

Press Release : 26 May 2020

## NEW HISTORICAL MEMORIAL FOR DOWNTOWN SACKVILLE

The return of better weather has facilitated the completion of the installation of a new historical marker in downtown Sackville, N.B., - a memorial bell and a historical plaque commemorating “Sackville Methodist Churches.” Located in the corner of the Old Lower Sackville Methodist Cemetery at 112 Main Street, directly opposite “Cranewood,” the memorial consists of a 1,200 lb church bell salvaged from the 1898 Methodist/United Church when it was demolished in 2015. The plaque alongside the bell features information and pictures of the four successive Methodist churches which stood in this area of downtown Sackville between 1818 and 2015.

According to the inscription on the bell, it was cast by Meneely & Co., West Troy, New York in 1898, and was presented to Sackville Methodist Church by Mary Anne (Snowball) Black, wife of Hon. Joseph L. Black in October 1898. The bell was preserved by Lafford Realty who donated the bell for the memorial and contributed significantly to its creation. The site within the cemetery was used with the permission of Sackville United Church. The cost of the metal stand and the historical plaque was contributed by the Rotary Club of Sackville.

Methodism was brought to this area by Yorkshire settlers in the 1770s, and a Methodist chapel built in Middle Sackville in 1790 was among the first Methodist churches in Canada. The first downtown church was built in 1818 at the corner of Main and Bridge Streets (where the Powell Block now stands), diagonally across the street from the new memorial. Successive churches were built in 1838, 1876 and 1898 on the site now occupied by the apartment building directly adjacent to the memorial.

The new memorial and plaque are reminders of the important role played by Methodism in the history of Sackville. Methodist lay people who attended these churches, made major contributions to the community, especially to the founding and development of Mount Allison University.

The project was overseen by an advisory committee with representatives from Sackville United Church (Dave Fullerton, Phyllis Stopps, Lloyd Bruce), The Rotary Club of Sackville (Bill Evans, Dale Creelman), The Tantramar Heritage Trust (Al Smith, Paul Bogaard), and John Lafford; the group was chaired by Charlie Scobie. Background research and the wording of the plaque was carried out by members of the group, and the design was by Leslie Van Patter.