



March 2001

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# The Griffin

A PUBLICATION OF HERITAGE TRUST OF NOVA SCOTIA

## The Runciman House



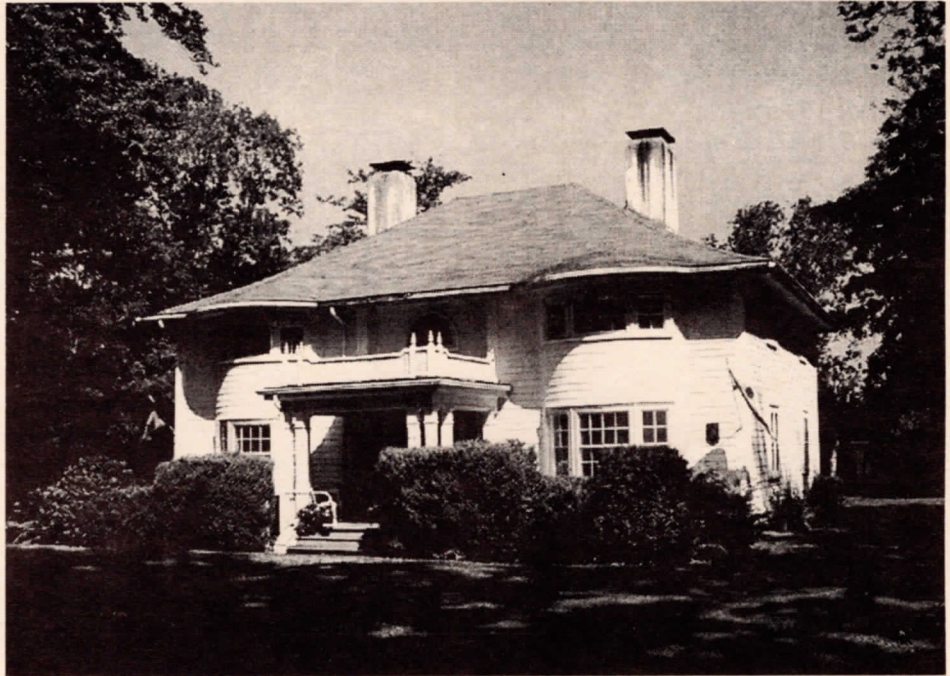
*This article contributed by Brenda Shannon, Nova Scotia Governor for the Heritage Canada Foundation.*

In the early 1800s an ambitious young Scot, George Runciman, arrived in the prosperous lumber and shipbuilding centre of Annapolis Royal where he established a very successful dry goods business. In time he and his wife sought a fine home in which to raise their family. They found it on Upper St. George Street not far from his downtown business.

The house had been built in 1817 for the Reverend John Milledge, an Anglican rector. Its purchase in 1822 by the Runcimans started a remarkable six-generation ownership which only ended in 1977 when the family sold the house to the Heritage Canada Foundation.

Of Regency design, it is set well back from the street and stands in two acres of grounds. It is one-and-a-half storeys high, of wood clapboard with a stone and brick foundation. It was known to the family as Girvan Bank after a favourite place in Scotland.

Perhaps because of the long occupation by one family, there have been few architectural additions or deletions except for the inclusion of upper and lower bathrooms. The spacious rooms still appear much as they would have done to the young Runcimans in 1822, with nine-foot ceilings, a plaster cornice around the downstairs ceilings, eight fireplaces with Adam mantels, windows with



*The Runciman House in Annapolis Royal; photo by Alvin Comiter*

original bevelled and pitted glass, an enclosed winding staircase, floors of original wide board, and "Christian" doors designed with a cross and their original brass hardware.

When the Heritage Canada Foundation was invited to participate in the revitalisation scheme for Annapolis Royal in the mid 1970s, it bought, renovated and recycled the Queen Anne Annex and the Farmer's Hotel. The Runciman House was also acquired and operated for a while as a museum showing some of the many artifacts and furnishings shipped to the New World by its prosperous owner.

More recently the house has been rented, and this summer I had the opportunity to be shown the property by the present tenant, who cares for it lovingly. From time to time she visits with the last family member to live in

the house and has borrowed the family photo album and made copies of those pictures showing the house and grounds. A sturdy fern, shown in an early snapshot, is still flourishing in one of the living rooms. At one time there was a beautiful rose garden modelled on one visited by a family member while in England.

After lightning hit the house some years ago, firemen discovered on the upper floor a 'secret' room long forgotten by the family!

The house with its elegant but comfortable rooms is still a warm and inviting home and an integral part of the built heritage of Annapolis Royal and the province.

The Runciman house is one of four properties owned by the Heritage Canada Foundation.

# The Garden Crest still threatened with 'Façadism'



*The President, Peter Delefes, summarizes the present state of the ongoing struggle to save the Garden Crest apartments*

The Garden Crest apartment building, a municipally and provincially registered heritage building on Summer St., in Halifax, may face substantial demolition as early as April of 2001. In 1991, the Heritage Trust, in conjunction with the Friends of the Public Gardens, appealed the decision of Halifax City Council to allow the Brenhold Development. This development included plans for the erection of two high rise apartment buildings, 11 and 12 storeys, respectively; a three-story commercial building, fronting on Summer St., and restoration and reconstruction of the Garden Crest apartments. The development did not proceed at that time. Developer Danny Chedrawe and his partners have recently acquired the property with the Development Agreement and plan to proceed with the mega-project. At present, there is an application to demolish all but the façade of the Garden Crest apartment building.

We believe that the entire, authentic Garden Crest should be repaired and renovated. The demolition application, which is currently in the hands of HRM Planning Services staff, has not been brought forward to the Heritage Advisory Committee for recommendation to City Council, as required by the Heritage Property Act. If granted the application would destroy all but one façade of the heritage building.

The current application by Mr. Chedrawe and his associates differs significantly from the wording of the original development agreement and permit signed in 1994. The agreement and the permit both call for the restoration and reconstruction of the building; the recent application just calls for the 'renovation and

reconstruction' of the façade. Thus, there is a significant shift from the building to the façade alone, and from "restoration to renovation". In addition, the plans presented in the most recent application do not conform to those in the original Brenhold agreement. The buildings are bigger, bulkier and higher and there is less open space than in the original plan. Because of the inconsistencies between the two plans and because the process set forth in the Heritage Property Act (a provincial statute) has not been properly adhered to with respect to this development, the Trust has sought legal assistance in requesting that HRM not take any action on the development until the issues we have raised can be resolved.

When the Garden Crest apartments were erected in 1914, the suites were soon occupied by several prominent Nova Scotians. Among the first tenants was Col. Sidney Oland, owner of Oland's Brewery. John Franklyn Shatford, one of the pioneers of the oil business in its first thirty years in Nova Scotia, occupied another of the luxury apartments. James A. Scriven and his wife, Blanche, daughter of George Wootten, the builder and owner of the Garden Crest, lived in Apartment 2 of the building for over 40 years. James Scriven owned the Scriven Bakery which had been founded in Halifax in 1835. The Scriven Bakery was a household word to five or six generations of Haligonians until it was taken over by Arnolds Limited, Bakers, in 1937.

