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# The Griffin

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# The Griffin

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The Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc,  
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## President's Report

### *The Mystery that is the Reid House Demolition*

*Andrew Murphy*

On the weekend of December 5th, the Reid House in Avonport, Nova Scotia, was demolished by its Halifax-based owner, Nanco Developments, a company which according to publicly available information owns 31 properties with a combined assessment value of \$8,510,100. The Avonport property, which dates back to the 1760s, was provincially registered. This is the highest level of protection for a heritage building in Nova Scotia. By law, demolition is only allowed after an "order in council," effectively only after approval by the cabinet of the Government of Nova Scotia.

That the developer did not have this permission, and had been told that they did not have it, is clear from published media reports. They were warned in writing that they could not do this demolition without express permission from the Province.

The site itself has significant development potential. It is located between two highway exits about a third of a kilometre apart; perhaps a perfect spot for a gas station and fast-food outlets. Nanco Developments owns four plots of land there that total just over 11 acres, a substantial development site. But then the mystery deepens. The Reid House was far off in one corner of this huge site, not in the way of a substantial redevelopment at all. We have all been to Mastodon Ridge on Highway 102. The Reid House was not in the way and perhaps could have been an attraction for the site.

The provincial protection of this site is backed up by big fines, up to \$250,000 for each offence. Nanco may have committed two offences: two weekends after they demolished the house, they removed the foundation, yet another ac-

tion they had specifically been warned against, thus possibly constituting a second \$250,000 offence. Nanco could also be required to rebuild the Reid House, which would be very expensive. Defence of a prosecution may cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal bills.

All this mayhem for a collection of properties assessed at a total of \$141,470. The vacant land plots next to the plot the Reid House was on are assessed at \$13,600 for all nine acres, or about 3¢ a square foot. The 8,000-10,000 square foot Reid House lot is worth, according to the provincial assessment agency, about \$300.

Hence the big mystery: Why would a company go out of its way to destroy one of the oldest houses in English Canada, with full legal provincial protection, to free up a piece of land worth as little as \$300? The downside risk is two \$250,000 fines, and the requirement to rebuild the house—easily another \$300,000—with legal fees on top.

Then, there is what they could have done, and should have done: If they did not want to keep the house, they could easily have donated it to an appropriate heritage group and achieved a charitable donation, which would have put cash in their pocket rather than incurring the sizeable fines and costs they face now. The risk exposure differential for this company could be as much as a million dollars—truly a crazy move.

Or is it? It is my theory that the culture of the world and now, alas, here in Nova Scotia, is changing. We have gone from a culture where the worth of a person was very much associated with the quality of their character, to a culture where a person's worth is based, more and more, simply on wealth. One of my favourite movies is the 1947 classic *It's a Wonderful Life*. Jimmy Stewart plays the part of a truly admirable person, always putting the quality and well-being of his community over the impulse to simply acquire ever more money for himself. The villain in the movie is Mr. Potter, an

*continued on page 4*

Cover image: The Reid House, by Robin Crouch, 2019, oil on birch cradled panel, 12" x 24" (courtesy of the artist)

## ARTIST

# Robin Crouch

Robin Crouch is an artist living in the Annapolis Valley. He grew up in a suburb of Toronto and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from York University. He taught a digital arts course at Acadia University, but is happy to have returned to working with oil paint.

### Artist Statement

Sometimes, when glancing at a crooked door, an old window, or even an air vent on top of an industrial building, I'm struck with a sense that I've caught a glimpse of something special and hidden, a fleeting moment. These moments are most interesting to me when I look at something unassuming, something whose form was dictated solely by utility, and not intended to be remarkable, like an outcropping added to an old leaning shack or the scaffolding appended to the side of a building under repair. I feel then that I have glimpsed the raw presence of a thing or a place, sometimes just before its presence recedes back into hiding.

*... rust slowly growing upon a steel roof top, its patina ... expanding while the building itself is moving toward decay*

What I see in the world is the constant interplay between things growing and things dissolving away. These states are often captured in the same moment, such as rust slowly growing upon a steel roof top, its patina of rich character expanding even while the building itself is moving toward decay.

For me, painting is an exercise in appreciation, however small, frail, and diminished, or majestic, pristine, and vibrant my subject might be.

Contact: <https://herringbone.ca/>



*Two Brothers Outlasting the Sun, by Robin Crouch, 2019, oil on cradled panel, 16" x 20" (courtesy of the artist)*



*The Fish Market, by Robin Crouch, 2019, oil on canvas, 16" x 20" (courtesy of the artist)*

*'Mystery' continued from page 2*

odious character for whom money is everything.

Flash forward 70 years and now Jimmy Stewart is a fool. The hero now is Potter, played out recently and with a spectacular level of malevolence by none other than a President of the United States – the triumph of greed and personal ambition over any semblance of grace, consideration, and character.

Perhaps the developers wrecked down this building not caring about the possible cost. Perhaps they did it just to show the power they have. As they become more and more wealthy, why should they obey laws?

Of course, I could be overthinking all of this. They could just be downright irrational, unable to make the logical decision not to risk incurring what may be a million dollars in fines, costs, and lost opportunity to gain an open piece of \$300 land.

In any case, for the rest of the million or so inhabitants of Nova Scotia, perhaps it is best if this company gets prosecuted and fined appropriately. And we should learn a lesson from the demolition of the Reid House. The lesson, of course, is: *Don't think that they won't do it because they just shouldn't—because they will.* And because they will, this company should be prosecuted. To prevent future offences, the \$250,000 fine embedded in the law should surely be increased to \$1 million, or even \$5 million.

It's important that we live by the rule of law that applies to everyone, no matter how wealthy. We all saw on TV on January 6th of this year what happens when this social contract breaks down. I, for one, prefer the gentle mayhem of our own historic legislature, the site of the first-ever peaceful transition to responsible government.

## *A Visit to the Reid House*

*Gordon Haliburton*

The old Reid House in Avonport has a place in my memory from the earliest days.

I remember it first as the destination of the horse-drawn vehicle that passed our house every morning and every afternoon, taking the mail from Avonport Station to the post office. Most often the driver of the vehicle was my motherly old friend, Mrs Lockhart, and she would stop and invite me to sit beside her, and to go into the post office situated in a side entrance to the grand old house that had once been a tavern and coaching stop. That was an adventure that didn't happen too often, but enough to impress on me the importance of the house.

The post office was in the charge of Mrs Reid, well known in the neighbourhood as a firm and thorough teacher in local schools, and an excellent organizer of events. Indeed people were as much afraid of her as they were respectful. In her later years she liked to show off her house, the room where old Joshua Reid, J.P., had held court, the oak-panelled

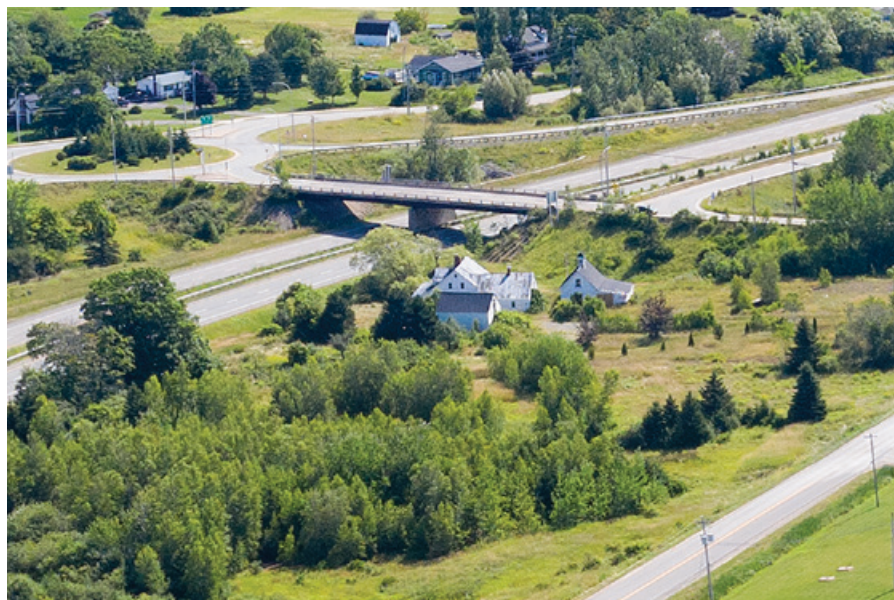
ceiling in the dining room, the parlour with its ancient carpet and grand piano.

