

PAST · PRESENT · FUTURE

# The trident

The

NEWFOUNDLAND  
HISTORIC TRUST  
NEWS BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 1973

NUMBER FIVE

## President's Message

This is my final report as President of the Newfoundland Historic Trust to the membership through the means of our own house organ, the TRIDENT. During the past two years, I have done my best to keep you informed of the activities of the organization and you will recall that I have said that our principal concern must be towards the completion of Christ Church, Quidi Vidi. In my last report, I indicated that the work had been finished but that there was still a great deal of money to be raised to pay the bills. It, therefore, gives me great pleasure, as you will see from the Treasurer's Report, to announce that not only have the bills been paid but there is also money in the bank.

This has been achieved largely through the efforts of a very small group of people who have been active on the fund raising committee and I am indeed grateful to Penny Rowe, John Carter, Gerard Walsh and the people who have helped them in their herculean fund-raising efforts.

Again, this summer a most successful exhibition was held in cooperation with the Art Gallery of Memorial University at the Arts and Culture Centre with the presentation of the St. John's multimedia pictorial exhibition which was organized by

Mrs. Frank O'Dea and the members of the Exhibition Committee. I know that many residents and visitors alike were fascinated by the pictures of St. John's, old and new, and I feel its success is due largely to the care and consideration that was given to the mounting of the Exhibition.

I would also like to publicly express my appreciation to the editors of the TRIDENT for the past two years, Mr. and Mrs. Huston Dixon because they have had to continually cajole and exhort contributors to provide the material necessary to make this publication a worthwhile one. To them, it has been a labour of love which has been amply demonstrated by the care and consideration with which this paper has been put together.

Last but not least, I would like to express my appreciation to the Officers and particularly to the Secretary, Mrs. Frank Duff, and the Treasurer, Mrs. Peter Gardiner, for the tremendous efforts they have made in keeping both the President and the organization on a straight and narrow path. There is still a lot of work to be done and this will continue to require an all-out effort by all the members of the organization in the future.

—John C. Perlin  
President

## Money Matters

The Trust has had a most successful year to date both financially and in other ways. We began the year with a bank indebtedness of about \$2,300, this being the unpaid balance of the loan raised to complete the interior of Christ Church, Quidi Vidi.

We have received from the Provincial Government a grant

of one thousand dollars, for operating expenses.

The net proceeds from movie shows - early motion pictures of Newfoundland - came to \$2,700.

The Regatta booth brought in about six hundred dollars.

The Wine and Cheese Party and the Exhibition made a profit of about five hundred dollars.

The bank balance as of August

31, 1973, is approximately \$1,800, the difference being accounted for by advertising accounts receivable and operating expenses for the year.

A detailed audited statement of the financial affairs of the Trust for the year 1972 will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

—Janet Gardiner

## Notice

*Annual meeting and election of officers*

*Wednesday, October 3 - 8:00 p.m.*

*Lecture Room,*

*Arts and Culture Centre*

*All members are urged to attend.*

*The meeting is open to the public and all who are interested in the work of the Trust are invited to come along. Family membership costs \$5.00; single membership \$2.00.*

# Early Motion Pictures big success!



*St. John's 1853 - Sketch by Rev. Wm. Gray.  
Courtesy of the Hon. Fabian A. O'Dea.*

## St. John's — a pictorial exhibition

St. John's — A Pictorial Exhibition, our summer activity, was an outstanding display of Prints, Maps and Charts, Oils, Water-Colours, Sketches, and Photographs which gave a true expression of St. John's, one of the oldest seaports in the Western World.

The exhibition was opened at a wine and cheese party by Deputy Minister of Tourism, Frank Manuel on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Tom Doyle. Mr. Manuel presented the Trust with a cheque for \$1000 to assist in its activities. The attendance at the wine and cheese party was

below that of last year. However, it should be noted that many people who purchased tickets did not attend.

This is the fourth exhibition under the direction of Frank and Raymonde O'Dea, Chairmen, Exhibition Committee, whose knowledge and interest have made each one an outstanding success. These unique exhibitions were only made possible by the many hours of devoted hard work by Dr. and Mrs. O'Dea and their assistants.

The Trust wishes to thank the Newfoundland Museum, St. John's Municipal Council, The Maritime Museum and the private collectors who generously loaned many of the items for this exhibition. The catalogue, which was distributed at the exhibition was made possible by the generosity of the sponsors: Ayres' Limited, Bowring Brothers Limited, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, A. Harvey & Company Limited, Newfoundland Tractor and Equipment Company Limited, and donors - Balne Johnston & Company Limited and St. John's Publishing Company Limited.

The exhibition was held at the Arts and Culture Centre during the month of July and realized a profit of \$546.

— Gerard Walsh

The showing of early Newfoundland films last April was, as anticipated, a tremendous success. From all reports those who saw the films found them very entertaining and the receipts at the box office were very gratifying. The films, lent to the Trust by the Provincial Archives and the School Broadcast Division of the Department of Education, dated from approximately 1910 to 1928 and included scenes of St. John's, a trip to the seal hunt, and a canoe trip up the Hamilton River to Churchill Falls.