The Garden Crest contains many interesting structural and architectural innovations. It was built in the Edwardian resort style and was the only apartment building with a three-tiered front verandah from which all the occupants could enjoy the view of the public gardens. The exterior walls were made of reinforced concrete and contained both fire- and soundproofing. Elizabeth Pacey in her book, *Historic Halifax*, offers this description of some of the significant aspects of the building. 'The Garden Crest has the

distinction of being the city's first luxury apartment house. When it opened in January 1914, the Morning Chronicle described the layout and amenities. The most spacious suites, where the 'privacy was just as complete as in the ordinary house' were arranged in the college style, with the parlours, dining room, kitchen, pantry, etc., on one floor and the sleeping chambers on



*The Garden Crest on a cold winter day.*

the floor above. Some suites even had separate maid's quarters and there were three dumb waiters for carrying luggage and provisions to the units. The enthusiastic report also mentioned the white marble staircase with mahogany rails and the ingenious system of speaking tubes for callers to communicate with the occupants."

Proponents of demolition of the Garden Crest state that the building is in poor condition and not worth saving. The Heritage Trust, along with many other concerned Haligonians, fought to save the waterfront buildings, now Historic Properties, which were abandoned and derelict. They are now a National Historic Site - a great historic attraction bringing in millions of tourist dollars.

I was recently looking at some visuals showing the condition of the waterfront buildings at the time they were relegated to demolition. One of the photos has the word "CONDEMNED" on one of the buildings. St. George's Round Church was badly damaged by fire and now is beautifully restored. These examples of buildings which were almost demolished and are now treasures should give us pause for thought concerning the Garden Crest building

*The Griffin - Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia*

which needs some repair but is in great shape compared to the examples just cited. A number of qualified engineers and architects have spoken publicly on behalf of The Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia that the Garden Crest would be a good candidate for repair and restoration. In fact, if the Garden Crest apartments were restored to their original two-storey suites they could be spectacular. Such a restoration would enhance the reputation of any developer who had the vision to undertake it.

The Trust supports new development, but we do not wish to see it occur at the expense of heritage buildings. Michael Tippin, a Toronto-based developer, has turned under-utilized and often threatened historic landmarks into profitable investments. He has invested about \$20 million in eight heritage properties which today have an aggregate market value of more than \$27 million. In the recent issue of *Heritage*, the magazine of the Heritage Canada Foundation, he maintains that the reason most developers demolish perfectly good heritage buildings is because they lack the skills necessary to solve the preservation problem. He claims that there is always a way to retain or restore all or most of a heritage building at a cost less than replacing the entire building. All of his projects to date have been profitable. Heritage Canada reports that over the last 30 years we have lost 23% of our early buildings in urban areas and 21% of stock in rural regions. Recent surveys of the public by Heritage Canada show that, of those surveyed, 90% believe that heritage conservation is important. The number of early buildings which still exist throughout Nova Scotia provide distinctiveness and character to our cities, towns and rural communities. Most of these properties were beautifully crafted and contain elegance and scale unmatched by any modern edifices. Once these heritage buildings are demolished, they are gone for all time. We hope this will not be the fate of the Garden Crest apartments. We will continue to advocate the retention of the entire Garden Crest apartments. Saving anything less would be a travesty.

March 2001



Anne on the job

## Anne West 'Retires'

Anne West has decided it's time to retire from her positions of editor and graphic designer of *The Griffin*. We have been fearful of this day for a long time.

Of course this didn't mean we were prepared for the decision when it came. Anne has been creating and improving this newsletter with the help of Doris Butters and Pat Lotz for seven years. Anne's skills in desktop publishing and graphic design have enabled her to bring *The Griffin* into the modern age with more graphic images and better quality reproduction than was ever possible before she took it on. And for most of those seven years, Anne was spending an extraordinary amount of time leading the spectacularly successful fund raising effort required to rebuild St. George's Church after the fire in June 1994. For this effort she was presented with the Gabrielle Léger Award for exemplary lifetime achievement in the preservation of heritage in Canada by the Heritage Canada Foundation. She also deserves a medal for her *Griffin*.

In her retirement Anne will be just as busy as before serving on the Board of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum and finally taking that course in the classics. Thanks for it all, Anne.

### 'Temps' Fill in

The nominating committee consisting of Nancy O'Brien, Joan Dawson and John Lazier (chair) are



### Giant Yard Sale 9 am, Saturday, June 9

We shall be receiving goods at the church from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, May 7 onwards. All contributions gratefully received. Information: 423-8733

hoping to find someone to replace Anne. While this search is underway we have taken on the job of keeping *The Griffin* going. You will notice this issue is not as large as the ones Anne regularly produced. You may also find some indications that our skills in desktop publishing and graphic design are not yet up to Anne's. We hope you will enjoy the issue and send us your ideas, suggestions and offers of help - thank you.



## The Griffin

A quarterly newsletter published by Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.  
Deadline for the next issue:

**May 1, 2001**

Please send submissions to:  
Doris Butters, Apt. 2211,  
1333 South Park Street,  
Halifax, N.S., B3H 2K9, or to the  
Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia,  
P.O. Box 36111, Spring Garden RPO  
Halifax, N.S., B3J 3S9  
Tel: (902) 423-4807,  
e-mail material to  
heritage.trust@ns.sympatico.ca  
or to John Lazier  
jlazier@hfx.andara.com

### Correction

The joint authors of 'A Phoenix Rising from the Ashes' (December 2000), about the Nova Scotia tree-ring project and St. George's Church, were Alan Ruffman, Erik Neilsen, and Scott St. George.

The caption with the illustration (photo by Gary Castle) of a large polished 'cookie' from St. George's, showing its four live edges, should have stated that the sample was kindly provided by G. Keith Hare, one of the carpenters who worked on St. George's restoration.

# Stepping Back in Time: Reconstructing Built Heritage

## A New Series

Time, fashion and the fortunes of war have changed the face of Nova Scotia so that we are now, rather belatedly, realising what a small proportion of our early built heritage remains intact. Yet there are instances where the existence of contemporary records, combined with research and archaeology, have resulted in the reconstruction of lost buildings as closely as possible to their original form. The two major instances of this type of reconstruction in Nova Scotia are the Habitation built by de Monts' French settlers on the Annapolis Basin and the Fortress of Louisbourg in Cape Breton. Both these projects were carried out by the Federal Government in a happy combination of job creation and historical awareness which resulted in the buildings which now stand again as part of our cultural heritage.

