

# At Saint David's

## Summer at David's Place

### TRANSITIONS

#### **Congratulations to:**

Lois Yorke and Barry Cahill on the birth of their grandson, Oliver on May 15

Rob Fyfe on his graduation from NSCC with a diploma in Health Information Management.

Ian Palmeter on his graduation from Queens - BEng.

Kathryn Blaikie on her graduation from Queens - BSc (environmental science)

Jessica Boone on her graduation from Acadia - BBA

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to: George, Nora, and Colin Clarke on the death of their father Lorne on May 21.

### Summer Service Schedule

**July 3 & 10**  
St. John's United (meeting in the Conservatory)

**July 17 & 24**  
St. David's Presbyterian

**July 31 & August 7**  
St. Andrew's United

**August 14, 21, & 28**  
First Baptist

**September 4**  
Return to St. David's at 9 am & 11 am

*Have a safe and happy summer!*



On Friday May 27, we kicked off summer at David's Place with our first barbecue of the season. Kudos to our volunteer Mike McPhee for his excellent skills flipping burgers, hot dogs, and sausages in typically cool, damp Halifax weather. Note Mike is wearing his winter jacket! We will be having barbecues around each of the summer holidays, including Labour Day. These are a real treat for our guests.

During the summer our volunteer numbers dip as folks go off to cottages and vacations so, if you would like to join us for a Friday, we would be most appreciative of your help. Just let Val MacDonald or Johannah Roberts know a little in advance to assist with our planning.

If you're not able to participate on a Friday morning but could cook or bake occasionally for David's Place that

would also be extremely helpful.

Our guests thank us each week for the delicious meals and the food and toiletry items that you provide for them. Please bear in mind that Sunday June 12<sup>th</sup> will be our last Food Bank Sunday until September. The following items are always needed: toilet tissue, individually packaged tooth brushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, sun screen, and non-perishable food items.

Please keep our David's Place community in your thoughts and prayers.

Thank you.

**Johannah Roberts**

## A Unified Image

Instance of magic  
in focus of time  
no forceful  
confinement be  
freedom's climb

Taking the route  
while reading each  
sign  
a passage to glory's  
peace to mind

Foreseeing all  
limits while walking  
the line  
without roads to  
confusion the  
future shine

By a city's  
transformance  
alike regrowing  
vine  
hearts loving  
rhythm in all  
peoples combined

Where change  
seems so drastic at  
times  
strong lasting  
commitment  
speaks progress  
defined

*David Mac Eachern*

## Stories in Stone Writ Large

As we celebrated Saint David's 91<sup>st</sup> anniversary, we asked three speakers to give us perspective on the changes that are currently underway to our property and to tell stories of those who came before us.

### The Ground On Which We Stand...

... is the Old Methodist Burying Ground of Halifax, which was in use from 1793 to 1844, when all the existing downtown cemeteries were closed, and Camp Hill, then on the western outskirts of the city, became the public cemetery.

In March 1793, one William Goreham, "in consideration of the great love and esteem which he has and bears unto the said Society of Methodists and the better to

enable them to bury their dead according to the forms of their own church," gifted to the Methodists of Halifax the tract of pasture land in the south suburbs of the town on which Saint David's now stands. The deed mentions that the plot was bounded on the south by the poorhouse cemetery, which dated from 1760 and which lies on the site of the former Halifax memorial library. The poorhouse complex was large, running eastwards most of the distance from Queen to Grafton Streets along the northern side of Spring Garden Road.

Why did the Wesleyans need or want a cemetery? The answer may lie in inter-denominational politics. From early

days of settlement, everyone except the Roman Catholics used the Old Burying Ground on Barrington Street, which was the principal public cemetery. Then in June 1793 the Nova Scotia government granted the cemetery to St Paul's (Church of England), to be held in trust for continued public use. That was perhaps too much for (Bishop) William Black and the trustees of his largely working-class Society, who, as dissenters, were not on especially good terms with the elite Established Church. Another possible incentive, however, was the opening in November 1792 of Zoar chapel, the first Methodist preaching house in Halifax.

