

The OAA Headquarters

Excerpt from:

Simmons, Geoffrey, Ontario Association of Architects a Centennial History 1889-1989, p. 248-249.

...From what headquarters will the Association view its second century? This, too, is an open question. At many times in their history, members of the OAA have felt especially good about themselves. On at least two occasions this came about at least partially because their own headquarters. The first time was in 1900, at 94-96 King Street West, Toronto, whose sober and sincere Arts and Crafts interiors were a perfect match for the architects' own feelings about themselves during those years; the second in 1954, when John B. Parkin Associates' uncompromisingly modernist premises were built for the OAA at 50 Park Road, Toronto. Since then the Headquarters building has become impossibly overcrowded. The ramp on whose flanking walls paintings once hung has been replaced by offices, as has the library. So has the dining room (combined with a lounge) where members once enjoyed lunch. Such steps were necessary in the light of the Association's growing membership rolls and increased responsibility for such programs as the Certification Board and Indemnity Plan. Extra office space had to come from somewhere.

In view of this pressing need to establish a new headquarters, in the summer of 1988 OAA Council established a task force to review the short and long-term space requirements of the Association. In a communication to members dated 29 July 1988, Irv Rayman, chairman of the Headquarters Building Task Force, urged members to identify potential sites for a new headquarters building. Considering the various options—a new building is only one of them—will doubtless occupy council during the coming years...