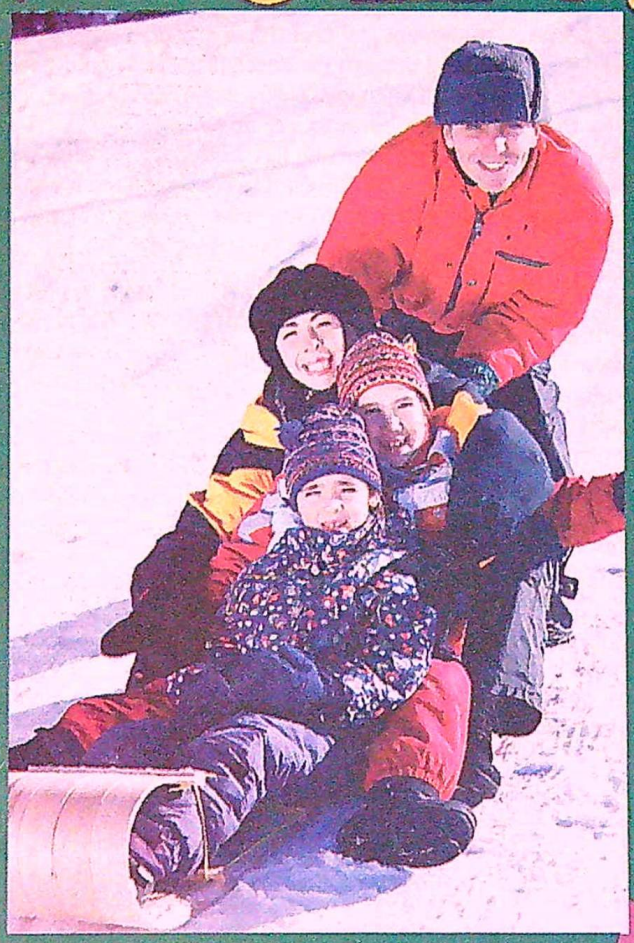
THE PARTICIPAPER

AN INVERNESS COUNTY PERIODICAL



Ancestors Unlimited & Annual Christmas Story
Chestico Museum and Historical Society Tidbits
Warden & Councillors District Updates
Inverness County Expo 2014 Planned
Michelle Greenwell Classes
Meet our Community Development Officer
and More....

Vol 34, No. 5

Dec 2013/Jan 2014

Editor's Notebook - Inverness County Recreation, Tourism, Culture and Community Development Office

Marie Aucoin
Editor

In the near future we may offer residents the opportunity to read *The Participaper* online rather than receiving it by regular mail. For those whose preference would be to continue receiving it by mail, we would implement an "opt-in" procedure. Whether reading it online or in print, the publication would remain free of charge to our residents. We would appreciate hearing from our readers about their thoughts on this possible change: Please take time to think about it. A subsequent issue of the publication will contain a mail-in form to guage interest as to how many residents would prefer to continue to receive *The Participaper* by regular mail.

Some county residents have informed us that they have not been receiving *The Participaper*. After making some inquiries it would appear that those residents who requested that unaddressed mail not be delivered to them by the Post Office may inadvertently be foregoing their copies of *The Participaper*; it is distributed through the Post Offices as "unaddressed mail." If you are one of these people, may we suggest that you ask your Post Office to leave extra copies out on the counter for a week or two to allow those residents who don't receive them in their mailboxes to pick up a copy.

Many thanks to Jim St Clair for the lovely Christmas story he has written for the enjoyment of our readers. Jim's stories have become a tradition over the years and I always look forward to reading them. It appears on page 7, after his regular Ancestors Unlimited column. Thanks also go out to Joanne Watts and the Chestico Museum and Historical Society for contributing several items to this issue. I hope that other Inverness County museums and historical societies will follow suit and consider sharing their photos and information with our readers. Our readers tell us that they enjoy learning more about their history through our pages.

Inside, you will also find messages from our Warden and Councillors with news about what is happening in their Districts.

Winter can be great fun! It looks like the family on the front cover found one of the great tobogganning spots in the county. I'll bet there's one near you too. Why not take the kids out and have some fun!

