

# EXPLORE

SUMMERSIDE  
36 POINTS OF INTEREST



A SELF-GUIDED TOUR  
OF HISTORIC DOWNTOWN  
SUMMERSIDE, PEI

Culture  
*Summerside*

Arts, Heritage and Culture

CITY OF SUMMERSIDE

## Walking Tour of Historic Summerside, PEI

*Discover even more about the place we call home! Summerside has an interesting history waiting to be explored. This walking tour, centered on the waterfront and historic downtown core, can be done in part or in its entirety.*

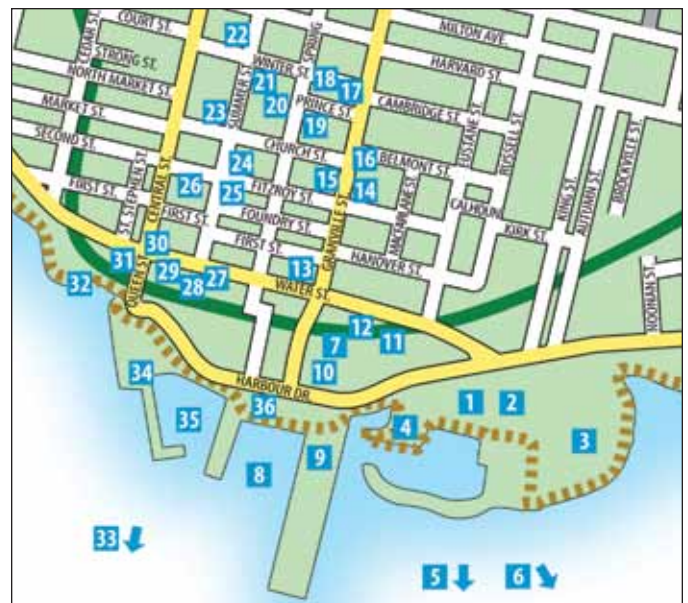
Summerside is on an isthmus that separates Bedeque Bay and the Northumberland Strait on the Island's south side from Malpeque Bay and the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the Island's north side. At its narrowest point the width is a mere four miles.

Its story is drawn from land and sea, and is steeped in the entrepreneurial and working-class spirit of its people. The early Mi'kmaq, who summer-camped and fished in the area, named it Eptek, meaning "hot place" in reference to the warm waters in comparison to those on the north side of the Island.

The first Europeans in the area were Acadian (French) families, who rendered the word Eptek as Bedeque. They settled along the shorelines and inlets of Malpeque and Bedeque Bays and reaped traditional crops of marsh hay, wheat, and peas. Their individual fates are not entirely known in the Acadian deportation of 1758.

The 1763 Treaty of Paris saw the French give up their lands in North America to the English and thus unfolded the next chapter of settlement. In 1765, Captain Samuel Holland began his survey of eastern North America on the Island. He divided it into sixty-seven townships (lots) of approximately 20,000 acres each. The area that would one day become known as Summerside fell within Lot 17.

The first British settler in the area was United Empire Loyalist, Daniel Green. In 1785, the Pennsylvania Quaker was granted 500 acres for his loyalty to the British king during the American War of Independence. He cleared and farmed the land, and with time acquired another 500 acres. The area became known as Green's Shore.



By the early 1850s, the natural harbour gave rise to a thriving wooden ship building industry. Ships could easily be launched in the bay that flowed directly into the Northumberland Strait leading to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean. Farmland gave way to a shipbuilding village that grew to be a town incorporated in 1877. It became the main service centre for Prince County. Designated a city in 1995, Summerside, with a population of less than 15,000, retains its small town feel. The cultural heritage of the people of Summerside is primarily drawn from Acadian (35 %) Scottish, Irish, English, and Loyalist stock. In the 21st century the city is becoming more diverse with newcomers from around the world.

## Begin outside the Wyatt Centre

### THE CREATION OF WATERFRONT LAND



The shoreline of Summerside in the early years lay directly south of the railway tracks. As early as 1894, one of the merchants started filling in his waterfront property to make usable ground. The major push to develop the shoreline took place in 1974, when eleven acres of land were created by infilling an eastern portion of the harbour. A number of

buildings and facilities were built on the new land including the four below:

#### 1 WYATT CENTRE, HARBOURFRONT THEATRE, AND VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE – 124 Heather Moyse Drive

A community dream was achieved in 1996, with the opening of the multipurpose facility, The Wyatt Centre, which houses the Harbourfront Theatre, the Visitor Information Centre, and the Eptek Art and Culture Centre. The 527-seat theatre encourages and nurtures the development and appreciation of the performing arts through local and touring productions.

