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The Griffin

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Cover image: Road to Peggy's Cove, *by Kat Frick Miller, 2020, acrylic gouache on paper, 11″x14″ (courtesy of the artist)*

ARTIST

Kat Frick Miller

Duke Street, Halifax, *by Kat Frick Miller, 2020, acrylic gouache on paper, 11″x14″*

Kat Frick Miller is a Canadian artist and freelance illustrator. You can find her painting in her Dartmouth studio or exploring the rural seaside of Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia. She graduated from NSCAD University in 2009 with an interdisciplinary BFA.

Kat is known for her playful work exploring east coast heritage and culture. Her vibrant colours and whimsical interpretation of the Maritimes lend a distinctive personality to her paintings. She is the illustrator of *If I Had an Old House on the East Coast* by Wanda Baxter, published by Nimbus Publishing, translated to Simplified Chinese in 2019. *Last Fish, First Boat,* a short film about the Newfoundland cod moratorium released by Canadian Geographic and MacIntyre Media in February 2021, was co-produced by Kat and Jenn Thornhill Verma, with artwork and animation by Kat. Her illustrations have been featured in Canadian publications including *The Narwhal* and the *Atlantic Salmon Journal.*

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All images courtesy of the artist.

Lincoln Street, Lunenburg, *by Kat Frick Miller, 2016, india ink on paper, 8″x10″*

Prince Street, Lunenburg, *by Kat Frick Miller, 2016, india ink on paper, 8″x10″*

Bayport Wharf, *by Kat Frick Miller, 2016, india ink on paper, 10″x8″*

Sand Hill: Black Cultural Roots in Amherst

Darlene Strong

Sand Hill, formerly called the 'Highlands,' is a predominantly Black neighbourhood that overlooks downtown Amherst. It has a rich history, which the author chronicled in her 2003 book Sand Hill: Cumberland County's Historical Black Community.[1] *As noted in her contribution to Historic Nova Scotia,[2] some sites on Sand Hill connect to important reminders of past racial prejudice. But there are also many landmarks worth celebrating and historic homes "which belonged to merchants, midwives, politicians, preachers, stone masons, farriers, and cultural icons that confirm our forefathers' contributions." -Ed.*

Postcard showing Highland View Hospital, built in 1904, destroyed by fire in 1928

The old stage coach stop in Sand Hill, long ago repurposed as a private residence

Nova Scotia is the birthplace of Black Culture in Canada. It is home to the oldest and largest multi-generational Black community in the country and one that long predates Confederation. Numerous Black families can trace their origins back to the 18th century. The early migrations of the Black Loyalists, Jamaican Maroons, refugees of the War of 1812, and other Caribbean migrants who came to Nova Scotia, have all contributed to the rich, contemporary, diverse landscape of Canada.

> *"Many people in Cumberland County can trace their ancestry to the Loyalist settlers, both enslaved and free"*

As early as the 1750s, there were black slaves and settlers in Cumberland County. Many more arrived with the Loyalists in the 1780s, some still enslaved, and others listed as indentured servants. Amherst has always had the largest black population in the county, but there were others in Springhill, Parrsboro, Oxford, Tidnish and Joggins. Some of the earliest surnames to appear in official records (by 1827) were Boles/Bowles, Cook, Dixon, Gay, Halfpenny, Howe, Jones, Martin, Milligan, Newton, and Rogers. Descendants of several of these earlier pioneers reside in Cumberland County to this day.

The Sickles lineage dates back nine generations to the Benin area of Africa. Denbo Sickles (Suckles) (c. 1762-1845) arrived in PEI (then St John's Island) in 1785 with Captain William Creed, a well established merchant and ship owner. Sickles bought his freedom in 1802, purchased and married Mary Moore (Lt Governor Edmund Fanning's servant), purchased 100 acres of land in Lot 59, and was a prosperous farmer with several children. Today he is buried in the provincially-owned Wightman's Point Pioneer Cemetery.[3] His granddaughter, Maria Sickles, moved to Sand Hill and in 1884 married Hibberd Cook, who had purchased property from the Lusby brothers in 1874. Now "Maria's Place," it became an unofficial meeting place for

SAND HILL HISTORIC WALKING TRAIL 2020

1. The Old Stage Coach Stop
2. The Amherst Regional High School
3. The East Pleasant Street School
4. Dickey Park
5. Former Site of Highland View Hospital
6. E.T. Hunter's Store (The Bicycle Shop)
7. The New Highland AME Church
8. The Amherst Cemetery
9. The Former Highland AME Church
10. The Parson House
11. Mr. Fred Parsons - Engineer
12. The Christie Street School
13. The Cumberland County Museum
14. The Amherst Stadium
15. Angus L. Road Gravel Trail
16. The Meeting Place (Maria's)

A self-guided map takes you past the homes of politicians, preachers, midwives, merchants, and an Inn owned by the Rocks' great uncle, Mr. Douglas Gay. Retrace the steps of the early Black settlers in the geographical district formerly known as the "Highlands"

Map for the self-guided historic walking tour of Sand Hill (place numbers on map added by The Griffin*)*

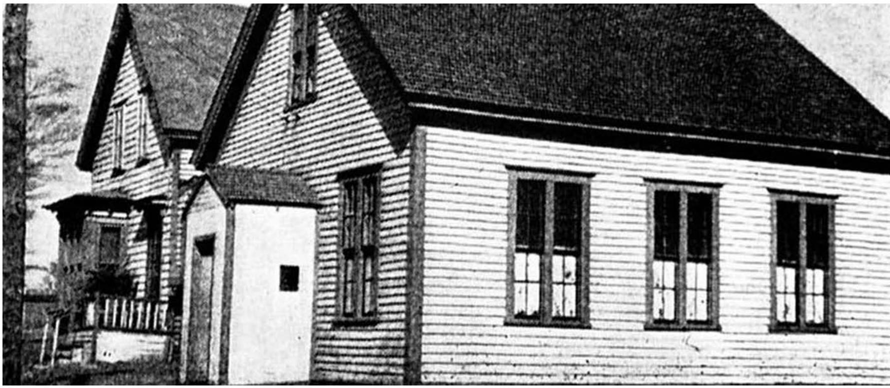
the Black community in the Amherst area.

Other early arrivals destined for Cumberland County travelled aboard three known ships carrying over 450 refugees. The *Thetis, Nicholas and Jane,* and *Trepassey,* left New York City in the summer of 1783 and landed at Fort Cumberland, near present day Amherst. Over the past two hundred years, these Loyalists and their descendants have made remarkable contributions to Nova Scotia in the fields of government, education, agriculture, business, and religion. Many people in Cumberland County can trace their ancestry to the Loyalist settlers both enslaved and free.

Mr Fred Parsons, "Sand Hill's engineer," was Street Superintendent for the Town of Amherst for many years, as captured in the 1891 census. He was responsible for laying out streets, parks, and the cemetery. Several sandstone buildings in the county were erected with the help of master stone masons from Sand Hill. Other early settlers became farmers and were successful in raising large families. A few of the midwives in the county were Florence Martin in the Oxford area and Maria (Sickles) Cook and Katherine Cooke in Amherst and Brookdale.

