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**CONSERVATION, RECREATION, ACCESS, AND ELITISM:
McNABS ISLAND AS A CASE STUDY.**

by Victor J Fisher

This thesis is presented to the Faculty of Arts
of Saint Mary's University in Halifax as partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Atlantic Canada Studies

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Abstract

Conservation, Recreation, Access, and Elitism: McNabs Island as a Case Study

by Victor J Fisher
19 April 1996

The Halifax Metropolitan Area has several tracts of land in a natural or underdeveloped state. Studies suggest the best possible use for these areas is in recreation. McNabs Island, Lawlor Island and the Thrumcaps have been spared from intensive urban development since the founding of Halifax. The land on these islands remains in a mostly natural, though not pristine, condition. The writer will develop an historical narrative to present the chronology of conflict and decision making over land use on McNabs Island as a case study of the interrelationships of recreation, conservation, access and elitism. The thesis will attempt to identify the roles of government and private pressure groups to explain the changing use of lands on McNabs and the adjacent islands as a demonstration of this interrelationship. This will show the change in land use patterns and how this reflects the way in which the classes of society view the importance of leisure space.

Acknowledgements

It would take another paper to try and acknowledge all the help and support that was given to me in the development and writing of this thesis. I would especially like to thank Dr. Hugh Millward who spent many of his valuable evenings and weekends attempting to keep my focus on the main topic. Dr. Colin Howell and Dr. Ken MacKinnon also provided valuable input, encouragement and advice that was greatly appreciated. Special thanks also to my fellow students who were always there when the pressure was on. I would also like to thank the faculty of Atlantic Canada Studies at Saint Mary's University that gave me the opportunity to accomplish the writing of this thesis. Thank you all. It has been a pleasure working with all of you.

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Abbreviations

AC	Agriculture Canada
CEAC	Canadian Environmental Advisory Council
CLI	Canada Land Inventory
DLF	Department of Lands and Forests, Nova Scotia
DME	Department of Mines and Energy, Nova Scotia
DND	National Defence Canada
DNR	Department of Natural Resources, Nova Scotia
DOE	Department of the Environment, Nova Scotia
EC	Environment Canada
EMR	Energy, Mines And Resources Canada
FOMIS	Friends of McNabs Island Society
HHCI	Halifax Harbour Cleanup Inc.
MAPC	Metropolitan Area Planning Commission
NCNS	Native Council of Nova Scotia
PANS	Public Archives of Nova Scotia

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Halifax Metropolitan Area has several tracts of land in a natural or underdeveloped state. Studies prepared for Halifax County (Coblentz 1963; MAPC 1971) suggest the best possible use for these areas is in recreation.

One area mentioned in these development plans is the group of islands lying in the entrance to Halifax Harbour (figure 1). The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (1979:137) suggests that since islands have clearly defined boundaries, they are spatially and psychologically distinct from surrounding land masses. This physical separation allows the creation of a distinct character on an island and encourages development different from nearby existing patterns. McNabs Island, Lawlor Island and the Thrumcaps have been spared from urban development since the founding of Halifax because of their military value and the high costs involved in residential or commercial development. The land

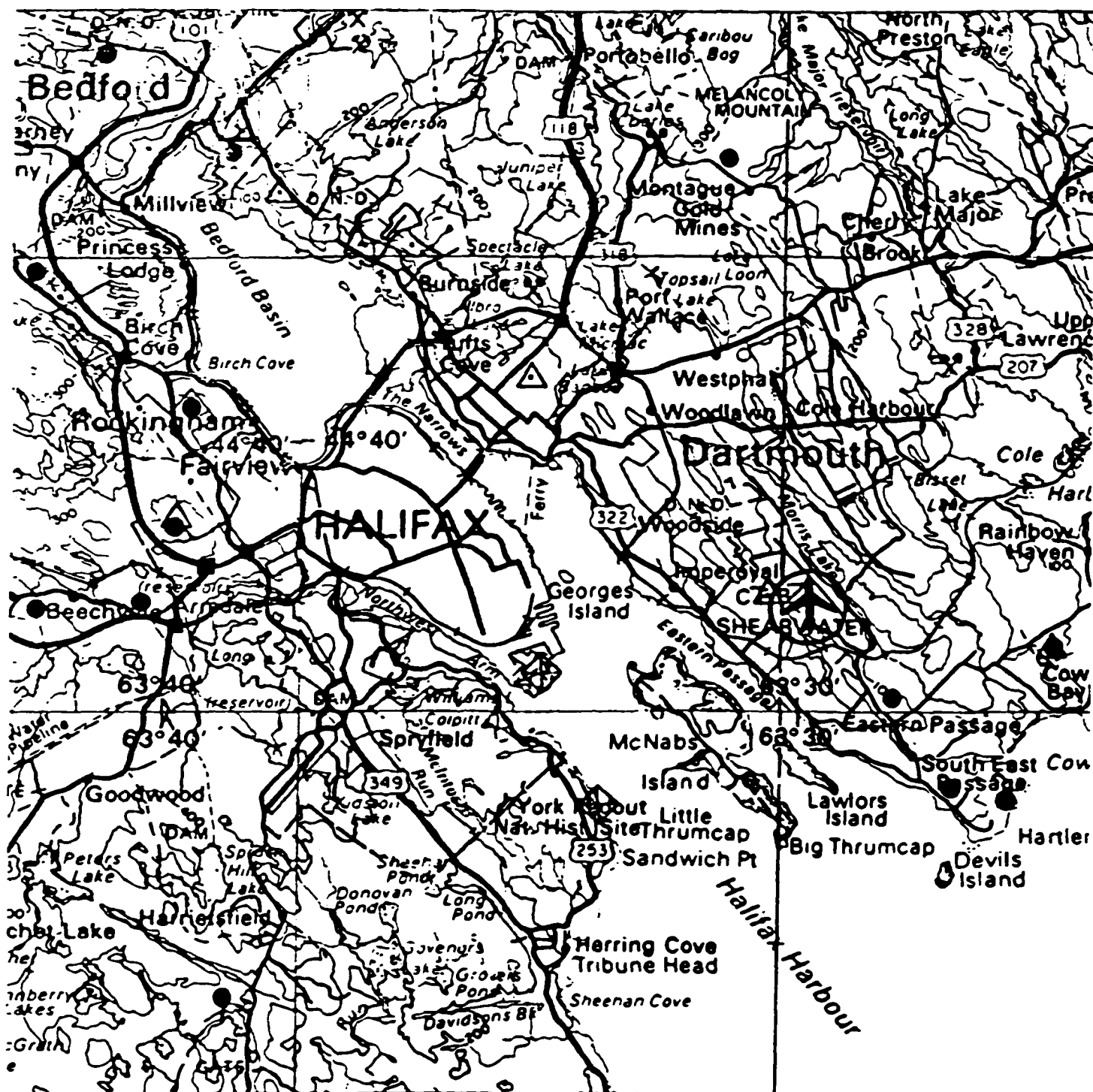


Figure 1

McNabs Island in its Regional Context
 (Department of Mines, Energy and Resources. Mapsheet 11D, 1972)

on these islands remains in a natural, though not pristine, condition. There has been economic and military development ranging from the forts and roads to facilities such as a military prison, hospital, rifle ranges, and a naval fire fighting school. With the exception of the forts, most of these structures are now ruins.

The creation of an island park in Nova Scotia will be popular for a second reason. Atlantic Canadians have a fascination with islands and this is reflected in the traditions and literature of the region. Many books are now written with a focus on the smaller islands of Atlantic Canada. This is apparent in the focus on islands in Thurston's Atlantic Outposts (1990) and in various books studying Sable, Anticosti, Oak, Grand Manan and Brier islands to name but a few. As a case in point, Allison Mitcham has produced two books, Offshore Islands of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (1984) and Paradise or Purgatory: Island Life in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (1987) dealing with both populated and deserted islands. American writers such as David Yeadon (Secluded Islands of the Atlantic Coast, 1984) include Maritime Province islands in their work. This fascination is also apparent in works of fiction. Thomas Raddall's The Nymph and the Lamp is largely set on Sable island, and F.P. Day's Rockbound is set on East Ironbound

Island. In addition, at least two works of fiction are set on McNabs Island: Raddall's Hangman's Beach (1966) and G.B. Lancaster's Grand Parade (1943) draw their themes from the McNab Family and their life on the island. A guide book to McNabs Island, Discover McNabs Island, was published by the Friends of McNabs Island Society (FOMIS) in 1995 and quickly became a popular seller.

The intent of this thesis is to show that an examination of the past provides critical knowledge for future planning. McNabs and Lawlor Islands, a pair of islands in Halifax Harbour, will be used for the case study because the future of these islands is the subject of much public debate and speculation today. The writer will develop an historical narrative to present the chronology of conflict and decision making over land use on McNabs Island as a case study of the interrelationships of recreation, conservation, access and elitism. The thesis will attempt to identify the roles of government and private pressure groups to explain the changing use of lands on McNabs and the adjacent islands as a demonstration of this interrelationship. The story of these islands will show the change in land use patterns and how this reflects the way in which the classes of society view the importance of leisure space.

Langton (1988:19) writes that the relationships between environment, economy, and social structures, which he calls historical geography, describes the complexities of a relationship rather than presenting an explanation. Recreation, conservation, elitism, and access are concepts that have the potential to create confusion and debate in the development of new parks in the urban fringe. These four terms are interrelated and this relationship requires consideration by planning agencies in park development. It is important to distinguish between these terms, where they overlap, how they are used and misused, and how these concepts relate to a practise of limited use with regards to recreational lands. Failure to do so will create conflicts among the various special interest groups.

Small and Witherick (1986:177) define recreation as "any activity which takes place within leisure time...leisure pursuits involving less than a day's absence from home." Pigram (1983:3) takes a second approach and suggests that recreation is a state of mind which can be defined as any activity that takes place within the timeframe of leisure. Under these definitions, urban parks will normally have recreation, not conservation, as a primary focus. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the topic of leisure and recreation presents interesting and vital challenges for

contemporary and future societies. Current studies in recreation emphasize that it is a constructive, rewarding, and restorative activity (Brockman and Merriam 1973). Researchers now place more emphasis on the geographical constraints to recreation and leisure (Jackson 1994:110).

Many problems faced today in the development of parks stem from a lack of consideration of the traditional land use patterns which often included a recreation component. Outdoor recreation is a land use which competes with other economic activities for available land and water resources (Wall and Marsh 1982:1). Recreation requires land not only for the activity itself, but also for service areas, parking and access routes. This creates a situation where communities surrounding the facility are impacted as well. This is evident in the concern of the residents of Eastern Passage over park developments on McNabs and Lawlor Islands.

Where the creation of parks is involved, conservation normally involves the introduction of management or planning techniques that will preserve or improve the quality of the natural environment. Conservation is a concept that includes elements of both protection and preservation but requires a broader consideration of the factors. Proponents of conservation treat a system as a functioning unit or ecosystem

rather than an individual building or location (Ashworth 1991:2). One useful definition of conservation was given by Burke (as cited in Ashworth 1991:3) who wrote that "Conservation means or has come to mean preserving purposefully: giving not merely continued existence but continued useful existence." This is taken further in the 1988 report on British Social Attitudes which argues:

Conservation today seems to imply opening up the countryside to people rather than protecting it from them. And this vision of the proposed future for the countryside places heavy emphasis on the visual, rather than on the economic environment (as cited in Robinson 1990:36).

Patmore (1983:48) argues that both conservation and access are "rooted in an elitist view of rural landscapes, satisfying primarily the country lover with high aesthetic ideals and the desire to savour the countryside through physical endeavour at first hand." Elitism in recreation is often reflected in control and regulation and as Hammit and Cole (1987:210) suggest, the secret of good management is to use persuasion in a way that users do not realize they are being manipulated. Constraints to access of recreation sites can be physical, financial, social, or transportation barriers. In the case of McNabs Island, this would involve a regular ferry service from both sides of the harbour. The development of trails and facilities will not help if people

are unable to have easy access to the location. The irony is that this isolation is the key reason that McNabs Island remains undeveloped. A second consideration of access deals with the area of the park itself. Recreation-based developments change the patterns of land use within the park and are important tools in the management of user impact.

In 1993, the Department of National Defence declared their holdings on McNabs and Lawlor Islands as surplus (Moar 1994). No other federal department expressed interest in the islands so they were offered to the provincial government as a no cost land transfer on June 1, 1993. This declaration and the announced intention of Halifax Harbour Cleanup Limited to locate a sewage treatment plant adjacent to McNabs Island reopened the controversy on appropriate uses for the islands. The federal government is prepared to turn all holdings on the islands over to the province, with the exception of two forts and a surrounding buffer zone. There is confusion as to what the land transfer will entail. The provincial government believes it will be an outright land transfer (Moar 1994:3), while federal authorities suggest it will be a lease arrangement (Smith 1995:A5). The forts and their buffer zones will be protected as historic sites under the control and ownership of the Parks Canada division of Environment Canada. The original stipulations on the land transfer were the

creation of a provincial park on the islands, and the provincial government acquiring the private land holdings on the island (Dartmouth Free Press 23 May 1968:2).

Chapters two and three will present an overview of concepts and sources dealing with the dichotomy of geography and society in recreational land use. Chapter two will deal with the theories of conflicting land use within recreation, while chapter three will examine class conflicts within the field of recreation. A site assessment of the islands by MAPC (1973) proposed zoning and development to produce an acceptable level of recreational development that will allow for moderate capacity without creating unacceptable impacts on the natural and cultural environment. In this respect, access to the island is both a blessing and a curse. It does allow park management to effectively control visitor numbers. However, any use of the island will still create environmental impact and change.

Often land set aside for conservation or recreation has normally been a site that has been historically passed over for other economic uses. In most areas of Canada this land has already served a purpose in resource extraction (Carter 1991:4) and is not a pristine environment. This has been changing in the latter half of the twentieth century as

recreation grows in importance. Wall (1982b:22) suggests the increased importance of sites for outdoor recreation led to two new thrusts in geographic research: carrying capacity and landscape evaluation.

The very term "park", in the public mind, especially because of the recreational function of urban parks, connotes recreational use rather than protection. This work will address two of the key areas of conflict. The first is the recreation versus conservation controversy which is very prevalent in areas of the urban fringe. Consideration will also be given to the issue of restoration versus stabilization and the implied aspect of economic development through the creation of a tourist attraction. Conceptual work on recreation versus conservation conflict will be brought into the thesis. This type of conflict is often partially resolved through the use of carrying capacity and zoning programs which are now included in park proposals for the islands. The successful development of the Lawrencetown and Rainbow Haven Beach Parks by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources is proving that heavy recreational use and environmental protection of an area are possible in conjunction, but carry an expensive price tag (Trider 1987:3).

Chapters four and five will provide background to

describe the present physical state of the islands. In chapter four, the natural setting will be examined. This chapter will attempt to explain the present diversity of plant and animal life on the islands. Consideration will also be given to any species on the island that require extraordinary protection. The colony of great blue heron and the nesting locations of osprey fall in these categories.

In order to explain the present state of underdevelopment on McNabs Island, a linear historic description of economic uses and land ownership will be presented in chapter five. There has never been a book published on the history of the islands but at the turn of the century, H. W. Hewitt published a series of weekly articles in the Dartmouth Patriot in 1901. These articles were later presented to the Nova Scotia Historical Society between 1907 and 1909 (PANS MG100/184:32), and deal with the presence of the various cultures on the island. These articles give valuable background, but are unsupported by documentation. Consideration will also be given to Thomas Raddall's 1966 Hangman's Beach, a work of fiction that focussed on McNabs Island. An effort will be made to trace the use of the islands by the various cultural groups. The Mi'kmaq, French, Acadian, English, Scottish, Irish and Doukabour cultures all had a presence on the islands at one time and most have left an imprint on the physical

landscape. Many of the early economic proposals for the islands will be detailed. These range from the French plan to locate a fortified town on the island in the early eighteenth century to the recent proposal to use the island as a site for a sewage treatment facility.

The historic use of the islands as a recreation site for the residents of Halifax will be traced in chapter six. The islands were a favourite hunting and fishing location for the elite of Halifax from 1749. McNabs Island emerged as a popular location for picnics by the middle of the nineteenth century, replacing the former favoured sites in Bedford, Cow Bay and on the Northwest Arm. During this period access constraints lifted and the Dartmouth Ferry Service started to offer a regular service to McNabs Island (Acadian Recorder 5 Sept 1873). For a thirty year period McNabs Island became a location for mass recreation. This use of the island ended with the start of World War I, when the military value of the islands took precedence.

The thesis will show that the earliest uses of the location by the elite changed eventually to a recreation site for all classes, and then later reverted more and more towards use as a playground for the upper middle class. Today, the islands are mainly a play area for people with access to

boats. Works on recreation in Halifax by Beverly Williams (1991) and Bonnie Huskins (1991) provided valuable background information on picnics and the development of structured recreation in the Halifax area.

Chapter seven will examine government policies with respect to the development of the islands. This will cover the period from 1960 until the present. Most proposals since 1960 focus on the recreation and tourism potential of the islands, and not on protection. The proposals put forward by the different levels of government demonstrate the differing stances taken in development and protection.

The Province of Nova Scotia has reorganized its objectives for the provincial parks and reserves. These new guidelines impact the recreational development proposals for both McNabs and Lawlor Islands.

The conflicts arising from these proposals show an undercurrent of class dissension in relation to the park development plans for McNabs Island. Comparisons and contrasts can be made to other similar Canadian locations, such as Victoria Park in Truro (Creighton 1980:171), Pacific Spirit Park in Vancouver (Wynn and Oke 1992:288), the islands of Toronto Harbour (Kroll & Kroll 1995:B1: McFarland

1982:259), and Mount Royal in Montreal (Sobol 1991:52), as well as local conflicts within the Halifax area related to the Public Gardens, Point Pleasant Park, and the Halifax and Dartmouth Commons.

Chapter eight, Retrospect and Prospects, will present conclusions based on the thesis.

The research for this thesis involved four principal procedures. The first step was a literature review of McNabs and Lawlor Islands covering all aspects including biographies of key historical figures. Literature specifically related to McNabs Island is very limited and generally consists of a paragraph or two in varied histories. Most historical data were therefore developed from archival research.

A second step was a selected review of literature pertaining to issues and problems identified with the islands. This included government procedures and policies on protection and recreation as well as relevant literature on historical and geographic aspects. Various policy statements and proposals were consulted, and provided information on the public stance on island use and the different protection policies that have been applied. There is an increasing number of proposals and planning documents available dealing

with the islands. These include natural life studies by the Nova Scotia Museum and the Department of Natural Resources, as well as historical studies from Parks Canada and a heritage resources survey sponsored by Halifax Harbour Cleanup Incorporated (HHCI) in 1991. The government-sponsored development plans, starting with the Coblentz Survey of 1960-1963 and up to the extensive Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) plan of 1975, show the positions of the municipal and provincial governments.

The third step was a series of visits to the islands in order to become familiar with its physical and biological features, and to verify mapped data on their features. This also offered an opportunity to identify potential problems with the creation of a park. The fourth step was to identify and interview interested groups and individuals who have concerns about the future of the islands.

It is hoped that this study will provide both theoretical and practical benefits. The historical portion of the research will give insight into a part of the region's history that has been overlooked. The consideration of land use patterns and conflicts in relation to political economy and land use capabilities will aid in future development proposals for the islands.

Chapter 2

CONFLICTING LAND USE WITHIN RECREATION

As Canadians, we are fortunate to have natural areas available for recreation within easy reach of most major cities. However, a study by Waterloo University in 1985 identified the fact that Canada is losing 80,000 hectares of natural area per year (Heritage Resources Centre 1985:16). This land is disappearing through activities ranging from forestry to new highways to new living spaces. More research and consideration is needed in the maintenance and renewal of urban and urban-fringe natural areas.

Consideration of sites for recreational purposes is a complicated process. The importance of recreation land is in its location, not in its size. There is no exact formula to identify a location as a preferred recreation site.

There is nothing in the physical landscape or features of any particular piece of land or body of water that makes it a recreation resource; it is the combination of the natural qualities and the ability and desire of man to use them that makes a resource out of what might

otherwise be a more or less meaningless combination of rocks, soil and trees (Clawson and Knetsch 1966:7).

Canada is the only nation that has attempted to assess land potential for recreation. Lavery (1974: 254) suggests this was done because of the large tracts of crown land and abandoned farm lands in the nation. The Canada Land Inventory (CLI) program for recreational land use recognizes the difference between intensive and dispersed activities. The CLI considers intensive activities as those which involve a relatively large number of people per land unit while dispersed activities involve fewer people in larger land units (CLI 1970). Under the CLI program, land is classified in one of seven groupings. These data are transferred to maps and published as 1:250,000 map sheets. The land is further described with the consideration of twenty-five sub classes (CLI 1970). The published maps are limited by space to the inclusion of three of these sub classes per area.

The Land Capability for Recreation Map of the Halifax area shows most of McNabs and Lawlor Islands to be class 1 capability (CLI Map 1971). This rating means the islands can sustain high annual use for intensive recreation. This rating is the same as would be given to a major ski area or high use beach (CLI Map 1971).

In the years following European Contact, islands have had differing uses to society in North America. Initially, islands were preferred for settlement by Europeans because of the ease of defence and the consideration of transportation. A prime case was the French attempt to locate its first permanent settlement in Acadia on an island at the mouth of the St. Croix River. This changed over the years as threat of attack lessened. Islands became sites for marginalized communities and a symbol of primitive life style. Many of the smaller islands of Atlantic Canada were depopulated during the early part of the twentieth century. Now the offshore islands of the region are sought for their isolation and solitude.

With few exceptions, most of the small islands in Atlantic Canada no longer contain economically viable communities but are now utilized largely for recreation. The islands of Halifax Harbour are no exception, and remain undeveloped despite their location near the largest urban area in the region.

Land use conflict occurs frequently in lands of the urban periphery. Such lands are most accessible and visible to a large population and can suffer the most environmental impact from urban activities. Russwurm (1977:9) suggests that land in the urban fringe is important to all levels of government.

On a national level, this land provides the space required for a growing population. At the provincial level, the land is required for new community development as well as transportation improvements. The municipal level of government requires land for transportation, public utilities, resource use, and parks. Siting of facilities such as sewage treatment plants and landfill sites is often in the urban fringe. Locally, land in the urban fringe provides room for growth of the expanding cities and towns; in short, subdivisions and industries that increase the value of the local tax base.

Wall and Sinott (1980) suggest the provision of urban fringe parks has been relatively neglected in North America, yet most urban planning studies acknowledge the demand and address the requirement in their proposals. Halifax is no exception, and urban proposals in the last half of this century do include the provision of regional parks. The creation of new parks in the urban fringe often leads to conflict between those favouring recreation use and those whose priority is protection. Studies show such parks are normally day use facilities with heavy visitor potential (Wall and Sinott 1980; Marsh 1977). Environmental managers now accept that parks need to serve a variety of ecological functions in addition to the social considerations. An urban

park such as is proposed for McNabs and Lawlor Islands will have its use based on recreation, not protection. There is agreement among the public and private sectors that the islands need to be protected, but there is disagreement on protection levels. This is a textbook example of a recreation versus conservation land conflict.

The environment can be both the object and the setting for outdoor recreation (Wall 1989a:453). Landscape features such as scenic look offs, historic sites and fishing locations can be destination points for outdoor recreation. At the same time, these features can provide preferred locations for activities such as picnics or hikes.

