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The Griffin

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The Griffin

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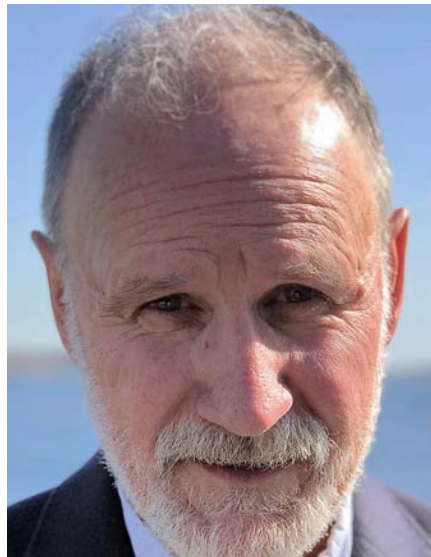
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President's Report



Andrew Murphy

On January 29th, the Heritage Trust posted on Facebook about the plight of 1029 Tower Road, Halifax, now in its last year of countdown to a possible demolition – another building at risk, symbolic of so much more. Within days the article had more than 25,000 views.

The house itself is lovely, part of a registered heritage streetscape in the South End of Halifax. It is mentioned in one of L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* books, and for a time was occupied by Dr James Doull, a much-decorated war hero and early tuberculosis researcher who was involved in the formation of the World Health Organization.

Historic and literary significance aside, this house embodies the plight of much of our built heritage here in Halifax. 1029 Tower Road has become the proverbial "canary in the coal mine." It is symbolic of the rapidly disappearing, rich fabric of streetscape that has made the experience of visiting and living in this city so special.

The importance of this fabric is easy to see in such places as Paris and Old Quebec City. There, the *flâneur*, the traveler, and the commuter's experience arises not from an encounter with any

one iconic building, but from the effect that a harmonious collection of beautiful buildings creates. Neither of these cities has "missing teeth," filled in with modern structures inappropriate both in scale and in context.

In this globalized world, it is a precious and increasingly rare feeling to sense that one is uniquely, unmistakably somewhere—as one does in Paris and Old Quebec. There is therefore a very strong argument to be made about the impact our heritage has on the tourism industry. It is an Ivany Report goal to increase tourism in Nova Scotia to \$4 billion a year by 2023 – for context, that's about eight times the annual landed value of lobster in our province. Yet it seems to many that we are erasing the very thing tourists are coming to see. Ambassatours, the largest tourism operation in Nova Scotia, has grave concerns about the demolitions. They report that over 80% of their tours have a heritage component.

... it is a precious and increasingly rare feeling to sense that one is uniquely, unmistakably somewhere ...

The assault on built heritage in Halifax has been relentless. A recent city report notes that since the Downtown Plan was adopted fewer than 10 years ago, 30% of existing unregistered heritage assets have been demolished. At this rate, it will be all gone in fewer than 20 years.

So, why is this disaster happening? One answer is Section 18 of the Heritage Protection Act of Nova Scotia. It is this clause that allows any municipally registered building to be demolished after a three-year holding period. We need to convince our provincial politicians of the need to remove Section 18 from the Act and to preserve our valuable heritage resources. We need to urge the government to study the importance of this economic resource, and to take steps to preserve and nurture it—not just in Halifax, but throughout our province!

Cover image: Kennetcook Station (1950s), by Lem MacDougall, 2017, watercolour on 140 lb cold-pressed paper, 18"x24" (courtesy of the artist)

ARTIST

Lem MacDougall



Lem MacDougall, originally from India, modestly describes herself as a stay-at-home mother of three. She moved from the busy streets of Chennai to Sackville, Nova Scotia, and eventually to the rural community of Upper Kennetcook, Hants County. Inspired by the serene beauty of the Kennetcook Valley, she took up painting seriously in 2015. One of her first paintings was of the beautiful Anglican Church in Upper Kennetcook. She says “The beauty of this countryside is not limited to the landscape of tall trees and open fields, but the people are just as wonderful and have inspired me to keep painting!” Lem enjoys the outdoors and has a newfound love of gardening. She has painted members of the local community, finding beauty in what some might call their flaws, and including all the laugh lines. She has also found inspiration in former and current landmarks of the area, such as the former Kennetcook Bridge, the last surviving covered bridge in Nova Scotia, and the now-demolished Anglican Church in Lattie’s Brook (see page 4). Lem has done some commissioned work and some of her paintings have been for sale at Anthony’s Freshmart in Kennetcook.

Lem can be contacted at clmacedougall@yahoo.ca

“The beauty of this countryside is not limited to the landscape of tall trees and open fields, but the people are just as wonderful and have inspired me to keep painting!”

Above: Upper Kennetcook Church, by Lem MacDougall, 2017, watercolour on 140 lb cold-pressed paper, 20”x16” (courtesy of the artist)

Right: Kennetcook Covered Bridge, by Lem MacDougall, 2017 (painted from a 1964 photo), watercolour on 140 lb cold-pressed paper, 16”x20” (courtesy of the artist)



The End of “The Sweetest Little Church in Nova Scotia”

Holly Hanes

St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Latties Brook, East Hants, was nicknamed “The Sweetest Church in Nova Scotia” after a swarm of bees decided to worship there. The bees were removed, but unfortunately they returned not long after. St John the Baptist, one of four heritage churches in the Parish of Maitland, was built in 1881. In the last few years, work was completed on the belfry, but sadly (as in much of Nova Scotia) a dwindling congregation resulted in the closure and deconsecration of the church. The last official service was Christmas Eve in 2016 and the church was deconsecrated in 2017.

Since then the stained glass windows have been removed and the church demolished. The demolition of the church and recovery of useable wood was completed by Andrew Bland of Avonport. The stained glass windows, bell, font, and doors were sent to an antique shop in Borden, Prince Edward Island. The antique shop is housed in a former church. The wall sheathing was sold to a person from Truro to construct a porch area on a farmhouse there. The belfry was salvaged by Minna Ettinger, a member of the Parish of Maitland, and



Latties Brook Church, by Lem MacDougall, 2017, watercolour on 140 lb cold-pressed paper, 18"x24" (courtesy of the artist)

it sits prominently in her garden. This photo of the demolition shows a heartbreaking scene of a building, lovingly built and used by its parishioners, being knocked down.

This area of Hants County was settled in 1783 by the 84th Regiment of

Foot. Many of the family names on the stones in the cemetery surrounding the church are descendants of members of the 84th Regiment. There was a record of worship in this Parish of Maitland as early as 1795. While this church was built in 1881, there is a record of a grant being given for the building of a place of worship in the area in 1845. St John the Baptist Church was built on land donated by Joseph Clarke. The Rev. Addington Jamison served as the first rector, from 1870 to 1883. The church design was Neo-Gothic with lancet windows and buttressed corners. William and Catherine Cook donated the bell and bell tower in memory of their son John. The bell tower design included Victorian gingerbread ornamentation.

