

PRESENT
PAST FUTURE

the trident

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Heritage Foundation Reprieve

The vagaries of the provincial budget place financial support for the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador in a precarious position, making it an easy target for cost cutters. Since its beginning, the Foundation has existed on limited and unstable funding. In times of restraint, it has been among the front lines of perceived expendable items.

Again we are in a time of restraint and again the Foundation has come under threat. This time however, individuals from across the province, including many members of the Historic Trust, reminded government that the Foundation is an integral part of the fabric of the province as a whole. It is not in any way a luxury. Government was reminded that the foundation plays an important role in the development of communities, is a presence in tourism infrastructure, and, through its programmes, plays an undeniable economic role. The people concerned about heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador are many, and their action has prompted government to give the Foundation another year to continue its service to the province. This is an accomplishment to be proud of for a cause important to all.

Yet, we must not assume that governments seeking to realign budget priorities will regard

heritage as untouchable. We need only recall an earlier administration which considered dispensing entirely with support for “heritage.” The reasons for retaining the Heritage Foundation are equally relevant to other aspects of our heritage. The Trust and our heritage sector stakeholders must do what we can to convey that message to the present administration. The Rooms opening is delayed for one year (or likely more accurately, at least one year). Public access to our heritage, through the museum, archives and art gallery will be heavily affected as staff supported by Rooms Transitional Funding have been laid off.

We can justly be proud of what has been accomplished and celebrate the right decision to continue the work of the Heritage Foundation. But let us hope the next campaign for heritage remembers the lessons of history.

2004 Southcott Awards Event

The awards ceremony for the Newfoundland Historic Trust’s 2004 Southcott Awards for excellence in built heritage restoration will take place from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Foran Room at St. John’s City Hall on June 25th. The ceremony will include a slide show featuring the nine award-winning architectural restoration projects from around the province, as well as refreshments and live traditional music. All are welcome to join us!

Letter of thanks from HFNL

April 13, 2004

Dear Newfoundland Historic Trust Membership:

I write to thank you for your commitment to the built heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. We appreciate your support during the consultation process of the budget. As you may have heard, the provincial budget was announced on March 30. We are pleased that as part of this announcement funding was reinstated for the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador. The assistance and support of people like you certainly helped increase the profile of the importance of the continuation of the Foundation's services.

Many activities are on our agenda for the coming months. We will visit Woody Point for our board meetings in May - a community that has submitted an application to the Heritage Foundation for consideration as a Registered Heritage District. Also, at this time, representatives from the Heritage Foundation will conduct an information session on Canada's Historic Places Initiative (HPI).

Over the next few weeks, we plan to review applications for designation and we will designate successful buildings at that time. We are organizing plaquing ceremonies for previously designated structures for later this summer including the United Church in Fogo, and the Precious Blood Church in Codroy Valley. There is a Statements of Significance workshop organized for the beginning of May. This will train individuals on an important aspect the Canadian Register of Historic Places, a program of HPI. There are other workshops planned for Heritage Groups

throughout the summer, and we will be accepting more applications for the August 1st deadline for Heritage Designation.

We look forward to your continued support of built heritage in our province. If you have any questions about our programs, please give us a call.

Kind Regards,

Ruth Canning
Chairperson, Board of the Heritage Foundation
of Newfoundland and Labrador.

NL Fisheries Heritage Preservation

This past winter the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador's Fisheries Heritage Preservation Program distributed \$100,000 amongst 24 projects across the province to help preserve 52 fisheries heritage buildings. "The Foundation received 84 applications, requesting \$742,758," says Dale Jarvis, HFNL's Heritage Preservation Officer. "There is an incredible demand for this type of program."

The goal of the Fisheries Heritage Preservation Program is to provide funding to community and non-profit groups to restore stages, stores, flakes, lofts and other buildings associated with the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery. Assistance is provided for restoration of heritage features using original materials.

"We have never had so many projects underway at the same time," says Jarvis. "HFNL is funding projects in communities that have never been involved in heritage restoration, and continuing to show our support for those communities which have been identified as having exceptional heritage value."

St. George's Church now in the hands of local heritage group

The perseverant St. George's Heritage Committee received the legal title for the former St. George's Church in Brigus from the Anglican Diocese on April 8th. The committee raised \$110,000 to purchase the 127-year-old building. Their business plan for its maintenance and preservation as a public heritage resource, as well as historical information, is posted online at www.ecoastonline.ca/sghc/index.asp.



Concert on the Hill

The St. George's Heritage Committee will present a "Concert on the Hill" at St. George's Church, Brigus at 8 p. m. on April 24th. For more information call (709) 528-4817.

