

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
LOCK OFFICE, OTTAWA LOCKSTATION, ONTARIO (91-134) / PAGE 1**

FHBRO number: **91-134**
DFRP Number: **09412**
Resource name: **Lock Office**
Address: **Ottawa Lockstation, Rideau Canal (northern entry), Ontario**
Construction: **1884 (Department of Public Works), renovated (interior) in 1873, restored (exterior) in 1980**
Original function: **Offices of toll collector and other Ottawa Lockstation staff**
Current function: **Offices and public washrooms**
Custodian: **Parks Canada**
FHBRO status: **'Recognized' Federal Heritage Building**

Reasons for designation

The Lock Office at the Ottawa Lockstation is a 'Recognized' Federal Heritage Building because of its historical, architectural, and environmental values:

Historical value: The Lock Office illustrates the development and maintenance of regional canal systems by the federal government in the post-Confederation era. It is associated with major changes at the Ottawa Lockstation during the late 19th century, such as the beautification of the site following the establishment of Majors Hill Park, and the more recent shift in the focus of canal activities from the east to the west side.

Architectural value: The Lock Office at the Ottawa Lockstation is the most architecturally distinguished of the several lock offices along the Rideau Canal, and the only extant one that was constructed of masonry in the 19th century. Its solid composition and eclectic architectural expression complements the earlier Commissariat Building, and makes it a suitable neighbour for the nearby Parliament Buildings. It exemplifies the combination of different styles that typified the work of the Department of Public Works under the direction of Chief Architect Thomas Fuller. The building underwent extensive interior alterations in 1973, and its exterior was restored in 1980.

Environmental value: Although the site of the Lock Office retains its original boundaries, many of its early landscape features and structures have changed over time. During the last fifty years, the attractiveness and visual cohesion of the Ottawa Lockstation have been enhanced by the removal of secondary structures, and the Lock Office maintains a distinctive profile within its

immediate setting. Its functional relationships with the locks and the Commissariat Building remains evident and contribute to the character of the ensemble.

Character-defining elements

The following character-defining elements of the Lock Office should be respected:

Its ongoing role as a key component in both the Ottawa Lockstation and the regional canal system:

- Its ongoing function as the lock office and one of the key public buildings of the Ottawa Lockstation. (It now also houses public washrooms.)
- Its prominent location at the west side of the northern entry to the Rideau Canal, a key section within the regional canal system.

Its distinctive architectural styling and high-quality construction:

- Its stylistic eclecticism and attention to detail, features that characterize many buildings designed under the direction of Chief Architect Thomas Fuller, as exemplified by the following carefully designed elements: its asymmetrical 1-1/2-storey form, enclosed by random-coursed stonework and ornamented with ashlar trim, and surmounted by a complex slate tile roof; its Romanesque Revival elements, such as thick voussoirs and a large semi-circular arch, which are combined with more traditional Victorian elements like segmented arches. (The restoration of the exterior in the 1980s involved reconstructing the enclosed porch and the shuttered bay window, and renewing the roof. Despite the extensive interior renovations in 1973, the Lock Office retains its original lock office and toll collection office.)

Its spatial and functional relationships to its immediate context and the canal landscape:

- Its original physical and functional relationships with the nearby Commissariat Building and locks, which remain legible.
- Its comfortable rapport with the Parliament Buildings and Château Laurier Hotel.
- Its status as a landmark well known landmark that is used by local residents and visitors from both land and water.

For guidance on interventions, refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information, contact FHBRO.

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