Removal of the beautiful stained glass windows and interior signalled the end of a beautiful heritage church. Many of the descendants of the original settlers have moved away. With the



Sad end of St John the Baptist Church in Latties Brook (courtesy of Luella Hennigar)

continued on page 5

Joe Ballard - *Historic House Names of Nova Scotia*

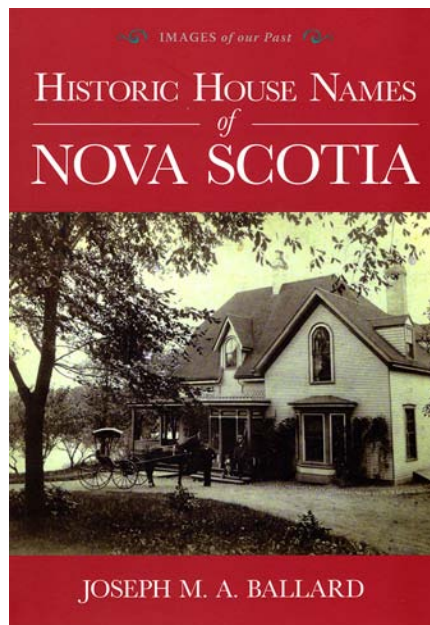
Halifax: Nimbus (2018)
ISBN 978-1-77108-668-4 \$17.95

Janet Morris

In 1974, C. Bruce Fergusson's book, *Place-Names and Places of Nova Scotia*, was a definitive study of names found on a Nova Scotia map. In 2002, *Halifax Street Names*, edited by Shelagh Mackenzie with Scott Robson was published by Formac. Continuing in the naming tradition, Joe Ballard, former President of HTNS, has done a study of *Historic House Names of Nova Scotia*. In a region ripe with names, this adds another layer of meaning and, as Joe states, a further sense of place to our distinctive province.

There is a sense of needing to apologize for the 'high-brow' effect of naming a house, but as Joe points out, in days before established street names and numbers, a house name was a sort of address. And I think it can be said that, for some people, their homes or succession of homes are like a succession of children; one would not dream of not naming a child; or of simply assigning a number (e.g. 14 Ballard Clan) – though come to think of it, this could be less confusing when names are repeated in a family tree. It is certainly an established custom to name a boat, so why would one object to naming something as important as a house? There are certainly mansions mentioned in the text, but at p. 105 we encounter "Magazine Cottage" – so unspectacular that it cannot be ascertained which of the humble abodes in the photo bears the name. Even the insignificant deserve a name.

There are many fascinating elements and much trivia uncovered between these covers. Joe defines ten categories of house names, and in his Introduction he spells out his methodology, and helpfully defines such antiquarian words as "croft", "hurst", "holm", "hall", "lodge", as well as suffixes often found in house names.



It is no surprise that house names often harken back to the "old country" or invoke family connections; but, as Joe alluded to in his HTNS talk on January 17, it is interesting that it is often the distaff line that is commemorated.

Another prominent theme in house (or estate) names is landscape features: trees, flowers, gardens and elevations. Our ancestors are to be admired for their horticultural prowess. Even more astonishing is some namer's literary acumen. We perhaps expect biblical references, but more obscure references such as "Mantua" and its prominence in literature is a revelation – and a testimony to our forefathers' erudition.

We are treated to some very interesting family names along the way – my favourite is meeting Thomas *Gotobed* McMullen! There are also some delicious historical footnotes, such as the Rev. John Ambrose and his devotion to abolishing the practice of 'selling' paupers to the lowest bidder. This merits some research.

The book is a collection of anecdotes which must have been gathered over many years. One expects this sort of book from a sagacious octogenarian,

not from the pen of a Truro businessman. People accustomed to reading Joe's President's Report in *The Griffin* will know his facility with language and his love of irony, both profusely illustrated in this book. My only regret is that oftentimes we are left wondering whether the house under discussion still stands. For example, there is no indication whether Bilton Cottage (the "cover girl") is still standing. Spoiler: it is, though we can say for sure that the horse and phaeton no longer grace the curvilinear drive. In other examples, a 21st century street address would help sightseers who wish to (re)view named dwellings with new knowledge of their stories. There is no pretense of this being a definitive discussion and we look forward to Volume II: *More Historic House Names*.

continued from page 4

community's members aging and with no influx of youth, the rural churches are slowly closing. This was one of five churches that made up the Parish of Maitland originally. The others are St Peter's in Upper Kennetcook (see page 3), Holy Trinity in Maitland, and St Paul's in Northfield. St Thomas, in MacPhee's Corner, originally part of this parish, was transferred to the Parish of Shubenacadie and Stewiacke in 1959.

In Latties Brook, this gorgeous church that held so many memories, through the hardest and the happiest of times, was a focal point in the community. As I drive by where the building stood, I reflect on those memories and those who work tirelessly to keep open the churches in rural Nova Scotia.

Holly Hanes, BA, is a resident of Upper Kennetcook and is currently attending Dalhousie University for a Masters in History, with a focus on the Moirs Chocolate Factory advertising.

The Sheet Anchor House in Chester

Duncan and Sylvia McNeill

Lewis Millett (whom I first met by chance when he visited the Sheet Anchor House on a Chester Village Heritage House and Harbour tour in 1996) is a genealogist who has researched the Millett family extensively.

Millett told me that in 1749 or shortly thereafter, Nathaniel Millett (born 1727 in Essex County, Mass.) was given a land grant in the south end of Halifax, where he died in 1754 or 1755. His widow, Mary Crompton Millett (born 1729 in Ipswich, Mass.) was left in financial straits. She wrote several letters (copies of which are apparently in the Nova Scotia Archives) to Capt. Charles Morris, Surveyor General of Nova Scotia, pleading for help. Apparently Nathaniel had been with Morris in Annapolis Royal in 1747, during which time he and his brothers helped defend that garrison from attack by the French and their indigenous allies. In spite of the appeal, Mary was forced to sell her husband's land in Halifax to pay off his debts (which land Millett thought was purchased by Morris, who also interceded on Mary's behalf and arranged for her and two of



Ceiling beams and joists in dining room, looking to front room (Griffin photo)

her sons, Francis and George, to receive grants of land in Chester about 1756). It is probable that her grant was for, at the least, Town Lot 11 (on which the Sheet Anchor House sits) as we shall see.

In November 1758, Mary Millett married Henry Neal in Halifax, and they had a daughter Mary, born 1760. By 1765 the family had moved to Chester, where

they had four more children. Almost nothing is known about the couple during this time, although it appears that, along with Benjamin Bridges, Henry Neal was also a surveyor in Chester. Unfortunately Henry died in 1773 at the age of 38. Mary was once more in debt and in 1779 was forced to sell all property in Henry's name, including a number of properties in Chester, among them Town Lots 11 and 16, the only properties on which the presence of buildings is suggested by the sale documents.

Nathan Levy (or Levi) was one of the witnesses for all the sales except Lots 11 and 16, which he purchased himself. Levy was a trader who had been active in real estate transactions in Chester since 1769. The two properties were bought by him "with the house and buildings thereon" for the sum of 80 pounds.

