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The National Trust's 2015 Top Ten Endangered Places List

Heritage Canada The National Trust released its 11th annual Top Ten Endangered Places list on May 26, 2015.

The selection—presented here from the West coast to the East coast—was compiled from the results of the National Trust's call for nominations as well as those stories and news items followed throughout the year.

Point Grey Secondary School – 5350 East Boulevard, Vancouver, BC – SEISMIC MITIGATION PROGRAM POISED TO REDUCE HISTORIC SCHOOL TO RUBBLE

Why it matters

Opened to students in 1929, Point Grey Secondary School is one of the most significant heritage high schools in Vancouver and an impressive historical landmark in the Kerrisdale neighbourhood. Designed by Townley & Matheson, who also created Vancouver City Hall, the building combined the Collegiate Gothic architectural style with an advanced form of poured concrete construction. The interior features beautiful fittings such as wood-



Photo by Jeremy Hood

beamed ceilings, Gothic-inspired metal lanterns, and coloured leaded glass windows. While the school is not designated, it was one of only a handful in the city to receive the highest “A” rating on Vancouver's Heritage Register.

Why it's endangered



Photo by Richard Eriksson under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)

Since 2005, the British Columbia Ministry of Education's Seismic Mitigation Program (SMP) has provided a pool of money to ensure that school environments are made safer from earthquake damage. The Ministry applies a funding formula that limits the cost of a seismic retrofit to 70% of the cost of constructing a new school, giving unfair advantage to new construction. Given the Vancouver School Board's (VSB) handling of past seismic upgrades—the demolition of Charles Dickens and Lord Kitchener schools, and the planned demolition of General Gordon and l'École Bilingue—along with the SMP's inadequate funding envelope, heritage advocates are concerned that the school board will resort to widespread demolition, even in the case of Point Grey Secondary. They say that seismic upgrading costs are inflated due to years of deferred maintenance and that the VSB also claims that older schools are inadequate for today's educational needs.

Where things stand

Heritage Vancouver and other advocates are calling on the VSB to thoroughly document the heritage values of Point Grey Secondary, and other heritage schools, to help the board in its decision-making. They ask that the VSB seek out creative solutions to upgrade these important historic landmarks or, where that is not possible, to retain the most significant portions of these buildings.

Peace River Valley, Northeast BC – HYDRO POWER TRUMPS ABORIGINAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Why it matters



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Archaeological evidence and oral history bear witness to at least 10,500 years of human occupation along the Peace River Valley, marking it as an important prehistoric migration route. It contains many First Nations traditional and sacred sites, as well as heritage sites from the fur trade and later

periods of European settlement. The valley is also an important wildlife habitat home to 20 at-risk species and to BC's only prime farmland north of Quesnel.

Four hydroelectric generating stations harnessing the entire length of Peace River were proposed in the mid-1950s. Two were eventually built covering about half the valley: W.A.C. Bennett Dam (1967), which created the vast Williston Reservoir, and the Peace Canyon Dam (1980). A third, Site C dam and generating station, downstream from Peace Canyon and 6.5 km southwest of the city of Fort St. John, was proposed and studied in 1976-80, but rejected by the BC Utilities Commission in 1983.

Why it's endangered

In April 2010, the BC government announced plans to revive the Site C dam and generating station at a project cost of approximately \$8.8 billion. The Site C reservoir would flood 83 km of the Peace River Valley bottom—almost tripling the river's width and inundating more than 31,000 acres 125 sq. km (31,000 acres) of Class 1 to 7 agricultural land, along with 100 sq. km (25,000 acres) of forested land. This would result in the largest withdrawal from the Agricultural Land Reserve in BC's history. Individuals and groups such as the Peace Valley Landowners

