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### PRESS RELEASE - It Takes a Village to Raise $1.9 Million

### Ottawa: Wednesday, February 19, 2014

Community-Owned Carriage House in Sandy Hill Open for Business!

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On Thursday, February 20th at 9:15 a.m. the pre-schoolers at Bettye Hyde Co-Operative Early Learning Centre will each take a toy from the school’s basement home of 40 years and march down the street to their new home: a converted century-old Carriage House in the heart of Sandy Hill.

* WHAT: This endeavour is the first of its kind in Ottawa. Neighbours and friends bought shares in a beautiful heritage property to keep it from becoming a rooming house. The result is CAFCO-CEAFO (Childhood, Adolescent, and Family Centre of Ottawa) and a much-needed new home for Bettye Hyde Co-Operative Early Learning Centre to allow it to transition from a nursery school into a full-time daycare.
* WHEN: Thursday, February 20th,2014 at 9:15 a.m.
* WHERE: Camera opp begins at 10 Blackburn (All Saints Church at Laurier) and follows children as they walk down the hill to 43 Blackburn Avenue.
* WHO: Pre-schoolers and toddlers, teachers, professionals from CAFCO, investors, and residents of Sandy Hill.
* WHY: A story of what happens when a community finds a way to both preserve and serve!

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#### **The Story**

There *is* a way to marry progress with the past.

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The story begins in 1943. The dads of Sandy Hill had gone to war, and the moms left behind needed a break. Local resident Bettye Hyde saw a need and she set about filling it. Mrs. Hyde created a co-operative nursery school for mothers in the Ottawa neighbourhood to have their children cared for by others for a few hours each day. [**Bettye Hyde Co-operative Nursery School**](http://bettyehyde.com/)was established. For the last 40 years it has found its home in the basement of All Saints Church on the corner of Blackburn and Laurier.

Fast-forward 71 years. The needs of the community are a bit different today. Often **both parents are working, kids are entering the school system earlier, and the neighbourhood is in danger of losing single-family dwellings to the steady encroachment of student housing**. Bettye Hyde’s enrollment was dropping.

​**Cindy Mitchell**, the nursery school’s director of 22 years, had a vision to transform the old model while staying true to its roots. It must maintain quality early childhood education, offer a home-like atmosphere and an openness to parental involvement. The right property with enough green space is tough to find and expensive, especially close to downtown. That is where **Leanne Moussa** stepped in.

In the fall of 2012, Moussa saw an opportunity to keep Bettye Hyde embedded in the Sandy Hill community and to save a beautiful century-old carriage house at Osgoode and Blackburn from becoming a maze of rooms-to-let. It had been on the market for nine months and she envisioned this grand old building at the heart of her neighbourhood as everybody’s home: a place where local children, including her own, would be cared-for alongside embassy kids while their parents were at work.

Even better, the building offered enough space to incorporate the vision of **Dr. Caroline Sullivan** and **Dr. Julie Desjardins**, who hoped to bring together a group of bilingual professionals such as child psychologists, speech and language pathologists, naturopathic doctors, social workers, and family lawyers to offer families services in a community setting. They formed the [**Child, Adolescent and Family Centre of Ottawa (CAFCO)**](http://www.cafco-ceafo.ca/)to share the space with Bettye Hyde Co-operative Early Learning Centre.

Moussa rallied the residents of Sandy Hill to convert the Carriage House at Blackburn and Osgoode into a shiny new daycare and wellness centre in familiar, classic surroundings. For around $35,000 per share one could invest in a venture unique in Ottawa, possibly even the country. Over twenty separate investors came forward.

In November 2012 the house was purchased and the transformation began. The worn old linoleum was pulled out and wood floors were laid. The impressive fireplace mantle and antique tiles stayed, as did the old Carriage doors. The windows high on the walls were intended only for horses, so new windows were added to better suit the new two-foot-tall inhabitants.

Finally, after more than a year of hard work, the newly-named Bettye Hyde Co-operative Early Learning Centre moves in on the ground floor February 20th. CAFCO has been open on the second floor since January 2014. While embracing the storied past of Sandy Hill in its gorgeous new home, the school will say good-bye to All Saints Church and its basement digs of the past 40 years, and with it the old business model. Families will have access to full-time childcare and professional health and wellness services, while holding strong to Sandy Hill’s community roots and historic properties. This new, improved Carriage House is an example of what can happen when a vision becomes a project that goes far beyond a labour of love and serves the past, the present, and the future.

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For interviews regarding the Carriage House Development contact: Leanne Moussa c:613.282.8900 leannemoussa@gmail.com

For interviews regarding [Bettye Hyde Co-operative Early Learning Centre](http://bettyehyde.com/) contact: Cindy Mitchell, Director c: (613) 725-6500 bettyehydeottawa@gmail.com

For interviews regarding the [Child, Adolescent and Family Centre of Ottawa (CAFCO)](http://www.cafco-ceafo.ca/) contact Julie Desjardins (613) 794-6019 or Caroline Sullivan (613) 868-9882, directors@cafco-ceafo.ca.

CAFCO is dedicated to providing quality care, anchored in research-based approaches, including individual, family, and group treatments as well as workshops and consultation. For more information on CAFCO, visit www.cafco-ceafo.ca or call (613) 567-0777.

Bettye Hyde Co-operative Nursery School has been providing quality childcare for children aged 2-5 for over 70 years. The school is a non-profit cooperative owned and operated by the parents of its students. Bettye Hyde is a great school for your terrific child! For more information visit: www.bettyehyde.com.

<http://www.ottawacommunitynews.com/news-story/3976853-former-sandy-hill-carriage-house-gets-new-future-community-rallies-to-invest-in-daycare/>