This raises the question as to which property (if not both) had the aforementioned buildings on it/them. To suggest an answer we turn to the Church Map of Chester (1867), which shows that indeed there was a house where the Sheet Anchor House is now located on Lot 11, but there are no buildings shown on



Notch for central chimney in ceiling beam (Griffin photo)



Sheet Anchor House, 38 Central Street, Chester, 2019 (Griffin photo)

Lot 16. Furthermore at that time there were only four houses on the entire block. With such a sparse distribution of houses, it is probably safe to say that up until that time there had never been any buildings on Lot 16.

On their arrival in Chester in 1765, the Neals probably had Mary's three sons from her previous marriage, as well as their first-born, and eventually their four other children. Clearly they needed some sort of house and since it seems very likely that there was a house (and buildings) on Lot 11 by the time it was sold in 1779, it would also seem that in all probability that house was built shortly after their arrival in Chester.

The question is: Was that the Sheet Anchor House? Tradition in Chester is that this was so, in which case it was probably built between 1765 and perhaps 1773. Allen Penney, a Halifax architect with extensive experience in historic buildings, examined the house

in 1991 during renovations, when much of the structure was exposed, and concluded that it dated back to the late 1700s.

The house was built using traditional post-and-beam techniques common

throughout New England at that time. It is often stated that early Chester houses were prefabs, with the major timbers transported by ship from New England. However we should keep in mind that Chester had a sawmill from earliest



Roman numerals in third-storey timbers (Griffin photo)

times and that the New England Planter settlers were well used to building this type of house. The house on Town Lot 11 is thought to have been relatively isolated from the centre of the village and surrounded by fields overlooking the harbour.

The house is a classic three-bay structure and originally had a large central chimney, the size of which is inferred from cut-outs in floor boards in the middle of the house, as well as sections cut into the ceiling beams and joists. The original room sizes were very small, as can be seen from marks on the floors and holes in the joists. The central location of the front and rear doors is easily seen as cut-outs in the front and rear girts. No nails were used; all joints were made with mortise and tenon (which demands very accurate notching). All timbers were held together with tree-nails (pronounced 'trunnels'), which are large wooden pegs hammered into corresponding holes. Roman numerals, which ensured correct matching of the timbers, are clearly evident in the third storey.

The appearance of the house has changed over the years, principally with the addition of a kitchen wing at the east end, probably about the begin-

ning of the 20th century. At this time, the central chimney was replaced with a furnace (located beneath the kitchen wing), dormers were added on the third floor, and doors and windows in the old section were relocated to suit the new room configuration.

Dimensions of the old part of the house are 30 ft by 30 ft, which is also the length of the major timbers. The sills are 10"x10". The old section has a full basement, lined with large field stones. Planking of the weather walls consists of 16" to 20" wide boards about 1" thick. Insulation was generally birch bark, which can still be seen. An exception is the exposed western wall, where spaces between the timbers were infilled with brick nogging.

Other features which attest to a probable 18th century date for the house include the shallow roof pitch, the lack of returns on the four corners of the roof, and the vertical planking in the roof, which was common until about 1800. Also of interest are the six-over-six windows, with many panes still showing early distorted glass. Standing in any corner of the living room, it is obvious that there is not a single right angle in the whole house. In our early days of ownership we worried that the entire

external front wall tilted back about 3°. However, close examination of the front door frame showed that it had been cut to accommodate this angle, so obviously the tilt had stabilized many years ago.

When we bought the house in 1990, all ground floor ceilings were plastered and hung very low, which gave the sensation of living in a tunnel. With trepidation, we asked the contractor to poke a hole in a ceiling so that we could look into the space above. To our delight, timbers were all that we saw, so the old hung ceilings were removed, greatly opening up the ground floor rooms. Also, at some time in the past, with enormous effort, the wall panels in what are now the living and dining rooms were stripped of their paint and stained (paint would, of course, have been the custom when the house was built). We found the effect dark and ominous, so we decided to gyproc over the wall panels, leaving them intact so that a future owner would still have the option to expose them. During this work, we found behind one of the light switches a small and very old tract of the 'Gospel according to Saint John', surely a relic from the first half of the 1800s, when the Sheet Anchor House was the Rectory for St Stephen's Church for nearly half a century.

The curious hand-carved cabinet with elliptical arch in the living room is not unique to this house. Another, virtually identical, is on the second floor of the Lordly House (c. 1806), now a museum in Chester.

It is both a pleasure and a privilege to own and look after a very old house such as the Sheet Anchor House. Compared with the age of such a dwelling, we stay for a short time only. We must pass on a house that will continue to give shelter and pleasure to people for many years to come.

Duncan McNeill is a retired geophysicist with a strong interest in history and built heritage. He has been applying geophysical tools to advance archaeological discovery in Nova Scotia for many years.



Built-in cupboard in living room wall (Griffin photo)

Garry Shutlak - Government House Lecture Celebrates 200th Anniversary of Province House

Their Honours, the Hon. Arthur J. LeBlanc, ONS, QC, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, and Mme Patsy LeBlanc graciously hosted one of their Evenings @ Government House events on 12 February 2019 to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Province House. The latter, the home of the Nova Scotia Legislature, is Canada's oldest legislative building and has been described as representing the best use of Palladian design in Canada.

... the well-known 1819 etching of Province House by J.E. Woolford, a beautiful image of a fine morning in Halifax

The speaker was Garry Shutlak, Senior Archivist at the Nova Scotia Archives, Honorary Life Member of the Trust, and a leading expert on the history and built heritage of Halifax. Mr Shutlak opened with the well-known 1819 etching of Province House by J.E. Woolford, a beautiful image of a fine morning in Halifax (though there may be some lingering fog – St Paul's is faintly visible in the background at right). In addition to Province House, this image shows the Cochran Building at left (on the present site of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia). This was leased by the Nova Scotia Government in the years prior to 1819, when the new legislature became available for use. In the background, we see Mather's, the Dissenters' Meeting House (forerunner of St Matthew's United Church). In addition to these buildings, Garry pointed out the ethnic diversity in this scene, with Mi'kmaq on the street, a black person in African dress in the doorway of Cochran's, and well-to-do Haligonians, privileged members of society, going about their daily activities in what was still largely a residential district. A drayman running after his wagon adds a note of humour. Could these barrels be destined for Province House?



Street scene in front of the newly completed Province House, with the Cochran Building at left and Mather's Meeting House in the background; drawn and etched by J.E. Woolford, published in Halifax, 1819, etching with aquatint, finished with watercolour (courtesy of Nova Scotia Archives, accession no. 1979-147 no. 603)

Mr Shutlak chronicled the design and construction of the building, the decision in 1811 to proceed with a freestone structure based on "a plan and elevation made by Mr John Merrick," a painting contractor (not an architect), and the fact that no full pre-construction drawings of the building survive. There is what Elizabeth Pacey describes as "only a frail, tattered drawing, an east elevation, of Province House believed to be Merrick's work ... as enigmatic as the shroud of Turin."¹

Province House accommodated both houses of the Legislature, the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia ... and many public offices

The supervising architect was Richard Scott, a Scottish-born stone mason, aged 29, who owned a quarry at Remsheg (later Wallace), from which stone was shipped by schooner for the project.

