

# the trident

A publication of the Newfoundland & Labrador Historic Trust

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*Photo: Zach Bonnell*

## *Placemaking, Heritage, and Community Vitality*

Emily Wolf, Board of Directors, NL Historic Trust

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As communities grow and evolve, historic buildings provide an important sense of place. They reinforce our connection to the past while providing meaningful opportunities for the future, lending themselves to small businesses, start-ups, and creative endeavours. Unfortunately, we face a crisis of value when it comes to our built heritage. Heritage buildings, and the social, cultural, economic, and environmental values they embody, are too often overlooked in favour of generic, “one size fits all” development solutions that are ultimately detrimental to our communities.

A key tool to ensure that heritage is maintained as communities evolve is placemaking – a collaborative approach to improving a neighbourhood, town, or city based on strengthening the connection between people and the places they share. Placemaking addresses not only urban design and architecture but also the physical, cultural, historic, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

All of the diverse elements that make up a community – parks, commercial districts, waterfronts, streets, landscapes, heritage buildings – are places. Place exists at multiple scales: the community as a whole, specific destinations or neighbourhoods within the community, and the individual elements that populate these destinations or neighbourhoods.

Placemaking is both a framework for planning and a participatory tool. At its best, it brings all stakeholders of a place together to devise solutions that shape or revitalize that place. Common

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## Placemaking, Heritage, and Community Vitality

problems, such as pedestrian-unfriendly downtowns, deserted parks, underutilized buildings, and underperforming development projects, can be addressed (or avoided!) by viewing a place in its entirety, rather than focusing on isolated components.

Because buildings, especially historic buildings, play a central role in how people relate to their communities, placemaking and heritage go hand in hand. Integrating placemaking with heritage conservation and adaptive reuse recognizes that these actions are as much about the past as they are about the present and the future.

Although the term “placemaking” emerged in the mid-1990s, it is not a new idea. Writers like Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte introduced place-centric ideas beginning in the 1960s, focusing on the social and cultural importance of lively, mixed-use neighbourhoods and inviting public spaces. Placemaking is currently pioneered by Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. PPS has identified four qualities that define successful places:

### They are accessible.

A successful place is easy to move through and visually and physically connected to its surroundings.

### People are engaged in activities there.

Activities are the basic building blocks of a place. Having something to do gives people a reason to visit (and return to) a place. Successful places cater to locals and visitors alike.

### They are comfortable and have a positive image.

Successful places are comfortable and foster positive associations. This includes safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit.

### They are sociable.

When people meet friends, greet their neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, they tend to feel a stronger sense of place or attachment to their community, and to the place that fosters these social activities.

Many heritage buildings or neighbourhoods already embody (or are readily adapted to embody) these four qualities, in turn supporting a diverse mix of uses and users. Developing heritage resources with place in mind allows communities to reestablish their distinct identities and reclaim their economic, social, and cultural vitality.

As PPS has observed, placemaking reflects the common sense approach that guided how most communities were created in the first place. All kinds of people (not just developers, planners, or architects) worked to create a community’s buildings, streets, and public spaces. Rejecting this holistic approach to development threatens the community’s built environment, cultural heritage, and sense of place.

Placemaking also helps to expand the impact of heritage conservation. By embracing a process that draws on local knowledge and existing heritage assets, communities can forge connections between heritage advocates, developers, entrepreneurs, artists, and others to create places of long-lasting value that serve - and will continue to serve - multiple needs within their communities.

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# Who is your Heritage Hero?

## Nominations Open for 2018 Southcott Awards

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The Historic Trust is now accepting nominations for the 2018 Southcott Awards. The Trust established the Southcott Award program in 1984 to recognize excellence in the preservation and adaptive reuse of the architectural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Nominations are considered in five categories:

- Heritage Restoration
- Heritage Tradesperson
- Design in Context
- Heritage Stewardship
- Lifetime Achievement

The Southcott Award for *Heritage Restoration* is presented to finished architectural restoration projects.

The *Heritage Tradesperson* award celebrates the skill and contribution of an individual in the craft or trade professions in heritage conservation. The individual must work using specialist and traditional methods and exhibit a high standard of craftsmanship.

The *Design in Context* award recognizes that building design has the power to encourage economic development and improve the quality of life for residents in a particular area. Such

design may address issues of sustainability or encourage community renewal. The award seeks to recognize individuals or organizations that have completed an architectural design project sensitive to the heritage character of the surrounding environment. New, infill, and renovations will be considered for how sympathetic the addition or renovation is to the historic context of the neighbouring area with regard to style, scale, form, and building materials.

