

**THE HAMMONDS PLAINS BAPTIST
CEMETERY – A LOOK AT IT'S PAST AND
A LOOK AT WHO IS BURIED THERE**

The Early Days of Hammonds Plains

- ◎ The priority in the early days was on survival and establishing a home for family.
- ◎ It wasn't until the 1820's that the residents started to attend to setting up village support structures (such as a school, church, shops and a graveyard).



Amos & Dorothy Melvin

- ⦿ Had come to Hammonds Plains in 1811.
- ⦿ Had considerable wealth, were able to buy hundreds of acres of land in Hammonds Plains, including much of the middle of village.
- ⦿ Were a driving force in establishing a village.
- ⦿ In 1824 they donated to the village the eastern most acre of their land for burial grounds and a meeting house or school . (Deed wasn't registered until 1831).

Location of Cemetery

- It is thought that Amos & Dorothy liked this site for a burial ground because it sat peacefully on a hill, overlooking First Lake.



Community Cemetery

- The land was given to be used as a community cemetery, as no religious affiliation was mentioned in the deed, although the Melvin's were of the Baptist faith.



Meeting House / School

- ⦿ There was a building put on the site – no record of when or where.
- ⦿ It is thought that the building was used as school and a meeting place for church.
- ⦿ In 1841, Jacob Melvin donated a quarter acre lot for a school house (on site where Baptist Church now stands). Building open in 1843 as a Baptist Church and School.
- ⦿ Building therefore became redundant, after 1843.



Period of Confusion – Mid 1850's

- Amos Melvin died in 1829 and his wife Dorothy passed away in 1855.
- After Amos's death, conflict arose in the settling of the Melvin estate. Some of the estate went up for auction in 1852. After the auction, there was some question about who owned the cemetery lot.
- Community leaders took steps to secure a proper title for the cemetery (1853).



John Thomas

- ◎ One of the leaders in securing the proper title was John Thomas, who acquired the old meeting house and moved it to his property, a few hundred metres toward Bedford.

The Baptist Church oversees Cemetery

- ⦿ During the second half of the 1800's, the Baptist Church became the body to look after the cemetery.
- ⦿ References are made in church records of maintaining the cemetery.
- ⦿ After Anglican and Catholic Churches were built in the mid 1800's, along with connected cemeteries, it is thought that the Baptist Church decided to use the cemetery as their own, although anyone could still be buried there, during the 1800's.



Notes from the 1800's

- ⦿ Not sure when first person was buried in the cemetery.
- ⦿ Oldest recorded grave is that of Nathaniel Smith, who died May 19, 1838.
- ⦿ A fence was erected around the cemetery at some point in the late 1800's
- ⦿ Gravestones made of different materials (mostly limestone in 1800's, although a few appear to be sandstone, transition to granite, and some marble in the 1900's), came in many shapes and had unique inscriptions. Gravestones of the 1800's more likely to have inscriptions on them. They were thinner for the most part than gravestones of the 1900's.
- ⦿ Lots of young children buried in cemetery during the 1800's, as result of epidemics of tuberculosis & diphtheria.

Inscription-“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord”



First Half of 1900's

- The Baptist Church maintained the Cemetery – mowing, fixing gravesites, repairing fence etc.
- Many large funerals in community
- Fence taken down in mid 1955's, when road was widened.
- Adjacent picture taken in 1955.
- Gravestones became wider and thicker



Expansion of Cemetery – 1957-58

- December 17, 1957 – A special business meeting of the Baptist Church was called to discuss the possibility of purchasing some land to expand the cemetery. The landowner, Wilfred Eisenhauer behind the cemetery had been approached and has indicated that he would be willing to sell some of his land to make the cemetery larger. A motion was made to move ahead with the purchased, with Deacon Carl Haverstock being given the responsibility to carry on negotiations with Mr. Eisenhauer.
- January 9, 1958 – At church business meeting, it was motioned to purchase an acre behind the present cemetery (from Wilfred Eisenhauer) at a cost of \$200, with the provision that the land be cleared by the landowner.
- Reference is made in church records from 1958 until the 1960's about the new lot needing to be cleared but it doesn't appear that it ever was.

Establishing Cemetery Guidelines

- ◎ **October 1960** - Special Meeting of the First Baptist Church was held to deal with cemetery and church hall. Recommendations included: The back acre (added 1958) to be cleaned up, not to sell cemetery lots, permission for burial to be given only to the following – members of the church, supporters of the church (husband, wife or any member of family), former ministers and their families, a cemetery fund to be created (to be trusted to the church treasurer) and \$200 be used for cemetery upgrades.

1962

- ⦿ **New committee formed to oversee cemetery. It was to be called Cemetery Business Committee. The committee looked at future use of the cemetery. First step was to put new gravel in the entrance area of cemetery.**

1965

- ◎ Morton Eisenhower donates funds to purchase a gate in honor of his parents, who were buried in the cemetery.



