

the

Past Present Future

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trident



St. John's Infill Housing

Today in the downtown area of St. John's, you may live in a brand new house. From the outside, however, your home is not a modern misfit, as are an unfortunate number of new buildings in our Heritage Conservation Area. These modern houses have been designed to blend with the older architecture of the area. They utilize such features as narrow clapboard, wide trim, colour, roof form and general proportion to generate new, but compatible housing. Perhaps the most noticeable exterior concession to modern living is the provision of off-street car parking, a necessity for most people. The interiors are contempor-



Rawlins Cross Project



Queen's Square Apartments

ary, built to National Building Code Standards.

The majority of these houses have been designed by local architect Phillip Pratt for the St. John's City Council non-profit housing programme. There are examples, some still under construction on Queen's Road, Colonial Street, William Street, Prescott Street, Bond Street and Convent Square. In addition, some 24 units will be built in 1984 for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. Their purpose is to distribute public housing throughout the city instead of having the

St. John's Infill Housing cont'd



Infill housing under construction on Queen's Road near Rawlin's Cross.



Long's Hill Apartments

ghetto-like concentrations of past efforts. These housing units will be mostly downtown to take advantage of the available services and ease of transportation.

Besides these public efforts, there are similar private developments. On Long's Hill, there are two renovated and one new house providing a total of six apartments. Phillip Pratt is part owner of these houses. On Queen's Road, there is Queen's Square, an attractive apartment building with compatible architecture.

Hopefully, this encouraging trend will continue in the renewal and development of St. John's.

Paul Thorburn

Heritage Awards Program

Heritage Day 1984 signals the re-introduction of a heritage awards program for traditional restoration and new construction in St. John's and surrounding areas.

The award program is being undertaken by the Nfld. Historic Trust, following the example set by the St. John's Heritage Foundation. It is the hope of the Trust that this program will eventually be expanded to cover all areas of the province.

Tim Houlihan, Chairman of the

Trust's award program explained that the purpose of the program is to recognize outstanding achievements in property restoration and development.

Residential and non-residential property will be considered for awards which will recognize both high quality property restoration and new construction.

Properties to be considered for awards would be those constructed or restored in the past two years. In

addition, recognition in the form of an award may be given for design work that is in keeping with the intent of the program.

Written nominations should be forwarded to:

*Nfld. Historic Trust
P.O. Box 5542, St. John's
Newfoundland A1C 5W4*

on or before May 12, 1984.

It is the intent of the Nfld. Historic Trust to present the awards during the St. John's Day weekend.

Message From the President

Since my article in the November/83 issue of the Trident, I thought it would be appropriate to comment on what has been happening within our organization for the past few months.

The Trust continues to work towards the preservation of our visual heritage. We attempted, without success, to halt the demolition of the Crosbie Hotel. Articles appeared recently in the St. John's papers on the Awards program that was announced on February 20, 1984. An Awards Committee is now in place under the direction of Tim Houlihan and nominations are being received. Once the Awards program is in place, we hope to develop a program whereby property owners can get free advice on the restoration of

private homes.

Work recently got underway re the formation of an affiliate group in the Wesleyville area and an active committee is now establishing priorities and plans to ensure the facade of this portion of outport Newfoundland is maintained.

The 1984 membership drive should be getting underway about the time that you receive this issue of the Trident.

The Trust will have an involvement in the St. John's Day celebrations with plans for the presentation of awards at a reception to be held on the Friday of the St. John's Day weekend.

A recent social event, a lecture about Government House, followed by a tour and reception was a tremen-

dous success and a programs committee is now in place headed by Edna Hall to plan subsequent events. All suggestions are welcomed.

Plans are in place for a spring home renovation fair.

The gift shops under the guidance of Betty Anderson and Martha Entwistle (supported by a cast of superb volunteers) are doing well with sales trailing 20% ahead of last year.

In summary, your new executive has been kept busy and much more will be accomplished throughout the year. Program suggestions are always welcomed from all members. In absence of such suggestions your executive will hopefully fulfill the mandate that is expected of us.

Chris O'Dea

Quidi Vidi Church Today

Christ Church in Quidi Vidi Village is the Trust's only real estate holding. The church was designed by local architect James Purcell and opened on November 9, 1842. By 1966, the little church had fallen on hard times. It was in a state of disrepair and the Anglican Synod decided to demolish the building for reasons of safety. An interested group of people spearheaded by Edith Goodrich, then president of Newfoundland Art Association, banded together to save the church and the Trust was born.