2004 Trust Board & Committees

Following the Annual General Meeting of the Newfoundland Historic Trust in November of 2003, the following Officers and Committees were named by the board for 2004.

President and Chair - Newman Wine Vaults and Programming, Dale Jarvis; Vice President, Kim Blanchard; Treasurer, David

Hood; Secretary and Chair - Preservation, Gerard Hayes; Chair - Southcott Awards, Colette Nap; Chair - Membership, John O'Dea; Chair - Communications, Peter Latta. The board welcomes two new members: Bobbie Gushue and Kenneth F. Flynn.

Thank you to retiring directors of the Newfoundland Historic Trust

In November of 2003 three directors retired from the board of the Trust. Patricia O'Brien, John Moss and Shane O'Dea have left the board but not the Trust, and each continues to nurture their interest in heritage. Pat O'Brien served as President of the Trust from 1999 to 2001 as well as two years as past president. During her time on the board she worked constantly to improve the Trust's position within the heritage community and to acquire funding to give the Trust its first General Manager.

John Moss provided sound advice during board meetings and served as a member of the preservation Committee. Although he was with the board for just one year, John's experience in the construction business enabled him to benefit the Trust through sharing valuable insights to the needs of historic buildings.

Shane O'Dea served the Trust for many years and in particular as Chair of the Preservation Committee. Well known in the heritage community as an early advocate of the province's built heritage and former member of the Board of Governors of Heritage Canada, Shane's deep understanding of the issues surrounding heritage architecture served the Trust well. His ability to identify the kernel of an issue and propose a sound solution over the year earned him great respect among the members of the Trust and the public. Shane will continue to serve the Trust as its

representative on the St. John's Ecclesiastical District project of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The board and members of the Trust extend a large Thank You to each of them for their help and guidance, and wish them all the best for the future.

Current HAC Activities

by Gerard Hayes

The City of St. John's Heritage Advisory Committee continues to provide recommendations to City Council on building and development proposals for properties in the Heritage Area. The Committee advises Council on proposed new construction, as well as proposals involving existing buildings.

During the last two to three years, the pace of development in the Heritage Area has increased and, with it, the workload of the Committee. In general, it appears that owners of residential properties in the older areas of the City recognize the value of heritage architecture. Consequently, applications for renovations of older residential buildings tend to propose preservation or restoration of existing architectural features.

The increased recognition of the value of Victorian residential architecture, however, has brought with it a tendency among some property owners to overdo it. As a result, the Committee often finds itself trying to limit the addition of inappropriate gingerbread trim and window treatments to houses of a plainer vernacular style.

Commercial property owners in the downtown have also jumped on the heritage architecture bandwagon. Most notable among recent developments on Water Street are the

reconstruction of two prominent turreted buildings on Water Street. The Grace Building (The Model Shop - No. 285 Water Street) was completely refurbished following a catastrophic fire. The building that once housed the Wood's West End Candy Shop and Stirling's Restaurant (No. 348-350 Water Street) was almost completely demolished and has been faithfully replicated in brick and stone. The latter was made feasible when the City committed to lease the building for office space. The initial plan involved renovation only; but it ultimately became necessary to reconstruct the building from the ground up for structural reasons.

Several large properties are currently on the Committee's agenda. The former St. Michael's Convent on the Belvedere property is under renovation, and a number of matters are in dispute between the City and the property owner. The former Old Military Hospital on Forest Road is in a state of disrepair and neglect. The building was sold to a developer by the provincial government some years ago subject to legal covenants that the building would be redeveloped. The Committee has asked City Council to inquire as to whether Government intends to insist that the developer either fulfil its obligations or reconvey the property to Government as agreed.

A new large Class A office building is proposed for the southeast corner of Water Street and Prescott Street. The proposal will require the demolition of the Gray & Goodland building (No. 125 Water Street), which contains some vaulted structures in its basement. Following consultations with the Committee, the developer has agreed to a sympathetic architectural treatment, and to preserve the vaults during demolition and incorporate them into the new building.

The "St. John's Heritage Areas, Heritage Buildings and Public Views Report" (March 2003) prepared by PHB Group in association with Tract Consultants is available online at www.stjohns.ca/cityservices/planning/pdfs/Heritagefinal.pdf.

Hospital images wanted

The Newfoundland and Labrador Health and Community Services Archive and Museum is seeking photos of cottage hospitals, and other records relevant to the history of health care in the province. For more information e-mail shawnkelly@yahoo.ca or call (709) 757-3296.