Outdoor recreation pursuits, such as park visitation, bird watching, nature photography, hunting, hiking, canoeing and camping, require a mixed pattern of landscape that includes forest cover and open areas in order to maximize enjoyment. The belief in the importance of the visual environment to both tourism and recreation has prompted new research into methods of quantifying landscape evaluation in recreation (Millward and Allen 1989; Pearce & Waters 1983).

As a general rule, the individual effects of recreation on the environment are small and normally concentrated in a

small area (Wall 1989a:454). The exception to this rule is the creation of a major tourism development, such as a resort, or the construction of high impact recreation venues such as ball fields or sports complexes. All human use has an impact on an area. Park planners must decide at what level impact becomes resource damage. McHarg (1971) argues that we need a better understanding of the recreation potential and need to use an ecological planning approach to develop a mix of land use activities. Some land use conflicts can be resolved with multiple purpose or sequential land uses. However, when these options are not feasible, solutions will involve compromise which can generate further conflicts.

Environment Canada (1994:335) acknowledges the paradox of recreation and conservation. The department suggests that outdoor recreation requires a high standard of environmental quality, but in turn causes significant stress on the environment. If this stress is not managed properly, the area loses its value to recreation. The Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC 1991:40) argues that the successful management of a park or protected area involves consideration and understanding of both the ecological and sociological relationships.

Growing urbanization in Halifax is putting additional

pressure on the surrounding rural areas. For some people, land in areas adjoining cities which is usually referred to as the urban fringe, is not considered "used" unless it has housing or industrial parks on it.

Protection is usually a restriction on the extent of use for a given area. Protection of an area does not mean an alteration of the environment to suit recreation. Neither is protection simply a tool to forbid new forms of use or exploitation. Successful planning of parks can be seen in the context of a continuum with economics on one end and protection on the other. The park is located along this line at a point depending on which interest group attracted the most public sympathy or attention. As a result, many times land set aside for protection or park use is not properly managed or controlled. Recreational opportunities need to be provided that are acceptable or friendly to the environment on ecologically sensitive lands. Consideration must also be given to the present land use and existing residents of the area. Protection is generally compatible with limited use.

Protection of an area in North America is often accomplished by determining an optimum use based on freezing or rebuilding a natural environment rather than protecting the area and allowing natural progression. Works by geographic

researchers (as examples, Brown 1968:94; Nelson 1989:86; Johnston 1985:6) argue that in Canada different social, environmental and economic forces encourage a "romanticized utilitarian", rather than a strictly preservationist, approach to natural landscape protection. This old "fortress" approach to protection of fencing an area and keeping all intrusions out is no longer acceptable (Heritage Resources Centre 1985:5). Areas protected this way are still vulnerable to outside influences ranging from acid rain to shrinking government budgets. The idea of controlled or restricted access also gives an impression of elitism. Most areas of Nova Scotia have a traditional use component. Although this is usually in a primary sector such as fishing, hunting, forestry, or subsistence agriculture, public access for recreation purposes is also a factor.

We tend to believe that change in an environment is not a good thing. However, not all changes to an environment are harmful. Any landscape or natural setting is constantly changing, both from the effects of man and nature. Often our attempts to protect a natural area interferes with this natural process. There are many recreational land uses that are compatible with environmental protection of an area.

Ashworth (1991:2) suggests that "Preservation is not

synonymous with conservation, but is the protection from harm and by implication care and maintenance of artifacts ...extended to cover sites of historical or symbolic association." Preservation of an area does not necessarily mean the restoration of a landscape to a romanticized ideal of what it once was, although this is the stance often taken by the general public. Originally preservation referred to the motivation to protect surviving relics of the past from both man-made and natural threats. The term preservation is normally used today in reference to the protection of static artifacts such as buildings.

Johnston (1991:131) argues that preservation and conservation of natural settings have not received a high priority in Canada because of the apparent abundance of land. This view is reinforced in work by Turner and Rees (1973:35) and Wall (1982a:428). Konrad (1982:403) argues that preservation has developed an elitist connotation since a small group has traditionally exercised the power to decide what should be preserved and then set access controls to the site.

Most work done on natural and historic preservation treats the subject as intellectual history. Several writers have concentrated on the historic evolution of preservation.

Nash (1967) points out the changes in public attitude to wilderness. Huth (1972) traces the change in public attitudes which led to preservation legislation. Runte (1979) and McNamee (1994) follow the development of national parks; Runte in the United States, McNamee in Canada. Graber (1976) explains the motivation of the wilderness movement.

A new meaning is now placed on an old term, "stewardship". The contemporary urban public is now forced to face new limitations on city growth. Today the concept of stewardship is an attempt to protect an area as much as possible from external forces by increasing public involvement in its design and management. Protection is best achieved through cooperation between the public and private sectors in order to relieve the pressure of conflict between potential economic development and recreation.

Capacity

User satisfaction is an important goal of recreation management. This factor is difficult to either define or measure. Recreation managers are in the difficult position of attempting to provide quality environments for different user groups without hard data on how people value the different recreational experiences. Dorfman (1979) suggests several environmental components underlie acceptable public

values of a recreational experience. These include scenic beauty, good weather, wildlife, wilderness and an absence of crowding. As well, personal goals such as self enjoyment, peace, quiet and tranquility, mental rest and relaxation contribute to recreational values. Capacity and satisfaction are based on personal value judgements.

It is important to consider that our sense of space and our spatial imagination are not just defined by geography or legislation, but also by custom. Space is an intangible concept that has different meanings to different individuals. There is another plane beyond the cultural definition that leads to a specialized kind of cultural space. This is the sacred space which is regarded by many cultures as a spiritual resource (Graber 1976). As examples, Kelly's Mountain on Cape Breton Island and Richibucto Island off northeastern New Brunswick are considered to be sacred sites by the Mi'kmaq.

When a park is located in an obvious area of potential heavy use, it is essential to determine its carrying capacity to prevent unacceptable environmental deterioration and still provide quality recreation opportunities. The current practise in park planning is to estimate a minimum, maximum and optimum carrying capacity for an area (Shelby & Heberlein 1986). In most considerations of capacity, the identification

of a capacity figure involves the consideration of factors that can be managed as well as the consequences of these management decisions.

Researchers identify four assessments that must be included in the calculation of capacity for a proposed recreation area (Patmore 1983:222; Pigram 1983:67). These are the physical, ecological, perceptual, and economic capacities.

Physical capacity can be defined as the maximum number of people a site can accommodate for an activity. Pigram (1983:68) suggests physical capacity is actually a design concept and is generally associated with organized sports or recreational facilities. Other considerations must be included in the calculation of physical capacity. In the case of McNabs island, the physical capacity of the site is constrained by the problems of access and transportation. This makes physical capacity a management tool on McNabs Island as it is easier to control visitors by physical restraints rather than regulation.

Economic capacity is the level of use in an area that is required to provide a planned financial return. Unlike the other concepts, economic capacity is usually measured as a minimum rather than a maximum desired use. This type of

capacity often is more concerned with multiple use of an area, especially where recreation is combined with other types of land use (Patmore 1983:232).

Ecological capacity is the level of use an area can sustain without creating long term environmental problems caused by either intentional or unintentional actions. These can be as simple as increased foot traffic on paths causing soil erosion, to increased litter and noise pollution. Wildlife can have its natural patterns disturbed by increased human traffic. Ecological capacity is generally concerned with long term damage to the environment.

Perceptual or social capacity is a value judgement of the user's perception of an area's capacity. Some people enjoy and demand solitude in natural areas, while others are not bothered by the presence of small groups or even crowds. Patmore describes a British study by Burton which shows that education and social class are key factors in this perception. This study suggests that higher educated and upper social classes prefer solitude, while the lower educated and working classes are comfortable with other people near (Patmore 1983; Burton 1974:168). In order to assess the recreation capacity of the island, it is necessary to forecast what visitors will do when they arrive. If one thousand people arrive on a given

day, where will they go and what will they do? Will they remain in larger groups or will they split up as individuals, pairs, and small groups? People do move about and engage in various activities. Some will tend to congregate at the forts, on the beaches or at established picnic grounds. Smaller groups will take to the trails. One hundred people exploring a fort is probably an acceptable figure to most, but the same number of people on a secluded trail could be perceived as over crowding.

Access/Zonation

Contemporary park planners use access and zoning techniques to control environmental impacts and provide quality recreation. This becomes apparent in the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission strategies (1971, 1979) for park development on the islands.

Patmore (1983:228) identifies four considerations which are used to develop zoning patterns in a park. The first tactic is to allow recreational activities to exert only minimum influence on the environment. The second technique is to retain the base environment of the area but to allow minor changes. The third technique is to modify the environment to suit the intended use. *A laissez faire*

attitude is the fourth approach.

The consideration of access requires data on both users and their mode of travel (Millward 1991). The numbers of visitors to McNabs is controlled by the external access problem. The peak visits to the island will normally occur on weekends during July and August. A park on the island will be primarily a day use park and climatic conditions will determine visitor levels.

The Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (1991:45) suggests that properly run interpretive services will improve visitor understanding and appreciation and can also be a key factor in directing visitors to the preferred patterns of zonation to lessen environmental impacts. Interpretation is defined as "a communications process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public through first-hand involvement with an object, artifact, landscape, or site" (Interpretation Canada 1976).

Economic Values

A recreational facility has the ability to generate economic revenues. Boggs and Wall (1984:43) divide these benefits into primary and secondary components.

Primary benefits measure the direct economic revenues of the recreation offered. These benefits are present even if there is not an actual fee to use the facility. They can be estimated by various economic methods such as willingness to pay techniques (Fischer 1975) or demand curves (Clawson 1959).

Secondary benefits of a recreational facility are the advantages to the host community. Boggs and Wall (1984) believe the secondary benefits can be further divided into direct, indirect and induced impacts. The direct economic impacts are wages, goods and services, utilities and expenses associated with the operation of the facility. Indirect impact is money spent within the host community by facility visitors. The induced impacts are commonly known as the multiplier effect. This is the change in wages, employment patterns and spending patterns caused by the facility.

Tourism

Tourism development is an important feature of economic development proposals in Nova Scotia. The interrelationship between tourism and the environment also fosters conflict. One view suggests that tourism has been an economic boon at the expense of the environment (Gunn 1991), while opponents to this belief suggest that tourism can be the bridge between economic growth and environmental protection (Manning 1996).

One of the key attractions in Halifax is the harbour itself. The ferries are a popular attraction as well as the varied harbour cruises that are now offered. Halifax Harbour has another advantage that lends itself to the tourist market. The islands of the harbour have tremendous potential for tourism.

The islands were part of the tourism planning of the provincial government at the turn of the century. As early as 1889, the recreational potential of the islands was apparent to some. A local newspaper devoted to tourism, the Halifax Carnival Echo (Midsummer 1889) described the islands and gave an account that "No other city on the Atlantic Coast can offer the sights and sounds of McNabs and Lawlors. Halifax does not realize the value." Stories and reports of special events in the harbour also mentioned the islands (The Critic 21 Aug 1891).

Parks are associated with tourism in the minds of most Nova Scotians. Tourism is often seen as the economic saviour to many depressed areas. The development and maintenance of special places is essential to any tourism development today. However, it is very easy to forget that tourism is also a threat to the environment. This dichotomy fosters conflict,

not resolutions. Government sponsorship of the alternative tourism initiatives appears to be an attempt to address these conflicts, but too often the design becomes bogged down in arguments over competing land use. Planners face the dilemma that increased tourism pressures can diminish the potential of a natural area.

Heritage sites rank high as tourist attractions. Historic resources are unique and non renewable evidence of our past. The problem we face is that we cannot hope to protect and preserve everything. Konrad (1982:393) suggests that historical artifacts have value and are often considered a recreational resource, since there is an increased demand for access and direct experience with historical landscapes. Ruins and structures are often best used to explain the significance of the setting; not in an attempt to demonstrate history.

Scenery

Scenery and landscape are natural resources that cannot be mined or refined for export. The exploitation of these resources is commonly associated with tourism as their economic value is realized by importing consumers. Natural destinations have become a major pull factor in tourism travel and advertising (Gunn 1991:5). Their economic value is

realized by importing consumers, not in the export of the finished product. However, economic profit is not the only consideration. Protection of the resource must also be addressed.

A proper balance of forests, beach views and open areas is essential in park planning. Various scenic opportunities enhance the landscape qualities and personal enjoyment. The islands now offer a variety of landscapes. Decisions will be required on former agriculture lands that are reverting to forest.

Generally, public emphasis is focused on large areas of wilderness, as threats to these regions generate national publicity and outrage. However, three hundred and ninety-five hectares on McNabs Island in Halifax Harbour is of more concern to the citizens of Halifax since it is more accessible than any of the new national parks in Canada's North.

The belief in the importance of the natural landscape has led to strong protests when a natural area is threatened by development or change. The threat to the environmental quality of wilderness or natural areas comes from people as much as from dams, roads or commercial development. Parks and protected areas cannot be all things to all people. This

leads to the current importance placed on carrying capacity in parks and recreational areas. Pigram (1983:68) defines carrying capacity as, "The level of recreation use an area can sustain without an unacceptable degree of deterioration of the character and quality of the resource or the recreation experience." A new subfield in economics, recreational economics, emerged in the 1960s because of the importance society placed on recreation and leisure (Clawson & Knetsch 1967).

Chapter 3

RECREATION AND SOCIETY

Canada is a pluralistic nation. The political and economic powers are dispersed among conflicting groups within Canadian society. A balance of power is achieved between these groups by their ability to influence the actions and beliefs of others. An argument can also be made that Canada has traditionally been an elitist nation where the power to control is held by a small minority of the population. Lucas (1982:148) argues that recreation and regulation are incompatible since freedom of choice and spontaneity are at the core of recreational beliefs. This dichotomy is reflected in the development of recreation and leisure sites.

Regional parks are an important factor in improving the quality of life for the local population. Contemporary belief is that proper leisure leads to relaxation which in turn increases productivity of the labour force. In the past, recreation was often closely associated with one's work.

Heavy industry fostered employee social groups that sponsored a range of recreational activities from picnics to organized sports. The recent loss of heavy industry in Atlantic Canada with its occupational social nets is putting more strain on parks and special places. Social scientists argue that today, work and play are opposites that allow a person to be unique and this uniqueness makes recreation a basic human need (Revelle 1967:1174).

Some areas contribute most to the physical, mental, and spiritual health of man if they are left in a natural state (MAPC 1979:10). The MAPC regional development plan (1975:) argued that regional parks were essential "to have development which imparts a strong sense of community and respect for the natural environment" and "...to meet the recreational needs of the people and provide visual relief within areas of intense urban development." Disagreement develops in the decisions of what land can best accommodate urban development and what land should be preserved in its natural state.

Development of parks has the potential to create a great deal of conflict since different interest groups have differing agendas. The attitude of local society towards recreation and leisure is an essential planning tool in the creation of parks and recreation sites. Thompson and McEwen

(1958:24) argue the creation of successful parks and recreation sites involves cooperation of government, industry and public interest groups. User conflicts create problems in park management that are often reflected in vandalism and a refusal to accept park protection policies. A portion of the population of Halifax consists of a large military and university presence which makes a transitory population. The largest employer in the Halifax metropolitan region is the government, both federal and provincial. These positions offer relatively high wages with a high degree of job security. A large middle and upper class is a result of this mix. This social structure, and its economic demands, must be considered in the design of parks within the region as studies show this sector of the population demands a wide variety of leisure opportunities and is also highly concerned with environmental protection (Harry, Gale & Hendee, 1969; Faich & Gale 1971; Jackson 1989). The outdoor experience of many city dwellers today is often concentrated on urban parks. However, Fiton (1976) suggests that the needs of the less privileged class of society should take precedence over considerations of environmental and scenery protection. The park must fill the needs of the regional population requirements.

Recreation versus conservation is one of the key issues

in conflicting land use when ecosystems are considered. Dunlap and Heffernan (1975:18) suggested that the relationship was more symbiotic and was keyed by four possible reasons. The first was that involvement in outdoor recreational activities created an awareness of environmental problems. Secondly, this increased awareness led to a commitment to protect the environment. Their third reason was that participation created a taste and demand for more natural settings. The fourth reason was that outdoor recreation enthusiasts were exposed to more education and information campaigns designed to protect the environment. Preservation of resources for outdoor recreation is an important focus in the agendas of many environmental groups.

Recreation development and activities can detract from and destroy wilderness since the very qualities that create a situation where conservation is required are the same qualities that will attract visitors to the area. The most important point is that outdoor recreation is a range of activities that all use land. Outdoor recreation does have an impact on the resource base, even though it may be unintentional. Many environmental groups grew out of a particular recreation club or activity and focus on an area of environmental concern that has an impact on their preferred activity. Hendee uses the example of a kayak club on the

Pacific Coast that united to stop the construction of a dam that might interfere with their activity but did nothing about a proposed highway in the same area that was cut through stands of virgin timber (Hendee et al 1969). Ducks Unlimited promotes breeding areas for waterfowl in order to improve their hunting opportunities.

Conservation is often viewed as a forum of the elite (Harry, Gale & Hendee 1969). Outdoor recreation pursuits of the elite often include a broader range of activities than those of the working class. Certain sports evoke a connotation of elitism - golf, yachting, and skeet shooting for example. This leads to a situation where the elite, who have the physical and fiscal resources to participate in these activities, also have the power to retain control over development policies that would affect preferred locations.

An elitist view of recreation has been apparent in many of the recreational development proposals suggested in development plans for McNabs Island since 1960. Recreational components in these proposals have included marinas, golf courses, resorts and riding trails. These activities have been included with a series of popular recreational pursuits such as swimming and campgrounds. Inclusion of this variety of activities would require a highly regulated park.

The emergence of city parks in Canada coincided with the rise of industrial cities from the 1890s to the start of World War I (Martin 1983:8). The growth of these cities created a demand for open spaces as population shifted to the urban settings. Canadian cities followed the British example and started to reserve space for the creation of parks. The first public parks in Britain were created as a cure for the declining health of urban populations (Patmore 1983:19). These early parks served a mainly social function. They were a setting for events ranging from political rallies to receptions for visiting dignitaries. Available land for these first parks was often found in the fringe surrounding congested urban areas. This created a situation where parks became a buffer zone between the working poor and the elite (Patmore 1983:40). These open spaces were generally owned and controlled by municipal units.

The Halifax Commons was granted to the public officers of the town of Halifax in 1763 (Markham and Edginton 1979:12). Although initially designated as a common area for the citizens, by the middle of the nineteenth century the establishment of the Public Gardens and various venues for sports, such as ice skating, tennis, croquet, and archery, had changed its function to that of a park. The second major park in Halifax is Point Pleasant Park, which was leased for that

purpose in 1875 (McFarland 1982:260). Point Pleasant Park was on the periphery of the city at that time.

There is evidence of conflict over access to these new city parks on the Halifax Peninsula, but not on McNabs Island. The Halifax Horticultural Society attempted to impose an admission fee to the public gardens in 1874. This brought a negative reaction from the newspapers in Halifax. The newspapers saw this action as an attempt to limit access which should not be permitted in an area where the word public is included in the name (Evening Express 5 Aug 1874). Citizens of Halifax felt this was part of the traditional commons and was owned by the residents of the city.

McNabs and Lawlor Islands have historical connections to many cultures dating to pre-European contact. The use of these islands since 1749 demonstrates the process of change in recreation patterns and preferences in Halifax society. Recreation and leisure are no longer pursuits enjoyed by only the wealthy, but are now of concern to all people.

In many ways, the elite have the physical and economic resources to prefer a park that will cater to activities that retain impressions of natural landscape, while the working class prefers recreation that is structured in the

consideration of facilities. This creates a situation where the elite support protection policies, while the working class support the creation of parks that are user oriented. The danger in defining the issue in this manner is that the groups urging environmental preservation and protection can easily be marginalized by a propaganda device that labels them as special interest groups. This strategy will be discussed with reference to the islands in chapter seven.

The natural environment is shaped by the various cultures which in turn make use of the land. The historical sequence of occupancy and uses on the islands includes a variety of land uses, some of which are production-oriented, (e.g., farming and forestry), some are related to the military, and some to recreation. This is the concept of sequent occupance.

Mass participation in outdoor recreation activities is a phenomena of the latter half of the twentieth century (The Economist 13 July 1963: 114; Clawson 1972b:57). Changing patterns of work have increased the amount of leisure time available to the average person, which creates increased demand for recreational opportunities (Clawson 1985:75; Lavery 1974:41). Various levels of government respond to this pressure with the development of new parks and recreation sites. Recreational development in the Halifax Metropolitan

region has been a major consideration in all development strategies since 1960. This new importance placed on leisure makes the islands a focal point for land use controversy in the region.

Other factors that contribute to and influence our demand for leisure must also be considered. The health of the economy affects the demand for leisure. Increased employment and a growing economy has a direct bearing on the amount of per capita disposable income. Population size, rate of growth, an aging population and family size and structure influence the demand for recreation sites. Technological innovations create new opportunities for leisure and reduce barriers to certain types of recreation. Education shapes values and therefore leisure preferences. A fifth additional factor is political considerations. Society expresses its views and preferences in the electoral process. Government is forced to respond to some of these pressures and their creation of recreation sites is the end result (Jackson 1989:358).

Chapter 4

PHYSICAL SETTING

The consideration of a natural area for special protection as a recreation site requires a detailed study of its ecology. The Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC 1991:40) suggests this type of study needs to include a detailed inventory of ecological processes, habitats and species. Any location, irrespective of size, has its own distinct natural traits and has been exploited to a different degree by man.

The natural environment of any area is an integrated system which Russwurm (1974:3) argues can be broken down into five parts - weather, climate, landform, soils, and biota. The first three parts provide a base for the final two, the soils and biota. Biota includes plants, animals (including man), and microorganisms. This integrated system is known as an ecosystem.

McNabs And Lawlor Islands

McNabs and Lawlor Islands lie on the eastern side of the entrance to Halifax Harbour (figure 2). Lawlor Island lies to the east of McNabs near Wreck Cove and opposite Eastern Passage. Big and Little Thrumcaps lie off the southern end of McNabs Island. Consideration of park development for McNabs Island must include reference to Lawlor Island and the Thrumcaps, as the natural environments are closely interlinked. In fact the erosion of the Thrumcaps has created shoals that join them to McNabs Island.

There is confusion over the present day spelling of the current place names. The spelling used in this thesis is taken from Gazetteer of Canada (EMR 1993).

