

Halifax's hidden treasures

by Mark Farmer

It's April. You've been in Halifax eight months, and the furthest you've strayed from home is exactly one mile downtown to get loaded. Impossible? Think again. Each spring thousands of us escape Dal having seen maybe one or two square miles of this fair city. Even worse, some people base judgements on that brief snapshot, so here's a list of Halifax's best lesser-known nooks and crannies. It'll be too late by April, so make the effort to see a couple now. Enjoy.

1. Hemlock Ravine Park Once the private playground of the Duke of Kent, Queen Victoria's father, now 185 acres of thick, largely virgin woodland and trails. Check out the heart-shaped pond, built for the Duke's lover, Julie. Take the #80 bus to the "music rotunda" (ask the driver) and cross the highway at a safe point.

2. Saint Mary's Boat Club The only place in town where you can rent a canoe. Paddle the North West Arm and see the oldest yacht club in Canada. Walk or take #1 to Jubilee Rd., walk downhill, and turn left on Fairfield Rd. Open weekends till early October (weather permitting), 12 - 7 pm, so you'll have to hurry on this one. With a canoe you can visit...

3. The Dingle That big, anonymous tower across the North West Arm from Dal. A monument to representative government in Nova Scotia, it's got an underrated view of the city and a super little park with trails, a pond and a beach. Take #1 to West End Mall, then transfer to #15. The park's open all year, but the tower's only open 9 - 5 pm until Thanksgiving.

4. The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic Cool stuff! Relics from the Titanic and the Halifax Explosion, plus a WW II corvette you can tour. There's a ship's chandlery reconstructed to look, sound, even smell like the real thing, and a deckhouse that pitches and rolls authentically enough to make you sick (what a bonus, eh?). 1675 Lower Water St. Open everyday, except Mondays starting in October.

5. Chocolate Lake The best outdoor skating in Halifax. If you're around in the summer, it's also a great place for a dip. Take #14, 19 or 20 from Spring Garden Rd., and ask the driver where to get off.

