

Heritage Update



News and Notes on Heritage NL's Built Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Programs
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Heritage at Work on the Port au Port By Dale Gilbert Jarvis

A historic Port au Port Peninsula church will soon start much-needed repair work with assistance from Heritage NL.

Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church is an imposing Renaissance Revival church prominently situated on the isthmus dividing St. George's and Port au Port Bays.

Apart from being one of the largest, it is also one of the finest Newfoundland churches and was designed by one of the province's noted architects William F. Butler. It was designated a Registered Heritage Structure by Heritage NL in 1997.

Built between 1914 and 1925, the all-wood building is being restored by the not-for-profit Our Lady of Mercy Complex Committee. The 2023 recipient of a \$20,000 Revitalization Grant from Heritage NL, the Committee will focus the first phase of their repairs on the church's eaves and historic trim work (*see photo showing area to be restored*).



"This funding will assist us to begin an overall plan to restore the exterior of the heritage church," says Vanessa Glasgow, Chairperson of the Our Lady of Mercy Complex Committee. "It means we can address one of the priority issues from the completed conditional assessment."

"The original pine carved eavestrough has been in place for almost a century and has deteriorated the eaves," Glasgow adds. "This restoration project will restore the integrity of the eaves, reducing heat loss, and addressing any deterioration."

Campaniles and Registered Heritage Structures

By Juliet Lanphear

During recent research into Precious Blood Roman Catholic Church in St. Andrew's, Heritage NL decided to look more into one of the church's external features, an exterior bell tower or a campanile (right). A campanile is a freestanding bell tower or a bell house used to house church bells by churches without belfries or a viable interior space.

Several of Heritage NL's Registered Heritage Structures have campaniles, including St. George's Anglican Church in Brigus, the Church of the Most Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Trinity, and Precious Blood RCC. Some historically had an exterior bell house, like Pilley's Island Methodist (later United) Church. Numerous other non-RHS churches across the island also have campaniles, like the All Saints' Anglican Church in Dildo (Jarvis 2018).

Why did some Newfoundland churches use a campanile instead of a belfry? Using a belfry, which is part of a bell tower or steeple that houses a church's bell, did not always make sense for certain Newfoundland churches. Some Newfoundland churches, especially those in rural areas, were paid for and built by parishioners and were often constructed with local materials like timber. Wooden church steeples, especially in Newfoundland's windy weather, make housing a heavy brass church bell difficult (Brown 1981). Church bells were expensive and could not always be purchased at the time of construction but instead years or decades after the church was finished. A campanile provides an alternative for a church unsuited to a belfry.



Heritage NL's Registered Heritage Structures with campaniles include St. George's Anglican in Brigus, a wooden church constructed in 1876. The church was built with a spire, but it was later removed based on pictures from the 1900s (Philpott and O'Brien 2021, photo next page). The church's bell is now housed in a campanile.

Precious Blood Roman Catholic Church also features a campanile built in the 1940s constructed in a style similar to a lighthouse, an architectural style well known to the local parishioners.

In Trinity, Church of the Most Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church (left) is a timber church constructed

in 1833. The campanile was a later addition in the 1880s to accommodate the bell donated by parishioner Mrs. Priscilla Doherty.

Pilley's Island Methodist Church previously had an external bell tower built circa the late 1930s. The bell was later brought inside the church when the steeple was rebuilt in the 1990s (Jarvis 2018). The campanile and bell, which would be rung during emergencies, was an attraction for local children, who would tap the bell but not ring it to avoid punishment (Jarvis 2018).

While campaniles are not a unique architectural feature to Newfoundland, they were used on the island to accommodate heavy brass church bells in Newfoundland's wooden churches and windy weather.



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Danny and Arlene collecting spruce roots. Photo courtesy of Danny White and Arlene White

Craft at Risk and Heritage Skills Training Program Update

By Terra Barrett

Craft at Risk was a large project by Heritage NL that aimed to assess the current viability of historic crafts in Newfoundland and Labrador, and to identify those crafts which were most at risk of disappearing. As part of the Craft at Risk project Heritage NL identified two areas to address critical gaps and loss of historic knowledge in Newfoundland and Labrador. Heritage NL then implemented the Heritage Skills Training Program as part of the Craft at Risk Project to maintain and preserve historic knowledge across the province.

