



The Griffin

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PRESIDENT RECEIVES DOCTORATE

On May 13, 1977, Dalhousie University conferred an honorary Doctor of Laws on Heritage Trust President Phyllis Blakeley. The following citation was read at the convocation ceremony:

"Born in Halifax, Phyllis Blakeley attended Halifax County Academy before entering Dalhousie where she was awarded bachelor's and master's degrees in Arts.

She joined the staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in 1945 as a research assistant and in 1959 she was appointed assistant archivist, a position she continues to fill with great diligence and devoted service to the public.

Over the years Phyllis Blakeley has been able to combine her assistance to researchers and her contributions to the efficiency of the archives with a writing career of considerable significance. Her reading public has included a generation of Nova Scotian school children who have first developed an interest in their history through her textbooks. In addition, both amateur and professional historians have learned much from her innumerable studies of various facets of local history. As befits a local historian with so much expertise to share with her fellow citizens, Phyllis Blakeley has played an im-

portant role as member and executive officer of such organizations as the Canadian Historical Association, the Nova Scotia Historical Society, the Canadian Author's Association, the professional archival associations, the Halifax Landmarks Commission and Heritage Trust. Nova Scotians are indebted to her as a custodian of the province's heritage; Haligonians are grateful to her for her role in preserving this historic city's past."

DISPLAYS

1. The Prince and Hollis Buildings.
A display on this group of eight pre-Confederation buildings is currently at Historic Properties. The buildings, owned by the Provincial Government, are within the boundaries of the Waterfront Development area.
2. Historic Waterfront Buildings.
A display on historic buildings in the Waterfront Development area is currently in the window of the Heritage Trust office at 1815 Hollis Street.

Both displays are similar to earlier Heritage Trust displays at the Nova Scotia Museum.



THE WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

An Overview

In previous issues of the Griffin you have read of the proposed Halifax-Dartmouth Waterfront Development. In February, 1976, a public hearing was held on a plan prepared by the Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee (I.W.C.), a committee of civil servants from all three levels of government. Later that year, the provincial government created and made appointments to the Waterfront Development Corporation (W.D.C.), a crown corporation set up to carry out the development. In February of this year the City of Halifax held a public hearing on its own Halifax Waterfront Development Area Plan, to establish policies for the development. This plan, with amendments, was just passed on May 12, 1977.

SMITH'S WAREHOUSE

At the City of Halifax public hearing in February of this year, Heritage Trust recommended that the A.M. Smith warehouse be added to the list of buildings to be evaluated in the Halifax Waterfront Development Area Plan. The Heritage Trust brief stated that "so many of the traditional wooden waterfront buildings have been demolished that Smith's should now be considered for retention." The buildings on the list are afforded some measure of protection as they won't be demolished before they are evaluated by the Planning Department and considered by City Council. Other buildings on the list include: the Irving Oil

Arch, the Prince and Hollis group, the old fire hall, Robertson's hardware, the Sperry building, Morse's Tea building and others.

Just before the City's Plan and list were to be passed City Council decided to delete the Smith's Warehouse from the list on the strength of a letter from Mr. Hugh Thomas, President of the W.D.C., who stated that the building was "beyond the bounds of reasonable repair or restoration". Heritage Trust President, Phyllis Blakeley, then sent a letter to City Council asking them to reconsider their decision. Preliminary investigation indicated that the building was sound and contained numerous "ship's knees" inside. Subsequently Mr. Janusz Rosinski, acting as consultant to the Trust, found the building to be in "healthy structural condition" with "considerable load-bearing capacity" and "in very much better condition" than some of the Historic Properties buildings which have been successfully restored. City staff's Building Inspector also found the building to be basically sound.

On May 12, City Council voted unanimously to add Smith's Warehouse to the list of buildings to be evaluated. This gives the building a chance to be ultimately retained and re-used.



THE FERRY BUILDINGS

In the I.W.C. Plan of Feb. 1976, the Ferry terminal in Dartmouth was listed as a "significant building" and shown to be retained as a heritage museum. The Ferry terminal in Halifax was also listed as significant and was to be retained in conjunction with a new terminal. This building was also listed for evaluation in the City of Halifax Plan.

Both ferry terminals date from the turn-of-the-century and are picturesque additions to the waterfront scene.

Recently, however, demolition of the ferry terminals has been recommended by consultants to the W.D.C. On Thursday, June 9, 1977, Arcop Associates of Toronto presented a proposal for the redevelopment of the foot of George Street area to Halifax City Council. This scheme, called "Chebucto Square" calls for the demolition of both the Halifax ferry terminal and the Fisherman's Market. Also, another group of consultants who have prepared designs for new ferry terminals and ferries, have recommended demolition of the old terminals. The retention of the old terminals would not prevent construction of the new terminals, which would be built nearby.

FISHERMAN'S MARKET

As mentioned above, the Chebucto Square scheme calls for the demolition of the

Fisherman's Market building (and the relocation of the business in a shop to be attached to the courthouse garage). The building was built in 1857 by the City and is sturdily constructed of brick and granite. During its long and colorful history, the building has housed a British army commissary store, a flour and feed store, the ferry ticket office and a bar with brass spittoons.

