



# RYAN PREMISES

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
OF CANADA

## *Management Plan*





FEBRUARY 2007

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OF CANADA

*Management Plan*

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## Foreword



Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas offer Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast unique opportunities to experience and understand our wonderful country. They are places of learning, recreation and fun where Canadians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Canada.

From our smallest national park to our most visited national historic site to our largest national marine conservation area, each of these places offers Canadians and visitors unique opportunities to experience Canada. These places of beauty, wonder and learning are valued by Canadians – they are part of our past, our present and our future.

Our Government's goal is to ensure that each of these special places is conserved.

We see a future in which these special places will further Canadians' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Canada, the economic well-being of communities, and the vitality of our society.

Our Government's vision is to build a culture of heritage conservation in Canada by offering Canadians exceptional opportunities to experience our natural and cultural heritage.

These values form the foundation of the new management plan for Ryan Premises National Historic Site of Canada. I offer my appreciation to the many thoughtful Canadians who helped to develop this plan, particularly to our dedicated team from Parks Canada, and to all those local organizations and individuals who have demonstrated their good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In this same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Ryan Premises National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Baird".

**John Baird**  
*Minister of the Environment*



## Recommendations

*Recommended by:*



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**Alan Latourelle**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*Parks Canada*



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**William (Bill) Brake**  
*Field Unit Superintendent*  
*Newfoundland East Field Unit*  
*Parks Canada*





## Executive Summary

Ryan Premises National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) was designated in 1987 to commemorate Canada's Atlantic fisheries. In particular, the international fishery, the inshore fishery, the Labrador fishery and the seal hunt are all commemorated at Ryan Premises NHSC. Parks Canada began acquiring the property in 1991 and the site was officially opened to the public in 1997.

Located in Bonavista, on the northern tip of the Bonavista Peninsula, Ryan Premises NHSC consists of six historic buildings on 2.4 hectares of land adjacent to Bonavista Harbour. These buildings were once the headquarters of James Ryan Ltd., which played a major role in the inshore fishery, the Labrador fishery and the seal hunt. The buildings are an excellent example of a traditional Newfoundland mercantile complex of the saltfish era.

The first management plan for the site was completed in 1995. This new management plan is the first to be prepared since the site became fully operational. A Commemorative Integrity Statement that was prepared for the site in 2002 guided the management plan review. A Commemorative Integrity Evaluation conducted during the plan review highlighted the many strengths of site management, and identified several areas requiring attention.

This management plan provides strategic direction to maintain the commemorative integrity of the national historic site. It includes a 15-year vision, strategic goals, and management objectives and actions for cultural resource protection, public education, visitor experience, the involvement of partners and the public, and environmental stewardship.

The priority management actions for Ryan Premises NHSC over the next five years are:

### *Cultural Resource Protection:*

- Make necessary repairs to the Carriage House;
- Conduct further evaluation of archaeological sites;
- Promote the protection and presentation of the Tenement House, a Level I resource;
- Prepare a Conservation Maintenance Plan for the site; and
- Work with partners to promote protection of the cultural landscape.

### *Public Education:*

- Adjust the main exhibit to provide a more balanced explanation of the decline of northwest Atlantic cod stocks;
- Include contemporary fisheries information in the main exhibit;
- Review portion of the exhibit dealing with Aboriginal involvement in the fishery, and determine if additional interpretation is required;
- Develop additional outreach educational materials for schools; and,
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of the Ryan Premises web site.

### *Visitor Experience:*

- Implement the Field Unit sign plan and work with partners to improve roadway signage;
- Prepare a new parking plan to improve parking facilities;
- Prepare a marketing plan aimed at increasing visitation;
- Develop programs and events to attract local residents to the site; and,
- Improve on-line visitor information.

### *Partnerships and Public Involvement:*

- Collaborate with partners to market and promote the heritage attractions of the entire Bonavista Peninsula;

- Explore opportunities for potential linkages and cross promotion with Battle Harbour Historic District NHSC and Port Union Historic District NHSC;
- Enhance communications with other attractions in the area;
- Explore opportunities for use of the kiosk space in the Retail Store.

*Environmental Stewardship*

- Undertake environmental assessments as necessary;
- Participate in the development of the Field Unit Environmental Management System Action Plan.

A strategic environmental assessment of this management plan was conducted in order to identify any potential negative impacts on ecological or commemorative integrity. This assessment concluded that the actions outlined in this plan will not result in significant environmental impacts, but they will result in greater commemorative integrity for the site.

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Canada's family of national historic sites protects and presents outstanding examples of the nation's cultural heritage. These sites are special places that are recognised as being of national significance to the history of Canada.

The Minister of the Environment has the honour of recognising and commemorating places, persons and events of national historic significance in Canada. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), established in 1919 and governed by the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* (1985), makes recommendations to the Minister regarding the sites, people, events and places that deserve recognition.

The objectives of Canada's national historic sites program, as set out in the *National Historic Sites Policy* (1994) are:

- To foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historical commemoration.
- To ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada by protecting and presenting them for the benefit, education and enjoyment of this and future generations, in a manner that respects the significant and irreplaceable legacy represented by these places and their associated resources.
- To encourage and support the protection and presentation by others of places of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada.

