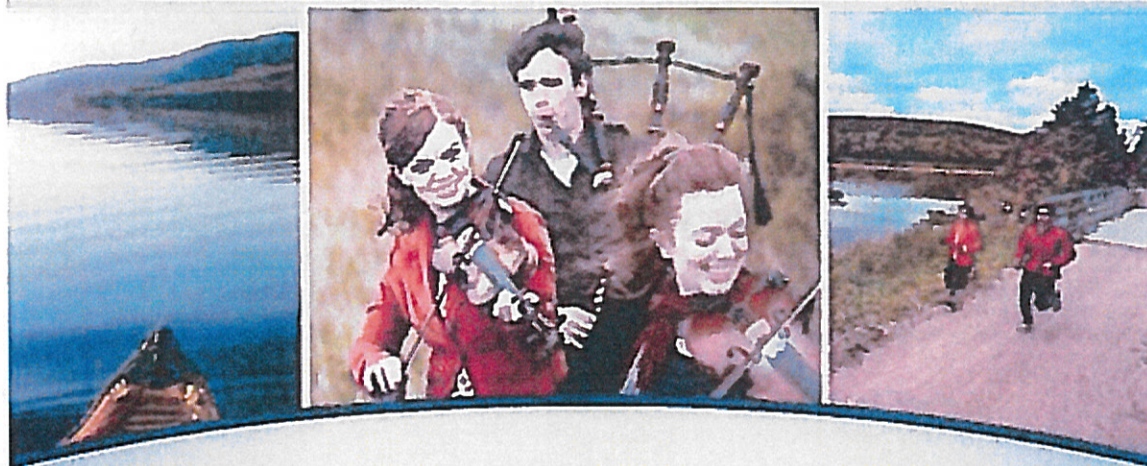


Traditions, Tunes, Trails & Sails Mabou has it All!

www.mabouvillage.com




mabou
WHERE CULTURE LIVES
Far am beò Dualchas



Mabou, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia

Application 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

March 23rd, 2015

To Whom it May Concern;

The Mabou & District Community Development Association (MDCDA) on behalf of our community members and in partnership with the Mabou Gaelic & Historical Society, Mabou Farmer's Market, Mabou Communications & Dance Debut would like to nominate the home of our hearts – Mabou, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia for a 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award.

Mabou, is an oceanfront community on the Western side of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The beauty of Mabou's lush, rolling hills, the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and breathtaking scenery from any part of our developed trail systems is matched by the genuine hospitality of the people who live here. Warm waters and warm hearts are two key elements that make Mabou unique. Mabou is *Where Culture Lives!* The preservation, practice and advancement of local culture/tradition (music, song, dance, storytelling & language) are flourishing, as demonstrated by organizations like Féis Mhabu and quality venues like The Strathspey Place Performing Arts Centre. It is readily accessible to people of all ages through weekly ceilidhs, dances, teaching opportunities and mentorship programs.

Traditions, Tunes, Trails & Sails – Mabou has it all! And we have it all because of the dedication of our people. These are welcoming, proud, happy, humorous, giving, caring people – salt of the earth people. We are rooted here. No matter where people from Mabou go in the world, those roots do not wither.

In Mabou, we are fortunate to have a strong and committed volunteer base. Our volunteers add to every facet of our community. Through the work of volunteers we have grown stronger, happier and healthier. Our community members are all volunteers; each and every one of them give! We give to each other by offering an ear to listen, words of encouragement, arms of support to lift up those in need, our time, our resources and our talents. The value of community is passed down through the generations. We produce leaders who make a difference in our community, our province and our country. Mabou is a community that cares for everyone who lives here regardless of circumstance – we are all community members first and foremost.

The community of Mabou will imprint upon your heart and soul and keep you coming back for more whether you choose to live here, work here or play here. Mabou, through the beauty of the place and the people, inspires a daily practice of gratitude for everyone who calls this community home.

This nomination is a labour of love and pride for us. We hope that we will prove to you that even though our community is small in geographic size and population, Mabou's capacity is limitless because of the strength, tenacity, and the caring, generous spirit of

**Mabou Gaelic and Historical Society/Comunn Gàidhlig agus Eachdraidh Mhàbu
The Bridge/An Drochaid Museum and Archives,
Main Street, Mabou, Nova Scotia**

The Community Spirit of Mabou can be likened to a tune whose joyful effects benefit the local community but are also felt far and wide. The notes for the tune come from many quarters but, for now, I would like to concentrate on one area.

