

**William John Winters' Cabin-site (CjAe-159)
Long Pond (Pippy Park), St. John's**

Archaeological Investigation Permit #18.02



William John Winters, near Long Pond, St. John's, c. 1950 (photo by Harold Hammond, courtesy Philip Hiscock).

Submitted to
Provincial Archaeology Office
Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development
Confederation Building
St. John's, NL
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Submitted by
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16 March 2018

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Letter of Transmittal

16 March 2018

Martha Drake
Provincial Archaeologist
Department of Tourism, Culture Industry and Innovation
Confederation Building
St. John's, NL
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Dear Martha,

Please find enclosed our report "William John Winters' Cabin-site (CjAe-159), Long Pond (Pippy Park), St. John's", under Archaeological Investigation Permit #18.02.

Sincerely,

Gerald Penney
President

/encls

cc. Jamie Brake, Nunatsiavut Government, Nain

Executive Summary

Under Archaeological Investigation Permit #18.02, Gerald Penney Associates Limited (hereinafter, GPA) (re)located and recorded the position of a former cabin on the north shore of Long Pond in St. John's, once owned by William John Winters, a World War One veteran of Inuit descent from Ford's Harbour, Labrador. Having served at the Somme and at Gueuedecourt, he received a medical discharge in 1917, and eventually settled in St. John's. The site is registered as CjAe-159 (William John Winters Cabin site).

The location of the site was known, having been incorporated into the signage for a trail system around (Upper) Long Pond by the C.A. Pippy Park Commission and the Grand Concourse Foundation. Registration of this known site was a recommendation in our report on Labrador Inuit World War One veterans compiled in 2017 for the Nunatsiavut Government.

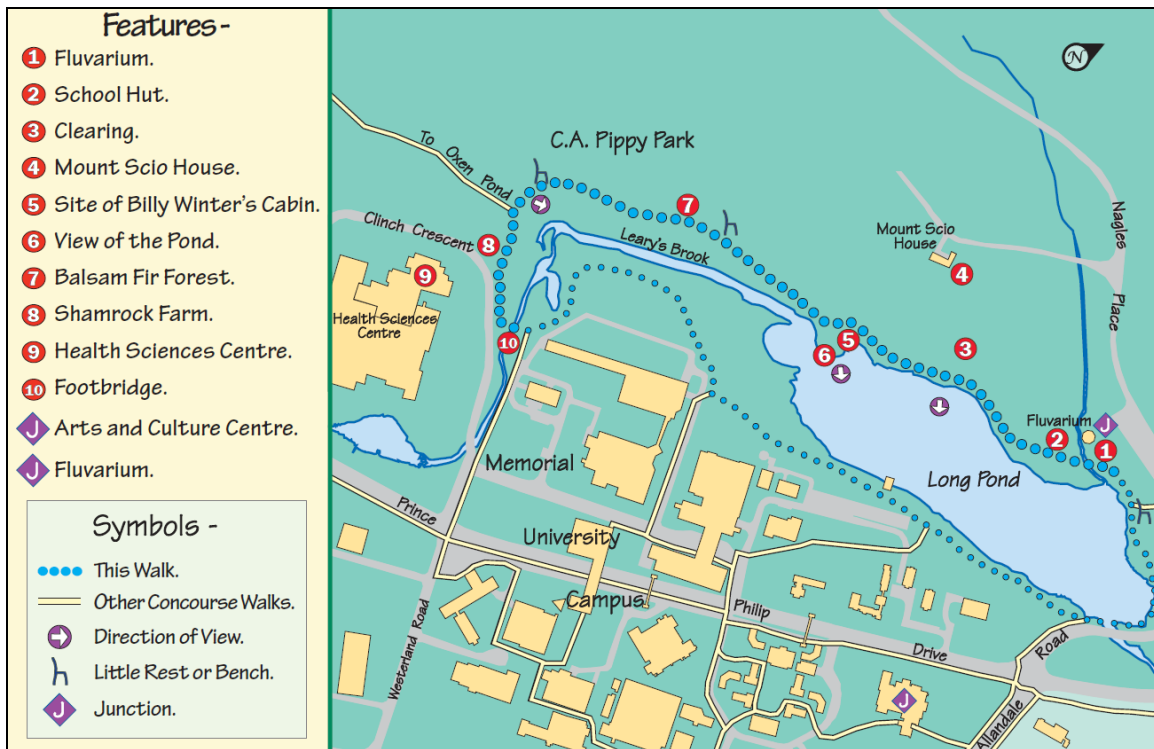
Surface survey revealed a disused area in the public park, with a small but varied deposit of mid-20th century cultural material. Nearby, a small raised platform was identified, and is the cabin's probable location. Examination of the cabin site and immediate area identified no structural remains. The cabin is a short distance from the shoreline, between it and the main trail along the north side of the pond. Traces of a former path were visible just above the high water mark, and a likely boat ramp was observed.