To have an event included in our publications, brochures, website or weekly radio spot, contact Margaret Beaton at the Recreation/ Tourism office at: margie.beaton@invernesscounty.ca or call her at: (902) 787–2274.

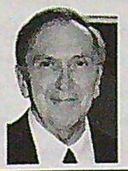
I hope you enjoy reading this issue. My wish for everyone is a happy, peaceful and joyous holiday season filled with family and friends spending time together making happy memories. May 2014 bring only good things for Inverness County and the world.

Many thanks to Mike Little of Port Hood, who has been providing up-to-date listings of Cape Breton events for the past 14 years on his website. Mike's "eagle-eye" spotted a typo in our last issue. My apologies to any of our readers who may have been inconvenienced by the error. The CMIC Grand Finale concert was held on October 10th and NOT 20th, as was listed here.
If you have events that you'd like Mike to add to his Music Cape Breton website, he may be reached in the following manner: By regular mail: Box 125, Port Hood, B0E 2W0. Email: mike@musiccapebreton.com Website: http://www.musiccapebreton.com/

Table of Contents

Ancestors Unlimited ..... Page 3
CAP site locations ..... Page 6
Annual Story ..... Page 7
Warden's Message ..... Page 8
D/Warden's Message ..... Page 9
Chestico Tidbits ..... Page 12
Councillor's Message ..... Page 16
Councillors' Messages ..... Page 17
Comm Dev Officer ..... Page 18
Snrs Tax Rebate Info ..... Page 18
Inv Co Expo Plan ..... Page 19
Dance Classes/Workshops ..... Page 20
Councillor's Message ..... Page 24
Gardening Workshop ..... Page 24
Inv Co on the Move ..... Page 25
Strathspey Draw ..... Page 27
Strait Area Transit ..... Page 29
ECRL Schedule and Notes ..... Page 30
Municipal Contact Info ..... Page 31

THE NEXT ISSUE OF *THE PARTICIPAPER* IS THE SPRING PROGRAMMING ISSUE
IT WILL BE DELIVERED TO RESIDENTS EARLY-FEBRUARY 2014
SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THIS ISSUE IS JANUARY 10, 2014



Ancestors Unlimited

Helping to find your Inverness County Roots

by Dr Jim St. Clair

I. Visible Heritage

What did our county look like one hundred years ago? What clothes did people wear? What changes in fashion are evident in photographs? What ships could be seen in our harbours? Which buildings are no longer in our view?

There are answers to these questions for those who seek them. In the early decades of the 1900's - in the days of our grandparents and great grandparents - the Notman Family of Montreal, reknowned photographers, came to Cape Breton with their "all seeing" cameras to photograph life here.

Established in the 1860's, by a Scottish immigrant to Montreal, the Notman Studios were noted as "Photographers to the Queen." Today, thousands of their negatives - both on glass and on film - are now a part of the photography collection of the McCord Museum in Montreal.

Fascination with our family tree,
especially to my progeny,
sheds light on where they came from,
who they are, where they might be -
if only I had bought ...
a company called Apple -
back in 1983! - Marie Aucoin

Almost two hundred images from the Notman collection are of Cape Breton; three dozen of them of Inverness County places and people from Cheticamp to Port Hawkesbury. They may be viewed on line at the museum's website at http://www.McCordmuseum.qc.ca . Insert the keywords "Cape Breton" in the search field area of the site.

The following is a listing of some of the photos which may be found at the website. They are listed by the numbers to be found on the side of the images:
#40-44 Cheticamp village, harbour and quarry;
#54 Grand Etang old bridge in 1914;
#122, 123 Chimney Corner – a great image of a horse and buggy and school house and bridge;
#4, 46-47 and 67 E. Margaree and Forks;
#140, 141 Mabou;
#34, 35, 125, 126 Whycocomagh;
#127; #28, 90, 91 West Bay, Orangedale and Bras d'Or Lakes with an excellent view of the store of Hon. James MacDonald;
#86-91 Marble Mt. Quarry;
#23-26 Strait of Canso and Ship Harbour with sailing ships.

Thanks to the Notman photographers, these pictures provide us opportunities to place our ancestors in a well-preserved landscape. They also encourage us to ask questions such as: Who is seen? Who owned the vessels? And, who managed the stores that are pictured in the collection?

