

10 Topsail United Church Cemetery

Just east of the intersection of Spruce Hill Road and Route 60 you will find Topsail United Church Cemetery, one of the oldest cemeteries in the area. The oldest known headstone is that of John Allan who died in 1849. The cemetery has received a Conception Bay South Historic Trust Award to recognize its historical significance.



This cemetery is the final resting place of Phebe Florence Miller (1889-1979), known as the postmistress-poet of Topsail. Miller was one of Newfoundland's best known poets in the first half of the 20th century. An avid nature lover, she spent her entire life in Topsail on the shores of Conception Bay and served as the local postmistress from 1928-1942.

11 A Former Prime Minister's Home

A little further east on Route 60 is a historic property at #2350 Topsail Road. Constructed in 1890 for the Gear Family, it was home to Frederick C. Alderdice who served as the last Prime Minister of Newfoundland (1932-34). The private home received a Conception Bay South Historic Trust Award in 2002.



Our Location

Topsail Heritage District is located off Spruce Hill Road in Topsail, in the Town of Conception Bay South.

Please note the historic homes and gardens on the walk are private and are not open to the public.

Contact Us

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topsail
heritage
homes &
gardens walk



Conception Bay South

Topsail Homes & Gardens Walk is a 1.3 km self-guided stroll through a quiet country neighbourhood in one of the oldest parts of the Town of Conception Bay South. The quaint area was home to many of the regions first settlers and today boasts historic homes well over a century old.

1 St John the Evangelist Anglican Church

Begin your walking tour on the road called Church Terrace at St. John the Evangelist Church. This historic jewel has received a Conception Bay South Historic Trust Award and is a registered Heritage Structure, having been recognized provincially by the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador.



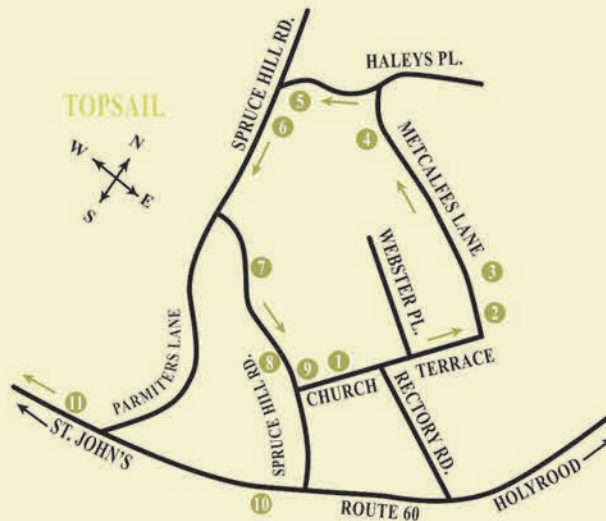
Most early Newfoundland churches were constructed in the Gothic Revival style (c. 1850-70) and this church is no exception. Built between 1860-61, the plain exterior contrasts with ornately detailed interior woodwork. The pristine state of the interior structure provides valuable insight into building materials and techniques, especially since neither the walls, ceilings, floors nor pews were ever stained or painted.

2 Metcalfe's Lane

Continue along Church Terrace to Metcalfe's Lane, while enjoying a view of the private country garden before turning the corner. One can just imagine a horse and buggy making its way along this charming lane under the rich canopy of mature trees.

3 Former Home of Sir Edgar R. Bowring

Continue along Metcalfe's Lane. On the right is residence #35, former summer home of Honourable Sir Edward R. Bowring (1851-1943). Born in St. John's, Bowring was a shipping magnate, politician, diplomat and philanthropist. He served as chairman of C.T. Bowring Company Limited of London and Liverpool, and also of Bowring Brothers Limited St. John's. In 1911 Bowring donated \$50,000 to the citizens of St. John's which was used to purchase land for Bowring Park.



4 Rock Wall

At the top of Metcalfe's Lane, a peek through the paling fence offers a glimpse of a delightful cottage vegetable and flower garden. Note the rock wall along the fence line. Walls like this were built by early Newfoundland settlers to mark vegetable gardens and keep out animals.

5 Dairy Barn

From Metcalfe's Lane, turn left onto Haley's Place where you'll find a beautifully preserved barn once used to house dairy cattle.



6 Alma Cottage

As you round Haley's Place and turn left onto Spruce Hill Road, you'll see a lovely Second Empire style home (c. 1860-1880), known as Alma Cottage.

Of particular note is the distinctive mansard roof with gable capped dormers protruding from the concave roof surface.

7 Second Empire Style House

There are a number of lovely old homes and gardens along the route. The home at #46 on Spruce Hill Road resembles a small-scale Second Empire style house designed by John Thomas Southcott (1853-1939), one of Newfoundland's most prominent architects. Modern windows have replaced the old.

8 The Hermitage

The Hermitage, located across from the churchyard, is one of the oldest structures remaining in the province. Details of its history are sketchy but it has reportedly been dated to 1793. Largely of stone construction with a slate roof, it has received a Conception Bay South Historic Trust Award. It gained its moniker from rumor that a hermit once resided there.

9 Cemetery

Cross the street to the cemetery and enter by the side gate. The meticulously maintained hallowed ground serve as the resting place for generations of former residents of the historic district. The oldest headstone, at the north corner of the church, marks the grave of Joseph Waugh who died in 1861.