Both McNabs and Lawlor Island are only accessible by boat. The Department of Education (1966) gives a physical description of the islands. McNabs island is approximately five kilometres long and between one and two kilometres wide and covers an area of three hundred and ninety-five hectares. The island runs on a NW to SE axis. There is deep water off the north shore of the island at Ives Point. Lawlor Island is approximately one and a half kilometres long and one half kilometre wide with an area of fifty-one hectares and divides

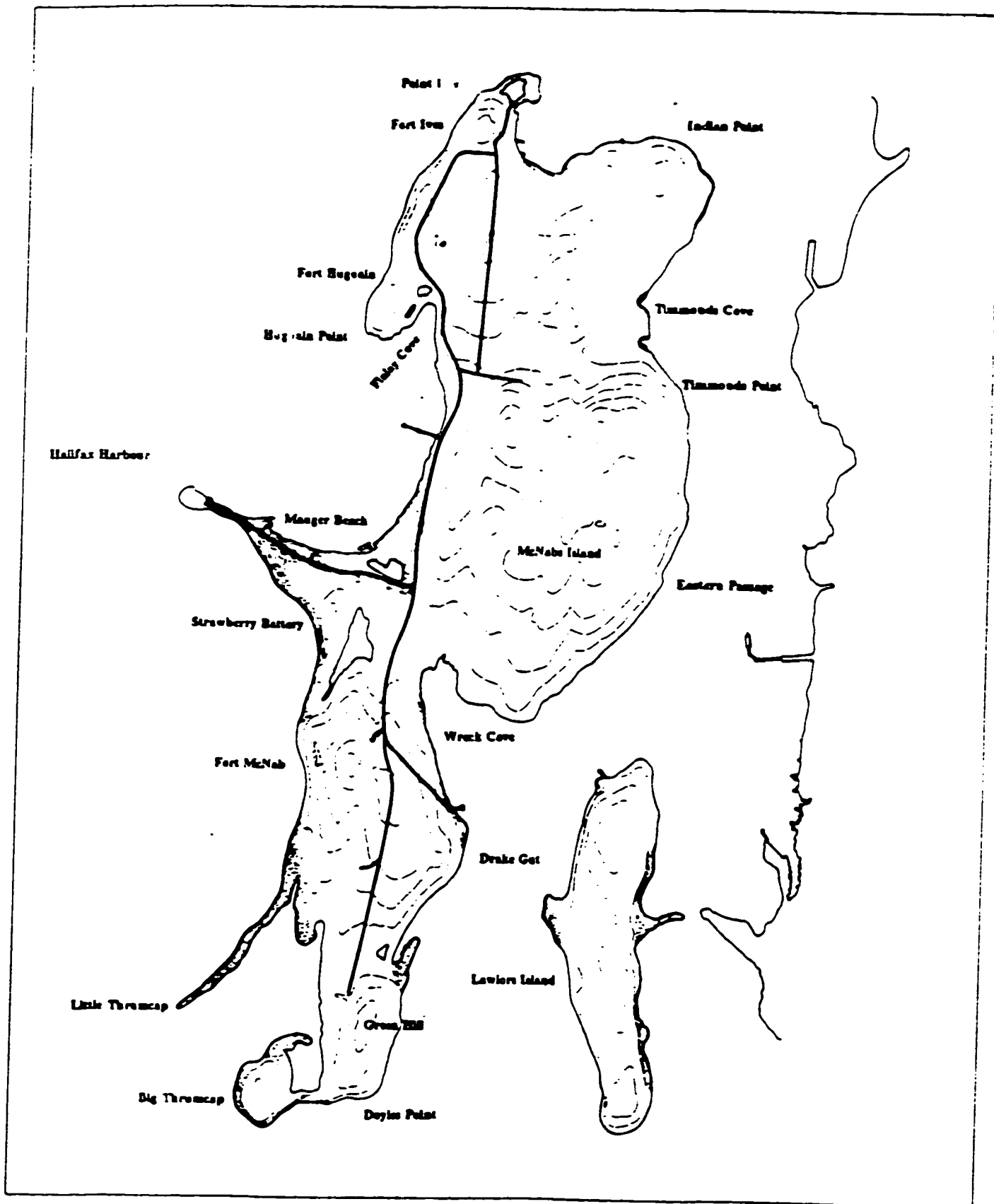


Figure 2
McNabs and Lawlor Islands (Kinsman 1995: Introduction)

the eastern entrance to Halifax Harbour. Both Big and Little Thrumcap are remnants of drumlins attached to the southern end of McNabs Island.

The Natural History of Nova Scotia (Simmons et al 1989) places the island group in theme region 833, *Eastern Shore Beaches*. This region features drowned coastlines with headlands, long inlets, and drumlins. There is active coastal erosion of till headlands, producing sediment which builds spits and barrier beaches. The area provides migration and winter habitat for waterfowl.

Geology

A geological time chart shows that bedrock formed from sediments was deposited during the Cambrian and Ordovician periods five hundred million years ago. From the Devonian Period to the Tertiary Period, a period of three hundred and fifty million years, the mountains formed by the folding gradually eroded. In the last two million years glaciers covered the area and deposited a variety of sands and gravels. The glaciers deposited the drumlins and shaped the islands (von Bitter 1968).

The north and south ends of McNabs Island are Halifax Slate (Ordovician) formations while the centre of the island

is of the older Goldenville (Cambrian) quartzite (figure 3). The most important geological features of the islands are the drumlins. Little Thrumcap and Big Thrumcap are both drumlins, while McNabs Island proper has several drumlins which are joined by low areas in the centre of the island (Roland 1982:73). Lawlor Island contains a small drumlin as well. Drumlins, also known as whalebacks, are domelike hills of glacial till which are formed beneath a moving sheet of ice and involve a combination of a rubbing away and plastering-on process. In Nova Scotia, drumlins generally consist of clay overlaying slate (von Bitter 1968). Wave and tidal action has reduced Little Thrumcap by almost two thirds and this has created a series of shoals extending to the southwest into the entrance of Halifax Harbour, and sandbars and spits on the western side of McNabs Island. There is evidence of a submerged forest near the mouth of a small creek on McNabs Island (Roland 1982:96). The original channel of the Sackville River, since drowned to become Halifax Harbour, runs to the west of the islands and can still be identified in the geological formation of Halifax Harbour.

The Mineral Resources Land Use Map produced by the Department of Mines and Energy (DME 1988) covering McNabs and Lawlor Islands shows no economic mineral or energy extraction value for the islands. However, there are deposits of clay on

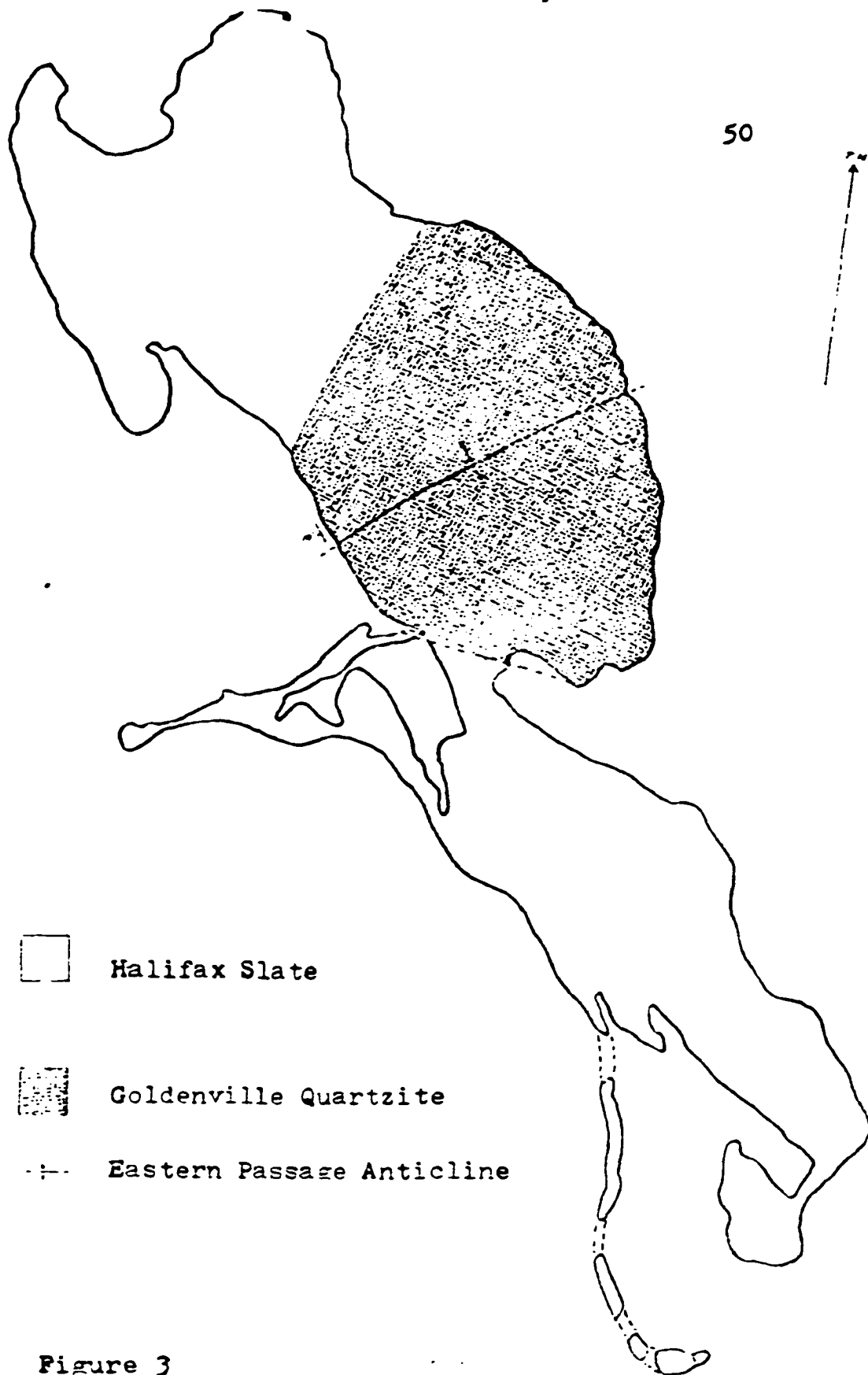


Figure 3
Geological Formations and Soil
(von Bitter 1968:3)

Green Hill that have been quarried in the past. Popular folklore suggests there is a lost French gold mine on the island. Kinsman (1995:66) suggests, "While initially sounding far-fetched, a portion of McNabs Island is underlain by the same geological formation which produced famous gold mines at Moose River, Caribou, and Rawdon."

Soils and Topography

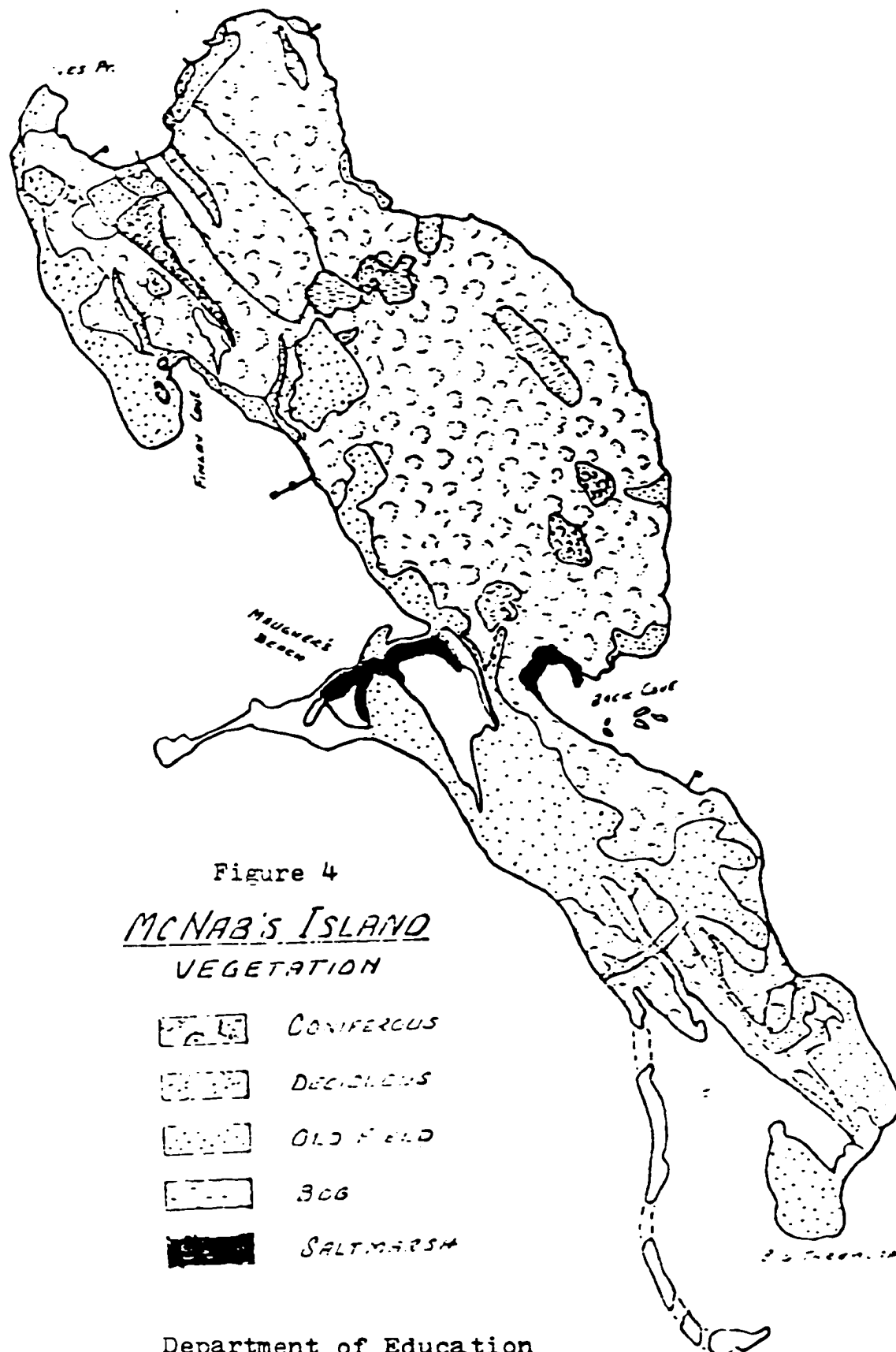
Drumlins are often considered to have good soils for agriculture. The Canada Land Inventory shows Lawlor Island as having an agricultural soil capability of 3r. This is described as moderate agricultural land with shallow depth of soil. McNabs Island is rated as soil capability 2s on the eastern side while the remainder of the island is rated as 3r (CLI Map 1967). A class 2 soil is the highest rating in Nova Scotia.

Agriculture Canada (1981) identifies the soils on both islands as Wolfville Series. The exception is an area of Coastal Beach Series on Maugher Beach. The Wolfville Series is a reddish brown loam till derived from shale and sandstone, which generally has good drainage (AC 1981). The soil is considered to be moderately stony and the department suggests this would interfere with agriculture.

The DeLabat survey of Halifax Harbour in 1709 identified the agricultural potential of the islands. Watson (1969:17) believes the recognition was based on observation of the tree cover, as the hardwoods on the drumlins signified good agricultural soils. It is therefore very possible that Colonel Cornwallis also recognized this potential and this is the reason he did not include the islands in the initial land lottery for the settlement at Halifax. This identification of good agricultural soils was probably based on recognition of the drumlin formations, and the clover that was prevalent in open areas. A diary kept by William Dyott who visited the islands in 1787 mentions the fact that as land was cleared, it immediately grew up in sweet clover (Jeffrey 1907:31).

Biology

The landscape of the island includes a mix of forested areas, fields, old homesteads, heath bogs, salt marshes and beaches. The forest cover (figure 4) offers a variety of habitat for wildlife. The openings offer grasses used by deer, rabbits, and partridge. The areas of shrub provide nesting locations for birds, and allow for growth of wild berries. Mature softwood provide winter cover by reducing the depths of snow cover. This is necessary to many species of birds. Old growth hardwoods provide nesting sites for large birds and den areas for small mammals (DNRNS 1988b:5).



The Department of Lands and Forests (1985) identified four main types of forest habitat on McNabs Island. Tree cover is a mix of second growth hardwood and softwood less than one hundred years old. The most abundant is a mixture of white spruce, balsam fir, maple and birch found predominantly on the drumlins. A mix of spruce and fir is found at the base of slopes where the drainage is poor. There are hardwood stands of yellow birch, red maple, and white birch on the crowns of the drumlins.

Non-forested habitat on McNabs island includes abandoned pasture, alder thickets, and rose thickets. Many of the older cleared fields are gradually reverting to white spruce forest. At the present time these fields provide valuable habitat for some species of birds, as there are few open fields in the Halifax Metropolitan area. An inventory by the Department of Lands and Forests (DLF 1985) identified more than 150 varieties of trees and shrubs on the island. Some of these species of shrubs and perennial are not native to the island but are from the gardens of the Perrin Estate, and are concentrated in that area. Butters (1986) gives an account of the non native species still present. The English garden that was established on this estate has not been tended since the mid 1930s.

Several varieties of berries are also growing on McNabs. These include raspberries and blackberries in the abandoned pastures, and blueberries and rose hips throughout the island. There are apple and cherry trees still on the island that are the remnants of orchards planted by the tenant farmers.

The CLI (1972) identifies little forestry potential on the islands. The map shows the prevailing land suitability for forestry as 5ud. Forest on this type of land develops biomass slowly and growth is further constrained by dense and compacted soil layers.

The shoreline of McNabs Island features a large sand beach in Wreck Cove. Erosion of Little Thrumcap has created a second beach in McNabs Cove. Beaches are tolerant to human encroachment (McHarg 1971) as they are cleaned regularly by the tides and contain animal life in the sand which help to decompose organic litter on the shoreline. Beaches are also ideal locations for recreational activities such as picnics, swimming, sand castles, fishing, and sun bathing.

The shores of Lawlor Island and the remainder of the shoreline on McNabs Island are pebble and boulder with sections of mud or silt. There are remnants of a heavy oil slick on the north eastern shoreline of McNabs Island facing

Shearwater and the Imperial Oil Refinery. The harbour tidal race keeps the shoreline reasonably clean on the western shore.

The Department of Lands and Forests did an extensive inventory on island mammals in 1985. They identified snowshoe hare, masked shrew, red fox, raccoon, red squirrel, brown bat, meadow vole, meadow jumping mouse, and white-tailed deer as mammals that are permanent residents on the islands. The white-tail deer herd on the island is estimated to be twenty four animals. At present the deer move between both islands and the mainland and so do not represent an isolated population. There is a fear that the build up of the shoreline in Eastern Passage may lead to a distinct island deer population (DLF 1985). The warden on the island has reported sighting moose and black bear, but reports no evidence of permanent populations. Coyotes are reported on the island during the winter months. There have been occasional sighting of mink, river otter, and bobcat. The Department of Natural Resources is considering an attempt to introduce a beaver colony into McNabs Pond at the tip of McNabs Cove. This is now a freshwater pond since the culvert system prevents the entrance of salt water from the harbour.

4

Studies of the amphibian and reptilian population of

McNabs Island have received little attention. There are six species reported, including three species of snakes, two of frogs, and one salamander. Gilhen (1984:132) suggest that the Maritime Garter Snake population on McNabs Island has extreme colour variations which is typical for small island populations of the species.

The guide book produced by the Friends of McNabs Society in 1995 devotes an entire chapter to bird populations on the island. They identify thirty-five species of waterfowl, eleven species of birds of prey, thirty-eight species of shorebirds, six species of owls, seventy-six species of songbirds, and sixteen other miscellaneous species. Presumably many of these are permanent residents of the island, but not all are nesting residents. The survey does suggest that in excess of eighty per cent can be classified as resident populations, either permanent or seasonal, rather than transitory populations, and this demonstrates the importance of the islands to the local bird population.

The Department of Natural Resources wishes to preserve a connection corridor between the Cole Harbour Marshes and McNabs Island. They also consider the harbour islands an integral part of an east coast chain of parks that includes the Crystal Crescent and Lawrencetown Beach Parks (Grigg

1995:8). This connection would offer a passage along the coastline to prevent the isolation of bird populations in any particular area. All of these areas are extremely important to the migration patterns of waterfowl. McNabs Island is also home to a nesting colony of great blue herons on the northern coast at Indian Point, and Lawlor Island is a favoured nesting site of osprey (Simmons et al 1984:698). The heron colony is gradually relocating to Lawlor Island and away from the increased human visitors on McNabs Island. The nesting sites of osprey on Lawlor Island form the largest concentration of nesting sites for these birds in Atlantic Canada. This is also important to the province as the osprey was proclaimed the provincial bird of Nova Scotia on 30 June 1994 (Moores 1995:5). The mouth of Halifax Harbour is an important stopover point in the migration route for black duck and Canada Geese, and these can often be observed from the island (Simmons et al 1984:698).

The eastern shore of McNabs Island contains large clam beds. An excavation at Wreck Cove in the mid nineteenth century unearthed a shoal of clam shells four feet deep and thirty yards long (PANS MG100/184/32). This area is opposite the known summer camp of Mi'kmaq in Eastern Passage.

No discussion of the biology of McNabs Island would be

complete without mention of the local sea serpent. This creature was sighted off Ives Point in 1853 by Peter McNab. He watched the creature for more than thirty minutes (Novascotian 8 Aug 1853:4) and described the creature as "...over 20 feet long...moving very rapidly. It greatly resembled a large eel - had a very small head, raised 2 or 3 inches above the water, and it moved in an undulating motion."

Climate

The climate of a locality or region is determined by atmospheric conditions, including mean temperatures, winds, precipitation, hours of sunlight, and water temperatures. These conditions influence the flora and fauna, and exert control on the activities of man.

For purposes of recreation, Nova Scotia is considered to have two seasonal climates. The winter season is the period when snow cover is likely and in Halifax is considered to be the period of early December to early April (Gates 1975:4). The summer season is further divided into three distinct periods. The spring shoulder starts in Halifax Harbour in late April. There is a fifteen day period of grace to allow for a period of spring thaw when the land is not suitable for outdoor activity. The period known as the high summer starts in mid June and runs until late September. The third period

is known as the autumn shoulder and occurs from late September until the onset of winter. High summer is the period of the year when outdoor activities are possible without additional clothing.

Gates (1975:116) claims the climate makes the islands highly suitable to touring most times of the year. He suggests the islands are suitable for passive recreation activities, such as picnics, angling, sightseeing, and walking, from the end of April to the beginning of November. Early morning fog is a common occurrence on both islands.

Toponymy

The early French name for Halifax Harbour was Chibouquetou and McNabs Island was Isle de Chibouquetou (figure 5). Following the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, many of the French place names were retained, but their spelling and pronunciation were anglicized. Chibouquetou and its island became Chebucto and Chebucto Island.

English survey maps of 1732 name the larger island Scarboro Island, and identify a site of fresh water springs in what is called, today, Finlay Cove (Fergusson 1967:395). The island was renamed Cornwallis Island in 1749 after Lord Edward Cornwallis. Peter McNab bought the island in 1783 and it

became known as McNab's Settlement and later McNabs Island.

Silas Rand identified the Mi'kmaq name for Thrumcap as *Elpasaktcatc* and suggests this means "canted over" (Rand 1919:24). Rand identified one other Mi'kmaq name on the islands, this being the name for present day McNabs Cove: *Gebechakchehek* (Rand 1919:28). In 1749, the shoals on the south end of the island were given the name of Thrum Caps from the sound of the sea breaking on them (Pullen 1980:39). On November 23, 1797 a British frigate, HMS La Tribune, grounded on a shoal off Little Thrumcap with the loss of over three hundred lives (Hill 1924). This shoal has since been called Tribune Shoal. Little Thrumcap was known as Red Island in 1750 (Map by T Jeffery; reproduced in Dawson 1988:26).

The Jeffery Map of 1750 (figure 6) gives an interesting list of McNab Island place names in use in 1750. Maugher Beach was known as Dead Man's Beach or Shoal; McNabs Cove was called Scarboro Cove; Ives Point was called Gull Point; Finlay Cove was called Watering Hole; Indian Point was known as Little Beach, and Wreck Cove was called Lobster Hole. In addition, the northernmost point on the island (Ives Point) is marked as Cap. Rouses, suggesting this may have been the fishery operation of Captain Rouse (as reproduced in Dawson 1988:26).



Figure 6
Jeffrey Map of 1750
(Dawson 1988:26)

The point south of Fort Hugonin, now called Harrigan's Point, was named Hawthorne's Point in 1793 after a tenant of Peter McNab who lived there (PANS MG100/184/32). Timmins Cove (Timmons) was named after a servant of Peter McNab who lived in a cottage at the head of the cove (PANS M620/693/2a).

