

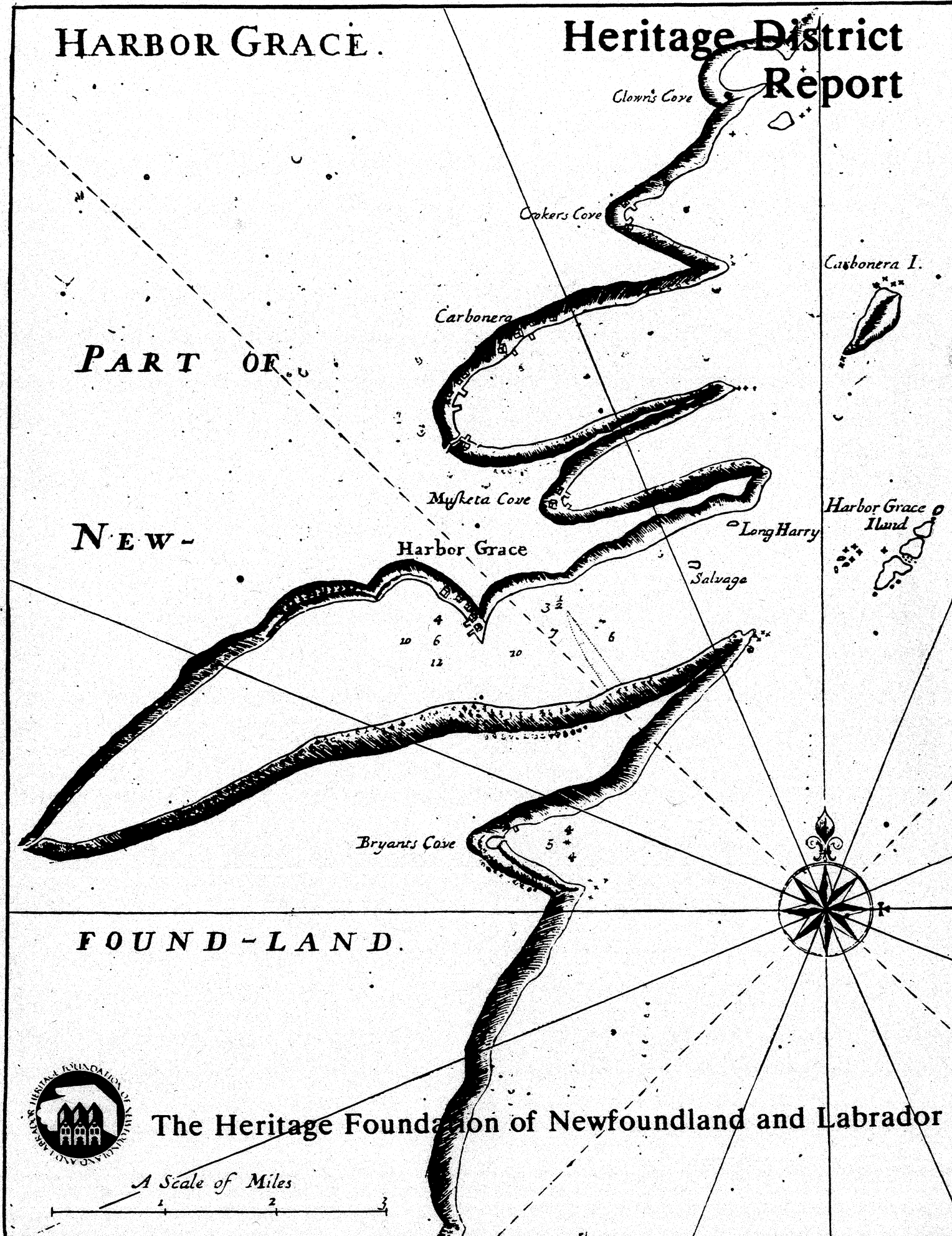
The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador was established in 1984 to stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation for the architectural heritage of the province, and to support and contribute to the preservation and restoration of buildings of architectural or historical significance to the province.

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HARBOR GRACE.

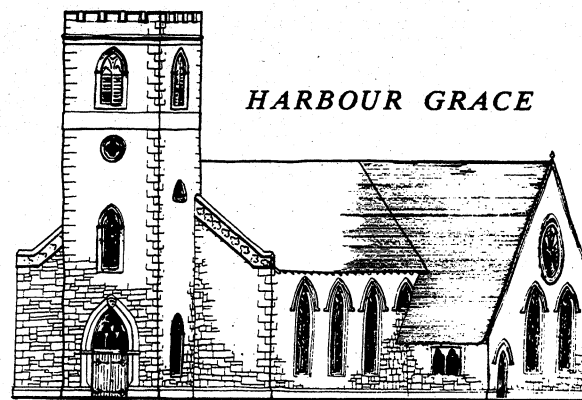
Heritage District Report



The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador

A Scale of Miles





HARBOUR GRACE

HERITAGE DISTRICT REPORT

Addressing the feasibility and desirability of establishing a new Heritage Preservation District in the Town of Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. Prepared for the information of residents by the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Design, drawings, photographs, and text:
Alec Brown.

Additional drawings and photographs:
Conception Bay Museum, Harbour Grace;
Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's; National Airphoto Library, Ottawa.

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Appendix: *Heritage Preservation Guidelines*

An effective plan to preserve a district's physical heritage will give some control over its future development to the municipality. So as to ensure fairness and consistency, both the town's Heritage Advisory Committee and (when allocating grants) the Heritage Foundation would follow defined guidelines in assessing the desirability of new projects. The following serve as an example:

Standards:

(1) Where the setbacks (the distances from the front of the principal building on each lot to the street) of neighbouring buildings are uniform, the setback of the development shall conform to them.

(2) Where the setbacks of neighbouring buildings are not uniform: If the setback of one of the neighbouring buildings is the same as the setback of the building next to it then the setback of the development shall conform to this. If the setback of the building on either side of the development is not the same as the setback of those buildings next to it, then the setback of the development shall conform to that of either one of the neighbouring buildings.

(3) The side-yard ratio (the distance from the side lot line to the near side of the building compared to the entire lot width) on each side of a development shall conform to the relative side-yard ratios of either of the neighbouring buildings so as to maintain the pattern of open spaces.

(4) The height of a development shall not be less than 80 percent and not more than 100 percent of the average height of existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered and located within the same block as the development.

(5) The height/width ratio of the facades (the building sides facing onto the street) of a development shall not vary by more than 10 percent from the height/width ratio of the facades of existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered and located within the same block as the development.

(6) The allowable opening/wall ratio (ratio of door and window area to solid wall area) for the facade of a development shall not vary by more than 10 percent from the facade opening/wall ratio of the facades on existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered, and located within the same block as the development.

(7) The dimensions of the windows in a development shall not vary by more than 10 percent from the dimensions of the windows in existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered, and located within the same block as the development.

(8) The roof or roofs of a development in regard to their direction, pitch and arrangement shall conform to those on existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered, and located within the same block as the development.

(9) The size, shape and prominence of a porch, entrance projection or doorway in a development shall be similar to those found on existing buildings of the same type or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered and located within the same block as the development. Similarly for outbuildings, walls, fences, and gates.

(10) A development shall use traditional detailing and traditional materials for its exterior facades in keeping with those found on existing buildings of the same type

or style constructed prior to 1915 and not subsequently altered and located within the same block as the development. Contemporary materials may be used where their appearance is compatible with the appearance of traditional materials and detailing.

(11) The distinguishing original qualities or character of an existing building or structure constructed prior to 1915 (later in some cases), its site and its environment should not be destroyed. the removal or alteration of any historic material, distinctive architectural feature, or example of skilled craftsmanship should be avoided as far as possible.

(12) Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a use for such a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment.

(13) Original architectural features which have deteriorated should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should visually match.

Definitions:

(1) "Contemporary materials" includes, but is not limited to, aluminum, vinyl, pre-cast concrete, mirrored glass panels and any other materials not available for buildings constructed on or prior to 1915.

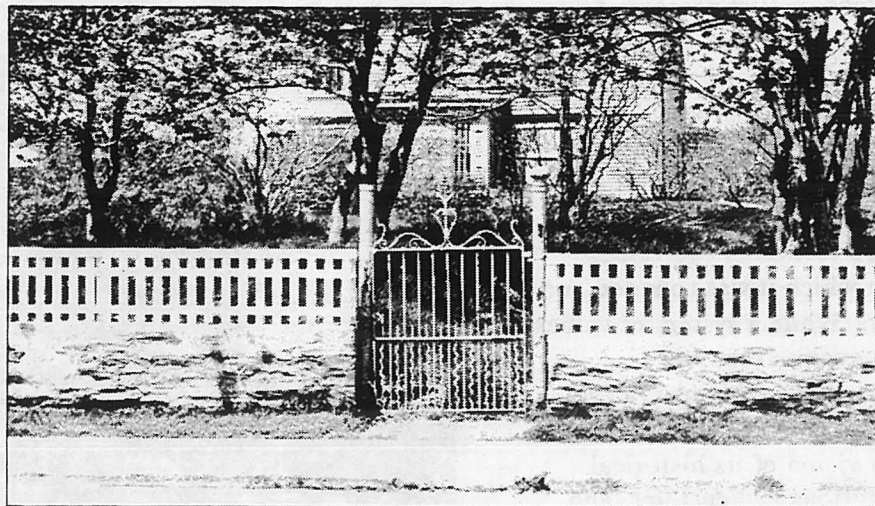
(2) "Development" means the erecting, placing, relocating, removing, renovating, restoring, demolishing, altering, repairing or replacing of the exterior of a building or structure or appurtenances, in whole or part, other than traffic control devices or statutory notices.