#### 2 EPTEK ART AND CULTURE CENTRE – 130 Heather Moyse Drive

Eptek Art and Culture Centre, a PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation site, which first opened in 1978, adopted the Mi'kmaq name for the area. The year-round centre offers a wide range of regional and provincial exhibits, as well as a permanent exhibit on the history of Summerside. The gift shop features the work of Island artists and artisans.

#### 3 HOLLAND COLLEGE SUMMERSIDE WATERFRONT CAMPUS AND MARINE CENTRE – 98 Water Street



In 2012, the Summerside Waterfront Campus of Holland College was established in the former Waterfront Mall. This community college takes its name from the British surveyor, Samuel Holland. The Holland College Marine Training Centre provides Transport Canada approved training with an international reputation for excellence.

#### 4 SPINNAKERS' LANDING – 150 Heather Moyse Drive

Spinnakers' Landing, reflecting the design of an early Island fishing village, is Summerside's waterfront market from June to September. A spinnaker is a large triangular sail set on a spar that swings out over the bow of a vessel and is used when running before the wind.



#### 5 HOLMAN'S ISLAND – Summerside Harbour

From the water side of Spinnakers Landing is the 90-acre Holman's Island. In 1873, James Ludlow Holman, a pioneer in Canadian tourism, opened the 125-room luxury Island Park Hotel. It was left vacant after his death in 1877 and burned down in 1904. The Island was identified in the 1980s as an area of natural significance for wildlife habitat, natural flora and fauna and was acquired by the Nature Conservancy of Canada in 2016.

#### 6 FAMOUS ISLAND OYSTERS

Oyster fishermen in small dories often can be seen at work in the Summerside harbour. They still fish with the equipment used from the early days of the industry: a small dory, oyster tongs, and a strong back. The area is considered one of the best oyster growing areas in the province due to the strong tidal surges that replenish Bedeque Bay twice daily.

#### 7 THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD – 240 Heather Moyse Drive

The coast guard has operated in PEI since 1875. The Summerside Canadian Coast Guard Operational Services Centre, which opened in 2003, is a 24/7 search and rescue operation focused on the Northumberland Strait and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Summerside was chosen because the harbour can be kept open late into the winter season and the distance by land to transport rigid-hull inflatable vessels to the Gulf of St. Lawrence is only 10 kilometres.

#### 8 PORT OF SUMMERSIDE – 162 Heather Moyse Drive



The port was the focal point of early Summerside and private wharves lined the waterfront. Schooners, loaded with farm produce, fish and lumber sailed away to Britain, her colonies, and the United States, and returned loaded with exciting wares. Only the Government and Queen's wharves remain, but excitement is still generated when a ship is seen entering the harbour and the purpose of its arrival reported upon.

#### 9 POTATO PANELS ON PORT BUILDING – 162 Heather Moyse Drive

PEI has been growing world famous potatoes since the tuber was first introduced by Irish immigrants. By the 1830s, it was the colony's main export, and still remains its principle export crop. During WWII a potato dehydration plant was built in Summerside to produce potato flakes for the military.

#### 10 LOYALIST CAIRN – Waterfront Park – 195 Heather Moyse Drive

United Empire Loyalists, though not often mentioned in American history books, are well documented and celebrated in Canadian history. They were the men and women who stayed loyal to the King of England when the American War of Independence broke out in 1775. Driven from their homes in the thirteen colonies, they sought sanctuary and a new beginning in the northern British colonies still friendly to the King.

### 11 CONFEDERATION TRAIL SCULPTURE

When trains were discontinued on PEI in 1989, the tracks were removed to make way for a walking and biking trail named The Confederation Trail, which extends from one end of the Island to the other. In 2000, PEI became the first province in Canada to complete its section of the Trans Canada Trail.