Lawlor Island has had many names. On 22 September, 1750, it was named Bloss Island after the grantee, Captain Bloss. Through the years this island changed names as it changed owners. Hence, in 1758 it was Webbs Island; Carrolls island in 1792; McNamaras Island in 1821; Duggans Island in 1829; and later Warrens island before it became known as Lawlor Island (Fergusson 1967:348).

The passage between McNabs and Lawlor Island is named Drakes Passage after Roger Drake. Drake was a fisherman who lived in Wreck Cove during the early part of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 5

CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT - ECONOMIC AND MILITARY

The natural environment of McNabs and Lawlor Islands has not undergone radical change since the founding of Halifax. The physical separation of the islands created a situation which resulted in different land use patterns and development than occurred on the Halifax Peninsula. The human use of the environment creates the cultural environment.

Cultural Environment

The Oxford Dictionary defines culture as "the customs, civilization and achievements of a particular time or people". Aspects of the cultural environment affect land use decisions. These factors include public and private perceptions of the land, ideologies of planning, individual property rights, socioeconomic considerations, and the interactions between the economic and natural environments (Bryant, Russwurm & McLellan 1982:19). Various cultures have made use of the islands throughout their history and prehistory.

McNabs Island and its consorts, Lawlor, Little Thrumcap and Big Thrumcap, were never fully, or even substantially, developed on an economic basis. Early settlers, however, used the islands because of their good agricultural soil, their location made them valuable to the military for harbour defence, and the beaches and woodlands have offered leisure opportunities to the citizens of Halifax. This partial development of the islands is in contrast to the settlement patterns of the day. The European colonizers generally saw islands as the ideal settlement locations based on the need for transportation and security requirements.

Mi'kmaq

The Mi'kmaq maintained a seasonal settlement in Eastern Passage across from Wreck Cove, and in Wreck Cove itself. This settlement may have existed for at least twenty-five hundred years until shortly after the founding of Halifax. During the late winter months, the Mi'kmaq migrated from their winter camps inland to the river mouths and bays. The spring, summer, and autumn seasons gave opportunities for fishing, digging clams, and hunting the ocean mammals that frequented these areas (Tuck 1984:72). Chebucto Harbour was the summer seasonal camp for the Shubenacadie River Clans. Hewitt (PANS MG100/184/32) tells of the military in Halifax forcing the Mi'kmaq to move their camp from Eastern Passage to the

northern point of McNabs Island in 1762. Hewitt suggests this was done for security reasons following unrest on the Dartmouth side of the harbour, but no mention of this fact is made in other literature. In the same article Hewitt mentions several raids on the English settlement at Eastern Passage carried out by Mi'kmaq from the island. It is a fact that this new location for the village on the island was renamed Indian Point and is still known by this name today. The Mi'kmaq maintained a presence on the island until the middle of the nineteenth century. Hewitt adds a note that several Mi'kmaq from Cape Breton arrived in Halifax in the latter part of the nineteenth century and temporarily repopulated the village site. An archeological survey in 1992 dated one midden in Wreck Cove to 1600 BP (Sheldon 1992:7).

French/Acadians

An Acadian fish drying station with a house and three settlers was located on the western side of McNabs Island in 1686 (Clark 1968:155). The same report notes the presence of 33 Mi'kmaq on the island. From the description we can assume this settlement was on Maugher Beach. Diereville (1933:74) noted an interesting description of the station on his visit to Chebucto:

...half as long and quite as wide as the Mall in Paris, built on a fine beach [Maugher Beach] along the River [Halifax Harbour], and at a distance which permitted the

water to pass under it at high tide and carry away the refuse of the cod.

Diereville reported the station as being abandoned in 1699, but that there were indians living on the island.

The Gargas Survey of Acadia in 1687 and 1688 identified the harbour at "Chibucto" as a site that had the potential to support a large settlement. Gargas also included a note that the islands in the harbour had fine soils for agriculture (Morse 1935:188).

Raddall (1966:4) notes the first recorded French missionary at Chebucto, Father Louis Peter Thury, worked among the Mi'kmaq and was possibly buried on Cornwallis Island (McNabs) in 1699. Father Thury, a Jesuit, petitioned the French government for permission to move to Acadia where he planned to collect the Mi'kmaq of the region in one large settlement between Shubenacadie and Chebucto. He received permission from the king and arrived on McNabs Island near the Huguenot fishing settlement in 1699 (Webster 1934:199). Local legend has it that he was killed by the fishermen on 3 June 1699 who then promptly abandoned the island and moved to Boston. The Mi'kmaq found his body and buried him on the island. Raddall recounts the fact that when Sieur de Diereville, a French botanist collecting specimens for the

royal gardens, visited Chebucto, he was taken to the grave site by three Mi'kmaq chiefs. The Nova Scotia Museum has recently identified the location of the grave.

France considered Chebucto Harbour an excellent site for settlement. DeLabat, a military engineer stationed at Port Royal, surveyed Chebucto Harbour in 1711. He reported the harbour capable of holding more than a thousand vessels between McNabs Island and the back of the basin (Harvey 1949b:8). The French Government investigated McNabs Island with the intention of establishing a fort and settlement to defend New France and the entrance to the St. Lawrence River. The proposal was to locate a fortified town on the western side of the island overlooking the fishing station on Maugher Beach. The main fortress was to be located on the mainland at a point opposite the island near the present site of York Redoubt, with supporting batteries on Lawlor Island, Maugher Beach and at Point Pleasant. However, in 1713 the mainland of Nova Scotia was ceded to England by the Treaty of Utrecht. France changed its focus to the building of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island, and Chebucto Harbour came into the English sphere of influence.

Early British

Louisbourg fell to the English in 1745, but the treaty of

Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 returned the Fortress of Louisbourg and Cape Breton Island to French control. The British Government required a military stronghold to offset the French power on Cape Breton, to allay the fears of the New England Colonies, and to protect claims to mainland Nova Scotia. Whitehall decided Chebucto Harbour offered the most advantages. Thus, in June of 1749, Colonel Edward Cornwallis and a British Fleet with 2,576 settlers arrived in Chebucto Harbour.

This settlement was to be very different from others of the era. Military strategy and considerations of empire would dictate the location and control of Halifax, not agriculture, fish, or furs. Halifax, the name chosen for the town, was to become a military post and administration centre for the colony of Nova Scotia, replacing the former English capital at Annapolis Royal. The key feature of the settlement was the excellent harbour. This harbour contained five major islands - McNabs, Lawlor, and Devils on the eastern side of the entrance, Melville in the Northwest Arm, and Georges Island in mid-harbour.

Land Ownership

The initial settlers of Halifax were mostly the dregs of the London Streets attracted by the offer of free land and

provisions. One of the first acts of Governor Cornwallis was a lottery to assign lots within the town to the settlers. The land granted to the settlers in the lottery did not include the harbour islands. Georges Island was needed for military purposes and Governor Cornwallis considered the other islands to be indefensible as they were located a fair distance from the town.

Georges Island was promptly cleared and fortified. Lawlor island was granted to Captain Bloss on 22 September 1750 (PANS MG100/184/32). Some settlers believed that Cornwallis planned to keep Scarborough Island for his own use. The foundation for this belief was the transfer of the island to his nephews in 1752, and the subsequent renaming of the island as Cornwallis Island (PANS MG100/184/32). His nephews would never set foot on the island. This decision was not popular with all the settlers. Martin (1957:91) cites a letter from a settler in Halifax to a Boston merchant:

...he [Cornwallis] gave to his family the very best island in the harbour of Chebucto, called Cornwallis Island, which in my opinion should be given in small farms to the many settlers of Halifax, instead of cooping them up on a small isthmus.

Joseph Peters, the port master of Nova Scotia, placed an advertisement in the Nova Scotia Gazette on 22 June 1773 offering ownership of Cornwallis Island for the price of £1000

sterling. This was a very high price at the time. Peter McNab, a native of the Breadalbane District of Perthshire County in Scotland arrived in Halifax in 1763 (PANS MG9/1). In 1782, Peter McNab bought the island from the Cornwallis estate for the one thousand pounds and paid an additional £313 to a tenant whose lease was terminated by the sale (PANS MC20/693/2a). This tie to the McNab family would last until the early 1930s when Ellen McNab, daughter of Peter McNab III, sold the last remaining McNab holdings shortly before her death (Kinsman 1995:11).

Peter McNab is a bit of an enigma. He is described in different sources as being a shoemaker (Jeffrey 1907:31), a Royal Navy Lieutenant on the staff of Cornwallis (PANS MG100/184/32), and a British Army veteran from the Revolutionary War (PANS MFM 806/12147).

Construction on the McNab homestead began in the spring of 1783 (PANS MG9/1). The actual location of the house is in question, but it is described as "a long low stone house" (PANS MC20/693/2a) at the southern end of the island (PANS MG9/1). Most researchers assume the house was on the drumlin north of where Fort McNab is today. Peter McNab was not a permanent resident of the island, although there were probably tenant farmers living on the island year round. He maintained

a winter home in Halifax and lived on the island during the summer months (PANS MC20/672). The island became known as McNabs Settlement and McNab Island shortly afterwards.

Seven years before his death on the island on 3 November 1799, Peter McNab transferred the island to his son Peter (Peter McNab II) in 1792 (PANS MC20/673/2a). Peter McNab I is buried in St. Paul's Cemetery in Halifax. His wife, Susannah, died on 7 May 1822 and is buried beside him.

In 1842 Peter II deeded a lot at the northern end of the island to his son, Peter McNab III. Peter McNab II died in 1847 and left his remaining share of the island to a second son, James.

James unsuccessfully attempted to sell his holdings in 1848. Peter McNab III attempted to sell his share of the island in 1849 by combining it with James' holdings (Novascotian 8 January 1849). When this attempt was unsuccessful, Peter McNab attempted to subdivide his holdings and sell it as one hundred lots in 1850. The vast majority of this land was not sold.

James McNab died on 16 October 1871, and was buried in Camp Hill Cemetery. His interest in the island was divided

among his three son-in-laws, Captain Westcote Lyttleton, Roderick Hugonin, and Robert Cassels (PANS MG9/1).

Robert Cassels was manager of the Bank of British North America in Mirimichi in 1838 when he met and married Mary McNab, the second daughter of James McNab (Christian Messenger 10 Aug 1838:3). He purchased two parcels of land totalling 364 acres on the eastern side of the island in partnership with Lyttleton (figure 7). Cassels bought out Lyttleton's share before Lyttleton moved to New Zealand. Allan Cassels bought his father's holdings on 25 November 1878.

Roderick Hugonin married Harriet, the youngest daughter of James McNab, in 1851, and acquired part of the Peter McNab II estate in 1852. In 1854 he acquired another parcel of land from James McNab, which gave him an area of 135 acres in the centre of the island. Hugonin built a large Georgian style house on his property. Hugonin returned to England in May of 1865. A notice in the Evening Express (19 May 1865:3) advertises the sale of his household effects at the Mason Hall.

Captain Westcote Whitechurch Lewis Lyttleton served with Her Majesty's 64th Regiment of Foot, and arrived in Halifax with the regiment in October of 1840 (Halifax Morning Post 29

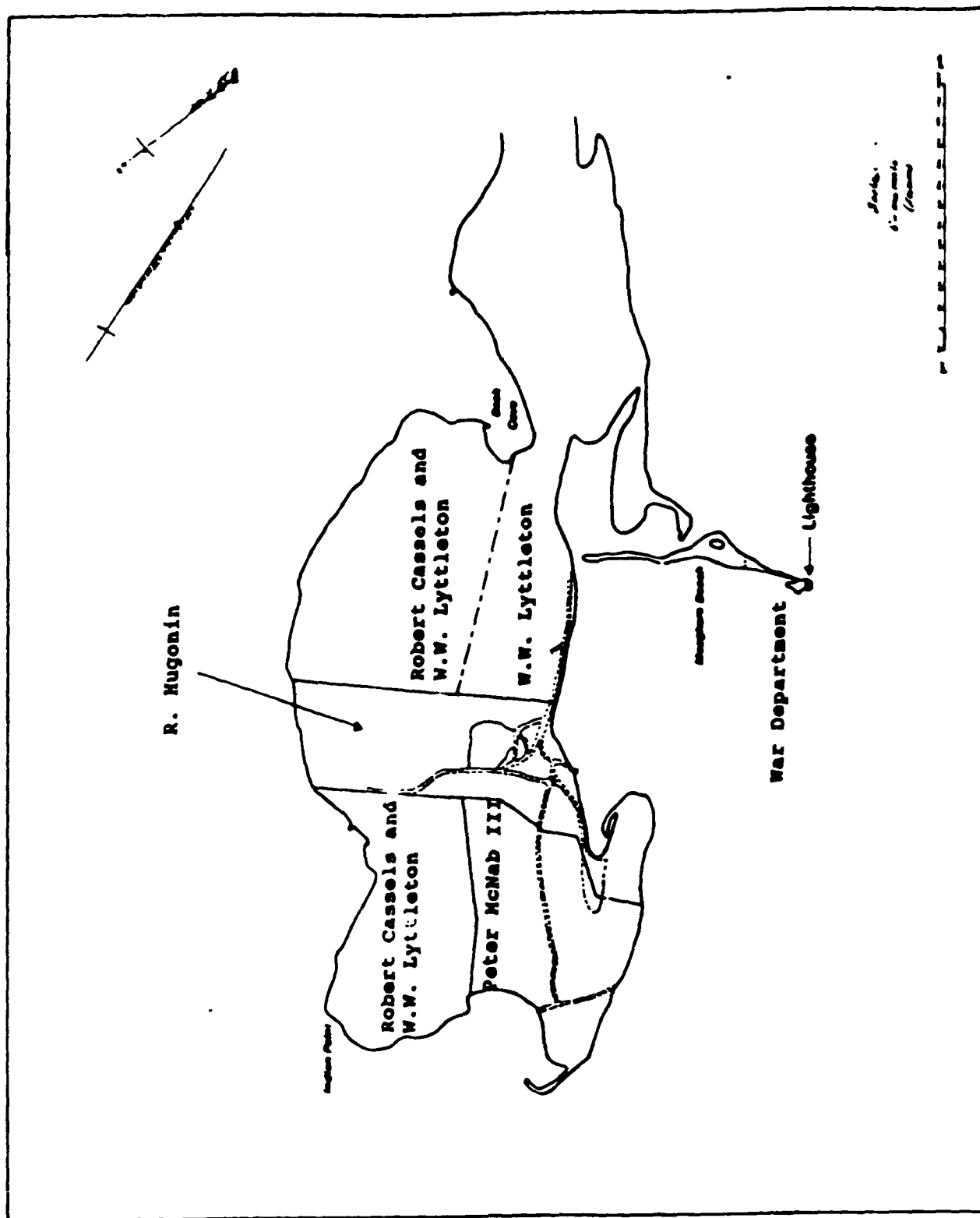


Figure 7
Land Ownership 1855 (PANS MG9/1)

Oct 1842). He was stationed in Halifax until 1843. While in Halifax, he met and married Joanna McNab, the eldest daughter of James McNab. When he retired from the military, he returned to Halifax to live. In 1855, he bought the southern end of the island, approximately three hundred acres, from James McNab and occupied the original McNab homestead on a seasonal basis.

Lyttleton sold his holdings to the British War Department in 1867 for £10,000 (PANS MG 9/1) and moved to New Zealand. This was probably in part because his house had been destroyed by fire in 1866, and then the fear of a cholera epidemic following the arrival of the SS England. A descendent of Lyttleton, G.B. Lancaster, wrote the novel Grand Parade in 1943, which was based on the story of the McNab family.

Peter McNab III died in 1856 and his widow started to sell the McNab holdings on the island in 1862. The first purchaser was the British War Department, which purchased the ten acres near Ives Cove. The remainder of the McNab estate, except for the homestead and three acres, was purchased by Lewis Kirby in 1872. Kirby subdivided the land into forty nine lots. Several of these properties were sold to private interests, and the remainder of the property on the western shore was purchased by the Imperial Government. Charles

Woolnough purchased lots from Charles Kirby, built a residence, and named his holdings Pictou House. Pictou House was destroyed by fire on 19 November 1905 (PANS MG4/106/22).

The remainder of the McNab homestead passed into the hands of the daughter of Peter McNab III, Ellen. She retained possession until 1931, when she sold her property to Jack Lynch, the light house keeper (Mail-Star 2 Oct 1934:3). Jack Lynch was the father of Nova Scotia carnival promoter, Bill Lynch. In 1931, Jack Lynch demolished the McNab house near Ives Point and built a modern two story dwelling (Evening Mail 7 July 1931).

The Hugonin property was offered for sale in 1869 (Halifax Daily Reporter and Times 5 July 1869:4). It appears that the property did not sell at this time, since in 1873 it was reoffered (Acadian Recorder 22 Aug 1873:3).

Frederick Perrin purchased the Hugonin house and some of the adjoining land in March of 1885. Later in the year he purchased the remaining Hugonin lands except for the four lots held by James Finlay. Perrin imported many exotic species of trees and shrubs that he planted on the grounds. Many of these plants still flourish on McNabs Island. The house burnt in a fire in 1948 and the estate was then bought by John

Lynch. These grounds became the site of the tea room in the early 1980s.

By the 1960s, the ownership of McNabs Island consisted of three sections. The Department of National Defence owned the southern end of the island; Parks Canada controlled the central section, including Maugher Beach; and the northern end of the island remained mainly in private hands. The largest private landowner was Bill Lynch, who retained the original Lynch Estate in conjunction with his sister, Gladys Conrad.

Gladys Conrad, the last permanent resident of the island, died in June of 1985. Her will specified the Lynch and Conrad estates were to be sold and the proceeds given to various charities (Daily News 7 Nov 1985). The province bought the Lynch and Conrad holdings.

The province bought twenty acres of privately held shorefront property in 1986, and the holdings of the Franklin-Hirschorn group in 1992 (Smith 1987:1). Now the province of Nova Scotia owns the northern half of the island except for a few private lots which will revert to the province on the death of the present owners. The federal government, primarily Parks Canada, controls the remainder of the island.

Lawlor Island remained in the hands of the same family from its original grant to Captain Bloss in 1750 until its purchase from the Lawlor family by the Imperial government in 1866. The island changed names when it was passed to a daughter and her husband, or when a widow remarried.

Population

The islands never supported a large permanent population. The census of 1752 shows twenty-nine residents on Cornwallis Island (McNabs) and four residents on Rouse Island (Lawlor) (Akins 1895:259).

In 1778, the population of Cornwallis Island totalled about fifty people. The brick yard was still operating at Green Hill (PANS MG100/184/32).

The Nova Scotia census of 1827 reports a population of 47 residents on McNabs Island and nine on Duggins (Lawlor) Island (Dunlop 1979:40).

Haliburton reported a population of nine persons on Lawlor Island and 55 on McNabs Island in 1829 (Haliburton 1829:33). Brian Kinsman (1995: 32-39) gives a biographical sketch of the various tenant farmers of McNabs Island in this era.

The population on McNabs Island was sixty three people in 1956 (Fergusson 1967:396). Lawlor Island has had no permanent residents since its purchase by the Imperial Government in 1866. By 1976, Gladys Conrad was the last permanent resident on McNabs Island (Halifax Mail Star 14 June 1976:21).

Agriculture

In the early years of Halifax, livestock was often the most prized possession of the settlers. There was constant fear that these animals could get lost in the wilderness or fall prey to wild animals. Cornwallis Island was used as a secure grazing area for the livestock of the Halifax settlers, but there were still problems, since at a council meeting on 27 December of 1749, mention is made of prisoners in jail for killing cattle on Cornwallis Island (PANS MG100/184/32).

There was a constant problem with agricultural production in Halifax. The thin soils on the peninsula had their fertility exhausted in a few growing seasons. Not one family in Halifax was earning a living from farming by 1762 (Clark 1968:357). Governor Cornwallis placed an excise tax on liquor to pay a bounty of one pound sterling per acre of cleared land in Halifax and the surrounding area (Clark 1968:357). This bounty probably led to the initial attempts to clear land on both McNabs and Lawlor Islands.

Attempts were made to clear both islands for agricultural purposes between 1750 and 1850. In 1787, a sometime general in the British Army, William Dyott, reported that twenty to thirty acres were cleared and fenced on McNabs Island (Jeffery 1907:31). An advertisement in the Royal Gazette in October of 1797 advertised the sale of the north end of the island with notice that one hundred acres were cleared. By 1829, there were one hundred and seventy-seven acres cleared and under cultivation (PANS MG100/184/32). The island produced grain, potatoes, and hay, and provided grazing for cattle, sheep and pigs (Haliburton 1829:33).

Several leases were granted on Cornwallis Island in the years following the British Settlement of Halifax. Richard Bulkely, former secretary to Governor Cornwallis, purchased a lease in 1766 and Peter McNab obtained one about the same time for a fishing station. A lease on Cornwallis Island was granted to Jacob Horn Sr. in 1773 (PANS MG100/184/32). Horn was a German officer who had served with Wolfe in Quebec. He built a log house at Ives Point on the site that Peter McNab II would later use. Jacob Horn used the island to grow produce and livestock for the government, but found the location inconvenient because of transport problems. The following year he returned his lease on the island to the

crown and took a grant in Eastern Passage.

There was a provision in the sale to Peter McNab in 1782 that the island be used to grow stock and potatoes for the use of the government (PANS MG100/184/32). Peter McNab used the island as a location to raise sheep from the early 1780s onward (Parks 1985:49). This was a common use for the offshore islands of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (Thurston 1990:16). The sheep were safe from predators and did not require fencing to control their range.

William Dyott, a regimental commander in the British Army and aide-de-camp to King George III, visited McNabs Island in 1787 and recorded the visit in his diary (Jeffrey 1907:31). He mentions the construction of a fence and questions its use in confining livestock. More probably, it was used to delineate the McNab homestead. Dyott also records the fact that a Scotsman was clearing the island using tenant farmers and mentions a fisherman living in the area called Wreck Cove today. Hewitt (PANS MG100/184/32) writes of labourers living on the island. These were probably the tenant farmers of Peter McNab or their employees.

Peter McNab II built his house on the northern end of the island. Like his father, Peter raised sheep on the island and

brought shepherds from Rosshire in Scotland as tenant farmers (PANS MG4/106:6). The sheep were raised primarily for wool, as evidenced by his obtaining rams noted for superior wool production (PANS MG4/106:3). The Assessment of 1793 (PANS MG100/184/32) tells that Peter McNab II had two horses, twelve cows, and two hundred sheep on the island. A letter titled "Dear Chelsea" (PANS MG20/673:2a) states that more than half of the island was used for grazing.

In 1829, a report of agricultural production on the islands showed that McNabs Island had 177 acres (71 ha) of cleared land, representing 18 per cent of the island's area, that produced 590 bushels of grain, 2530 bushels of potatoes, and 181 tons of hay, and provided grazing for 32 cattle, 550 sheep and 14 swine. Lawlor Island had nine acres (4 ha) cleared. It produced 10 bushels of grain, 200 bushels of potatoes, and 8 tons of hay, and provided grazing for 27 horses, 5 cattle, 6 sheep and 10 swine (Haliburton 1829:33).

An advertisement in the Novascotian (8 January 1849) when James and Peter attempted to sell their holdings gives a good, though possibly inflated, description of the island and its importance to agriculture:

That Beautiful Property known as **McNab's Island**, situated at the entrance of Halifax Harbour, containing about 1400 ACRES, of which 3 to 400 acres are under cultivation cuts

about 120 tons of the best Upland Hay, and will keep to advantage, from 1,000 to 1,500 Sheep, for which it is particularly well adapted. The Homestead [Peter McNab II residence], a comfortable Two Story House, contains five rooms, a Kitchen, and Pantry, on the first floor, six Rooms on the second floor, with a large frost proof Cellar under the whole; there are three large and commodious Barns with stabling for 15 to 20 head of Cattle, and room for 70 to 80 tons of Hay.

