COUNTY of INVERNESS
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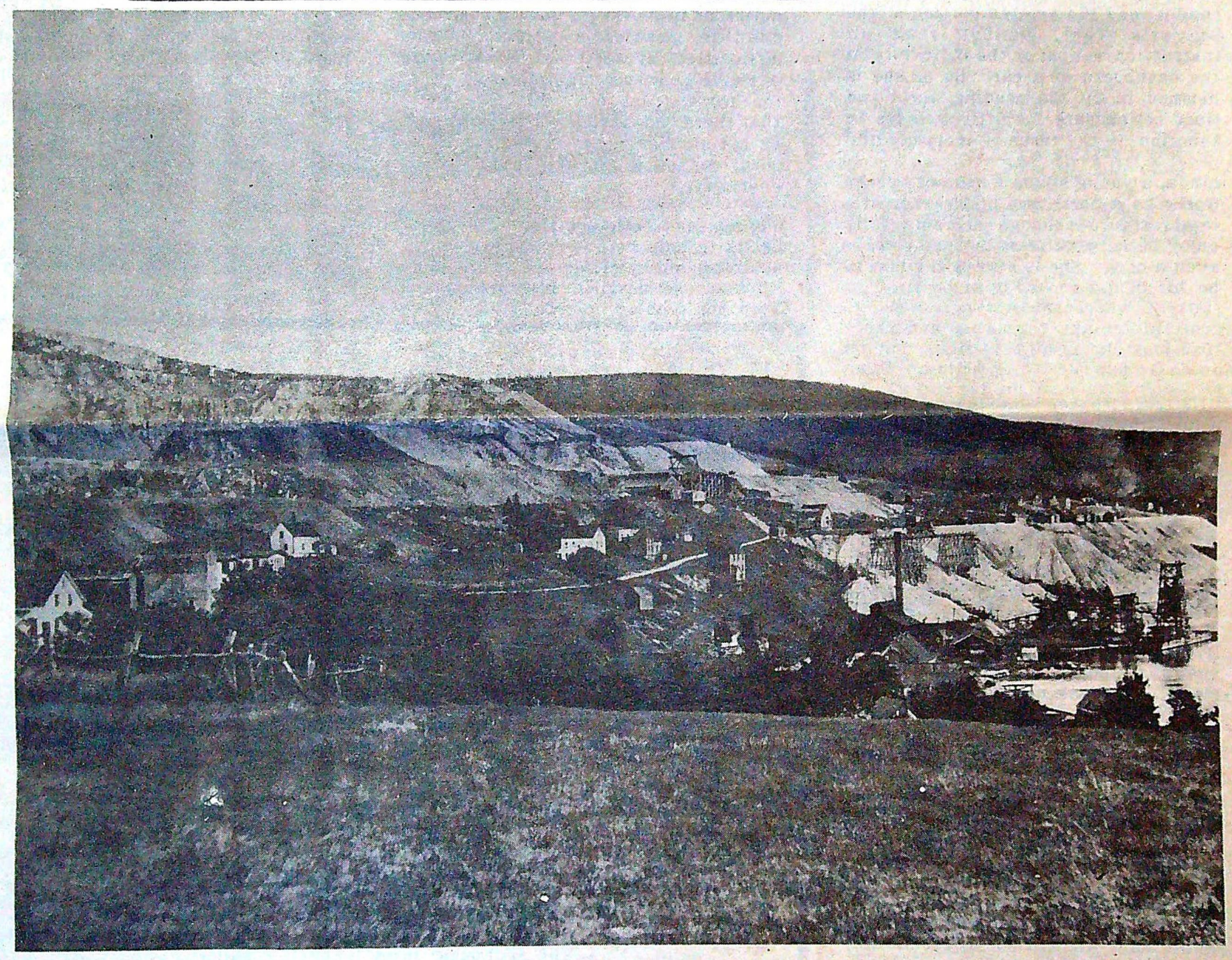
Partici~Paper

Covering culture, heritage, recreation, physical fitness, tourism, and community activities in Inverness County since 1979.



A student, daydreaming briefly by the window, would see this view of Marble Mountain as he sat at his desk at the three-room school house in the early 1920's. Captured in this vintage photo as a still-life, the community was actually a bustling town of 1,000 people, about 750 of which were men who worked the quarries.

The school house is now a museum, and the men who worked the quarries are gone, but Marble Mountain memories are very much alive.

