



THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD NOMINATION

South Mountain Arm of Gold

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

1. South Mountain Arm of Gold Community Association

I heard our Lieutenant Governor Mayann Francis speak to her Community Spirit Award on CBC Radio. That led me to think about our community. Here on Cape Breton Island, on the shores of the beautiful Bras d'Or Lakes, our spirit is not of the young children being parented by the whole community as Her Honor remembers, but the welfare of us seniors being here for each other as there are so few young children in this community.

The area that I wish to recognize is made up of several "communities" along the shore from Dundee to Scots River. These would include DUNDEE, ST GEORGE'S CHANNEL, THE POINTS, ROBERTA and SCOTS RIVER. These communities are made up mainly of retired folk and would account for no more than 150 people in total.

Four years ago we recognized the need to replace our old hall and build a new one. This allowed us to continue to bring our communities together and provide a meeting place for us to share our laughs, our sorrows, our music and our food. We needed a place that was safe, a place to discuss ideas, to agree and disagree. With the support of our communities, our Municipal Government, Provincial Government and Federal Government, we succeeded in creating the most pleasant community hall that reflects the culture of our communities and gives us the pride of Community.

One interesting reflection is the reaction of tourists, even to the point where one couple that arrived on a sailboat, to tour the Lakes, ended up staying for a year before continuing on their adventure. They often tell us that the one word to describe our hall and us is "laughter". They even rented a car from Baltimore where they had secured their boat, to come back to our Celtic Colours Song Session. Before they left to head back, they purchased a lot of land on which they will build their new home so that they can be a permanent member of our community.

Our hall is a meeting place each Wednesday morning for a "Coffee Break" from 10:00am until noon. It is at these get-togethers that we share our stories. One of our older members usually calls his daughter to see if she is going "to the Liar's Convention". We do not have a charge for this activity, we just put out a bowl and if you have a bit of change you can drop it in. We collected enough to give \$600.00 to a Food Bank. Sunday evenings is the Dart League where several teams play for the "bragging rights" of the night. The hall is also used for monthly meetings of the Garden Club and the Hookers (rug hookers).

It is at our hall where we celebrate the lives lost in our community. The fellowships are the respectful gatherings where we share our love of our fellow community members.

It is at our hall where we tap our toes to the music of the fiddle and bow. Here we host a Celtic Colours Song Session and then provide (for a small sum) a Fishcakes and Beans supper.

Here we provide a Senior Supper during the Christmas Season. This is a free dinner that is served to the older folks by younger members in our area. This year we have 70 seniors signed up to feast like kings.

We also host a Carol Sing with Santa and presents for the few children in the area. Last year there were six children who got to sit on Santa's knee.

In an effort to bring our community into the 21st century, we allowed a Wireless Internet Provider to put a repeater pole on our property. Seaside Communications now provides high speed internet to many members of our community as well as to people on the other side of the lake. In return, they gave us a wireless router which makes our hall a "hot spot" for users of the internet with lap top computers.

It is at the hall where we hold special meeting to see how we can help a neighbour that has lost their home to fire, or had a stroke or needs help in some perceived way.

It is at the Hall where we host a Country Breakfast the third Sunday of each month. For \$6.00 you can have an omelet, pancakes, home made beans, sausage, home fries and toast. Our claim is that if you want more, come and get it. No one is to leave hungry. People come from 40 and 50 km to eat and share stories with us. We even had the Breakfast put on "Chow Hound internet site" by one satisfied customer. That resulted in three couples from Georgia USA showing up one Sunday morning. They had been researching Cape Breton for their holiday and decided to see if our Breakfast was as good as described. It is not unusual to serve as many as 250 satisfied patrons.

We host a Strawberry festival and a Blueberry Festival where you get to eat as much as you can. A big bowl of berries is on the table with a pitcher of cream and lots of sugar. All you have to do is fill your bowl and pour the cream. Then you eat until you are full. Along with the berries is a basket of breads and oat cakes.

Each year we hold a Canada Day Celebration where we provide Hot dogs, burgers, pop and cake. It is attended by 90 or 100 people from our area as well as folks from farther afield. Usually at that time of year our local population increases with summer residents.

