

McHugh, Patricia. *Toronto Architecture, A City Guide*. Toronto: Methuen for Mercury Books, 1985. Pp. 264. Illustrations. \$14.95

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Volume 14, Number 3, February 1986

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1018093ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1018093ar>

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Publisher(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (print)

1918-5138 (digital)

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Cite this review

Johnson, D. (1986). Review of [McHugh, Patricia. *Toronto Architecture, A City Guide*. Toronto: Methuen for Mercury Books, 1985. Pp. 264. Illustrations. \$14.95]. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 14(3), 292–293.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1018093ar>

compliment Harney for reminding us that everyone is ethnic through his inclusion of the article on Cabbagetown by Careless. For the present, however, the comprehensive ethnic history of Toronto remains largely unwritten.

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The promenade was a popular form of amusement in 19th century Canadian cities. Many residents spent pleasant Sunday afternoons, walking the streets, parks, cemeteries and boardwalks of the community. Though undoubtedly recreational, the walk-about had other uses, too. Authors often employed the city tour to introduce visitors to their town. Newspaper editors sometimes did a spring or late summer walk of various districts, using the occasion to point out the finest of the new buildings in the community, and to applaud the energy, industry and cultivated taste which produced them. Indeed, as Henry Scadding showed in *Toronto of Old*, the history of a city's development could be told in this way.

In the 20th century, visiting the outstanding sights continues to be one of several methods of judging the vitality of our cities. The 19th century promenade has become, at a somewhat more lively pace but with some of the same didactic purposes, the 20th century walking tour. Authors have responded to this growing demand by devising walking (and sometimes cycling or driving) tours of our major centres. They range from single-page handouts produced by municipalities and local heritage groups, to full-scale books, such as Hal Kalman and John Roaf's two studies on Vancouver and Ottawa. Patricia McHugh's *Toronto Architecture, A City Guide* is undoubtedly one of the most detailed and useful Canadian works of this genre.

The book consists of a brisk six-page introduction to the development of Toronto, a very useful eight-page discussion of the styles of architecture identifiable within the areas covered by the book, and twenty walking tours of ten distinct areas, covering 750 buildings. The book covers a relatively small part of the city, its downtown core from the waterfront north to Davenport, and from the Don River on the east to Bathurst Street on the west and includes areas such as the University of Toronto, Cabbagetown, Yorkville and the Annex. It is not therefore a comprehensive guide to the city's important buildings; for example, it does not introduce the reader to many buildings listed by the Toronto Historical Board as being of historical or architectural significance,

such as Casa Loma or Spadina, nor does it cover equally interesting neighbourhoods such as Rosedale and the Beaches.

Within this understandable limitation, the book possesses many merits. First and foremost, it is a splendid read. The author fairly bristles with thoughtful judgements, carefully chosen anecdotes and arcane information. One can always quibble over the assessments (as indeed this reviewer often did) but that is part of the fun. It is also well organized. Ms. McHugh has taken 750 downtown Toronto buildings, and written crisp, informative paragraphs about each of them. She has divided this voluminous material — which might well have overwhelmed a reader otherwise — into twenty walking tours, each described by the author as taking roughly an hour and a half.

On the whole, the book is a delight. Though there is a somewhat uncritical attitude towards post-modern architecture and an occasional tendency to gush, the author's judgements are generally balanced and thoughtful. St. Lawrence Hall "is Toronto's Victorian classicism at its very best," the original Knox College is a building which "took its formal, symmetrical responsibilities perhaps too seriously," while the Yorkville shopping complex Hazelton Lanes "is so tortuously laid out it's almost impossible to find your way without dropping bread crumbs — or perhaps croissant crumbs, this being Hazelton Lanes." The book contains an immense amount of detail, garnered from sources ranging from assessment rolls to private papers to architectural journals.

This book will be of value to a variety of audiences, roughly in the order of interests listed on its back cover (Travel/Architecture/Reference). For the traveller — arm-chair or real — it provides a relatively inexpensive, convenient, well organized and fact-filled introduction to the city that the rest of Canada loves to hate, but many of the world's cities envy. For the architectural historian, the book offers a compressed but fact-filled history of a remarkable range of downtown buildings, a third of which are illustrated by clear black-and-white photographs. The variety of building types illustrated is an important feature. Though major Toronto landmarks as varied in time and purpose as the Grange and Eaton's Centre receive due attention, it is one of many delightful aspects of McHugh's book that the author gives nearly equal attention to the houses, factories and small commercial properties which were the less ornate lifeblood of Victorian and Edwardian Toronto. Though they are much the most important part of her study, buildings are not the author's sole interest: she includes monuments, squares and streetscapes as well.