The first gap identified was skills and knowledge required for historic preservation and conservation of historic places. For this part of the project Heritage NL worked with recognized specialists in critical building conservation areas to deliver specialized training to practicing tradespeople, contractors, and other interested residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. The second gap area identified was the revival of historic skills at risk. The goal of the training program was to transmit these historic skills which may also have the potential to create new cultural and economic opportunities. For this part of the project Heritage NL delivered interactive, introductory level workshops in historic skills, as well as coordinating a one-on-one Mentor-Apprentice Program to support the transmission of historic skills that are categorized as endangered or critically endangered on the Heritage NL Craft at Risk List 2021.

Over the two-year period of the Heritage Skills Training Program, Heritage NL and its community partners completed 67 training events with 30 instructors and more than 1,000 registrants. As part of the Mentor-Apprentice Program 61 people from around Newfoundland & Labrador participated in a one-on-one immersion program to support the teaching of endangered historic crafts and skills from an established mentor to an apprentice craftsman or tradesperson.

In order to have a lasting impact on the historic crafts in Newfoundland and Labrador historic documentation occurred at each training event, workshop, and with each Mentor-Apprentice pair. This led to the documentation of more than 20 historic skills including photographs, videos, and oral history interviews.



Over 35 oral history podcast episodes focused on historic crafts and skills were completed as a result of the Heritage Skills Training Program. Three in-depth videos were recorded on letterpress printing, weaving, and birch broom making.

There are also short videos on Heritage NL's social media on wriggle fence building, stone masonry, dry stone walling, wooden window restoration, headstone cleaning/historic masonry conservation, plus five videos released on Heritage NL's YouTube channel that focus on historic foodways.

All of these photos, videos, and oral histories are being placed on an online digital archive, Memorial University's Digital Archives Initiative, which is freely and publicly accessible.

For more information on the Craft at Risk please visit our [website](#).

Here is the link to the full Heritage Skills Training Program Final Report prepared by Lara Maynard for Heritage NL: <https://heritagenl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Heritage-Training-Final-Report-2023.pdf>

Update on Sacred Heart Church, Open Hall

By Anne Barker

Our contractor, Fred Freeman, began work on the church on Monday, July 30. We originally planned to replace the upper round coloured windows facing the main road, but after the contractor repaired and puttied each one last year and replaced the round plastic covers, we had no leaks in our church for the first time in years. We have decided to put this plan on hold and continue with more necessary work.

We had window maker Chris Kelly inspect all bottom windows and both side doors of the sacristy leading onto the cemetery. Using an original window from the church as a template, he will rebuild at least one large window and make replacement parts for others.



Chris will also make two storm doors for each side of the sacristy and a new wooden door to replace a stainless steel one now opening to the handicapped ramp. In addition to the windows and doors, the contractor will replace all clapboard on the lower level, both on the (road) side and the back of the church, checking for rot and making necessary repairs. He will examine the sills for deterioration and replace them where necessary.

Work will also take place on the upper level at the back of the church, beginning with necessary repairs to the three upper round windows. All clapboard in this area will be removed and replaced following any repairs. The concrete set of steps by the sacristy door will be removed to allow access to the rotten sill beneath the door. A wooden structure will replace the concrete. As in two previous years, a group of volunteers will prime both sides of the clapboard before the contractor installs them.

[Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church](#) was erected by builder Thomas Martin and completed in 1913. It was designated as a Registered Heritage Structure by Heritage NL in 2018.

In Search of Herstory

By Andrea O'Brien

Heritage NL was established in 1984 with a mandate to help preserve the rich heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. In the beginning, this mandate was largely met by designating spaces which were built by and for the elite - including grand ecclesiastical buildings, merchant houses, fraternal lodges, and government institutions. Over time it was recognized that many spaces integral to the province's history were not being recognized. This led to the designation of more modest buildings and some that recognized underrepresented parts of the province's past.

Yet the stories told about these places and the names assigned to them were still those of the male white owners, architects, and builders. The plaques placed on the exteriors extolled their accomplishments while ignoring the stories of the females who lived and worked with them. Over the past few years Heritage NL has introduced a new plaque design. This presents an opportunity to re-explore buildings and the lives lived within them. We are discovering that untold stories are often more captivating than the known, male-centric narratives. Improved archival access and a refocusing on oral histories is uncovering the stories of the unnamed women who lived in heritage homes, women who ran businesses alongside their male family members, women who worked at merchant premises, women who contributed to the building and maintenance of community spaces, women who were forces for change, women who weren't afraid to break societal norms.

To date Heritage NL has designated over 340 Registered Heritage Structures. One by one we are determined to tell the stories of the others who lived in, worked in, and used these buildings - with hopes that this rethinking of accepted narratives will lead to the telling of even more diverse stories. If you know of a woman's story connected to any of our Registered Heritage Structures, please reach out to andrea@heritagenl.ca.