1967

- ◎ Baptist Church petitions the province to transfer the deed of the cemetery to them. The province accepts transfer.
- ◎ No record of deed transfer can be found.

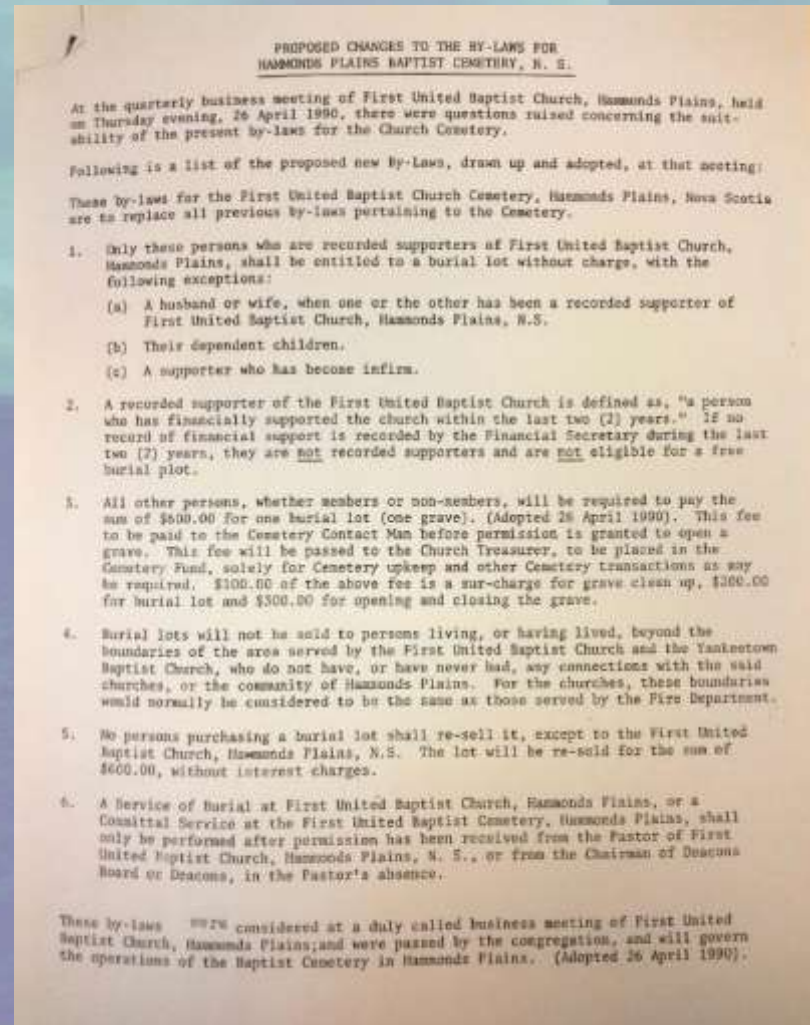


1974

- ⦿ A plot Cemetery Plan was devised. A listing was recorded to match who was buried in each lot.
- ⦿ Three most common names buried in the cemetery were Haverstock, Smith and Thomson.
- ⦿ 150 lots recorded on plan.
- ⦿ The plan shows a distinct road going down middle of cemetery.

1990 – By-Laws Created

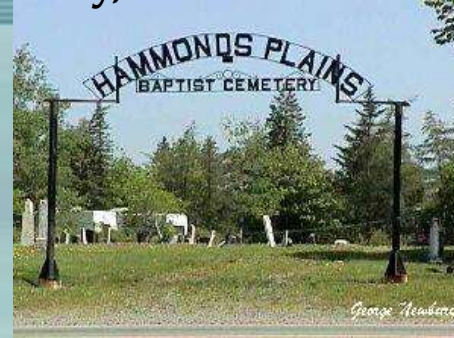
- The 1990 By-laws established that only persons who are recorded supporters of the First United Baptist Church were entitled to burial lots without charge. Others who wished to be buried here could do so at a fee of \$600 – the fees would be dispersed solely for cemetery upkeep; \$100 was a surcharge for grave clean up, \$200 was for the burial lot, and the remaining \$300 was for opening and closing the graves. However, in addition to the fees, the deceased had to be someone living, or having lived, within the boundaries of the area served by the church and the Yankeetown Baptist Church.



Since 1990

- ⦿ No changes have been made to cemetery, except for upkeep.
- ⦿ Record of burials was done in 2000 and put online by George Newbury and Blair Haverstock

HAMMONDS PLAINS BAPTIST CEMETERY - Rte 213 Halifax County, Nova Scotia



The cemetery wasn't always under control of the church. It was known as the Baptist cemetery but it was a community cemetery.

That meant that anyone could go pick a spot and be buried without the church even being involved (and they were). The community wasn't taking care of the cemetery so in the late 1960's the church took it to the legislature and had the deed put on the status books. That meant that the church would control it from April 1967 on.

