

Saint Patrick's Church Restoration Society

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Quarterly Report

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The Halifax Explosion Irish Interpretation Centre was officially opened on December 3, 2011 by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Her Honour, The Honourable Mayann E. Francis. Ann E. Smith was the guest speaker.



The Board of the Saint Patrick's Church Restoration Society sends warm Christmas greetings and wishes for a very happy New Year to everyone who has helped us in so many ways during the past year. May God and the Irish Saints bless you all!!!

CHRISTMAS AT ST. PATRICK'S

Dec. 24 Carols 7:30pm Mass 8:00pm
Dec. 25 Carols 9:30 am Mass 10:00am
Jan. 1 Mass at 10:00am
Jan. 8 Mass at 10:00am
Jan. 8 Evening Prayers 4:00pm

Please join our vibrant faith community as we celebrate the Christmas season.
Everyone is welcome.

Sunday at Saint Patrick's (Winter 2012)

Starting January 15th the Restoration Society will be hosting concerts and noon lunches on alternate Sundays.

Sunday January 15th 2:00pm concert
Scott MacMillan and Doris Mason

3:00pm Join the artists in the Church Hall for afternoon tea and homemade cookies.

Tickets \$10.00

A FAREWELL MESSAGE

In 2007, the Archdiocese of Halifax announced the closure of Saint Patrick's Church. Saint Patrick's had a dwindling congregation of about 75 people, a weekly collection of about \$500.00 and had a large debt that it owed to the Archdiocese. This is not an uncommon situation for many Churches today and is the main reason why so many Church are closing.

Saint Patrick's Parish has a long history of being a unique faith congregation. Our Parish first started when it became too hard for the many Irish Catholics to walk from the old north end of Halifax to Saint Peter's on Spring Garden Road to attend daily and weekly Mass, particularly during the long winter months. Permission was given by the Archdiocese for Mass to be said initially in a barn on Gerrish St. In the mid 19th century, a Church was purchased on the site of our current Saint Patrick's Church to house the growing Catholic population in this area. The number of parishioners outgrew this Church by the 1860's and the Archbishop told the congregation at Saint Patrick's if the men would assist in moving Saint Peter's Church from its site where Saint Mary's Basilica stands today to Ochterloney Street in Dartmouth, and if they would help to build the current Saint Mary's Basilica, then the Irish would be given permission to build a Church that would reflect their culture and history. Saint Peter's Church was floated across the harbor, went up the locks of the canal and became a Church for a new congregation in Dartmouth. That Church remained on this site until it was destroyed by fire in the late 1950's. The current Saint Peter's Church was opened in the 1960's and thrives today. Saint Mary's Basilica was built and then Saint Patrick's Church was built.

In 1885, our beautiful Saint Patrick's Church opened and has remained open ever since. It is not only a wonderful faith community but it serves as an historic building reflecting the culture of the Irish who migrated to Nova Scotia since the 17th century. It is part of the unique culture of our capitol city and our province. But was this history enough to revitalize a dying faith community and a Parish that was mired in debt and unable to pay its bills?

In 2007, a group of parishioners joined together to form the Saint Patrick's Church Restoration Society to address these issues and I have served as its elected chair of an elected board since then. Our challenges have been many. However, our current Archbishop Mancini, after much reflection, told the faith community at Saint Patrick's, if we could pay our bills, Saint Patrick's could remain open. On June 16, 2009, The Restoration Society signed an Agreement with the Archdiocese of Halifax and basically this agreement states that all liturgical matters, the ownership of the Rectory building and its properties, one third of the caretaker's salary, and any utility bills that exceed the \$25,000.00 dollars paid by the Restoration Society, the debt of the Parish and all Sunday collections are the responsibility of Saint Patrick's Parish. These responsibilities are administered by Jean Marc LaPorte SJ and the Parish Council. Our faith community has grown from 75 members to an average of 300 people who attend our weekly Mass. Collections have grown from an average of \$500.00 a week to \$1,700.00 per week. Current bills are being paid. The Parish Council continues to explore ways to get an income from the Rectory so this money can help to pay down the Parish debt.

The Restoration Society assumed the responsibility for all bills of the Church building, (this includes the Church, Hall, parking lot and the area in back of the Church), as well as the maintenance, repairs and restoration of the Church and Hall. All funds required to meet these obligations have to be raised by the Restoration Society. This was and continues to be a monumental task and people throughout the city, province and beyond have supported the Restoration Society as we strive to meet our mandate.