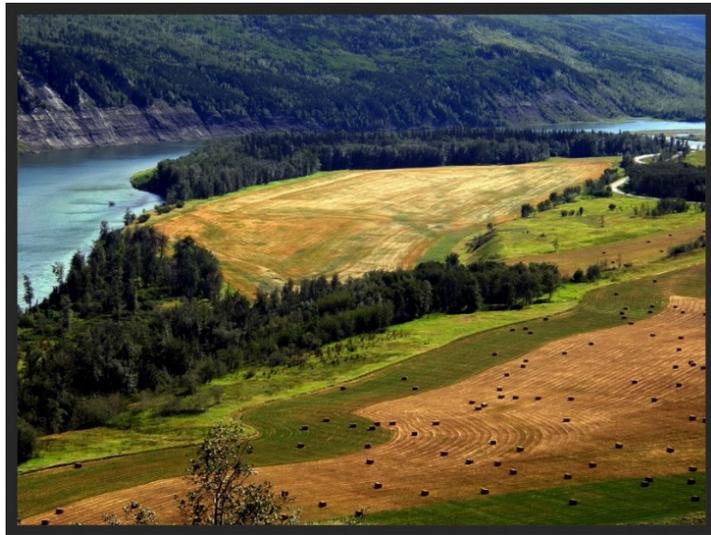


Photo by Robin Bodnaruk

Association have warned that over 60 family farms and ranches passed down for generations would be washed away. The Site C project would also destroy 78 First Nations heritage sites—including burial grounds—as well as 337 archaeological sites, 27 built heritage sites (including remains of fur trade forts), and 4 paleontological sites.

The Site C dam and generating station received environmental approvals from the federal and provincial governments in October 2014, and was given final approval by the BC government on December 16, 2014. Unlike in the 1980s, the province has exempted the project from a regulatory review by the BC Utilities Commission.

Where things stand

Many groups in the region have been advocating against the project, including First Nations, area landowners, and environmental and wildlife protection organizations. In December, the First Nations Summit issued a statement denouncing the approval of the project, noting it will result in extensive flooding within the traditional territories of Treaty 8 First Nations. Two court challenges aimed at stopping the project were launched in April, one by the Peace Valley Landowners Association and the other by the Treaty 8 First Nations. However Bill Bennett, Energy Minister for BC, recently said he expects construction on the Site C dam to begin this summer.

East Coulee Truss Bridge, Atlas Coal Mine NHS, East Coulee, AB –RARE TRESTLE BRIDGE NEEDS NEW LEASE ON LIFE

Why it matters



Photo by Ken Yuel

The wooden C.P.R. "Howe Truss" bridge over the Red Deer River at East Coulee was first built in 1936 and destroyed by heavy flooding and ice floes in 1948. It was rebuilt to the same Howe Truss design—a wooden design that was almost anachronistic in the 1930s. First patented in 1840 by Massachusetts millwright William Howe, they were primarily used in the 19th century for bridges across North America. The East Coulee Bridge remains a rare example of wooden bridge architecture and

as such, merits proactive conservation measures.

The bridge has an important historical connection to Atlas No. 3 Coal Mine National Historic Site (the last in the Drumheller/Red Deer River valley). It provided the essential transportation link to the main rail lines across the Red Deer River. From the dual CPR/CNR branch line near the town of East Coulee, the bridge enabled trains to cross the river and service both the Monarch and the Atlas coal mines. It was also used by trains delivering coal, the primary domestic heating source, to communities throughout Western Canada.

Closed in the mid-1970s, the Atlas Mine was recognized as an Alberta Provincial Heritage Resource in 1989 and became a National Historic Site of Canada in 2001. The latter designation notes the significant role Atlas No. 3 Coal Mine played "in the history of the coal industry in Drumheller ... the most productive plains coalfield in Alberta and southeastern BC from WWI to the 1950s."

The unique site is interpreted and operated from May to October by the Atlas Coal Mine Historical Society's dedicated staff and volunteers.



Photo by Bill Church

Why it's endangered

The East Coulee Bridge was closed to all traffic when the mine closed and it has fallen into disrepair. Without any maintenance program in place, its rotting deck planking is accelerating.