Awards in the *Heritage Stewardship* category are considered for excellence in long-term maintenance of heritage properties that have not been significantly altered since construction.

The *Duff-O'Dea Lifetime Achievement Award*, named in honour of inaugural recipients Shannie Duff and Shane O'Dea, recognizes individuals who have made an exceptional contribution over a period of 25 years or more to heritage conservation in the province.

The deadline for nominations is May 15, 2018.

For more information on the Southcott Awards or to download a nomination form, please visit <https://www.historictrust.ca/southcott-awards> or email [southcottawards@gmail.com](mailto:southcottawards@gmail.com).

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### A GIFT OF HERITAGE



HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF ST. JOHN'S  
NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST

### TEN HISTORIC TOWNS



HERITAGE ARCHITECTURE IN NEWFOUNDLAND  
NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORIC TRUST

## Historic Trust Books Now Available Online

The Historic Trust has published two books - *A Gift of Heritage: Historic Architecture of St. John's* and *Ten Historic Towns: Heritage Architecture in Newfoundland* - that celebrate the province's historic buildings and communities.

Both publications are illustrated by Jean M. Ball, well known to many through her drawings of some of the province's most cherished landmarks.

PDFs of each book are available for download at the Historic Trust website ([www.historictrust.ca/publications](http://www.historictrust.ca/publications)). The books are also archived through Memorial University's Digital Archives Initiative (<http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/>).

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## Save the Date! Doors Open Returns in September



Doors Open 2018 will take place on Saturday, September 8. The Historic Trust is excited to announce that this year's event will feature a greater focus on built heritage, with additional changes designed to streamline and improve the event for both visitors and participating sites.

Doors Open is a unique opportunity for the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador to celebrate our architecture and heritage through the exploration of some of our historic and architectural gems. Buildings that are normally closed to the public or charge an entrance fee welcome visitors to look around for free.

To get involved with Doors Open as a committee member or volunteer, please contact [coordinator@historictrust.ca](mailto:coordinator@historictrust.ca).

## Annual General Meeting

The Historic Trust hosted its Annual General Meeting on March 22 at the Rocket Room in St. John's.

After a brief business meeting, members and supporters were invited to share their thoughts on priorities for built heritage conservation and advocacy via informal, interactive stations and discussion. Topics addressed included buildings and sites at risk; strengths, weaknesses, and challenges affecting the province's built heritage; and opportunities for engagement.

As the Trust embarks on a strategic planning process, this feedback will be used to help inform our future efforts and initiatives.



Historic Trust President Cory Thorne speaking at the AGM.

## News from the Board of Directors

Peter Jackson, Kim Cooper, and Scott Osmond stepped down from the Historic Trust Board of Directors in late 2017. Many thanks to Peter, Kim, and Scott for their hard work and dedication to the Trust's mission.

In March, the Trust welcomed three new directors: James Hiller, Michael Knox, and Tyler Stapleton. They bring expertise in history, education, conservation, and built heritage to the Board.

Directors Jessica Dellow and Emily Wolf have been appointed to the City of St. John's Heritage Policy Working Group, convened by Councillor Maggie Burton.

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## Scenes from the 33rd Annual Southcott Awards

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The 33rd Annual Southcott Award recipients were honoured on October 27, 2017 at a sold-out ceremony and reception held at Sunnyside (70 Circular Road) in St. John's.

The Trust was pleased to recognize a diverse group of projects that support and protect the places that matter to our province. As a leading voice for heritage conservation in Newfoundland and Labrador, we will continue to bring people and organizations together to influence the future of our historic buildings, landscapes, and communities.

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Historic Trust President Cory Thorne presented the Duff-O'Dea Lifetime Achievement Award to Ruth Canning, in recognition of her significant contributions to the preservation of the province's built heritage.



Andrew Pretty accepted a Heritage Restoration award for the restoration of the Herbert Pretty House in Dildo.



Brian Casey accepted a Heritage Restoration award for the restoration of 55 Rennie's Mill Road in St. John's.



The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador's Dale Jarvis presented the 13th Annual Leida Finlayson Memorial Scholarship to Alexander Jessome.



Kim Doyle and Adam Steffler-Minty accepted a Design in Context award for the Inn by Mallard Cottage in St. John's.