Forty years ago, youth and elders of the community of Mabou came together to celebrate the language, culture and heritage, which had been brought to this new land of Cape Breton Island close to two hundred years previously. Throughout the generations, the strong values brought from the old country, the Highlands of Scotland, were passed down "*o ghlùin gu glùin*" (from knee to knee: Gaelic) to build a caring, supportive community for all who chose to settle here from far and wide.

The Mabou Gaelic and Historical Society/*Comunn Gàidhlig agus Eachdraidh Mhàbu*, a volunteer organization, was set up to continue to promote the values of the ancestors and to encourage the promotion of the music, song, history and dance of the original non-aboriginal settlers while acknowledging the role played by the first nations peoples in the original community of Mabou (Mi'kmaw for Sparkling Waters).

The home of the Mabou Gaelic and Historical Society located on Main Street in Mabou, is called An Drochaid-The Bridge. The name had been carefully chosen for several reasons: to reflect a bridge from the past to the present and to the future; a bridge between cultures; and historically, Mabou was known as *An Drochaid*-The Bridge. This building is situated in the heart of the community where any member of the community, or visitors, may have easy access. It belongs to the community! Throughout the summer months, the doors are wide open wishing everyone "Ceud Mile Failte" or 100,000 welcomes!

Over the years, the volunteer spirit of the community has been evident in all the activities taking place in this building and throughout the village. Programs over the years include the following: musical presentations (e.g. Rankin Family, Men of the Deeps); instrumental workshops (e.g. piano, fiddle, guitar); language lessons (Gaelic); literary talks (e.g. Alistair MacLeod, John Lorne Campbell, Linden MacIntyre, Kate Beaton); CD launches (e.g. Natalie MacMaster, Rita and Mary Rankin); historical collections (e.g. house histories; Dutch family histories); interviews with war veterans and recognition of the living veterans at a public forum; craft workshops (e.g. paper maché, weaving, quilting); creation of Mabou Weavers; sponsorship of youth (e.g. scholarships, funding for learning camps, overseas travel); seasonal "*Ceillidh's*"; youth ceillidhs (some conducted entirely in Gaelic); an annual gathering of all NS Gaels at a

People in Mabou care about each other because they share so much of their lives together. At community events you can hear the Gaelic language and traditional music made famous by The Rankin Family, who grew up in this community and learned their craft locally. Dutch families welcomed after the second World War have made an impact with their strong work ethic and determination to succeed.

Food is grown here, and the ocean offers feasts of snow crab and lobster. People help each other and contribute to a community that loves and supports its children. If Mabou was ever cut off from the rest of the world, it would survive quite happily, and it would be the envy of those who remembered it. This is a testament to its strength and its beauty.

Sincerely,
Allan MacMaster, MLA
Inverness

Mabou for the 2015 Lieutenant Governors Community Spirit Award

Since it was founded in 2007, the Mabou Farmers' Market has grown to be the largest farmers market on Cape Breton Island. Despite being a village of 1,200, Mabou hosts a farmers market the envy of many larger centres. How can this be? For us, Mabou holds a rare combination of attributes that make it the perfect home for our market and would make it a worthy recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award.

Food comes from the land and sea. Boasting some of the cleanest waters in the world, the seafood from the coast near Mabou is pristine. At our market the popularity of Jeff Lee's Mabou oysters is international. Mabou and the surrounding area are also home to many farms and gardens that supply our market stalls. Clean healthy soils support bountiful harvests.

Many artisans are also drawn to the Mabou area and our market. Perhaps inspired by Mabou's rugged beauty, vendors such as Bellemeade farm of Rankinville craft unique textile arts from the wool of their sheep. Terron Dodd makes small harvests from the Acadian Forest to create one-of-a-kind spoons.

We believe the Mabou Farmers' Market is a reflection of our community. It highlights our many talents and displays them to the world. Most importantly its success, without any government or outside funding, is a reflection of the vitality, creativity and vibrancy of our community. We work together to ensure we all succeed, whether it's the Mabou Arena providing us our home in their off-season or the Mabou Volunteer Fire Department Hall offering us a space to hold our meetings. The market would not have grown by such leaps and bounds without numerous volunteers putting in countless hours to do the little things that make the special destination that is the Mabou Farmers' Market. In a world that shouts 'bigger is better' from every corner, maybe it's the small places, like Mabou, that have something to teach.