### 12 FORMER TRAIN STATION – 192 Water Street

The former Railway Station, completed in 1927, sits on the corner of Water and Granville. The building of a railway in the late 1860s bankrupted the colony of Prince Edward Island and forced it into Canadian Confederation in 1873. The railway was to have bypassed Summerside, but the businessmen of the town kicked up such a fuss the track was diverted through the downtown.

### 13 WATER STREET

As the shipbuilders converged on the shoreline in the 1850s, they were followed by the merchants, tradesmen, and professionals who built their businesses. The roadway stretched from Read's Corner on the east to St. Eleanor's on the west, making Water Street the principal thoroughfare. It remained the primary mercantile centre of the community until the early 1980s, when the introduction of large malls and chain stores caused decline to local businesses.

There are approximately half a dozen "gable end to the street" buildings that remain on Water Street. The shop-style building was common in the 1860s. Fire struck numerous times in the downtown commercial area, forcing brick to become the preferred building material after most of the buildings on Water between Summer and Central Streets burned down in 1916.

## Turn up Granville Street

### 14 COLIN MCLENNAN — RICHARD HUNT HOUSE

193 Fitzroy Street (Corner of Granville and Fitzroy)



The two-storey Neoclassical Georgian House, built in the 1860s for the merchant and shipbuilder, Colin McLennan, is a testament to the wealth generated during the shipbuilding era. Postmaster Richard Hunt bought the property in 1891. During the time he served as the American Consul, the American flag flew in the side yard. The house survived the

1906 fire (155 buildings destroyed in one night) thanks to the Hunt family, who worked frantically to keep wet blankets on the roof preventing cinders from setting it ablaze. Their actions are credited with saving the houses north of it on Granville Street.

### 15 JEREMIAH NOONAN HOUSE

203 Fitzroy Street (Corner of Granville and Fitzroy)

This home is a Queen Anne Revival built in 1897 for the large family of Jeremiah Noonan, a successful businessman in the community. This architectural style was popular from the late 1800s up to 1914 and can incorporate asymmetrical facades, steeply pitched and irregular rooflines, gables, circular and square towers, turrets, overhanging eaves, wraparound verandas, fish scale siding, and bright colours. The Noonan House has several wall claddings: clapboard, fish-scale shingles, and board and batten.

### 16 NEIL MACQUARRIE HOUSE – 61 Granville Street

PEI's most famous architect, William Critchlow Harris, designed this large, attractive house, built in 1890 at a cost of \$2,400, for prominent Summerside lawyer Neil McQuarrie. The house is built in a High Victorian style on a rectangular plan with a variety of bay windows and asymmetrical elements. The stone in the foundation, as in many Summerside homes, was imported from the stone quarries of Wallace, Nova Scotia.

## Turn left on Prince Street

### 17 LEFURGEY HOUSE – PART OF WYATT HERITAGE PROPERTIES – OPERATED BY CULTURE SUMMERSIDE – 205 Prince Street



This Gothic Revival house, with a cupola, was built in 1867 for carriage and sleigh builder, William Tuplin. In 1871, it was sold to John E. Lefurgey, a prominent shipbuilder, merchant, and Member of the Legislative Assembly, who embellished the house and named it Bonny

Castle, meaning "Happy Place." Lefurgey's son, Alfred, sold the house in 1924 to J. E. Dalton, a druggist and hotel owner. In 1966, Miss Wanda Wyatt, granddaughter of John Lefurgey, bought the property and turned it into a cultural centre for Summerside, which was gifted as part of Wyatt Heritage Properties. It now serves as the programming and office space of Culture Summerside and is open to the public for self-guided tours Monday through Friday.

### 18 WYATT HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM – 85 Spring Street



The Georgian style house was built in 1867 for Summerside merchant, Robert Strong. In 1887, John Lefurgey purchased the house, which became the home of his daughter, Cecelia, when she married Ned Wyatt in 1890. Wyatt was a lawyer and Member of the PEI Legislature. The

two Wyatt daughters, Dorothy and Wanda, lived in the house throughout their lifetimes. Wanda was a graduate of McGill University, the first woman in PEI to study law, and an astute businesswoman. Ever dedicated to Prince Edward Island and its people, Wanda established, in 1966, the Wyatt Foundation, a charitable organization that supported non-profit Island causes. After her death in 1998, her home was gifted to the City of Summerside and operates as one of the few historic house museums in Canada dedicated to a female, and containing all the original furnishings.

