Guides to Galt: A Brief History of Architectural Spaces

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OVERVIEW

In 1973, the City of Cambridge was formed when the city of Galt merged with the towns of Preston and Hespeler and parts of the townships of Waterloo and North Dumfries.

Each of these communities has its own rich and multi-layered history; however, this booklet focuses on the heart of downtown Galt--that enchanting section of the city along the Grand River that has been officially designated as a heritage conservation district.

The purpose of this distributable ebook is to serve as an unofficial guide to the history of architectural spaces within this district that continue to provide valuable services to the community.

Sponsored by Render & the University of Waterloo
6. Galt Collegiate Institute and Vocational School
200 Water St. North

In October of 2004, the University of Waterloo chose downtown Galt as the location for its new School of Architecture.

Overlooking the Grand River, the three-level, 85,000-square-foot facility accommodates about 400 architecture students, faculty and staff. It includes a gallery built and operated by the Cambridge Libraries and Galleries as well as a 70-seat cafe. Both facilities are open to the general public.

The building formerly was known as the Riverside Silk Mill, founded in 1915 by the brothers Donald and E.M. McCormick. The Mill has an affluent history, pioneering the switch from natural to synthetic fibres as well as introducing a profit-sharing plan, and was a major contributor to the rich history of textile production in the region.

Later it changed ownership several times, hosting a number of small retail and manufacturing concerns, the last of which were Galt Knitting and Tiger Brand.
Southworks Outlet Mall is named after the South Works of Babcock & Wilcox. Dumfries Foundry was founded in 1844 by James Andrews and James Crombie. In 1847 the foundry was relocated to the Grand Avenue site upon which Southworks is built.

By the mid 1850s the Crimean War had created a necessity for local manufacturing within Canada, which stimulated an industrial boom in the city of Galt. The foundry itself changed hands twice, first to Crombie alone and then to John Goldie and Hugh McCulloch. It gained a reputation for its engine building and became a major manufacturing company with a broad line of products.

In 1923 Goldie McCulloch Ltd. and Babcock & Wilcox merged and continued operation until the building was sold in 1987. The old foundry was renovated to its current status; however, many traces of antique machinery remain around the property and can be seen today.

Most of the development at Southworks has taken place since 1996. Today there are more than twenty-eight outlet stores open for business, plus a 30,000 square ft Antique Mall.