



June 2020

Volume 45 No. 2 ISSN 0384 7335

The Griffin

A Quarterly Publication of Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia



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The Griffin

A quarterly newsletter
published by
**Heritage Trust of
Nova Scotia**

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ONS, QC,
Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia

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Layout: Douglas Porter
Printers: etc. Press Ltd

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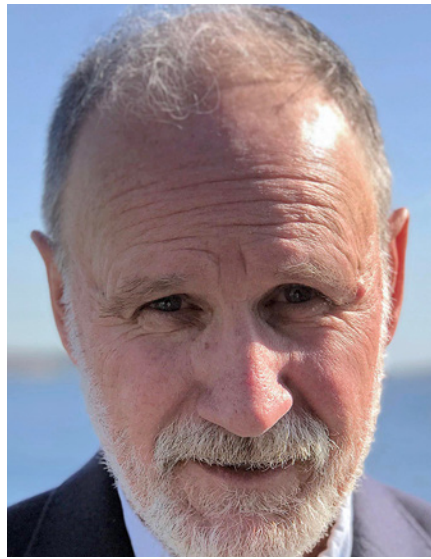
We welcome submissions
but reserve the right to edit
for publication. Contributions
appear in both print and
web editions.

Deadline for the next issue:
24 July 2020

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Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
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All donations are tax creditable.

President's Report



Andrew Murphy

This summer, the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia is working on indexing past issues of *The Griffin*, which we have been publishing continuously since 1976, some 44 years. In light of this re-examination of past issues, I think it's important to reflect on and document the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in our province, with the thought that perhaps, 50 years from now, someone might be wondering what our thoughts were at this time.

Certainly the effect on Nova Scotia has been huge. In addition to the tragic loss of life (56 at time of writing), there has been a tremendous impact on the economy. Fifty thousand jobs were lost in April, on top of 25,000 in March; there has been a 25% decline in hours worked. Nova Scotians are wondering just how quickly we can recover from this nearly unprecedented shock.

One of the advantages of being heritage-minded is the ability to reflect on experiences from the past, and to use that knowledge when deciding what to do in the future. An event that jumps to my mind is the Great Depression. The stock market crash of 1929 caused a huge disruption in the economy, and as confidence waned, people collectively

pulled back. At that time, my grandfather had a large factory in downtown Halifax, where the Scotiabank Centre is now. According to family lore, six weeks after the crash, he imposed a 20% wage cut on himself and all of his workers. This strategy really worked – to cause the economy to decline more. By 1930, gross economic activity had fallen more than 42% below the 1929 levels. As is the case now, it was worse out West: eventually, on the Prairies, two-thirds of the population were on relief.

Among the lessons learned here is that, when these economic storms hit, it is exactly the right time for governments to step up and spend money, to get the economy going again. In the 1930s, it took 10 long years to restart the economy, which only really recovered because of the outbreak of the Second World War. Unfortunately, today in Halifax, the government continues to do exactly the wrong thing. The City has postponed the hiring of new planning staff, including a new heritage position, until the economy improves. They have also delayed a \$2 million grant program to refurbish the newly-created Heritage Conservation Districts in Schmitzville and the Old South Suburb, a fund which, with property owner matching, would have created \$4 million of improvements to these districts and much needed economic activity. Finally, while continuing to run empty buses with great frequency, the City has cancelled all of their student internships this summer.

Not to be undervalued is the impact this decision has on the students themselves. Having graduated with my first degree in the early 1980s, into a massive recession with interest rates hitting the 20% range, I know what happens to students' confidence. It's not just the money that the students don't earn; it's also the lost work experience and the references so key to their eventual permanent job search. A further loss is the contribution of the students' work. These students are talented, and have been

continued on page 13

Cover image: Detail from *The Armoury*, by Gordon MacDonald, 2020, oil on canvas, 30"x30"
(courtesy of the artist and Argyle Fine Art)

ARTIST

Gordon MacDonald

Gordon MacDonald was born and raised in Atlantic Canada, spending most of his childhood in New Brunswick and Newfoundland. He studied Art at the Toronto School of Art, the Ontario College of Art and Design, and the Art Students' League in New York City.

Gord returned to the Maritimes in 1999 and has developed his artistic practice ever since. He works and lives in Halifax and exhibits regularly at Argyle Fine Art. His work can be found in permanent corporate and private collections across Canada, the USA, and internationally.



Closure, by Gordon MacDonald, 2019, oil on canvas, 22"x36" (courtesy of the artist and Argyle Fine Art, available for purchase)



Antigonish, by Gordon MacDonald, 2020, oil on canvas, 36"x48" (courtesy of the artist and Argyle Fine Art)

Caring for the Caregivers - Nurses Residence, Victoria General Hospital, Halifax

Gloria Stephens

As we have been living with the COVID-19 pandemic over the past few months, the heroic efforts of our healthcare and other front-line workers have attracted new appreciation and thanks. This article on efforts to improve accommodation for nursing students over the years is therefore very timely.

Before telling the story of the Bethune Building, it is important to recall what nurses endured with regard to their accommodation when a formal hospital was first built to serve the citizens of Halifax and Nova Scotia. In about 1859, a wooden hospital was built on the South Common. Known as the City Hospital, it was not a success. The 'improved' Provincial and City Hospital replaced it in 1867. Recommendations were made in the hopes of improving patient care and working conditions for staff, especially the doctors. One such recommendation, according to the Annual Report, was to hire two trained nurses.

Between 1867 and 1887, conditions within the hospital remained the same, especially for nurses. Still untrained for the most part, they received little pay and absolutely no consideration for

their accommodation or welfare. In fact, nurses shared empty beds on the patient wards: one would get up to go on duty and another would then sleep in the same bed. How they managed their personal care was not documented.

In 1887, the hospital was renamed the Victoria General in honour of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. At this time, wings were added to the original hospital, which was given the separate name 'Jubilee Building', and the bed capacity almost doubled to 140 beds. A separate apartment was made in a wing for the House Surgeon, but no accommodation yet for nurses, who continued to sleep in the empty ward beds.

The increase in hospital beds and the move to specialization in medicine or surgery made more demands on nurses; staffing became a major issue. In 1890, the first organized nursing school in the Maritimes was developed at the VG. The Lady Superintendent, Julie Purdy, from New Brunswick, a graduate of Boston, demanded that a 'proper' nurses' residence be built immediately. An existing house close to the hospital was purchased to house twenty student nurses and the Lady Superintendent, who would supervise the students not only in the hospital but in the residence

