

# Heritage Homes Tour 2001: An ode to homeowners

By Catherine Murphy

Okay. Okay. I will write about the 2001 Heritage Homes Tour. But what to write? Should I write about the many sleepless nights wondering if there would be enough homes? Nah, too hard luck.

Should I write about the Nanaimo Bar summit meeting? One or two bars per person at the tour tea — that is the question...?

Nah, makes me hungry.

Should I write how something called a provincial election just HAD to be called on May 16th, the same night as the planned homeowners' pep rally. Why did they not consult with us first! Nah, toooo political.

So, I guess that leaves a discussion on the houses.

It is very likely that, by the time this publication hits the streets, its very keen readers will already have purchased their Homes Tour tickets and know in detail what lovely homes and historic sites await us on May 27. So we won't go into great detail about the 13 houses and Burr Hall and Copp's Shoes.

But there remains the burning question.

Why would anyone want to open their home to more than 1000 people?

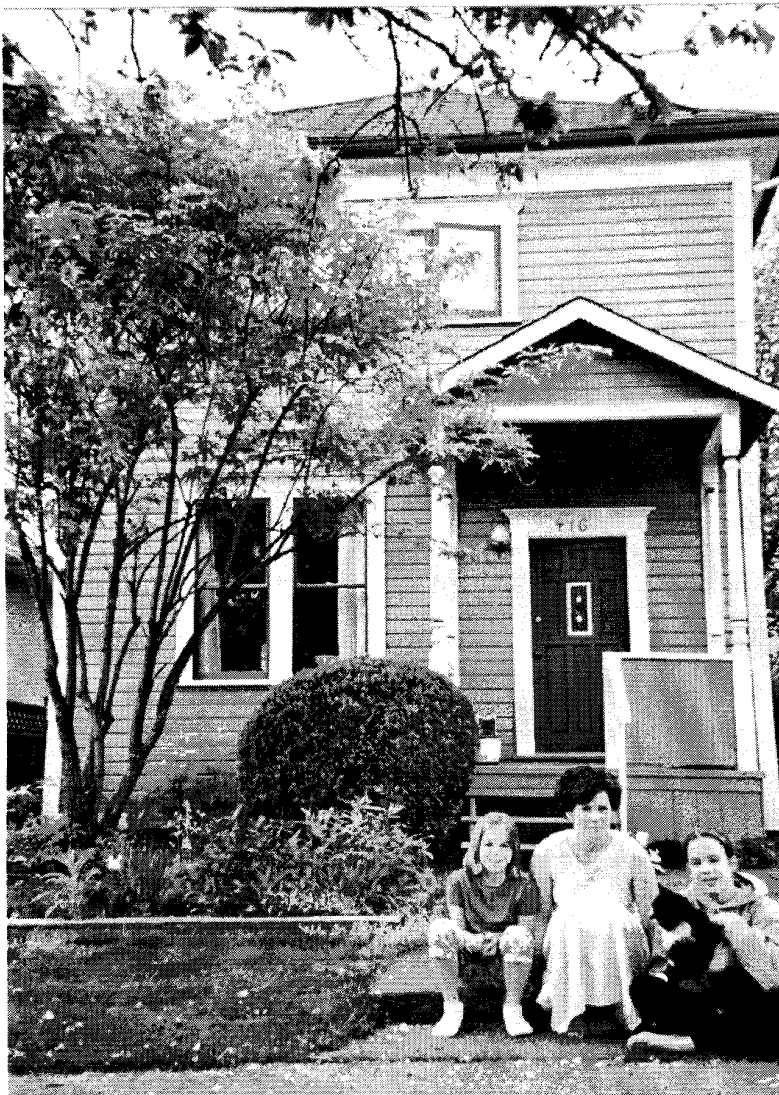
We all want to see the homes but without the generosity and enthusiasm of these special people — the Heritage Homes Tour homeowners — there would be no tour. Simple as that.

For Stephanie Lundrigan, it was quite simple.

