



# Story of Transitions – Always Looking for a New Home

**History of Schools in  
Hammonds Plains  
1820 to Present**

# Resources

- **Hammonds Plains – The First One Hundred Years 1993 – Dorothy Bezanson Evans**
- **A Recess in Time 2005 – Marie Kerr**
- **Nova Scotia Archives – Miscellaneous School Records from 1880's**
- **Whatever your Will, Lord 1984 – Rev. Willard Clayton**
- **HRSB Web site – [www.hrsb.ca](http://www.hrsb.ca)**

# Beginnings

- In 1786, at the granting of the original Hammonds Plains Grants, schools in Nova Scotia were built and operated by individuals or groups and were financed through tuition fees or contributions.



# Beginnings

- **No known records** of schooling in early years of community. However, there is some evidence of schooling being conducted in some local homes.
- In 1808, the Nova Scotia Government passed the Schools Act, which empowered landowners in townships to **vote funds** for the establishment and support of schools. Provision were also made for administration, appointment of trustees and teachers, and a course of study.
- The Schools Act of 1811 was designed to overcome the defects of the 1808 Act. The new act reduced district size, increased grants and **gave trustees more power**.

# First School

- In 1816, as part of the Upper Hammonds Plains Land Grant to the Chesapeake Blacks the government issued a grant of One Hundred Pounds to build a small house for a school master, along with a school. The lot was established overlooking Taylor Lake. The school was built and opened in 1820. The first teacher was hired by the Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia.

# School – Upper Hammonds Plains

- According to the 1828 School Records, the school was supported by **donation** (one from the African Society of London) and voluntary subscription – **had 55 students** (aged 6 -16) – All African Canadian Students.
- 1831-32 School Records show 50 students, including 14 white students, of which 9 paid for their education. Interesting to note that the 4 daughters of Jacob Haverstock had free education, along with son of Joseph Thomas (Apparently school masters wife was first cousin to the children of Jacob).
- **Books and school materials were provided, largely from a charitable society in England, along with teacher's salary.**

# Beginnings – Lower Hammonds Plains Schools

- **By the 1820's**, when the community was becoming established, records indicate 2 schools in the community (one at English Corner and one near the Lucasville Road). There was also evidence of a night school for young men over 15 years of age, also located in the community (in the cellar of Mrs. John Haverstock House – where present Hammonds Plains Consolidated School is located).
- School was moved to the newly built meeting house (at current day Baptist Cemetery) around 1840.
- Rev. Clayton in his research indicated that by 1838, there were at least 4 school buildings identified in the HP area.

# Beginnings – Lower Hammonds Plains

- In 1826, the government passed an new act providing provincial allowances for the support of school grants. By 1841, a Central Board of Education had been established. By 1846, an universal system of common education was established in the province.
- In 1841, Jacob Melvin donated one quarter area of land, where the Baptist Church is located to-day for a school. School was built there during the late 1840's.
- During some of the early years, there were years when schools did not operate as no teacher could be found.

# Education 1840's

- **Teacher's paid - \$35 - \$40 per year.**
- **Subjects taught – Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography and grammar.**
- **Books used by the teacher – The Bible, The Scholar's Spelling Assistant, Tutor's Assistant, The English Reader, Murray's English Grammar, Morse's School Geography.**

# Lower Hammonds Plains Schools – 1850's

- In 1857, Louisa Melvin (daughter of Nathaniel Melvin) donates an quarter acre of land from her inheritance to the community for a new school and Temperance Hall (land near entrance of Glen Arbour)
- New School first held classes in 1859. Classes held on first floor, while Temperance Society maintained the second floor. Building was 32 x 25.
- 60 students registered in 1859.



**School built on land donated by  
Louisa Melvin – taken around 1914**

# Upper Hammonds Plains School —

## Mid 1800's

- In 1840, William Taylor comes to community and becomes teacher at the Upper Hammonds Plains School.
- He was untiring for his efforts to better the lot of students and families he served. He led to make repairs to the school and devoted his time to clearing the land around the school.
- In 1846, there were 88 students attending school, of which 10 paid for their education.
- Parents of the children provided wood for fuel and family of teacher.

# Free Education - 1865

- In 1865, **Compulsory Free School Education** was introduced in Nova Scotia. A school tax was levied and monies were used to pay for teacher, maintain the school and buy school supplies. Schools were to be administrated by a Board of Trustees, who were responsible for hiring teacher and finding a boarding house for him or her.
- \$335 was raised in Hammonds Plains through assessment taxes for education.

# Education in Hammonds Plains – 1860's - 1900

School built at Kemptown in 1860's. Had 13 students in 1880.

