

Algeria Embassy in Ottawa



View from the yard



*Fleck Paterson House
Historical heritage*

- english version -

The edifice of the Algerian Chancery in Canada is a building recognized as a historical heritage by the City of Ottawa. It was designed in 1901 by John Watts, one of the best architects of his period, for lumber baron J. R. Booth who built it for his daughter Gertrude and her husband Andrew Fleck, a railway magnate.

J.R. Booth, son of Irish immigrants and self-taught person who joined his son-in-law in various projects, has started his business by building bridges and sawmills but he built his fortune in the middle of 1850-1860 when he was charged to provide softwood lumber to build the Canadian Parliament building.

In 1941, Senator Norman Paterson purchased the house and lived in it until his death in 1983 at the age of 100. He started his professional career in Manitoba (province of his birth) in railways in 1897, then he joined his father's company in 1903, they worked together in the grains' field. During the years 1908 and 1920, Mr. Paterson has created portage and grains' maritime transportation companies, which now are the properties of his sons.

Mr. Paterson has also been a politician who marked his era. Nominated Senator in 1940 by the Canadian Prime Minister MacKenzie King, he remained so until 1981. Senator Paterson was interested during his life in philanthropy. He was member of the Canada's Presbyterian Church and President of the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada. In tribute to his contribution to the human and economic development of Canada, Ottawa's Carleton University created in 1965 a school that name it "The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs".

Since Senator Paterson passing away, private developers who hoped to turn the house into a commercial area (a retirement home), but these efforts fell through as the City of Ottawa refused it.

In 1989, the building was purchased by Robert Van Eyk who proposed to turn it into inn by respecting its historic and architectural feature. The City of Ottawa recognized heritage structure in 1978.

Few months later, the building was sold to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, an Indian spiritual circle. They used it as a meditation center (practice yoga and transcendental meditation and as headquarters of the Natural Law Party of Canada.

Renovation works estimated at two millions dollars have been made during this period and allowed the building to restore its glamour and its current appearance.

Today, as when it was constructed, the residence has gardens extended until Rideau Canal. It gets dressed with cut sandstone and ornament stones from the same material. The house is characterized moreover by its turret in pepper-box, its carriage entrance and its red tiled roof on its ornamented porch. The interior of the building, including its principal staircase, its living-room, its dining room and its library, are recognized under the Ontario Heritage Act.

In May 2002, the house was purchased by Algeria to host the Chancery of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Like other chanceries recognized as "Canadian heritage", the Embassy of Algeria opens its doors to the public since 2005 within the framework of the festivities "open-doors days" organized annually by the City of Ottawa in June, in order to allow the admirers to appreciate the architectural heritage of this city.