There is a "Healthy Living" activity where health professionals come to meet with those who wish to maintain a healthy lifestyle, or wish to participate in a more healthy lifestyle.

Because of the Healthy Living program, several participants have started to walk 3 time a week for about 45 minutes.

Each month a News Letter is sent to all residents in our area to keep them informed of the activities and news. These are mailed through Canada Post so that every household in the area is made aware of activities and news of our communities.

In addition we have created a Web Page where we post information on our activities . It can be found at www.channelhall.ca.

In this application are submitted two unsolicited examples of how our pride and the Spirit in our Community have affected two newcomers. It is evident that they too have caught the pride and Spirit of our area. We also include a letter from Warden John Boudreau of Richmond County supporting our application.

Sent: Thursday, November 29, 2007 11:08 PM

Subject: Re: December Newsletter

Rose,

I have not read the entire Newsletter yet but already I am missing St. George's Channel and all our new friends there and the wonderful programs that "The Channel" (as I like to think of it) sponsors.

We are safely back in Philadelphia and greatly enjoying seeing children and family and friends again and reintroducing ourselves to life below your border. At the same time we long to be back in Cape Breton. But without, perhaps, the short days and cold temps. It was sunny and up to 10C here today.

Anyway, please keep sending the Newsletter and we will continue to dream of spring and our return. Please feel free to forward this message.

All the best to all...keep warm....

Tim and Ann LaBorie

From the Log/Blog of the SV Aavyi , October 2006

Capers

I've mentioned a couple of times the wonderful people we met while in Cape Breton. It was they that made our stay such a pleasure, in spite of all the boat adventures.

Alfred Sampson and Barry McNeil were the first to greet us as we tied up at Dundee, about half an hour after arrival on October 14, 2005. (Yeah, we were there for one week short of a year). I soon learned to associate Alfred's infectious laugh with all that is good and right about the people in Cape Breton. Barry is the quiet fellow, with the knowledge of sailing.

Soon thereafter we met Nelda, Alfred's oh-so-sweet wife. She and Alfred are the epitome of Caper hospitality, and it was many, many times that we found ourselves at their house for tea, or dinner, or, to quote Alfred, "a drinkarum".

Jimmy and Carol Ann Organ became good friends over a huge pile of lobsters at their house one night, and we found a wealth of good solid cruising wisdom from a couple who had actually gone to the Bahamas from Cape Breton, and are now on their way south again with their new boat, Seaduction II. As I struggled to recover Aavyi from the crash of January 19th, Jimmy was a friend indeed – with a drill press and a shop that could produce just about anything needed. And a pick up truck.

We first met Doug and Rose Begg, Alfred and Nelda's good friends at the St. Georges Channel Community Hall Sunday breakfast. Since I cannot ever remember a name unless I associate it with something else, and since Doug is the go-to guy for pancakes at the Hall breakfasts, he will forever be "Pancake Doug" in my mind (don't ask me how it works, it does, and I'm sticking with it). He also has a really neatsie woodshop out back with a bandsaw to die for, and a tablesaw through which we ran a few of my weirder projects. His wife Rose is a lovely lady – who invited us to a lobster dinner at their house, AND shelled the bugs for us as well (although I was a bit freaked out to see how she ripped its tail off and shoved a finger up its butt to push the meat out from the south end looking north, so to speak). We were invited to stay in their home so many times while our boat was filled with fiberglass dust – and did so, exhausted and delighted with a night in so beautiful a home.

Johnnie Jeffries came by the boat to offer us his summer cottage up by the hall for the winter. We didn't accept the house because of the need for a basement workshop, but we gained another set of friends in he and Mildred, and shared several meals together at either their house or ours. Johnnie is an avid fisherman and hunter, and I bet he fills the freezers of many of his neighbors, so kind is his nature. As far as avid applies to the fishing, how about 3 o'clock in the morning in the winter in an open boat off the causeway jigging for squid and calling Mildred to bring down a couple of sandwiches and coffee, 'cause there's too many squid? Mildred, the Saint who actually did take the coffee and sandwiches to the causeway, does tole work of incredible detail and finish.

