



The Old Train Station News

Newsletter #73

March 2015



The museum is tackling an extensive project that will, hopefully, honor all of the Antigonish men who served and died in the First World War. It's an ambitious project. To date, we have upwards to one hundred names on the honor roll. Each of these names is being carefully researched and recorded with regards to date and place of birth, parents, date of enlistment, occupation at the time of enlistment, marital status and military particulars (regimental number, force, unit, rank and location of service). Much of our information to date has come from government files on the internet.

The brainchild of Bill Landry of the town of Antigonish, this project involves a dozen or so researchers but, to complete this task adequately and in time for the 100th anniversary of the death of each man, we need community support. Not all names were, for one reason or another, listed on the cenotaph. To ensure that we miss not one single soldier, we're asking the public to provide us with names and particulars. We're looking for information, family stories and photographs and for each veteran.

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

"We will remember them." We hear that sentiment every Remembrance Day, Bill reminds us; yet, if we walked past the cenotaph today, how many of us would recognize even one of the names engraved there? Built in the fall of 1937, the cenotaph was erected so that future generations would always remember the soldiers who lost their lives for our freedom. Have we broken faith with those who fought and died? The Antigonish Cenotaph Committee intends to remedy this – but with your help.

Many families lost sons, husbands and fathers. Others lost friends and neighbours. Each community lost men. Please help us so that no man goes unnoticed. Think back. Remember stories. Dig through your collections of old photos, newspaper clippings and memorabilia. Check your family Bible for family particulars. The best information comes from families.

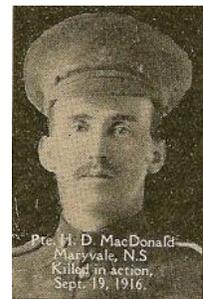
So, who were some of these soldiers of the First World War? In my community of Maryvale, we know of two men who volunteered and lost their lives. Both of these soldiers' names are engraved on family stones in the local graveyard next to the church. Each man's story is unique.



Daniel (Donald) V. McDonald was the youngest son of John and Margaret McDonald. (His grandfather, Angus, came from Lewis, Scotland, in 1804. For identifying purposes, the family became known as the "Lewis" McDonalds.) Daniel's family lived in the old "Mac" Wallace house next to the school and across from the church at Maryvale before moving to New Glasgow in 1913. When Dan enlisted in 1916, he was only eighteen years of age. His attestation papers indicate that he had some previous military training. Before joining up, he had been working as an "iron constructor" or an iron worker. Dan served with the Canadian Infantry (New Brunswick Regiment). He was twenty-one years old when he was killed on August 28, 1918.

A note posted in the *New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle* and then reposted in *The Casket* on January 8, 1920, reports that Daniel's parents received the Military Medal "won by their gallant son, Daniel Vincent, who gave up his life on August 28, 1918, in trying to rescue a comrade wounded in the great battle then raging." His mother's obituary in 1928 recalls that "her youngest son, Dannie, made the supreme sacrifice on the fields of Flanders." His father's obituary, later that same year, indicates likewise. Pte. D. V. McDonald's name is among several mentioned in the *War Diary for the Canadian Infantry Battalion* for "bravery" and "devotion in battle" in the trenches at Baurains, France, in August of 1918. Daniel lies buried in Pas de Calais, France. The family gravestone at Maryvale includes Daniel's name, his service number, 26 Bat. (26th Battalion), and a stanza from John McCrae's poem, *In Flanders Fields*: "We are the dead. Short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved, and now we lie in Flanders fields."

Hugh D. McDonald was a son of Alex and Margaret McDonald. The family lived in what has long been known as the Theriault house at Maryvale. A brother, Dan Joe, was a merchant in town; another brother, John D., was a guard at Dorchester Penitentiary; but Hugh Daniel went west and found work as a machinist/mill hand in Nelson, British Columbia. Hugh enlisted out west with the 1st Canadian Pioneers. On September 19, 1916, he was killed in the Battle of Courcellette. He was thirty years of age. Hugh was buried in Somme, France. Soon after, an "impressive" memorial service was held at Maryvale for this "heroic young man" who "gave up his life for his King and Country on the blood-stained soil of France." *The Casket* reported that Hugh had made "the supreme sacrifice for the Empire, and had performed the greatest of all acts of charity – the laying down of his life for his fellow man." The newspaper also noted that all who attended the service were beginning to realize "more keenly than ever the sacrifice of life this terrible war is going to entail before peace is again assured." In 1921, *The Casket* informed that Hugh's mother, Mrs. A. D. McDonald, had received a "war cross and scroll" in memory of her son.



