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This column is based on information in the APT Archives, which are stored at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia. If you are interested in working on the APT Legacy Project, which is collecting biographical data on preservation leaders who had important roles within APT, please contact a member of the working committee: Julia Gersovitz, Lonnie Hovey, François LeBlanc, Hugh Miller, Nancy Oakley, or Michael Tomlan.



Herb Stovel, APT's Ninth President

Herbert "Herb" M. Stovel (1948-2012) was a Canadian architect whose love of buildings and history had a profound impact on the world of conservation and preservation and the education of its practitioners.

Stovel was active in many APT programs and projects. His leadership included serving on the Board of Directors (1983-1985), taking on the role of vice president (1987-1989), and then serving as president (1989-1991). Stovel was also a member of the Publications Committee (1983-1984) and eventually served as the Publications and Communications Committee chair (1984-1985). He sat on the Executive Committee as past president (1991-1993) and as chair of the Nominating Committee (1993-1995).

Additionally, Stovel served with Sheila Larmer as the conference co-chairs for the APT annual conference held in Toronto in September 1984. The theme for that year's conference, "Principles in Practice: Philosophical Challenges / Technical Responses," suggests that Stovel had an influential role in its selection. Stovel was very familiar with the philosophical principles underpinning the restoration and rehabilitation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century structures, as well as the technical requirements and challenges in ongoing use and maintenance of those same structures.

These lessons were learned in the field. Between 1978 and 1984 Stovel worked for the Ontario Heritage Foundation as a property and project manager for its 35 historic properties. Resources were scarce, so Stovel worked out a plan where proper research was done; public support from the community was enlisted; opportunities to visit the properties were created; and rental agreements with tenants as caretakers to manage the properties were developed. The rental agreements were a key part of Stovel's management framework for the foundation's properties. Each agreement included "a set of management guidelines" (the philosophical principles) that would guide the tenant caretakers "through the various steps of the conservation process" (the technical responses) as the research for each site influenced and supported the preservation and/or the restoration work to be done at each property.

In 1984 Stovel joined Heritage Canada as the director of education in the Main Street Canada Program. In that position, he created a training program with annual, bilingual courses for Main Street coordinators working at 70 Main Street communities throughout Canada. His architectural training and experience with older buildings shaped program direction and content.

Hugh Miller recalls being with Stovel following an APT planning retreat when he voiced his concerns that APT's business practices and its consequent precarious finances could threaten its very existence. This was prophetic; shortly afterwards, during the 1990s recession, APT was forced to close its Fredericksburg, Virginia, office, and became an all-volunteer-run organization again.

Stovel continued to be involved with APT after his service on the executive committee ended in 1995. The *APT Bulletin* became a forum for his expanding interest in education, publishing many of his articles on the subject.

He established an international reputation for his seminal contributions to the World Heritage Convention, including the co-authorship of the 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity. In the next decade, under the auspices of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), he developed the Convention's Global Training Strategy, wrote its publications on risk preparedness for world cultural heritage and conservation of living religious heritage, and was actively involved in its training programs. In 2011 he received the prestigious ICCROM Award.

Stovel was also a distinguished academic, co-directing the masters in conservation program at the Université de Montréal, teaching at ICCROM Rome, and finally serving as associate professor and coordinator of the heritage conservation program in the School of Canadian Studies at Carleton University. His influence was international, training students around the globe. Although he enjoyed an exceptional reputation in his field, there was no ego in his interactions with his students. They benefitted from his intellectual rigor and curiosity but also from his kind and generous spirit, his keen sense of humor, and his humanity.

Nancy Oakley, now director of education at Willowbank in Canada, recalls having Stovel as an instructor and mentor while a student at Carleton University. She remembers him for his wonderfully warm and gentle spirit that was tempered by a passion and deep commitment to the field. Among all his talents, she particularly remembers Stovel's skill as a folk musician, which may surprise some.

To sustain the memory of Herb Stovel as educator, conservationist, and supporter of educating the next generation of professionals, The National Trust for Canada established the Herb Stovel Scholarship Fund at the time of his passing. To learn more about the scholarship, click [here](#).

--Lonnie Hovey