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# The Griffin

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## The Griffin

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**Heritage Trust of  
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Unless otherwise indicated,  
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## President's Report



Georgia has been on my mind of late. Two Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) professors spoke at the Provincial Heritage Conference in Digby in October. They introduced an app which promotes historic properties in Savannah – home to North America's largest heritage conservation district. While their initiative known as "LiveSavannah" was thoroughly inspiring, their enthusiasm for their campus was what really caught my attention. Spread across the city's historic district, SCAD has rehabilitated more than 70 historic structures that serve as academic, administrative, and residential space for staff and students. Wow! This commitment to inspiring spaces and recognition of the creativity fostered by such spaces should not sound novel to Nova Scotians. The Nova Scotia College of Art & Design (NSCAD) made a similar commitment several decades ago, but the school is now sadly musing about abandoning that enlightened path. Such a move carries with it the risk of making our respected NSCAD University irrelevant to much of the culture and heritage community. How can an institution that exists to cultivate talent in art and design give such a kick in the shins to a collection of buildings that is now so connected to our province's art and design tradition – and one that is itself

akin to a gallery of public art?

The Digby Conference, easily our most engaging heritage conference in recent years, also featured keynote speaker Dale Jarvis, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Development Officer for Newfoundland & Labrador. Mr Jarvis detailed how ICH survives as living heritage and contributes to contemporary creativity by (1) *documentation*, the work of inventorying; (2) *celebration*, where we honour our tradition-bearers; (3) *transmission*, where we ensure skills are passed on; and (4) *cultural industry*, where we build stronger communities using ICH as a tool. A classic example that employs these living heritage strategies is mummering. These strategies appear to work so well with preserving intangible heritage that it raises the question, can they be applied to built heritage in a way that offers comparable results? My sense is that preservationists do fairly well with *documentation* and *celebration*, but that's sometimes where we stop. Can we build stronger communities using heritage as a tool? Some small towns and heritage conservation districts are already showing us how.

The last speaker I have space for is another Newfoundlander, John Norman. His companies, Bonavista Living and Bonavista Creative, are significant contributors to an economic revival in, where else? Bonavista. These companies have bought a couple dozen derelict buildings in the town, restored them, and then placed them on the rental or real estate market. This private initiative, coupled with government investment in other areas of the town, has created a buzz and pride not seen in Bonavista in a hundred years. Young people, in particular, have reason for optimism – and Mr. Norman is one of them – he accomplished all of this before the age of 30! The lesson here is that there are indeed opportunities "at home" for young people and the heritage sector has much to offer.

Cover image: Advocate Village, by Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking, 2015, acrylic on canvas, 31 x 61 cm, \$1800+HST (courtesy of the artist)

## ARTIST

# Joy Laking

*"I have been a professional artist living and painting full time in relative isolation in rural Nova Scotia for over 40 years. . . . My personal goal has been to try to capture beauty and light whenever and wherever I find it. The majority of the year, I paint within an hour of my home on the Bay of Fundy. At least once a year, I paint somewhere different internationally for one or two months, just so that I am exposed to different landscapes and colours. I always return home with fresh eyes and new ideas for the scenery that is home."*

The daughter of a professional artist, Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking grew up in Owen Sound, Ontario, surrounded by the beauty of Georgian Bay and the Group of Seven. After finishing a degree with a Fine Art Major at the University of Guelph, she moved to Nova Scotia in 1972 and began painting professionally. Her first solo exhibition was in 1982 at Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery, followed by solo exhibitions at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. Initially, Joy was known as a watercolour painter and a printmaker, but in the last fifteen years, she has also worked in oils and acrylics. Although most of her inspiration is from Nova Scotia, she has also painted in the UK, Europe, Morocco,



*Early Morning, Philpott Street [Port Hawkesbury], by Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking, 2015, acrylic on canvas, 61 x 76 cm, \$2,500+HST (courtesy of the artist)*

India, Thailand, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South America, as well as in other parts of Canada. Whenever possible, she paints outside on location, only moving inside to the studio when it is too cold. Joy has served on many

boards, including the Robert Pope Foundation, the Elizabeth Bishop Society, the Ivar Mendez International Foundation, Third Place Transition House, Ships Company Theatre, and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. Joy's play, *Invisible Prisons*, was produced in 2013 and 2014 and she is a founding member of PLANS (Professional Living Artists of Nova Scotia). Joy was a Halifax Club "Woman of Excellence" recipient and was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. Her gallery near Bass River, Nova Scotia, is open to the public ([www.joylakinggallery.com](http://www.joylakinggallery.com)).



*Houses in Margaree Harbour, by Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking, 2015, oil on canvas, 61 x 122 cm, private collection (courtesy of the artist)*

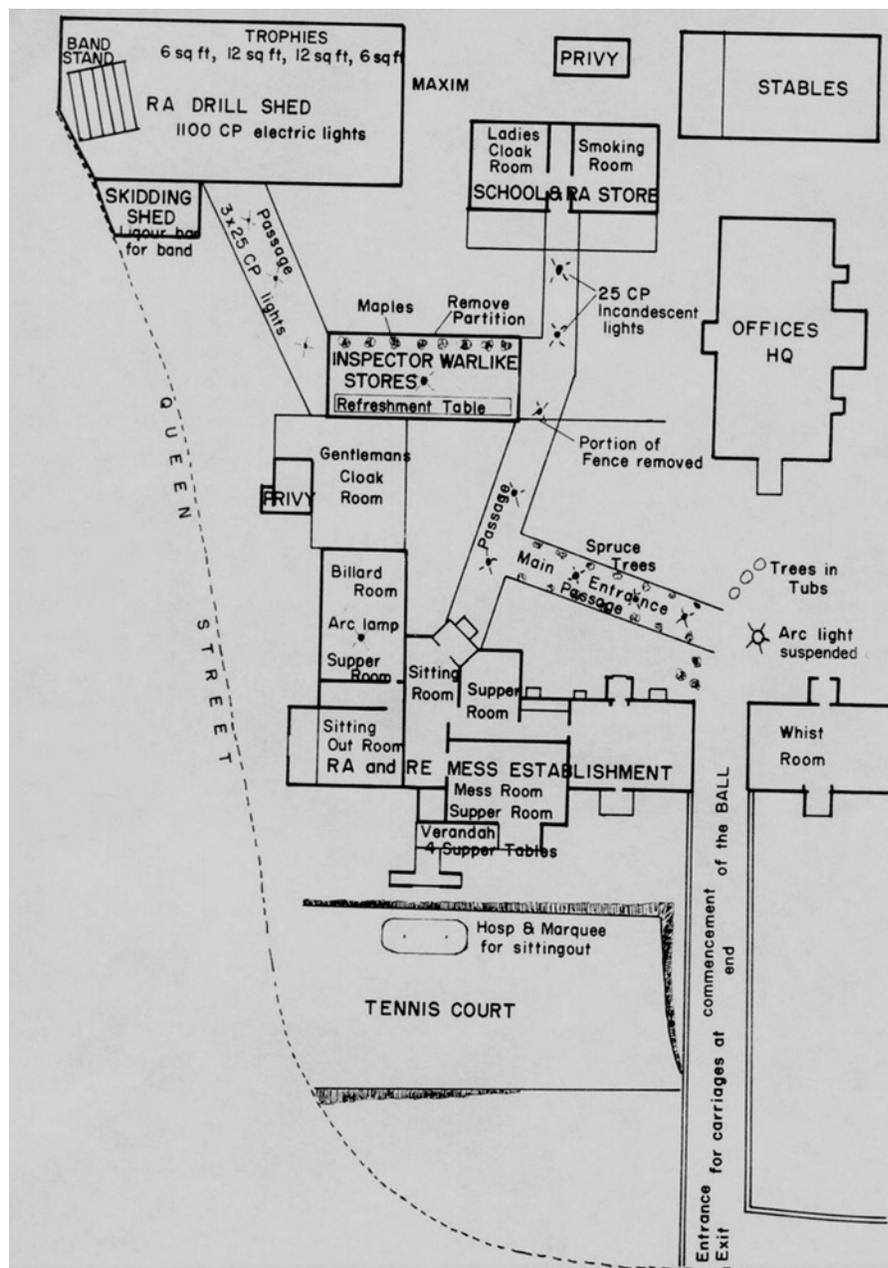
# Artillery Park - the RA and RE Ball, Wednesday, 21 October 1891

## Wayne Shellnutt

The following is part of the information that Wayne Shellnutt shared with the Board of HTNS when they met with representatives of Royal Artillery Park in September to discuss the conservation of this historic military property directly across Sackville Street from the Halifax Citadel.

