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CENTRE FOR NFLD. STUDIES
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MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

the past present future **trident**

NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST NEWS BULLETIN

VOL. 1 NO. 1

A THREE-PRONGED IMPLIMENT

This News Bulletin: an SOS

An SOS to save our historic sites, buildings, landmarks and records that bind together our history and heritage. It is only through action that those remaining will stand to tell our story.

If the Newfoundland Historic Trust has learned anything in the past two years we have learned that a significant contribution in the preservation and restoration of these sites and artifacts cannot be made by a handful of people.

We know that the job we feel should be done is too big and the group too small. Even the job of organizing and expanding the Trust has seemed impossible and was always put off "until we finished the church." Now we realize this job cannot be completed without your help. This newsletter is an SOS, to everyone who is interested in the work we are trying to do. Our work must also include a threefold program that can only be carried out if you are part of it.

Threefold program of Trust

1. **TO INFORM:** by newsletter and the use of the media so that the public is aware of all that is of historic value in our province. The fact that 17,000 people visited the newly restored Queen's Battery at Quidi Vidi during the miserable summer of 1968 should be ample proof of the interest of tourists and residents alike, once an effort at restoration is made.

2. **TO PROTEST:** when historic sites are threatened and to help coordinate the efforts of other interested groups who endeavour to preserve our landmarks. To protest, the Trust feels, is an important and vital part of our work as a group, but without the public to back us and assist us our protesting will fall on empty ears.

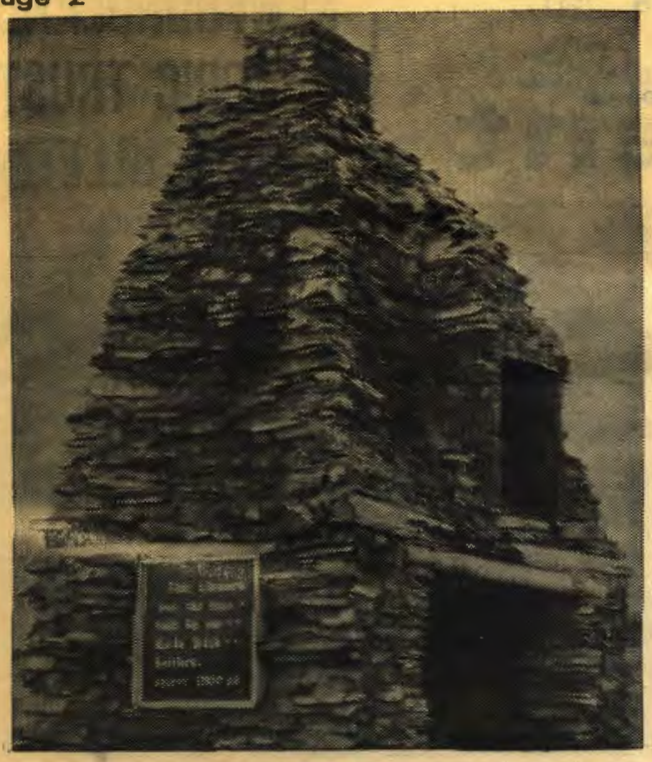
3. **TO RAISE MONEY:** must also be an important part of our work, so that we many undertake to restore and preserve suitable sites and artifacts where possible and to commission qualified professionals to make records through photographs and sketches of those sites which cannot be saved. The money we raise will be used also to establish an organization that is effective and efficient.

You can save our historic sites

This news bulletin has been sent to you because of the interest you have shown in the work of the Trust. You can now help us with this work by becoming associated with the Trust as a member or an active worker. The choice is yours to make of preserving our heritage—so choose wisely and generously.

1. AN ACTIVE MEMBER—willing to work on specific committees and projects.
2. AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER—willing to support our work and to contribute through a membership fee to the Trust.
3. A FAMILY MEMBERSHIP—guaranteeing through you families' participation that this work will continue to preserve our heritage for generations to come.

