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Explore The Grounds

A self guided walking tour of the Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum grounds.

Town Hall 1872 Inscription

This building was the original town hall of Carleton Place, which is why there is an inscription stating, “Town Hall 1872” located at the top. When Carleton Place first incorporated as a village in 1870, they required a town hall separate from Beckwith Township, so they acquired a portion of the original land grant of settler William Morphy for the purpose. The plans and specifications were provided by William Rorison for a fee of \$20 in 1871, and the building was then contracted by William Willoughby in 1872. It is made of a lighter local limestone as well as a darker Beckwith limestone, which was used for the quoins. Despite the inscription of 1872, the village did not take possession of the building until 1873.

Heritage Plaque

This plaque commemorates the building’s designation as a heritage building. The building was designated in April 1978 under the terms of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Museum Gates

These iron gates were originally located at the Old Post Office at 81 Bridge Street. The post office was designed by Thomas Fuller, the Ottawa Parliament and Peace Tower architect and closed in 1970 when the new post office was constructed. The gates were removed from the alleyway in 1974 and were later installed here in 1991.

Harlequin Maple Tree

The harlequin maple tree is a mutation of a Norway Maple that produces these green leaves with white outlines. Harlequin do produce leaves that are entirely green, but as these leaves grow at a much faster rate, they can overtake the tree. For this reason, any leaves like this are pruned in order to maintain the tree’s unique colours.

Solitary-Bee Pollinator House

This bee house provides solitary-bees with cavities that they can nest in. Solitary-bees are bees that do not produce honey, live in a hive, or have a queen. The sign under the house provides further details about these pollinators.

Old Playground Fence

The fencing along the far south side of the property line remains from when this was the Victoria School playground. The Victoria School was made up of four classrooms for children between grades one and four. The playground's surface was covered in sharp cinders from Findlay's Foundry and it had swing sets, chain-link spinners, a baseball diamond, and a barn.

Barn Cleaner Chain Sculpture

This sculpture is constructed out of parts from an old barn cleaning system. A barn cleaner uses paddles which scrape along a gutter to remove manure from the barn and collect it for fertilizer.

Horse Trough

This is a horse trough that was used in town when horses were a common means of transportation. There were a few others like this through the town, but this specific trough used to be located on the corner of Bridge Street and Charlotte Street. Across the road from this location there was a carriage maker and a blacksmith, so people could leave their horses there to drink as they visited these places. Another trough is located on Bridge Street just across from Scotiabank.

Murals

The back of the Museum features murals depicting the various purposes of the building through its history. A legend and more information are located on the back door.

Fire Escapes

The fire escapes at the back of the building were added sometime between 1919 and 1950.

Wooden Anchoring Device

The wooden piece wedged in between the bricks near the back door is an early anchoring device. These worked by having a bolt screwed into the middle of the piece of wood until it expanded and became tight, enabling things such as porches, beams, or other parts to be attached to the stone.

North and South Facing Windows

The building's windows were originally smaller, but in the 1920's larger windows were installed. The larger windows were united with pressed metal and allowed more sunlight into the classrooms. About the same time, steel beams were installed to support the upper floor, and it is assumed that the interior pressed metal ceilings were added then as well.

Finger Labyrinth

On the stone bench in the labyrinth there is a finger labyrinth. When walking the grass labyrinth, one walks along the grass path as they meditate, reflect, or recharge. At the centre, one can stay for as long as they like before returning back along the path. The finger labyrinth follows the same principles but allows people to use their finger to trace the etching on the bench rather than walking along the path.