At the North end of the Island, there is an excellent Two Story Stone Dwelling House [Peter McNab III residence], with Four Rooms, Pantry, and Hall in the first floor, with Kitchen, Dairy, Wash-house and Out Houses attached. There is also a large Dwelling House [former Culliton house], in the South end of the Island, containing 8 rooms, with Cellars, &c. This building is partially out of repair, but, could be made comfortable at a small expense. There are various other small buildings on the island, occupied by the present tenants.

The advertisement also claimed that half of the island was covered in hardwood, mentions an abundance of fish in the waters along the shores, and that large quantities of ballast stone from the beaches were sold annually. James McNab promised a fair bargain and the inclusion of five hundred sheep with the package, but the island remained unsold.

R.E. Hardy, an engineer with the British Army, compiled a map (figures 8 & 9) that shows the extent of the land purchased by the War Department in 1865 (PANS REO/A.87). This map identifies several cleared areas in the vicinity of McNabs Cove, such as *Stone Wall Field*, *Brow Hill Field*, *Cabbage Garden Field*, *Little Island Field*, and *Cunningham Field* which attest to the important role of agriculture on the island.

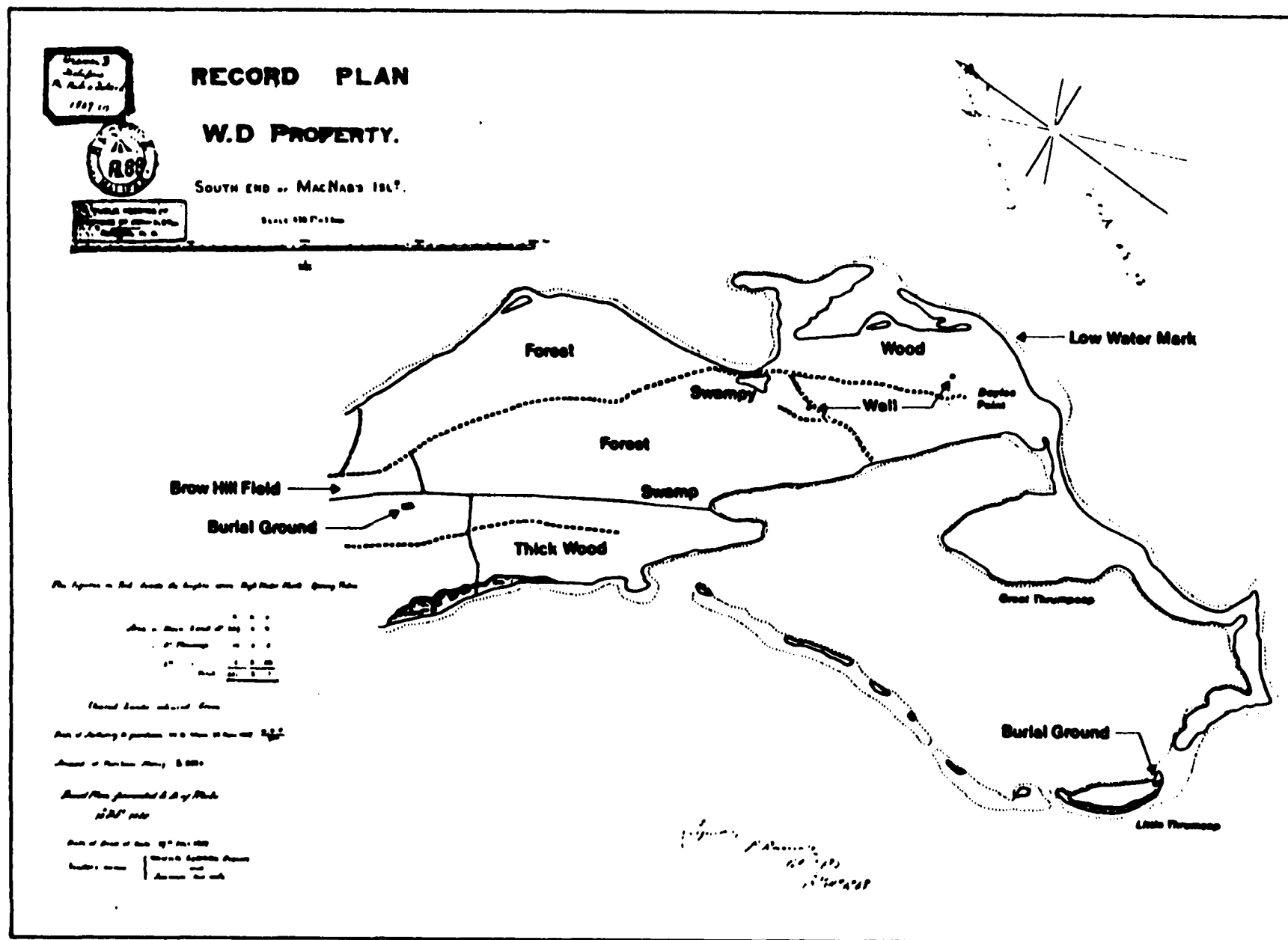


Figure 9

War Department Property 1869 (PANS REO A87)

Other Commercial Use

Seven days before Cornwallis transferred title of the island to the nephews, Richard Bulkeley, the secretary to Governor Cornwallis, placed a warning letter in the newspaper, Halifax Gazette (18 July 1752), advising against colonists cutting wood on Cornwallis Island. Colonists cut trees on the island and floated them up the harbour to the settlement.

At this time thirty two men and one woman were engaged in fishery operations on the islands. The principals were captains Cook, Rouse, and Maugher, as well as a Mr. Bradshaw (Akins 1895:259).

Cornwallis faced a multitude of problems in the first years of the settlement. Apart from the military considerations of Halifax, Cornwallis needed to make the colony more self sufficient. Cornwallis did locate a source of clay on McNabs Island. The drumlin now called Green Hill contained a large deposit of clay and a brick plant for the colony was built there. A military report in 1761 mentions Cornwallis island as a source of clay for making bricks (Piers 1947:79).

Joshua Mauger was one of the most colourful characters in the early history of Halifax. The story of Maugher and his

years in Halifax has been well documented by several writers (Hewitt 1901:1; Kernaghan 1988:1318; Moreira 1988). Mauger arrived in Halifax shortly after its founding and was promptly appointed Agent Victualler for the navy. Mauger applied for a water lot in 1750 and received permission to build wharves on McNabs Island (Hewitt 1901). The wharves were used to conduct a fish drying operation, a smuggling operation with the French in Louisbourg (Akins 1895:68), a base for his privateers (Raddall 1971:47), and a slave trading business (Halifax Gazette 30 May 1752:2). Mauger was eventually granted the five acres of land on McNabs Island that includes the beach now bearing his name on 20 July, 1752. The island was a perfect location for his operations, as Eastern Passage gave a hidden access to the back of the island. Mauger made use of it as he was able to bring ships in to the beach away from the prying eyes of the authorities in Halifax. He used smuggled molasses from the Dutch and French islands in his Halifax distillery (Moreira 1988:19). Mauger retired and returned to London in 1768, and passed control of his land and interests in Nova Scotia to his protege, John Butler, alias Dight (Sutherland 1987:98). Dight eventually returned the holdings on McNabs Island to the crown, because he felt it was too exposed to the elements for either agriculture or buildings.

On October 9, 1761, Alexander McNutt arrived at Halifax with more than three hundred Irish immigrants destined for his lands near Truro. The authorities thought it was too late in the season to start construction of a new settlement, so the immigrants were quartered for the winter on McNabs Island. There was a considerable business connection between Mauger and McNutt, and it is probable this is the reason for the Irish spending the winter near Mauger's holdings on McNabs Island (Chard 1966:527).

Peter McNab was not happy about paying an extra sum when he bought the island in 1782 as he felt the tenant had damaged the land by removing the best wood. McNab complained in a letter to Governor Cornwallis, but paid the additional sum (PANS MG4/106/2). Hewitt (PANS MG100/184/32) suggests this tenant was "a man named Murphy who operated the brick yard on Green Hill." However, the McNab letter to Cornwallis suggests the money was paid to Richard Bulkely who had been using his lease as a source of timber (PANS MG4/106/2):

...I can't but think sir that you'll agree with me, in concurring that Mr. Bulkely's conduct to have been very unjust in exacting from me the full sum he gave for the purchase of the lease 16 years ago, tho' he has during that time fulfilled not one condition of the lease...but has done the island a great deal of damage, by the wood sold from off it.

Near the end of the nineteenth century, A.J. Davis, a

Halifax meat packer, set up a distillery and bottling plant for soda pop near the Finlay House. Davis bottled a soft drink called *Pure McNab*, and built the house now known as the Conrad Estate. This bottling plant operated until 1915.

There was a resurgence in popularity on McNabs Island in the late 1930s and 1940s. Several cottages, small houses, a school, church, and bandstand were built in the area near Ives Point. Most of these were owned or rented by Matthew Lynch (Jacques Whitford 1991:4).

Military Use

McNabs Island has been an integral part of the Halifax fortifications since the Napoleonic wars and no history of island development is complete without consideration of these facilities. Harry Piers published The Evolution of the Halifax Fortress in 1947, which gives an excellent detailed overview of military construction and development on McNabs Island. Two Environment Canada: Parks Service documents, Halifax Defence Complex Management Plan (1985) and Fort McNab National Historic Park Boundary Delineation (1985) also give valuable background information.

The French attack on St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1762 worried the residents of Halifax and they started to look for

ways to improve their defences. The first military use of the islands was the establishment of a signal station on Thrum Cap in 1762 (Piers 1947:11). The government realized the strategic importance of the islands and stationed a major warship off McNabs island to protect the harbour mouth. On 21 July 1762 the military started to clear land on Ives Point to locate an artillery battery (Piers 1947:13). Work was suspended 10 days later because of a lack of available labour. When the threat of French attack passed, this cleared land was sold to the Halifax Quoits Club. From early 1780 to the 1820s, the military authority in Halifax maintained gibbets on the seaward side of Maugher Beach. These were used to display the bodies of executed military personnel, to discourage thoughts of mutiny or desertion. Tradition has it that Peter McNab and his tenants cut down the gibbets in early 1820 (PANS MG4/106/6).

A large mooring chain with anchors was laid off the northern end of McNabs Island in 1812. This chain was used to moor a ship which contained the military ammunition for Halifax. In 1814 construction started on a martello tower located on Maugher Beach. Construction halted because of funding problems and did not restart until 1826. This martello tower, named Sherbrooke Tower, was the first building in the Halifax area to be built with granite. The two-story

tower was eventually finished in 1828. The officers quarters for the tower were located on the landward end of the beach near the pier. On 1 April 1828 a lanthorn (lantern) was lit on top of the martello tower (Haliburton 1829:33). This was the first of the lighthouses on McNabs Island. Five months later Sherbrooke Tower was struck by lightning which damaged the top of the structure (Piers 1947:46).

The next move by the military came in 1865. The threat of attack during the period of the Fenian raids caused the military to reconsider the state of the port defences. Land on the northern end of the island was purchased from the Halifax Quoits Club and the widow of Peter McNab. A battery was sited to cross fire with both Fort Clarence (Point Pleasant Park) and York Redoubt. The fortification was named the Ives Point Battery after Benjamin Ives, the captain of the port (PANS MG100/184/32). This battery was completed in 1870. The fort was constructed of brick and included three barrack casemates (Piers 1947:53). In 1888, a new battery was added and parts of the brick fortifications were covered with concrete. Fort Ives was placed in reserve status at the end of the First World War.

Construction of Fort McNab on a drumlin near the south end of the island started in 1889 and represented a new style

of coastal defence. This was the first fort in Halifax to be armed with breech loading guns. Fort McNab would be the furthest seaward fortification of Halifax at that time, and was designed to command the entrance to Halifax Harbour. Fort McNab was constructed of concrete, and completed in 1894.

In 1899, another smaller fort was started on the shore between Ives Point and McNabs Cove. This was named Hugonin Battery. The armament consisted of a rapid firing battery which was located in a fort with concrete casemates that could cover the shore below York Redoubt. The battery had subterranean magazines and crew shelters.

In 1906 all fortifications in Halifax were turned over to the Canadian Department of Militia and Defence by the Imperial Government (Piers 1947:62). The Canadian Government also recognized the importance of the islands, and built a battery in Herring Cove to cover the sea approaches to McNabs Island. Each fort on the island has a clear line of sight to other fortifications of Halifax Harbour. Strawberry Battery was built north of Fort McNab in 1939 to replace the Hugonin Battery.

The military built two 800-yard rifle ranges on the south end of McNabs Island. Naval units from Shearwater used one,

while military units on the island used the other. The naval units landed at the pier in Wreck Cove and this pier became known as Range Pier.

Military installations and population remained on the island until the end of the Second World War. Fort McNab remained an active station until 1960. The island was the site of a military undersea listening post after World War II.

The navy moved the military detention barracks, built during World War II, from McNabs Island to Shearwater in July of 1947 (Chronicle 25 July 1947). The detention facility had been located on the hill overlooking McNabs Cove. The navy also maintained a fire-fighting school on McNabs until 1960. The facility was moved to Sandwich Point on the mainland.

Lawlor Island was never fortified, but during both World Wars naval artillery and army searchlight units maintained positions on the island. The navy started to use Lawlor island as a training ground for the fleet diving school in 1955 (Halifax Mail Star 5 Jan 1955). No new structures were added at this time.

Non-Military Government Use

Sherbrooke Tower was placed under the control of Dr.

Abraham Gesner for the month of December in 1852. Gesner used his new discovery, kerosene, to operate the lighthouse. This experiment was so successful that it is reported mariners veered off course to witness the spectacle (Sherwood 1979:162), and proved that kerosene gave a steadier light and was more reliable than previously-used oils in all types of weather.

A second lighthouse was built on McNabs island in 1903. It was built in line with the lighthouses on Maughers Beach and Chebucto Head. This light was manned until 1959 and was then converted to unwatched status. Jack Lynch was the lightkeeper at this location between 1905 and 1932. This lighthouse was replaced by navigation range towers in 1973 and at this time the original lighthouse and keeper's house were torn down (Pullen 1980:).

McNabs Island had its first school built in 1857. A teacher, William H. Grindley, had been assigned to the island in 1855. This building was used until its replacement with a new structure in 1940 (Fergusson 1967:395).

On 8 April 1866, the *SS England* was diverted to Halifax with 1202 Irish and German Immigrants on board and a crew of 100 (Evening Express 9 Apr 1866). There were 160 cases of

cholera among the passengers with 52 deaths by the time of the ship's arrival in Halifax the following day. The ship anchored off Maugher Beach and the healthy passengers were transferred to tents near the construction buildings at Ives Point Battery. The bodies brought from the *SS England* were buried at Ives Point. In order to ensure security for the residents of Halifax, the remaining passengers were moved to a facility at Green Hill. This section of the island was uninhabited and gave the military an opportunity to set up a patrol line from Wreck Cove so no one could leave the area. Buildings were constructed for the patients at Green Hill. Two hundred of the passengers died in the facility and were eventually buried on the island. These bodies were exhumed and burned when health officials ruled the contractor had not dug the graves deep enough (PANS MG100/84/32:19). There are reports that the island had first been used for a quarantine station in 1793 because of the fever raging in Philadelphia (The Mail-Star 24 Dec 1965). Dalhousie medical historian Dr. Ian Cameron has done a great deal of research on these events (Cameron 1985a, 1985b).

The Government in Halifax did not want a repeat of this episode and after searching the harbour decided to locate a permanent quarantine station on Lawlor Island in 1866. The buildings at Green Hill were dismantled and moved to the new

location. The decision to locate this hospital on the island created a storm of public controversy. Residents of Eastern Passage did not want a facility of this nature anywhere near their homes. The citizens of Halifax also felt that Lawlor Island was too close to the city of Halifax and pushed for an alternative location at Pennant (Evening Express 27 Apr 1866). An interesting battle was fought in the editorial sections of the local newspapers. The quarantine station was forgotten in the excitement of Confederation. This changed quickly when the *SS Franklyn* from Scandinavia arrived in Halifax Harbour on 6 November 1871 with cholera on board. Tenders were announced for the construction of several buildings for quarantine purposes in September (Halifax Daily Reporter and Times 13 Sept 1871). One month later construction began on Lawlor Island in earnest with the construction of three hospital buildings. These buildings were based on passenger class - first, second, and third class. The construction was completed in 1872 in time for the first burial when a smallpox victim from the *SS Peruvian* was buried on the island in April 1872. A new disinfecting building was added in 1893 and then the facility gradually fell into disrepair.

Requirements for a quarantine station arose again in January 1899 when the *SS Lake Superior* arrived with 2000 Doukabors, enroute to the Canadian prairies. The Doukabors

were led by Count Tolstoy, a son of Leo, the famous novelist. There was suspected smallpox among the passengers so they were put ashore on Lawlor Island. The island had spaces for only 1400 people and the government could not get contractors to either repair or build additional facilities. Eventually, the Doukabors built their own dormitories, a kitchen and bathhouse. The smallpox scare was unfounded and the Doukabors continued their trip to Montreal and the Canadian West in the spring. A water piping system was added in 1900 and in 1901 the island handled ten cases of smallpox.

The last use for Lawlor Island as a quarantine station was for smallpox in 1938. At that time, the facility was moved to a site in the north end of Halifax at Rockhead (Archibald 1968:35). The hospital became the site of an infectious disease facility maintained by the army during the Second World War.

Structures and Remnants

The McNab Cemetery lies on the grounds of Fort McNab (figure 10). This cemetery was used between 1808 and 1863 by the McNab family and their servants (PANS MG5/6/30). The graveyard has thirteen stones and nine wooden crosses. Most of the headstones had been damaged by vandals and were replaced by Parks Canada. At this time, a chain link fence

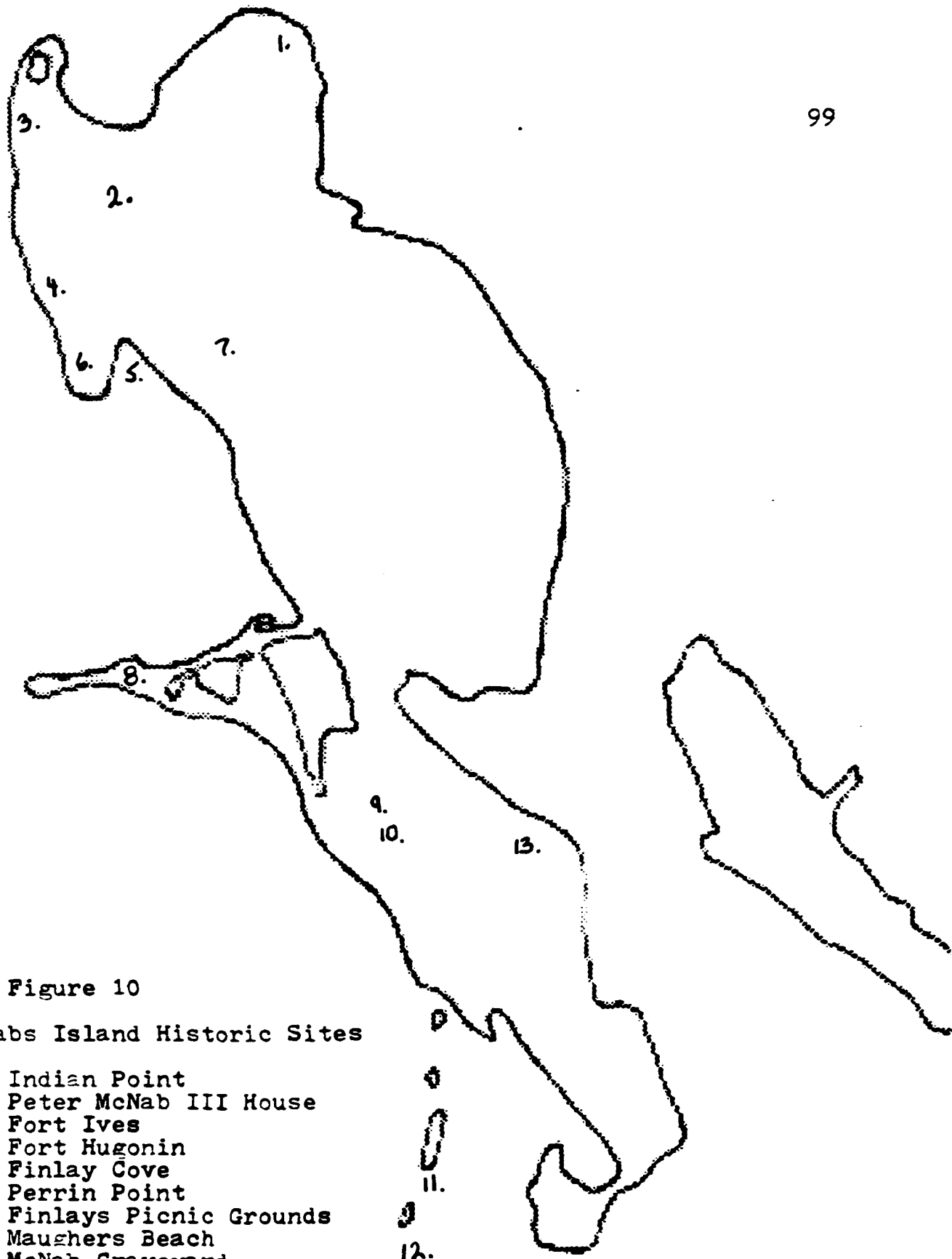


Figure 10

McNabs Island Historic Sites

1. Indian Point
2. Peter McNab III House
3. Fort Ives
4. Fort Hugonin
5. Finlay Cove
6. Perrin Point
7. Finlays Picnic Grounds
8. Maughers Beach
9. McNab Graveyard
10. Fort McNab
11. Little Thrumcap
12. La Tribune Shoal
13. Green Hill

surrounds the cemetery to prevent future damage to the headstones. Two other unmarked cemeteries are located on McNabs Island. A mass grave on Little Thrumcap has been mostly washed away by erosion, while the mass grave for cholera victims at Hugonin Point is covered by underbrush.

Fort McNab features a panoramic view of the entrances to Halifax Harbour. The structures within the fort include gun emplacements, range finding cells, an extensive underground magazine network, searchlight defences, and a radar post.

Severe deformation is taking place along the casement walls of Fort McNab. The building drains are clogged. Most of the roofs are in poor condition. Parks Canada (Environment Canada: Parks Canada 1991) mentions several threats to the fort. These include structural damage from the elements and vandals, a marine environment that is speeding the deterioration, vegetation encroaching on the structures, corrosion of the structural steel, and water build-up in the casemates. A series of interim protection projects began in 1991 in an effort to stabilize Fort McNab and Ives Point Battery, which is in much the same condition.

The Lynch and Conrad estates and their grounds are in good condition. The Department of Natural Resources stationed

a permanent warden on the island in 1992 to look after these two houses, maintain their grounds, and attempt to control vandalism on the island. This is the only provincial park in the province that has a full time caretaker assigned.

The lighthouse on Maugher Beach was converted to an unmanned station in early 1970. Transport Canada through Coast Guard Canada maintains the lighthouse and its associated buildings.

