

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

### **Hawthorne Cottage**

Irishtown Road  
Brigus, Newfoundland

Hawthorne Cottage was constructed in 1830. It was designed by merchant John Leamon as part of his country estate five miles out of Brigus. In 1833-34, the structure was moved from its original site to a spacious lot in Brigus. The original structure has been extended with a kitchen addition, roof dormers, bay windows and a new verandah. The most recent alterations (1995) were modifications for accessibility at the exterior porch entryway and within the interior. The building is currently used as a house museum. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 92-84.

### **Reasons For Designation**

Hawthorne Cottage has been designated Classified because of its historical associations, environmental significance and architectural design.

Hawthorne Cottage is associated with two individuals of historical importance. The first is its builder, John Leamon, a local merchant with connections to the seal and fishery trades who also held numerous posts including membership in the House of Assembly. The second is Captain Robert Abram (Bob) Bartlett. Designated a person of national historic significance in 1972, Bartlett is famous for his northern explorations and his study of Arctic archeology, flora and fauna. His association with Hawthorne Cottage comes from his sporadic residency between voyages.

The construction of Hawthorne Cottage is an early and compelling case illustrating the growing wealth of Brigus when it was a key sealing, fishing and shipbuilding port between 1830 and 1870, during the first years of the Newfoundland outpost "golden age." It is a well-known landmark within the town and region for its early date of construction and for its association with the Leaman family and later with the Bartletts.

Hawthorne Cottage is considered a rare Newfoundland example in the cottage orné style of the Picturesque movement of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of Hawthorne Cottage resides in all aspects of its form, stylistic references, fenestration, materials, interior layout and site relationships.

The massing of Hawthorne Cottage consists of a square one-and-one-half storey form with hip roof, dormer windows, bellcast-roofed veranda, and a two-storey flat-roofed kitchen. The high stone foundation, constructed when the house was moved, and the side bay windows contribute to the form of the house. These components contribute to

the distinctive massing which is intrinsic to the Picturesque aesthetic, and should not be altered.

The details of the roof, chimney, variety of window and door configurations, building finishes and the characteristic verandah are important to the character of the building. The ornate verandah runs across the front facade and sweeps around to enclose two thirds of the length of each sidewall. It consists of a series of bays detailed with arched wood fretwork which frame the view of windows and doors, and with balustrades which are alternating combinations of spindles or crosses. A strong horizontality is created by its roof, which parallels the eave of the hip roof of the house. Wood elements, including the porch elements, the double hung windows with exterior storms, and the wood horizontal siding should continue to be maintained. At the end of any material's lifespan, replacement should be in kind, in the original design and should be installed with the involvement of conservation expertise. Colour may have been used as part of the decorative scheme. Paint analysis studies to determine the original colour scheme, and incorporation of this information into any design, would enhance the heritage character of the building.

The interior layout on both floors is largely intact and is characterized by a centre-hall plan. The stair and hallway are the principal organizing features of the layout. The stairs occupy an area off the front entryway and are placed parallel to the front wall. The hallway pierces an enormous central chimney which serves both the parlour and the dining room. The organizing principles of the stair, hall and chimney should be respected.

Hawthorne Cottage is located close to the business district of Brigus overlooking the harbour. Its prominence as a landmark within the community should be maintained. Although the original property area has been reduced over time, there remains a high degree of integrity in the relationship of the building to its site. Care should be taken in protecting the spaces created through the use of vegetation and fencing and re-establishing those features documented in period photographs. Inspiration for surfacing should also derive from period photographs. The addition of contemporary elements should only be considered if these are complementary to the site's character.

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.

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