Another way in which buildings which would otherwise have been lost have been preserved, restored and given a new life is the establishment of sites like Sherbrooke Village. Here, a combination of original buildings and others moved from sites where they would have been destroyed or allowed to fall down, recreates, not the original village, but a settlement which typifies a Nova Scotia community of the period.

We hope in this series to examine the means by which Nova Scotians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been enabled to step back in time and observe the homes and workplaces which were the background of the daily lives of earlier residents of this province. Any suggestions for subject matter, or offers of contributions, would be appreciated. (JD)

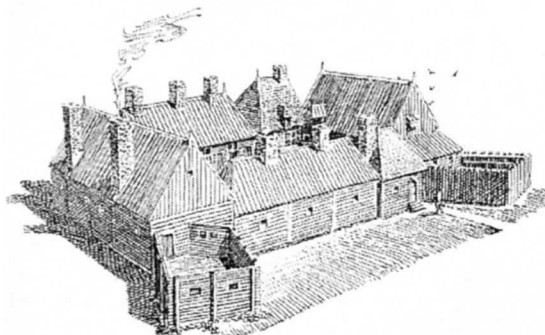
## The Habitation at Port Royal, *by Joan Dawson*

In the late summer of 1605 a group of French settlers, led by Pierre DuGua, Sieur de Monts, and Samuel de Champlain, established on the north shore of the Annapolis Basin a small settlement known as the Habitation of Port Royal. They brought with them timbers from the dismantled buildings on the island of Sainte Croix on the Maine-New Brunswick border, where they had spent the previous winter in great discomfort. These were re-erected to a completely different plan from that of the earlier settlement, as we can see from Champlain's plans and sketches of both, published in the 1613 edition of his *Voyages*.

The new Habitation continued in use until the settlers were recalled to France in 1607, and was reoccupied in 1610 when one of the earlier colonists, Jean de Poutrincourt, returned to make a further attempt at settlement. But in 1613, Samuel Argyll's expedition from Jamestown raided Port Royal and burned down the buildings. It would be over 300 years before they would rise again, and it would be a slow and gradual process, made possible chiefly by Champlain's own depiction of them and his map showing their location.

In 1905, the tercentenary of the landing of de Monts and Champlain revived interest among the local population in the site of the Habitation. Its location and general shape are clearly marked on Champlain's map of Port Royal, made during his stay there from 1605-7. In 1911, the historian W.F. Ganong visited the site and identified the probable location of the structure, partially obscured by more recent development, and in 1924 a cairn

*Sketch of the reconstructed Habitation, by C.W. Kettlewell, Courtesy of Parks Canada.*



*Champlain's sketch of the Habitation: (Champlain, Voyages, Paris 1613)*

was erected to mark the historic spot. It was not until 1927 that the idea of reconstruction was put forward by L.M. Fortier, who was then the Honorary Curator of Fort Anne National Historic Park. The following year, the plan was endorsed by the Annapolis Royal Historical Society.

The scheme was furthered, as is so often the case with such endeavours, by people "from away." An American summer resident of the area, Harriette Taber Richardson, became interested in the project and in 1930 organised a group of people in the U.S., called the Associates of Port Royal, to raise funds toward reconstruction. The original idea was that the Historical Society would acquire the land, undertake the construction and maintain the buildings. In the event, fundraising was delayed by the Depression, but meanwhile land adjacent to the site was donated by William Inglis Morse, of Cambridge, Mass., and Paradise, N.S., and the garden site by Edwin S. Fickes of Pittsburgh. Mrs Richardson herself contributed research to one of the preliminary plans of the Habitation, drawn up in 1936 by K. E. Eaton.

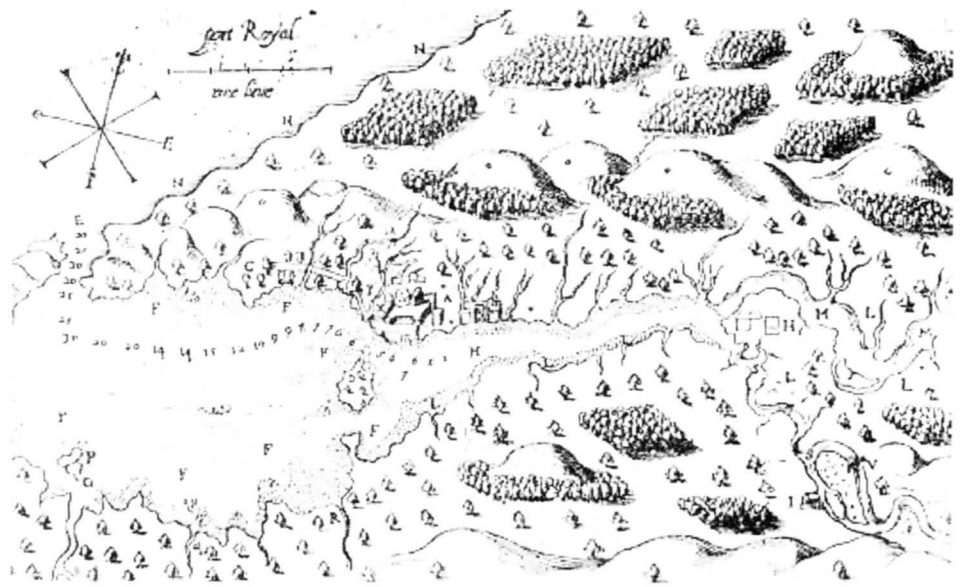
Finally, in 1938, the actual Habitation site came on the market. The local Historical Society acquired an option on the land which was taken up by the Provincial Government collaborating with the Federal Government, which completed the purchase. A feasibility study was conducted that summer and the decision was made to proceed with the reconstruction.

The preliminary archaeological assessment was funded by the

American Associates of Port Royal, and carried out by C. Coatsworth Pinkney's firm of landscape architects, which had worked on the Williamsburg restoration. Their excavations established the location of some walls and a cellar, which were thought to agree in general though not in all details with Champlain's engraved illustration. More recent investigations show that the remains were of a nineteenth-century farm, and that the Habitation in fact lay closer to the water.

In 1939, the Federal Government of Canada undertook the actual reconstruction, which was clearly too large a task for the local population. The Engineering and Construction Service of the Department of Mines and Resources was responsible for the bulk of the work. The architect in charge was K. D. Harris, who had restored the Officers' Quarters at Fort Anne, with Dr. C. W. Jefferies acting as consultant. Champlain's sketch and plan formed the basis of project. Architects and historians from Quebec and France were consulted in an attempt to determine the most likely form of construction that Champlain was trying to represent.

