

You are the other guy. You are someone else.

As things follow the natural course of events, a small group of like minded people come together to champion a cause, undertake a task, rectify an injustice or just work together for a common purpose. In the case of the Toronto Historical Association it is the desire to see the city's heritage, in its various aspects, preserved for future generations to appreciate, and extolled as something that makes Toronto a welcoming and unique place to live, work and play.

An ad hoc group formed, became organized and gained confidence and expertise in speaking out on issues relevant to heritage preservation. In time, this group was recognized in the greater community as having valid viewpoints, expert opinions and credibility among the general population.

The people who were chosen to direct the group, themselves gained confidence in their abilities, expertise in various aspects of heritage and, in many instances, moved on to other challenges where their abilities, developed at the grass roots made them an essential element in the process of heritage preservation and promotion, or even gained them an assuredness to move out into other fields of endeavour. But, as they move on, others are required to take their places. If the mission of the organization is to be maintained, the cause for which it was formed to remain valid, then new people must take up the mantel. In our case, this means filling the Board of Directors with people who want to see the city's heritage, local and city wide, natural, built and cultural, acknowledged, protected, extolled. It is not an onerous task, it is a worthwhile cause, a learning experience, a chance to make a difference.

We have 5 vacancies on the Board for the next period [2014 -2016] . We meet 10 times a year for two hours each night. Though, to be fair, directors are expected to attend third party meetings as representatives of the T.H.A. if possible, to keep our presence and ' footprint' in the community

prominent and relevant. We have the chance to support and encourage local groups and member organizations in protecting, advancing and promoting the rich and diverse history of the city. We can, and do, affect change and make others stop and rethink options. We learn and develop personally as well. It is an opportunity to do good things.

The Toronto Historical Association is a volunteer organization and, like many similar groups, relies on a minimum commitment of time and availability. WE know that many will step up to the task. To continue, to grow to make a difference, we need people who will step up, donate time and energy and their experience and knowledge. It is not a hardship and, if you believe in the need to preserve, protect and extol our city's heritage, the right thing to do.

Don't sit at the back of the room and stare out the window, slip off to the washroom or slouch down in your chair in the hopes no one will see you. Don't expect the 'other guy' to take over, don't expect 'someone else' to raise his / her hand.

You are the 'other guy'. You are the 'someone else'. Nominate someone you know from your group, put yourself forward as a candidate. You are the reason heritage matters. Make it your mission to see that it continues to be so. Join the Board of the Toronto Historical Association at the AGM.

Paul Federico