On completion, Province House

accommodated both houses of the Legislature, the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (in what is now the Legislative Library), and many public offices. The basement, which housed offices, had a floor of sand, but the precinct inside the iron fence was paved. Among the supplies required for efficient operation of government at Province House were large quantities of olive oil, presumably for lighting. Mr Shutlak shared many old images, plans, and details on the later evolution of the building to the present day, as it marks 200 years of public service.

The Ball Room was packed for this talk, which was followed by a reception in the Dining Room and adjoining Drawing Room (the venue for the opening of the Trust's travelling Canada-150 exhibit two years ago).

– Donald Forbes

¹Elizabeth Pacey, *Georgian Halifax*, Hantsport: Lancelot Press (1987), p. 47

Signs of optimism in Amherst

Leslie Childs

Amherst, the hub of the Maritimes, had fifty years of remarkable growth and prosperity (1872-1920), but things have slowed down over the last hundred years. The population remains just under 10,000; industries have disappeared; and, until recently, many people saw the future “through a glass darkly.” And why not? The grand buildings and mansions that line our streets have declined, surviving largely as apartments: some gracious and well-kept, some sadly neglected.

Lately though, things are looking up

Front yards have been sporting dumpsters as their new owners (often CFAs) are rejuvenating neglected or tired



The 2 Barkers Store, Victoria Street E, Amherst (postcard courtesy of the author)



Dayle's Grand Market staircase (in former Margolian's and 2 Barkers store), Amherst (courtesy of the author)

properties, both inside and out. Gone are the knob and tube wiring and lead pipes; repaired are the rotted window frames, masonry, and other cladding; and so much more. And it's not just happening in the large imposing homes of past industrialists like the Hewsons, Barkers, and Rhodes families, but also in small and medium-sized homes, built originally for workers and managers, where the same families have lived for years. In fact, these renovations are giving the whole town a facelift.

So let's have a look

The Hewsons were descendants of a Loyalist widow, whose husband was killed in “the south” during the Revolutionary War. She and her son, James, arrived in the Wallace area in 1784. They later moved to Fort Cumberland and their descendants have lived throughout Cumberland County, eventually owning highly successful woollen mills in Oxford and Amherst.

The vast sandstone ‘castle’ built by Harvey Lee Hewson in 1907 now has safe modern wiring and plumbing, and a main floor almost ready to host guests. Brand new front steps have been installed by an accredited heritage stone



Hewson House, Victoria Street E, Amherst, 2019 (Griffin photo)

mason who has also worked on Ottawa's Parliament Buildings and on the Cranewood mansion in Sackville, New Brunswick (just across the Tantramar). The woodwork gleams and the massive stained glass windows sparkle. All thanks to new owners from Ontario, who have chosen Amherst as their new home.

*These renovations are giving
the whole town a facelift*

The work of the Rhodes Curry Company still graces all parts of the Maritimes. Nelson Admiral Rhodes (1845-1909) began his career in Amherst as a carpenter's apprentice and then, like so many others, moved to Boston. There he met his wife, Sarah Curry, and

her brother, Nathaniel. They moved to Amherst, formed a partnership in 1878, and went on to build the Ladies Seminary at Acadia University, Halifax City Hall, Alexander Graham Bell's home near Baddeck, and the towers at Glace Bay for Guglielmo Marconi, not to mention innumerable railway stations for the Intercolonial Railway, the Dominion-Atlantic Railway, and the Canadian Pacific Railway. The company also made bricks and expanded into rolling stock repair and then into manufacturing railcars. In 1909, when Rhodes died, the company grew even bigger when it merged with Canadian Car and Foundry.

About a year ago, the one-time home of N.A. Rhodes, 'Rhodes Manor', also began its new life, thanks to new

owners from Ontario. Over its 130 year life, this old house has been a single family home, an apartment building, and a bed & breakfast. Today, the roof sports new shingles, the railings and verandahs are safe to walk on, and the exterior is in the process of getting a new coat of paint. Inside, things look equally appealing. Soon, travellers and visiting artists will get a chance to experience the home's hand-hewn woodwork, stained glass, and elegant rooms.

Then, of course, there's the story of the Two Barkers. In 1903, the Barker brothers arrived in Amherst from Saint John. They had a new idea in retailing: sell lots of goods to lots of people, buy wholesale for less, and so charge less. It worked. In 1907, they built a three-

storey department store. The name “2 BARKERS” is still visible on the façade (spelled out between the second storey windows). The store was later well known as Margolian’s and then as Dayle’s.

*Built heritage matters
and it can be a driving force
toward economic growth*

Five years later, A.A. Barker built himself a huge modernist mansion with oak-floored ballroom, enormous main floor entertaining rooms, lots of bedrooms, and even a porte-cochère. Its history is similar to others: eventually apartments, and then abandoned. In this case, the newest owner bought a shell, largely stripped by a previous owner. He plans to restore it completely and everyone eagerly awaits its return to glory.

And what about the store? Shoppers used to travel from Moncton, Truro, and even Halifax to buy quality goods in an old-fashioned atmosphere of tin ceilings and towering British Columbia Douglas-fir pillars. Then the owners retired and it sat empty for a year.

Built heritage matters

In 2017, an enterprising young woman with an innovative retail approach took over half the main floor and things started to bloom and grow. Dayle’s Grand Market is now a shopping destination again. Best of all, an iconic piece of Amherst’s built heritage is re-purposed and once more a vibrant part of this community.

Built heritage matters and it can be a driving force toward economic growth. Here in Amherst, it feels like a breath of fresh air to see all the changes happening along our streets.

Leslie Childs is Regional Representative for Cumberland, Colchester, and East Hants on the Board of Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.



Rhodes Manor, Havelock Street, Amherst, 2019 (Griffin photo)



A.A. Barker House, Regent Street, Amherst, 2019 (Griffin photo)

New Life for 'The Khyber'

Michael Erwin

Standing at 1588 Barrington Street, the Church of England Institute building has a storied past. Most people probably know the building as 'The Khyber', but it has been many things besides.

Commissioned by Bishop Hibbert Binney, and designed by architect Henry Busch, the Church of England Institute was constructed in 1888. It comprised such amenities as a library, lecture hall, billiards hall, and a smoking room. In the 1940s, the building was leased to the Naval Officers' Club for the duration of WW II. Since then it has been home to a diverse and eclectic procession of organizations: Fire Fighters' Association, Bean Sprout (health food store), Sanpaka (restaurant), Halifax Youth Clinic, Gay Alliance for Equality and the Turret Club (gay bar), Alternate Bookstore, Wormwood Cinema, Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op, Khyber Café, Kara's Salon, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, and of course the Khyber Arts Society. In 2014, the Khyber Arts Society and the Heritage Trust were compelled by Halifax Regional Municipality to vacate the building over asbestos concerns, and the building has been disused and in a state of disrepair since.

