



Shubenacadie Canal Commission

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2014 - March 31st, 2015



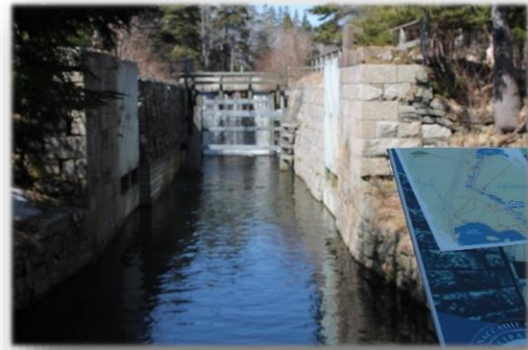
The Shubenacadie Canal

The largest part of the Shubenacadie Canal system was shaped 12,000 years ago, as the last great Ice Age departed. It left in its wake a remarkable land and river chain that connected the Bay of Fundy with Halifax Harbour. It became a major highway for Nova Scotia's first inhabitants.

In 1797, the Nova Scotia Legislature voted funds to survey the system with the possibility of constructing a trade waterway along the system, but it was not until 1824 that Francis Hall submitted plans and estimates for a canal. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor General of the day, turned the first sod on July 25th, 1826, and started the largest construction project undertaken up to that time in Nova Scotia.

Unfortunately, construction problems and a lack of funds brought a close to the endeavor before its completion and it was not until 1854 that the work could begin again. Seven years later in 1861 the Canal vessel, the Avery, made the first complete journey from Harbor to Bay thus officially opening the 115 kilometer long waterway. The waterway operated until 1871 until the railway restricted usage.

After sitting idle for 114 years, the Province of Nova Scotia realized its heritage potential and the then Minister of Development, The Honorable Roland Thornhill, signed an agreement in 1984 to begin restoration of features of canal system. That work continues today.



Mandate of the Commission

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission (SCC) was created by an act of the Legislature in 1986 (amended in 2007) to:

“Oversee and further promote the Shubenacadie Canal System including the operation of any information or interpretative centers pertaining to or belonging to the Shubenacadie Canal System.”

The SCC consists of a volunteer board of 15 members that are assigned by the Province, Halifax Regional Municipality, as well representatives from Colchester and East Hants counties.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Shubenacadie Canal Commission is to preserve the historic features of the Shubenacadie Canal and to provide access to the waterway for the education and the enjoyment of the public. In order to achieve its mission the Commission will pursue the following objectives:

- To carry out stabilization, preservation and restoration work to the locks and associated features including the dams, head ponds and channels.
- To provide for the maximum practical use of the waterway by shallow draft watercraft.
- To provide for the interpretation of sites for visitors.
- To provide park-like settings for residents and tourists.

CHAIR REPORT

THIS WAS A YEAR OF GOOD PROGRESS ON KEY CANAL MATTERS AND ENGAGEMENT BY THE SHUBENACADIE CANAL COMMISSION.

Early in the year the provincial department of Natural Resources responded positively to a request from the Commission for interim staff funding to better support the properties, activities and efforts managed on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia. For the first time in almost 15 years, the Commission was able to hire an Executive Director. Half-way through the fiscal year, the Province provided additional funding. With that, the Commission determined that the best approach was to hire a part-time office manager and to replace the Executive Director position with a part-time Operations/General Manager. This balance of staff and a stronger focus on operations worked very well in helping the Commission focus on areas of most importance over the next few years – advice on Greenway and Trail projects, maintenance of canal grounds and buildings, commercial partnerships, service to clients, historical records.

Despite our current fiscal strength, at March 31, 2015 year-end, ongoing stable funding remained a primary area of long-term concern. The Board is aware of the potential impact on our long-standing programs, services, and activities and assets if there is no government funding for the Shubenacadie Canal Commission. The challenge of securing and maintaining strong core funding, therefore, remains a priority.

The Commission worked with the N.S. Departments of Internal Services and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) to identify renovation needs for the Fairbanks Centre. This unique centre which has been used in the past as a museum and interpretation centre for the Shubenacadie Canal, had suffered over the past 15 years from lack of funding and attention. TIR has developed a list of key structural improvements needed for the Centre and will develop a plan for addressing these needs.

The Commission would like to thank the Province of Nova Scotia, in particular staff of the departments of Natural Resources, Internal Services, and TIR for their support over the year. As well, we would like to thank Minister Andrew Younger for his ongoing interest in the Shubenacadie Canal and his support of the Commission over many years.

