

**WILLOWBANK**



**RESTORE  
REVIVE  
RENEW**

Heritage  
conservation  
for the 21st  
century



## INTRODUCTION

From its historic campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Willowbank is pioneering an ecological approach to heritage conservation and renewal. Through the Willowbank School, which offers a Diploma in Heritage Conservation, and the Willowbank Centre, which promotes community engagement, we are developing an innovative way of thinking about the past, in order to create a more sustainable future.

## VISION



KENSINGTON MARKET, TORONTO, ON (PHOTO BY DAN ZEN)

**“Willowbank’s approach is about more than heritage; it’s about a way of life—a way to make better, more ecologically sound communities”**

**WALTER FURLAN**

*Owner, Walter Furlan Conservation, Hamilton, ON  
Class of 2012*

Willowbank’s ecological approach represents a powerful response to today’s environmental and social challenges. Willowbank infuses the traditional methods of heritage conservation with a sense of obligation to recognize the interconnection of our built, natural and cultural resources. At Willowbank, we believe that places are richer for their diversity and we embrace this complexity. We believe heritage plays a pivotal role in creating a sustainable future.

Willowbank’s historic campus—an 1834 estate, a 1914 schoolhouse, an 8,000-year-old portage route—represents more than an architectural and cultural asset; it is a living case study for students of the Willowbank School, and a compelling backdrop for the Willowbank Centre’s programming. It is a home for the evolution, development and expression of our innovative approach. It is the birthplace of a new paradigm that will have a deep and lasting impact on the world.

WILLOWBANK MEADOW (PHOTO BY ALLEN KOVACH)





WILLOWBANK AT THE PRINCE'S FOUNDATION FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY, LONDON, UK (PHOTO BY RICHARD IVEY)

## VALUES

As a dynamic organization in a rapidly changing landscape, Willowbank is deeply rooted by its values. These enduring principles reflect the essence of Willowbank's character, and they serve as the framework that will shape our future.

### **1. WE EMPLOY A PROGRESSIVE, FORWARD-THINKING APPROACH.**

A leading edge organization, we are developing a new approach to the theory and practice of heritage conservation—and facilitating a paradigm shift in the process.

### **2. WE ADAPT TO REFLECT THE WORLD AROUND US.**

We draw on a fundamentally dynamic and flexible character in order to evolve, and to adapt to different circumstances and cultural landscapes.

### **3. WE ARE DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE PAST.**

At our core is a profound appreciation for, and commitment to, sustaining the skills and practices that imbue our historical buildings and places with meaning.

### **4. WE EMBRACE COMPLEXITY AND DIVERSITY.**

Our work is driven by a nuanced understanding of ecology as the interplay of people and the places they inhabit. We view sustainability as a broad concept that reflects culture as well as nature.

### **5. WE ARE INDEPENDENT.**

Far from centres of power and bureaucracy, we are bound only by our own values, and we are guided by the diverse perspectives and priorities of our stakeholders.

## WILLOWBANK SCHOOL



OPEN HOUSE (PHOTO BY JONATHAN CASTELLINO)



GLAZING DOCUMENTATION (PHOTO BY JEREMY BRIDGE)

The heart of Willowbank is its Heritage Conservation Diploma Program. Willowbank's ecological approach to learning embraces innovation, interdisciplinary problem-solving, and an integrated study of people, practice and place. A progressive and unconventional educational model, coupled with a flexible curriculum, enables students to gain knowledge beyond the classroom by engaging with the real world. The faculty comprises leading international heritage professionals, including master tradespeople, designers, planners, academics and artisans.

In part, The Willowbank School is inspired by the model of the master builder: A professional who draws on comprehensive expertise to navigate the technical, social and cultural priorities associated with the built environment. The school aims at creating an entirely new kind of professional—an individual trained in the contemporary practice of heritage, and uniquely equipped to address questions of development and conservation in the 21st century.

**“There’s power to the site. Seeing layers of history—having Willowbank itself as a case study—creates a deep connection to what students are learning.”**

**KIRSTINA MARTENS**

*Heritage Specialist, Taylor Hazell Architects, Toronto  
Class of 2013*

# SITE MAP

## THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP

A contemporary building constructed by master craftspeople and students using traditional timberframing and drystone building methods.

## THE BRIGHT SALON

This grand room, which is named for the family who owned the house from 1934 to 1966, and which is the setting for many of the Centre's events, reveals rich layers of architectural history.

## THE RAVINE

Today a rich, biodiverse corridor, the ravine has served as an important historic portage route around Niagara Falls. Willowbank's site has been inhabited since 6,000 BC and was home to Mississauga First Nations people prior to European Contact.