The Mess Committee of the Royal Artillery (RA) and Royal Engineers (RE) Officers' Mess at Royal Artillery Park, Halifax, proposed a dance function that would rival any previous military Balls, specifically any by the Royal Navy, in Halifax'. It was to be larger than all previous mess dances held at the relatively small mess of many small rooms, a dining room, and an equally sized billiards room for a total useable area of about 2400 square feet. The plan was to convert the Drill Shed (on the corner of Queen and Sackville streets) into a ballroom by moving three large 7-, 9-, and 10-inch guns to the corners and building a 2300 square foot, wooden, dance floor over the packed earth floor, together with a raised bandstand for 30 musicians at the Queen Street end. The floor was to be finished to a standard suitable for ballroom dancing. The ballroom was to be fitted with electric lights totalling 1100 candle power. The Drill Shed (ballroom) was to be decorated with flags and tables were to be placed on the Sackville Street side to display RA and RE trophies. Heat was to be provided by one stove placed in a corner, but it was not required and was removed before the event.

The Inspector of Warlike Stores building was to be set up as a refreshment room and sitting-out place. It was decorated with plants and small brass model guns. The north side was lined entirely with red maple trees planted in green-painted cement barrels. The mess was set up for the dining of 122 guests at one sitting. The appropriate quantity of chairs and tables, carpets, screens,



Layout of RA and RE Mess for the Ball of 21 October 1891 (from Mess Records of 1891, courtesy of RCA Museum, Shilo, Manitoba)

and rugs were borrowed from other messes and the wives of the married officers, including the General Officer Commanding.

All the buildings were connected by canvas-covered passages, on wooden frames, with roofs lined with white sheets and the sides lined with mar-

quee walls and flags. The floors were constructed of wood covered with grey carpet paper. Decorations were to include spruce trees and flags, suitably fitted with electric lighting.

The 25 mess members were directed to cover all costs for the Ball, with all guests invited on a gratis basis. The mess



RA and RE Mess (centre right) in 1880 (courtesy of Nova Scotia Archives, "R.A. R.E. Mess", Military Halifax, 1880, NSA Photo Album no. 29 page 3)



Skating on the tennis court rink, south side of Mess - note Cambridge Military Library in background (courtesy of Nova Scotia Archives, "Skating Party, R.A. Mess Rink, Jan. 1896", NSA, Capt. Ferdinand James Odevaine Collection, 1992-306 no. 21)

members and their wives (five) acted as hosts and hostesses for the 210 guests (240 attendees in total). The costs for the Ball came to \$965.77, which was assessed to the 25 members based on 14.33 days pay for each rank from 2nd Lieutenant to Colonel, raising \$970.00.

The Menu consisted of five courses, each with multiple choices, including:

- **First Course:** Oysters or Turtle Soup
- **Second Course:** Petits Nectarines Foie gras à la Belle; Sardines à la Royale; Olives St-Augustine; Caviar aux Crevettes; Timbale de Foie à la Bourgogne

- **Third Course:** Roast Chicken; Poulet à la Belle-Vue; Hind Quarter of Lamb; Pigeon Pie; Roast Partridges; Cotelettes d'Agneau à l'Andalouse; Quails à la Souvaroff; Roast Beef; Galantine of Turkey; Sandwiches assorted; Torpedos

- **Desserts:** Petits Choux aux Abricots; Pommes à la Princesse Maude; Charlotte Russe; Vanille Bavaoise; French Pastry; Meringues à la Crème Vanille; Trifle; Charlotte Alexander

Following are a few excerpts from the *Daily Echo*, Halifax, which carried four full columns describing the Ball in great detail on Thursday 22 October 1891:

**"THE OFFICERS TO BE CONGRATULATED ON THEIR VERY MARKED SUCCESS**

"A wonderfully large contingent of pretty and well dressed ladies ... every inch of the ballroom, huge as it was, covered with flags ... not since the naval ball of last year has there been a better vista at a dance ... more waiters than at any previous ball in Halifax ... the supper perfect in every detail.

"And a most excellent, well arrayed and par excellence dainty supper at that! There was a long and good menu, going from oysters and turtle soup up to fruit, sweets and liqueurs. The tables were very pretty and lit with candles alone, which produced the soft lustre which is so comfortable after the sharpness of electric light. There was no standing about, no scrambling for food. People sat comfortably at table and were comfortably waited upon by innumerable waiters, whom the town must have been taxed to produce. I never saw so many at any ball in Halifax before. There was unlimited and very good champagne, and ices to perfection; taken together, one seldom sees a ball supper of such dimensions so faultlessly done and with such a great deal of daintiness; certainly one does not often see it here.

"Mrs Ryan, who with Mrs Maycock was receiving, was very well dressed in black and carried quite the best bouquet of white roses in the room<sup>2</sup>. In her hair she wore bands of black velvet clasped with diamonds, which were most becoming of her."

Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Based on the RA & RE Mess records for 1891, held by the RCA Museum, Shilo, Manitoba

<sup>2</sup>Mrs Ryan's husband was the Commander RA

*Major (ret'd) Wayne Shellnutt is Director of the Army Cadet League of Canada (Nova Scotia) and a specialist on the history of Royal Artillery Park.*

## Amherst Heritage at Risk



Former Bank of Montreal red sandstone building at corner of Victoria and LaPlanche streets, Amherst, with its neighbour, the grey Wallace sandstone 1935 Dominion Public Building (now repurposed as the Town Hall – see December 2013 Griffin) and tower of the Old Amherst Post Office (1884-1886) in the far distance (Griffin photo, May 2013)

Amherst, Cumberland County's shire-town, has sat atop the southernmost of the Tantramar Ridges for almost 200 years. Settlement in the area began even earlier, with the 17th century Acadian settlement of Beauséjour, followed later by New England Planters, Yorkshiremen, and Loyalists spreading over the fertile Tantramar Marshes. By the 1850s, Amherst was home to resourceful and innovative entrepreneurs laying the groundwork for the industrial success that was to be called 'Busy Amherst'.

The major role Amherst's citizens

played leading to Canadian Confederation reflected their enthusiasm and foresight. Four of them - Tupper, Dickey, Chandler, and McCully - were Fathers of Confederation. Today, Amherst's main streets are still home to the impressive government and church buildings that Busy Amherst built to demonstrate its political importance and prosperity.

Time and lack of maintenance have begun to claim these Victorian industrial artifacts. In 1999, besides many historic wooden structures, Amherst boasted 19 heritage masonry buildings, many constructed of local red sandstone and located along Victoria Street. Today there are only 13 (> 30% attrition). One after one, they are failing and falling. Soon we could be down to eight.

The next demolition may be the old Bank of Montreal building. Through misfortune and now neglect at the hands of its owners, it is in need of support, something Amherst Town Council has been loath to extend. At least two groups have tried to no avail to open discussions with the Town. Until recently, it seemed this gracious gem that anchors one of the entry points to Amherst was doomed.

Now we have one last chance for a good outcome. Heritage Trust of Nova

### Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

Illustrated Public Lecture Series

Thursday January 21 7:30 pm  
**Elizabeth and Philip Pacey**  
 NSCAD and the Granville Street National Historic Site: Past, Present, and Future

Thursday February 18 7:30 pm  
**Don Chard**  
 Moving Home: the Protestant Orphanage, from Modest House to Purpose-built Institution (1857-1970)

Wednesday March 23 7:30 pm  
**Allen Penney**  
 Examining the Simeon Perkins House, Liverpool

Museum of Natural History Auditorium  
 1747 Summer Street, Halifax  
 Information: 423-4807

Scotia representatives Joe Ballard, Elizabeth Pacey, and Philip Pacey addressed the Town Council meeting in October 2015, passionately presenting a case to rethink the current plans for demolition. They asked for three months' reprieve as they try to grow their vision for a restoration and repurposing package, including donated money, labour, and grants. For now, the building is still standing.

Canada's 150th birthday is coming in 2017. What a great project it would be to see this wonderfully elegant building up, running, and useful again.

– Leslie Childs

### Save the date!

To recognize **Heritage Day** we are planning a special event

**Royal Artillery Park's Mess will be 200 years old in 2016**

Help celebrate this important building!

