



Shubenacadie Canal Commission

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2015 - March 31st, 2016



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 stability and accomplishments for the Commission and the first full year that the Province supported staff, since 2000. The support of staff has enabled the Commission to move beyond the caretaker role of recent past years and focus on enhancing provincial assets, promoting active recreation and tourism, as well as historical, and cultural aspects of the Shubenacadie Canal system and better engaging the public. This was a clear signal from the Province of the importance of the Canal, related parkland and trails and its significance to the parkland, recreation and history and culture of the Province.

That being said, by the end of the fiscal year the Province had made no indication of funding commitments for the upcoming fiscal year. This put the Commission in a very difficult position in terms of project development and planning. For future years, the Commission will seek an approach to funding which reflects the deliverables for the Province, is predictable and does not force volunteer Commission members to perform staff functions.

Governance was a key challenge for the Commission due to the length of time required to replace provincial Commissioners when terms expire. At the beginning 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.

The Commission welcomed a number of new members including; George Clarke, Vishal Bhardwaj, William McIntyre, Tim Schaus, Joliene Stockley, Steve Newton, Mike Hughes, Tony Mancini and Colin Mason. These new Commissioners bring strong skills to the table including legal, technical and engineering, planning, stakeholder and public relations, marketing, financial, management and educational. This has created a strong board with innovative ideas and a passion for the Canal system and the opportunities that it presents.

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 and well-loved community space, 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 developed a plan for addressing these needs. The Department will begin to address these needs in the upcoming fiscal year.

The Commission would like to thank the Province of Nova Scotia, in particular staff of the departments of Natural Resources and TIR for their support over the year. The past 2 years of renewed Provincial support had given us confidence to put significant effort in strategic planning.

The development of the Dartmouth Incline Plane/Greenway made great progress and continued to advance during the year, with the movement of the Cradle to the Greenway site, the engagement of NSCC students and staff on key internal elements of the Flume House, the engagement of the public on the development of an interpretation plan for the site, presentations to HRM councilors on the interpretive plan and development of interpretive components for the site structures. While HRM is the funder and the lead, we have appreciated the recognition of the historical, technical and project management expertise and countless volunteer hours 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. Thanks to Joliene Stockely for her engagement of key stakeholders and her creativity on the development of the interpretation plan for the Greenway.

The Commission would like to recognize Councillors 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 Councillor 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.

With a focus on the longer term sustainability of the work of the Commission, commercial partnerships were strengthened. 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. This was the last year for the Port Wallis Church to rent the kiosk and the Commission would like to thank them for the excellent service provided to park users. A new business will occupy the kiosk for the upcoming summer and we look forward to another successful partnership to service park users. A new small business replaced the Bike Peddler as tenant of the Alderney Centre, providing use and community access to a charming building at the mouth of the Canal that was closed for many years.

The NS Moves project, for the design of a section the Lake William Trail, undertaken in partnership with SWEPS was completed.

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 small docks for portaging along the canal system are in need of replacement or repair. The Commission developed plans for addressing these issues and means of financial support. As much of this work is on provincial lands, we will look to the provide to provide 50% of required funding. Mike Hughes continues to provide volunteer maintenance support on an ongoing basis. His efforts are much appreciated.

Bernie Hart is recognized as the resident historian for the Commission. He has given his time as volunteer staff to the Commission visitor services on a daily basis for over a decade. 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.

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. Although we move into a new fiscal year in a situation of great uncertainty with respect to the Province's ongoing engagement and support of our Provincial mandate, we remain optimistic that the Government of Nova Scotia will recognize the value the Shubenacadie Canal Commission delivers to the Province and its citizens and provide the support needed to continue operations.

Debbie Windsor

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. Significant capital investment is not included. In 2015-16, 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 for contracting EXP consultants to carry out a Building Condition Assessment Report on the Fairbanks Center. Many problems were identified as needing attention due the age of the structure. The SCC also replaced the wheelchair ramp railing.

Projects 2015-2016

Dartmouth Greenway - Doug Brownrigg



Activities on the Canal Greenway Site advanced throughout 2015-2016. The Canal Greenway Committee of the Shubenacadie Canal Commission continued their hard work and dedication working closely with HRM staff and their consultants ensuring the planned works are in keeping with the historical themes of the 1800's Canal.

