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The Newsletter of the Newfoundland Historic Trust

Southcott Edition 1999

Introduction

*George Courage,
President*

The Newfoundland Historic Trust is pleased to sponsor the sixteenth presentation of the Southcott Awards. This program was developed by the Trust in 1984 to recognize excellence in the preservation of the architectural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. The goal of the program is to commend the good work of individuals and organizations, corporations and governments.

But it goes beyond that - we want also to show both what can be achieved and how it can be done. We want to show the real pleasure that can be created for the client and the community by first-rate preservation work. If the quality of our architectural heritage has come to be one of the defining aspects of Newfoundland, then the Newfoundland Historic Trust has been very much responsible for that definition, but it is people like our award winners who give the definition reality.



The Southcott Awards are named for one of the most important nineteenth century Newfoundland building firms: J. and J.T. Southcott. We know them today principally for the Second Empire designs of J.T.'s architect son, John. The characteristics of this style are concave curved mansard roofs, with hooded dormers in the mansard. While the style started with the development of the Southcott properties at Park Place on Rennie's Mill Road, they spread throughout the whole colony.

The committee this year was chaired by Shane O'Dea and consisted of Chris Butt, Mandy Cattle, Paul Blackwood and John O'Dea. I also want to recognize Chris Butt and Sharon Furlong who did major work in preparing the awards presentation. Newtel has been our major corporate sponsor since the beginning and this year

has been even more helpful, allowing us to develop our presentation and our coverage. Newtel, under its former CEO Vince Withers and now under Steve Wetmore, has been a very active and effective promoter of all the arts in Newfoundland and we are glad to continue to work with them to promote the province and its people.

Parks Canada is one of our major partners in the development of heritage preservation and the Department of Canadian Heritage has consistently supported the work of the Trust - as we have supported their work. And without the considerable help given by George Chalker and Madonna Sullivan of the Heritage Foundation we would not

have a list to draw from, the research to write up or the backup to do half of what we do.

Hopedale, 11 Circular Road, St. John's

One of the great mansions constructed during the building boom of the 1880s, Hopedale is a product of the successful sealing voyages of Capt. Samuel Blandford. Blandford was MHA for Bonavista 1889-93 and then made a member of the Legislative Council on which he served until his death in 1909. During the World War II the house served as a military club and afterwards was a Salvation Army retirement home: Sunset Lodge.



Much altered in the 1960s it was taken over by Pamela and Owen Crossan in 1989. They found a building that had been converted into apartments and covered in stucco. When they were able to start work they made discoveries that were both intriguing and appalling. On the exterior they found that much of the detail had been stripped back or levelled with an axe so that the panelling beneath the bays had all to be restored. The masking of a modern addition by a Victorian porch serves to give it new life while preserving the utility of the structure and makes what was once a grimly-utilitarian entrance into something quite striking.

In the sitting room there was no trace of the original Victorian grandeur - only an angelstone fireplace and modern carpet. Using ghost marks on the wall and the pattern from a mantel upstairs a new mantel was created. Once the carpet was lifted its backing had to be peeled free to reveal a beautiful hardwood floor with cherry trim.



The work here was a family effort because it went beyond Pam and Owen to take in Pam's brother, Harold Cooper,

and her father, Samuel Cooper, of Harper Construction. For their considerable work in restoring or - for very many of us - revealing the old glory of Sam Blandford's Hopedale, the Newfoundland Historic Trust presents Pamela and Owen Crossan with the Southcott Award.

Ewing Terrace, Pleasant Street, St. John's

To design anew while reflecting the old is a great challenge for an architect and one which has been ably met in the design of Ewing Terrace. The objective of this project was to create a residential infill unit of six townhouses reflecting the traditional architecture of downtown St. John's. Originally this was the location of W.H. Ewing, a furrier, who at peak of production purchased thousands of seal pelts every year and was a mainstay of that fishery. Unfortunately, after 75 years in business, Ewings closed in 1971 and the building on this site was irreparably damaged by fire in 1986.

When construction on this project started in 1998, the site had been empty for some time and was dwarfed by the multi-storey Delta Hotel. The work, all new construction, proceeded through 1998. Care has been taken on the outside elevations to reflect the traditional architecture of downtown St. John's in



both building form and arrangement.

Attention has been paid to such details as door and window headers as well as moulding and flooring. The exterior design admirably incorporates narrow clapboard, traditional window forms and narrow eaves. The colour scheme gives a lively yet coherent sense to the whole project. The architect, Philip Pratt, has demonstrated a keen sense of design and sensitivity in this project. The result is a worthy example of how to meet the challenge of building modern, functional accommodation while respecting and reflecting the integrity of design features from the past.

Lloyd George House, Dildo

This house was built by Albert George for his



family in 1885. The Georges, thought originally to have come from Wales, had been in the Dildo area since the arrival of the builder's grandfather about beginning of the nineteenth century. For a long time, in fact from 1920 to 1958, the house was the local post office. The property has a fine view over the harbour and Rosanna and Fred Tizzard, who took over the house from Lloyd George in 1995, have done a superior job in preserving it.