In his campaign to save the building, Mr. Greene, the proprietor, has obtained approximately 4000 signatures and 275 letters of support.

The main argument for demolishing the building appears to be that it blocks access to the water. Surely, however, walking around historic buildings by the water's edge should be a valuable part of the waterfront experience.

HOUSES FOR SALE

1. Within walking distance of Habitation in historic Port Royal, Nova Scotia. 18th century house with deed showing purchased by Loyalist in 1789. Completely restored seven rooms with new roof, chimneys, wiring, plumbing, heating, double siding, 3 bedrooms, 8 closets, brick cold room with one wall believed to be Acadian, 18 acres to Annapolis River. \$62,000. Box 73, Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia.

2. The MacDonnell House, built in 1845 in Port Hood, N.S. for James MacDonnell, Inspector of Schools for N.E. Nova Scotia and Captain of the local militia.

The house is 1½ storeys, all-wood construction in fine condition, situated on a one-acre lot, surrounded by a variety of trees, plants and shrubs. Reasonably priced. Persons interested may contact Charles Chisholm by writing to P.O. Box 46, Port Hood, N.S., or by phoning 787-2802.

BATTLE FOR HERITAGE

(excerpt from the Irish Georgian Society Newsletter - by Desmond Guinness)

The destruction of Dublin continues. The latest battleground was Upper Pembroke Street, where Bord Na Mona were established in a terrace of five houses in the heart of the Pembroke Estate, the best preserved part of Georgian Dublin. The houses were to be pulled down and reproduced in replica.

The houses do not have fine or elaborate interiors, but they are on List B, the top rating for preservation. It was felt that a dangerous precedent would be set if a State agency was allowed to pull down five List B houses, making a complete mockery of our planning laws.

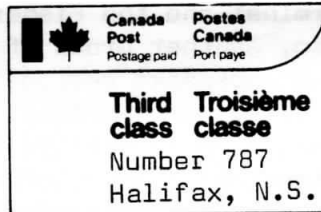
Protests and appeals through official channels had the customary effect, but when demolition began in January 1976, architectural students from U.C.D. and Bolton Street obtained entry and barricaded themselves in the houses. The Irish Georgian Society contributed £ 100 in response to their appeal for funds to enable them to undertake vital repairs. A siege lasting four months began, which ended in victory for the students and for the cause of preservation. The houses have been bought from Bord na Mona by the Allied Irish Investment Bank and the Bord will build elsewhere.

contributed by Margaret Martin

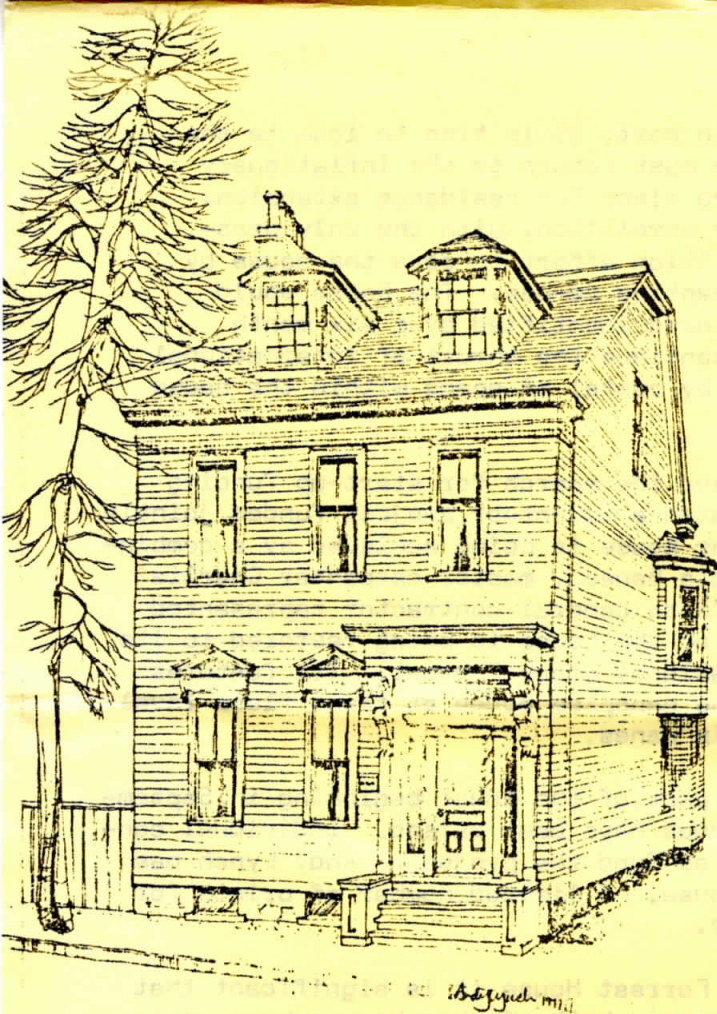
Please send articles and items of interest to the editor, Elizabeth Pacey, 1345 Edward St., Halifax, Nova Scotia.