The development of the Dartmouth Incline Plane/Greenway continued to advance during the year, with the completion of the Cradle. The Dartmouth Greenway project will include the re-creation of historical components of the marine railway such as the Cradle, Flume House and Turbine chamber. While HRM is the funder and the lead, we have appreciated the

recognition of the expertise that the Greenway Committee of the Shubenacadie Canal Commission brings to the project. The Commission has been highly engaged with HRM as the project progresses. Strong leadership has been provided by Doug Brownrigg, chair of the Committee and by Alden Killen, Mike Hughes, Bernie Hart, Cameron Ells, and Doug Conrad in advancing this project. The construction, by Alden Killen, of a model of the Flume House and its components was exceptional. This provided a valuable aid to HRM and contractors as the design of this component was developed. Another key component of the project will be interpretation. This will allow active engagement by the public in understanding and appreciating the history of the Shubenacadie Canal.

The Commission would like to recognize Councilors Darren Fisher and Barry Dalrymple for the exceptional support that they have provided to the Greenway project and to the work of the Commission in general. We also want to thank Councilor Gloria McCluskey for her support to the Greenway project over the past year. We recognize the valuable partnership that we have developed with HRM staff including Planning, Building Services, Parks, etc., without whom we could not move forward with projects, run the Fairbanks Centre and operate much of our parks & waterway access.

In order to strengthen the longer term sustainability of the work of the Commission, a number of commercial partnerships were undertaken during the year. This included the ongoing relationship with the canoe-kayak rental business, Kaynoe. Park visitors value the opportunity to rent boats and tour the Deep Cut as well as Lake Charles. In addition, our external café-kiosk was rented during the summer months to the Port Wallis United Church. The Church provided an excellent service to the park users for food and beverages as well as providing music entertainment on certain evenings. The Alderney Centre was rented for a full year to the Bike Pedaler. This was the first bike rental service to be provided in downtown Dartmouth.

The NS Moves project, for the completion of the Lake William Trail, was undertaken in partnership with SWEPS with strong support from Councilor Barry Dalrymple. This past year was the beginning of construction of the project. The commitments under the project with the N.S. Department of Energy are complete.

Shubie Park was host to a public archeological dig and an industrial heritage exhibition in late September. Both events were highly successful with strong participation by the public.

Some Canal assets, particularly the Fairbanks Centre, as noted earlier, and Alderney Centre are in desperate need of investment for refurbishment. In addition, the system of docks for portaging along the canal system are in need of replacement or repair. The Commission is developing plans for addressing these issues and means of financial support. In the interim,

Mike Hughes has provided volunteer maintenance support on an ongoing basis. His efforts are much appreciated.

Governance has been a key challenge for the Commission due to the length of time required to replace provincial Commissioners when terms expire. At the end of the year only one of nine provincial commissioner positions was filled. This created challenges for filling executive positions and for planning for events such as the AGM. A special thanks to Suzanne Roy who stepped into the Chair position on an interim basis, while also serving as the Treasurer.

Bernie Hart is recognized as the resident historian for the Commission. Throughout the year he has provided numerous presentations, public tours, school demonstrations and media interviews. His expertise, as well as the volunteer time and enthusiasm he provides to the Commission is valued and appreciated.

Despite the shortage of Board member horsepower, committed Commissioners and volunteers have worked hard to transform parts of the canal waterway into a well-used, well-loved Nova Scotia treasure, valued for its heritage, recreational, and ecological attributes, as well as for our educational and community activities.



Maintenance

Under a License agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia, the Commission has responsibility for maintenance of provincial lands, buildings and assets along specific areas of the Shubenacadie Canal. For example, included in this agreement SCC is responsible for the provincial lands in Shubie Park and for ongoing maintenance of Fairbanks Centre and Alderney Centre, but not that which requires significant capital investment. In 2014-15, the Commission carried out regular maintenance on these lands as well as necessary renovations and repairs to the Fairbanks Centre and the Alderney Centre from funds within our budget. Thanks to TIR repairs to the roof were completed.

In addition the Commission improved safety at lock 2, with the addition of fencing.

