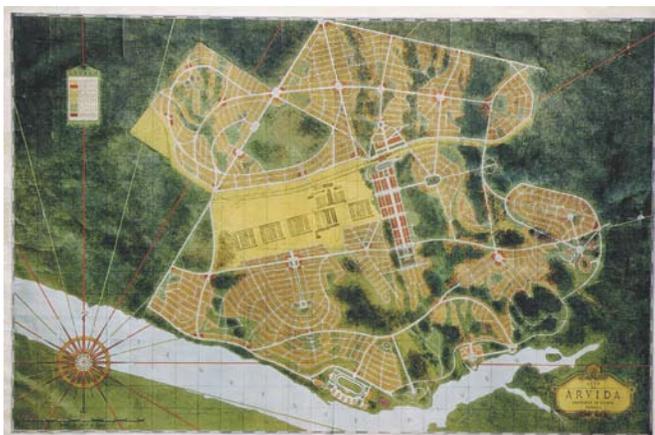
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Prize for Municipal Leadership

City of Saguenay (district of Arvida), Quebec

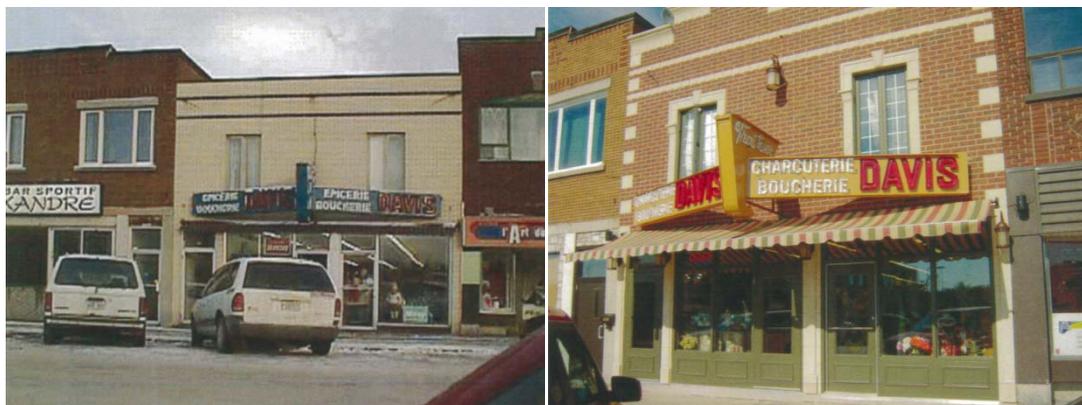


Plan of the City

Arvida was founded as a single-industry town by American millionaire **Arthur Vining Davis**, president of the Aluminum Company of America (later Rio Tinto Alcan), in 1925 when the aluminum smelter was constructed. Located 240 kilometres north of Quebec City and south of the Saguenay River between Chicoutimi and Jonquière, Arvida is a pre-planned model town whose oldest area, Sainte-Thérèse, was built in just 135 days.

In its heyday, Arvida was the largest aluminum production centre in the Western hemisphere, and workers were brought in from around the world and housed near the

smelter to work with the “magic metal of the 20th century.” The scope and character of the original urban plan is evident today in the layout of the streets and arrangement of the built and natural landscapes. Their unique and creative planning approach included 140 different models of single-family homes on spacious lots along winding, tree-lined streets, interspersed with residential parks, schools and places of worship that welcomed a range of Alcan employees—from managers and skilled professionals to the unskilled labour force. The innovative housing designs made good use of Quebec’s traditional building styles and wooden construction materials in a pleasing contrast to the linear uniformity of most industrial towns. The region’s familiar bell-cast and mansard roofs and other architectural components were engineered into standardized pre-cut pieces that could be quickly assembled on individual lots.



Before Restoration (2009) and After Restoration (2012)

Photo: Rio Tinto Alcan



But it was not just about housing. Respected Quebec architects were hired to oversee the design and construction of a range of institutional buildings: Manoir Saguenay, research laboratories, company offices, the Palace Theatre, Town Hall, Arvida Hospital, churches and schools.

In 1975, Arvida was amalgamated with nearby K nognami and Jonqui re to form the new city of Jonqui re. In 2002, it then merged with Lac-K nognami, Shipshaw, Chicoutimi, Laterri re, La Baie and Tremblay Township to create the new city of Saguenay. Now part of this larger amalgamated city, Arvida has

about 12,000 residents, and the smelter and other related plants, now part of Rio Tinto Alcan, are still in operation.