Lambert and Johanna Greene House and Outbuildings

Built early 1900s

Built by Lambert Greene, this house was constructed in a gable-ell design using sections from his previous home in Greene's Point after a storm destroyed their fishing premises. The designation includes the house and four outbuildings, including a cellar and storage buildings.

Lambert and Johanna Greene House and Outbuildings is designated a Registered Heritage Structure by Heritage NL. Find more at heritagenl.ca.

Yarns and Yarns

By Terra Barrett

Knitting might not be your first thought of summer in NL but this summer Heritage NL is highlighting it! We've been partnering with local community museums, heritage groups, and 50+ clubs to host Yarns and Yarns events in communities across the province. This project aims to recognize, record, and celebrate the importance of knitting and crafting to Newfoundland and Labrador. The main objective of Yarns and Yarns is to combine traditional knitting and crafting knowledge with



social participation through a series of mug ups or workshops. These mug ups combine a knitting circle with story telling for community members, where people gather, have a cup of tea, enjoy snacks, and share memories.

Our most recent events took place in Salvage and Carbonear. In Salvage we partnered with Salvage Fisherman's Museum, and the event took place in the centre of the museum where we were surrounded by their artefacts and displays including an exhibition on local knitter, Aunt Annie. Annie Lane was a prolific knitter who knit for NONIA for over 65 years. Her beautiful knit lace became known as Salvage lace. We heard stories from Annie's relatives and neighbours, and knitters who learned from their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and so on. Many of these knitters returned to the craft following retirement or during the pandemic. One knitter brought a sweater she had started 30 years before. After running out of wool she put it in storage until recently when she sought out a good colour match and got to work to finish the sweater. We also discussed spinning wool, and keeping sheep. Some participants remember older relatives spinning wool; though it isn't something they learned to do themselves, there is a large spinning wheel on display at the museum.

In Carbonear we partnered with SeaSpun Yarn and Coffee House. The event took place in the seating area of the shop which doubles as a coffee house. There was a great group of regular knitters as well as some new to the group knitters. We spent the afternoon getting to know everyone and how they learned to knit, swapping patterns, and talking techniques. Several people who came in for the first time said they would be back the next weekend to knit some more! We also heard tips and tricks from the resident knitter who is known for fixing the group's mistakes.

We've also got several Yarns and Yarns scheduled later in August on the Northern Peninsula so stay tuned to our social media for more updates.

This project has been funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.

If you are interested in hosting a Yarns and Yarns event in your community reach out to Terra Barrett at terra@heritagenl.ca or 709-739-1892 x2.

Winter Home Receives New Heritage Plaque

By Juliet Lanphear

Winter Home in Clarke's Beach has recently received a new heritage plaque. The house was designed and constructed in 1919 by outport furniture maker Henry William Winter.

The house has an attached workshop which was used as a general store by his wife Mary. Winter Home was designated a Registered Heritage Structure by Heritage NL in 1995.



The plaque reads:

“This house was built by prolific and creative outport cabinetmaker Henry William Winter. Decorative shingle work, intricate brackets, and an unusual configuration of bay windows speaks to his creative approach. The attached workshop was operated as a general store by his wife Mary while his own shop was located across the road”.



Avondale Railway Station Research By Emlyn Tuck

With the Township of Avondale asking us to research and compile a list of people who worked at the Railway Station we started by going through what we currently have in our archives. But with that came the realization



that we had little information on the history of the building and what we did have was either sparse in detail or factually incorrect. We are currently researching more about the building itself to grow the story of how it came to be what we see today.

We dove into the research, looking through old newspapers from the late 1870s onwards, such as *The Evening Telegram* and *The Harbour Grace Standard*, to try and make sense of the building and its place in the history of the Anglo-American Telegraph Company and Railway in the province.

Previously we had suggested that the building was built between 1870 and 1880, but since the

railway was not completed until 1883/84, it would have not made sense for the station to be built that early. From our current research we believe it was built in the early to mid-1880s allowing time for the railway to be completed as well as time for the building itself to be built close to the railway bed.