## LAURA SECORD SCHOOL

Built in 1914 and renovated in the 1950s, this schoolhouse, which houses classrooms, an architectural library and archives, was acquired by Willowbank in 2012.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN

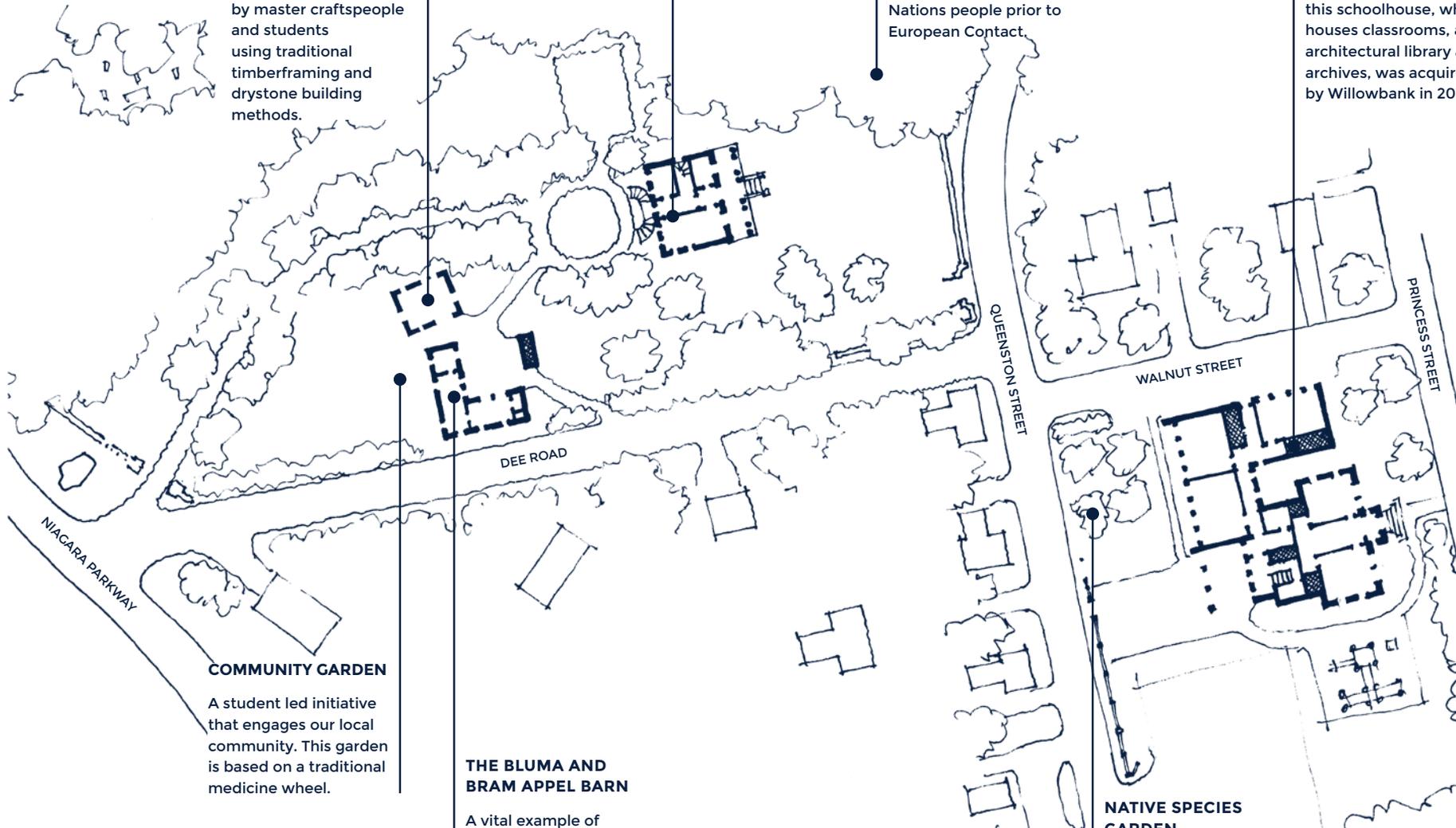
A student led initiative that engages our local community. This garden is based on a traditional medicine wheel.

## THE BLUMA AND BRAM APPEL BARN

A vital example of adaptive reuse, this 1870s barn was relocated from a nearby estate and transformed into a workshop.

## NATIVE SPECIES GARDEN

A collaborative effort to increase awareness of the Carolinian species native to our area.



## WILLOWBANK CENTRE

The Willowbank Centre is a hub for research, dialogue, and engagement. At the Centre, we are committed to the exploration and advancement of the theory and practice of cultural landscapes—the ecological understanding of place that reflects the interconnected layers of built, natural, cultural and spiritual meaning. The Centre provides the theoretical framework for the Diploma Program, and connects Willowbank with the broader heritage community.

Through the activities of the Centre at local, national and international levels we are shaping the future of the heritage field. The Centre hosts a range of local events including public lecture series, short courses and symposiums, and advises on municipal, provincial and federal policies. At the international level, the Willowbank Centre works with non-governmental organizations including UNESCO, ICOMOS and the World Bank.



ITALY FIELD SCHOOL, CANOVA, ITALY (PHOTO BY MAURIZIO CESPRINI)

SPRING LECTURE SERIES (PHOTO BY COSMO CONDINA)



**“Willowbank is devoted to the shift towards a more ecological, sustainable approach...My aim is to support and encourage these kinds of approaches.”**

**THE PRINCE OF WALES**  
*Royal Patron of Willowbank*  
Since 2014

## HELP US SHIFT THE PARADIGM

Your support:

Enables our students to *shape the future* of heritage.

Allows us to *share our message* with the world.

Helps us *restore and evolve* our historic campus.

Join our community!

To donate contact us at [willowbank@willowbank.ca](mailto:willowbank@willowbank.ca).

To learn more about our facilities, tours, and upcoming events visit us at [willowbank.ca](http://willowbank.ca).