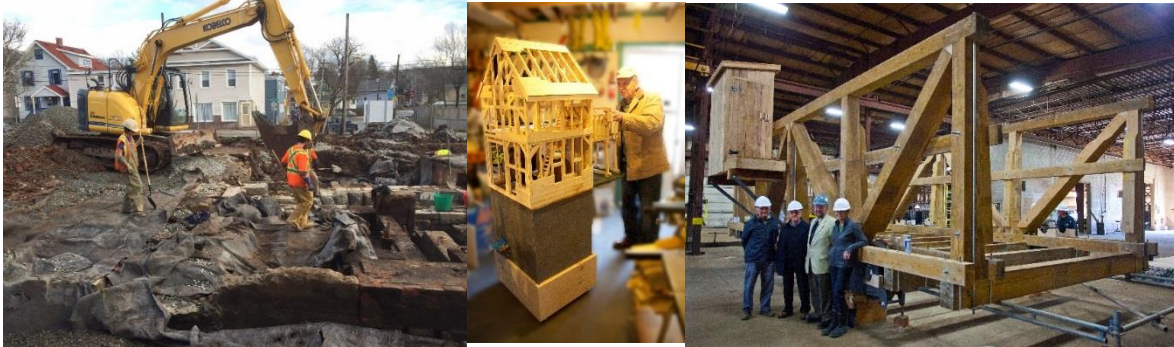
Lock 4

From April – October 2014, SCC was called on by the community to fulfill its mandate of protecting and ensuring public access to the entire waterway. Backed by very strong public support and 120+ testimonial letters, SCC became engaged in preventing a private land-owner from laying claim to an “owner unknown land” on the shores of Fletcher Lake Fletcher Lock 4. This action would have permanently plugged public access to the entire Shubenacadie waterway at the portage access from Lake Thomas to Lake Fletcher, and denied protection and access to the “Special Place” designated historical area. In October 2014, Minister Zach Churchill announced that an agreement had been reached with the land-owner which would protect public access to the portage route. The SCC was very pleased with this announcement, although the particular details of the public access remain unconfirmed.



Projects 2014.15

Dartmouth Greenway - Doug Brownrigg



2014 saw the completion of the fabrication and assembly of a replica of a Marine Boat Cradle used to haul loaded boats up the Dartmouth Inclined Plane section of the Shubenacadie Canal from Halifax Harbour to Sullivan's Pond. The heavy timber cradle was designed, drafted and fabricated based on detail drawings of an original boat cradle used in the Morris Canal, New Jersey, USA in the early and mid-1800's.

The primarily materials used to construct the replica of the boat cradle consists of Douglas fir timbers in a range of sizes from 5"x8" to 8"x12" in lengths up to 36' long. The boat cradle travelled on two rail lines traversing the full length of the incline plane. The materials used were based on what is available today such as stocked CN steel wheels, plate steel trucks (not cast iron of 1870's). The boat cradle is expected to be installed in early fall, 2015.

During the winter of 2015, students at the Akerley Campus of the NSCC fabricated four steel nozzles, part of a replica turbine that will be installed in the existing underground turbine chamber in the fall of 2015. Again, drawings were produced based on a similar turbine that exists in the Morris Canal, NJ.

The timber boat cradle is part of the Canal Greenway Project presently being designed for the former Shubenacadie Canal lands between Halifax Harbour and Lake Banook. The project is being managed and financed by HRM with many of the main features slated for construction in 2015, including:

- Installation of the Boat Cradle;
- Inclined Plane finishes;
- Excavation and inspection of the Turbine Chamber;
- Design and Construction of the Power House/Turbine Chamber Building and partial elevated flume;
- Exposure and reinstatement of the Tailrace;
- Many addition park features and landscaping; and
- Inclusion of a section of the Trans Canada Multi-Use Trail.

The Canal Greenway Committee has been hard at work documenting the many features of the Dartmouth Inclined Plane and coordinating the historical background information. They are taking up the challenge to have the mechanical features of the Turbine/Power House Building, including the reaction turbine, cable drum, gears, bearings, etc. drafted and ready for fabrication in 2016.

HRM staff are working very closely with the Shubenacadie Canal Commission and seek the Commission's input on almost every aspect of the project. For this the Shubenacadie Canal Commission is very grateful



Nova Scotia Moves Program - Lake Williams Trail development

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission (SCC), in partnership with three community associations, undertook to lead the completion the Lake William Trail, including 4 km. of Active Transportation (AT) walkway, a foot bridge over Marshall's Brook, a cable bridge over the CN track and a floating pedway across a wetland. As of this date, the trail itself is essentially complete. All costs have been covered as per the budget submitted in March 2014. The design for the bridges is also complete. All construction costs have been covered by the NS Moves funding and by the major sponsor, Dexter's Construction.

What remains to be finished in the construction period of 2015, is the actual installation of the bridge over Marshall's Brook and the cable bridge. Unfortunately, the permit required from the NS Environment is still pending. It is expected to be delivered soon and the work will begin in June 2015, after the recognized fish spawning run in the waterway. The floating pedway across the area of marsh will also be installed during the approved construction 2015 season. All costs are to be covered by Dexter's Construction.

