



## The Guelph Civic Museum is Officially Open

*Article Courtesy of Chris Seto, Mercury staff  
Friday March 2nd 2012*

On Friday morning, the newly renovated building on Catholic Hill was host to a number of dignitaries, community leaders and donors gathering to celebrate the museum's grand opening.

Addressing an audience of around 40 people in a well-lit boardroom, Guelph Mayor Karen Farbridge said the building was nearly demolished seven years ago.

The project almost didn't happen, she said. She attributed the salvation of the building to the partnership between the three levels of government, the Diocese of Hamilton and community leaders and donors.

"We've created an engaging community space where people can discover the history and stories that make Guelph, Guelph," she said. The federal government contributed 1.5 million dollars, the Ontario government gave five million dollars and the municipal government put forward seven million.



*Interior View of addition*

*Guelph Civic Museum - The snow falls softly outside the Guelph Civic Museum during its grand opening celebrations this Friday.  
All Photography Courtesy of Chris Seto, Guelph Mercury*



Chapel Exterior



Shamrock stone carving detail

## Guelph Civic Museum Exceeds EcoENERGY Design Requirements

### Guelph Civic Museum is a model of energy efficiency

A significant achievement for any building let alone a 150 year old historic building. A recent energy modeling review by NRCan indicates it is 55.8% more efficient than the MNECB reference building and meets all MNECB requirements. The Museum is a 5-storey stone heritage structure with newly expanded space for the new occupants.

The building envelope boasts significantly improved insulation values in the walls and roof, and the windows are double glazed argon-filled and low-e curtain walls. The entire building is hydronically heated and cooled by two modulating natural gas boilers and an air-cooled chiller. The majority of the zones receive zone-specific conditioning through fan coils.

Significant Energy Conservation Design Features include:

- Two heat recovery ventilators improving heat recovery effectiveness
- Heating is provided by modulating boilers (85% efficient) with variable speed pumps.
- The cooling pumps are variable speed
- The building's lighting uses 35.7% less power
- The R-value (thermal resistance) of the walls and roof is 30% higher
- The U-value (thermal transmittance) of the window fenestration is improved by 50%

As Prime Consultants **+VG Architects** planned, designed and successfully built this outstanding project.

Structural Engineer	Andy Truax
Mechanical Engineering	Jain & Associates
landscape Architects	Wendy Schearer - Div. of MHBC
	Planning, Urban Design & Landscape
	Architecture
General Contractor	Harbridge & Cross

See [www.plusvg.com](http://www.plusvg.com) for more information.

On top of this, community fundraising contributed another \$772,000 toward the project. Ontario's minister of tourism, culture and sport, Michael Chan said the Ontario government was happy to contribute to the renovation of the former Loretto Convent. He said museums are an important way to keep safe a city's local heritage.

"They preserve our heritage, promote local history and most of all, tell our stories," he said. Guelph MP Frank Valeriote said the opening of the museum was like a homecoming for him. He said 40 years ago he was in the same building attending a geography class in the former Bishop Macdonell High School.

He said the building on Catholic Hill was very fitting to house the new Civic Museum, as it has been such an important part of the city's history. "How appropriate that a museum be placed in a historic structure," he said. "They taught us knowledge," he said, speaking of the building's former tenants. "And now because it's a museum, their effort is being perpetuated, forever."

The museum is will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, and will be admission free until March 1. During this grand opening weekend museum staff will also be giving tours to areas of the museum not normally shown to the public. For more information on museum exhibits and events, visit their website at [www.guelph.ca/museum](http://www.guelph.ca/museum).