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PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE



The trident

NEWFOUNDLAND
HISTORIC TRUST
NEWS BULLETIN

NUMBER TWO

APR 8 1992
CENTRE FOR Nfld. STUDIES
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY
OF NEWFOUNDLAND

NOVEMBER 1971



Courtesy of Newfoundland Provincial Archives

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have first to express gratitude to my predecessors in the office of President, Mr. Cyril F. Horwood and Mr. John Murphy, and their colleagues in office, whose efforts launched the work of the Newfoundland Historic Trust and sustained it in its early years.

There are two items in this issue of *The Trident* of fundamental importance to anyone who cares for the work of the Trust.

The first describes the project for an Inventory of Historic Buildings, and indicates the very large number of sites and structures that form the proper area of our concern. There may be more than a thousand buildings which we

Newfoundlanders have inherited from the past, the preservation of which is the heavy responsibility of all of us. To the members of a group formed initially to save only one building (Christ Church, Quidi Vidi), this should be both a sobering and a challenging thought.

The second article draws attention to what must be the answer to that challenge: legislation by all levels of government (Federal, Provincial and Municipal) to provide for the designation of historic buildings, the imposition of formal controls on their alteration or demolition, the provision of grants in aid of preservation,

and the setting up of effective machinery to co-ordinate the efforts of government and private organizations and individuals.

The pace of change in our communities is now

so rapid, the threat to our historic buildings so grave, that nothing less than an attack on the fundamental issues will do.

George M. Storey

THE CHURCH AT QUIDI VIDI

The fund-raising campaigns of the Historic Trust during the past two years have succeeded in covering the last of the expenses incurred in the major task of renewing the structure of Christ Church, Quidi Vidi. They have not, however, been sufficient to allow anything more than the

maintenance of the building in its "stabilized" condition, and the task of interior restoration still remains to be completed.

A decision on the precise nature of the interior restoration now awaits the outcome of negotiations on the ultimate use or uses to which the building will be put.

HISTORIC TRUST'S ANTIQUE EXHIBITION 1971

The Newfoundland Historic Trust's antique exhibition this year ran for two months at the Arts and Culture Centre in St. John's and attracted nearly fourteen thousand visitors. The principal display this year was the Henry Birks Collection of Canadian Silver. The exhibition was generously loaned by Henry Birks & Co. of Montreal, and containing examples of Canadian craftsmanship from the seventeenth century to the present. With this was a display of Newfoundland pine furniture, including kitchen dressers, benches, chairs, an infant cradle, etc., dating for the most part from the nineteenth century and serving (we hope) as a preview of a later more extensive exhibition.



Incense Boat & Spoon c. 1800

The Antique Exhibition 1971 was the second major exhibition arranged by the Historic Trust and was generously sponsored by the Extension Service of Memorial University.



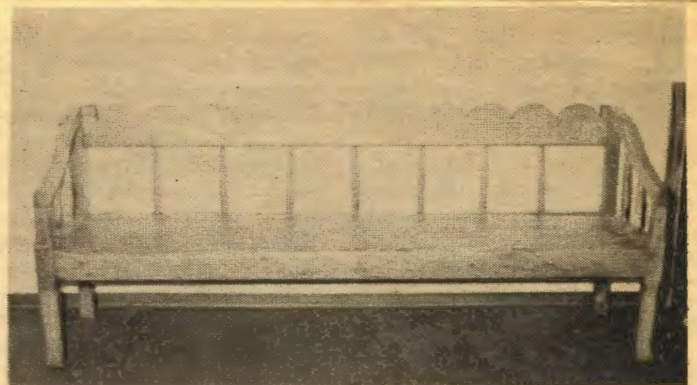
Ewer by Laurent Amiot Quebec City 1764-1839 Birks' Collection



Kitchen Dresser Conception Bay - c. 1900

The Honourable Dr. G.A. Frecker, then Minister for Provincial Affairs, kindly officiated at the formal opening of the exhibition. His Department gave much assistance and lent certain of the exhibits. The Chairman of the Exhibition Committee, Mrs. Raymonde O'Dea, and her co-workers deserve special thanks for the success of this undertaking.

The Trust's first exhibition (in 1969) included a wide range of antique furniture, books, silver, glass, china and paintings from Newfoundland homes. Later exhibitions will concentrate more intensively on particular fields as part of the Trust's efforts to catalogue and display the notable objects which illustrate the Newfoundland cultural heritage.



Bench — Cape Shore - c. 1830

NOTICE

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Newfoundland Historic Trust will take place on Tuesday, November 9, 1971, at 8:00 p.m. in the Colonial Building on Military Road. We extend a warm invitation to you to attend this meeting. Your presence will give us the encouragement and support we need in order to be able to continue our work. During the meeting a new slate of officers will be presented and plans for the future discussed. Please come to this meeting and give us the benefit of your ideas and suggestions.

