



Joseph Brant Museum

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## FROM THE BRAIN OF BRIAN

### Adapt, Renovate and Re-Use

I was on a panel at the ROCK ADVISORS symposium, last month, speaking on the topic of apartment construction and investment. At the end of our presentation, one of the attendees approached me, with a very good question: How do you decide whether to renovate or design a brand new building? This is a very valid query and its relevance extends far beyond the apartment industry.

In many cases, it can be more costly to adapt or renovate an existing building but sometimes the historical context outweighs the financial considerations. Sustainable issues often tip the scales in favour of re-using an existing building as this greatly reduces the materials trucked to landfill sites. Our approach at Chamberlain is to use the talents of both our Architects and Constructors to model the demolition and the rejuvenation scenarios to provide our clients with data that allows them to make informed decisions.

Sometimes, contrast is used to emphasize an addition, for example, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. In an addition to an historical building for the Niagara Parks Commission, we contrasted the older masonry building with a modern glass greenhouse addition.

There are many reasons to upgrade existing buildings for modern use. An office building with new tenants, may need to modify the functional layout to suit the new user. Restaurants, on the other hand, often renovate, without a user change because concepts need to be refreshed on a regular basis either to adapt to a new corporate image or just to refresh an existing theme.



McFarland House, Niagara Parks, Canada



The adaptive re-use of buildings is also a popular trend. Changing neighbourhood demographics or zoning issues, sometimes require a building to be changed from its original use to a new one more compatible with its location. One example of this is the distillery district in Toronto where many of the Victorian-style warehouse buildings have been repurposed as restaurants, retail, spas and offices. The charm and historical value of such projects can often be factors in the financial success of a particular area by drawing people not only to the new use, but for the historical context of the original buildings. Often, the only salvageable area of such a building is the structure and the exterior historical materials and details.

Some renovations can be augmented by additions to an existing facility where the user has outgrown their space. One of the first questions is whether the expansion should

try to exactly duplicate the existing building's exterior aesthetics or complement or contrast with the original design. In the case of a historically-designated building, it may require careful coordination with the authorities. Most designated buildings tend to be constructed using stone and other masonry products. The cost of duplication can be considerable, if the construction materials, means and methods also needed to be duplicated.

Another option on a historical addition is to retain the essence of the existing building in terms of scale, proportion and colour, but use more modern materials that complement the historical building. We did a restoration and addition in Bracebridge, Ontario, which matched the form of the addition to the existing Carnegie Library utilizing modern materials of similar colour, but different composition. The effect was a library that retained its historical charm, while meeting the modern needs of its users.

Additions are not just limited to historic buildings, but often occur in modern structures as well. The addition to our Chamberlain corporate offices (The front portion of the building in this photo) exactly matched the existing building.

In some cases, there is simply no acceptable return on investment in the adaptive re-use of an existing building, and, when that occurs, demolition may be required. The decision to renovate, add to, adapt or demolish is closely tied to the financial model of any development, which will be a major factor in a decision going forward. Asking the right questions is the key to choosing the solution that is best for your project.





## ACTS OF KINDNESS



**Left: David Fraser, Major General, Ret'd, Canadian Armed Forces**

**Center: Brian Chamberlain, Major, Ret'd, Canadian Armed Forces and CEO of the Chamberlain Architects & Constructors Group**

**Right: Tom Jenkins, Honorary Colonel, Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada and Executive Chairman of the Open Text Corporation**

On June 6, 2013, a group of Ontario's distinguished military members and supporters gathered on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day to raise funds for the HMCS HAIDA. The gala was held at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, which was designed and built by the Chamberlain Group and opened by the Museum's Patron, His Royal Highness Charles, the Prince of Wales, on April 26, 1996. The gala, which raised funds for the Friends of the HMCS HAIDA, included live music by the HMCS Star Band as well as demonstrations by Korean dance troupe, Mugunghwa Samulnori.

If you would like to learn more about Friends of the HMCS HAIDA you may contact them at 905-523-0682 or [hmcshaida@bellnet.ca](mailto:hmcshaida@bellnet.ca)

HMCS HAIDA is the last remaining example of the 27 Tribal Class destroyers built for the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy between 1937 and 1945. It has been said that The Tribals were "magnificent in appearance, majestic in movement and menacing in disposition".

