

## The Coming of Our Yellow Brick Road

### **Echoes From the Past – Essay #13**



Historically speaking, the event having the greatest impact on the historical shaping of Hammonds Plains may well have been the paving of the Hammonds Plains Road. Before the 1950's road project, Hammonds Plains was basically a self-sufficient rural hamlet almost totally dependent upon the forest trade. After the road paving, a new path to becoming a dynamic suburban community was forged. Let's look back at this noteworthy project.

After World War Two, the Nova Scotia government made a big push to improve the road systems within the province. The road connecting the Bedford Highway to St. Margaret's Bay, commonly referred as the Hammonds Plains Road, was one of the highways marked for upgrading. By the early 1950's, serious government attention was given to constructing a modern highway through Hammonds Plains, with a detailed plan put in motion. Funds for the project were released in 1954 to transform the narrow and boggy gravel road into a modern highway.

The contract for the project was awarded to Lively & Murley Construction of Lower Sackville. It took almost 6 years to complete the project. During 1955-56, the road was transformed with widening, creating new sections to straighten the road, providing fill to the boggy sections, and creating an appropriate drainage system with new ditches and culverts. During this period, residents often were seen standing in their yards looking in bewilderment at the large pieces of machinery transforming the front of their properties. In many cases, taking down century old trees or property fences was a necessary tribulation to accommodate the widening of the road.

Notable features of the upgraded highway included a new bridge at Stillwater Lake, creation of a new segment that bypassed the old Yankeetown Road and a new section along the south side of Mason's Pond, thus eliminating a precarious sharp turn.

In June of 1957, the section of road from the Bedford Highway to English Corner (the intersection of Hammonds Plains Rd and Pockwock Road) was paved. The next section paved was from English Corner to Upper Tantallon during the fall of 1959. The last piece of the project was the construction and paving of the underpass under the new train track bridge at the Tantallon end of the highway. It took almost 6 years in total, but the new yellow brick road that ultimately would lead to a transformation of the Hammonds Plains area, was finally completed.



June 1957 – Paving of the Hammonds Plains Road



Hammonds Plains Road being widen – Summer 1955