

Hammonds Plains Historical Society Newsletter

Web Site: www.hammondsplainshistoricalsociety.ca

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The Latest from the HPHS Board of Directors

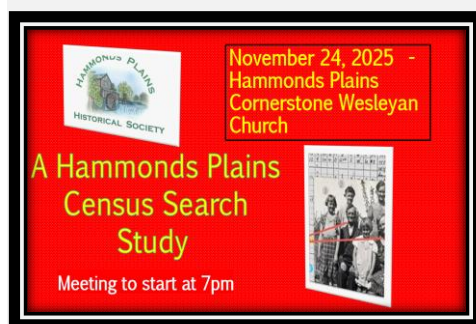
The HPHS Board of Directors continue to be active in planning society activities for the upcoming fall and winter season. Noteworthy is the following:

- Our November General meeting is upcoming on November 24th. It will take place at the Cornerstone Wesleyan Church, beginning at 7pm. The presentation for the meeting will center on exploring the **Canadian Census** statistics, with a focus on the data related to Hammonds Plains. See ad on the right-hand side of the page for more information. There will not be any online option for this meeting.
- Memberships are now open and being accepted for the 2025-26 year. As per previous years, the membership fee is \$10 for the coming year. (See page 2 for details).
- Planning is underway for our special Picture Trivia Night to be held at the Hammonds Plains Community Center in March. Be prepared to see all kinds of photos from places during the 1900's that Hammonds Plains residents had connections with, whether through work, shopping or entertainment. **How many of the photos will you be able to identify?**
- Our 'Did You Know?' fact series continues on our Facebook Page. An interesting fact relating to Hammonds Plains history is posted every week. We encourage reactions, if the fact is something that evokes memories of the past in the 'Plains'.
- We are featuring a new feature in our newsletters, starting with this edition. The feature is entitled 'A Hammonds Plains Heritage Flash' and will explain in detail an intriguing aspect of Hammonds Plains History. Our very first **Flash** looks at the oldest landmark in the community (next to the Hammonds Plains Road).



November 24th
General Meeting –
7pm

A Canada Census Study



Most of us are interested in learning about our ancestors. However, quite often when we go and search for info on them, we come up disappointing results. At our upcoming Hammonds Plains Historical Society general meeting on November 24th, we will be showing how one can use Canadian Census data to find key information about descendants from years long ago. While the presentation will have a focus on Hammonds Plains residents, many tips will be given for those looking to do a general search. Come and learn about the surprising information one can gather in doing a census search.

Becoming a 2025-26 HPHS Member:

You can become a new member of the Hammonds Plains Historical Society by filling out a registration form and e-mailing it to haverstockdave@gmail.com. Annual fee is \$10.

If you have been a member in the past, no need to fill out a new registration form. Registration forms are available by copying from our web site for new members only.

An e-transfer can be sent to the above e-mail address as payment for membership fees.

Donations will also be graciously accepted.

New Additions to Our Photo Collection

Standing on the Yankeetown Road



Photo of Delorosa Stone, standing on the Yankeetown Road, during the 1940's (picture taken very close to where Cox Lake Road connects with Yankeetown Road, looking east). You can tell from the background, there were not very many homes on the road, during this era.

A Hammonds Plains Heritage Flash



The oldest landmark in Hammonds Plains currently existing (besides the Hammonds Plains Road) is the Hammonds Plains Baptist Cemetery. The land on which the cemetery sits, was donated to the community in 1824 by Amos and Dorothy Melvin. The Melvin's gave the eastern most acre of their property at the time, for burial grounds and a meeting house/school to be used by the community. The deed for the transfer of the land wasn't registered until 1831.

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

In the 1830's, a common meeting house was built on the acre lot. It is thought that the building was jointly shared as a school and a place of worship, during the early years.

In the 1840's a new Baptist church was built at its current site and the meeting house was eventually declared redundant and moved to a private residence.

The cemetery was a considered a community cemetery up until the 1960's, when the Hammonds Plains First Baptist Church obtained the deed to the cemetery, to be used as a Baptist cemetery.

Revisiting the 1930's in Hammonds Plains

At our upcoming January meeting we will be doing a presentation depicting what Hammonds Plains of the 1930's was like. This will take place on Monday January 26th.

The 1930's were a decade of great challenges to the community and its residents, as the Great Depression gripped the world. The times were marked by hard work, subsistence living and a community centered support system. It was also a decade when war clouds in Europe brought anxiety, as the reality of war, in the closing days of the 1930's. Yet it was also a decade when key advancements making life better for folks happen, including electricity being introduced, radio in homes becoming the norm, trucks taking over from horses to support the industrial base in the community and the building of a brand-new school.

Come to our presentation and learn about the impact of the 'Dirty 30's' on Hammonds Plains and surrounding area.



This is a 1930's photo of what is believed to be the first truck that was used by businesses in Hammonds Plains.