Technologically, they represented the most advanced naval architecture, marine propulsion systems and weaponry of their time.

Once, HAIDA was a mighty fighting ship. Today, she is an irreplaceable historic artifact and her significance has been formally recognized by the Canadian Historic Sites and Monuments Board. The thousands of men who sailed in Haida represented a total cross section of Canadian society during that period.

Today, Parks Canada owns and operates HMCS HAIDA as a National Historic site. It is located at Pier 9, 658 Catharine Street North, Hamilton, ON L8L 4V7



More Info: <http://jproc.ca/haida/>

Friends of the HAIDA: 905-523-0682 [hmcshaida@bellnet.ca](mailto:hmcshaida@bellnet.ca)

## HAIDA'S BATTLE HONOURS

ARCTIC 1943 - 1945  
ENGLISH CHANNEL 1944  
NORMANDY 1944  
BISCAY 1944  
KOREA 1952 - 1954



## INTEGRATED PROJECT DELIVERY

### IPD's Flexibility Makes "Open Hotel Renovation" a Lucrative Choice

The '70s was a decade of inflation, oil crisis and the start of the digital revolution. This was also a decade during which a large number of hotels were built. Today, many of those hotels are coming onto the real estate market creating profitable opportunities for savvy buyers. These properties are old, tired, and in many cases, attractively priced. The investors who built them are ready to retire and they are shifting their portfolios to more passive investments. This baby boomer trend is opening doors to a new generation of investors who see the upside potential of renovating properties with good bones in key locations -- while remaining open for business.

#### **BENEFITS OF AN "OPEN HOTEL RENOVATION"**

An "Open" renovation allows a property to retain their staff, remain on the reservation system and gain revenue to offset renovation costs. This is particularly beneficial for a hotel that might have lucrative contracts with airlines that could be lost if they closed for an extended period of time. The Chamberlain Group, which encompasses both Architects and Constructors, has been using a creative solution called Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) for 15 years, to meet the unique demands of this type of client. Because hotel renovation is a very fluid exercise, the bulky design-bid-build process of traditional construction is just too cumbersome, slow and expensive to be effective. IPD's innate ability to respond to surprises quickly makes it possible to keep costs and schedules in check. One thing an investor can count on, during a hotel renovation, is plenty of surprises. IPD helps hotels maximize their renovation budgets while minimizing the challenges to their business. In the hotel renovation scenario, saving time and money can make the difference between a frustrating experience and a project that is financially and personally rewarding.

#### **RENO VS NEW BUILD**

So why not just build a new hotel? There are several factors driving the hotel-reno surge. They are financial, political, practical and sometimes, green. Following are a few of the more compelling reasons an investor might choose a renovation over building a brand new hotel:

#### **LIMITED LAND**

In some cases land availability and zoning restrictions make new hotel construction difficult. Many municipalities are tightening codes in an attempt to discourage new development and encourage higher density within an urban context. When a buyer can't find available, affordable land to build a hotel, an older property in a great location could justify the cost of a retrofit.

#### **CASH FLOW IS KING**

A 300 room renovation typically takes 6-8 months. Usually, these are done without closing the hotel. By contrast, building the same hotel from scratch is often a 4 year proposition, due mainly to the stringent municipal approvals process. When carrying costs are factored in, the instant cash flow potential of an existing hotel is substantial.

#### **REPURPOSING**

Hotels are purpose built, but that doesn't mean they can't be repurposed. Many investors are redeveloping old hotels into new senior residences or student housing. Demand for these two categories is projected to exceed supply within the next few years.



*Pointe-Claire Holiday Inn, Easton's Group of Hotels*

The Chamberlain Group believes their Integrated Project Delivery method was the only way to tackle the Pointe Claire Holiday Inn project that included 14 floors, 10,000 sf of meeting space, a gym, restaurant, and 312 guest rooms, and complete renovations in the short span of 6 months, while the hotel remained open.

“Any time you are doing a project like this, you are going to run into surprises” explains Adrian Mauro, Chamberlain’s President. “IPD gives us the control and flexibility to respond to those surprises quickly without sacrificing schedule or



Sault Ste. Marie. “We’ve always had excellent service. Now we have the product to back that service up. All of our employees are really proud to show our property off and welcome our guests in”...Dominique Eckhardt, Sales Manager, Delta Sault Ste. Marie Waterfront Hotel and Conference Centre.