In my husband's family, Ron's grandfather, Dan R. MacGillivray, had two second cousins who were killed in the so-called "Great War." Daniel and John Angus were brothers and the sons of Ronald and Catherine (Mclsaac) McGillivray of Highfield (or Rear Doctor's Brook). Both men were unmarried.

Daniel McGillivray enlisted in March of 1916 at a recruiting rally held in town. Amidst fanfare and speeches, twenty-nine young men joined up. Dan was thirty-one years of age, much older than most of the other recruits. "They are nearly all very young, mere boys from 17 to 20 years of age," *The Casket* wrote back then. "In physique, they do not compare favorably with the platoon that left here last week for Pictou." Dan's attestation papers indicate that he was a shell worker and that his medical exam took place in New Glasgow. Munitions were being manufactured at Trenton at the time. Was Daniel working there? *The Casket* notes that he went overseas with the 193rd Battalion.



On November 20, 1917, Daniel McGillivray died from shrapnel wounds received at Passchendaele – that infamous battle that has gone down in history as "a vivid symbol of mud, madness and senseless slaughter." He had been wounded twice before, had regained strength, and had been returned to the firing line. His death announcement in the local paper reported that only two "of the many Antigonish men drafted from the N. S. Highland Brigade, are now left on the firing line." Apparently, he was a man of "fine character" and "quiet disposition" – qualities that made him many friends. He lies buried in Belgium.

Daniel's younger brother, **John Angus McGillivray**, was only twenty-one when he enlisted. His attestation papers state that he was a farmer. His brother's obituary mentions that John Angus was stationed in France at the time of Daniel's death. Just months before the end of the war, John Angus was admitted to the No. 16 Canadian Hospital in Orpington, England, suffering from bronchitis. While convalescing there, he fell victim to the Spanish Influenza. The *War Diary of No. 16 Canadian Hospital* notes the prevalence of the influenza epidemic. It also indicates that Nursing Sisters were complaining of the cold in the wards and in their quarters. In fact, the wards were so "lacking in heat" that the influenza patients were transferred to the Isolation Building. "The heating has been poor, largely owing to the inferior coal used."



John Angus died on December 12, 1918, one month after the signing of the Armistice. He was just twenty-three years of age. Private John Angus McGillivray was buried in Kent, England. Sadly, the end of the war did not end the war casualties.



Ron's grandfather had a second cousin, once removed, who was also killed in WWI. **William Fielding Mclsaac's** paternal grandmother was Catherine McGillivray from Malignant Brook (what is now Maryvale). She married Donald Mclsaac of Dunmore. William Fielding's father was Colin Francis Mclsaac, a prominent lawyer and politician (Member of Parliament for Antigonish County from 1895 – 1905 and Member of Parliament for Antigonish-Guysborough from 1922 – 1925) and his mother was Mary Helena Houlette of Halifax. The family lived at 86 Church Street in what was once known as the T. B. Murphy house.

Fielding was a graduate of McGill Medical School in Montreal. After graduation he took a Captaincy course and left for overseas. He was just twenty-two years old. In a

letter to his mother shortly before his death, he assured her that “there was no danger except from the air” and that “the chance of injury to any one individual was not alarming.” (*The Casket*, April 13, 1918) Ironically, Mclsaac was wounded in an air-raid on the night of May 19, 1918, in Etaples, France, while on duty at a stationary hospital. The *War Diary for No. 9 Canadian Stationary Hospital* notes that Mclsaac was “very severely” wounded “receiving a splinter in his lung.” Fielding died on June 3, 1918. He had just turned twenty-four. The war diary notation for June 5, 1918 reads: “Capt. Mclsaac was buried today. The whole unit attended the funeral. . . .” Officers from other hospital units attended the service too. “Capt. Mclsaac was . . . a faithful and efficient officer.” *The Casket* reported that the family received “sympathetic expressions from General Mewburn and from such distinguished men as Sir Robert Borden and Sir Wilfred Laurier.”