Commemorative plate c. 1973, when the new Highland AME Church was opened

Sand Hill was booming at the turn of 1900s, when the town was dubbed 'Busy Amherst'. Sadly the jobs were vied for and many black people were excluded


The original Highland AME Church, built c.1877 (from a newspaper clipping)

from the foundries and factories, or given jobs most others would not want. As the times changed, many in the Black community became entrepreneurs.

Religion played a significant role in the lives of our ancestors, many of whom were members of the Church of England congregation in Amherst. Later in 1877, when the Highland African Methodist Episcopal Church was being constructed on Poplar Street in Amherst, a large percentage of the black community joined this newly formed church. The present-day church, known as the Highland AME church, is still vibrant in its later building, 236 Church Street in Amherst.

An aging population, migration, and urban development have changed the landscape of Sand Hill forever. The youth have moved away, seeking greener pastures, and the fourplex seniors' homes have been developed on almost every vacant lot.

Today the Amherst cemetery is evidence of a former robust Black community. Houses still dot the tree lined streets on Sand Hill and remain home to many notable people: sports figures, musicians, trades people, entrepreneurs, and artisans. Landmarks include the East Pleasant Street School House; the Christie Street School; Dickey Park, focus of many recreational activities; the site of the former Highland View Hospital, built in 1904 following a typhoid outbreak, on land donated by R.B. Dickey; the present-day Highland AME Church; the Fred Parsons House; Maria's Place; and the old stage coach stop, formerly owned by The Rock's (Dwayne Johnson's) great uncle, Douglas Gay, a businessman and political activist.

To learn more, resources include the Historic Sand Hill Walking Trail, the author's 2003 book and other publications, and exhibits that have been co-created and featured at the Cumberland County Museum and Archives.[4,5]

Darlene Strong is a visual artist and professional counsellor in private practice. She is the Founder of the Cumberland County Black Artisans Society and of the Cumberland County School of the Arts Society. She has promoted greater understanding of the accomplishments of the Black community in Cumberland County and Sand Hill through her book, exhibits, and other activities.

[1]Darlene Strong, *Sand Hill: Cumberland County's Historical Black Community.* Amherst: Strong's Community Development Publications (2003), ISBN 0968719317.
[2]Darlene Strong, Sand Hill, Historic Nova Scotia (2020), historicnovascotia.ca/items/show/232 (accessed 2021-08-26).
[3]Also known as St Andrew's Point Pioneer Cemetery, www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=11600 (accessed 2021-09-09).
[4]Darrell Cole. Honouring Amherst's rich African Nova Scotian history. Saltwire, *The Chronicle Herald* (2020-02-04), www.saltwire.com/halifax/news/provincial/honouring-amhersts-rich-african-nova-scotian-history-406779/ (accessed 2021-08-26)
[5]Sand Hill Historic Walking Trail, ansa.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/images/events/promotion_poster_january_2020_final_develop_strong.jpg (accessed 2021-08-26)

Illustrations courtesy of the author.

Dickey Park provided recreation and entertainment

Virtual Doors Open for Churches 2021

This year, the second in which the pandemic precluded in-person Doors Open events, virtual tours of churches throughout the province are providing glimpses and histories of places of worship, which readers may wish to visit and enjoy on their own.

Through the summer and fall (July-October), each region has been assigned a time slot. For every participating church, photos and text are being displayed on the HTNS Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/HeritageTrustNovaScotia), according to a schedule posted on the Trust's website (www.htns.ca). Even if you are not a Facebook user, you should be able to view the Facebook posts.

As we go to press, 44 churches have been profiled in Lunenburg, Queens, Shelburne, Cumberland, Antigonish, Pictou, Annapolis, and Kings. Still to come as summer gives way to fall are another 46 churches in Guysborough, Yarmouth, Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Inverness, Richmond, and Victoria counties. All of the profiles and photos of churches covered to date are available on the Facebook page. Posts for locations already featured can be found by checking the dates for the relevant region on the schedule and then scrolling though the Doors Open feed on Facebook (link above) to the appropriate date.

Following are excerpts from two posts earlier in the summer:

St Anne's Church (Roman Catholic)

577 Summerside Road, Welnek/Summerside, Antigonish County
Posted 26 July 2021 (St Anne's Day)

The remains of an earlier Catholic church, which was lost in a fire, can still be seen near the old cemetery in Welnek (Summerside). This predecessor of St Anne's was built c. 1836-1838 under the direction of the French-born monk, Father Vincent de Paul Merle, the pastor of Tracadie. It is said that the local Mi'kmaw chief raised funds to cover the costs of building materials and hiring a carpenter by selling hay cut on the Reserve and taking up a collection among his people.

The present-day St Anne's church, named after the patron saint of the Mi'kmaq, was built as a missionary church in 1867 by the men of Paqtnkek[1] First Nation. Since then, much of the maintenance and repairs to the church can be credited to local Indigenous volunteers who used wooden staging to paint the church's interior and exterior.

Late afternoon view of St Anne's, with Pomquet Harbour in the background (photo © and courtesy of Brendan Riley)

This site became an important location for the annual Feast Day celebrations, a spiritual and social event which lasted for two weeks and attracted participants from throughout the region who gathered to worship, exchange information, and participate in storytelling, song, and dance. Some families set up temporary birchbark structures on the hill behind the church, decorated in readiness for services of Holy Communion and confirmation. Elder John R. Prosper relates that "Camp fires would be burning and meals would be cooking and there would be a lot of tea going around." Some participants went out eel fishing during the night and the catch would be served the next day. In the 1970s, a stage was built, and fiddling and dancing took place in the evenings. There were also bingo games, bag races, and bicycle races. On St Anne's Feast Day, mass began at 9:00 a.m. and the Eucharistic procession, accompanied

Interior of St Anne's with the altar and image of Christ (courtesy of Father Gillies)

by the recitation of the rosary and the veneration of the relic of St Anne, would be held in the afternoon. Into the 1920s, some of the older Mi'kmaw residents turned out in their traditional dress: the women in their pointed caps and ribbon trim, the men in blue broadcloth coats and woven belts. There was a solemn procession of chiefs, priests, and young men; young girls dressed in white dresses and veils were led by a cross-bearer and the statue of St Anne was held aloft as they followed a route decorated with flags and arches and strewn with flowers.

St Anne's church exemplifies Gothic-revival style with its double lancet Gothic windows along the sides, a lancet Gothic window over the doorway, and two lancet Gothic windows flanking a Gothic pointed central entrance. The square tower is almost flush with the façade and is topped by a finely tapered spire. The church's clapboard exterior displays classical elements such as eave returns and decorative corner boards.

The interior features widely spaced Gothic arcades, running down both sides of the nave, which are supported by grooved columns. These architectural details are rendered with a refined delicacy, which is complemented by the predominantly pale blue and white colour scheme, thereby heightening the effect of the powerful painted image of Jesus Christ over the altar.