Where things stand

The responsibility for the bridge's maintenance is still within the shared domain of CN and CP Rail. The costs of maintenance, and conservation, and the issue of assuming insurance liability has dissuaded the Atlas Coal Mine Historical Society and the community of East Coulee from assuming ownership.

A concerted cost-shared conservation effort is required now to ensure the ongoing sustainability of this nationally significant example of bridge architecture. At present these efforts appear to be stalled.



Photo by Cory Huchkowski

Our Lady of Assumption Church – 350 Huron Church Rd., Windsor, ON – HOPE REMAINS FOR FUTURE OF HISTORIC CHURCH DESPITE FUNDRAISING ROLLERCOASTER RIDE

Why it matters

Our Lady of Assumption Church is a prominent landmark steeped in history—a Gothic Revival tour de force serving the oldest continuously operating Roman Catholic parish in Ontario, with roots dating back to the early 18th century. Built in 1842 on land donated by the Huron Nation, the present church is associated with an earlier Jesuit mission for the local Huron and Ouendot First Nation; with service to the area's first French farmers; and with the founding of Assumption College, which ultimately became the University of Windsor. Owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of London, and located on a notable site east of the Ambassador Bridge and adjacent to the University of Windsor, the building is loved by parishioners and the wider community.



Photo by Christopher Woodrich, under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)

Why it's endangered



Photo by Christopher Woodrich, under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)

Substantial funds estimated at \$10 to \$15 million are needed to make essential structural, electrical, mechanical and life safety repairs and upgrades. Yet there is a will in the community to save the building, and optimism that the funds can be found. Major donors have come forward offering multi-million dollar contributions. However fundraising efforts have been a rollercoaster ride of hopes raised and dashed. A 2009 fundraising campaign led by prominent local figures was terminated by the Bishop without explanation.

Where things stand

In 2014, \$10 million offered by a private donor was ultimately turned away by the Diocese. The building's doors were closed indefinitely by the Bishop in November 2014, with parishioners now worshipping elsewhere. There is no indication of the Diocese's intentions for the future of the building. In the meantime, portions of the brick façade are crumbling.

The Barber Paper Mill, 99 River Drive, Halton Hills, Georgetown, ON – STAKEHOLDER IMPASSE THREATENS INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE SITE

Why it matters

Established in 1854 on the banks of the Credit River in Georgetown, the Barber Mill is a rare example of a pre-Confederation industrial complex. Operated by the Barber family—leading industrialists in Canada West—it became the largest industry in the County of Halton, employing hundreds of workers from the surrounding communities. The complex contributes to both the history of paper milling in Canada and the pioneering use of hydro-electric power.



Photo by Patrick Cummins

The mill initially produced “rag paper” from cotton and linen rags, then manufactured paper from oat, wheat, and rye straw for nearly ten years, when it was superseded by wood pulp in 1869. The principal product of these mills was machine-finished book paper, lithographic and label papers,

coloured covers and posters, and the better grade of newspaper. The complex supplied paper across the country until 1948.

About 3 km downstream are the stone ruins of the Barber Dynamo, a remarkable innovation dating to 1888 and reported to have been the first long-distance transmission of hydro-electric power to supply an industrial plant in North America.

In 2008, the 13-acre complex was designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Why it's endangered

Since 2010, the Town of Halton Hills, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and the owner/developer Everlast Group Ltd. have failed to negotiate a viable site plan agreement for the adaptive reuse and mixed-use development of the Barber Mill site. Unresolved issues are the rehabilitation of the crumbling walls and remediation of a contamination zone, as well as Official Plan and zoning amendments to allow for new development while respecting the heritage character of the site.



Photo by Gregory Roberts, under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)

The buildings are suffering from demolition by neglect, at risk from wildlife, weather, vandalism and arson. In 2012, the municipality used its Property Standards Bylaw to force a site clean-up and have fencing secured.