The fees are $3.00 for single membership and $5.00 for family. Please take a moment to make your choice and return this notice to us in the enclosed envelope.



STONE CHIMNEY—built by the early Irish Settlers to Newfoundland still stands in Harbour Grace as a sturdy reminder of our history. (Daily News photo)

Financial Facts

Statement of Income and Expenditure
July 1, 1966 to October 31, 1968

Income		
Membership fees		$ 159.00
Provincial grants		2,000.00
Donations		4,148.93
Bank interest		61.44
Net income from special fund raising projects		1,204.62
		$7,573.99
Expenditure		
General expenses	$ 344.31	
Restoration Quidi Vidi church	7,792.64	8,136.95
Excess of expenditure over income represented by bank position October 31, 1968		$ 562.96

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For the past two years, the Newfoundland Historic Trust has strived against strong odds to awaken in all of us an awareness of our history and heritage. We will continue to strive towards a goal that is not impossible to achieve nor that far in the future—the awareness on the part of all Newfoundlanders and their communities of a history to be told for generations to come. We have up to now been a small group, but we are confident that you will become part of this movement.

C. F. HORWOOD,
President,
Newfoundland Historic Trust.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Newfoundland Historic Trust is now preparing for its first Annual Meeting to be held on Monday, March 10th, at the National Film Board Theatre at Pleasantville. We are extending a sincere invitation to you to attend this meeting. Your presence will give us the encouragement and support we need to continue our work. During the meeting a new slate of officers will be presented, a blueprint for the future will be drawn up and a film will be shown. It is during this meeting that your ideas and suggestions can be made known. Won't you come.

New interest shown in preservation

Listed below are some of the projects undertaken in recent years that demonstrate the surge of interest in the preservation of our history and historic sites.

VISITORS CENTRE—Signal Hill, constructed by the Federal Government and opened in 1968 by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board.
SIGNAL HILL—in progress by the Federal Government.
CASTLE HILL—Placentia, opened by the National Historic Parks.
FERRYLAND MONUMENT—erected by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board.
CAPE SPEAR LIGHTHOUSE—in progress by the Federal Government.
ST. THOMAS' RECTORY—combined project of the Provincial and Federal Governments.
BONAVISTA LIGHTHOUSE—to become a provincial historic site and museum.
QUIDI VIDI BATTERY—Provincial Government and the 56th Field Squadron, RCE (M).
PORT AU CHOIX—interprative centre and archeological site (provincial).
L'ANSE AUX MEADOWS—continuing archeological site (provincial).
TWILLINGATE DIG—provincial and federal project.
UNITED CHURCH—Topsail, restored by the Evening Telegram.
TRINITY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES—set up by the Trinity Historical Society.
TREPASSEY BATTERY—a citizen group.

Officers & Members of the Trust

President—Mr. Cyril Horwood.
Vice President—Mr. David Webber.
Secretary — Mrs. Frank Duff.
Treasurer — Mrs. Peter Gardiner.

Committee Chairmen

Publicity — Mrs. Norman Goodridge.
Financial—Mr. Randy Bell
Building — Mr. Norman Goodridge.
Regatta—Mrs. John Carter.
Ways and Means — Mrs. Randy Bell.
Newsletter — Mrs. Norman Goodridge
Membership — Miss Barbara Murphy.
Architectural Advisor - Mr. William Guihan.
Historical Researcher — Mrs. Eleanor McKim.
Legal Advisor — Mr. Ted Goodridge.

Active Members:

Mrs. W. A. MacCallum
Mrs. R. V. Winsor.
Mr. Hans Melis
Miss Rae Perlin
Mr. Michael Harrington

Quidi Vidi and Christ Church

Historical Background

In one of the oldest parts of St. John's is the quaint fishing village of Quidi Vidi that has changed very little since it was first recorded on maps in the 1680's.