This church's location is particularly idyllic, nestled close to the trees, beside the waters of Church Cove. In 2018, near this locale, an historic Friendship Accord was signed by Paqtnkek Chief Paul Prosper and Antigonish County warden Owen McCarron, formalizing a partnership between Paqtnkek First Nation and Antigonish County. A fund is currently being established for the restoration of St Anne's, especially the steeple which is in need of time-sensitive repairs.

Acknowledgements: Father Andrew Gillies, Elder Joseph R. Prosper, Jolene Chisholm

[1] To hear the name pronounced, go to: https://www.mikmaweydebert.ca/sharing-our-stories/education-and-outreach/school-curriculum/mikmaw-translations-for-teaching-about-the-mikmaq/

Old Holy Trinity Church (Anglican)

49 Main Street, Middleton, Annapolis County
Posted 23 August 2021

Old Holy Trinity Church in Middleton, Nova Scotia, is the oldest structurally unaltered wooden Loyalist church in Canada. It was designed by Bishop Charles Inglis following the style of the English architect, Christopher Wren. The windows were to be large and of clear glass to let in lots of natural light. The sanctuary was to be an extension on the east end to focus attention on the sacraments and service. The Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed were to be posted at the front of the church. The baptismal font was to be at the west end of the nave. Construction began in 1789 and

Interior view of Old Holy Trinity, Middleton, with a concert in progress, box pews, and original texts of the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, and Apostles' Creed framing the round-topped chancel window, with the old union flag to which the Loyalists rallied (courtesy of the Old Holy Trinity Charitable Trust)

Old Holy Trinity Church, Middleton (courtesy of the Old Holy Trinity Charitable Trust)

was not completed until 1797. Rev. John Wiswall, a missionary from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, oversaw and assisted in the construction, on land granted by Governor John Parr "for the newly established Parish of Wilmot".[1] Rev. Wiswall was appointed the first rector.

"Old Holy Trinity Church has the original round-head east window, which ... bathes the altar and the whole church in natural light"

Old Holy Trinity Church has the original round-head east window, which was lovingly restored by Troy Wood of The Wooden Window and Door Co. in Woodville, near Cambridge Station, Nova Scotia.[2] Almost all of it is the original glass. This beautiful window bathes the altar & whole church in natural light.

On each side of the nave are two rows of box pews. Families paid annual rent for the privilege to sit in them. The closer to the front, the more important you were. If you did not keep up your payments, you were relegated to the upper balcony at the back of the church with the servants and poor.

The large bell in the bell tower was made in England and donated by the Loyalist William Bayard, who organized the King's Orange Rangers in 1776. This battalion, which included his two sons, John and Samuel, was tasked mainly with guarding Nova Scotia ports such as Liverpool from attack by American privateers. After the revolution, Col. Samuel Vetch Bayard and another loyalist, Col. Timothy Ruggles were each given land grants of close to 5000 acres nearby. There is a monument to them in a park next to Middleton's Macdonald Museum. Both men settled in the area and were instrumental in getting Old Holy Trinity Church built on land donated by a Mr Chesley. Col. Bayard is buried in the family graveyard a few miles away in Wilmot.

The first service in Old Holy Trinity Church was held by Bishop Inglis on 14 August 1791, even though the church was not completed. The steeple and bell tower were finished a little later. Old Holy Trinity Church remains a consecrated church. It has an annual celebration on the anniversary of the first service. The 225th anniversary was celebrated in 2016.

Recently during the summer, early morning communion services were held. Also the Camino Pilgrims held services there in their trek through the countryside from Grand-Pré to Annapolis Royal. The acoustics in the church are marvelous. Besides church services and weddings, many public musical events have taken place.

This historic church is surrounded by a large cemetery where Mr A.G. Chesley and Col. Ruggles are buried. Many of the church rectors along with other important community members are also laid to rest here. A map of these is posted inside the church. At the east end of the cemetery is a special section dedicated to the British Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It has a large cenotaph and 23 stones for Commonwealth airmen who died during training in World War II at the air force base in Greenwood. Every year, on the second Sunday in June, a solemn Decoration of War Graves ceremony takes place. A red rose and a flag of the country of origin are placed on each grave. This was started in 1942 by the IODE and continues to this day with the support of the Royal Canadian Legion (Branch #1 Middleton) and CFB. Greenwood, who supply the pipes and drums and the bugler.

Old Holy Trinity Church is usually open in the summer with funding from a Provincial Youth Grant, which enables the hiring of student guides. Old Holy Trinity was designated as a provincial heritage property in 1998. The care and maintenance of the building is in the hands of the Old Holy Trinity Church Charitable Trust. This organization, entirely made up of volunteers, was established in 2001. The website for more information is: oldholytrinitychurch.ca; the email address is: oldholytrinitychurch@gmail.com

[1] https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=3805&pid=0
[2] The Wooden Window and Door Co. was profiled in *The Griffin*, 45, no. 2 (June 2020)

A Call to Barns: Understanding Agricultural Buildings in Rural Nova Scotia

Barn in East River St Mary's *[belonging to the author's family], by Kat Frick Miller, 2019, watercolour on paper, 11"x14" (courtesy of the artist)*

Meghann E. Jack

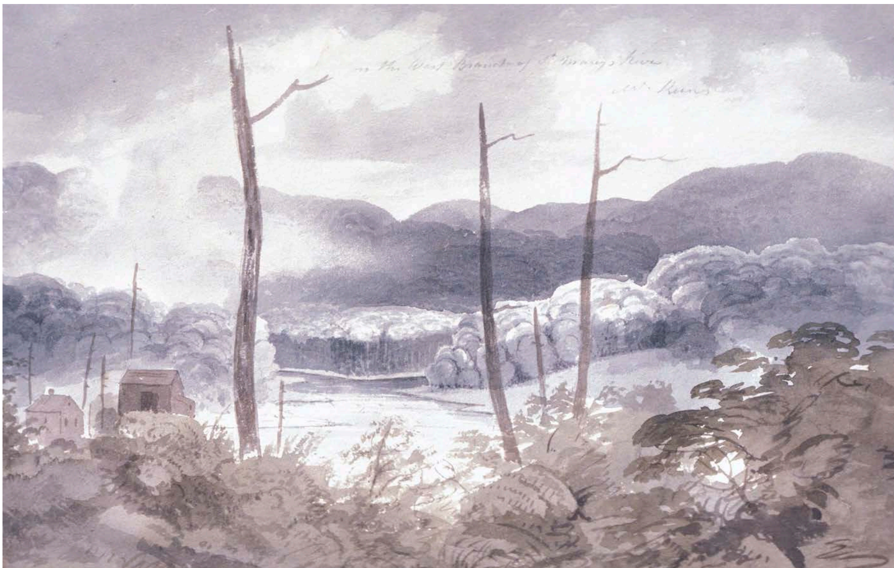
In 1868, Roderick MacKay of Fox Brook, Pictou County, built a new barn. In his diary he records how he spent the dreary days of late winter cutting and hauling timber and hewing the sills, plates, scantling, and "ribs" for the planned barn. Over two days a local carpenter and joiner, Donald McLeod, framed the barn and on April 22nd MacKay concisely wrote: " Cloudy had great many and put up barn first rate."[1]

Across 19th-century Nova Scotia, thousands of such barns populated the built landscape. Today, the remnants of MacKay's countryside have become the interest of photography enthusiasts with Facebook pages dedicated to dreamy snapshots of neglected old barns. Weathered, decaying, covered in overgrowth, these largely redundant buildings are almost always valued for their romantic aesthetic rather than the evidence they reveal about the everyday social, spatial, and material lives of rural Nova Scotians. When efforts at preservation are made, barns tend to take on new lives as performance spaces, artist studios, pool houses, or residential conversions – uses far removed from the working world of Roderick MacKay and the particular contexts that compelled him to build a new barn in the spring of 1868.