(3) "Traditional materials" includes, but is not limited to wood, brick, stone, but excludes those materials not commonly used prior to 1915.

The front gate into Hampshire Cottage, Water St. Despite being left untended for years, these properties still demonstrate the amount of care and attention which originally went into them. Simply maintaining such creations is a small price for such a rich inheritance.

the towns and villages which have traditionally been the backbone of our society and our economy. Heritage Districts work because they are initiated by the members of the community; the buildings are maintained by the residents for themselves and their community; And the benefits of the co-operation stay entirely within the community.

Low municipal costs. The costs to the taxpayers through the municipality of improvements to the public spaces in the district are modest and flexible, and more than likely offset by new tax revenues from repair work, and an upturn in both economic activity and property values.



- Preservation of Newfoundland Heritage
In strictly architectural terms, heritage conservation safeguards the province's rich architectural traditions so that they can be studied and enjoyed by all well into the future. The need to preserve these artifacts is compounded by the subsequent loss in the modern age of many of the skills of design and individual craftsmanship which contributed to earlier construction.

In terms of preservation initiatives heritage districts have a special role in that they step beyond the protection of isolated structures to give us an image of the historical community itself.

Introduction: *The Idea of Heritage*

This booklet is about two issues: cultural heritage on the one hand, and development on the other. Only in very recent times have people felt them to be in opposition to each other. In fact, one's heritage - the legacy of wisdom, experience and labours of the past - is the very ground out of which new and better things can grow. Respecting and building on the achievements of previous generations does not conflict with the path of progress, it serves it.

This is especially true of our physical heritage. Consider examples like a cherished old church, or a mature garden. Older parts of communities are not just a tangible reminder of history, they also remain as vital and as useful as ever. As the inheritors of this valuable legacy, we must not allow ourselves to lose it forever through neglect, because to do so would be to lose both a monuments of our culture's past, and an instruments of its future.



On the cover: A chart appearing in John Thornton's *English Pilot*, in editions from 1689 to 1760. The *Pilot* was the first naval atlas to be published in Britain. On another chart dated 1772, The famous chartmaker James Cook wrote that Harbour Grace boasted "...very good holding grounds and room for any number of ships, where they lay securely sheltered from all danger."

Opposite page: St. Paul's Church, 1835. This is the third Church of England on the site - the first two, dated 1764 and 1816, were destroyed by fires. In the 1970s the building was fully restored.

Dragger equipment in front of Ridley Hall, an old stately home - now derelict. More than just treasures of our past, buildings from another age still have much to contribute to today's modern communities. But in order to stop the wasteful neglect and decay, we first have to change our idea of what development means.

¹ see publications of British Columbia Heritage Trust, "Community Pride" program, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture; 103-1216 Broad St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 2A5

² Robert Shipley, "Does Heritage designation affect property values?" in *The Canadian Appraiser*, spring 1992, pp.26-30.

³ Galt, George, *Investing in the Past: A Report on the Profitability of Heritage Conservation*, Heritage Canada, 1974; pp. 2-4.

Why a Heritage District?

Harvey Street, Harbour Grace, looking towards the Cathedral, c. 1910. For each succeeding generation, part of a vibrant and healthy community is the pride felt by the townspeople in their history and in the symbols which identify the town.

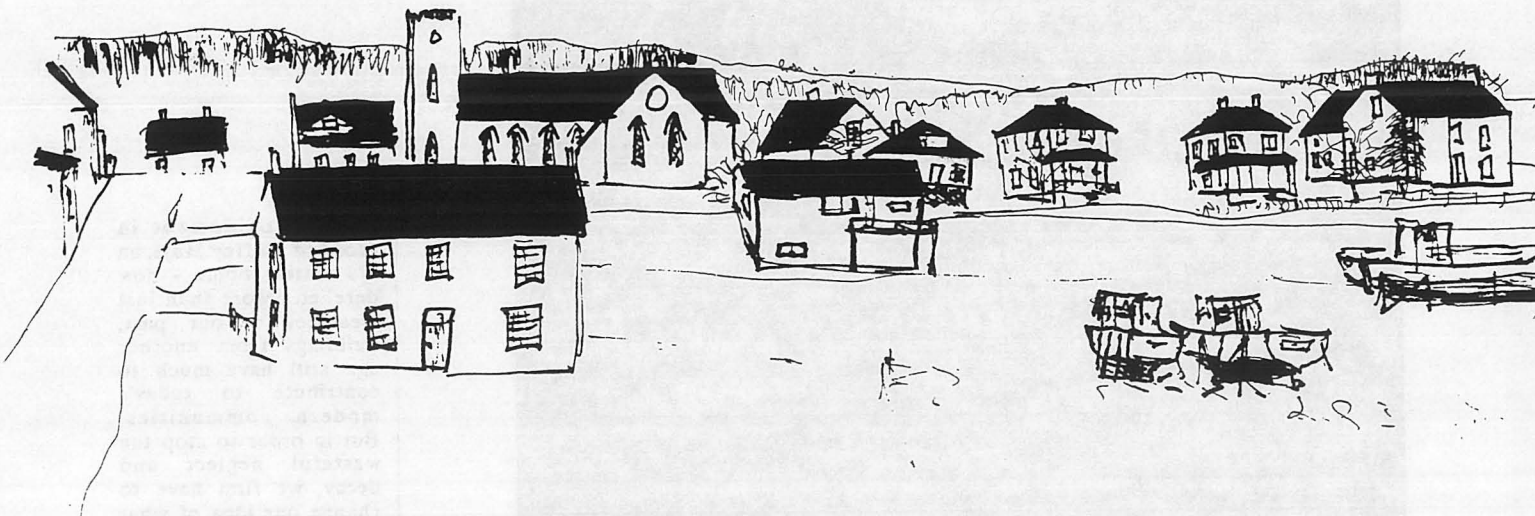
Today, our understanding of community development is again beginning to include a wider range of initiatives which can build on resources already present in the community.

The concept of the heritage district has emerged in other parts of North America as a vehicle for local economic development using the existing physical assets of an area, its buildings, streets, public spaces, and environs - as well as its history - to attract new revenues and investment, while enriching the local community



through a renewed sense of identity and pride.

A heritage district is a specific area of town which, because of a concentration of older buildings and an absence of any extensive re-development, presents an especially powerful and cohesive image of the past. Within the district an effort is made to maintain and preserve the historic character of the architecture and other elements (streets, fences, gardens, etc.), and to develop the aesthetic quality of the overall site. These efforts in turn produce new opportunities for growth: new business; a higher profile for the town; economic diversification. Historic communities are recognizing that heritage district programs create new potential in existing resources, and are a powerful catalyst for further renewal.



package. An effectively promoted heritage project has strong potential to draw tourists to the community, and to prolong their stay in it, providing a substantial boost to the local economy³.

The regeneration of under-used or abandoned areas. At a time when physical resources are becoming limited and the environment is under threat of resource depletion, it makes good economic and environmental sense to preserve those natural and built elements which we already have. heritage conservation is, therefore, a natural component of healthy town planning.

Community spirit. A heritage district presents a vivid image of the permanent fabric of memories which binds the town. Every town has characteristic features which together contribute to its own unique identity. This identity is a reflection of the values upon which it was founded and grew. While a system of values does evolve from one generation to the next, a healthy community maintains a clear vision of its historical institutions and customs, and hence an appreciation of the physical environment which embodies this history.

Our communities stand as a tangible legacy which should be respected as both the presence of the past and a foundation on which to build. By valuing our local heritage we foster community pride,



and encourage a continuation of the labours and dedication of our predecessors.

Local solutions with local benefits. Increasingly, as the imported schemes promising prosperity come and go we in Newfoundland have been forced to look for our economic future back within

Bay windows on the Simmons house, c. 1900. The house was built by one William Carson for Willis Davis, uncle of the present owner. The care that went into its design and construction is evident in details like the shingle-work and original window sashes.

