

# The Parliament Buildings

Hello, my name is Alfred, and I am the Parliament Building's house mouse. Let me tell you all about where I live. I live in the Canadian Parliament Buildings, one of the most symbolic places in Canada. There are three separate buildings; the Centre Block, the East Block and the West Block. I live in the Centre Block. My favourite part about the magnificent Centre Block is going to visit the Parliamentary library. I love seeing all the books and documents; there are over 600,000 books and documents to be exact. I also love seeing all the wonderful statues in the Parliamentary Library. My great Grandpa mouse lived through a fire in the Parliament Buildings on February 3, 1916. He used to tell me and my sister Ellefred all about his adventures, like how he saw Prime Minister Robert Borden escape the Parliament Buildings through a messenger's stairway because of the fire, or how it took 7 years to rebuild the Parliament Buildings after the fire, and that the only surviving portion of the Parliament Building was the Parliamentary Library. But sadly my great Grandpa was found and kicked out when they reconstructed the Parliament Buildings which started later that year.

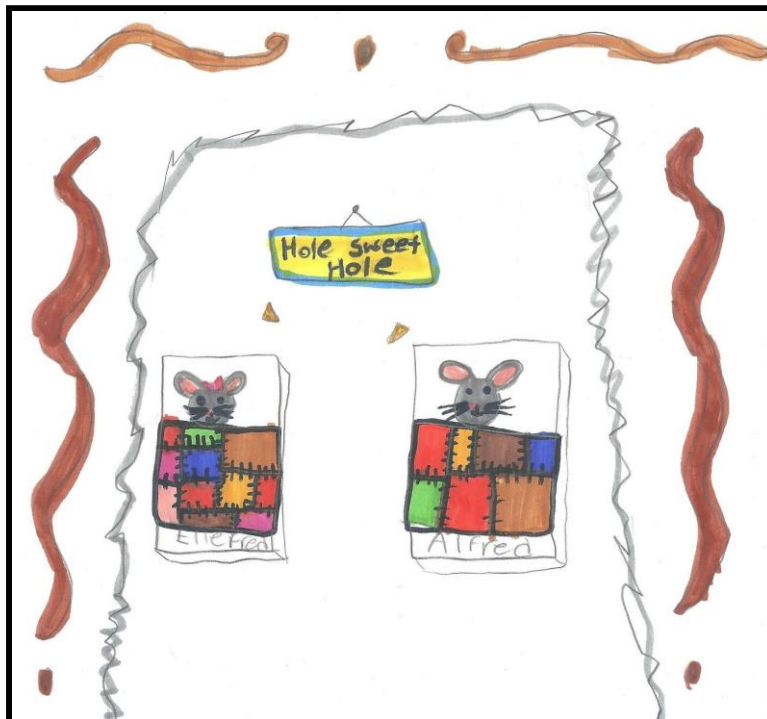


Alfred exploring the library and finding his favourite book.

The Parliament Buildings are located in Ottawa, which is the capital of Canada. The Buildings sit on a beautiful hill near the Rideau Canal. Me and my sister Ellefred love to watch the tourists admiring the beauty of this wondrous place through the nice big glass windows. When the tourists aren't around we love to look at the amazing design of the

Buildings themselves and all the Gothic Revival elements; the pointed arches, the lancet windows and tracery, the spires with crockets, the intricate iron work, the rubble coursed stone work, or my favourite--the flying buttresses. We can both agree that at the end of the day the Parliament Buildings have certainly affected the way government buildings would be built in the future. My cousins Alistair and Alice live in Britain's Parliament Buildings and they say that the Parliament Buildings in Canada are WAY better and prettier than the ones there. We agree with them. Another thing we love to do is look at all the beautiful carvings in the doorways. Some of our favourites include: an orca whale, a farmer, "thunderbird" and a sailor. Ohh yes the Parliament Building house mouse life is simply the greatest!

At the end of a long day being a mouse, we love to hunker down in the basement of the Centre Block in a hole in the wall we call home. This is a very proud spot for us because in 1924 our family had to outsmart awful cats that were brought to the Parliament Buildings to get rid of us. Today they try to use chemicals to get rid of us, but we are on to them. We have all we need in our little cozy hole in the wall. It is especially cozy because it is right next to a heater. Also, we have found cloth scraps for our blankets, leftover wood scraps for the beds themselves and we eat anything we can find on the grounds of the Parliament Buildings. We are like the smartest Pioneer mice of the Parliament Buildings right here in our own little nook.



Ellefred and Alfred in their hole in the wall

I often wonder where all the interesting people that come to visit the Parliament Buildings live. It's been weird lately because we do not see too many people coming to the Parliament Buildings anymore. The people that do come and visit are always really far apart from each other, or wearing a mask and gloves. Are they coming for us? Do they want to make us leave like they did with my great Grandpa? I don't know, but what I do know is that Justin Trudeau keeps talking about some virus that is killing thousands of people and that everyone has to stay at home. I wonder if that nasty virus can kill mice? I really hope not, but if so, people better not come near me or Ellefred! I fear for the people who can be affected by this virus even if they try to hurt me and Ellefred with their awful chemicals. I think she feels the same way. Hopefully this virus does not affect our cozy, warm nook that we call home. The Parliament Buildings are a wonderful place to live!

By Maddie