



THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD NOMINATION

Sable River



STORIES FROM AND ABOUT SABLE RIVER

"Health Matters" is a program that is available to all residents of the area, and from its inception in April of 2008, has been very well attended and appreciated by both our men and women. Volunteer registered nurses give of their time to record blood pressure, weight, test blood sugar, cholesterol, every other week. A pharmacist, lawyer, massage therapist, nurse practitioner, dietitian, and more have given of their time to help and inform all interested. This program is a valuable asset that, along with others, RN (BN, Respiratory Nurse Consultant) Anna Freeman has presented.

By Anna Freeman:

Sable River United Baptist Church Choir

At the age of 15, I was invited to join the choir, under the capable baton of my grandmother. Such a thrill! The Choir, 16 members strong, with gifted singers including the highly regarded Sable River Quartet. My Dad, Maurice, was the 1st Bass; Stan, Earl and Gordon Giffin rounded out the foursome. They competed in the first ever NS Barbershop Quartet Competition in the late 50's, and although they did not win, received many comments of praise from the adjudicator. What an honor for a young girl to sing with this fine group!

Thus began my "career" as an Alto. Upon returning to Sable River in 2007, much to my delight I learned that a Sable River and Osborne Choir, directed and accompanied by talented Sandra Elliot, performs at Christmas and Easter Services in both communities. It is really an ecumenical group, with singers also from the Anglican and United faiths. Recently, a group of young and older members "gig" together with their instructor in the Community Hall on Thursday nights. The spirit of music is still alive and well in Sable river!!

By Deena Harlow, for the *Shelburne Association Supporting Inclusion*

My husband and our two children live in Sable River and I volunteer with the Women's Fishnet, committee member with Harmony Bazaar, and a Medical First Responder with the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department. When people ask what I do for work, I tell them and then I smile and say, "I love it! It's not like work at all." When you can make a difference with a smile, patience and understanding, you learn so much. The best thing about our work environment is our outlook "every day is a new day". The workshop is an amazing and rewarding place. It offers fulfilling days for persons with disabilities, a small Café and a second hand Furniture

Store called "Shanty". We work hard and are proud of our accomplishments as we continue to grow and watch for opportunities for employment within our community on the horizon.

The Chernobyl Connection

By Dawn Harding

Viktoryia Viarbitskaya is a young woman from Belarus who has chosen to make Sable River her home. She first came to Canada through the efforts of the Canadian Relief Fund for Chernobyl Victims in Belarus when she was eight years old. Local families who were involved with the program hosted children for six weeks during the summer. Vica came to visit every summer until she was sixteen, after which time the program no longer sponsored her. Her host family brought her back the next year and was able, with the help of the Rotary Club International, to enroll her as a grade twelve student at Lockeport Regional High School. She graduated with the class of 2007.

Vica's wish to stay in Canada and become a Canadian citizen has led her to attend the Shelburne Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College where she is studying Office Information Technology. This has been made possible for her by the efforts of the people of Sable River and surrounding area. So many have been generous with fund-raising and financial support to help her realize her dream!

Why I Feel at Home in Sable River

By Vica Viarbitskaya

Sable River is the most beautiful place filled with very nice people. Because they are so generous and



welcoming, I feel like I am home. Even though I miss my family in Belarus, I have another family here and I have lots of friends. So many people in the community are helping me raise money for my tuition. Whether it is a bake sale or pot luck supper at the hall, the good cooks of Sable River are always willing to share their culinary treats. I feel welcomed when I am asked to participate in community activities like the Fireman's Fun Fest and volunteer work with Women's Fishnet and Harmony Bazaar. Sable River is my happy place to live!

Sable River Youth

By Carson Swim

Growing up in Sable River I have always found the trails and river as a source for my enjoyment. I had never taken into consideration the opportunities in our community to provide fun and companionship for the youth.



In June of this year we were invited to the Community Hall to take part in a traditional Mik'Maq talking circle. The very first settlers of Sable River were Mik'Maq so it was a fitting and new concept to use to express our ideas. As the talking stick was passed from each youth we expressed our feelings; and as a whole felt we had "nothing to do". But after much discussion we grouped all ideas towards planned events and activities.

