



What will become of the Colonial Building?
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NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS



News, resources and events for Newfoundland & Labrador's history community

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NHS News, Winter 2003

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2003 Symposium: The Idea of Newfoundland

Over the past decade, Newfoundland and Labrador has witnessed a remarkable cultural renaissance. This phenomenon has encompassed a wide range of fields and genres, from folk music and dance, theatre and film, to literature and poetry, and has attracted significant national and international attention. While the artists are practicing their crafts, a large contingent of volunteers in the province's heritage sector are energetically and creatively working to preserve and celebrate various aspects of our history and heritage. The provincial government is beginning to take the lead in such matters, having embarked on a series of new initiatives. Most notable of these is the formulation of a cultural policy and the construction of the Rooms - a multimillion dollar complex to preserve and present the province's culture and heritage.

At the same time, there has been a notable surge in nationalist sentiment in Newfoundland. Since the mid 1990s, nationalism has become a part of mainstream political culture and is a force that can no longer be dismissed as merely a fringe movement. Prominent members of both the business sector and the provincial government have publicly espoused nationalist views. They claim that Confederation has been a poor deal for Newfoundland and argue that the 1948 Terms of Union should be re-negotiated. In response to such concerns, this past spring the provincial government established a royal commission to examine Newfoundland's place in Canada and the historical legacy of the Terms of Union. The common thread, or inspiration, for all this activity seems to be a profound sense of place based on our history and culture.

There are many compelling questions: How is the work of Newfoundland artists shaped by a sense of identity and place? Is there a strong Newfoundland identity and does it benefit or harm our society? Is the current cultural renaissance something new, or is it an extension of the 1970s revival? Is the renaissance limited primarily to St. John's elites, or is it more widespread? Is Newfoundland nationalism a recent phenomenon, or does it have deep historical roots?

The 2003 symposium will create a forum to discuss these and other questions and encourage an interdisciplinary reassessment of Newfoundland identity, nationalism and culture. Rather than focusing on a single event, this forum will facilitate a wide-ranging exchange among university scholars, members of the arts community, the heritage community, and the general public. *The Idea of Newfoundland: Nationalism, Identity and Culture from the 19th Century to the Present* will take place in St. John's at Hampton Hall, Fisheries and Marine Institute, March 27 - 29, 2003. Mark these dates on your calendar - it's an event you won't want to miss.

President's Report

We hope you have enjoyed the Fall and Winter lectures so far. The NHS Executive regularly meets a week before each lecture to discuss the upcoming event and to plan the next month's work. Although these meetings are very busy (as you will see by the committee reports in this issue of the newsletter) we always take time to discuss current provincial affairs that relate to Newfoundland history.

The current Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening our Place in Canada is one such matter. The commission report itself will become a historical document. Even if its recommendations (whatever they may be) are never acted upon, it will be the record of how we in Newfoundland and Labrador felt about ourselves and how we felt Canadians perceived us, and will be consulted by future commentators and researchers for a clue to our time.

The Executive's discussion regarding the Royal Commission included these points: How the Terms of Union currently affect our lives, Canadians' lack of awareness that Newfoundland entered Confederation with valuable resources, the negative attitude of national newspapers towards the province, the slight we feel every time central Canadian broadcasters say "across Canada from Victoria to Halifax", our own Department of Education's lack of a Newfoundland history course in the school curriculum and our own media's

continued presentation of this province as a "have not" area.

Perhaps you have opinions on these topics yourself? The Society encourages its members to submit their own thoughts to the commission ensuring that the views of individuals who are knowledgeable about the province's historical context will be preserved.

The society's next symposium *The Idea of Newfoundland: Nationalism, Identity and Culture*, to be held on March 27-29, 2003, will present another occasion to think about these issues. Make plans to attend what will surely be a lively series of papers and discussions.

We hope you have now received your first issue of the new *Newfoundland Quarterly* and that you like it. The Newfoundland Historical Society retains its strong connection to the publication. Dave Bradley sits on Memorial University's Quarterly Foundation Board, Joan Ritcey and Anita Best sit on the Newfoundland Quarterly Editorial Advisory Committee and Jim Hiller is the editor of *Aspects*. This journal within a journal continues as the Newfoundland Historical Society's section of the Quarterly. Articles appearing in *Aspects* will be selected by Jim and his committee. We expect *Aspects* to publish one long article per issue though some smaller items may appear at times. The articles will be written texts of Historical Society lectures, history papers of academic quality and overviews of timely topics for discussion. Please feel free to send us your feedback on the new iteration of an old icon. We will pass it on to the editor.

Joan Ritcey, President

The Newfoundland Historical Society

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left on the answering machine,

or by email. Research inquiries

will be answered during office

hours only. Please call the

Centre for Newfoundland

Studies (737-7475) for

reference help at other times.

