

KEYNOTE ADDRESS - Dr. Ernie Walker

Tales from the Big Empty: The Improbable Story of Wanuskewin Heritage Park



Heritage conservation and preservation can often be challenging in the context of the Great Plains (Prairies). In some cases, remoteness, low population density, and the subtle nature of the prairie environment are seen as impediments to the success of many heritage initiatives in this region. Sites related to Indigenous cultural heritage pose unique problems because of the lack of built structure and their ephemeral nature.

Wanuskewin Heritage Park, located on the north end of Saskatoon, is an example of one such project that has gone from a small rural cattle ranch to a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site now situated in an urban park setting. “Tales from the Big Empty” tells the improbable story of the development of Wanuskewin focusing on some of the most significant events that have transpired over the past 40 years. The central theme of the story is one of loss relating to grassland depletion, the near extinction of the bison, and the hardships the Indigenous of the Plains had to endure. At the same time, the story is one of hope and promise for the future and how heritage conservation and preservation can play a central role in establishing a sense of place. The overarching theme of the Heritage Forum aptly titled “Our Places - Our Stories That Matter” clearly recognizes that fact and the significant role that Saskatchewan can play in preserving and protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Northern Plains. The establishment of Wanuskewin is not just a local or provincial story, but truly is one of critical importance for all of Canada. It is our fervent hope that Wanuskewin can serve as a beacon for how communities and individuals can join together to share our places and stories with the rest of the world.

Dr. Ernie Walker is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Saskatchewan with Associate Memberships in the Department of Geological Sciences, the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology, and the College of Dentistry. His interests include North American Prehistory with an emphasis on the Great Plains and American Southwest regions, vertebrate paleontology with an emphasis on Late Pleistocene fauna, and the environmental history of western North America. Dr. Walker is also interested in environmental conservation and preservation, the development of parks and interpretative facilities, and is a founder of Wanuskewin Heritage Park. For over 40 years, he has worked in a variety of roles towards the establishment of the Park. Dr. Walker is also well known for his work in forensic identification for law enforcement agencies across Canada. He is a Special Constable in the Major Crime Unit of the RCMP F Division and a consultant to the Office of the Chief Coroner, Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. Dr. Walker received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in 2001 and the Order of Canada in 2003 for service to law enforcement and the First Nations community.

Vanessa Mathews



Telling the Story of Place through Craft Beer

The narrative of beer production is a connection to place: the physical adaptation of the built environment, the celebration of the unique and local, and the development of “third places” — places between home and work that encourage exchange and community. The stories of beer leave an imprint on the location; my presentation collects these impressions across time.

Vanessa Mathews is an Associate Professor in Geography & Environmental Studies at the University of Regina. She has published numerous articles on heritage, urban change and industrial restructuring. Her current research examines the effects of craft beer on place, specifically the ability for the sector to catalyze economic development, revalue existing built form, and establish new social spaces.

Vanessa is currently a Board Member for the Civic Museum of Regina, and a member of both the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, and the Canadian Association of Geographers.

Deeter Schurig



cSpace King Edward: Transforming a 100-year-old school into a LEED- Certified Community & Arts Hub

Historic places are important within our heritage narrative, and how we steward their stories to keep their value resonant for the past, present and future, is a creative endeavour. With complex challenges facing society today, the redevelopment of heritage places like King Edward School provides a precedent for revitalizing undervalued community assets while considering a next chapter for cities' tomorrows.

Deeter Schurig is the President and CEO of cSPACE Projects, a social purpose organization developing affordable and sustainable space for artists, non-profits and social entrepreneurs. Since 2009, Deeter's focus has been to develop the award-winning cSPACE King Edward Arts Hub, the redevelopment of a 3-acre, inner-city site including the adaptive reuse of a historic sandstone school. This LEED Gold facility is the first in a network of large scale, multidisciplinary creative workspaces in Calgary. Before cSPACE, Deeter practiced as a freelance designer on theatre and opera projects in Canada and abroad.

Deeter has an Honours Bachelors of Fine Arts in Theatre from York University and a Masters in Architecture from the University of Calgary where he has served as a guest lecturer and course director. As a champion for the arts and city-building, Deeter's multidisciplinary practice and passion for rethinking heritage buildings has merged in an innovative approach to designing, developing and managing spaces for creative communities to thrive.

