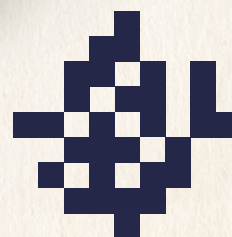




**Halifax
Explosion
100**

Halifax Public Libraries Resource Guide



**Halifax Public
Libraries**



Introduction

The morning of Tuesday, December 6, 1917 dawned clear and unseasonably warm in Halifax. The harbour was busier than usual, teeming with ships whose schedules were dictated by the commerce of World War One. Halifax served as a gathering point for ships being escorted by convoy to Europe, and it was bustling with activity.

Shortly before nine a.m., two ships began their opposing journeys in the harbour's confines. The *Mont-Blanc*, a munitions ship loaded with close to three thousand tons of explosive material, was steaming into the harbour while the Belgian relief ship, *Imo*, was approaching the Narrows on its way out of Halifax. For reasons unknown, both ships headed for the same point in the crowded harbour and were unable to correct their positions in time to avert disaster. The *Imo* collided with the *Mont-Blanc*. The collision spilled a number of barrels of benzol, and the leaking fuel caught fire. As the fire intensified, black smoke billowed skyward.

Unable to control the blaze, and fully aware of the dangerous cargo, the *Mont-Blanc* crew abandoned ship, and the vessel drifted toward Richmond Pier on the Halifax side. Shortly after nine a.m., as hundreds watched from the shoreline and from windows, the *Mont-Blanc* exploded in a ball of fury, laying waste two and a half square miles of Halifax city, killing close to 2,000, wounding 6,000, and leaving 25,000 homeless. Dartmouth's North end, including the Mi'kmaq community of Turtle Grove, was equally devastated.

Much has been written about the Explosion within the last 100 years, examining the circumstances before and after the collision. What follows is a select list of adult and youth materials currently in the collection of Halifax Public Libraries. In 2017, Halifax Regional Municipality will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion with a series of programs, cultural events and commemorations. For more details visit 100years100stories.ca.

Resources

Adult and Youth Non-Fiction (Y):

Aftershock: The Halifax Explosion and the Persecution of Pilot Francis Mackey, by Janet Maybee. Halifax: Nimbus, 2015.

Amazing Medical Stories, by George Burden & Dorothy Grant, 79-84. Fredericton, N.B.: Goose Lane Editions, 2003.

Autobiography, by Benjamin Russell, 264-273. Halifax Royal Print and Litho, 1932.

Bearing Witness: Journalists, Record Keepers and the 1917 Halifax Explosion, by Michael Dupuis. Winnipeg: Fernwood, 2017.

Behind the Headlines! From Moose River to Shangri-la, by Ralph Kelly Morton, 15-17. Halifax: Nimbus, 1986.

Betrayal of Trust: Commander Wyatt and the Halifax Explosion, by Joel Zemel. Halifax: New World Publishing, 2017.

The Bicentennial of the Halifax Fire Department: 1768-1968: 200 Years of Firefighting, prepared by Pearl Connelly, 22-26. Halifax: McCurdy Print, 1968.

"Big Bang Theories: Remembering the Halifax Explosion with Townhouses and a TV Movie," by Robert Plowman, **The Coast**. October 23, 2003, 11-12.

Blizzard of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917, by Sally M. Walker. New York: Henry Holt, 2011. (Y)

Breaking Disaster: Newspaper Stories of the Halifax Explosion, by Katie Ingram. Pottersfield Press, 2017.

Broken Pieces, by Allison Lawlor. Halifax: Nimbus, 2017. (Y)

Canada and the Great War: Western Front Association Papers, edited by Briton C. Busch. 93-121. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003.

Canadian Disasters: 43 True Stories, by René Schmidt, 1-5. Toronto: Scholastic Canada, 2013.

Catastrophe and Social Change, Based Upon a Sociological Study of the Halifax Disaster, by Samuel Henry Prince. New York: n.p., 1920.