She liked to hang on to the old furniture and made a veritable museum in the large back porch outside the kitchen, where she arranged and labelled artifacts of the dairy and husbandry on tables.

My memories of being in that large dim kitchen with its low ceiling include the pleasant sitting space in the south-east corner, a little addition projecting from the main mass of the house with large windows letting in the sunlight and giving a view of the road up the hill ("Onion Street") and the brook alongside it that filled up with tidal water twice a day.

If Mrs Reid had a dream for the house, it probably would have been that the Province took it over and restored it, with its outbuildings, as a picture of early 19th century Nova Scotia.

*Dr Gordon Haliburton grew up in Avonport and is the author of Horton Point: a History of Avonport (Gaspereau Press, 1998).*



*Aerial oblique view of the Reid House (drone image courtesy of Paul Illsley)*

## *Demolished Horton Planter House - the Witter/Reid House, Avonport*



*The former Reid House as seen from Highway 101 in 2008; note barn at right which may have housed a tavern or a store at one time, according to some sources (photo courtesy Beth Keech)*

### *Donald Forbes*

The many woes of 2020 were capped by the sad and wanton destruction of an iconic, provincially registered, heritage home. This structure, apparently dating back to the 18th century (probably to the 1760s), had a long and rich history in the New England Planter community of Horton Point (Avonport). For close to 250 years, it functioned not only as a home at the centre of a 200 acre (81 ha) farm, but also at various times as a tavern, inn, stage-coach stop, court house, polling station, store, and post office. The house and outbuildings, of wooden construction, and the surrounding property were all included in the provincial heritage designation (18 October 1993)

The following description is taken largely from the Canadian Register of Historic Places,<sup>1</sup> with additional information from Gordon Haliburton's detailed history of Avonport,<sup>2</sup> including genea-

logical information on the Samuel Witter and Joshua Reid families.

*For close to 250 years, it functioned ... at various times as a tavern, inn, stage-coach stop, court house, polling station, store, and post office*

The house consisted of three distinct parts, one behind the other. The middle section, the kitchen, may have been the oldest part of the house, as indicated by the chimney with a large cooking hearth and beehive oven. These and other details are "consistent with a building date as early as the 1760s."<sup>1</sup> The rear section showed no indications of 18th century building methods. On the other hand, the main front section showed evidence of both 18th and 19th century construction and finish styles, but the specific circumstances of its origin remain unclear.

Samuel Witter was born 1723 at

Norwich, Connecticut, 10 km up the Thames River from New London, home of his third wife, Anna Prentice, who came with him to Nova Scotia. Samuel Witter took up land in Horton Township in the 1760s and died there prior to 1770, when Anna was listed as a widow and head of household in a 'Return of the State of the Township of Horton.'<sup>2</sup> Whether she was already living in this house is uncertain but seems likely. In any case, Witter's Tavern was established here at some point. Samuel and Anna's son, Joseph Prentice Witter, was a signatory to a petition in June 1794, seeking replacement of the 'lower bridge' over the Gaspereau River, which had been carried away by ice and tide in March of that year.<sup>2</sup> As Gordon Haliburton has suggested, the disappearance of the bridge would have caused a drop in traffic and custom at the tavern.

J.P. Witter's daughter, Eunice, married Joshua Reid, who acquired the property

from her father in 1837.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, while still maintaining the farm, they continued to operate the tavern, at some point changing to an inn or road house, where coach travellers would spend the night.<sup>2</sup> In 1850, "Reid's" was a recognized stop 11 miles past Windsor on the road from Halifax to Annapolis Royal.<sup>3</sup> It has been suggested that sometime in this period Joshua Reid may have expanded the house to its final "handsome dimensions".<sup>2</sup> He was a J.P. and held court in the northwest tap room, which subsequently became the post office (1872-1940) and served as a polling station until 1950<sup>1,2</sup> (see accompanying reminiscence by Gordon Haliburton).

Joshua Reid's son Charles inherited the farm and eventually, in 1917, it passed to his son, Percy Bayfield Reid. Percy's marriage to Hannah Margaret

Higgins in Higginsville, Middle Musquodoboit, Halifax Co., on 28 September 1910<sup>4</sup> marked the beginning of her very long association with the house. Arriving as a 22 year old bride, she and Percy lived here (apart from a few years out west) until his death in 1939, when she married Charles Magee (1879-1968)<sup>4</sup> and remained in the house for the rest of her life, passing away in her 101st year in December 1988.

*It is regrettable that ... a careful survey of the house could not have been undertaken and that the owners acted to prevent any subsequent archaeological investigation*

The house originally faced the tidal creek and marsh extending east from the Gaspereau. Gordon Haliburton shows a photograph of the property at a

high spring tide in 1950.<sup>2</sup> Margaret Reid fought strenuously to avoid expropriation and demolition when Highway 101 was pushed through between the house and the marsh. Unfortunately, this spoiled the situation of the house, which faced a busy highway in a hollow below the nearby overpass.

Character-defining elements identified at the time of provincial designation included the following:<sup>1</sup>

- two-and-a-half storey wooden construction;
- one-and-a-half storey wooden middle kitchen [possibly the original structure];
- one-and-a-half storey wooden rear addition;
- kitchen chimney incorporating a large fireplace and beehive oven;
- front veranda;
- large front central dormer with smaller dormers on each side;
- two central chimneys in main part of the building;
- prominent position in an agricultural landscape.

It is regrettable that, prior to demolition, a careful survey of the house could not have been undertaken and that the owners acted to prevent any subsequent archaeological investigation, both of which could have answered many questions about this house. Now that it has been destroyed, the remaining mysteries will go without answers.

Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Canadian Register of Historic Places, Reid House, <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=7996&pid=0> (accessed 2021-02-20)

<sup>2</sup>Haliburton, G.M., *Horton Point: a History of Avonport* (Wolfville: Gaspereau Press, 1998), pp. 151, 289-293, 324-326.

<sup>3</sup>*Belcher's Farmer's Almanack for ... 1850* (Halifax: C.H. Belcher, 1850), p. 85, courtesy of Public Archives of Canada and Internet Archive, [https://archive.org/details/cihm\\_28456/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/cihm_28456/mode/2up) (accessed 2021-02-20)

<sup>4</sup>Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics, <https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com> (accessed 2021-02-20)

1850.		ALMANACK.		85	
ROADS to the Principal Towns in the Province.					
<b>Halifax to Digby.</b>					
Hesslein's	4	Nickerson's, Beaver Dam	12	Hewson's, River Philip	8
Davidson's	1	Mc'Intosh's, Shelburne	10	Farrington's Amherst (64)	10
Ward's	4		285		129½
Brass's	1	<b>Halifax to Shelburne, Shore Route via St. Margaret's Bay.</b>			
Fultz's	2	Kirby's	9	<b>Halifax to Pictou.</b>	
Hamilton's	2	Mrs. Boutillier's	3	To Truro	65½
Hiltz's	7½	Hulley's	2	Archibald's Salmon River	14
Pentz's	3	Dauphiney's, head of the Bay	7	Irving's Mount Tom	6
Lakeland's	5½	Mc'Lean's,	11	Fraser's W. River	8
John Sweet's	1	Chester (45)	13	Pictou	12
Martin's } Newport }		Zwicker's,			105½
Cody's } Road 35 }	35	Mahone Bay	20	<b>Halifax to Middle Musquodoboit.</b>	
Windsor (45)	10	Lunenburg (72)	6	Across the Ferry	1½
Reid's } Lower }	11	LaHave Ferry	7	Shultz's	18
Parker's } Horton }	1	Across the Ferry	¾	Ker's	10
Hancock's } Wolfville }		Petite Riviere Drew's	7	Miller's Gay's River	8
Graham's } ville }	4	Broad Cove	4	Logan's	10
Kentville (68)	7	Mill Village	9		47½
Sheffield's	17	Liverpool (107½)	8½	<b>Halifax to Antigonish and Guysborough.</b>	
Gibbon's	12	Port Mouton	10		
Lawrence Town	9	Port Jolly	5		
Bridgetown	7	Sable River	10		
Annapolis (128)	15	Jordon River	8		
Ruggles', Digby	24				

