

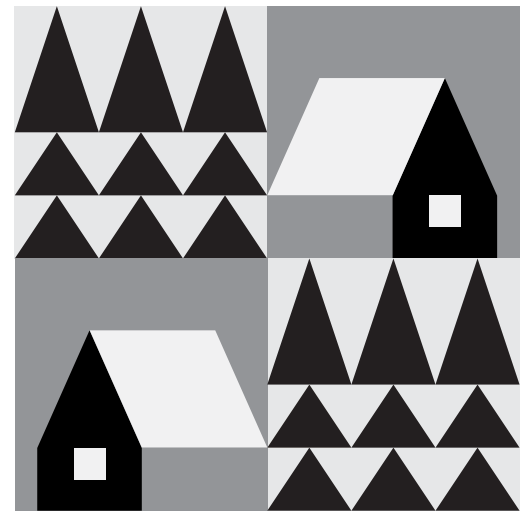
THE STONE CIRCLE: WHO KNEW?

by Jane Panet

Rockcliffe Park has much to offer, but who knew one unique offering is that it is home to an important piece of landscape art? Right in the heart of our community sits landscape art that is so significant that according to retired Chief Landscape Architect of the National Capital Commission (NCC), Gerald Lajeunesse, it should once again become a destination for community residents of greater Ottawa, a place he says visitors to our Capital would want to visit. It is, of course, the Stone Circle. Accolades for this space are plentiful: The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) describes the Stone Circle as "an example of how architects shape cultural landscapes" and that it "celebrates one of Canada's milestones and represents a pre-eminent example of design." the late Cornelia Oberlander OC, a giant in the world of Canadian landscape design and the creative genius behind the design of such signature public spaces as the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Robson Square, Vancouver, and the Museum of Anthropology, UBC, pronounced in 2017 on the Stone Circle: "... this has to be restored and preserved...we have too many places of destruction."

Following my invitation to visit the site, Linda Dicaire, a long-time Rockcliffe resident, and her former colleague at the NCC, Gerald Lajeunesse, have offered to help the Rockcliffe Park Residents Association and the Rockcliffe Park Foundation to create a plan for restoring the Stone Circle, that will preserve the essence of landscape architect Humphrey Carver's vision while at the same time updating the space and bringing it up to code. Both Linda and Gerald bring considerable experience to the task. Linda is honoured to be a Fellow of the CSLA. One of the many important projects she has designed and which is on-going, is The Vimy Foundation Centennial Park, a garden

of remembrance adjacent to the Canadian Vimy Memorial National Historic Site, on Vimy Ridge in France. She also designed its furniture. She also just happens to be Chair of the RPRA Heritage Committee. Gerald, also an honoured Fellow of the CSLA, is a 32 year veteran of the NCC and is committed to projects that promote environmental sustainability, community involvement, and civic pride. His present passion is the creation of a national botanical garden 'Canadensis' at the Central Experimental Farm. Linda and Gerald are contributing to this as volunteers, without remuneration. There is no time frame but we promise you, you will be hearing more from us in the near future. In the meantime, if you have comments or ideas that you would like to contribute, please email us at info@rockcliffeparkfoundation.org.



COMMUNITY

This is the second article in a series on the once magnificent and commemorative Stone Circle. Located in the Village Green (the park area bounded by Springfield Road on the west and Mariposa Avenue on the south), the Stone Circle was officially opened by G.G Roland Michener in 1967 to celebrate Canada's centennial. The circular flagstone and river rocks paved space, anchored in the centre by two boulders, and ringed by maple trees, has unfortunately fallen into a state of disrepair.