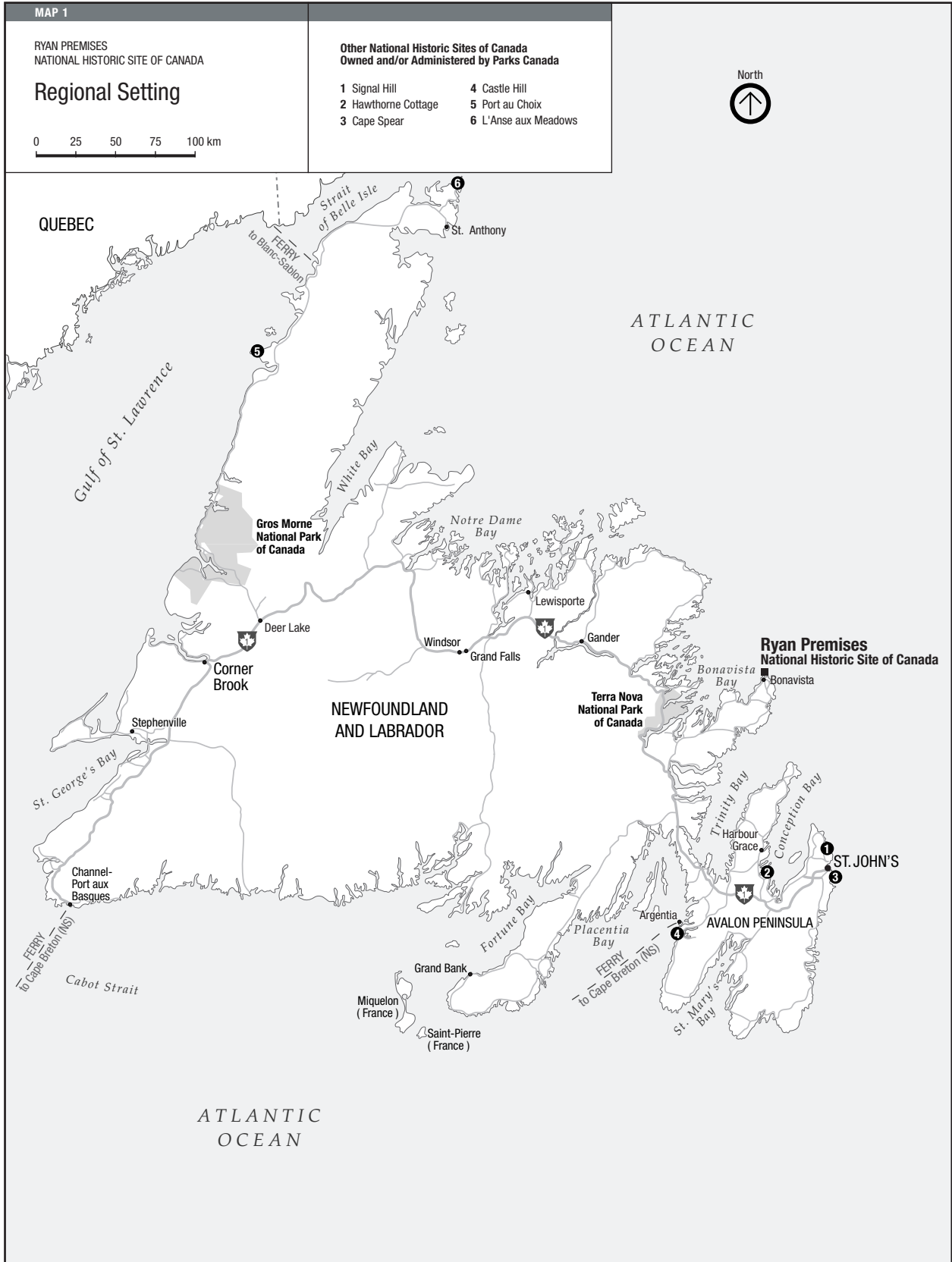
The *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998) requires Parks Canada to produce a management plan for each of the national historic sites it administers. A management plan was prepared for Ryan Premises National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) in 1995 prior to its development and official opening in 1997. This new

management plan is the first to be developed since the site began operations. It sets the strategic direction for cultural resource protection, public education and visitor experience over the next five years in ways that respect the commemorative integrity of the site. This management plan has been developed by a multi-disciplinary team of Parks Canada professionals, who sought input from First Nations, other key stakeholders and the public during the plan review.

### 1.2 SITE HISTORY AND ROLE IN THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES

Ryan Premises NHSC is located in the community of Bonavista in northeastern Newfoundland, approximately 300 km northwest of St. John's (MAP 1). The site consists of a collection of heritage buildings and the surrounding cultural landscape on the shore of Bonavista Harbour. The buildings were once the headquarters of James Ryan, a prominent Newfoundland fish merchant in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Ryan Premises NHSC was designated as being of national historic significance in 1987 because of its association with the east coast fisheries, which is a major theme in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada. The east coast fisheries theme consists of five fisheries that have shaped the economy and society of the region: the international fishery, the inshore fishery, the Labrador fishery, the seal hunt, and the bank fishery. The bank fishery is commemorated at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. The other four fisheries are commemorated at Ryan Premises NHSC. Other important sites related thematically to Ryan Premises NHSC include Battle Harbour Historic District NHSC in Labrador, which commemorates the Labrador fishery and protects a mercantile complex in



what was known as “the saltfish capital of Labrador”, and Port Union Historic District NHSC, which preserves a portion of the historic town that was built by the Fishermen’s Protective Union.

Parks Canada began acquiring the site in 1991, and it was officially opened to the public in 1997. The property owned and administered by Parks Canada is approximately 2.4 hectares in size and includes the Retail Shop, the Retail Store, the Fish Store, the Salt Store, the Proprietor’s House, and the Carriage House. The Tenement House, which is adjacent to the site and was also part of the Ryan enterprise, is owned by the Bonavista Historical Society.

The property was acquired by James Ryan in 1869 and served as the headquarters of his fishery empire until around 1909, when James Ryan moved to St. John’s. The Bonavista business ceased operations in 1978. The Proprietor’s House and a portion of the Retail Shop are thought to have been built in 1869. Most of the other buildings on the site were constructed between 1874 and 1890. The original Salt Store was built in 1879 but was replaced by the current building in 1947.

James Ryan Ltd. played a major role in the Newfoundland inshore fishery, the Labrador fishery and the seal hunt. Using the credit system, whereby fishers used their catch to pay for advances of fishing gear and provisions, the Ryan enterprise flourished and expanded from Bonavista to the entire northeast coast of Newfoundland, from Conception Bay to Labrador. The success of James Ryan Ltd. was instrumental in Bonavista’s development as not just a fishing community but also an important regional supply centre.

Ryan Premises NHSC is an excellent example of a traditional Newfoundland mercantile complex of the saltfish era. The site typifies the nature and scale of operations used to process, grade, store and export saltfish and seal products in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The setting, complemented by the rich fishing heritage of the community of Bonavista, provides visitors with a remarkable sense of history and the ideal place to appreciate the national historic significance of the east coast fisheries.





## 2.0 Commemorative Integrity and the National Historic Significance of Ryan Premises NHSC

### 2.1 COMMEMORATIVE INTEGRITY

Parks Canada is responsible for ensuring that the national historic sites it administers are protected for all Canadians, for all time. Parks Canada's primary responsibility at Ryan Premises NHSC is to ensure its commemorative integrity is maintained.

