

Project Description: Poet's Hill Literary Heritage Site

Background

Since 2002, the Poets' Pathway Committee has consulted with federal, provincial and municipal planning officials, community associations, advisory committees and diverse cultural organizations regarding the creation of a literary heritage route—the Poets' Pathway—that will connect sites of literary-historical importance throughout the capital.

Beechwood Avenue, and in particular Beechwood Cemetery, presents an exceptional venue for the commemoration of Canadian literary heritage. Beechwood Cemetery contains numerous memorials of influential nineteenth and twentieth century Canadian writers of national significance.

Objectives

A portion of Beechwood Cemetery will be designated and developed as a site for literary commemoration, reflection and education. The site will serve both as a gateway destination and as a point of departure for the extended Poets' Pathway network.

The proposed Beechwood Cemetery site is situated at the top of a hill that provides a vista of Parliament Hill in the distance. This visual and physical correspondence between sites will be recognized by designating the commemorative site "Poet's Hill," a name that also invokes the romantic and natural associations invested in this unique commemorative environment.

The Beechwood Cemetery literary heritage site will encourage reflection on the cemetery's solemn literary-historical attributes, as well as inspire an active appreciation for Canadian history and culture as revealed through poetry and other forms of literary expression. The site will be designed to encourage educational programming, local commercial development and cultural tourism. Importantly, the site also will serve as a final resting place for individuals whose lives have been shaped by a love of literature.

Committee

The project committee will consist of representatives from the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation, the Ottawa Literary Heritage Society, the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital and affiliated members.

Steven Artelle, Director, Ottawa Literary Heritage Society
Erwin Dreessen, Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital
Michael Heenan, Ottawa Literary Heritage Society
M. Catherine Carroll, Ottawa Literary Heritage Society
Vera Yuzyk, Beechwood Cemetery Foundation

Fundraising

Fundraising will be directed by the project committee, and will be conducted by members the affiliated organizations on behalf of the committee. A detailed fundraising plan will be submitted to the committee for discussion. Fundraising activities and sources may include:

- Literary-heritage events held at Beechwood Cemetery and in the community
- Trillium Foundation project funding
- City of Ottawa Heritage Project funding
- Partnerships with organizations such as the Ottawa Independent Writers, the Ottawa International Writers Festival, the League of Canadian Poets, the Canadian Authors Association

The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation will provide direction on fundraising initiatives, and will assist the committee by administering project funds and by issuing tax receipts.