William Goreham, the Methodists' benefactor, though apparently not a Methodist himself, died, full of years, in 1825, leaving the Society £50 for poor relief. In 1832 the trustees of the Methodist Society were incorporated by act of the Legislature and their ownership of the burying ground and other properties was confirmed to them. In the early 1850s the burying ground, by then disused, became the site of the first Grafton Street Methodist Church. The land remained in Methodist hands until 1925, when, as a result of church union, it came under the control of St Andrew's United Church, who sold it to the Presbyterians. The most famous resident of the Old Methodist Burying



Ground is Bishop Black himself, who died in September 1834. According to an account published in 1907, "The remains of Mary (William's first wife) and William Black rest in the old graveyard at Grafton Street Methodist Church, Halifax, and near the vestry door are their gravestones and those of their children." The gravestones themselves were afterwards removed to the Black family plot in Camp Hill. The interment of Bishop Black's remains in the Old Methodist Burying

Ground renders it one of the sacred sites of Maritime Methodism.

**Barry Cahill**

### Tombstone Talk

So many stories are told in tombstone talk – that's the message left on the grave markers uncovered under our gym floor-stories of tragedy such as losing a young child like MARGARET PARTIS, Daughter of ANDREW & HELEN SHIELS who died at 1 year ten months. – I too would be tempted to put on the tombstone as they did the words: '*Death ends the brief catastrophe*'. So many stories, most of which we've lost. It was a difficult- and different age.

The Bells, Hugh and Ann, lost Hugh's mother, their 12 year-old daughter, their six year-old daughter, and another six years and six days-daughter a year later and a 20 month-old daughter... all in a two-year period between 1833-4

Almost the whole Black family are there – Rev. Black died at 74 and his first wife at 73, his son died at 35, and his grandson as an infant.

We know snippets about others, like Peter Smith, a Master Block Maker at His Majesty's Shipyard, or William Fletcher who was a Master Mariner

Some stories just begin with tombstone talk like the story of ALEX.r

ANDERSON who died 31st Jly 1833. Here is a story of a Presbyterian turned Methodist and part of his story may be found in a book entitled *A Memoir of the Late Rev. William Black, Wesleyan Minister, Halifax N.S.* by Matthew Richey, 1839, p.155-156:

*On Rev. Black's return to Halifax he held a meeting to restore and bolster his small group of Wesleyans: "The power of God manifestly rested on the congregation. Several, pierced to the heart, cried aloud in the meeting. Among these was Mr. Alexander Anderson, of the King's Dock Yard. – Mr. Anderson was a graduate of one of the Scottish universities, and even previous to his conversion, a*

*man of inflexible integrity. Educated a Presbyterian, he had no predilection for either the doctrines or the economy of Methodism. But he was endowed with a strong and enquiring mind; and being, by a combination of providential circumstances, led to attend Mr. Black's preaching, it was blessed to his spiritual illumination and saving conversion to God. Immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood. Unpopular as Methodism then was in the community, and likely as an intimate and open association with it was to expose him to the charge of enthusiasm and imbecility, and to impede his promotion to a situation of*

*greater emolument under government, he was not the man, for any temporal considerations, to suppress his convictions of truth, or falter in his allegiance to Christ. From the day his name was enrolled as a member of the society, to the day of his death, a period of nearly half a century, he was, emphatically, both as to strength and ornament, a pillar in the church. He officiated for many years as a leader and local preacher; and although his gifts in the pulpit were not of the most attractive kind, the veneration which his character inspired, always ensured him an attentive and respectful hearing. This "dear man of God, and pattern of piety," as Mr. Black*

*justly characterizes him, after for a long series of years adorning the doctrine of God his saviour in all things, died as he had lived, feeling and proclaiming that "God is love!"*

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There are many more but taken as a whole, the dead speak to us once again – of hopes and shattered dreams, of faith and of difficult day, of an ages that is long gone yet is ageless. All of this points us anew to the words of scripture and to the affirmations made in *Living Faith*:

Eternal life is resurrection life. As God raised Christ, so shall we be raised into a condition fit for life with God.

Eternal life begins in this life: whoever believes in the Son of God already has eternal life.