14 February from 2 to 4 pm

Details will be sent out closer to the date.  
 For more information, call the Trust office,  
 902-423-4807.

## Wolfville Heritage House Demolished



*The Christie House, Wolfville, ca 1850, before its demolition by Acadia University in October (courtesy of Wendy Elliott and The Kings County Advertiser)*

### Wendy Elliott

*The Christie House, a municipal heritage property in Wolfville, was demolished after a three-year wait required by provincial statute.*

Although there were some expressions of interest in the Christie House, the heritage property ended up demolished [in October].

The owner, Acadia University, had to wait three years due to the building's municipal heritage status. The over 160-year-old duplex had been offered for \$1, but it had to be moved.

One local architect tried to interest a client in the largely sound Main Street structure, but the rooms were deemed too small. In the end, it went down rapidly. Acadia set aside the large foundation stones for future use.

According to Wolfville's built heritage inventory, the wooden house was valued for its association with its former owner, John L. Brown, and for its architectural features. Brown was one of Wolfville's most successful merchants of the nineteenth century. He owned and operated a store next door to his home.

The double house was named after the Christie family, who lived in the

home from 1912 to 1965. Architecturally, the Christie House belonged to the Classic Revival architectural style. It was one of 17 homes in the vicinity, according to Gordon Hansford, who grew up next door. Only one, Alumni Hall, remains.

*Reproduced from and by courtesy of The Kings County Advertiser*

## Barrington Court House

The Old Court House in Barrington is an integral part of the group of Shelburne County museums. Peter Oickle, our South Shore regional representative, reports that the Museum's Board is assessing the building's physical condition to ensure its continued viability. Investigations have uncovered a vaulted ceiling, which had been hidden by gyproc.

The following is reproduced from the Canadian Register of Historic Places ([www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8957](http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8957)):

*The Old Court House was built in 1843 by Sherard Kenney and was then known as the Town House and Lock-up. It was built in the Neo-classical style with symmetrical lines and a simple design...*

*The Old Court House is the third oldest court house in Nova Scotia. Although much altered, the original Neo-classical building is clearly evident. Many of the original and historic interior elements also remain, including the jury box, seating, doors, trim and flooring.*



*Tatamagouche Station, by Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking, 2015, watercolour on paper, 36 x 51 cm, private collection (courtesy of the artist)*

## *Saving Nova Scotia's Industrial Heritage*



*The lamphouse (at right), on the site of the former Springhill mine, has the appearance of an unloved and nondescript building – but it remains the most significant standing heritage building from Nova Scotia's coal mining era (author photo)*

### *David Rollinson*

In the summer of 1827, the Industrial Revolution came to Nova Scotia when a ship carrying British coal miners and their machinery arrived in Pictou. Sent out by the General Mining Association, the miners came ashore to sink deep mines and raise coal. 'Industry' was about to bring profound changes to mainland Nova Scotia and Cape Breton over the next one hundred years. It helped found and support new communities, offered an alternative to the traditional subsistence lifestyle of what was then a mainly rural population, and left a lasting mark on the province.

Many revolutions are noted for their propensity to destroy, but the Industrial Revolution was all about building. Mines needed engine houses and processing facilities. The mass production of goods needed factories. The conversion of ore into iron and steel resulted in the construction of massive complexes that dominated the skyline.

Some of the largest structures erected in the industrial era were brick-built textile mills – Nova Scotia could boast of five, in Amherst, Halifax, Truro, Windsor, and Yarmouth. Although four of the five textile mills have survived, most of the small wooden structures have gone; the victims of fire, natural degradation, or recycling. The cutting torch removed most of the evidence of the province's coal and iron industry. The extent of this

loss can be judged by the fact that in 1871 there were 1144 steam- and water-powered sawmills operating in Nova Scotia. The Dominion Coal Company had 16 collieries in operation in 1912, and there were 5400 employees at the Sydney Steel Plant in 1957.

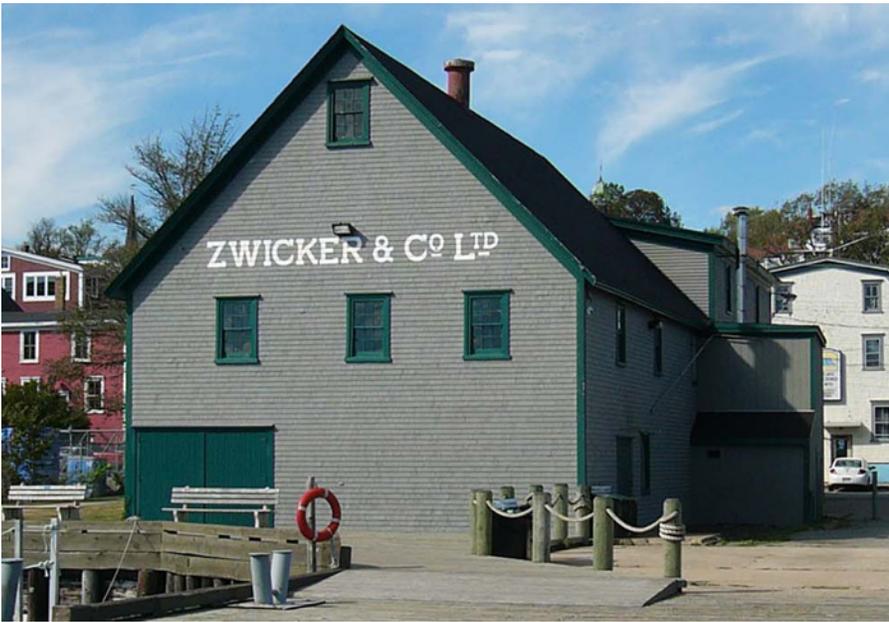
Surviving industrial heritage buildings remain at high risk of demolition worldwide. According to English Heritage, this is because they lack glamour, are often large and unsuitable for conversion to residential use, and suffer from a lack of vision for repurposing. In

Nova Scotia a number of additional local factors related to population density and financial resources impact the repurposing of our remaining industrial heritage buildings. Thankfully, a number of significant examples of our industrial heritage have been saved. Half of the sites making up the Nova Scotia Museum are based on industry. Other examples of conserved industrial built heritage are spread around the province under the stewardship of individuals or community organizations.

There have been some notable private-sector successes in repurposing industrial heritage buildings in recent years. Conversion of the massive 1944 power station on the Halifax waterfront for use as offices, and the adaptive reuse of a small wooden blacksmith shop in Lunenburg as a distillery and retail outlet are two very different examples. Both of these buildings had the advantage of location ('... location, location'); some others waiting for attention may need a bit more vision, but the local community, if asked, can often identify a potential use.



*Small industrial heritage buildings such as this one in Amherst can often be underutilized – a new owner or a new approach to adaptive re-use can see them transformed into community assets, contributing to the local economy (author photo)*



*The refurbished Zwicker building shown here, and now ready for a tenant, forms an integral part of the successful Lunenburg Working Waterfront project (author photo).*

Historically, industry was widely dispersed throughout Nova Scotia to take advantage of either local resources and raw materials or the availability of labour. The Dominion Chair Works in Bass River was a good example of a sizable 'rural' industry. Although the main factory has gone, the memory of the Chair Works is preserved by a store and local history museum, both contributing towards a unique identity for the small community and providing economic opportunity.

There are, as can be expected, both

opportunities and challenges when trying to save an industrial heritage building. Some of these challenges and opportunities are common with any historic preservation vision. One of the most significant differences in opportunities is that industrial heritage buildings can attract tenants whose business benefits from being in a distinctive building. Also, because of their unique character, industrial heritage structures can be a catalyst for area regeneration. The 'Distillery District' in Toronto's east

end is a notable example. Two significant challenges that can be faced in the repurposing of industrial heritage buildings are generating local political and community support and accessing the technical expertise necessary to design a successful conversion.

When these buildings are gone, they are gone. Not only have the structures themselves disappeared, but any future potential and the sense of place they provided for the surrounding community has also been lost. *Cheese Factory Corner, Sydney Mines, and Steam Mill Village* are examples of Nova Scotia place names that provide a legacy from those communities past, but a building will always be a more tangible reminder of that history.

Even when vacant and in poor condition, a heritage building remains a community asset, with the potential to enhance the local environment and contribute in an economic way. Providing the minimum of weather protection and security for a heritage structure can be seen as an investment in its value rather than an expense. Adaptive re-use visions for these unique buildings should examine the options that lie between two extremes – demolition or conversion into a museum. I am a big supporter of museums, but they are not necessarily the most effective community use of a heritage structure. The building must always be the primary artifact.