Champlain's illustrations show that the 1605 Habitation, though built of reused materials from the earlier site, differed entirely in concept from the Sainte Croix settlement. A winter of intense cold, scurvy and fear of attack had taught some valuable lessons. Instead of the original open plan, with separate houses with individual yards, the buildings at Port Royal were closely huddled around a courtyard, sheltered from the weather and from possible intruders. The gardens lay outside the walls. Champlain's drawing gives a very clear representation of the arrangement of the buildings and their use. It was less helpful in determining the exact materials and construction methods. For this reason, experts were consulted who were familiar with seventeenth-century wooden structures both in France and Quebec, where the builders might be assumed to have employed similar techniques to those of de Monts' carpenters. It was decided to build the type of structure known as "colombage," using heavy timber frames, with the exterior walls



Champlain's map of Port Royal, 1607; (Champlain, *Voyages*, Paris 1613)

weather-boarded and the interior walls finished with vertical sheathing. Some of the roofs were to be finished with lapped boards, others with shingles. The specifications for the Governor's house were rather more elaborate than for the other buildings, with oak instead of plank or stone floors, and leaded glass windows instead of plain glazing or oiled parchment.

Local workmen were found who had the necessary skills to carry out the construction. Some of the carpenters had worked as ship-builders and were familiar with the adze and the broad axe used in preparing the wood, and one was skilled in making shingles. An elderly man who had formerly run a brick kiln was eager to take on the job of producing the appropriate bricks from the local clay, with satisfactory results. Some of the finer wrought iron hardware was produced in Montreal from early French and Quebec models, but some work was also done by the local blacksmith.

The official opening of the reconstructed Habitation took place in 1941. Port Royal has become a popular National Historic Site. The furnishings, incorporating seventeenth-century French designs, and the more recent addition of costumed animators demonstrating the lifestyle of the original settlers attract visitors from across the country and around the world. The reconstructed buildings, after more than half a century, have themselves become part of our built heritage. Their importance is summed

up in the Port Royal National Historic Site Commemorative Integrity Statement, issued by Canadian Heritage in 1997:

*The replica of the Port Royal Habitation was the Government of Canada's first large-scale reconstruction and a distinct departure in interpretive approaches to presenting the past. For the 1930s it incorporated to an unprecedented degree, historical archaeology and research in primary and secondary documentation in an attempt to reproduce a representative example of 17<sup>th</sup> century French colonial architectural design and construction. Integral to this message are the local, national and international efforts, such as those of Harriette Taber-Richardson, which over two decades contributed to the completion of the furnished replica.*

The most important contribution of all was made by Samuel de Champlain, without whose contemporary map and drawing of the Habitation, and written records, it would have been impossible to undertake such a reconstruction.

*Acknowledgements:* Much of the above information is derived from a report written by Ronald M. Peck who, as a student of architecture at McGill University, spent the summer of 1940 working on the project. Up-to-date archaeological information comes from Birgitta Wallace's study, "An Archaeologist Discovers Early Acadia" in *Looking into Acadie*, edited by Margaret Conrad. Thanks also to Gerald Smith, who generously guided me through the records in the Parks Canada Library at the Halifax Citadel.

# Glad Tidings for the New Millenium *by Jan Zann*



*The chair of the Communities Committee has a lot of good news to start the new millenium.*

## **Truro**

It appears that, occasionally, our wildest dreams do come true. A Truro landmark, the old Immanuel Baptist church built in 1893 by the Blaikie Brothers of Great Village, was destined for the wrecking ball until purchased by John Henry two years ago. Mr. Henry has developed a private sector business plan through the Department of Economic Development. To obtain funds to revamp the property into a \$1.2-million restaurant, outdoor café, and multi-purpose performing arts centre, the newly formed Heritage Investment Properties Inc. will publicly offer between 9,000 and 17,000 shares at \$100 each from January 1 to March 30, 2001. Each share will qualify for a maximum Nova Scotia Equity Tax Credit of 30 per cent and investment funds will be treated as pre-approved holdings for a self-directed RRSP.

Mr. Henry's goal is to make the Arts accessible to everyone, including underprivileged children who would be provided with the opportunity of

receiving classes in music, etc. He hopes to gain permission to name the centre after Truro's renowned singer Portia White. Further information: John Henry, Heritage Investment Properties Inc., 667 Prince St., Truro B2N-1G5, or 902-897-7074 or email [john.henry@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:john.henry@ns.sympatico.ca). Mr. Henry is hopeful that members of the community and those outside it, will invest in this innovative project which could serve as a catalyst to revitalize Truro's downtown. For information about the Community Economic Development Investment Fund: Chris Payne, Dept. of Economic Development, Halifax, 424-1259 or John Robertson, Dept. of Economic

much to increase public awareness of the variety and beauty of the built heritage of this region which includes Weymouth, Bear River, Digby Neck, Long and Brier Islands. They have established a data base on a CD-ROM and hope to develop an extensive website. They are not only surveying the architectural features, but also doing valuable research into the region and its people about which very little has been written in the past. Their work should prove most useful to potential "cultural tourists" who will soon discover that there is far more to see and do in addition to whale watching in this remote part of Nova Scotia.



*Immanuel Baptist Church in Truro*

Development, Truro, 902-893-6150.

## **Digby County**

Another exciting news item is that the old Waterford Baptist Church on Digby Neck, abandoned by the community 40 years ago, now has a new owner, a Toronto resident with strong family ties to the area and with a passion to see the building saved and utilized. The new owner has promised to keep the Trust informed of her plans and progress.

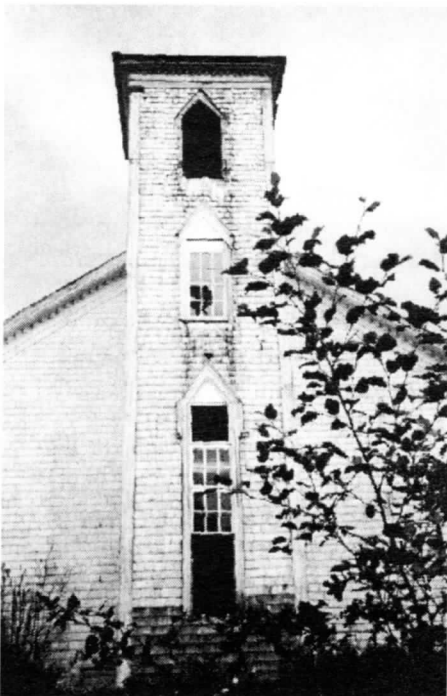
Finally, Digby Municipality is to be heartily congratulated for having had the foresight to establish a Heritage Department and to have employed such talented and enthusiastic young men as Robert Hersey and Derek Thurber. These two are in the process of carrying out an extensive survey and inventory of over 400 buildings. They have done

## **Brookfield**

An additional piece of news worthy of celebration is that the Putnam home in Brookfield, just outside Truro, is to be renovated and occupied once more. When stagecoaches were the means of transport, this was one of the locations for changing horses. The owner, to whom the house was recently bequeathed, has decided to relocate from Toronto on her retirement. In his assessment, Harry Jost described the house as solid, well built, and likely of 1790s vintage. Happily, for now, it has escaped the bulldozer.