Application 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

The entranceway to our MCL building has a large section of one wall devoted to advertising where anyone, local and not so local, can freely advertise. Mabou is a community of entrepreneurship and cooperation.

Inside our building one can find locally-crafted greeting cards, prints, knitted crafts, books, etc. which provide more examples of community craftsmanship, but even more. One lady uses our business as a place to sell beautifully knitted mittens to raise funds for diabetes research. Over the years, her knitting, combined with ticket sales, have raised more than \$40,000.00. Mabou is a community that cares.

Mabou is a community that welcomes. Our staff is friendly and thoughtful. Sue and Gwennie treat their customers as one would treat family and friends. Housing the community C@P site, our business is also a home away from home for the many tourists who visit the area each year. Patrons are treated with complimentary tea and tasty treats twice yearly, at Christmas time and also on the first work day after Remembrance Day, the anniversary of our opening.

If you have spent any time in the area, you will know the things of which I speak. If you have not yet visited, you will need little time to discover that Mabou possesses, among other things, cultural pride, uniqueness, generosity, initiative, cohesiveness, resilience, remembrance, celebration, a caring attitude and a welcoming community spirit that would make any lieutenant-governor proud!

Jim Cummings, Mabou Communications Limited Chair
Mabou Communications Limited
11541 Main Street
Mabou, Nova Scotia B0E 1X0

Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

DANCE DEBUT INC. – *Michelle Greenwell, Mabou N.S.*

www.dancedebut.com

"Life is in the Dance You Choose"

It is a great honor to be able to write to your organization in response to the application for Mabou to be recognized for its Community Spirit. Our family moved to Mabou 5 years ago because of the music and dance initially, but in reality, because of the people. We love the sense of community that exists here. We are keenly aware of the intense connection that everyone has for each other in the community, for neighborly assistance, for community projects, for gatherings, for memorial celebrations and support to family, and so much more.

we also carry one another through the difficult times. This support is non-denominational, it does not discriminate and it is unfailing.

In the 1950's , Mabou welcomed many Dutch families who came in search of better living after WWII. They brought with them a wealth of knowledge in Agriculture, farming and strong work ethic and a deep desire to make new lives here. The community of Mabou grew and prospered by their presence.

I have been a part of this community since 1981, having moved here with my family from a large US city at the age of 13. Many people who move to rural areas lament having difficulty finding full acceptance into small towns by the people who have lived there all their lives. We did not find that to be the case in Mabou. We just fit... friendships came readily, invitations to participate in community organizations saw us immersed in life here with little or no time to look back on our old lives in the city. In the last 15 years there has been an influx of young people and families with diverse backgrounds, education, cultures and spirituality. They were all drawn to our community by the scenery, the music, and the lifestyle. They chose to settle here because they were embraced by the community in the same manner that we were nearly 35 years ago.

I am manager of an organization that operates a developmental residence for people affected by mental illness as well as physical and intellectual disabilities. Our home as well as Thomas House, which is part of L'Arche Cape Breton offer people who may otherwise be marginalized in society the opportunity to live in a community. Our clients take part in all aspects of life in Mabou. They are employed by local businesses, attend activities such as concerts, dances, farmers' markets and community dinners, and engage in volunteer projects on a regular basis. My organization has a house that offers people with special needs a roof over their heads. It is the acceptance and the support of the people of Mabou that makes this community their home.

In closing, I have attached a blog post that I wrote in July of 2014. Having received thousands of likes and shares on social media, this blog was widely accepted as an accurate picture of living in Mabou.

Need to Know's about Living in Mabou

- You don't need to like music but it helps.
- You don't need to be musical but it helps.
- You don't need to know how to play crib and auction but it helps.
- You will need to try homemade cheese at least once.
- Yes there are a number of John Beatons in Mabou. There are a number of John Rankins in Mabou too. The first and the last names are how they are listed in the phone book. The handle in the middle tells you who they are and how to tell them apart. Pay attention.

Sincerely,

Mabou