

The Old Train Station News

Newsletter # 109

February 2019

Dear Friends,

♥ Sitting by the window on a recent morning, having a spot of tea, I watched my stalwart neighbour resolutely heading out for his morning walk. It was cold, it was windy, and the snow was coming down sideways and blowing in circles. I wish I could say he was an inspiration, but I think I'll wait until spring.

♥ Snow seems to leave a marked impression on our minds. The granddaughter of Duncan MacDonald who died in White Head, Guys. County in the winter of 1889 said that sadly his foot prints from the house to his shop remained there until well into spring. I smile to think of a story told by Dr. John Stewart who was looking out the window on a wintry day in Bayfield and seeing the Rev. Plummer carefully following behind the Mrs. and stepping in his wife's footprints as she marked a path through the deep snow.

♥ With climate change, the weather folks talk about the effects we can expect from the increase in storms, especially this time of the year. It made me think of the winter storms that were experienced in years gone by. Oh, I know we all walked 5 miles through snow banks that were over our heads. We all exaggerate just like our parents and grandparents, but what was it really like?

♥ Now, when my oldest sister was born at Beaver Meadow on March 2nd, 1938 my father was sent for help. He left by horse in the face of a nor'easter and returned 3 days later, far too late to be of any help. Years earlier his grandfather's estate was being settled on February 14th, 1905 and no one could attend "due to the impassability of the roads."

♥ Around the end of the first World War, it was reported that "*the late Bishop John R. MacDonald walked from Clydesdale through five feet of snow and slush to give the last Rites of the Church*". These feats were not uncommon as priests braved many a storm to tend to their parishioners. Rev. Ronald MacGillivray, whose vast parish extended from the hills of James River to the mines of Wine Harbour arrived home by horse from a call in Wine Harbour one wintry evening. He just got settled to his tea when he was called out to return once again from whence he came. "*Many a priest and doctor knew the mountain and valley roads in the days before the plows. They knew the horse and sleigh, and the plain slugging through snow, slush and mud, after the horse and sleigh had to be abandoned.*"

♥ It is often not just the snow but the constant winter change from snow to rain which caused great damage. On January 8, 1857, the Casket reported damaged properties – "*the freshet carried away a mill-dam belonging to Mr. Robert Trotter. Several small bridges on the public roads east and west were carried away by the same freshet and are this week visited by a great snow storm which commenced on Sunday last and continued snow drifting until to-day, so that our roads are all impassable. Owing to this the mails arrive very irregularly for the last two or three weeks. The Telegraph wire between this and Halifax is also in some parts down.*" Things were no better on the water. In November 1869 the Barque

“Lillie” was lost in a snowstorm off Pomquet Island and a month later the schooner “Gazelle” was lost off Cape George in a heavy gale and snowstorm.

♥ Despite our complaining and the dire warnings, we are far more able to handle the storms with weather warnings, heavy equipment and the latest in technology (not to mention taking off for sunny climes). However, we are less patient with what nature sends our way. Enough with the wintry weather, I think I’ll make another cup of tea!

♥*The Epistolarion*♥

The Ice Man

Joseph Edward Grant (1901 – 1974) was the Ice Man at Antigonish Harbour. Joe cut ice from a pond behind Lanark School and was the only person who delivered ice in the Jimtown and Mahoney’s Beach area. His tools were an ice saw and tongs and Joe owned a great white horse and wagon which he used for his deliveries. Joe was also a farmer and liked to collect and recycle items from the community.

When he died on July 14, 1974, the Casket reported, “The best word to describe Joe is kind. He was kind to the children, to the dogs that followed the wagon, to the besieged women who couldn’t get something done – like driving nails, mending a leaking roof, and best of all, taking several young imps for a drive.”

(with thanks to Francis, Judy & Joan for their memories)



The Memory NS Project:

As you may recall Jocelyn and Marleen spent a day last fall learning the ropes on how to upload our archival collection to the MemoryNS database. The purpose of the database is to provide researchers with detailed information about the extent and breathe of what we have available provincially and locally. Often objects and graphic images are used in displays, but textual material must be kept protected and handled with great care. This project allows the general public to know what we have available for research.

This has certainly been a learning curve, but we are getting somewhat competent and working at a snail’s pace. We can finally ask you to browse <https://memoryns.ca/> for our still small but on-going collection. We invite you to spend some time browsing by subject or the whole collection from the various Museums throughout the Province. In particular, take a look at what we have in our own back yard by searching the **Antigonish Heritage Museum**. And don’t forget to visit often as we continue to add our collections to the database.

AT THE MUSEUM

From our Displays:

February: We will have a display of period **Valentine Cards** and sweet boxes from our collection. It will do your heart good.

February/March: Alistair Hamilton will provide an interesting **Loyalist Era Military Costume** with accoutrements for display.

Books for Sale:

“A Clyburn Story” by **Barry MacKenzie** – The story of a family who moved from the U. S. to the Isaac’s Harbour area of Guysborough County.

“The Tides of Time” by **Suzanne Stewart** – A gentle seasonal excursion through rural labour in northeastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.

Mark your Calendar:

We are having a sale! April 6th from 12:00 – 3:00pm
You won’t want to miss it! More details to come.



