

NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

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



Heritage Awards at Government House

The Newfoundland Historical Society presented two heritage awards Thursday November 27th at 4:00 pm in a private ceremony hosted by The Lieutenant Governor, Ed Roberts at Government House. This year's recipients were Roland Abbott of Musgrave Harbour and Jim Tuck of St. John's. The purpose of the awards, which have been presented since 1975, is to recognize exemplary contributions in preserving

and promoting the history and culture of Newfoundland and Labrador.

After a brief welcome by Society president, Joan Ritcey, His Honour, Ed Roberts, took the podium and welcomed everyone to Government House and expressed his happiness at being asked to host the event. "As many of you know I have a keen interest in Newfoundland history and I can't think of

a more historical place than Government House, which has played such a significant role in our history, or at least the people who have lived in this house, have made important contributions in shaping our history." The Lieutenant Governor then extended an invitation to make the ceremony at Government House a yearly event.

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Newfoundland and Labrador in 2003

It has been an interesting year for Newfoundland and Labrador: On the political front, Danny Williams led his Progressive Conservatives to victory in the provincial election, while John Efford became a cabinet minister in the new Liberal Government in Canada.

On the academic front, Memorial University received three new Tier I Canada Research Chairs and reduced tuition fees by five per

cent. As well, Dr. Proton Rahman, a rheumatologist with the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial led a research team that discovered a new gene in psoriatic arthritis.

On the religious front, Father Paul Lundrigan and most of his congregation took a stand on same-sex marriages that didn't go down well with their Bishop and *The Monitor* closed down after 70 years of publication.

In other news, NHS Member Eric Jerrett

was the 21st recipient of the Alumnus of the Year award from Memorial—our congratulations, Eric. The Newfoundland Museum on Duckworth Street in St. John's closed its doors and waits to turn into one of the Rooms butterflies sometime in June.

We are still waiting to hear the status of the Colonial Building and the Newfoundland History Course for Grade Eight.

Heritage Awards



Dr. Jim Tuck

Jim Tuck (From Jeff Webb's Citation)

It's a pleasure for me to take this opportunity to thank Jim Tuck, on behalf of the Newfoundland Historical Society, for his contribution to the exploration and preservation of our archaeological heritage. There are many grounds upon which we might have decided to acknowledge his contribution to the province. In the last nearly 40 years Dr. Tuck has personally written much of the prehistory of Newfoundland and Labrador. Jim's scholarly contribution in defining the Maritime Archaic tradition, establishing a cultural chronology for coastal Labrador, exploring the 16th century Basque whaling industry, and revolutionizing what we know of 17th century English settlement upon the Southern Shore, are all of such significance that we might give him an award for any of these accomplishments. We might also recognize his teaching and graduate supervision at Memorial University of Newfoundland since 1967, in which he trained several generations of archaeologists who themselves have made significant contributions to the history of the province's Native Peoples and European settlers. The Newfoundland Historical Society has

chosen to today acknowledge in this small way the model of community archaeology, which Jim pioneered... In Red Bay and more recently in Ferryland, Tuck has made each community the beneficiary of the work, rather than just the backdrop to his own research. He has employed a large number of local people in all of his excavations, who are then taught skills and an appreciation of the heritage of their towns which will last long after the excavation has finished. Jim has always seen the tourism potential not only of historic sites but of archaeology itself as a concrete way he can help foster heritage development in local areas.... Jim has involved the community at every level and endeavored to maximise the local benefit.

His model has shown how to do archaeology that contributes to economic and cultural renewal as well as uncover aspects of the past that had been lost. On behalf of the Newfoundland Historical Society I would like to say congratulations upon your accomplishments, and we all eagerly await the findings of your next field season.

Roland Abbott

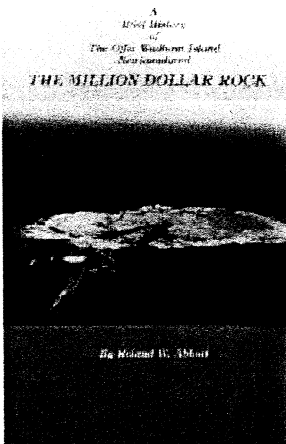
Roland Winfield Abbott was born in Musgrave Harbour, Newfoundland and grew up there,

spending his early teens fishing in the summer with his father and four brothers on the Offer Wadham Islands.

His first ambition, after finishing school, was to become a navigator or sea captain, and made several trips on his uncle's schooner both as a crewmember and passenger. It was on one of those trips - on the Erema H., in 1929 - that he was shipwrecked at Lumsden, barely escaping with his life... Roland came ashore and home, where he was offered a teaching position pro-term; he began work in January 1930. In 1969 he retired from a teaching career that spanned forty years.

Roland Abbott is a Past Master of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Maritime Provinces; a Past Grand Master of The Grand Black Chapter of Newfoundland; one time Mayor of Peterview and Councillor and Town Clerk of Musgrave Harbour. He was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1979 and for twenty-five years wrote a column in the Gander Beacon. He is the author of three books: Our Year 80, The Three Seas, and The Million Dollar Rock. In 1977 he was awarded the Coronation Medal, and, in 1992, the 125th Anniversary of Canada Medal.