The job of editing, researching, scripting and providing suitable musical accompaniment was a major undertaking, and many people were responsible for the success of the project. The Historic Trust wishes to acknowledge the kindness of the Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation Limited for sponsoring the program, the Provincial Archives, and Pat Treacher, Christine Penney, and Mickey Hammond who gave so many hours of their time.

The commentary and music provided by Cassie Brown, George Story and Ignatius Rumboldt was superb and without them the project would not have been possible.

The following members of the Trust were actively involved in the organization of the presentation: Penny Rowe, Mary Barry, Barbara Crosbie, Shannie Duff, Janet Gardiner, Edythe Goodridge, John Perlin, Andree Thoms and Gerard Walsh. The House committee on the evening of the first performance included John Carter, Barbara and Roger Crosbie, Frank and Shannie Duff, Janet Gardiner, Edythe Goodridge, Verne Somers, Andree Thoms and Gerard Walsh.

This project was a fund raising effort to help pay off outstanding debts from the renovations of Christ Church in Quidi Vidi. Besides the original showing in St. John's it was arranged in conjunction with the Arts and Culture Centre's Summer Festivals around the Province to use the films again. The net proceeds were about \$3,000.00 — much to the delight of all those involved.

— Penny Rowe

### Regatta booth a great success

In the words of the Regatta Committee chairman M.H.A. John Carter - "We experienced an unprecedented level of commercial activity" at our booth at the 1973 Regatta. This is certainly borne out by the day's receipts which amounted to a net profit of just under \$600.00.

This year for the first time we added sandwiches to our usual wares of cotton candy and lemonade - as the exhausted members of the Trust who manned the Regatta Booth can testify the only limiting factor was the speed with which we could pass things over the counter and take in money.

By five o'clock we were "sold-out". The Regatta committee would like to thank all those who helped in anyway to make this undertaking a success and particularly Mr. John Murphy who made his cotton-candy machine available and Mr. Jack Evans of Generator Exchange Ltd. for the use of a generator.

#### OFFICERS OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST

President: John C. Perlin  
First Vice-President: Richard Crewe  
Second Vice-President: G. Alain Frecker  
Treasurer: Janet Gardiner  
Secretary: Shannie Duff  
Past President and Chairman Research & Planning: George Story  
Chairman Ways & Means Committee: Gerard Walsh  
Chairman Exhibitions Committee: Frank and Raymonde O'Dea  
Chairwoman Membership Committee: Penny Rowe  
Editors of THE TRIDENT: Huston and Sarah Dixon

# Placentia in 1786

Watercolour from the log of H.M.S. Pegasus. Courtesy of Provincial Archives.



## Interpretation Centre, Castle Hill Historic Park, Placentia Officially opened

On Saturday, July 21st, 1973, the National and Historic Parks Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development officially opened the Interpretation Centre of the Castle Hill Historic Park, Jersey Side, Placentia.

The Hon. Jean Chretien, Federal Minister responsible for Historic Sites, Monuments and Parks was represented by the Hon. Senator F.W. Rowe, and the Hon. Frank Moores, Premier of Newfoundland, was represented by the Hon. T. Alex Hickman. Mayor Cyril Pittman of Jersey Side, Mayor William Hogan of Dunville and Mr. Frank Smith, Town Clerk, Freshwater, represented the surrounding municipalities. The Placentia Area Historical Association was represented by its President, Mrs. Alicia Phippard.

Dr. Leslie Harris, Newfoundland and Labrador representative, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, presided at the opening ceremonies. At the close of his

introductory and welcoming address Dr. Harris called on the Hon. Senator F.W. Rowe, the Hon. T. Alex Hickman and Mr. Cyril Pittman, Mayor of Jersey Side to address the gathering on behalf of their respective governments and the area municipalities.

The Rev. James Doody, Parish Priest of Placentia, was invited by the Chairman to pronounce the prayer of dedication. Following Father Doody's prayer of dedication Senator Rowe cut the ribbon thus officially opening the Interpretation Centre.

All present were then taken on a guided tour of the Centre which was found to be most attractively designed. Visitors were particularly impressed with the way the building blends harmoniously and unobtrusively with the natural environment. At the rear of the Centre there is a glassed-in observation gallery which, on a clear day, commands an impressive view the beauty of which it would be difficult to exaggerate. The displays in the

Centre have been arranged with excellent taste and evoke Placentia's nostalgic past when it was the capital of French Newfoundland.

After the guided tour the guests assembled at the Star of the Sea Hall in the old town of Placentia for a reception hosted by the Placentia Area Historical Association and friends. During the reception Dr. G.A. Frecker, the honorary President of the Association and former member for the District, unveiled a commemorative plaque memorializing the historic importance of Placentia in the early Colonial history of the New World.