Exterior restoration and interior renovation were completed in 1972. In September of 1980, a business called Homeworks rented the premises from the Trust. Homeworks provided various bits and pieces of hardware, often difficult to find, for use in renovation of older homes. Since the spring of 1983, the church has been rented by This Olde House, a furniture refinishing company. Proprietor Ed Godden provides hand-crafted service for the stripping, staining and finishing of genuine antique furniture, usually 100 or more years old. It is a specialty shop, depending on word-of-mouth advertisement.

On the day I spoke to Ed Godden, he was working on a 1907 oak dining room table which he described as a typical catalogue piece obtained from one of the mail order catalogues of that day. Newfoundland antiques tend to be walnut and mahogany although pine is becoming popular with younger families.

If you have quality old furniture which needs repair, part replacement or refinishing, then This Olde House may be just the service you need. It is good to see faithfully renovated exteriors from the past providing shelter for economic activity of today.

Paul Thorburn



Christ Church, Quidi Vidi Village, presently the home of "This Olde House"

HISTORY OF SIGNAL HILL

Signal Hill served as a lookout and signalling station to advise St. John's of approaching ships from the beginning of the 18th century until the mid-20th century. Its military advantages became apparent in 1762 when a British force took Signal Hill and from there brought guns to bear on French troops who had occupied Fort William below. During the American Revolution the British improved St. John's defences, and, when Britain and France went to war again, in the 1790's, the British fortified the heights of Signal Hill with a block-house and batteries. Queen's Battery dates from this period. They also added to other military works on the Signal Hill peninsula, such as Chain Rock Battery. There have been batteries in this area, if not on this specific site, from perhaps as early as the 1660's up to and including World War II, making this the earliest defended area of St. John's.

After the Napoleonic Wars, military activity at Signal Hill and St. John's generally slackened. Then, in 1827, a new study called for extensive new works on the Hill and centralization of the town's defences there. The plan was too expensive to be implemented fully, but did result in a considerable revival of Signal Hill's fortune in the 1830's. It was in this era that Queen's Battery was rebuilt and a number of new works developed on the summit.

By the 1840's Britain had moved to free trade and was eager to cut back on military expenditures overseas. As a result, the British withdrew some troops from St. John's in the 1850's. There was a flurry of activity in the early 1860's because of tensions between Britain and the United States. By 1870, however, Britain had withdrawn the entire garrison from Newfoundland. This was part of an almost total withdrawal of the British Army from British North America. Fol-

lowing the recall, military installations at St. John's were allowed to fall into ruin until World War I.

During World War I, Newfoundland authorities revitalized Waldegrave Battery at Signal Hill. Known then as Fort Waldegrave, it was the sole defensive work in St. John's throughout the War. During World War II, Canadian and American forces became involved in bolstering Signal Hill's defences. Among other measures taken to defend St. John's, Canadian forces rebuilt Chain Rock Battery (renamed Fort Chain Rock).

In 1897 activity of a different sort occurred on Signal Hill. The cornerstone was laid for a stone tower, known as Cabot Tower, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the landing of John Cabot and Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. It was in a building near the tower that Guglielmo Marconi received the first trans-Atlantic wireless signal, broadcast from Cornwall, England, in 1901. In 1933, the Canadian Marconi Company opened a wireless communication station on the second floor of Cabot Tower. The station informed ships in the area of ice conditions, gave directions for entering the harbour in fog, and listened for distress signals. The station also provided a communications link with Labrador and northeastern Newfoundland. The Cabot Tower operation lasted until 1960.

In addition to housing various barracks, batteries and storehouses, Signal Hill has also provided both the military and civilian populations of St. John's with hospital facilities. The earliest known use of Signal Hill for hospital purposes dates from the 1820's, when convalescent soldiers occupied the old wooden officers' and soldiers' barracks on the summit. It was thought that the cold winds which buffeted the site were an aid to recovery.

In the 1830's these buildings

reverted to barracks, but there was a replacement hospital available in the 1840's. This was a 46 metre long, two-storey stone structure built near George's Pond. The Royal Engineer at St. John's described this structure in 1843 as "the best stone building in the colony."

The military authorities converted this building to a barracks by 1846, but it was re-converted to a hospital in 1871 after the withdrawal of the garrison. In that year a smallpox outbreak had caused over-crowding at other facilities. This hospital, known as St. George's Hospital, saw use intermittently until it burned in the Great Fire of July 8, 1892. That fire engulfed some two-thirds of St. John's.

St. George's left much to be desired as a medical facility. Its well tended to freeze in winter and to dry up in summer. At such times, water had to be carried from George's Pond. Snow and rain penetrated the roof. Raw sewage from the hospital poured into a nearby bog, conveyed by surface pipes which were broken in several places. Cows and sheep grazed in the vicinity of the bog, and there was concern that their meat and milk would be contaminated.