Christ Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia: 1817 to 1959, by Charles Walter Bayer, 58-67. n.p.: 1960.

Christian Science War Time Activities, by the Christian Science War Relief Committee. Boston: Christian Science Publishing Society, 19__.

Cinders and Saltwater: The Story of Atlantic Canada Railways, by Shirley E. Woods, 178-180. Halifax: Nimbus, 1992.

Crime Wave: Con Men, Rogues and Scoundrels from Nova Scotia's Past, by Dean Jobb, 57-66. Porter's Lake: Pottersfield Press, 1991.

The Curse of the Narrows: The Halifax Explosion, 1917, by Laura MacDonald. New York: Walker & Company, 2005.

Dartmouth's Day of Anguish: The Explosion, December 6, 1917, by Harry Chapman. Dartmouth: Dartmouth Museum Society, 1992.

Dartmouth's Day of Sorrow: Halifax Harbour Explosion – 1917, by Harry Chapman. Dartmouth: Dartmouth Historical Association, 2007.

"Day of Disaster," by H.B. Jefferson in the **Atlantic Advocate**. January 1958, 15-24.

"Death in Halifax", By Edmund Gilligan. (An excerpt from **Reader's Digest**, condensed from **The American Mercury**, February 1938).

December 1917: Re-Visiting the Halifax Explosion, by Janet Kitz and Joan Payzant. Halifax: Nimbus, 2006.

December 6/The Halifax Solution: An Alternative to Nuclear War, by Leslie Choyce. Porter's Lake, NS: Pottersfield Press, 1988.

Devastated Halifax: Views of the Greatest Disaster in the History of the American Continent, Caused by the Explosion that Followed the Collision of the French Munition Ship "Mont-Blanc" and the Belgian Relief Ship "Imo" in Halifax Harbour, December 6th, 1917, Halifax: G.E. Weir, 1917.

Dispensing Aid: Druggists and the Halifax Explosion, by Mary E. MacCara. Tantallon, N.S.: Glen Margaret Publishing, 2017

Relief Ship "Imo" in Halifax Harbour, December 6th, 1917, Halifax: G.E. Weir, 1917.

Disaster Canada, by Janet Looker, 232-240. Toronto: Lynx Images, 2000.

Disaster Citizenship: Survivors, Solidarity, and Power in the Progressive Era, by Jacob A.C. Remes. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016.

Edwardian Halifax: Postcard Glimpses of an Era, 1900-1920, by Dan Soucoup, 78-81. Halifax: Nimbus, 1998.

Enriched by Catastrophe: Social Work and Social Conflict After the Halifax Explosion, by Michelle Hébert Boyd. Black Point, N.S.: Fernwood Pub., 2007.

The Explosion – A Child's Story, by Darren Brackley. **Shunpiking**, December 1997, 5.

Explosion, Dec. 6, 1917: 75 Years: A Special Project of the Daily News. Dartmouth: Daily News, 1992.

Explosion in Halifax Harbour, December 6, 1917: The Salvation Army's Relief Operations, by Ralph Pilgrim. Halifax: n.p., 1994.

Explosion in Halifax Harbour, 1917, by Dan Soucoup. Halifax: Nimbus, 2017.

Explosion in Halifax Harbour: The Illustrated Account of a Disaster That Shook the World, by David B. Flemming. Halifax: Formac Pub., 2004.

Final Report of the Massachusetts-Halifax Health Commission with Appendices: October 1919 to October 1929, by the Massachusetts-Halifax Health Commission. Halifax: The Commission, 1932.

Four Years Work of the Massachusetts-Halifax Health Commission: A Progress Report, by Franklin Royer. Halifax: The Commission, 1923.

Gone But Not Forgotten: Victims of the Halifax Explosion in Catholic Cemeteries, by Shelby Bailey. Halifax: Catholic Cemeteries of Halifax, 2017.

The Great Halifax Explosion, by John U. Bacon. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017.

The Great Halifax Explosion, December 6, 1917, by Joan Horwood. St. John's: Avalon, 1976.