Commemorative integrity is a concept that refers to the health or wholeness of a national historic site. A site has commemorative integrity when the resources that represent its importance are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for the site's national historic significance are effectively communicated to the public, and when the site's heritage values are respected by all whose decisions or actions affect the site.

A Commemorative Integrity Statement articulates what this fundamental concept means at a given national historic site. It identifies what is commemorated and why, and what resources are of national significance. The commemorative integrity statement also defines the messages of national significance that should be communicated to the public, and identifies other cultural resources that are not deemed to be of national historic significance but still have historic value.

The Commemorative Integrity Statement for Ryan Premises NHSC was prepared in 2002, and is the foundation of this management plan.

### 2.2 COMMEMORATIVE INTENT AND THE DESIGNATED PLACE

Commemorative intent refers to the primary reasons for the national historic significance of the site. The Statement of

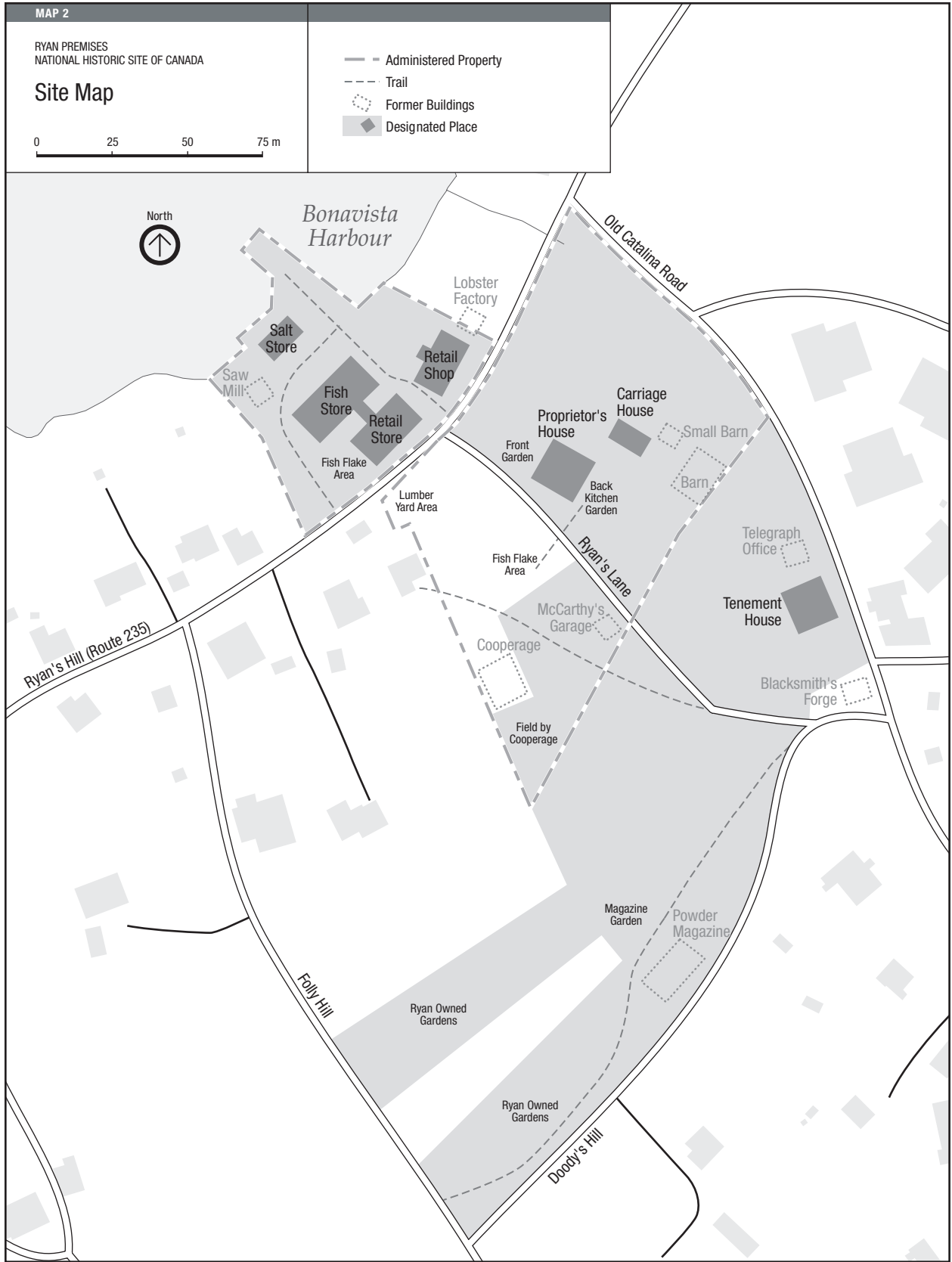
Commemorative Intent is derived from the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), as approved by the Minister responsible for Canada's national historic sites.

#### *Ryan Premises NHSC is nationally significant because:*

- It is the site which best combines thematic associations with Canada's Atlantic fisheries with extant resources;
- The Ryans, whose headquarters it was, were deeply involved in the whole range of the fisheries over a long period; and,
- The richness of the fisheries-related resources in the community of Bonavista contributes to the overwhelming sense of history.

The designated place refers to the physical place designated by the responsible Minister on the recommendation of the HSMBC. Information on what constitutes the designated place is drawn from the Minutes of the HSMBC.

The designated place constituting Ryan Premises NHSC consists of seven buildings, namely the Retail Shop, the Retail Store, the Fish Store, the Salt Store, the Proprietor's House, the Carriage House and the Tenement House, the remains of a wharf, and their cultural landscape setting (MAP 2). There are several archaeological sites within the designated place that represent former buildings and structures. The property that is owned and administered by Parks Canada encompasses approximately half of the designated place, including all the buildings except the Tenement House.



### 3.0 Current Situation Analysis

The Commemorative Integrity Statement outlines the cultural values of national significance as well as other cultural values embodied in the site. It also provides management direction to ensure that commemorative integrity is maintained.