## **Freeport**

The Lent House at Freeport on Long Island will no longer have to be moved from its present location as indicated in an earlier edition of *The Griffin*. The Bank of Nova Scotia is



*Nova Scotia's first Baptist Church, Waterford, Digby County.*

pulling out of the area and rumour has it that the bank may donate the house and land to the local community, which is anxious to set up a much-needed Interpretive Centre

### Truro's Architectural Exhibition

by Jan Zann

An exhibition, "Celebrating Truro's Victorian Heritage," opened on January 17th at the Colchester Historical Museum on Young Street in Truro. With over 75 people in attendance, Meredyth Rochman delivered an interesting address on Victorian Interiors. Meredyth was of great assistance to the local Heritage Protection Society in actually creating a Victorian Parlour as part of the Exhibit, providing the appropriate wallpaper and curtain fixtures, etc. The display attempts to educate the public, and school children in particular, about the architectural styles predominant in Truro as well as common architectural terms.

Photographs of homes of a wide variety of styles are on display. Worksheets are provided for older students and building blocks (similar to the Froebel Gifts which apparently motivated Frank Lloyd Wright) for the younger children. An excellent model of the old Intercolonial Railway Station (demolished in the 70s) is also on display. The Exhibit continues until April 21. The Museum is open from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. and 2 p.m. till 5 p.m. Tuesday to Friday, and Saturday afternoons 2 p.m. till 5 p.m. Admission is \$2~ schoolchildren free.

Hal Forbes will give the address on February 28 at 7.30 p.m. at the Museum. He will be describing how he is able to reproduce many architectural details on a home which have been destroyed or which are in need of repair. Hal is the "gingerbread" expert, among his many skills. Allen Penney, architect and author, will speak on "The Legacy of Truro's Heritage" on March 22.

The Society for the Protection of Truro Heritage Properties, the Truro Heritage Advisory Committee, and the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture are the sponsors of the Exhibit which, it is believed, will encourage a greater appreciation of the town's built heritage.

## A New Venture for Halifax

Trust members have noticed some recent advertisements offering lectures by 'Heritage College'. This is an interesting retirement project of Brian MacDonald and Peter McCurdy. The first series, which was oversubscribed, was Landscape Design by renowned Halifax gardener, Jill Cooper-Robinson. Now underway is The History of Halifax by long-time Trust member, Blair Beed. Intended 'class' size is 12-15 people. The courses, weekly for six weeks, from 9:30-11:30 a.m., are reasonably priced at \$135 for the series, and take place at the old St. Andrew's School site on Bayers Road in Halifax. Further information, 876 1031 or dbmacdon@is.dal.ca.

## Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

### Abstracted from *The Lightkeeper* by Doris Butters

To conserve and maintain at least a little of Nova Scotia's maritime built heritage, strenuous efforts are being made by small groups around the province to fund, restore and utilize local light stations. Included to date are Chebucto Head, Seal Island, Burntcoat Head, Cape Forchu, Port Bickerton, Walton and Queensport Light on rook Island. Sadly, many others are on the 'Doomsday List'.

Light stations are fast becoming a summer attraction to tourists: Port Bickerton reported 5000 visitors in 2000 while 12,000 signed the guest book at Walton Light, where a coin-operated telescope offers stupendous views of Cape Blomidon, Cape Split and the Parrsboro shore. Lighthouses are proving of, more interest than merely as look-off spots of Nova Scotia's rugged coastline. They can become interpretive centres of local marine history, museums, tearooms, art/crafts studios, or exhibition areas - one or two have even become homes. The surrounding sites are often suitable to turn into a small park, a playground, or a picnic area.

But more is needed to save maritime heritage at risk. To this end the board of the NSLPS is lobbying hard to get government to pass Lighthouse Preservation Legislation. A

## A Royal Patron for the Heritage Trust

The Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Honorable Myra Freeman, has graciously consented to be a patron of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotians and especially members of Heritage Trust are fortunate to have her as our Lieutenant Governor and patron. During a recent address to Heritage Trust members at Government House the Lieutenant Governor highlighted her strong interest in heritage and her desire to raise awareness of our province's heritage and its profound importance in our daily lives.

motion on behalf of NSLPS sent to the Heritage Canada Foundation annual meeting in Calgary was passed unanimously. The Foundation is one of the intervenors in the Senate Committee Hearings on the bill. David Curry and Dan Conlin also made submissions to the committee on behalf of NSLPS.

During the Federal election the three opposition parties pledged to support the Lighthouse Protection Act expected to be re-introduced in the Senate this session. Although the Liberals avoided taking a position either for or against the Act, they supported the Coast Guard Alternative Use program, saying "A new Liberal government will continue to support this program as it encourages lighthouses to remain as cultural symbols, while possible, generating economic growth", and expressed a sort of support for bending the rules. "The Federal Government, when possible, has relaxed the regulations and policies on the disposal of federal property ..."

For more details contact David Curry or members of the Lighthouse Protection Act Committee on NSLPS website:  
<http://www.ednet.ns.ca/educ/heritage/nslps>

## City Rambles:

*Villa Maria*

6541 Coburg Road,

Halifax

By Garry D. Shutlak

The Roman Catholic Archbishops of Halifax have only resided in three principal residences since the archdiocese was created in 1852. Along with this principal home, many also had summer residences of varying sizes along the North West Arm.

The first of these residences was the large wooden residence adjoining Saint Mary's Cathedral which was demolished in 1890 when the present brick and stone glebe was erected. The second was a large home on the corner of Dresden Row and Artillery Place originally built for James Butler. It was purchased by Archbishop Cornelius O'Brien in 1890 and was the archiepiscopal home until 1931.

In 1931 Archbishop Thomas O'Donnell purchased a part of the Bloomingdale property, the former home of Alfred G. Jones, and erected the present structure which had all the amenities of a principal residence with the ambience of a summer cottage setting. The designer was well known architect Andrew R. Cobb, and the contractors were MacDonald Construction. The building is of sandstone and freestone and is fire



*The Archbishop's Residence in Halifax; originally known as Villa Maria. (photo N.S. Archives)*

resistant. It also has a slate roof and copper flashing which were becoming a rarity by 1931.

The house consisted of fourteen main rooms which included basement billiard room. On the main floor was a drawing room, parlour, dining room and hall. The hall was in reality a large waiting or reception area between the dining room and drawing room with egress to the veranda. On the first floor were five bedrooms with baths, a small chapel, and a sitting room overlooking the North West Arm. The house also contained housekeeper's quarters, servant's quarters, kitchen, pantries and storerooms.

A five-room wing, attached to the chauffeur's quarters, was added to the

north side of the house overlooking the Arm by Archbishop J. Gerald Berry some time after 1954. The addition provided space for the Chancery office and later the Marriage Tribunal. In 1984, the space was used to coordinate the Papal Visit to Halifax.