Grim Visions: Arthur Lismer and the Halifax Explosion, by Alan Ruffman. Halifax: Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery, 1990.

Ground Zero: A Reassessment of the 1917 Explosions in Halifax Harbour, by Alan Ruffman and Colin D. Howell. Halifax: Nimbus, 1994.

Halifax and its People 1749-1999, by Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, 54-56. Halifax: Nimbus, 1999.

The Halifax Catastrophe: Forty views showing extent of damage in Canada's historic city as the result of a terrific explosion on Thursday, December 6, 1917, which killed 1,500 men, women, and children, injured 3,000 and rendered 6,000 homeless, causing property damage of nearly \$50,000,000. Halifax: Royal Print and Litho, 1917.

Halifax, Cornerstone of Canada, by Joan M. Payzant, 136-138. Burlington, Ont.: Windsor Publications, 1985.

Halifax, December 6, 1917: A Photo-Documentation of the Halifax Explosion, researched by Graham Metson. West House Museum: Halifax, 1977.

The Halifax Disaster, December 6, 1917, by Ernest Fraser Robinson. St. Catherine's Ont.: Vanwell, 1987.

The Halifax Explosion, by Kate Carman. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1981.

"The Halifax Explosion," by Charles Bruce Fergusson. **Journal of Education**, (February, 1968), 25-31.

"Halifax Explosion," by Thomas H. Raddall. **Atlantic Anthology**, ed. Will R. Bird, 230-235. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959.

The Halifax Explosion, by Evelyn Richardson. **Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly**, 1977, 305.

"Halifax Explosion-A Great Disaster-December 6, 1917." **More Tales Told Under the Old Town Clock**, by William C. Borrett. Halifax: Imperial, 1943.

"The Halifax Explosion and Going to Siberia." **Cape Breton's Magazine**, Issue 34, 7-12.

The Halifax Explosion and the Royal Canadian Navy: Inquiry and Intrigue, by John Griffith Armstrong. Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 2002.

"The Halifax Explosion and the Spread of Rumour Through Print Media," by Gayle Graham and Bertrum H. MacDonald. **Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society Journal**, Volume 17, 2014, 92-111.

The Halifax Explosion: Canada's Worst Disaster, by Ken Cuthbertson. Toronto: HarperCollins Canada Ltd., 2017.

The Halifax Explosion: December 6, 1917, compiled and edited by Graham Metson. Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson, 1978.

The Halifax Explosion: Heroes and Survivors, by Joyce Glasner. Toronto: J. Lorimer, 2011. (Y)

The Halifax Explosion: SS Stella Maris and the Cape Island Connections, by Bruce Brannen. Ottawa: Bruce Brannen, 2017.

The Halifax Explosion: Surviving the Blast that Shook a Nation, by Joyce Glasner. Canmore AB: Altitude Publishing, 2003. (Y)

The Halifax Explosion: Realities and Myths, by Alan Ruffman. Halifax: Geo-Marine Associates, 1987.

Halifax in Ruins: Streets Littered with Dead; French Munitions Boat Collides in the Harbour with a Belgian Relief Ship and Blows Up; Two Spare Miles a Burning Ruin, in the *Times Series (Times of Halifax)*. Vol. 4, No.2 (2002).

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Halifax: Warden of the North, by Thomas H. Raddall, 241-250. Halifax: Nimbus, 2010.

Halifax's North End: An Anthropologist Looks at the City, by Paul A. Erickson, 54-64. Hantsport: Lancelot, 1986.

Halifax's Other Hill: Fort Needham from Earliest Times, by Paul A. Erickson, 26-34. Halifax: Dept. of Anthropology, Saint Mary's University, 1984.

Heart Throbs of the Halifax Horror, by Stanley K. Smith. Halifax: Weir, 1918.

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"Helping Unheeded: Newfoundland's Relief Effort and the Historiography of the Halifax Explosion, 1917", by Malcolm MacLeod in **Nova Scotia Historical Review** 2, No. 2 (1982): 65-68.