In many cases, recent zoning changes might have decreased the number of parking spaces required, making a large surface parking area a nonproductive wasted space. Moving the parking underground might even create enough open space to add a second revenue generating use like another tower.

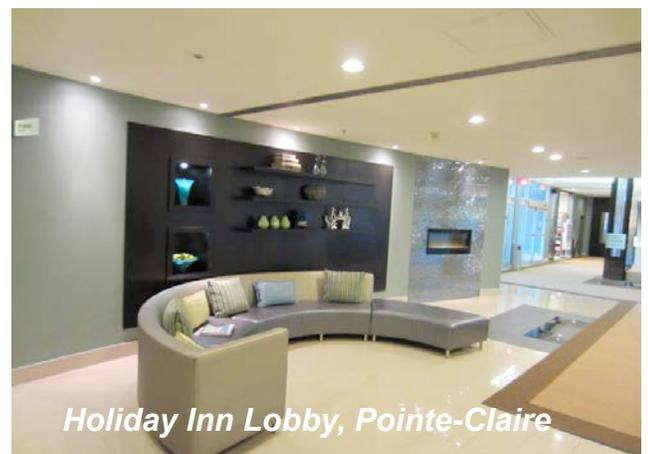
Sometimes, a hotel is just not what it used to be because industry trends have changed. When Easton’s Group of Hotels purchased the Pointe Claire Holiday Inn, they found suite potential waiting on the balcony. Balconies, which were a common feature in business hotels in the ‘70s when many travelers smoked, are generally found only in hotels with a view in today’s smoke-free environment. By enclosing these balconies, the Chamberlain team was able to expand the size of the rooms and incorporate suite features, such as kitchens.

### THE ULTIMATE RECYCLING PROJECT

At the heart of every recycling opportunity is the idea that it is better to reuse something than to throw it away. Building renovation is recycling on a grand scale. By avoiding wholesale demolition and rebuilding, a renovation project keeps tons of debris out of landfills every day. Many hoteliers are committed to making green choices in their building programs, both for personal and political reasons. Hotel guests, who make purchasing decisions with a social conscience tend to look favorably on corporations which they perceive as being socially responsible.

### BOTTOM LINE BENEFITS OF THE “OPEN HOTEL RENOVATION”

It is tough enough to accomplish a renovation of an entire hotel, working around the clock. Add the pressure of doing it all while guests are relaxing nearby and teamwork becomes crucial. Make no mistake; it takes a team to navigate the challenges of such a large renovation, especially when the project must be accomplished while the hotel remains open. The current economic climate is enticing hotel buyers to renovate while remaining open because they cannot afford to be closed for an extended time. An “Open” renovation, when executed by an experienced team of Architects and Contractors, can reap great rewards for the hotel investor who wants to minimize risk, maximize cash flow and capitalize on the opportunity of an undervalued hotel in a great location.



Forward thinking investors are beginning to recognize that with a few modifications, hotels can easily be converted to meet the needs of this swelling demographic.

### HIDDEN POTENTIAL

Sometimes older hotels have hidden treasures that are not obvious in the listing. The demographics of the neighborhood may have changed during the last 30-40 years of operation. A simple rebranding might bring the property into better alignment with its location, as was the case with the re-branded Delta Hotel on the waterfront in

Pointe Claire Chamberlain Design Team: Adrian Mauro, Per Lilholt, Tracey Pilcher  
Pointe Claire Chamberlain Construction Team: Ersilio Serafini, Dan Burgess and Jean Charpentier  
Delta Hotel Chamberlain Design Team: Adrian Mauro, Massimo Zucco, Per Lilholt  
Delta Hotel Chamberlain Construction Team: Ersilio Serafini, John Colby and Diane Zufelt



## NEWS YOU CAN USE

Thinking Outside the Architectural Box.



This is a picture of a public toilet in Houston from outside.



Now that you've seen the outside view, take a look at the inside view. It's made entirely of one-way glass! No one can see you from the outside, but when you are inside it's like sitting in a clear glass box!

Now would you...COULD YOU....?