A Commemorative Integrity Evaluation was conducted at Ryan Premises NHSC in July 2006 to assess the state of commemorative integrity and provide information for this management plan review and Parks Canada reporting on the State of Protected Heritage Areas. The following table presents the three overall indicators and evaluation results for the site. The evaluation determined a combined overall rating of 8 out of 10 for Ryan Premises NHSC.

**Table 1: Overall Results of the Ryan Premises NHSC Commemorative Integrity Evaluation**

Performance Indicators	Results
Resource Condition (Overall)	Yellow (fair)
Effectiveness of Communications (Overall)	Green (good)
Selected Management Practices (Overall)	Yellow (fair) plus

The following section provides an overview of the state of commemorative integrity at Ryan Premises NHSC based on the values identified in the Commemorative Integrity Statement and the results of the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation.

**3.1 CULTURAL RESOURCES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**  
 Cultural resources that are considered to be of national historic significance are referred to as Level I resources. The Level I resources

constituting Ryan Premises NHSC include the designated place consisting of the buildings and their cultural landscape setting, the in-situ archaeological resources, and the artifact collection.

#### 3.1.1 Buildings

The seven buildings within the designated place exemplify Newfoundland vernacular architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are all built with a simple wooden post and beam construction, with wooden clapboard exteriors, and wooden roof shingles. They are plain, rectangular structures with regular fenestration, gable roofs and simple ornamentation, with the exception of the Proprietor’s House, which displays more elaborate exterior decorative details.

The majority of buildings are in good condition and are not under any significant threat. The Carriage House requires minor repairs to the roof felt and siding to ensure protection of the building. The exterior of Tenement House, which is not owned by Parks Canada, is in good condition but the interior fabric has been lost.

The nature of the buildings and their exposure to severe weather means that they require ongoing preventative maintenance. Conservation maintenance is conducted on a regular and timely basis, however the evaluation highlighted the fact that there is no formal written plan to govern this work.

#### 3.1.2 Archaeological Resources

The archaeological sites within the designated place include the remains of two old wharves, a harbour-side fish flake, saw-mill, barn, small barn, McCarthy’s garage, telegraph office, and powder magazine. Archaeological sites that are within the Parks

Canada administered property but outside the designated place, and are still considered to be Level I resources are: the land-side fish flake, the remains of a cooperage, and a lumberyard area.

The condition and status of these archaeological sites are not clearly understood. Two archaeological surveys were conducted in 1994 and 1995 by a contractor, but these were primarily for mitigation related to other work on the site. The surveys revealed significant surface remains in the area of the cooperage and some intact remains of the shoreline breastwork associated with the wharves. Some artifacts were recovered during this work. Most of the other archaeological sites remain untested but are not considered to be under threat.

### 3.1.3 The Cultural Landscape

The landscape within the designated place consists of an open grassy slope that rises from the rocky shoreline of the harbour. The grassy field includes gardens and pathways, and the hill affords scenic views of the historic town of Bonavista. Ryan's Hill road intersects the site.

Parks Canada owns approximately half of the cultural landscape within the designated place. This landscape continues to reflect the historical context of the site, although some contemporary issues affect this setting. Some adjacent landowners operate motor vehicles across some of the cultural landscape, including a portion owned by Parks Canada. Several large buildings have been constructed recently on private land in the vicinity of the site. These structures diminish somewhat the sense of scale of Ryan Premises NHSC, but they are similar in architectural style and therefore are sympathetic to the overall historic character of the site.

### 3.1.4 Artifacts

The artifact collection consists of nearly 800 Level I objects that reflect domestic lifestyles, retail business operations and fish processing activities. The majority of the artifacts consist of domestic furnishings, fish processing tools and equipment, and retail merchandise.

Approximately 80% of the catalogued artifacts are considered to be in good condition, while 14% are rated fair and 6% poor. Not all of the recent data on the condition of artifacts have been entered into the artifact database. Artifacts from the 1994 and 1995 archaeological surveys have been catalogued, and are stored in the Parks Canada conservation lab in Halifax.

## 3.2 PUBLIC EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNICATION OF MESSAGES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Public education aimed at raising awareness of the reasons for the designation of the site is a critical element of commemorative integrity. Messages of national significance are the key messages that convey the reasons for the designation of the site. They are derived from the Statement of Commemorative Intent. Secondary context messages elaborate the messages of national significance and contribute to a broader understanding of the national historic significance of the site.

### 3.2.1 Messages of National Significance

The messages of national significance are:

- The Ryan Premises are the site which best combines thematic associations with Canada's Atlantic fisheries with extant resources.
- The Ryans, whose headquarters it was, were deeply involved in the whole range of fisheries over a long period.
- The richness of the fisheries-related resources of Bonavista contributes to the overwhelming sense of history.

### 3.2.2 Target Audiences

The audiences Parks Canada wishes to reach with the Ryan Premises NHSC education program are:

*Independent Vacation Travellers* – These visitors are traveling in the region of eastern Newfoundland and Labrador and visit the site as part of a larger tour of the area. They may have a specific interest in cultural heritage or fishing history, or may simply be exploring the various attractions of the Bonavista Peninsula.

*Commercial Tour Groups* – These visitors arrive primarily by motor coach. Recently, passengers on small specialty cruise ships have joined this group. The St. John’s convention market is another group within this audience with potential for growth of pre-or post-event tours. Ryan Premises NHSC is usually one stop on a larger package tour of the Bonavista Peninsula.

*School Groups* – This group includes students from local and regional schools who may visit the site, or learn about the site through the *Making Fish* outreach program.

*Special Interest Groups* – This group includes community groups, local or regional service organizations, academics, museum professionals and associations specializing in Maritime history, as well as university students with an interest in this discipline.

*Local Residents* – This target audience includes the residents of Bonavista and surrounding communities on the Bonavista Peninsula. Although many in this group have visited the site, most do not come for return visits. Parks Canada would like to increase the level of participation among this target audience.

*Provincial Residents* – This group is a key audience. The history of Newfoundland and Labrador is inextricably linked to the fishery and Ryan Premises NHSC is the premier site that explains this history and its significance. Making this history better known to the residents of the province is an important objective, and all residents should be encouraged to visit this site.

*Other Canadians* – This important audience may never visit the site, but it can be reached through interpretive messages and cross promotional material provided at other national historic sites or provincial heritage attractions, or through the Parks Canada web site and other media channels.

