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THE TRIDENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST



TRUST LAUNCHES "BUILDINGS AT RISK" LIST

Places matter to people. We all know of buildings and homes that have importance for one reason or another. Buildings remind us of outstanding people, events, and times in the history of our communities. Buildings are also valued as places for the day to day activities of a community. Many of these buildings continue to matter but are in need of repair.

Released on Heritage Day, Buildings at Risk is a visual collection of some of Newfoundland and Labrador's "endangered structures". Since its compilation in 2009, a number of the properties have been restored. Compiled by NHT President, Deborah O'Rielly, this visual presentation highlights places that are threatened in some way. Visit www.historictrust.ca to see the list.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: 27TH ANNUAL SOUTHCOTT AWARDS

The Trust invites nominations for its 27th annual Southcott Awards. For the first time in the Award Program's history, nominations will be considered in three separate categories:

- Building Restoration/Preservation**
- New Building Design**
- Heritage Craftsperson/Tradesperson**



2010 Southcott Winner Stella Burry Foundation
(photo by Greg Locke)

Since 1984, the Trust has given Southcott Awards to 170 properties across the province. The committee considers architectural design, quality of conservation work, preservation of original features, use of traditional materials, and the integrity of the structure and its surrounding site. Heritage property owners are welcome to nominate themselves, but family, friends, contractors, builders or architects may also nominate a property or individual.

For further information on criteria, nominations, and past winners, please visit our website at www.historictrust.ca, phone 709.739.7870, or e-mail coordinator@historictrust.ca



The Newfoundland Historic Trust is a membership-driven organization dedicated to the preservation of the built heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador through research, advocacy, and education. For further information, please phone (709) 739-7870, email coordinator@historictrust.ca or visit our website at www.historictrust.ca

NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST AGM A GREAT SUCCESS

On April 5, the Newfoundland Historic Trust held their annual AGM at the Newman Wine Vaults. The well-attended meeting had a good energy with much promise for the coming year. In the President's address, David Hood spoke of the Trust's new vitality. The Trust's strategic planning session this past February, he said, gave the board a renewed focus and a direction for more growth.

As a part of this expanded vision, newly appointed vice-president, Robyn Pike announced two new awards for the 27th Southcotts: Heritage Craftsperson/Tradesperson & New Building Design. These two new awards come as a response to the Province's changing needs.

Communications team member, Dave Lane spoke of the Trust's communications plan currently in development. Further, he detailed ways in which the Trust has been outspoken on built heritage issues this past year with the Buildings at Risk campaign and an active media presence relating to current development issues.

The Trust's board of directors has seen some movement this year. Vice-President Deborah O'Rielly has taken on the role of President, director Robyn Pike has become Vice-President and David Hood will be filling the role of Past-President. The Trust is pleased to welcome new board member, John Drover and acknowledges the continued efforts of our other board members: Karen Viscount (finance), Kim Blanchard, Terry O'Rielly, Dave Lane, and Greg Locke. The Trust would also like to extend its appreciation to Sherri Kelly who has stepped down from the board this year.

The AGM was followed by a thoughtful presentation by Elena Patarini titled "Preserving the Past to Protect the Future." Elena has worked as a planner incorporating historic preservation and sustainability in her projects. Her academic research has focused on preservation from physical, social and cultural standpoints. In Italy, Elena was involved in restorations as an architect. Her talk spoke to many of the current heritage issues that face a Province undergoing much change.

The evening ended with a port-tasting by active Trust member Tom Beckett. Tom is a St. John's wine educator, consultant, wine importer, event coordinator, and founding member of the Newfoundland branch of the Opimian Society. His port-tastings have been a much-appreciated part of the Trust's activities at the Newman Wine Vaults. The Trust will continue to advocate for the preservation of the built heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador and looks forward for a promising year to come.



(Elena Patarini speaking to the Trust. Photo by Greg Locke)

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Trident is the quarterly publication of the Newfoundland Historic Trust and is distributed to our members and subscribers. We accept short articles pertaining to the built, architectural, cultural and natural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador, historic sites and monuments, preservation reports, book reviews, and other matters of interest to those in heritage-related fields. Specific studies or reports on buildings and their use in the province are encouraged. We also accept event notices from other heritage, nonprofit, and community organizations.

Articles should be 250-750 words with the exception of event and program notices. Please e-mail all submissions to coordinator@historictrust.ca with the article attached as a text (.txt), Microsoft Word (.doc), or Word Perfect (.wpd) file. Also attach any photographs you may wish to accompany the article in .jpg format (300 dpi). Articles are also accepted by mail. Please send a hard copy and *The Trident*, P.O. Box 2403, St. John's, NL, Canada, A1C 6E7.

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The Battle of Harvey Road

What should the Harvey Road of the future look like?

Submitted by Taryn Sheppard

(B.F.A, M. Arch, NLAA)

A public debate has arisen over a proposed development at Harvey road. The proposal for a 5 storey executive condo and office building has twice been rejected by city hall on the grounds of not meeting heritage regulations. While the proposed building in question may not appear to be a particularly inspired design, its rejection has forced a discussion once again over the standards by which we judge new buildings in heritage areas.

I sympathize with both sides of the debate: on the one hand, the developer feels they should not have to build new architecture to look old, and that it would be a lie of sorts to do so. I totally agree with that. Why should they have to forfeit the opportunity to use new materials and technology? Why construct a false "old" facade? And who decides that clapboard, white trim, and dormer windows are the most important historical characteristics to reproduce anyhow? From the developers' perspective it seems like city hall is just enforcing its own brand of 1890's commodified vernacular.