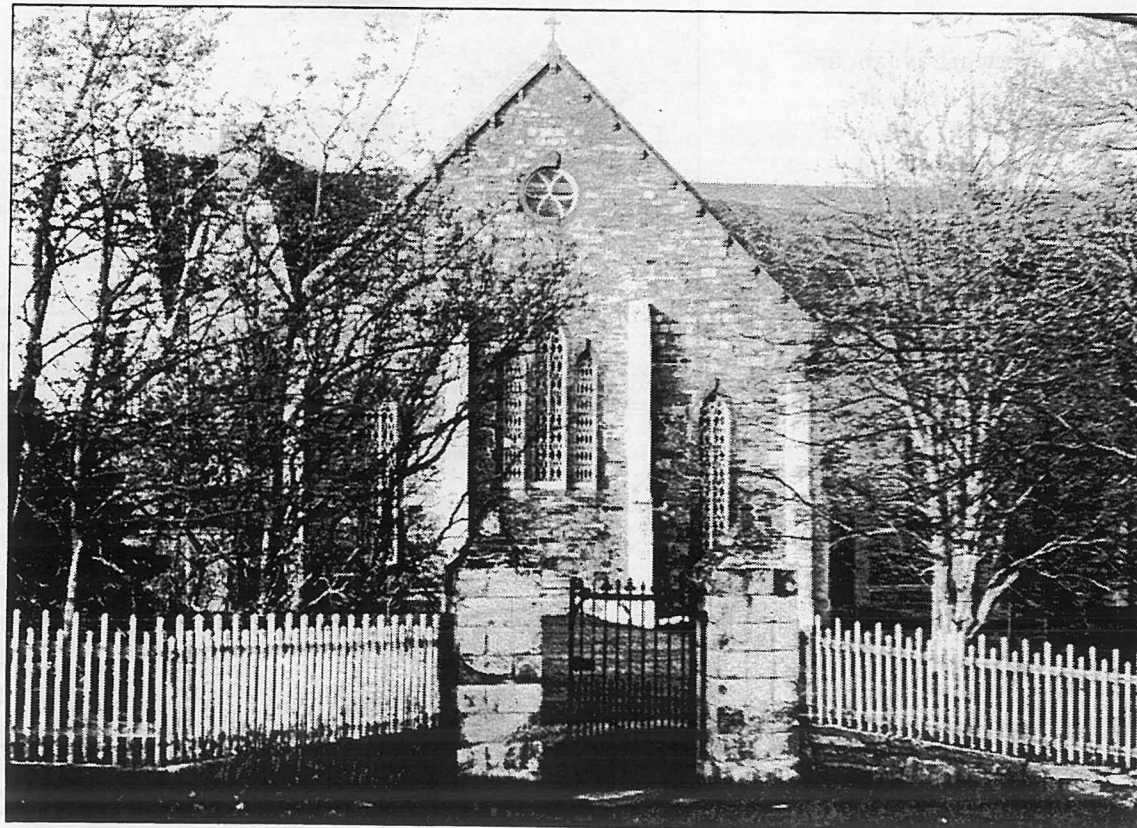
The west transept of the cathedral, from Carbonear road. Its condition having deteriorated, the church was facing demolition before local groups initiated an ambitious restoration project.

An increase in property values. A well planned heritage project creates a unique and appealing neighbourhood atmosphere which is reflected in prices and demand for real estate. And studies in Ontario and elsewhere demonstrated that, contrary to some popular beliefs, heritage designation almost invariably has the effect of raising the value of the designated property.²

New tourism potential. In 1985, Tourism Canada commissioned a massive study of the U.S. travel market. The study found that neither Canada's cities, nor its great outdoors, nor its resorts had an image which stood up well to competition in the Americans' minds: "Instead, Canada's

strength lies in the fact that it is a foreign destination, close and familiar, yet somehow different. The essential difference is the people of Canada - their British and French heritage, their ethnic diversity, and their regional and local traditions."

Tourists who come to Newfoundland repeatedly say that the most valuable and refreshing aspect of our province is that instead of tourist traps and tour guides, they are led to explore the genuine communities and meet the local people themselves. Our reputation as a "cultural" tourist attraction is a solid foundation on which to develop an expanded industry, and the province's built heritage is a most integral part of this



Making the District Work

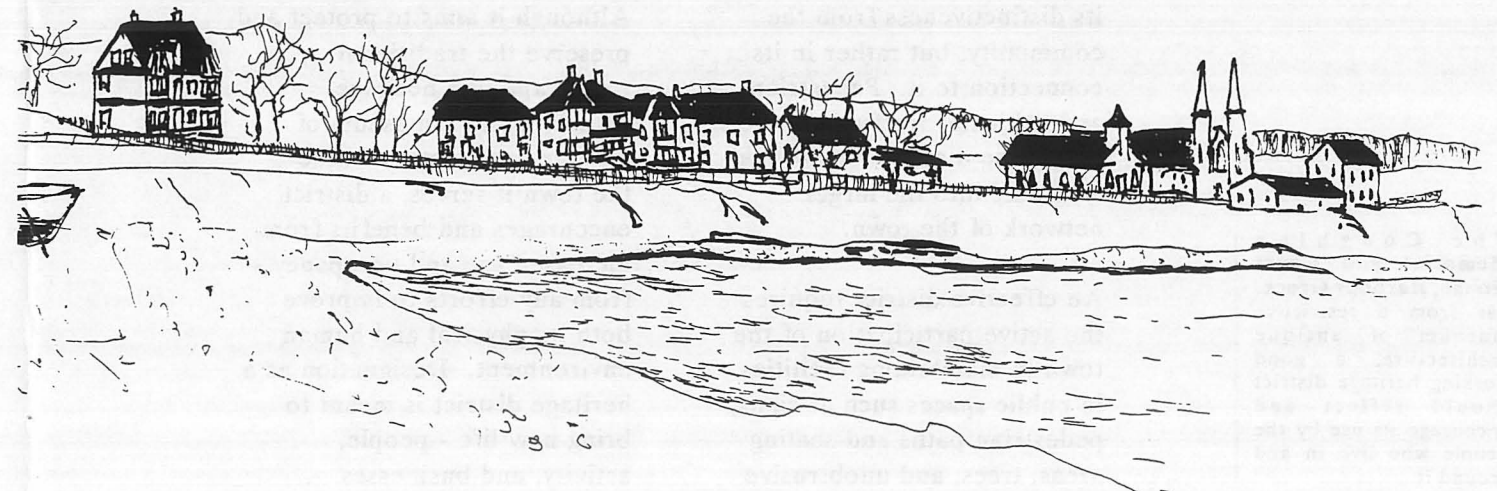
Within the district, guidelines are laid down with the aim of preserving and strengthening its vintage character. Proposed demolitions, alterations, or new constructions are considered by town council through a heritage advisory committee. The committee would consist of at least one resident property owner from the district, one council member, people from the historic society, and a representative of the local business community. Through this framework heritage priorities are reasonably balanced against other issues, and an effort is made to ensure that both the quality of the district, and the concerns and needs of its residents are addressed.

Building applications are reviewed against set standards which protect the continuity,

value, and attractiveness of the district. It should be noted that the guidelines are not meant to prevent any new development of the properties in the district, but rather to insure that any development which does take place is in harmony with its valuable heritage quality. The basic tenets of a heritage district preservation policy are listed on the last page of this booklet.

The relationship between the district and the rest of the community is one of interdependence and mutual advantage. Generally, across Canada the experience has been that instead of creating a separate, favoured area, improvements within one district have tended to precipitate further improvements adjacent to it and beyond. The potential of

Water St., Harbour Grace, from Point of Beach. For one reason or another, some areas of towns change little over the years. When the quality and integrity of the original fabric is maintained for a long time, it acquires a powerful beauty and character.





The Coughlan Memorial and Court House, Harbour Grace. Far from a restrictive museum of antique architecture, a good working heritage district should reflect and encourage its use by the people who live in and around it.

the heritage district lies not in its distinctiveness from the community, but rather in its connection to it. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic into and out of the district should link smoothly into the larger network of the town.

An effective district requires the active participation of the town in maintaining facilities in public spaces such as signs, pedestrian paths and seating areas, trees, and unobtrusive

parking. Local shops, museums and churches can also play an active role as premises which are open to the public.

Most importantly, the successful heritage district must have active support from the community. The custodians of a town are its residents, and the responsibility for its use is theirs. While heritage foundations and governments can provide extensive organizational, and in some cases financial assistance, the viability of the project depends on the initiative and support of members of the community.

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador encourages owners of older structures to undertake restoration projects through matching grants of up to \$10,000 for worthy heritage buildings. In addition, it is offering matching grants of up to \$5,000 for work on other elements such as fences on properties ineligible for the first grant.

Although it aims to protect and preserve the traditional townscape, the heritage district is not a museum of antique architecture. Like the town it serves, a district encourages and benefits from increased use and occupancy - from any efforts to improve both its physical and human environment. Designation as a heritage district is meant to bring new life - people, activity, and businesses.

Benefits: *The Argument for Preservation*

The value of heritage awareness goes beyond the restoration of important buildings. Potential benefits¹ include:

Local employment. Old house restoration tends to be more labour-intensive, providing local employment, as well as an injection of sales revenue to local suppliers. Work on older structures usually contributes far more to the local and provincial economy per dollar spent than new home construction, where materials are pre-made elsewhere and shipped in, and the skills of local carpenters, painters, or masons are rarely needed.

Although this work is labour-intensive, overall costs are comparatively low. All over the world restoration and renovation of existing buildings is being recognized as more cost-effective than demolition and rebuilding from scratch.

Stability. A healthy and long-established neighbourhood is preserved. There is no uprooting or demolition or rezoning in the name of "progress."

Unlike other forms of economic development, the money sunk into the project is small, and the return is not so risky as with, for instance, a new industrial venture.

Heritage Districts don't go bankrupt and leave a community high and dry. It is friendly development, turning existing resources into functioning assets.

Increased business. Merchants, restaurant owners, and innkeepers in or nearby heritage districts report marked improvements in sales, and often respond to the heritage initiative by expanding services.

Ridley Hall in the evening light. Because they provide such a strong sense of permanence, some buildings act as markers - both in the landscape and in the memory - capturing the timeless spirit of a place.