Fishing Stage of the Year

The Kittiwake Economic Development Corporation, in conjunction with the Kittiwake Coast Tourism Association and the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, recently selected the winners of the Stage of the Year Contest. The contest was held to find the fishing stage on the Kittiwake Coast which best represents traditional design, heritage and beauty. The goals of the project were to foster appreciation for built heritage on the Kittiwake Coast and to enhance the cultural tourism product.

The contest selection committee reviewed nearly three dozen nominations. Dale Jarvis, Preservation Officer with HFNL, says, "It was an interesting to browse the submissions, which ranged from very old structures that have not been used in years to structures that still play an integral role in today's fishery. It was a look through time with regards to fisheries structures on the Kittiwake Coast."

Prizes were awarded to owners of the top three stages, as well as two honourable mentions:

First Prize: Patrick Kean, Pound Cove (below)



The Kean stage was built from a unique design of the early 1900s. Many of the boards were salvaged from shipwrecks and were originally painted with red ochre and white trim. The original wheel and anchor on the door didn't withstand the elements and have been replaced. The glass for the windows came from a fishing room on Kean's Island. The main support beam was made from a spar of an abandoned schooner and the wall joists are hand chopped.

Second Prize - Jim White, Change Islands

Third Prize - David Boyd, Tizzard's Harbour

Honourable Mentions: David and Julie Eveleigh, Exploits Island; Basil Lane, Tilting

Newfoundland & Labrador's Heritage Worth Promoting. Worth Protecting.

**Did you know that in the last 30 years,
Canada has lost nearly a quarter of its
heritage buildings?**

To help stop this trend, the Government of Canada and the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) are working together through the Historic Places Initiative (HPI). HPI will have several tools including:

- Canadian Register of Historic Places
- Standards and Guidelines
- Commercial Heritage Properties Incentive Fund

To learn more please call 1-888-739-1892.
email info@heritagefoundation.ca or
visit www.historicplaces.ca.



Canada's
Historic Places

Lieux patrimoniaux
du Canada

Monument To Courage: The Tale of Ethel Dickinson

by Stephen Nolan

Few bother to glance at the large stone cross that is situated on Cavendish Square in downtown St. John's, and those that do with only a passing curiosity. The person to whom the monument is dedicated, while not forgotten in the annals of Newfoundland history, is no longer a household name. Yet the fact remains that it is a memorial to the courage of Nurse Ethel Dickinson, who selflessly gave her life so that others could live. This is her amazing story.

The decade beginning in the year 1910 would prove the death for millions of people around the Earth and the country of Newfoundland. It was not only the First World War that was a scourge on the nation, but the Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1918 took a terrible toll of human life. Ironically, as the war concluded, the disease killed over thirty million people across the globe. When soldiers finally did return to their homeland, many returned to an empty or depleted house. War, famine, plague and death had visited the nation within a very small time frame. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse had ridden menacingly into every town and community and had left a swathe of horror and desolation in their path. None who still lived would ever forget the terrible days when the dreaded riders visited their homes.

The Spanish Flu did not come with a bang, but as with all invisible enemies the contagion arrived unsuspectingly in the night. It arrived that November with a friendly face and a cough. By the time it burned itself out that spring, only 59 of the more than 300 people who greeted the supply ship when it tied up at Okak on Labrador's northern coast were still alive. Along the rest of the coast, an estimated

one third of the Inuit population succumbed as well. In St. John's, doctors and nurses moved the sick and dying into the brick refuge of the King George V Building on Water Street. It was the winter of 1918-1919 and, almost like a punishment for the stupidity and atrocities of the world war that has just wound up in the trenches of France, nature was laying its own beating on mankind. Its wrath was in the form of a contagion called the Spanish Flu though like most flu bugs it originated in Asia. "By the time it had spent itself, some 30 million to 40 million people had died. In Canada, the Stanley Cup final was cancelled and hockey arenas were used as emergency mortuaries" (Westcott, *Planning for the Worst*, 5).

Hundreds of people died in Newfoundland due to the outbreak of Spanish Influenza. In St. John's alone sixty-two people succumbed to the deadly virus. Churches and theatres, as well as any other place of mass gathering, were closed. Quarantine became a familiar word in the city as whole families were forced to stay in their infected homes for dread fear of spreading the contagion. Those that did not die of the illness directly were indirectly affected because of the poor health condition the flu left them in. Many people would never be the same after having been afflicted with the Spanish Flu. Oddly, the Spanish Flu affected the young, healthy portion of the populace rather than going after flu's traditional victims, the very young, sickly or old. This disease, combined with the destruction of the First World War, decimated the country's youth.