Much of MacKay's farming life would have centred around his barn(s). Many of his diary entries centre on the barn and its maintenance – "cleaning upper barn"; "making yard at barn;" "repairing barn"–– or the work of threshing grain and breaking flax, also performed within the structure. Yet MacKay never tells us what his new barn looked like, nor *why* he decided to build the barn in the first place. What were his motivations? What were the cultural and economic factors that shaped his decision-making? It is the absences between those brief lines of MacKay's diary that we must illuminate to better understand the presence of barns across Nova Scotia's rural landscape.

To date, there has been little inventorying or documentation carried out on barn building traditions in Nova Scotia. Outside of Robin Wylie's *The Heritage Barn in Nova Scotia: A Guide to the Identification and Recording of Heritage Barns and Other Farm Outbuildings*

Three-bay 17th-century barn with lean-tos, Little Spray's Farm, Brightling, East Sussex, England (barn is now a domestic conversion; photograph by Gerald L. Pocius, c. 1975)



On the West Branch of the St Mary's River, W. McKeen's farm; an early house and three-bay English barn with lean-to (John Elliott Woolford in Sketches of Nova Scotia, *1817; courtesy Nova Scotia Museum, Woolford images 31135)*

prepared in 1988 for the Heritage Unit of Nova Scotia's Department of Tourism and Culture, our understanding of the rural built landscape is rather limited.[2] Yet any drive along the highways and backroads of this province tells us that Nova Scotia's barn forms are richly varied, indicative of locality and region, ethnic group, time period, and the scale and nature of agricultural production.

It is the intent of *The Griffin* to draw more attention to the architecture of Nova Scotia barns in this and future issues. Arguably, we are at a precipice in the conservation of Nova Scotia's rural built landscape and indeed of working buildings in general. Historic barns, fish stages, workshops, and woodsheds are vanishing from the landscape at an alarming rate [*We published an article on fish stores, vernacular architecture of the fishery, in our March 2021 issue – Ed.*]. Likewise, the intangible knowledge associated with the use and meaning of these structures is equally threatened as regional, small-scale food production and subsistence systems shift in the context of increased industrialization and globalization. With competing interests, a small pool of financial resources, and limited structural supports for historic preservation, there has unfortunately been less focus on strategizing ways to protect outbuildings in comparison to domestic, religious, and commercial architecture. The intent of this series is to introduce readers to the world of Nova Scotia barns so that we can better see barns as evidence of the everyday lives of past generations, but also as heritage assets deserving of targeted preservation and restoration efforts. *The Griffin* invites others who are interested in the architecture of barns, their uses, and preservation to contribute to this dialogue.

Consider this a call to barns––an invitation to plot their presence in the lives of past and present Nova Scotians, to examine their diversity in form and function, to come to understand the choices that ordinary Nova Scotians of a range of ethnic, geographical, and socio-economic backgrounds made in the formation of the rural built landscape. Finally, it is a call to consider conserving barns––not only their built fabric but also their accompanying uses––as an inheritance for future generations.

Early Barns in Settler Colonial Nova Scotia: the Three-Bay English Barn

I begin this *Griffin* series on barns with a brief introduction to one of the earliest and most ubiquitous barn forms in Nova Scotia, the three-bay English type. This early barn form, characteristic of the British settler colonial period of Nova Scotia, is a New England design that diffused northward with groups like the planters and loyalists in the 18th century.[3] Timber-framed, the three-bay English barn is typically 30x40 feet with a central threshing floor that is flanked on either side by bays for hay and livestock stabling. The type draws its name from an antecedent form found originally throughout southeastern England.[4] The design has been a durable

The village of Debert, Township of Londonderry, Colchester County; an English barn with its double doors open is visible in the centre left of the image (John Elliott Woolford in Sketches of Nova Scotia, *1817; courtesy Nova Scotia Museum, Woolford images 31073)*

one, as English barns were continually built throughout Nova Scotia between the 18th and 20th centuries.[5] The draftsman and architect John Elliott Woolford recorded barns of this design during his travels across Nova Scotia with Lord Dalhousie in 1817.

While the form and timber-framing techniques of English barns closely reflect their British antecedents, in the context of New World settlement the uses of the barns changed. In Britain, barns were intended only for the storage of harvested grains and their processing. Other smaller outbuildings such as cattle byres, stables, granaries, dovecotes, piggeries, dairies and so on were situated throughout the farm yard forming a complex of interrelated yet separate buildings. In North America, however, barns evolved into multi-purpose units.

The English barn type in Nova Scotia thus additionally housed cattle and other animals, combining livestock, grain, and fodder all under one roof. Although some agricultural reformers advocated for the British system of a separate stable and barn, and colonial newspaper sale ads can be found that refer to a separate cowhouse or stabling, this arrangement was infrequently adopted in Nova Scotia. Alfred C. Thomas, in his *Comparisons of English & American Farming* (1880) recommended separate buildings for the Nova Scotia farmstead and condemned the "large, elevated barns generally built in this country" as "very unsightly," and a "constant expense to keep in repair".[6] His prescriptions, however, held little sway over the building decisions made by ordinary farmers. The multi-functional arrangement of both livestock and crops under one roof remains the normal conceptualization of a barn in Nova Scotia and across North America today.

The multi-purpose plan of both grain storage and animal shelter was well suited to the nature of the largely subsistence and family-run farms that early settlers maintained. Most farm families were the only labourers on their steads, so they needed an efficient, compact barn design that permitted them to grab a hayfork, climb the mow, pitch down the hay, open a hatch and toss the feed into the cow's manger from the same floor on which they threshed their grain. Farm labour became more convenient and efficient when performed under one roof ridge, freeing up time for occupational pluralities––like lumbering––that were necessary to achieve subsistence or purchase goods. Efficiency in barn plan was crucial to Nova Scotia's farmers as they

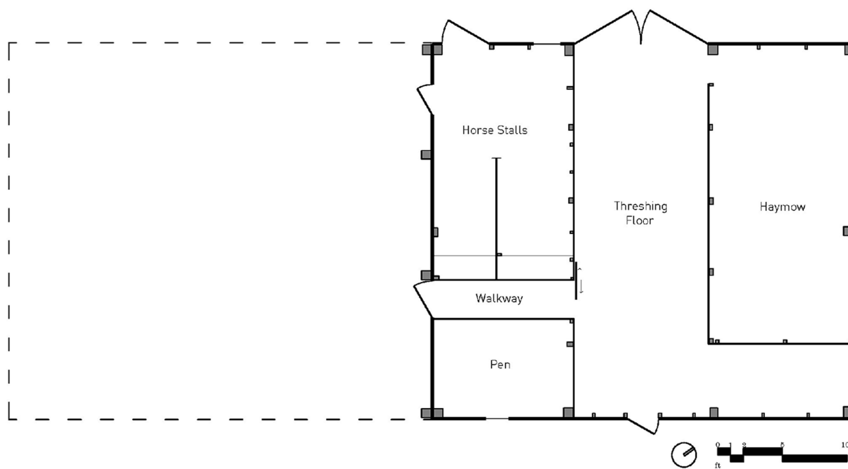
John Cruickshank's three-bay English barn, probably built in the early 1830s, in Caledonia, Guysborough County (photo by Meghann Jack)

sought to meet the rigorous demands of the early settler landscape.