A key feature of the landscape in Wreck Cove is a number of disintegrating ship hulls. The last of these were beached here in 1958. Through the life of any major port, one area generally became a ship graveyard. Mostly it was an exposed beach or reef where the elements would finish off the hulks. Somehow, in Halifax, McNabs Island became the last resting ground for these unwanted vessels. The Harbour Master reported that no permission was ever granted to use the cove in this manner, but it happened. The last two ships beached in the cove were identified as belonging to the Dominion Coal Company Limited and had been used as coal tenders to the power generating facility on Water Street. Local residents complained these wrecks had become a hazard to navigation of Eastern Passage (Halifax Mail Star 11 Apr 1959).

Most of the other structures on the island are either in poor shape or in ruins (figure 10). The schoolhouse, built in 1940 (Fergusson 1967:395), is gone, but parts of the desk fittings are lying in the field near the building foundation. The remains of this school are on the northern end of the island near the site of the former village. Fort Hugonin was remodelled by the military for use as an undersea listening post and remains in good condition. Very little of the original fortifications are evident as the buildings were extensively changed by the military. The concrete pits and abutments of the rifle ranges are visible in the southern end of McNabs Island.

There are pit toilets and picnic tables at Wreck Cove and McNab Cove. Pit toilets are also located in the area of Fort McNab and Ives Battery. The wooden building on the Perrin Estate used for a tea room by John Jenkins in the 1980s is still standing, but requires extensive repairs. The Friends of McNabs Island Society (FOMIS) hopes to use part of this building as a museum to display their collection of island artifacts.

There are numerous other foundations and structure remnants on McNabs Island, ranging from wells and cisterns to building foundations and fuel tanks. The Department of

Natural Resources is burning the older wooden buildings that have no cultural or historical significance.

The military maintained a series of roads until 1992. The main north-south road from Ives Point to Wreck Cove (figure 2) is deteriorating through wash-outs and lack of regular maintenance. The remainder of the forty kilometres of roads and trails on the island are gradually growing in with the exception of the trails that are kept clear by the FOMIS.

The jetty in McNabs Cove is in good repair but requires a program of continuing maintenance. The piers on Lawlor Island and in Wreck Cove are in a state of disrepair and are unusable.

On Lawlor Island, no structures remain except for the water tower, the ruins of the wharf, and the small cemetery. The sites of the fever hospital and quarantine station can be identified by the foundation remains.

Chapter 6

RECREATION ON MCNABS AND LAWLOR ISLANDS

An additional important element of the cultural environment requires consideration on McNabs Island. The island has been a factor in the recreation and leisure patterns of Halifax since the founding of the city. Although little physical evidence of this use is apparent, this traditional land use requires consideration in the creation of a park.

Sport historians have recently started to concentrate on the relationship of sport and recreation to society, rather than to emphasize the individual sports, feats and participants. Two distinct schools of thought have emerged with respect to the history of recreation and leisure. The first is that the elite used recreation as an instrument of social control in an attempt to make the masses conform to their view of an ideal society (Muraskin 1976). This use of

recreation as an instrument of social control, such theorists often suggest, emerged during the early part of the nineteenth century in industrial societies. A second approach argues that the field of recreation was an area of contested terrain, involving class, gender and ethnic conflict. In many cases, the elite tried to force their beliefs on the lower orders of society in an attempt to relieve class tensions (Metcalf 1987), yet the working class turned to recreational activities in an attempt to reshape and improve their lives. Bryant argues "the right of access to recreational opportunity has become increasingly entrenched during the twentieth century, with both citizens and governments concerned with the provision of recreational facilities and opportunities (Bryant, Russwurm & McLellan 1982:125).

McNabs Island - The First Hundred Years

Recreation in Halifax has changed greatly over the years but has constantly been shaped in part by class. From the founding of Halifax to the mid-nineteenth century, recreation was an important aspect of life for the upper classes, but for the working class and the poor, recreation was essentially unstructured. Malcolmson (1973:59) wrote that Pre-Victorian recreation was normally a part of custom and tradition that left little physical evidence of its occupance. This is no exception on McNabs Island. The working class often

envisioned the outdoors as a place necessary to supplement their incomes through hunting, fishing and the gathering of firewood.

By the middle of the eighteenth century recreation activities tended to be characterized by violence and blood sports. Many were what we now refer to as field sports, such as hunting, fowling, and fishing. In Halifax, as in most British military settlements, the garrison had a major influence on the types of recreation (Lindsay 1970; Day 1989). In this era, military commissions were usually purchased. This ensured that most officers came from the upper classes, who brought their sports and recreation traditions with them. Although Halifax was founded for military reasons, there was little fear of physical attack. The officers used sports and recreation to maintain morale and relieve the boredom of a posting to Halifax (Lindsay 1970:33). The military officers provided leadership and administration for much of the leisure activities of the city. The editor of the newspaper, The Novascotian, commented they "had not been without an influence on the society of Halifax" (Novascotian 10 Aug 1831). Although there were staged events such as military concerts, horse racing, sleigh and snowshoe parties, cricket, curling, sailing regattas, and theatre, actual participation was often limited to the upper and middle class. The lower class used

alcohol and gambling as their primary source of recreation and often were spectators at these events where the attraction was betting on the outcome, not an interest in the event itself (Howell & Howell 1969:134). A letter to the editor of the Acadian Recorder on 20 December 1817 commented on the problem of widespread gambling in the city.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the elite started to distance their recreation from the lower class and develop recreational pursuits that encouraged a sense of refinement in manners, taste, and behaviour (Malcolmson 1973:163). The first recorded use of McNabs Island for structured recreation was in 1762. In that year, the French attacked the settlement in St. John's, Newfoundland. The military in Halifax sought to improve the defence of the city by clearing land at Ives Bluff on McNabs Island to build a new artillery battery. The danger passed quickly and construction was halted. A quoits club was organized by the residents of Halifax on the cleared land and operated for nearly one hundred years.

McNabs Island was a favoured destination for hunting parties, an activity that may have been recreation for the elite, but often was a necessity of life to the working classes. William Dyott, a sometime regimental commander in

the British Army and former aide-de-camp to George III (Jeffery 1907:30), records in his diary the excellent partridge hunting and fishing on the island in 1787 and gives his impression on the landscape of the island:

The island formed a small bay in this place. The surrounding wood, which covered the hills on every side of the bay, and a most beautiful small island...about a league distant from the bay, formed altogether a most beautiful prospect...I never spent a more pleasant day. There are frequent parties of this kind.

The conclusion of these events was often a supper prepared from the day's bag with the addition of lobsters, clams and other seafood gathered off the island (Jeffery 1907:31).

In 1789, Mary Roubalet opened a house of entertainment on McNabs Island that she called "The Mansion House" (Royal Gazette 22 June 1790:2). The notice thanks her customers for their patronage during the previous summer and announces that it is opening for the current year. This inn or tea garden is described as a place where ladies and gentlemen could enjoy tea, coffee and dinners during the summer of 1790. Akins (1895:98) believes it is possible that Roubalet was related to Peter McNab, the owner of the island, as he actively encouraged her endeavour. Reservations for and transportation to the inn could be arranged by leaving word at Peter McNab's

place of business in Halifax. This tea house was located south of the McNab homestead on the Culliton leasehold which suggests the Culliton family may have been employees of Peter McNab.

For many years the elite and middle class urban dwellers of Halifax have maintained a link to the outdoors through the use of summer homes. Indeed, as soon as the threat of French or Mi'kmaq attack was lifted, the more wealthy of the early settlers of Halifax built and maintained summer residences outside the boundaries of the township.

Peter McNab attempted to take advantage of this trend by selling the northern half of the island in 1797 as a location for safe summer homes for the elite of Halifax (Royal Gazette October 1797). This plan was unsuccessful. A possible reason for the failure was the location of the Mi'kmaq village on Indian Point. This may have been a source of concern for safety of the potential purchasers.

In 1828 visiting journalist John McGregor came to Halifax and published his observations in a book on the Maritime Colonies of Great Britain. His comments on Halifax society are worth repeating:

The state of society in Halifax is highly respectable;

and in proportion to the population, a much greater number of well-dressed and respectable-looking people are observed, than in a town of the same size in the United Kingdom...and may readily be accounted for, from there being few manufacturers, or few people out of employment, and the labouring classes living chiefly in the country. The officers of the Government, and of the Army and Navy, mix very generally with the merchants and gentlemen of the learned professions; and from this circumstance, the first class of society is more refined than might otherwise be expected. The style of living, the hours of entertainment, and the fashions are the same as in England.(as cited in MacMechan 1906a:111)

McGregor also comments on the forms of recreation, "The amusements of Halifax are such as are usual in the other towns in the North American Provinces; in all which, assemblies, pic-nics, amateur theatricals, riding, shooting, and fishing form the principal sources of pleasure." (MacMechan 1906a:112).

Severe economic problems arose in Halifax following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. During the war years, employment opportunities in Halifax attracted workers from all the Atlantic colonies as well as immigrants from Scotland and Ireland. The downturn in the economy created job loss and severe hardships for these labourers. Through this period the elite maintained their recreational lifestyle and McNabs Island was firmly established in their leisure and recreation patterns. Until this point, there is no mention of a working class presence on the island, except as tenant farmers. Access constraints limited use of the island to those with

boats. Sleighing excursions, snowshoe clubs, and tobogganing were also very popular in Halifax during this era for those who could afford the equipment. These recreations were peculiar to the colony because of the long winters and heavy snow falls. During periods when there was ice on the harbour, McNabs Island was a popular destination for the participants (Akins 1895:194). The hunting parties and the tea garden were leisure activities for the upper class. As well, the McNab family entertained frequently on the island at their estate. Attendance at a formal supper at the McNab Estate reflected one's position in Halifax society. The island became a favoured location for celebratory meals, such as the supper held to honour Samuel Cunard winning the Atlantic mail contract in 1838 (Payzant 1979:55).

James McNab was an ardent supporter of the Tory Party in the years leading to confederation, and Joseph Howe was a frequent guest. Howe eventually married Catherine Susan Ann McNab, the daughter of James, and continued to enjoy the serenity of the island. Howe "worshipped the fireflies and the moon...under the trees" on McNabs Island (Stupka 1973:22). A letter to the editor of the Novascotian in 1825 (13 July 1825:226) tells of fond recollections of a picnic on McNabs Island. The author, who signs himself as "The Wanderer", comments on the beauty of a sunset over Halifax viewed from

the boat returning him to the city, "While Nova Scotia can even in her wildest parts present such scenes, why need we envy fairer climes."

Local historians such as Phyllis Blakeley and John Quinpool have suggested that recreation and leisure were part of the realm of the elite with comments such as "The public generally was banned" (Blakeley 1947:404) and "Not ordinarily available to the public" (Quinpool 1936:83). Beverly Williams (1991:38) points out that factors such as "private grounds, admission charges, and closed memberships suggest that sport was never intended to be society's great equalizer." The elite in Halifax considered McNabs Island as their personal playground and did attempt to restrict its use by restricting access of the working class and the poor. These restrictions were reinforced in the courts. As late as 1843, charges were brought against two Mi'kmaq for taking birchbark from trees on the island. The natives were convicted and fined twenty shillings each (PANS RG34/312/J3).

The Victorian Era

Sport and recreation in Victorian England promoted social concepts of fair, but intense, rivalry and competition. Initially, games and sports were not organized for the bulk of the population during this era. A change in work patterns in

North America during the mid-nineteenth century led to a growth in recreational activities. For the working class, sports and recreation became an activity to fill leisure time rather than a diversion from stress and work.

The development of sports or organized games intensified in the latter half of the nineteenth century. An editorial in the Acadian Recorder (18 July 1857) suggested the general population needed access to recreational activity. Many of the organized sports were too expensive for the general population.

Social reformers in Nova Scotia promoted sports and recreation as an alternative to the extensive use of alcohol (Acadian Recorder 18 July 1857). These reformers often concentrated their emphasis on the physical condition of the urban poor as they believed the provision of recreation and sport helped to create stability in society. On the surface, the reformers promoted idealism and humanitarian aid, but a closer examination shows a group operating for their own benefit, even if an enlightened self interest, not in the interests of society (Fingard 1973:15).

Social control historians believe conflict is a basic tenet and that throughout history classes were not equal in

the division of resources and power. This creates a situation where the elite use their assets to maintain their position by manipulation or force. Muraskin (1976:561) argues "social control historians have been especially interested in the past use of nonviolent means for controlling the population - especially the use of apparently 'progressive,' 'humanitarian' reforms."

Picnics became a primary feature of family recreation for the masses in Victorian Halifax, and the reformers took advantage of these to put more emphasis on the physical condition of the lower class. A key feature of these mostly informal events was the physical activity. This is evident in the coverage given to physical activity and competition in the local newspapers of the period. Sports included a wide variety of track events and ball games. Most of the participation in these events was limited to the male population. Accepted sports for women in this era were often limited to skating and tennis. Almost every group and social organization held picnics. These organizations included the U.P.C. Sabbath School (Acadian Recorder 9 Aug 1873), the YMLA (Acadian Recorder 23 Aug 1891), and the Orange Lodge (Acadian Recorder 30 Aug 1873), the Cadets of Temperance (Acadian Recorder 22 Aug 1873), as well as various fire departments, militia companies and schools. Attendance varied from fifty

people to fifteen hundred, depending on the organization. All of these events featured physical activities as part of the program.

McNabs Island quickly became a popular location for these picnics. The island offered a wilderness setting that contrasted with the civilized trappings of the city and fit in well with the new romantic view of wilderness promoted by nineteenth century authors such as John Muir, Henry Thoreau, William Wordsworth, and John Audubon. The traditional use of the island by the elite also added to its appeal to the working class.

One of the first groups to organize an event on McNabs Island was the Mechanics' Institute in Dartmouth. They decided to hold a bazaar to raise funds for the construction of a new meeting hall in 1845. The picnic was held on 10 July 1845 and was attended by over 4000 people (Fergusson 1960). A military band provided music, and activities included quoits, balls and swings. Two ferries shuttled people back and forth to the island until the evening hours. The picnic raised £491 for the organization.

Martin (1957:287) described it as the social event of the year in Dartmouth. An editorial in the Halifax Times on 15

July 1845 commented:

...a larger proportion of the population left the city for the scene of enjoyment. then ever before since its existence, or for any object beyond its limit.

There can be little doubt that the trip to McNabs Island on Thursday, of so great a number of our citizens, will create a desire for future excursions to the same lovely spot, and that the hospitable owners of that noble domain will be often solicited for the use of their grounds for similar purposes, a favour which we feel certain will never be abused.

The same edition also noted the interesting point that the picnic was so popular, several prominent citizens could not secure passage to the island:

The Viscountess of Falkland, under whose patronage the Bazaar was held, and his excellency the lieutenant Governor, were at the Queen's Wharf about 4 o'clock for the purpose of embarking on board the Steamer for the island but were prevented by the rush from the Market Wharf of a large number of persons who were waiting there for a passage, and returned to Government House.

An article in the Dartmouth Patriot signed "Rambler" (6 July 1901) adds an interesting observation. The story tells how a bottle of spirits was secretly added to the lemonade that was served for the organizers, producing a strong mixture. These organizers included a number of church members and officers, superintendents of Sunday Schools, deacons, class leaders and others who were unfamiliar with the taste of alcohol. It was a hot day and large quantities of the lemonade were drunk and it was interesting to note the extent

to which these leaders "unbent" as a result of the refreshments.

The following year the Dartmouth Mechanics Institute attempted to repeat the success of 1845. On 28 July 1846 they held a second fund-raising picnic. This featured the activities of the previous year and added a display of zoological specimens belonging to Andrew Downs. This display consisted of both stuffed specimens and an assortment of caged birds (Fergusson 1947). The success of the picnic created problems for the organizers. More than 6000 people attended and there were many complaints about lack of sufficient food and drink. In 1847, the attendance dropped dramatically despite numerous posters advertising the event (PANS MG100/1/45).

These early picnics were held in the northern section of the island on the lands of Peter McNab III. Transportation was not a major problem since the Halifax Steam Boat Company had been offering excursions on their steamers, *Sir Charles Ogle* and *Boxer*, since 1829 (Payzant 1979:54). The addition of the ferry, *Micmac*, on 17 June 1844 (Payzant 1979:62) increased the availability of transport.

Newspaper reports of the picnics used terms such as

"serenity", "peacefulness", "lack of alcohol", and "pleasant surroundings" to describe these and other picnics on the island. This reinforced the belief of the reformers that this type of spectacle had a positive effect on society of the day. The idyllic view was reinforced in literature. James F.W. Johnston, a reader in chemistry and mineralogy at the University of Durham, visited Halifax in 1851 (MacMechan 1906b:204), and described a large picnic held by the Roman Catholic Schools on McNabs Island. Johnston commented:

I saw neither intoxication, nor disorder, nor rudeness, nor incivility anywhere. A little of the liveliness of the early French settlers probably clings to the modern Nova Scotian; but though there were many both Irish-born and of Irish descent among the crowd, there was no shade of disposition to an Irish row. (MacMechan 1906b:205)

It did not take long for the elite to consider that the working class enjoyment of picnics on the island infringed on their terrain. On 20 August 1857, for example, the Royal Halifax Yacht Club, now the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, hosted a picnic for its members on McNabs Island. The affair was hosted by Sir Houston and Lady Stewart. Forty craft brought the guests and they sat at a table fifty yards long for a formal meal complete with linen and fine silver (Harvey 1949a). Eventually, organizations such as the yacht club started to call their picnics hodge-podges in order to distinguish them from the common events (Evening Express 5 Aug 1874). Blakeley (1949:405) mentions the island as popular

location for lobster suppers in 1867.

The picnics were never held on Sundays. Prior to Confederation, the colonies followed the customs of the colonizing group. In Halifax, the Sabbath traditions of Britain were followed (Schrodt 1977:23). This effectively barred most of the working class from participation because of their limited available leisure time. Professionals, merchants and the military were the groups able to take advantage of these picnic opportunities. The efforts to control activities on the Sabbath continued well into the next century. A petition from the office of the Clerical Secretary of the Diocese of Nova Scotia in 1912 protested the decision to allow the ferry to make trips to McNabs Island with picnickers on Sundays (PANS RG5/38/83).

Entrepreneurs in Halifax saw an opportunity for profit in providing a location for picnics. Charles Woolnough, a native of England, arrived in Halifax following the Crimean War. He was involved in various restaurants in Halifax and from 1871 to 1895 he owned and managed the Pictou House Restaurant, an oyster bar on Salter Street (Kinsman 1995:48). Woolnough bought land from Charles Kirby and built a house on this property. He opened a commercial picnic grounds on August 25, 1869. These grounds were located about one half mile south of

Ives Point (Blakeley 1949:61), between McNab Cove and Ives Point. The grounds consisted of two large pavilions, one for dining and one for dancing. There were also fields for quoits and football as well as a series of walking trails. The dance floor was advertised as the largest in the colony (Acadian Recorder 9 July 1873).

The success of Woolnough's Grounds quickly made McNabs Island the most popular picnic destination in the region, supplanting Prince's Lodge, Woodside and Bedford. The island became such a favoured spot that in 1873, the ferries between Halifax and Dartmouth cancelled their service to Bedford and started a regular service to the island three days per week. The trips were twenty minutes in duration and operated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays (Acadian Recorder 5 Sept 1873). A third ferry, *The Henry Hoover*, was added to supplement the island runs by the Dartmouth Ferry *Micmac* and the steamer *Goliah* in 1874 (Evening Express 1 Aug 1874). Tickets on the ferry were 25 cents for adults and 12 cents for children (Acadian Recorder 5 Sept 1873). The picnic and excursion season ran from mid-June to the end of September (Evening Express 30 Sept 1874). The working classes could not easily take advantage of this opportunity as picnics became part of the recreational activities of the middle and upper classes. The working class was limited to attendance at the

staged events.

An advertisement to sell the Hugonin estate (Acadian Recorder 22 Aug 1873:3) attempted to take advantage of the growing popularity of the island as a picnic site:

McNabs Island: This favourite locality for summer excursions is likely to be adopted as the resort of persons wishing to remove their families from the dust and heat of the town during the hot weather...Go everybody and buy a lot on the Hugonin farm on Saturday.

From the wording of the advertisement, it is apparent the agent appears to be attempting to sell the farm in subdivided lots since he also advertises the availability of water lots for an extra charge. The agent is also announcing he will supply refreshments and a ferry for potential buyers.

James Findlay, the caretaker of the Hugonin estate, bought two of the lots in 1873 and another two in 1887 (Kinsman 1995:23). Findlay built a house on his lots and then developed a picnic grounds on this land as well in August of 1874 (Evening Express 8 Aug 1874). The Findlay Grounds were located at the head of McNabs Cove and operated until the start of World War I. Like Woolnough's facilities, Findlay's Picnic Grounds offered barbecue and picnic sites as well as sports facilities and a dance floor.

The Hugonin house and its immediate grounds were sold to a Mr. Ramsay, a hotelier from Halifax, who opened a hotel on the island the following year. He refurbished the house and grounds to provide facilities for private parties, picnics and croquet parties. The hotel was a seasonal operation and offered a setting for invalids requiring sea air and salt water, as well as hotel facilities for visitors to Halifax (Evening Express 24 June 1874). This building burnt down in the early 1930s.

McNabs Island has also been the location for picnics and receptions honouring visiting dignitaries. The special celebrations for dignitaries gave the state the opportunity to display its largesse. These picnics were open to the entire populace of Halifax regardless of "party, country, creed or colour" (Acadian Recorder 20 June 1887). Municipal officials in Halifax saw the opportunity to release some of the social pressures within the city and provide food for the poor of the city. This was the chance for the elite to show a humanitarian side, as organizers felt that a full stomach would generate a feeling of loyalty to the state. In old English tradition the lord of the manor had provided a feast to reward the workers for a job well done or to honour a special occasion (Malcolmson 1973:64); an opportunity to allow the working class to let off steam and forget inhibitions.

A reception and picnic in August of 1869 was held by the Highland Society of Canada to honour the visit of His Royal Highness, Prince Arthur. This event was attended by the elite of Halifax (Halifax Daily Reporter and Times 24 Aug 1869). Early in the morning large numbers of men and women sailed to the island on the ferry *Micmac*, to enjoy "manly exercises and gay festivities". The Regimental Band of the 78th Highlanders provided musical accompaniment for the crowd (Blakeley 1949:49). No mention is made of exactly who attended the event. It appears from the newspaper advertisements, that attendance was limited to members of the Highland Society and their guests. The upper classes were again exerting their control over access to the island.

In August of 1873 a major civic picnic was held to honour the visit of Earl and Lady Dufferin to Halifax (Acadian Recorder 11 Aug 1873). This event was held on the Woolnough Grounds and was attended by several thousand citizens. Comments were made that an event of this size could be held with no "...displays of ruffianism, vulgarity or obscenity..." (Acadian Recorder 11 Aug 1873). The only complaint in the press was the lack of space on the dance floor. Activities included entertainment by a military band, quoits, ball games, strolls, a dance and refreshments. The Canadian Illustrated News carried a full page illustration of the celebration on 30

August 1873.

The Halifax Natal Day Celebrations in June of 1874 included a picnic on the Woolnough Grounds sponsored by the Early Closing Association of Halifax. The picnic started at 10 AM and ferries ran all day between Halifax and McNabs Island. Woolnough announced the addition of a new circular swing imported from England. The organizing committee also advertised their intention of using special constables to prevent undesirables from attending the event. Their advertisement said this would be done to ensure there would be no repeat of the occurrences of the Governor General's picnic the previous year (Evening Express 11 June 1874). This report in the Evening Express does not agree with the story presented in the Acadian Recorder which had emphasized the good behaviour at the picnic. The Evening Express report questioned who would have the power to decide what people were undesirable. The newspaper felt the decision should be made by an impartial agency such as the police, not by the organizing committee. It is possible that the two newspapers disagreed on conduct at the events on philosophical grounds.