Smaller industrial heritage buildings continue to offer a perfect home for community-based tourism activities. They often have the advantage of location, and their initial use provides an internal layout conducive to use by individuals or small businesses. The former LaHave Outfitting Company building in LaHave is now home to several year-round businesses, and has attracted several tourism-related operations into the community, proving once again that economic and cultural regeneration go hand-in-hand.

*David Rollinson is Chair of Industrial Heritage Nova Scotia ([www.industrialheritagens.ca](http://www.industrialheritagens.ca))*



*The former LaHave Outfitting Company building in LaHave, Lunenburg County (author photo)*

## Government House Rehabilitation - “New Wine in an Old Bottle”

The following article describes the rehabilitation of Government House for which the project team<sup>1</sup> received a built-heritage award in February 2015 from the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia. The text is taken from the nomination document, submitted by Cynthia Street, Associate Architect with L. Paul Hébert Architects, and Terrence Smith-Lamothe, Design Team Leader and Steering Committee Chair, Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

The oldest architect-designed structure in the Maritimes, and the oldest vice-regal residence in Canada, had fallen on hard times – rising damp, ancient wiring and plumbing, deteriorating wood and stone. Previous patchwork had only prolonged the problem.

The 2006-2009 conservation and rehabilitation project set out to bring wiring and plumbing up to building code standards, to replace or refurbish windows, doors and floors, and to make the four working floors of Government House accessible. Original lighting fixtures and hardware were used wherever possible. Extensive use of new building material produced in Nova Scotia supported the local economy, while reinforcing the symbolic nature of Government House as a provincial icon. This entire initiative occurred while maintaining the character-defining features of the building, respecting historical colour schemes and interior design, within a project managed to be completed on time and on budget. The Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Mayann Francis, moved in on schedule, in November 2009. This could not have been achieved without the excellent rapport with, and between, the entire design and construction project team.

### Initial Problems

At the outset, there were numerous concerns. Over 100 years of “rising damp” threatened the health of occupants



Government House, Barrington Street façade

and the building. Rodents had taken up residence. Mechanical and electrical systems were not to current code, while pipes were visible and intrusive. In earlier renovations, solid wood flooring had been cut up to accommodate sprinklers, then covered with plywood and hidden under carpet. Underground and under-building drainage was blocked and needed to be redirected. Finishes and mouldings had deteriorated and needed replacement. Plaster applied since 1930 was discovered to contain asbestos and needed to be removed. The service stair was inadequately structured and sagged.

Accessibility was woefully inadequate. There was no wheelchair access to the basement area where public washrooms would be installed, nor was there access to upper levels. There was not one barrier-free toilet in the house. The project aimed to render this heritage building as universally accessible as possible. An elevator was needed, but a high water table was problematic. The existing plan and heritage structure did not lend itself easily to introducing an elevator. The spaces were tight. The only feasible loca-

tion would displace an existing servery, old washrooms, and a Maid’s Room.

### Project Constraints

As Government House is an important heritage building, attention needed to be given to character-defining features, to ensure that they were not inadvertently removed or irreversibly altered. Various decorative features (gilded valances, mirrors, consoles, fireplaces) needed protection from dust and damage. Relatively “new” mouldings had been applied to various walls. Questions arose regarding the appropriateness of retaining these and other historically-inappropriate building components. Furthermore, the valuable Chinese wallpaper in the Morning Room needed protection from water (which had been a problem) and required conservation measures.

The original brick and stone load-bearing partitions constrained the degree of freedom within the plan for additional washrooms. Also, there were very few locations where a sanitary sewer pipe or ventilation shaft could be run. Fire regulations, plumbing, heating,



*Drawing Room after completion*



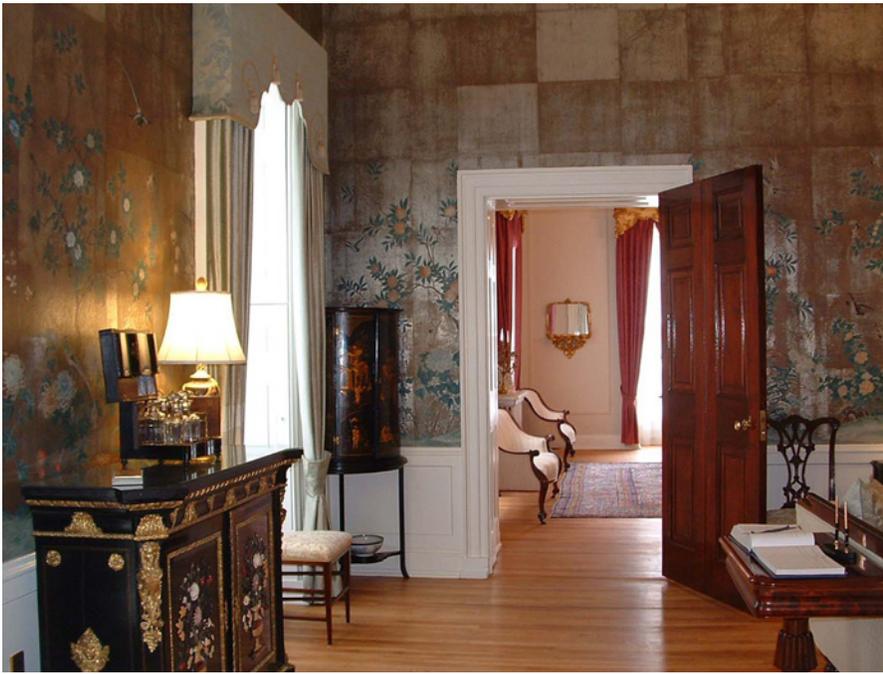
*Work in progress on the Drawing Room*

sprinkler, and building codes presented challenges.

Rewiring the existing chandeliers to CSA standard was a necessary part of the renovation. In addition, colour schemes were dependent upon the colours in furnishings that would later be reinstalled.

#### **Interesting Discoveries and Works**

Government House was completed in 1805. Wood samples were analyzed at the Mount Allison Dendrochronology Lab and were found to be white pine (*Pinus strobus*) cut in a Nova Scotia forest in about the year 1800 from trees which (in at least one case) started to grow in the late 1400s<sup>2</sup>. Heavy timber framing, typical throughout the building, was left exposed in the basement Artifact Room and Secretary's Office. An example of charred wood from the great fire of



*Morning Room with Chinese wallpaper*

1854 was preserved. This fire allegedly destroyed the entire attic and much of the third floor.

When a built-in china cabinet was removed from the front corridor, the original configuration of the service stair was discovered and restored. Instead of curving down towards the basement, the original stair showed a straight run. When the front entrance was relocated to the Barrington Street side of the building, the exposed stair and servants would be visible, so the lower part was cut back and redirected behind the china cabinet.

Two “beehive” type brick ovens and a large fireplace were uncovered behind partitions and restored. In the artifact room, above the beehive oven, a chamber was built to house a “time capsule” - a handmade copper box containing donations from the design and construction team. Children’s shoes were found in the walls near doors and windows, a practice of workers of the day supposedly to ward off evil spirits. When the new walls went up, contemporary shoes were solicited from the public for future generations to find. These were placed again within the structure and

an official letter with the matching shoe was sent back to each donor. When the existing floor slab in the basement was demolished, artifacts were found and preserved by the archaeologist and the Nova Scotia Museum. These items included old glass bottles, broken shards of chinaware, animal bones, remnants of old newspaper, and bottle caps.

The remnants of bell cranks (call bell controls) were found in the attic floor leading from the maid’s quarters down to Dining and Morning Rooms. Lead pipes used to deliver gas to the old lamps were found in the wall framing. The original basement floor, in certain rooms, could be seen in layers starting with a layer of thick slate, followed by four layers of leveling concrete slab, possibly reflecting early efforts at water control.

Early wallpaper and wall stenciling were discovered throughout the house. One wall near the security station, showing a stenciled or rolled pattern, has been preserved. A new decorative frieze in the Lieutenant Governor’s kitchenette replicates this pattern.

Stone and brickwork throughout the basement and in locations around the

moat, were cleaned and restored. Coal bunkers were found and restored. The walls surrounding the grand stair were plastered anew. Traditional artisanal techniques using cut metal profiles reproduced archways, cove mouldings, and rosettes at ceilings.

