County of Inverness

# Partici~Paper

October 1988
Vol. 9 No. 10

## Tour Trends

**NOVA SCOTIA TOURISM ON A HIGH**
Tourism is one of the most vital, growing sectors of the provincial economy, a one billion dollar industry. And it is growing all the time. Last spring's Sea Sell trip and Rendez-Vous Canada were indicative of the increasing attention paid to fulfilling a potential for increased employment and economic benefit.

**TOURISM'S FASTEST GROWING SECTOR: "The short break pleasure market,"** the trend towards more frequent 3 or 4 day vacation get-aways, was created by 7.41 million people last year who spent 1.1 billion dollars. The ease of air travel has contributed to this mushrooming new market in tourism and it is estimated that 25% of the tourism in Nova Scotia from the U.S. could be coming from this market.

**BOOM IN THE SENIORS MARKET.** The general population is aging and there are dramatically increased numbers of "empty nesters" and seniors at the peak of available disposible income. These people love to travel and will be an increasing factor in tourism planning over the next decade.

**RV TRAFFIC UP.** Possible relationship with the doubled number of Nova Scotia entries in the U.S. publication **TRAILER LIFE CAMPGROUND AND RV SERVICES DIRECTORY.** Also there was a 6 page insert in the **TRAILER LIFE GUIDEBOOK.**

As the sun finally made a shy appearance in August, emerging from the rain and fog were those "behemoths of the road," the RV's, or recreational vehicles. There has been a significant 9% increase in this traffic in Nova Scotia this summer, over the 1987 figures. The increase in real numbers is by 2,870 vehicles.

Dan Brennan, marketing director of DOTC has a ready explanation for this remarkable increase. He credits it to the "Bible," the massive Trailer Life Campground and RV Services Directory which is published in the U.S. and guides the dedicated RV driver to all the best campsites on the continent. In the past year, Nova Scotia has almost doubled its number of entries in the guide and inserted a six page four colour section in the Trailer Life Guide Book.

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This Issue:

# Focus on tourism

## The tourism balance wheel

by Mary Anne Ducharme

In Cape Breton time ticks more slowly than in many other parts of Canada, but the regulating gear of the clock, the balance wheel, has been speeding up, especially in tourism and economic development. Mega government projects here have been replaced by saner policies which foster the entrepreneurial spirit that has always been part of the Island. Small businesses scattered in many villages and towns now have hopeful prospects. Tourism is stepping up and calling, and the fresh new money that tourism brings into the local economy is viewed as a major boon.

We have an enormous value in the tourism picture in our natural attractions. Because the world sees Canada as a place of outdoor adventure, because "they like it wild," because we are a time capsule of older ways and days, the world is indeed coming to our doorstep in increasing numbers. Hope is a wonderful stimulant.

However, there is much work to do if we are to reach the elusive potential that many of us are firmly convinced is just around the next corner. In Cape Breton the food service and accommodation industries are overdue for major upgrading; we need to develop better access to natural attractions; to step up our efforts to provide a wider range of activities and quality experiences for the tourists who share our Island during memorable vacations. In doing this we not only provide a holiday environment for visitors, but we increase our own pride in the place we call home and in ourselves.

The balance wheel is a delicate part of the mechanism, one that requires meticulous attention so that we do not destroy the very things we seek to develop. In developing hiking trails, we do not, for instance, want to open the way for ugly litter in the wilderness, to jeopardize wildlife, to tame the natural into the man-made. We do not want a Coney Island environment to be part of our beautiful beaches; or to make our waterways polluted; or to crowd the most special places of scenic beauty with developments so that access to them is for the rich elite alone, or so that the beauty is obliterated. We do not want to become quaint and backwards-seeming people in a tourism circus; we want to remain what we are.

The balance wheel is located somewhere between development and preservation, and it will take a great deal of far-sighted wisdom to keep this balance.

Tourism work is extremely complex and difficult, not to mention politically volatile. Opinions are strong and deeply held. And above all, the tendancy to protect private, regional and positional interests sometimes eclipses the common good. The government also tends most often to be reactive rather than active, and many good opportunities evaporate while the region is struggling to catch up. In tourism, no answers are easy, and no solutions are perfect.

Nevertheless, work is being done to catch up in a pragmatic way with what we know conceptually about tourism development.

For instance, tour packages are being developed to attract our sister provinces, because it is a plain fact that our largest market is within the Maritimes, and that the short break market is the fastest growing sector in Canada. The effect of further tourism development in this sector is that money keeps circulating from province to province, helping to minimize economic disparity.

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# Viewpoint

## Cape Breton's Calling (that's why one New Yorker stayed)

**by Mary Anne Ducharme**

Last summer I made a modest debut on CBC Radio. I was asked why a New Yorker would actually CHOOSE to live in Cape Breton. In the four minutes I was ambushed by my own words which did not say at all what I had in mind. On the air, you can't delete, insert, backspace; you have to follow the sentence to the bloody grammatical end. On paper, if you don't like your words, you can feed the kitchen stove with them, and consign them to their true element of hot air.