Regular Column

Beyond the Overpass

In this new regular column, we take a look at what's happening in and around the province. In this issue, David White fills us in on another eventful year for the Trinity Historical Society

It was a very busy summer and fall for the volunteers of Trinity Historical Society and the Trinity Trust-Canada Inc. At the Museum, to commemorate the Jubilee year of Queen Elizabeth II, the Society mounted a small display of Royal memorabilia from its own collection as well as items on loan from the general public. At Lester-Garland House a collection of artefacts from World War I was displayed concurrently with Rising Tide's theatre production of Kevin Major's *No Man's Land*. These displays were maintained throughout the summer and early fall and were well received. In July, Lieutenant Governor Max House and Mrs. House attended a presentation of the play and hosted a reception at Lester-Garland House for members of the cast, the Board of The Trinity Trust-Canada Inc. and invited guests.

In August, the Society held its annual Garden Party and Auction in the Museum garden in conjunction with a display at the Trinity Historical Society Archives at Lester-Garland House. There was a great turn out for these events and a grand time (and good food!) was had by all.

Dr. C. Sanger was guest speaker at



Above: The Lester Garland House. Home of the Trinity Trust Canada Inc.

the seventh annual M. M. White Lecture on October 12. His topic was Scottish Whaling Activity and the Newfoundland Seal Fishery: International Connections. Later, during a reception at Lester-Garland House, Francis I. W. Jones of Bedford N. S. presented The Trinity Trust-Canada Inc. with a 1789 ship's portrait depicting the ship *Britannia* entering the harbour at Naples. The *Britannia* was rebuilt at Trinity in the dockyard of Benjamin Lester and Jones' great, great, great grandfather was employed by Lester as her captain. This portrait of the *Britannia* had been passed down in the Jones family for six generations from eldest son to eldest son and now hangs above the fireplace in the bedroom of Lester-Garland House.

On November 2 and 3, the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, in conjunction with the Canadian Conservation Institute of Ottawa, held a workshop on Mount-making for Exhibits and Storage at Lester-Garland House. Fifteen participants and two instructors from the CCI attended the workshop.

On November 10 and 11, at Lester-Garland House, rather than the Court House, Gaol and General Building, the Trinity Historical Society held its sixth annual Commemoration of World Wars I

and II. This year the Commemoration highlighted the 60th anniversary of the sinking of the *Caribou* whose Captain, Benjamin Taverner, had been born and reared in Trinity. Other highlights of this display were the letters and other memorabilia of Arthur Maidment, of Trinity, a member of the Newfoundland Regiment who was killed in 1917 at Monchy. His nephew and namesake presented these and other artefacts this summer to the Trinity Museum and Archives.

The Canadian History Class from Bishop White All-grade School visited this Commemoration on November 7th having first visited the Mortuary Chapel, in the present Anglican Cemetery, whose stained glass windows commemorate the casualties in World War I from Trinity, Goose Cove and Dunfield. Later, Ms. Bunty Severs, a member of the Society, spoke to the class about growing up as a very young child in London during the Battle of Britain and throughout the remaining years of World War II.

The Society and Trust look forward to Heritage Day in February and to visiting Bishop White School with artefacts from the Trinity Museum and Archives.

Regular Column

In Touch

Local

A Note from the Editor

The Winter 2003 issue of the NHS News has a new look and some new (we hope they'll be regular) columns. Many thanks go to Jane Severs, who kindly agreed to take on the responsibility of layout and design, for taking time out of her busy schedule.

We would like to make Beyond the Overpass a regular feature, so please send us your news. We are all interested in what's happening around the province, in communities, regional historical societies, and heritage associations. Send us a profile of your local group: How often do you meet? What do you regularly do? What are your future plans? Help us make your group more visible to everyone in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We would also like to make feedback and letters to the editor a regular part of the NHS news. Write us with your compliments, complaints, questions, and suggestions for change. We'll print as many letters as we have room for, and answer your queries if we can. You can contact us at the email, postal, and fax addresses listed on the front page. Only with your input can we make the newsletter relevant to all our members.

What will Become of the Colonial Building?

The time is at hand when a decision about the future of the Colonial Building will have to be made. In 2004, the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador will be moving to The Rooms and the venerable seat of Newfoundland government from 1850 - 1960 will be vacated. The Newfoundland Historical Society and the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives will no longer have a home.

The Colonial Building is intimately connected with the story of Newfoundland as a country, its sojourn into the no-man's-land of Commission of Government, and finally its beginnings as a province under Joseph R. Smallwood. Some people consider it to be the most important heritage building in Newfoundland and Labrador today.

The Association of Heritage Industries (AHI), a group comprising representatives from the major heritage groups all over the province, has made a proposal to the government to ensure that the Colonial Building will be restored to house interpretation on the province's political history and to be home for the major provincial heritage organizations. This proposal will ensure that the public will be able to visit the building and show their children and their grandchildren where their country came into being.