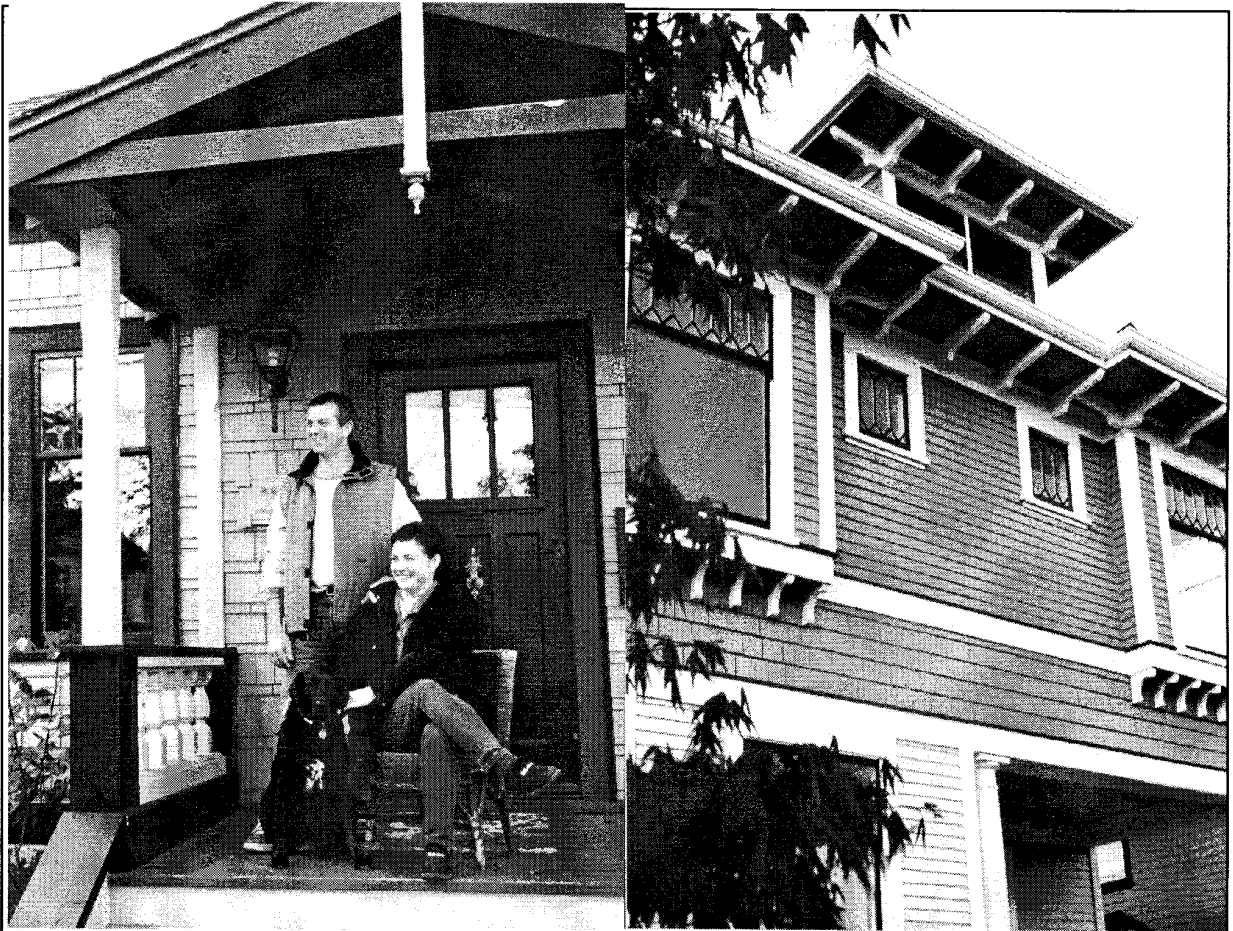
"I want the plaque," says Lundrigan with a smile, adding that when she moved to New Westminister from Nova Scotia, she enjoyed strolling the neighbourhood reading the distinct wooden plaques which feature the name of the property's first owner and when it was built. "There were lots of heritage homes in Halifax," says Lundrigan, pointing out most homes there are more than 100 years old.