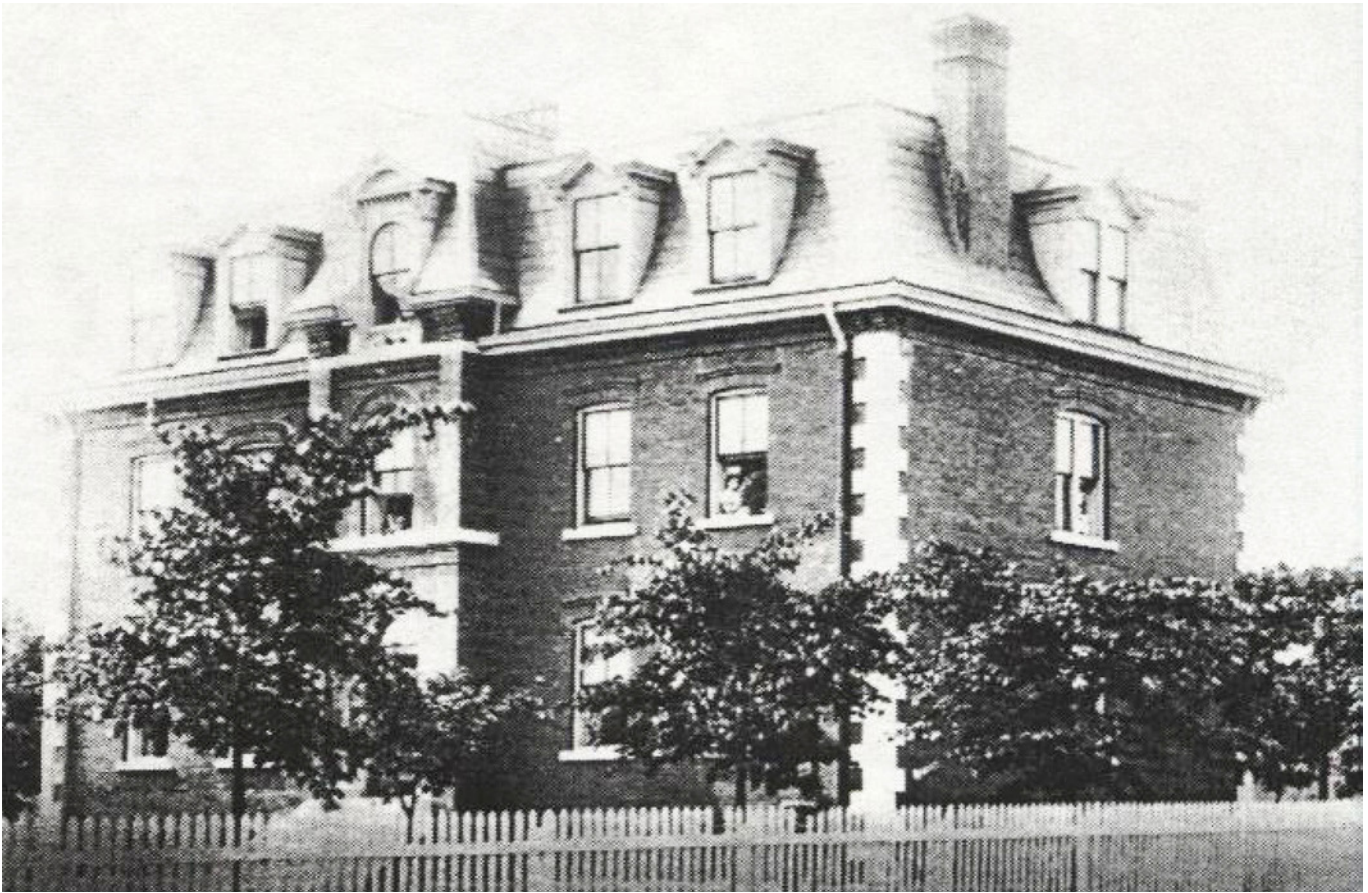
as well.

As the hospital's bed capacity, services, and technology increased, so did the need for more staff. Student nursing classes were expanded, demanding a larger residence. This second residence sat northeast of the hospital's north wing and parallel to Morris Street (now University Avenue). It remained until 1951. One nice addition was a set of four tennis courts. Although well used by all staff, the courts eventually became a parking lot.

When a new hospital replaced the old VG in 1948, the second residence was also demolished. The Cathedral Barracks, several long, two-level, wooden buildings behind All Saints Cathedral, had been occupied during WW II by the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC). After the war, these buildings were used for a Polio Clinic; School for Social Workers; sleeping rooms for unmarried male Dalhousie University students, medical interns, and residents; study rooms; and the temporary nursing student residence. Everyone had to double up while living in the Barracks, and occasionally there were three students to a room, which made it difficult when one was on night-duty and trying to sleep during the day. Although the 'rules' of residence



Victoria General Hospital, c. 1900 (courtesy VGH School of Nursing Archives)



First Nurses Residence, date and photographer unknown (courtesy VGH School of Nursing Archives)

still prevailed, there was one advantage to living there: it was easier to sneak out of an evening – just slide down the escape ramp. It was a little more difficult getting back in wearing high heels, but a friend would throw down sneakers, making the climb up a bit easier.

The third Nurses Residence sits in approximately the same location as the second, parallel to University Avenue. It opened in late 1952. Why the need for a new residence? The 500-bed Victoria building was equipped with the most up-to-date technology for administering patient care. Once again staffing became an immediate problem. How better to answer the call than to increase the student numbers?

The nine-storey residence was equipped with storage lockers, classrooms, an auditorium, and a huge, hardwood-floored room, where dances, receptions, and special ceremonies were

held. The 'Ballroom' is used to this day on the first Tuesday of a month for VGH School of Nursing Alumni meetings. Immediately adjacent to the front door was a glassed-in reception office, which functioned as a mail room and communications centre. Student nurses had to keep a curfew and the 'House-Mother' checked students out and in. She re-

ally had their interest at heart. It could become awkward if she thought that a chap did not 'make the mark'. When he called again, she would say, "Oh, you're not the one she is expecting."

The first and second floors accommodated unmarried Head Nurses and Nursing Supervisors who wished to live in residence. Their one-bedroom suites



Cathedral Barracks (courtesy VGH School of Nursing Archives)

contained a small kitchenette, as their main meals were eaten in the hospital's main cafeteria. Individual student rooms were furnished like a university residence. There was a common bath and shower room in the wings of each floor; it was quite a challenge when everyone was trying to get out of the residence before curfew! Each wing had a small kitchenette supplied with milk, coffee, tea, juice and bread, so the students could have a snack.

Many changes occurred during the 1970s. By 1972, male nursing students, interns, and residents were given rooms on the second floor and two wings on the fifth floor were designated as male and female areas. Offices for the School of Nursing took up the first floor; the second floor became a training area.

By 1983, all education services were amalgamated as the Education Services Division within the Nurses Residence. Toward the end of the 1980s, all floors except 5, 6, and 7 were dedicated to offices of some kind. Nursing students from the Halifax area were requested to live at home; if this were impossible, they could rent a room in the residence for \$100 a month and purchase meal tickets in the hospital cafeteria.

The Board of Governors made the decision in the late 1980s to name the Nurses Residence the 'Bethune Building' in honour of Dr Clarence M. Bethune, Administrator of the hospital from 1945 to 1969. The VGH School of Nursing Alumni sent many letters arguing that the building should be named after an outstanding nurse. Names were submitted, to no avail; the letters were not even answered (copies of these letters form part of the School of Nursing Archives, housed in an anteroom off the Ball-room).

Outside the main door, a bronze "plaque donated by September Class 1956" still marks the building as "Nurses Residence, Victoria General Hospital," but the future of the building is once again in question, as the VG site faces more change.