Page from Belcher's Farmer's Almanack for 1850, showing "Reid's" as a coach stop on the road between Windsor and Kentville (see note 3 for source)

## *The Smyth House, a Pre-Confederation Home on Brunswick Street, Halifax*

*Garry Shutlak*

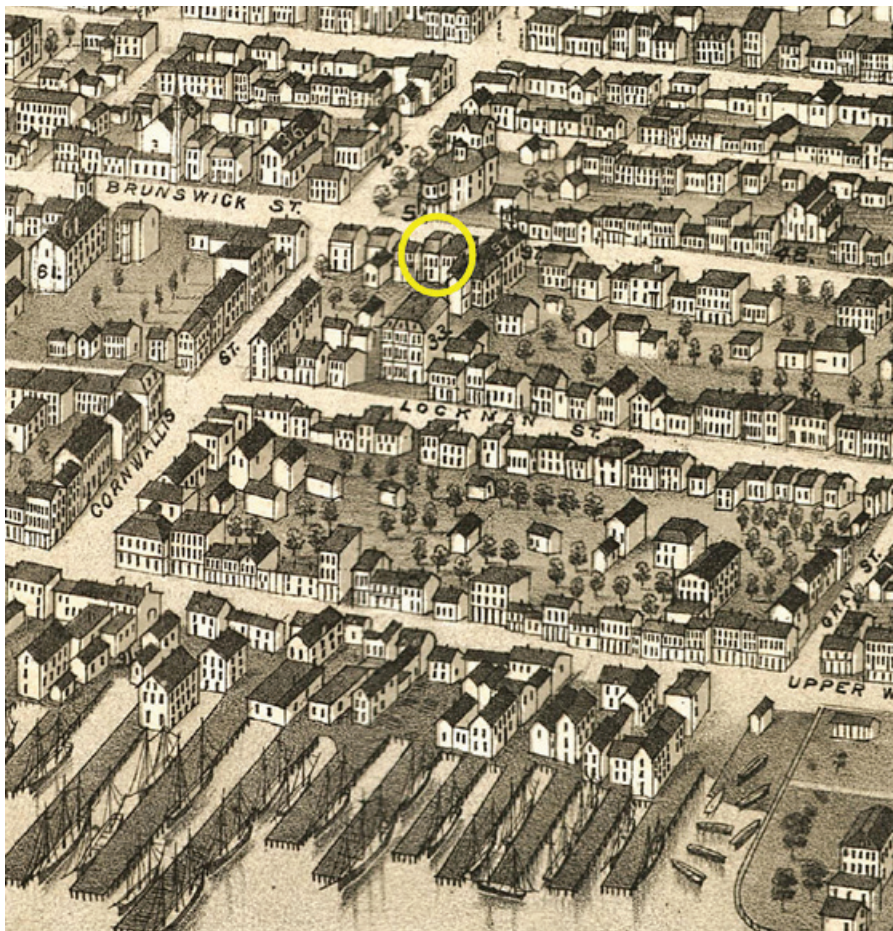
This municipally registered heritage property on once-fashionable Brunswick Street is one of a few pre-Confederation houses for which Nova Scotia Archives

has the specifications. Currently at civic 2237, the property was formerly (prior to July 1964<sup>1</sup>) successively numbered 105, 285, 303, and 281. The property on which the house was built was purchased by John Smyth from Thomas B. Akins and others in May 1846.

The house is a variation of a three-bay Georgian (or Halifax) house, 24 ft x 32 ft, with a side entrance hall. As built, it was two storeys on Brunswick Street and three storeys in the rear, with a crown roof. The basement at the rear was eight and a half feet high. We do not know



*The Smyth House, 2237 Brunswick Street, Halifax, 1965; former Sisters of Charity building at left no longer stands; source: City of Halifax, Works Department, 2213-2323 Brunswick St., Mar./May 7, 1965 (courtesy Halifax Municipal Archives, 102-39-1-603.6)*



The Smyth House (circled) at 303 Brunswick Street, Halifax, showing the crown roof and location two blocks from the docks (source: Ruger, 1879)

the contractor of the house. As the specifications stipulate, Mr Smyth was to furnish the front-end walls of the basement with window frames (currently below grade). He was also to furnish all the other windows, sashes, etc., with the exception of the front door, supply the glazing of all the windows, and the painting of the entire building, also the zinc for the crown, including the laying of same and the lead or zinc required for the tops of front windows, and "will supply the shingles for the front of said building".<sup>2</sup>

John Foster Smyth (1814-1857) was born at Drumahair, Co. Leitrim, Ireland, the son of Joseph Smyth, carpenter, and Mary Foster. The family of seven emigrated from Ireland in 1826. John married Emeline Smith (1812-1863) of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, 15 June 1839.

He was a painter, glazier, and gilder by trade at No 6, Marchington Lane. Taught by William Valentine, he operated his daguerrean studio at the same location, 1843-1844.

*The house is a variation of a three-bay Georgian (or Halifax) house ... with a crown roof*

John and Emeline had eight children, of whom five died between 1840 and 1859. Three children lived to adulthood: Esther Jane Johnson (1845-1890), Emeline Smyth (1847-1912), and Joseph Howe Smyth (1855-1917). The family home was only disposed of when Joseph H. Smyth reached the age of 23 years (1878). They had quit the home on the death of their mother in 1863.

Between 1863 and 1882, the house

at then 105 Brunswick Street was leased to a succession of tenants, including Susan Fultz, teacher; Foster H. Snelling (1807-1868), gentleman; Eliza Ann Stirling (1816-1868), widow of Thomas John Stirling MD (1814-1846), and sister of Mr Snelling; and William S. Stirling, banker, in 1869. Miss Sarah O'Brien occupied the house 1871-1874. During her tenure, the house was numbered 285 and two years later renumbered 303. The 1871 census has Mary Rogers, 60; Sarah O'Bryan [sic], 40; Hannah Selby, 70; Caroline O'Bryan, 30; Harriet Symons, 18; and William Stirling, 20, all living in the same household. The most likely conclusion is that the residence was being used as a boarding house. Miss Harriet Symons (Symonds) occupied the property in 1875-1880.

*John Foster Smyth ... was a painter, glazier, and gilder by trade ...*

Cooper James McCaffrey (1826-1889) purchased the property at auction from the Smyth family in 1878 for \$3700. He resided there 1881-1886. Subsequently, Dr Alexander Murdoch Chisholm (1849-1929) bought the house at auction for \$5000 in 1887.

Dr Chisholm (who went by Murdoch) was born in Loch Lomond, Richmond Co., the son of farmer Phillip Chisholm and Ann McKenzie. Sometime after 1871, he decided to study medicine and came to Halifax to attend Dalhousie University, then to McGill in Montreal, where he graduated in 1879. When he married Ada A. Clayton (1858-1935) in 1881, he was practising medicine in Bay Roberts, Newfoundland, before moving to Halifax in 1886. Dr Chisholm lived on Brunswick Street for forty-one years (1887-1928). The change in the roof line of the house to a modified mansard with dormers happened during his tenure. He was active in the community, physician for the Deaf & Dumb Institute, the Visiting Dispensary, Victoria General Hospital, and Halifax Infants Home 1887-1897. He was Alderman for Ward 5, 1899-1900, sitting on various Committees: the City Health Board, City Works, Charities, and Cem-





The Smyth House today, without the storm porch, February 2021 (Griffin photo)

etry. He was Professor of Surgery and Clinical Surgery at the Halifax Medical College (later Dalhousie University). He was active in the Nova Scotia Medical Society and served as president in 1904. Dr Chisholm was also active in the Ancient Order of United Workmen and the North British Society.