She was one of the first homeowners to say yes to the selection committee and is keen to share her passion for old homes and the Royal City.

Husband Glenn freely and admiringly admits that the restoration at 416 3rd Street was Stephanie's vision.



Stephanie Lundrigan, with daughters Kaitlin and Erin, outside their home, the 1895 Reverend Thomas Scouler House, on Third Street at St. Patrick's. Her work has been (mostly) a labour of love.



*Rose Ternes and Bob Williams relaxing on the porch of their charming Keary Street cottage and 335 Pine, shorn of its vinyl siding and filled-in porch, is also on this year's Homes Tour.*

“She had originally wanted to buy her grandmother’s house but when that didn’t work out and we moved to B.C., I knew she would do something like this,” he says.

“When we got married she made it clear that she wanted to live in an old house and fix it up. She’s done most of the work herself, from stripping the woodwork to painting and wallpapering.”

Indeed Stephanie Lundrigan made a passionate decision to take on a considerable project and has succeeded in transforming a remuddled 1895 house into a cozy heritage home for Glenn and their three daughters Amanda, Kaitlan and Erin.

The main floor with its period kitchen and bathroom can only be fully appreciated by seeing the before-and-after pictures.

Next up is the restoration of the second floor. Perhaps a second plaque may be in this house’s future? A second plaque? Why would anyone want another one and have to go through the craziness of having their home on the tour again?

Rob McGaw and Jo Geilan of 906 Third Avenue said yes when called to duty again. Their lovely home has seen many new projects since its first appearance on tour, most notably a beautiful, bright second-floor period bathroom.

“It was frightening at first,” explains Geilan when they first thought about being on the tour. “But it was really great — people were so encouraging.”

Rose Ternes, proprietress of The Antique and Olde House Resource Shoppe on Twelfth Street, is opening her Keary Street Cottage again. “It’s a fantastic way for people to see what fabulous stuff can be done to their old house without spending a lot of money,” says Ternes, whose Sapperton home promises to hold wonderful — and colourful — surprises for tourgoers. Ternes is unveiling a line of paint —

*... continued page 5*



*Also on the Homes Tour is the Reverend Benjamin J. Sand House, 403 Ninth Street, a 1912 Classical revival style Edwardian home.*

Farrow and Ball, the official paint for the British National Registry — during the tour.

What perks do the homeowners receive for participating in this community event — the largest

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and oldest of its kind in Canada?

Besides an adrenaline rush, positive feedback, and amazing energy to resume renovation/restoration projects, the homeowners receive six free tickets, research of their house's history, the coveted plaque and reimbursement of cleaning costs either pre- or post-tour.

They also receive the immense satisfaction that they have been part of heritage history and contributed to the awareness of the Royal City. They have helped “show off” New Westminster at least for that one special day. Thank you to all participants. You are the Homes Tour!

## **Henrietta Houseman's Heritage Homes Tour helpful hints**

### **Dos**

- Be sure to wear comfy, slip-on/off type shoes.
- Wash your feet if you insist on going sockless. Henrietta favours nylon sockettes.
- Wear a hat to protect from the elements — sun, rain and wind. This also helps if you don't have time to wash your hair or to hide “bed head.”
- Wear loose fitting clothes as the tour tea has so much food, and our pants only so much waistband.
- Bring a pouch to carry the tour program, umbrella, all the
- T-shirts, mugs, books and other items for sale at the tea that you simply must have.
- If you really need to, ask to use the washrooms at the homes.

### **Dont's**

- Don't use the washrooms without permission. Try to find an alternative location if possible.
- Don't open any closets or cupboards in any room unless encouraged. The house is on the tour, not for sale unless otherwise noted.
- Save your comments that may not be positive for elsewhere. Never do anything to upset the homeowner. And in most homes, you may not know who is who!
- Don't ask for more than 10 Nanaimo bars. Never snap your fingers at one of the tour tea volunteers. They just might be your MP, MLA or boss one day!