## School Boundaries from 1884

Kemptown – District 36 – From Pockwock Road to west boundary of John Davidson's Property.

Upper Hammonds Plains – District 35 – Begins at Charles Romans property and extends along HP to Thomas Jones property.

Hammonds Plains – District 34 – Begins at mouth of Kearney Lake Road and extends about 4 miles along the HP Road to Charles Roman's property and on the St. Margaret's Road to Still Water Lake.

# Education in Hammonds Plains – 1860's - 1900

- 1873 - William Taylor passes away. Upper Hammonds Plains School goes into disrepair. Can not find a teacher for 2 years.
- 1875 – The Government repairs school in Upper Hammonds Plains. A Halifax Merchant donates \$100 towards new school, plus wood is used from old school. School reopens in 1875.
- In 1886 a fire destroyed school in Upper Hammonds Plains. School was rebuilt in 1887.
- Kemptown School operates from 1860's to 1920's. Attendance at school generally between 10 – 20.
- School in Lower Hammonds Plains may have been rebuilt/repared in 1890's.

# Early 1900's

- Evidence of school being established at base of Pockwock Lake. It is listed on 1923 map of area.
- The school at Lower Hammonds Plains starts to decline, with repairs needed. In 1912, the Foresters/Temperance Society built a new community hall (across the road), therein allowing the school to operate on both floors. School was renovated, including putting dormer windows in the roof.
- All students walked to the school.
- Teachers were boarded in the community.
- Christmas Concerts held in Community Hall.

# Night School – Early 1900's

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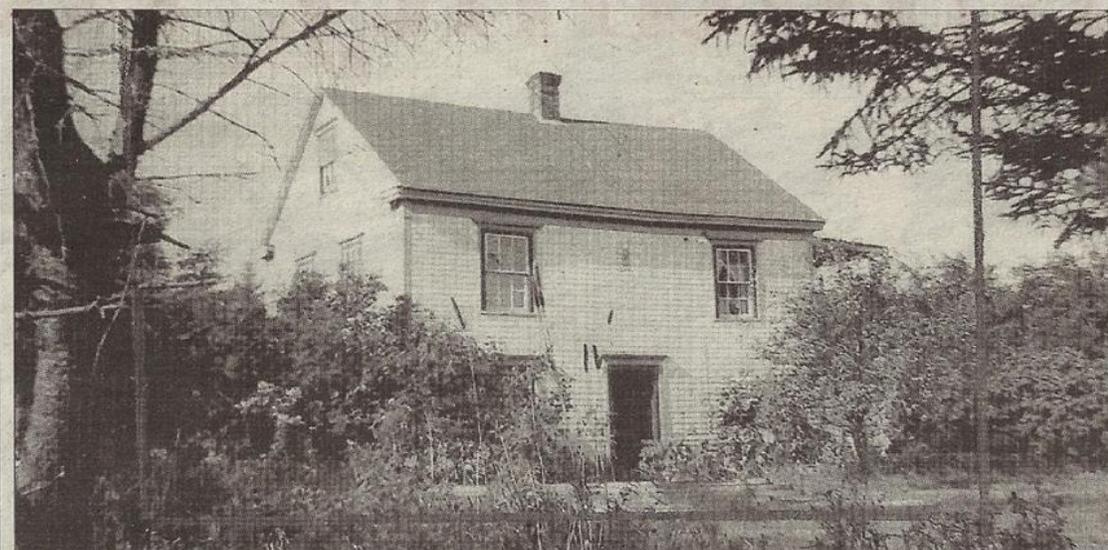
## COMMUNITY HERALD

The Bedford-Sackville-HRM North Community Herald is published on Mondays by The Chronicle Herald, Halifax, N.S., P.O. Box 610, B3J 2T2. It serves the communities of Bedford, Lower Sackville, Middle Sackville and Upper Sackville and HRM North, including Beaver Bank, Antrim, Dutch Settlement, Elderbank, Elmsdale, Enfield, Fall River, Fletchers Lake, Gays River, Grand Lake, Hammonds Plains, Horne Settlement, Kinsac, Lantz, Meaghers Grant, Milford, Middle Musquodoboit, Oldham, Stillwater Lake, Waverley, Wellington, Windsor Junction and Yankeetown.

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## FLASHBACK



## Former night school

Haverstock House in Hammonds Plains, described in 1947 as standing across the road from Eisenhower's millpond, had been used for night school.

*(The Chronicle Herald archive)*

To order reprints, email [library@herald.ca](mailto:library@herald.ca) or call 426-2811, ext. 3080 or 3081.