Murdoch and Ada Chisholm had seven children. As Canada was engulfed in the Great War, six of the children enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force: Mary Maud Ethel Chisholm, Nursing Sister; Kenneth Gordon Chisholm, Private, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry; James Stanley Chisholm, Lieutenant, Canadian Army Medical Corps; George Philip Chisholm, Lieutenant, Canadian Army Dental Corps (killed

in action 27 Sept 1918); William Harold Chisholm, Sapper, Canadian Engineer Reserve Battalion; and Alexander Roy Chisholm, Lieutenant, Nova Scotia Railway and Forestry Depot.

*As Canada was engulfed in the Great War, six of the [seven] children [of Dr Murdoch and Ada Chisholm] enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force ...*

Seemingly safe at home, Dr Chisholm was in his surgery when the 1917 explosion in Halifax Harbour occurred and he was cut by shattering glass. His near neighbour, Dr Lewis Thomas, was told he was injured and went to his house, to find him bleeding from his

head and unconscious. He provided first aid and arranged to transport him to the Victoria General Hospital, an act which undoubtedly saved his life. The house was evidently repaired and several of the family were recorded living there in the 1921 census. At the time of his death, Dr Chisholm was residing at 131 South Park Street, where he been living for about six years.<sup>3</sup>

Gymnastics instructor and war veteran, Benjamin Vaughan, and his wife Pauline bought the property in 1928. Two years later, they sold to mail carrier, Evelyn Hamilton, and his wife, Adelina, who owned it until 1949. They sold to jobber, Harry Turel, and his wife Ann, who in turn sold the property to Spartan Realty Limited in 1963.

*Garry Shutlak is Senior Research Archivist at the Nova Scotia Archives, a frequent contributor to The Griffin, and an Honorary Life Member of the Trust.*

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Halifax Municipal Archives, Civic Address History, Street Re-numbering Progress Reports, [https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/archives/AboutTheCity\\_MunicipalArchives\\_SearchToolsCivicAddresses\\_PDF2.pdf](https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/archives/AboutTheCity_MunicipalArchives_SearchToolsCivicAddresses_PDF2.pdf) (accessed 2021-03-06)

<sup>2</sup>John F. Smyth Business Records, Nova Scotia Archives, mfm 11013.

<sup>3</sup>Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics, [www.novascotiagenealogy.com](http://www.novascotiagenealogy.com)

#### Other sources:

- Census of Canada: 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921
- Canadian Register of Historic Places, [www.historicplaces.ca](http://www.historicplaces.ca)
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- Nova Scotia Provincial Directories: 1864/65-1907/08
- Nova Scotia, Property On-line, Halifax County
- Civic Advisory Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings, *Brunswick Street: a Survey of Buildings and Environs* (Halifax, 1968), p. 29
- Hopkins, H.W. *City Atlas of Halifax, Nova Scotia, from Actual Surveys and Records ...* (Halifax: Provincial Survey and Pub. Co., 1878), Plate D – Part of Ward 5, <https://archives.novascotia.ca/maps/hopkins/archives/?ID=6>
- Ruger, A. *Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia* (1879), Library of Congress, Washington, [www.loc.gov/item/73693337](http://www.loc.gov/item/73693337)
- Wikitree: Dr Murdoch Chisholm
- Personnel Records of the First World War, Library and Archives Canada, [www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx)

## A Victorian Fragment?

*Jonathan Fowler*

Our ancestors' fingerprints are so common that we often don't even notice them. This fragment of an old stone column somehow escaped my attention until it was pointed out recently. This is the thing about old places: there are stories everywhere. The fabric of our communities forms a kind of outdoor archive, so you can walk back in time while walking down the street. That's two experiences for the price of one, and the price, by the way, is nothing.

The column fragment stands between 5949 and 5963 College Street in Halifax, and it looks old. Drop one of these addresses into Google Maps and take a virtual walk as a yellow gingerbread man if you can't see it for real.

*The fabric of our communities forms a kind of outdoor archive ...*

It may be that somebody out there knows the story of this broken column, and if so, please say the word. Until then, here is a very preliminary interpretation:

(1) The fragment is mounted on a concrete pedestal. Somebody appears to have done this recently and whoever did it (or ordered it done) may have more information.

(2) It doesn't seem to belong to any nearby buildings, so I'll assume it does not.

Speaking of bits being removed from buildings, I am reminded of William Butterfield's neo-gothic brick colossus, Keble College, built in Oxford in the 1870s to educate "gentlemen wishing to live economically." Undergraduates from its more affluent neighbour, St John's College, secretly formed the Destroy Keble Society, its members vowing to remove one brick at a time until nothing remained. Maybe they had a chapter in Halifax catering to local antagonisms?

(3) Stone carving is a time consuming and relatively costly option for construction in a city like Halifax, which



*Part of a stone column on College Street, origin unknown (author's photo)*

has a long tradition of building with more readily available and more easily worked timber.

Commentaries by visitors to Halifax over the centuries frequently remark on its wooden architecture, and I've even had students from other countries tell me this is the first thing they notice about Halifax. Some years ago, a young friend from England, upon seeing an abundance of vinyl siding for the first time, exclaimed, "They live in plastic houses!" Well, not quite yet. Our stone

column therefore likely belonged to a public building or one owned by someone of high socio-economic status.

(4) This area was formerly part of the Halifax Common, but the present city blocks were carved from the Common in the early 19th century and leased for 999 years to residents, who quickly set to work pulling up stumps and rocks. (By my reckoning, they just might revert to common land around the year 2817 or so).

(5) As it is no doubt heavy, it might

be reasonable to assume that our stone column fragment has not travelled far from its point of origin. Archaeologists have recovered fragments of ornamental stonework belonging to Enos Collins' pulverized Gorsebrook estate on the Saint Mary's campus. Was there formerly a high-status dwelling in the vicinity of College Street?

Lo and behold, it looks like there was, though the evidence so far is only suggestive. Two Victorian-era maps are instructive.

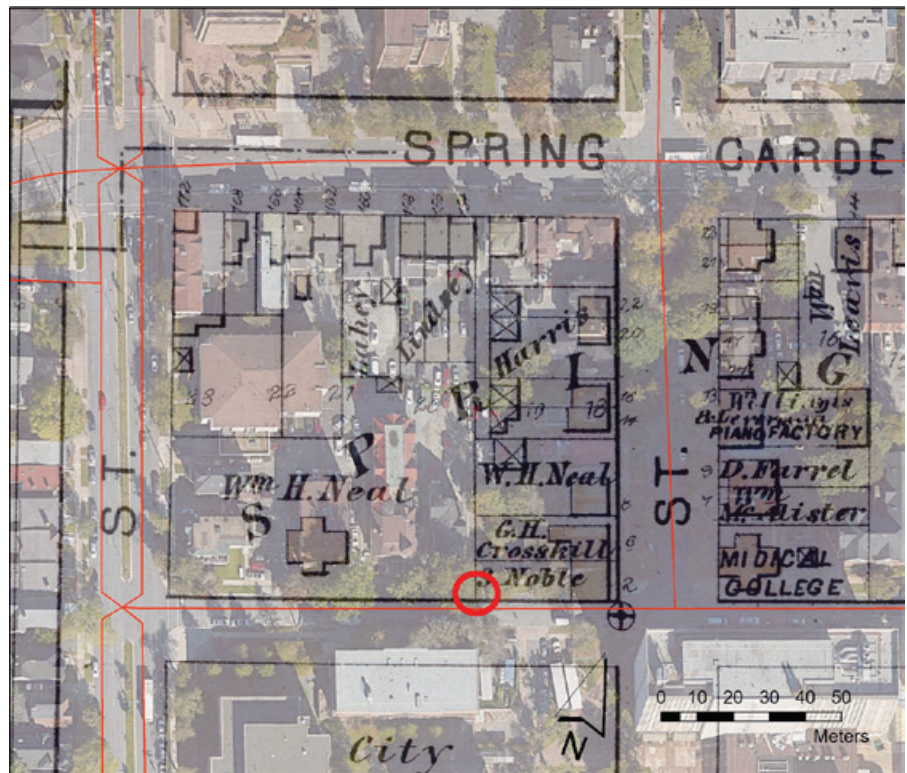
### William Neal

Henry W. Hopkins published his *City Atlas of Halifax* in 1878. A detail of Plate O, shown here georeferenced to modern (2016) Google Earth imagery and provincial 1:10 000 topographical data, identifies a large residence at this location belonging to William H. Neal. Maps and aerial photographs can be digitally collated with Geographic Information Systems (GIS), such as in this image, created in ArcMap 10.6.1.