The truth is that if I had four weeks in which to explain my decision to come to Cape Breton, it would not be enough. More difficult would be explaining why I have stayed for ten years even when I had the occasional urge to cross the Canso Strait and burn the Causeway behind me. The truth is I can no longer imagine living anywhere else.

Hugh MacLennan wrote an article for the HOLIDAY MAGAZINE in the 1950's, under the
simple title of "Nova Scotia." In it he describes what "strangers found in Nova Scotia and why they came back again and again."

I thank my friend Yvonne Fox of Port Hastings for having saved this wonderful article through the years and for sharing it with me. This article says what I've always wanted to about Nova Scotia, especially Cape Breton, and explains why at least one New Yorker is still here.

What follows are a few of my favorite passages in the article.

"Nova Scotia is a sort of time-capsule of life in the United States of earlier days."

"To begin with, visitors become acutely conscious of the astringent quality of its air. When the wind blows from the northwest, it carries the aroma of balsalm forests into the streets of coastal towns and far out to sea. . . .When the wind blows southwest off the ocean it is full of ozone and sunshine and salt.

"The stranger becomes conscious not only of what he sees but of the familiar things his eyes do not see. Streets and crossroads are not awash with billboards. It is remarkable how this lack of the familiar helps visitors think and feel about what they do see."

"There is nothing vast but the sea. Yet the images evoked are wonderfully varied and intimate. Granite tors, grave and lichened, cast their shadows over seaward moors in the afternoon sun. High promontories noble in the moonlight smoke with spume when a storm assaults them."

" . . . a solitary pit of moon-whitened shingle in a lonely, loon-haunted lake, where suddenly a great-antlered moose comes out of the woods to cast his shadow in absurd dignity on the still water. Or a salmon pool, refecting the multitudinous colors of the sky after sunset, with the still, indifferent outline of a red deer drinking from the same pool. Or a glen threaded with sea mists after rain . . ."

"Men tend to be held by rocky countries, where the living is hard and the challenges sharp. Above all they are held by countries which create a sense of poetry in the ordinary scenes of life."

"The farm had gone back to woods and grass because there were no young men to work it. It was simple and complicated as that. . . that farmhouse in the Margaree Valley is the most significant symbol I know. The lonely old couple sitting in the prim little parlour, with the brassbound Bible in its special place. . .it never occured to feel sorry for themselves or to guess that their point of view is passing from the earth. The last time I saw the old gentleman . . .he said in words he used as naturally as a modern man uses the latest slang, that he would soon be gathered to his father."

"So no matter how successful they may be, they are always lonely in other parts of the world. They miss the intimacy of home and the sight and sound of the sea."

"At the head of Bras d'Or is a little village called Whycocomagh which faces across a small bay . . .As we left the boat at the end of the day and went to the farmhouse where rooms were waiting, I smelled eelgrass amd shivered with delight when the first notes of wild music began in the sky. The music came from the mountain slopes opposite the village. A piper lived on each slope and in the sunset they were playing pibrochs across the water to each other. The music continued until the moon rose and it has continued in my head ever since."

## Balance wheel continued

So far, however, very little attention has been paid to developing European market opportunities. In a Europe where the wilderness and wildlife are virtually gone, and crowding civilization provides culture and history-galore, but little in terms of outdoors adventure, we would have an eager market for those seeking a life-time dream trip. Best of all the money generated by non-Canadian tourism would be NEW MONEY in the economy, something that regional tourism cannot accomplish.

This market is very small at present but it is doubling every year in Canada and needs only expert promotion and packaging to become a vital force in future tourism, especially in places like Cape Breton. The opportunity to be on the leading edge is here now.

## History of hooked rugs now in English

**by Daniel Aucoin**

La Societe Saint-Pierre is proud to announce that the English book entitiled THE HISTORY OF CHETICAMP HOOKED RUGS AND THEIR ARTISANS is now on sale. The French version, launched in 1985, was translated this year by Marcel Leblanc and published by Lescarbot Publishing in Yarmouth.

Hooked rugs and tapestries have been famous for more than 50 years and constitute a unique form of handcrafts in Cheticamp. These are renowned for their perfect workmanship, rich soft colours, their diversity of design and often also for their distinguished owners.

These rugs have a colourful history. The fact that they were introduced in Cheticamp by a New York artist, Miss Lillian Burke and by the family of the famous telephone inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, already gives then an illustrious beginning. The evolution of these rugs to their present high-quality workmanship, their economic importance to the area, the social activity which was and still is associated with this form of handcraft and the fame of several artists in this medium all required that the history of these rugs be recorded.

The book was edited by Father Anselme Chiasson. The task of researching the historical facts was entrusted to Mrs. Annie-Rose Deveau.

THE HISTORY OF CHETICAMP HOOKED RUGS AND THEIR ARTISANS sells for $11.95. You may write to La Societe Saint-Pierre at P.O. Box 430, Cheticamp, Inverness County, Nova Scotia, BOE 1HO.

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Next deadline October 31
Next printing November 11

Printed by
The Pictou Advocate