

Project Gaining Momentum...

Office Opened! Staff Hired!



Dorothy Bennett, Project Manager and Carolann Wilson, Project Administrative Assistant

With funding assistance from the three levels of government, Federal, Provincial and Municipal the Society was able to hire two full time staff people and open an office location in the Canso Area.

Through successful applications made to ACOA's, Innovative Community Fund; the NS Department of Economic and Rural Development's Community Development program and municipal funding from the Municipality of the District of Guysborough we were able to hire Dorothy Bennett in the position of project manager.

Dorothy brings several years of experience in community development and a project management background to the position. Dorothy has worked on many community-based projects throughout the County.

In addition to Dorothy, we were also fortunate to be able to hire Carolann Wilson in the position of Project Administrative Officer. Carolann has a background in finance and has spent the last three years working with Eastern Communities Youth Association, in both paid and volunteer

positions. She has been actively involved in fundraising and has coordinated many events for ECYA such as the Canso Regatta and Casino Night.

Together they bring the skill set in community development, project management, finance and fundraising that we require to move our project off the paper unto the brick laying stage.

Our new office is on the third floor of the Canso Enterprise Centre located in the Old Canso Post Office on the corner of Main and Union streets. Drop by for a visit any time.

Commercial Cable Company – The “Canso” Station.

In 1883, J.W. MacKay, an American financier who made his fortune from silver mines, joined forces with J.G. Bennett in the founding of the Commercial Cable Company. The Commercial Cable Company, wanting to be part of the new commercial cable business, quickly laid two sub marine telegraph cables from Europe, running the initial North America ends through Hazel Hill, Nova Scotia. Eastern Guysborough County was the closest populated area between mainland North American and Europe. The first Cable Station was a wooden building constructed in 1884 in Hazel Hill and was known as the ‘Canso Station’. This office was replaced with a brick structure in 1888. In 1899 the Cable Office expanded...almost doubling in size. Certainly well designed and appointed this brick and granite building was completely unique to the landscape. Deciding on ‘Hazel Hill’ was influenced by two factors. First, lakes exist between Hazel Hill and the landing areas in Dover Bay and Fox Island. Laying cable in lakes reduced expenses associated with ground trenching. Second, it placed the office within close proximity to the main competition; the Western Union office in Canso.

COMMERCIAL CABLE REHABILITATION SOCIETY

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Commercial Cable Company
Hazel Hill , NS
1888

HISTORY WORTH SAVING!

President's Message

With our success in obtaining funding for project one this past spring we now can bring the much need dedicated time to support our mission to rehabilitate the "Canso Station".

Since hiring full time staff the Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society has been very busy. We have redesigned and expanded our newsletter (we hope you are enjoying it). We are in the process of developing a new brochure and keep an eye on our website www.ccrsociety.ca as we redesign it as well.

We are currently in communication with three potential tenants. Tenants are necessary to show sustainability. Without this the project will not go forward. Additionally, we are in the process of implementing our fundraising strategy. CCRS is expected to raise ten percent towards the cost of the project so we have our work cut out for us. Please watch out for subsequent newsletters and keep checking our website for updates on this exciting project.

As well as all of these new initiatives the Society continues to undertake several ongoing initiatives: During Stanfest 2009 our board members successfully operated an information tent. Several donations were received and prints were provided to the donors. Many thanks to the board and community support.

The Penny Campaign continues to flourish with Mariam Smith's efforts and the local support to the penny jars. The Guysborough Journal featured a story on Mariam and her ongoing efforts to support the Society in its work. Many thanks to Mariam Smith.

Thank-you for your continued support.