The completed AT trail will then be ready for an iconic cable bridge, reusing surplus parts from the deconstruction of the Macdonald Bridge pedways. Those panels are to be provided free-of-charge by the Halifax Bridge Commission, but will only become available in the fall of 2015, as they are removed from the structure. When complete, the trail will become part of the official AT route which follows the Canal Greenway out of the downtown, reaching 18 km. to Waverley/Fall River and beyond. Specifically, this multi-modal route will become a showpiece addition to the "Blue Route", a cycling network envisaged by the Ecology Action Centre and Cycle Nova Scotia. The existing level of community engagement ensures that it will quickly become a popular route for commuters due to its sustainable transportation values.

A Place to Meet



The Fairbanks Centre

The Fairbanks Centre has been host to many looking for interpretation of the Shubenacadie Canal. This museum features a working lock replica that helps to show young and old a glimpse on how watercraft made their way through the canal. This facility is available year-round and can be booked for receptions or other special events. The site is shared with Canal locks 2 and 3, making it one of the most historic settings in Dartmouth.

The Avery Room

This space has been the back drop for many information sessions, meetings, receptions and presentations in 2014/2015. The meeting room can accommodate up to 40 people at meeting tables, or 60 in a theatre style set up. The destination location has made the Avery Room a very favorable venue for repeat bookings.



Boardroom Meeting Space

In the fall of 2014 the Commission was given approval to convert office space into a usable board room. This space can accommodate 8-10 around a board room table.

Activities, Events & Programs

Guided Tours



Bernie Hart, a seasoned volunteer tour guide has been providing guided walks and presentations upon request for over 10 years. During walking tours, Bernie provides individuals and groups with the opportunity to identify trees, plants, and birds in areas along the canal locks located in Shubie Park. Along the route they can see archeological remains where people along the canal had houses, community centres, and built rock walls. The presentation is concluded inside the Fairbanks Centre with a demonstration of how the Locks operate.

School & Community Group Tours

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission conducted 24 guided tours and educational programs to Community Groups including School Classes, Beavers, Scouts, Girl Guides and Brownies of Nova Scotia.



Bernie Hart leads a guided tour to Girl Guides of Nova Scotia

Switch Program

This program is a Downtown Dartmouth live event held annually during the month of June. In 2014 Bernie Hart conducted 2 walking tours along the Greenway (Dartmouth Harbour to Sullivan's Pond) and created take-away tour packages for participants. Approximately 40 people participated during the 1 hour tours.

Industrial Heritage Nova Scotia

An active group interested in the industrial heritage of Nova Scotia. During the fall of 2014 Bernie provided a guided walking tour between Lake Mic Make and Lake Charles. Approximately 25 individuals participated in the one and half hour walking tour.



On Sunday, September 28, 2014 the Industrial Heritage Nova Scotia and SCC had an open house at the Fairbanks Center.

Visitors were invited to explore our industrial heritage through displays, demonstrations and activities. A great day was had by all.



Merchandise & Product Sales

The Commission has several items for sale including; Shubenacadie Canal and River System maps, two books on the history and landscape along the waterway, "River of Dreams" and "Ribbon of Water". The Commission partners with well recognized artist Tom Forestall, in offering his original paintings and reproductions of canal scenes. The Commission also installs memorial benches along the Canal land and throughout Shubie Park.

Special Events

Canoe to the Sea

Canoe to the Sea didn't host an event in 2014 but this premiere canoe race and tour is planned for June 27, 2015 with the support of SCC.

Canoe to the Sea offers the participants an opportunity to experience the waterway first hand while paddling the route of the Native Mi'kmaq Indians. This one day event is designed for recreational paddlers, families and boating enthusiasts.



Canal Days

In July 2014 the Fall River Canal Days was celebrated with a historic walk and guided tour featuring the Canal's early operation in the area. Animated by long-time commission volunteer, Bernie Hart, canoes and kayaks travelled from Lake Thomas to Fletcher Lake promoting the significance of the Canal's construction along the Canal waterway.

Running Events and Outdoor Activities

Throughout the year the Commission supports running events and outdoor activities. The Commission provided groups with access to space in the Fairbanks Centre for registration, designated space in the park, and volunteer staff to assist when needed. In 2014 the Commission supported 11 such activities including events like; Blue Nose Marathon, Bark in the Park, MEC Annual Shubie Park race, German Association Light Walk, Salvation Army Santa Run and the annual holiday Tree Lighting.

Other activities supported by the Commission include the Nova Scotia Ship Modelers Guild event featuring a Model Boat Sail on the Canal and picnics for local community groups. An Industrial Heritage Expo was setup in the Fairbanks Centre and Archeological Dig happened along the Canal in Shubie Park.