Our initial project was to clean the upstairs of the Community Hall for our activities and achieve an overall better look. Informing everybody was the next project, which we resolved by obtaining an outside event message board, which is visible to all that drive by.

Thursday nights became "Ping-Pong Night", where all youth are welcome to come and get involved in a game with volunteer supervision by adults from the community. Also over summer, with a grant we were able to purchase a very nice ping-pong table to give us a total of two to use.

A local musician, when available, guides a music jam with us. The opportunity to show our talent had encouraged our participation in a musical fundraiser in the community to raise funds for a foreign youth attending a community college in our area.

Recently we got together to start another project, which involves painting murals on barns and housing throughout the community. We plan to post bulletins throughout the high and elementary schools, inviting all to come and take part in our local "art".

Since the "talking circle" I have taken notice that our voice in the community has a definite place. It has been acknowledged and our ideas and involvement have been welcomed, as we now have "something to do"!

A TALE OF TWO RIVERS---The Book---compiled by The Friends of Sable River

In 2005, the Municipality of Shelburne's 150th anniversary, friends of the village of Sable River formed an ad hoc group to assemble various writings, photos and memoirs. Material flooded in and the book "Tale of Two Rivers" was born.

Launched October 28 2007, the book was an instant best seller as 250 copies (the complete first printing) were scooped up in less than two hours! This popularity has continued with the second and third printing.

Letters of congratulations from near and far, along with more memories, continue to arrive as the book makes its way to those who grew up or spent time here.

"That is why books like this are so important; they keep us connected to our past." "I was particularly touched by the essay on Allister Harlow---one of my heroes when I was a Kid"

"It is so easy for people to forget what it was really like to live and work anywhere 20,30 or 50 years ago" "This book shows and tells the real "people's history" of Sable River so that it won't be forgotten"

"This book will help me to remember. The photos are amazing in themselves! So---we would like to order two more copies---cheque enclosed"

"It is fabulous---really interesting!! I remember---, I remember---, I can relate to many people (mentioned). A good tribute---well written". (From a 90 year old former resident).

"It is wonderful. Great work. A labour of love. I can hear Wilbur's voice when I read some of the stories"

"Your book was wonderful. It's amazing how much Sable River has changed over the years. I can't believe all the



events that took place in your kitchen---!"

"I opened it and never put it down until I read it from cover to cover. I did my exercising to the wonderful music by Phillip (and looking at the photos on the CD). It was a delight! A big thank-you from this former resident of Sable River"

"The thing that touched me was seeing the sweet faces of my two grandmothers" (from Chad, Africa)

"There was a lot of good wholesome fun growing up in a rural community where everyone knows everybody. The people, both young and old helped make Sable River the best place to grow up in."

"The photos and stories have brought alive again for me many, many pleasant memories of my teen years in Sable River in the 50's. It is good to see that the community continues to be a good place to live."



SABLE RIVER POST OFFICE---A Link Between Communities

Submitted by: Mrs. Bessie Robart and Postmistress Kimberly Williamson

In this era of the world wide web, when it's possible to send and receive text messages and photographs in just seconds, we remember and honour those pioneers who worked so hard to establish the excellent postal service that we have today.

When the first settlers came to the Sable River Valley there was no way to communicate with relatives and friends except by the spoken word entrusted to the captains of the sailing vessels. In the late 1800's, bridle paths connected Sable River to settlements in Jordan Falls and Shelburne. Messages scripted on parchment and sealed with wax were passed to the rider of the pony express.



The Halifax and South Western Railway was built in the early 1900's, and postal service was greatly improved. The daily train ran between Halifax and Yarmouth, stopped and handed off letters and parcels to be picked up by residents at the country general store. It was a great place to meet and keep in touch with all the local news!

In following years, Post Masters often worked from their homes. In 1951, "Aunt" Gertie Harlow gave out the mail along with delicious ginger cookies from her fragrant kitchen! Many other dedicated residents followed, laying the foundation for the welcome deliveries we still receive from Canada Post today.

In Sable River now we have just one rural route that covers West Port L'Hebert, East and West Sable, and delivery to Little Harbour, Rockland, East Ragged Island and Walls Lake. This covers an area of about 102



kilometers. The post office has played an important role in the community during each of its eras, but in my

opinion, even more so in this day and age. In our world where the internet links just about everyone and everything, I think it's important that we realize our post office remains the only physical link between these communities for the mail

Heritage Properties

by Bessie Robart

As a long-standing member of the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee, I hereby testify that community spirit is alive and well in this tiny village of Sable River!