We also looked at old Newfoundland Yearbook and Almanacs and copies of the McAlpine's Newfoundland Directories to be able to grow the list of individuals who worked in and out of the building. We currently have 53 individuals on the list as of August 1st and are still looking for more! If you have any information about someone who worked there or know anything about the Avondale Railway Station do not hesitate to contact us at research@heritagenl.ca or take part in the worker name survey at <http://forms.gle/f37hryvx7eUurGtJ9>

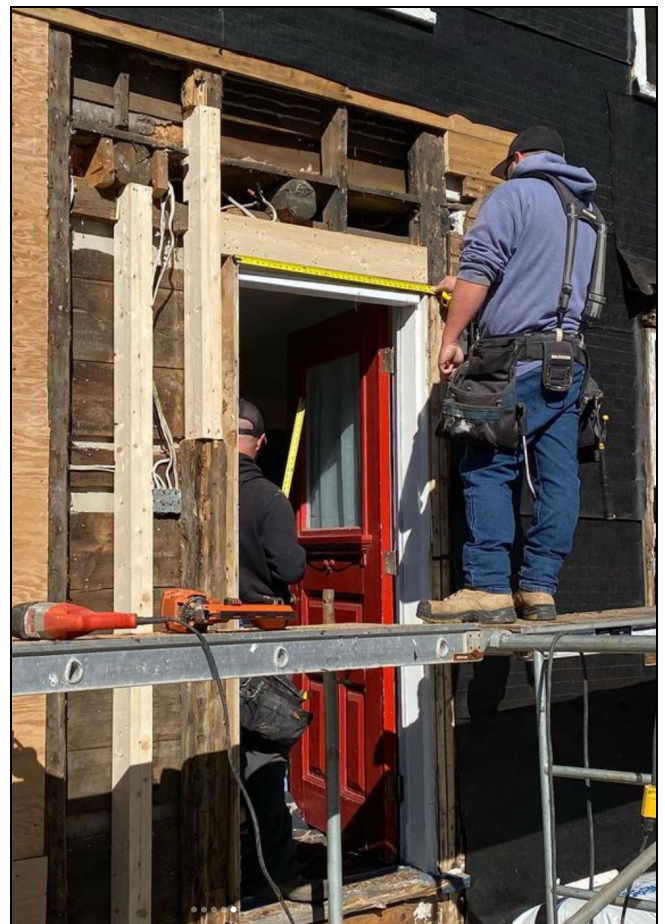
The Fowler House - Restoration Update by Stephen Burfitt

We were immediately captivated by the unique construction and charm of [this house](#), and in 2017, we became its proud owners. Little did we know that it would lead us to a profound appreciation for the rich history embedded within Brigus and in Newfoundland and Labrador's heritage. Our journey of restoration has been very rewarding, and we're excited to share the updates that have taken place so far.

Brad Baldwin and his skilled team from BBMJ Contracting have made remarkable progress with the exterior restoration and renovations. A crucial initial step was ensuring the structural integrity of the house. They diligently removed all existing clapboard, thoroughly inspecting each wall for rotten wood, which was promptly replaced. Strengthening the main supports of the house with additional supports was a priority, along with installing new plywood where needed. Importantly, fibreglass insulation was also added before the new plywood to provide much-needed insulation where there was none before. To fortify the house further against the elements, a layer of felt, 1" styrofoam insulation, and strapping were meticulously applied.

As the project moves ahead, approximately 40% of the new clapboard siding has been installed, and the exterior has already been painted with the charming heritage colour "Hawthorne Yellow" by Benjamin Moore. Additionally, a new third-floor entrance has been constructed to replace the almost deteriorated previous entrance.

Every window in the house has been carefully removed and sent to Neil Hammond at Hammond Woodworking for evaluation and restoration. Although some of the original window frames were too damaged to salvage, Neil successfully saved and restored most of the original window sash.



Notably, he has already completed six full windows (with frames) using mostly restored window sash and built a replica "hat store" window to replace the one beyond repair. A few sashes needed complete rebuilding, but most were salvageable, with approximately half of the original glass preserved.



As of now, Brad and his team are in the process of installing the windows Neil has restored, continuing with new clapboard and trim installations. Neil has ten more windows to restore/repair, and he'll also be working on restoring the exterior doors. Furthermore, major roof work is also planned. More updates to come! We couldn't be more pleased with the progress so far, and the dedication and craftsmanship demonstrated by everyone involved will undoubtedly ensure this house's preservation for at least another 170 plus years.

It is our hope that through our efforts, this house will continue to stand as a testament to Newfoundland and Labrador's history and heritage.



To follow along with the restorations you can follow the project's Instagram or Facebook page, where the team tries to post updates at least once a week.

www.facebook.com/brigustwine/loft
www.instagram.com/brigus_twine.loft



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