Sustaining Heritage
Giving the Past a Future

Tony Gilmour

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FOREWORD BY PROFESSOR EDWARD J BLAKELY

Heritage buildings are no heritage when they interfere with the future of a community. Surely, no one in a cave thought of preserving this abode for future posterity. In fact the basic notion of heritage is to add value and not to stop the future. In this important book, Tony Gilmour sheds light on not only the concept of heritage but the intrinsic issue of land rights and uses and how they intersect with shaping the future. One might say that if everything is preserved then nothing has any value. It is in the act of selective preservation that generates new value and creates opportunities for new uses. Preservation must be seen, as this book points out, in the larger canvas of making history more than nostalgia.

The reader is forced to rethink the economic relationships between honouring the past and forging a future on the same landscape. It is in this connection of use, value, past and future that the book adds an important new set of ideas that can form the basis for guiding how we understand heritage as an economic opportunity and how we can learn to preserve in order to protect alternative futures and not to just trap communities in the past.

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This book is dedicated to Enid Gilmour, sadly missed.