



The Old Train Station News

Newsletter #78

August 2015

This month's article comes to you compliments of Bonnie Musial of Monticello, Mississippi. Bonnie is a local Antigonisher, the daughter of Ninian and Marie MacDonald who ran the Green and White Store on Main Street. After practicing medicine in Halifax for two decades, Bonnie moved her practice to the warmer climes of the southern United States. Now retired, she volunteers with the historical society in her community of Monticello. For the past number of years, she's been a supporter and contributor to our museum.

Multiculturalism in 1954 Antigonish: St. Ninian's Street School

What was an eight year old Catholic student doing at the Protestant school in Antigonish?



The Antigonish Heritage Museum antiheritage@parl.ns.ca or 902-863-6160

The problem at Morrison School was the four flights of stairs to reach the Grade 3 classroom.

Whomever my father, Nin MacDonald, asked about rearranging the grades to the lower floor for one year would not consider it so my parents enrolled me at St. Ninian's Street School. Apprehension quickly turned to joy because the teacher was very kind and she didn't mind us Grade 3's listening when she taught the other grades in the same room (Gr. 4-6).

The Antigonish clergy were not too happy, it was learned later, but the days of physically accessible buildings were far in the future. Polio had given me crutches and braces and the other children could barely wait for me to sit down at recess to allow them a chance to try out the crutches.

I was so worried they would hate me since they didn't believe in the Pope. That was my understanding of Protestantism and when I found out that some were Baptists or Methodists or Presbyterians AND they all went to the same St. James United Church – a shock until they explained that the church concentrated on the similarities, not the differences. It was so simple and yet profound that today's world could take note. It didn't bother me to say the Lord's Prayer with the extra 14 words before Amen since the rest was identical to the Catholic version.

Clara Whidden was a mentor to me throughout that time and the town respected her highly. Other Protestants in town were business owners or active politically – mostly excellent examples of good living people. How fortunate we were to live in that time of innocence, security and acceptance. Antigonish has the haunting beauty and wildness of the Western Highlands that lingers in the soul no matter who or where her people are. When the alumni magazine shows pictures of the "X" grads who have spread all over the globe, I know it is actually love of Antigonish they are proudly displaying.

Everything we are and have become goes back to our parents and the elementary schools where true education occurs.

Bonnie (MacDonald) Musial

For many years, the old St. Ninian's Street School accommodated the Protestant schoolchildren of the town of Antigonish. An old day planner for the year of 1954-55 reveals that the teacher that year was Marion (Mrs. Cecil) MacLean of West Street. (Apparently, Mrs. MacLean was the first Catholic teacher to teach at the school.) She taught Grades three to six. That year she reported 195 teaching days and two sick days. Her salary was \$1960. Visitors to the school that year included Courtney Henry, Eileen's husband, and Rev. E. V. Forbes, the United Church Minister based out of Lochaber.



The day planner includes a list of the students including George Williams, Patsy Wong, Judy Hudson, Charles Lowe, Ray Mah and Lawrence Skinner. Bonnie can clearly identify Doug Adams in the back row, third from the left and Arnold Charron, sixth from the left. In the middle row, Marilyn Adams is first on the left, Bonnie, second from the left, George Williams, fifth, and Johnny Hudson, last in that row. In the front row, Patsy Wong is first on the left, Bonnie is second from the left and Susan Sweet, is ninth from the left.

Kindly help us identify the other students in the class photograph.

Recent Acquisitions

Mary MacKenzie Corke of the United States brought in a copy of her book which includes valuable material on her great grandfather, Captain Dan MacDonald of Lees House on Main Street. Captain Dan was a seafaring man involved in the cattle trade between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. "Captains All," as her publication is called, includes a copy of a painting of Captain Dan's vessel, the *Glenaladale*, painted by his daughter Margaret. That painting now hangs in a family member's home in St. John's, Newfoundland. Margaret's son, George Hugh Henderson, went on to become a professor at Dalhousie University and was noted in the field of radar.



This summer the museum received a considerable collection of old negatives from the old **Buckley Studio** that operated on the south side of Main Street from about 1950 through the 1980s. Ken Holmes of Truro, who worked for Buckley Studio as a photographer, obtained the collection and recently determined that it was time to turn it over to an organization that would appreciate the contents.



The Museum has begun to make prints of some of the more interesting activities, events, buildings and businesses.

Seen here are Eatons on Main Street and the Gael Restaurant on James Street. Both images are from the mid-1960s. Both businesses have ceased operation in Antigonish.

Andrew “Colin R.” MacDonald of Antigonish and Halifax donated a quality picture of the Aurora owners and managing team dating back to 1880-85.

Peggy Power contributed a collection of old school registers from the Aulds Cove School dating from 1895 to 1920. Peggy’s great grandfather was Professor A. G. MacDonald. The registers and three flatirons were donated in memory of Marjorie and Joseph Power.