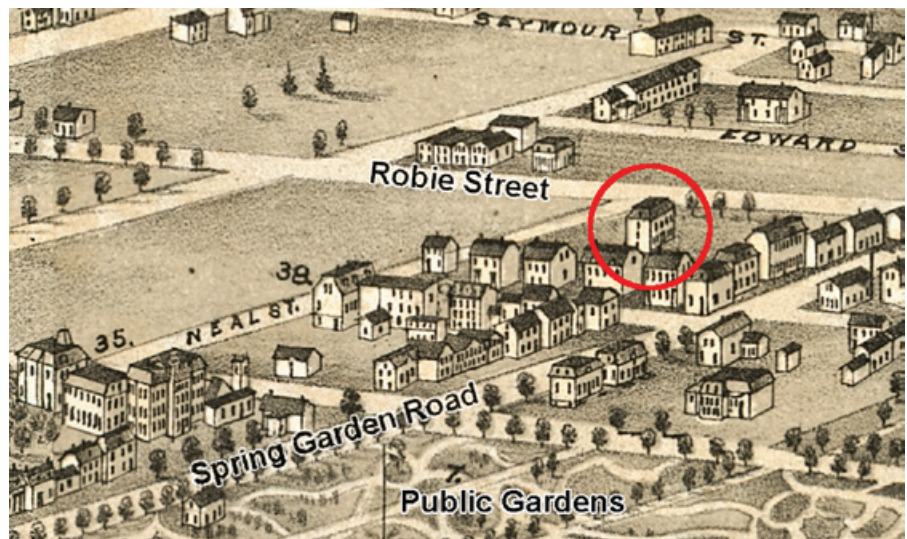
*The fact that no [archaeological master] plan exists suggests we are poor stewards of the legacy we have inherited*

More maps are almost always better than one in these sorts of investigations. It is a way of ensuring quality control over the evidence. Our second map was published by Albert Ruger in 1879, just one year after Hopkins'. Ruger's effort is a panoramic map, which was something of a craze in the Victorian era. I've included only a detail, with Neal's residence circled. It appears to be a three-storey structure with a mansard roof (a popular 19th century architectural style, of which many examples may still be seen in Halifax). Note that Neal was prominent enough that College Street was labelled Neal Street on Ruger's map (College was named for the Medical College, seen on Hopkins' map at the corner of Carlton).

I've not really delved very far into the story of William H. Neal, but a quick scan of a few online archival records indicates that he operated a dry goods



*Hopkins' 1878 atlas, superimposed on satellite image with digital street centre lines, showing William H. Neal's residence occupying the largest property on the block; he also seems to have owned a neighbouring house on Carlton Street, with an outbuilding (probably a stable) (David Rumsey Historical Map Collection and Google Earth, 2016)*



*Detail of Ruger's 1879 panoramic map of Halifax showing the large Neal house (circled) with other landmarks labelled (Ruger, A. Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia (1879), Library of Congress, Washington, www.loc.gov/item/73693337) – see also p. 8*

store downtown in this period. Municipal records also indicate he served as Alderman for Ward 1 in 1871-72, which further enhanced his public profile. In

those days, Ward 1 included the Halifax peninsula south of a line drawn along the axis of Coburg and Spring Garden roads. So, he lived in the district he

represented. It was mostly suburban at this time.

An 1889 fire insurance plan (not shown here) appears to indicate Neal's residence still standing, though closer to College Street than Ruger shows it. If it is the same structure, I think I'd trust the fire insurance plan (by the way, this plan says the house was 2 1/2 storeys, not three). It was either replaced by the building we see today at 5977 College Street or – more intriguingly - absorbed into it. This block is now subject to redevelopment once again.

### Concluding thoughts

So, there we have it. From a broken piece of rock, down into a rabbit hole. These interpretations are only tentative, but they provide some insight into how urban archaeological investigations proceed before the trowels are unsheathed.

A couple of concluding thoughts:

(1) A photo of William Neal and/or of his residence might conceivably exist (Please feel free to let us know if you have further information); and

(2) Wouldn't it be nice if we could integrate sources such as Hopkins,

Ruger, and others into an archaeological master plan for one of Canada's oldest urban communities? The fact that no such plan exists suggests we are poor stewards of the legacy we have inherited. Maybe we'll sleepwalk through our storied streetscapes until their fragmented remains are at last unrecognizable.

*Archaeologist Dr Jonathan Fowler teaches in the Anthropology Department at Saint Mary's University.*

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## Robin Crouch



Digby Seafood Market, by Robin Crouch, 2019, oil on cradled panel, 12" x 16" (courtesy of the artist)

## *Fish Stores, Once Commonplace, Disappearing from our Coastal Communities*



*Boats alongside in Peggy's Cove, with the York Manuel fish store, built in 1825 (Griffin photo, May 2017)*

### *Peter Delefes*

In 2018, the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia published a book entitled, *Witnesses to a New Nation*, featuring photographs of 150 Nova Scotia buildings that saw Canada's Confederation in 1867. It is a remarkable collection of some of the finest examples of built heritage in Nova Scotia and includes structures both grand and modest. Among the simpler, plainer buildings is the York Manuel Fish Store in Peggy's Cove.

Fish stores (aka sheds, barns, and stages; in Newfoundland, rooms) are the buildings, with wharves attached, where the fishermen keep equipment, like nets, buoys, and lobster traps. The fish stores also provide a workshop for repairing gear. The York Manuel store is

the earliest one surviving in Nova Scotia. It dates from 1825 and is a provincially registered heritage building.

Because all provincially registered buildings have their character-defining elements listed, those associated with the York Manuel store indicate which architectural features were common to the original fish stores:

- 1½ storey wood construction
- wooden board cladding
- six over six windows
- structural elements which allow access to the water (stages or wharves)
- setting on wooden posts secured to the rocks below.

Not so long ago, these diminutive buildings, with their accompanying wharves, dotted the shorelines of our fishing communities. Over the past

20 years most have been demolished, blown down in storms, fallen into disrepair, or been transformed into homes. They are barely recognized for the important roles they once played in the fishing culture of Nova Scotia.

*The York Manuel store dates from 1825 and is a provincially registered heritage building*

The intention of this article is to highlight the important relationship between the fish stores and the people who built and utilized them, employing a variety of tools and methods, most now obsolete, to carry on their fishing trade.

I have relied heavily on the expertise of two practicing fishermen, Wayne



Two of the original fish stores owned by Gilford and Creighton Harnish in Mill Cove (c. 1980 courtesy of Cheryl Harnish)



'The Old Fish Store,' built in the late 1940s by Harlie Johnson and Sanford Coolen in Mill Cove, has been transformed into a summer cottage (photo by author)

Manuel and Jerry Harnish. Both are in their early 60s and live and fish off the South Shore of Nova Scotia. Wayne lives in Peggy's Cove; and Jerry in Mill Cove, Lunenburg Co. Both live on properties once owned by their fathers and grandfathers, and both learned all about fishing at an early age. The fish stores on their properties were built by their forebears and were an integral part of their early fishing experience. I am indebted to these two intrepid and experienced fishermen for the time they spent with me and for their patience in respond-

ing to a deluge of questions about all aspects of the fishing industry in this province.

Wayne Manuel is owner of the York Manuel fish store and shed, named after his father. Wayne and his wife, Eliza, live in a house overlooking the little cove. The fishing buildings have been in the Garrison-Manuel family for nearly 200 years. The building nearest the shore, which Wayne refers to as a fish stage, is on stilts and extends over the water. Today, the building is used primarily for storing traps and other equipment. The adjacent building is utilized as a workshop. In addition to these two buildings, Wayne also owns a fish store across the cove, where his Cape Island boat, *Reverence*, is moored. This red boat is often captured in pictures and paintings of Peggy's Cove.