In Baptism by faith we die and rise with Christ and so are one with the risen Lord.

In death we commit our future confidently to God.

Life had its beginning in God.

In God it will come to completion and its meaning be fully revealed.

All creation will find fulfillment in God.

Christ will come again. Only God knows when and how our Lord will return.

Now we see in part. Then we shall see face to face.

***Kenn Stright***

## **The Presbyterian Church of Saint David – Building on History**

Halifax was founded as a British garrison town, and from the beginning in 1749 provision was made for a church. Of course it was a Church of England church and it was given a prominent place on the Grand Parade, and it still exists as St. Paul's Anglican Church, the oldest intact and identifiable building in Halifax.

There were Haligonians of many faiths from the earliest days, but they were not so fortunate in their places of worship, often having to make do with what was available. Over time they were able to build more

substantial houses of worship and Presbyterians of many stripes built their own churches all over town.

They did not just need churches, they also needed cemeteries, and these began to spring up outside the town walls, and were organized along denominational lines, with St. Paul's cemetery at the foot of Spring Garden road, stretching south along Barrington, and St. Mary's stretching west from Barrington up Spring Garden, with other cemeteries for the indigent along Spring Garden west of Grafton Street.

In 1798 William Goreham gave some land on Grafton Street for use as a Methodist cemetery and it

remained in use from 1794 to 1844. We now have some evidence to suggest that it may have been in use as a cemetery even before that date.

Methodists were just one of many denominations that struggled with inadequate facilities.

By 1852 the Methodists had outgrown their Zoar Chapel on Argyle Street, and the decision was made to build a new church on the cemetery lands. This must have necessitated the relocation of remains, but we have little record on how this was accomplished. The wooden structure of the Grafton Street Wesleyan Church served until 1868, when it was destroyed by fire.

The congregation immediately went about rebuilding and this structure was erected in remarkably short order. Since it was bigger than its predecessor, more graves had to be relocated in the process.

This building- built in 1869- was designed by David Stirling, a noted local architect of Scottish birth (and member of the Church of Scotland). His preference for Gothic revival architecture did not necessarily suit the plainer tastes of the Methodists, but he was able to restrain himself to some extent with the simple shape of the building. However his treatment of the Grafton Street facade exhibited his preference for elaborate stone work. Although

forced to work in sandstone, a more easily workable but less durable material than granite, he was allowed to include gargoyles (four small carved heads on window frames), finials and other architectural filigrees that said more about the pretensions and prominence of the congregation than perhaps a truer expression of Methodist values. The building is in fact quite magnificent, and if you have not read *The Blue Banner*, the excellent history of our Beacon on the Hill, you might do so to learn more about the architectural features.

With the rise of the Church Union movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Grafton Street Methodist fell into disrepair and

disuse, and when the Disruption finally came in 1925 it was vacant. The remnants of displaced Presbyterians gathered in First Baptist Church, then on the corner of Spring Garden and Queen, until they collected the \$30,000 or so it took to buy this place.

Although initially strapped for finances, the new Presbyterian congregation soon gained strength and began a process which continues to this day, to modify the facilities to suit their needs.

As they found it in 1925, the building was largely unchanged from its original form. The only real modification had been the relocation of the organ console from the

balcony to the worship platform roughly where it is today.

The Presbyterians had a vision for what became Saint David's, and it became, at least architecturally and liturgically, a Church of Scotland Kirk. Architect Sydney P. Dumaresq knocked out the blind arch, built a chancel with rose window, and surrounded it with support rooms for choir and minister. These rooms were built of concrete. (As those of you who watched in recent days the demolition of the United Services/ former CBC Radio building, it was designed by the same architect and was meant to last.)

As part of the same plan, a new Casavant organ was installed in the balcony wings, but

retained much of the older Karn-Warren organ in the back balcony as an echo organ.

The pulpit, brought from old St. Andrews Presbyterian Church on Tobin Street was also designed by David Stirling, and in itself is a significant piece of Presbyterian history. The brass lectern on the ecclesiastical south side is typically cathedral-like, and we retain the arrangement today.