William Fielding Mclsaac’s name is included on the family headstone at St. Ninian’s cemetery along with the following inscription: “*We have loved them in life: let us not forget them in death.*”

The above are simply a researcher’s brief sketches on five (of almost one hundred) local men who died in WWI. Most of these soldiers have living relatives who could provide details, stories and whatnot that would prove to be even more valuable. Do these men justice and help us with this project – for ourselves and for posterity’s sake. Surely, they all deserve a few lines to be remembered by.

“To date, the public is responding to our request for assistance,” says Jocelyn Gillis. “We’re encouraged by the initial response.”

Catherine MacGillivray



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Recent Acquisitions



Thank you to **Eleanor Belland of Antigonish** for donating some of her husband’s badges and sporting memorabilia. Ray Belland grew up in Antigonish and taught bricklaying and tiling at Canso Regional Vocational School (1969 – 1990), a trade that he had learned from his father, David. (Ray’s mother was Marjorie D.D. MacDonald.)

As a young fellow, Ray had been encouraged to go to university but he had no interest in that. He wanted to do bricklaying. In later years, (probably with teacher K. M. MacDonald’s words still ringing in his ears) he took courses

on a part-time basis. In 1996 he graduated from St. F. X. with a B. A. and a B. Ed degree.

Ray had a great interest in sports – both as an athlete and while assisting and promoting various teams over the years.

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- Thank you to **Imelda Farrell of Antigonish** for a photo of the 1944 graduating class of Provincial Normal College.
 - **Dr. J. H. Gillis School** sent an interesting document via **Leah Duggan**. This document, dated 1826, outlines the principle of interest and how to calculate rate of interest in pound sterling. Currency in the Province of Nova Scotia changed to dollars and cents in 1860. Thanks, Leah!
 - Thank you to **Garry Fleuren of Cloverville** who donated the following books:

1890 Pocket Atlas and Gazetteer of Canada

Letters Home: Martimers and the Great War, 1914 1918 by Ross Hebb

Going Over: A Nova Scotian Soldier in World War I by David Mossman



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First World War Veterans of Guysborough County

Bruce MacDonald has been working on a project to document the stories of Guysborough Veterans, including 131 soldiers who died while serving with the Canadian forces during or shortly after the Great War. If you have photos or information to share, please contact Bruce:

brucefrancismacdonald@gmail.com

Blogpost can be reached here: <http://guysboroughgreatwarveterans.blogspot.ca/>

The Ice Situation

Ice was used for refrigeration in days past. It was cut in chunks from lakes and ponds, laid in layers, and then covered with sawdust to prevent the various layers from freezing together.

Ice harvested off Linwood and Tracadie Lakes was hauled by horse and sleigh to Monastery where it was shipped on the railway to Stellarton where it was used by CN.

Young cottagers at Jimtown can recall Joseph Grant from Antigonish Harbour delivering ice to the area and chipping off small pieces as treats for children. Hugh Haley from Antigonish Harbour notes that Mr. Grant had several outbuildings—one of which was an ice house. He delivered ice twice per week to the cottages at Jimtown Beach in the 1950s.



The icemen pictured here remain unidentified.

Museum Ceilidh

The performers from our last ceilidh: Scott Williams, Marion Dewar, John Hanlon and Natalie DeCoste.



Request

Arts Health Antigonish is looking for the loan of a dory and two sturdy Mi'kmaq baskets for their historical production planned for this summer and fall. (Our museum baskets are much too fragile.) They're also looking for Loyalist period artefacts or costumes that people may be willing to loan. Are there any costumes still around from the bicentennial celebration of Timothy Hierlihy's landing at Town Point in 1784? Please contact Dorothy Lander or the museum.

Please Note

The museum will be closed on April 16 and April 17 for an ANSM (Association of Nova Scotia Museums) training session.

Nova Scotia Probate Records

Are you aware that these records are online? <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2134302>

Annual Walk to the Culloden Memorial Cairn

Bill McVicar would like to remind our readers of the annual walk to the Culloden Memorial Cairn at Lismore on April 18, 2015. All are asked to meet at the highway at 10:45. Remember to wear appropriate footwear as it can get messy. Dinner and Ceilidh will follow at the Community Centre in Lismore. Watch for further details in the local media.

New Volunteers

Our organization is seeking new volunteers. If you have time, talent, and ideas that you would like to share with our organization, please let us know and we will work with you to find a place where you can contribute in a meaningful way. We value your input.

