

## Article

# EY Tower in Toronto celebrates historic masonry work

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by label: Dan O'Reilly *Mar 31, 2017*

A new office tower in the heart of downtown Toronto pays more than a passing nod to the historic building which previously occupied the site.



The south and east elevations of the EY Tower in Toronto are comprised of a mix of Roman Stone, terra cotta and new heritage-style bricks up to the 14th storey. - Photo: CLIFFORD RESTORATION

Designed by Kohn Pederson Fox and assisted by Toronto-based WZMH Architects, Oxford Properties Group's LEED Platinum EY Tower at 100 Adelaide St. W. is distinguished by a new historic-style masonry on its east, south, and west elevations up to the 14-storey level.

Interspersed with the masonry on the south and east elevations is Roman stone at the base and terra cotta at the parapet which were salvaged from the 1928 Art Deco Concourse Building.

Toronto-based Clifford Restoration Ltd. is the masonry contractor which has worked on the project in two distinct, but related phases. In 2013, its crews removed more than 3,000 heritage components from the Concourse Building just before it was torn down to make way for the new tower. Included in that inventory were three specially decorated glazed brick mosaics in the shape of two thunderbirds and a sunburst.

Considerable effort was made to catalogue, assess, number, and restore those pieces with the eventual goal of reincorporating them into the east and south facades, says Clifford project manager Robert Laurie.

Last year the contractor returned to the site and commenced the construction of those facades. The first step was installing 35,000 pieces of 190-mm-thick, 16.5-kilogram concrete which had to be lifted into place with mast lifters.

Two lifters were required on the east elevation and one apiece on the south and west elevations, he says.

Because other trade work was also taking place, the installation took about four months to complete, says Laurie.

After the vapour barrier and the insulation had been inserted, the heritage elements were placed back in the exact same locations where they had been in the old Concourse Building. Although not an easy task, it was achieved through the cataloguing and numbering process conducted during the restoration phase, he explains.

"We then installed the bricks to frame the heritage elements and connected the bricks to the concrete blocks using a BL507 brick tie system."

Sourced from Pennsylvania-based Glen Gery Brick, the approximately 130,000 bricks had to be stored at Clifford's large Scarborough plant and delivered to the site on an as-needed basis.

"Obviously we couldn't store all the bricks on site," says Laurie, citing the constraints of working in a downtown setting.

While the elevation work was underway, a second crew was busy installing 31,000 concrete blocks to form the walls of the five-level underground parking garage. This phase of the project also included the creation of an attractive—if not unusual—entranceway.

Overlooking the entranceway on the south wall are the three mosaics which had been dismantled and restored in the Scarborough plant. A number of rows at the lower levels are also lined with limestone and granite slabs.

When asked to list some of the challenges of the now-completed project, Laurie says it went remarkably well thanks to the design team's meticulous planning.

"This is one of the most satisfying projects I have ever worked on."

*Mar 31, 2017*

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