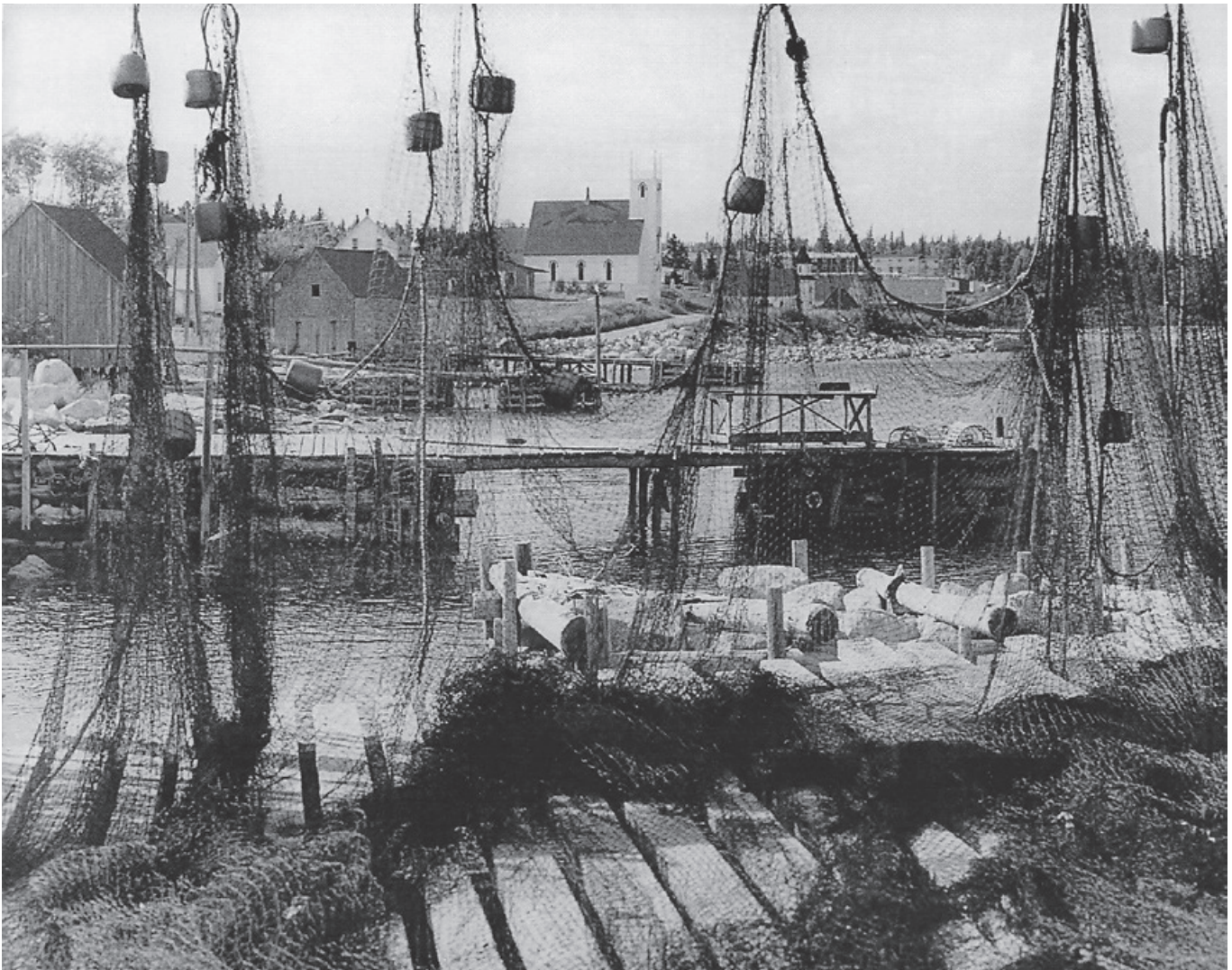
There are four historic fish stores still operating in the cove. Because it is such a popular tourist destination, these iconic buildings have survived over the years, with few alterations. Not so long ago there were six fishing boats operating out of Peggy's Cove; today, there are only three. Wayne explained that up to the 1980s, large quantities of cod and pollock were fished out of Peggy's Cove. On the way back to port, the fish would be gutted; once ashore they would be split, washed, salted, and placed in large barrels called puncheons to be cured ("struck" in the parlance of the fishermen). Today, Wayne traps lobster almost exclusively, although he still salts a few cod for the use of his family and to savour the distinctive flavor of his favourite fish.

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*As we stood inside the little fish store at Peggy's Cove, Wayne related a few incidents from his earliest fishing days. He remembers going lobster fishing with a neighbour when he was four years old. A lobster trap had been hauled up, baited, and was ready to be dropped back into the water. Wayne saw a sculpin inside the pot*

*and reached in to grab it. As he did, he, and the trap, went overboard. Fortunately, the fisherman was able to reel the trap back into the boat, with Wayne attached. Later, in Grade 3, he recalls fishing for lobsters in a little punt with his mother. He would sell some of the catch to his teacher at school for 45 cents a pound.*

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*Mill Cove shoreline in 1970, with nets hanging on Creighton's flake, remnant of Creighton's wharf, and Gilford Harnish's wharf beyond; in the distance, two fish stores belonging to Lester Jennings (nearer) and Stuart and Cyril Harnish (both demolished in 1980 for widening of the road); St Marks Church in the background with (to the right) the fish store later repurposed by Harlie Johnson and Stanford Coolen (photo courtesy of Denise Harnish)*

Jerry Harnish lives with his wife, Cheryl, in Mill Cove. He built his home on the site of the Creighton fish store, erected in 1925 by one of his Harnish ancestors. That building was destroyed by Hurricane Juan in 2003. Alongside his new house is the fish store once owned by his late father, Gilford. The photo shows the two fish stores, side-by-side, taken prior to the hurricane. The store on the right no longer exists.

At my first visit to Jerry and Cheryl's home I was introduced to one of their neighbors, Aaron Jollimore, a life-long resident of Mill Cove. Aaron had been a fish plant worker for most of his adult life

and was knowledgeable about the local fishery and about the various fish stores which once crowded the shoreline in this community. Jerry, Cheryl, and Aaron provided a wealth of information on the former fish stores, which played such an important role in the local fishery. In the 1980s, there were 12 fish stores operating in Mill Cove along the strip of the Shore Road between St Mark's Anglican Church and the government wharf, a distance of about 1 km. Today, not one of the original 12 fish stores and their wharves is still functional. Some have been made into residences, a couple have fallen into disrepair and a few were

demolished or destroyed by storms. One of the photographs shows 'The Old Fish Store', formerly a working fish store owned by Harlie Johnson and Sandford Coolen. It is now a summer rental property, across the road from St Mark's Church.

The Buckie Harnish fish store was built in the 1920s by Gilford's father, Arnold. It is now in a dilapidated state, yet still full of fishing gear. The abandoned building was once one of the finest fish stores along the cove. I ventured inside the open front door to glimpse the nets, buoys, and even a small dory, which were left inside some time ago.



*Gilford Harnish working on his wharf in Mill Cove in 1970 (courtesy of Jerry Harnish)*

The side of the building facing the water is open to the elements. The next major storm will surely be the end of Buckie's fish store. All the old wharves that were part of the fish stores have been replaced by large boulders for protection from the sea.

Another old photo shows Jerry's father working on the wharf next to his fish store in 1970. Gilford is standing at his splitting table removing the backbones from cod. To his right is a large puncheon, or barrel, used for washing the fish. Nearby are the fish boxes where the fish were placed and then carried into the fish store for salting in 12-15 puncheons, each holding up to 900 pounds of fish. The salted fish would be kept in the fish store until sold. At the end of the wharf is the crane post, a device used to lift heavy loads from the fishing boat tied up at the wharf. In the background are two wharves, now long gone, and a glimpse of St Mark's Church (erected 1869) on the left.

In the yard of Jerry Harnish's house is a large, cast iron pot, called a 'bark pot', used by fishermen to make a tar preservative to treat fish nets



*A rare bark pot once used to prepare tar for preserving fish nets, Aaron Jollimore at left and Jerry Harnish right (photo by author)*

to make the preservative. A fire was lit under the pot to heat the concoction. There were three such pots outside the Creighton fish store. This is the only one remaining. Jerry maintains that the pot is about 90 years old and quite rare. Early nets were made of cotton twine and the

preservative helped protect the twine from the corrosive effects of the sea water.