Partial demolition of some of the buildings was subsequently approved by the municipality.

Where things stand

The Halton Hills Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario has mobilized a dedicated effort to conserve the Barber Mill site. The Town has adopted a Cultural Master Plan that identifies the mill as “a heritage jewel and a resource that should be protected, preserved and enhanced as a community resource.” It lists as a condition of redevelopment “the preservation of the ruins, and the interpretation of a significant public interpretive feature.”

The Everlast Group Ltd's concept for a 44-room hotel, 50,000 sq. ft of commercial space, and a 14-storey, 240-unit condominium is stalled. The site is reportedly listed for sale at \$5 million.

Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, ON – FEDS PLAY FAST AND LOOSE WITH A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



Photo by Andrew Power

Why it matters

A rare example of a farm within a city, the Central Experimental Farm (CEF) was established in 1886 as an agricultural and scientific research centre. In recognition of its historical, cultural and scientific significance—and to protect it from encroachment and inappropriate development—it was designated a National Historic Site in 1998. The accompanying Management Plan and Commemorative Integrity Statement identify the national heritage value of the Farm in terms of its history, contributions to Canadian science

and farming, overall design, research fields and historic landscape elements.

As a cultural landscape, the CEF is significant for its ongoing research on long-term climate change and soil integrity, its extensive contributions to agricultural research, and as a symbol of the central role agriculture has played in shaping Canada.

To this day, the Farm remains an open-air laboratory focused on long-term experiments in agriculture.

Why it's endangered



Photo by Joyce Lundrigan via Wikipedia Commons

On November 3, 2014, the federal government announced it would be severing 60 acres of the northwest corner of the Farm to be leased to the Ottawa Hospital for the development of a future hospital campus. This block of land represents close to 20% of the total useable crop research area on the Farm and will include fields that have been in continuous use for experimentation since 1886.

The severance runs contrary to the Management Plan, and was made without consulting the Central Experimental Farm Advisory Council, a body created to advise the

Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on the implementation of the Management Plan and engage the public in the evolution of the Farm.

Where things stand

The scientific and heritage communities have been actively advocating for a reversal of the decision to sever this nationally important scientific landscape, which will threaten the long-term vitality and health of the Farm as a cultural heritage landscape. Advocates include Heritage Ottawa, the Greenspace Alliance of Canada, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and the National Trust for Canada, along with many concerned individual residents and scientists.



Photo by Steve Colwill

Miséricorde Hospital, 840-890 René Levesque Blvd. East, Montreal, QC – INSTITUTIONAL LANDMARK IN NEED OF REVITALIZATION

Why it matters



Photo by Philippe Du Berger under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)

This large convent hospital complex built between 1853 and 1940 is a reminder of the essential role religious congregations played in 19th-century Montreal life. A landmark structure, its institutional architecture symmetrical tree-filled courtyards that flank the central chapel hold a commanding presence in downtown Montreal. Built by the Sisters of Miséricorde, it began as a maternity hospital for unwed mothers, later becoming the Hôpital Général de la Miséricorde. It was acquired by the province with the formation of the Ministry of Health and Social Services in the

late 1960s. In 1975 it became the Centre hospitalier Jacques-Viger, a long-term care facility.

Although it has no formal provincial heritage status, the building is included on the City's urban planning list for its "exceptional heritage value" and for its location in an "exceptional heritage area."

Why it's endangered

The Jacques-Viger long-term care hospital relocated two years ago due to the deterioration of parts of the masonry walls, leaving the building vacant. To date, there is no plan to adapt the facility to a new use. It remains without purpose, which is contributing to the building's physical degradation. Masonry restoration is badly needed along with the revitalisation of the complex that comes with a conversion to a new use.



Photo by Jean-François Séguin

Where things stand

Heritage Montreal has been advocating for the conservation of this important downtown landmark for several years, stressing that without a long-term plan for the site, the vacant hospital is increasingly at risk. It joins other historic institutional structures in need of revitalization in the city and serves an example of just how challenging it can be to manage the health sector's built heritage.

