

Nomination to Register Findlay Community Centre as a Municipal Heritage Property

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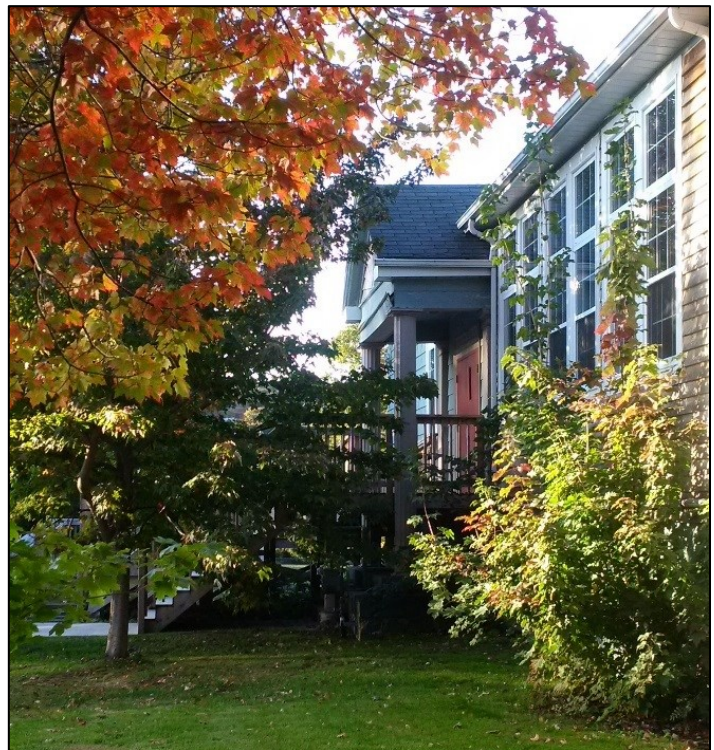
Submitted by
Maura Donovan and Denise Gray Cox
8 April 2019
(with corrections - 4 May 2020)

Please note:

Unless otherwise cited, the source for all historical information regarding Dartmouth schools is the book, “Second to None: A History of Public Schools in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia,” (1993, Dartmouth Historical Association). This book was written by Dartmouth educator, historian, and author Joan Payzant. Payzant herself was a much-loved teacher at Findlay School, from some time in the 1960s until the school closed in 1971.

Except where otherwise cited, all photographs were taken by Maura Donovan (maura.donovan@ns.sympatico.ca).

Right: Entrance to the Dartmouth Senior Citizens’ Club, Findlay Community Centre, October 2018



Views of Findlay Centre, 2018



Above: front façade of Findlay Centre

Right: Findlay from Prince Albert Road at sunset



Below: Approaching Findlay Centre on Elliot Street

(image shared with permission of those who appear in it)



INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. What is Findlay Community Centre?

Findlay School was built in 1932 to help relieve extreme school overcrowding in the growing town of Dartmouth. The six-room, wood-frame bungalow school served as an elementary school until 1971. Since then, the building has served as the Findlay Community Centre. The building and surrounding lands are owned by the Halifax Regional Municipality, and operated and maintained by HRM Parks and Recreation. See Appendix A (pages 22 & 23) for property details and map.

II. Overview: What makes Findlay Centre a heritage property?

Findlay is being nominated for municipal heritage registration on five main grounds:

1. **Findlay is the second-oldest Dartmouth-area public school building that is still standing today. The vast majority of Dartmouth’s historic civic and educational buildings have been lost** (details, pp. 6-7). **Without protection, Findlay Centre may meet the same fate.**
2. **Findlay Centre is a classic and well-preserved example of a wood-frame bungalow school** – one of the most common style of school buildings in North America during the first half of the twentieth century. Only a small fraction of these historic bungalow schools are 1) still standing today, 2) true to their original form, and 3) accessible to the public. Findlay is all of these things. *Indeed, as a municipally owned and operated community centre that retains many original features, Findlay is a uniquely accessible heritage site, both inside and out.*
3. **Physically and psychologically, Findlay has a very strong relationship with the local area.**
 - Findlay Centre is beloved by many Dartmouthians, for whom the building is an enduring landmark and a key gathering place. As one of the strongest ‘threads’ in the social fabric of downtown Dartmouth, Findlay continually facilitates social cohesion and engenders in residents a sense of pride, continuity, and belonging.
 - Findlay Centre contributes to the beauty, usability, and value of the surrounding area. It is nestled perfectly into residential Elliot Street, surrounded by trees and its own parkland, and directly connected to Dartmouth’s treasured ribbon of green and blue – the Shubenacadie Canal and Dartmouth Lakes.
4. **It appears that Findlay was the first school to be designed by Dartmouth’s Douglas A. Webber, who went on to become a leading architect of Nova Scotia schools** during the post-World War II “building boom” years. The firm that Webber founded, and its successor firms, have designed over 130 schools, and continue to be Atlantic Canadian leaders in the planning and design of educational facilities today. For details, see pages 9-11 and 36-41.
5. **Findlay Centre was named after much-loved teacher and vice-principal, Sara (Sadie) Findlay**, who taught in the Dartmouth schools for 44 years (1883 to 1927). Miss Findlay took leadership on many initiatives, establishing the town’s first school library, teaching night classes for adults who had left school, and organizing extracurricular activities. Sara Findlay’s family donated the Findlay property to the town of Dartmouth for the school. For details, see pages 11 and 12.



III. The focus of this application

It can be difficult to separate the value of an ideally sited, historic building from the value of a busy and much-loved community centre.

Indeed, part of Findlay's overall contribution to the community and municipality derives from its status as a publicly owned and managed community centre. If this same building housed a private business, its connections to the social fabric and the built environment of Dartmouth would be diminished.

However, Findlay's value is also derived from the design, form, siting, age, and history of the building itself. If the current building were demolished and a 'modern' community centre built in its place, there would be losses to the aesthetic and historic assets of the community, and to the built heritage of the region.

Thus, aside from the descriptions on page 5 and the top of page 15, this application focuses on the value of Findlay Community Centre's design, form, siting, age, and historical associations.



Above: Findlay School's bungalow form and Georgian Colonial Revival features are clear in this photo, which may have been taken shortly after opening in 1932; photographer and date are unknown.
This photograph is the property of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum and is used here with permission.

The above photograph, and the one on the previous page, were taken from the same location and at the same angle, possibly more than 80 years apart.

IV. Findlay Centre's role in the fabric of Dartmouth life

1. For almost 50 years, Findlay Community Centre has provided a wide range of recreation, wellness, and leisure programming for the public. It is one of the largest and busiest community centres in the Dartmouth area. Findlay Centre serves many people from the immediate neighbourhoods and other parts of Dartmouth, but people also travel from farther afield – from Cole Harbour, Waverley, Halifax, and even Windsor.

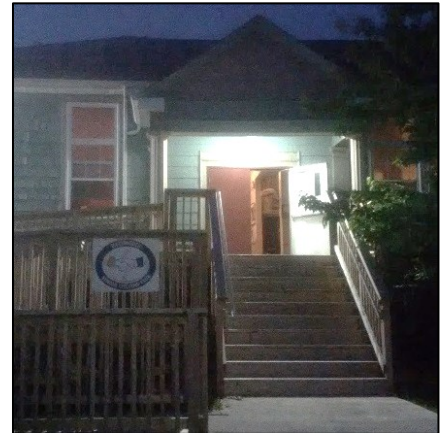
Findlay's classrooms and gymnasium are also in demand as bookable facilities for civic events, birthday parties, meetings, and other gatherings.

2. Findlay Centre makes several unique contributions to community life, such as:

- The **only pottery studio & kilns** in a Dartmouth community centre.
- The very active **City of Lakes Horseshoes Club**, one of just a few such clubs remaining in HRM (see photo below).
- The busy, volunteer-run **Dartmouth Senior Citizens Club** (shown at right). The Club operates completely separately from Findlay Centre, as decreed by an HRM Order in Council that dates back to the 1970's.
- The only municipally run (and thus, more affordable) **preschool** in Dartmouth. Over the years, this popular program has made it possible for many children in Dartmouth to attend preschool.
- An **outdoor movie screen** on Findlay Centre's back wall (see rink photo, below). This wall faces a natural amphitheatre – a grassy slope rising from the back of the building. The movie screen is part of "The Findlay Wall", which also includes a mural designed & completed with community involvement, and that features iconic neighbourhood images, such as the ferry, a canoe, and the ducks & geese of Sullivan's Pond.

3. Findlay's **outdoor spaces** host a wide range of activities and programs, all year round:

- Formal outdoor uses include: Horseshoes, gardening, movie-viewing, and Halifax Recreation camps and events (maple festival, Switch).
- Informal outdoor uses include: Woodland play, bike-riding, scootering, snowshoeing, ball hockey, ice skating (shown at right), runners' meet-up, teen hangout, dog-exercising, and – perhaps the most frequent use – playing at the playground.
- Groups of local residents hold events in Findlay's green space, including birthday parties, Easter egg hunts, neighbourhood social gatherings, and memorial ceremonies.



Findlay Centre is a hub of community activity, indoors and out. It serves as a primary recreational, social, and civic gathering space for the people of downtown Dartmouth.

V. An overview of historic school buildings in Dartmouth and area

Dartmouth has a rich and compelling 200-year history of public education. It's a story of many things: leadership and accomplishment; tremendous effort in the face of limited resources; exclusion, inequality, and struggles for inclusion; unimaginable losses; and 25 years of breakneck population growth, unique in all the Maritimes.

Unfortunately, the built heritage of Dartmouth's historic schools has been all but lost. By 1840 the Dartmouth area had already been home to at least four public schoolhouses; in the 75 years that followed, there were many more. However, only three former school buildings are standing today that are over 100 years old.¹ **Of these, only the 1915 Greenvale School building (now Greenvale Lofts) is recognizable as a former school, and only Greenvale is a registered heritage property.**

After these three buildings, the two next-oldest Dartmouth-area school buildings are **Findlay Community Centre** and its neighbour across Sullivan's Pond, the former **St. Peter's Grammar School**. Both were built in 1932. Both retain many of their original features, inside and out, and have been well-maintained (for more on St. Peter's, see p. 28).

How did Dartmouth lose its built educational heritage?

When "brick Greenvale" and "brick Hawthorn" schools opened in 1915, they were the first Dartmouth-area schools that weren't made of wood. Two years later, the Halifax Explosion destroyed four of the seven Dartmouth-area wood-frame schools (See #1-4, below). The two brick schools were hastily repaired and re-opened (although "brick Hawthorn" was later demolished, in 1971). The three remaining wood-frame schools (See #5, 6, & 7, below) were repaired, but later demolished. **Thus, of the nine schools operating in the Dartmouth area in 1917, only Greenvale survives today.**

In 1917, there were 7 wood-frame schools in operation in the Dartmouth area. None are with us today:

- 1, 2:** Two badly damaged schools were demolished and never replaced – the tiny one-room school for Mi'kmaq children, located at Turtle Grove (not pictured), and the once-elegant Central School (below left).
- 3, 4:** Two other badly damaged schools, Park School (below right) and Tufts Cove School (see p. 28), were completely rebuilt. Both replacement schools were later demolished: Tufts Cove in the 1940s, and the second Park School (see p. 7) in the 1980s.
- 5:** Tiny Victoria School on Wyse Rd. (not pictured) was repaired (rebuilt, essentially) and expanded, but demolished in 1952.
- 6, 7:** Two schools located some distance from the blast were repaired and re-opened, but demolished many years later: the first Woodlawn School (near the intersection of Woodlawn Rd. & Mt. Edward Rd.), and the two-room school in North Woodside (at roughly 218 Pleasant St.). *We have not located photos of either of these schools.*



Left: Central School (1866-1917) stood at the north corner of King & Queen Sts., site of today's Post Office parking lot. *Photo: DHM, 1995.002.003.*

Below: The first Park School (1876-1917) overlooked the harbour on the east side of Wyse Rd., between Thistle St. & Alderney Dr. *Photo: Payzant, 1993.* Both schools closed abruptly due to Explosion damage.