Woolnough attempted to increase the use of his grounds the same summer (1874) by offering a weekly dance called the Moon Hop. Woolnough lit his grounds and the roads leading to

it with torches. Ferries to the dance left Halifax at 7:30 and returned from the island at 10:30. Initially these dances were very successful, but attendance dwindled through the summer and the experiment was not continued the following year (Evening Express 1 July 1874). The newspaper suggests the problem was the rowdiness of the lower class of people that started to attend the dances. Mention is also made of the drunkenness and scenes created by lower class women. This may be the first evidence of the lower classes rebelling against the control practices of the elite on the island. Newspaper reaction may show evidence of the resentment of the elite against the intrusion of the working poor into their recreational environment.

The same year, Woolnough made extensive renovations to his grounds with the addition of a second playing field for football and the importation of a circular swing from England. At the same time, he approached the hotel keepers of Halifax asking them to advise visitors to the area of the entertainment he offered on McNabs Island (Evening Express 8 June 1874).

1874 appears to be the peak year for picnics on McNabs Island. By the end of the season, however, the island was falling into disrepute. Newspapers report rowdiness and

drunkenness at events and the need for adequate policing on the island. Although picnics would still be an important function on the island, they would not again reach the popularity they held in 1874. In the years following this, advertisements for picnics organized by social groups disappeared from the newspapers. It would appear that picnics on McNabs Island became more of a family outing rather than an organized event. Following the failure of picnics as instruments of attempted social control, the elite reclaimed the island. Access was limited again to those who owned boats or had the available leisure time to use the limited ferry schedule. However, some events continued to be held on the island. The Halifax Natal Day picnics continued to function on the island until at least 1878. A diary entry for that year mentions the picnic on the island (PANS MG1/315). The changes allowing better access to the Halifax Public Gardens may have been a factor as well.

Although little mention is made of group picnics on the islands in the closing decades of the century, an article in the Evening Mail (Carnival Number; August 1880) mentions that Lawlor Island is a favoured spot for watching the rollers breaking on shore and McNabs island as a favoured spot for family picnics. James Finlay added carnival games and a steam-powered carousel in the 1890s. His position was

solidified when the military built a new pier at Maugher Beach in 1895 (Kinsman 1995:52).

The Acadian Recorder of 31 August 1882 carried a notice for a promenade concert on the Hugonin House Grounds. The event would include a band from 1st Garrison Artillery, quoits, croquet and swings. On the previous day, the Princess Louise Fusiliers had enjoyed dancing in the pavilion, games, and athletic sports.

The Princess Louise Fusiliers enjoyed a most beautiful day for their picnic at McNabs Island yesterday. The whole regiment went down, with hundreds of friends, and with games, dancing in the pavilion and athletic sports...a very pleasant day was spent. The shades of evening increased the hilarity, and as the "sentinel stars eat their watch in the sky" fresh reinforcements arrived and Woolnough's Grounds were a scene of enthusiastic enjoyment until 11 o'clock, when the last boat sailed for home with a crowd of passengers who will remember pleasantly the 66th picnic of 1882.

The Young Men's Literary Association held a picnic in 1891 that attracted 1500 people for sports and races (Acadian Recorder 23 June 1891). The popularity of McNabs prompted an editorial in the same edition:

...of late years, McNabs Island has monopolized nearly all our large picnics. Woodside, which was formally the favoured resort, is now almost forgotten as a picnic ground.

This statement disagrees with evidence in the newspapers. Large picnics no longer appear to be an important event in the

social life of Halifax.

The Woolnough Pleasure Grounds and McNabs Island began to decline in popularity by the turn of the century. The competition between Woolnough and Findlay divided the potential. Findlay purchased additional land from the Hugonin estate and in the early 1890s added carnival games and a steam powered merry-go-round. The opening of a new pier, Garrison pier, on the eastern side of the island cut further into Woolnough's business as the pier offered easy access to Findlay's Pleasure Grounds. Even with the decline of the Woolnough Grounds, McNabs Island remained a popular recreation site for local residents. Martin (1957:505) relates

McNab's island was another Sunday mecca for bathers and for beer drinkers. There were plenty of suitable spots for private picnics and beaching of row boats, and plenty of ale for five cents a pint at the forts in the years up to 1905 when the Imperial regiments were garrisoned at Halifax. The annual Sunday School picnic to Findlay's Grounds "on the island" was the one event in the lives of most youngsters to which they looked forward from one summer to the next. The march from the church, the band, the boat-trip, the Maughers Beach lighthouse, the rural surroundings, the smell of spruce, the creaking of swings, the welcome odour of dinner cooking, the cramming of food, the foot-races, the whir of the wheel of fortune, the staccato tones of the agile young man calling figures through strains of Buchanan's orchestra on the dance floor.

Post World War I

Recreation patterns had started to change during the Victorian Era. The working class had resisted the imposition of recreation practises from above and instead attempted to use recreation as a way to improve their lives. Colin Howell (1995) used the example of working class participation in baseball to demonstrate this change. However, this new interest in mass participation in recreation did not spread to McNabs Island. Geographic constraints still restricted mass use of the island.

Woolnough returned to England when the British garrison was withdrawn from Halifax in 1906. His property was sold and operated as Redmonds Pleasure Grounds for several years (Kinsman 1995:53). At some point Findlay acquired these interests and operated them until 1915 when restrictions caused by the onset of World War I put an end to many of these activities on McNabs Island. The Findlay Grounds reopened following the war and had a brief resurgence in popularity. The island for a short time did regain its status as a site for picnics honouring special occasions. However, these picnics were no longer sponsored by social clubs or organisations. Instead, they were commercial events organized by the pleasure grounds. Dominion Day celebrations were one such example, and included events such as a merry-go-round,

shooting gallery, baseball games, and dance contests (The Evening Mail 30 June 1921:18).

This did not last long and the grounds were purchased by Bill Lynch. In 1925, Lynch removed the rides and games from the island and established the touring company which remains one of the largest touring carnivals in Atlantic Canada. Picnics on the island remained popular for residents of Eastern Passage and Woodside in Dartmouth, but the islands were out of bounds to most people. The Halifax Ferry Commission does mention that it ran picnic excursions to McNabs island in 1948 (Payzant 1979:180).

After World War II, the general public had either forgotten the island as a site for recreational activities or were excluded because of their lack of access. Most people in Halifax have never visited the island. The island remained a favourite party location for the yacht clubs and people who had access to boats, in short, the elite of Halifax. The announcement by Franklin Hirschorn of plans to create a satellite community that encompassed both McNabs and Lawlor Islands brought them back to the public interest. It quickly came to light that the islands had been part of the recreation scene in the harbour all the time. The islands have quietly reverted to a playground and party site for local residents

who had access to boats.

McNabs Islands became part of the municipal planning strategies during the 1970's and 1980's. These various plans identified the recreation potential for the islands, but differed in the degree of recreational development that they thought should be allowed. During this period, public use of the islands started to increase. Access was still a problem, but many groups found ways to reach the islands. The Boy Scouts started to use McNabs as a site for camping trips and district events in the early 1970's. Again popularity was a problem. The district events sponsored from Dartmouth and CFB Shearwater attracted upwards of four hundred people and became too difficult to control. An orienteering course was laid out covering the island in 1972. The various government proposals for the islands, including the creation of a Coney Island style amusement park, kept the site in the public imagination. At one point in the 1970's, the provincial government used volunteer labour from the Sackville Correction Centre to build picnic tables and pit toilets on the island. This, considering there was no easy public access to the island, makes one question exactly who these improvements were made to serve. The tables were used as a source of firewood for beach picnics, and the pit toilets were destroyed as well by vandals.

In the 1980's, a Halifax entrepreneur, John Jenkins, capitalized on the demand for access and started a regular seasonal ferry service to the island. This service was successful and attracted over five thousand paying fares in its first year. The second year the service attracted more than eight thousand and public services on the island were improved (Aikenhead 1984:19). Pit toilets, picnic tables, and a tea room on the old Hugonin farm site were added in 1984 (Daily News 7 Nov 1985). A larger boat was used and a second company offered Saturday and Sunday trips to McNabs Island. These services grew until 1989. For the first time in a century, McNabs Island had become a favourite public picnic spot again. Residents of Halifax and Dartmouth began to realize the value of this pocket wilderness in their harbour. In 1989 the Department of National Defence declared their property on the island surplus. In order to prevent possible liability from injuries, the wharf in McNab Cove was disabled by the removal of boarding ladders and bollards. The tea house was closed in the same year. The docking problem effectively ended the regular boat service to the island, although some charter companies still offer limited service to the island. The Department of Natural Resources finally stationed a warden on the island in 1992 to prevent further incidents of vandalism.

Control of access to McNabs Island is no longer an easy operation. The government must now use regulation to control island activities. The increasing affluence of the lower and middle classes is reflected in the increasing popularity of recreational toys such as all terrain vehicles and boats. Five yacht clubs operate in Halifax Harbour. Pleasure boaters make the harbour a busy place for five months of the year.

The Halifax Field Naturalists and the Friends of McNabs Society now offer guided tours several times a year. Further information on the Friends of McNabs Island Society is given in Chapter 7. The membership of these groups is not working class, but is mostly a mix of boat owners and well educated environmentalists. The Friends of McNabs Society also provides volunteer services on the island. These services include beach clean-ups, guided historical and nature tours, trail maintenance, and garbage pick-ups during the summer months, and organized lectures at the Nova Scotia Museum during the winter months (McCarthy 1994). The group also organizes family picnics and camp-outs during the summer months. The island is slowly regaining its popularity as a location for family outings.

The public in Halifax is still touchy about perceived elitist slants to park policy. In 1960, Abol Zial, the

Director of Recreation for the City of Halifax, announced a plan to add fountains and gardens to Point Pleasant Park. This created an outcry that was fought in the editorial pages of the Halifax newspapers. Zial believed that parks must change with the times. He felt that a park would only continue to function and draw public attendance if it grew to meet changing preferences (Mail-Star 23 Feb 1960). The public took the stand that the creation of a second Public Gardens in the Point Pleasant Park would add to the image of the park as a special preserve for the residents of the city's south end (Mail-Star 26 Feb 1960).

Chapter 7

RECENT AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Since 1960, new importance has been placed on both recreation and conservation. This has created conflict between the two competing land uses. However, many recreation activities are compatible with protection of the natural environment. Development proposals for McNabs and Lawlor Islands have been a source of discussions and controversy since 1960. The federal, provincial and municipal governments have had differing views on an acceptable plan of development. Public pressure and input on potential development is also becoming a factor in these proposals. Plans to create a park on McNabs Island give valuable insight as to how the recreation versus conservation conflict has affected planning decisions.

Development Proposals

Commercial or industrial development on McNabs or Lawlor Island does not appear to be an option at first consideration, yet there have been numerous such proposals since 1960. In

early 1960, Franklin-Hirschorn, a real estate development company, revealed plans to create up to 2500 single family dwellings on the island. They announced that they had bought nearly all the private holdings available on the island and were negotiating with Ottawa to buy any and all excess federal lands on both McNabs and Lawlor Islands. Their proposal was to create a model community, making use of both McNabs and Lawlor Islands. In addition to the housing, Franklin-Hirschorn envisioned locating small-scale industry on the deep water edges of the island, a large shopping centre and a professional centre. The company planned to build sixty-six foot wide causeways to Lawlor and then to McNabs. Lawlor Island would have a hotel and an eighteen hole golf course (Halifax Mail Star 12 Feb 1960).

The province of Nova Scotia stopped the project by arranging to have first option on federal lands on both islands as they became available. The province wanted to control development that would occur on the island and felt that proper consideration was not given to its future use and impact on the fishing village of Eastern Passage (Halifax Mail Star 23 Feb 1960). The Town of Dartmouth also offered strong objections to the proposal. Mayor I.W. Akerley of Dartmouth wished to emphasize industrial growth in the north end of Dartmouth and voiced concerns that the Dartmouth water supply

could not handle the increased demand of the Hirschorn development (Dartmouth Free Press 18 Feb 1960). Public pressure created many of the objections to the plan. Groups ranging from local yacht clubs, the Nova Scotia Museum, the biology departments of both Saint Mary's and Dalhousie Universities, and the Nova Scotia Bird Society clearly show which elements of society were interested in preserving the islands. The Franklin-Hirschorn owned lands became a problem in the creation of an island park until they were purchased by the provincial government in 1992. These were the private lands that the federal government wanted the province to obtain before a land transfer could be negotiated.

H.S. Coblentz produced the Halifax Region Housing Survey in 1963. The survey was commissioned in 1960 and jointly funded by federal, provincial, and municipal governments. It was in fact an advisory regional plan, despite its title. A technical background report for this survey by Professor H. Cameron (1963) recommended development assessment based on bedrock and structural geology. Housing was only one element considered among many aspects of development. This was the first attempt in Nova Scotia at an integrated regional development plan, with attention paid to all aspects of development.

The Coblentz survey recommended development of most of McNabs and Lawlor Islands. The area was viewed as suitable for the economic development of a planned community, based on the bedrock and Pleistocene geology. The glacial till covering the islands would reduce the need for blasting of bedrock, and thus reduce development costs. Similar arguments for development were applied to the Cole Harbour area, Eastern Passage, and the Lower Sackville area. The report did suggest an area for recreation on the northern end of McNabs Island in the area near Ives Point. The remainder of McNabs and all of Lawlor Island would receive its optimum use as a satellite residential community. In many ways, the Coblentz Survey followed the suggestions of the Franklin-Hirschorn proposal, except for the designation of recreation lands on the islands.

The Coblentz Survey was followed by another planning proposal in 1964. Project Planning Associates, on behalf of the Planning Board of the County of Halifax, released The Official Town Plan in August. This report suggested the north end of McNabs Island should be considered for industrial development, while the south end should be left as open green space. They recommended that Lawlor Island be retained in a natural state.

The proposals put forward by both of these reports met

with disapproval in Dartmouth and Halifax County. A newspaper article in 1965 suggested the harbour islands should be used to create a regional park (Mail-Star 15 May 1965:1). The proposal came from Dartmouth Mayor Joe Zatzman and Halifax County Warden, Ira Settle. They both urged public-controlled development and expressed fears of private development proposals. The Dartmouth City Council felt the regional park offered better tourism and recreation potential than their own plans to develop a park on Lake Charles. The Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Authority entered into negotiations with Ottawa in order to gain control of the islands. In December, the Regional Authority suggested an island park that would include tenting facilities, a golf course, and an amusement park (Mail-Star 10 Dec 1965:1). Their suggestion included a bridge to Lawlor Island and a causeway to McNabs Island. Funding was the principal concern. The provincial and federal governments were not prepared to help with funding for the construction of the bridge or causeway. The chairman of the Regional Authority, Laurie Granfield, felt the creation of a park was the best use for the islands. He argued that if the land was required at a later date for industrial growth, it could be easily rezoned, but if it was developed for industrial use at this time, the park potential was lost forever. Dartmouth Alderman Eileen Stubbs also argued for non-industrial use of the islands. She felt there were ample

sites suitable for industrial development in Dartmouth and at Africville in Halifax. These two locations both had access to deep water docking and would not require expensive rail construction. She also felt that Halifax and Dartmouth required increased camping and recreation facilities to attract tourists. The local newspaper, The Dartmouth Free Press (6 Jan 1966:4), argued the pro-development stance taken by the Halifax newspapers and suggested the privately-held lands on McNabs Island be zoned for tourism development such as motels and restaurants.

The Regional Authority held a public meeting in early 1967 to allow public debate over the future of the islands (The Mail-Star 17 Jan 1967:1). The authority recommended industrial development on the northern end of McNabs Island. The remainder of the island and Lawlor Island would be used for recreation purposes. The Hirschorn interests and a lawyer representing an unnamed oil company which was considering locating an oil refinery on McNabs Island argued for industrial use on the island. The park proponents were strongly represented by the Federal Resources Minister, Arthur Laing; the biology departments of Dalhousie and Saint Mary's University; NS Heritage Trust; Nova Scotia Bird Society; local yachting clubs and sailing associations, and several other public interest groups. The stance taken by Ottawa was to

allow only low impact development and this seemed to seal the fate of future industrial development on the islands.

The Halifax-Dartmouth and County Regional Planning Commission presented a report later in 1967 with consideration given to McNabs and Lawlor Island. The commission felt that McNabs and Lawlor were unsuited for residential or commercial development because of the cost factor in providing services. The commission suggested four possible future options for the island, all with their projected use as recreation sites (Halifax Mail Star 21 Dec 1967). The first option was to limit access to the islands and allow low impact development such as picnic sites, trails and a possible marina on McNabs Island. The second option included improving the military causeway to Lawlor Island and adding a foot bridge from Lawlor to McNabs. A camp and trailer park would be built on Lawlor. The third option allowed for more development, including a nine hole golf course on McNabs Island, the restoration of Fort McNab, creation of play ground areas on McNabs and the addition of scenic drives and look offs on Lawlor Island. Access would be provided by the causeway to Lawlor Island and a footbridge to McNabs Island. The fourth option involved extending a causeway from Lawlor to McNabs. This option also suggested the possibility of intensive recreational development on McNabs Island including a midway, aquarium, and

a home for the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. Some industrial development would also be permitted on the islands.

The federal government announced in 1968 they were prepared to lease the islands to the Regional Authority for park development. The DND lands on McNabs were exempted from the proposed lease and another provision stipulated the province must acquire all private holdings on the islands before a lease would be considered (Dartmouth Free Press 23 May 1968:2).

The Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Authority announced a new two-phase plan to develop McNabs and Lawlor Islands as a recreation site in 1970 (Dartmouth Free Press 22 Oct 1970:1). In phase one, ferry service would be started to the islands from both Point Pleasant Park and Eastern Passage. Eating and sanitary facilities would be developed and recreational boating would be offered. Phase two would include building a campground on Lawlor Island, a golf course near Green Hill on McNabs Island, a marina in Ives Cove, restaurants, and an outdoor swimming pool near Maugher Beach. The plan saw McNabs Island developed as a day use facility with overnight accommodations developed on Lawlor Island. The plan also proposed a miniature railway that would follow the shoreline of McNabs Island, a youth activity area on Big Thrumcap,

paddle boats in the lagoon, and the construction of a natural aquarium. The proposal also suggested that private land holdings should be rezoned to park and institutional from industrial. The proposal recommended that these facilities be developed with private funding and suggested phase one should be completed in two years.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) of Halifax County prepared a development report on recreation, Growth Through Recreation, in 1971. This report acknowledged the new research that suggested recreation was an important asset to any urban area, both on the economic and social levels (as an example, Clawson 1972a). The MAPC report suggested the need for open spaces from three levels - metropolitan, community and individual. On the metropolitan level, open spaces contribute to the social structure and provide flexibility for future demand. At the community level, open spaces give an impression of life and growth and provide locations for activities that are either organized or spontaneous. For the individual, open spaces provide an opportunity for solitude and privacy as well as venues for physical activity and socializing (MAPC 1971).

The MAPC report (1971) listed four objectives for open spaces. The first was to maintain and protect areas that are

unique and have value to the local area. The second was to maintain and protect areas that are not suited to other types of urban development. The third objective was to develop and maintain areas that have a high capability for outdoor recreation activities. The fourth objective was to optimize the use of available space in the metropolitan area (MAPC 1971).

This MAPC report (1971) included McNabs Island as a potential regional park location in its report. The committee suggested several developments or upgrading stages would be required to open McNabs to the public. The suggestions in the report included an improved regular ferry service from both Halifax and Dartmouth. MAPC members also felt that a marina with boat and bicycle rentals could be located at the head of McNabs Cove. Changing houses and public washrooms should be located on Maugher Beach. The forts at Ives Point and the original martello tower on Maugher Beach would be restored, as would Fort McNab. A trail would be constructed from Ives Point to Back Cove (Wreck Cove) through Indian Point. This trail would feature wildlife observation points, interpretative locations and a possible zoo. The open spaces around the naval rifle range on Green Hill would be cleared and become an area for picnics and informal recreation. The tops of the drumlins on the northern end of the island would

be reserved for low impact recreation such as picnicking and hiking trails (MAPC 1971).

The Province of Nova Scotia created a new Ministry of Recreation in 1973. The first minister, A. Garnet Brown, announced in July the first special project of his department would be the creation of a metropolitan park on McNabs and Lawlor Islands (Dartmouth Free Press 18 July 1973:5). He stated that the islands were more versatile for recreation than Central Park in New York or Stanley Park in Vancouver and that agreement in principle had been reached with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to use the islands for recreation. The proposal called for six hundred acres to be kept in their natural state and the other six hundred studied for the best possible use.

The spectre of industrialization again came to light in 1975. A Dutch consortium began negotiations with the province to build a repair yard to handle maintenance on container ships (Dartmouth Free Press 16 Apr 1975). The proposal was turned down by the province because of the large amount of funding required. The newspaper reported the discussions were kept secret because of the fear of protest from local ecologists. The newspaper also asked why the province would even consider a new ship repair facility when there were

constant financial problems with the Halifax Shipyards.

Dispute over development control on the island started to become a major point of contention. In September, the province stated it controlled the islands and planned to use them for recreation, light industry and a sewage treatment facility (Dartmouth Free Press 17 Sept 1975). In the same article, the provincial minister of Tourism and the Environment, Glen Bagnell, suggested the islands would be a good site to locate the new sanitary landfill as well. The province applied for permission to build a floating bridge and causeway to the islands but was turned down by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. The federal government maintained their stance of 1967 to veto all but low-impact development on the island.

The Proposed Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Development Plan was released by MAPC in 1973 (MAPC 1975) and approved by the Department of Municipal Affairs in 1975). This development plan for the region included seven regional parks in its proposals. The plan suggested these seven areas had "...high recreation values as well as environmental values," and further recommended limiting land use within these areas to recreation uses, forestry and related uses, agriculture, schools, and public buildings, marinas, campgrounds and similar public and recreational uses, except where these

uses would destroy the natural processes of the area or surrounding water bodies. (MAPC 1975:)

MAPC acknowledged its regional parks concept in the 1975 regional development plan required more planning. A parks advisory group was approved in 1976 to carry out additional studies on regional parks and report back to MAPC. The mandate of the parks advisory group included conceptual park development plans, park boundaries, and costing estimates, not the actual recreation development to be considered. Their report was published as the Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Parks Report in 1979.

In this report MAPC argued the most important concern that required consideration was identifying the jurisdictional responsibility for regional parks. The report stated "The importance of this recommendation cannot be over-emphasized as the credibility of the whole regional parks concept, and other recommendations in the report, depend upon resolution of the confusion surrounding jurisdiction and responsibility." (MAPC 1979:6). Jurisdictional responsibility was required to prevent a duplication of services within the parks. The report attempted to identify the role of regional parks:

The primary purposes of the Regional Parks System should be recognized as the protection and preservation of significant natural resources and the provision of recreational opportunities, and any park development should respect the natural environment. (MAPC 1979:8)

McNabs Island remained as one of the seven areas to be developed as a regional park. MAPC identified picnics, beach areas, scenic look offs, scuba diving, and photography as recreational activities that could be exploited with minor development. The report acknowledged Parks Canada control of the forts and suggested other buildings on the island should be either improved or demolished for safety reasons, depending on their cultural or historic values.