The site is under no current threat, being an Environmental Protected Area under regulation of the Pippy Park Commission, as well as being subject to the *Historic Resources Act*. No further testing is recommended, unless the site should be subject to some unanticipated threat. A broader archaeological landscape assessment of Pippy Park, continuing from the work conducted in 1989, should be considered.

Participants

Gerald Penney, M.A.	principal investigator
Blair Temple, M.A.	field archaeologist; report preparation
Toby Simpson, B.A.	drafting/digital mapping
Robert Cuff, M.A.	historical research; report preparation
Lori Temple, B.A.	cataloguing
Miki Lee, B.A., Dip. CCM	conservator

The assistance of Jamie Brake and Kyle Crotty (Nunatsiavut Government), Phillip Hiscock (Dept. of Folklore, MUN), Ric Mercer (C.A. Pippy Park Commission), Mike Manning, the City of St. John’s Archives, and the Provincial Archaeology Office is gratefully acknowledged.



Map section from a Grand Concourse Authority interpretive panel of the Long Pond, north shore walking trail. The cabin’s location (#5) is noted, but is incorrect.

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Introduction

In 2017 GPA was contracted by the Nunatsiavut Government (hereinafter NG), to conduct and compile research on persons of Inuit descent who served in the military during World War One. In March 2017, a report titled “*Unatapvimesimajuk: Labrador Inuit and World War One*” was submitted to the NG, which contained a compendium of Inuit veterans and brief biographies (GPA 2017). Also included were several recommendations for related research into the role the Labrador Inuit played during the war. One recommendation was that:

The site of William John Winters’ cabin at Long Pond in St. John’s should be registered as an archaeological site. GPA can undertake this once the snow had melted. A day’s work to obtain coordinates, photograph the site, and registered it with the Provincial Archaeology Office will offer a degree of protection for this unique “urban Inuit” site (Ibid:62).

In February 2018, GPA was contracted by the NG for continued research into individual soldiers post-War. One of the tasks of this supplementary project was to record the Winters cabin site.

As the site is located on property under regulation of the C.A. Pippy Park Commission, Chairman Ric Mercer was contacted and informed of our intentions (highlighting the fact that no sub-surface testing or excavation would occur), after which we were given the Commission’s full cooperation.

Study Area/Natural Features

Long Pond (historically, Upper Long Pond¹) is a fresh water lake located c. 2.3 km from St. John's Harbour, east of the Freshwater Valley, at the base of Mount Scio. It is bounded to the north by Pippy Park, and by Memorial University to the south. A trail rounding the pond is part of the extensive Grand Concourse Authority trail system. Long Pond is c. 640 m long (c. 750 m, if a large marshy area at its west end is included), and between 130 m and 170 m wide through most of its length. It is fed by Leary's Brook at its west end (meandering around the south and east sides of the Health Sciences Centre, from a far ranging watershed), and Nagles Hill Brook at its NE end; its egress is via Rennie's River, emptying into Quidi Vidi Lake.



