



UBUNTU



“I am what I am because of who we all are.”

# NOMINATION FOR New Waterford, NS

Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

May 15, 2023

# The History of New Waterford and Area

New Waterford is an Urban Community in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality of Nova Scotia originally called “ Barrachois “. It was incorporated into a town in 1913 and in 1995 was amalgamated into the Cape Breton Regional Municipality ( CBRM ) with Lingan, River Ryan, Scotchtown and New Victoria. Population is approximately 9,700. In the 2021 municipal election voter turnout was 61%.

The first inhabitants of the area were Mi'kmaq, where lifestyles were centered around hunting and fishing. In later years, it became a coal mining community, that has experienced economic decline. Coal mining began in 1854. Through the years 11 mines were in production and some employed up to 1,250 people. The miners were a variety of nationalities including Irish, Scottish, French, English and Eastern European. In 1907, Dominion Coal Company began here, drawing many from all areas of Cape Breton and beyond. In 1917, the worst coal mining disaster occurred in No.12 Colliery, where 65 miners lost their lives. The last mine closed in 2001. As a result of mine closures, many residents were retrained and they relocated to the west coast and other parts of Canada for employment. The former residents gave back to the community by supporting financially those in need back home, especially through the Combined Christmas Giving. On June 11, 1925, through failed contract negotiations between Company and United Mine Workers of America ( UMWA ),the miners “Stood The Gaff” and William Davis was shot and killed by company security. Since that time here in New Waterford, June 11<sup>th</sup> has been called “Miner’s Memorial Day“ and in other surrounding mining communities as well.. A monument is erected on Plummer Avenue and in 2025 it will be the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that fateful day.

New Waterford at present has one elementary school named Greenfield and one high school Breton Education Centre (B.E.C.), with a new P6-12 school in the process of being built and will open in 2024 to replace BEC. A new Health Centre is being built to replace the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital that opened in 1963. Due to this, many nurses , teachers and other professionals have had to relocate for work.

Looking at the future sometimes we are left wondering what lies ahead for us, but our community sees a new potential. We have survived so much, along with Covid-19 and recently Fiona and even though the population decreases, the people, because of their diversity strive to keep “togetherness” and culture sharing as a priority. Living here means surrounding ourselves with “quality not quantity”.

We feel that we are able to maintain the historic character of our community in the rapidly changing world. Our strong elected leaders are committed to our citizens in the best way possible. Our Main Street may not contain many businesses but when the newly repainted murals are re-hung , you will see our history and respect for hard work evident in these murals. You feel the closeness and friendship when you see people stopping to chat in the street and witnessing the open door to door hospitality and being there for each other in time of need.

You will see street signs on poles or concrete blocks named after some of the first settlers in this area. These streets were laid out by an engineer who had worked for the city of New York. It is said to be the best laid out community in Cape Breton.

The New Waterford and District Church Council , represent all of our clergy and religious leaders. There are four distinct denominations that maintain Christian and Ecumenical unity.

“Coming Home” is so vital for former residents of all ages, and having the Coal Bowl Classic and the well- known Coal Dust Days promotes a sense of return ,to allow this to happen.

Seniors play a large part in the vitality of our community. They shop here, use the services and pay taxes. They are like the roots of a tree. They preserve the traditional and cultural values present and visible in our community. Our Historical Society holds vintage photos with stories of the past, which is one of the greatest teachings for our youth. New Waterford and area plays a key role in growing strong people. We are resilient , and we are survivors when things get tough. When anyone enters our community they smell the ocean, see the fishing boats, experience the walking trails , observe the hospitality and friendly people, and recognize how rich in spirit and culture our community really is.

You will see in the following submissions from organizations and people just how rich in love, respect and culture we really are.

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Dear Selection Committee,

How grateful I am to the “Island Breast Friends” who nominated our community for this outstanding award. As you will read from our Service and VOLUNTEER groups , we are proud to live, work, play and be part of all that takes place in the New Waterford and area.