### 19 MACNAUGHT HISTORY CENTRE AND ARCHIVES – 75 Spring Street



The heritage value of the MacNaught house lies in its association with two prominent Summerside citizens. Land surveyor and Prince County Superintendent of Public Works, John Clay, erected the dwelling in 1887. Summerside lawyer, J. Watson MacNaught, who served four

terms in Parliament and was a member of the 1960s Lester Pearson cabinet, occupied the house with his family for several decades. The building is now the third component of Wyatt Heritage Properties and serves as a repository for local historic and genealogical research materials. It houses a small art gallery and has on display a pocket watch of Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. MacDonald.

## 20 MEMORIAL SQUARE



Memorial Square, established in 1889, is the oldest public green space in Summerside. It was developed around the Militia Drill Shed to provide some artistic beauty to the town and pleasure to the citizens of the day. The park was expanded after the Drill Shed burned in the fire of 1906 and in 1922 became the memorial site for Prince County soldiers who lost their lives in the Great War. The names of those who died in WWII and the Korean War were later added. There is also a monument dedicated to the men from the British Commonwealth who died while training during WWII at three RCAF Stations on Prince Edward Island.

## 21 THOMAS CRABBE HOUSE – 89 Summer Street

Bordering the northwest corner of the park is the Crabbe House built in the mid-1870s. The land was purchased from John Green, a grandson of Summerside's original settler, Daniel Green. A daughter of Thomas Crabbe lived in the house until 1943. Her son, Henry Whitney, who grew up in Summerside, became vice-president of the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York City.

## 22 FANNING HOUSE – 98 Summer Street

P. T. Fanning, the owner of a boot and shoe company, built this Queen Anne Revival House that was completed in 1891. A highlight of the house is the three rounded windows lighting the inner staircase. A later owner of the house was Thane Campbell, Island premier 1936-1943, who played a role in the creation of the National Park in the Cavendish-Dalvay area. As Chief Justice of the Island Supreme Court he had the privilege of swearing in his son, Alex Campbell as premier in 1966.

## 23 ST. MARY'S CHURCH – 66 Summer Street



This brick church replaced the wooden Gothic Revival style church burnt in the 1906 fire. It was designed by local architect George Baker. The church bell was not included in the rebuild, but rather was loaned for several years to the fire department, and then stored in someone's garage until 2003 when the current housing was built for it. The church hall next door was constructed in the 1920s.

## 24 SUMMERSIDE CITY HALL – 275 Fitzroy Street



The impressive Romanesque Revival building was built between the years 1884 and 1886, at a cost of \$31,000. It was designed as a post office by Thomas Fuller, the chief architect for the Dominion Department of Public Works. It is the only known public building in Canada to feature the carving of a pig, which is found over the right front door on Summer Street. The building was decommissioned as a post office in 1952 and became the new town hall in 1956, after fire destroyed the former civic building. In 2003 it was expanded in a historically sensitive manner at the cost of \$3.5 million to meet the space needs of the municipal government.



## 25 THE ARMOURY – HOME OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOX MUSEUM 33 Summer Street



In 1911, this handsome Colonial Revival building became the replacement for the militia drill shed lost in the 1906 fire. It was a recruiting centre in both World Wars and the grounds were used in 1916 by recruits practicing trench warfare. The Armoury remained in the hands of the federal government until 1992 when B Squadron of the PEI Regiment relocated to Slemon Park. The plaque at the door pays tribute to Georgina Fane Pope who nursed in the Boer War and The Great War. She was nicknamed "P.E.I.'s Florence Nightingale" and was the first Canadian awarded the Royal Red Cross. Currently housed in the Armoury is the International Fox Museum, which presents the story of the silver black fox industry. Summerside was the centre of activity that involved colourful characters, secrecy, high stakes, and incredible sums of money.

## 26 HOLMAN HOMESTEAD – 286 Fitzroy Street (side view Summer Street)



The Holman Garden, on the former site of Summerside's first Catholic Church, may be one of the oldest Victorian gardens in North America. The main section of the house (circa 1862) was built as a home for the priest. It was sold to the town's most successful merchant,

Robert Tinson Holman, in 1870. Mr. Holman established the famous Holman Department Store on Water Street and raised his family of eight children in the house known as the Holman Homestead. His business was carried on by descendants until 1985.