# 1920's

- Schools at Pockwock and Kempton closed out.



# Class picture – 1920



# New Schools

- **The 1930's saw a need seen for a new school in Lower Hammonds Plains. Old one was showing it's age. The community decided to build new on land adjacent to old school.**
- **Community raised \$2500 - \$3000 to build new school. Acquired a piece of land from Sid Eisenhower to add to the land they already had.**
- **New School opened on October 10, 1939, with two classrooms (registration of 51 children).**

# The New School



# The New School



# Facts about New School

- **Cost - \$2500 - \$3000.**
- **Community raised money via fund raisers.**
- **Two room school.**
- **No basement – only a low cement wall ceiling for a foundation.**
- **Had two outhouses.**
- **Bucket with dipper and basin in school for washing hands. Students would get new bucket of water each day from nearby spring.**
- **Opened with registration of 50 students.**
- **All students walked to school from Kearney Lake Road to Yankeetown to White Hills.**

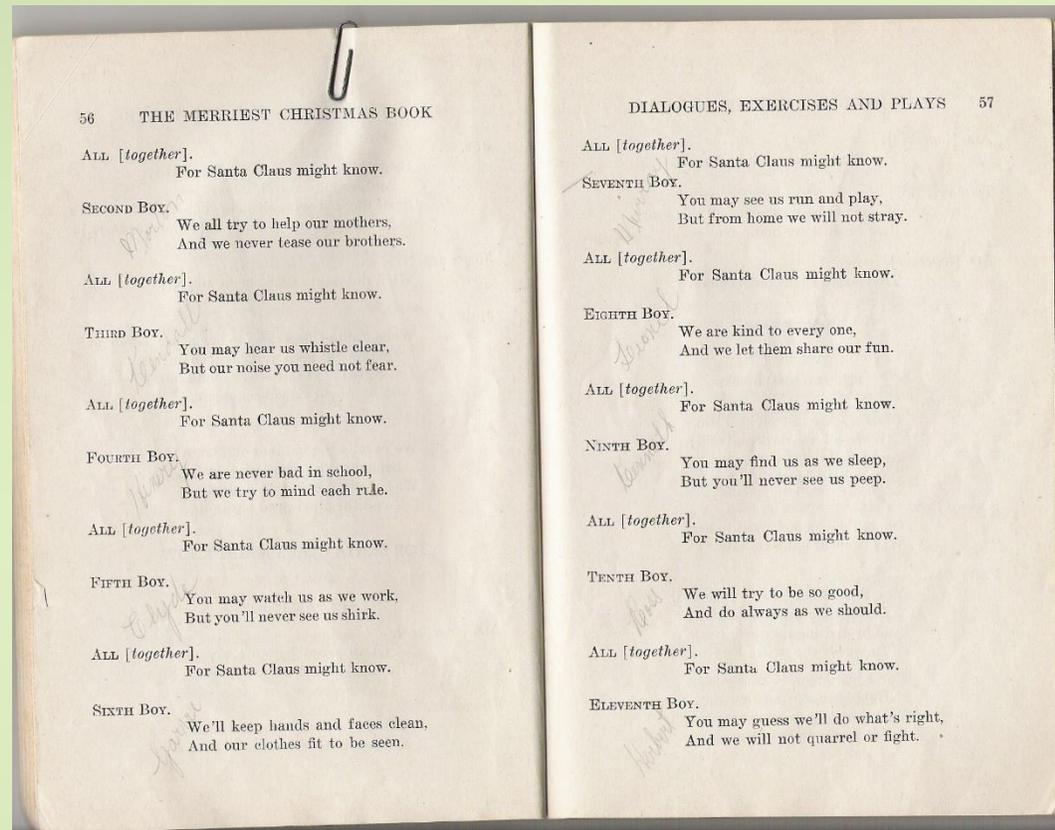
# Facts about New School

- **School Trustees administrated the school – Earl Haverstock, Cliff Haverstock and Will Smith. Trustees elected at annual meeting.**
- **Teacher hired by trustees.**
- **One of the teachers was appointed Principal – Responsibilities included keeping records of all expenses. Reported to the School Trustees.**
- **Teachers had to purchase own supplies, including the strap. Exception a box of chalk, board erasers, a map and yardstick.**
- **Principal could buy supplies from money's collected from poll taxes - \$336.17 for 1939.**

# Facts about New School

- Department of Education provided text books, including a reader, an arithmetic book, a speller and a writing compendium. When students reached grade 9, they had to buy their own textbooks.
- Provincial Inspector of Schools would pay visits to the school to inspect the school and see if everything was going as expected. Teachers most often dread the inspector's appearance.
- School heated by woodstove. Wood kept in shed behind the school. School caretaker made fires early in the morning so school was warm when students arrived.
- Concerts held in Community Hall.