Membership Renewal

April is Membership Renewal time and an opportunity to solicit new members. Our Revised Membership Form is attached. If you are unsure of your status as a member, please do not hesitate to contact us antheritage@parl.ns.ca.

Heritage Association of Antigonish

Learning Events

- In the spring of 2015, **Zane deNoncourt** will talk about the Latvian immigrants to Antigonish and their contribution to agriculture in this area.
- In June, **Allan Marble** will give a biographical sketch of Dr. J. W. MacDonald.

New Members

Janie Teasdale, Williams Point

Message from the Chair – Heritage Association of Antigonish

(Working today to preserve yesterday for tomorrow.)

This month the Association hosted two Ceilidhs. One of these Ceilidhs was our Flag Day Celebration which was held over from February due to bad weather. This was a free event. The Association co-hosted this event with the Antigonish Highland Society. We also received a donation from Antigonish

Farmers Mutual to help with the cost. As Chair of the Association, I would like to thank our friends at Antigonish Farmers Mutual for this financial support.

On the evening of the first full day of spring, I attended the concert production of ***Strathglass Farewell***. This concert included all the music from the original production. The music was written and performed by locals and dealt with the experiences of our Scottish forefathers who were removed from the Isle of Skye.

There are two things that really need to be noted. The first is the wow factor. This production was as good as, if not better than, any you would find in New York or Toronto. Whether it was young Grayson Hudson singing "Lord of the Mutton" or Abigail MacDonald singing "A'Bheinn Ghorm" in Gaelic, Duncan MacDonald and his team hit the ball out of the park. Antigonish has so much talent!

The second is my disappointment with the number of local residents taking the time to support our local musicians and performers. When speaking to Duncan MacDonald, I was told the purpose of the concert was to raise seed money for additional projects. I realize the weather that evening was not great; however, I want to remind everyone of the importance of supporting our local events – and this means buying a ticket and attending these events.

As many of our readers are aware, I am active with the Antigonish Highland Society and I want to advise that the tickets for the 2015 games are now on sale. This year the Society is offering an early bird passport ticket that will provide access to all games events for the price of \$75.00. This passport ticket includes the sequel to the Ships of 1801 which is called **The Year of the Burning**. The cost to attend this event is \$ 30.00. As you can see, the passport provides for a real savings if you purchase early.

Tickets can be purchased at any Ticket Pro Outlet or online. (In Antigonish, the outlet is MacKinnon Pharmasave on Main Street.) See links attached:

<https://ww3.ticketpro.ca/pos.php>
https://antigonishhighlandgames.ticketpro.ca/?lang=en&aff=ahg#def_1110682052

These passport tickets will make a great Mother's Day or Father's Day gift.

When writing my monthly message, I like to review my write-up for last year. Back then, I had written the following: *"On March 12, as I was placing the garbage out, I heard and saw a small flock of geese returning to our region. There is hope that this winter is nearing an end. We have to think positive thoughts!"*

I have not heard or seen any returning birds yet and I must admit that I will be happy to say good bye to March and hopefully experience some warmer weather in April.

In closing, as I wrote last year, we have to think positive thoughts!

Until next month, Take Care and God Bless.

Angus MacGillivray, BBA FCGA angus.macgillivray@ns.sympatico.ca

HERITAGE ASSOCIATION OF ANTIGONISH
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Membership is open to any interested residents of the Town or County, former residents, or persons who have roots in Antigonish, upon annual payment of dues.

Membership Types:

Individual - \$ 10.00 per year _____ \$ 25 for 3 years _____

Family - \$ 15.00 per year _____ \$ 40 for 3 years _____

High School Student - Grade 10, 11 & 12 _____

Student – Grades 1 to 9 inclusive _____

(Students join for free. Students in grade 9 or below are honorary members.)

Please note: for students less than 16 years of age we will require the signature of a parent or guardian.

Name: _____

If taking family rate, please list names of children

Address: _____

Email: _____ Telephone _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Note: Membership Dues are due with the completed application.

Please make cheque payable to the Heritage Association of Antigonish

Important Notice

Please check here _____ if you wish to become a member of the Antigonish Highland Society. There is no extra charge. Members can be those who actively promote the objectives of the Antigonish Highland Society whose mission is to preserve the Scottish culture and traditions and to perpetuate the language, literature and athletics of the Gaels.

www.antigonishhighlandsociety.ca