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A WOMAN'S PLACE - FORREST HOUSE



Forrest House circa 1850

Why A Woman's Place - Forrest House?
The simple answer is a new way of life for a worthy old house. The full story is an exciting blend of awakening to historic worth, voluntary endeavour, imaginative planning, and more than a little courage!

The 'facelifting' activity at 1225 Barrington Street, Halifax started three months ago, but the YWCA owned house receiving the attention may well have been standing there for more than 125 years. The part of its history best known to most of us whose memory reaches back before 1940 is the era of the Forrest family. They lived there longest of the many owners and were the last to use it as a single family residence. For 30 years it was home to Dr. William Duff Forrest, his wife Jobena Frances and their daughters Nancy and Margaret.

When the Forrests first moved to the house in 1910, it was still known as 257 Pleasant Street, and the street was still a very popular residential area. The neighbour to the north was the Wiley Smith residence, not the YW building and across the street the former Duffus estate housed the Halifax Ladies College. The horse and carriage had not yet been replaced by the motor car, nor were the streets paved. The barn/stables at the back of the property were to remain until well into mid century.

Dr. Forrest's busy schedule as a practising physician must have dominated the household routine for it was the custom then for the doctor's office to be in his house. Over the years, community and political involvement became part of the family way of life. Recent discoveries in the attic - a large banner of Mrs. Forrest's Princess Louise Chapter, IODE and Dr. Forrest's gold lettered name plate - are fitting reminders of those earlier days.

Interestingly, it was an ancestor of the Forrests who first owned the land on which the house was built. Joseph Fairbanks came to Halifax in 1749 from Massachusetts after serving as a Lieutenant at the first siege of Louisburg. His nephew Rufus began the intermarriage of the Fairbanks, Prescott, Duff families that over several generations led to the parents of Dr. William Duff Forrest.

As for the builder of the house, it may have been any one of the three property owners from 1840 to 1858 - Adam Esson, William Clark(e), Sarah (and Benjamin) Salter. If it were Adam Esson (1784-1849) as some research would suggest, he had done so by 1841 when he sold to Clark(e). Clues to the age are no doubt hidden in some features of the house. Might it be in the soft sun dried bricks of the basement fireplace or the wooden pegs?

Whoever the builder, we do know that William Bauld Jr. (1829-1881) and his wife Emily became the owners in 1858. It was to be their home for the next 12 years, and the birthplace of their eight children, excepting the eldest and the youngest. In 1862, William succeeded his father as partner in the expanding and highly prosperous wholesale grocery business of Bauld & Gibson. From that time one can imagine plans were begun for the much larger house at the far south of Pleasant Street that the family was to move to in 1870.

over...

While the story of the house has been relived only in part, it is time to look to the reason for the activity focussed there. For this we must return to the inflationary 1970's, and budget restraint at the YW with cancelled plans for residence extension. The house was left emptied of tenants and slated for demolition, with the only prospect that of a parking lot. A last minute pre-demolition effort to save the house by a group of YW volunteers gave birth to an idea of adaptive re-use. The house would become a resource and activity centre for women - a need identified by a six month study of the YW Social Action Committee, formed to continue the thrust of International Women's Year. Ongoing operating costs would be met by rental of space within the house to non-profit women's organizations.

So the commitment grew, the demolition was shelved and the search for start-up funding began. Many months of concentrated effort have created a volunteer project funded jointly by public and private sources. Rehabilitation of the house is being achieved by a combination of women trainees, training coordinator Virginia Benson, master carpenter Charlie MacNeil and project manager Jon Murray, with the YWCA as general contractor represented by several volunteer committees. The street facade of the house is being restored to its appearance in the 1940 photograph kindly made available by Nancy Forrest. Its features are the Georgian lines with Victorian door and window canopies added at first floor level and the two Scottish dormers above, with six over six panes.

The Junior League will operate its Bargain Box from part of the house beginning in September. At the time of writing, half of the project funds have been raised. Individual contributions are helping to furnish the house as well as fund the project. Andy Lynch has generously contributed his original sketch of the house. A limited number of prints for framing and notepaper will be on sale from September.

In the realization of the idea of A Woman's Place - Forrest House it is significant that encouragement came when we needed it most from two women, both of whom have a keen appreciation of family history. They are Madalyn Bauld Mitchell and Nancy Prescott Duff Forrest.

- Pat Langmaid

HISTORIC HOUSES FOR SALE

- 1) The MORRISON HOUSE, Pictou County (2 miles west of PEI Ferry)
Built circa 1835, 1½ storeys, Cape Cod style with full height stone basement, 7 rooms plus bathroom. Water pumped from excellent well. Heating by wood stove. Chestnut tree and orchard on grounds. From 1 to 25 acres available with right-of-way to beach. House assessed at \$12,000. Contact:
Mr. D. Greg Murray, 14 Wilson Blvd., Halifax or tel. 443-1339.
- 2) Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Rosinski are interested in selling their unit in the Georgian MARIAN PRYOR HOUSE, 1350 Hollis Street, Halifax. The Rosinskis, well known to Heritage Trust members, are embarking on another restoration project in Halifax. Tel. 429-6885.