Former Nurses Residence, now Bethune Building, Victoria General Hospital, with flag at half mast following the April shooting tragedy in the midst of pandemic (Griffin photo)

For further information on the nursing archives, see <https://www.halifax-vghnursesalumni.ca/filemanager/files/VGHNursingArchives.pdf>

Gloria Stephens is Manager of the VGH School of Nursing Archives in the Bethune Building.

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia 2020 Annual General Meeting

Due to current legislation prohibiting meetings of more than ten persons, the Board of Directors of Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia has decided to postpone the 2020 Annual General Meeting.

This decision has been made in accordance with Section 14 of the *Emergency Management Act*, which states:

... a required in-person meeting can be deferred, without penalty or recourse, for a period of up to 90 calendar days after the last date of the declared state of emergency ...

We will advise the new date for the Annual General Meeting when the current State of Emergency has been lifted and the new date is determined.

Please feel free to contact our President, Andrew Murphy, by email at president@htns.ca with any questions.

To read the Emergency Management Act, please go to this link: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Ministers-direction-EMA-AGM.pdf>

HERITAGE FOR SALE

John Walsh House, 150 Main Street, Guysborough

This beautiful property overlooking Guysborough Harbour is a rare find, an historic 2312 sq. ft home dating to 1857 and lovingly restored by the late owner to the point of provincial heritage designation. With its period storefront facing on Main Street and its walkout basement, garden, and ocean view behind, it has approximately 69 feet of frontage on the harbour, a reliable drilled well, and municipal sewer. A large attractive workshop and potting shed and a small storage shed are located behind the house. With three bedrooms and two bathrooms, it has served well as a retirement property with room for visitors. Located in the historic town of Guysborough, with many heritage properties, numerous culinary and cultural amenities, on a beautiful part of the Nova Scotia coast, with nearby access to the Trans-Canada Highway, this historic property is looking for a sympathetic buyer who will appreciate its unique character, history, and the care bestowed on it by the late owner.

The John Walsh house was originally built as a family residence and tailor shop. This account is drawn from an article by Christopher Cook, of the Guysborough Historical Society, in the September 2015 issue of *The Griffin*. The home had been vacant for about 15 years when Henri and Minke van der Putten purchased it in 1989. Henri had supervised restoration work at historic sites, including Fortress Louisbourg, Fort Beausejour, and Fort Selkirk. Minke fondly recalls that Henri was not going to “retire and sit around,” but after they had started the work on the house, she wondered what they had gotten themselves into. In addition to new cedar roof shingles and new clapboard cladding, all the original trim work and windows were repaired. Henri was a stickler for detail. The glass in the entire house is period. Beginning in 1990, the project took almost four years to complete inside and out.



The John Walsh home today, with heritage storefront (courtesy Marilyn Sceles)



The John Walsh tailor shop (courtesy Christopher Cook)

The home is beautifully finished and has a warm and comfortable feel. Though the rooms are spacious, each feels cozy and lived-in. A unique feature of the house is the Victorian tailor and millinery shop that remains in the front eastern end of the building. The van der Puttens chose not to remodel the shop, but to leave it as it was, complete with window and wall shelving, separate entrance, and spacious counters. Minke expressed the hope that one day someone will use it once again as a retail space – another opportunity for a new buyer?

This was a project that required hard work, skill, attention to detail, dedication, time, financial commitment, and love and respect for authentic craftsmanship. The van der Puttens had all these and put them to very good use.

Asking price \$269,250
For further details contact
Marilyn Sceles, Sceles Realty Ltd,
+1-902-318-5678 (Antigonish)
or +1-902-318-5678 (Boylston)
<http://scelesrealty.ca>

Canada Post Abandons Landmark Public Building in Dartmouth

Donald L Forbes

In February 2020, Canada Post, a federal Crown corporation, walked away from the iconic public post office building which has stood in the centre of Dartmouth since the First World War. With a broad forecourt and tree-lined adjacent parking lot, First World War memorial, and plaque marking the location of Dartmouth's first school, this place has been the central square in old-town Dartmouth for more than a century. While disappointing, the departure of the post office was not unexpected, as it follows on the Corporation's sad and countless abandonments of publicly-funded heritage structures in communities throughout Nova Scotia and across Canada. The writing had been on the wall for several years, as Canada Post opened retail franchise outlets in grocery stores and pharmacies across the former City of Dartmouth, including one four blocks away and four others within a 2.6 km radius, and diverted deliveries to those locations instead of the main post office.

... the progressive and ongoing disposal of prominent Crown assets and community landmarks has been a sad affront to the public interest

Canada Post has walked away from imposing public structures from Truro to Annapolis Royal, from Shelburne to Amherst, to Baddeck, to Sydney Mines, and many others. To be fair, some of these were left behind before the Post Office became a Crown corporation in 1981. The 1886 Yarmouth Post Office was demolished in 1959. And the old Post Office in Pictou, which has sat for decades as an eyesore in the centre of town, was abandoned in 1956. Repeated in place after place across Canada, the progressive and ongoing disposal of prominent Crown assets and community landmarks has been a sad affront to



Dartmouth Post Office with mid-century addition, Government of Canada coat-of-arms, First World War memorial, and plaque marking the site of the Quaker Meeting House, Dartmouth's first school, and first fire hall (Griffin photo, May 2016)

the public interest.

In some places, successful new uses have been found. The Dominion Public Building in Amherst (to which the post office moved from its older abode down the street in the 1930s) is now the Amherst Town Hall. In Truro, the former post office serves the same function. The old post office in Baddeck is home to the Bras d'Or Lakes and Watershed Interpretive Centre. But the sad reality is that when the post office walks away, it leaves the community with a hollowed-out centre and a major challenge to find a successful and compatible alternative use.

These structures were all the products of a massive building program by the Dominion government over the 50 years and more following Confederation. Together they represent an extraordinary portfolio of public works, designed and built to provide the face and services of the federal govern-

ment in communities large and small from coast to coast. The Dartmouth Post Office was designed at the very end of the long career of David Ewart, third Dominion Chief Architect (1897-1914), following Thomas Seaton Scott (1871-1881) and Thomas Fuller (1881-1896). Under Ewart's direction, his office completed more than 340 new public buildings and major renovations, from which emerged "a recognizable federal design vocabulary across the country."¹ These projects ranged from the Minto Wing and other additions to Rideau Hall, the Royal Canadian Mint, the Dominion Observatory, the Victoria Memorial Museum, and many others in Ottawa, to the Post Office, Court House, and Commissioner's Residence in Dawson, Yukon. They included 183 post offices and 45 armouries in all nine provinces.² In Nova Scotia, Ewart's work comprised 16 post offices, including Bedford Row at George Street in Halifax (currently the



Dartmouth Post Office, c. 1920, photographer: Allen Fraser. Note tower of Grace Methodist (later United) Church in right background and house on corner at left (Samuel Greenwood House, 1797), which still stands (courtesy Dartmouth Heritage Museum, acc. no. 1975.55.46)



Art Gallery of Nova Scotia), and numerous other projects such as the Baddeck, Middleton, Windsor, Truro, and Amherst armouries, and the Lawlor Island Quar-

antine Station and Winter Hospital.³

The Dartmouth Post Office, designed in his “very controlled, sober manner”¹ at the peak of Ewart’s career, was constructed of grey-brown sandstone, with a granite foundation, tall arched windows, and an elegant, bell-capped, clock tower. Sometime before 1962, the mid-century addition was built using the same stone. J.P Martin notes that demolition to clear the site for the Dartmouth Post Office was underway in 1914⁴ (alas he does not mention what structures were removed). Although the design was ready before Ewart stepped down, he was appointed to the post-retirement position of Dominion Consulting Architect and would have retained broad oversight until the building was completed in 1917. The tower was removed in 1977. What a project it would be to rebuild it!