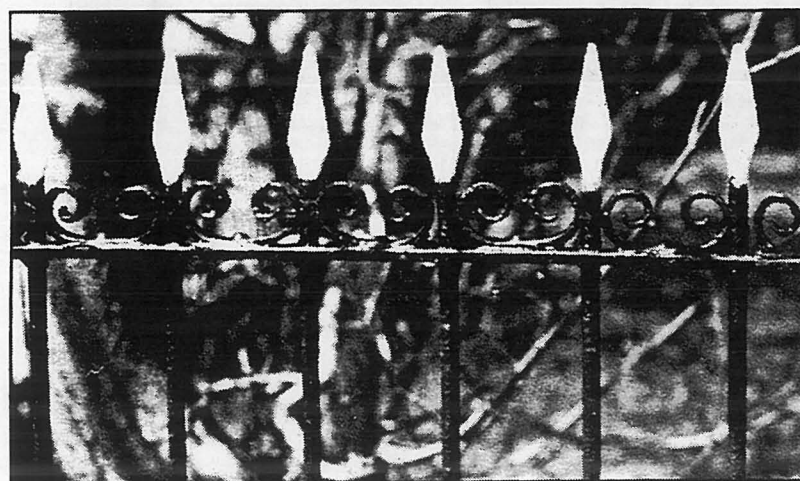




Houses within the District

Tapp House. This house originally stood on the northern end of the same lot, facing Harvey St. Art Tapp, who moved the house and added the central bay at the beginning of the 1900s, was a blacksmith who fashioned many of the iron gates and fences in the district.

Wrought iron fencing in the arrowhead style common to the district. The ever-present fences help unite houses big and small, historic and contemporary into one cohesive neighbourhood. Today craftsmanship such as this would be so expensive to produce that we must make certain to save those examples which still exist.



Heritage districts are initiated in order to help a community improve the local built environment. For private residences this help comes in two ways. First, the provincial Heritage Foundation offers assistance to owners wishing to restore their homes in a program of matching grants for restoration projects.

Second, the designated district acquires recognition and distinction as a provincial landmark, which improves the desirability, saleability, and the general health and vitality of the area, reducing the number of derelict homes, and increasing the value of properties for sale.

Normally, buildings in the province would only be eligible for heritage grants on individual merit - if they are deemed by the Foundation to be of substantial architectural or historical significance. However, where the idea of the heritage district emphasizes preservation of the community fabric as much as individual structures, the Foundation would make grants available to any properties within the district which contain heritage elements in need of restoration.

The limitations on the grants are that:

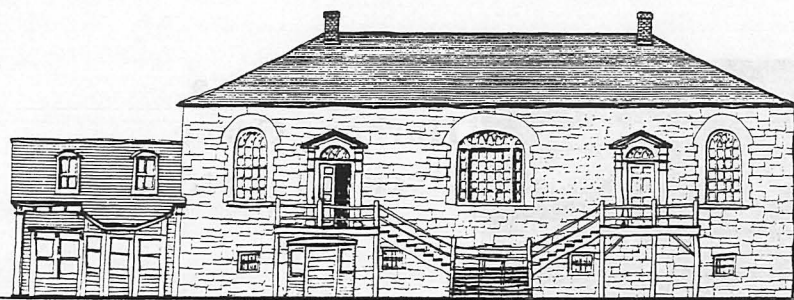
- they only be used for restoration, not for upgrading or maintenance;
- they not exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs;
- they not exceed \$10,000 for work on older buildings, or \$5,000 for work on elements such as original stone walls where the buildings themselves are contemporary (ie. restoration would not apply).

Costs allowed include professional services, exterior restoration, and some interior restoration.



Proposal for a Harbour Grace Heritage District

Harbour Grace, showing Point of Beach; from an aerial survey conducted in 1954.



History: *Early Settlement*

The Court House, 1830. Newfoundland's oldest surviving court house, it was built with new-found support from the British Government, only a year after the ban on island settlement was formally lifted. The rare full stone construction, with elegant fanlights set above windows and doors speaks of the wealth and prominence enjoyed by Harbour Grace at that time.

The proposal to develop a historic district in Harbour Grace is a pilot project for the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is also a joint initiative of the Foundation and the town of Harbour Grace and is intended to build on - to strengthen - an already strong local sense of heritage, a very fine collection of heritage structures and a significant history.

town with some real cultural pretensions.

An obvious resort of fishermen because it provided good shelter, Harbour Grace was occupied by the pirate Peter Easton at the time when John Guy and his colonists were developing Cupids. By 1618 - when Guy had left Cupids and the Bristol men involved in the Newfoundland Company had become quite fed up with



"Harbor de grace" on an unidentified chart from the 1600s. Depicted next to Point of Beach is an image of Peter Easton's fort - Its actual design is not known.

Harbour Grace has a very important place in Newfoundland history and until the end of the nineteenth century was always the principal Newfoundland town outside the capital. Important commercially, it became an administrative and political centre as well as a

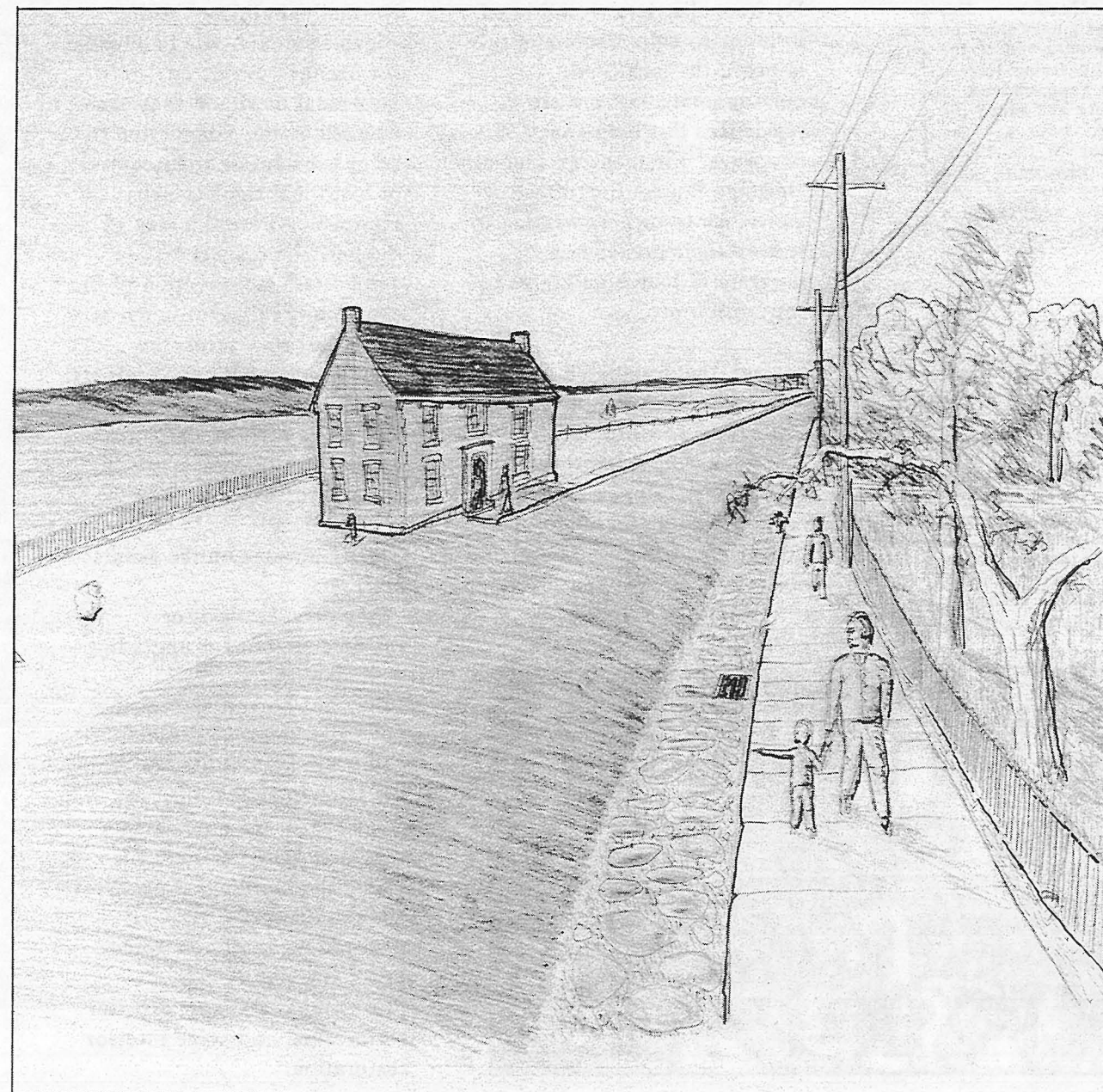
having to play second fiddle to the London shareholders - the colony of Bristol's Hope was established. In 1617 the Newfoundland Company had granted the Merchant Venturers of Bristol a portion of land which may have run from Carbonear to Spaniard's Bay and over into Trinity Bay.