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Historic Halifax in Tales Told Under the Old Town Clock, by William Coates, 186-192. Borrett. Toronto: Ryerson, 1948.

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Hugh MacLennan: A Writer's Life, by Elspeth Cameron. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.

"The Hydrostone's Heaven to Me," by Barbara Fuller. **Halifax Magazine**. Halifax: Jan. 1982, 44.

In My Time: A Memoir, by Thomas H. Raddall, 30-41. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

In the Face of Disaster: True Stories of Canadian Heroes from the Archives of Macleans, ed. by Michael Benedict, 242-253. Toronto: Penguin Books, 2000.

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"Just One Big Mess" The Halifax Explosion, 1917 [video recording DVD]. National Film Board of Canada, 2006, c1991.

"A Kernel of Truth?" Joseph Champion and the Halifax Explosion, by Miles Dillon. **Nova Scotia Genealogist**, Summer, 2017, 82-84.

"The Last Alarm," by Janice Landry. **Halifax Magazine**, November 2012, 34-38.

Like a Weaver's Shuttle: A History of the Halifax-Dartmouth Ferries, by Joan M. Payzant and Lewis J. Payzant, 144-147. Halifax: Nimbus, 1979.

The Little Dutch Village: Armdale and Fairview, by Devonna and Don Edwards, 43, 44, 81. Halifax: Nimbus, 2003.

"The Halifax Explosion" (ballad) in **Maritime Folk Songs**, compiled by Helen Creighton, 208-209. Toronto: Ryerson, 1962.

The Medical Services, by Andrew MacPhail, 327-329. Ottawa: The Department, 1925.

"Memories from the Bells" by Alice Bardsley, **Atlantic Advocate**. December 1984, 41-43.

"Memories of a Day of Horrors," by Harry Chapman. **The Beaver**. Aug./Sept., 1993, 35-39.

"Mi'Kmaq at the Halifax Explosion," by Kenny Prosper. **Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Nation News**, 20 December, 2002, 5.

Miracles and Mysteries: The Halifax Explosion, December 6, 1917, by Mary Ann Monnon. Halifax: Nimbus, 2011.

More History with a Twist, by Bruce Nunn, 116-119. Halifax: Nimbus, 2001.

A Name for Himself: A Biography of Thomas Head Raddall, by Joyce Barkhouse, 1-7. Toronto: Irwin, 1986.

"Names of the Identified Dead in the Explosion at Halifax, 6 December 1917," by Leland H. Harvey, **Nova Scotia Genealogist**, Summer, 1998, 94-112.

The Naval Service of Canada: Its Official History, by Gilbert Norman Tucker, 229-233. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952.

1917 Halifax Explosion and American Response, by Blair Beed. Halifax: Nimbus, 2010.

1917 Halifax Explosion: 50th Anniversary. Halifax: n.p., 1967.

"On the Frontlines of Disaster," by Joyce Glasner. **The Beaver**, December '07/January '08, 16-24.

"Portrait of a City," by Hugh MacLennan. 284-285. **Atlantic Anthology**, ed. by Will R. Bird, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1959.

"Portraits of Survivors," in **Cities**. December, 1988, 35-39.

Pride of Home: The Working Class Housing Tradition in Nova Scotia 1749-1949, by Joann Latremouille, 67-74. Hantsport: Lancelot, 1986.

Purcell's Cove: The Little Place That Helped Build Halifax City, by Elsie Purcell Millington, 23-25. Victoria, B.C.: S. Millington, 2000.

Reconstruction of the Richmond District in Halifax: A Canadian Episode in Public Housing and Town Planning, 1918-1921, by John C. Weaver. Ottawa, Ont.: Atlantic Planners Institute, 2004.

St. Paul's in the Grand Parade: 1749-1999, by Sarah Baxter Emsley, 12-13, 56-57. Halifax: Formac, 1999.

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17 Minutes to Live, by Richard A. Boning. Baldwin, N.Y.: Dexter & Westbrook, 1973.