INVENTORY OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings, now in its second year, seems likely to prove the most important single contribution to preservation work ever made in this country, and is one to which the Historic Trust is lending its active support and co-operation.

Launched in the summer of 1970 by the National Historic Sites Service of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, it is the first comprehensive architectural inventory in the world created for a computerized information system. The project is expected to take ten years to complete. The first phase will record the exteriors of some 100,000 buildings to produce a general view of our architectural heritage. The second phase will describe the interiors and architectural details of 10,000 buildings chosen from the results of phase one. In the third and final phase, some 2,000 structures will be selected from phase two for even more detailed analysis and description.

The Inventory, when completed, will serve a number of purposes. It will form an immense

source of information for students of building styles and history in Canada; it will identify specially important structures of national importance; and it will serve as a guide to planners at the provincial and municipal level throughout the country. It will put preservation work on an accurate, scientific basis.

The general historical cut-off point for the Inventory is 1880. Some idea of the scale of the project in its first phase can be indicated by the fact that St. John's alone has upwards of 300 buildings which qualify for inclusion in the national list. Towns such as Brigus, Harbor Grace, Carbonear, Placentia and Trinity provide many other examples of Newfoundland's richness in historic structures, some of them unique in Canada.

The Historic Trust, meanwhile, has been collecting information for use in the compilation of its own inventories of historic sites and buildings, and hopes to circulate these from time to time for the interest and guidance of individuals, organizations and the various levels of government.

LEGISLATION FOR PRESERVATION

The Province of Ontario now has under study the most comprehensive and detailed proposals ever made in Canada for the preservation of buildings of historic and architectural value. Prepared by Robin A. Leonard for the Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, the report proposes:

- Rapid completion of detailed inventories of provincial historic sites and buildings;

- Adoption by provincial and municipal authorities of a list of "scheduled" sites and buildings regarded as of outstanding importance;

- Introduction of provincial and municipal legislation to control the demolition or alteration of

scheduled sites and buildings;

- Introduction of legislation for compulsory purchase of threatened sites and structures;

- Provision of loans and grants by provincial and municipal authorities for the preservation of designated buildings;

- The setting up of an Advisory Board to tender advice to governments on preservation work.

If adopted, the Ontario proposals will mark the first time that any Canadian province has officially adopted comprehensive legislation of the kind long common in Europe and other parts of the civilized world.

PRESERVATION FOR USE

The scarcity of money for preservation work and the large number of claims on that money raise a fundamental issue: if there is a limit to the number of historic structures a given community can afford or is willing to preserve as museum pieces, what happens to the rest?

The answer is that if these hundreds of buildings are to be preserved, they must be preserved not as fossils but for use. The proposed use of Newman's 18th century wine vaults on Water Street as an art gallery, the renovation of the old Board of Trade Building

by a businessman for business purposes are encouraging examples of what can be done. And there are many private individuals throughout Newfoundland who have acquired historic houses simply because they want them as dwellings.

There is a case to be made for changes in municipal tax policies to encourage this process, thus permitting private organizations and individuals to shoulder some of the responsibility for preservation which otherwise must be borne directly by governments.

HISTORIC TRUST GIFT TO TRINITY MUSEUM



The Newfoundland Historic Trust has presented the Trinity Historical Society and Museum with a copy of a rare book with early Trinity associations.

The book, Robert Parsons' Christian Directory (London, 1727), is a famous English devotional work which was purchased by the first Anglican Bishop of Newfoundland, Aubrey George Spencer, while he was

an undergraduate at Oxford. An inscription on the fly leaf, dated 15 April 1821, records its presentation by the Bishop to a Miss Pitman at Trinity, Newfoundland.

The presentation of the book to the Trinity Museum was made in September by the Trust's President, Dr. G.M. Storey, in appreciation of the work of preservation undertaken by the Trinity Historical Society.



INTEREST IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION NOW PROVINCE-WIDE

Listed below are some of the projects undertaken during the past two years that demonstrate the continuing surge of interest in the preservation of our historic sites and buildings:

— Fishermen's Museum, Hibb's Cove — a citizens' group;

— Preservation of lighthouse — Ferryland Historical Society;

— Museum at Salvage — citizens' group;

— Wireless Museum at Heart's Content — interested individuals and Provincial Government;

— 200th Anniversary celebrations by the Moravian Mission of Labrador with special attention to the surviving 18th century buildings of the Mission;

— Preservation of the 18th century wine vaults of the Newman Company at St. John's by the Provincial Government and Memorial University;

— Recognition by the Pippy Park Commission of the interest of older structures within the area of its jurisdiction.

Together with the continuing work of the Federal and Provincial

Governments on such projects as Castle Hill (Placentia), Signal Hill (St. John's), L'anse aux Meadows, and St. Thomas's Rectory (St. John's), and the work of such private bodies as the Trinity Historical Society and the Historic Trust, this demonstrates the widespread interest in the work of historical preservation and reconstruction in Newfoundland.