

The Story of the *Public Gardens*

The Halifax Public Gardens is one of the finest surviving examples of Victorian Gardens in North America. It was established in 1874 by the amalgamation of two older gardens, the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society Garden (laid out in 1837) and an adjacent public park (opened in 1867). The Nova Scotia Horticultural Society objectives were to establish the best horticultural examples of vegetables, trees and choice flowers. The current site of the Public Gardens was formerly a swampy piece of ground covered with brambles. A grant of two thousand dollars from the City of Halifax enabled this new ground to be laid out as a free Public Garden for the citizens of Halifax.

In 1872, Richard Power was hired as the Garden's Superintendent. Richard Power provided the vision for the Gardens that we enjoy today. Superintendent Power spent the next 45 years creating a formal Victorian Garden. He created the design and installation of the following features:

- ~ The symmetrical layout of tree lined paths, lawns and flower beds
- ~ A network of curved gravel paths
- ~ Select specimen plants
- ~ Carpet beds, scroll beds, and serpentine beds
- ~ Architectural, water features and sculptural elements



Rules and Services

The Halifax Public Gardens has existed for over 140 years. Please respect the following rules to maintain the Garden for the future.

- ~ No pets
- ~ No bikes
- ~ No jogging
- ~ No feeding the birds and waterfowl
- ~ Lawn activity only permitted on the Family Lawn Area

Wedding ceremonies are not permitted in the Gardens. Photos are welcome (no appointment necessary).

Services

Gardens open early May until November 11 (Remembrance Day) from 8:00 a.m. until dusk.

- ~ Security is on duty in the Gardens
- ~ Sunday Band Concerts from mid-June to mid-September
- ~ Wheel chair accessible (wheel chairs available in Horticultural Hall)
- ~ Photos are permitted in the Gardens
- ~ Public Washrooms
- ~ Light Refreshments

*For facility enquiries, please contact 902-490-4000.
For Public Gardens enquires, please contact 902-490-3995.
Visit us online at www.halifax.ca/publicgardens*

The information provided in this brochure is courtesy of the Halifax Public Gardens National Historic Site Commemorative Integrity Statement (April, 1999), prepared by Historic Sites. visit: www.historicplaces.ca.

Historical Facts

- ~ Halifax Public Garden was established in 1874
- ~ The Halifax Regional Municipality maintains this historic garden as a free public garden
- ~ In 1872, Richard Power was hired as the first Public Gardens superintendent, and for three generations the Power family continued in that role
- ~ What exists today as the Family Lawn Area was originally a public lawn tennis court established in 1876
- ~ Local residents have always had strong emotional attachments to the Public Gardens. There is a long tradition of celebrating personal achievements at the gardens by taking photographs for graduations, weddings, anniversaries and civic events

The Halifax Public Gardens was established in 1874 by the amalgamation of two older gardens, the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society Garden (laid out in 1837) and an adjacent public park (opened in 1866). In 1872, Richard Power was hired as the superintendent. He introduced an axially symmetrical plan which governs the overall design of the site. Over the years, he oversaw the introduction of the bandstand (designed by architect Henry Busch), fountains, statues, and wrought iron gates as well as establishing the bedding out of annuals in highly designed carpet beds, redesigned Griffin's Pond and introduced water fowl. He also initiated specimen planting, including many exotic and semi-tropical species. The whole was united by a system of gently curving gravel pathways within a perimeter of mature trees and wide sidewalks acting as buffers between the park and the surrounding city.

PUBLIC GARDENS

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Public Gardens

Open daily from 8:00 a.m. until dusk

Early May until November 11

www.halifax.ca/publicgardens