A second hospital was located on the summit of Signal Hill. This was known variously as the Fever Hospital, the Diphtheria Hospital, or Signal Hill Hospital. This structure was originally built as a soldiers barracks in the late 1830's. It declined in importance as a hospital after 1906 when a new fever wing opened in a building alongside the city's General Hospital. Signal Hill Hospital, however, continued to receive smallpox cases and found new importance as a centre for the treatment of tuberculosis.

There were drawbacks with the Signal Hill Hospital just as there had been with St. George's Hospital. In 1890 a savage gale tore the roof off. (A Public Health Com-

Trust Visits Government House

mission in 1910 acknowledged that "the hospital is not as sheltered as could be wished." The Signal Hill Hospital burned down in 1920.

A third hospital existed in Ross's Valley, below the summit of the hill, facing the Atlantic. This hospital was built as a quarantine station, in 1892. There was a cholera epidemic in Europe at the time, and there was some fear that the disease would reach Newfoundland. The hospital was erected at the suggestion of Judge D.W. Prowse, who, among other things, was a public health officer. The building became known as Prowse's Folly. It was used on only two occasions. It fell into disrepair, and finally succumbed to a fire on May 6, 1911.



Pinky Duff, Aiden Duff and George Courage during Heritage Day visit to Government House.

Heritage Day, 1984, brought members of the Trust together for a most enjoyable and informative evening which consisted of a lecture about Government House followed by a tour and reception.

The lecture was held at the Colonial Building and given by the Hon. Fabian O'Dea.

The lecture and tour plus the reception was very well attended by members of the Trust and for very good reason.

Hon. Fabian O'Dea with his interest in Newfoundland history and speaking as a former Lieutenant Governor presented a most informative lecture that was supported with about 20 slides, showing copies of the original

plans of the building, together with shots of interior and exterior views.

The tour that followed put in perspective many of the points that were covered in the lecture and gave Trust members a real opportunity to view this magnificent structure in all its detail.

Based on conversation among those in attendance at the reception, the evening was a tremendous success and most fitting to help celebrate Heritage Day 1984.

The Trust is indebted to the Hon. Fabian O'Dea for his efforts, to Col. Bartter and staff at Government House and to Lieutenant Governor Paddon for his approval of plans for the evening.

Chris O'Dea

Parks Canada

**Parks Canada
is preparing a
Management Plan
for
Signal Hill
National Historic Park**



You are invited to attend an
OPEN HOUSE

to discuss the
future direction of

**Signal Hill
National Historic Park**

any time between
11:00 a.m. — 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 27, 1984

in the
E.B. Foran Room
City Hall
St. John's, Newfoundland

Canada



Honourable Fabian O'Dea giving Heritage Day lecture on Government House to Trust Members and Guests

Trust Branch for Bonavista Bay Area

On Saturday, January 14, a truly historic event took place at the community centre at Pound Cove. It was the organizing of the first Historic Trust Branch to be established in Newfoundland outside of St. John's. This will serve the area from Pool's Island to Newtown, including Greenspond.

The meeting was chaired by the mayor of Wesleyville, Mr. William Jones. Attending were representatives from Greenspond, Badger's Quay, Brookfield, Wesleyville, Pound Cove and Newtown.

After Mayor Jones had extended a warm welcome he introduced the important guests who had travelled from St. John's to set up this local branch. They were: the newly-elected president of the Newfoundland Historic Trust, Mr. Chris O'Dea; Mr. Shane O'Dea; Mr. George Courage, treasurer; and representatives, Mrs. Jean Ball and Mrs. Kathleen McCullum.

After some remarks by the president, Mr. Chris O'Dea, who explained that the Historic Trust was set up to preserve monuments of our past history and culture in Newfoundland, and what the future aims of the organization were, Mr. Shane O'Dea spoke to the assembly. He accompanied his address with a series of visual slides. These proved most interesting. They were buildings — houses, churches, fishing and business properties of another day. Some of them are still standing —

thers alas! have been torn down. He told of the struggle fought and won to preserve the Quidi Vidi Village Church. He also showed the splendid old St. John's post office — a building of unusual architectural design, which was not saved but destroyed, to give place to a modern structure, lacking in much of the beauty of the old one — which might have been restored, and remodelled, without losing its original design. He counselled his listeners to be on the lookout for all structures or things, which our forefathers created. They are our past and where possible should be preserved. As he said at the end, "We don't want to die leaving as our only monuments the grave-stones at our heads!"