### 3.2.3 On-site Education Programs

Parks Canada interpreters provide visitors with their first introduction to the site and to the messages of national significance. Most visitors then proceed to the Bonavista Museum and then to the main interpretive exhibit located in the Retail Store and the Fish

Store. This award-winning exhibit, entitled *Cod, Seals and Survivors*, delivers the messages of national significance and the secondary context messages. It uses a variety of interpretive text panels, life-size and scale models, artifacts, sound recordings, and video footage that collectively provide a comprehensive overview of the history of Canada’s Atlantic fisheries. Guided tours through the exhibit and the remainder of the site are provided on request. Guided tours are not always feasible for larger groups. In these cases, the site visit is usually conducted using interpreters stationed at key points throughout the site to answer questions and provide information.

Additional Parks Canada exhibits that are located elsewhere on the site include two fish flakes used in the drying of fish; the Proprietor’s House, which includes period furnishings and restored front gardens; the Retail Shop, which includes a model of the accounting office; and several interpretive text panels.

During the summer, several costumed animators provide another means of delivering key messages. Additional complementary exhibits and programs are offered on site. These are outlined in section 3.5.

### 3.2.4 Outreach Education

Parks Canada also strives to deliver messages of national significance beyond the site itself. The main approach that delivers messages related to Ryan Premises NHSC is a school outreach program, called *Making Fish*, that has been developed as part of the grade five Social Studies program. The program takes students through the fish making process, the credit/truck system, and the adaptations that people made to survive in the sometimes-harsh environment. This program has been offered for several years and has been well received by Social Studies teachers from the Bonavista Peninsula and one school in the St. John’s area. Parks Canada is now working on a *Making Fish* educational kit that will allow schools throughout the Province and perhaps the Atlantic Region to take part in this program.

A new grade eight course in Newfoundland and Labrador History has

recently been introduced to the provincial curriculum. The Field Unit has developed a resource package on Ryan Premises NHSC linked to this new program. The package was piloted at teacher in-services across the Province in 2005 and was well received.

The site is also involved in the History Pal program, which allows students in communities adjacent to a national historic site to complete educational programs related to the site, and to share results via the Internet with students adjacent to a national historic site in another part of the country. For Ryan Premises NHSC, a project was successfully piloted in 2005, in partnership with Matthew Elementary School in Bonavista and Motherwell Homestead NHSC and North Valley Elementary School in Abernethy, Saskatchewan.

Ryan Premises NHSC also has a web site that communicates the messages of national significance and provides limited information about the site.

### 3.2.5 Performance Indicators for Public Education

Parks Canada has established a target of 80% visitor participation in public education programs at national historic sites. A visitor satisfaction target of 85%, including a target of 50% for "very satisfied", has also been established. The level of understanding conveyed by these programs is measured by posing 6 simple questions related to key site messages. Parks Canada has set a visitor understanding target of 75% based on a visitor's ability to correctly answer at least 4 of the 6 questions.

Social science research conducted in 2001 indicates a very high level of participation and satisfaction with the public education program. The survey also indicates that the key messages are being effectively communicated and are understood by the majority of visitors (TABLE 2).

The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation considered all of the approaches to public education that are employed at the site. The evaluators concluded that Ryan Premises NHSC provides a good depth of information that is presented effectively through a variety of methods. The reasons for designation are clearly and prominently communicated, and the secondary messages are presented appropriately.

**Table 2: Selected Performance Indicators for Public Education at Ryan Premises NHSC**

Performance Indicators	Target	2001 Results
Participation in Public Education Program	80%	98%
Overall Satisfaction With Learning Experience (Satisfied or Very Satisfied)	85%	96%
"Top Box" Satisfaction With Learning Experience (Very Satisfied)	50%	63%
Level of Visitor Understanding (at least 4 of 6 key messages understood)	75%	81%

The plan review identified two areas of potential improvements to the exhibit. The first involves the section of the exhibit dealing with the reasons for the decline of the northwest Atlantic cod stocks. The second deals with the linkages between the fishing history presented at Ryan Premises NHSC and the contemporary east coast fisheries. The Ryan Premises NHSC web site was also identified as an element of the program where improvements should be made.

### 3.3 OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES AND MESSAGES

Cultural resources that are not directly related to the reasons for national significance, but which are still important heritage assets, are referred to as Level II resources. The only Level II resource identified in the Commemorative Integrity Statement is the HSMBC plaque, which is valued because it contributes to a fuller understanding of the reasons for the site's significance. The plaque is located in the Retail Store, just inside the main entrance to the site.

The Commemorative Integrity Statement identified a number of secondary messages not directly related to the reasons for designation. These messages communicate the role of the Ryan enterprise as a retailer following its withdrawal from the fishery in 1953, and the relationship of Ryan Premises NHSC to the family of national historic sites and other fisheries-themed sites in Canada.

### 3.4 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Application of the Parks Canada *Cultural Resource Management Policy* ensures that the management practices at the site support the commemorative integrity of Ryan Premises NHSC. The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation rated most management practices as good. Several areas for improvement were identified, most notably completion of archaeological resource inventories, and evaluation and recording of the condition of artifacts. The need for a written conservation maintenance plan was also identified as a deficiency that should be addressed.

### 3.5 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Ryan Premises NHSC offers a range of opportunities for visitors to experience the rich fishing heritage of the Atlantic region. The site has a well-conceived flow that guides visitors on their exploration of the site. Access to the tangible extant resources, opportunities to interact with staff, proximity to the harbour, and encounters with living history presenters bring the site and its stories to life. The main interpretive exhibit uses a variety of media that appeal to young and old. The exhibit includes a fishing-themed game, and the Retail Shop includes a children's display area. A number of other programs and exhibits that complement and enhance the experience provided by the main exhibit are outlined below.

Archival films are included as part of the exhibit in the Fish Store and can be viewed by visitors at their leisure. Recent films on the modern fishery are shown upon request in the theatre space on the third floor of the Fish Store.