A Painted Bathroom Floor! Tenth floor of a hi-rise building. Imagine you are at a Party, and then you have to visit the Bathroom. You open the door. Now, Remember the Floor is just a painted floor! It Takes your breath away. Doesn't it?

Would this mess up your mind? Would you be able to walk into this bathroom?



Finally! This is a ceiling mural. An Smoker's Lounge. Please share with friends with a sense of humor.



## NOTABLE QUOTES



They say “Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”. It must be true because we couldn’t be more flattered that Canadian Lodging News picked up a story from our last newsletter for their June issue. The article, written by Stephen Blood “How do New Building Energy Codes Affect Your Project’s Outlook?” focused on new Provincial requirements and their impact on Ontario projects. At the request of Colleen Isherwood, Lodging News editor, Stephen revisited the article to specifically identify issues of interest to the hotel industry. It can be viewed here:

<http://www.can-lodgingnews.com/artman2/publish/June2013/Financial%20News/Hotel-builders-use-building-energy-modelling.shtml>

Thanks for the read and for the copy, Colleen!



## EVERY STOREY TELLS OUR STORY



The city of Burlington, Ontario has a rich history, including the distinction of being the home of Joseph Brant, a notable figure in the Seven Years War. The museum, which bears Joseph Brant's name, also has an interesting history. The Burlington landmark celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012 and is currently gathering funding for a much needed transformation. The 70-year old museum is no longer large enough to meet the growing demands of the community and needs some significant updates. The project was unable to reconcile the diverse desires of the community and museum patrons and its unique topographical challenges until Chamberlain presented an unorthodox idea. By lifting the existing structure, rotating it slightly and gently placing it on a grassy knoll, they would construct a newer, larger LEED Silver museum beneath it, reconfiguring the original structure for use as administrative offices. This was not the first time Joseph Brant's home was debated, reimagined or even moved. That story began in 1800.

Burlington's community museum is a replica of the original homestead of Joseph Brant, whose Mohawk name was 'Thayendanegea' (1742-1807). In 1798, Brant, who was also a British captain, was granted 3,450 acres at the 'head-of-the-lake' (Burlington Bay) by King George III, rewarded for his services to the Crown during the Seven Years War and the American Revolution.

The original Brant house was built in 1800 with a commanding view of the beach. Joseph Brant enjoyed it for just seven years, before his death in 1807. In the years that followed, the house served as a hotel and a military hospital before it was finally demolished.

With the help of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, construction of the current museum began in 1937, with the official opening on May 22, 1942. Its site was later included in the sale of the crown-owned property to the Burlington–Nelson Hospital (later renamed the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital). The sale agreement included a commitment to "retain, preserve and maintain the said Brant House and that portion of the land that it occupies as an historical property and museum in perpetuity." In 1994, the museum was moved 60 meters to the east, to accommodate an expansion to the hospital.

Over the years, the Museum has added a number of important acquisitions to its collection, including personal artifacts owned and used by Joseph Brant and the Eileen Collard Collection of Historic Costume and Textiles. Committed to the preservation of Burlington's past, the Joseph Brant Museum is a place for exploring a wealth of cultural traditions, issues and ideas that inspire within and beyond our borders.

Today, the Joseph Brant Museum's expansion is well on its way to becoming a reality. The design features a 14,000 square foot expansion that retains the architectural integrity of the Brant House. The expansion is on the existing waterfront site and provides new spaces for gallery displays, interactive programming, archival storage and community outreach.

All the museological displays and public areas are on one level with the entrance at street grade. This will provide barrier-free access and allow for continuity and flexibility of exhibitions. The current Brant House will be utilized for administrative and other non-public functions. Staff areas on level two, the green roof garden, and the former ground floor of the Brant House, will be accessible by using the new passenger elevator.

With significant improvements to safeguard artifacts, improve accessibility and accommodate an increased number of visitors, the museum will become a major exhibition and community centre.

To date, the project has received substantial commitments from the City of Burlington and the Burlington Museums Foundation. The project is now waiting for some funding from senior levels of government. The remainder of the roughly \$2 Million needed is expected to come from local fundraising efforts. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please contact:

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Chamberlain Design Team: Brian Chamberlain, Adrian Mauro, John Knox, Jon McGinn