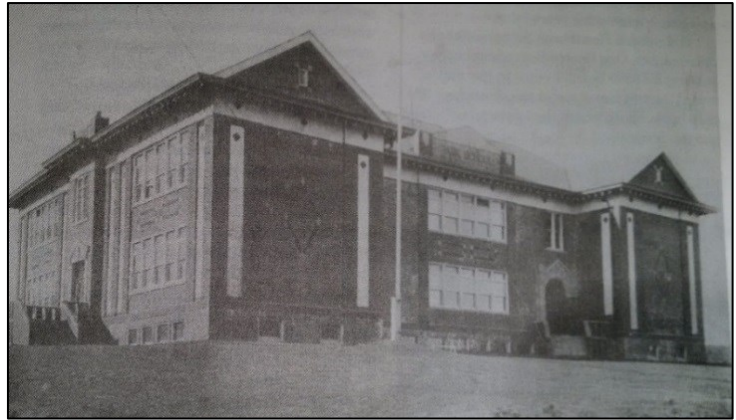
¹ In addition to Greenvale, the other remaining pre-Explosion former school buildings are:

- 1. The first Hawthorn School (c 1885).** In the 1920's, the two-room wood-frame schoolhouse was sold, cut in half, moved across Hawthorne Street, and refinished as two single-family homes. These houses stand today at 21 & 23 Hawthorne St. (Source: John Martin, "The Story of Dartmouth," c 1957.
- 2. St. Peter's Church Hall (c 1840), also known as "Miss O'Toole's School."** For a few decades in the late 1800's, this very small hall served as the school for Dartmouth's youngest pupils and their instructor, Miss O'Toole. In 1894, the building was moved to 50 Victoria Road, and renovated into a private residence (*ibid*). The home still stands in this location.

Right: The second Park School stood where the Dartmouth Skate Park is today – directly across Wyse Road from the first Park School. From 1919 until its 1982 closure, Park School’s 12 large classrooms served hundreds of students every year.

Park School was closed due to declining enrollments, and demolished in part because it needed costly upgrades. However, it took two phases of demolition, and a mysterious fire, to bring down this very well-built, post-Explosion brick school.

Photo & content: Payzant, 1993



Surprisingly, historic Halifax schools have fared better

Halifax lost many times more buildings than Dartmouth in the Explosion, and four of its schools were destroyed (Kitz & Payzant, 2006). **However, several Halifax schools survived the blast, and at least seven pre-Explosion schools are still standing in Halifax today:** the former Tower Road School, both the Halifax Academy and the Old Halifax Academy, St. Mary’s Boys’ School, the National School, Chebucto School, and Alexander MacKay School (which was under construction, but almost complete, in Dec. 1917). Of these, all but the latter (now home to the Shambhala School) are registered heritage properties.

In comparison, our research suggests that, in all of Dartmouth and the Eastern Shore of HRM, only two pre-Explosion schools are with us today: Greenvale (1915) and the Necum Teuch schoolhouse (1887), both registered heritage properties.

Further, eight Halifax school buildings that were built shortly after the Explosion are standing today:

1. Ecole Beaufort Annex (a 1923 brick bungalow, formerly the LeMarchant Street School Annex; see pp. 14 & 32);
2. The former Richmond School (1921, now Family Court);
3. Sir Charles Tupper School (1929; still in operation, with many original features inside and out);
4. The former Sir John D Thompson School (1931, now seniors’ apartments);
5. Chebucto Annex (now the Maritime Muslim Academy);
6. Bloomfield’s Fielding Building (1920 or 1929, and in danger of being demolished);
7. Bloomfield’s Commons Building (1921, and in danger of being demolished).
8. The former St. Joseph’s Girls’ School (1921), now Ecole St. Joseph’s-A. MacKay School – **HRM’s oldest school building still in operation as a public school.** Recently this school was promised provincial monies for renovations. This bodes well for its future use and upkeep, but does not guarantee the preservation of its heritage features.

In comparison, the enduring post-Explosion schools in the Dartmouth area are fewer and newer. After Findlay & St. Peter’s (both 1932), other schools were built in 1937 and throughout the 1940s & 1950s (for details: Appendices C & D, pp. 27-31).

Also largely lost: Dartmouth’s built civic, industrial, & cultural history

Sadly, almost none of Dartmouth’s *other* historic civic buildings remain. Partly because Dartmouth always struggled to afford basic civic infrastructure, and partly due to the town’s reliance on the harbour ferries, the ferry terminal buildings were the *de facto* heart of Dartmouth for its first two centuries. All of the old ferry buildings, including the iconic 1906 terminal, are gone. Also gone are the 1846 Mechanics’ Institute/Town Hall building, the impressive 1884 indoor skating rink and exhibition building, the 1939 Dartmouth Service Centre & library, and the 1957 Town Hall/Museum/Library building. Further, virtually all of Dartmouth’s historic *industrial* buildings are gone; several were destroyed in the Explosion. And there are almost no visible traces of thousands of years of Mi’kmaq inhabitation.

Of course, there *are* buildings that speak to Dartmouth’s built heritage, including churches and commercial buildings, Quaker and Evergreen houses, the Banook Canoe Club, and many private homes. **However, there are only three pre-Explosion, non-sectarian, civic buildings identifiable in Dartmouth today: the Union Protection Company building (1895), the Post Office (1915), and Greenvale (1915).** Of these, only the Post Office has maintained public ownership and public accessibility; it is not a registered heritage property.

Thus Findlay Centre is one of the most important historic civic buildings standing in the Dartmouth area today.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

I. Age of Property

Historical Timeline of the Findlay property

- For hundreds, if not thousands, of years, the area from the harbour to the First Lake (present-day Lake Banook), including the Findlay Centre property, was part of Punamu'kwati'jk (approximate pronunciation: *Boo-nah-moo-kwah-dee*). These lands were not ceded by the Mi'kmaq, who continued to live in several areas very close to the Findlay property until roughly 1900, but the land was claimed by the Crown.
- In 1828, the Anglican church in Dartmouth (Christ Church) built its first rectory at present-day 65 Hawthorne St., on a 12-acre wooded area known to settlers as "The Grove." The Grove property included both the present Findlay property and what is now Hawthorne Street between Prince Albert Rd. and Silver's Rd. (John Martin, *The Story of Dartmouth*, 1957).
- In 1844, Henry Findlay (who later became the Shubenacadie Canal lock master) purchased 5 acres of the Grove property – all of the land between present-day Elliot and Hawthorne Streets (p. 281, Martin), including what came to be known as "Findlay's Pond." Findlay's Pond covered the area where the horseshoes club & ornamental garden are today.
- Two 1929 aerial photos show at least one building on the property (HRM Archives online collection).
- In the 1920's, then-high-school-vice-principal Sara Findlay (daughter of aforementioned Henry Findlay) offered to donate (some or all?) of the Elliot St. plot for a new school. At the time, the Board of School Commissioners did not take her up on this offer; Dartmouth taxpayers were unwilling to pay for a much-needed new school. Sara Findlay died in Dec. 1927.
- In 1931, plans were pursued for a school on a portion of the Findlay property. Dartmouth historian Harry Chapman (*In the Wake of the Alderney*, 2000) states that the Findlay family donated this land for the school.
- Plans for the school were commissioned in October 1931. The school was built in 1932.
- In September 1932, Findlay opened as an elementary school, serving students in grades 1 to 6 (later, primary to 5).
- In November 1932, the school was officially named Findlay School, after Sara Findlay.
- In 1949, the first playground was built onsite, a project initiated and funded by the Dartmouth Kinsmen.
- In the early 1960's, a gymnasium was added to the back of the building (gym is visible in the 1963 photo on p. 22).
- In subsequent decades, accessibility ramps were added to both front entrances. There have been no other additions.
- In 1971, Findlay School closed, due to the federally funded (DREE) construction of a new Hawthorn School, just one block away, which was much larger and had modern amenities (this is the third Hawthorn School, still standing in 2020).
- Shortly after Findlay School closed, the building re-opened as a community centre.
- Presently (2020) the Findlay Community Centre building is 88 years old.

See pages 22 & 23 for property details and map.

Right:

Undated photo of teacher and students at Findlay School, possibly 1940's.

The source is not known, but the note on this image suggests the photo may have appeared in the Halifax Mail newspaper.

This photo is the property of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, and is used here with permission.



II. Historical Associations: Occupants, Institutions, and Occasions

Findlay Centre has three significant historical associations:

1. with its architect, Douglas A. Webber;
2. with its namesake, Sara Findlay;
3. with itself, as a cherished civic building for almost 90 years.

1. Findlay Architect, Douglas Alexander Webber

Following a devastating 1914 fire at wood-frame Greenvale School, the Dartmouth Board of School Commissioners approved construction of the town's first brick schools, Hawthorn and Greenvale. These two Andrew Cobb-designed schools opened in 1915, but didn't relieve overcrowding in the town's schools. In 1917, Dartmouth citizens voted *not* to raise taxes to construct a desperately needed new school; it took the total destruction of the Halifax Harbour Explosion, and funds made available through the Halifax Relief Commission, for the town to build the 12-room Park School (photo, p. 7), which opened in 1919.

By the late 1920's, it was clear that another new school was badly needed. The population had grown steadily, forcing the town to house students in non-school buildings, as it had done in previous times of overcrowding. Many Dartmouth students had to study in "shifts" – some in the mornings, the rest in the afternoons. It was decided that students from outside the town limits would no longer be allowed to attend Dartmouth schools (Payzant, p 59). And all grade 11 & 12 students had to take the ferry over to Halifax Academy, an arrangement that led to low rates of school completion among Dartmouth youth.

The town was cash-strapped, but the Board of School Commissioners was desperate to put an end to students studying in shifts. In October 1931 the Board announced "plans to build a new six-room bungalow school on Elliot Street" (Chapman, p. 259). The town clerk advised the Board of School Commissioners that "whenever possible Dartmouth men [sic] be given preference" [quoted in Payzant, p. 61, no reference provided]. The job was awarded to a young architect originally from the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia, Douglas A. Webber (1901² to 1971), who had just returned from studying and working in the U.S., and was living in Dartmouth with his young family (for more details on Webber, see biography, pages 36-41).

The town budgeted \$24,000 for the school (Chapman, p. 259). Payzant reports that initially, Webber "submitted plans for an eight-room bungalow school. When tenders... proved far higher than the Board had expected, plans for a six-room school were approved." The 1932 annual report of the Board of School Commissioners indicates that in the end, Findlay School construction costs totaled \$43,000; of this, Webber was paid \$1,200.³

Historical records suggest that Findlay may have been the very first school design for the 31-year-old Webber, but it was far from his last; he went on to become one of the best known educational architects in Nova Scotia. A very small sampling of his other school designs follows:

1. **Ship Harbour Lake School** in Webber's home community of Ship Harbour Lake (now Lake Charlotte). This design was commissioned in 1932. Webber's plans are on file at the NS Archives (plans for Findlay are not on file).
2. The first consolidated rural high school in NS, **Middleton Regional** (1948), still in operation today (shown at right).
3. The iconic art deco-style **Bridgetown Regional High School** (1951 - 2017), pictured on the following page and described further on page 40.



² <https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com/ItemView.aspx?ImageFile=1908-59700172&Event=birth&ID=216708>. Parents: Ida Maude Mitchell Webber and Howard Douglas Webber.

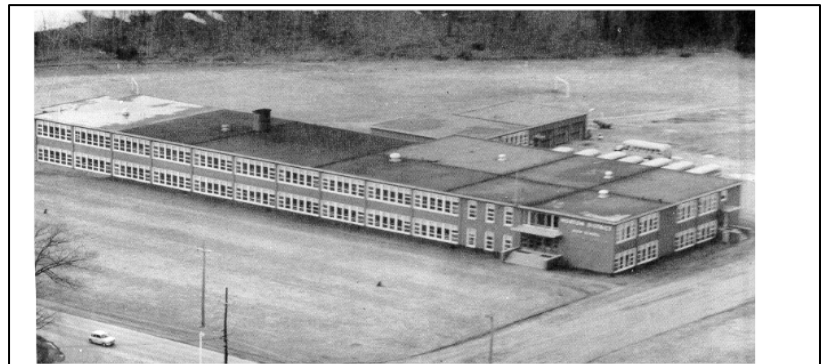
³ <http://legacycontent.halifax.ca/archives/DartAnnReps/documents/101-1m-1932.pdf>

4. **Crossroads School** in Terence Bay (1952). At one time, 500 students attended the 4-room school in shifts, before a 1960 addition. Webber's building is still standing, and the addition is still in use as a small P-5 school.