View of Long Pond from Mount Scio, pre-1908; looking more-or-less east, towards the Narrows at centre, right (CNS Photo 0109002).

¹ Present-day Kents Pond was known as Middle Long Pond in the 19th century.

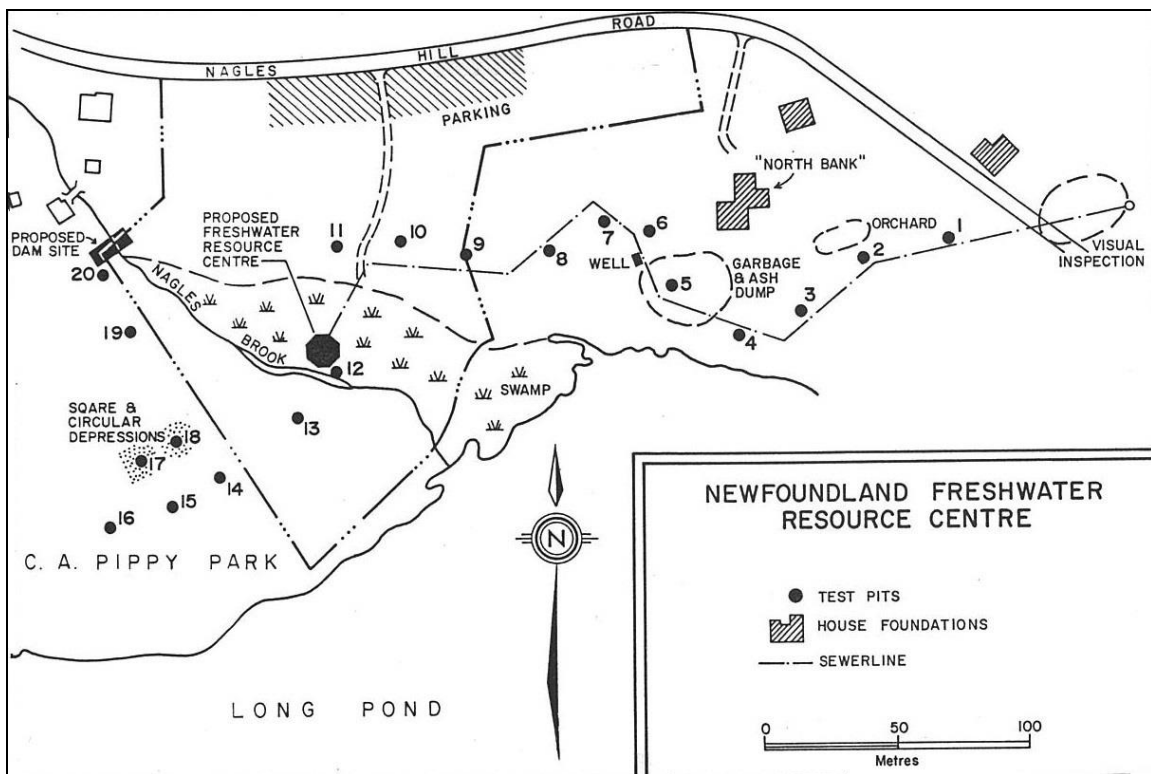
The cabin-site study area is inland of a small point of land on the north side of Long Pond, in the City of St. John's and within the boundaries of Pippy Park since 1966. The Grand Concourse/Pippy Park Long Pond Trail is 20-40 m inland on the north side of the pond, flanked mainly by tree cover of varying thickness on both sides nearest the study area. An open area below the Park headquarters at Mount Scio House, former agricultural land/pasture, is about 75 m northeast of the study area.



View from north east end of Long Pond (looking SW), showing approximate area of the cabin site.