We mourn the loss of the true func-

tion of this building and the threat to the public open space it oversees. We hope that an appropriate public use can be found. The Dartmouth Heritage Museum has been promised a new home for years and the Post Office could be renovated to serve that purpose. Efforts are underway to ensure appropriate heritage designation, and it might be reasonable to hope that Canada Post would support efforts to ensure retention of this heritage structure in and for the community.

¹G.W. Fulton. Ewart, David, in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/ Université Laval (2003), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ewart_david_15E.html (accessed 2020-06-03).

²As they were by the end of Ewart’s term.

³Ewart, David, in *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950*, <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1559> (accessed 2020-06-03).

⁴J.P. Martin. *The Story of Dartmouth*. Dartmouth, privately printed (1957), p. 514.

Wesley Knox United Church, now the Home of Wooden Window and Door Co., Woodville, Kings County

Michal Crowe

Woodville is a small farming community of about 200 people in the Annapolis Valley, at the foot of the North Mountain. It has a thriving apple industry and is famous for its Chicken Barbecue, held each year at the Boates Farm during the Annapolis Apple Blossom Festival. The Foote Family Farm, also famous for its apples, has extensive beehives for the family's honey business and carries supplies for other beekeepers.

The community of Woodville was settled in the early 1800s and known as Kinsmans Corner. It was renamed Woodville in 1864 after settler Samuel Wood, who had purchased land there in 1807. The community was, and remains, a small village, but is noteworthy for having not one but two repurposed heritage buildings. The first is the community centre, located in the former school, which was built in 1942. The other is the former Wesley Knox United Church, built in the spring of 1921 at a cost of \$22,000 to serve the Methodists and Presbyterians of Woodville and district.

The Church

The dedication service was held on 8 September 1921, conducted by Dr Clarence MacKinnon, Principal of Pine Hill Divinity College in Halifax, assisted by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Hon. MacCallum Grant. On 22 April 1922, the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia passed an Act incorporating the "Union Church" of Woodville, Kings County. The 'New Union Church' thus preceded the 1925 union of Canadian Methodists, Congregationalists, and most Presbyterians to form the United Church of Canada. At this point, the Union Church became Woodville United Church.

A mortgage burning ceremony was held on 9 June 1946, with services both morning and evening, and special music



Former Wesley Knox United Church, now Wooden Window and Door Co., Woodville, NS (courtesy Peter Cheney)

written for the occasion. Later, in 1948, the congregation voted to change the name to Wesley Knox United Church, thus perpetuating the memory of the union of two congregations.

[In] 1922, the Legislative Assembly ... passed an Act incorporating the "Union Church" of Woodville

As time passed, memorial stained glass windows, including three designed by Terry Smith-Lamothe, were donated by members of the congregation. Others were acquired through a Memorial Window Fund. An 800 lb bell was donated to the church by Mr W. Orr, in

memory of his brother, who was killed in the Halifax Explosion.

Over time the congregation declined. For a while, alternating services were held with the neighbouring congregation in Waterville, but even that plan had to be revised. Both church buildings were then put on the market; the congregation of the one which sold first would join with the remaining church, which today is Waterville United Church.

The Business

The Wesley Knox United Church was sold to Troy Wood in 2007. It has since become the site of Troy's business, the

Wooden Window and Door Company. Recently Troy removed the bell from the steeple and installed it in front of the building for all to see.

Initially, the business produced only windows, but the need for the accompanying doors soon became apparent. The company now offers a wide range of products, manufactured on-site from exotic woods, featuring various architectural styles and finishes, which are sold across North America and beyond.

The Wesley Knox United Church was sold to Troy Wood in 2007 [and became the home] of... the Wooden Window and Door Company

According to Troy, "We started this company first because period architecture is our passion and second because, in this increasingly sterile world of vinyl and plastic, it has become difficult to find [skilled] crafters [in wood]. We are committed to the creation of aesthetically correct sash and doors, where form bolsters function and function bolsters form. We are a company that has come to understand the essence of old windows and doors and their interaction with the entirety of the home. Using age-old building techniques with select high quality woods and modern bonding and finishing material, our products are not mere reproductions - they are real, old-fashioned sash and doors, possessing high performance and great longevity."

The Interview

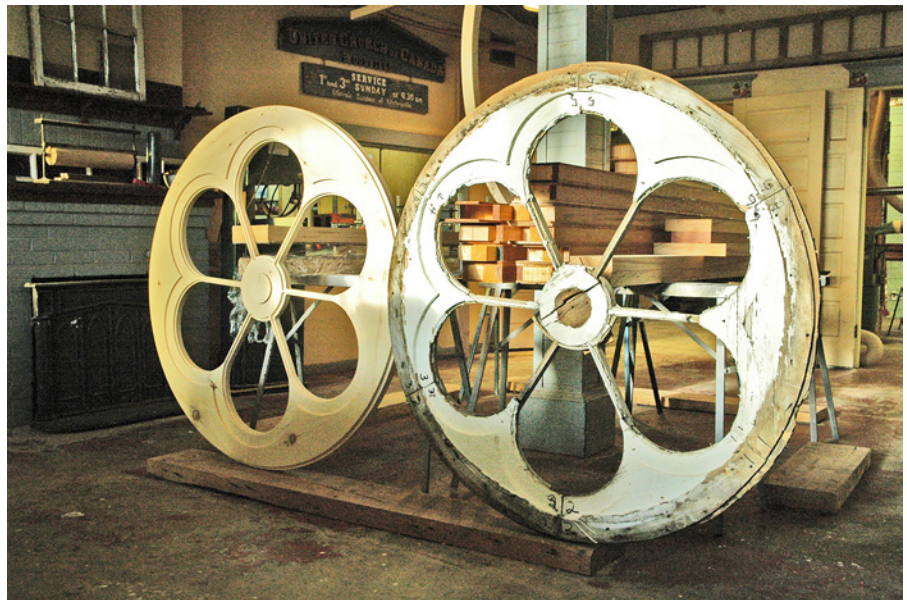
Troy was kind enough to take time from his work to answer some questions on his business in the repurposed church building.

What did you do before you started Wooden Windows?