II. Will of Douce Belhache

Wills on file in provincial probate archives provide identification of the genealogical connections among various individuals, as well as insights into activities or organizations important to the person confronting the reality of the brevity of life.

Born on the Isle of Jersey in the Channel Islands about 1764, Douce Belhache came to Cape Breton with her husband in 1788.

Both her daughter and her husband were long dead when she made her will in May of 1842 in which she states that she is "very sick and weak of body but of perfect mind."

Identifying herself as being of "The Gut of Canso," she named Charles Fixott and Peter deCarteret of Arichat, as Executors of her Will, which notes that both were of Channel Island birth.

In addition to requesting of them a "decent Christian burial," she made the following bequests to be distributed by them: to her "beloved friend," Mrs Charles Fixott of Arichat a bureau and a "keeping table;" to the three daughters of her beloved friend, Mary Ann deCarteret Fixott, Victoria Adelaide Fixott and Laura Huntington Fixott the sum of "twenty-five pounds each to be paid of my property:"; to James William Smith, son of James Smith of Little Mabou, the sum of twelve pounds, ten shillings; to Clement Fixott Hubert and Mary Elizabeth Hubert, "son and daughter of Ann Hubert of Arichat" twenty-five pounds currency.

*Continued page 4...*Ancestors

Continued from page 3...ANCESTORS

In addition she requested that her executors divide any remainder of her estate, after property was sold and debts paid, be equally divided among the Church of Scotland, "that is presently on that part of my property at present occupied by McMillans," and the "Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Ship Harbour, Gut of Canso," and "the Church of England in Arichat" and the "British and Foreign Bible Society of Nova Scotia."

One of the earliest, perhaps first, female entrepreneurs of Inverness County, Douce Belhache gives us an insight into the mind and the affections of an early resident. She was equally generous to three different denominations in her area and showed affection to distant relatives who were named Hubert and Fixott.

An understanding of the close connection between members of the Channel Island merchants and shippers of the area is also evident.

From other sources, we know that Mary Ann deCarteret Fixott, born about 1836, married Peter Bosdet, merchant of Arichat; her sister Laura Ann Harrington Fixott, born about 1834, married J. Marshall Bourinot; and the third sister Victoria Adelaide, born about 1839 married John Clough, a merchant of Arichat. They were all quite young when Douce passed away in 1844, but each had a tidy sum as a dowry. They all have descendants in our time.

The father of the Hubert brother and sister was John Hubert, merchant of Arichat, who died in 1837 at the age of 26. Their mother, Ann, was a member of the Fixott family. They were both young children under ten years of age when Douce died.

Thus, the Will reveals not only the wider view of the widow Douce Belhache, but also her interest in young children who were connected to her by blood or by association.

It would appear that all of her property, including her land at the present traffic circle at Port Hastings and her house lot in Ship Harbour (Port Hawkesbury) were sold at auction by her Executors.

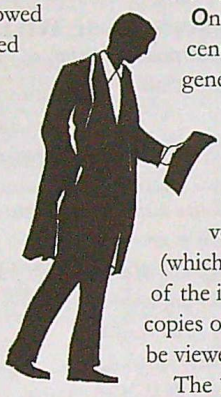
The importance of the commercial undertakings of Douce Belhache for more than thirty years after the death of her ship captain husband requires further investigation. In the meantime one must ask if it would not make good sense to name the traffic circle at Port Hastings for her, since it is on what was once part of her land?

And, so it is that wills and probate records open up topics for further discussion and investigation.

[For a fictional insight into the life of this early resident of our area see the section entitled "Chez Douce," in the book *Nancy's Wedding Feast and Other Tasty Tales* by James O. St Clair and Yvonne C. LeVert. Published by Cape Breton University Press and CBC Radio. ISBN: 978-1-897009-24-6]

III. Research Aids -

(a) 1901 and 1911 Records



On-line access to both the 1901 and 1911 censuses may be found at: www.automatedgenealogy.com . To access information for Inverness County simply click on >Nova Scotia and then >Inverness County.

All of the listings have been transcribed with very great accuracy by volunteers. However, the transcribed version (which is very easy to read) does not contain all of the information to be found on the original copies of the censuses. However, the originals may be viewed by clicking on "Proof."