*Photos: Jeremy Hetzel*

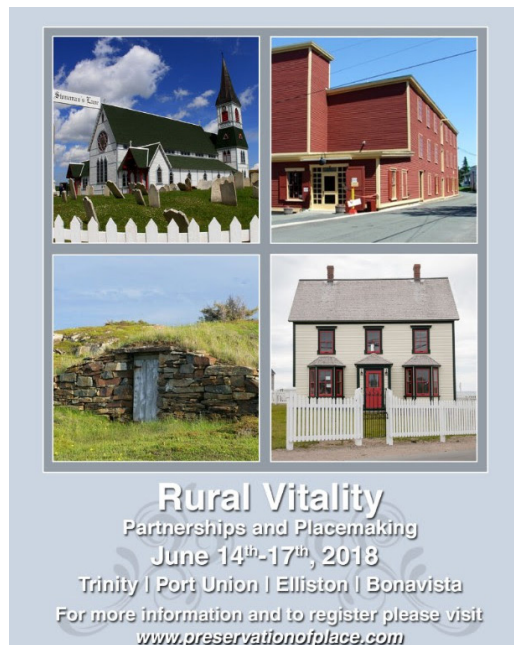
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## Rural Vitality: Partnerships and Placemaking

Rural Vitality: Partnerships and Placemaking will take place on the Bonavista Peninsula from June 14-17. The forum will highlight the region's built heritage assets and identify new strategies for mobilizing heritage for place-based development.

This unique, community-based forum will engage regional stakeholders, businesses, municipalities, and not-for-profits in a dialogue around built heritage by identifying new place-based development opportunities based on regional and sectoral collaboration.

The forum will include presentations, panels, and walking tours, all designed to introduce participants to the way in which communities such as Bonavista, Port Union, Trinity, and Elliston have capitalized on their one-of-a-kind built heritage and used it to enhance social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being.



Speakers will include John Norman, COO and co-owner of Bonavista Creative and Bonavista Living; Dr. Gerald L. Pocius, Research Professor at Cape Breton University; and Natalie Bull, Executive Director, National Trust for Canada.

For more information, visit [www.preservationofplace.com](http://www.preservationofplace.com).

## Federal Financial Incentives for Heritage: What Now?

Earlier this year, the Federal Government released a budget with no financial measures to encourage investment in historic places, and no word on the future of the National Cost-Sharing Program for Heritage Places.

On March 21, Bill C-323 was killed in the House of Commons – terminating a Conservative-led proposal for heritage rehabilitation tax incentives that saw widespread support from organizations, municipalities, property owners, and heritage advocates.

The Historic Trust was a signatory on the Canadian Heritage Sector's response to Minister McKenna in 2017 and will continue to work closely with the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Association of Heritage Industries, and the National Trust to advocate for the passage of federal measures that support investment in our built heritage.

The National Trust is leading a number of advocacy initiatives, from building a list of Canadian places in need of or already lost due to lack of investment, creating a social media toolkit, and hosting bi-weekly conference calls. For more information on how you can get involved with these efforts, visit <https://nationaltrustcanada.ca/what-you-can-do/advocacy-action>.



## Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust 2018 Membership Form

Annual membership fees support the ongoing work of the Trust in fulfilling its mandate of research, advocacy, and education. The ability of the Trust to speak confidently and lobby effectively to protect our province's built heritage, neighborhoods, streetscapes, and open spaces depends, to a large extent, on the degree of public support it enjoys.

We have purchased a group membership with the National Trust for Canada and can now offer all the benefits of National Trust membership at no cost to you. This includes their nationally acclaimed magazine, *locale*; free admission or discounts at historic sites in Canada, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Jersey, Australia, and the United States; reduced rates at conferences; voting privileges; and travel offers. To extend your Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust membership to include the National Trust for Canada membership, please tick the relevant box below. It's that easy!

You may visit our website complete your application and payment online. Just go to [www.historictrust.ca](http://www.historictrust.ca) and fill out the convenient online membership form. Then select the Canada Helps icon (it reads "Donate Now") to make your payment online. Input your details and preferred method of payment.



Memberships and donations are tax deductible. Receipts will be issued annually. Online memberships will be issued tax receipts upon payment through [Canadahelps.org](http://Canadahelps.org).

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**Membership level:**

- Student \$10
- Individual/Family \$30
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- I include a \$\_\_\_\_\_ donation
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\_\_\_\_\_

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Yes, I want to join National Trust for Canada.

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[www.nationaltrustcanada.ca](http://www.nationaltrustcanada.ca)  
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## the trident

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### Board of Directors

Cory Thorne, *President*; Jessica Dellow, *Vice President*; Kirsten Morry, *Treasurer*; Emily Wolf, *Secretary*; Nancy Brace; Grant Genova; James Hiller; Jillian Hood; Michael Knox; Tyler Stapleton.