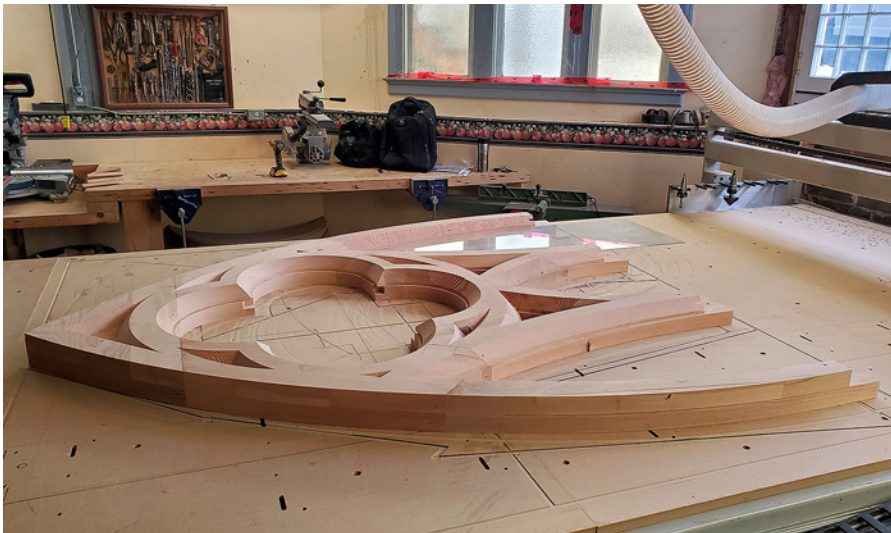
I graduated with a BA (philosophy) from Acadia and then went on to a tech school (ITI Halifax). Much of my early adult life was as a Java/Oracle programmer. I was working with the IRS in Washington DC during 9/11.



Window crafted for Clarence Baptist Church (courtesy Troy Wood)



Windows new and old, St Andrew's United Church, Rexton, NB (courtesy Troy Wood)



Window in progress for Presbyterian Church of St David, Halifax (courtesy Troy Wood)

What prompted you to start the company?

I needed a sash for my basement. The existing one was bad, so with some basic tools I made a nine lite sash that got compliments from friends and family. A neighbour was so impressed he asked me if I would do one for him and I did. After that, the local building supply retailers got wind there was a sash maker in the area and a lot of small but fun jobs ensued at a hobbyist level.

I have always been drawn to historic architecture. There was (and still is) a magical lure to perfect architecture for me. This architectural perfection is largely a thing of the past, but the windows and doors are items over which we still have control. They can exist autonomously on any building and, as wretched as the structure may be, we still say, "look at those windows and doors." That's powerful when you really think about it. This, along with a void in availability, is why I started my company.

... our products are not mere reproductions - they are real, old-fashioned sash and doors, possessing high performance and great longevity

The first time I actually believed I could do this full-time was after high

profile architects and designers started calling for really interesting projects – I said yes to many projects that should have been over my head at the time but somehow managed to pull them off.

Did you have to take any special training?

No special training. Ironically however, my previous IT career was instrumental in what I do currently. The Heritage Carpentry Program from NSCC have brought their classes to my building many times and the question always arises: What is the most important piece of equipment in the shop? it is my computer! Not the romantic image of the old man with a beard and overalls that everyone expects, but there it is. We should be building amazing things with the technology we have at our disposal.

How was the church chosen for your business, were you located somewhere else first?

I started out in the basement and garage of my home. As good contracts started to present themselves and I realized I could do this as a job, I started looking for a location. The church came up for sale and I put an offer on it immediately. As I was one of many prospective bidders, the congregation had to decide who was going to get it and they

chose me (I offered \$1000 over asking price so this probably helped). The building could not be better suited for what I am doing. It fit my requirements like a glove and the aesthetic ambience only bolstered the fit. Prospective customers love coming to the old church to talk about their project.

The building could not be better suited ... It fit my requirements like a glove and the aesthetic ambience only bolstered the fit

Can you tell us about the time capsule you found in the church?

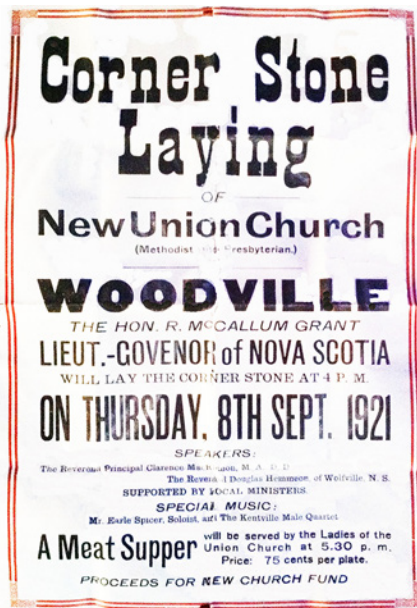
At the time the building was sold nobody remembered that the time capsule existed. When I bought the building in 2007, a woman well into her 90s, Edna Lacey, invited me over for tea and told me it was there.

I was fortunate enough to locate the granite time capsule containing details of the church construction. It had been placed in the cornerstone of the church by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Hon. MacCallum Grant, in 1921. Contained in the time capsule were a small Bible; several coins; a copy of the *Presbyterian Witness* of June 1921; copies of *The Wesleyan* and *The Advertiser*; a bill from B.C. Goodwin, Carpenter and Builder; a list of the members of the Building Committee; a poster publicizing the dedication; and a list of the Ministers.

I can honestly tell you, when I put my hand in the wall and grabbed hold of that capsule, it was a feeling I doubt I will ever feel again - so exciting.

Most challenging and rewarding achievement?

The timing of this question could not be better. I currently have a contract for all six windows on the south side of the Presbyterian Church of Saint David on Grafton Street, Halifax. These ogival windows are over 18 feet high, 6 feet wide, and 6 inches thick. The demands of this project are really high and I have had to approach it with a militant degree of organization. The problem with



Poster for the cornerstone laying, 1921, found in the time capsule (courtesy Troy Wood)

large scale complex windows is you have to make all the parts to all the windows sequentially to be efficient, profitable, and yield a high-quality product. Systematic errors are the wolves always sitting outside the door. But this project has brought me that illusive sense of unadulterated joy.

... currently have a contract for all six windows on the south side of the Presbyterian Church of Saint David on Grafton Street, Halifax

Where is your product going?

We ship all over Canada and the US. Last year we shipped a sea container of mahogany windows and doors to Bermuda. Most of our work these days is going to PEI and New Brunswick.

How do you advertise?

I've never done a stitch of conventional advertising. I'm pretty sure I am still on the first page of google search results for wooden windows or doors. I owe the internet a lot of credit – it's been good to me.

Do you accept small projects or only large ones?

We do both.

What is next on the horizon?

I want to build a web application that streamlines the process for organizations (churches, museums, etc.) to get replica replacements for their specialty windows which have become beyond repair. This is a daunting process even for advanced carpenters and architects. It is also very expensive, but I think that price can come down a lot if I could get this application and dedicated infrastructure built. I've made so many exact reproductions at this point that I have never been so sure that many of the windows of interest you see were generally produced via universal jigs. The only variable is the scale. Once upon a time, during the building process of a church, when it came time to order the windows, you could select from a catalogue the styles you wanted. Many congregations today do not have the funds to replace those windows and I believe there is an opportunity to use technology to make the whole process easier and thus more affordable for everyone.

Have you received any awards?

Still waiting!