For more than 20 years the City of Saguenay and Jonqui re before it energetically promoted and protected its architectural and urban landscape through the creation of building inventories, development strategies, and publications made possible with the support of Quebec’s department of Culture and Communications. In date, the City of Saguenay committed to the designation (under the *Loi sur les biens culturels*) of three heritage conservation districts, comprising 733 houses, which represents 40 % of the original model town. It also offered grant programs to support the restoration and maintenance of the

company-built houses. As a result, the broad avenues with towering trees, several churches, schools and a hospital have remained intact.

The community itself is actively involved in raising awareness of Arvida’s unique architectural heritage and cultural landscape through an ongoing plaque program, walking tours, information brochures and heritage events. Arvida’s residential area now enjoys the same protection that institutional and commercial properties have benefited from as part of the formal conservation plan adopted by the municipality of Jonqui re in 1999. The City of Saguenay pledged \$800,000 in the past two years alone towards its long-term plans to revitalize the district through the preservation of its heritage.

Photo: City of Saguenay



Present –day House in Arvida

The conservation of Arvida has motivated the community to proudly protect the heritage of the wider region, as they are trustees of its rich history and will be the ones to perpetuate and disseminate stories of its past.

With the amalgamation of so many municipalities in the area since the 1970s, Arvida has had to overcome a number of political and economic difficulties associated with integration. Proponents of heritage conservation have had their challenges too, as the interests of smaller former municipalities and their heritage assets are often subsumed by the needs of the expanded political entity. But the City of Saguenay has its sights set on making Arvida a region known on a national and international scale. It is well aware that the area holds a special place in history and is a unique asset in the city. The regeneration of Arvida continues today, and Saguenay has many plans in the works to protect the heritage of the district.

This nomination by the Comit  des citoyens pour la valorisation du patrimoine d’Arvida.

Lieutenant Governor's Award

Francine Lelièvre

Preparing for the future by protecting and promoting our heritage and archaeological history is the motto that motivates Francine Lelièvre. Founder of the renowned Pointe-à-Callière museum, Mme Lelièvre is a passionate historian and teacher who has been devoted to preserving history through cultural, heritage and tourism institutions for over 30 years. She began her career with Parks Canada in 1973, where she took charge of the conservation, promotion and interpretation of several national historic sites, including Louis-S. St-Laurent in Compton, and Grande-Grave in the Gaspésie—the first site to be developed as a

“cultural landscape.” She was named Chief of Interpretation Services and Promotion for Québec in 1982, where she was responsible for 3 national parks, 26 historic sites and 4 historic canals. Her career then took her to the Musée de la civilisation du Québec before she set up her own heritage consulting firm, Processus inc, which she operated for 5 years prior to 1992.

Photo : Pointe-à-Callière



Signing livre d'or in the Hall du Musée,
May 2004



Panoramic view of Pointe-à-Callière, museum of archaeology and history of Montreal
Vue panoramique de Pointe-à-Callière, musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal

Mme Lelièvre had the vision and determination to establish the Pointe-à-Callière museum of history and archaeology in Montreal on the site of extensive archaeological discoveries from the 1970s that revealed over 1,000 years of human activity, including the ruins of the earliest French fortifications. She was determined for the site to become not only a nationally recognized destination for Canadians, but one that is celebrated internationally. Mme Lelièvre has overseen an expansion of the museum that has resulted in the preservation of surrounding heritage buildings: the Old Custom House, the Youville Pumping Station (the first electrically operated wastewater pumping facility in Montreal) and the Old Mariners' House—spaces now used for exhibits and educational events. She also established the first school for archaeological digs in an urban centre on the site of the Fort Ville-Marie—where Montreal was founded—and integrated it into the complex.



Inside the Pointe-à-Callière Museum

Mme Lelièvre leads a staff of more than 100 people and prides herself on giving them opportunities to be involved in every aspect of the planning process in an engaging and stimulating work environment that respects the importance of work/life balance and personal strengths. The museum continues to attract increasing

numbers of tourists and local visitors (close to 350,000 people in 2011) and is seen as a premier destination in the province of Quebec.

A rigorous administrator and outstanding project manager, Mme Lelièvre has brought her expertise and expansive knowledge to help shape such cultural institutions as the Biosphere Environment Museum, the Musée de la civilisation and the Réseau muséal de la Gaspésie.

Photo: Alain Vandal, Pointe-à-Callière



Outside the expansion of the museum, May 2010

She began her career in education began teaching history at the Cégep of Gaspésie and the University of Quebec at Rimouski from 1968 until 1973. Later, she lectured at the University of Montréal in museum studies, the University of Quebec in heritage and the University of Laval in anthropology and ethnology.

Mme Lelièvre has been a member of numerous boards of historical and archaeological organizations; she writes for publications and participates in countless meetings, roundtables and summits on history, heritage and archaeology. More than 50 projects she has overseen garnered municipal and provincial awards, and an impressive collection of personal awards

that attest to her prowess in everything from she has been awarded over 10 personal awards about everything from graphic design and multimedia to museology and tourism. She is currently in the process of writing *La Cité de l'archéologie et de l'histoire de Montréal*.