News from the Past (From Halifax Herald March 1925)

Golden Wedding

The immediate relatives of Mr. and Mrs. John Thomas made a surprise and gathered at their home, English Corner, February 16th, to celebrate with them their golden wedding. They found the couple looking and feeling well, and ready as usual to welcome their friends with all their hearts. It would be useless for me to try to say anything in reference to the esteem in which this couple are held in the community, but this I can say, I think if a book could be written on their married life the introduction would be love and happiness, and all who have ever known them would gladly sign it. Among the gathering there was one who had been at the wedding, Mrs. Lindsay Moran. She, as well as all present were much surprised when the bride told her she had been in her mind all day, as she remembered she was the only relative living that had been at the first marriage. She was there a baby, too small to remember.

We all had a right good time, the largest part of the evening being spent in music and singing. The music being cheerfully rendered by Miss Florence Thomas, Sackville, niece of the groom, and later music was very much enjoyed by all on the violin and organ, given by Blake Thomas and Mrs. Francis Belfield, nephew and niece of the bride. Somewhere around midnight a dainty supper was served, and much enjoyed, after which our pastor, Rev. A. H. MacLeod, spoke beautifully to the bride and groom and all. He said it was rare to meet on such occasions as this, and he also thought it must be grand to look back over the many happy years spent together, and judging from their looks, they had borne the joys and sorrows together. After his talk to them he presented the couple with a good sum of gold, a token of remembrance from those present. The groom was very pleased and very much touched, but he thanked the pastor for the beautiful things he had said, and he also thanked those who had remembered him and his bride, and they could not tell them how much they appreciated their kindness. He also said, as he looked back over the years, they seemed only too short, and he felt sorry he had not lived a more useful life for his master, but he trusted we would all meet someday where the circle would never be broken. After singing a few more hymns the gathering broke up with 'God Save the King'. Trusting the dear old couple will live to celebrate many more wedding days is the earnest wish of the writer.

This write up was found on the web site: [notyourgrandfathersmining](http://notyourgrandfathersmining.com). It discusses the gold mines that were located in the Kemptown area during the 1860's, as part of the website Gold Stories series.

Gold at Pockwock

Pockwock was explored for gold starting in 1863 but historical records say activity came to an end in 1868. So, it was a surprise to government geologists in the 1990s when they discovered that exploration work was done there sometime in the 1900s.

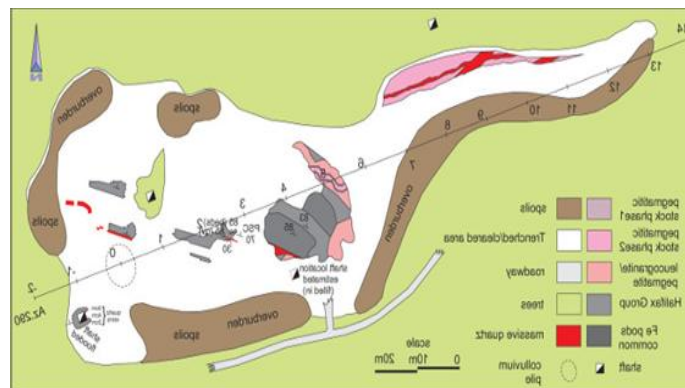
There is very little documentation of the work done south of Pockwock Lake, in the Upper Hammonds Plains area of Halifax. Historical records say three shafts were dug, 37, 9 and 5 metres deep, on three quartz veins that were 122, 20 and 18 centimetres thick. Records also say the site, "not having come up to expectations," was abandoned in 1868.

However, geologists visiting the area in the 1990s found evidence of a lot more prospecting activity than records indicate took place. In fact, there had been considerable trenching, blasting and test pitting done over an area about 100x30 metres.

It was obvious that this exploration took place much more recently than the 1860s – the trenches were dug with a bulldozer or other earth moving equipment. So, the geologists examined historical aerial photos of the area to figure out when the exploration took place. Evidence of ground disturbance from the exploration activity is apparent on aerial photos taken in 1992, but no disturbance can be seen on photos taken in 1954 and earlier. This suggests the trenching and blasting took place sometime between 1954-1992.

Additional exploration at the site took place in 2014. For example, aerial pictures taken with a drone were

compiled into an image for mapping. The result was the site map below. This was likely the first time this method of mapping a site was done in Nova Scotia given how recently drone technology has become easily accessible.



The gold in the picture below came from a single bucket of quartz from one of the shafts. The ore was crushed and panned to separate the gold from its host rock. Panning means scooping up water, sand and gravel in a pan and swirling it around. The gold, which is very heavy, settles on the bottom of the pan while the lighter gravel and sand wash over the side. It is a simple but effective way to separate gold from other materials.



Today, the Pockwock site is mostly overgrown but a number of rock piles and rubble from blasting are evidence of the past exploration work.

Gold was also discovered at the northern end of Pockwock Lake. Again, there is little documentation of work done there but the site is marked as a "Gold Pit" on a 1909 geological map.