Bart Wainwright of Antigonish brought in a miner’s carbide lamp that came from New Campbellton, Cape Breton.

Diane Roberts of Antigonish donated an album cover of the Mount Saint Bernard Gaelic Choir. It dates back to about 1959.

Ron McConnell of Antigonish brought in some ephemera concerning Rev. John R. MacDonald, a program from his consecration as Bishop of Peterborough, Ontario, and testimonial dinner in his honour. A few postcards were included as well as an interior photo of St. Ninians c. 1940.

Leo “Boots” Chisholm of Antigonish came in with a few photographs including hockey photos, Marian Boychoir photos and others.

The HMCS Antigonish

John III and Renee Helm of Camrose, Alberta, stopped by to visit us this month to inquire about information concerning the *HMCS Antigonish*. John III told us that his grandfather, John Sr. (Jack Helm), was born in Glasgow, Scotland, immigrated to Canada about 1910, and eventually settled in Edmonton, Alberta.

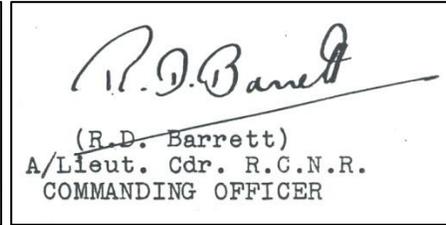
Jack Jr. served on the *HMCS Antigonish* at the end of World War II. Too young for service, he had the permission of his mother to sign up a little early. In his postwar career, John Jr. worked for CN Rail as a conductor just as his father had done before.

John III recalls hearing of another friend of the family, Gordon Hay of Camrose, Alberta, also serving on the *HMCS Antigonish*. We had a photo take of John and Renee examining a cap tally that originated in Alberta and was donated to the Museum a number of years ago.



We’ve gathered a little more information on the *HMCS Antigonish*. **Gordon and Wendy LeClair of Kelowna, British Columbia**, report that their neighbour Christopher Bradbury (Rob) served on the *HMCS Antigonish*. His first job was on the ship and it was there that he was introduced to Cathodic Protection. Rob eventually left the navy, attended a technical school where he furthered his studies in this area of corrosion, and established a company that worked in the Alberta oil fields.

We recently reported the acquisition of a dog tag worn by *HMCS Antigonish* crew member Nippy Barrett. We're now wondering if Nippy might have been R. D. Barrett A. / Lieut. Commander R. C. N. R., Commanding Officer of the *HMCS Antigonish*? Can anyone help us?



Thank You

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Lochaber Blueberry Festival

The Lochaber Blueberry Festival will take place next Sunday, August 23, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Come for an afternoon of delicious blueberry desserts, fine entertainment and a chance to catch up with folks you may not have seen for a while. www.lochaber.ca/blueberry-festival/

Heritage Association of Antigonish

Learning Events

Rod Bantjes will present "Eigg Mountain Land Settlement History Project" on September 14th 7pm. Bantjes, a Sociology professor at St. F. X., has been working with students and locals to map out the properties at Eigg Mountain.

Sian Turner of Antigonish will present "A Basketry Primer" on Monday, October 19th at 7pm. As part of this presentation, Ms. Turner will give an overview of basketry, discuss materials, techniques, the use and gathering of local materials, and the construction of a basket. She will introduce samples from different cultures as well as some from the museum.

Patrons Program: *We Appreciate Your Support!*

Greenway Claymore Inn, Antigonish: Silver

Justamere Café, Antigonish: Silver

Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance: Silver

St. F. X. Development: Silver

St. F. X. Continuing Education: Silver

Municipality of the County of Antigonish: Platinum

Lynn MacFarlane, Ottawa: Gold (Donated as a wedding gift to Dan MacFarlane and Heather Churchill-Smith of Calgary.)

Message from the Chair – Heritage Association of Antigonish (Working today to preserve yesterday for tomorrow.)

The summer of 2015 is coming to a close and I am looking forward to our fall and the cooler weather.

The Heritage Association's summer employee finishes her summer employ on August 28, 2015. Casey has worked hard on the memories project adding a number of new interviews to our collection. (Check out our Facebook site for clippings from some of these interviews.) I would like to say a special thanks to Casey for her dedication and hard work. Further, I want to wish her all the best with her studies.

The Heritage Association of Antigonish will hold their annual general meeting in September. This is where we elect the directors for the Board of the Heritage Association of Antigonish as well as the Association representatives for the Board that manages the Museum. We will advise when the date is set. It is hoped you will attend this important meeting.

Depending on your individual circumstances everyone can volunteer their talent, time or money. This support is critical for the success of any organization. New blood brings new ideas and energy to an organization. If you want to take on a leadership role in our Association please email the undersigned or speak with Jocelyn Gillis at the Museum.

In closing it would be fantastic to see some young people taking on a leadership role in our Association!

Until next, Take Care and God Bless.

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