We have over 30 small businesses and several nonprofit groups here. When we experience hardships, they all step up to answer the call when needed. They are dedicated to serving the people of the community. There is so much to offer here no matter what your interests are. People are here to make any newcomer welcome and help each other. There is always something to do for people of all ages. Our two local schools keep youth involved in all activities at the schools and in the community. It is all about supporting everyone to achieve and reach their inner goals to be happy.

I am proud to be the elected representative of the community and will forever be grateful to them for their vote of confidence in me, and I want to sincerely thank this amazing group in taking the initiative to apply for this award.

Sincerely,

Darren O’Quinn

Councillor , District No.11, Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Dear Selection Committee:

“Island Breast Friends” is honored to be partnering with some amazing community members to nominate New Waterford and Area for the Lieutenant Governor’s Community Spirit Award. In 2003 “Island Breast Friends” was formed to support men and women struggling with breast cancer in our community. We began with twelve (12) volunteers and twenty years later we are a team of five (5). The definition of “ **UBUNTU** “ fits our mandate of coming together to help one another. We have held many fund raisers with help from volunteers in our community. Our biggest fundraiser was during Covid-19 lockdown, selling 2300 copies of our third edition cookbook. Money raised goes towards COMFORT BASKETS and THE TOM MCNEIL PATIENT CARE FUND at the Regional Hospital. Delivering a Comfort Basket to a newly diagnosed Breast Cancer patient is one of the most rewarding things our group does. We have delivered 192 of these baskets to date. Close to \$190,000 has been donated to the Tom McNeil Patient Care Fund and the Atlantic Chapter of Breast Cancer.

**“WE ARE FAMILY , NO ONE FIGHTS ALONE “**



### **THE ROTARY CLUB OF NEW WATERFORD**

Paul Muisse – President

Rotary in New Waterford was admitted to Rotary International on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1938 with a group of businessmen in the community. Eighty-five (85) years later we have welcomed women to our club and see the world where people unite and take action to create lasting change across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves.

The Rotary Club of New Waterford’s major fund raiser is our Number For Life and with the funds we raise we support our communities especially youth and seniors. Over the years we organize and deliver Meals On Wheels, helped low income seniors with oil, transportation to Halifax for youth medical care, breakfast programs, school scholarships, sports and recreation, support our local rink, support the food bank and Salvation Army and we give out bicycles on Plummer Avenue Day. The list goes on and on. It’s the love of our community and the many partnerships that bring the spirit of New Waterford alive. We believe our community has been enhanced by the special fellowship and atmosphere that has been a trademark of the club over the years. We are a non-profit community service club. Our motto “SERVICE ABOVE SELF”. The New Waterford Rotary Club also sponsors the Breton Education Centre Interact Club. The club

brings together young people to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of the Rotary motto. This year, the club has nineteen (19) members and they have volunteered and supported many projects such as clean up the town, adopt a family, entertain seniors at the Maple Hill Manor, The Terry Fox Run and many more.

## **NEW WATERFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Fire Chief – Matt Hawley

New Waterford Volunteer Fire Department (NWVFD) is a composite department consisting of 28 members and 4 career firefighters. They are very committed to serving the community, providing training opportunities for fire fighters as well as education and awareness to the community. NWVFD responds to calls for grass and brush fires, alarms, structure fires, vehicle accidents as well as water rescue and medical emergencies. NWVFD also has a close relationship with neighboring departments in Scotchtown and New Victoria.

Although sometimes fire services may be overlooked, we as residents have to remember how important these men and women are to our communities. September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, would mark another memorable day when Hurricane Fiona struck our small community. Many New Waterford and surrounding communities were spending the days after in temporary shelters, making insurance calls and trying to do a clean-up. Residents were also scrambling for child care, food and charging stations after everything was shut down. Road conditions were not safe and a state of emergency was declared.