A View from the Future

by Mary Anne Ducharme

The Marble Mountain Museum overlooks the brilliant blue of the Bras d'Or Lake which is dotted with islands. From the side window can be viewed sheer marble walls rising from the mountain, bearing the silent scars of past mining. The museum, once a school house, is constructed in a spare, unadorned style typical of the community, but there is no sense of starkness. Everywhere is a profusion of wildflowers some of which grace the exhibits in the museum. While the total impression is of a mostly deserted and pictuesque village, by many standards "quaint," there is

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Non-Readers: Removing the Stigma

by Mary Anne Ducharme

How can friends and relatives of non-readers identify those who are functional illiterates? Often people who cannot read or write go to great lengths to hide their inability, even from people closest to them. According to Joan MacDonald of the Inverness South Literacy Council," the most difficult barrier to break is getting those people to come forward and ask for help."

What is a functional illiterate? It is a person who may or may not have graduated from highschool but who cannot read street and highway signs, cannot read the printed portion of the Driver's Test, cannot read an instruction manual or the indicators on the dashboard of a car. He or she is hemmed in by the reading world and must compensate in difficult ways to function in the tasks of everyday life.

Linda, a young single woman of twenty works as a part-time dishwasher in a local restaurant though she would really enjoy being a waitress or a cashier, or even a cook. She is always the last to be hired and the first to be fired no matter where she works and she is grateful for any temporary and part-time jobs she is able to find. But no one asks her to read or write anything as a dishwasher so she is forced to be satisfied with her lower pay rate. She needs to save money to make ends meet and there is a generic food store nearby -- but she does not shop there because she cannot read the labels. One time she bought a can of insect spray which was sold in a can similar to vegetable oil spray, and when she disovered her error, she threw the spray can into a metal barrel with other trash and burned it.

It exploded and it was fortunate that she sustained only minor cuts and burns. She was not able to read the warning label.

Linda cannot read the labels on her prescriptions, fill out application forms, cope with Income Tax forms, read magazines or newspapers, write letters to friends and family, or vote in an informed way.

Linda is able to maintain only a limited level of independence, finding that she cannot cope without social assistance, and the help of her parents. Independent by nature, this has severely undermined her self respect. She graduated from highschool by dint of staying in the back of the room, minding her own business, and being as quiet and anonymous as possible. She was simply overlooked by her teachers, many of whom could not recall her name most of the time. She looks forward to a long life of being anonymous -- a welfare 'nobody' as she secretly thinks of herself.

She counts it her one success that few suspect that she is functionally illiterate.

People in Linda's predicatment are more numerous in Inverness County than the reading public is aware. Her difficulties, by their nature, make it difficult or impossible for her to come forward and ask for help. She feels that there is a terrible stigma attached to her problem, especially here in a rural county where everybody knows everybody.

She may not be aware that a program exists to help her: she may be deeply ashamed; she may fear exposure and ridicule; she may not trust anyone to keep her problem confidential.

It takes the greatest perceptiveness of the part of relatives and friends to identify the functionally illiterate. It takes even greater sensitivity and diplomacy to create the trust by which a person like Linda can accept tutoring.

The first change in attitude that has to take place is the pre-conception that illiterate people are necessarily lesser in intelligence or worth. Both the reading public, and unfortunately, the non-readers are guilty of this attitude. Hundreds of reasons and combinations of reasons explain how illiteracy can exist in the 1980's in Inverness County. Perceptual problems, stemming from brain-eye development in childhood, home problems, social adjustment, insecurity, unsympathetic, unskilled or impatient teachers, lack of diagnosis of medical conditions, hyper-activity, other interests more absorbing, lack of home encouragement and support of school objectives-- these are just a few possiblilties.

What is most important is that adults who desperately need doors opened to

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Fall Courses in the County

The Inverness County Recreation/ Tourism Department is now preparing for the Fall 1987 session of Recreation and Continuing Education courses. If you have a program request or would like to instruct a course, please *contact* the School Programmer in your area before August 24.

Community	Programmer	Phone
Pleasant Bay	*Mary Fraser*	224-2364
Cheticamp	David Poirier	224-2936
St.Joseph du Moine	Betty Anne Aucoin	224-3897
Margaree Forks	Donald MacLennan	235-2439
N.E. Margaree	Heather Currey	248-2408
Inverness	Anna Lee MacEachern	258-2089
Mabou	Marie MacDonald	945-2676
Port Hood	Francene Gillis	787-3344
Judique	Rita Warner	787-2779
Port Hastings	Doris Carrigan	625-3842
West Bay Road	Irene MacDonald	625-2596
Glendale	Josephine Smeenk	625-0299
Orangedale	Carl Zimmerman	756-2872
Whycocomagh	Debbie Gillis	756-2389

REGISTRATION WEEK IS SEPT.14-19.
Complete course descriptions will be in the September issue of Partici-Paper.

Partici-Paper

Mary Anne Ducharme, Editor

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