City Hall's stance, on the other hand, is not really asking that much - but what they are asking for could limit the potential for design. Maintaining the rhythm of the streetscape, an identifiable entranceway, elements of traditional masonry, and other similar qualities of the surrounding heritage buildings are often required by the city.

Is there some way to make modern architecture that respects the heritage of a place without just copying something old? This neighborhood presents an entire palette of materials and a rich history to draw on. In this neighborhood: The Rooms, The Kirk, the Big R, Ches's, the Fire station, the CLB, the Police Station. The Harvey Road area is full of historically potent structures - some of which might not have a physical, material age that qualifies it as heritage, but all the while represents a rich history of the neighborhood. Many architects have looked to strange and highly conceptual ideas to find form that speaks to the history of a place.

Pritzker Prize (the 'Oscar' for architects) winning architect Peter Zumthor designed a church called the Bruder Klaus Chapel for the small town of Wachendorf in Germany. He created a huge cone-shaped arrangement out of logs, and then had local masonry workers coat the entire thing in concrete. Then, after the concrete was set - lit the inside wood on fire. After the fire had burned out all the lumber, what was left was a hollow structure with subtle lace-like patterns of the wood and bark, impressions in the concrete, and an open top which let in the light. While this building is pretty radical, it still reflects the community and its history in its material qualities, it is conceptually compelling, and creates a beautiful and inspiring space to be in, without simply copying an old church.



(Image by Douglas Hawes RJC Services)

Contemporary architecture is not by definition antithetical to reflecting the history and heritage of a place, nor should a "heritage architecture" be deemed suitable based on its fulfillment of a checklist of preordained features. Maybe we are afraid that, if developers aren't forced to abide by at least the minimal rules of style enforced by heritage guidelines, we might end up with no style at all, or something that actually detracts from the character of the surroundings like the infamous Atlantic Place. Maybe heritage guidelines are really just a crutch, there to make sure there are no total architectural atrocities, the difficulty is that they can limit potential for design. As a city we can enforce buildings to meet certain standards for heritage but it is another question to enforce something as subjective as taste.

MISPERCEPTION: THE BATTLE OF HERITAGE ROAD

Submitted by Terence P.O'Rielly, CMA
(Director, Newfoundland Historic Trust)

Heritage regulations are not a crutch or a mechanism by which one enforces taste. Heritage regulations are necessary to set the rules by which potential developers engage a jurisdiction. Without those rules, development is truly subjective and may not reflect the desires and wants of society. Governments do not always consider a long-term view and rules do not stifle innovation; they set the boundaries and challenge innovation to be at its best, for the long-term. Heritage preservation, sustainable development and innovation are not mutually exclusive. The Trust believes that society needs to strike a harmonious balance and develop a set of rules that allows all stakeholders full discovery, from the concept stage through to commissioning.

An excellent example of this harmonious balance exists at 16 – 18 Prescott Street. When the Trust awarded the owners of this building with a Southcott Award in 2009, the owner took so much pride in receiving the award that he had a interpretative panel made referring to it and has it prominently displayed in his building. Built in the late 1800s, the building has gone through many changes. It has been the home of the Evening Herald Office, Newfoundland Publishers Ltd, Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Co., Newfoundland Meat Packers Co., and others. After more that 100 years, the heavy timber wood structure had fallen into bad repair. Only about sixty percent of the structure was even considered salvageable. When the current owner, Mr. Emad Rizkalla, began the restoration project, he was told that he would be better off demolishing the surviving building and starting from scratch. He did just the opposite. He decided to save and restore the building. Most of the original structure was salvaged.

The building's structure was reinforced with steel, and heavily insulated to provide as much energy efficiency as could be accomplished. An elevator and several ramps were put in to provide easy access for those with disabilities. Sprinklers were installed throughout, along with a modern fire alarm system. The blending of the old and new was achieved with the use of a glass curtain wall.

The owner and RJC Services, in consultation with architects, Javier Gomez and Douglas Hawes, have saved a heritage structure and redesigned a building that will be enjoyed for many years to come.

SAVING THE ST. PHILIP'S 1894 CHURCH

Submitted by Amy Tucker

The Church by the Sea (CBTS) Inc. is a volunteer non-profit registered charity dedicated to restoring the St. Philip's 1894 Church, one of the last pieces of built heritage in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's.

The Anglican Church applied for a permit to demolish the church, which was rejected by the Town Council on March 30, 2010. However, on March 31, 2010 the steeple was torn from the church. The Parish refused to request a police investigation.

The Town then designated the church a Municipal Heritage Building. The CBTS Inc. has tried to work with the Town, Diocese and Parish to restore the church. It has assembled a team of professionals to restore the church, compiled a list of funding sources, and created a long-term plan. However, the plan was not accepted by the Parish.

In October the Bishop told the Town that there will be restoration of the church. In January the CBTS Inc. was asked to cover the top of the church tower to protect it from the elements, and in February their professional volunteers were happy to do so.

Slow progress has been made; however, there is still much to do. Unfortunately, the CBTS Inc. has not been involved in direct discussions with the Town, the Diocese and the Parish regarding the 1894 church, despite the group's requests to be a part of this process due to their support and knowledge.