The storm raged through the province on Saturday, downing trees and power lines, flooding homes, washing out roads and leaving more than 250,000 Nova Scotia Power customers without electricity on Sunday morning. We were fortunate enough to put together our Volunteers and be able to open as a “Community Safe/ Comfort Centre” We were able to put together a list of volunteers, provide food, shelter, charging stations, hot beverages and most of all some compassion and kindness for upwards of 1500 residents per day. Our community is very grateful and many expressed their gratitude and thanks. Sometimes it takes tragedy to see how a small town can come together. Because of resources such as our generator and more importantly our Volunteer Firefighters and community members we were up to the task. In addition to our community volunteers, we had assistance from our International Student Community. They stepped up daily to volunteer and bring support to our communities that were utilizing our centre.

NWVFD is and always will be dedicated to the people of New Waterford and the surrounding areas. We would like to thank everyone in our community for supporting each and everything we do. We strive to provide the best support and protection to each and every resident in our New Waterford and area communities.

## **NEW WATERFORD COMBINED CHRISTMAS GIVING**

Shelly McLellan – Chairperson.

Combined Christmas Giving is a local non-profit organization founded in 1992 whose goal is to provide a Christmas for low income families/seniors. We were a group of twelve (12) volunteers per Covid-19 and presently have three (3) volunteers. Adopt-A-Family has not yet resumed since Covid-19. Post Covid-19 fund raising takes place through social media. Before Christmas, we take applications from families based on proof of income. Shopping is done for

children/families who receive toys, P.J.'s and gift baskets. Families also receive a turkey and voucher for all trimmings. Once Christmas is over we start working on the next year. To date we have supported over 16,952 families in our community. As long as the support continues we will provide.

### **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

Gerald Coady- Grand Knight

ST. ANTHONY COUNCIL 3209 KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEW WATERFORD, was first organized in 1949 and close to seventy (70) years, the Council has been involved in the community by participating and contributing financially to community projects and parish functions. Financial support has been given to youth organizations along with scholarships and bursaries to graduating students within our community. Donations to food banks and Christmas Giving take place annually. The Council is also a major sponsor of the Coal Bowl Annual Invitational High School Basketball Tournament that attracts participants from all across Canada. Our Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary host funeral receptions by providing a venue and lunch for families of those who have passed. The Knights of Columbus is a very active group that lays a vital role in our community. At present the Council has one hundred and fifty-six (156) members who look forward in continuing to offer support in our community and area.

### **ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION, NEW WATERFORD BRANCH**

Frank Corbett-President

In the New Waterford Legion there are approximately seventeen (17) actual Veterans...12 of these are Peacekeepers and 5 are Afghanistan Veterans. There are approximately seventy-five (75) members . The legion provides assistance with any and all forms for DVA funding and equipment. The Poppy Fund is used for appliances any Veteran would require i.e. wheelchairs, canes special shoes and any form of medical equipment. Widows of Veterans are also entitled to this service. We advocate for the care and benefits for all who served Canada regardless of when or where they served.

### **ARMY NAVY AIR-FORCE VETERANS UNIT 217**

Cathy Boutilier McKenzie-President

The New Waterford Unit of the ANAVETS is home to two hundred and fifty-nine (259) members and volunteers. They host many events throughout the year, including Allie Leadbeater Day, and St. Paddy's Day Fundraiser for high school bursaries. It's a place to meet old and new friends, have a game of crib or cards and enjoy some fellowship. The unit holds bingo twice a week and darts weekly. They generously provide a venue for hosting any event. The UNIT also supports our Veterans; visiting and providing comfort and companionship. Seniors in nursing homes also delight in the annual Halloween luncheon, while children enjoy visiting with Santa at Christmas. The ANAVETS are always willing to help, "Shoulder To Shoulder".