With such a storied past, many in the community have come to love and appreciate the building for its intrinsic physical beauty, historical value, and for the cultural significance of the groups and activities that 1588 Barrington Street has been home to. This was the inspiration for the creation of the 1588 Barrington Street Building Preservation Society.

The Society was formed to preserve the building, as the name suggests, and to restore it as a safe and accessible place in downtown Halifax for artists and members of marginalized communities to gather and create. Specifically, the Society's mission is "to create a collaborative multidisciplinary space that nurtures creativity, encourages experimentation and supports the development of artists



Proposed design of repurposed 'Khyber' building (courtesy David F. Garrett Architects)

and new artistic expression." After a years-long campaign to acquire the building from HRM, the Society purchased 1588 Barrington Street for one dollar (plus HST!) in November 2018.

Preliminary designs for the project have been created by David F. Garrett Architects. These plans include affordances for accessibility such as a ramp and new elevator, restoration of the heritage craftsmanship, and a new and modern fourth floor addition to add square footage.

Now is a crucial point in the story of this unique and beautiful heritage property. The Society is beginning a \$3.5M capital fundraising campaign in order to renovate and restore the building to its former beauty, with some modern

improvements. In addition to government support, the Society is looking to raise \$1.25M from private sources. The Society's first public fundraising event will be held in partnership with Neptune Theatre on May 30th. A portion of ticket sales from that evening's performance of *The Color Purple* will go to the 1588 Barrington Street Building Preservation Society's capital fund for the project.

To learn more about the Society, this fundraising event, and how you can donate or otherwise contribute to the mission of the Society, please visit <https://1588society.ca>

Michael Erwin is on the Board of the 1588 Barrington Street Building Preservation Society.

A Tribute to Arthur (Artie) Archibald Irwin

Dulcie Conrad

Artie, we will never know how much you cared. Eileen, your wife of 57 years, knew and so did your daughter Anne and your loving lab retriever. And maybe the hundreds who turned out for your memorial gathering in January knew. But, after more than 40 years of friendship, I had no idea that you had given so much time and passion to the community in which you found yourself, after coming to Halifax from Sheet Harbour to complete your education.

My god Artie, you even volunteered for 29 years with the CBC, freely dispensing energy information that helped home owners and others across the Maritimes with their heating and ventilation problems. And you found the time to assist in the restoration of numerous historic churches, St Margaret of Scotland in Oakfield (often referred to as the "Chapel in the Pines") for one, Fort Massey United Church in Halifax's South End for another, and you did



Professional portrait, late 1990s

dozens and dozens of church energy consultations. As well as heading up several companies of your own, being active in many professional associations,

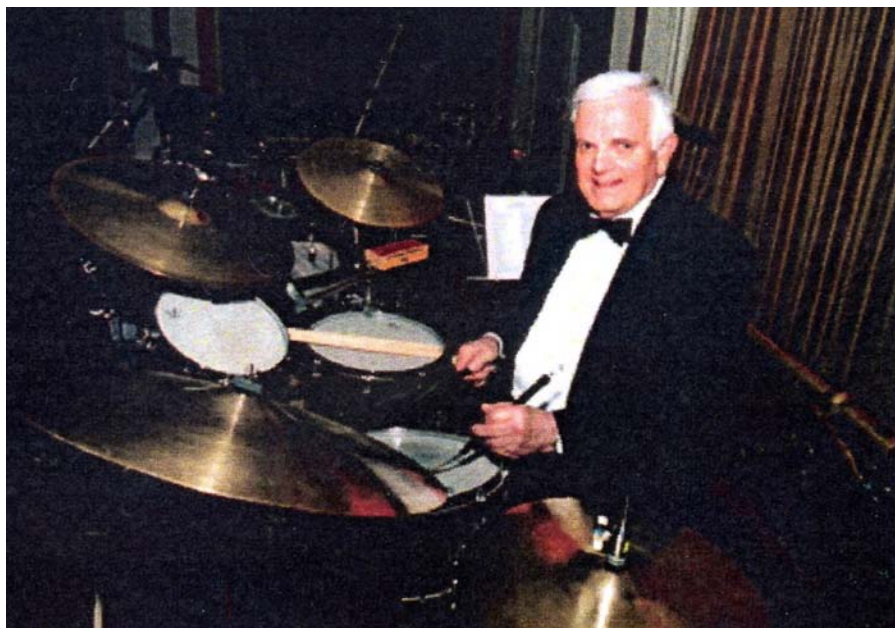
and serving on numerous scientific and standards committees in Canada and abroad, you still found time to graduate from the King's College public relations program.

One might ask what Eileen was doing all this time. Well, she was doing some pretty good work herself in the local area, heading up the Victorian Order of Nurses, which on a daily basis is worth its weight in gold.

You both took time to travel the world and to see first-hand how Europe's leaders dug out the original plans to rebuild many of their historic structures, which had been reduced to rubble by the devastation of local and world wars. You often wondered in your talks why many of Halifax's builders had so little interest in Canada's heritage. Artie, I recall you receiving a reward from a former Mayor and members of Halifax Regional Council in 2008 for your dedication and commitment to the Heritage Advisory Committee. And as a Life Member of the Heritage Trust, you were no less active on committees and writing for *The Griffin*.

You and Eileen both loved historic houses and were thrilled to find your 1920 Andrew Randall Cobb home for sale in 1971. She says she had just finished an exam in her BN program when you went to look at it, and you both appreciated the Arts and Crafts style with its oak walls, beamed ceilings, leaded glass windows, and original light fixtures.

Another thing which intrigued me about you, Artie, was your commitment to the Bengal Lancers Riding School for many years. You also served as long-time Public Relations chair of the Canadian Ski Association. And I understand you were invited several times to Austria as a guest of the government to assist in promoting tourism in that country. I saw the framed scroll hanging in your Halifax home office, stating that the Gold Medal was presented to you for outstanding



Artie Irwin with his drums at one of many gala functions where his Ensemble Plus provided big band music – this could be Robbie Burns Night, circa 1998



Art Irwin ("Mr Energy") doing his monthly CBC Radio Noon phone-in show, circa 2000



The Glenn Sarty Quintet, circa 1954 (L-R: Lloyd Peach, Al Simmons, Glenn Sarty standing behind Ron Davidson, and Artie Irwin)

contributions in the field of tourism.

I can't finish this tribute without a mention of your love of music and your beautiful tenor voice. You were active as a musician for 65 years. You also played a vital role in bringing the world to Halifax through the Halifax Jazz Festival, which later honoured you with the Susan Hunter Award, presented to an individual demonstrating leadership, creativity, and passion. They said that as a drummer you were known to generations of Haligonians, both through your own projects such as Ensemble Plus and the Artie Irwin Trio, and performing with dozens of other groups, including the CBC Revolving Bandstand, the Cliff Ledger Big Band, Erno Reti and his Continentals, the Lloyd Peach Quintet, the Glen Sarty Quintet, and the Dixie Tech 7. You were a singer in the early days of Singalong Jubilee, broadcast across the country, and both a drummer and a singer in the Armdale Choir, which through your efforts was recorded by Capital Records.