While the English barn follows a standardized dimension, variation was not uncommon. Property sale ads from the pre-1850 period in Nova Scotia describe a plethora of framed barns of roughly 30x40 feet, but other ads indicate variation in spatial capacity, as barns were often larger or smaller by several feet depending on their context. For example, an 1829 ad for a house lot in the town of Sherbrooke describes "a good barn, 30 by 25 feet," while an 1837 ad for a farm in Musquodoboit describes "two barns of 40 by 34 feet, each." Another farm ad from Nine Mile River describes a "frame barn 46ft. x 36ft.," and still another farm sale ad in Antigonish advertises a barn "33 x 27 feet, floored with 2 inch-plank." The English plan was also flexible in that additional bays could be added. Thus the tripartite, three bay form served as a basic mental template of design from which enlargement or extension could occur through the lateral addition of bays.[7] Additionally, lean-tos or sheds could also be applied on the rear or side of the barn to increase storage or stabling space. The horizontal expansion of barns from the basic three bay English barn template was especially prevalent in districts of northeastern Nova Scotia after the mid-19th century.

Nova Scotia's early English barns were certainly overbuilt. Eighteen inch floor joists and fourteen inch posts show builders' attentions to using the abundance of timber available to them. Converting the wilderness into a landscape suitable for Eurocentric conceptions of agricultural productivity was an important effort as settlers sought to impose their own forms of regularity and order in their new environment. As the early landscape of Nova Scotia was one of dense woods, settlers––in not only a practical, but also an ideological sense––believed that the forest needed to be felled and cleared, and that "the wilderness [must] blossom as the rose."[8] Overbuilt barns thus became a metaphor for this action.

The strength of the barn's framed presence on the landscape represented agricultural triumph through the conquering of the wilderness. Early English barns were therefore symbolic of place-making. As architectural historian Daniel Maudlin writes, placemaking was the "process by which new landowners made their lot their home: turning forests into farms, the unfamiliar into the familiar … a state of mind, whereby settlers began to think of their square of heavily forested land not as the unknown to be tamed––and feared––but as a home within a community of friends and neighbours doing familiar things and sharing familiar concerns."[9] Though English barns were a performance of early



Plan of John Cruickshank's three-bay English barn in Caledonia, Guysborough County; in the mid-19th century the barn was extended by several bays, since demolished (fieldwork by Meghann Jack and Adrian Morrison, re-drawn by Colleen Briand)

subsistence farming, the intention was that these buildings should last, and we must remember that these barns were the first permanent structures on the settled landscape––in many instances finer than the farmer's first dwelling.

English barns, ultimately, are a representation of the early Nova Scotia farm family's hope and optimism for independence and success in a new geography. Though a material statement of the defeat of the forest, of the "savage" wilderness brought under the "order" of the plough, the English barn represented more than human dominance over nature. While crucial to the efficiency of Nova Scotia's early mixed farming system, the English barn also symbolizes the beginnings of community building. The barn, as the principle storage and processing building on the farm, was key to establishing a productive and abundant agricultural landscape that would sustain the groups of settler families that would make Nova Scotia both a home and a place.

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[1] 2021-007, Nova Scotia Archives

[2] This report is available at the Nova Scotia Archives. It is uncertain if the report was ever circulated to the public. The text is not without its flaws. It has no scale drawings of structures, few interior images, and does not utilize archival or oral history sources.

[3] The timber-framed barn building tradition of Nova Scotia is largely an Anglo-American one. While New England design and construction techniques tend to dominate the built heritage of Nova Scotia, the possibility of other cultural traditions of barn building has not yet been adequately explored. It is therefore crucial to look at the *interiors* of structures to assess plan and construction technologies. For example, the influence of Germanic design in the material culture of Lunenburg County is well known. While a form may *appear* of New England origin in plan or look, it is possible that the structure was framed using continental techniques. Acadian barn building traditions may also emphasize different spatial priorities and arrangement, as well as construction technology.

[4] Henry Glassie, The barn across southern England: a note on transatlantic comparison and architectural meanings. *Pioneer America,* 7, no. 1 (January 1975).

[5] Gordon Hammond, for example, has observed that the majority of extant early- to mid-20th century barns along the Eastern Shore are built on the three-bay English plan. See *The Griffin*, 41, no. 1 (2016).

[6] Alfred C. Thomas, *Comparisons of English and American Farming in Connection with Hard Times … also on the Management of a Hundred Acre Farm* … (Windsor [NS]: C.W. Knowles, 1880), p. 56, https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.33919/63?r=0&s=1 (accessed 2021-09-05).

[7] A bay could also be subtracted to create a small, two-bay barn. These barns were built infrequently in Nova Scotia.

[8] First report of the Cumberland Agricultural Society, 1820, RG8 vol 6, #174, Nova Scotia Archives.

[9] Daniel Maudlin, Politics and place-making on the edge of empire: Loyalists, Highlanders, and the early farmhouses of British Canada, in *Building the British Atlantic World: Spaces, Places, and Material Culture, 1650-1850*, ed. Bernard Herman and Daniel Maudlin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 290.

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 21 October 2021 7:00 pm

Due to the ongoing pandemic and state of emergency,
this year's AGM was postponed and will now take place virtually
on the third Thursday of the month,
our usual meeting day, 21 October 2021

The date published in the last issue was incorrect.
Further details on the Zoom connection can be found in the insert.