During the summer months, there are a number of scheduled activities on site. *Fisherman's Corner* provides an opportunity for visitors to talk to a retired fisherman who shares his experiences and encourages the visitors to try their hand at mending a net. Traditional music is performed on site twice a week by the "Cape Shore Boys", a group of local musicians who are also retired fishermen and plant workers. Visitors enjoy singing along and getting up for a "scuff". When children are on site, the heritage presenters

try to do special activities with them such as reading stories or performing puppet shows.

There is also a living history program with heritage presenters dressed in period costume portraying people whose character profiles are based on research into the firm's employees around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These characters – Maggie, who works for the Ryans; John, a fisherman; and Patrick, a clerk in the office – appear on a scheduled basis and interact with visitors either in the first or third person.

The Bonavista Historical Society operates the Bonavista Museum on the third floor of the Retail Store. This museum displays a large variety of artifacts related to the history of Bonavista.

An exhibit called *Outport Furniture: Adaptation, Revival and Culture* is located in the Salt Store. This exhibit displays traditional Newfoundland and Labrador furniture as well as modern pieces based on the traditional styles and construction methods. A number of smaller artifacts and their modern counterparts are also on display.

In the Proprietor's House, the dining room is restored to a period setting. This helps to illustrate the luxurious life enjoyed by the fish merchant during the saltfish era. Most of the remainder of the Proprietor's House accommodates visual art exhibits. A permanent exhibit of paintings by Joan Blackmore-Thistle, entitled *Honouring Our Heritage*, depicts the life of fishing families in outport Newfoundland and Labrador. The remaining gallery space is intended to accommodate changing art exhibits. This space has been used to present collections from the Art Gallery of Newfoundland and Labrador, and photographic exhibits presented in partnership with Tourism Elliston and the Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation.

Finally, Tip-A-Vista Performing Arts stages live theatre performances in the top floor of the Fish Store during the summer season. In 2006, the main work, titled *From the Lips of Our People*, focused on the traditions of the regional community as revealed by oral history research.

Visitors who wish to learn more about the site and its themes can use the Ryan Premises NHSC Resource Centre, located on the top

floor of the Retail Store. Although open by appointment only, the Resource Centre offers an excellent collection of books, videos, tape recordings and other documents that can be made available to people upon request. The local library also includes a catalogue of all the titles contained in the Resource Centre.

### 3.5.1 Target Audiences and Visitor Statistics

The target audiences for visitor experience are the same as those identified for public education: independent vacation travellers, commercial tour groups, special interest groups, school groups, local residents, provincial residents and other Canadians.

Visitation to the site averages approximately 8800 people annually. This is within the range of paid visitation recorded at the nearby provincial historic sites of Cape Bonavista and Mockbeggar Plantation, but it is below the visitation numbers projected at the time Ryan Premises NHSC was developed.

### 3.5.2 Visitor Experience Indicators

The following table outlines the performance indicators for visitor experience. Results obtained from 2001 social science research indicate a very high visitor satisfaction rating for the experiences provided at Ryan Premises NHSC.

**Table 3: Visitor Experience Performance Indicators for Ryan Premises NHSC**

Performance Indicators	Target	2001 Results
Satisfaction With Visit as a Learning Experience	85%	98%
Satisfaction With Visit as a Recreational Experience	85%	90%
Visitor Satisfaction With Overall Experience	85%	99%

Although the survey results for overall satisfaction are impressive, visitors did indicate that the site parking facilities and road signs leading to the site could be improved. During this management plan review, the private owners of the current parking area informed Parks Canada that this land may not be available for Ryan Premises NHSC in the future.



## 4.0 Management Direction

This section identifies the strategic goals, vision, and management objectives that will guide the operation and management of Ryan Premises NHSC for the next 10-15 years. It also outlines the key management actions that will be taken over the five-year life of this management plan.

### *Strategic Goals:*

The overriding goals of this management plan are to maintain the commemorative integrity of Ryan Premises NHSC, to ensure that the heritage resources are protected and presented in accordance with Parks Canada's *Cultural Resource Management Policy*, and to facilitate meaningful visitor experiences that promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the site.

### 4.1 SITE VISION

#### *In 15 years,*

Ryan Premises NHSC will be widely recognized as a premier heritage attraction that preserves and presents the rich history of Canada's east coast fisheries. The protection of the extant historic resources will preserve a portion of Bonavista's unique cultural landscape that evokes in visitors and local residents an authentic sense of place.

The site will inspire a sense of ownership and pride within the community and the province based upon a deeply rooted respect for the region's fishing heritage. Ryan Premises NHSC will be a cornerstone of sustainable heritage tourism on the Bonavista Peninsula. Promotion and marketing efforts will be integrated with those of other heritage tourism experiences in the region, thus increasing visitation and enhancing visitor satisfaction. Visitors to the site will experience dynamic, enjoyable and authoritative learning programs that instil an appreciation

and understanding of the national historic significance of the east coast fisheries in the economic and cultural development of Newfoundland and Labrador, and of Canada.

### 4.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Maintaining commemorative integrity is the primary objective for Parks Canada in the management of national historic sites. Protection of cultural resources for this and future generations is vital to the commemorative integrity of the site. The Parks Canada *Cultural Resource Management Policy* provides the framework for the management of the resources at Ryan Premises NHSC.

Parks Canada will continue to maintain the high quality of heritage conservation and protection currently provided at Ryan Premises NHSC. The following management objectives and actions have been formulated to address the issues of cultural resource protection and management discussed in section 3.

#### *Management objectives:*

- To ensure that the Level I and Level II resources, including heritage buildings, artifacts, and cultural landscapes, are not impaired or under threat from human action or natural factors.
- To increase knowledge of the condition of archaeological resources and artifacts.

#### *Management actions:*

In order to maintain the commemorative integrity of the site and address several issues identified in the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation, Parks Canada will:

- Install new roof felt and make repairs to the siding of the Carriage House.

- Conduct further evaluation of archaeological sites to better understand their condition and determine priorities for further investigation.
- Promote the protection and presentation of the Tenement House, a Level I cultural resource, through dialogue with the owners.
- Update the records in the Artifact Information System with recent data on the condition of the artifact collection.
- Prepare a Conservation Maintenance Plan that will detail the necessary procedures and actions that need to be taken, when and by whom, to ensure the proper maintenance and protection of the site's cultural resources.
- Work with adjacent landowners to address cultural landscape issues.
- Work with the Town of Bonavista and the Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation to promote municipal planning and development that is supportive of the commemorative integrity of Ryan Premises NHSC and considers cultural landscape values.

