

OUR COMMUNITY

LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED Restoring one of the city's architectural treasures

By Jenny Mitchell, OTLBC President and Chair, Fund-Raising Committee

Nearly a century ago, a prominent Ottawa architect – John Albert Ewart (1872-1964) – built the Ottawa Civic Hospital in our city. He is the same architect who stepped forward in 1922 to design a clubhouse for the Ottawa Tennis Club in Ottawa South. Ewart was a big deal in early-20th-century Ottawa. The son of Dominion architect, David Ewart, he designed many of Ottawa's finest civic buildings in his day. In acknowledgement of that, Ottawa recently recognized the clubhouse in Ottawa South as a designated heritage building.



OTLBC's Heritage Designation

The Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club (OTLBC) is itself a national treasure. Especially now, with the closure of two other major clubs in Ottawa in the past three years, it remains the dean of Ottawa tennis clubs, with people coming from all over the city to play. At the same time, the club is recognized nationally for having more high-quality clay courts than any club in the country, and has the capacity to host national and provincial tournaments.

When the City of Ottawa awarded the building a heritage designation in 2019, the honour recognized the clubhouse not only as an outstanding example of an old-style sporting venue, but also an important cultural landmark in the city of Ottawa.

The designation underscores the importance of the club to the city's heritage, both architecturally and culturally. It also highlights the role of today's club as the steward of physical heritage. In that light, the club has for several years now been planning and fund-raising for restoration and renewal of the clubhouse.

A Grant Plus Community Donations Fund the Restoration

In 2019, the OTLBC was honoured by a substantial federal heritage grant from Canadian Heritage, given in part to help restore the clubhouse and also to enhance its usefulness as a year-round facility where the community can host a variety of cultural events. The grant is for a maximum of \$375,000, depending on how much the club is able to provide in matching funds.



The city of Ottawa stands to benefit from this restoration, and not only through the preservation of an architectural landmark. OTLBC has a vision to restore the club as a year-round facility and meeting place for the whole Ottawa community, and it has made great progress. The initial goal was to raise \$1 million by 2020. Donors have proven very generous, and to date the club has raised close to \$700,000. If it reaches its target, the first phase of the project will be launched as soon as 2021. A second phase of work will depend on the club's ability to raise another \$1.6 million.

The OTLBC invites the community of Ottawa to come on board as partners in the exciting work of restoring a clubhouse that has local and national significance and opening it to new and broader kinds of use. As a tennis club and now, more and more, as a community meeting place, the OTLBC is planning, working and actively raising funds to ensure that it can go on helping people of Ottawa to live more satisfying and connected lives. Help the club to fulfil that mission.

To donate to the Clubhouse Restoration Project, please visit OTLBC.com/donate and click on the "Donate Here" button. Tax receipts can be issued.



Remembering Winterlude

Photo Credit Gerri Doherty