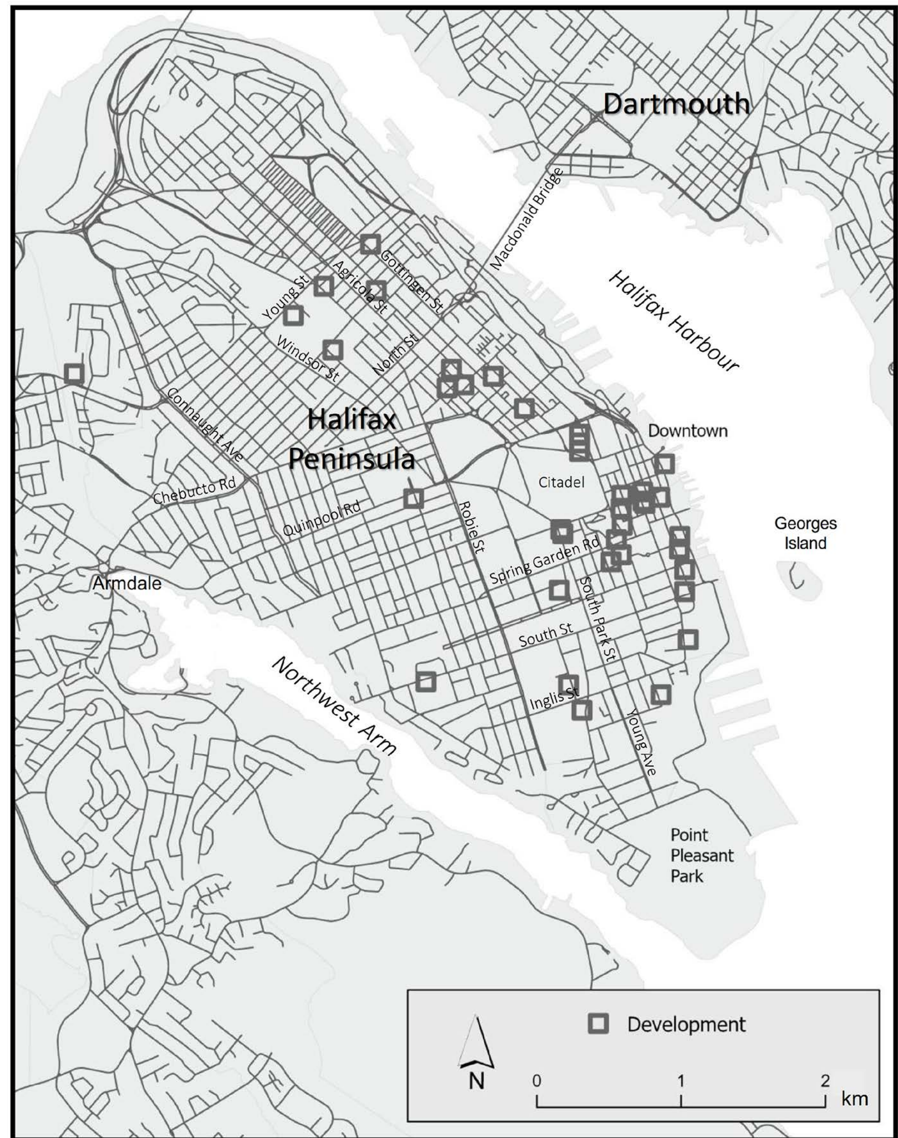
Taking a Wider View on the Redevelopment of Halifax's Urban Core

Katherine Macdonald
Mathew Novak

This article summarizes the key findings and results from an undergraduate Honours thesis at Saint Mary's University.[1]

Paralleling trends common in cities across Canada, the urban core of Halifax is experiencing immense changes to its built environment. Primarily driven by the demand for residential units in mid- and high-rise buildings with access to amenities and services, existing structures are demolished to make way for new developments. While a range of opinions have been expressed regarding the consequences of such alterations, the city's ongoing state of transition provides the opportunity to chronicle and investigate an important period in Halifax's urban development with regard to local heritage. Framed around Schumpeter's theory of creative destruction, premised on the notion that any act of creation necessitates destruction, 38 sites were selected to illustrate notable changes occurring across the Halifax Peninsula between 2009 and 2019 (see map).

> *"The fine-grained traditional urban fabric, with its diversity of styles and uses, is [being] replaced by larger buildings that disrupt the existing streetscape"*



Locations of 38 case studies of redevelopment (2009-2019) across the Halifax Peninsula

Two well-established technologies, Google Street View and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), are useful for documenting Halifax's urban transformation. As a feature of the Google Maps application (maps.google.com), Street View offers imagery of nearly every street in Halifax (as it does for most other cities across Canada) collected by 360-degree cameras mounted on vehicles that navigate the city's streets. These images are updated every couple of years and are available in Halifax dating back to 2009. As such Street View provides an extensive catalogue of Halifax's recent history, offering a visual record of the city's streetscapes including both changes and continuities. GIS provides a fruitful mode of analysis to enable empirically driven conclusions relevant to urban areas undergoing redevelopment. In addition to the obvious mapping capabilities, showing where development is occurring, GIS provides analytical tools for calculating such measures as changing densities. Employment of such technologies was central in yielding several principal conclusions relevant to Halifax's evolving built environment and formulating predictions for the future.

Analysis implementing these tools reveals that, overall, peninsular redevelopment exhibits an intensification of land use primarily through increased building heights and areas. In terms of height, the new buildings on average comprise ten storeys, while former struc-

Redevelopment and densification retaining part of the historical building on the corner of Market and Sackville streets in Halifax

tures displayed in 2009 Street View imagery typically were three storeys. Tracing building footprints from air photos in GIS shows that recent developments are three times larger than the buildings they replaced. Density measures also reveal further evidence of increased land-use intensity. Comparing densities calculated in GIS as the percentage of the lot covered by buildings reveals a more than two-fold increase in the density of new developments compared to the previous coverage. Similarly, floor-area ratios, another density measure defined as a structure's total floor area relative to lot size, rose seven-fold.

The trajectory of densification in Halifax parallels another trend common to many urban cores – that of homogenization. Urban areas are increasingly looking the same from Melbourne to Edmonton, largely stemming from a convergence of the globalization of aesthetics and the standardization of materials and design, resulting from the drive for efficiency and, ultimately, profit. In the past, such trends were commonly relegated to suburbia, with its cookie-cutter houses and low-slung retail plazas dominated by international chains. Inner-city areas too saw some placeless architecture, notably in the downtown office towers of steel and glass. However, traditional residential areas (such as are found across the Halifax Peninsula) are now following such homogenizing tendencies. These traditional neighbourhoods arguably represent a city's most distinctive architectural styles, from red-brick Victorian row houses in Toronto's Cabbagetown to Vancouver's Craftsman and Tudor cottages. Likewise, Halifax's shingled buildings, both grand and humble, are a common symbol of the city.

> *"... prolongation of current trends will act to further alter the Peninsula's built environment and replace Halifax's characteristic, daresay unique, urban forms with generic placeless structures"*

Comparing the Google Street View imagery of Halifax from before and after redevelopment shows that this trend towards standardization is nearly ubiquitous in the urban core, where the vast majority of new buildings are mid-rise, mixed-use structures with ground-floor commercial and anywhere from three to twenty storeys of housing units above. The fine-grained traditional urban fabric, with its diversity of styles and uses, is replaced by larger buildings that disrupt the existing streetscape. The vast majority of developments exhibit streamlined modern or neo-modern architecture, clad primarily with glass and metal sheeting, sometimes mimicking brick, stone, and wood. The characteristic ornamentation and materials endemic to Halifax are replaced by mass produced products chosen for their efficiency and durability. Comparing new mixed-use developments in Halifax with those found in cities across the continent shows few differentiating elements; in fact it is almost impossible to tell which city is which. Google's extensive coverage makes this comparison possible with numerous placeless examples found with random drops of Street View's pin.