In 1990, the City of Halifax purchased the property from Archbishop James Hayes, and in 2000 the residence was purchased by the Waegwoltic Club, with the City retaining ownership of most of the land as well as public access to the waterfront. Thus the Waegwoltic Club, formerly the Bloomingdale estate, has repurchased at least part of the property they sold seventy year ago.

## Yarmouth's gain brings Ruff's loss

In the September 1999 issue of *The Griffin*, we reported that Eric Ruff, curator of the Yarmouth county Museum, had offered to put the beard he has worn for 33 years on the chopping block in a good cause. He agreed to sacrifice his face fungus if the Yarmouth County Historical Society could raise \$100,000 towards the museum's \$2.5 million expansion fund. By early February, the beard fund had reached \$97,000 and a public shaving is optimistically set for March 28.

In an editorial on February 6, the *Chronicle-Herald* commended Eric Ruff on his dedication in "sacrificing something to which, needless to say,

he's very much attached".

Much of the ambitious expansion has now been accomplished and the new section was opened last summer.

The next phase includes construction of a breezeway connecting the museum with a carriage house on the site.

If you wish to help put the finishing touches to this magnificent effort, send your gift to the Yarmouth County Heritage Society (Beard Fund), 22 Collins Street, Yarmouth, NS, B5A 3C8.



## "The German Legacy in Nova Scotia

### 1750-2000"

Proceedings of this conference, the first of its kind, held in Halifax in September 2000, 'Marking the ANN's arrival at Halifax in September 1750', are being published in *The German Canadian Yearbook*, available in March. Copies can be ordered from The German Canadian Historical Association, c/o Dr. Lothar Zimmermann, UPEI, Charlottetown, PEI C1A-4P3. Price \$19.00 plus shipping. (Invoice will be sent with book).



# A New life for Greenvale School?

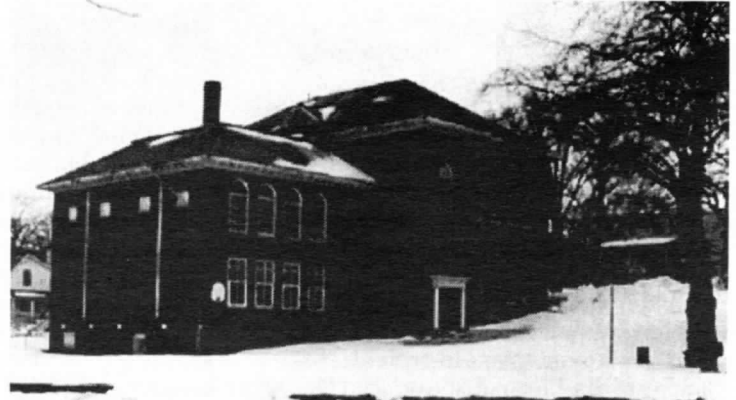
by Anne West

Greenvale School, the fine building on Ochterloney Street, Dartmouth, built to Andrew Cobb's design in 1915, could become the home of both the Greenvale Art and Cultural Association and the Dartmouth Heritage Museum.

The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), which owns the building, is currently working with the association and the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society to work out how the building can serve these two functions and how to fund this ambitious proposal. The

association has been working for several years to save this important building, which it plans to use for artists' and artisans' studios and as a public cultural space.

The Dartmouth Heritage



School as seen from the site of the now demolished Starr Building



Greenvale School - front.

Museum Society, which manages the Dartmouth Heritage Museum collection and its two historic houses on behalf of HRM, is searching for a new home for the museum. Its current premises on Wyse Road, Dartmouth, are

required by HRM for other purposes.

What could be a marriage made in heaven requires serious funding to make it possible. The school needs immediate restoration and also requires a functional but sensitive addition on the back to fulfil the museum's needs. The museum needs storage space for the 40,000 artifacts in its collection in addition to display galleries.

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## The Former Alexandra Centre School Site New Developments

by Mia Nishi Rankin

In the December 2000 issue of *The Griffin*, I reported on a proposed residential development by Romanza Custom Homes to be located at the site of the former Alexandra School, between Brunswick, Cornwallis and Maitland Streets, adjacent to St. George's Church, currently owned by the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). At the time, Romanza was proposing to construct 48 freehold townhouse units designed by Brian MacKay-Lyons Architecture and Urban Design.

Romanza has since withdrawn its offer of to purchase the property. According to J.P. Felix, President of Romanza Custom Homes, the offer was withdrawn due to the project's inability to conform with zoning restrictions set

forth in the Brunswick Comprehensive Development District (BCDD) planning policy, coupled with public opposition to its architectural design.

### *A New Offer*

Cygnets Properties, managed by Jim Taylor, in consultation with Lawrence White, President of Sherwood Enterprises, have recently submitted an offer to HRM to purchase the Alexandra Centre Site. Response from HRM is pending and an architect for the project has yet to be hired. Mr. White has stated that his group would like to work with the community to provide a project that will complement the neighborhood. He has agreed to meet with HTNS and the Brunswick Heritage Area Residents' Association (BHARA) to identify the issues and inform the community about their project operating constraints — which

are primarily of a monetary nature. The proposed development reportedly meets the zoning regulations as set forth in the BCDD Planning Policy.

BHARA and HTNS are very interested in working with any potential developers toward the creation of residential units that are complementary to the heritage nature of the area and consistent with community goals as outlined in the BCDD Planning Policy. This sort of consultative development process is viewed as a positive first step toward the preservation of the Brunswick Heritage Area. Due to the heritage significance of the Alexandra Centre site, the HTNS Board of Directors has formed a special sub-committee whose mandate is to deal with development issues associated with this specific area.

*Info:* Craig Walkington, BHARA, (902)422-6968 / [cwalk@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:cwalk@hfx.eastlink.ca)



## Doris's Column: *A Visit to Government House with Dr. Marie Elwood*

On our December visit to Government House we were welcomed most charmingly by our new

Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Myra Freeman. She spoke about her interest in history, her belief that children should learn about their heritage as part of the school curriculum, and projects and plans to promote that interest. Mrs. Freeman introduced Dr. Marie Elwood, our tour guide, as "one of the most amazing people to work with in Government House," a person who knows more about the House, its history and contents than anyone else. After spending several years researching and documenting every item in Government House, Marie Elwood is working on a catalogue with a photograph, detailed description and the provenance of each item and artifact. It will be used on the Government House website, recently launched by the Lieutenant-Governor to let the world know what we have here in Nova Scotia.

Marie began with a brief history of the building by first encapsulating what is meant by the word 'Georgian'. Four King Georges covered a period of over 100 years, so to describe Georgian, one needs to be more precise. This house was built during the reign of King George III (1760-1820) who, while taking architectural instruction from Sir William Chambers, designed a house to a specified plan. The original drawings are now in the Library of Windsor Castle, and King George III himself described it as "...a design for a house or palace" — and to such a building Marie welcomed us!