We met Larry and Bonny Emon after the crash. Larry was kind enough to go to the boat yard and take pictures of Aavyi lying over. He was there when they picked her up again, taking pictures, and was shown great courtesy by Charlie, the owner. Must've thought Larry was the insurance adjuster who would be approving a huge windfall (boatfall?) profit for the yard. Sorry Charlie. Thanks, Larry. And thanks Bonnie, for the dinner while I was a bachelor awaiting m'lady's return from the Costa Rican Jungle.

Wilf and Mary Pat Cude are just plain neat. Wilf, the university professor, is one of those people with a towering intellect that leaves one wondering how on earth to have a conversation with the guy – he uses words I can't even pronounce, much less know the meaning of. Fortunately, Wilf is interested in everything, and can accommodate the dumbest of us in conversation. Me, for instance! Mary Pat, his wife, is another example of why I'm convinced girls are smarter. A trained nurse, she decided rocks are interesting, and went along to university and got herself degree in geology. Well, why not! Why not indeed. Why not write a book on the history of the area she lives in while she's at it? So she did that too.

Art and Diane Metcalfe live in the yellow house next to the St. Georges Channel Hall. I don't know how many times we had dinner at their place, always with the most interesting people. When we sent our car down to Halifax with Doug and Rose in July preparatory to our arrival on the boat (HAH!), they immediately offered us one of their vehicles to use while still in Dundee. What dear folks.

These are only a few of the lovely people we had the privilege to know. I live in mortal fear that I've left someone out, or left something unsaid or unrecognized, but I know I'll be excused. Dawn and I are, by definition, "from away". Never did we feel so. We feel we are part of the family, and look forward ever so fondly to the next time we cross that causeway. You are all lucky indeed to have been born and raised in such a gentle and loving place. Bless you all.

Dawn and Jeff

Within our area is a small population of German summer residents. One couple prepared a German Dessert and Tea Party. Twenty-nine different desserts were available to the people attending this event. All profits from the event were donated to the Hall.

We are fortunate to be able to provide a scholarship to the regional High School, funds to the Fire Department, Food Bank and to host Benefits for local families that require financial assistance and moral support.

Each year we provide a "free" Country Breakfast to thank our patrons for their continued support. Last year we were able to donate \$1150.00 that we received in donations to Strait Richmond Hospital.

It is with this sense of Spirit and Pride that we submit this application for the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award.

While we would be honored to receive the recognition of this award, we would none-the less be very happy to receive a visit from Her Honor at a time convenient to her.

P.O. Box 279
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December 20, 2007

By: E-Mail

Members of the Selection Committee and
The Honourable Mayann E. Francis, O.N.S
Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia

Re: The Lieutenant Governor Community Spirit Award

It is a privilege for me to offer a reference on behalf of the South Mountain Arm of Gold Community Association. If this award is meant, as I believe it is, to recognize those communities which strive for vibrant life and whose citizens work constantly, collectively and harmoniously in this pursuit, then you have here, a most worthy candidate!

The South Mountain area offers a true glimpse of a modern "rural" Canadian community. The economy is not strong but the spirit and will, of the locals will not permit the fiber of the community to degrade! In my view, the glue that binds this community together is the social conscience and totally positive outlook of its citizens. The long list of events and activities, produced by this group, is amazing in numbers but even more so, in scope. To think that a small rural community would choose, as a goal, the provision of high-speed internet connectivity, for its citizens and to see that transpire when it would never have happened otherwise, is truly inspiring. It also speaks volume of a community wanting to sustain and nurture itself instead of laying aside its will to do battle with the difficulties faced by isolated and economically deprived rural areas.

I must note also, that this community and this association have clearly demonstrated their want to participate and assist, **in large fashion**, with those issues we face throughout the Municipality. They participate in Council sessions, in public hearings and in all other Municipal forums, at a level far exceeding any other group or community and they bring, **always**, a genuine and positive contribution. I truly believe this is a phenomenon you would be hard-pressed to find anywhere else in Nova Scotia.

In sum, the South Mountain Arm of Gold Community Association is a tremendous candidate and I ask that you recognize them by honoring them with this very prestigious award.



South Mountain Arm of Gold Community Hall



Celtic Colours 2007



**Set up for our Senior Supper
Note the tartan hangings that were woven in Glendale, a neighboring community**



Santa at our Christmas Carol Sing Along



German Pastry Table



Relay for Life Participants from South Mountain