The Quebec Bridge, St. Lawrence River, linking the cities of Quebec and Lévis, QC – LONGEST CANTILEVER BRIDGE SPAN IN THE WORLD IS RUSTING AWAY

Why it matters



Photo by Ronald Santerre

The Quebec Bridge will be 100 years old in 2017. Its construction is symbolic of this country's significant achievements in the history of transportation engineering and it was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1995. First conceived in 1887, the bridge took over 30 years to complete. A riveted steel truss structure, the Quebec Bridge is 987 m long, 29 m wide, and 104 m high. It remains the

longest cantilever bridge span in the world.

In the early 20th century the Quebec Bridge was described as the 8th wonder of the world. Accommodating three highway lanes, one rail line and a pedestrian walkway, it represented a colossal challenge to construct at the time. In 1987 it was declared an International Historical Monument by the American Society of Civil Engineers and by the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering.

The Quebec Bridge is also a commemorative memorial site. Its construction failed twice—in 1907 and 1916—at the cost of 89 lives. On August 29, 2006, a year-long commemoration was begun at the Kahanawake Mohawk Territory in memory of the 33 Mohawk men lost in the 1907 collapse.

Why it's endangered

It is estimated that 60% of the bridge is covered in corrosive rust. Since its transfer to CN Rail by the federal government in 1993, maintenance and restoration programs for this historic infrastructure have been cut back.

In November 2014, the City of Quebec, City of Lévis, Province of Quebec, and Government of Canada joined in pledging half the estimated \$200 million cost of repainting and restoring the Quebec Bridge. To date, CN

Rail has not agreed to match this amount. CN Rail has deemed the proposed sanding and restorative paint work to be “aesthetic” and therefore unnecessary, a categorization supported by a ruling of the Superior Court of Quebec.

The corrosion, accelerated by exposure to extremes of weather, will ultimately result in the loss of the bridge's mechanical properties—and potentially, its structural integrity as well.

Where things stand

Public pressure is being placed on CN Rail and the federal and provincial governments by the Coalition pour la sauvegarde et la mise en valeur du pont de Québec to negotiate a course of shared costs and positive action to sustain the historic bridge for the next hundred years.

Quebec City and the City of Lévis have also requested the support of the Premier of Quebec and the Prime Minister of Canada to have the Quebec Bridge nominated for the UNESCO World Heritage List.



Photo by Martin Cauchon

Sackville United Church, 112 Main St., Sackville, NB – DECK STACKED AGAINST YET ANOTHER FORMER CHURCH BUILDING

Why it matters

A landmark in the heart of Sackville's downtown since 1875, the impressive 40-metre spire of the former Sackville United Church is the most recognized feature of the skyline. In 1898, it was expanded to the configuration of a Greek cross by acclaimed New Brunswick architect H.H. Mott. The impressive interior craftsmanship is attributed to highly skilled wooden-sailing-ship builders, and the set of magnificent 4-metre stained-glass rose windows to renowned Montreal artisans John Spence and Sons. The building also houses an



Photo by Jean Cameron

original 116-pipe Casavant organ (installed in 1927) toned for the excellent acoustic qualities of the sanctuary, which is known as one of the best concert halls in the Maritimes.

A marker recognizing the historic significance of the church was put in place by the Town of Sackville in 1999. The church was also included in a Municipal Heritage Conservation Area created in 2010.