Some of the people struck down by the deadly contagion met that end only because of their admirable need to help people. One of those hundreds of victims was a Newfoundland nurse on leave from England who died of the Spanish Flu on October 26, 1918. Ethel Dickinson was a teacher who volunteered to nurse overseas in the First World War. In August 1918 she

returned home to Newfoundland to take a much needed vacation from all the horrors of war. What she saw upon her return home was not a respite but only more dreadfulness and suffering.

Not being a person to shirk her duty, Ethel Dickinson instead bravely rose to the task of helping those infected with the virus and saving lives. The hospitals in St. John's did not have nearly enough beds to care for the sick, so she worked on Water Street where an emergency hospital was set up at the King George V Institute. On both sides of her, dedicated nurses fell ill to the terrible disease and had to be taken away, but Ethel bravely carried on the fight to save the lives of others. She went without food or sleep until at last she herself succumbed to the flu and shortly afterwards died.

A monument to Ethel Dickinson's bravery was raised two years after her untimely death. Governor Charles Harris erected a tall, stone cross that still stands today on Cavendish Square in St. John's (O'Neill, *The Oldest City*, 243-244).

The courage of Nurse Ethel Dickinson is a reminder to all that bravery comes in all forms. She devoted herself to her patients and paid the ultimate price for her dedication. Her memory deserves to be celebrated by a grateful people. The monument that rests on Cavendish Square is not only a monument to one individual but to the spirit of courage and devotion to duty and to the humanity that resides within us all.

Bibliography:

O'Neill, Paul. *The Oldest City: The Story of St. John's Portugal Cove St. Phillips*: Boulder Publications, 2003.

Westcott, Craig. "Planning For the Worst: St. John's Hospitals Prepare for Pandemics such as Bird Flu Just in Case" *The Express* February 18-24, 2004.



The monument reads: "THIS SHAFT, SURMOUNTED BY THE/ WORLD EMBLEM OF SACRIFICE IS/ SET UP BY A GRATEFUL PUBLIC/ IN MEMORY OF/ ETHEL DICKINSON/ VOLUNTEER NURSE WHO IN THE/ GREAT EPIDEMIC OF 1918 GAVE HER/ LIFE WHILE TENDING PATIENTS AT/ KING GEORGE THE FIFTH INSTITUTE/ ST. JOHN'S."

For further information on the Spanish Flu in Newfoundland and Labrador, see Dr. W. David Parson's fine article, "The Spanish Lady and the Newfoundland Regiment" online at www.ku.edu/carrie/specoll/medical/parsons.htm.

“Sealers’ Walk” for Wesley Hall

On May 1st and 2nd, 2004 the curator of the Bonavista North Regional Museum and Gallery in Wesleyville will re-enact the 90-kilometer historical walk of sealers from Bonavista North to Gambo to get a berth. Kris Mullaly will have the company of Jamie Harding, Steven Perry and Jeremy Chippett on the 90-kilometer walk, a fund-raiser towards the purchase of Wesley Hall in Wesleyville. Members of the museum board will follow in a support vehicle to collect donations and spread the word about plans for building.

Rev. James Lumsden served the Methodist congregation of Wesleyville in 1874, when a church he described as “the queerest little building imaginable” was constructed. Since then the building now known as Wesley Hall has undergone many alterations: from single-storey church and schoolroom, to two-storey church hall, and finally to single-storey warehouse in 1977. Yet, it remains an important place in community memory, connected with worship, artistic performances and other social functions.



Wesley Hall circa 1960. That year 1,000 meals of soup and pie were served there to people from the region who came to witness the launching of the MV Prince Andrew designed and built by Skipper Boyce Winsor.



Wesley Hall today.

The current owner will sell Wesley Hall to the Regional Museum for \$15,000 rather than tear it down. The museum group plans to establish a maritime history museum and folklore and language archive there. For more information contact Kris Mullaly at museum@nf.aobn.com or by phone at (709) 536-2110.

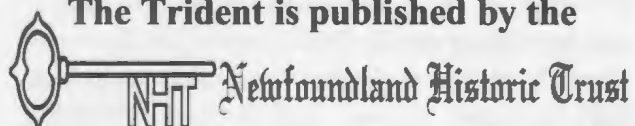
Newman Wine Vaults in 2004

The Vaults Provincial Historic Site is scheduled to open for the visiting season on June 14th. Check the Trust’s events calendar at www.historictrust.com throughout the summer for information about special events.

Thank you

The editor sends a special “Thank You” to the various contributors to this issue and to Lara Maynard, Manager of the Trust.

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