Our thanks to Troy Wood for his generosity during a trying period; Sarah Wallace, Archivist, Maritime Conference Archives of the United Church; Charlotte and Keith Boates, former members of the church; Peter Cheney, retired photographer and *Globe and Mail* journalist; Lorna Huestis, United Church of Canada; and Genevieve Allen Hearn, *The Grapevine*.

Reference: *The Story of Wesley Knox United Church*, as collected by Lorna Smith.

President's Report *continued from page 2*

trained in the most recent technology. It is far better, for all of us, to employ them than to keep them at home on a subsistence stipend.

We at the Heritage Trust are committed not to repeat the errors of the past (or present). We have already hired six students and recent graduates to move various heritage projects forward this summer. We believe that we will complete the research needed to establish HCDs in Downtown Dartmouth and the Old North End (Brunswick Street). In addition to this, our Planning and Architecture interns will be collaborating on an exciting project under the direction of Gerry Post, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate, to study and create guidelines for accessibility options for heritage structures. Our Architecture intern will also be completing a study on the Red Row in Sydney Mines (the oldest example of workers' housing in Canada), assisting with plans for a Polish church hall in Whitney Pier, and documenting successful adaptive reuse projects around the province. It is our hope that we can prepare some worthy heritage projects to be "shovel-ready" when the inevitable infrastructure money comes down from Ottawa to get our economy growing again.

This summer, Nova Scotia's tourism industry is going to take a \$2 billion hit. Unemployment will be rampant. But sooner or later tourism will come back; our combination of modern buildings and unique, high-quality heritage structures will still make our province a vibrant place for tourists to come to enjoy. We need to continue to work to protect our heritage assets and the advantage they offer: making our province such a unique destination. In this time of crisis, let's take the time to plan to preserve and restore our local heritage. We need to move forward decisively and with confidence. When the tourists return, they will find Nova Scotia even better than before.

The Library, Shirreff Hall, Dalhousie University - an Historically Important Room

Elizabeth Burke

Shirreff Hall, the first women's residence at Dalhousie University, opened its doors to students in 1923. The need for a women's residence had been recognized years earlier but no funding was available until Jennie Shirreff Eddy came forward with her extremely generous donation of \$300,000.

Mrs Eddy was a former nurse and the wealthy widow of Ezra B. Eddy, founder of the Eddy Match Co. and later the E.B. Eddy Co., a large pulp and paper company based in Hull, PQ. The life and times of Jennie Shirreff Eddy is a tale, perhaps saved for another time. Her vision was for a residence that would be both elegant and homelike for the students. The Hall is named in memory of her parents.

The Georgian-style building was designed by architects Frank Darling of Toronto and Andrew R. Cobb of Halifax. Andrew Cobb (1876-1943) was one of the most renowned architects to work in Atlantic Canada. The Library of Shirreff Hall is an impressive testament to his architectural mastery, his attention to detail, and his decorating talent. The profession of decorating did not come into being until the 1930s; prior to that, decorating for significant projects often fell under the purview of the architect.

Of the three principal rooms in the Hall, the Victorian Lounge, the Library, and the Study Hall, the Library is particularly significant for several reasons. Cobb's original notes on the furnishings and decorations to complete the room have been retained.¹ Many of the original furnishings and fitments were designed by Cobb and are still in place and use today. The notes include reference to the local craftsmen and suppliers used to outfit the room. There is also correspondence from the President of the Dalhousie Alumnae Association



Shirreff Hall front façade on South Street (Griffin photo, April 2020)



Cobb-designed mantelpiece, lighting, and table (courtesy of the author)

detailing the items gifted by them to Dalhousie for use in the residence.

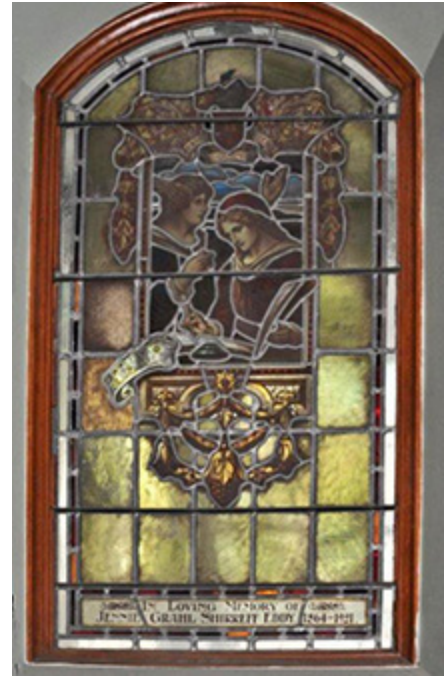
Cobb's furnishing and decorating of the Library adhered to the principle of form follows function. The aim to create an "atmosphere of quiet and restfulness"¹ for the students to pursue their studies informed decisions on colour,

lighting, and furniture.

The overall colour scheme was "rich luminous browns in complementary harmony, with contrasting notes of green blue in light values."¹ Mahogany bookcases on the entire west wall and part of the north and east walls were custom-built by the Rhodes Curry Com-



Interior of the Library, with Cobb-designed table, benches, and other furnishings (courtesy of the author)



Stained glass window in memory of Jessie Grahl Shirreff Eddy (courtesy of the author)

pany of Amherst. Cobb noted that the bright book bindings, once the cases were filled, would add another note of colour.

Significant pieces of furniture designed by Cobb include the library table with two long benches, a pair of gate-leg tables with four Windsor chairs brought up to each, and two winged chairs. Both the Cobb-designed furniture and the ready-made furniture were supplied by the Nova Scotia Furnishing Company. The same company supplied the Donegal rug and made the Cobb-designed window treatments.

Other notable Cobb-designed items in the room are the rare pair of Arts & Crafts style wrought iron standing lamps, fireplace fixtures, and an outstanding Arts & Crafts oak wood box with wrought iron handles and corner straps. All the ironwork was crafted by Herman A. Fultz of Lower Sackville. In his notes, Cobb said that the ironwork

would have cost twice as much if made in New York, then crossed that out and wrote “nearly three times as much.”¹

Many of the original furnishings and fitments were designed by Cobb and are still in place and use today

Due to the lack of natural light in the room, great consideration was given to both ambient lighting and task lighting. There was a twelve-candle chandelier over the library table and a pair of two-candle sconces over the mantel. The wrought-iron standing lamps were placed near the two wing chairs, and the lighting was completed by two table lamps placed at each end of the library table. The wrought-iron standing lamps are the only original lighting still in place.

Another notable feature of the room is the leaded stained-glass window in

memory of Mrs Eddy. Installed on the west wall, it “admits the brilliant afternoon sunshine.”¹ The design is of two figures, “Poetry” and “Prose”. The window was made by Robert McCausland Limited of Toronto, the oldest operating stained-glass company in the western hemisphere.

Today the Library continues to be used and enjoyed by the residents of Shirreff Hall as a spot for quiet study. During the summer months, both the Library and the more formal Victorian Lounge are a popular venue for weddings.