Commercial Partnerships

As part of its efforts to generate additional revenues to support its operations, the SCC has implemented a few commercial initiatives, in addition to the rental of its board rooms.



Kayak and Canoe Rental

Kaynoe Rental, a private operator offering rentals of canoes and kayaks for recreational paddling had its fourth successful season in 2014. The service enables hundreds of locals and tourists to experience the up-close scenic adventure paddle of the Shubie Canal from May to October.



Bike Pedaler

The Bike Pedaler, a local independent bicycle shop, opened up its second location in the Alderney Center. They offered sales and service of new and used bikes along with bike rentals.



Lockside Café

The Lockside Café is located adjacent to the Fairbanks Centre on the Patio in Shubie Park. It is being operated by Port Wallace United Church. The Shubenacadie Canal Commission is very happy to have this community partnership as it provides a community gathering spot and local employment.

Executive Committee

Deborah Windsor (Province) ~ Chair – (term expired February 6, 2015)
Suzanne Roy (HRM) ~ Vice Chair & Treasurer Interim Chair at March 31, 2015
Doug Brownrigg (HRM) ~ Vice Chair (appointed December 2014)
Doug Conrad (HRM) ~ Vice Chair (resigned August 2014)
Richard MacMichael (Province) ~ Secretary (Term expired February 6, 2015)
Jolienne Stockley ~ (HRM) Secretary at March 31, 2015

Commissioners 2014/2015

Alden Killen (Province) (term expired November 2014)
Megan Blumenthal (HRM)
Tim Rissesco (HRM) (term ended November 2014)
Donica Poirier McGougan (Province)

Ex-Officio

Barry Dalrymple, Halifax Regional Municipal (HRM) Councilor
Darren Fisher, Halifax Regional Municipal (HRM) Councilor
Harold Carroll/Brian Kinsman, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

Many thanks to the Commissioners and Representatives whose term ended during this past year. We are delighted to still see some faces around the meeting table and are happy to know that our paths will continue to cross. We appreciate your continued support!

Volunteer Secretariat

Bernard Hart
Michael Hughes
Allan Billard
Dr. John O'Connor
Tony Mancini
Cameron Ells
Steve Newton

Staff

Denise Williams, Executive Director (April – September 2014)
Doug Conrad, General Manager (October – Present)
Paula Wheaton, Office Manager (September – Present)

Committees:

Greenway Committee
Heritage
Communications

Special Thanks to the following organizations for their contribution to the Shubenacadie Canal Commission 2014-2015

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (NS DNR)
Halifax Regional Municipality
Nova Scotia Department of Energy – NS Moves
Dexter’s Construction Ltd.
Shubenacadie Watershed Environmental Protection Society (SWEPS)
CBCL Engineering Ltd.
Industrial Heritage Society of Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia Community College
Derek Simon, Burchell’s
CivTech Engineering

The Henry Findlay Lock keeper Award

Presented to friends of the Shubenacadie Canal and Waterway who dedicate their time and effort towards improving this provincial heritage resource and its parklands for all the people who come by.

2001	Peter Connor	Long Term Planning
2003	Scott MacKnight	Environmental Design
2005	Ian Bailey	PortoBello Plane Archaeology
2007	Joe MacDonald	Parkland Maintenance
2008	Bob MacDonald	Trail Development
2009	Frank Horne	Heritage Preservation
2011	John O’Connor	Fund Raising
2012	Alden Killen	Marine Railway model and design
2014	Bernie Hart	Long term volunteer and canal historian

Current Assets/Land Holdings

Halifax Regional Municipality			
Property Know As	Approx. Size	P. I. D.	Registered Owner
Lock 1 Lake Banook	0.75 acres	94474	SCC & HRM
Locks 2 & 3 Shubie Park	55+ acres in 15 parcels	00255505 to 40857898	"The Queen" & DNR
PortoBello Plane	6.3 acres	40128977	SCC & DNR
Lock 4 Lake Fletcher	0.75 acres	00510065	SCC & DNR
	0.06 acres	40645608	DNR
	0.25 acres	40705501	DNR
	200 sq. m.	40705519	DNR
Lock 5 Wellington	14+acres in 8 parcels	00529727 to 40705063	DNR
River Access Hwy #2	0.5 acres	40662744	DNR
Municipality of East Hants			
Property Know As	Approx. Size	P. I. D.	Registered Owner
Lock 6 Horne's Settlement	7.1 acres	45289477	SCC
	2.2 acres	45218260	DNR
Lock 7 Enfield	7 acres	45077401	SCC
Riverbank in Elmsdale	1.5 acres	45151743	SCC



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