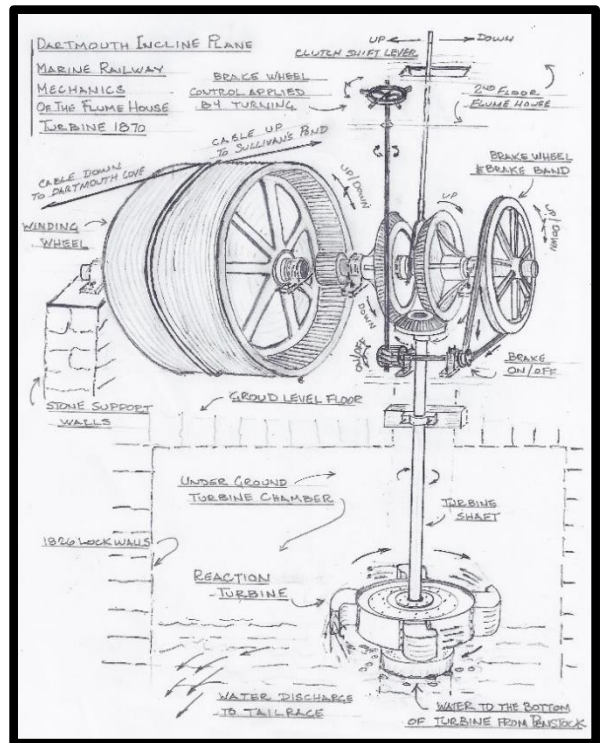
HRM awarded two tenders for the construction of the Flume House, one for the heavy timber framed Flume House Building and Elevated Flume and the other for the Flume House foundation and repairs / rehabilitation of the underground chamber. Work continued throughout the winter, 2016 with the addition of a temporary housing over the chamber to help address inclement weather. Canal Greenway Committee members Alden Killen, Mike Hughes, Roger Plant and Doug Brownrigg visited the timber fabricator's premises in Canning, NS to view the progress to date. All were impressed with the quality craftsmanship of the timber, especially the mortise and tenon joints. The foundation work is expected to be completed in early July, 2016 followed immediately by the erection of the heavy timber framing for the Flume House.

The final design of the site works and landscaping is nearing completion with a tender call expected in July, 2016. It is hoped the Flume House and site works / landscaping will be substantially completed by the end of September, 2016 leading to tentative plans for a ceremonial opening.

Committee members were also kept busy with a number of related activities. The Commission is responsible for the fabrication and installation of infrastructure to be housed in the Flume House, including the turbine, shafts, gears and cable drum. Again this year, students at the NSCC Akerley Campus are fabricating steel components of the turbine for completion, painting

and installation in the Flume House chamber in July, 2016. A fabricator in Porters Lake is producing the 3-foot diameter crown gear, two six-foot diameter beveled gears, clutch and cable drum pinion gear out of a high density foam material with a special polyurethane coating (see photo) resulting in a durable, realistic looking cast iron appearance.

Bernie Hart has coordinated activities involving students at Dartmouth High School for the installation of a Time Capsule to be installed in the interior stone walls of the Flume House. Students are busy collecting appropriate items for the capsule that relate to their day to day activities and life style. The capsule is expected to be installed in September, 2016 as part of activities for an opening celebration.



The “Interpretation” document produced under the leadership of Joliene Stockley has been presented to HRM and Councilor Gloria McCluskey. It was received favorably. The next step will be to present it to Dartmouth East District Council. A Request for Proposal for Planning / Graphic Design Services from professional consulting firms is being drafted for the concept development and recommendations for the Interpretation material for the Canal Greenway Project.



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. Dexter’s has completed the trail to where wetlands begin. Environmental permits have been submitted and work across this area is expected to be completed in 2016. HRM has purchased the former Chappel lands and planning for the connection from Lake Charles to Lake William will begin soon.

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 year the model enjoyed a bit of a facelift. 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 enjoyed a renovation in 2015. Now in addition to the renovation the destination location has made the Avery Room a very favorable venue for repeat bookings. With the addition of an exterior fire door we have increased the capacity to 140 thus opening up many new opportunities and bookings.



Boardroom Meeting Space

During 2015 the back work space was converted into a boardroom which is now warm and appealing. It's a great space for small size groups. It has a pull down screen and WiFi and can accommodate 6-8 around the 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 11 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 centers, 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 8 guided tours and educational programs to Community Groups including; School Classes and Girl Guides of Nova Scotia. This year we had some summer support from student, Kaylie McGraw.



