

It finally
 came. summer.
 True, it may not be
 much when you compare it
 to California or Rio,
 but it's ours, and it's here.

Halifax changes around this time
 of year. The Gardens open, the universi-
 ties close, the tourists come back, the
 residents leave. And you begin to notice
 things.

Like the proliferation of pizza places on
 the Blowers, Argyle strip. And the proliferation of
 rancid, oozing grease stains on the sidewalks
 outside them. It makes you yearn for the sensibi-
 lity of shopkeepers in Europe, for whom hosing off
 the sidewalk every morning, even if it is perfectly
 clean, comes as naturally as wiping tables.

And it's construction season, or, rather,
 demolition season. There seems to be a few
 buildings missing since I last looked. Those of us
 lucky enough to be around here for a while get
 to observe the principle of architectural entropy
 in action. Simply put, this means that a building

will always be worse than whatever
 preceded. Remember Spring
 Garden Road, before the attack of
 the empty malls? Old enough to
 remember Barrington Street, before
 it became a canyon?

Of course, you can always
 head down to the waterfront with
 the tourists, as long as you don't
 mind becoming an unpaid extra in
 a thousand camcorder vacation
 epics. And can stand overhearing
 the comments about the indelicate
 scent of the harbour.

If you want to see a pristine,
 unspoiled version of Halifax, a de-
 MacDonaldised Halifax, forget it,
 you're too late. It's been lost to the
 wrecker's ball, gaudy fast-food
 outlets and infectious North Ameri-
 can sameness. Maybe, though, you
 can retrieve this city, at least the bits
 no-one else wants. Its time for
 meta-tourism. Take a trip to watch
 yourself taking a trip.

Take a bus ride to some-
 where exotic, like Burnside Industrial
 Park. Don't forget your camera! Ask
 store owners for postcards of your
 favorite warehouses, and don't take
 no for an answer.

Advertising is urban folk-art.
 Make a collection of grammatical
 and spelling errors in signs and
 posters. Point out the mistakes to
 the sign's owners; they'll be happy
 for the advice. Or bring along a
 can of spray paint and a chart of
 proofreaders' marks, and make the
 changes yourself.

Go to Peggy's Cove.
 (Weekends are best.) Take pictures
 of tourists. Start casual conversa-
 tions about how many people have
 been swept out to sea by freak
 waves. Use examples, especially
 ones they can relate to "From
 Arizona, eh? Couple from Arizona
 got sucked right off that rock there
 last year..."

Go to any tourist bureau
 and ask them to direct you to the
 least popular attractions, places
 with no historical connections,
 architectural distinctions or interest-
 ing features whatsoever. Request a
 list of bad restaurants while you're
 at it.

Visit the Halifax Commons.
 Not the part with grass and cricket
 players; the paved part, the part
 that has become hospital parking
 lots.

Every time you let your
 attention wander, a part of this
 place gets bulldozed, buried,
 fenced in or turned into a Subway
 franchise. So why compete for the
 tiny slices of this city everyone wants
 to see? There a whole other world
 out there, a big, ugly, dull, mass
 produced world, and it's desperate
 for visitors. Make your reservations
 today; space is limited.

by Robert Currie



1595 Barrington Street in Halifax

Trooper

Sept. 17, 18, 19th

Open nightly 8 pm.-3am.

No cover for Ladies

Sun-Tuesday

entertainment hotline

454-6666



1721 Brunswick Street in Halifax

Playing this week:
 from the U.S.A.

Shady Characters

Sun. to Wed.

Ladies get in free
 entertainment hotline

429-5959

New liquor licence regulations now in effect

Halifax's nightly entertainment hotspots