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"The Shea Family and the Halifax Explosion," by Douglas Cochrane. **Nova Scotia Genealogist**, Summer, 2017, 67-81.

Shipwreck Treasures: Disaster and Discovery on Canada's East Coast, by Roger Marster, 94-99. Halifax: Formac, 2002.

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The Smoke-Eaters: A History of Firefighting Nova Scotia: 1750-1950, by Mike Parker, 170-174. Halifax: Nimbus, 2002.

The Story of Dartmouth, by John Patrick Martin, 62-67; 71-72; 515-523; 527. Dartmouth: the Author, 1957.

Survivors: Children of the Halifax Explosion, by Janet Kitz. Halifax: Nimbus, 1992.

30 Views of the Dartmouth Disaster: Showing Effects of Explosion December 6th, 1917, compiled by A.W. Griswold. Dartmouth, N.S.: A.W. Griswold, 1917.

Time in a Bottle: Historic Halifax Harbour from the Bottom Up, by Bob

Chaulk, 127-128. East Lawrencetown, N.S.: Pottersfield Press, 2002.

T.N.T. by Allan Baddeley. *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1931.

Too Many to Mourn: One Family's Tragedy in the Halifax Explosion, by James G. Mahar. Halifax: Nimbus, 1998.

The Town that Died: A Chronicle of the Halifax Explosion, by Michael J. Bird. Halifax: Nimbus, 2011.

"Tracing the Halifax Explosion", by Tom Mason, *Saltscapes*, November 2001-December 2001. 36-40.

"Truth is the First Casualty," by Katie Ingram. *Halifax Magazine*, December 2015, 26-28.

Views of the Halifax Disaster, December 6, 1917. Halifax: n.p., 1917.

"A Vision of Regeneration": Reconstruction after the Halifax Explosion, 1917-1921. Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1993.

"Visit with Steve Whitty", by Steve Whitty. *Cape Breton's Magazine*, issue 34. 64-72.

We Harbor No Evil Design: Rehabilitation Efforts After the Halifax Explosion of 1917, edited by David A. Sutherland. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 2017.

White Shirts with Blue Collars: Industry in Dartmouth Nova Scotia 1785-1995, 59-62. Dartmouth, N.S.: Dartmouth Historical Association, 1997.

Who was to Blame: The Halifax Explosion Inquiry, by Owen McCarron. Halifax, N.S.: *Chronicle-Herald*, [n.d.].

World Disasters: Tragedies in the Modern Age, 62-63. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001.

Worse Than War: The Halifax Explosion, by Mary Pauline Murphy Sutow. Tantallon: Four East, 1992.

Adult Fiction

Barometer Rising, by Hugh MacLennan. New York: Doull, Sloan and Pearce, 1941.

Black Snow: A Story of Love and Destruction, by Jon Tattrie. East Lawrencetown, N.S.: Pottersfield Press, 2009.

Blue Tattoo: A Novel, by Steven Laffoley. East Lawrencetown, N.S.: Pottersfield Press, 2014.

Burden of Desire, by Robert MacNeil. New York: Tales/Doubleday, 1992.

Dark Clouds of the Morning: A Historical Novel, by Janet C. Burrill. Winnipeg: Word Alive Press, 2011.

Exploded Identity: A Saga of the Halifax Explosion, by Catherine M. Mildon. Victoria: Trafford, 2005.

Glass Voices, by Carol Bruneau. Toronto: Cormorant Books, 2007.

Highlanders Without Kilts: One Canadian Family's Loss on the Slopes of Vimy Ridge and One Nation's Altered Sense of Self, by Denis Dauphinee. Bradley, ME. Kicking Pig Press, 2015.

Lives of Courage, 1912-1932, by Bill Smallwood. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 2008.

A Romance of the Halifax Disaster, by F. McKelvey Bell. Halifax: Royal Print and Litho, 1918.

Shattered, by Jennie Marsland. Christchurch, New Zealand: Bluewood. 2011.

Tides of Honour: A Novel, by Genevieve Graham. Toronto: Simon & Schuster Canada, 2015.