Elizabeth Burke is an interior decorator and lighting specialist, a former Board member of HTNS, and frequent contributor to The Griffin

¹Andrew Cobb’s notes, held by the Women’s Division of the Dalhousie Alumni Association



HERITAGE TRUST OF NOVA SCOTIA

PRESERVING NOVA SCOTIA'S BUILT HERITAGE

High Rises Win Again at NSUARB Decision Puts Brunswick Street Heritage Character Under Attack

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 3, 2020

HALIFAX—In a decision released on Monday, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board “has landed a devastating blow on the Brunswick Street Heritage Area, approving a high-rise building that will dominate two neighbouring registered heritage properties, including St. Patrick’s Church,” said Andrew J. Murphy, President of Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia. “It will tarnish the unique historic character of the area, which contains some of the crown jewels of Halifax’s architectural heritage.”

The NSUARB’s ruling endorses Halifax and West Community Council’s approval of a nine-storey tower addition—presented repeatedly and erroneously as eight storeys—to the former St. Patrick’s Rectory, at 2267 Brunswick Street. The decision flies in the face of MPS Policy 9.3.2.1 (c) which clearly demands that proposed developments in the Brunswick Street Heritage Area be “similar” in height and “complementary” to adjacent residential buildings, particularly registered heritage properties.

“In the big picture, it means that no heritage anywhere is safe, if such blatant disregard for the rules which are clearly intended to protect heritage areas from unsympathetic development can occur,” said Murphy.

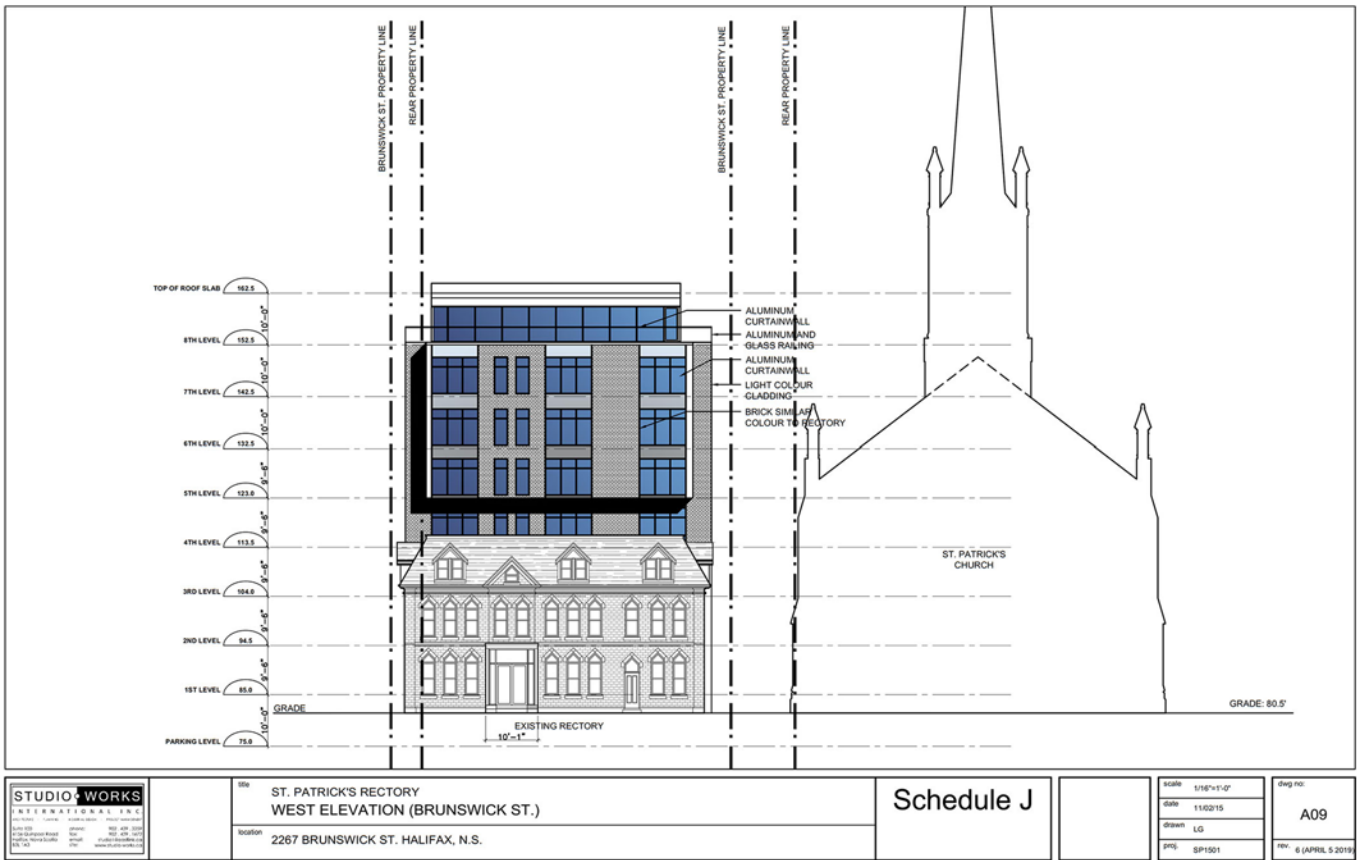
David Donnelly, counsel to the Heritage Trust, said, “The hearing was eminently fair, but the decision does not deal with the central issue at trial: is a nine-storey modern building made of dark red brick ‘complementary’ or ‘similar’ to a light blue, two-storey heritage building made of wood? Precedent says ‘no,’ but that question never got answered, which seems to defeat the point of the City’s policy protection for Brunswick Street,” he added.

The Brunswick Street Heritage Area has been recognized since the 1960s as the most intact wooden Georgian streetscape in Canada and is lauded as a unique illustration of over 200 years of architectural trends and tastes, from modest vernacular residences to some of the grandest structures in Nova Scotia. In addition to its designation as a Heritage Area, Brunswick Street contains an unusually high concentration of individually registered properties, including sites of municipal, provincial, and national import.

“We were particularly disappointed by the refusal of the Board to hear direct evidence from some of Canada’s most authoritative architects on this matter,” Murphy commented.

Mr. Murphy was referring to two expert witnesses retained by the Trust: Brian MacKay-Lyons, an architect and urban designer of international renown, and Gary Hanley, one of Nova Scotia’s most decorated heritage restoration architects. Mr. MacKay-Lyons and Mr. Hanley strongly recommended against allowing the nine-storey tower, as had the City’s own Heritage Planner, Aaron Murnaghan. Much to the dismay of the Trust, Mr. Murnaghan was not allowed to testify.

The case turned on whether the proposed nine-storey tower was “similar” in height to the adjacent residential heritage property, the Huestis House, a municipally-registered property that is two storeys tall, the most common height for a building in the Brunswick Street Heritage Area. The Trust’s inclusion of the Merriam Webster definition of “similar” as “closely resembling each other ... [with] the possibility of being mistaken for each other” was apparently in vain: the Board’s ruling establishes a new legal and linguistic standard whereby a height of nine storeys can be considered “similar” to a height of two storeys.



West (Brunswick Street) Elevation of proposed 9-storey (basement plus eight "levels") development behind St Patrick's Rectory, relative to the adjacent church ridge line and tower (Schedule J) of proposed development agreement entered into public record under Notice of Motion, item 10.1.2, Halifax and West Community Council, 9 July 2019)

The Board also substituted its own definition of "complementary" regarding scale and architecture for the Heritage Trust's definition, which sheds little light on why the decision was made.

