

St. Peter's Canal  
**Lockmaster's House**  
St. Peter's, Nova Scotia

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The St. Peter's Lockmaster's House is a two storey mansard roofed building that served as the canal lockmaster and superintendent's residence from the time of its construction in 1876 until it was vacated in 1983. It was designed by Department of Public Works engineer, Henry F. Perley, and is the major surviving remnant of the canal's early history. The building has been subject to many minor alterations over the years, and is not currently in good repair. It is managed by the Canadian Parks Service, Environment Canada. See FHBRO Building Report and 89-01.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The St. Peter's Lockmaster's House has been designated Recognized. It was built in 1876 during the first of three major reconstructions of the St. Peter's Canal, and survives today as the most prominent reminder of the canal's early history. It was designed by Henry F. Perley, who had been associated with the initial construction of the canal in the 1854-72 period as an employee of the Nova Scotia Board of Works. By 1876 Perley was responsible for renovating the canal as Engineer in charge of Works for Canada's newly formed Public Works department. In the course of this activity he built the Lockmaster's Residence.

Prominently located beside the canal, this building has become a local landmark by virtue of its setting and physical prominence. It is a tall, two storey wooden building with a distinguishable mansard roof, and its original forms have remained remarkably intact on both the interior and exterior. As one of the oldest buildings in the community of St. Peter's, which formed around the nucleus of the canal, it serves as a rare reminder of the early roots of both the canal and the town.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the St. Peter's Lockmaster's House resides in its distinguishable presence as an early building associated with both the canal and the town of St. Peter's.

The exterior features of the building which underline its age -- its mansard roof, general form, symmetry and materials -- are essential to its heritage value. Those early exterior elements that still remain should be guarded and carefully maintained to retain their integrity. Recent modifications to the building which have marred the clarity of its exterior composition -- its aluminum siding, and front porch -- should be

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removed and sympathetic repairs conducted. Restoration of missing exterior elements, particularly the window pediments and paned windows would enhance the building.

Early sub-divisions, forms and materials on the interior of the residence should be generally respected and incorporated in plans for its future use. The building is insulated with ureaformaldehyde foam insulation. Any plans for its removal should be developed and their implementation monitored by a conservation architect.

The open setting of the building with access to both the ocean and the canal should be respected. Its prominence as a landscape feature should be guarded by the prohibition of all but small scale new construction in the immediate vicinity. If the site of the building is subdivided from canal lands in the future, the portion severed should be sufficiently generous to safeguard the spacious relationship between the building and its surroundings.

Compatible future uses for the building might include its use as a residence, gift shop, museum, tea house, canal office or similar low impact canal or canal-related facility. It should be heated and preferably occupied year round. Until necessary renovations are completed and the building is once again inhabited, it should be protected against vandalism.

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