5. Dartmouth's first two junior high schools, **Bicentennial** (1950 - present) and **Prince Arthur** (1956-2015). These were the first Dartmouth schools to be designated junior high schools; as such, each had an auditorium, gymnasium, and modern facilities for industrial arts and home economics.

These two schools were also helpful in the town's efforts to deal with exponential population increases caused by the post-war baby boom and the 1955 opening of the MacDonald Bridge. One example of this growth: In 1953, the Town asked Webber to draw up plans for a 6-room school; before construction began, his plans for Southdale School (below) had to be enlarged to 16 rooms.



6. Dartmouth's **Southdale Elementary School** (1954-2017), later known as Southdale-North Woodside School.

7. **Dartmouth High School** (1959, plus additions – still in operation).

8. **Horton District High School** in Greenwich, Kings County (1959-1998), shown at right.

Horton District High School was officially opened by the Honourable E. D. Haliburton, Minister of Agriculture, on Friday, 9 October 1959 in the school gymnasium. According to the media, one thousand people attended the ceremony, to hear special guest speaker H. M. Nason, Director of Primary and Elementary Schools for the Department of Education.

Amos Blenkhorn, chair of the Horton District School Board, presided, and platform guests included the Municipal Council of Kings, headed by Warden William T. Blair; Municipal School Board Chairman Gordon Gates, Port Williams; chairs of the other school boards in the county; Eric Balcom, MLA, Kings North; contractor Vernon Woodworth; Douglas Webber, architect, Halifax; and many others. Mr. Nason was introduced by Inspector of Schools, Seymour C. Gordon.

Photo sources: Middleton Regional High School: Google Maps. Bridgetown Regional High School: Chronicle-Herald. Horton District High School: <https://schools.ednet.ns.ca/avrsb/070/hhsweb/HDHSHISTORY.pdf>

Webber's Legacy

DA Webber's architectural firm, founded in 1946, went through several expansions and name changes; it is perhaps best known today as the former WHW Architects. In 2016, WHW Architects became part of Architecture 49 (a new national design & project management firm formed by the merger of six firms). **In all, Douglas Webber, the firms he founded, and their successor firms, have designed over 130 schools. Including additions, renovations, and other changes, the Halifax office has been involved in over 300 school projects** (Source: Architecture 49 Atlantic Division, autumn 2018).

Today the Atlantic division of Architecture 49 designs schools in all four Atlantic provinces and elsewhere – including several schools in indigenous communities in western and northern Canada. Halifax's Stacey Hughes is the lead architect, nationally, for the firm's educational facility planning & design portfolio.

The firm's recent NS public school designs include: Charles P Allen High School & Ecole Secondaire du Sommet (both in Bedford), New Glasgow Academy, Lunenburg's Bluenose Academy, Yarmouth High School, St Thomas-LeMarchant School (Halifax), Yarmouth Elementary School, and the successor of Webber's original Bridgetown Regional High School – the cutting-edge, P-12, Bridgetown Regional Community School (<http://architecture49.com/en/portfolio/projects/bridgetown-regional->

[community-school/](https://thechronicleherald.ca/valleyharvester/1537721-bridgetown-regional-community-school-seeing-positive-changes-in-attitude)). This school, opened in 2017, has garnered rave reviews for its innovation, beauty, and ability to engage all students, including those at risk for academic difficulties (<https://thechronicleherald.ca/valleyharvester/1537721-bridgetown-regional-community-school-seeing-positive-changes-in-attitude>).

From LEED certification to small-group learning spaces throughout each school, and from the use of local wood finishes to bright multi-level “cafetorium” spaces, the most recent Architecture 49 Atlantic Division designs demonstrate the firm’s ability to create bright, inspiring and integrated spaces that facilitate student learning and engagement. Architecture 49 is continually building on a rich legacy – a legacy that has served hundreds of thousands of students, and will serve many more in the decades to come. **By all accounts, this legacy began with Douglas Webber’s 1931-1932 design of Findlay School.**

In addition to Webber’s many school designs, he also designed homes, churches, the Dartmouth Curling Club, and key civic buildings, including Dartmouth Town Hall (1957-2002) and City Hall (1965, now home to the Dartmouth District Office of the NS Dept. of Community Services).

These and other accomplishments are outlined in the attached unpublished biography of DA Webber (Appendix G, pp. 36-41). This manuscript was researched and written in 2002 by Halifax architect George Rogers. It is shared here with the author’s permission.

2. Dartmouth teacher and school administrator, Sara Findlay

Findlay School was named for beloved Dartmouth teacher and high school vice-principal, Sara (Sadie) Findlay. Born in 1865, “Miss Findlay” began teaching high school in 1883, at age 18. She taught in Dartmouth schools for 44 years, right up until the day before she died in December 1927. In the 1902 Town Report, her former principal stated that “Miss Findlay manages to maintain discipline without harshness or punishment and teaches with the ease which is born of skill and experience. Her pupils both love and respect her...” (Payzant, p 57). Indeed, school children formed an honour guard at her funeral.

Payzant also writes, “From all accounts Sara Findlay, a Dartmouth native who had only a C license⁴, was a remarkable teacher. Former pupils... spoke often of how well she had grounded them in English literature and grammar.” Payzant goes on to quote an 1893 newspaper reporter’s glowing account of a visit to Miss Findlay’s class, which took place on a day when the students were doing a recitation: “Every pupil felt free to express his [sic] thoughts, for he knew that his answer, even if being far from correct, would be treated deferentially. He was not made to shrink back by a frown or a sneer; but was most skillfully led to the correct thought” (Payzant, pp 26-27).

Payzant also reports that the then-Principal of the Dartmouth Schools (today’s “Superintendent”), George J. Miller, praised Findlay “several times in his annual reports”. Payzant quotes his 1894 report:

I cannot speak too highly of Miss Findlay, teacher of junior Math, English and Drawing in the High School. She is invaluable in the position she occupies which in every other town requires a man and a good one, and she receives about half his salary. She is an executive officer of great ability, and as a teacher, second to none that I have met: firm, gentle and always ladylike. (p. 27)

Payzant follows this with: “Feminists and proponents of affirmative action and pay equity would gnash their teeth with rage if a female teacher were described this way today!” Indeed, Harry Chapman (*In the Wake of the Alderney*, 2000) suggests that Sara Findlay was passed over for the Principal role because of sexism; ironically, George Miller was hired instead.

A plaque honouring Sara Findlay hangs in the foyer of Findlay Centre. It provides an excellent summary of her teaching career (plaque is shown on p. 12. The photo was taken in 1924, about three years before Sara Findlay’s death at age 62).

3. Findlay Centre itself – a cherished public building since 1932

For Dartmouthians, Findlay’s most important association is with itself. For more on the relationship between the people of Dartmouth and Findlay Centre, see pages 3, 5, and 15.

⁴ Payzant (1993) states that a teacher with a “C” license had completed grade 10 and one year of Normal School (Teachers’ College).



Sara (Sadie) Findlay

1865-1927

Dartmouth School Teacher for 44 years

Sara Findlay was born in Dartmouth in 1865, the daughter of Mrs. and Mrs. Henry Findlay.

Miss Findlay began her teaching career at the Dartmouth Central School at the corner of King and Queen Streets in 1883 when she was 18 years old. She taught the grade 8 class, which was the highest grade in the town at that time.

Miss Findlay along with school principal Ernest Robinson taught night classes for school drop-outs three nights a week from 1907 to 1912. Subjects included arithmetic, English, commercial arithmetic, and business forms.

When the high school moved from Central School to the Greenvale School in 1893, Miss Findlay moved with it and initiated several new programs for the benefit of the students such as: a school newspaper, a library with 400 books, and a small museum of natural history. In 1914 a fire destroyed the Greenvale School building along with the library, books, and museum.

She moved to the new Park School as vice-principal in September of 1919.

In addition to her dedicated teaching career, Sara Findlay was actively involved in Christ Church and the HMS Shannon Chapter of the IODE.

Toward the end of the fall term in 1927, she took sick while walking to school one morning and died the following day. School children formed a guard of honour at her funeral paying their respects to a well loved and respected teacher who had been part of the Dartmouth education system for 44 years.

Findlay elementary school opened in 1932 on Elliot Street on land owned by the Findlay family and previously suggested by Miss Findlay herself. In November of 1932 the Dartmouth School Board adopted a motion naming the school Findlay School in remembrance of Sara Findlay. Findlay School has since been closed but the building continues to serve the area as the Findlay Community Centre.

**Sponsored by: Dartmouth Historical Association - 2007
Dartmouth Community Health
Community Development Fund**

III. Relationship to the Surrounding Area

Findlay is ideally sited

It's as if DA Webber positioned his first school specifically to bring joy to those who turn on to Elliot Street and catch sight of Findlay – nestled among the houses, and framed by the trees.



Findlay Centre is strategically located just past the curve in Elliot St. This provides passerby a full view of Findlay as they approach from Erskine St. As with many bungalow schools (see section below), the building is proportionally aligned with the surrounding homes in every way – **siting, setback, height, roof pitch, and orientation**. See also the winter photo on p. 2.

The siting of bungalow schools

Bungalow school buildings: Well-sited bungalow schools fit into their surroundings organically. They are not much taller than the surrounding homes, and thus, are not imposing. Their pitched roofs imitate house roofs and, with no gable end, create a natural step-back from the curb, regardless of which side faces the street. They are located close to the sidewalk, and most often parallel to it – thus connecting these schools to passerby in a way that is rare among newer schools. The end result: each school's front façade falls in line with the surrounding houses, in every way. This makes a bungalow school a delightful surprise – a rare and unexpected public space, in the midst of many private dwellings.

Bungalow school grounds: These are small schools, built during lean financial times, often in densely populated neighbourhoods. Thus, they aren't surrounded by vast fields, large parking lots, and bus drop-off loops; instead, like the schools themselves, the school grounds blend into their surroundings (however, in an era of burgeoning awareness of public health, some bungalow schools were designed specifically to provide city children with outdoor play and fresh air, which guaranteed some amount of open outdoor space).

Many decades on, trees have grown up around these schools, blurring the lines between public and private properties. Findlay has the added element of mature trees in an enclosed courtyard. These trees are now much taller than Findlay's roof (see photos, this page).

Thus Findlay Centre is literally entwined with its natural surroundings.



Photo: Trees thriving in the courtyard; runners thriving during their Sunday morning meet-up.

Bungalow schools are great neighbours

Right: As one admirer of Cliff Bungalow School (Cliff Street, Calgary) wrote online:

“Cliff Bungalow School looks more like a house, with its pitched roof and two side yards, rather than one humongous playing field.”

Photo at right: Google Maps



Left:

Anchoring the opposite end of Cliff St. in Calgary is another well-sited bungalow school, Holy Angels.

Source for this photo and the above quote: everydaytourist.ca/2015/2015/3/9/are-school-sites-sacred-cows

Right:

Lynn Woods Elementary in Lynn, Massachusetts (see front façade, p. 24) has been called a “hidden gem.” It is tucked into a wooded hillside on a short side street (see right). Those who make an effort to see it may catch a glimpse from the busy main road; otherwise, it is easily missed.

Source: Google Maps Street View



Below: Ecole Beaufort, Halifax, is sheltered under a canopy of trees (see also photo on p. 32).



Each building fits seamlessly into the residential area around it – and enjoys a strong sense of ownership by the neighbourhood.

Section III, *Relationship to the Surrounding Area* – continued

Findlay Centre: History that is publicly owned and uniquely accessible

Former students take their children, grandchildren, and others to Findlay, and share their school memories. Moreover, Dartmouth children and youth still take classes and attend events at Findlay Centre, and still play on Findlay's grounds. This invites them to put themselves in the shoes of the students of 85 years ago – to think about who those students were, and what their lives might have been like. They can do all this in a space that is remarkably true to the original building. This is a rare opportunity today, and *the only such opportunity in the Dartmouth area*.