In addition to persons already mentioned by name, the following are some of the distinguished guests who graciously honoured the historic occasion: The Hon. E.J.A. Harnum, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland; The Hon. Thomas Doyle, Nfld. Minister of Tourism and Recreation; Mr. Walter Carter, M.P., St. John's

West; Mr. Fintan Aylward, M.H.A., Placentia East; Captain Donald Jarvis, Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Station, Argentina; Chief Supt. K.M.B. Fraser of the R.C.M.P. The Hon. Wm. J. Browne, Q.C., former Solicitor General of Canada; Mr. P.A. Thompson, Director Atlantic Region, Parks Canada; Mr. Wm. Manning, Area Superintendent, Historic Parks and Sites, Nfld.; Mr. Martin Rowe, Director of Historic Resources, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador; and Mr. Wm. O'Shea, Superintendent, Castle Hill Historic Park.

The Trident congratulates all who participated in bringing about the development of the Castle Hill Historic Park and the restoration of the fortification thus far effected. The Historic Park and site restoration constitute an important contribution not only to the Placentia Area, and to Newfoundland, but also to Canada.

—G.A. Frecker

# Personally Speaking

## The Future of the Past

BY SHANNIE DUFF

The coming year is likely to be the most crucial in the seven year history of the Nfld. Historic Trust. The organization is solvent for the first time in its short life and Christ Church, Quidi Vidi the "founding cause", which drained so much of the energy and resources of the Trust, has been completed; granted, not as a museum of church history, as originally intended, but as a community centre. The continued operation of the building is still somewhat of a question mark, but at present it is being operated as a community arts and craft centre by the Extension Service of Memorial University. At the end of a trial year, in Feb. 1974, this programme will be reassessed by both the Trust and the Extension Service.

The past year saw an unprecedented level of involvement in community issues with a bearing on the future of historic resources in St. John's. This involvement was not without cost nor without controversy even within the organization. It is highly likely that this sort of issue will become more rather than less frequent as a response to an accelerated rate of municipal development. It is therefore necessary for the Trust to define its aims and objectives vis à vis this type of involvement and come to some decisions about what its proper and most effective role should be. In short it is perhaps time to ask, "Where now and whither going?"

The question of the continued existence of the Trust is basically one of relevance. Can the organization perform a function in the community which is not effective or cannot be more effectively performed by another agency or group?

I feel the answer is yes. Certainly the vineyard of Historic Resources is not overburdened with workers and it is my opinion that the area of the development and preservation of our historic resources is not a particularly high priority of government, or indeed a matter of burning concern to the general public.

I think the experience of Christ Church has taught us that the

Trust, as presently constituted, should not become involved in attempts to raise money for another restoration project per se. Its real relevance and function should lie more in the direction of arousing public interest, identifying and classifying buildings and areas of historic value, pressuring public and private agencies to involve themselves in the protection and development of historic resources and in attempting to achieve, for this province, a really enlightened policy, with the necessary legislation, in the area of historic resources. At the moment there is inadequate protection for historic sites and buildings. In reality they are safe only as long as nobody else has a bright idea for "developing" the land.

If we accept for the Trust, this role of "animator" in the field of Historic Resources management, then the organization must be very clear in its own mind what we want to preserve and why. We must be able to articulate a philosophy of preservation. It is not enough to have within ourselves a deep "gut-feeling" about the value of preserving the best of the physical aspects of our past for the good of the community and future generations. We must be able to communicate our feeling in language everyone can understand. This is why the work being done on an inventory of historic buildings by George Story and Shane O'Dea is so important and must continue. In addition I think it is time for the publication of some booklets and pamphlets about our historic resources aimed at the general public. The Halifax Heritage Trust is way ahead of us in this area. We must put across the point that historic resources are virtually non-renewable and, if lost, can only be replaced at great cost and therefore rarely are.

It is no longer adequate to wait until a historic building or site is threatened and then mount a rear guard action to save it. The Trust should involve itself in the whole question of protective legislation so that developers and private owners as well as con-

servationists can work in a clear and logical framework.

At the City Conference, held in May of this year, a lot of very competent people had some very sensible things to say about the economics of recycling older buildings, the importance of scale and congruity in development in older cities and the whole concept of area or site preservation for ongoing community use. The tragedy was that the people who should have been listening weren't there. The atmosphere was one of confrontation which is not very helpful in changing attitudes. Perhaps the Trust should bring back some of the invited guests from the City Conference and arrange for them to enter into discussion and dialogue with those who will be making the decisions about the physical development of the province.

At least part of the reason why the public involvement of the Trust and other groups interested in the future of the past has not been more productive is because the ground is not yet ready. The past year has seen the open discussion of many good ideas. Unfortunately they were in large part ideas whose time, in this province at least, has not yet come.

The members of the Trust must continue to take issue, to write and talk, to sponsor exhibitions and movies and speakers in an effort to prepare a seed bed which will ultimately come to fruition in a truly enlightened historic resources policy, supported by legislation and by widespread public interest in the future of the past.

Mr. Shane O'Dea, Honorary Member of the Trust, has prepared a statement on the desirability of setting up "an independent Historic Sites and Buildings Board". He regards the establishment of such a board as "an essential step in the development of a coherent preservation policy for Newfoundland". Further details of Mr. O'Dea's proposal will be published in a later edition of The Trident.