### **A successful outcome**

In 2007, the then Minister, Angus MacIsaac, stated that the province was “committed to preserving this important piece of our history for generations of Nova Scotians.” The project took three years and over \$5 million, but the outcome was a safe, healthy, and renewed historic structure which retained its architectural integrity with enhanced heritage value. With the successful completion of this milestone project, Government House will continue to house our Lieutenant Governors and to host Nova Scotia citizens well into its third century.

### **End notes:**

<sup>1</sup>Project team: Due to the nature of the Government House renovation, with so many unknowns, it was decided to use skilled tradespeople on the staff of the Building Services Group in the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (now part of Internal Services) to perform most of the demolition and reconstruction. Outside specialists were engaged for the construction of the elevator, conservation of the Chinese wallpaper, re-wiring and cleaning of the chandeliers, repainting the doors in faux-wood, repairing plaster mouldings and other specific tasks, but, for the main part, the finished product is the result of the dedication and hard work of the government’s own workforce. The team members were Paul Hébert, Prime Consultant Architect, assisted by Cynthia Street; Dumac Engineering for mechanical and electrical engineering, Jacques Whitford (now Stantec) for civil and BMR for structural engineering; T. E. Smith-Lamothe, Design Team Leader and Steering Committee Chair; Ron Jeppesen, Project Manager for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. This information kindly provided by Terry Smith-Lamothe.

<sup>2</sup>Robichaud, A., Pickard, F., Phillips, B.E. and Laroque, C.P. 2008. Wood from the Government House, Halifax, Nova Scotia: species identification, ring count and preliminary measurements. MAD Lab Report 2008-02. Mount Allison Dendrochronology Lab, Department of Geography and Environment, Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB (<http://www.madlabsc.ca/2008-02.pdf>).

*Illustrations courtesy Government of Nova Scotia*

## Seeton House, 1253 Barrington Street, Halifax

Garry D. Shutlak

On part of the former gardens of the late Sir Brenton Halliburton and adjoining the residence of the Honourable Edward Kenny at 197 Pleasant Street, George Blaiklock purchased land on speculation in 1864. The houses he built there were designed by the recently founded architectural firm of Elliot & Busch [Henry F. Elliot and Henry F. Busch.] The houses were to be of pressed brick with freestone trimmings. The first house completed in 1865 was 199 Pleasant Street, purchased by Joseph Seeton.

Joseph Seeton (1825-1890), with his brother Robert B. Seeton (1829-1900), moved from the Rawdon area to Halifax in 1850 and established the firm of J. & R.B. Seeton, commission merchants and general importers. First located in Sackville Street, the firm moved to Collins Wharf, now part of Historic Properties, on Upper Water Street. Shortly thereafter (1869), the Inman Line got the mail contract, formerly held by Cunard, and Messrs Seeton were appointed their agents. The firm also occupied a three-storey brick and freestone building, 12-18 Upper Water Street. It was an Inman liner, *City of Brussels*, which brought the young Prince Arthur of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (later Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught) to Halifax in 1869. Another of their vessels, *City of Boston*, left New York on 25 January 1870 and cleared Halifax on the 28th, never to be seen again. Among the prominent Haligonians lost were Mr Arthur K. Doull, Mr E. Billings, Mr John B. Young, and Mr Edward J. Kenny<sup>1</sup>. Mr Kenny was Mr Seeton's neighbour. Mr Seeton occupied the house on Pleasant Street until 1871, when he moved to Dorset Cottage on Inglis Street and lived there until his death in 1890.

Mr Seeton sold the Pleasant Street house to Thomas A. Ritchie (1810-1890). Mr Ritchie was the second son of the late Judge Thomas Ritchie of Annapolis Royal. He began his career in Halifax in the employ of Creighton & Grassie,



Seeton House, 1258 Barrington Street, formerly 199 Pleasant Street, Halifax, as it appears today serving as the Halifax Hostel (Griffin photo)

commission and West Indies merchants. About 1832 he moved to Cuba and remained there nearly forty years before returning to Halifax. Most of his family were lawyers or clergyman, not merchants. His brother, Sir William J. Ritchie (1813-1892), became a member and then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. His half-brother J. Norman Ritchie (1834-1904) was a member of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court. After a residency of nineteen years, Thomas A. Ritchie's funeral took place at his home on Pleasant Street. He left the property and contents to his barrister nephew, Thomas Ritchie, who resided there for three years and then sold the property to Susan McNeil Whitman (1853-1925).

Mrs Whitman was the wife of Arthur N. Whitman, fish and West Indies merchant. They remained in the house until 1918, when they moved to 58 Inglis Street. After the Whitmans vacated it, the house remained unoccupied until purchased by the Halifax Branch of the Great War Veterans Association, who remained there until they joined the Canadian Legion in 1926.

The residence then became the

"Thistle Lodge" boarding house run by Mrs Emily L. Stewart from 1927 to 1930 and by Mrs Flora Thompson until 1933. It was then occupied by carpenter John A. Duncan (1935-1941) and by Clarence C. Langill (1942-1947).

In 1948, the house became the Halifax branch of the Missions to Seaman (now Seafarers), a Canadian non-profit charity, which is part of the worldwide network, offering help and support to seafarers when their ships arrive in a port far from home. From 1975 until 1982 the building was occupied by the Halifax Business Academy. Since 1985, it has served as the Halifax Heritage House Hostel.

*Garry Shutlak is Senior Reference Archivist at Nova Scotia Archives and a frequent contributor to The Griffin*

<sup>1</sup>My great-great uncle, Capt. William Forbes of New Glasgow, was also a passenger on this ill-fated voyage and the story has lingered in the family ever since – Ed.

## A Victorian Pleasure Ground in Truro

Joe Ballard

*This article is based on a lecture by the author, presented in the Trust's regular monthly lecture series on Thursday 17 September 2015.*

Forget what you think you know about parks. Forget your modern-day understanding of what a park is or ought to be. Enter the Victorian interpreted wilderness gorge of Truro's Victoria Park - a picturesque landscape full of wonder and discovery - a place where fairies dance in rustic bowers and nymphs guard the fresh water rivulets and springs that feed the diligent brook.

A rambling Joseph Howe visited the "Truro Falls" in 1829 and wrote of its charms in an issue of the *Nova Scotian* the next year. The following is an excerpt of his poetic description.

*"Lay thee down upon that rock, my gentle traveller, which the heat of the noon-day sun has warmed, despite the coolness of the neighboring waters - and there, with thy senses half lulled to forgetfulness by the murmurs of the falling stream - thy eyes half closed - and thy spirit all unconscious of earthly turmoils and care - give thyself up to musing, for never was there a more appropriate spot than the Truro Falls for our old men to see visions, and our young men to dream dreams..."*

The description continues with the same eloquence and was quietly treasured for many years by the citizens of Truro.

As early as 1880, there were those in Truro agitating for the creation of a public park. By 1887, the *Colchester Sun* was still carrying on the lobby and took up the cause with renewed vigour. The paper also noted Queen Victoria's impending jubilee as a milestone that should be acknowledged in some form, and so, in September of 1887, Victoria Park opened.

Truro barrister, James D. Ross, had arranged for parcels of land to be



*A panoramic view of the gorge boardwalk, ca 1913 (courtesy of the Colchester Historeum, Truro)*

carved out of the existing estates of *Longfield Cottage, Brooklands*, and his own *Landsdoon* as well as pieces from other donors. Ross confidently sought subscriptions from other citizens in his unusual style of persuasion: "Don't imagine we are asking any favour from you. On the contrary I honestly consider that we are offering you a privilege, and for my part I want no contribution that is grudgingly given."

James Ross called Joseph Howe a "great statesman and orator." On Howe's description of the gorge that would become Victoria Park, Ross states, his "master mind, poetic, and romantic genius instantly recognized the surpassing charm of the place." But it was Ross's wonderful artistic taste that in effect leveraged the value of Howe's prose in

combination with the beautiful setting of the gorge into a Victorian pleasure ground which was regularly lauded as having no equal on the continent.

Victoria Park, under the direction of James Ross, appears to have deliberately followed the Picturesque Style of landscape design, responding to the topography of the area and favouring the untamed natural landscape. As such, the paths of Victoria Park are designed to provide excellent vantage points from which to admire the scenery. Manmade features are intended to be limited and to utilize natural material such as local stone and rustic wooden railings. Exotic and non-native species of ornamental vegetation are avoided in the Picturesque Style landscape.