**NEW WATERFORD KINSMEN**

Joe Currie- President

The New Waterford Kin Club was established in 1971. There are seven (7) members presently active. In the past 52 years there have been many projects that the Kin Family have supported in the New Waterford Area including the wellbeing of youth and seniors, adults with special needs, bursaries and monetary help for medical assistance. We aid the Back –To-School Campaign and the Breath Of Life “ (Cystic Fibrosis). We abide by our motto “ Serving The Community’s Greatest Need”

**NEW WATERFORD LIONS CLUB**

Joe Lynk – President

The New Waterford Lions Club is a registered non-for-profit organization with a history of serving the local community. There are six (6) active members. Lions meet the needs of the local community every day because they share a core belief- to Serve Their Community. Our facility hosts many important community events and meetings. For generations, we are best known for fighting blindness, but we also volunteer for many community projects. The hall serves a variety of cultural and recreational purposes and is a major influence in promoting a sense of community in New Waterford.

The Lions Club hosts events for the African Nova Scotia Community. The Black community didn’t have a place to congregate as the NEGRO SOCIAL CLUB was inhabitable. This enables the community to better understand the cultural values of the Black community. The Club assists community members with travel expenses travelling outside the area for medical appointments and procedures.

The Lions give back to the New Waterford community and are proud to serve New Waterford and surrounding areas. Our motto is “ We Serve “.

**NEW WATERFORD PENSIONERS CLUB**

Blair Smith – President

The New Waterford Pensioners Club has approximately one hundred and sixty-five (165) members with five (5) volunteers looking after events. What is unique about this group is the medical plan they offer to seniors of New Waterford and area. They invest this money independently from any large insurance companies and it is strictly managed by the Club. Presently the hall offers a women’s exercise program, weekly darts, card games, pool and monthly dances. It is completely self-sufficient and all are welcome.

**NEW WATERFORD FOOD BANK**

Families in New Waterford and Area are struggling to make ends meet. The Food Bank is there to serve the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.

## **FOOD CUPBOARDS AND PET CUPBOARD**

There are two food cupboards located in the downtown area. These food cupboards are filled by local residents. On each cupboard it states “ Take What You Need...And Leave What You Can”. The newest addition is a Pet Cupboard. This cupboard operates very similar to the two food cupboards in helping families struggling to feed their pets.

## **THE COMFORT CLOSET AT BRETON EDUCATION CENTRE**

The Comfort Closet is located on the main floor of the school. It is a one stop place where students can access not only clothing but lunches, snacks, personal hygiene supplies and take home meals. Due to the generosity of the Rotary Club, Salvation Army and grants from the province the room is well supplied. Students organize the schedules and work the room themselves.

## **UNDERCURRENT**

Undercurrent exists to inspire hope in the lives of children and youth in our community. We accomplish these things through sports and recreational programming, life skills building opportunities, one-on-one mentorship and building positive relationships with children and youth.

## **NEW WATERFORD LIBRARY**

The doors to our Library opened in November 1950 in the New Waterford Credit Union and is now located in the “Urban Centre”. The library has become the hub of our community offering many services to all. All newcomers arrive at the Library looking for a friendly face to help them settle into our community. All services are free and there is something for everyone. Computer use which includes free Wi-Fi and any other computer related services are readily available.

## **LINGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Shirley MacIntyre – President

Back in the early sixties Lingan school closed. The people of Lingan took over the building and converted it into a community centre. For years committees were formed and many events were sponsored through the spirit and dedication of tireless volunteers. In later years the community purchased the property and formed the Lingan Historical Society now known as the LINGAN HERITAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE.

Our mandate has always been to provide a place for community to gather and enjoy recreational events, community spirit, support when needed and the fellowship of belonging. Keeping our community alive and in touch is essential and remains our goal for the future

## **HISTORIC FORT PETRIE MILITARY MUSEUM**

In June 1998, the Fort Petrie Site was established as a Military Museum. Through the perseverance of military personnel, Veterans from the area and volunteers, Fort Petrie became part of the continuing Heritage of New Waterford and Area.

## **FRIENDS OF COLLIERY LANDS PARK**

In 2020, the New Waterford Action Committee began to operate as the Friends of Colliery Land Park, and has been working to revitalize the property. Currently, it has eight (8) volunteers who work tirelessly towards the beautification project.

## **COAL DUST DAYS**

In 1983, the Coal Dust Days Committee was established to celebrate the Town of New Waterford's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This committee has continued every year since, with the exception of the years that there were Covid-19 restrictions, resulting in a full week of activities in the month of July. This event draws home former residents to reunite community spirit and friendship.