"In the last nearly 40 years Dr. Tuck has personally written much of the prehistory of Newfoundland and Labrador."



*The Million Dollar Rock
By Roland Abbott*

President's Remarks

Dear members,
The Executive and I were delighted to see large turnouts for Andrew Cook's and Roberta Buchanan's September and October lectures; we hope you enjoyed them. We also saw many of you at the Association of Heritage Industries (AHI) conference on community heritage sustainability on October 3-4. November 27, a big day for the Newfoundland Historical Society, went off well. The Heritage Awards ceremony had been planned for several months. Citations were read and heritage awards were bestowed on Roland Abbott and James Tuck,

followed by a reception hosted by Lieutenant Governor Ed Roberts at Government House. (The newly decorated Government House was bright and welcoming late on a winter's afternoon and we all had a delightful time). That evening Robert Mellin's lecture at Hampton Hall was a standing-room-only affair and there was another reception after that. (Do think of the historical society as a social club.)

As usual, heritage matters have been in the news in recent weeks - the new Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation,

Paul Shelley, was appointed, the St. George's Church Heritage Committee is all over the media, whipping up support for the preservation of the old Brigus church, and progress on The Rooms construction is reported every few weeks.

May I suggest you give Newfoundland Historical Society memberships to family and friends as birthday gifts this year? Call Office Manager Melanie Martin at 722-3191.

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An Innu Couple
photographed by Pritchard

NHS Lecture

On January 29, Larry Coady spoke on Hesketh Prichard's 1905 and 1910 treks through Labrador, trails that Larry himself has walked and photographed.

Taken from the St. John's Daily News, Saturday, April 10, 1920

At Thursday night's meeting of the Historical Society, Mr. H. W. LeMessurier, C. M. G., presiding, Mr. E. R. Furlong was elected to membership. Rev. P. W. Browne, of the University at Booklands, D. C., and Mr. I. Kennedy, will be balloted for at the next meeting. Dr. J. A. Robinson presented some extracts from the Annual Register, among which from the volume of 1811 appears a despatch of the Duke of Wellington in which Lt.-Col. Henry Pynn is mentioned. This

volume was some time the property of Mr. W. Alexander, of Bonavista, whose name appears on it with the date 1816. He states Pynn was a native of St. John's and an employee of Elms. The fact is that he was born at Bristol's Hope (Mosquito). The Royal Newfoundland Regiment or Royal Newfoundland Fencibles are mentioned in despatches of 1812, referring to the attack by the Americans on Detroit. Ensign Kerr recorded as wounded. He was a relative of the McBrides,

of the firm of McBride & Kerr, after whom McBride's Hill is named.

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**UNESCO ADOPTS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO SAFEGUARD
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Paris, October 17 - Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage, the performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, as well as knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and traditional craftsmanship, now benefit from an international legal instrument to safeguard intangible heritage through cooperation.

"The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is of general interest to humanity," states the Convention, which underlines its "invaluable role" in "bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them." The convention requires a minimum of 30 States Parties to enter into force.

UNESCO's Director-General Koichiro Matsuura welcomed the Convention, which "expresses the urgent need for action in this domain," he said.

Algerian judge Mohammed Bedjaoui, a former president of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, added, "Despite all its complexity, this concept of intangible cultural heritage has affirmed and finally imposed itself on all of us as a key concept in understanding the cultural identity of peoples [...]. Every word of this convention is a grateful tribute to the creators and artisans of this wonderful heritage, to the great and also to the humble and anonymous, to the authors and the guardians of the temple of the traditions and knowledge of peoples."

The convention specifically provides for the drawing up of

national inventories of cultural property to be protected.

The adoption of the new convention is the result of a long process of awareness raising, which intensified in recent years but began with the 1982 Mexico City Conference, where UNESCO's Member States first evoked the concept of intangibility to refer to the body of humanity's expressions of spirituality. In 1989, UNESCO adopted the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore, but the fact that it is not legally binding has limited its impact.

Dr. Gerald Pocius, MUN Folklorist, is one of Canada's representatives to the UNESCO Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The complete text of the Convention can be found at: <http://www.unesco.org/confgen/2003/intangible>

"The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is of general interest to humanity."



"Woman"
By Angela Andrew
Sheshashur

The Innu Tea Doll--a tangible result of intangible skills and knowledge

"The Newfoundland Historical Society favours the AHI's proposal: to have the provincial heritage organizations housed in the building."

President's remarks--continued

A heritage building issue that several members have asked me about is the Colonial Building. As mentioned in the last Newsletter, a committee made up of interested stakeholders and government staff is looking into future use of the building. The Newfoundland Historical Society favours the AHI's proposal: to have the provincial heritage organizations housed in the building. The heritage industries of

Newfoundland & Labrador are largely run by volunteers; giving their organizations housing in a government building would be a great gift. It would also be a nice fit if all the heritage organizations could be housed in the Colonial Building, as it would allow "one-stop shopping" for people who wish to learn about or get involved in heritage issues. The heritage organizations are in a good position to help the government too. Being

non-profit organizations, they are eligible for federal government program funding for projects such as building restoration. The heritage organizations are keenly interested in making sure the building's history is not forgotten and are prepared to create displays and publications about the province's political history. We think it is the best solution on the table.

All the best wishes for 2004, Joan