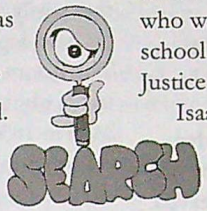
The 1901 censuses (in the original handwriting of the census taker on the "proof" versions) includes a column which shows the year that the listed individual believed they had emigrated to Canada. Another column lists the occupation of each person and yet another, their language of preference. The religious choices of residents are also listed in this version. For example, on the 1901 census for Pleasant Bay, Christina McIntosh (resident with the family of Alexander McIntosh) affirms that she came to Canada in 1842 and that Gaelic is her language of preference. This is in contrast to all of the other residents of this particular household, who list theirs as English.

The year of emigration, language and religious preference is listed only on the original version and not the transcribed version. Therefore, researchers may find it useful to peruse the original handwritten documents in conjunction with the transcribed versions. *[Note: with the help of the "Zoom" icon at the top of the census pages, a close up view of the document is possible, making it easier to read.]*

Continued page 5... ANCESTORS

Upon reading the census documents, one soon discovers that there is no distinction between "Mc" and "Mac" as an identifier of religious or ethnic origin.

Furthermore, clearly the census takers were not always consistent in their listings; it appears that some householders listed family members who lived and worked elsewhere. One example of this appears on the 1911 census, where a Pat Muise of Cheticamp is listed with his parents and other family members. However, at the age of 16 he was already working in the lumber woods. Although his address is given as "St. Anne's" his parents listed him with their household. Other examples such as this exist, with those listed as living in Sydney and Halifax; therefore reading the original document can sometimes very helpful for the family historian.



One should also read the documents with much care. Very occasionally errors were made by the census taker. For example, in the 1901 census, the family of Isaac McLeod are listed as Reids on the transcribed version. Some census takers wrote the names as "Leod" with "Mc" at the end of the name. In this instance, the "Leod" was misread by the transcriber thus written as "Reid."

To be sure, as in all census recordings, the information is only as good as the people who are providing the information. Some may have guessed at their year of birth and yet others may have wished they were younger than their actual age. Note to that illegitimate children were never listed as "born out of wedlock," but may appear on the census as "nieces," "nephews" or "adopted."

(b) 1921 Census

The 1921 census records for the entire country of Canada are now available on-line. They may be viewed in the original form as they have not yet been transcribed. They are free of charge on "Ancestry.ca" or "Ancestry.com" provided that you have a membership in that organization OR if you have a valid e-mail address from yahoo, gmail or hotmail.com.

There is much information available on this long form of the census that will interest researchers. But the handwriting is often difficult to decipher. However, there is a reading aid available to lift up the information.

IV. Response to Query re: Isaac MacLeod

The query was, "Who was Isaac McLeod and where did he come from?"

Isaac McLeod is listed on the 1871 census for Strathlorne as "merchant." The location of both his house and store are also visible on Church's Map of Inverness County. His is a very interesting story indeed.

Isaac McLeod, as a young boy in St. Ann's, attended the school of the Rev. Norman MacLeod who was known as a very strict and sometimes cruel school teacher who was also the local minister and Justice of the Peace for the community.

Isaac was born in 1820, the son of Squire Donald and Janet (Munro) McLeod, who were immigrants with the Rev. Norman, from Scotland. Isaac's father was a very prominent citizen and a supporter of the minister. Therefore, it is very surprising to learn that his young son stood up against the teacher Norman McLeod when the instructor was about to apply a switch to the hand of a young girl in school. Young Isaac took the disciplinary item away from the teacher and threw it away and left McLeod's classroom, never to return.

Subsequently enrolled by his parents in the Munro School on Boularderie Island, he experienced a very different kind of instruction.

In later years, well qualified to teach and wishing to live far away from the autocratic Norman MacLeod, Isaac taught in Hillsborough, Inverness County, and then in Strathlorne as an assistant to the Gunn teachers.

He married Euphemia "Effie" Laurence of the prominent family of merchants in Port Hood, Cheticamp and Margaree Harbour. Isaac opened his own store in Strathlorne where he lived out the remainder of his life.

Retiring from the store, which he handed over to his son George, he continued as postmaster for Strathlorne until 1885 - a position he had held since the office first opened in 1840.