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

Switch Program

On June 7 members of the Shubenacadie Canal Commission participated in the Switch Program. We were invited to set up a booth where our volunteers were available to explain the historical aspects of the Canal Greenway Project in Dartmouth. The Switch program is a Downtown Dartmouth live event where Portland Street and Prince Albert Road are closed to car traffic and opened up for walkers, rollers, cyclists, dancers, and more.

Plant of the week

This year the Commission offered an educational series on plants found in Shubie Park, Dartmouth. This program ran 14 weeks (June – August) and featured plants like Pink Lady's Slipper, Queen Anne's Lace and Golden Rod to name a few. This feature educational series was promoted online as well as in the community bulletin board.

Merchandise & Product Sales

This year the Commission teamed up with Lost Cod clothing and created a line of Shubenacadie Canal Company clothing. The line includes; t-shirts, sweatshirts and hoodies.

In addition to the apparel we continue to offer the following items in our Fairbanks Centre location or online; 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 2015

When you send over 87 people away from Maitland with broad smiles on their faces, you know it was a good day on the Canal!

There were 79 paddlers registered for the Canoe to the Sea event and if you include wives and sweethearts, there are a lot more folks who now appreciate how beautiful the lower portion of the



Shubenacadie Canal is and what a pleasure it can be to experience it first-hand... from water level.



The start in the village of Shubenacadie was led by Margaret Miller, MLA and MEH Coun. Al Flemming. Both were on hand to welcome the participants and to ensure that they experienced the very best which the community can offer. Of course, the weather was splendid and with such a colourful display boats on the water, it was a beautiful scene.

Paddlers were given a water safety demonstration beforehand by representatives of the Canadian Coast Guard and then followed by safety boats from the Shubenacadie River Runners outfitters. Added to that, several colonies of bald eagles put on a display enroute. At the finish, a Town Crier, as well six historical recreationists from the village of Maitland were on hand to welcome them. There was good media coverage from the Enfield Weekly Press. Special thanks to Allan Billard for his annual organization of this event and his commitment to ensuring that Nova Scotians have the opportunity to experience this adventure on all parts of the Canal.

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 2015 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 and an archeological dig 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 2015. The service enables hundreds of locals and tourists to experience the up-close scenic adventure paddle of the Shubie Canal from May to October.



Kings Pier Curated Collections

Kings Pier Curated Collections, a local independent vintage clothing store, opened in the Alderney Center this year. They offer carefully selected luxury vintage attire and accessories.



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 expires June 2018)
Suzanne Roy (HRM) ~ Treasurer (term expires November 2016)
Doug Brownrigg (HRM) ~ Vice Chair (term expires November 2016)
Bill McIntyre (Province) ~ Secretary & Vice Chair (term expires June 2018)

Commissioners 2015/2016

Vishal Bhardwaj ~ (Province) (term expires June 2018)
Megan Blumenthal (HRM) (resigned December 2015)
George Clarke ~ (HRM) (term expires November 2016)
Michael Hughes ~ (Province) (term expires June 2018)
Steve Newton ~ (Province) (term expires June 2018)
Donica Poirier McGougan (Province) (term expires March 2017)
Timothy Schaus ~ (Province) (term expires June 2018)
Joliene Stockley ~ (Province) (term expires June 2018)

Ex-Officio

Barry Dalrymple, Halifax Regional Municipal (HRM) Councilor – resigned Fall 2015
Darren Fisher, Halifax Regional Municipal (HRM) Councilor – resigned Fall 2015
Brian Kinsman/Matt Parker, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Tony Mancini, Halifax Regional Municipal (HRM) Councilor – February 2016

***Many thanks, to the Commissioners and Representatives whose term ended during this past year.
We appreciate your continued support!***

Volunteer Secretariat

Bernard Hart
Alden Killen
Dr. John O'Connor
Cameron Ells
Roger Plant
Tim Rissesco
Richard MacMichael
Allan Billard

Staff

Doug Conrad, General Manager (October 2014 – Present)
Paula Wheaton, Office Manager (September 2014 – Present)
Kaylie McGraw, Summer Student (June 2015-August 2015)

Committees

Greenway Committee
Heritage
Communications

Special Thanks to the following organizations for their contribution to the Shubenacadie Canal Commission 2015–2016

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
Clintar Landscape Management

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
2015	Mike Hughes	Long term promotion, maintenance & development



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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