Why it's endangered

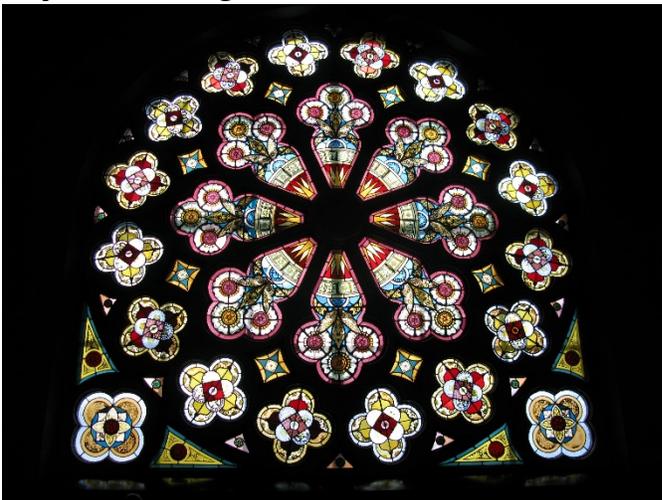


Photo by SPLASH (Sackville People Leading Action to Save Heritage).

Caught up in a tsunami of sweeping change facing ecclesiastical real-estate across the country, the building is a victim of a shrinking congregation unable to afford ongoing maintenance costs, weak heritage protection, and market forces (the building was sold to a private developer in 2013 who has plans for a housing development).

In the absence of an adaptive use option that met his financial expectations, the owner applied to the Sackville Heritage Board (SHB) for a demolition permit in August 2014. In March 2015, the SHB reluctantly voted 4 to 1 in favour of

issuing the demolition permit on condition that the owner submit a salvage plan to help retain some of the historically significant elements, including a set of the stained glass windows.

Where things stand

A local group of citizens named SPLASH (Sackville People Leading Action to Save Heritage) have worked tirelessly to save the building, raising close to \$100,000. They have paid to heat the interior, and have set out buckets to catch water dripping from a leaking roof. The group has also appealed the demolition permit to the Assessment and Planning Appeal Board of New Brunswick.

Belcourt Spirituality Centre, Rustico, PEI – GOOD FAITH LACKING IN DIOCESE’S DISMISSAL OF A CHERISHED COMMUNITY ASSET

Why it matters



Photo by C.W. Jeffery

The Belcourt Centre, formerly St. Augustine's Convent, is an important symbol for Prince Edward Island's Acadians, and a prominent structure in an extraordinary cultural landscape that includes the historic St. Augustine's Church (1838), the Parish House (1852), the Farmers' Bank of Rustico (a National Historic Site of Canada, 1864-1894), Doucet House (c.1772) and the Barchois Inn (1880).

The survival of the Acadian culture and language in the area is credited to the establishment of a convent

and school on this site in 1882. In the present building and in an earlier one destroyed by fire, the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame provided an education for the Acadians of Rustico for more than 80 years. After school consolidation in 1963, the building served as a summer residence for the Sisters of Notre Dame in the Maritimes until the Catholic Diocese of Charlottetown purchased it in 1977 and opened it as the Belcourt Spirituality Centre. It was named for Father Georges Antoine Belcourt, a caring and enterprising clergyman who, together with the Sisters of Notre Dame, played a prominent role in preserving the Acadian language and culture in Rustico. The Centre accommodates meetings and retreats for a number of faith groups and service organizations across the Island.

Why it's endangered

The Diocese has announced its intention to use funds from a recent multi-million dollar bequest to demolish and replace the building. Pleas from the community that the Bishop consider integrating the existing building into the plans have fallen on deaf ears. While poor condition is cited as the rationale for demolition, a report outlining the condition of the building has failed to materialize, and indeed seems not even to have been made available to the project's own Advisory Committee.

Where things stand

Demolition seems imminent. A community group formed within the Parish to raise awareness of the threatened demolition and seek alternatives has effectively been shut out by the Bishop—its request for an "open and sensitive approach" denied. Although both the original convent and the current building were constructed using volunteer labour generously supplied by parishioners, requests to have a resident from the Parish named to the project's Advisory Board and to be given access to the interior of the building have also been denied. Likewise, the Bishop has apparently discounted a petition bearing 350 names urging the Diocese to consider renovating and adding to the building, rather than demolition.