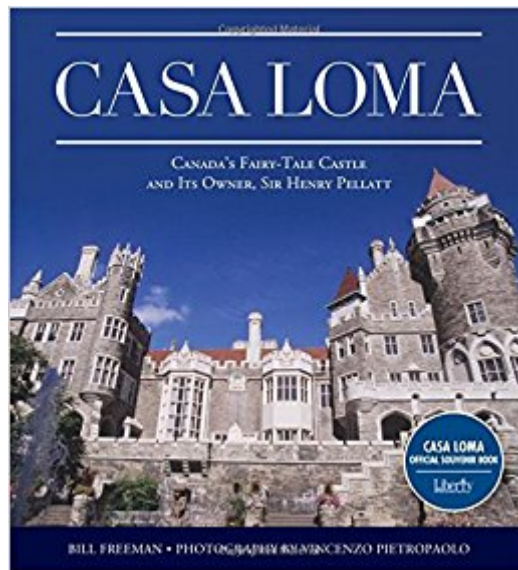




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Casa Loma: Canada's Fairy-Tale Castle And Its Owner, Sir Henry Pellatt



Synopsis

In this fifth edition, with new photography showing Casa Loma in its newly restored state, Bill Freeman takes readers on a tour of every significant room in this dramatic hillside castle, including the towers, the gardens, the tunnel to the stables, the greenhouses and the garage. He also tells the fascinating and tragic story of the man who built the castle, and who ultimately lost it. Born in 1859, Henry Pellatt was an accomplished athlete as a young man who broke the world record for the mile in 1879. He was an entrepreneur who was adept in the worlds of finance and industry. He was a keen royalist and military enthusiast. Above all, Pellatt was a romantic whose interest in architecture inspired the medieval-style castle that is now a Toronto landmark. Casa Loma took three hundred workers three years to build at a cost of \$43.5 million. Completed in 1914, the castle was enjoyed by the Pellatts for only ten years before bankruptcy forced the family to sell it. Today, Casa Loma is owned by the City of Toronto and managed by the Liberty Entertainment Group. It is one of the city's most popular attractions.

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Customer Reviews

BILL FREEMAN is a historian, novelist and freelance writer. He is co-author of *Their Town* and the author of *A Magical Place: Toronto Island and Its People* and *1005: Political Life in a Union Local*. He is also a respected children's author whose publications have earned him various accolades, including a Canada Council Children's Literature Award. VINCENZO PIETROPAOLO is a well-known Toronto photographer whose work is in many collections, including the Art Gallery of Ontario.

This is a history and guidebook to Casa Loma, a massive castle-like home built in Toronto by businessman Sir Henry Pellatt and completed in 1914. Oddly, it wasn't for sale in the gift shop the last time I visited but it should be because not only does it include a lengthy description of a tour of the home, going room by room and describing its furnishings, decorations, and art but it also includes a biography of Casa Loma's builder. Pellatt was a businessman who was involved in many different businesses from stock brokerages to hydroelectricity and the author hints at the kind of dubious business dealings that Pellatt most likely benefited from in an era of little or no regulation in financial markets. It describes the immense fortune he created and some of the crazy things he did with it, of which building Casa Loma was only one. But Pellatt fell on hard times and there's also a very fascinating and moving reversal of fortune which ended up with Pellatt losing pretty much all his money and his castle, ultimately living in an apartment and being invited back to Casa Loma to visit as a tourist, where he was photographed gazing up at a more youthful portrait of himself from an earlier time when he had the world on a string. This is an excellent book if you've visited or are thinking of visiting Casa Loma. It's got wonderful color illustrations, historical photos, a lengthy description of the house and a wonderful biography of the man who conceived and built it.

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