Tom Van Dewark



Beyond Theory: Lessons from the Real-World Application of Oral History Ethics

The practice of oral history fosters intimate relationships between researchers and the individuals who graciously share their knowledge and lived experiences. The nature of this work requires trust between the interviewee and the network of professionals associated with the project. Systems must be in place to assure each participant that their perspective, dignity, and privacy will be upheld in perpetuity. Using firsthand experiences, Tom Van Dewark will explore the ethical standards and potential pitfalls associated with oral history work. Beginning with oral history best practices in project design, Tom will provide a high-level overview of obtaining project approval, interviewee identification, and community outreach. Next, he will explore the ethical requirements for conducting an oral history interview with an emphasis on obtaining informed consent, the mitigation of harm, the right of withdrawal, and dealing with competing historical perspectives. Through this section, he will tackle several difficult questions such as: What are the barriers to informed consent? When should an interview be cut short? What if a participant asks for a statement to be removed from the record? And what considerations should be made for the wellbeing of the interview team? Lastly, Tom will speak about responsible stewardship of interview recordings and supporting materials. This will cover immediate backups in the field, an overview of oral history transcription, and best practices in project archiving.

Tom Van Dewark is the Director of Western Operations for Know History, one of Canada's premier historical consulting companies. In this role he oversees daily operations of Know History's Calgary office, manages project teams, and leads business development in western Canada. As a historical consultant Tom has led a diverse range of oral history projects. His professional experiences in this field include a seven-part series of historical documentaries for the Métis Nation of Ontario, a Traditional Knowledge and land use study focused on Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' development of a new near surface disposal facility, indigenous language documentation, individual family histories, and oral history workshops for Ottawa's museum services. The varied nature of these projects has resulted in Tom working with interviewees from a wide spectrum of social and economic backgrounds, clients with assorted project aims, and with interdisciplinary teams who are often unfamiliar with the ethical requirements of oral history. Out of these experiences, Tom has become familiar with the real-world application of oral history best practices in numerous environments. He obtained both his Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts at the University of Western Ontario.

David Siebert



Exploring Southern Saskatchewan's Many Places of Faith – Past, Present, and Future

David Siebert's presentation will be on the *Places of Faith* project that he worked on with Heritage Saskatchewan this past summer. The project covered southern Saskatchewan, roughly following the lines of the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina. However, the project

intentionally investigated 'places of faith', so the sites investigated were not limited to churches. The presentation will highlight some of the challenges facing places of faith, and the changes those sites are facing. The original project also limited itself to sites that were either "managing change" or had been adaptively re-used. Examples of both of these will be discussed, as well as the different categories of adaptive reuse. Finally, David will discuss the conclusion of the project, its next steps, and findings.

David Siebert is a second year masters student at the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa. His focus is heritage conservation, especially cultural landscape and nature/culture intersections. David grew up in Ottawa on unceded Algonquin territory, and attended the University of Waterloo where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Medieval Studies.

Bevra Fee



Main Street Spiritwood

Beginning in 2015, Northern Lakes Economic Development Corp undertook a transformation of the Spiritwood's Main Street. As an accredited partner with SaskCulture's Main Street program, lessons in funding, grant applications, visioning and project alignment were utilized to bring a cohesive and updated function to the town.

Bevra Fee is one of the founding members and now Managing Director of the non-profit Northern Lakes Economic Development Corporation (NLEDC). Governed by a volunteer board, NLEDC strives to enhance tourism, marketing and business expansion for the region surrounding Spiritwood, Saskatchewan. Bevra also served on the Saskatchewan Economic Development Association Board of Directors since from 2011 to 2019. Prior to economic development, Bevra was involved in the agriculture industry with Fast Genetics for 10 years, serving on the Saskatchewan Pork Development Board of Directors for three years, the last of which saw her in the role of Vice Chair. She holds certification in Business Administration from the University of Saskatchewan and Pro. Dir. Certification from Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy. Her current governance roles include Board of Directors of SaskPower, Councillor for the Rural Municipality #496, and Vice Chair of the Saskatchewan Party. She is President of Spiritwood Golf Course, where she is also one of the five owners.

Ryan Reiss



Vibank Heritage Building – History, Current Use, & Challenges

Ryan Reiss will share with delegates how Vibank's innovative community leaders have taken on the challenge of enhancing their town by creating the Vibank Heritage Centre. This and other initiatives have contributed to changing the look and the vision of their community for present and future generations.

As the current Mayor of the Town of Vibank, Ryan Reiss is a life-long resident of Vibank, Saskatchewan. He attended Vibank Regional School; initially he at the Vibank branch of the Plainsview Credit Union and is now employed at the Conexus Credit Union in Regina. Ryan served one term as a Councillor from 2012-2016 and is currently in his first term as Mayor 2016-2020.