The Restoration Society on a monthly basis pays \$1,500 for heat, \$400.00 for power, \$2,500.00 for the new gas furnace lease, \$1,000.00 in repairs (this week a plumber is required to fix an old toilet and an older urinal and an electrician will be installing 3 new lights in areas where they are required by law as well as doing a day's worth of other electrical repairs), \$250.00 for phone and office supplies, \$6,000.00 for salaries and CRA deductions, \$1,000.00 in communications (includes newsletters, advertising, processing and mail out of tax receipts, etc.) and \$1,800 in insurance. In addition to these expenses, all the Restoration Society's fundraising expenses are paid on a pay as you go basis for all events, programs and sales. Our costs follow accepted fundraising principles and guidelines. It is through donations and fundraising that the Restoration Society pays its bills.

The Agreement has been signed and provides a framework to allow Saint Patrick's Parish and the Restoration Society to grow and thrive together. Programs to provide for fundraising and donations have been established to pay the bills of the Restoration Society. A grand piano was purchased to allow concerts to be held at Saint Patrick's Church. A new gas furnace was installed when the original oil furnace died. The entire sub-basement area was rewired, cleaned and repaired where necessary and the hazardous waste material that had been accumulated for years was removed according to code. Architectural and engineering studies have been completed for the Restoration of the Church and Hall. The Church Hall has been newly renovated and is the home of the Saint Brigid's Gift Shop and the Halifax Explosion Irish Interpretation Centre. Plans are in place to establish in 2012 a Genealogy Center linked to Ireland and an Education and Skills Development Program for immigrant women. I am privileged to have been a volunteer to lead these projects.

I am stepping down as Chair of the Restoration Society in January 2012 to return to my work as an Education Consultant. I will remain as a proud and loyal member of Saint Patrick's Parish, a volunteer and strong supporter of the Restoration Society and I wish to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to support the mandates of Saint Patrick's Parish and the Saint Patrick's Church Restoration Society as we work together to keep our beautiful Church open and a center of social justice in seeking whatsoever is right, just and true.
Penny Doherty

35 Parishioners of Saint Patrick's Parish died in the Halifax Explosion

The Halifax Explosion of December 6, 1917 devastated the north end of Halifax, the area of the city then called Richmond. At least 1900 people are known to have died as a direct result of the initial explosion and by the fires which ravaged two square kilometers of houses and factories which had been ruined by the force of the initial pressure wave. More than 9000 people were injured in the explosion and many thousands more were left homeless. The victims and their rescuers faced blizzard conditions on December 7, which added to the plight of those without homes and to the difficulty of the rescue efforts. Among the victims of the explosion were 35 individuals who were subsequently identified as being parishioners of St. Patrick's. A large number of these 35 were men employed as stevedores and coopers by the Furness Withy Co., which operated steamships between Nova Scotia and the eastern U.S. states. Given that World War I had raged for three years by December, 1917, it is not surprising that many of these men were middle aged. Other parishioners of St. Patrick's killed in the Explosion were members of the Halifax Fire Department, including the Chief and Deputy Chief. Two young men were identified as being well-known local athletes. Two women, one only 16 years old and one in her 70's died in the Spring of 1918 from injuries received in the Explosion.

The names of these St. Patrick's parishioners and a little about each of them is as follows:

John Arthur, 67 years old, died in hospital on April 18, 1918 from "blood poisoning" caused by the Explosion.
Hugh Brackett, 24 years old, stevedore, Furness Withy. His body was never recovered. His wife Irene survived and remarried in 1921.
William Paul Brunt, 42 years old, Deputy Chief, Halifax Fire Department. His wife was Margaret McPhee.
John Carson, 35 years old, stevedore, Furness Withy. His wife Kathleen and 5 of their children were also killed
Harry Chapman, stevedore, Furness Withy. His body was never recovered. His wife Norah survived and remarried in 1921.
John Duggan, 34 years old, fireman from Hose Wagon No. 4. He died at the waterfront. His body was never recovered. His wife Florence survived and remarried.
Bertram John Earle, 39 years old, stevedore Furness Withy. His body was found near the Acadia Sugar Refinery. His wife Frances survived and remarried in 1920.
Thomas Fewer, 42 years old, stevedore Furness Withy. His body was found in the ruins of the Acadia Sugar Refinery. His wife Margaret survived and remarried in 1920.
Edward Foran, 32 years old, stevedore Furness Withy. His wife Mary survived and remarried in 1921.
Thomas Foran, 28 years old. His wife Elizabeth Deveau remarried in 1921.
Victor Gomes, 23 years old, clerk, CG Railway
Fred Griswold, 30 years old, moulder, Hillis Foundry. His wife Mary survived and remarried in 1920.
John Heenam, 62 years old, cooper, Acadia Sugar Factory. His body was identified on January 31, 1918. His wife Agnes survived.
Edward Hickey, 32 years old, stevedore Furness Withy. His wife Rose survived.
Charles Johns, 37 years old, checker, Furness Withy. He was killed at Pier 6. His wife Florence survived.
Catherine Joyce, 71 years old. She died March 10, 1918 from injuries received in the Explosion.
Charles Lacey, 53 years old, moulder, Hillis Foundry. He was killed at the factory. His wife Elenora Smith survived.
George Maltus, 40 years old, Captain, Halifax Fire Department. He was killed on the "Patricia". His wife Janie Pettipas survived.
Forrest McDonald, 37 years old, machinist/longshoreman. His wife Mary McMillan survived and remarried in 1924.
Matthew Moore, 16 years old, stevedore, William Buckley. He was killed on the SS WH Thomas
Wilfred Leonard Mosher, 18 years old, moulder Hillis Foundry
Walter J. O'Brien, 29 years old, checker, C G Railway. Described as a "local athlete".
William Power, 48 years old, stevedore, Furness Withy. His body was found at the Acadia Sugar Refinery. His wife Annie Malloy survived.
Isabella Pratt, 16 years old. She died at home on April 2, 1918 from injuries received in the Explosion.
Joseph Purcell, 67 years old, janitor, Telegraph and Telephone Co. died January 18, 1918. His wife Eliza survived.
George Richardson, 59 years old, grocery and provision merchant. Died October 6, 1918 in the Halifax Infirmary from injuries suffered in the Explosion. His son George was also killed.
John Ronayne, 23 years old, reporter, Chronicle & Echo
Michael Ryan, 25 years old, stevedore, Furness Withy. His body was not recovered. His wife Mary survived.
Dennis Sullivan, 29 years old, stevedore Jackson Bros., He was killed at Pier 9. He was described as a "local athlete".
Patrick Tobin, 48 years old, cooper, Furness Withy. His wife Mary survived.
Leo Patrick Vaughn, 17 years old, worked at the dry dock.
William Voltz, 31 years old, stevedore, Furness Withy. His wife Annie survived.
Thomas Walsh, 56 years old, cooper, Furness Withy. His body was found at the Acadia Sugar Refinery. His wife Bridget survived.
James Welcher, 38 years old, cooper, Furness Withy. His body was found in the water at the Acadian Sugar Refinery. His wife Susan survived.
Richard Young, 56 years old, worked for the Acadia Sugary Refinery. His body was found in the ruins. His wife was Rosanne Bowers.

(Thank you to Ann E. Smith)

Thank you for your Support

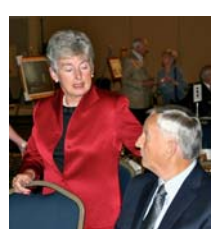


Monsignor Donahoe and friends on the 25th anniversary of the celebration of his ordination

On October 22nd, at the WTCC, The Restoration Society celebrated its 5th Annual Dinner. The dinner committee worked for almost a year to make this event such a success. The members included, Janice Flinn Nourry, Kurt and Margaret Ahlblad, Carol Reiniger, Mary Morash Watts, Trudy Cann Fournier, Helen Cassidy, Frank Flinn, Jean Knickle, Shannon Johnston and Penny Doherty. Rick Grant was our gracious host and Brian Warschick entertained one and all as our very successful auctioneer for the evening. The family of Monsignor Donahoe who was pastor of Saint Patrick's Parish from 1938 to 1945 were in attendance for Monsignor's induction into the Restoration Society's Hall of Honour.

The Society netted \$43,000.00 from this event. This money will be used to help pay the monthly bills and restoration work for Saint Patrick's Church and Hall.

We wish to sincerely thank the members of the dinner committee, our dinner sponsors, supporters, every person who contributed to our live and silent auction and of course, the people who purchased tickets and attended the dinner. Our 6th Annual Dinner will be held at the WTCC on Friday, October 12th, 2012.



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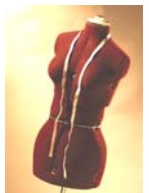
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