



Your History Matters

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Charitable Registration #: 11881-7113-RR0001

MEDIA RELEASE

Brant Historical Society

President: Murray Angus

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TOPIC: Crystal Cottage

“The Brant Historical Society is proud to have contributed to saving a part of Brantford's built heritage - the Crystal Cottage. Despite the many challenges and expenses incurred the Society is pleased to announce that the Crystal Cottage is now in the hands of Dan and Carol-Lyn Brown, local restorers of heritage buildings across the city and county” declared Murray Angus, President of the BHS.

The story about the move of the Crystal Cottage begins with a search by the city for a nearby location to rescue the cottage from demolition when a developer bought a large portion of the city block bounded by Market, Chatham, Queen and Nelson Streets. The vacant lot beside the downtown museum was the only available lot within the distance for relocating the structure. The Historical Society was to prepare the new building lot and build a foundation for the Crystal Cottage to be set on. The move was to be at the cost of the developer with the moving company contracted to complete the move and repair any damage resulting from the move. All contracts were through the developer. The Brant Historical Society was to pay only a minimal price to obtain possession of the building on its city lot. Unfortunately, the developer went bankrupt leaving the Society to cover the cost to maintain the structure, do some limited repairs, and provide security. The extensive damage that was incurred during the move has resulted in restoration that is beyond the scope of work that the Historical Society was prepared to undertake. The Society had to use capital from its endowment fund to cover expenses it was never meant to address.

Over the past two years there have been five enquiries regarding the property. Two never enquired further, two wanted the structure restored ready for occupancy, and one made



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an offer which would achieve our mutual goal of having a heritage structure restored to its earlier prestige. That sale was to the Browns who have a reputation for returning heritage structures to their former glory, and we, both the Historical Society and the Browns, are hoping for a similar result with this sale since this is the type of challenge not new to the Browns. They have restored a number of older houses in Brantford and done an amazing job.

According to City Councillor Dan McCreary, who has been involved in this project since the beginning, "This is a 'good news' story for the community and Heritage advocates. The City of Brantford and the Brant Historical Society saved the Cottage from destruction and now Dan Brown can restore it to its original condition."

Dan and Carol Lyn Brown added "we are thrilled to be taking on this very unique project. We have been following its journey and are glad to see it through to the finish line. We invite everyone to follow the restoration of the Crystal Cottage on YouTube – Reign of the Chatelaine"

The Brant Historical Society now needs to turn our attention to our dedication in bringing the history of the people, places, and events that shaped Brantford and Brant to life through interactive exhibits, engaging programs, as well as a multitude of special events, educational programs, lectures, and guided tours. Our purpose since 1908 is to collect, preserve and share the history and heritage of Brantford, Brant County, Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We hope members of these communities will join us in this venture.