Mrs. Ball also spoke to the gathering. She recalled that earlier in the late autumn of '83 she and Mrs. McCullum had visited Wesleyville and had met with a few interested persons to set up this meeting including Mr. Ishmael Tiller, president, and the secretary-treasurer, Rev. N. Winsor, and other members of the Bonavista North Regional Museum. The impetus to choose this area was largely sparked by a famous son of Wesleyville — one of Canada's great artists, David Blackwood. He had been a guest at the annual meeting of the Newfoundland Historic Trust in October, 1983. It was he who had informed them of the richness of the history and the culture of this area.

As was depicted in the slide presentation by Mr. Shane

O'Dea, there are many historic buildings in this area, noteworthy all at Greenspond and Newtown. It is hoped enough interest will be awakened in the minds of the people of Bonavista North that we will treasure what our forebearers wrought with such care, forethought, skill and ingenuity. It will stand as a part of our history, our culture, and as familiar land marks to future generations.

Mayor Jones took over the meeting, thanked our visitors, and expressed great appreciation for their presentations. He also approached the business of forming a committee to carry through the suggestions made. It was decided that two representatives from each municipality will act. There seemed no problem in getting people to volunteer. The final selection will be made in the near future.

A letter presented at the meeting by a representative from Newtown, was from David Blackwood. He suggested, that because this area had such a history of great sealing captains, and seamen in general, it might be a place to establish a 'Sealing Town' — an historic museum of this once great industry, now almost disappearing from the lives of Newfoundlanders.

A post-executive meeting with the volunteers was held after the general meeting was adjourned. Great hopes are entertained for the future of this organization.

Mildred Winsor

Open House for Signal Hill Management Plan

On March 27, in the E.B. Foran Room, City Hall, St. John's, Parks Canada will hold an open house to get your opinions on the future direction of Signal Hill National Historic Park.

On October 19, 1983, Roger Simmons announced on behalf of Environment Minister, Charles Caccia, the beginning of a management plan for Signal Hill.

A management plan is a guideline for the development and operation of a national historic park. Each plan describes how Parks Canada's policies apply to a specific national historic park.

The management plan for Signal Hill will take into consideration that some facilities already exist. The intent of the plan is also to recognize what has been done to identify areas which may still need attention, and to set a clear direction for the future.

Public consultation is essential in the management planning process. Complex decisions will have to be made. The ideas, support and active participation of individuals, special interest groups and every level of government will ensure the decisions are appropriate.

At the open house Parks Canada will be asking you for specific comments on the proposed historical themes and objectives for the park, protection of historical resources, and appropriate ways for visitors to use and enjoy the park.

In March, 400 copies of a newsletter providing background information for the open house will be distributed by mail throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. By March 12, you can also pick up a copy at the following locations:

- Signal Hill National Historic Park, Visitor Reception Centre or call 772-5367
 - City Hall, Information Desk
 - Confederation Building, Information Desk
 - Arts and Culture Centre, Hunter Library, Main Desk
 - University Library, Main Desk
 - Mount Pearl Town Council Office
- Parks Canada encourages anyone

who has an interest in Signal Hill to come to the open house. If you can't attend you can send your written comments to:

Ms. Edna A. Hall
Area Superintendent
Historic Parks
Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 5879
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1C 5X4

The proposed "Themes and Objectives" for Signal Hill National Historic Park are:

Themes

Major — The role of Signal Hill in the defence of St. John's and its harbour, up to and including World War II.

Major — The story of communications at Signal Hill, from the use of cannons and signal masts to Marconi's experiments in 1901, and subsequent use.

Minor — The history of medicine at Signal Hill, particularly from the

1820's to 1920.

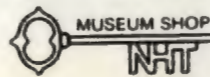
Objectives

To identify and preserve significant historical resources, emphasizing extant structural resources such as Cabot Tower, and the Imperial Powder Magazine, and any significant resources revealed as a result of archaeological investigations.

To interpret the Park themes at the Visitor Centre and elsewhere, so that visitors may gain an appreciation of Signal Hill's place in history and of the diverse works which existed on the Hill over time, from Queen's Battery and Cabot Tower to Ladies' Lookout and Ross's Valley.

To provide those visitor services essential to the public enjoyment of the Park, and which are consistent with the historic nature of Signal Hill, so that the Park is maintained as a place for public relaxation and enjoyment of its historical views and associations.

★ Museum Gift Shop ★



Easter Surprise !!

for sale handpainted
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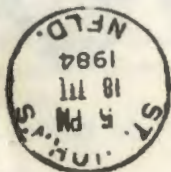
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