



***Town of Avondale***

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## **HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF AVONDALE**

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**Avondale, a small community in Conception Bay Centre, bordered by 2 mountains and with 2 rivers leading to the sea was first settled by Irish fishermen around 1790. Then known as Salmon Cove (probably because of its good salmon river) the settlers remained small in number with**

**most involved in fishing and the growing of root vegetables. However by 1900 the town sent four**

**vessels to the Labrador fishery with more than 100 men and 18 women.**

**In 1877 Reverend John Roe arrived in the area and noting how the little community of Salmon**

**Cove reminded him of a similar spot in his native Ireland renamed it Avondale.**

**The first church built on a hilltop in the centre of town was struck by lightning and totally destroyed in July 1911. One year later the cornerstone was laid for an impressive Gothic style**

**church which would be named Assumption Church. Over the years this Church has become known by motorists as the Disappearing Church. Quite visible as you enter the town of Avondale**

**it gradually disappears from view as the highway turn and descends only to reappear further down the road. In 1972 the Church was struck by lightning once again and the famous steeple**

**was destroyed. In 1982 a new steeple was skillfully placed in position by local Ironworkers**

and

the Disappearing Church concept could once again be enjoyed.

One of the more interesting business to be set up in Avondale happened around 1880 when a

water powered saw mill was set up and used for a hundred or more years until it was destroyed by fire. Today the new Millville Trailer Park occupies this property and the waters of the river that once powered saws can be heard throughout the campsite.

From 1863 there was a telegraph station in Avondale and the present Avondale Railway Station is one of the oldest Stations in the Province. It has 1.4 km. of narrow Gauge track. Today, the Railway Station is currently being refurbished and hopefully will be opened to the Public in July 2016.

In 1950's Avondale Mill Area became a tent camp for training American Servicemen (On the doorstep of the Racetrack)

From at least the early 1900's men left home to work in Canada or the United States. Some Fished, but the majority were involved in construction especially as Ironworkers.

Avondale men were found on the skyscrapers of America. Some became permanent residents but most worked there for most of the year with their families remaining back home - Local 764.

Both World Wars spoke strongly to the people of Avondale and many of our young people went to fight. The War Monument adjacent to the Town Office is a testament to all those who served and the many who gave their lives both in the world Wars and in the many conflicts.

The first meeting of Avondale Town Council was held on June 7, 1975.