## Corner of Summer and Water Streets, looking east

## 27 HOLMAN BUILDING – 250 Water Street

The brick Holman Building dominates downtown Water Street. R. T. Holman began a small retail operation in 1857 and over time became the biggest retail businessman in the province, dealing in everything from coal to lumber to groceries and clothing. He failed to win support for Sunday shopping, which finally came to the Island in 2007. The main portion of the Holman Department Store opened in 1895 and was connected to the earlier brick warehouse in 1919. The building was refurbished in 2007 by the Summerside Regional Development Corporation.

## 28 FARMERS MARKET – 250 Water Street

The diverse and flourishing Farmers Market in Summerside is housed at the back of the Holman Building. Summerside has always been a service town for the surrounding agriculture communities, and a market place for their produce. In the early days of the settlement farmers would peddle their produce directly door to door or sell to the town's merchants.

## Turn right along Water Street

### 29 FORMER HEADQUARTERS OF THE CANADIAN NATIONAL SILVER FOX BREEDERS ASSOCIATION – 292 Water Street

The three storey building is typical of 1920s commercial architecture. It was built as the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders Association headquarters, which established and maintained the fox livestock registry to ensure the integrity of the industry breeding stock. Its branch offices were in London, England and New York. The building contains the vaults used for the storage of fox pelts.

### 30 CENTRAL STREET



The corner of Water and Central Streets was once the centre of town giving rise to the name Central Street. Numerous buildings have come and gone in the first block of Central Street.

Many were lost to fire while others were simply torn down prior to the days of appreciation for built heritage. The first Prince County Hospital along with some fine hotels and businesses also once graced the street.

## Cross Central Street

### 31 JOURNAL BUILDING – 320 Water Street



On the southwest corner of the intersection of Central and Water is the 1895 structure known as the Journal building, which was built to house the offices and presses of the Journal Publishing Company. The Summerside Journal absorbed its competitor The Pioneer in 1951 and

the office of the local newspaper is still on the premises. The ground level of the building provides commercial space and the upper floors are divided into condominium units.

## Cross Water Street and go down to the Confederation Trail

### 32 BAYWALK (BOARDWALK)

This segment of the Confederation Trail connects to Summerside's 7 km boardwalk system known as Baywalk. It was built in phases beginning in 2003 and extends from the east end of Water Street, through the downtown area, and along the shoreline to the wooded segment at the west end of the city. Of particular enjoyment are the beautiful sunsets over the harbour. Signs along the boardwalk provide heritage and natural history information.



### 33 INDIAN HEAD LIGHTHOUSE

From this vantage point it is easy to see Summerside's lighthouse in the distance. It was constructed in 1880, by the Dominion government at the end of a long shoal running out from MacCallum's Point (formerly known as Indian Head). The breakwater, which has been reinforced many times over the years, was built three years later to protect the lighthouse from storm and ice damage. The octagonal design, common at the time of construction, is now rare. The light is still in use.



### 34 HISTORIC WATERFRONT

Along the original waterfront were the shipbuilding yards that flourished from the 1860s to the 1880s. Some enterprising merchants owned their own wharves, and the current Queen's Wharf, owned for decades by the federal government, was probably the site of the first commercial wharf. At its height of influence, ships of all sizes docked here and the area was busy with the cart traffic of commerce and the foot traffic of locals and visitors alike.



## Proceed left to the wooden boardwalk

### 35 LOCAL FISHERY

Lobster boats may be seen in port during the South side fall fishery from mid-August to mid-October. The spring season runs through May and June on the north shore and the eastern end of the Northumberland Strait. A summer fishery is not permitted as the lobsters are moulting and mating. Lobster is the primary seafood product for the Island.

### 36 HEATHER MOYSE DRIVE

As you walk left along the boardwalk you are on land claimed from the harbour. The street, originally called Harbour Drive, was renamed in 2014 to honour Summerside native, Heather Moyses, a two-time gold medal Winter Olympian in the sport of bobsledding. Various panels along the boardwalk reflect the history of the waterfront area.

## Return to Wyatt Centre

[CultureSummerside.com](http://CultureSummerside.com)

French Translation on reverse  
by La Belle Alliance

City of  
*Summerside*