## **COMMUNITY SPORTS ACTIVITIES**

New Waterford promotes physical activity programs for people of all ages.

The well-known Coal Bowl Classic held at Breton Education Centre in February is a National Invitational High School Basketball Tournament.

Minor basketball for Elementary School children has over forty (40) volunteers with a Small Ball and Common school program.

Minor baseball for children aged 4-18 has over 25 volunteers.

New Waterford's Boxing Club are trained volunteers improving the lives of youths through Olympic Style Boxing.

The New Waterford and District Rink holds hockey, figure skating and public skating in winter. In the summer it holds roller skating, indoor basketball and is also a venue for parties etc.

The Horsemen's Association are a group of volunteers who keep the spirit of horsemanship alive in our community. They are "A special BREED of men and women".

The Learn to Run Program is a group of volunteers who promote physical activity by teaching youth and adults the joy of running.

Organized Dart, Cribbage and Tarabish Leagues are held from fall to spring in many clubs. Special Dart and Washer Toss Tournaments are held in memory of local individuals. Monies raised from these tournaments go toward bursaries and Combined Christmas Giving. The new Sports Hub holds the tennis courts and beside them the lighted artificial soccer turf field. Also included is a renovated skateboard park, a ball hockey and basketball court, and an outside fitness station. In July of each year "The Sports Hall Of Fame" is held in recognition of residents and former residents who excelled in athletics.

## COMMUNITY MUSIC

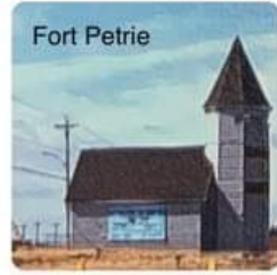
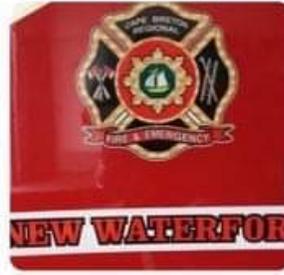
The sound of a fiddle, drums beating, strumming of a guitar and the voices of young and old alike is the most welcoming sound in our little community. Whether it is a school concert, a kitchen party or a fund raiser in a hall, there is nothing better than the sound of music to uplift you. During Covid-19 we had “Garbage Night Sessions” and “Sunday Night Live “to keep everyone’s spirits alive, from across the country and beyond. “ Garbage Night” sessions were fundraisers that raised money for tablets to allow families to communicate with those confined in nursing homes under quarantine. This added so much vitality and strength at a time when we needed it most.

## THE CONCLUSION:

We the “ISLAND BREAST FRIENDS” have given you a detailed description of why we are nominating our Town of New Waterford and Area for the “Lieutenant -Governor’s Community Spirit Award” . We are very proud to be doing this and to have indicated why we think our community is so very worthy of this award. We are so fortunate to be living in an area where we are all regarded as FAMILY. We love the people, the area and definitely the **COMMUNITY SPIRIT**. We wouldn’t want to live anywhere else in the world. Our hearts and souls are embodied in this quaint little town we call **HOME**.

We would like to thank all of our community partners and volunteers who came together to support us for this nomination. In the accompanying video, you will experience how this is all brought to light. <https://youtu.be/9nwL3ZHBMZo>





New Waterford Rotary



BRANCH 014, NEW WATERFORD



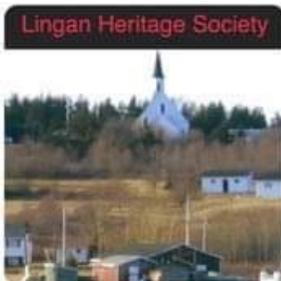
International Business Women Council of New Waterford Helping during Fiona



Men of the Deeps at Church



at Breton Regional Library at New Waterford



Lingan Heritage Society



Pet board



Knights of Columbus Hall New Waterford



Pet board

PHOTO-COLLAGE