Previous Archaeology

No previous archaeological investigation has been conducted at the site, and investigation in the general area has been limited. In 1989 GPA conducted an overview assessment of an area that was to be impacted by construction of a Newfoundland Freshwater Resource Center, the Fluvarium, and associated works (GPA 1989). Fieldwork identified evidence of mid-19th and 20th century occupation throughout, partly associated with the former residence of Surveyor General Joseph Noad, and other later agricultural occupants to the east along the "North Bank" (CjAe-04; North Bank). Investigation determined that neither the construction of the Fluvarium, nor the damming of Nagles Brook further upstream, would cause damage to historic resources. There were however, potentially significant deposits along a proposed sewer line route that warranted further investigation. Later data-recovery test excavations along this route by Laurie McLean identified a variety of materials dating from the mid-19th century, through the 20th century (McLean 1989), related to the North Bank occupation, including its use as a military hospital during WWII. Metal detectorists are known to visit the north side of the pond.



Test pit and feature map, CjAe-04 (Penney 1989:4ff).

For the larger “central” St. John’s/Freshwater Valley area, limited archaeological investigation has occurred. In 2006, personnel with the Provincial Archaeology Office made a brief pre-construction excavation visit at an abandoned Kelly farm-site on Clinch Crescent, current site of the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism. In 2014, a Memorial University archaeology field school tested and excavated various areas at O’Brien’s Farm on Oxen Pond Road, further to the west in Freshwater Valley proper (Lyttleton 2015a and 2015b).

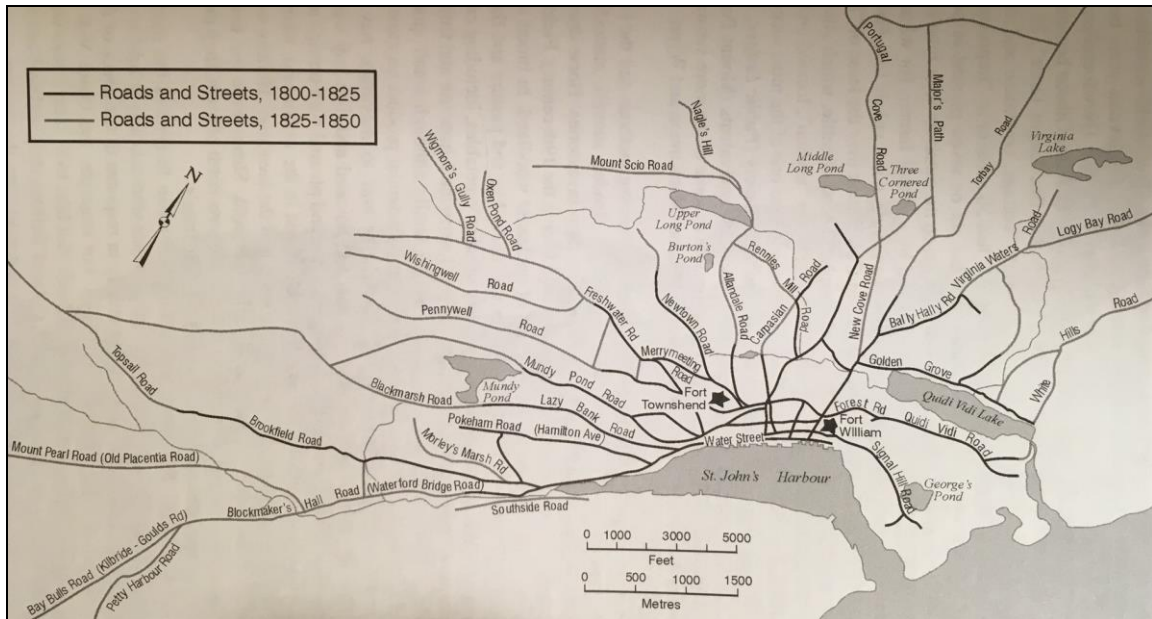


Long Pond, c. 1942 or 48² (Collins 2010:109). Note the extensive cleared agricultural and pasture land. Study area marked in red.