Unlike a museum, one doesn't have to go to Findlay in search of history. A child can go for a birthday party, dance class, or Youth Night, and find themselves experiencing history by happenstance. This greatly increases the number of children (and adults) exposed to an old school building – people who walk down Findlay's echoing main hallway, taking in the tall windows and gleaming hardwood floors, and think, *"Wow – this is what an old school looks, sounds, and feels like!"*

It is rare to find an older school that has retained many historically authentic elements, and is both publicly owned and tasked with welcoming the public into the building. **Such buildings are uniquely accessible heritage sites, both inside and out.**

III-A. Architectural Style

Findlay is a single-story, wood-frame bungalow school, built in the Georgian Colonial Revival tradition. For Findlay's Georgian Colonial details, see pages 16 to 19. For a sampling of bungalow school architectural styles, see Appendix B (pp. 24 to 26).

Bungalow schools

Countless "bungalow schools" were built across Canada and the US in the early 20th century. For growing towns like Dartmouth, these unpretentious schools could house more classes than traditional one- or two-room schoolhouses, but were less costly than the substantial, often ornately finished schools popular in the Victorian and pre-War eras.⁵ Wood-frame bungalow schools such as Findlay provided further savings over brick or stone bungalow schools. The need that gave rise to bungalow schools is described on the Calgary website, "Explore 150":

In the prosperous and expansive years of 1905-1914, Calgary evolved modern and imposing school structures... This pattern of school building was reversed after 1914, due to post-war economic decline. Although school enrolments increased, the Calgary School Board was forced to erect more modest buildings to house overflows. This, combined with a more regulatory role by the Alberta Department of Education with respect to building practices, lead [sic] to the formula development of frame and brick, vernacular, bungalow schools.⁶
(<https://www.whose.land/en/balmoral-bungalow-school?msg=gottweet>)

Features of Findlay Centre that are common among many bungalow schools include:

1. **One story and modest in size, but larger than a traditional schoolhouse.** 4 to 8 classrooms is typical, though some bungalow schools are larger. Most often, they were built with no gymnasium, cafeteria, or library, although these were added to some schools later on. While many bungalows (including Findlay) were stand-alone schools, some were built as an annex to a larger school; students in the bungalow used the amenities in the main building.⁵ Indeed, in some locales today, the stand-alone classrooms that we in Nova Scotia call 'portables' are known as 'bungalows'.
2. **Hipped roof with less-than-45-degree pitch; some roofs are quite low-pitched.** The low pitch allowed many bungalow schools to be two classrooms deep, while presumably reducing or eliminating the need to use a flat surface for any portion of the roof (however, some bungalow schools do have roofs with flat sections, and others have shed/gabled roofs). For photos of bungalow school roofs, see pages 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 22, 24-30, 32, & 33.
3. **Minimally adorned and decorated.** Bungalow schools were humble creations, built to put children in classrooms and relieve overcrowding during difficult economic times. Most often, costly elements were excluded.⁵

Continued, next page

⁵ "511 Clifton Street South – Wolseley School," a report prepared by the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee, May 1996: <https://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Heritage/ListHistoricalResources/Clifton-S-511--long.pdf>.

⁶ Both "Explore 150" and the Facebook page "Historic Calgary" state that the Calgary bungalows' use as schools was intended to be temporary: "The original idea behind the bungalow schools were to convert them into apartments after they were no longer needed, however there are still some that are used for educational purposes." ("Historic Calgary" Facebook page)

4. **Built as an elementary school.** It appears that few bungalow schools were built to house upper grades, which required more classrooms as well as an auditorium, gym, science labs, library, etc.
5. **Partially above-grade, finished basement.** Basements often held additional classrooms or large open spaces suitable for assemblies and/or indoor recess. Former Findlay students recall having indoor recess in the basement.

III-B and C. Original Façade and Architectural Details

Given that the HRM Heritage Property Program is primarily concerned with building exteriors, the present section focuses on exterior features. For photos of some of Findlay’s notable interior features, see Appendix F (pp. 34-35).

Colonial Revival features

Findlay’s Georgian Colonial Revival features reflect the Georgian Colonial architecture of the 1700’s, including **symmetry in all aspects of the front façade, double-hung windows with small lights, a hipped roof with a pitch that is less than 45 degrees, minimal roof overhang, and very few adornments.**

Front façade details: Findlay Centre’s two offset front entrances are equally spaced, contributing to the symmetrical layout of windows and doors.

Each entrance is flanked by two windows on the “outer” side (toward the side walls). Across the middle of the façade, there are three identical banks of classroom windows (as shown in 3 photos: top of p. 2, bottom of p. 17, and bottom of p. 19).



Adornments

The only exterior ornamentations on the entire building are at the two offset, identical front entrances, and on the roof:

- a) Both entrances have **Doric columns** and **sunburst/fan porticos**. The original double columns have been removed and replaced with a single column anchoring each side of the portico. The two porticos are shown on this page.
- b) There is a **lovely eyebrow window** in the centre of the roof, facing the street. It is shown at left and below, and is visible in the black-and-white photo on page 4.



Adornments continued, next page

Exterior adornments, continued:

- a) There are two **plain wooden cupolas** on the roof. They are symmetrically placed, with traditional louvered panels. This feature is probably original, as a cupola is visible in the black-and-white photo on page 4.
- b) The main entrance has a **very large original transom window, with 18 small lights** (see colour photo, below). At the other entrance (Dartmouth Senior Citizens' Club), there is no transom window. This entrance hasn't sported a transom for many years; see ~1990 black & white photo, below.

Right:
Original transom window
above main entrance

This was originally the boys' entrance to the school; the present Senior Citizens' Club entrance was for the girls.
Girls and boys also had separate cloak rooms, as was standard practice at that time. Most of Findlay's cloak rooms are intact, and now serve as storage closets; a few have been converted to washrooms or kitchen areas.



their peers at Park High School. By September 1933 the total enrolment in the Dartmouth schools was 1690.

When tenders for the eight-room school proved far higher than the Board had expected, plans for a six-room building were approved. On

Right: Photo of the front façade, roughly 1990, showing Senior Citizens' Club entrance before the entrance doors were raised to be level with the main floor (compare with photo on p. 5).
Photo source: Payzant, p 61.

Findlay School, completed in 1932.

*M. C. 1993 - Dartmouth Historical Assoc. (DHM)
 Joan Payzant, "Second to None: A History of Public Educ. in Dartmouth, N.S."*

Windows

It appears that no new windows have been added to the original building.

- All windows appear to be in their original location, and are the original size, shape, and style.
- The original classroom windows were double-hung 6-over-9 panes (see photo directly below). Of these, seven original windows remain:
 - six face into the courtyard (and thus, are not visible from the exterior). For an interior view, see this page, below right; exterior views are found on page 19 (courtyard photos).
 - one window on a rear wall (shown in the interior and exterior photos at right >>).
- All the other main-floor windows have been replaced with vinyl inserts. While not the exact same as the originals, they create a similar look. They are triple-sash windows with 6 lights in each sash; the bottom sash is operable.
- It appears that the only main-floor windows that have been removed are on the northeast side of the building, facing Sullivan's Pond. Here, two windowless fire doors lead nowhere (see photo, p. 20). These doors have been sealed shut for at least 25 years. They may have been installed as part of a wheelchair-accessible entrance (as suggested in the ca. 1990 photo on page 17; note base of ramp, barely visible in lower left corner).
- On the main level, there are two small washroom windows (shown on p. 20, top and bottom photos). The interior woodwork/moldings suggests that these windows are original, as does the old black & white exterior photo (p. 4), in which the southeast-facing washroom window is visible.
- The ~1960 gymnasium windows open by way of an original, and unusual, mechanism. A pulley system allows a staff member to stand on the gym floor and open an entire row of ceiling-height windows at once, with minimal effort.
- For basement windows, see 'Basement' section, next page.



Below: Original windows, April 2009. Source: Google Maps Street View



Building Layout and Footprint

- Of the six main-floor classrooms, three face the front. The other 3 classrooms are on the two sides of the building. As shown in the aerial photo on p. 22, this layout created a shallow, very slightly offset, U-shaped footprint.
- In the early 1960's, a cinderblock gymnasium was added across the back of the building. This changed the shape of the building from a 'U' to more of a square. It also created 1) a closed loop that can be travelled indoors (by going through the gym), and 2) an enclosed outdoor courtyard. The courtyard, which is accessed from one of the corridors, has mature trees and bushes, picnic tables, and a brick "floor" (see photos below). In the years before the school closed, grade primary students played in the courtyard during recess.



Above left: the courtyard in summer. Above right: Detail of original windows, viewed from the courtyard.

Basement

- Like most bungalow schools, the original school building has a full, finished basement that is partially above grade. Every basement room has one or more well windows (6 lights). Recently all original basement windows were replaced with vinyl inserts. A handful of the basement windows have been removed.
- The basement is accessed via two interior staircases that are original to the building.
- The basement houses the weight/fitness room, preschool room, large ceramics studio, washrooms, youth room, caretaker's closet & office, and storage rooms.
- The gymnasium, and the two hallways that lead to it, were built at grade. There is no basement beneath them.



Cladding

At present, the exterior cladding is a mix of large wooden shingles (painted) and recently installed clapboard (not painted).

From the old black-and-white photo of the front façade (p. 4), it appears that the school was originally shingled, though perhaps using smaller shingles.

See also the photo on page 21. It shows the front façade in June 2012, prior to the shingles being removed and clapboards installed.

Exterior views, 2018

- The classroom locations listed on this page apply from the mid-1960’s until the school closed in 1971.
- For historic and present-day views of the front façade, see pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 17, 19, & 21
- Note that the building corners face north, south, east and west.



Left:
The three classrooms across the front of the building housed grades primary, 3, and 4, respectively.

The windows on either side of the south corner indicate where the school offices were located.

Right:
The bank of windows indicates the former location of the Grade 2 classroom. The main gymnasium doors are tucked into the east-facing corner. The “Findlay Wall” spans the back of the building.



Left:
North-facing corner (rear gymnasium doors) and back parking lot.

Note trees in the enclosed courtyard. The lone original window is located in an office.

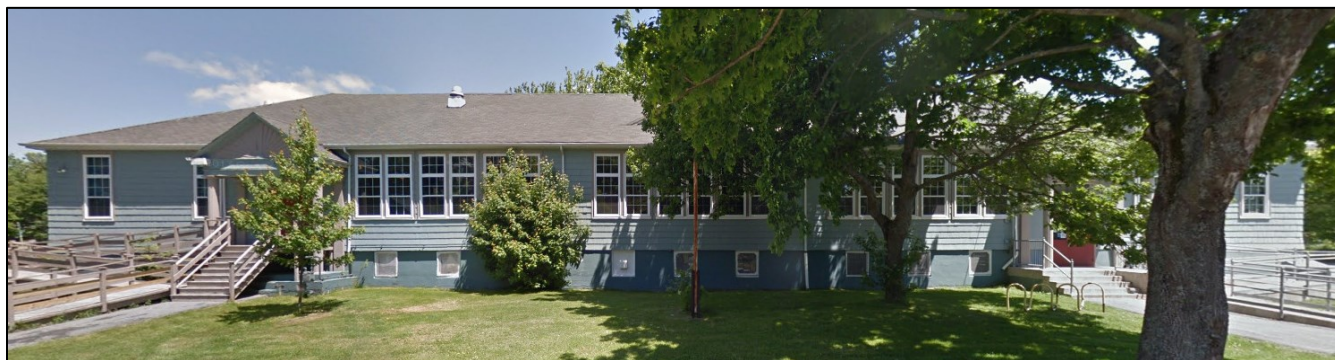
Right:
Northwest side, facing the horseshoes pit, Prince Albert Rd., & Sullivan’s Pond. The left-hand windows indicate Grade 5 & the Auxiliary class (segregated class for children with developmental delays). Grade 1 was housed in the classroom to the right.



Appendices

Appendix A: The Findlay Centre property	22-23
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In the appendices, photographs of Findlay Centre can be found on this page (below) and pages 22, 34, & 35.



Front façade, June 2012; source: Google Maps Street View.
*This image was captured after the new windows were installed,
but prior to the shingles being removed and replaced with clapboards.*

Appendix A: The Findlay Centre property

See also the annotated map of the Findlay Centre property, next page.

