

## MORRIS, Robert Schofield (1898 – 1964)

**R**obert S. Morris was awarded the Royal Gold Medal in architecture in 1958. Instituted by Queen Victoria in 1848 the award was given each year to an architect regardless of nationality for "outstanding contribution to the profession". Morris was the first Canadian to receive this honor since Frank Darling in 1915 and other recipients include such figures of architectural stature as Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright.

A native of Hamilton, Morris was educated at Highfield School, Hamilton and Ashbury College Ottawa before entering Royal Military College at Kingston in 1915. After serving in France and Belgium during World War One he studied architecture at McGill graduating in 1923. He worked first for Carrere and Hastings and then H. T. Lindberg both of New York City but in 1927 returned to Montreal and joined the firm of H. L. Fetherstonhaugh. However, the following year Morris spent six months travelling through Europe before moving to Toronto to join the firm Marani and Lawson. In 1929, Morris became a partner in the firm re-organized as Marani, Lawson and Morris.

Their most notable building was the Bank of Canada (1937-38), designed in a modest art deco manner. However, after the war, his firm now called Marani and Morris became one of Canada's establishment firms and designed many governmental, commercial and institutional buildings throughout Canada.

His buildings were described as "having an air of no-nonsense sturdiness, embody the generally accepted functional principles of the moderns with none of the avant-gardism".

Morris's commissions include Ridley College, St. Catharines; Fort York Armoury, Fleet Street; Shell Oil Building, Toronto; the Canadian Embassy, Washington D.C. and the Maclean-Hunter Building, Toronto.

Active in many architectural organizations Morris was a chairman of the Toronto Chapter and President of the Ontario Association of Architects (1942-43). He was President and a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Morris's wife was Elsie Johnston.

### Important work:

#### *(with Marani & Lawson)*

Merrit House, Ridley College, St. Catharines, Ont.	1931-32
North American Life Assurance, King St., Toronto	1931-32
Fort York Armoury, Toronto, Ont.	1933-34
Bank of Canada, Ottawa	1937-38

#### *(within Marani)*

Bank of Montreal, King St. W., Toronto, Ont.	1937-48
CNE Grandstand, Toronto	1947-48
City Hall, Peterborough, Ont.	1950-51
Confederation Life Insurance, Bloor St. E., Toronto	1950-51