They told me that your favourite piece of music in all the world was *Moonlight in Vermont*, which was performed at your funeral. I hope that everyone who reads this all-too-short tribute will play it for you anytime and anywhere.

Thank you, Artie, for doing so much to make the world and this community a better place.

Dulcie Conrad is a native of Halifax, an artist and former journalist, and a long-time member of HTNS.

All photos and many details courtesy of Eileen Irwin

Companions



Photo by Arthur Irwin

Arthur Irwin submitted this photo to *The Griffin* in early December, accompanied by his title 'Companions – South Shore of Nova Scotia'. It is his last contribution and very poignant – see tribute in this issue. Thanks to his daughter Anne for her help in finding a high-resolution copy of the image. Artie's wife, Eileen, tells us that the photo was taken about 25 years ago and there are one or two ideas about where it might be. Perhaps sharp-eyed readers with good memories will be able to help with this detective work.

Joan Dawson – Nova Scotia's Lost Communities

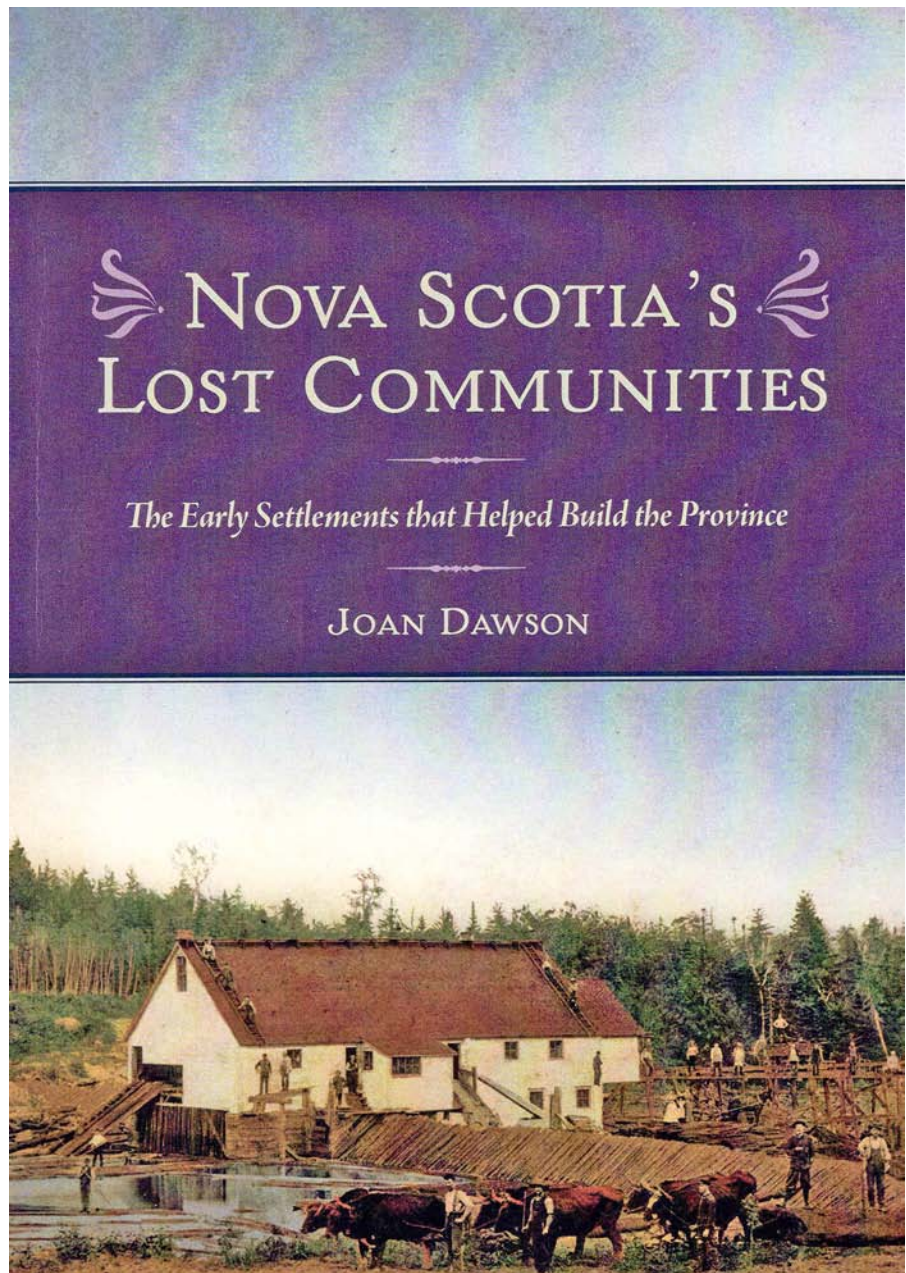
Halifax: Nimbus (2018) ISBN 978-1-77108-603-5 \$21.95

Donna McInnis

In a densely packed 130 pages, Dawson leads the reader to explore places where Nova Scotians once lived, built their homes, and dreamed their dreams, but which have since disappeared into obscurity. Some of the names remain familiar to us, commemorated by plaques, heritage designations, provincial or local museums, even Parks Canada. Others have names preserved only in local lore and family histories. Or they have reverted to sites unnamed, but with vestiges of habitation discovered and rediscovered by backwoods adventurers.

Joan Dawson's authority rests on the quality of her research, the precision of her information, the scope of her knowledge, and on her personal enthusiasm. Locations are described as only someone who has been there can do, and with a clarity that all who know the site will recognize at once. Half of the nearly sixty images in the book are attributed to her own collection. Dawson knows the places she writes about.

The accounts are succinct, with only three or four pages allotted to each story. Much of the history recounted here has been written about elsewhere. Michael Parker's books about the mining and the lumbering ghost towns of Nova Scotia have an echo here and others listed in her bibliography expand on the various tales she sketches. What is original about this book is the organization that Dawson imposes on her version of the narrative. The story is not chronological nor geographical. There is no travel itinerary suggested. The chapters are clustered around themes: 17th century Port Royal and 20th century Africville share the title *Victims of Destruction*; Electric City and Partridge Island have in common the heading *The Entrepreneurs*. The groupings provoke fresh reflection about what accounts for change, and in



particular what factors foretell extinction for communities.

Dawson's own Afterword offers the most compelling recommendation for her book. Like her, I am fascinated by the awareness that there were once real people who came to these places, created their communities, lived and loved there. Reconstructing their lives in these

forgotten places enriches my attachment to Nova Scotia, the place where I have made my home just as they once did.

Donna McInnis is a retired secondary school teacher who enjoys exploring back-country roads in a camper, in search of lost communities.