Standing in this Historic settlement is a small wooden church that was built in 1834. It is regarded as an historical landmark and a fine example of village church architecture of its period. It houses a window dating back to 1886, the large Bible and Altar Book dating back to its dedication in 1843, and a bell that was placed in the church in 1890.

Christ Church was originally built by the Congregationalists as an interdenominational church. In 1843 it was taken over by the Anglicans and has been part of St. Thomas' Parish since that time until it was secularized in 1966 for restoration purposes.

The Historic Trust is now planning a museum in the church depicting the religious, military and fishing life of this picturesque early 16th Century village that was the scene of many a battle between the British and French troops for the ultimate possession of the Island during the period of 1662 to 1762.

The necessity of things historic

By BARBARA MURPHY

To appreciate the things of the present, to have a mark of real civilization and to solidify and strengthen our nation it is necessary to have available for observation those landmarks of history which refect our heritage. People who value the records of history are a people with a future.

Here in Newfoundland we have the oldtst city in North America. St. John's is unique and special, a most interesting city steeped in history and traditions. Are we going to allow it to become a chrome-plated site or are we going to proudly preserve its beauty, dignity and past?

A record of progress and development in the domestic, social and economic life in St. John's for over four hundred years as well as the restoration of fine old buildings were ideas of our government were formulated, debated and written into law, could be an attraction for many visitors—a source of great income for our country.

It is urgent that we make a start on the preservation of our Newfoundland culture, to promote the study and knowledge of our history. The sites at L'Anse aux Meadows date back to 1000 A.D. and Ferryland, Brigus and Trinity are landmarks of our early settlements.

We must aim at stimulating and developing the interest of the young people with special emphasis on the role played by the Historic Trust. We must promote the cultural and material interest of the public and the endeavours of the Historic Trust by conducting exhibitions of all media and by organizing other artistic and cultural events in restored areas.

We must inject new life in our organization so vital in history in its many varied forms.

The future may learn from the past.

STONE LIGHTHOUSE—located at Rose Blanche may soon be on the list of lost landmarks. The crumbling rocks in its walls are said to be a constant source of danger. (Max Mercer photo)

a country such as ours where thousands could benefit from increased exposure to our

But where is our history?

By SHANNIE DUFF, Secretary

Like most other families in St. John's during that "Come Home Year" summer of 1966, ours came in for its fair share of visitors, and it fell to my lot quite often to be unofficial tour guide around the city. As I had just returned home myself after an absence of some years and was full of pride at all the new and progressive things which had so obviously happened I found it a most enjoyable task.

Visitors were impressed, no doubt at all, especially those who were returning Newfoundlanders whose last memories of St. John's were many long lean years ago. Somewhere along the way always came the proud boast, "St. John's is the oldest city in North America". And then immediately the unbidden question, "Yes, but where is our history? Where is some link with our past that we can see?" I always felt a bit lame driving past the Hotel Nfld. and saying, "This is the site of Fort William".

Earlier in the summer Christ Church, or as it is better known, the little Church at Quidi Vidi, had been threatened with demolition. Built as a very early eccumenical effort of three denominations, Methodists, Anglicans and Congregationalists it later became a mission church of St. Thomas' Anglican Parish. Now in a era of motor cars and shortened distances it was no longer really necessary. In 1966 the building was in sad repair and according to an estimate given to the Anglican Synod the cost of the necessary renovations would be in the neighbourhood of $20,000. As much as the decision was regretted it had to be made. Christ Church would be demolished.

Often painted by local artists, object of Sunday walks by countless St. John's families and of fond memories of those for whom it had served for years as village church, this decision to demolish Christ Church raised a howl of indignant protest. Everybody asked, "Why don't THEY do something about it?" "THEY let Fort Townsend and Fort William go." "THEY didn't do anything about St. Mary's Church. But who are they?