Isaac aand his wife both died in 1888. He is buried in the Strathlorne Cemetery, as are many generations of his descendants. He and Euphemia are the ancestors of a number of very distinguished people both in Inverness County and in other parts of Canada.

Continued page 6... Ancestors

Continued from page 5... ANCESTORS

This story of a brave young boy, in an era when such behaviour was generally not tolerated, encourages us to ask questions about other young people who challenged the status quo and moved on to lead successful lives.

V. TIDBITS

The *North Sydney Herald*, a newspaper widely distributed throughout Cape Breton in the last decades of the 1800's, carried many items relating to people of Inverness County.

In 1887 the *Herald* reported:

☙ The marriage of Coll Campbell, Esq., of Whycocomagh to Miss Sarah McKinnon of Lake Ainslie, by Rev. McLeod at Strathlorne on 10 March 1887.

☙ The meat canning factory of Messrs. McFadyn and Co., at Mabou Harbour, reported that in the previous season it had put up 85,000 cans of preserved meat, beef and mutton.

☙ The Municipal Council, in its Annual Meeting, voted to raise the pay of Nicholas Nicholson, the police constable, from $15.00 to $18.00 .

In its April 25, 1888 issue:

☙ The *Herald* published a statement to the effect that it regretted it had published the "bogus marriage announcement" of Mr. A.D. McLellan, House Joiner, Margaree, to the widow of the late Mr. Angus Porrior(sic). Mr McLellan had written to the newspaper asking that an "emphatic denial be published." (Who do you suppose sent such a false announcement to the paper? What reason would they have had for doing so? Perhaps there's an interesting story here that a wily sleuth might uncover?)

☙ Also reported was the death of Neil Campbell of The Boom (Inverness County,) age 84. According to his obituary, Neil had emigrated from the Isle of Mull in 1830, he died 21 February 1888. It was also reported that, "...In his younger years, he was considered the greatest Highland Piper in Cape Breton." He was a brother-in-law of Alexander McEachern, J.P., who was postmaster at Boom at the time. Mr Campbell was survived by a widow, two daughters and four sons.

Inverness County C@P Network Society

CAP Site Locations/Hours:

- Mabou Communications:
  Monday – Friday, 9 to 11:30 am & 12:30 – 5 pm
- Port Hood Resource Center & Library: Monday – Wednesday 12:30 – 6 pm
- Port Hawkesbury: Strait Area Education Center
  SAERC TV: Monday – Friday, 3 pm – 5 pm
  SAERC Library: Monday – Friday, 10 – 11:30 am & Noon – 6 pm
- Margaree Forks: Coady-Tompkin's Building
  Upper Level – ECRL: Monday, 1:30 – 4:30 pm & 5 pm – 8 pm
  Thursday, 10 am – 12 pm & 12:30 – 4:30 pm & 5 – 7 pm
  Lower Level: Operates seasonally – Please call the ICCNS Coordinator at (902) 787-2568 for more information.

Locations in Pleasant Bay, Scotsville, Judique, Glendale & Meat Cove operate seasonally. Please check individual websites or call the ICCNS Coordinator.

Programs:

ICCNS will be offering a number of after-school and adult programs at the following sites: Inverness Education Center, Port Hood Library and Resource Center, SAERC Library, SAERC TV and the Scotsville School of Crafts. For more information on these programs watch for the Spring Programming issue of *The Participaper* in early-February.

Program offerings in the planning stages are:

- **Lego Robotics**
- **Lego Mindstorm and/or •Lego WeDo** – Eastern Counties Regional Library Programs
- **Workshops in 3D Printing**
- **Minecraft Power Hour**
- **SCRATCH – Kids Learning Computer Programming**
- **Technovation Challenge for Girls** – Girls learning to develop apps for mobile devices
- **Maker Space Workshops:** Learning how to solder; Intro to RaspberryPi; Intro to Ardunio & more!
- **One-on-One Computer Technology Help:** Are you frustrated with your technology? We can help. If you have a question about one of your "gadgets" (computer, e-reader, smart phone, tablet, camera.) call to book an appointment and get the answers you need!

For more information on programs, check out our website or call our Regional Coordinator. And, if you have an idea for a new program you'd like to see offered – we'd love to hear about it.

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Look for us on Facebook!!