

# Letters to the Editor

## *Synthetic materials destroy value of heritage structures*

*The following letter was written to the mayor and council of the Municipality of Kincardine and forwarded to The Independent.*

Re: Kincardine Lighthouse

We have recently learned that the Municipality of Kincardine is changing the windows and exterior cladding of the Kincardine Lighthouse. We applaud the idea of maintaining the lighthouse, which is one of the most important heritage sites in Bruce County, but we are very concerned about the way in which the work is being done, specifically about the materials being used.

In order to maintain the heritage features of a building it is essential that any repairs or renovations be done using materials that are as close as possible to the original materials. Use of modern synthetic materials effectively destroys the historic character of the structure. The use of synthetic materials on such important features as windows and cladding will significantly reduce the value of the structure as a heritage building.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario would point out that on a structure close to the lake it is doubtful that the siding will stand-up well. It is likely to quickly look cheap. On such an important landmark to Kincardine this would reflect poorly. You currently use the lighthouse image on much of your tourism material and maintaining it in an appropriate manner should be a major concern to many in the area's tourism industry. This building is one of the draws to the harbour area.

On the windows, replacing the look of the current pattern should be maintained. The changing from four over four to six over six should be avoided. If going away from wood for maintenance, every effort should

be made to match detail and colour of the current windows as possible. Also the original windows should be fully documented and saved if possible for future replacement if needed.

When undertaking work on such a prominent historic building you should take time to consult with the public and your heritage committee (Heritage Kincardine) who will take a longer-term look at the building for future generations. If expertise is required that is not available locally, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario can help provide advice on appropriate materials and procedures for maintenance or restoration of heritage buildings.

**Henry Simpson  
President**

**Architectural Conservancy of  
Ontario**

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## *Nobody's home*

The front page says: "Phone the mayor." I would ask why.

Nobody's home, and if they are, the collective of our elected officials don't listen to reason and common sense - and like all politicians are quite willing to take credit for someone else's knowledge and work. (I am referring to the Secord house aka Gerry Crooks.)

I say again, a council that in its collective wisdom doesn't have enough brains to throw out a wet carpet when water runs in under an entrance way, would not have enough knowledge to restore a landmark property to its former glory.

My God, people, this lighthouse has been an icon in the village since it was built!

Well, that's the way I feel and view the situation from under my rock. I know I'm not going to restore or rejuvenate, but I keep it well drained. Have a good Old Boys.

**Yours,**

**Bryan Edden**

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