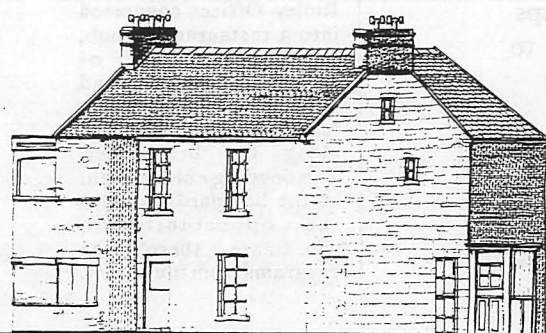
The public area - ie. the street and cliffside - require almost no changes. It is, however, recommended that a walk be constructed, running from the Conception Bay Museum along the water side and down steps to Point of Beach, in order to link up the two areas. Benches should be incorporated as well.

The state of repair of the

street and sidewalk is not bothersome, although thought can be given to a subtly more attractive lay-out when it comes time to replace them. Heritage districts are helped by distinguishing characteristics such as a different type of road surface or a special style of street lamp, which let the visitor feel they are in a special place.

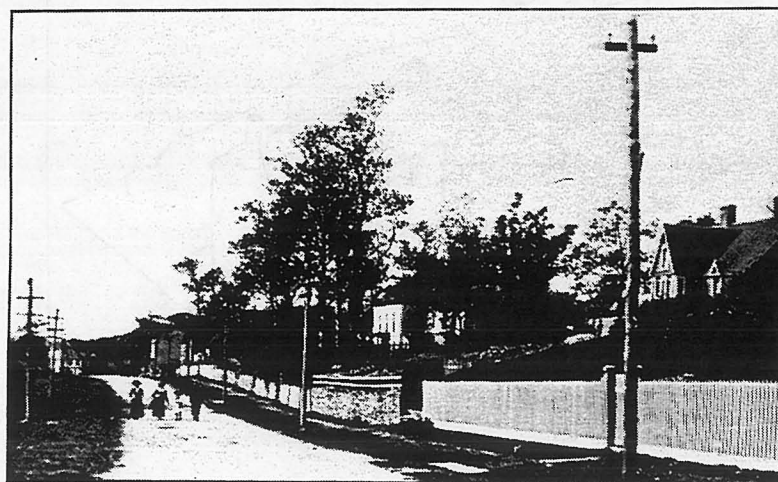
Water Street as a Heritage District. With the Cathedral and Court House at one end, Point of Beach, St. Paul's and downtown at the other, and the Museum as a focal point in between, this beautiful long block of homes and gardens becomes an ideal walk for visitors. To exploit the coastal setting, some improvements should be made to the south side of the street before the museum.





Ridley Hall, 1833. In all likelihood, the finest surviving stone house in Newfoundland. Even in its tragically derelict condition, its sheer size and presence still command attention.

Houses along Harvey St., c.1905. This sort of image has largely disappeared from Harbour Grace, other than within the area of the proposed district.



Case Study 2: Water Street

Old photographs of Harbour Grace show elegant streets with large homes surrounded by elaborate gardens, always encircled by fieldstone walls or wrought iron fences. Quite a few properties around town still include a number of these features, but only along this eastern section of Water street is so much of this historic character still intact that the image of the photographs really comes to life.

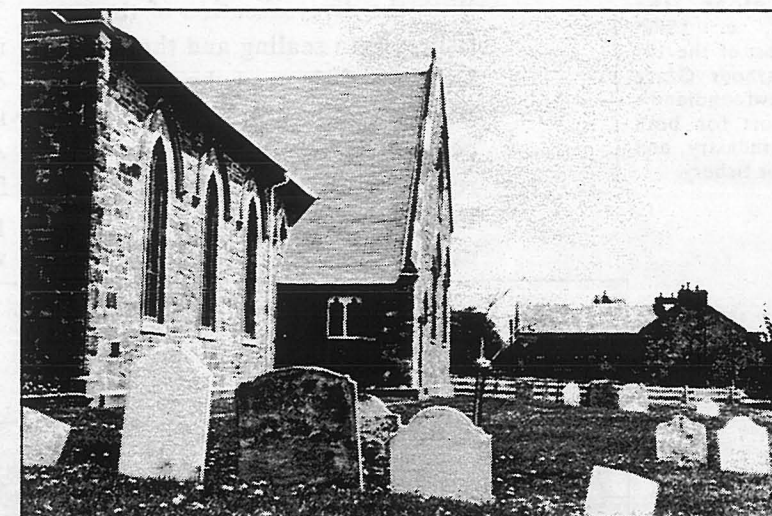
On a summer day, the walk from Cochrane street to the Cathedral is a popular one for those who know the town and the area. The scenic

atmosphere is a product of several factors: The street sits atop cliffs which offer a fine view out over the water. The street is not a main thoroughfare any more - there is a soothing quiet in which the pedestrian seems to predominate over the automobile. The gardens, flowering trees, and fences which together have been lovingly assembled by property owners over many years provide a human-scale attractiveness. And the historic residences, originally built with great care to present a proud and attractive public face, are a self-contained architectural tour of remarkable breadth and beauty.

As valuable as this streetscape is, it is essential that it not be permitted to erode. Heritage designation is the appropriate framework to stop this from ever happening, by developing a district which is enough of an asset to the community that its preservation is a priority on economic as well as cultural grounds.

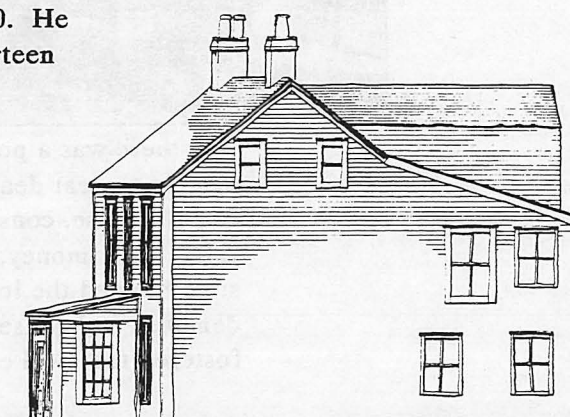
With that grant a formal colony was established at Harbour Grace. It was most likely peopled by some of those who had become disenchanted with the Cupids experiment. The governor was Robert Hayman who spent one winter and several summers there but is more famous for his verse than for his administrative abilities. His book, *Quodlibets*, is essentially a promotional publication written in not very good poetry. Its distinction is that if it is not the first, then it is among the earliest books written in Canada.

Nothing more is heard of this colony after 1631 but that does not mean it disappeared. It may simply mean that the formal connections between the settlers and the investors in Bristol broke down and that some people stayed to pursue their own livelihood. But the links remained sufficiently strong for the



mayor of Bristol to report in 1696 that "the trade of this city lies at Harbour de Grace and the places adjacent . . ." The next year the Abbe Baudoin, who accompanied the French on their raids, reported the death of an inhabitant of Harbour Grace who was born there in 1610. He also spoke of fourteen settlers who kept cattle - a sign of secure occupancy of the land.

St. Paul's Cemetery. The remarkable origins and history of Harbour Grace can be well appreciated by reading the many stories of earlier ancestors from near and far carved into these beautiful stones. Dates reach back to the 1600's.



Growth and Prominence

Throughout the eighteenth century Harbour Grace was an important centre for the Conception Bay fishery but also the major port of entry for supplies. It is not surprising then that in the 1760s the town begins to develop its institutions. Its first church, for the Anglicans, was constructed in 1764 to be the

same size as the St. John's church. It was from this church that Rev. Lawrence Coughlan sowed the seeds of Methodism in North America. This period also saw the beginnings of the great Irish migration that was to so strongly shape the history and character of both Harbour Grace and Newfoundland.

Hampshire Cottage. Also known as The Garrison House. The earliest record of the building is on Joseph Noad's map of 1845, although it is locally thought to date back to 1811. A charming example of the typical 19th Century Newfoundland salt-box style house, it is the last survivor from a series of similar residences which once lined Water Street.

Activity along the waterfront, c. 1880. Through most of the 19th Century Harbour Grace was Newfoundland's principal port for both the sealing industry, and the Labrador fishery.

With the diversification of the fishery into sealing and the Labrador fishery at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Harbour Grace grew remarkably. Sealing meant that the working year was extended into the winter, so

This stable resource industry inspired other types of development - economic, institutional and cultural. Along Water Street a range of fine stone shops were built to provide the prosperous town with a selection of consumer

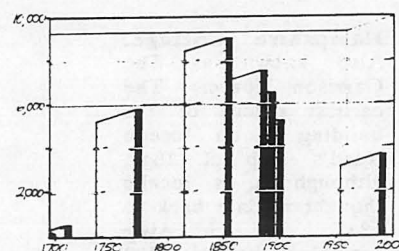


that there was a possibility of making a great deal of money (at, of course, considerable risk). That money, in turn, strengthened the local demands and consequently fostered the local economy.

The Labrador fishery was a very profitable extension of the local summer fishery and, by 1847, employed two-thirds of the fishermen of the town. By that time Harbour Grace had become the most important port in these two aspects of the fishery - a place it held until St. John's took over control of capital, and so began its dominance at the end of the nineteenth century.

goods. Cabinet and carriage makers established themselves in the town to serve the growing population. The Harbour Grace Grammar School was opened in 1844 and some sense of its standing is indicated by the fact that there were 20 applicants for the post of Master. By the mid-1880's there were a dozen schools in the town.