# Christmas Concert Play



# 1940's Renovations

- School raised to include a basement.
- Indoor chemical toilets installed.
- A wood furnace was put in.



## 1940's

- **School divided into Primary Room and Advanced Room.**
- **Many of the students who achieved Grade 9 status went outside the community for Grades 10-12 (ie. Bedford).**
- **By end of 1940's, school had grown to 75 students.**

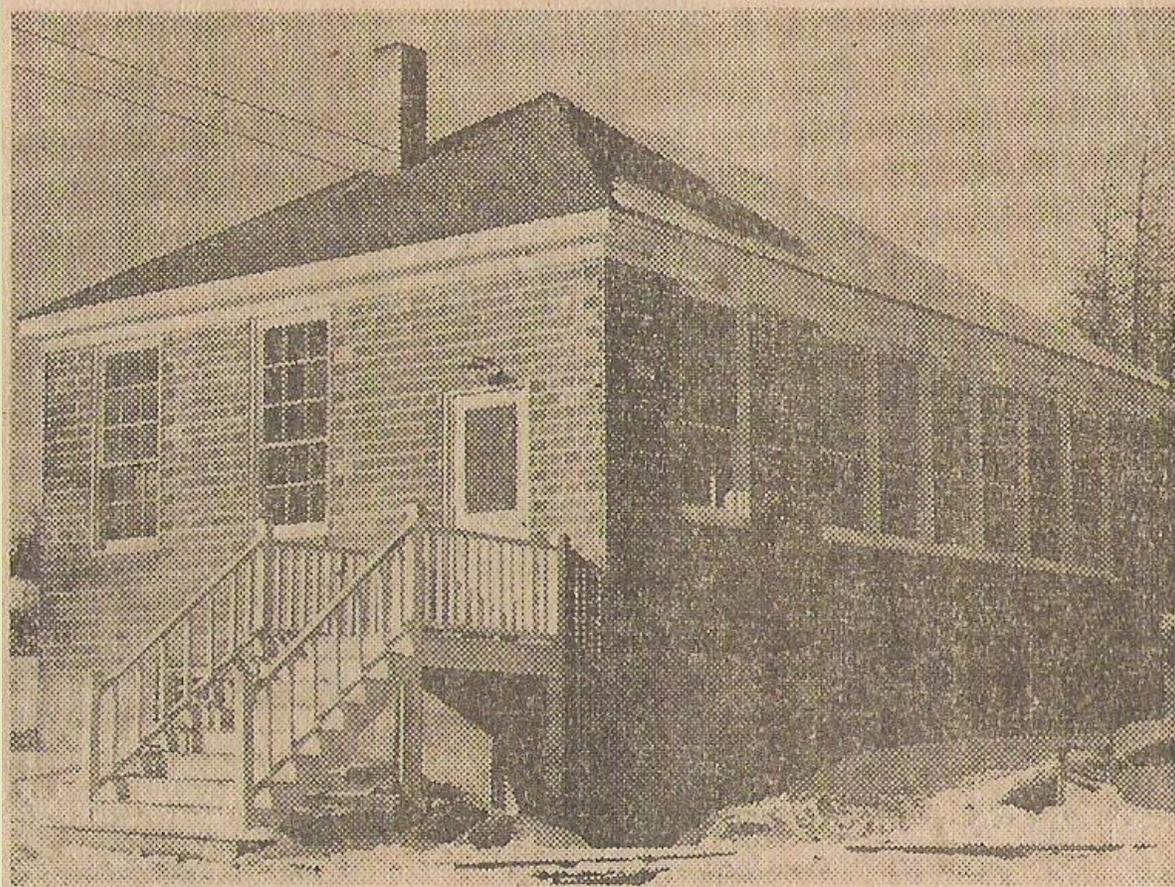
# 1942 Advanced Class



# **New School – Upper Hammonds Plains**

- **The 1940's also brought forth a need for a new school in Upper Hammonds Plains. Madeline Symonds, a teacher at the school is most instrumental in raising funds.**
- **A new school was built in completed in 1945. New school contained one large classroom and a cloakroom which was converted to a science lab, with sink, cupboards and sewing machine. School heated by wood burning furnace. School cost \$4000 to build.**
- **70+ students were enrolled. Madeline Symonds is appointed principal and reaches legendary status.**
- **Students attended school in split shifts (Grades 5-12 in the morning, P-4 in the afternoon).**

# New Hammonds Plains School - 1945



**OPENED ONLY LAST MONTH** for the colored children was this new modern tile-structure school at Upper Hammonds Plains. Costing an estimated \$4000, more than \$1100 of the sum was raised by the citizens at social functions. Nearly 70 students are enrolled.