According to Sir John Somerton in London, England, the particular concept for Government House came from a book of original designs published in 1795 by Sir George Richardson. As a young architectural draughtsman, Richardson had accompanied the young Robert Adam and his brother James to Italy and Yugoslavia to study classical architecture. Returning to Rome, Robert and James set up a manufactory to produce the beautiful stucco-like designs which are an important aspect of Robert Adam's architecture and, in fact, are a prominent feature of Nova Scotia's Province House, which we visited earlier in the autumn. It is also quite possible Sir John Wentworth may have seen Richardson's book of designs, brought back to Halifax two elevations he liked,

and worked with them. The exterior of the House, we note, is of sandstone quarried from regional quarries.

One of the slight changes made to the original drawings was the inclusion of the symmetrically curved bays at each end of the building on the ground floor and the rooms above, giving more natural light to the interior, an Adam design feature. As we sat in the ballroom, Marie pointed out how the extended apse-like bay and the two free-standing pillars created a greater sense of space and added much to the impression of grandeur.

Records show that the ballroom was originally the 'Levee Room', from the French verb 'to rise', it being at one time the custom for monarchs and nobles to meet and greet their friends in the morning as they got up out of bed. In it, we know, were many chairs and seven 'sophas' — a sofa, a forerunner of our sofa, was really little more than a platform covered with beautiful cushions and Persian carpets.

George Richardson had in his floor plans a standard Italian approach to the interior of a house of this grandeur, with public rooms not at street level but on an upper floor. To increase the sense of splendour, upper rooms were always approached by a fine staircase. In Government House, however, there is no stairwell in the entrance hall; instead there is a separate hall and stairwell with a very grand and gracefully curving staircase rising to the upper floor.

For 200 years the interior of Government House has remained virtually unchanged with one exception, the upstairs 'Saloon' (not 'Salon'). Records show the Saloon, reached through a lobby with free-standing pillars which Marie feels may not have been in the original floor plan, held a great amount of furniture: according to one list, 38 chairs and several 'sophas' and according to another "...98 pieces of mahogany furniture, some of it purchased from merchants in Halifax". A very large room indeed! It is now the Royal Bedroom and as we stood there, Marie exhorted us to visualize the room as it must have been in the days when Lord and Lady Wentworth received their guests in the Saloon.

Early governors usually imported their furniture, as was done for Rideau Hall and here at Mount Uniacke. In 1811 Richard John Uniacke was Head of a Commission to look at furnishings for Government House. His meticulous records list each room, its function and

the furniture, much of which was imported from London. One can visualize how the rooms in Government House appeared in the early part of the 19th century by reading Richard John Uniacke's list and visiting Mount Uniacke to see the furniture he purchased for his own house, much of which is still there today.

During a study visit to the Department of Woodwork in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Marie specifically studied those who made furniture for export around 1800, most of it made to be disassembled, crated for transport and put together on site — "It's not an original Ikea idea that you turn it into a parcel and ship it!" Many of the furniture makers at this time shipped furniture to British garrison offices, fortresses, and government houses in the colonies.

Richard John Uniacke dealt with a furniture maker in Tower Hill. Marie found it on a period map of London and from insurance records also found the names of makers of furniture for export. Although Tower Hill is no longer there, she tells us, she could stand upon the spot from which Nova Scotia Regency furniture came. Picture the crates being carried from the top of the hill down to the wharf on the River Thames where trans-Atlantic ships waited to carry them to their North American destinations!

"Where now is the Regency furniture?" Marie muses. Except for the Wentworth Suite still in an upstairs bedroom, most of the present furniture appears to be mid-Victorian. According to the Statute Book of 1859, Her Majesty Queen Victoria decided that she was "...not able at this time to visit Canada, but would send her dear son the Prince of Wales", who did indeed come to Canada and the United States for two months in 1860. In Halifax he stayed in Government House, and the chair in the Royal Bedroom known as the 'Throne Chair' was especially commissioned, as no doubt were many other pieces. Other records indicate that famous Toronto furniture makers were commissioned to make all the furniture for every place in Canada where His Royal Highness was to stay — in oak for Ottawa, walnut for Toronto and mahogany for Montreal, with elaborate carvings of Prince of Wales feathers, and rose, thistle and shamrock. And afterwards, all was to be auctioned. So... if one visits an auction room and notices furniture embellished with these symbols, it may be worth taking a closer look — it might be...

# Programs sponsored by Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

Unless otherwise stated, meetings of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia are held on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax. Parking in the two museum parking lots and across Bell Road at the Vocational School. Info: 423-4807

Thursday, March 15, at 7:30 pm  
**Tree-rings: A Powerful Tool for Dating Heritage Buildings and Hindcasting the Climate**

*Speakers:* Alan Ruffman, Marine geologist, geophysicist and Museum Research Associate, and Dr. Erik Neilsen, Quaternary Geologist, Manitoba Geological Survey. Fortunately for us, Erik Neilsen (a former Nova Scotian) will be visiting the province during Earth Sciences Week, thanks to the Atlantic Provinces Inter-University Committee of Science (APICS).

Thursday, April 19, at 7:30 p.m.  
**Heritage Plants in the Nova Scotia Landscape**

*Speaker:* Alex Wilson, Manager Collections and Botanist, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History.

Thursday, May 17, at 7:30 p.m.  
**Norden, Süden, Osten, Westen: The German Heritage sites in Halifax.**  
*Speaker:* Dr. Allen Robertson, Heritage Consultant and Biographical Researcher

Thursday June 21, at 7:00 pm  
Annual General Meeting of Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia; lecture at 8 pm.

**The Reverend James McGregor:**

**The Highland Sheppard**

*Speaker:* Alan Wilson

## Programs sponsored by other societies

Many of the following organizations have Fax or E-Mail. To obtain numbers or addresses, please contact the group concerned by phone.

### **Amherst Township Historical Society**

Regular monthly meetings, 4th Tuesdays at Cumberland Co. Museum, 150 Church Street, Amherst. Details/ meeting times. ph: 902-667-2561.

### **Bedford Heritage Society**

9 Spring Street, Bedford, NS, B4A 1Y4  
For dates of meetings/ programs contact Marvin Silver, 835-0317.

### **Calligraphy Guild of N.S.**

Meets 7-9 pm 3rd Mondays. Details: Les de Wit, 835-0508 or John Peake, 425-4128.

### **Canadian Authors Association - N.S. Branch**

Meets 2 pm 4th Saturdays at NSARM 6106, University Avenue, Halifax. Contacts: Evelyn Brown, 466-2558, or Mary Ann Monnon, 902-542-2726, Wolfville.

### **Charles Macdonald Concrete House**

19 Saxon Street, Centreville, NS. For Winter Program contact: Stephen Slipp, 455-0133.

### **Chester Municipal Heritage Society**

Old Chester Train Station, Chester, Box 629, NS, BOJ 1J0. Contact Duncan McNeill, 902- 275-3172.