*Harold Roberts,
President CCRS Society*



Original watercolor by Steven Rhude

Former Resident Gives Back

Artist Steven Rhude studied fine arts at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto. After spending some time abroad he moved with his wife Simone to Fox Island Main, Guysborough County. While there he developed the realistic and colorful style he is known for today. His work reflects his passion for themes which evoke the culture of coastal communities in Atlantic Canada, their social conditions and iconic character. When asked about his painting of the Commercial Cable building he says;

"I remember talking to a woman whose father was an operator at the Commercial Cable Building, and saying that they sometimes used leftover spools of tickertape (from messages) to start their fires in the kitchen stove. I thought I have to do a painting of this building; such a remarkable history. It was painted in watercolor, on location from the front seat of a GMC pick-up truck. It took about 2 weeks to complete it."

The original painting by Steven Rhude was purchased by Ophthalmologist, Dr John Hamilton of Antigonish. Dr Hamilton had prints made of the painting and donated them to CCRS. In turn for your donation of \$100 you will receive one of these prints.



Did you know...in 1866 the cost of a cablegram was \$100.00 for the first 20 words or less and \$5.00 per word there after...imagine trying to send a newspaper overseas...very expensive even by today's standards!

Reawakening Our History

Lecture given to St. Mary's University Elder Learners

Board members Harold Roberts and Darren Bennett participated in the St. Mary's 2009 Fall Lectures Series by giving a talk entitled "**The Commercial Cable Company & Its Canso Station**" for the Elder Learners.

The lecture was given on September 26th, 2009 in Halifax with a great turnout. The lectured covered many aspects of the Commercial Cable Company's "Canso Station" operations, the architectural, social and technological heritage of Hazel Hill and the struggles faced with saving this important piece of our community, provincial and national history in such a remote location.

Several connections to Commercial Cable Company were made during the lecture and afterwards while Darren and Harold shared lunch with the learners. One connection was with Mrs. Olga Neal, who had several family members working for the Commercial Cable Company. A follow-up visit and possible second talk is being discussed as one of the outcomes from this lecture.

It is important that we document as much of the history and personal stories as we can as the age of the people directly impacted is reaching a critical point.



Harold Roberts and Darren Bennett giving the lecture during St. Mary's 2009 Fall Lecture Series

CCRS BOARD



Pauline Parker

Board member Pauline Parker has been with the Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society (CCRS) for the past four years as a dedicated volunteer. Pauline's commitment and contribution to our goal of saving the Commercial Cable Company's Canso Station building, a unique part of our history, has been substantial. Pauline has served on the executive of our Board of Directors holding the position of Secretary.

Pauline had this to say about her involvement to date; *"Coming from the UK I realize how important the heritage and history is in my home country, so when asked to join the board of CCRS I was very happy to help save the heritage and history of my adopted country even more so since it has a connection to the UK.*

I believe the building is very important to the country the province and especially the area and that to let it go to ruin is unacceptable, but also to recognize that with the current state of the local economy is also an opportunity to breathe new life into the economy"

Thank-you Pauline for your dedication and continued commitment

Community Support



How can you help? Saltscapes Community Spirit Program



SALTSCAPES Magazine is a means by which Atlantic Canadians home and abroad can stay in-touch with our special corner of the world. The Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society (CCRS) has been selected as a member of the *SALTSCAPES* Community Spirit Partnership. *SALTSCAPES* Community Spirit Partnership is designed to help community-based organizations raise money and increase awareness. The program makes *SALTSCAPES* subscriptions available to affiliated partner organizations as a fund-raising tool.

Your purchase of a *SALTSCAPES* subscription will help The Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society with its important work. For every new subscription sold CCRS receives \$10.00.

It will also ensure that you receive *SALTSCAPES*, Canada's East coast magazine. In each issue, you will find articles and photographs that reflect the best of the people and lifestyles of Atlantic Canada. Consider a gift subscription for a special friend or relative, or just treat yourself and enjoy!

The Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society was profiled in the January/February edition of *Saltscapes*



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Please send order with payment in Canadian funds to The Commercial Cable Rehabilitation Society

Thank-you, for supporting our efforts to save a small piece of our history.

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