While many recent construction projects remove all elements of the past, including massing and design, several developments included within the study sample demonstrate a commitment to preserving elements of historical

Many new developments such as this example (left) on Clyde Street do not fit the context of the surrounding neighbourhood, in contrast to scale-appropriate and sympathetic repurposing (building at right) featured in the December 2020 issue of The Griffin *(v.45, no 4)*

structures. A noteworthy illustration of historical conservation is that of the Dillon, situated on the downtown corner of Market Street and Sackville Street. Incorporation of the brick building's façade and setback of newly added storeys atop the original structure allows for retention of a part of the existing building and the maintenance of the streetscape – although the latter is largely disrupted nearby by large-scale structures such as the Nova Centre.

The repurposing of existing buildings permits redevelopment projects to meet density demands while ensuring conservation of built forms unique to Halifax. This compromise is almost exclusively found in the urban core, where existing commercial buildings are substantial, making them readily adaptable to new contexts. Elsewhere on the Peninsula, entire blocks of traditional residential and mixed-use buildings are being levelled to make way for new construction, with no attempt to incorporate the existing structures. The new buildings are unsympathetic to their neighbours as well as to the streetscape and urban fabric, as demonstrated in the aforementioned change in density and scale.

Increasing architectural sameness consequently produces a variety of implications for local context and

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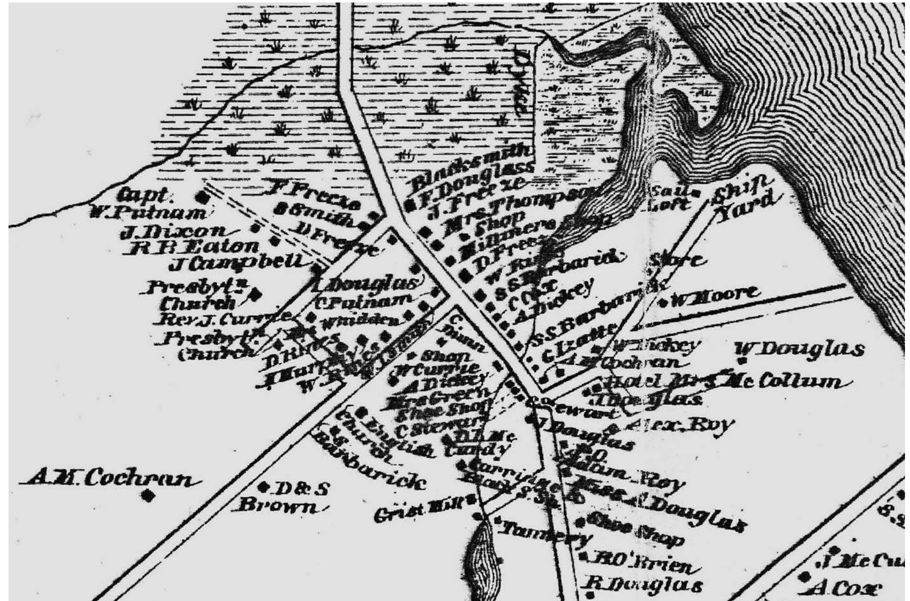
Putting Places to Names: the Nova Scotia GeoGen Project

Donald Forbes



Detail for part of Maitland, East Hants, from the 1871 Church map of Hants County, showing rich detail of building locations and householder names (source: http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nshants/resources/map/afchurch/hants/maitland.pdf)

A systematic census is an essential foundation for evidence-based policy-making in the modern world. The first post-Acadian Nova Scotia census to list all members of households was the first Dominion census of 1871; ever since, a Canada-wide census has been taken every ten years, as stipulated in the British North America Act 1867. The 1881 census occurred at what might be considered the zenith of Nova Scotia's rural economy, and gave unprecedented detail on the population of 440,572 individuals residing in 74,154 dwellings.[1]

But where exactly did these people live? Who were their neighbours? Where was their place of work? How far did they have to go to church? What view did they have looking out their windows? To some extent, proximity in the census records can suggest answers to these questions, but precise addresses (to the extent these may have existed) are rarely provided. Aspects of the places our ancestors took for granted in their daily lives are missing and must be pieced together using clues from old photographs, correspondence, property deeds, oral tradition, and other sources.

As it turns out, between 1865 and 1888, a detailed mapping project was underway with limited support from the provincial government. Ambrose F. Church published 18 county maps in which topographic features such as streams, ponds, lakes and shorelines, roads, and buildings were plotted in great detail. Not only do we have the locations of structures, but in most cases they are labelled, by type (e.g. grist mill, hotel, church, sail loft …) for non-residential buildings, and by head of household (first initial and surname) for dwellings.

Geo-genealogy is the study of family history in the context of place (geography). The potential benefits of combining the 1881 (and potentially 1871) census data and the rich social history record in the Church maps was the inspiration for the GeoGen Project. This was initiated by the Maritime Institute for Civil Society (MIRCS) in collaboration with several other organizations, including the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia. Recognizing that there is no complete set of the Church maps (each of the three major collections has gaps) and that most of those surviving are in poor condition, the goal initially was to acquire, conserve, preserve, and capture additional historical value from a best copy of each of the maps. It was also clear that our understanding could be greatly enhanced by linking the names of heads of household and house locations (latitude and longitude) on the Church maps with names and other details in the census records. By providing enhanced geographical context for our understanding of the social conditions and relationships that underpinned our communities in the past, it is hoped that the project will contribute to a more robust appreciation of our collective heritage.

An in-person workshop on the project was convened in Truro in August 2021 (by invitation only, unfortunately, due to public health restrictions). The aim was to share information on the methods adopted and progress to date in the collection, conservation, digital imaging, georeferencing, and further utilization of the Church maps. The project has now acquired 14 of the 18 maps (some remain elusive). The painstaking process has begun of cleaning, stabilizing, and conserving the paper copies, acquiring undistorted digital images of the complete maps, digitally rectifying the resulting images to a consistent geographical coordinate system, and creating the tools to capture and organize dwelling locations and names on the maps. The workshop was convened by Kith Observatory (www.kithobservatory.ca), a social enterprise majority-owned by non-profit partner organizations to facilitate the manage-

ment of data in the project and further sharing and dissemination of locally-owned archival resources. Active partner organizations include the Genealogical Association of Nova Scotia, the West Hants Historical Society, East Hants Historical Society, and Heritage Antigonish, with sponsorship from HTNS and the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society, and a grant from the federal government. Prototype projects have been undertaken in north-end Halifax, New Ross, and Heatherton.

Speakers at the workshop described the various steps needed to reach the goal of a georeferenced genealogical data base. Julia Landry, a professional conservator, described some of the challenges she has faced working on these large-format maps, including her methods for physically accessing all parts of the maps (with a sliding platform), for removing the darkened varnish coating, and for stabilizing parts where there was not much left but the backing linen. Christian Laforce, collections photographer at the Nova Scotia Museum, described the formidable challenges of creating undistorted and consistently lit mosaic images of the maps (following a best-practice archival protocol). David Raymond described the geomatic processing of the map images to bring them into a modern coordinate system. He also described the mapping process used to create the maps and the extent and resolution of topographic discrepancies. Paul Armstrong, standing in for Shaun Johansen, described some aspects of the innovative software development required to enable the matching and management of map and census data.