During the ensuing Great Depression and World War II not much was done except to maintain the building, and that only sparingly. However with the return to peace renovations began again. The hot air furnace was replaced with hot

water, this time fired by oil. The unsightly cast iron radiators were war surplus items (you can see exactly the same type that is visible in the balcony in the mess deck of HMCS Sackville).

The old church hall, formerly a school, was a two storey brick building, freestanding on the northwest corner of the site, built in 1866 but was beyond repair. It was demolished in 1950 to make way for a new hall, attached to the church. Designed by James Boulter and built along the lines of a gymnasium, with a kitchen, it opened in 1951, and it too necessitated the relocation graves from the old Methodist cemetery.

The Trustees had not reckoned on the baby boom, and more Sunday school space was needed, and an addition to the hall was built in 1960, designed by Henry Romans. A more Modernist, two-storey building containing half a dozen classrooms, a church office, minister's study, and parlour.

There then ensued a quiet period punctuated by restoration and decoration projects and urgent repair work, but which left the building(s) intact.

Faced with declines in enrolment, mounting costs for maintenance and operation the congregation, came to terms with the how to remain in this place.

The decision was to demolish the hall, renovate the sanctuary, and to subdivide and rent out the hall land for development. This was accomplished eventually and the process began to once again relocate the Methodist cemetery, this time in a responsible and respectful way recognizing the heritage of this place.

We have now reached a new date in our history – 2016, which will be remembered as the year in which the halls came down and construction started on a new phase of our history. A mixed use residential and commercial building, with space for church use within it, will soon begin to rise.

**Mac MacKay**

## Sarah Richardson

Just in time for our Christmas services, we welcomed a new alto to the choir, Sarah Richardson. She came in as an alto, but she is so versatile she can sing soprano, tenor--you name it!

Sarah grew up in Sarnia, Ontario where she studied classical piano, flute, drama, and dance. In her teens, her family moved to Ottawa where she went to Canterbury High School, which caters to students in the performing arts. Here she majored in voice (and in her spare time picked up the viola). She attended Ryerson University in Toronto and received her Bachelor of Fine and Applied Arts in Theatre Tech, majoring in Historical and Contemporary Costume Design and Construction.

She has been performing and directing musicals in and around Halifax for more than 15 years. Most recently she directed "Company" for the Dartmouth Players (Ian Gilmore choreographing). You may have seen her perform at the Halifax Feast Dinner Theatre as well. When Tristan was on tour with

the Canadian Chamber Choir, she filled in capably for two Sundays.

She spent the winter teaching musical theatre at Neptune's Theatre School as well as working at The Scotiabank Centre box office. She is the singer for two rock bands! You can see her perform at the Carleton Bar in their monthly "Dark Day Cabaret" series until June and she has just joined another choir called "The 19". This summer, you'll see her handiwork as she takes on the job of musical director for the Chester Playhouse.

In her leisure time (not sure how manages to find any) she likes to cuddle with her two cats and is an avid knitter. I'll bet the cats are a great help organizing the wool for her!

It is so nice to have you at St. David's.

*Phyllis Morrison*

## From the Finance Committee

Most of our renovations are paid for and we have a bank loan for the remainder. However, we are waiting for the graves under the hall to be remediated and then the hall can be demolished. Once it is demolished St David's will start to receive land lease payments. These payments should be slightly more than our loan payments.

It is always important that our operating finances are maintained, especially during the present transition period.

Each year offerings at St David's fall short of our expenses. Some of us go away in the summer and that is one of the periods when the shortfall develops and grows. Fortunately much of the shortfall is made up again in the November and December. Here are several ways you could help with this problem:

1. Give your offering as a lump sum before you go away.
2. Give post-dated cheques for the time you are away.
3. Join the PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) program – pre-arranged transfers from your bank account will ensure your offering comes to St David's every month, regardless of where you are. PAR application forms are available on the table in the sanctuary. (The amount transferred per month can be increased or decreased by notifying the finance convenor.)

If you are making up your offering after being away, just put the total amount in ONE envelope. You do not have to spread your offering over the envelopes for the Sundays you missed.