"Winter's Tale," by Thomas H. Raddall. **Nearly An Island: A Nova Scotian Anthology**, ed. By Alice Hale and Sheila Brooks. St. John's: Breakwater, 1979.

Youth Fiction

Blinding Light, by Julie Lawson. Halifax: Nimbus, 2017.

Chaos in Halifax, by Cathy Beveridge. Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2004.

Explosion Newsie, by Jacqueline Halsey. Halifax: Formac Publishing Company Limited, 2015.

The Flying Squirrel Stowaways: From Halifax to Boston, by Marijke Simons. Halifax: Nimbus, 2017.

Halifax Explodes!, by Frieda Wishinsky; Illustrated by Patricia Ann Lewis-MacDougall. Toronto: Owlkids Books, 2011.

Hope and Survival: A Story of the Halifax Explosion, by Laurie Swim. Halifax: Art Quilt Publishing, 2017

Irish Chain, by Barbara Haworth-Attard. Toronto: Harper Trophy Canada, 2002.

The Little Tree by the Sea, by John DeMont; Illustrated by Belle DeMont. Lunenburg, N.S.: MacIntyre Purcell Publishing, 2017.

Love from Katie, by Paddy Muir. Dartmouth: James-Stonehouse, 1991.

No Safe Harbour: The Halifax Explosion Diary of Charlotte Blackburn, by Julie Lawson. Markham, Ont.: Scholastic Canada, 2006.

Penelope: Terror in the Harbour/ Book One, by Sharon E. McKay. Toronto: Penguin, 2001.

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Who's a Scaredy-Cat! A Story of the Halifax Explosion, by Joan M. Payzant. Halifax: Nimbus, 2005.

Yesterday's Children, by Joyce C. Barkhouse. Hantsport, N.S.: Lancelot, 1992.

Halifax Central Library

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The “Minutes of the City Council of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia”, from 1917-1976 reported on the efforts to rebuild Halifax. Each volume has an index in the front. Look for entries under “Explosion, December 6, 1917” or “Halifax Relief Commission”.

CITY DIRECTORIES

Check the **McAlpine's Halifax-Dartmouth City Directories** for the year 1915-1925 to locate families or businesses before and after the Explosion. The **1918 City Directory** published an alphabetical list of “Names of the Identified Dead Killed in the Explosion at Halifax, December 6, 1917”, up-to-date at the time of printing, The “Halifax Street Directory”, near the front, notes afflicted regions as “Devastated Area”.

VERTICAL FILES

The Local History Room has vertical files on the Halifax Explosion. These files contain newspaper articles, tour guides, brochures, maps, photocopies of primary sources and other interesting items.

For example:

Halifax, N.S.-Explosion

Halifax, N.S.-Explosion, 1917-Relief Commission

Halifax, N.S.-Hydrostone District

NEWSPAPERS ON MICROFILM

Newspapers published hundreds of articles after the explosion. Many survivors placed notices inquiring or identifying the whereabouts of families and friends. Articles on rescue efforts and relief measures can also be found. Look for new research or survivor tales around the December anniversary.

Halifax Herald/Chronicle Herald: July 1880 to present.

Evening Mail/Mail Star: 1894-2004

Daily News: 1981-2008

PERIODICAL INDEXES AND

DATABASES

Canadian News Index. (1978-1992). Indexes Canadian magazines and newspapers.

Canadian Periodical Index. (1920-2002). Indexes Canadian magazines.

Eureka.cc. Features over 4000 full-texted articles from local and world newspapers. (Available only at the Halifax Central Library).

General Reference Centre. General interest articles, mostly U.S. based.

ProQuest. 1985-present. Online access to Canadian Newspapers.

Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. 1890-2006. Indexes American and some Canadian magazines.

Halifax North

MEMORIAL BOOK “HALIFAX

EXPLOSION, 1917” (1966):

The Halifax Relief Commission donated \$100,000 towards building of the Halifax North branch as a memorial to the Explosion. The branch features a calligraphic listing of all the known dead, circa 1966.