The property (PID 00235010), is 3.42 acres in total (source: Viewpoint), and includes:

1. Both grassy and wooded park spaces, a small ornamental garden near Prince Albert Road, a playground*, 5 benches, 2 picnic tables, a bike rack, the main building and enclosed courtyard, and a paved parking lot that surrounds two sides of the building, all of which are maintained by HRM Parks and Recreation;
2. Fenced horseshoes pits, operated by the City of Lakes Horseshoe Club;
3. The volunteer-run Goodness Grows Community Garden (~25 raised beds);
4. Two storage structures: a wooden 'baby barn' belonging to the Horseshoes Club, and the Community Garden's semi-portable (plastic) garden shed.
5. In the partially wooded areas along the back property line, roughly 20 residential properties have direct access to Findlay Park. This connection increases both the informal day-to-day use of the park, and the neighbourhood surveillance of the building and the property.
6. The largest wooded area has a steep gravel path that emerges near the corner of Hawthorne & Sinclair Streets. This path creates a "back entrance" to Findlay for pedestrians coming from Hawthorne St. and the adjacent Silver's Hill residential area. A small Water Commission pump house once stood here; it is visible in the 1963 photo below (start at the red X, below, & draw a straight line down to the small, shed-roofed building with the gable facing Hawthorne St).

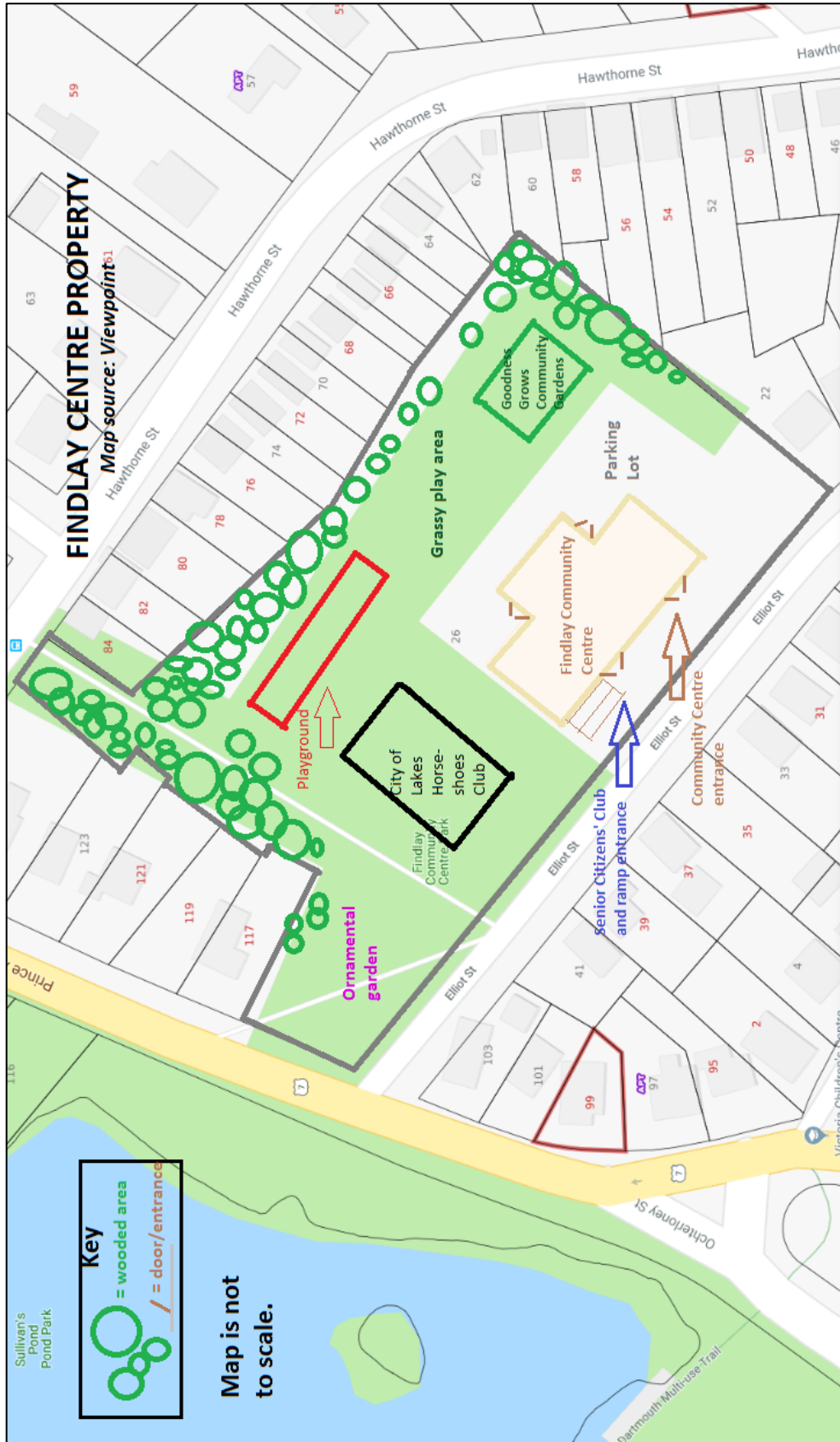
* As of February 2020, the Findlay Playground consists of a large grassy area, a small commercial-grade play structure, a 4-bay commercial-grade swing set, two concrete-and-wood park benches arranged to face each other, and a curious round raised bed, with walls made of stone and mortar (a feature with an endless number of functions in a playground!).

X



Aerial photo taken Sept. 1963, showing rear elevation of Findlay School, enclosed courtyard, and most of Findlay property. Prince Albert Rd runs parallel to Sullivan's Pond at right. Hawthorne St. and the start of Sinclair St. are in the foreground (source: HRM Archives, <https://novascotia.ca/archives/communityalbums/HalifaxArchives/archives.asp?ID=470>).

Appendix A, continued: The Findlay Centre property



Appendix B: Some styles of bungalow schools

Schools that are no longer standing are outlined in a thick red line and have a red X on the photo.

Craftsman:

Old School, Musquodoboit Harbour, 1954 and at present.

Sources: Below, Chronicle-Herald Archives;
Right, Google Maps Street View.



This photo of the Musquodoboit Harbour School was taken in March 1954.

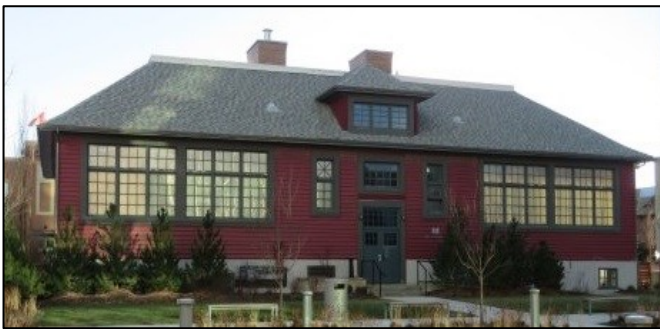
(E. G. L. (BERT) WETMORE / The Chronicle Herald archive)



Right: Lynn Woods
Elementary School,
Lynn, Massachusetts
(c 1921, still in use)
Photo: Google Maps



Prairie School:



Above: Ninette School, Ninette, Manitoba; now a private home (Source: Manitoba Historical Soc.)

Upper left: Wooden Victoria Bungalow School, Calgary (https://www.tripadvisor.ca/ShowUserReviews-g154913-d3164491-r546003195-Victoria_Sandstone_School-Calgary_Alberta.html).



Lower left: Balmoral Bungalow School, Calgary (<https://www.whose.land/en/balmoral-bungalow-school?msg=gottweet>)

Georgian Colonial Revival:

Right: Dunaway Community Centre,
Ogunquit, Maine

*See also: Woodlawn School,
Dartmouth (c 1949), page 29.*



Left: The former Bark Street School in Swansea, Massachusetts, now houses the town's Planning Department.

Photo: Google Maps Street View

Right: The Old School, in Newington, NH, is part of a federally registered heritage district. The front of the school is finished in round stones.
Photo: Google Maps Street View



Left: Despite modern windows and fire doors, classical elements are still visible in the grand entrance of the 1947 Valcartier Elementary School in Valcartier, Quebec. This school, still in operation, is a registered heritage property.
Photo: Google Maps Street View

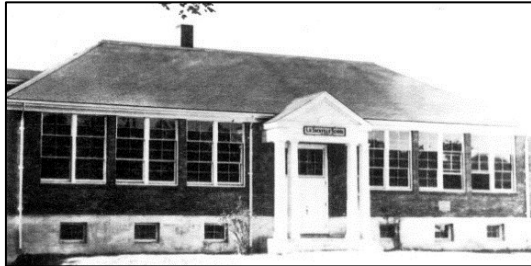


Left: Not all schools with hipped roofs are bungalow schools. Some, like tiny Glencoe School in Pictou County, are simply schoolhouses with hipped roofs. This two-room school, in operation from at least 1888 to the 1970s, has never had indoor toilets. Today it is maintained by a few volunteers and used just once a year, for the annual Remembrance Day ceremony.
Photo: Google Maps Street View

Other styles of bungalow schools:



Some bungalow schools have a mix of architectural influences. Sheet Harbour Consolidated School (now the Blue Water Centre) opened in 1942-43, and is built of stucco and tile. Most of its original features were Colonial Revival, but the windows were steel casements, which were popular in other traditions at the time. *Source for info & photo: NS Archives (LB N85 1943).*



Similarly, the four-room (1948) Acadia School (**below left**) had Colonial Revival features, and windows that resembled casements. In recent decades, the façade of this building was altered with the addition of a substantial clock tower. *Photo: Sackville Business Assoc.*

These two HRM-owned buildings now house local Halifax Recreation offices and branches of the Halifax Public Libraries. In Sheet Harbour, one or both services may move to a proposed new rink & community centre.



Above left: Some bungalow schools, such as Truro’s lovely Princess Margaret Rose School, were altered to the point where it was hard to determine the original style. Demolished just since 2015, its outer cladding may have been stucco. *Photo: Google Maps Street View.*

Above right: Elegant Haultain School in Calgary, completed in 1894, is built of sandstone in the Richardsonian Romanesque tradition. It is now a protected heritage property and the centre of a city park. *Photo: Source unknown.*

Function before form: Later renditions of bungalow schools

Throughout the 1940’s & 50’s, bungalow schools continued to be built in NS, especially in small towns. These schools became even more plain and unadorned, as illustrated by the former Immaculate Conception School in Woodside (photos, p. 30) and these South Shore schools:

Right: Tuskent School was built in 1949 and closed in 1969. Currently home to the offices of the Municipalité d’Argyle, the building’s future is uncertain, as a new purpose-built municipal complex is in the works.

Lower right: The “Old School” houses the New Ross Family Resource Ctr.

Below: In 2018, the former Mt. Pleasant School, Liverpool, was under threat of demolition; in 2019, the property was transferred to a former tenant.



Tuskent School photo: Argyle Township Courthouse Archives. Other photos: Google Maps Street View.

Appendix C: Bungalow schools in the Dartmouth area, 1920 to 1957

Including Findlay, we are aware of 9 bungalow schools in the Dartmouth area.⁷ Of these, four have been demolished, and five are still standing. None of the five still standing are operating as schools today, but all have been repurposed. Two of these five schools – Immaculate Conception (p. 30) and North Woodside (p. 29) – have been altered to the point where they are not easily identified as former school buildings. A third school, Admiral Westphal (a DA Webber design, p. 29), has been altered somewhat. **Thus, only 2 of the 9 bungalow schools – Findlay and St. Peters Grammar School – are still standing, have been well maintained, and have exterior facades that look close to the original.**

Please note that several former Dartmouth-area schools from this period are not included in this section, because they were not bungalow schools: four two-room schoolhouses that exhibit some bungalow school characteristics, but are too small to be considered bungalows (see page 31); and the more modern, mostly flat-roofed schools, which began appearing in the Dartmouth area about 1950.

Please note: Schools are listed by year of construction. Those that are no longer standing are indicated by a red X.



1920: The second Tufts Cove School – no longer standing

Tiny Tufts Cove School was the only Halifax County school that had to be rebuilt following the Explosion. Shown at left is its replacement.