"I've won cases and lost cases, but never on the definition of a word in its transitive verb versus noun sense," said Mr. Donnelly, echoing a line from the decision.

After a successful redevelopment of the distinctive, three-storey former Rectory into apartments, the current owner, Adam Barrett, proposed a tower addition to the rear of the building. Despite a total of seven meetings of municipal bodies, convened to discuss the proposal, and repeated calls to reduce the addition's height to a maximum of six storeys, so as to respect the roofline of the neighbouring St. Patrick's Church, a provincially-registered property, Barrett refused to amend his plans to anything lower than nine storeys.

The Heritage Trust is concerned that the Board's decision to stick-handle around the very clearly written and thoughtfully composed MPS policies addressed in this case will allow for increased development pressures in one of Canada's most important heritage districts, and that as a consequence Brunswick Street's historic character may no longer receive the protection and sensitive treatment it deserves.

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, founded in 1959, is a non-profit registered charity whose goal is to conserve buildings and sites of historic significance, and to promote this important cultural component of Nova Scotia's identity.

A Pleasure to Meet You! - 2019 Built Heritage Awards

Michal Crowe

The Built Heritage Awards Committee has recommended five 2019 candidates to the HTNS Board for recognition in 2020:

- » White Cottage, Chester
- » Old Town Clock, Halifax
- » Kentville Library (former United Church of St Paul and St Stephen), Kentville
- » Bank of Montreal Building, Lunenburg
- » B2 Lofts, Lunenburg

Now that the evaluation phase is complete, we can look back at what was an interesting, educational, and mostly pleasurable experience. Visiting the nominated properties was a real treat and we were truly gratified that all those involved were deeply interested in their local history and proud to have been involved in saving and/or restoring a heritage building.

To begin, owners were pleased to have the committee visit and see what had been accomplished after so much work and thought. They were more than happy to show us every nook and cranny; indeed, we were pleased to see everything, including any behind-the-scenes areas which may not be generally visible, and to discuss some of the issues around problems encountered along the way.

The common thread was a sense of pride. Their accomplishments were sometimes accompanied by unforeseen trials and tribulations. For instance, it was an enormous challenge to remove the 3500-lb iron night deposit box from the BMO building in Lunenburg. And, after the White Cottage in Chester was purchased (despite warnings from the realtor), the new owners discovered they had to take it down to the ground, numbering pieces as they went, and

then to store the house parts in containers while the foundation was rebuilt and suitable material found to replace anything that was rotten or not salvageable. Then the finest tradespeople in the province were engaged to ensure it was properly restored (and in some cases, enhanced).

The B2 lofts were a wonderful discovery. This renovation and infill project is truly well designed, incorporating discreet security measures and a welcoming measure of luxury. I would love to stay overnight sometime to gaze out over the harbour of Lunenburg and snuggle up in front of the fire. The lofts are part of a stable of others created by MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple in different parts of the province and in PEI, so that visitors can plan a journey and tour the Maritimes staying in comparable accommodations across the region. The B2 Lofts project had to conform to many strictly enforced covenants in UNESCO Lunenburg, including details such as colour. Originally the town thought the colours too bright, but no: lots of buildings in Lunenburg are brightly coloured, so the colour was allowed, and the buildings fit compatibly with others on the street.

Parks Canada has completed an exemplary restoration of the iconic Halifax Town Clock. They appreciated the input from Heritage Trust several years ago at the RFP stage, to ensure that the conservation work was historically correct. It was a great opportunity to put into practice one of the core goals of the Trust — education about historic value and the principles of heritage conservation, as articulated in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (<https://www.historic-places.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s-g-eng-web2.pdf>).

In the church repurposing project for the Kentville Library, it was important to both the private owner and the architect that they were preserving a heritage building. It was also important to the Mayor, the wider community, and the Friends of the Library, all of whom had input to make it a success. For example, while doing the renovations within the church, owner John Parsons was very conscious of the value of recycling. He understood the significance of special hardwoods incorporated in the church, so material was saved and repurposed.

Further details on each of these winners of the 2019 Built Heritage Awards will be presented in future issues and celebrated in 2021 rather than in July 2020, as originally planned.

Michal Crowe is a member of the Awards Committee. She was the initiator and project chair for the Witnesses to a New Nation photo exhibit and book.

Other members of the committee are: William Breckenridge, Chair, and Schmidville Heritage Conservation District activist; Austin Parsons, Assistant Professor of Architecture, Dalhousie University, and President and operator of Parsons Lumber Company Ltd in Black Point, St Margaret's Bay; and Luke Stock, Master of Architecture student, Dalhousie University.

The Job Hatfield House, Yarmouth

Christopher Cooper

The Job Hatfield house is a beautiful yellow Carpenter Gothic house in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. It is one of two identical homes that a father built in 1877, one for his daughter and one for his son. Unfortunately, the other one was lost to a fire in 1992.

The master carpenter who built these houses was James Huestis. He built many houses and other buildings in Yarmouth, including the Lovett house on Parade street and the Zion Church, to name a couple.

This house is valued as an excellent example of Victorian Carpenter Gothic Revival architecture. It is a large wood-frame, one-and-a-half storey house on a brick-faced foundation, in cruciform massing. It has a steeply pitched gable roof with steep cross gables on north and south sides. All the gables have unique verge-boards, which distinguish this house from others of a similar style in the town and in Nova Scotia. The asymmetrical two-bay façade has an off-centre entrance, with paired doors and a large hood supported by heavy brick columns. Most of the windows have double-hung sashes. The first storey has paired and triple windows and there is a one storey cutaway bay window on the south side, with a triple window above.

Dr Christopher Cooper is the founder and Director of Education of the Edifice Guild & Atelier (<https://edificeatelier.com/>).

Photos courtesy of the author



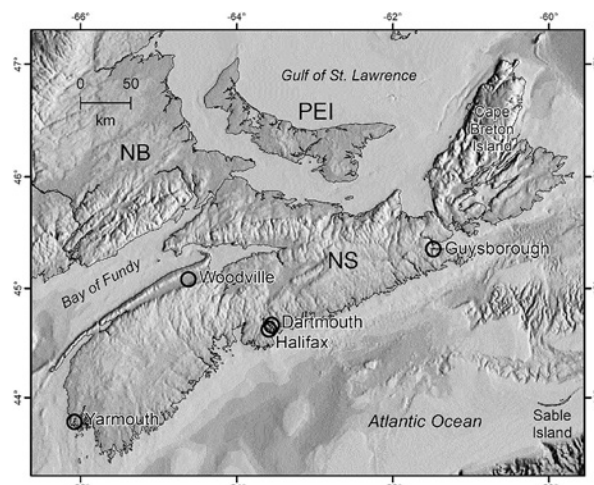
Another Yarmouth House and a Puzzle

This superb photograph has come into the Trust's possession, with no accompanying notes. Parker was a well-known late 19th century photographer in Yarmouth. We expect that

among our readers may be some who can identify the house and perhaps the people in this wonderful image. Bonus marks if you can fix the date and name the dog!



Locations of subject matter in this issue



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