

The Town of St. Alban's

General Information



St. Alban's - the best kept secret in Newfoundland and Labrador

The area is popular for its scenic beauty and pristine environment. Whether you are a water lover or a land lover, St. Alban's is guaranteed to please you. For the water lover, St. Alban's is at the headwaters of the Bay D'Espoir estuary which is approximately 40 kilometers long with many secluded beaches and serene coves where one can easily get lost in a fantasy world. The outer reaches of the estuary take on the appearance of the Scandinavian fjords where cliffs extend for hundreds of meters toward the sky, where waterfalls cascade over the escarpments and the Bald Eagle, perched on the edge of its nest, keeps watch from on high in the cliffs - a nature lover's paradise. The estuary provides the perfect setting for water skiing, windsurfing, kayaking, sailing, scuba diving and fishing for sea trout or the ever popular Rainbow Trout. Pitch your tent on a sandy beach and let your imagination run wild.



For the land lover, the area around St. Alban's offers scenic hiking trails with spectacular views of the bay and communities below. On occasion, one

may even meet the mighty moose which is abundant in the woods around the town. One friend you are sure to have along the way is the grey jay, always looking for a morsel of food. Birds of every description frequent the area during the summer and early autumn when Mother Nature does wonders with her paint brush.

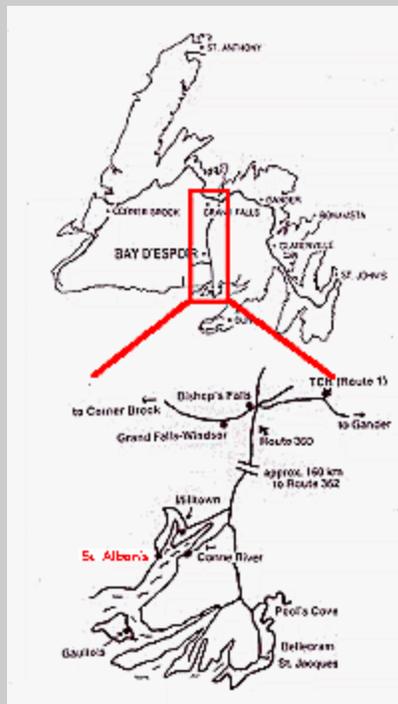


The St. Alban's area is a year round playground for the outdoors person.

In winter, the hiking trails become excellent snowmobile and cross country skiing trails. Some trails behind town provide a good downhill ski run of about 2.0 kilometers. A short snowshoe hike cross country ski run or snowmobile ride will bring you into the winter grazing grounds of hundreds of woodland caribou of the Grey River Herd.

Whether you are an artist, a nature lover, a physical fitness enthusiast or just want to get away from it all, St. Alban's is the place to be. All you need to bring is YOU and remember, there are no strangers here - just friends you haven't met YET!

Where to Find Us



St. Alban's is located in the Bay D'Espoir estuary on the south coast of Newfoundland, Canada on Route 361, approximately 180 kilometers from the Trans Canada Highway along Route 360 commonly known as the "Bay D'Espoir Highway" and more recently designated a theme touring route named "The Coast of Bays Passage".

Population

In 2012, we have a population of 1,233 people.

Services Available

Besides being the location for the aquaculture industry, St. Alban's is also the commercial district for the whole of Bay D'Espoir. Although we do not have a so-called "downtown" area, we do have all the necessary day to day services such as a bank, pharmacy, grocery stores along with a medical centre and ambulance service for the area.

Optometrists & dentists make regular monthly visits to the area. The Department of Public Health maintains an office in St. Alban's which services the Bay D'Espoir area as well as the coastal communities of Rencontre East and McCallum. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police provides policing services from a detachment in Head Bay D'Espoir, seven miles away. We have a hotel, the St. Alban's Inn, reservations if not staying at the Inn, which provides fine dining and comfortable rooms at affordable prices. The Du Drop Inn - Motel cottages for rent, nightly, weekly or monthly. We also have a fast food outlet, Golden Fried Chicken, for the person on the run.

We have a Post Office which provides a full range of postal services and a

rural route service to the outlying areas. A courier service from central Newfoundland, Sameday, makes a daily visit to the area. Day and Ross and Midland Transport have scheduled visits to St. Alban's on Tuesday and Thursday of each week. The Bay D'Espoir Bus (709-538-3545) provides daily passenger and freight service to Grand Falls-Windsor in central Newfoundland as well as two trips a week to St. John's.

