

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT ELIAS GAVEY HOUSE, FORILLON NATIONAL PARK, QC

FHBRO Number: **01-66 c**
DFRP Number: **05132**
Resource Name: **Elias Gavey House**
Address: **Forillon National Park, QC**
FHBRO Status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1889-1890**
Designer: **Unknown**
Original Function: **Residence**
Current Function: **Vacant**
Custodian: **Parks Canada**

Reasons for Designation

The Elias Gavey House has been designated a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations and its architectural and environmental values:

Historical value

The Elias Gavey House is associated with the national theme of the cod fishery in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which was the main activity and the driving force behind the Gaspé economy for several centuries. The building was home to the Gaveys, one of the oldest families in Grande-Grave, some of whom worked for the Fruing Company and were clerks at William Hyman & Sons. The building illustrates the pivotal role played by cod exporters and merchants in the settlement of the region, and the social structure and economic dynamics that shaped traditional Gaspé fishing villages like this one.

Architectural value

The Elias Gavey House is a good example of a vernacular form that is especially common in Gaspé, where Quebec domestic architecture is influenced by the design of the Neoclassical New England house. The building consists of a storey-and-a-half timber house, with a gable roof and facade with three openings, one of them a monumental entrance topped with a gable dormer. The building's distinctive style illustrates the preservation of a tradition in domestic architecture between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, and is typical to many of the houses in Grande-Grave. Many of the characteristic elements of this style can be found in both the layout and the elevations of the Elias Gavey House. Although a conventional structure, this well-preserved house features exterior ornaments which are among the most elaborate in Grande-Grave and remarkable interior woodwork, which together, demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship.

Environmental value

The Elias Gavey House reinforces the present character of Grande-Grave which still evokes the former settlement, and blends with the marine landscape of Forillon owing to its design which is compatible with other buildings in Grande-Grave, and to its siting which is well-integrated with the site's topography. The Elias Gavey House is one of a string of buildings along the coast that characterize the cultural landscape of the south shore of the Forillon Peninsula. Open to visitors, it is a highly visible landmark in the area and speaks to the presence of a former, traditional Gaspé coastal fishing village.

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Character Defining Elements

- Features specific to this typical form of domestic architecture, such as the stone foundation which supports the raised frame of the house and follows the topography of the site, the balanced symmetry of the elevations, the roof line broken by a gable dormer, and the uncovered gallery running the full length of the south façade;
- The components that illustrate the building methods and techniques that are specific to this vernacular neoclassical tradition including the use of wood as a building material, the white, painted, lap siding and coloured exterior trim, and the decorative interior elements, some of which, like the newel post, the surround for the stove opening, and the built-in furniture, are especially remarkable;
- The roof line with its bell-shaped eaves, a typical feature of 19th-century Quebec vernacular architecture that was somewhat popular in Gaspé;
- The interior layout representative of Neoclassical houses and which consists of four rooms around a centre hall on both floors;
- The summer kitchen at the back of the house and its projecting storm-enclosure, a common feature of additions to Grande-Grave houses;
- The combination of style, form and materials that creates the overall harmony of the buildings in Grande-Grave;
- The visual and physical similarity between the house and its outbuildings, the site with which they are historically associated, and the commanding view of the bay, as well as the house's location amid fields and pastures which reflects the varied activities of fishermen-farmers; and,
- The relationship of the house to its setting which consists of a rugged coastline, as well as its relationship to the spread-out settlement of Grande-Grave.

For guidance on interventions related to this building, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information, please contact FHBRO.

March 2002