We proudly describe some of our Municipal Heritage Properties:

Our beautiful church is now 103 years old and has a vibrant choir and congregation of mixed denominations.

The Community Hall, built by the Sons of Temperance in 1903, is now the center of the community. It plays an important role in the lives of all, young and old.

The Esker is our only Provincial Heritage Property, a perfect Cape Cod, built in the 1820's and is still on its original rock foundation.



Two other registered homesteads are the Freeman Harlow House and Priscilla's Place.

We have a wonderful walking trail that crosses our two rivers, The Tom Tigney and the Sable River with the 100 year old Swinging Bridge and The Trestle.



We know that with continued interest by our youth and all of our cooperation, that we will preserve our cherished heritage and thrive in the future growth of Sable River.

Committee Member

By Shirley Guthro

This begins in September 1990. We came from Ontario to visit our daughter and family, and ended up purchasing a home in this part of God's country called Sable River. At the end of November we became permanent members of this community.

As a craft person, I was asked to be part of the Octoberfest celebration, run by the Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. I subsequently became President/Secretary for a period of time. Now I am a member of the Community Hall Committee.

There is a wonderful group of Craft Ladies here and they meet each week to create items for fund raising and companionship. I have participated for the last twelve years and learned so much about the people and history of this area. Our son and myself operate Dream Garden Creations, selling perennials, shrubs, hanging baskets, etc. Throughout the years a variety of garden beds have been developed on our property for people to take in the beauty of the landscape. Now established in this community, we wouldn't want to live anywhere else as the camaraderie and spirit is great!



Connection with Guatemala

By Gail Daniels

My home is in Little Port L'Hebert, near Sable River. My husband and I bought property on the ocean 18 years ago and camped on it every summer for ten years. During that time we met some of the wonderful people there who made us feel very welcome. After retiring and having our house built by some talented locals six years ago, my husband passed away. My new community helped me through the difficult time of bereavement. My children feel quite at home when they visit, so my new place by the sea has become my new home base.

From here I became actively involved with a group out of Tatamogouche, called "Guatemala/Maritime Breaking the Silence Solidarity Network". This group is working in Guatemala to help support social justice organizations there. I have visited there four times in the last three years and am learning to speak some Spanish to be able to assist more effectively. I am raising awareness of the human rights abuses there, in my own community and belong to the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia in Sable River. I'm leading a new and different life on my own and very grateful for the good friends and their support here.



SABLE RIVER COMMUNITY HALL

From the newsletter by June Williams (Chair)

Crib and Fitness start in September---hall meeting to plan fall programs & suppers

"Health Matters" continues every other Tuesday morning at 10 am

Young people met and discussed vision for Sable River and identified Music, Art & Sports projects as youth incentives. Jack Morrison will be advisor for Music, cooperating with Cathy Cook's teaching. Anna Freeman is the advisor for sports, and Bessie Robart for art projects. Carson Swim has agreed to represent youth on the Hall Committee.

Family gatherings and parties are welcome. Please call for bookings.

A ping pong table has been purchased through the Physical Activity Strategy grant program. Call for bookings---adult supervision is required

Survival Day using the new generator was a big success with everything working as it should. A haven when the community needs it!

Thanks to all who contribute food and time and energy to our Hall activities.

A Busy Place

By Gloria Gilbert

There's no coffee shop in Sable River. The men congregate at the garage to swap stories and gossip, but the place where most folks meet socially is the Community Hall. Our person who keeps the calendar for Hall events



is challenged to avoid double bookings!

The milestones of our lives are celebrated in the Hall. From baby showers to wakes, shared food and conversation mark the passages of time and people in the community. Church receptions, Women's Institute events, variety shows and all sorts of family gatherings happen here in the center of the village. It is the heartbeat of the community with regular programs such as the women's fitness class, swimming at a nearby resort and weekly cribbage games, giving the residents the opportunity to connect and enjoy common interests. "Health Matters" addresses the needs of those living nearby. We come to the Hall to vote (**---a very healthy number of eligible people---82.9% exercised their right in the last municipal elections!**) We consult here with our Council member, plan our community's future, celebrate, mourn, talk and eat together. With our Volunteer Fire Department, we have created an Emergency Comfort Station, equipping the Hall with generator power.