Francine Lelièvre was nominated by Cyril Simard, président du Conseil d'administration, Société du réseau des écomusées.

Gabrielle Léger Award

Jim Bezanson, Saint John, New Brunswick

Jim Bezanson has been simultaneously a passionate heritage advocate, educator, conference speaker, volunteer, architect, planner, heritage consultant and building contractor for over 35 years.

He grew up on the east coast of Nova Scotia where he worked on the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings in 1975. He was later employed by Parks Canada's Restoration Section dealing with projects throughout the Atlantic Provinces. From 1980 to 1990, Mr. Bezanson lived in Vancouver where he worked with the first Heritage Conservation Program and helped establish and was principal instructor of the first award-winning heritage trades program at Vancouver Community College. He later launched his own architecture and planning practice specializing in the sensitive redevelopment of heritage buildings, where a number of his projects won awards.





Mr. Bezanson Leading a Walking Tour of Saint John

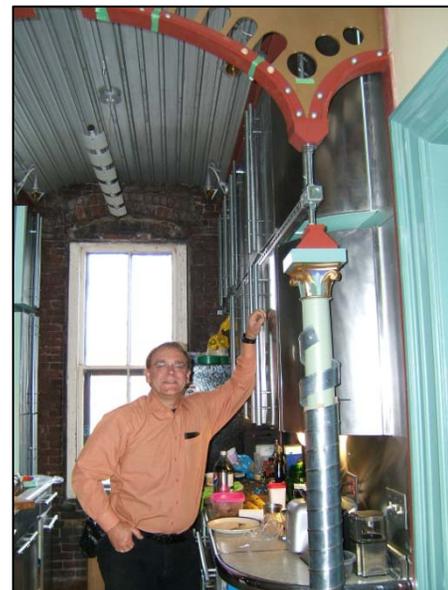
Since 1990, he has been the Heritage Development Officer for the City of Saint John, New Brunswick, where he has played a key role in shaping the city's heritage movement. In that capacity he has provided guidance on over 3,000 heritage conservation projects and has been instrumental in saving a number of buildings from demolition, including the first Carnegie Free Library in Canada. Through his efforts, a number of heritage designated districts were created in the city and hundreds of sites of cultural significance added to the Canadian

Register of Historic Places. Mr. Bezanson played a key role in having the City of Saint John recognized as a Prince of Wales Prize community in 2004.

Jim Bezanson's hands-on experience as a heritage building contractor and developer has helped to demystify the work of preserving and adapting heritage buildings to new uses. The highly sought-after series of Practical Conservation Guidelines, prepared under his direction, was the recipient of an award from the American Association for State and Local History. With his commitment to finding solutions to conservation problems, he focuses on offering owners of historic properties technical and design options that enable preservation, rather than focusing on what cannot be not changed or altered. His ingenuity and creative approach has resulted in flexible conservation solutions.

Through his participation in the development of the national *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, Mr. Bezanson's extensive technical knowledge has benefitted communities across the country.

He also managed the development and training program for Certification Agents for the national Historic Places Initiative. His balanced approach to safeguarding Canada's cultural assets has made him a highly sought-after speaker and adviser country-wide.



Mr. Bezanson in His Heritage Home



Mr. Bezanson Working on a Heritage Property

Jim Bezanson is committed to putting his beliefs into practice. In 1992, he purchased a six unit building in the Orange Street Heritage Conservation Area of the city to use as a "living laboratory" where he demonstrated how to resolve technical issues and share knowledge with other property owners. In 2004, he purchased a city block of 130-year-old buildings to rescue them from demolition. He also manages two dozen rental apartments, as well as the work of his construction company which specializes in sensitive heritage conservation and development. When demolition does occur, he can be seen in his 1955 Dodge Truck salvaging bricks, hardwood flooring, doors, light fixtures, stair balusters, newel posts and other heritage building which he shares freely with owners restoring or repairing old buildings.

Throughout Jim Bezanson's career he has proven to be a dedicated, passionately driven and energetic advocate for heritage conservation

across the country. He has willingly invested countless hours of his personal time to helping community groups throughout the Maritimes to persuade municipal councils and private building owners to invest in preservation over demolition and has extended his support to individuals facing a range of restoration challenges, from repairing masonry to restoring historic windows.

Jim Bezanson has served on local and national boards, including that of the Heritage Canada Foundation where he was chair from 2003-2005. He holds degrees in Architecture, Environmental Design, and Planning

Jim Bezanson was nominated by Harold E. Wright.