The entrance to the park opens onto



A picnic party gathered on the bridge below the Falls, date unknown; these may be workers from the Eastern Hat & Cap Manufacturing Co. as many of them are wearing caps with an 'E' (courtesy of the Colchester Historem, Truro)

the floodplain of the Lepper Brook but the cliffs quickly begin to close in as you follow the brook upriver. Ross had what he called a 'wharf path' constructed alongside the brook up to the falls. This was essentially wharf construction: crib work built with logs, in-filled with rock, branches and soil. In 1889, a pavilion was built on the Lepper Brook floodplain on that broad expanse of grass below the gorge. This whitewashed structure was the centre for picnic excursions, dances, promenade concerts, dinners, political speeches, and other public gatherings.

Along the wharf path Ross established points of interest and highlighted the park's natural features that he called "the beauties". Victorians were obsessed with the notion of fairies and fairy lore. Some actually believed in their existence and the reality of other related fairy folk such as changelings, brownies, sprites, elfin, nymphs and the like. Such creatures were often associated with the plant kingdom and many believed they assisted with the growth and fertility of trees and other vegetation. References to these creatures of the fantastic are pervasive in the park. *Fairy Dell*, located at the first great S-curve in the brook is one example that was particularly enchanting for early park goers.

*Jacob's Ladder* was first opened to the public in 1906. This great staircase

ascends from the *Fairy Dell* and serves to emphasize the height of the precipice and the depth of the gorge. The name is taken from a Bible passage in the *Book of Genesis*. Ross was well pleased with the finished product and declared, "I am satisfied that this will be found one of the strongest features of the Park and one of the greatest improvements of recent years."

The *Cathedral Dell* is a one of only a few small flats along the brook and so has been used as a picnic site since the park's earliest days. According to James Ross, the *Cathedral Dell* is named in recognition of the fact that "the groves were God's first temples." Early in its existence, the *Cathedral Dell* site displayed a quote from Bryant's *Forest Hymn* challenging passers-by to look from nature unto nature's God, "Ah, why should we, in the world's riper years neglect God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore only among the crowd and under roofs that our frail hands have raised?"

The *Holy Well* is found here within the confines of the *Cathedral Dell*. It is built on a spring and was created as a drinking fountain. It was constructed as a replica of the holy well in nearby Bible Hill – that site claims through oral history to be a place where local Acadians once baptized their children.

Just above the *Cathedral Dell*, there is an outcrop known as *Des Teufels*

*Kanzel* (German for Devil's Pulpit). Next we come to the *Witch's Cauldron* or *Lily Cauldron*. This small pool continuously bubbles like a boiling pot as it's fed by waters tumbling over a small ridge in the Lepper Brook. This is one of only a few places where the water is of a depth suitable for bathing. The site has for many years had a posted sign informing visitors of its foreboding namesake (*Witch's Cauldron*). However, during the 1890s, it was named *Lily Cauldron*, Lily it was noted being the poetic name for Susan. As it turns out, the name Susan is derived from the Hebrew and Persian names for lily. This pool, that resembled a boiling cauldron, was named in honor of Susan Waddell Stevens, the donor of the most beautiful of the parcels that comprise the park.

Still before reaching the falls, one comes across a branch ravine that Ross named *Natura Regina* (or Queen Nature). *Natura Regina* comprises this minor ravine and the paths on the heights above. Before the hillside paths were constructed the area was wholly inaccessible. Seizing on this fact, park planners, always looking to devise a bit



The Joe Howe Falls, Lepper Brook, Victoria Park (courtesy of the Colchester Historem, Truro)

of folklore, declared nature had kept the area for herself and proposed that it should still be considered sacred to her use. It would, therefore, be “an unpardonable park sin” to enter and pluck or destroy its ferns or mosses and furthermore, that “... retribution in some shape will overtake those who dare intrude and rob it of that on which alone its beauty depends.”

The lower portion of *Natura Regina* is called the *Nymph's Grotto* and it is here where one could find the *Wishing Well* and something called the *Cold Chamber*. The *Cold Chamber* was simply the cool, rock-enclosed area comprising that part of the ravine immediately before the well. Its anomalous microclimate was achieved by its isolation from the sun and the cold spring water that ran through it. It was said that “On a hot day

a thermometer carried into it will go down thirteen degrees.”

A short distance on you come across the *Hanging Glacier* ... if you visit at the right time of year. This seasonal attraction is formed from the dripping spring that falls down a precipice just before one reaches the falls. In winter, the water forms a narrow sheet of ice that can hang some twenty feet in length. The remarkable aspect of this particular site is the extended lifespan of the seasonal glacier. In most years it survives well into the warmer months, when the surrounding trees are fully leafed.

Finally, as the path makes a sharp turn, the gorge opens up to reveal the *Joe Howe Falls* - the first waterfall (of any great size) reached when hiking up the Lepper Brook gorge. The name is given to the falls in acknowledgement of Jo-

seph Howe's 1829 visit and subsequent written description of the site – being the earliest account of the place. From the beginning, the *Joe Howe Falls* was the centrepiece of Victoria Park. This was the final “big reveal” that all the anticipation accumulated from the twisting paths and ever-enclosing hillsides led up to. This was the isolated place that Joe Howe had written of in such beautifully poetic terms that the description compelled James Ross to open it up to the people at large and further leverage the charms of it through his keen eye for landscape architecture.

*Joe Ballard is Senior Interpreter with Vineberg & Fulton and President of HTNS.*

## Nova Scotia's (Mostly) Built Heritage in Recent Books

Ron Brown. **Rails to the Atlantic.** 144 pp, photographs, ISBN 9781459728776, Dundurn Press, 2015, \$29.99 (also available as an e-book) *Includes built heritage of Atlantic Canada's railways – stations, grand hotels, bridges, and roundhouses.*

Alex D. Boutilier. **The Citadel on Stage: British Military Theatre, Sports & Recreation in Colonial Halifax.** 384 pp, photographs, ISBN 9781895814545, New World Publishing, 2015, \$27.50 *Theatrical, and recreational activities of the garrison in the religious, economic, and social environment of Halifax 1749-1867.*

Phil Comeau, Mary Broussard, and Warren Perrin. **Acadie Then and Now: a People's History.** 496 pp, ISBN 9780976892731, Andrepont Publishing LLC, 2015, \$30.00. *History and present-day realities of the Acadian and Cajun people; French-language edition won the 2015 Prix France-Acadie.*

Joan Dawson. **A History of Nova Scotia in 50 Objects.** 208 pp, photographs,

ISBN 9781771082952, Nimbus Publishing, 2015, \$21.95. *Visual history through artifacts from museums and historical sites throughout Nova Scotia.*

Emma Fitzgerald. **Hand Drawn Halifax: Portraits of the City's Buildings, Landmarks, Neighbourhoods and Residents.** 128 pp, illustrations, ISBN 9781459503977, Formac Publishing, \$19.95 *Emma was our cover artist in June 2015.*

Jacqueline Halsey and Loretta Migami. **Explosion Newsie.** 32 pp, illustrations, ISBN 978145904011, Formac Publishing, 2015, \$16.95 *Children's book about a newsboy's experience of the Halifax explosion and its aftermath.*

David Hood. **What Kills Good Men.** 304 pp, ISBN 9781771083508, Nimbus Publishing, 2015, \$21.95. *Set in 1890s Halifax – “a sardonic inquiry into morality, justice, and the space in between” – cultural landscape?*

James W. MacNutt QC. **Building for Justice: the Historic Courthouses of the Maritimes.** 192 pp, photographs, ISBN 9780986873331, SSP Publications, 2015, \$24.95

William D. Naftel. **Halifax: A Visual Legacy: 200+ Iconic Photographs of the City from 1853 to the Present.** 168 pp, photographs, ISBN 978145900464, Formac Publishing, 2015, \$39.95 *History of the city and the photographs.*

Mike Parker. **Frontier Town: Bear River, Nova Scotia: a Snapshot in Time.** 280 pp, photographs, ISBN 9781897426661, Pottersfield Press, 2015, \$26.95

Len Wagg. **Then and Now: Following in the Footsteps of Nova Scotia Photographer Wallace MacAskill.** 112 pp, photographs, ISBN 9781771083409, Nimbus Publishing, 2015, \$29.95 *Juxtaposes MacAskill photos and the author's own of the same site.*

## *Parramatta Connection - Convict-Built Heritage House*

*Janice Zann*

Prior to Paul's and my visit to Australia in September this year, I was entrusted with an old booklet that our dear Heritage Trust member, Nancy O'Brien, had found among her late father's extensive memorabilia. Her instructions to me were to try to find any person or institution in Australia that might be interested in having it.

