



The Old Train Station News

Newsletter # 114

Summer 2019

Catawba Wine

The first grapes planted in Canada for wine production were a native North American species *Vitis Labrusca* "Catawba" which were planted on 30 acres of land on Pelee Island, Ontario. For more than a century, the Canadian wine industry was based on these hardy grapes. However, wines made from these native-based grapes had a peculiar taste, often described as "foxy." The term "foxy" refers to a very distinctive note found in some wine, a sort of wild, musky, odor and flavour. It's often found in American grape varieties like Concord or Catawba. Everyone who has ever downed a glass of Welch's concord grape juice knows that taste and smell.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the following as he disparaged finer wines . . .

While pure as a spring
Is the wine I sing,
And to praise it, one needs but name it;
For Catawba wine has need of no sign,
No tavern-bush to proclaim it.

Alex MacDonald (widow) penned this poem (Pub. 1936) during Nova Scotia's Prohibition Period from 1921 – 1930. The federal government introduced national prohibition (1918-1920), on the importation of alcohol, the inter-provincial trade of alcohol, and including a ban on production. In Nova Scotia, the protestant churches pushed hard for prohibition, but the Catholic Church was reluctant. *The Casket* published several articles in 1909 regarding the problems of labour, particularly in the mining areas, seeming to suggest the causes might include drinking. Catholic clergy thought liquor traffic should be suppressed but argued for generous licensing to provide for "drinking on the premises" and that the activities of the League of the Cross, "should be limited to converting people to temperance through teaching."

"Prohibition and the Social Gospel in Nova Scotia" by E.R. Forbes in *Acadiensis*, P. 11-36 (Interesting to read)

<https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/article/viewFile/11291/12041>

Farewell to Catawba

We've been friends for many a year,
Hence I come unto your bier,
Just to shed a friendly tear,
Departed Catawaba.

Alas, they signed a long petition,
Said you led us to perdition,
Robbed us of our small ambition,
Wicked Catawaba

Your death knell they would sign,
Though many a brow you freed from line,
Many a nose you made to shine,
Ill-treated Catawaba

To banish you became their mission,
Men of high and low position,
Yet to taste you some were wishing,
Inspiring Catawaba

You have brightened my abode,
You have lightened many a load,
Shortened, too, the Dagger Road,
Kindly Catawaba

You've made informal many a call,
Smoothed the floors in many a hall,
Removed the bumps from many a fall,
Obliging Catawaba

Many a bachelor will now be toiling,
While his love-nest will be spoiling,
Just because his tongue lacks oiling,
Mellow Catawaba

Though they've won the first long bout,
You may be down, but you're not out,
You may yet be under a snout,
Rugged Catawaba

Alex MacDonald (widow), Heatherton



*Its beauty all is gone
Dismantled and disrobed
And with the ravages of time
The scene of many a fray
Is sinking fast to slow decay.*

-Andrew Gilmore



AT THE MUSEUM

From our Displays:

Summer: If you haven't been visiting the Museum, we have changed up some of our displays and three of our cabinets have lighting which makes a world of difference.

Staff!

We have two students this year; **Ocean** working on setting up our new computer system and **Natalie** had a variety of projects in June. **Marleen** has volunteered to come in two or three days a week to fill-in where needed.

Renovations to the office are on hold until the fall but the floor has been tiled and a long computer desk has been built. More renovation to come.

FYI:

We now have up-to-the-minute weather reports here in Antigonish. If you want to know if it is really as hot or cold as it seems check it out and be sure to "bookmark" this site!

<http://www.capebretonweather.ca/Antigonish/Current.html>

Great News!

Due to the amazing work of a couple of volunteers, we have been given the **Baptismal (1856-1918) and Marriage (1859-1944) records from St. Columba's Church in Lakevale**. The records cover the areas of Georgeville, Lakevale, Maryvale and Ballantyne's Cove. Death records will come at some future date.

For Hockey Fans:

Village Media is running a 4-part series across all their Canadian sites. Part One mentions the Antigonish Heritage Museum.

<https://www.halifaxtoday.ca/local-sports/video-heres-how-our-ancestors-used-to-carve-hockey-sticks-out-of-a-single-piece-of-wood-1490903>

Drop by and buy tickets on our **quilted wall hanging** and support our efforts to buy display panels for the windows and don't forget the **Ceilidh** every Thursday evening during the summer at 7:30pm!

Museum Support: There are many ways to support the work that goes on here at the Museum. If you have some time and an interest in our history and culture, come in and speak with Jocelyn about how you can help. Remember us when making a donation as it helps us make the Museum a better experience for the public. Have you become a **member of the Museum** or remembered to renew your membership? Your continued support is important to us and our work.

We welcome participants in the 55+ Nova Scotia Games