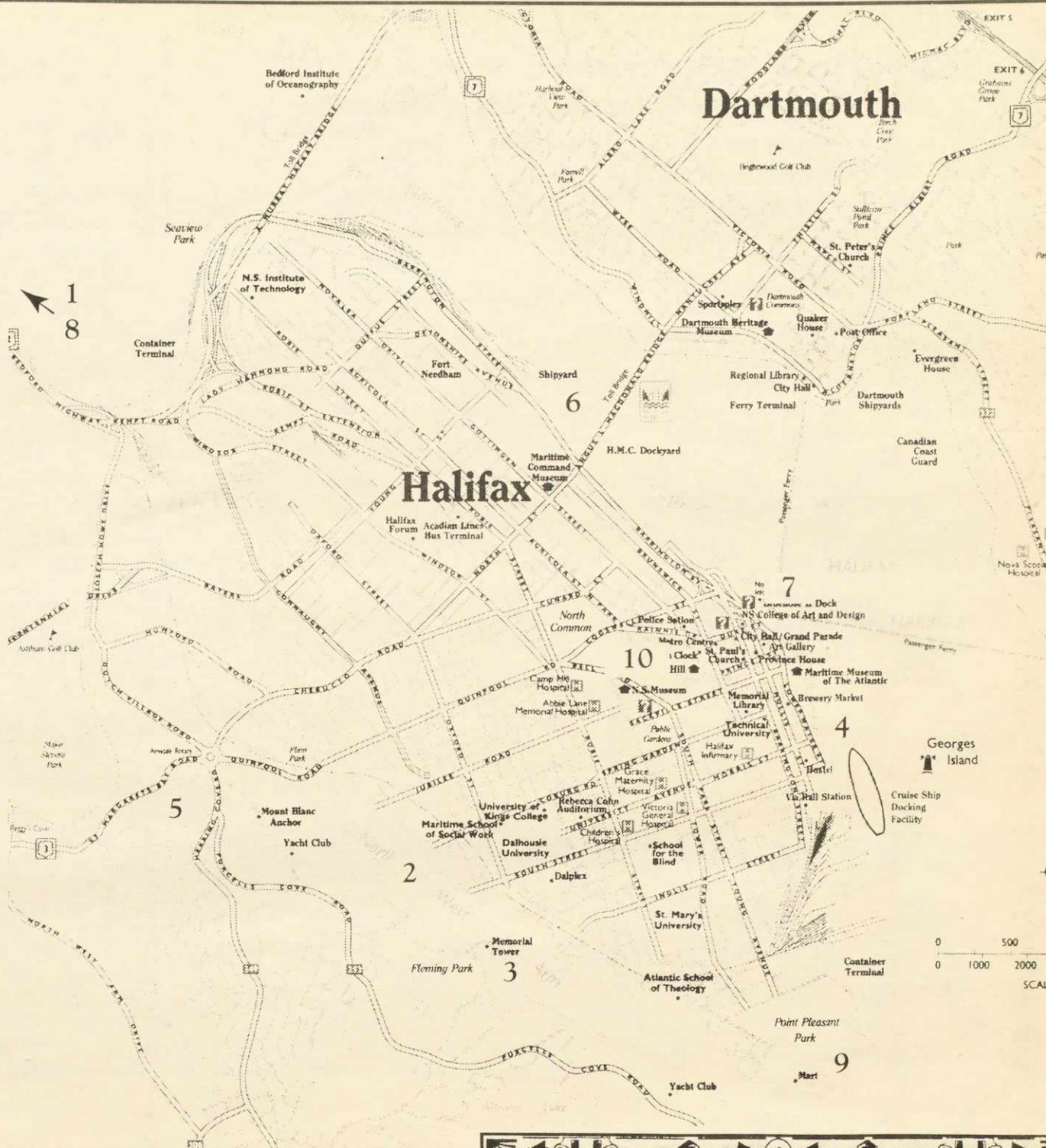
6. Canadian Forces Base Stadacona Why include this? 'Cause it's big, impressive and a lot of people think Canada hasn't got a real navy. Check out our new billion-dollar patrol frigates (OK - \$800 million dollar patrol frigates). It might surprise you to know The Battle of the Atlantic was fought to keep convoys moving out of this place. Walk down Barrington St., or take #12, which cuts through the base during rush hours.

7. Halifax-Dartmouth ferry At a buck a pop, still Halifax's best deal. Surprisingly relaxing and efficient with a great view, and you get to poke around Dartmouth, Halifax's poorer, yet unpretentious, cousin. Lower Water St. at George. Runs 6:45 am - 11:45 pm everyday, except 12:15 am - 5:45 pm Sundays.

8. The West End No, Halifax doesn't end at the peninsula. There are three big shopping centres here, a golf course, and yet another great view — the Bedford Basin (yes we have one of those, too). Mount Saint Vincent University, just off the Bedford Highway, has a beautiful campus with a huge hill for tobogganing in winter. Take #1 to the West End Mall. You can get a bus to anywhere from there.

9. Point Pleasant Park 186 acres of beach, shoreline walks, wooded trails and ruins of centuries-old forts. You can barbecue at one of the many pits, jog, bicycle during the week, cross country ski, tan, or even swim if you don't mind a little sewage. Take #9 from Barrington St.

10. The Citadel The big fort smack in the middle of town and probable meeting place for the G-7 economic summit next year. It's got yet another



killer view, a war museum full of pointy and explosive things, a cool audio-visual history of the city, and the noon-day gun, a cannon firing that's the most accurate timepiece in the city—it's set to Canada's atomic clock in Ottawa. Everything's open 9-5 pm 'til Thanksgiving. After Thanksgiving, then the grounds are only open, 10-5 pm.

Of course, nothing beats foot power. For those urban explorer types, check out...

- anywhere on the Halifax side of the North West Arm
- Young Avenue, once Halifax's ritziest address
- Quinpool road, featuring all kinds of shopping from bikes to dildos to diving lessons to ethnic food to movies to french pastry to

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