The booklet, entitled *On the London Front 1915-1919*, was written by Lindon Brown of "Brislington, Parramatta" in 1920. Brown tells of the amazing kindness of the English aristocracy towards wounded Australian soldiers recuperating from the front lines during those horrific years. He dedicates the document to "The Honourable Mrs Henry Edwards, my kind hostess for three years and friend of hundreds of Australians."

Apparently, Lindon Brown spent those years helping the wounded by organizing teas, outings, and entertainments to revive their spirits. He tells of the many socialites of the day opening their homes for such visits. Not wanting to write something that he said "savoured too much of self-advertisement," he decided to tell his countrymen of the wonderful generosity of English people to Australian soldiers during those momentous years.

*... a beautifully preserved  
Georgian brick mansion built in  
1821 by the emancipated convict,  
John Hodges ...*

The City of Parramatta, once a western suburb of Sydney, is just a short drive from where we were staying with family. Its name is an aboriginal word meaning "where the eels lie down." Its Rugby League team is *The Parramatta Eels!* To my delight, I had no trouble locating Brislington House. It is a beautifully preserved Georgian brick mansion built in 1821 by the emancipated con-



*Brislington House (1821), Parramatta, NSW, Australia, garden façade facing George Street, with spring flowers in September (2015 author photo)*

vict, John Hodges. Even though it was built only 33 years after the First Fleet of convicts had arrived in 1788, brick laying was already an established practice. Convict James Bloodsworth, a skilled bricklayer, had already been placed in charge of a gang of convict labourers making the colony's first bricks – made by hand, one at a time.

Brislington House is the oldest existing dwelling house in the inner city of Parramatta. The Brown family of doctors moved into it in 1857. At one time, it was a nurses' home, but since 1983 it has been a Medical and Nurses Museum, operated (forgive the pun) by volunteers and open to the public only two days each month. Unfortunately, I was not able to visit on those days. I therefore mailed the booklet to Brislington, with the request that I be notified by postal mail of any decision made concerning its fate.

Brislington House pays tribute to a

bygone era, showing a 'then and now' picture of medical science and hospital care in early Australia. Next to the building is a glassed-in protected archaeological dig, revealing part of the brick foundations of the earlier Hospital for the Poor built in 1792.

Upon our return to Canada, I learned that the House is presently being sold by the State Government of New South Wales. A petition is available on-line<sup>1</sup> to try to stop the sale, as heritage advocates fear that this would probably result in the building's demolition.

*Janice Zann is a Board member of HTNS based in Truro with roots in Australia*

<sup>1</sup><http://www.heritagewatchnsw.org.au/brislington-medical-and-nursing-museum.php>

## Prayers and the Power of People: Stellarton Church Saved From Demolition



*Our Lady of Lourdes, Stellarton (Griffin photo)*

Prayers and the power of people have saved Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Stellarton, Pictou County. At the end of May 2015, the Pictou Deanery of the Diocese of Antigonish decided to close two Catholic churches in the Pictou County area (St Ann's, Thornburn, and Christ the King, Trenton) as well as one of three others (Holy Name, Westville; St John the Baptist, New Glasgow; or Our Lady of Lourdes, Stellarton). On July 26, the decision to close Our Lady of Lourdes was announced. The Diocese cited the need for structural repair, maintenance, and cost as the reasons for the closure.

Ahead of the announcement, the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes suspected that this devastating news might be coming sometime soon. And like many religious groups of various

denominations throughout Nova Scotia, they would have to face the sad fact of losing their place of worship and the fundamental reason for having a building as a community gathering spot.

An 'Action Group' was formed and began the crusade to save their church. The group reviewed the reasons for closure and found that misleading information was given. A lawsuit was launched, led by lawyer, former Member of Parliament, and Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner, Roseanne Skoke.

On the weekend of November 14, 2015, Bishop Brian Dunn of the Diocese sent a letter to Our Lady of Lourdes parishioners withdrawing the decision to close their church.

- John Ashton

## Good News from Cape Breton

Beinn Bhreagh Hall, the Bells family home on their estate near Baddeck, received recognition as a registered Provincial Heritage Property in February of this year. The designation celebration took place at the site on July 30, 2015, with Heritage Minister Tony Ince and HTNS President Joe Ballard in attendance.

In August 2008, old North-End Sydney was designated as a Heritage Conservation District, one of a handful in the province. A second Heritage Conservation District is being proposed in the CBRM to recognize the Kolonia neighbourhood of Whitney Pier. Community consultations have begun and we look forward to their completion in the near future. In the meantime, the Sydney Architectural Conservation Society (SACS) is nearing completion of the Kolonia Parkette in Whitney Pier. The final step, the installation of an interpretive panel, is scheduled for fall 2015. We hope to carry a photo and more details on the proposed conservation district in a future issue.

Cape Breton University and the Sydney Architectural Conservation Society, in partnership with the National Trust for Canada and Faith for the Common Good, presented a successful workshop entitled Regenerating Spaces of Faith in September at the New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation.

St Alphonsus Church in Victoria Mines has had a reprieve. The Diocese of Antigonish has accepted the offer of \$40,000 from the Stone Church Restoration Society to purchase the church and the property. The church was originally slated for demolition. The society has worked with, and continues to work with, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, the National Trust for Canada, and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. Fund-raising efforts continue as payment of the initial \$20,000 will insure that the deed is turned over to the society.

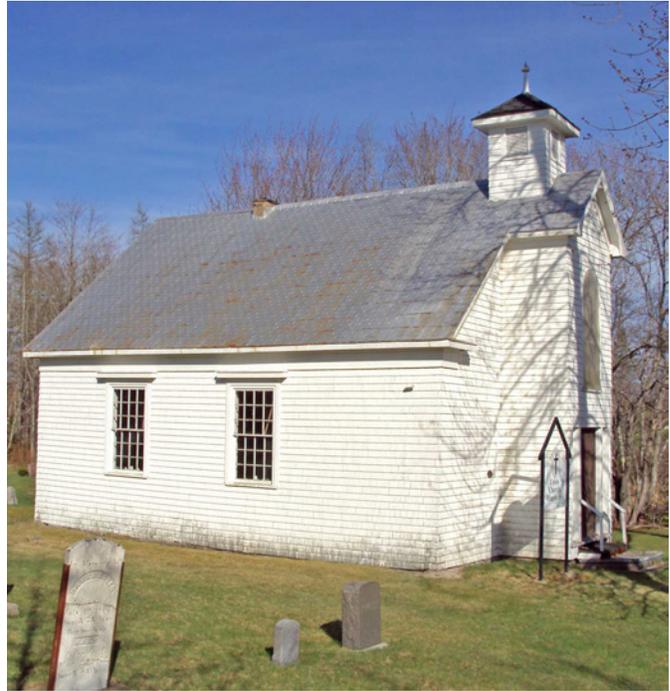
- Margaret Herdman

*The Griffin • Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia*

## HTNS Supports Conservation of Hants County Churches



Work underway on the steeple dormers of Avondale United Church, Newport, West Hants, in July 2015 (photo courtesy of Beverly Miller)



Uniacke Union Church, Mount Uniacke, East Hants, in May 2015 (photo courtesy of Philip Pacey)

This news item highlights the activities of the Trust's Buildings-at-Risk Fund and the role it can play in assisting conservation efforts in small communities throughout the Province. Here we focus on two projects, one each in East and West Hants.

Over the past year, the Trust provided advice and made a modest financial contribution to restoration of the remarkable church tower and steeple of the Avondale United Church in Newport, West Hants. This historic church was built in 1853 by shipwrights employed at the Mosher and Harvie shipyards nearby. The building has hand-hewn posts and ship's knees, with well-preserved stencilled wall decoration in the gallery (see <http://halifaxbloggers.ca/noticedinnovascotia/2014/09/heres-the-church-and-heres-the-steeple/>). The steeple may be unique, with its four-sided, miniature, mansard roof and elongated dormers facing in all directions. HTNS contributed \$3680 to the restoration of the dormer windows on the condition

that they were repaired or replaced by wooden windows. The Trust applauds the congregation for its fundraising efforts, commitment to maintaining the fabric of the church in the community, and the high standards of workmanship in the project. In June, the church's bell rang out to celebrate the 90th anniversary of church union (the founding of the United Church of Canada in 1925). The conservation work undertaken over the past year will help to ensure the continued ringing of that bell in years to come and the continued presence of the steeple as a mariners' landmark and a unique community symbol.