The project is now moving to a new phase of comprehensive data capture in Antigonish, Hants, and Halifax counties. Volunteers, both "doers" (for data capture) and "knowers" (holders of local historical knowledge) are invited to self-identify on the Kith website and with the relevant partner organizations spearheading the project in each county.

[1]https://www.kithobservatory.ca/geogen/ (accessed 2021-08-31)

Taking a Wider View on the Redevelopment of Halifax's Urban Core

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peninsular Halifax's heritage building stock. As displayed in the map, development sites are primarily concentrated in Halifax's downtown core, with significant clustering in the area below Citadel Hill; however, nearly all areas of the peninsula have witnessed changes over the past decade. Such rapid change evokes concern regarding issues of place-making and the sense of harmony apparent in the Peninsula's built environment, particularly with reference to the compatibility redeveloped lots possess with adjacent historical structures. A lack of compatibility is most noticeably exemplified by the recently constructed Mary Ann building on Clyde Street, bordering downtown Halifax's historic Schmidtville neighbourhood, which noticeably disrupts the urban fabric and historical integrity, both in terms of scale and design.

We often lose track of the big picture, focusing attention on individual battles before moving on to the next preservation fight. Taking a wider view, looking at the entire inner city over the last decade, reveals the cumulative impact of development touching all areas of Halifax's urban core. Municipal government agents, including Council and planners, are largely in favour of the piecemeal changes, as each development brings new, often wealthier residents, along with increased tax revenue, among other heralded but largely untested environmental and economic benefits. The Centre Plan, a new planning program governing the entirety of the Peninsula along with the inner core of Dartmouth, demonstrates this conviction by up-zoning large swaths of the city for redevelopment, including strips lining prominent streets such as Robie and Windsor. Also targeted for redevelopment is much of the city's vibrant North End, where one finds a variety of uses and users occupying Halifax's distinct traditional working-class housing.

While the benefits of development are often trumpeted, prolongation of current trends will act to further alter the Peninsula's built environment and replace Halifax's characteristic, daresay unique, urban forms with generic placeless structures. As discussed by Schumpeter, creating something new necessarily entails the destruction of what was already there. Using the analogy of music, nobody wants to give up the ease of instantly streaming and downloading their chosen playlist; however, such technologies have made vinyl records and their distinctive qualities a passion of a select few audiophiles. In terms of our urban environment, we do not want our old buildings to be relics cherished by a few enthusiasts, but rather to act as an integral part of daily life for all citizens. Thus, rather than disposing of old buildings like we would a collection of old eight-tracks, we need to understand the extent of what is being lost in the drive for creation.

Katherine Macdonald is a recent graduate of Saint Mary's University, where Dr Mathew Novak is Associate Professor of Geography and supervised Katherine's research.
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[1]Katherine Macdonald, 2020. The Changing Face of the Halifax Peninsula: a Narrative of Transition. Unpublished Honours Thesis, Department of Geography and Planning, Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

Map and photos courtesy of the authors

King's Head Light, Pictou County

Summer outing and visit at King's Head Light, 1907. This lighthouse, on the headland east of Melmerby Beach, was constructed in 1882 to mark the entrance to Merigomish Harbour. The builders were Angus McQueen and Hugh Cameron of New Glasgow, and the cost was $1497. It was equipped with a catoptric fixed red light 105 ft above sea level, visible at 10 miles. The Annual Report of the Department of Marine for 1882 described a square wooden tower 40 ft high, with attached dwelling, painted white.

The first keeper was Colin MacDonald, whose widow Margaret took over the keeper's role when he passed away in 1892. The light was discontinued in 1897, after which the lantern was removed, and the building became a private residence. Still standing, the building has had many additions and is now more than double its original size.

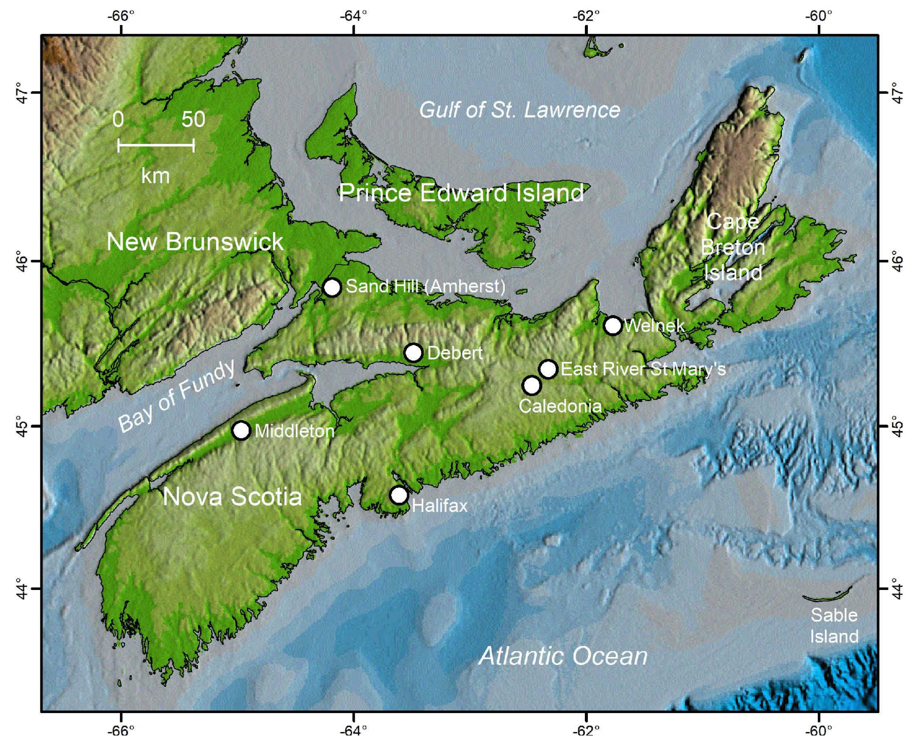
Note the woman holding a child in the doorway. Visitors are likely members of the Forbes family of Little Harbour. Source: family photo contributed by D.L. Forbes.

Sources:
Bush, E.F. *The Canadian Lighthouse.* Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Paper in Archaeology and History, No. 9 (2006), http://parkscanadahistory.com/series/chs/9/chs9-1e.htm (accessed 2012-08-31).

Merigomish Lighthouse, Lighthouse Friends, https://www.lighthousefriends.com/light.asp?ID=2101 (accessed 2021-08-31)

Cullen, M., Aikens, S. and Forbes, M. *Along the Shore of Little Harbour, Pictou County Nova Scotia: a History of Anderson's Mountain, Black Point, Boat Harbour, Chance Harbour, King's Head, Little Harbour and Woodburn* (Little Harbour NS: Little Harbour Community Centre, 1984), p. 52.

Locations of subject matter in this issue



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