The churches also grew in number and importance. The present Anglican church was constructed 1835-37 after a devastating fire and, built in stone, is one of the town's most important buildings. A monumental Catholic

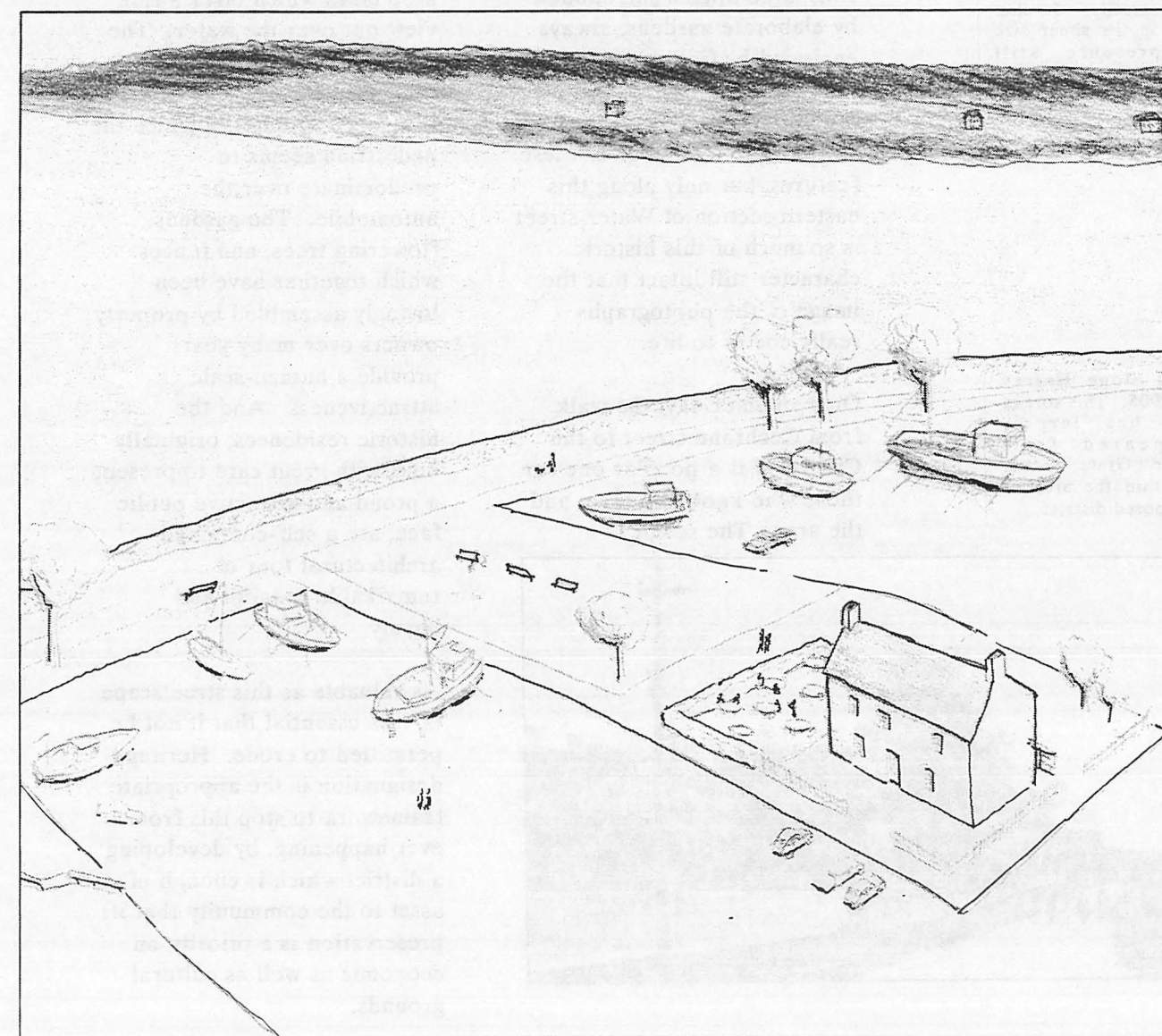


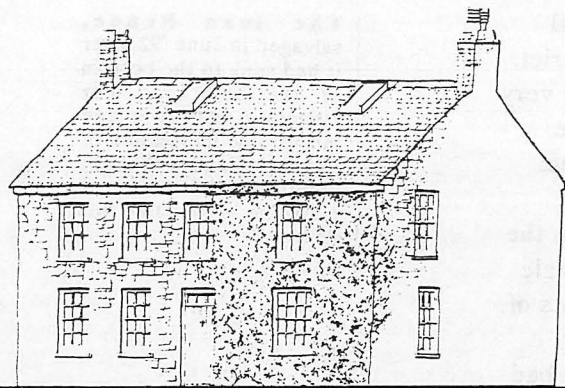
Population. In 1856 approximately 9500 people lived in Harbour Grace. Fewer than 3700 live here today.

Beach a larger, more accessible, and more picturesque waterfront area than most. On top of this it generally has a half dozen or more boats on the slipway, which add interest, and a good harbour for pleasure craft. In order to open it up to visitors, Point of Beach needs four things: First, the areas which have over recent years become miniature dumps, full of rusted machinery and empty paint cans, could quite easily be cleaned up. Second, some

basic visitor facilities need to be put in place, including signs, benches, parking, and perhaps even a small area converted to parkland. Third, the Ridley Offices should become the focus for the area, ideally as a public operation such as a restaurant. (Such a remarkable location is quite a drawing card.) Fourth, the package must be marketed, which is where in conjunction with the rest of the district heritage designation is a particularly powerful vehicle.

Redeveloping Point of Beach. One possible scheme would hope to see Ridley Offices converted into a restaurant or pub, with a stretch of recreational land connecting it to a path leading to the lighthouse along the breakwater. The ongoing enlargement of the boatyard provides the opportunity to coordinate these two programs from the outset.





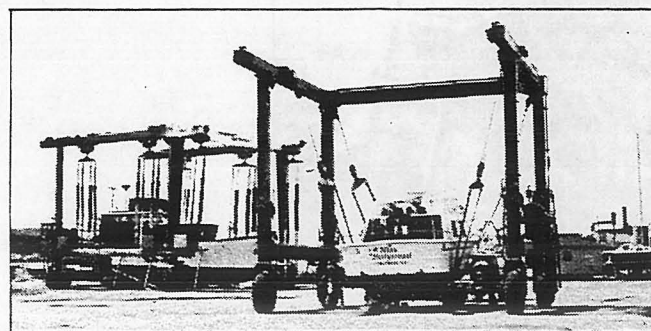
Case Study 1: Point of Beach

Ridley Offices, c. 1838. The last of the 19th century commercial buildings on the Point, built by the merchant Thomas Ridley along with the Hall which also bears his name. That both structures are of stone construction (with brick trim) is a testament to the family's affluence.

One of the benefits of heritage projects is the ability they have to define what sort of place the community really is. Towns transform themselves remarkably quickly, and sometimes in the process they forget why they came to be in the first place, or what over the years made them what they are today. For this reason heritage preservation should pay special attention to those elements of a community which represent its core, its reason for being what it is - its identity.

A wander through centuries of maps of Harbour Grace makes clear the central role which Point of Beach has had in the town's evolution. Along with the long narrow bay, the small promontory gave Harbour Grace the excellent harbour it

Activity on the slipway. Work in and around the Marine Complex actually complements a new accent on tourism: it adds life and visual interest, and the facilities themselves should attract the recreational boater.



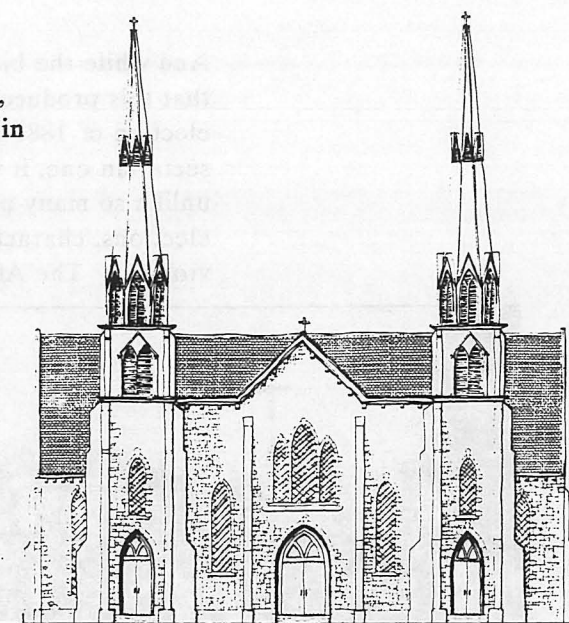
needed to become the predominant port in Conception Bay. The past few decades mark the first time in over two hundred years that the Point is home to less than a dozen stores and warehouses.

Happily, the great maritime traditions which this place represent have continued to inhabit it, these days in the shape of a boat yard. And one of the finer buildings to have graced the site, the Ridley Offices, still stand as a reminder of those earlier times.

On Point of Beach, a new openness to visitors can be cultivated in the midst of the normal activities of the yard. Many coastal communities in North America have turned their waterfront into the focus for visitors, for obvious reasons of beauty and interest. Although tourists in Newfoundland naturally expect to be drawn to the water which represents our history, few villages have any welcoming facilities beyond the government wharf. Harbour Grace already has in Point of

Cathedral was constructed on the model of St. Peter's in Rome over a 30 year period only to burn down in 1889 - two years after its completion. The current Cathedral was built immediately afterwards and opened in 1892. The Methodists had churches in Harbour Grace from c. 1791 and the Presbyterians a kirk from 1855 to 1940.