### **Colchester Historical Museum**

29 Yonge Street, Truro, NS.  
From January 17 to mid - April  
An exhibition on 'Victorian Truro Architecture, Culture and Industry' to celebrate Truro Town Council and Provincial Government approval for the designation of three Heritage Conservation Districts in town. Three evening lectures in connection with the display also being held. Details: Penny Lightall: 902-825-6284.

### **Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum**

471 Poplar Drive, Dartmouth, 434-0222.

Sunday, May 13, 1-3 pm

Mother's Day traditional Afternoon Tea with sandwiches, tarts and cake.  
Adults: \$7, Children: \$5.

Monday, May 21, 3-5 pm

Victoria Day High Tea. Adults: \$12. Children: \$5.

Saturday, May 26, 10 am

Plant Sale (Dartmouth Horticultural Society)

The Heritage Farm *Rose and Kettle Tea Room* will be open mid-May to mid-October, from 10 am to 4 pm Monday to Saturday; 12-4 pm Sundays and Holidays; offering an all-day menu, a luncheon menu and afternoon tea. The Tea Room also has a personalized catering service for Sunday brunches, dinners, parties, receptions, showers, etc. for groups of 40 or less. Details: 462-0154.

### **Costume Society of Nova Scotia**

Meets 7.30 pm 3rd Mondays, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax.

Monday, March 19, 7:30 pm

*Speaker:* Kerry DeLorey

*Topic:* 'Uniforms of the British and Loyalist Regiments of the American Revolution'. Kerry has been a living history re-enactor for 14 years; his wardrobe consists of impeccably tailored costumes researched and built by himself.

Monday/Tuesday, April 26/27, 9 am to 4:30 pm

Celebrating the Year of Costume in 2001- Fashioning a Legacy. AGM and Workshop on Care of Textiles, sponsored by the CSNS, Canadian Conservation Institute and NSCAD.

Registration/ details contact Faith Wallace 826-2506 or Estelle Lalonde 429-0790.

For details of exhibits and special events Contact: 902-667-2561

## **Dartmouth Heritage Museum**

100 Wyse Road, Dartmouth

February 8-March 24

As part of the Preston Cultural Festival in March, the Museum and Black Artists' Network of Nova Scotia present 'Home: The Art of Preston - revisited'. An exhibition featuring contemporary works from Preston area artists. Museum hours:

Wednesday to Saturday: 1:30-5 pm.  
Closed Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.  
Contact 464-2300.

## **Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage**

For details of Workshops and Programs, 800-355-6873.

## **Fort Sackville Foundation/Scott Manor House**

15 Fort Sackville Road, Bedford. For hours, programs and events, Contact: 832-2336.

## **Fultz House Museum**

33 Sackville Drive, Lower, Sackville, NS. For season opening date, contact 865-3794.

## **Genealogical Association of Nova Scotia**

NSARM, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax. For details, 454-0322.

Tuesday February 27, 7:30 pm

*Speaker:* Jan Buss, Executive Director, Writer's Federation of Nova Scotia.

*Topic:* 'Publishing 101: How to Publish a Book in Nova Scotia'.

Tuesday March 27, 7:30 pm

*Speaker:* Meghan Hallett, CNSA Archway Archivist.

*Topic:* 'An Overview of Archway: Nova Scotia's Archival Database'.

Wednesday April 18, 7:30 pm

A Joint Meeting with the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society.

*Speaker:* Peter L. Twohig, historian  
*Topic:* 'For the People's Health: Public Health in Nova Scotia, 1900-1945'.

## **Le Musée Acadien de Pubnico-Ouest**

For museum hours, programs and activities, 902- 762-3380

## **Nova Scotia College of Art and Design**

5163 Duke Street, Halifax.

Friday March 16, 7-9 pm.

*Speaker:* Ruth Fine.

*Topic:* 'Printmaking: Why Bother?'  
Introductory remarks by Ed Porter, Associate Professor, Fine Arts.

## **Nova Scotia Historical Society**

Contact: Bob Harvey, 864-4160.

Wednesday March 21

Annual Dinner Meeting

*Speaker:* M. Brook Taylor

*Topic:* 'Frederick William Wallace: The Making of an Iron Man'.

Place: Dalhousie University Club;  
Reservations, 423 6894, 422 5052

Wednesday April 18, 7:30 pm

Joint Meeting with GANS.

*Speaker:* Peter L. Twohig.

*Topic:* 'For the People's Health: Public Health in Nova Scotia, 1900-1945'. Place: Nova Scotia Archives, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax.

Wednesday May 16, 7:30

Annual General Meeting

*Speaker:* Judith Fingard

*Topic:* 'A Tale of Two Preachers: Henry Hartley, Francis Robinson and the Nineteenth Century Black Churches of the Maritimes'.

Place: Legislative Council Chamber, Province House.

## **Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society**

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held from September to July, on the 4th Wednesdays of the month at Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1679 Lower Water Street, Halifax. For programs, speakers and lighthouse tours, 424- 7490.

Wednesday April 25

AGM: 7pm, Program: 8.30

*Speaker:* Bill Budge, son of a former keeper on St. Paul's Island, off the north tip of Cape Breton.

*Topic:* 'St. Paul's Island'

## **Parkdale-Maplewood Community Museum**

Barss Corner, Lunenburg County, 902-644-2375, or 902-644-2893.

Saturday April 7, 1-6 pm

Maple Syrup Festival. Entertainment. Prices/ details, 902-644-2877.

Tuesday May 1

Museum opens for the season.

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm.

## **Parrsborough Shore Historical Society**

Ottawa House, Parrsboro.

For season opening date and programs, phone Susan Clarke, 902-392-2051

## **Poetry Society of Nova Scotia**

Meets 2 pm 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month, September to June at NSARM, 6106 University Ave., Halifax. Contact Daphne Faulkner, 423-5330,

## **Women for Music**

Sunday April 29, 2 pm

Peter Allen, piano and Patricia Creighton, flute, will perform at a Concert and Tea fundraiser in support of Symphony Nova Scotia to be held in St. John's Lutheran Church, Mahone Bay. For details, 902-275-3254.

## **Yarmouth County Historical Society and Museum**

22 Collins Street, Yarmouth, 902-742-5539

Unless otherwise stated, the Society meets the first Friday of the month at 7:30 pm and during the winter on the 2nd Tuesdays presents a program of Armchair Travels with a variety of venues and speakers.

Fridays March 2, April 6 and May 4, 7:30 pm

Historical Society Meeting -program TBA. Free.

Tuesdays March 13 and April 10, 7 pm

Travel Series. Program TBA. Charge \$3.00.

Wednesday March 28.

BEARD SHAVING at Th'Yarc. Watch for Details.

Friday April 20 - all day

South West Nova Scotia Curators' Meeting.