MAPC used a form of zoning and suggested dividing the island into recreational development units. This would allow recreational development in areas offering the greatest recreation potential while offering protection to environmentally sensitive areas. MAPC argued against a fixed link (i.e., bridge or causeway) both on financial grounds and the fact that a different style access (ferry) to this park would increase its popularity (MAPC 1979:138). They also suggested the ferry trip should be routed past harbour features, such as Georges Island, the container pier, and Point Pleasant Park, to make the trip an event in itself. The report recommended that Lawlor Island should be excluded from park development. As per its mandate, the committee did not detail specific recreational developments, but instead concentrated on preserving much of the natural landscape.

In 1982, Dome Petroleum announced plans to build a shipyard to construct reinforced tankers that could move oil from the Canadian Arctic (Daily News 7 Nov 1985). One of the site options was at Indian Point. This facility would cost \$350 million and would be able to construct the new 100,000 ton plus tankers that were in demand because of the oil crisis. The government of Nova Scotia looked at three possible sites. Dome accepted McNabs as the best location over Sydney and the Strait of Canso (Jenkins 1982). This proposal was never followed up because of environmental concerns over possible marine oil spills in the Arctic and a lessening of the oil crisis.

John Jenkins started his ferry service to McNabs Island in 1983. This service reintroduced McNabs Island to the general public for the first time in forty years.

Environment Canada Parks Service held a series of public meetings in May of 1989 to gather suggestions for the future development and use of the four surplus military sections of Halifax, including McNabs Island. There was an enthusiastic response to these meetings. The public opinion showed a preference for restrained and orderly development as opposed to the establishment of amusement or theme parks. The public wanted better access and interpretive centres on McNabs

Island, and were against creating campgrounds and other intensive recreational developments on the island. The feeling was that McNabs should be preserved in its present state because of its history and natural beauty. There was a call to clean up the litter on the island and its beaches, but the preference of the people attending the meeting was to leave the island in the control of Parks Canada (Inness 1990:B10).

In 1992, the Halifax Harbour Cleanup Inc. (a federal crown corporation) asked for approval to locate a sewage treatment plant on the shore at Ives Cove on the north of McNabs Island. A series of meetings was held in 1993 to allow public participation and input. These meetings showed that some of the public had concerns about development that may affect the island. The HHCI changed their plan and suggested building an artificial island in Ives Cove as a location for the plant. The plan did take recreation and environmental concerns into consideration. They proposed a visual screening of the plant with a tree break, enclosing the plant to prevent odours, and supplying the plant by water (HHCI 1993). These improvements were suggested to overcome objections from environmental groups.

Participants in the public meetings feared that the

province could drop or diminish the park status of the island if the sewage treatment plant were to be located in Ives Cove, and could set a precedent to allow other high-impact usage on the island. Parks Canada and the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources both stressed their objections to this development. Ottawa also mentioned problems transferring land ownership from the federal government to the sewage treatment facility. Parks Canada was only prepared to transfer the land on McNabs to the province if the island was retained as a provincial park. The plan was officially dropped in 1994 largely on the basis of excessive costs, and the withdrawal of funding by Ottawa.

The Department of Natural Resources stationed a permanent warden in the Conrad house on McNabs Island in 1992 to try and deter vandalism, and to provide emergency services. The provincial government says they do not have funding to proceed with further park development on the island at this time.

The objections to the proposal for the sewage treatment plant did lead to the creation of a special interest group, called The Friends of McNab's Island Society (FOMIS), on 15 March 1990. This group has been active in pushing the provincial government to ensure park status, and prevent commercial or industrial development on the island. The group

accepts the provincial claim that a lack of funds prevents the establishment of a provincial park on the island. Members prefer to see the island preserved as much as possible in its natural state (McCarthy 1994). To this end the Friends of McNabs has approached industrial sponsors to fund their programs and are having success. The Shell Environmental Group has provided annual funding to assist in the garbage clean ups (McCarthy 1994). At present the group has a membership of approximately one hundred people. Now there is a fear that this group is promoting an elitist status for the island. Those who have access to boats will have the island as a private playground. The remainder of the local population will be effectively barred by the transportation problem. These fears came to light when it was realized the bulk of the Friends of McNabs organization is drawn from the local yacht clubs who have traditionally used the islands as a private party location. This group has remained a force and is now attempting to work with the Department of Natural Resources to create the type of park they think is best for the island. Although FOMIS has done a great deal of work on projects such as trail clearing and beach cleanups (DNR 1995), little has been done to improve visitor facilities or access. On the surface, it looks as if FOMIS wants to create a park where they can control access; in short a private preserve much as the elite classes attempted to institute in the late

nineteenth century. The general public will be allowed access on days when The Friends of McNabs can control the program and activities. This group has prevented public scrutiny of their plans by keeping group meetings low key. These meetings are not widely publicized, but when they want volunteers to help with a clean up or to form work parties, they have little problem getting their message to the general public.

A plan developed by the Departments of Natural Resources and Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, was presented in a series of public meetings in 1995. This plan relied on zoning techniques much like the MAPC proposal of 1979. Development of most facilities would take place on the western side of McNabs Island on the shores of McNab Cove. The departments emphasized low-impact recreation based on existing trails and opportunities. It did allow for a camping area on Indian Point and a beach picnic area on Lawlor Island (DNR 1995:4-5). This proposal was the first to truly consider an inter-jurisdictional management plan with responsibilities shared between the provincial and federal governments. The proposed development of a campground also showed a consideration of a new pursuit on McNabs Island. Although camping has potential to create environmental problems, the plan suggested that it would be easier to accept and control camping rather than attempt an outright ban.

The Eastern Passage, Cow Bay and the Islands Economic Development Association also wants a say in the future of the islands. This group was formed with federal funding to promote economic growth within the communities of Eastern Passage and Cow Bay. They created a boardwalk along the marshlands across from Lawlor Island and provided funding to rebuild the fish houses and pier in Eastern Passage. Included in their initial proposal was a desire to provide a boat service from the reconstructed village in Eastern Passage to a park on the Islands. They felt that a study by the Economic Planning Group of Canada suggested the economic benefits of a water shuttle service with island boat tours and deep sea fishing. Now the group is pushing for a fixed link to Lawlor Island. They are attempting to obtain funding through ACOA to construct a drawbridge or swing bridge on the causeway to Lawlor Island at Eastern Passage. They wish to develop a campground on Lawlor Island and have input into recreational development on McNabs Island. Objections to the plan by groups concerned with the possible negative effects on the osprey nesting sites led to these groups being classified as "outside special interest groups" at the public meetings.

The Shearwater Development Corporation is pursuing plans to create a permanent link to Lawlor Island. This federally funded corporation was formed following the decision to

downgrade CFB Shearwater in an effort to find alternative uses for base facilities. This group wishes to include McNabs Island as part of their mandate because of its traditional ties to the military and CFB Shearwater in particular.

Late in 1995, a group of Dartmouth businessmen, led by Neil Black, applied for provincial and municipal support to build a golf course on McNabs Island. They cited the valuable economic spinoffs as support for their proposal (Connolly 1995).

Current Government Policies

Through time, aims and goals of government departments change to meet new requirements. The Province of Nova Scotia published their policies and objectives for provincial parks in 1988 (DNR 1988a). The Department of Natural Resources identified the role of provincial parks as:

...designed to provide quality outdoor recreational opportunities for present and future generations and to conserve Nova Scotia's outstanding heritage resources...Parks must be responsible to user needs and accessible and usable by all Nova Scotians (DNR 1988a:1).

This policy is based on a program of recreation, protection, education and tourism promotion. The department was given the important goal of offering a wide range of education opportunities for residents and visitors by

providing a variety of facilities and programs. The province also acknowledged the increased demand for urban recreation facilities in the creation of near-urban parks (Rajotte 1975:3; Smith 1987).

In Nova Scotia, provincial parks are seen as being but one element in a total park system including parks, trails, waterways, protected beaches and heritage resource properties. The new policy is a major step forward for Nova Scotia. There has not previously been an attempt to integrate all the aspects of environmental management into the park system in the province. Public pressure is forcing the Department of Natural Resources to place more emphasis on resource protection and interpretation. Accepted theory is now that planning must incorporate both the environment and the economy in an attempt to incorporate economic and environmental goals. The province has demonstrated an ability to sustain high-density recreation in an area of fragile ecosystems at the Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Heritage System. This was accomplished by using a new technique of park zoning (Trider 1987). Boardwalks were constructed and dune protection was instituted to steer users in patterns that would minimize environmental damage.

The province of Nova Scotia produced a new systems plan

for provincial parks and protected areas in 1994 (DNR 1994). This new proposal places more emphasis on the protection of natural areas within the province. One of the main changes proposed is a transfer of responsibility for ecological protection of special places to the Department of Natural Resources to administer under the *Provincial Parks Act* (DNR 1994b:18). Traditionally, the *Provincial Parks Act*, administered by the Department of Natural Resources was concerned more with tourism and was not used for environmental protection. The *Special Places Protection Act* was managed by the Department of Education. The new proposed legislation will give responsibility for both acts to the Department of Natural Resources which will create the flexibility to meet the challenge of competing demands on a scarce resource. This legislation will also encourage cooperation with the private sector in the protection of natural areas. This spirit of cooperation is already evident on McNabs Island in the working arrangements between FOMIS and the Department of Natural Resources. The province hopes that this new plan will lead to a more environmentally sustainable use of the natural areas of Nova Scotia.

The Department of Natural Resources and Department of Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada sponsored a series of public meetings dealing with the islands in 1995. Their intent was

to obtain public input on an appropriate land use strategy for the islands (DNR 1995). This preliminary proposal emphasized that the mandates of the two departments are compatible on the islands. The provincial policy (DNR 1994b) is concerned with the protection of representative elements of the natural environment while providing for high quality recreation experiences in natural settings. The policy of the Department of Canadian Heritage is to commemorate, protect, and present regions of Canada's cultural and natural history (DNR 1995:1).

Public Involvement

There is a growing attitude in Canada towards volunteer activities. The park administrations should attempt to access this pool of labour. The more people involved, the better sense of pride or ownership in the area and the better chance to ensure its preservation. Public participation in the planning and management process of a park generally creates a feeling of ownership. The continued participation in management decisions after the opening will ensure a successful park. The CEAC (1991:48) suggests the use of cooperating associations to aid in reaching protection goals. They believe that groups of people living near a protected area can act as a volunteer labour force and provide resources for education, research purposes, fund raising and public relations. These groups can be funded from the sale of

related merchandise or the operation of concessions related to the park. The Friends of McNabs group is already providing many of these services in Halifax.

Chapter 8

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECTS

McNab and Lawlor Islands require protection from intensive development. Their future is in park and recreation development. The islands have the potential to meet the objectives of both the Departments of Natural Resources and Heritage Canada (DNR 1995:2). The creation of a park on McNabs and Lawlor Islands could be a valuable addition to recreation opportunities in the Halifax Metropolitan Area. Research done on urban fringe parks suggests the main users will be local residents, so the emphasis needs to be on recreation, not on tourism potential. The recreation and cultural value of the islands is in the natural environment, but the historical significance adds a bonus to the location. The low-impact stance taken by the federal government preventing a fixed link to either McNabs or Lawlor Island effectively rules out industrial, commercial, or residential development.

Recreation opportunities afforded by the islands have served various groups within Halifax society. In the eighteenth century, McNabs Island was a recreational site for the elite of Halifax. The island offered a relatively safe location for hunting and fishing. The only people who could take advantage of these opportunities were those with access to boats, and in Halifax this usually meant the military, the colony administration, or the wealthy. This class used the courts to control and prohibit any activities on McNabs Island that would interfere with their belief that the island was a private hunting preserve.

The creation of the McNab Estate late in the century contributed to the impression of elitism on the island. The attempts by Peter McNab to sell part of the island for summer homes was definitely aimed at the wealthy sector of society. This impression was further strengthened by the formal suppers hosted by the McNab family.

Social reformers in the nineteenth century attempted to use picnics and public spectacles to improve conditions for the working class. The reformers knew the elitist perception of the island would attract participation in these events. The attempt to use picnics on McNabs Island as an instrument of social control failed when opportunities arose for the

working poor to develop other locations for picnics. This changed the basic nature of picnics from a staged group event to a family recreation pastime. On McNabs Island, commercial picnic grounds were opened and a ferry service provided improved access. These improvements, however, did not open the islands fully to the working class as the ferry schedules did not coincide with leisure time of the working class. The information available would suggest that when social control failed, the elite retreated to McNabs Island and redeveloped it as a private preserve again, but, with emphasis placed on individual and small group activities rather than events designed for mass participation. In the twentieth century, the public amusement grounds were moved off the island and the ferry service was discontinued. The commercial grounds failed because the growing influence of the automobile changed the leisure patterns in society. People became more mobile in their pursuit of recreation opportunities and developed individualized leisure patterns that tended to emphasize non-structured activities. McNabs quietly reverted to a recreation backwater in Halifax. Access again was limited to those with boats.

Development proposals for the islands over the past forty years reflect another change in recreation patterns. Recreation is now of more importance to a larger proportion of

society. As both the disposable income and discretionary time of society has grown, so has the choice of leisure pursuits. The design of an island park must be able to adapt to changes in recreation requirements.

As well, the last forty years has seen a growth of public concern in the protection of the environment. More consideration is now given to recreational activities that are not harmful to the natural surroundings. This can best be accomplished by doing as little as possible to alter the natural setting, and the new proposals reflect this change in belief.

McNabs island has been a favoured destination for boat owners since the founding of Halifax. Now the waterfront of Halifax Harbour has become a favoured spot for both tourists and local residents. A wide variety of attractions encourage people to stroll along the shore walks. Several tour boat operators now provide services in the harbour ranging from deep sea fishing to harbour tours. As well, more people now own a boat and use public launch facilities to put their boat in the harbour. This means that more craft could use McNabs as a location for activities. A public mooring system capable of handling small sailboats and power craft needs to be included in the park plans. The latest park development

proposal (DNR 1995) acknowledges this need but questions who should provide the services. Initial plans (MAPC 1975) suggested Ives Cove would be a good location, but the newer proposals would concentrate development in McNab Cove.

Attempts at recreational development of the islands in the future will create conflict if changing patterns of public use are not heeded. Although controversy may be generated under the guise of the environmental movement, the underlying problem is often a fear of a loss of access. The attitude towards the land is seen to become elitist in stature. This attitude towards the land was demonstrated by reaction to the Franklin-Hirschorn proposal and the formation of the Friends of McNabs Island Society in reaction to the sewage treatment plant. Park planners need to decide what type of park will best suit the needs of both the local population and the environment and what jurisdiction can provide the best management to meet these goals.

Public access to the islands is also a major consideration. Ferry service is now provided by a variety of charter operators, mostly operating from the Halifax waterfront, but there is no scheduled ferry service available. I believe a scheduled service should be provided from both sides of the harbour. The charter operators have made

modifications to the pier in McNabs Cove to allow limited use. This is only a temporary measure and could easily lead to an injury. Private boats usually land from a dingy on one of the beaches. The island piers need a program of proper maintenance as well to provide a safe landing area. There should be a study done to see if a ferry service to McNabs Island operated or licensed by the park administration is a profitable option. The park needs a secure scheduled ferry service that can make the trip to McNabs Island an important part of the recreation experience. Controls are required to ensure the quality of the ferry ride to the islands. Members of FOMIS now own and operate the main charter services to the island. These have been acquired since the formation of FOMIS. The piers in Wreck Cove and Lawlor Island need to be rebuilt if they are to be usable.

The 1995 proposal (DNR 1995) places most of the emphasis on day-use facilities and this was reinforced in the public meetings that followed. Day use has been the tradition on McNabs island. Facilities for visitors will need to be carefully located to meet this type of park use. The 1995 plan acknowledges this and suggests most user facilities be located in the area of Maugher Beach. This is in agreement with most research done on near-urban parks. They tend to be day-use locales with heavy visitor potential. There are many

recreation opportunities on McNabs Island today without the requirements of excessive development. In its literature, FOMIS includes hiking, picnics, beach parties, beachcombing, birdwatching, cycling, boating, camping, swimming, berrypicking, stargazing, skating and cross country skiing (FOMIS 1995:6-8) as activities that can be undertaken on the island without excessive impacts on the resource base.

Camping has become a popular activity on McNabs Island in recent years, though by necessity this would be classified as primitive camping. Planning now accepts this activity and the administration plans to develop a small camping area at Indian Point where they believe they can minimize any adverse environmental impacts. Only limited services would be developed at this site as the Department of Natural Resources wishes to promote a day-use image for the park.

Tourism is also a consideration for island parks. This again brings the traditional land use into consideration. The 1995 proposal recognizes that an island park would play a role in supporting the local tourism economy by providing high quality historical and cultural attractions that will emphasize the natural environment. The contrast of downtown Halifax to a natural setting only fifteen minutes away cannot do anything but help the promotion of tourism in Halifax. All

parties agree the tourism potential will need to be developed from an eco-tourism approach.

The Department of Natural Resources does not consider the islands to be exceptional in terms of the natural environment and has not recommended their inclusion as special places requiring protection in the new system plan (DNR 1994b). There are no species of wildlife on the islands that are on endangered lists. There is, however, concern for the future of the osprey and great blue heron colonies. These birds are suffering population drop because of the lack of suitable nesting habitat. The herons are very sensitive to disturbance while they are nesting and the Canadian Wildlife Service recommends there should be no development within 300m of any heron colony and no disturbances near the colony between March and August (Cdn Wildlife Service 1990). Great blue herons usually nest in colonies of thirty or more birds, and may abandon their traditional breeding sites if they are disturbed by nearby activity. Since most of these birds have now relocated to Lawlor Island, the best plan is to develop bird viewing stations on the mainland in Eastern Passage. This would protect the colony from disruption.

Environment Canada (1991:335) believes isolated pockets of protected wilderness do not provide enough protection for

all species. Travel corridors are needed between smaller protected areas to provide access for wildlife and waterfowl. This is an important consideration on the Atlantic Coast of Nova Scotia because of the migratory patterns of waterfowl. The mouth of Halifax Harbour, including McNabs and Lawlor Islands, is an important location on these migratory routes. The variety of birdlife would provide potential for an eco-tourism industry. In the light of these findings, the idea of a public golf course on McNabs Island may be an example of compatible recreation and conservation use. It is interesting to note that the main objection to a golf course is coming from FOMIS.

In the last decade, McNabs Island has become a popular location for outdoor education activities. The Department of Natural Resources believes there is potential for an increase in this type of activity for both schools and adult education. There is consideration of creating an overnight stay area separate from the campground to accommodate groups that wish to remain overnight.

McNabs and Lawlor Islands will require intensive management techniques to preserve the impression of a natural setting and still allow the variety of recreational opportunities demanded by the local population. Zoning will

be the answer to this situation. Interpretation centres can be an important component of park zonation techniques. Interpretation points need to deal with information, orientation, and recreation. These centres can be organized to steer visitors in particular directions and away from areas that may be environmentally sensitive. The interpretive centres must educate people by teaching respect for the natural environment and management methods used in the park.

It is reasonable to assume that public access on the islands will be concentrated in two or three areas. The area near McNabs Cove, including the lighthouse on Maugher Beach, and the beach in Wreck Cove will probably be the most used area of the park. This area offers the best opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, picnics, and family recreation. One of the earlier development proposals suggested this would be an ideal location for paddle boat rentals (in the lagoon) and bicycle rentals. This may be enlarged if these concession opportunities are offered. Moderate traffic can be expected in the former village area near Ives Point and in the area used as a naval rifle range on Green Hill. These areas are accessible on a system of gravel roads or well defined trails.

Most recent proposals address the requirements of zonation. The Friends of McNabs group wish to create a museum

on the Perrin Homestead. This was the location of the tea house and this building could be renovated to include the museum, gift shop, tea room and a picnic area. The province wishes to develop the Conrad Homestead as a hostel. Island trails should be maintained to a level where they are usable by bicycle. Motor vehicles, such as ATVs, should not be permitted on the islands. The timber stands in the northeastern section of the island should be left intact with no new trails cut into them. This area could be damaged by intensive use and this would also provide a buffer zone for the remaining heron nesting sites.

We are in a period of decrease in government spending and capital budgets. One recommendation is that a procedure be laid down to allow for public and corporate endowments of special areas (Heritage Resource Centre 1985). This could take the burden off the taxpayer and do more to ensure the survival of the protected areas. A second recommendation is to access available volunteer labour. However, this can be self defeating as often these volunteers are working with a personal agenda that may be very different from the public goals.

A park on the islands needs to generate sufficient revenues to offset some of these management costs. User-pay

facilities, such as a youth hostel, golf course, a limited forestry operation (including firewood and Christmas trees), and a campground, along with service facilities such as a restaurant, marina, or rental concessions could provide badly needed cash. Many of these user-pay facilities have been suggested in recent development proposals and at the public meetings.

An important factor on both McNabs and Lawlor Islands is the mandate of Parks Canada to protect and commemorate places of special historic significance as National Historic Sites or Parks. Parks Canada declared Fort McNab nationally significant in 1965 and acquired it from DND in the same year (Environment Canada: Parks Service 1991). A final decision has not yet been made on Fort Ives, but it is believed the federal government plans to maintain ownership of both Fort McNab and Ives Point as National Historic Sites. Parks Canada has no plans at present to restore these forts, but is committed to a stabilization of the buildings. Part of this program is a cost-sharing plan with provincial governments and historical societies to preserve historic sites that deserve more than a commemorative plaque, but do not fit the criteria for a National Historic Park (Parks Canada 1979).

Protection of historic sites can be accomplished by

simply saving them from destruction through regulation. A site can be restored with minor repairs which will stabilize the locale, or it can be rebuilt as a reproduction of what current public trends perceive as an original state. Konrad (1982:409) argued that often "restoration implies a return to a past forgotten or discarded." Ruins of structures are still able to convey emotional sensations. Rebuilding, or freezing, a natural environment interferes with the natural process of succession.

Access to Lawlor Island should be restricted to educational use, with minimal improvements to landing facilities. Lawlor Island presents less conflict possibilities as it has never been a popular recreation or visitation site. Participants at a public meeting in November, 1995, suggested that a series of pay telescopes could be located on the Eastern Passage boardwalk to allow viewing of the osprey nests and the heron colony which has relocated to the island. This would protect the environment these species need to flourish. Funds collected this way could contribute to the upkeep of the boardwalk system in Eastern Passage.

The new proposals to develop an island park have given consideration to the public land use on McNabs Island. These

plans will allow a park that will cater to the recreation needs of all residents of Halifax, not just the people who have access to boats. New park designs will allow for the preservation of the natural setting. The final decision on a park design is yet to be made, but the conflicts have provided the necessary public input to allow for the acceptable recreational development.

Conservation, recreation, access, and elitism are interrelated terms. As was suggested in the introduction, consideration of these terms provides a description, not an explanation of the complexities involved in the creation of a near-urban park today. The plans for development of an island park in Halifax Harbour are constantly changing to reflect new beliefs in recreation and conservation. Attitudes of society are changing so rapidly, that proposals are often outdated before they can be implemented. It is easy to forget that we do live in a democracy and that action should be taken in the best interest of society in general. There is no way that one single proposal can be generated which will satisfy all sections of society. The creation of an island park has become bogged down in proposals, counter proposals and public meetings. The development plans for the past forty years have not led to the creation of a badly needed regional park in Halifax. All that has been created is controversy and

conflict. At some point we must stop and proceed with one of these plans. The location is there. The best we can do is to create a park as it stands and rely on the professionals to adopt management techniques that can allow for future change in beliefs and demands. A proposal that does not demand major modifications to the natural environment must be implemented as an operational plan. The sooner, the better.

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