

The Buildings of Dalhousie University

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University of King's College

Address: N/A

Start Date: 192?

Completion Date:
1930; 1962; 1989;
2000

Architect: Andrew R. Cobb; J. Philip Dumaresq; E. W. Haldenby

Contractor: Kenney Construction Company

Renovation Date(s):



University of King's College - Postcard Graphic, n.d.



University of King's College - Aerial Photo, 1962

Building History

The University of King's College was the first university established in English-speaking Canada and is the oldest English-speaking Commonwealth university outside the United Kingdom. It was founded in Windsor, Nova Scotia in 1789 and moved to Halifax in 1923 when a fire destroyed its original buildings. At that time, offered significant financial support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, King's accepted its conditions and became affiliated with Dalhousie University. The two schools have joint faculties of Science and Arts and Social Sciences. King's students have access to the facilities and courses of both campuses, but they graduate with a degree from King's.

The original buildings on the five-acre King's campus were designed by Andrew R. Cobb, the Halifax architect who designed most of Dalhousie's early buildings. The main Arts and Administration building, the chapel and the five men's residences, or "bays," were completed by 1930 when King's reopened. Cobb used a Georgian architectural style in harmony with the nearby buildings, in a stone blockhouse design. The 1960s saw the campus expand, with the gymnasium, dining hall (Prince Hall) and women's residence (Alexandra Hall) all built in 1962. The new buildings were designed by J. Philip Dumaresq and contracted to Kenney Construction Company.

In the 1970s, King's developed several unique academic programs. The revolutionary Foundation Year Program exposes students to an interdisciplinary curriculum through a single course built on the "Great Books." The School of Journalism was formed in 1978, and is the only degree-granting journalism programme in Atlantic Canada.

The campus grew further with a new library erected for King's centennial in 1989. Previously, the university's collection had been scattered in five different places, with the original library deemed



University of King's College -
Administration Building, 1973

structurally unstable. The new library provided ample space for students and resources, and created appropriate conditions for King's significant rare book collection.

The New Academic Building opened at King's in 2000. It is a state-of-the-art facility, fully equipped for students' academic needs, yet remains loyal to the 18th century architectural aesthetic of the original buildings.

King's continues to earn recognition and respect with new programmes such as Contemporary Studies, Early Modern Studies and History of Science and Technology. The university, with a student population of only about one thousand, revolves around a close-knit community that is steeped in tradition and commemoration of King's long history.

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