Photo is from “A Goodly Heritage,” a book about life in North End Dartmouth in the early 20th century. In the book, the photo caption reads: “North School (Tufts Cove) photographed by Ian Forsyth.” (c 2002, Ian Forsyth & Edith Rowlings, Dartmouth Heritage Museum)

1920: Imperoyal School, Avenue A, Woodside – no longer standing

In Woodside (roughly across from 721 Pleasant St.), Imperial Oil built and operated a wood-frame, Craftsman-influenced bungalow school for children of its employees. The school was closed in 1962, and demolished within the year to make way for an oil refinery expansion (www.imperoyal.com).



⁷ Some schools built in the communities adjacent to the former City of Dartmouth may be missing from this list. This is because, although Joan Payzant provides a comprehensive list of all Dartmouth schools in her 1993 book, “Second to None: A history of public education in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia,” we are not aware of any historical lists of schools for the surrounding communities of Westphal, Lake Loon, Cherry Brook, North Preston (New Road), East Preston, Ross Road, Lawrencetown, Cole Harbour, Shearwater, Cow Bay, & Eastern Passage.

Appendix C, continued: Bungalow schools in the Dartmouth area, 1920 to 1957

1932: St. Peter's Grammar School – still standing



The former St. Peter's Grammar School is a 9-classroom, wood-frame school building, similar in style to Findlay. It is 3 stories at the front and 2 stories at the back – quite a bit taller than the typical bungalow school. Both the interior and exterior retain many original features, and the building has been well-maintained.

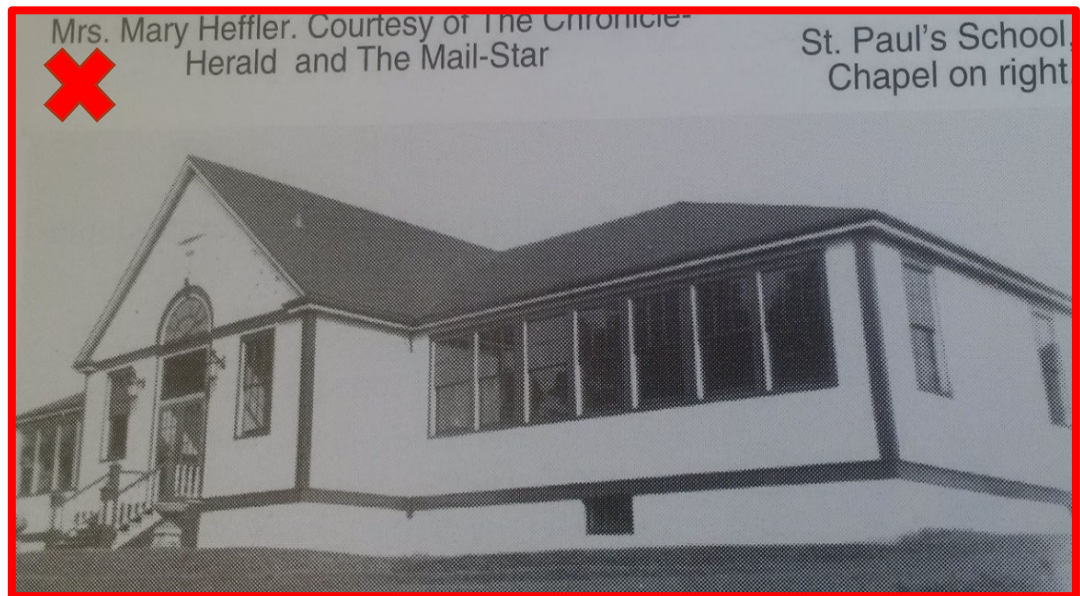
Located on Crichton Avenue, the school is at the centre of the expansive St. Peter's Catholic Church complex, which at one time included St. Peter's High School, a parish hall, a rectory, convent, and other buildings, as well as the iconic St. Peter's Church itself. Some of these buildings are still owned by St. Peter's, but most are no longer used for church purposes.⁸ For many years, the Grammar School building has been home to the Dartmouth Day Care Centre and the Dartmouth Players community theatre.

Perched on the side of the hill overlooking Sullivan's Pond, the St. Peter's Grammar School building is both highly visible and widely recognized in Dartmouth, and would be worth pursuing as a registered heritage property.

1932: St. Paul's Grammar School – no longer standing

St. Paul's Catholic Grammar School was located at the corner of Windmill Rd. and Jamieson St. It had the distinction of being built *before* St. Paul's Church. As such, initially it housed a 2-room school, a chapel/auditorium, and the priest's living quarters. St. Paul's Church opened in 1947, and the school operated until 1976. In the early 1980's, the school was demolished to make way for a seniors' affordable housing apartment complex (Crathorne Place).

Source: Book on the history of St. Paul's Parish, available in the reference section of the Alderney Public Library.



⁸ Another former St. Peter's building, the Arthur Scarfe House, is visible along the right side of the St. Peter's photo. It is a registered heritage property, and forms the centre of a large affordable housing complex for seniors.

Appendix C, continued: Bungalow schools in the Dartmouth area, 1920 to 1957

1937: North Woodside School – still standing, with significant exterior alterations



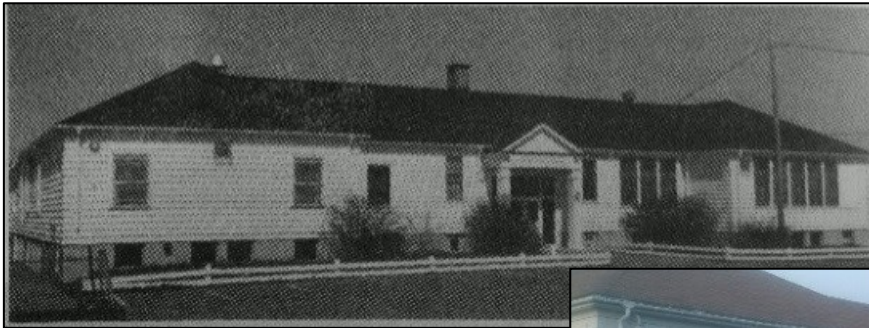
This wood-frame former school, still standing at 230 Pleasant St., is now the busy North Woodside Community Centre. The Centre is owned by HRM and operated by a non-profit board of directors. Although the interior retains some original features,

significant alterations have been made, particularly in the removal of windows; the building is not easily recognizable as a former school. Historic photos of the school & the Woodside community are on display in the hallways.



1963 photo, above: Halifax

Municipal Archives <https://novascotia.ca/archives/images/150HalifaxArchives/201631918.jpg>.



1947: Admiral Westphal School – still standing

This school was designed by Douglas A. Webber (see description, p. 40).

Photo at left: Payzant, roughly 1990.

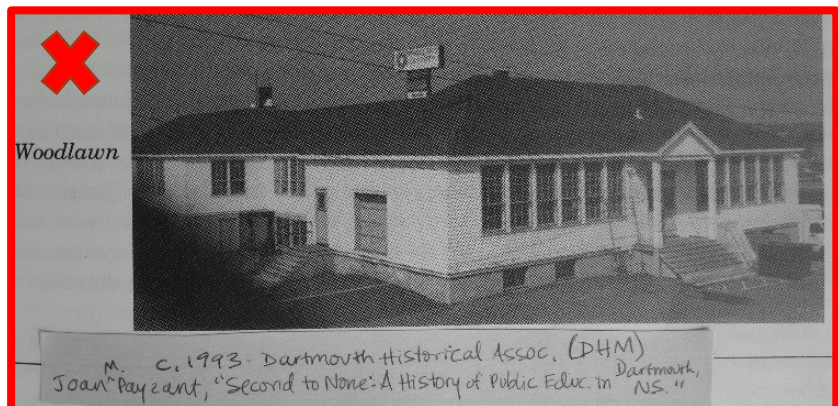
This Major Street building has been expanded a few times. The older wood-frame sections now house the Dartmouth All-City Music Program and some HRCE offices, while the newer brick structure (not shown) houses the Admiral Westphal Elementary School.



1949: Woodlawn School – no longer standing

The second Woodlawn School was a wood-frame bungalow, stylistically very similar to Findlay. It was located at Portland St. & Athorpe Dr., just east of the present-day Circumferential Highway.

The school was closed in 1982 due to declining enrollment, and used as the Dartmouth School Board's carpentry shop. It burned down in the late 1990's.

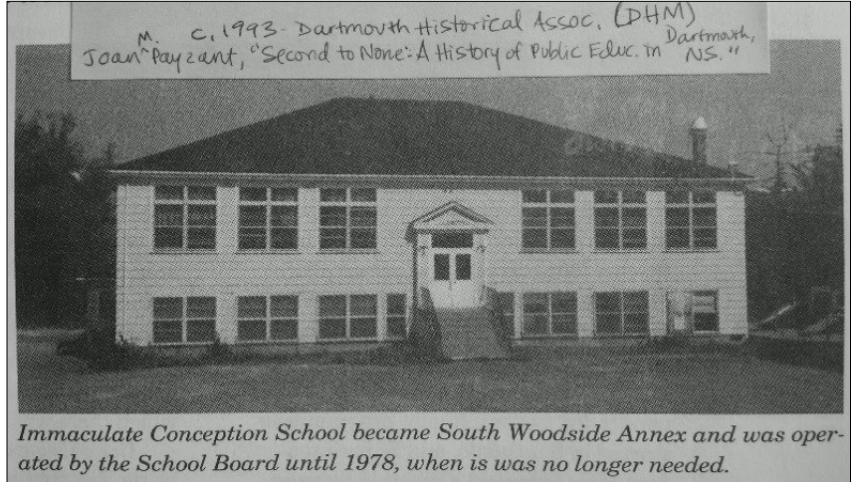


Appendix C, continued: Bungalow schools in the Dartmouth area, 1920 to 1957

1957: Immaculate Conception School – still standing, with significant exterior & interior alterations.

This 6-classroom, two-story elementary school was built by the Immaculate Conception parish in Woodside. It was one of the last bungalow schools, if not the last, to be built in HRM.* It reflects the emphasis on function over form of the later bungalow schools (and many mid-20th-century schools generally).

In 1978, 11 years after Dartmouth's Catholic schools were taken over by the Dartmouth Board of School Commissioners, Immaculate Conception was closed. It went on to house a childcare centre and then the HRM wood-working/cabinetry shop, before being sold in 2006 to a non-profit organization, Supportive Housing for Young Mothers (SHYM), now part of YWCA Halifax.



SHYM gutted the interior to create 12 apartments, program spaces, and staff offices. Two arched dormers were added, in order to carve out a third story under the deep bungalow roof. These changes breathed new life and purpose into the building; however, it is no longer easily recognizable as a former school.



* Another of the last bungalow schools to be constructed in HRM was **Lakeside School**, an 11-room wood-frame school built in 1956 by the Municipality of Halifax County. For many years now it has been home to the Lakeside Community Centre.

Appendix D: Not quite bungalows: Halifax County schoolhouses, 1940s & 1950s

At the core of several sprawling Halifax County community centres stand original schoolhouses from the 1940s, 1950s, or earlier, identifiable today only by their hipped roofs (examples include **Upper Hammonds Plains, Hammonds Plains, and East Preston**). With just 1, 2, or 3 classrooms each, all of these schools were small enough to be considered traditional schoolhouses; however, stylistically, they resemble bungalows. Indeed, the former **Middle Beaver Bank School** building (c 1958-2015), which housed community and school programs for decades after the much larger Beaver Bank-Kinsac Consolidated School opened next door, was known simply as **“the White Bungalow.”**⁹

Middle Beaver Bank and nine other Halifax County school buildings appear to have been built using the same basic plans. The nine listed below are still standing in 2020. There may be others not identified here.

1. Right: The **Cole Harbour School**, 1317 Cole Harbour Rd., operated from ~1940 to 1965. Later it was a community centre (aptly nicknamed “The Box”). Today, much altered from the original, it houses a dance school.

Sources: Colour photo, Google Maps. Black & white photo, “Arvense”:

https://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC1J31M_historic-cole-harbour-multi?guid=ef619059-e8f4-4e5b-b591-9f490e811838.



2. Left and Below: Westphal’s **Henry G Bauld School** (1948) was built to serve the children of the NS Home for Coloured Children (NSHCC): “...this two-room school house offered such studies as K-9, industrial arts, and domestic science to residents and neighbouring students alike. The school played a major role in the lives of teachers of segregated schools throughout the province, many of whom taught their first classes at this location.” (Source: akoma.ca/history). After closing in 1967, the school served as a recreation centre. Today the Akoma Centre (NSHCC) rents the Bauld Centre to the public for meetings & functions.