Happy Valentine's Day

My Lagan Love

Where Lagan stream sings
lullaby
There blows a lily fair
The twilight gleam is in
her eye
The night is on her hair
And like a love-sick
lennan-shee
She has my heart in thrall
Nor life I owe nor liberty
For love is lord of all

– Joseph Campbell
(1903)

A chuisse mo chroí: My heart's beloved.

Claddagh Rings are the most authentic Irish gesture of love and originated in the village of Claddagh in Galway back in the 18th century, where they were originally used by the fishermen of the village as a means of identification. The ring's design is a heart held by two hands with a crown on top, and each element has a specific meaning. The heart symbolises love, the hands friendship, and the crown loyalty; the most important elements of any successful relationship.

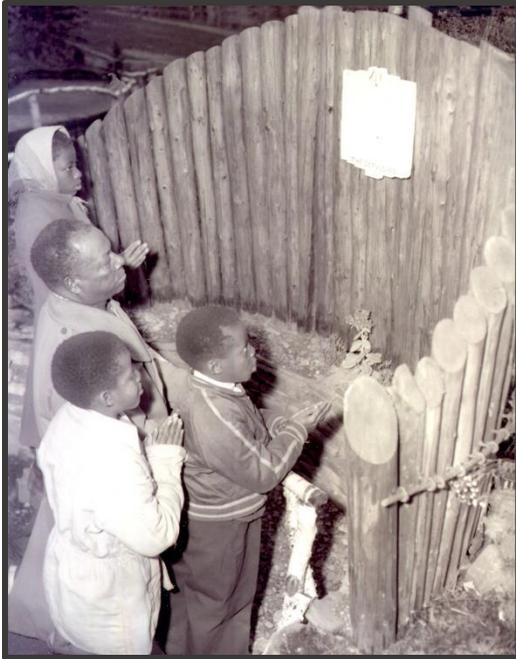


The traditional way to wear the Claddagh ring is with the tip of the heart pointing in towards your wrist if your heart has been promised to someone. If it points outwards, you're still on the lookout for your soulmate. The left hand is associated with serious relationships, while the right hand is for close

St. Margaret's of Scotland Cemetery: **Hon. James McLeod M.P.P., Knoydart 1820 – 1856**

*“His many virtues secured general esteem.
He served his country faithfully and laboured to promote her best interests.
He was deeply attached to the Catholic Church and the faith
once delivered to the Saints.”*

friendships or family ties.



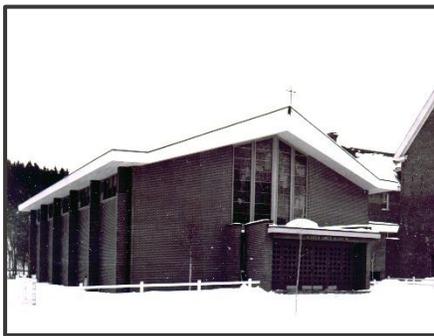
Our Lady of Grace Shrine, Monastery

On August 26, 1956, Bishop John R. MacDonald blessed the *Wayside crucifix* at the opening of Our Lady of Grace Shrine at St. Augustine's Monastery. A short distance from the Monastery, this rustic path of prayer winds through open woodland and gently rises as it connects the entrance Crucifix to statues of *St Joseph & the Holy Child* and *Our Lady at the Spring* whose waters are believed to have healing power. The *Stations of the Cross* are depicted along the way allowing for peaceful reflection.

Alexander Ash (1892-1967) of Monastery, shown here with his niece and nephews kneeling at one of the Stations, was involved in building the pathway. His son, Leonard also worked around the Monastery grounds.

St Augustine's Chapel

St Augustine's Chapel was opened on September 14, 1960 as an addition to the Monastery's main buildings. It was created as a "sacred room distinguished by simplicity, spaciousness and light explicitly dedicated to worship and prayer." Architect Michael Segalas, stained glass artist Earl C. Neiman and painter Robert Pinart, all of New York, were commissioned for the work. There are 5 side chapels suggesting a religious theme; the first chapel nearest the altar is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the red chapel is dedicated to St. Nicholas of Tolentine; the green chapel is dedicated to St. Joseph; the blue chapel to St. Rita; and the violet chapel to Our Lady of Consolation.



In the main sanctuary, the *Altar of Sacrifice* is of white Vermont marble crafted by Earl Neiman. The wooden *baldaquin* represents a crown of thorns and draped with a beaded cloth canopy created by Mrs. Adelaide Segalas.

The *Blessed Sacrament Altar* is fronted by a beautiful ceramic tile mosaic bearing the St. Augustine Coat of Arms by Jean Nison. The *Tabernacle* is by German goldsmith, Max Bessler. The carved *crucifix* mounted on the rosewood panel is by Swiss artist Emil Thomann.

The four *stained glass windows* are original designs by Robert Pinart and depict the four means of sanctity in religious life: 1. Chastity (a lily growing from a coffin); 2. Charity (an arrow surrounded by flames); 3. Obedience (a cross surrounded by a crown); 4. Poverty and life in common (drops of blood and loaves of bread).

The *murals* in the five side chapels, the *Monk's Chair*, and the sixteen *paintings* of saints of the Augustine Order are the works of Earl Neiman. The *large window* above the main entrance commemorates St. Augustine's writings and the main events of his life. The *Stations of the Cross* are drawings by Louis Jambor.

This beautiful Chapel with its prayer path and Shrine was the scene of many male week-end retreats and family celebrations throughout the years that the monks of St. Augustine Order were in residence.