#### 4.3 PUBLIC EDUCATION

Ensuring the effective delivery of the messages of national significance and the related context messages is an essential component of commemorative integrity. The public education program also delivers messages related to the local and regional history of the site, and Parks Canada program messages related to the family of national historic sites.

The public education program at Ryan Premises NHSC will continue to use the existing on-site exhibits and outreach program as the primary means by which the key messages are communicated to target audiences. Parks Canada will evaluate the effectiveness of the program by conducting social science research, reviewing visitor comments, and receiving feedback from school teachers and students. The management objectives and actions outlined below will guide efforts to enhance the public education program and to address the few concerns identified during this review.

#### *Management objectives:*

- To ensure that the nationally significant messages and the secondary context messages are effectively communicated to visitors.
- To strengthen outreach education opportunities in order to increase the delivery of messages to off-site audiences.
- To ensure that the Ryan Premises NHSC education program continues to tell the evolving story of Canada's Atlantic fisheries by including contemporary fisheries issues.

#### *Management actions:*

In order to enhance the public education program and ensure the effective delivery of the messages of national significance, Parks Canada will:

- Make adjustments to the *Cod, Seals and Survivors* exhibit in order to provide a more balanced explanation of the decline and collapse of northwest Atlantic cod stocks.
- Explore ways to augment the existing exhibits, such as providing access to recent fisheries-related media articles and productions, in order to highlight contemporary issues affecting the Atlantic fisheries.
- Review the portion of the exhibit that addresses Aboriginal involvement in the fishery and determine if additional interpretation is required.
- Develop additional outreach materials for different grade levels, focussing initially on the Grade 8 Newfoundland and Labrador History curriculum.
- Develop additional educational material to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Ryan Premises NHSC web site.

#### 4.4 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Parks Canada strives to engage the hearts and minds of visitors by providing meaningful experiences that tell the stories of our history in ways that are relevant to all Canadians. Ryan Premises NHSC will continue to undertake social science research as part of this endeavour in order to understand and respond to the needs and expectations of visitors.

The rich and varied methods of existing programming at Ryan Premises NHSC provide a good range of possible experiences for the visitor, both inside the buildings and on the surrounding grounds. The greatest challenge in achieving the visitor experience potential of the site is increasing the awareness among target audiences of what the site has to offer. Addressing signage and parking concerns, and improving the connection to the local community are also important challenges.

The marketing challenge of increasing awareness and encouraging greater visitation will require a concerted effort involving Ryan Premises NHSC and other partners on the Bonavista Peninsula. The small cruise ship industry is one area that may hold significant growth potential for the region.

A parking area evaluation was conducted as part of this management plan review to address an issue raised by some visitors. Seven sites were evaluated for the potential to accommodate the required parking for the site. There are no suitable sites on Parks Canada property. The existing parking location was determined to be the most appropriate from both the cultural resource protection and visitor experience perspectives.

The following management objectives and actions will guide efforts to enhance the existing visitor experience offered by Ryan Premises NHSC and address the challenges identified above.

**Management objectives:**

- To continue to provide engaging visitor experiences that respond to the interests, expectations and needs of a range of visitors.
- To increase awareness of what Ryan Premises NHSC has to offer, and to create expectations among potential travellers regarding the exciting experiences that await them at the site.
- To promote the value of Ryan Premises NHSC as a community asset by strengthening the sense of ownership among local residents.

**Management actions:**

To achieve the above objectives and respond to visitor needs and expectations, Parks Canada will:

- Implement the field unit sign plan and work with provincial and community partners to improve roadway signage so that visitors can more easily find the site.
- Draft a new parking lot plan for the existing parking area and use this plan to enter into negotiations with the owner for the re-development of the lot within the context of a long-term lease. The plan will include improved signage, better identification and separation of Parks Canada parking, and aesthetic improvements designed to address concerns of the owner.
- Prepare a marketing plan for Ryan Premises NHSC to identify opportunities and strategies to increase awareness and visitation to the site.
- Develop programs or special events aimed at attracting local residents to the site. Some possible programs include screenings of historical films about the fishery, presentations by experts on local cultural or natural history, genealogical workshops, or craft demonstrations and workshops.
- Improve Ryan Premises NHSC on-line visitor information.

**4.5 PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Parks Canada has worked closely with the local community and other stakeholders in developing and promoting the site. This management plan was also developed with stakeholder and public involvement. A stakeholder workshop was held in April 2006. A public newsletter was distributed to all households and businesses in Bonavista, and to stakeholders, and open houses were held at the site in September 2006. Parks Canada will seek to enhance ongoing communications with stakeholders in order to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones. Parks Canada will also provide stakeholders and the public with opportunities to be involved in the production of annual management plan implementation reports.

The on-site visitor experience is complemented by the presence of the Bonavista Historical Society, which operates the Bonavista Museum, and the Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, which operates the gift store in the Retail Shop. The collaboration of local musicians, artists, and theatre performers also enhances the experience in ways that complement the thematic content of the historic site.

The lower level of the Retail Shop contains several kiosks that were originally intended to provide operating and retail space for small business partners. None are utilised for this purpose at present. During the management plan review it was suggested that these spaces would provide a good location from which to operate a walking tour or ghost tour business, a retail shop for textiles or other crafts, or a visitor centre for the Town of Bonavista. The potential of these kiosks will be explored further.

Additional opportunities exist for collaboration with others, particularly in areas such as promotion and cross marketing with other heritage attractions, and delivery of programs and services that complement the mandate, goals and objectives of Ryan Premises NHSC. Key partners include: the Town of Bonavista; the Discovery Trail Tourism Association, which services the tourism industry on the Bonavista Peninsula; the Provincial Department of Tourism, which operates several historic sites in the region including Cape Bonavista Lighthouse, Mockbeggar Plantation and various sites in Trinity; the Battle Harbour Historic Trust, which owns and operates Battle Harbour Historic District NHSC; the Coaker Foundation, which owns and operates Port Union Historic District NHSC; the Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation, which promotes the restoration and conservation of historic buildings and provides a Heritage Advisory Service to support its mandate; the Action Committee for Tourism; the Bonavista and Area Chamber of Commerce; and Tourism Elliston. The Bonavista Cruise Ship Committee and the Cruise Association of Newfoundland and Labrador are also important partners working to develop the cruise ship industry in the region.