² The publication (Collins 2010) dates the stitched aerial photo to c. 1942. However, a flight tag/ID is still visible in two places, and both date to 1948 (http://www.flr.gov.nl.ca/lands/maps/airphotos/01N--_1948_BW_5000_1N2.JPG).

Historic Context

(Upper) Long Pond and its surrounding landscape has a long history of seasonal and agriculture utilization. Much like Quidi Vidi Lake, Long Pond was a common location for picnics, swimming and other relaxing activities by the middle and upper classes of St. John's throughout the 19th century (Shawyer 2005:125). Long Pond and the Freshwater Valley's eventual year-round settlement is due primarily to agriculture, with land having been cleared and exploited for agricultural purposes since at least the first decade of the 19th century, and many farms well established by mid-century (MacKinnon 1981:25-27; 2005).



Roads and streets in and around St. John's, c. 1800-1850 (after MacKinnon 2005:70).

During the early 19th century a network of roads was developed, connecting St. John's to the nearby outports and extending access to the hinterlands. Numerous farms and country homes sprung up (such as the aforementioned estate of Surveyor-General Joseph Noad) along these roads, some surviving into the mid-20th century. These properties were gradually acquired by the C.A. Pippy Park Commission, a process that continues today (Shawyer 2005:137-139). By mid-19th century, the Freshwater Valley/Upper Long Pond area had been long settled (MacKinnon 2005:72-73), and included well known farms and estates such as the O'Brien farm, the Kelly Farm, Westerland, and North Bank. Long

Pond and the Freshwater Valley remained a rural fringe of St. John's until the construction of Memorial University, the Confederation Building and the Prince Philip Parkway in the 1960s. Clearly, this environment appealed to William John Winters.



William John Winters, with Long Pond in the background. A cabin and chimney are visible at top, left (photo by Harold Hammond, courtesy Philip Hiscock).

Winters was born at Kamarsuk, Voiseys Bay, Labrador, in January 1892, to Edmund and Tamar (Ford?) Winters. He enlisted in the Newfoundland Regiment on 25 September 1915 listing his occupation as a fisherman, from Fords Harbour (east of Nain). A month later he was dispatched by train to Quebec, along with the “first contingent” of volunteers from Labrador, who had enlisted in July. He received his initial training in Canada and in Great Britain, arriving in France in June 1916, so his active service began as the Regiment was beginning to reform and retrain after Beaumont Hamel. He served in the

trenches during the latter days of the Battle of the Somme until being hospitalized with diphtheria. He returned to his unit in early October, during the initial stages of Gueudecourt, but was hospitalized again on 18 October, suffering from gastritis, and was evacuated to hospital at Wandsworth, London.

After furlough, and a period of service attached to the regimental depot, Winters was recommended for a medical discharge, returning to St. John's in March 1917. He was admitted to Jensen Camp near St. John's on 4 April, having seemingly come down with tuberculosis either while in England or during transport back to Newfoundland. He was discharged from Jensen Camp and the Regiment as unfit for military service on 11 June 1918.

Winters' continued residence in the St. John's area was likely related to periodic hospitalization and treatment for tuberculosis. For a time, he lived on Freshwater Road in the household of Chesley Ford, who was likely an uncle. When he received his medals, in September 1921, he was a patient at the sanitarium on Topsail Road. Although he may have returned to Labrador in the interim, "Billy" Winters was a well-known figure in St. John's by the 1940s, living in an area known as the Sandpits, now a part of the campus of Memorial University. He trapped, hunted and fished in the Freshwater Valley, and had a cabin on Long Pond – the subject of this investigation. He died on 9 December 1970.

Field Results

Field recording occurred on 26 February 2018, and was conducted by Blair Temple and Robert Cuff. As the approximate location of the cabin site was known to Mr. Cuff from his youth, and incorporated into earlier interpretive signage by the Grand Concourse Authority, locating it within the snow-covered woods was fairly easy. There is a path to the location of a former viewpoint/bench which is quite near the cabin site (marked #6 on the map on p.4). Site-visit goals were simply to identify the probable location of the former cabin and get GPS coordinates for any surface-visible cultural material or features. No sub-surface testing or surface collection occurred.