Model Ts at the Amirault Garage, West Pubnico

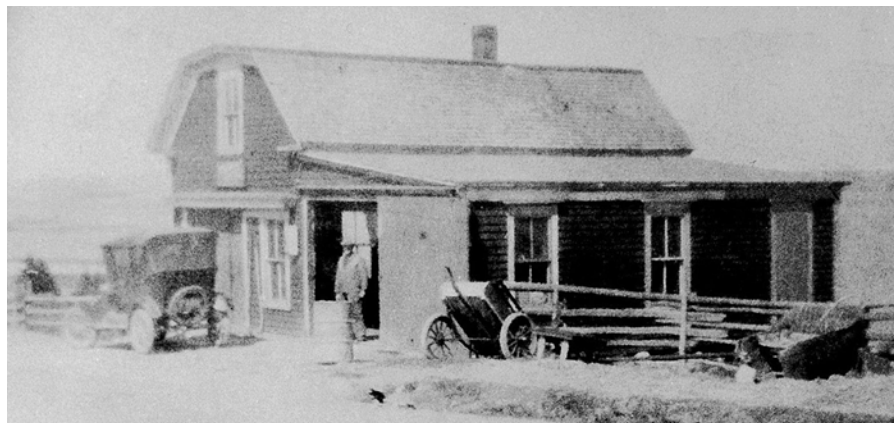


From the collection of Jeannine d'Eon, Les archives père Clarence d'Entremont (courtesy of Bernice d'Entremont, Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos et Centre de recherche, West Pubnico)

These two right-hand drive Model T Fords are parked at Léander 'Bouzique' Amirault's garage in West Pubnico, circa 1915. The two other vehicles are also right-hand drive, as Nova Scotia did not switch to driving on the right until April 1923. This building started out as a bicycle repair shop (perhaps built by Léander's brother Rudolph) and then moved on to fixing cars. It had a low wing added in 1926 (lower photo). The current garage was built behind the structure in the photo in 1947 by Sylvester Amirault, son of Léander.

The cars were manufactured at the Ford factory in Walkerville, Ontario, and many were exported to Australia and other countries driving on the left. Laurent d'Entremont submitted this photo to the Model T Ford Club International and they sent a plaque!

Note the quality of construction that went into a utilitarian building when this was first put up: wide trim, corner-



The 1926 addition added a bay; it has been suggested that the person standing outside may be Léander Amirault and the car may be his McLaughlin-Buick (accession no. 2002.47-P412, First garage of Léander Amirault, Les archives père Clarence d'Entremont; courtesy of Bernice d'Entremont, Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos et Centre de recherche, West Pubnico)

boards, eave returns, wooden drip caps over windows.

West Pubnico is still richly endowed with early Fords, thanks to Laurent d'Entremont, who built from parts a 1915 Model T (donated to the Village

Acadien Historique) and a 1927 Model T pickup; and drives a 1931 Model A wagon. Our thanks to Laurent and to Bernice d'Entremont for the photos and many historical details.

News Update from the Trust

At its January 26th meeting, the Board voted to grant \$4,025 from the **Buildings at Risk Fund** to Red Row Rising in Sydney Mines and an initial \$2,000 to the Amos Seaman House in Minudie.

The Red Row in Sydney Mines is a row of 12 brick (hence the name 'Red Row') miners' cottages. Nine of the units have been refurbished and are occupied but three units on one end are vacant and deteriorating. The community has done extensive work to identify a possible use for the units; it determined a creative work and socializing space would be an ideal future both for the buildings and the community. The project is proceeding under the auspices of the Sydney Architectural Conservation Society with considerable support from other community groups. They have requested funding for very basic maintenance.

The Minudie Heritage Society inherited the Amos Seaman house in 2008 but could not begin any repairs or restoration until the house was vacant. They are now planning the future of the house as a museum and tourist attraction. Unfortunately, there has been considerable structural deterioration in the last few years and an immediate need is for repairs to the foundation.

In Halifax, the Trust is actively supporting a proposal to develop a conservation district centred on **Historic Properties** and the area around **Province House**. The fate of non-registered "potential heritage" buildings is still a concern, however; about 30% have been demolished in the Downtown over the past decade. In the past month, members have participated in workshops and roundtables hosted by Parks Canada, a military history group, and Develop NS. The Trust was one of the groups supporting the independent review by Jan Gehl Architects of the Cogswell redevelopment plan; it has yielded some changes in HRM's plans. A park is planned to link the historic Granville Mall to the development to

the north. We are looking for continued recognition of the value and enhancement of these heritage buildings.

The **Communications Committee** is most often 'seen' on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/HeritageTrustNovaScotia/>) where it posts stories, photos and news articles to catch the attention of a range of built heritage and history enthusiasts. These can include items such as: the recent archaeological discovery at Province House; the finalizing of an agreement which allowed the repurposing of the Amherst train station; or photos of Maud Lewis's house, winner of a 2013 Built Heritage Award, on Heritage Day (which this year was focused on Maud Lewis and her art). This last post was seen by almost 3,500 people. We welcome photos and stories for sharing on-line (communications@htns.ca).

The next phase of the **Education Committee's** project, *Our Built Heritage*, is underway. An assessment will be made to determine how the product is being used in the classroom. The findings will be used to improve the interactive part of the site. The units developed to date can be found on the website: ourbuiltheritage.htns.ca.

Local coordinators are being identified for every Nova Scotia county for the **Doors Open for Churches** events being organized by the Places of Worship Committee. Offers of help or of churches to participate should be directed to the Chair, Marg Herdman (margareteherdman@yahoo.ca).

The **Awards Committee** is currently evaluating nominations for Built Heritage Awards in three categories. Chaired by Chris Sharpe (who photographed the early Shelburne buildings that grace the cover of the Trust's recent book, *Witnesses to a New Nation*), the Committee is looking forward to an awards ceremony in early summer.

Finally, a friendly reminder to check your membership status on your mailing label; it's renewal time.

Parks Canada Management Plan Review Workshop

The *Let's Talk Parks Canada Halifax!* gathering was a day-long workshop held at Pier 21 on 7 February 2019 with Parks Canada facilitators, stakeholders, and associated organizations. Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia was invited to participate in this 10-year review and renewal of the management vision.

Two main themes focused on (1) means to increase visitor attendance by way of modern communications and business models, and (2) special consideration of the form and content of Mi'kmaq representation at all Parks Canada sites. Hence, 'Communications' was the unifying discourse. Heritage Trust's person on the spot, Allen B. Robertson, took part in two diversity group sessions. These latter offered potential insight for the Trust in expanding and identifying heritage architecture associated with the Mi'kmaq as well as other groups so that the Trust can proclaim itself to be fully in support of all Nova Scotians' significant built legacies. Feedback from Parks Canada will be forthcoming by May 2019; the finalized management vision is to be submitted to the Federal Government in late summer of this year.

