

# Friends of St. Alban's Adolphustown STRATEGIC PLAN Updated 2023



## OUR BEGINNINGS

We began as a small community group concerned for St. Alban's after the church closed in November 2018. In January 2020 *Friends of St. Alban's* was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and became a registered charity. In December 2020 we launched our first Strategic Plan. Our activities were significantly curtailed in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. In 2022 we expanded our activities to now include: *Hallowed Grounds* (a seasonal outdoor café); guided and self-guided *Tours* of the historic St. Alban's Church; a unique *Escape Room* experience; and, a used *Book Store* in the adjoining rectory. We also held a variety of different music, theatre and community events.

This Updated Strategic Plan will guide our growth and development in the future.

## OUR MISSION

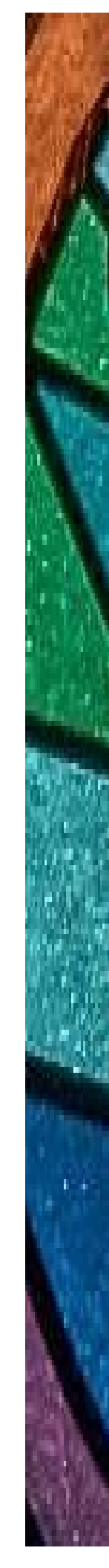
We have two **Purposes**:

- To preserve St. Alban's and commemorate, celebrate and educate the public about its unique heritage
- To transform St. Alban's into a vibrant community hub, **ST. ALBAN'S CENTRE**

## OUR FUTURE

Our Mission will be accomplished through the following **Strategic Initiatives**:

- Finalizing arrangements for a **long term lease or purchase** of St. Alban's Centre
- **Engaging community members** to participate in our Activities and Events and to support our organization through volunteering by:
  - Continuing to recruit a broad base of individuals to become involved in the organization as volunteers and ensure they are appropriately organized, utilized and recognized
  - Further developing a communications strategy through social media and traditional communications channels to increase awareness of our organization and promote our Activities and Events

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- Developing and expanding our **Activities**:
    - Hallowed Grounds Café
    - Church tours and open house
    - Escape Room
    - Rectory Book Room
    - Adolphustown historical walk
  - Hosting 10 to 12 **Events** each year appealing to a broad range of community interests, including:
    - Spring yard and plant sale
    - Variety of different music and theatre events (approx. 3 to 5 per year)
    - Speaker series (in person or online) focusing on relevant historical topics or other current topics of community interest (approx. 2 to 3 per year)
    - Annual fish fry
    - Annual UEL service
    - Annual Remembrance Day observance
    - Christmas event
    - Other events of interest to the community
  - Promoting St. Alban's Centre as a **community facility and event venue** for weddings, anniversaries, memorials services, book launches and other special events.
  - **Funding annual operations** (including a maintenance reserve) through Activities, Events, lifetime memberships, facilities rental, annual donation commitments, and grants.
  - **Enhancing the St. Alban's visitor experience** by continually presenting a variety of different feature exhibits.
  - **Developing a joint working relationship with other local organizations** to coordinate and promote Activities and Events and to share resources (e.g. Quinte Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada, Old Hay Bay Church, the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society, Lennox & Addington Museum, the Loyalist Parkway Association and local businesses)
  - **Preparing a 10 year property development plan** including restoration, major repairs and enhancements such as washrooms and food preparation area.

## OUR HERITAGE

Adolphustown was established in 1784 with the arrival of United Empire Loyalists in June of that year. They overcame early hardships and went on to build a thriving village boasting a district courthouse, a tavern, St. Paul's Church, a school, and later, hotels, taverns, blacksmiths, stores, a tailor, a dressmaker, a barber, and a post office. The 1800s brought a new town hall and a new church—St. Alban's replaced the old St. Paul's, which then became the parish hall. In the 1900s, the church and both halls were the centre of village life, hosting community suppers, dances, euchre parties, and political gatherings. Today, only St. Alban's Church, the Town Hall, Allison House (now a museum and research centre in the UEL Park), and several smaller houses remain.

Visitors to St. Alban's are treated to rare and beautiful 19<sup>th</sup> century memorial tiles, elaborate stained-glass windows, replicas of the Queen's Rangers Colours (carried in the American Revolutionary War) and even a small bronze bell manufactured in England in 1690, perhaps the first bell used in Upper Canada. This diminutive stone Gothic Revival church, built with the vision and passion of Reverend R.S. Forneri, served Anglican congregations for 128 years from 1890 to 2018. As well, it has been an important community gathering place for weddings, funerals, music, strawberry socials, plant and yard sales, bake sales, and the annual UEL Service and Loyalist Tea.

## OUR NEIGHBOURS

St. Alban's is located near several other significant heritage sites—all worthy of celebration, and together telling a many-faceted story of our rich local history.

**Adolphustown Town Hall**, originally a courthouse, was built in 1796, and served both as administrative centre for the township and as a site for the District Court of Quarter Sessions. A new Town Hall was built on the foundations of the old courthouse in 1864. The Town Hall continued as a centre for municipal governance and community events for more than 200 years until municipal amalgamation in 1998. Having received municipal heritage designation from the Town of Greater Napanee in 2015, the hall is currently owned by the Bay of Quinte Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada and is still used occasionally for community purposes.

**United Empire Loyalist Park**, also owned and operated by the Bay of Quinte Branch of the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada, is the site of the June 16, 1784 landing of the first United Empire Loyalists. This 72-acre park includes the Loyalist Cemetery, established in 1784, and the oldest monument to the Loyalists in Canada, erected in 1884.

**Allison House**, a Victorian mansion built in 1876 by D.W. Allison on the Adolphus Reach, is now owned and administered by the Bay of Quinte Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada. The house, situated within the UEL Park, has been protected since 2003 as a heritage site under a conservation easement by the Ontario Heritage Trust, and is now in use seasonally as a museum and heritage resource centre.

**Old Hay Bay Church**, erected in 1792 along the south shore of Hay Bay by early settlers, including United Empire Loyalists, is the oldest surviving Methodist building in Canada. It was designated an Ontario Historic Site in 1957, re-designated an American Methodist Church in 1992, and a National Historic Site of Canada in 2001.



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