I would be remiss if I did not comment on the enterprising fishing career of Jerry Harnish, who has been such a help in the preparation of this article.





*The Buckie Harnish fish store, Mill Cove, built in the 1920s, now abandoned (photo by author)*

Starting to fish in his teens, Jerry has successfully manoeuvred changes in the fishing industry over the last 40 years. At the outset, he fished mackerel and cod with his father and later expanded his catch to include pollock (Boston bluefish) and hake. He has been fishing lobster for the past 27 years, having purchased a license in 1993 when the groundfish went into decline. Today, he continues to fish mackerel, pollock and hake and he claims he is the only fisherman along the South Shore who still salts fish on a commercial basis. His 40' Cape Island boat, *J.B. & Andrea*, is moored at the government wharf in Blandford.

Jerry's fish store today is a modern shed on a concrete slab. He employs the latest technology, including containers equipped with refrigeration units, a fork lift, and fiberglass containers instead of wooden fish boxes. He still uses a splitting table like the one his father had

on the wharf, but today's tables must be topped with plastic for hygienic purposes.

*In the 1980s, there were 12 fish stores operating in Mill Cove ...*

The women of the fishing communities also played essential roles. Jerry was one of nine siblings, so his mother was busy at home, but she would come down to the fish store to help with splitting and salting the fish. Jerry's Aunt Claudine, who, in his words, was a "tough old girl," could do practically everything. She would "white nape" the fish, a process of removing the black skin around the belly of the cod. She worked in the galley at CFS Mill Cove, helped take care of St Mark's Church, and provided emergency care, fixing up any injuries. Jerry's wife, Cheryl, does all the bookkeeping for the family business.

It is sad to see the loss of so many

vernacular fish stores, which not so long ago were an integral part of the landscape of our fishing communities. The decline of the groundfish industry certainly took its toll, but Jerry points to another factor: the monumental and on-going effort required to maintain these buildings and their wharves against the ravages of wind and sea. It is to be hoped that the few remaining fish stores can be restored, retained, and repurposed to provide a reminder of their former relevance and practical value.

*Peter Delefes is a past President of the Trust and long-time contributor to The Griffin.*

# Open for Business: Art Galleries in Historic Buildings - Part III

Michal Crowe

In the last two issues, we have featured eight Nova Scotia galleries and small businesses located in historic structures. The list of 16 examples was published in the

September 2020 issue (The Griffin, v.45, no. 3). This is the third in a four part series.

## Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Yarmouth)

Former bank building

Angela Collier, Gallery Director

341 Main Street, Yarmouth, B5A 1E7

902-749-2248; [www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca](http://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca)

Due to a January 2021 fire, the building is currently closed.

The Yarmouth Branch of AGNS is housed in the former Royal Bank Building, which opened for business in 1913. Montreal architect, Kenneth G. Rea, oversaw the design, and general contractor, James Reid, was responsible for construction (1912-1913).<sup>1</sup> A two-storey building in Victorian commercial style, it is faced with sandstone (with finely carved mouldings), and has a granite base on a concrete foundation.<sup>1</sup>

Refurbished as the western branch of the Gallery, it was opened in 2006 by the Honourable Myra Freeman, then Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. Five hundred guests were present to view works from the AGNS permanent collection and featured artist Edward Burtynsky. The

AGNS preserved the exterior of the building but added an annex to provide an additional 900 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibit space.

Most buildings have histories which make for interesting reading and the RBC building is no exception, even in the present day. During the pandemic, it has hosted the Yarmouth Visitor Information Centre, while the latter's space was used as a Covid Testing Centre. Repairs and assessments are complete, but the building remains closed due to resource challenges in the pandemic.



The Yarmouth Branch of the Royal Bank of Canada c. 1979 (courtesy of Historic Nova Scotia and the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives, acc. no. PH-6-7)



A recent photo of the AGNS in Yarmouth, showing rear addition and courtyard created by closing the side street (courtesy of Art Gallery of Nova Scotia)

<sup>1</sup>Lisette Gaudet, Royal Bank of Canada Building, Yarmouth (Historic Nova Scotia, 2020), <https://historicnovascotia.ca/items/show/179> (accessed 2021-02-25)

## Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Halifax)

*Provincially-designated former Post Office and Customs House (and adjacent office building)*

1723 Hollis Street, Halifax, NS B3J 1V9

902-424-5280; [www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca](http://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca)

Open Thursday\* 2-9 pm, Friday-Sunday 10 am to 5 pm

\*free access courtesy of BMO

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) is located in the Dominion Building on the southeast corner of George and Hollis streets. The architects were David Stirling and William Hay. Construction took five years (1861-1866). The building is in the Italianate style and faced with Nova Scotia sandstone. On completion, an ornate domed cupola, soaring to a height of 100 feet, adorned the south pediment. The cupola, the statue of Britannia, and decorative urns have been removed over the years.

In 1867, under the British North America Act, the building was claimed by the new Dominion government as a 'public building'. Nova Scotia was not prepared to give it away. In the first federal-provincial dispute, strongly worded correspondence passed between Nova Scotia and John A. Macdonald, who did nothing for as long as he could. Finally, in 1871, an \$80,000 settlement was paid to Nova Scotia, half the cost of the new building, which remained a derisive landmark to anti-confederates for years.

In the late 1980s, the building was remodelled for AGNS, an organization established in 1908 as the Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Art. It then owned a collection of 200 works. In 1975, under its present name, an expanded collection was re-located to the Gunpowder Magazine at Citadel Hill, but moved again five years later to the former Nova Scotia Art College building, and then into the Dominion Building in 1988. Ten years later, it expanded to occupy two floors of the adjacent Provincial Building. The

structures are separated by Ondaatje Court, a public open art space with exhibition space beneath. The Maud Lewis House was accommodated during the expansion. The collection now includes 19,000 works representing 2000 artists.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia may be on the move again if current plans are realized to relocate it to the waterfront. This leaves the question open as to the future use of the Dominion building, with its storied past.



*Above: Dominion Building, completed as Provincial Building (courtesy of AGNS)*

*Left: Entrance to AGNS in the Gunpowder Magazine at Citadel Hill (courtesy AGNS)*



## The Convent

*Repurposed historic convent building*

Erika Shea, VP Development

170 George Street, Sydney, NS B1P 1J2

902-539-9560, ext. 202; [www.theconvent.ca](http://www.theconvent.ca)

Holy Angels Convent was built in 1885 by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, with the parishioners of Sacred Heart Church, led by Father James Quinan. It was the first all-girls boarding and day school east of Montreal. The high school addition was built in 1958. The school closed in 2011 after 126 years as a centre of education.

New Dawn, a volunteer-directed social enterprise founded in 1976, purchased the property in 2013 and began researching how it could become an inspirational community centre for the arts and culture in the region. The centre has been operational in the former high school, while planning for renovation and rehabilitation of the original convent building. Eventually, Nova Scotia Communities, Culture, and Heritage as well as the federal government made monies available to create a state-of-the-art regional hub.

Renovations have been underway since 2017 and the complex was to be completed in 2020, providing meeting and presentation spaces; a lounge, café and community kitchen; and space for over 40 independent arts and collectives within 21 private studio spaces, as well as 22 furnished spaces in a large open studio. The centre is intended to support the creative economy, which annually contributes \$1 billion and 14,000 jobs in Nova Scotia.



*The New Dawn Centre today (courtesy of Erika Shea)*



*Boarders outside Holy Angels Convent in 1895 (courtesy of Beaton Institute)*

## The Customs House Artisan Incubator and Gallery

*Former Post Office and Customs House*

Contact: Josephine Clarke

402 Granville Street, Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A 2M7  
902-625-1928; <https://capebretoncraft.com/learn/customs-house/>

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am to 4 pm

The red brick building known as The Customs House was originally built as the Port Hawkesbury Post Office. It became the Customs office when the Post Office moved. With a central Art Deco sandstone portico, incorporating

a clock, the building dates from 1939. There was a period when it was a doctor's office, but then it lay empty for several years before being reimagined as a gallery.