Important partners in the education community include the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, the College of the North Atlantic, school boards and teachers. Through our outreach activities, the themes/messages associated with Ryan Premises NHSC should be prominent in the provincial social studies curricula.

The Rooms, which is located in St. John's and houses the Provincial Museum, the Provincial Art Gallery and the Provincial Archives, is another important potential partner. Establishing a link with The Rooms would provide Ryan Premises NHSC with a presence in the St. John's heritage community and tourism market.

*Management objectives:*

- To continue to enhance the Parks Canada visitor experience at the site through collaboration with partners.
- To sustain and strengthen existing partnerships and develop new partnerships that assist in protecting, presenting and promoting the national historic site.

*Management actions:*

To achieve the above objectives, Parks Canada will:

- Explore opportunities and develop strategies to collaborate on marketing and promotion with other organizations and tourism attractions on the Bonavista Peninsula.
- Explore opportunities for potential linkages and cross promotion with Battle Harbour Historic District NHSC and Port Union Historic District NHSC.
- Explore opportunities for appropriate use of the kiosk space in the Retail Store.

#### **4.6 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

Parks Canada is committed to demonstrating sound environmental stewardship in the operation and administration of national historic sites of Canada. At Ryan Premises NHSC, environmental management considerations include land management practices, building maintenance practices, fleet management, and energy and water conservation. Opportunities to improve environmental management at

Ryan Premises NHSC will be identified and addressed in the Environmental Management System Action Plan for the Newfoundland East Field Unit of Parks Canada.

***Management objective:***

- To demonstrate sound environmental stewardship at Ryan Premise NHSC, and to ensure that the natural values of the administered property are considered and respected in management decisions.

***Management actions:***

To achieve this objective, Parks Canada will:

- Undertake environmental assessments as necessary for developments that have the potential to generate negative environmental effects.
- Participate in the development of the Field Unit Environmental Management System Action Plan.



## 5.0 Summary of the Environmental Assessment

Parks Canada is responsible for assessing and mitigating the impact of its actions on ecosystems and cultural resources. The *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* prepared by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency requires an environmental assessment of all plans and policies submitted to the federal Cabinet or to a Minister for approval, including management plans for national historic sites.

Accordingly, a strategic environmental assessment of the objectives, programs, and management actions outlined in this management plan was carried out. The objectives of the environmental assessment were to:

- Ensure that the strategic directions, objectives, and specific proposals contained within the plan respect and support the commemorative integrity goals and objectives of the national historic site.
- Assess the implications of proposals included in the plan to ensure that they enhance positive environmental effects, and avoid or mitigate potential negative effects.

The assessment included evaluation of cumulative environmental effects from all proposals. It also considered the full range of potential impacts on the cultural resources and natural environment of the site, both from ongoing operations and from proposed projects.

Relevant federal environmental policies, including those of Parks Canada, were considered in a policy review. The proposed strategic directions outlined in the management plan are consistent with these policies.

The strategic environmental assessment identified the following two management actions that are likely to trigger a project-specific environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*:

- Repairs to the Carriage House (because it is a heritage building); and,
- Re-development of leased parking space or creation of a new parking area.

The strategic environmental assessment concluded that any negative cumulative effects that may occur as a result of the implementation of this management plan are not expected to be significant. Positive cumulative effects will be generated with respect to cultural resources, commemorative integrity, heritage presentation, visitor experience and socio-economic values. All actions proposed in the management plan are consistent with Parks Canada policy and federal legislation. Implementation of the management direction and the specific management actions should maintain and enhance the commemorative integrity of Ryan Premises NHSC.





## 6.0 Implementation Strategy

This management plan provides long-term direction for Ryan Premises NHSC. It is also a framework for more detailed planning, investigation and decision making. Implementation of the plan's elements depends on the availability of financial resources, which are determined within the Field Unit's sustainable business planning process.

A summary of the planned projects or actions is presented in the table below.

Priorities have been assigned to indicate which actions will proceed within the first five years of plan implementation, and which will be implemented in future years. Implementation will be reported through the Field Unit's annual business plan and the Ryan Premises NHSC annual management plan implementation report. This management plan will be reviewed five years after it is approved by the Minister and tabled in Parliament.

**Table 4: Summary of Planned Management Actions**

Actions	Priorities During the First 5 Years	Future Year Priorities
<b><i>Cultural Resource Management</i></b>		
Make repairs to Carriage House	•	
Conduct further evaluation of archaeological sites		•
Promote protection and presentation of Tenement House through dialogue with the owners	•	•
Update the records in the Artifact Information System		•
Prepare a Conservation Maintenance Plan	•	
Work with adjacent landowners, the Town of Bonavista and the Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation to promote protection of the cultural landscape	•	•
<b><i>Public Education</i></b>		
Adjust exhibit to provide a more balanced explanation of the decline of northwest Atlantic cod stocks	•	
Augment the existing exhibits in order to highlight contemporary issues affecting the Atlantic fisheries	•	
Review portion of exhibit concerning Aboriginal involvement in the fishery and determine if additional interpretation is required	•	
Develop outreach materials for different grade levels		•
Improve the quality and effectiveness of the web site	•	

**Table 4: Summary of Planned Management Actions** (continued)

Actions	Priorities During the First 5 Years	Future Year Priorities
<b>Visitor Experience</b>		
Implement the field unit sign plan and work with partners to improve roadway signage		●
Draft a new parking lot plan and improve parking facilities	●	
Prepare a marketing plan	●	
Develop programs or special events aimed at attracting local residents to the site	●	
Improve Ryan Premises NHSC on-line visitor information	●	
<b>Partnerships and Public Involvement</b>		
Collaborate on marketing and promotion with other organizations and tourism attractions	●	●
Explore potential linkages and cross promotion with Battle Harbour Historic District NHSC and Port Union Historic District NHSC	●	
Explore opportunities for appropriate use of the kiosk space in the Retail Store		●
<b>Environmental Stewardship</b>		
Undertake environmental assessments as necessary	●	●
Contribute to the development of the Field Unit Environmental Management System Action Plan	●	

## Acknowledgements

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