This listing was taken by George Newbury
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and by Blair Haverstock

Headstone Listings include the following surnames as of October 2000



**INDIVIDUALS BURIED IN THE
HAMMONDS PLAINS BAPTIST
CEMETERY**

Rev. William Bezanson – 1866-1946



- Born and raised in Hammonds Plains
- Married Annie Thompson
- Educated as a minister at Acadia University & Newton Theological Institute, Massachusetts.
- Served as Baptist Minister in several communities in N S
- Was also an author who wrote on religion, history of the Acadians and tales of the Native people of Nova Scotia.
- Wrote 4 Volume Series – Stories of Acadia

Robert Deal – 1924 - 1944

- ⦿ While not technically a resident of H P, he lived very near, on the Kearney Lake Road
- ⦿ He died in service during WW2 – Died in action Italy 1944
- ⦿ Body is not buried in cemetery, but inscription is on parent's gravestone.



Sidney Eisenhauer – 1874-1962



- One of the best known and colorful residents in history of H P
- Simply known as 'Uncle Sid'
- Lived in Beacon Electric House
- Married to Effie Melvin
- Operated Mill on Mason's Pond from 1905 - 1958

Christopher Haverstock – 1890-1918

- Only H P resident to died in combat serving his/her country
- Born in Hammonds Plains – lived near English Corner
- Enlisted in Canadian Army 1916 (during WW1)
- Died in combat in Arras, France March 1918
- Name appears on Vimy Memorial in France.
- Wasn't buried in cemetery but his name appears on father's gravestone



Henry Haverstock Sr. – 1828-1904

- Son of Founding Father Jacob Haverstock
- Life Long resident of H P – Married Sarah Ann Smith
- Prominent resident in 1800's – used his finances to help others
- Laid the foundations for the Haverstock family becoming involved in the forest trade – sons followed his footsteps (not sure what mill he was involved with)
- Has one of the largest gravestone in cemetery



Hilda McEachern Haverstock – 1897 - 1947



- Part of the McEachern Family that lived on McEachern's hill
- Left Hammonds Plains to become a nurse in the U S. One of the earliest professionals to get trained outside the community and then return to live in H P – 1926
- Drove her car from Newport, Rhode Island to H P by herself and not always on roads
- Married Warren Haverstock – lived at Pockwock and then in main village

John Wesley Hays - 1801-1886

- Son of John Hays – Founding Father of H P / Married Sarah Ann McGowan
- Established lucrative lumbering business on Pockwock Lake
- Member of prominent Hays family in 1800's in H P
- Owner of tallest gravestone in cemetery



Lindsay Moren – 1863-1915



- Lived at Foot of Pockwock Lake – Married Eliza Romans
- Purchased half of Hays Brothers Mill on Pockwock Lake 1888.
- Very Community Minded – held a number of posts, including first treasurer of H P Phone Co.
- Represented Hammonds Plains as County Councillor – 1900-15.
- Died in office – 1915
- One of the largest Funerals held in H P

Lena Eisenhauer Smith – 1912 - 2009

- Long time teacher in Hammonds Plains – was well known in community as an educator. Almost every student in H P from the 1940's – 60's would have had her as a teacher. Started teaching when she was 18.
- Short in stature but mighty in personality
- Daughter of Sid Eisenhauer
- Married Raymond Smith, a former student



John Thomas Sr. – 1810-1896



- Very prominent citizen in 1800's in H P – Lot written about him in Dorothy Bezanson Evans Book
- Moved to H P in 1830's
- - well educated and had financial resources
- Created a banking system in the community
- Known as Squire – held many posts in community
- Married Susan Haverstock , then Mary Jane Melvin

Robert Thomson – 1786-1868



- One of the few founding fathers buried in cemetery
- Married Margaret Duncan, lived on lands on south side of Cemetery
- Very active in community during early years, served as first clerk of Baptist Church. Known for his letter writing. Wrote many letters to government officers asking for assistance for residents
- Laid the foundations for the Thomson Family being very active in community affairs during 18 and 1900's

Tremaine Thompson – 1864-1945

- Live long resident of Hammonds Plains – lived on Pockwock Road. Well known in the community during first half of 20th century
- Represented Hammonds Plains as County Councillor from 1916-1937
- From the Hammonds Plains Thomson Family – had 'p' added to his name.
- Married Jessie Bigby, then Minnie Mader



Olive Thomson Romans – 1910-2011

- Life Long Resident of Hammonds Plains – Married Charles Romans
- Lived in central part of village – between Hammonds Plains Pizza and Woodhaven Campground
- It is believed she is only resident to be buried in cemetery that reached the century mark (100 years)



Samuel Thomson – 1829 - 1899

- ⦿ Life long resident in H P
- ⦿ Was Councillor for Hammonds Plains from 1893 -1899 (passed away while being active councillor)
- ⦿ Influential resident of the 19th century
- ⦿ Married Ellen Haverstock, then Annie Pierce.