# Upper Hammonds Plains - 1949



# 1950's – Lower Hammonds Plains

- Population of Hammonds Plains grows at a fast pace. School population grew to over 90.
- Third class added in 1952-53. Primary – 2 students moved to Community Hall across the road.
- Community worked on raising funds to build an extension to school.
- In 1955, an expansion of two classrooms was added to the school. Renovation also included flush toilets, a sink, oil furnace.

# Non School Activities

- **Playing baseball at recess and noon.**
- **Visiting Melvin's Canteen.**
- **Fishing.**
- **No boundaries for outside play.**
- **After school clubs – Garment Club.**
- **The strap and home support kept most students in order.**

# Classes in Old Community Hall



# Grade 3-5 Class - 1953



# Renovated School with 4 Classrooms



# 1960's

- **By the 1960's, the subdivisions started to arrive and the school population to explode – 100 to 150 in a few years.**
- **School busing was implemented (from Uplands Park).**
- **High School Students (9-12) started attending new High School in Bedford – Sidney Stephen High. Soon Grade 8 students went there as well.**
- **New Junior High Schools in Lower Sackville and Bedford put Grade 7-9 students in those schools starting in the fall of 1963.**

# Grade 3 – 1965-66



# Consolidation of Schools

- **During the early 1960's, The Department of Education were making moves to improving the quality of education in N. S.**
- **The Civil Rights Movement in the U. S. contributed to the DOE moving to inclusive schools as part of this improvement.**
- **In Hammonds Plains, there were 2 schools that were beyond capacity and for the most part were segregated.**
- **In 1963, the decision was made to consolidate the 2 schools in Hammonds Plains into one.**
- **This decision caused anxiety and tension in both communities.**

# Consolidation of Schools

- A transition plan was put in place to handle the consolidation, until the new building could be built. The new school, located next to the Irving Station, finally started construction in 1966
- It was decided that for the 1966-67 school year, that half the grades from both communities would attend each school – Grades 1, 3, 3/4 and 5 attended Upper Hammonds Plains School while grades Pr, 2, 4, and 6 attended Lower Hammonds Plains School
- Students were bussed, as necessary
- It was time of apprehension for students and parents alike, but as time went on both communities became more comfortable with the consolidation.

# Consolidation of Schools

- In 1967-68, it was decided to have P-3 classes at the Lower Hammonds Plains School and have the 4-6 classes at the Upper Hammonds Plains School. P-3 classes went on split shift since there way too many students to be housed in 4 classes.
- The new Consolidated School opened in January 1968, with 12 classrooms, a library, a gym and music room and an office.
- Official Opening – June 5, 1968

# Hammonds Plains Consolidated - 1968



# The Growth Period – 1970's - 2000

- With the influx of new subdivisions in the community, the school population soon mushroomed
- By 1980, community discussions began to finding more space for students in the community. An addition was put on the Consolidated School during the 1980's, but the school was still over crowded. Portables became the norm, with as many a 9 in place by the 1990's.
- The 1980's and 90's brought intense discussions in the community between politicians and residents. The community came together in an organized way and finally in 1997 an announcement came for a new middle school in HP.

# Madeleine Symonds Middle School Opens - 1999



# High School History – Many Homes

- Since 1930's, most students have left the community to attend High School.
- In 1930's – 40's, students went to Bedford Central School or QEH in Halifax for Grades 10 to 12.
- In 1950's, high school became a regular practice for Hammonds Plains students, with QEH and then Halifax West High becoming the standard schools.
- In 1961, a new high in Bedford opens (Sidney Stephen) for Grades 9 – 12, with HP students attending.
- In 1973, Sackville High opened and became the area high school.

# High School History – Many Homes

- **New High School opens in Bedford (Charles P. Allen) in 1979, with Hammonds Plains students attending there for Grades 10-12.**
- **New Sir John A. MacDonald opens in 2006. Some Hammonds Plains students given choice to go there.**
- **New Charles P. Allen High School opens in 2013 on Innovation Drive.**

# Sidney Stephen High School – 1960's



# Sackville High – 1990's



# Old Charles P. Allen School



# New Charles P. Allen



# Since 2000

- **Need for second elementary school – Kingswood Elementary opens in 2005**
- **French Immersion becomes an option for students in Hammonds Plains**
- **2015 Hammonds Plains students in public schools – Approximately 2400**

# Kingswood Elementary Opens - 2005