We have local dialup Internet Service through Conne.Com, a local Internet Service Provider at Conne River and Sympatico. We also have high speed cable internet through Persona Communications. St. Alban's is serviced by a local digital switching and fiber optic phone system and a digital microwave long distance service by Newtel Communications. Newtel Mobility provides a mobile phone service in the area. A private communications company, Econo Communications, also provides radiotelephone communications services in the area. We have a Shooting Range and a Gun Club. Our local public library, located in the Municipal Building, offers more than just magazines and books. It is a Rich Edit Window which provides access to the Internet for the general public free of charge. With the growing popularity of this service, one should contact the librarian to make reservations for a workstation to avoid disappointment. Regional Cable provides subscribers with thirty channels of cable television viewing.

See our business directory for a complete list of businesses and services in our town.

Economy



The economy of St. Alban's is becoming more and more diversified. Although the majority of the workforce is dependent on the aquaculture industry, many are employed with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, others in forestry related industries such as sawmilling, silviculture, logging and the production of Christmas products, in the service industry and the construction industry.

A Bit of Our History

St. Alban's is the major service centre for the Bay d'Espoir area. Formerly known as Ship Cove, the community's name was changed in 1915 at the suggestion of parish priest Father Stanislaus St. Croix, in order to avoid confusion with numerous other Ship Coves. The present name of the community honours an English martyr and was chosen to reflect the fact that St. Alban's is one of the few predominantly Roman Catholic communities in Newfoundland where the majority of inhabitants are of English (rather than Irish or French) origin.

In the mid-1800s the area was being frequented in winter by a number of fishing families from communities at the mouth of the Bay, and a few eventually settled. Tradition has it that the Collier and Hoskins families settled in 1851, followed by the Organ family in 1853. Ship Cove first appears in the Census in 1869, with a population of 39. It was described in 1872 as a community of 45 souls, with two schooners trading such items as barrel hoops, rinds, game and beef to Gaultois and St. Pierre. "They appear to be contented and thriving, and not much troubled by too much learning" (JHA 1872). There was also a modest fishery for salmon, turbot, and herring. It is said that the name Ship Cove originated with the practice of American banking vessels mooring offshore in order to purchase bait.



In the 1880's and 1890's other families settled, many from Great Jervais, a predominantly Catholic community at the mouth of the Bay. These included Crants (at Swanger's Cove), Farrells, Howses, McDonalds, Morrises, and Willcotts. There were 117 people in 1884 and the next year the first Roman Catholic school/chapel was built. By 1901 there were 202 people - enough to warrant the opening of a branch store of Thomas Garland Ltd. of Gaultois and the building of a new Roman Catholic church (St. Ignatius, began in 1902). The community also received its first resident priest in 1911 when Father St. Croix began 35 years of service to the parish. The population

doubled between 1901 and 1921 (pop. 437), and again between 1921 and 1945 (pop. 860). In 1953, St. Alban's became incorporated as a town.

To a great extent this increase in population was based on a thriving logging industry. The first sizable sawmill in the area was begun at Milltown in 1895, while from about 1920 there was also some pulpwood cutting. After 1937, pulpwood cutting by contractors increased and in 1943 Bowater's established a major pulpwood operation above Conne River, drawing much of its work force from St. Alban's. Families continued to move into the town from the outer reaches of the Bay, and by 1956 there were 1368 people. The middle part of the century saw the building of a new Catholic church (also St. Ignatius) in the community. The community suffered a blow when Bowater's shut down its pulpwood operation in 1958, but in 1964 construction of the Bay d'Espoir highway and roads to Hermitage, Harbour Breton and St. Jacques-Coomb's Cove provided additional employment in the late 1960's and early 1970's, while solidifying the town's status as a regional center.

Since the end of the construction boom, St. Alban's has experienced periods of high unemployment - alleviated by further hydro construction in 1975-77 and 1981-82. Many of the younger people left the area, while others have traveled to work at other construction sites.



St. Alban's has begun to emerge as the centre for a growing aquaculture industry and it is today the largest site in Newfoundland for farming and harvesting of Steelhead Salmon and Rainbow Trout. An aquaculture resource centre is scheduled for construction this year. As well, a second hatchery facility is under construction at Salmon River and a salmonid incubation unit has been in operation in the town for the past three years.