The book has a number of minor problems. Unlike a number of similar guides, the author illustrates a relatively small proportion of the buildings she discusses, roughly one

in three. This is a weakness for those who would wish to use the book as a reference work, rather than an on-site guide. She has a tendency, especially evident on buildings of comparatively modest architectural importance, to point out the obvious instead of allowing the viewer to see the building for what it is. Her breezy prose style occasionally degenerates. Finally, her book is almost obsessively Toronto-centred, an unexpected weakness considering the author's advertised familiarity with Los Angeles, New York and London. World-class cities have a sense of their worth beyond their own borders, but this book shows disturbingly few signs of that level of maturity. The author even identifies two distinctive domestic styles of architecture for the city — but, contrary to McHugh's schema, the "Annex House" and the "Toronto Bay-n-Gable" are not house types uniquely Toronto's own.

McHugh's book is one of the happiest byproducts of Toronto's sesquicentennial. It joins what has quickly become a shelf of fine volumes on the city's past. For the architectural historian, she builds on an already-impressive body of work on the city's morphology and structural history, including Eric Arthur's magisterial *Toronto: No Mean City* (itself a candidate for revision and reprinting soon) and William Dendy's somewhat idiosyncratic *Lost Toronto*. But for those interested in seeing survivals of its past, no usable and comprehensive guide to the city had existed until McHugh's book became available. Its publication was undoubtedly aided by the immense resources available to building historians in Toronto: the Metropolitan Toronto Central Library has, in ARCHIDONT, an unparalleled source of documentation on structures built in the city, the Toronto Historical Board has been a most active agent in research and preservation, and the city has long had an active group of enthusiasts (most of whom are thanked in the acknowledgements to this book) working on its history. These resources, however, can merely contribute to an endeavour such as this: the author's role determines the scope and quality of the final product, and here the result must be judged a major achievement, which even required the author to become her own publisher. The question remains: how can the urban historian make use of it?

Patricia McHugh's *Toronto Architecture* provides an impressive array of information on structures and on their place in the development of the urban fabric. Because of the need to analyse a large and complex organism over a period of time, urban historians often seem to downplay the importance of two crucial elements within the urban scene, people and buildings. Nor have Canadian historians gone very far in exploring the exciting possibilities that creative interaction between urban and architectural historians — natural allies in understanding so many aspects of city life — might engender. Studies such as *Toronto Architecture* go some small distance in refocusing the study of the city on those significant historical documents, the buildings, which often seem so strangely absent from studies of Canadian places.

This is a valuable contribution to a growing list of guides to Canadian cities. It creatively melds an immense quantity of information into a lively and intelligent pastiche, which offers the serious tourist, the armchair urban enthusiast and the scholar interested in individual urban documents a useful and informative review of the city's built heritage. All of this comes in an affordable, reasonably attractive book, and remarkably free from error. This is no mean book for no mean city.

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Cruickshank, Tom; Peter John Stokes; and John de Visser. *The Settler's Dream: A Pictorial History of the Older Buildings of Prince Edward County*. Picton: The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward, 1984. Pp. xvi, 454. Illustrations, maps, indices. \$40.00.

The Settler's Dream deserves to become one of the standard works historians consult for formal and architectural precedent. The book is based on the Historical Architectural Survey of Prince Edward: a project that encompassed three thousand buildings, about a tenth of them included here. Prince Edward is a peninsular county near the eastern end of Lake Ontario. First settled in 1784, its relative isolation induced a social and economic conservatism to which may be attributed the survival of many of the early buildings and settlement patterns recorded in this book.

In a year to be remembered for the abundance of local and special history publications, *The Settler's Dream* stands out. As a selective inventory of even some of the county's buildings, the material transcends purely local interest on two counts: the inherent interest of the subject, and the quality of the study. Many of the structures in Prince Edward have been recognized as having an exceptional degree of importance and integrity since at least Eric Arthur's Ontario surveys carried out in the 1930s: they are now seen to epitomize the Loyalist legacy. As a straightforward record of this legacy, the book performs a valuable function, but it surpasses the normal limitations of an inventory format through its organization and the breadth of inquiry.

The book consists of seventeen chapters plus glossary, pictorial lexicon, bibliography and indices. Notes are integrated with the text. Five prefatory chapters deal with settlement history, topography, landscape, local building and an introduction to the communities. Eleven principal chapters correspond to a township, part of a township or a town, and may be further subdivided into villages. The community chapters all begin with a brief discussion of the settlement