

known, from reports, to have been faced with grey sandstone from quarries in the Renew's Head Formation of the St. John's Group in the Shea Heights area. Several buildings and retaining walls in the Downtown area have been constructed from the red and cream sandstone of the Gibbett Hill and Quidi Vidi Formations of the Signal Hill Group, e.g., the Temperance Street houses. The barracks and battlement at the Queen's Battery and the Powder Magazine near Cabot Tower are constructed from the grey-green and red sandstone of the Gibbett Hill and Quidi Vidi formations of the Signal Hill Group. Government House on Military Road was built in 1831 and is faced with the red sandstone of the Quidi Vidi Formation. On Signal Hill, the base of Cabot Tower is composed of red pebble conglomerate and sandstone from the adjacent Cabot Tower Member of the of the Cuckold Formation of the Signal Hill Group. There is currently little use of new local building stone but some of the old stones are recycled during restoration work and the construction of retaining walls.

Raising awareness of the materials used in prominent buildings in the city will promote a better understanding of local geology, geological history and the importance of resources in the historic development of St. John's.

St. John's Geoscapes: the use of local stone in buildings and structures

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Many buildings in the City of St. John's have used local stone in their construction since the building of the 18th-century forts that used stone for battlements. Detailed mapping by Dr. Art King indicates that the geology of St. John's has three main components. In the western area of St. John's, the green-grey, siliceous, turbiditic siltstone and sandstone are part of the Conception Group. In the central part of St. John's, including the Downtown area, the dark grey, variably cleaved, sandstone, siltstone, and shale define the St. John's Group. To the east, the grey, green and red sandstone and conglomerate form the Signal Hill Group. The gradational but consistent changes in rock type and colour across St. John's permits the assignment of the local building stones to a particular stratigraphic unit.

The battlements of Fort William were made from grey sandstone of the St. John's Group. Many of the 19th-century buildings have foundations made from grey, flaggy sandstone and siltstone also from St. John's Group. The outside walls of the Basilica, St. Patrick's Church, and the Anglican Cathedral are