The court house, constructed in 1830, and now the oldest in Newfoundland is another indication of the power and place of Harbour Grace in the middle of the nineteenth century.



Into the Modern Age

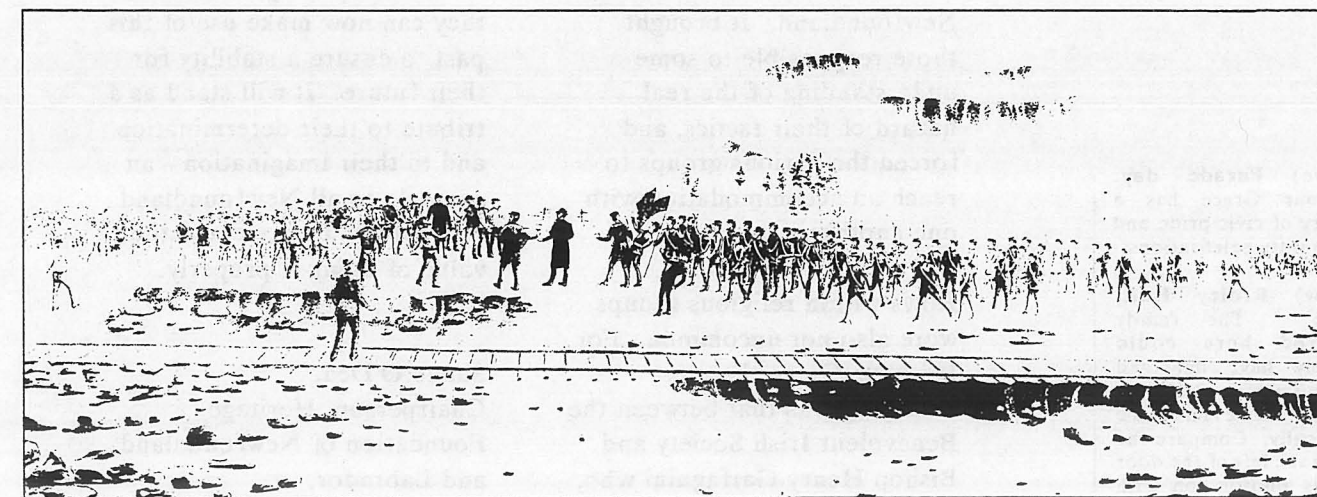
But all this began to unravel in the 1870's and 1880's. The bankruptcy of the Ridleys in 1870 followed on a series of poor fisheries in the previous decade and meant the collapse of one of the country's most substantial firms. And they were not the only Harbour Grace firm to go under. Yet the spirit was still there, for John Munn and Company produced a number of innovations which improved the marketability of

Newfoundland fish. But even they had problems and were among the most significant victims of the 1894 Bank Crash.

These economic problems were matched by sectarian strife which came to a head with what is known as the Harbour Grace Affray of December 26, 1883. On that St. Stephen's Day two Orangemen were killed by Catholics when their parade approached Riverhead.

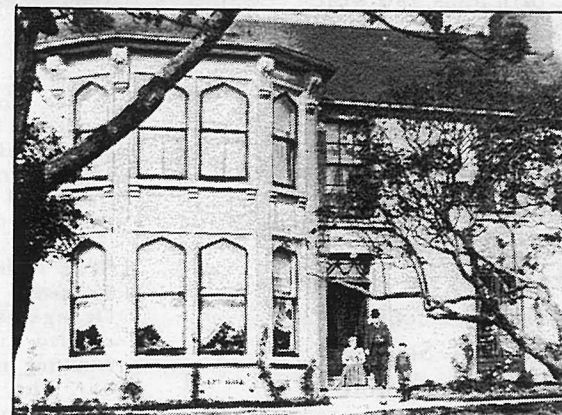
The Immaculate Conception Church, 1892. Universally known as the Cathedral, Harbour Grace having previously been the seat of the Roman Catholic diocese for over a century. Built to replace an enormous earlier Cathedral which was destroyed by fire in 1889.

"The Harbour Grace Tragedy, 1883." An Orangeman's parade erupted into violence resulting in two deaths, but the subsequent outrage forever brought to a close such radical sectarian conflict.



SCENE OF THE HARBOR GRACE TRAGEDY.
ST. STEPHEN'S DAY DECEMBER 26TH 1883

And while the bitter divisions that this produced made the election of 1885 a distinctly sectarian one, it was not, unlike so many previous elections, characterized by violence. The Affray, in fact,



marked the climax and the close of overt sectarianism in Newfoundland. It brought those responsible to some understanding of the real hazard of their tactics, and forced the various groups to reach an accommodation with one another.

Rows within religious groups were also not uncommon. For Harbour Grace the most damaging was that between the Benevolent Irish Society and Bishop Henry Garfagnini who, when he left in 1880, is reputed

to have said that grass would grow in the streets of the town. The most immediate manifestation of his curse was the destruction of the Cathedral in 1889, and he seems to have hovered like some darkening spirit over the town ever since. He was probably on hand when fire destroyed Water Street's business premises in 1945.

However, the will of the town has worked against him. Despite all past adversity, Harbour Grace has never lost its culture, its manners, its heritage, its sense of place. When the centenary of the Cathedral fire looked like it might have been celebrated by the demolition of its successor all Harbour Gracians, Catholic and Protestant alike, rallied to ensure the survival of one of their defining buildings. They built up and developed their museum two decades ago and have always shown a keen awareness and a strong commitment to their past.

With this Heritage District they can now make use of this past to ensure a stability for their future. It will stand as a tribute to their determination and to their imagination - an example to all Newfoundland of what can be done and the value of doing it properly.

Shane O'Dea,
Chairperson, Heritage
Foundation of Newfoundland
and Labrador,
10/7/92.

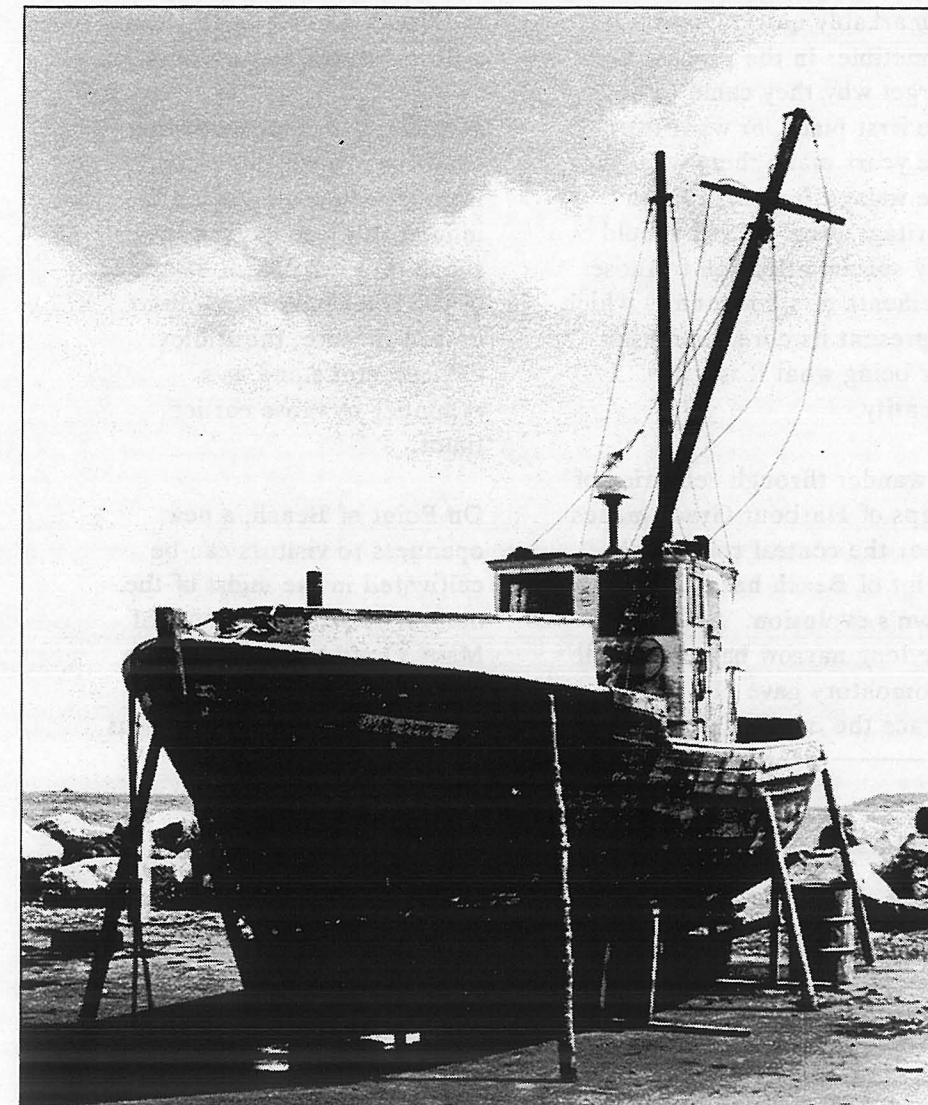
Point of Beach itself provides an opportunity for tourists to explore a working boat yard in an attractive setting. Because the strength of the image is the simple charm of a traditional working yard - the boats and the labour that goes into them, very little need be done to accommodate visitors within this facility. The wharf also provides the potential to cater to recreational boaters.