Coordinates for the cabin location and associated cultural material and features.

Waypoint	Coordinates (NAD 1983)	Comment
“Cabin”	0369455E 5270861N	Probable cabin location
“Bottle”	0369450E 5270853N	Location of a collection of garbage and debris
“Lookout”	0369431E 5270834N	Remnants of the former lookout bench
“Slip”	0369474E 5270867N	Location of possible slipway or boat launch



View of cabin location (wpt “Cabin”, beyond the dead-fall), with Long Pond’s southern shore visible in the background.

The study area is located approximately 360 m WSW of the Fluvarium and c. 260 m north of the MUN Engineering Building, on the north side of the pond, approximately 16-20 m off the main trail. Off the main trail is a secondary trail that leads to the remains of a former lookout platform (now, four concrete posts; wpt “Lookout”), for viewing the pond. Surface survey through the adjacent (eastward) woods identified a possible garbage dump on the side of a gentle slope, extending from the shore upward³. Examination identified numerous small fragments of clinker, or burnt coal, at surface, along with glass bottles, whole and broken, one of which is a complete brown medicine bottle (wpt “Bottle”). Other material observed include several AA (?) batteries, an iron pot fragment, and other debris. Most objects were frozen into the ground, and not moved; several were barely visible. The cultural material as a collection dates approximately to the mid (into the third quarter) 20th century, consistent with Winters’ occupation.



Rim fragment (handle attachment portion) of a cast iron pot.

³ Most of the visible cultural material was frozen into the ground.



Complete medicine bottle.

Roughly 10 m NE of this debris, on top of the slope (level with the main walking trail), is a flat clearing, measuring at least c. 5 m x 5 m, which is the probable cabin location (wpt “Cabin”). No structural remains or features were observed, however its proximity to the garbage dump and other nearby elements strongly suggest it as the correct location.

There are indications of an overgrown path below this platform, at shoreline, below and to the east of the cabin site, likely remnant of the pre-Park trouters’ path around the pond. This may still be used occasionally, but is no longer part of the official Park trail system with the abandonment of the former lookout. At the eastern base of the slope, there is a small indentation in the shoreline with a fairly level shore, possibly functioning as a boat-ramp/launch or slipway (wpt “slip”)⁴.

⁴ We later learned, from forwarded correspondence between Ric Mercer (C.A. Pippy Park Commission) and Mike Manning, that the latter recalled “a small boat ramp cut into the side of Long Pond” by Mr. Winters. Mr. Manning’s involvement in landscape planning for the Confederation Building/Pippy Park area began in the early 1960s.

Conclusions and Recommendations

William John Winters' cabin site is unique in preserving physical remains of the presence of a Labrador Inuit war veteran in a former agricultural area which is now within a regulated Park boundary – which accounts for its survival.

It is not surprising that no structural remains exist at the cabin site, which was probably last used in the early 1960s. But folk memory of Mr. Winters endured in the Freshwater Valley and was acknowledged by Pippy Park Commission – which accounts for it not having been forgotten.

The site is known to Pippy Park officials, and within Park boundaries, thus giving it an additional level of protection aside from its archaeological site designation. There are no obvious or immediate threats, and there are no present plans to alter the course of the trail system nearby.

Winters' cabin is located in a landscape in a Park with known historic resources relating to 19th/20th century settlement of the Freshwater Valley. The assessments of 1989, and other localized investigations in the Valley, suggest that there are other surviving historic resources which illuminate settlement prior to the government/university occupation of the 1960s. The Provincial Archaeology Office and Pippy Park Commission may wish to consider an archaeological survey of the broader area.

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Gerald Penney Associates Limited (GPA)

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Appendix A – Site and Waypoint Locations



Google Earth images showing Long Pond with the study area highlighted (top), and the study area with the waypoint location of cultural materials and features identified (bottom).