The groups represented at the workshop included: Halifax Citadel Society; Army Museum; Parks Canada - Mi'kmaq Mainland NS Advisory Committee; Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre; Province of Nova Scotia; Halifax Regional Municipality; Develop Nova Scotia; Ambassador Gray Line Murphy's; Halifax Port Authority; Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia/ Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council; Discover Halifax; Heritage Trust; Archaeology Society; Parks Canada Campus Club; Saint Mary's University; Parks Canada, Mainland NS Field Unit.

– Allen B. Robertson

Programs Sponsored by Other Societies

CHArt (Culture, Heritage, and Art Society)

High Tides Arts and Community Centre (formerly St David's United Church), Church Hill, Maitland, East Hants, NS

Season Opening Celebration: music and food, tour the repurposed heritage buildings, see the bell tower, photo exhibit, and other activities: Saturday 4 May, 1-8 pm.

Poetry Reading – Chad Norman and others: Sunday 19 May, 2 pm (optional donation).

Hants North Rural High School Band: Sunday 26 May, 2 pm (optional donation).

Colchester Historeum

29 Young Street, Truro, NS

A Taste of Science: Exhibit and March Break programs, Tuesday-Friday 19-22 March.

More info: <https://colchesterhistoreum.ca> or Facebook

Hammonds Plains Historical Society

The Origins of Hammonds Plains (1750 – 1820): Monday 25 March, 7 pm, at Cornerstone Wesleyan Church, 1215 Hammonds Plains Road.

The Life and Paintings of Hammonds Plains Artist Olive Haverstock: Monday 27 May, 7 pm, at Hammonds Plains Community Centre, 2041 Hammonds Plains Road

More info: <http://hammondsplainshistoricalsociety.ca> or Facebook

Highland Village Museum

4119 Highway 223, Iona, NS

Moonlight Snowshoe Walk at Hector's Point: Friday 15 March, 7 pm.

Hector's Point Snowshoe Walk: Sunday 24 March, 1 pm. To purchase tickets and rent snowshoes: <https://www.ionaheightsinns.com/events>

Industrial Heritage Nova Scotia

Lectures first Monday of month at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax, 7:30 pm

"Building the Port" – Halifax 1915-1928: Peter Ziobrowski, Monday 4 March (postponed)

Trucking and Milk Delivery: Bob Taylor, Monday 1 April

Windsor Textile Factory: Ed MacDonald, Monday 6 May

Little White Schoolhouse Museum

20 Arthur Street, Truro, NS

"There is no more practical way of saluting the flag, than to send a boy to Truro": The Agricultural Scholarships of 1925 and the Birth of the Antigonish Movement: Annual Dawson Lecture by Dr Peter Ludlow, Thursday 28 March, 7:30 pm at Colchester Historeum, 29 Young Street, Truro. More info: littlewhiteschoolhousemuseum@bellaliant.com or Facebook

Memory Lane Heritage Village

5435 Clam Harbour Road, Lake Charlotte, NS

Eastern Shore Cold Waters Seafood Festival: Saturday-Sunday 1-2 June, 11 am to 4 pm, admission \$5, 12 and under free. More info: 845-1937 or 1-877-287-0697; info@heritagevillage.ca; coldwatersfestival.ca

Nova Scotia Archaeology Society

All lectures in Burke Theatre A, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, at 7:30 pm

Homo Sacer and the Construction of Home: Myles McCallum, Tuesday 26 March

The Terrance Bay Mystery Wreck: Jonathan Kyte, Tuesday 23 April

Archaeology and Geology of the Ancestral Mi'kmaw: Gerald Gloade, Tuesday 28 May
For more info: <https://nsarchaeology.com>

Ross Farm Museum

4568 Highway 12, New Ross, NS

March Break Activities: 16-24 March, see website for full list.

For more info: <https://rossfarm.novascotia.ca>

Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society

Lectures held at the Public Archives, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax, at 7:30 pm

Invisible Victims: The Trial for the Murders of the Emoneau Family of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in 1791: Kenneth S. Paulsen, Wednesday 20 March

HMS Jervis Bay – the Nova Scotia and Maritime connections: Harold E. Wright, Wednesday 15 May, More info: <https://www.rnshs.ca> or Facebook

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia Illustrated Public Lectures

MARCH 21*

David Jones
**Underground Dartmouth:
finding Fort Clarence**

APRIL 18

Kelly Nelson
**A walk back through the history of Spring
Garden Road from 1749 to the present**

MAY 16

Claire Halstead
**At home with the horses of Halifax: the Bell
Road stables from 1908 to the present day**

All talks take place at 7:30 pm on the third Thursday of the month

*March location:

Helen Creighton Room,
Alderney Library, 60 Alderney Drive,
Dartmouth

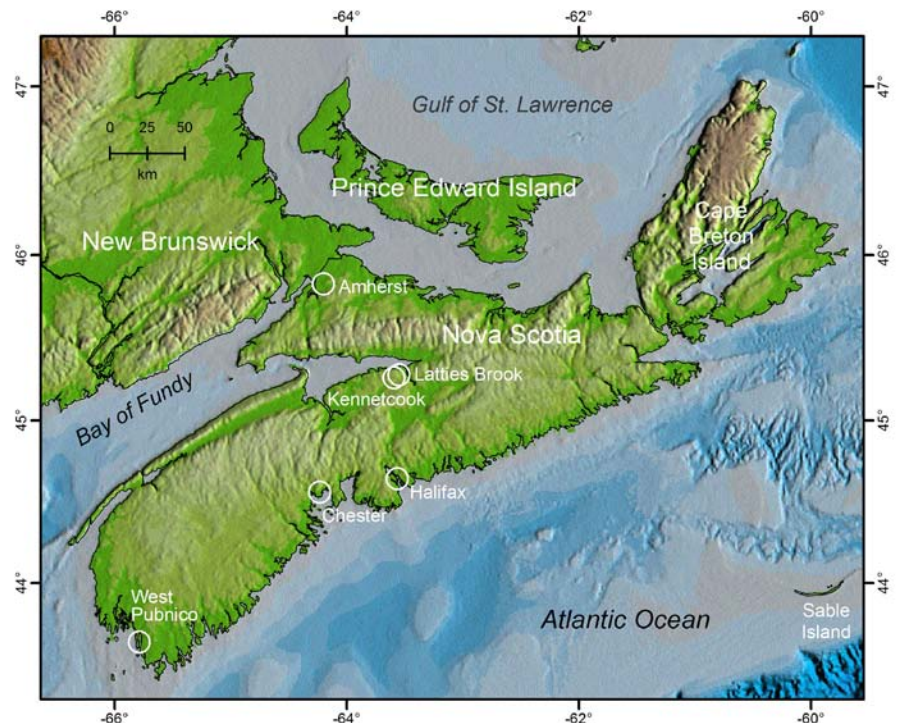
Take the ferry and you will be there!

April-May usual location:

Museum of Natural History Auditorium
1747 Summer Street, Halifax
Access from visitor's parking lot

Information 423-4807

Locations of subject matter in this issue



Base map data courtesy of Geological Survey of Canada, Natural Resources Canada