Spearheaded by a small group of members of the Art Gallery Association of Newfoundland and Labrador and a handful of concerned citizens the Newfoundland Historic Trust was formed. Its meetings were indignant, energetic and informal and its main purpose at that time was to save yet another historic landmark from destruction. First the members acquired the Little Church from the Anglican Synod and it was duly secularized in a ceremony presided over by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Seaborn in July of 1966. A sign was proudly errected,

This Building
Is Being Restored
by the
Nfld. Historic Trust.

and full of high hopes that the restoration would be completed and ready to be opened as a museum by the following Spring, the small group started work.

I am sure most of you have seen the sign many times and wondered if and when this restoration would show some results. One of the main aims of this Newsletter is to tell the story of the ensuing two years, the story of the Trust, its difficulties, its frustrations and its accomplishments.

Our work in retrospect

JULY, AUGUST SEPTEMBER

Church assessed and architects report submitted by Mr. Wm. Guihan. Total Cost of restoration approx. $15,000. The group hoped to reduce this considerably by the use of volunteer labor. Interior stripped and all artifacts stored for restoration. Windows and doors boarded and made weather tight.

OCTOBER

Realizing that volunteer labor alone would be totally inadequate the group turned to ways and means of raising funds. Speakers from the Trust addressed various groups in St. John's.

NOVEMBER TO JANUARY

Approach made on behalf of the Trust by Mr E. B. Foran to Historic Sites and Monuments Board, Ottawa, for Financial assistance.

Publicity and Fund raising campaign organized.

1967 FEBRUARY

Assurance given by Mr. Foran that Histosic Sites and Monuments Board had approved request for funds and passed recommendation to Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

APRIL AND MAY

Exhibit of paintings of Quidi Vidi in connection with Spring Exhibit of the Art Gallery Association. Publicity Blitz preceeding financial campaign organized by Mrs. Edythe Goodridge. Started April 28th. Week long campaign realized approx. $4,000.00. Announcement made by Mr. Joseph O'Keefe, at that time Federal Member for St. John's East that the Federal Governmtnt would assist with restoration of the Church. Cheque for $1,000. presented to Mr. Randy Bell, financial campaign chairman, by Dr. G. A. Frecker, Minister of Provincial Affairs, on behalf of the Provincial Govt.

AUGUST

Booth at Regatta selling watermellon. Net Profit $130.00 Engineer from Historic Sites and Monuments Board looked at church and submitted report to Ottawa.

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER

The following structural work on the Church was completed: main reams replaced, main sills replaced, tie beams to walls, replacement of main studding where decayed, minor repairs to steeple, new felt and shingles on roof, replaced clapboard where needed. This work exhausted the available funds and left the Trust with a deficit of approx. $400.00.

NOVEMBER

Anglican Rectory threatened with demolition. Meeting called by Nfld. Historic Trust with representatives of the City Council, Nfld. Association of Architecture, The Nfld. Historical Society, The Art Association of Nfld. and Labrador and the Junior Chamber of Commerce. It was agreed that in the event of negotiations breaking down again between the Provincial Govt. and the Anglican Synod a special committee would be formed from the above groups to rescue the Rectory from demolition. Press Release issued by the Trust.

JUNE 1968

Letter sent to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board asking for immediate clarification of their position with regard to financial assistance for the Trust.

$1,000.00 grant from the Provincial Govt.

AUGUST

No reply to letter to Ottawa. Assurance received by phone that $1,000.00 grant would be forwarded in a few days.

SEPTEMBER

Report from Mr. Guihan that the stone foundation of the Church in critical condition. Decision taken to make necessary repairs immediately and to have the church painted as soon as money received from Ottawa.

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

Work on foundations completed. Cost $1275.00. No further action from Ottawa. Elicited by phone that deed of ownership of Church and Papers of Incorporation in addition to details of finances and work complettd must be forewarded before assistance can be given. Financial condition critical. Loan of $850.00 raised to cover expenses. Church painted in traditional white with colonial red trim.

JANUARY

Grant still not forthcoming from Ottawa.