Fundraising is a perpetual challenge in a small community. Organizations and groups such as Shelburne County Women's Fishnet have raised money for their work through bake sales, flea markets, concerts, suppers and auctions. The Friends of Sable River donate all the profits from Book sales to help support the Hall and community. Amazing things (sometimes thought impossible), are accomplished while the folks are gathered for positive social connectedness.

The committee sponsors an annual corned beef supper, a flea market, dances, and a tree-burning after Christmas. A new youth group initiative is currently planning music events, sports and art projects to involve our younger community members in their choices of activities. These projects were generated when the youth were asked to gather at the Hall and share their vision for the future of Sable River, as part of this Spirit Award application. Sixteen community members between the ages of 12 and 19 participated in a "Talking Circle" based on the First Nations' healing circle. Adults in this area have committed to assisting the young people with their projects.

We are so grateful to have the Hall as our gathering place! For many years it has housed the spirit of the community in all its facets, and we will work to maintain this important function, and the welcoming atmosphere of the dear old building.



SABLE RIVER & AREA WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

By: Margaret Dawe, President—June 2005 to June 2008

Community has always been and continues to be a main focus of the Sable River and Area branch of the Nova Scotia's Women's Institute. Since 1940 there have been many varied projects undertaken and carried out by these community minded ladies. Health clinics were set up at different

times to provide cod liver oil and nutrition information. A "Buckle Up Baby" program provided baby car seats for parents of infants. The ladies have and are continuously making items for the Grace Maternity and Issac Walton



Killam Children's Hospital, such as layette sets, blankets, and premie caps for newborns. They also make mittens and hats which are given out in the Emergency Department when there is a need. Finger puppets and comfort bears are also sent to be used for the children's pleasure. As well, some members make large knitted comfort bras for Alzheimer patients.

Each year a bursary is provided for a graduating Lockeport High School student who is furthering their education. At Christmas there are gifts and "goodie" bags provided for community shut-ins.

A highlight each year is the annual Christmas meeting and social to which many ladies from the community who aren't members are invited. Laughter and smiles always abound with true community spirit.

In July 2007 the two Women's Institute Branches in Shelburne County (Sable river and area, Port Clyde and area) were hosts to the Provincial Annual General Meeting. This gathering was attended by members from the whole Province. Our theme, "Water, Water Everywhere" stressed the importance of water quality, particularly with its purity and supply.

The Institutes developed a "Buy Local" program emphasizing its importance and value to us all. This is now a main focus of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture.

Although the Women's Institute group in Sable River is small, we continue to try to identify and help with Community and home needs for everyone here.

Lieutenant Governor Community Spirit Award Entry Form

The Village of Sable River is the hub of several small hamlets and villages. There are 5 neighbourhoods, each extending about 15 kilometers from the center. Low population density is considered a positive value here, and given the broad distribution of our populace, the degree of participation in community events and municipal affairs is remarkable. Voter turnout at the municipal level has been as high as 82%. Within the past year, local residents have participated in Natural Resources' voluntary planning activities at the provincial level, have



negotiated trail development with the multi-use trail enthusiasts, and are currently participating in workshops at the municipal level for Integrated Community Sustainability Planning. The Municipality's Physical Activity Strategy

sessions have inspired higher attendance in Sable River than in any other District, and all ages were represented.

Our community is a diffuse rural population of approximately 550, with seasonal residents adding to our summertime numbers. We find pleasure in the unspoiled wilderness landscape and seascape and sightings of wildlife and birds, and we treasure the resources of land, river and sea that have traditionally provided the livelihood of the community.

Names of Groups within the community who have joined together to put forward this nomination:

1. Women's Institute
2. Sable River Community Hall Committee
3. The Friends of Sable River
4. Individual residents (past and present)

By submitting our nomination we are agreeing to allow the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award to post our stories on the Award's website and to share these stories online with the Award's media partners.

The authors of this submission and the residents of Sable River, thank the Lieutenant Governor, for the opportunity to examine and celebrate our unique quality of life in this area.