With its hipped gable ends, broad façade, and partly-above-grade basement, the **Henry G Bauld Centre** (left, Sept. 2018) resembles a bungalow school more than a schoolhouse.

Photo above left: Shunpiking.

3. Right: The former **Lake Loon School** (c 1952) is in extreme disrepair. It has been shuttered for 30 years due to a land ownership dispute between HRM & the Lake Loon-Cherry Brook Development Assoc. In 2017 HRM sold the building to the Association, which has since undertaken environmental remediation and structural stabilization. Community members have stated



that the Association is committed to restoring the building despite the high costs (>\$600,000), in part because African Nova Scotian communities have already lost so many civic buildings. Photo: Google Maps.

4. The former **South East Passage School**, now home to the Eastern Passage Baptist Church.
5. The former **Goodwood School** on the Prospect Road, now Twin City Insulation.
6. The former **Sambro-Ketch Harbour Consolidated School** (c 1950), now serving as the gymnasium of Sambro Elementary.
7. The original **Dutch Settlement School**, now the front section of the expanded Dutch Settlement Elementary School.
8. The former **Glen Haven School**, now the Glen Haven Community Centre (possibly closed), near Peggy’s Cove.
9. The Bay Community Centre (11 Station Rd., Head of St. Margaret’s Bay).

⁹ <http://www.beaverbank.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/BulletinIssue114.pdf>

Appendix E: And then there were three: Halifax's disappearing bungalow schools

Our research suggests that there are just three bungalow school buildings standing in the former City of Halifax.



1. John W MacLeod School on Purcells Cove Road (1947, above) is still in use. Its form & floor plan are almost identical to Findlay, but it is brick, and the side wings stretch farther back, to house more classrooms. A gym was added in 1984. This school is now part of École John W MacLeod- Fleming Tower School (see p. 41 for connection to DA Webber).

2. The Beaufort Annex (1923, at right) was built as an annex to the wood-frame LeMarchant Street School. For the past several decades, the Annex and its large 1951 addition have been known as Ecole Beaufort (respectively, Beaufort Annex & Beaufort Building).



Most recently, both Beaufort buildings housed students & staff of LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary (LMST) during construction of the new LMST. See *Beaufort Annex photo*, p. 14. View the recently restored interior at: https://www.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/hrsb/beaufort_reno_aug16_3.pdf. Photo: Google Maps, 2009.

3. St. Mary's Elementary on Morris Street (c 1950, not shown), a former Catholic school, is now a public school.

Bungalow schools that once stood in the former city of Halifax, but have since been demolished, include:

1. **Compton Avenue School** (G Shutlak, NS Archives)
2. **Chebucto Bungalow** (pictured next page, top photo)
3. **Oxford Bungalow** (HRM Archives, City of Halifax Engineering and Works Dept., 102-39-1-236)
4. **Bloomfield Bungalow(s)** – designed by Walter J Busch shortly after the Explosion (G Shutlak, NS Archives).
5. **Rockingham School** on Tremont Street, a wood-frame bungalow school (1922; see photo next page).
6. The former St Thomas Aquinas School (next page) on Watt Street, which most recently served as one section of the **LeMarchant-St Thomas Elementary School**. In 2017, this building, and the other school sections attached to it, were demolished to make way for a new LeMarchant St Thomas school building, designed by Architecture 49.

This list may be incomplete.

Appendix E, continued: And then there were three: Halifax's disappearing bungalow schools

Right:

The Chebucto Bungalow was demolished in 2008 to make way for the new Ummah Masjid.

Part of Chebucto School, the bungalow held four classrooms on the main level and a theatre (auditorium/assembly hall) in the basement. *Photo: Chebucto Road School Facebook group*



Left: The bungalow portion of LeMarchant-St Thomas School is on the far left-hand side of this photo. All sections of this building were demolished in 2017 to make way for the new LeMarchant-St Thomas School, which opened in September 2019.

Photo: Google Maps.

The original (c 1922) Rockingham School (shown in 1928, **at right**) was located where Ecole Rockingham School stands today.

The aerial photo **below** was taken in the 1950s or 60s. It shows the wood-frame bungalow school attached to a newer (c 1940) brick wing and gym (still in use in 2020).

Both photos: Sharon Ingalls ("Rockingham School & Community Public Group", Facebook)



Appendix F: Interior photos of Findlay Centre

All photos taken in 2018.

Top photo:
The Findlay Board Room

Middle photo:
Room 101, home of countless dance
and music classes

Bottom photo:
Fall foliage framed in a bank of
windows in the Conrad Room (double
classroom)



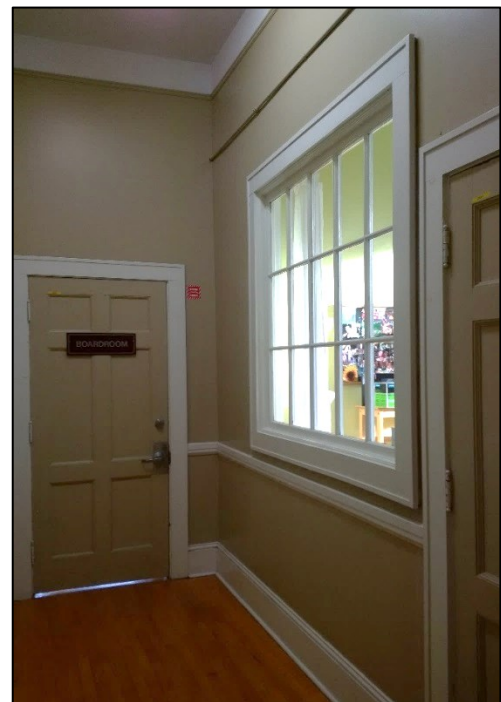
Appendix F, continued: Interior photos of Findlay Centre

Right:
The main room of the Dartmouth Senior Citizens' Club, ready for one of the club's monthly dances.



The original hardwood floors still grace all rooms, offices and hallways on Findlay's main level. They are in excellent condition (with the exception of the heavily used 'double classroom' – the Conrad Room – where the finish has worn off in spots).

Below & at right:
Original woodwork and display cabinets are everywhere on Findlay's main level.



Above: An interior window brings sunlight into a hallway. The room at right was the original Findlay School office.

Appendix G: Biographical information on Douglas A. Webber, Architect

This unpublished manuscript was prepared by George Rogers, and is subject to editing and review for accuracy.

Draft: December 24, 2002; Revisions: Nov. 2018 & Feb. 2019

Citations are not provided here. However, the following may have reference materials pertaining to this content: Architecture 49, Nova Scotia Archives, Tom Emodi (Teal Architects), and the Dalhousie School of Architecture.

For more info., contact: George Rogers NSAA FRAIC Architect, MacFawn and Rogers Architects. 39 Dingle Rd., Halifax, NS, Canada B3P1B1. 902 497 3041. macrogarch@gmail.com.

Webber's Early Life and Career

Douglas Alexander Webber was born February 4, 1901, at Ship Harbour Lake, Nova Scotia (now Lake Charlotte). He was the third child and older son of Howard Douglas and Ida Maude (Mitchell) Webber. In his formative years, he attended Ship Harbour Lake School to Grade 10 and then Technical School in Halifax, from 1917 to 1920. During this latter period, he was carpenter apprentice with Maurice Webber.¹⁰

From 1922 to 1923, Douglas Webber worked for the firm of Bates and Rogers (Chicago) as superintendent/foreman on the Welland Canal construction in Ontario. During this time, he also undertook studies towards an architectural diploma, which he received from International Correspondence School in 1924. Following his Welland Canal work, Webber relocated to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he was self-employed in speculative building until 1925. He married Anna Scott on June 4 that same year. The Webbers raised two daughters, Enid and Elizabeth; as an adult, Enid worked as a draftsman in her father's practice.

The Webbers remained in New England for the next several years, where Douglas continued to work in the construction industry. He was employed by McLean, Architect, in Boston, and later with Newton Construction Company in Newton, Massachusetts, as construction supervisor and architectural designer. He later worked with E. C. Fisher, Architect, also in Newton.

From New England, Webber returned to Nova Scotia, where he worked for a year as a draftsman for the Department of Lands and Forests, Province of Nova Scotia. This was followed by a position with the Halifax Harbour Commission. In 1931-32, he designed Findlay School, and in 1932 drew up the plans for a school for his home community of Ship Harbour Lake. Between 1933 and 1935, he attended the Chicago Technical College and obtained a Bachelor of Science in architecture. Webber became a member of the American Institute of Civil Engineering in 1936, and was accepted as a member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) and the Nova Scotia Association of Architects (NSAA) the following year.

From 1935 to 1939, Webber was employed by the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works and Highways, where his prime responsibility was bridge design. During this time, he also undertook private architectural work.

From 1939 to 1946, Webber served in the military, as captain and second-in-command of the 2nd Fortress Company in the Royal Canadian Engineers. For part of this time he served in England, Belgium, Holland, and Germany.

After his return from the war in 1946, Webber established the firm of D. A. Webber, Architect, working out of his home at 97 Crichton Avenue, Dartmouth. In 1947, he moved his office to 100 Granville Street, Halifax, across from

¹⁰ It is not known whether Maurice Webber was a relative.

Province House. In 1952, he moved again to a house he had acquired at 311 Barrington Street (between Morris and Bishop Streets). In 1961, his nephew, M. H. F. (Frank) Harrington, became a principal of the firm, and the company's name was changed to Webber, Harrington & Associates. The company remained on Barrington St. until 1962, when the office moved to the Bayers Road Shopping Centre, Halifax. In that year also, mechanical engineer Gordon Weld became a principal of the firm, and the company name was changed again, to Webber, Harrington and Weld, Architects and Engineers. This name, in turn, was later shortened to WHW Architects Limited, located at 1640 Market Street, Halifax. In 2014, WHW merged with five other practices across Canada to establish a new national firm, Architecture 49. The firm that Douglas Webber founded in 1946 continues to this day as one of the major firms in the Atlantic region.

Work Ethic

By all accounts, Douglas Webber was a prodigious worker. As a relatively small office, the firm produced an impressive amount of work in any given year. For example, records indicate that there were some 30 projects in the office in 1950, among them churches, schools, and private residences. The following year saw the firm take on 17 additional projects, all produced by an office of six persons, including Webber himself and his elder daughter, Enid. In 1960, with an office of eight, there were 33 projects listed, including schools, churches, and commercial buildings. During Webber's time in practice, the majority of the projects were in Nova Scotia, with the rest in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland.

According to Webber's nephew, Frank Harrington, his uncle held few interests outside work, and was frugal by nature. A common expression of his was, "My God, it's Tuesday and the week's over. I'm ruined!" He was strong willed, physically strong, and respected within the construction industry. He enjoyed a good rapport with contractors. General contractors of the day included Fundy Construction, Kenny Construction, Standard Construction, and Acadia Construction.

Webber enjoyed a high degree of loyalty both within and outside the office; during his entire practice, he had just three executive secretaries. Paul Hebert, an architect who worked in the office from 1960 to 1964, recalled that Webber was affectionately known as "D. A." to staff, and that he was "a kind gentleman, a good listener, and fair."

The office was run efficiently, with a system of job captains for individual projects. Webber was diligent on time budgeting and knew where jobs were at all times. His strength as an architect probably lay in a detailed knowledge of construction, and he was as much an engineer as an architect. Tom Bauld, who worked as an architect in his office from 1951 to 1953, referred to Doug Webber as a practical architect who could design you a good, solid house. Drawings were always complete and typically would include full-size sections of construction details such as windows. Many job files in the company archives include his design calculations for reinforced concrete and other structural components.

The Practice Context: The Economic Times of D.A. Webber

Following 20 years of economic depression, Nova Scotia prospered during the Second World War. Halifax became a strategic wartime east coast port, serving as a departure point for the convoys that provided a lifeline of goods, material and equipment to Europe. Industries related to the war effort – shipbuilding, ship repair, munitions – flourished in Nova Scotia. This wartime prosperity, however, was short-lived, as federal government investment policies for peacetime transition favoured central Canada at the expense of the Maritimes. Harry Bruce, in *An*

Illustrated History of Nova Scotia, writes that "the Department of Reconstruction ... used a formula to make sure government assistance went only to profitable companies that might make a successful transition to peacetime production. By July 1, 1945, Ontario had received 48 per cent of the funds, Quebec 32 per cent, British Columbia 15 per cent, and the six Maritime and Prairie provinces a total of only 5 per cent."