The Customs House Craft Incubator is an initiative of the Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design and the Town of Port Hawkesbury to promote the town as well as Cape Breton artists. It offers studio and retail space for emerging artists as well as craft producers working in textile, clay and jewelry.



*The former Post Office now serving as The Customs House Artisan Incubator (photo courtesy of Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design)*

Particular thanks in this instalment to Lisette Gaudet (Yarmouth County Museum and Archives) and Angela Collier, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Yarmouth; Emma Hoc and Troy Wagner, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax; Erika Shea (New Dawn Enterprises) and Jane Arnold (Beaton Institute), The Convent; Paula Davis (Town of Port Hawkesbury) and Josephine Clarke, The Customs House.

## *Restoring and Protecting our Past: New Life on the Corner*



*The rehabilitated Rofhe Building in February 2021 (photo courtesy of the author)*

### *Peter C. Oickle*

There are times when individuals and groups have worked to preserve and maintain old buildings, to retain their presence for future generations. While not all buildings can be saved, many can be repurposed and given new life. Such has been the case in Bridgewater, where an organization with a vision purchased an iconic structure, the Rofhe Building, on the corner of King Street and Dominion.

In January 1899, Bridgewater witnessed a massive fire that levelled

the downtown from Dominion Street to Dufferin. Starting in the overnight hours, this fire spread rapidly during a cold and windy night. Such was the cold that water froze in the hoses which were pumping water from the river, as firefighters desperately struggled to contain the blaze. As the sun rose on the town, not much stood between these streets except for chimneys and smouldering piles of charred wood. Soon business owners began to rebuild, but the historic buildings, many dating back to the mid 1800s, were gone. Fortunately, across the street from the Music Hall,

where the fire began, a building did survive. It would also survive a later fire that burned businesses across the street. This building became known as the Rofhe Building, the focus of an award in 2020.

The Bridgewater Built Heritage award was started six years ago to recognize property owners in the town who have maintained or restored a historically significant building. This award was started as a joint venture by the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Bridgewater Museum Commission, and is presented annually. Representatives from both groups consult and select a

building that has seen significant restoration or rehabilitation to preserve our built heritage.

In 2020, the recipient was the Family Service Association of Western Nova Scotia. This organization and its Executive Director, Art Fisher, have rehabilitated a landmark King Street building, to recreate a façade reminiscent of years gone by. Providing professional space on the first floor and apartments above, this project has adapted and revived the building and greatly enhanced the downtown. Further, they have ensured that it will be an energy-efficient space.

This building has a long history as part of the downtown. Built circa 1899, it was originally the site of the William V. Andrews store. Emmanuel Fronk, a local merchant, also owned it for a time. In 1907, Nobel Crouse bought the property and began renting to Nathan Cohen, who ran a dry goods store and offered men's clothing. One could also purchase from his line of steamer trunks and suitcases.

By 1911, James Power had taken ownership and continued renting to Cohen. In 1914, Edson Kaizer completed renovations upstairs and opened the Panama Boarding House (five years later he had begun construction of a new building, which he called the Queen Hotel, on Pleasant Street). In 1923, the Rofihe Building was purchased by Captain Daniel D. Meisner, a Bridgewater resident who owned other buildings in town and travelled abroad regularly.

Mohammed Rofihe, known more by the name Hermie, assumed occupancy in the 1930s and became a mainstay of the downtown. Three generations of Rofihe men ran the men's clothing store until it closed in 2018. The building then sat vacant for some time (as can still be seen on Google Streetview), until the Family Service Association of Western Nova Scotia took ownership, with plans to restore and begin operating from this site.

The observer on King Street will note the detail on the street façade. This reflects a past time, when similar embellishment could be found on other

buildings of the early years of commercial growth in town. The decorative corbels were cut out in Lunenburg and then assembled on site. The dentil mouldings on the façade enhance the historical look as well. The corner doorway features a large door that retains the original look. The renewal of the corner was made more prominent by extending the angled architectural feature back down to the ground floor to include the corner entry, and by reinstating the trim work to bring focus to the chamfered edge.

At one time the building had recessed balconies, which added to the visual appeal. These have been covered over in past renovations, and the new façade presents windows which will allow light into those rooms. Energy-efficient two-over-two windows on the upper floors create a sense of expansiveness, allowing light into the rooms while

maintaining a historical appearance.

The present owners have taken great pains to research and rehabilitate this building. The original structure had to be stabilized and brought up to code, the exterior was planned to remind the viewer of former buildings on the street. This building has been given a new life on a corner that has seen plenty of the community's successes and trials through the decades.

*Peter C. Oickle is a former board member of HTNS. He is a past chair of the Bridgewater Heritage Advisory Committee and the Bridgewater Museum Committee. Each year, he conducts guided cemetery walks, and heritage street walks that open the history of the town to participants.*

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

## Illustrated Public Lecture Series

Thursday March 18

**Amanda Dean (IBC) and Aneill MacCaull (IBANS)  
Insurance of older and heritage buildings**

Thursday April 15

**Brenda Hattie  
The Hattie family homestead:  
a love story for the generations**

Thursday May 20

**Panel  
Soft Densification: Condo-ization  
of existing structures and heritage buildings**

All talks at 7:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

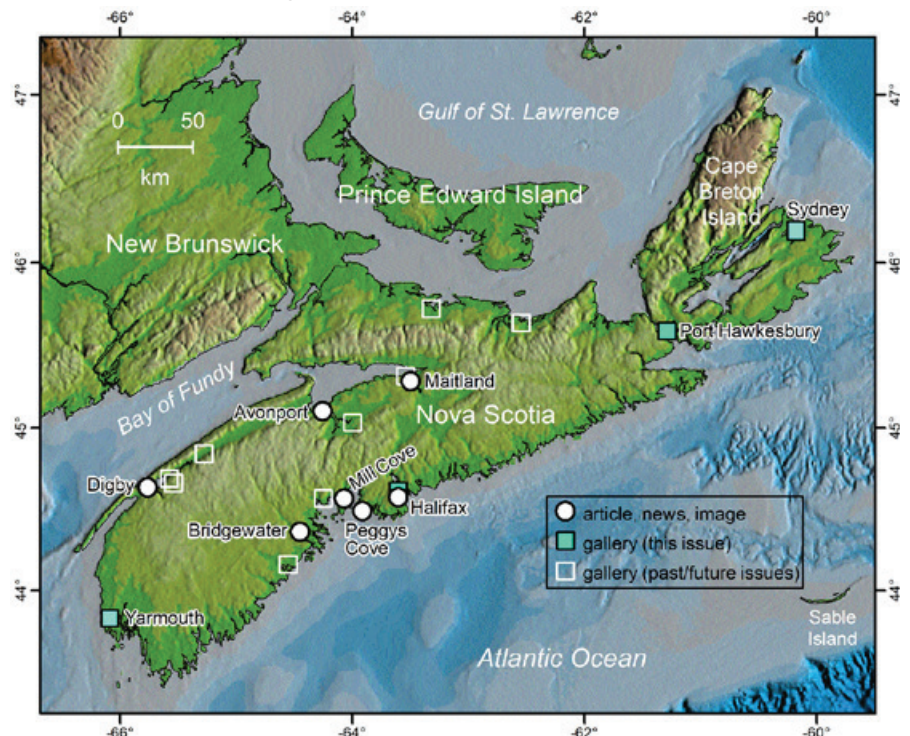
Please email [events@htns.ca](mailto:events@htns.ca) early in the week to receive Zoom link.

Information: 902-423-4807 [www.htns.ca](http://www.htns.ca)



This view of the Maitland Academy attests to the craftsmanship that went into building schools in Nova Scotia's shipbuilding communities. Land for the building was acquired in 1877 and the school was likely built shortly thereafter, at the peak of the shipbuilding economy. A growing population supported seven shipyards in the village and 20 along the shore. By the 1940s, the upper floor was no longer used. This building and others like it have been demolished over the years, making the preservation of survivors, such as the Lunenburg Academy, all the more important. Photo courtesy of East Hants Historical Society (negative N-7082).

### Locations of subject matter in this issue



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