If you would like to see this proposal and know more about its benefits to Newfoundland and Labrador heritage, you may call the AHI (738-4345) or visit this website: www.historictrust.com/colonialproposal.pdf

We urge you to support the AHI proposal! Please write a letter to your MHA, the Minister of Tourism and Culture, and the Premier. Here are some useful addresses:

Premier's Office

fax: 729-5218
email: premier@mail.gov.nf.ca

Minister of Tourism and Culture

fax: 729-0870
email: JulieBettney@mail.gov.nf.ca

Your MHA

For your MHA's email visit:
www.gov.nf.ca/hoa/members
Mail: MHA
p.o. Box 8700
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador
Confederation building
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

**Finding Aid to CO194 Papers
Now On-Line**

For historians engaged in research into the history of Newfoundland during the 18th and 19th centuries, the CO 194 papers are perhaps the single most important series of primary materials. Dispatches and their enclosures that were sent to the Board of Trade, or to the Secretary of State, from merchants engaged in the fishery at Newfoundland, from civil administrators stationed there, and from a host of other individuals were all assigned to this series. This is where researchers will find petitions, reports, complaints, and representations relating to the fisheries, trade, and defence of Newfoundland.

The originals, kept in the Public Record Office in Kew, England, have been copied for archives in Ottawa, St. John's, Halifax,

Washington, and elsewhere, so the series is widely available. However, to this point, no comprehensive finding aid to the series had ever been developed, with the result that each researcher wishing to search the individual volumes or microfilm copies must do so from scratch. This is now beginning to change.

Under the supervision of Dr. Olaf Janzen at the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College campus in Corner Brook of Memorial University of Newfoundland, students have been going through the many volumes of the CO 194 papers, developing a comprehensive finding aid, which is then published on-line. The focus thus far has been on the volumes up to and including 1815, for a set of this limited run of the papers is available at SWGC's Ferriss Hodgett Library. Over two dozen volumes have been done, and while many more remain to be completed, it is hoped that eventually the work can proceed beyond 1815 through the nineteenth century. The finding aid can be found at:

www.swgc.mun.ca/nfld_history/CO194/index.htm

Visitors to the site are invited to send comments, suggestions, and the inevitable corrections to Dr. Janzen at olaf@swgc.mun.ca.

Guidelines for Submissions to Aspects in the

Newfoundland Quarterly

Aspects welcomes submissions of essays upon any aspect of the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. Essays should be between 3,000-4,000 words in length, double-spaced and single-sided on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. Essays should be written in a clear

style and aimed at a general audience. Authors should avoid extensive documentation, although a limited number of endnotes may be included. These should follow the MLA style and be double-spaced on the page. Inclusion of a short bibliography or "further readings" section is encouraged. Pictures or illustrations that complement the text are highly recommended for inclusion with the essay. Authors should be prepared to provide these visual elements and copyright clearance. Components such as highlighted text or sidebars containing information may be appropriate. Suggestions as to how such elements may be used with the essay will be helpful. Submissions should have a title page complete with author's full name and contact information. Authors should provide a 2-3-sentence mini-biography for inclusion with the essay. Authors should also provide a computer disc copy of the essay in either WordPerfect or MS Word, using only one space after end punctuation in sentences. The Newfoundland Historical Society is not responsible for returning manuscripts submitted for consideration for *Aspects*. Send submissions to:

Dr. J. Hiller, *Aspects* Editor
Newfoundland Historical Society,
Room 15, Colonial Building
Military Road
St. John's, NL
A1C 2C9

Greenspond Letter

Four times a year Linda White publishes *The Greenspond Letter*, a journal of Greenspond history through poetry, prose, photographs and interviews. First settled in the late 1690s by people from

England's West Country, Greenspond is one of the oldest continuously inhabited outposts in Newfoundland. This publication provides an opportunity for people interested in the history of Greenspond to communicate with other. It sells for \$3.00 in Greenspond and \$5 outside the community. Subscriptions are \$20/year and are available through Linda White at:

37 Liverpool Avenue
St. John's, NL
A1C 3B4

National

1906 Census Records Now Available On-Line

Subsequent to the announcement of Ministers Rock and Copps regarding the immediate release of the 1906 Census of the Western Provinces, Ian Wilson, National Archivist, has announced that those records are now accessible online at the following sites:

www.archives.ca/02/020153_e.htm
www.archives.ca/02/020153_f.html

Our thanks to Dr. Ian Wilson and his staff for preparing these records so that they might be accessible so soon.

International

USA-NHRPAC Advisory Committee Disbanded

Two years ago President Clinton established the National Human Research Protections Advisory Committee (NHRPAC) and charged it to advise the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on ways to further protect humans