The Conception Bay Museum, containing information and collections from the area,

provides a very useful focal point for a tour of the district. Tourists should also at the very least be able visit the three churches and Ridley offices.

Situated next to downtown, the district would supply clientele to the shops and restaurants of Harbour Grace, as well as visitors to local hotels and bed & breakfasts. Designation and protection as a heritage district would expose the beauty and historical merit of the area, and convert them into viable assets to the community.

The Ivan Renee, salvaged in June '92 after it had sunk to the bottom of the harbour. For visitors a distinctive and memorable impression of Newfoundland is the raw, picturesque character of maritime images like this one.

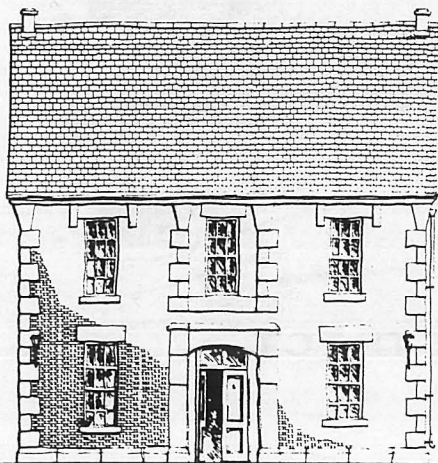


(above) **Parade day.** Harbour Grace has a history of civic pride and community celebrations.

(below) **Ridley Hall,** c.1895. The family pictured here could scarcely have imagined that this gracious building would decline so drastically. Compare the bay to the left of the door in this photograph with the drawing on p. 17.

Heritage districts have been effectively developed in many communities across North America. In order for a district to succeed, it must be engaging both at the level of the individual structures, and as a whole package. It must also contain elements of genuine historical interest and importance, and be somehow unique, or memorable.

The proposed district in Harbour Grace, stretching from Point of Beach to the Roman Catholic Cathedral, has all these qualities. The architecture of the district is at once varied and cohesive, with different styles and different choices of materials being employed for houses of widely varied size and function. And yet the neighbourhood as a whole has a pleasant unity which derives from the regular spacing of the houses, the typically large front gardens, and the ornate fence-work which runs along the front of the properties. Other



The Customs House, 1870. built on the site of Peter Easton's early 17th Century fort. The age, the architectural style and the use of brick masonry make it unique among Newfoundland's public buildings.

Aside from its historic merits, the district boasts a remarkable seaside location, looking out to the icebergs and islands in the harbour mouth. The location gives this part of Water Street a special park-

structures, like the Courthouse and Customshouse, punctuate the residential precinct with their distinctive and individual character, making the district as a whole an excellent setting for a scenic stroll.

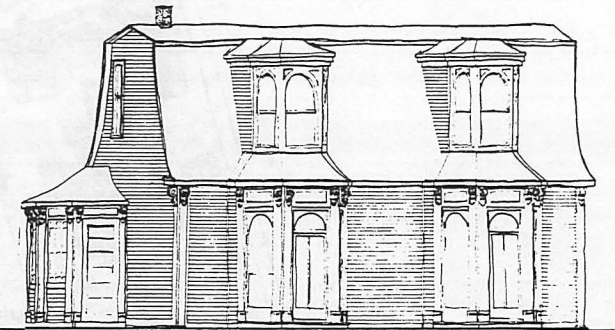
And the area has a good deal of historical importance. Point of Beach has always stood as the protection and the entrance for the town's historic harbour. Near the site of the Customs House once stood Peter Easton's seventeenth century fort, with speculation of pirates buried in the nearby churchyard.

Within the district are a memorial to the famous Rev. Coughlan, a sculpture commemorating Harbour Grace's role in early aviation history, several national architectural landmarks including the province's oldest courthouse, the first tennis club in the province, a number of residences built by very prominent figures from Newfoundland history, a museum, and three early churches - one a cathedral.

Welcoming Visitors

like quality - a natural attraction to new visitors just as it has been to the local residents for generations, since the first wealthy townspeople built their estates along this coast in the early 1800's.

Study: The Feasibility of a District



Today, despite several devastating fires, Harbour Grace retains many fine buildings from earlier chapters of its history. Together these stand as the most vivid testament to the proud place which the town has in the history of Newfoundland.

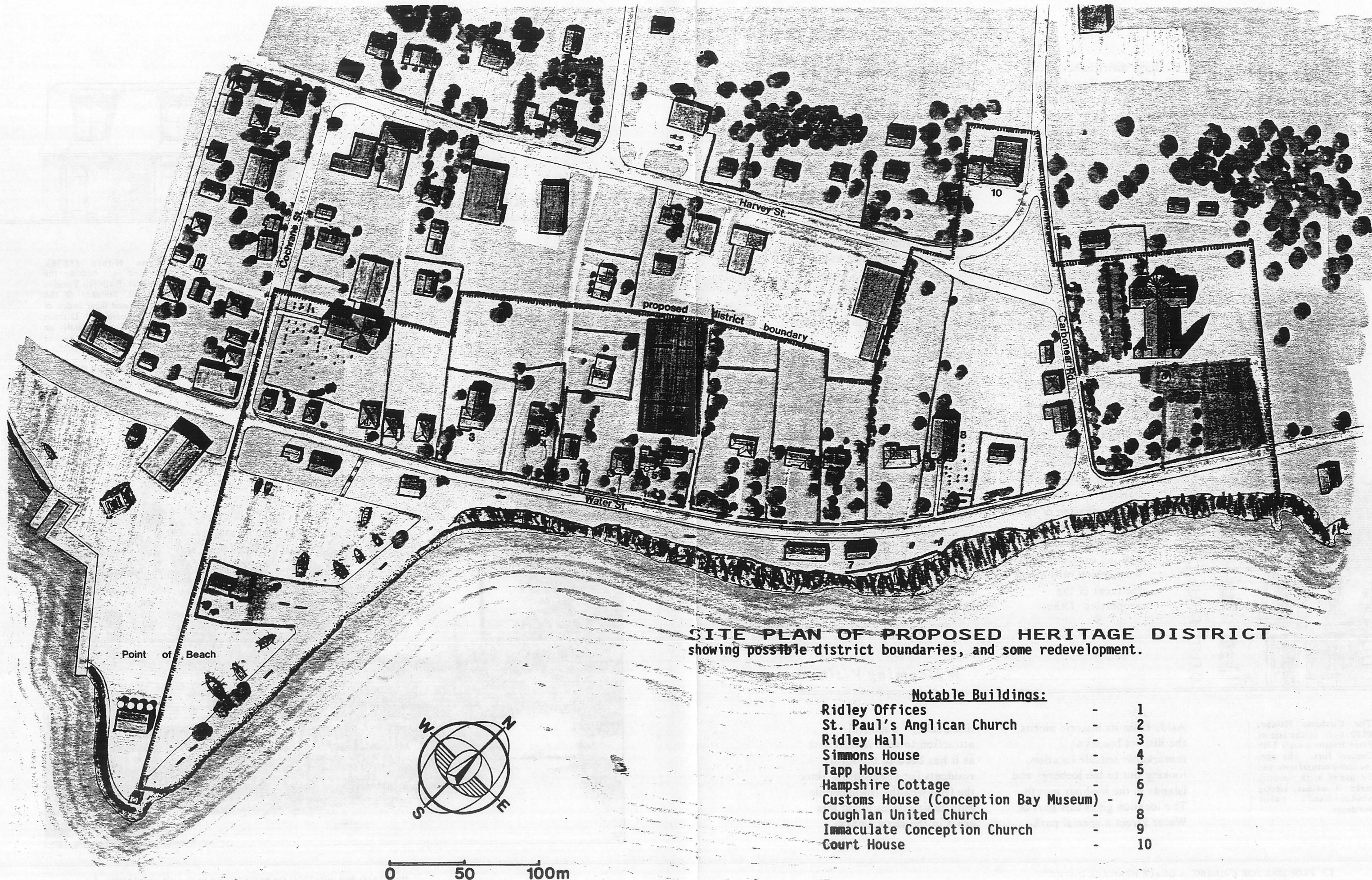
The area of Harbour Grace which has the strongest historical character is the

eastern end of Water street, where recent construction has been scarce, and there exists a concentration of notable heritage buildings. Because of its historical import, and its attractiveness, the area presents a strong case for special designation as a heritage district, the first in the provincial Heritage Foundation's new area preservation program.

Cron House (1878), located just outside the district. Built for Thomas Bennet, Speaker of the House and later Judge of the Northern District Court, it was actually an addition on to an earlier structure from c. 1835.

Looking down Doctor's Lane towards Water St. The fences help to comfortably define public areas alongside the treed gardens.





SITE PLAN OF PROPOSED HERITAGE DISTRICT
showing possible district boundaries, and some redevelopment.

Notable Buildings:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----|
| Ridley Offices | - | 1 |
| St. Paul's Anglican Church | - | 2 |
| Ridley Hall | - | 3 |
| Simmons House | - | 4 |
| Tapp House | - | 5 |
| Hampshire Cottage | - | 6 |
| Customs House (Conception Bay Museum) | - | 7 |
| Coughlan United Church | - | 8 |
| Immaculate Conception Church | - | 9 |
| Court House | - | 10 |