Over the line in East Hants, the Uniacke Union Church in Mount Uniacke is described by Elizabeth Pacey as "a gem" and "a rare Georgian meeting house" dating from ca. 1832, as indicated by the municipal registration plaque. This is consistent with several architectural details, including rectangular windows with 12-over-12 sashes in the side walls and round-headed windows with more ornate tracery at both ends. The church

rests on stone blocks and there has been some settling. Work is needed on the porch and the roof, but the most urgent task is to repair or rebuild the foundation to stabilize the beams. The Trust has committed \$3650 to the conservation of this church, payable when the church trustees are ready to begin the project. The upcoming 200th anniversary of Uniacke House nearby provides some incentive to redouble fund-raising efforts to allow this essential conservation work to go ahead<sup>1</sup>.

These two examples from Hants County demonstrate the role that HTNS can play (resources permitting) anywhere in Nova Scotia, providing support in various ways to small communities struggling to maintain their built heritage.

— with information from Beverly Miller and Philip Pacey

<sup>1</sup>Tax receipts are available for donations to the Union Church Trustee Association, c/o Ms Arlene Bent (Chair), 305 Rockwell Drive, Mount Uniacke, NS, B0N 1Z0.

## Programs Sponsored by Other Societies

### Annapolis Valley Historical Society

O'Dell House Museum, 136 St George Street, Annapolis Royal, NS

**Victorian Christmas**, with hot mulled cider, homemade cookies, and carol singing, December 4 & 5, 7:00-9:00 pm  
902-532-7754, [www.annapolisheritagesociety.com](http://www.annapolisheritagesociety.com)

### Genealogical Association of Nova Scotia

33 Ochterloney Street, Suite 100, Dartmouth, NS. Meetings at this address unless otherwise noted.

**Heritage Food**, Sunday, December 13, 2:00-4:00 pm, Christmas open house highlighting heritage food, always an important part of any family celebration, contributed heritage recipes on display and perhaps some samples and stories. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the food bank.

**Mi'kmaw Genealogy**, Don Awalt, Wednesday, January 13, 7:00-9:00 pm.

**The Ternan Family and the Scott Manor House** Terry Gordon, Thursday, February 11, 7:00-9:00 pm.

**Tracing your Irish and Scots-Irish Ancestors**, a one-day conference, Tuesday, March 22, Debert Hospitality Centre, Debert, NS, with speakers from the Ulster Historical Foundation, \$50 for GANS members, \$65 for non-members, including two refreshment breaks and lunch, full program and registration form will soon be available on the GANS website.  
[www.novascotiaancestors.ca](http://www.novascotiaancestors.ca)

### Industrial Heritage Nova Scotia

Meets at Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax, first Monday of month, 7:30 pm

**Ship-building in Mahone Bay**, February 1

**The Barrington Woollen Mill and Wile Carding Mill**, March 7

**The Davison Lumber Co.**, April 4

**Historic Bridges of Nova Scotia**, May 2  
[www.industrialheritagens.ca](http://www.industrialheritagens.ca)

### Isle Madame Historical Society

LeNoir Landing, Arichat, NS

**Noël Isle Madame**, with children's activities, a market, and refreshments, Santa will be there to help light the tree, December 5, 1:30-5:30 pm  
<http://imhs.ca/>

### Kings County Museum

37 Cornwallis Street, Kentville, NS

Kings Historical Society meets the last Tuesday of month, 7:30 pm Sept. to May  
**Jammin' Tea** with Bake Table, visit Yuletide Victorian Parlour and Childhood Valley, with live music jam, Saturday, Dec. 5, 2:00-3:30 pm, \$5.00  
902-678-6237, [kingscountymuseum.ca](http://kingscountymuseum.ca)

### NS Archaeology Society

Theatre A in the Burke Building, Saint Mary's University (except January lecture)

Fourth Tuesday at 7:30 pm (except January lecture)  
**The study of pre-contact plant use in the Maritime Provinces**, Dr. Michael Deal, Memorial University, Thursday, Jan. 28 (in Atrium 101, Saint Mary's University)

**Playing the Laird on McNabs Island? Historical archaeological evidence and the early colonial landscape**, Vanessa Smith, Tuesday, Feb. 23

**Parks Canada's 2015 archaeological survey of Sable Island National Park Reserve: results and challenges**, Charles Burke, Tuesday, March 22  
[www.novascotiaarchaeology.com](http://www.novascotiaarchaeology.com)

### Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society

NS Archives, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax, NS Lectures on the third Wednesday at 7:30 pm

**Valiant Nova Scotians: the Province's recipients of the Victoria Cross**, John Boileau, Jan. 20

**Surviving War and adapting to village life: Ella Baron, a Dutch war bride in Ingonish, Cape Breton**, Ken Donovan, Feb. 17

**The triumph of the 'Larger Unit': origins and impact of the School Consolidation Movement in Antigonish County, 1923 to 2012**, Paul Bennett, March 16.

<http://rnschs.ca/>

### Parks Canada and Fortress of Louisbourg Association

Chapel in Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Louisbourg, NS

**Chantons Tous Noël: Cape Breton Chorale** will be joined by the North Honour Choir and special guests, Chapel, lit by candlelight for the evening performance, December 6, 2:00 pm (gate opens at 1:30 pm) and 6:00 pm (gate opens at 5:30 pm), follow signs to Gate 2, tickets \$30.00 plus tax.

Tickets and information: Contact any member of the Cape Breton Chorale or Fortress of Louisbourg Association, 902-733-3548, [info@fortressoflouisbourg.ca](mailto:info@fortressoflouisbourg.ca)

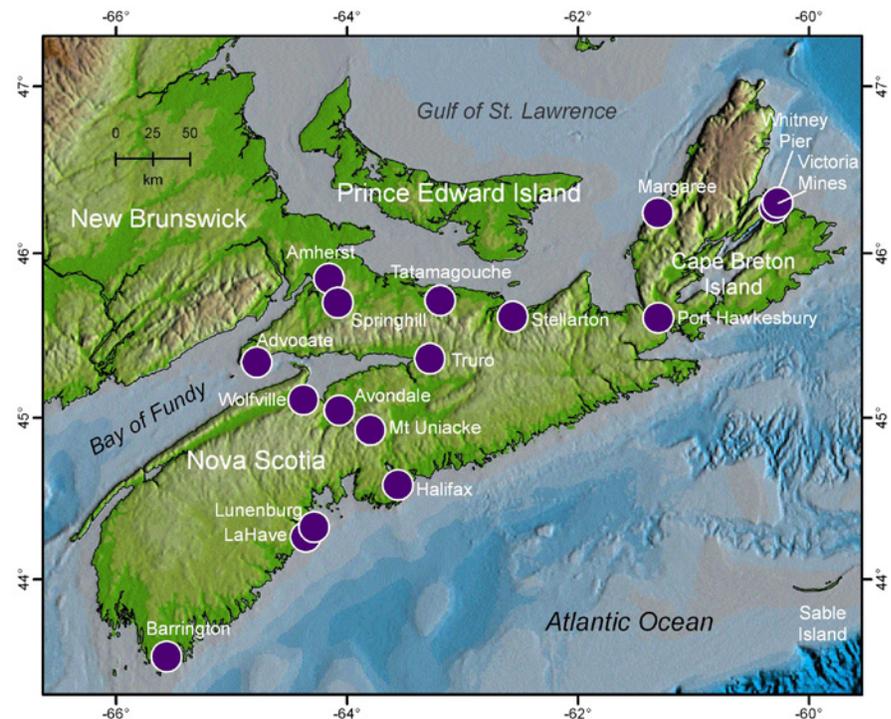
### Probus Club of Annapolis Valley

Meets at Kings Riverside Court, Kentville, NS, last Thursday of the month, 9:30 am

**The UNESCO World Heritage Site process and where the Landscape of Grand Pré fits in**, A.J.B. Johnston, February 25

[www.probus.org/15annapval.htm](http://www.probus.org/15annapval.htm)

## Locations of NS subject matter in this issue



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