The Tizzard's principal difficulty in doing the work was in ensuring that materials were available so that their carpenters, Reg Saunders and Les Noseworthy, could make the most efficient use of their time. This meant that a lot of forward planning had to be done to allow Jim Youden to make the correct windows and have them ready for the working season.

The result of the restoration is a house that now, in the crispness of its lines and sharpness of its detail, remembers the

work of Albert George and the history of his family. The Newfoundland Historic Trust is pleased to present Rosanna and Fred Tizzard with the Southcott Award for their work in preserving the Lloyd George House in Dildo.

Cable Station Staff Houses, Heart's Content

Heart's Content was chosen as the landing site for the transatlantic cable because of its superb harbour. The Great Eastern, at the time the largest ship in the world, laid the cable in 1866 creating a major change in Heart's Content as well as in world communications.

The Southcotts had built a range of houses for the telegraph company in 1868-69 and now more were needed. John Thomas Southcott son of James, the builder, was asked to draw up the plans for these houses in 1879. Work commenced in 1881 and was finished by December 1882.

But these very fine examples of Southcott



work really suffered after the closing of the Cable Station in the 1960s. Maintenance was minimal but so, fortunately, was intervention. From a heritage point of view this meant that the integrity of the buildings was maintained so that, when John and Judy Moss took them over in 1996, they had a good deal of original material to work with.

From the bottom up the house has been lovingly restored. Mouldings were removed, remilled and restored. While a lot of the old iron fittings had survived, they, as well as the wooden features, needed restoration. The porch, beautifully reflecting the design and proportion of the mansard roof, was repaired to complete the side facade



as it was originally designed.

Throughout this restoration, materials were recycled as much as possible and local labour was used. The result is a very fine example of what can be achieved with time and careful attention to detail. For their significant contribution to preservation of our architectural heritage, John and Judy Moss are the recipients of the Southcott Award.

FPU Premises at Seldom-Come-By, Fogo Island

The Fishermen's Protective Union, established by William Coaker, grew into a remarkable institution with its own town, newspaper, boat yard, political party and trading company. At Seldom they established one of their earliest stores and it was these premises - which include the 19th c fish store - that were taken over by the Fogo Island Cooperative Society to serve as a Marine Information Centre. The interior of the building had been altered at an earlier stage to accommodate a manager's residence on the second floor. In the red store - originally used for making fish - a cod liver oil factory had been put in, and was preserved.

The site itself is on the water and is a major landmark in the community. An oriel window brings light into



the third floor manager's office and provides a view over the harbour. The old retail building now contains marina and exhibit facilities on the first floor, and the whole site has been tidied up. Inside, the old general store was restored.



This is a pair of buildings that could very easily have been taken down or much altered to serve the purpose intended. It is to the credit of the co-op and their architect Robert Mellin that they saw the possibilities that the history of the building, as well as its architecture, offered and they used those features to give it a distinctiveness. With a crew under Arthur Payne, they made this concept a reality by ensuring that the restoration respected the old materials and the old forms. For this work, the Trust presents the Fogo Island Cooperative Society with the Southcott Award for their restoration of the FPU Premises.

**Our Lady of
Mercy Church,
Port au Port**

Second in size only to the Basilica, Our Lady of Mercy Church at Port au Port is the largest wooden Roman Catholic church in Newfoundland. The area where it is located, the Gravels, was very important as the centre of the late 19th century lobster fishery. With the opening of the limestone quarry at Aguathuna in 1911 the parish priest, Fr James Joy, felt that the community would grow in importance and merit a large church. In anticipation of that growth he began this church

(whose tower which rises 115') in 1914. It was not finished until 1925.

The style of Our Lady of Mercy is essentially Renaissance Revival. The architect was likely W.F. Butler who designed so many of the significant Queen Anne houses in St. John's. The builders were Nicholas LeCoeur and Messrs. Hanrahan and Fitzpatrick.

The interior is a wonderful play of light and dark with a great varnished wood barrel-vaulted ceiling set off by white cornices and columns. The altar achieves the same effect in the apse. The confessionals echo the renaissance forms. The



magnificent pulpit was originally from St. Patrick's in St. John's and used there 1881-1925.

The restoration project was done by a team of four capable men - Pat Snow, supervisor, Douglas McDonald, head carpenter and two assistant

carpenters - Joe Bedo and Randy Marche. We commend the Parish Council of Our Lady of Mercy for their efforts in preserving this important Newfoundland structure, and are proud to present them with the Southcott Award for their achievement.

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The Trident is the newsletter of the Newfoundland Historic Trust, an organization dedicated to the preservation of the built heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador through research, advocacy and education. *The Trident* and its contents are copyrighted by the Trust and may not be copied or reproduced without permission. The opinions contained in articles in *The Trident* are those of their authors and are not necessarily those of the Newfoundland Historic Trust. Correspondence and submissions may be addressed to: **Dale G. Jarvis, Editor, The Trident, 70 Fleming Street, St. John's, NF, A1C 3A5**

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Membership Renewal Notice

Fees are \$10 per person, \$20 per family and \$35 for groups, institutions and organizations. Please clip and complete the following form and mail with cheque for membership payable to "The Newfoundland Historic Trust" to The Newfoundland Historic Trust, PO Box 2403, St. John's, NF A1C 6E7

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