Harry Bruce continues, "The 1950's in Nova Scotia saw the advance of electricity, indoor plumbing, refrigerators, television, road-building, the family car, and mass consumer culture – and the retreat of an older order based on a belief in thrift and hard work to conquer scarcity.....In 1946 [the start of Webber's practice] personal income, per capita, in Nova Scotia was \$678, or 80 per cent of the figure for all of Canada; ten years later it was only \$971, or a mere 71 per cent. Canadian wages averaged \$66.44 a week in 1956. Nova Scotian wages, at \$52.90, lagged even behind those in New Brunswick and Newfoundland."

By the 1960's, the Nova Scotia government, under Premier Robert Stanfield, had established Industrial Estates Limited (IEL), a government financed investment enterprise charged with the responsibility of attracting secondary industry to Nova Scotia and assisting in expanding existing industries. Although there were two notable failures, Clairtone Sound Corporation Limited and Deuterium of Canada Limited, this initiative resulted in creating more than 5,000 jobs during this period. By 1966 (one year prior to Webber's retirement), Harry Bruce reports that "incomes had risen 40 per cent over their 1956 level."

It was against this backdrop – provincial prosperity during the war years, the decline in prosperity following the War, cultural changes in the fifties, a shift in the economy in the sixties – that Douglas Webber conducted his practice. Through sheer volume and diversity of work, it is evident that Webber was able to cope with these changes and maintain a stable and viable practice throughout his career.

The Practice Context: Urban Development and the Growth of the Profession of Architecture

In relative terms, building activity during the early 1950's was modest at best. Major building construction commenced only during the latter part of the decade, and continued in force during the 1960's. Universities throughout the province – Dalhousie, St. Mary's, Acadia, Mount Saint Vincent, St. Francis Xavier, Nova Scotia Technical College, and others – expanded with new buildings, including libraries, science buildings, student centres, residences, and performing arts centres. This was also the era of hospital expansions, new hospitals, and school construction. In Halifax, two projects had a major impact on the character of the city: the construction of Scotia Square as a mixed use development of office, retail, and residential encompassing several blocks of the downtown area, and the preservation and restoration of a collection of waterfront buildings, to be named Historic Properties.

Concurrent with these developments was a growing awareness of heritage which generated interest in preservation of historic buildings. Organizations such as the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia were formed and the City of Halifax established the Halifax Landmarks Commission. In 1961, a School of Architecture was established at the Technical University of Nova Scotia (now Dalhousie University) under the directorship of Douglas Shadboldt.

In 1969, across the harbour in Dartmouth, ground was broken for Burnside Industrial Park, today an immensely successful commercial centre. Also in the '60s, chartered banks, such as Royal Bank, the Bank of Montreal, and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce were establishing their presence in the capital city with new high-rise office buildings in downtown Halifax, albeit designed by non-resident architectural firms.

In Canada, leading architects of the day included Ray Affleck (Place Bonaventure), James Donahue (Great West Life Building – and teacher), John Parkin (Toronto Airport), Ron Thom (Massey College), and Arthur Erickson (Simon

Fraser University). In the United States, Walter Netsch Jr. of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, Louis Kahn, I. M. Pei, Walter Gropius of the Architects Collaborative (and the Bauhaus), and Eero Saarinen were architects creating new and spectacular contemporary buildings, among them universities, airports, homes, and commercial buildings.

Webber's Early Projects

Prior to Second World War and while in the employ of others, Webber carried out a large number of commissions on his own, both residential and commercial. ⁽¹¹⁾ These were small scale projects; his office archives, for example, include a number of small houses no larger than 26' square. The store and offices for S. H. Solomon, Dartmouth, in 1939 is one example of a modest size commercial project in the Art Deco style . Engineering calculations by Webber for a reinforced concrete beam over the main entrance are included directly on the drawings.

Along with the collection of small scale projects, there is nonetheless a portfolio of somewhat larger homes which he designed prior to 1940. At least three are very similar in design: Mackay House, Patterson House (Pleasant Street, Dartmouth), and Burchell House, also in Dartmouth. Each is a two story house, square or nearly square in plan, with a symmetrical front elevation and centre entrance in a classical motif (the entrances on the Patterson and Burchill houses are in fact identical). These entrances lead to a centre hall with stair, living room on one side, and dining room and kitchen on the other side. Each house has a sun porch, and there are four bedrooms and a bath on the second floor.

If the foregoing three houses represent a classical bent, other houses of the same period are less formal. The Malloy House, the Hershorn House, and the Parker House are asymmetrical in design with side entrances. The first two nevertheless retain a classical entrance treatment. Among the most appealing of this genre of house is the MacDonald House in Halifax. In this case the house is designed in the Tudor style featuring brick exterior, steeply pitched roof, and informal if not a "comfortable" floor plan arrangement. It is apparent that Webber was not fixed on any particular style in his work, but was able to accommodate a variety of styles either through his own interpretation of client suitability or through client request.

From the firm's inception in 1946 to Webber's retirement in 1967, the firm designed a variety of building types, including single family dwellings, multiple-unit housing, student residences, warehouses, gas stations, office buildings, shopping centres, schools (many), arenas, university buildings, a police station, a fire station, retail establishments, swimming pools, town halls, churches, banks, hospitals, grocery stores (chain), motels, and various alterations and renovations. In certain projects, Webber associated with other firms in joint ventures. An example of such collaboration is the (c 1963) Trinity Anglican Church on Alfred Street in north-end Dartmouth, under the firm name of Whighton-Carey-Webber, Engineers and Architects.

Among the first commissions of Webber's firm was a rink for the Dartmouth Curling Club. Webber was instructed to proceed on July 27, 1946, by an official of the club: "After you left the meeting of the Curling Club the other evening, a resolution was put through to the effect that you were to be asked to prepare plans and specifications in collaboration with ...[illegible] McMannus and Prof. Ball covering the new type of structure." The new curling rink measured 160' x 82'-6", and the roof structure consisted of a series of built-up wood arches at 8' on centre. It is assumed that Ball (mentioned above) was the engineer for the project, his name appearing on both the truss

¹¹ Webber's earliest private projects in NS included an addition to the James Orman apartments at 32-34 King St., Dartmouth (now a municipally registered heritage property), and the designs for Findlay School and Ship Harbour Lake School.

design drawing and the specification document. It is conjecture that Webber himself must have been pleased with the type of commission, given his interest and experience in engineering.

Also in early in his practice, Webber designed a house for William Martin at 62 Pleasant Street, Dartmouth. This distinctive house is a radical departure from previous residential designs. It can best be described as international style or “modern,” with a skin-like stucco finish over concrete block, a flat roof, and no ornamentation. Windows wrap around at the corners, and a featured glass block window stretches over two stories at the interior hall stair.

In 1947, Webber designed the wood-frame Admiral Westphal School on Major Street, Dartmouth (at the time, part of the Halifax County school district known as Port Wallace). The building is an elongated “U” shape, comprising a main floor and partial basement. Probably the most satisfying aspect of the building, however, is its architectural composition. Two wings project at either end of the building on the front elevation and are symmetrical about a main entrance portico (in classical motif) at the centre of the building. Windows were grouped in a series of threes and sixes along the facade in response to interior room arrangements. The original windows were vertically proportioned, conveying a sense of elegance to the entire composition. The building is capped by a gently sloping hipped roof.

The Webber office designed the first rural high school in Nova Scotia in Middleton in 1948. The plan form consists of a centre section of administrative offices, library, and auditorium, with two classroom wings projecting at an angle on either side (see photo, page 9). By comparison, Bridgetown Regional High School (1950-2017) was somewhat more distinctive in design. In this case the entrance was grander, and treatment of elevations at the windows more articulated, but the real feature of the building was the rounded ends. Here, the softness of the curved walls relieved what would otherwise have been a heavy-handed building (see photo, page 10).

Further work in Middleton includes the Town Hall in 1953. This two-story building was designed in the classical tradition, no doubt to impart a sense of dignity, permanence, and solidity as a symbol in the town. The building measures 55' x 31' and is symmetrical about the main entrance. ⁽¹²⁾

The 1954 design of Edgewood United Church in Halifax (now Hope United Church) was the most imposing of Webber’s churches. Here the elements of style are prevalent: a reference to Gothic buttresses, and a square Norman-like bell tower. The tower also serves as the entrance. The church is situated on a highly visible corner lot at Young Street and Connaught Avenue, adjacent to the Bayers-Connaught intersection.

By contrast, the Stairs Memorial Church on Hester Street in Dartmouth (1957) is less ambitious in architectural expression. With approximately the same seating capacity, the Stairs church is a straight-forward design with plain side walls broken only by alternating windows and brick panels, all capped by a steeply pitched roof over the length of the plan. A modest steeple at the roof peak provides symbolic reference as a religious building.

The Dartmouth Town Hall has to be one of Webber’s personal achievements. Officially opened in 1957, the building replaced the town hall occupied since 1877 on Ochterloney Street. With brick and stone exterior, the new building was described in the opening ceremonies as a symbol of the future:

¹² The perspective drawing in the plans for this building was drawn by “K”. This is Paul Kundzins, a professor in architecture at the time who emigrated from Latvia to Canada in 1952. His son, Andris, also an architect, became a partner with Duffus, Romans, and Single, Architects and Engineers in Halifax, a contemporary firm with Webber’s. Andris’ daughter, Inara, also became an architect; she is now retired and living in Halifax.

Poised like a sentinel with a watchful eye on its charges, Dartmouth's magnificent new Town Hall sits on a scenic block of park land at the bluff of Synott's Hill, a modernistic symbol of what still lies in the future for Canada's most progressive Town.

Webber was also recognized in the opening ceremonies:

Planning and design of our new civic office building was the responsibility of well-known Dartmouth architect Douglas A. Webber, B.Sc., Arch. In addition to this latest achievement Mr. Webber has been responsible for the architectural work on many other Harbour Town public buildings including the Prince Arthur and Bicentennial Junior High Schools, the new Fire Hall and Police Station, Southdale Elementary School and an addition to Notting Park School.

Unfortunately, the former Dartmouth Town Hall, which later housed the Dartmouth Regional Museum and the Dartmouth Library, is no longer standing.

Webber's Later Projects

The late fifties and early sixties saw a change in the architectural style of the firm. This was no doubt due to nephew Frank Harrington joining the firm following his 1958 graduation in architecture from the University of Manitoba, where he received the RAIC (Royal Architectural Institute of Canada) medal. At that time, Manitoba embraced the theories of the modern movement in architecture, exemplified by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, the Bauhaus, and others.

The Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Middleton in 1957, was not only a major health care project for the firm but also was representative of the new architectural style. The construction drawings show a systematic arrangement of spaces, overlaid on regular structural grid as an organizing element. There is a clarity of plan arrangement, notwithstanding the complicated and often competing functional requirements of hospitals. The exterior is equally clear in purpose. Here, there is an orderly arrangement of massing, fenestration, and clear sense of arrival and entrance. Since the original plans, however, the building has been changed so that original design intentions are no longer evident.

Both the six-room Fleming Tower School in Jollimore (1961, **shown at right**; now part of École John W MacLeod- Fleming Tower School), and the Kennetcook District School (1968) in Hants County, are further examples of the modernist trend. The



Kennetcook school is particularly strong in concept: the planning evolves from an orderly integration of rooms, structure, and circulation. Structure again is clearly expressed in the exterior of both buildings, and elements such as windows and brick panels are treated as discrete design entities. In this instance, Webber's design successfully added an elementary school on to the existing 14-room Hants North Rural High School.

During the latter part of Douglas Webber's career, other notable works of the firm include the Nova Scotia Institute of Technology, Halifax (now NSCC Institute of Technology campus, Halifax); Sir John Thompson Building, downtown Halifax; Dartmouth City Hall (1965); Dalhousie Law School building (now Schulich School of Law), and the NS Research Foundation Laboratory (now a commercial laboratory hub) at 101 Research Drive, Dartmouth.

In 1967, Douglas Webber retired to Chester, Nova Scotia. He died in 1971.