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Redevelopment of the historic Hespeler Library netted Waterloo's Melloul-Blamey Construction Inc. an award of excellence in the restoration category.

## Grand Valley Construction Association announces 2008 award winners

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Redevelopment of the Hespeler Library, one of the few remaining Carnegie libraries in Canada, netted Melloul-Blamey Construction Inc. a top award in the Grand Valley Construction Association's 2008 Building Excellence Awards.

Completed last June at a cost of \$3.9 million, the project encases a historic 1922 facility in a modern glass structure. The renovation doubled the original building's size while also modernizing the facility. The project was built from the inside out.

"The library is a deceptively complex project and in many ways, an unforgiving design from a construction perspective," said architect Alar Kongats of Kongats Architects.

In its submission, Melloul-Blamey said the "extremely difficult construction exercise" demanded a high degree of understanding of building materials as well as technical ability.

Structural steel mixed with wood framing ties the existing structure to the new structure. Modern glass technology was incorporated. Massive panes were specially ordered. There were 40 different patterns.

Tarps were used to protect the finished interior from the elements as the exterior glass façade was completed.

Ceramic "frit" patterns on the inside of the sealed units' glass surfaces diffuse light and reduce heat.

The pattern on one face is a series of rectangles similar to the brick on the existing building, and on the other face, fine vertical pin stripes.

Inside, the old concrete with the foundation and the library's original brick has been blended with more modern materials. Recycled wood with a graphic striped pattern was used on the floors.

"In the final outcome, the result was to wrap the fully restored Carnegie library in a seamless glass envelope, preserving the historic building for all time as a symbol of both the library's past importance to the community and

its future significance,” said Greg Hayton, CEO of the Cambridge Public Library Board.

The award, in the restoration category, was one of 10 awards of excellence presented Friday evening at a gala in Kitchener.