



Community Spirit Award Nomination

Tatamagouche

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

1. North Shore area Community Health Board
2. Tatamagouche Library Support Group
3. Creamery Square Association
4. Fraser Cultural Centre
5. Tatamagouche Centre / ACTC

Groups within the community of Tatamagouche who put forward this nomination:

- Tatamagouche Girl Guides of Canada / Guides du Canada
- Tatamagouche Library Support Community
- North Shore Area Community Health Board
- Tatamagouche Fire Department
- Creamery Square Association
- Tatamagouche Area Singers
- North Shore Recreation Centre
- North Shore Performing Arts Society
- Colchester Trail Association
- North Shore Bavarian Society
- Tatamagouche Village Commission
- 1ST Tatamagouche Scouts
- James LeFresne, Councilor, North Colchester Municipality, County of Colchester
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary
- Colchester Regional Development Association
- Open Doors Career Resource Center
- Northumberland Arts Council
- Tatamagouche Centre / ACTC
- Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital Auxiliary
- North Shore Archives
- Sunrise Trail Museum
- Tatamagouche Elementary School
- North Colchester High School
- North Shore 4 – H Club
- Colchester Adult Learning Association
- Karen Casey, MLA, Colchester North
- North Shore Seniors Group
- Truro & Area Chamber of Commerce
- Central Nova Tourist Association
- The Loquacious Compendium
- Tasters of Tatamagouche
- Brule Fossil Preservation Society
- Brule Community Centre
- Tatamagouche & Area Minor Hockey

- Tatamagouche Skating Club
- Anna Swan Museum @ the Creamery
- North Shore Depression Self Help Group
- Tatamagouche Detachment of the R.C.M.P.
- Northumberland Chorale
- Tatamagouche Farmers Market
- North Colchester River Restoration Project
- Atlantic Chapter # 65 Order of the Eastern Star
- Willow Lodge Home for Special Care

Tatamagouche

Welcome to the beautiful village of Tatamagouche, so named by the original Mi'kmaq, the word means a meeting of the waters, where the French and Waugh Rivers converge. In 1710, the Acadiens became the earliest European settlers here. They stayed until their expulsion by the British in 1755 (the first Acadiens forced to leave).

There is no record of settlement here for the ensuing decade. Then, in 1765, the French cartographer Des Barres was given a land grant for the area from the British Board of Trade.

Because Col. Des Barres would not sell any of this land to new arrivals, most of them moved to outlying areas such as River John and New Annan, to purchase their own land.

Wellwood Waugh, a Highland Scot, was hired to manage the Des Barres grant. Thus, the name Waugh River.

Mr. Waugh and his family began development of the area. They cleared land and even built their own church just south of Tatamagouche.

A group of a dozen or so families immigrated from Montbeliard, then a province in France, to settle the land. Some of these remained and still hold title to their original holdings. Some of their names - Langille, Joudrey, Tattie and Mattatall, for instance - are still commonly used.

Tatamagouche progressed with the economic and social dictates of the time.

During the Age of Sail, a local family, the Campbells, built more than 200 sailing vessels of different types in their various shipyards along both rivers. This industry, plus smithing, lumbering, farming and fishing carried the local economy during the nineteenth century. These industries helped to maintain a certain unity in Tatamagouche leading up to its incorporation as a village in 1953.

Community may be defined as "a unified body of individuals or people with common interests living in a particular area". It is also "all the groups of organisms living together in the same area, usually interacting or depending on each other for existence".

Tatamagouche embodies characteristics of both definitions.

The village business district suffered two major fires - in 1950 and 1953. Perhaps not surprisingly, these unfortunate events served to rally the troops, forging a long lasting, tightly knit community.

This phenomenon is often credited with creating the determined atmosphere that allows Tatamagouche to be so successful today.

Many factors contribute to the uniqueness of the area. Longtime residents, returning baby boomers and newcomers work side by side as volunteers to ensure the successful operation of

many organizations and activities. Approximately eighty volunteer groups are presently active. A small sample of these groups includes Creamery Square, Fraser Cultural Centre, Buddhist Community, Bavarian Society, Katimavik, North Shore Seniors, the elementary school volunteer read program, Canada Trails Restoration Program and various sports teams. As well, there is a very successful Communities in Bloom program, an active Canadian Legion membership, and the youngest (by age) fire department in the province.

Why is there so much activity in such a small place? The answer is as complex as the population.

One phenomenon here is the great diversity, attitude and talent level of people. Who are these people? Where did they come from, and why do they settle and stay here?

The “old timers” are very comfortable with who they are - no pretensions. They are very welcoming to strangers and very tolerant of all newcomers. This also attracts the many baby boomers who have worked and lived away for decades, but have returned to retire in a friendly, familiar setting. This provides for a wonderful diversity of ideas, energy and abilities.

Newcomers are attracted to the natural beauty of the area. They stay because of the friendly, welcoming attitude of the natives and their high tolerance for diverse people and groups.

When the melting pot of differences is brought together, it produces an unbelievable array of productive, inventive, highly energetic groups of volunteers.

Consider some classic success stories attributable in large part to the work of volunteers and local visionaries.

The first community school started in Tatamagouche in 1947. While others in the province began about that time or later, their life was usually short lived. The local one continued very successfully until just a few years ago.

In 1955, the Atlantic Christian Training Centre opened its doors here. A United Church of Canada supported facility, it was one of only four operating in Canada. Its placement here was largely due to the untiring efforts of several notable citizens who realized its potential.

Recently renamed The Tatamagouche Centre, it operates as a facility for camps, retreats, workshops, etc., for people from all walks of life and all parts of the world.

In 1956, Tatamagouche became the host of the newly created Nova Scotia Festival of the Arts. This too can be attributed to the tireless efforts of local visionary volunteers. Thanks to the total community effort, this festival was highly successful until 1962.

The Festival of the Arts attracted many top artists of local, national and international repute.

Some better known participants included Don Messer, the Buchta Dancers, Rich Little and

Teresa Stratas, to name but a few. This celebration became so successful, that during one summer session it attracted 20 000 people, 10 000 on Saturday alone. It eventually moved to Halifax where it quickly succumbed, due to a lack of volunteer help. But while it lasted, it was the ultimate example of the success that can be achieved through the cooperative efforts of a small community that refuses to say “it can’t be done”.

More recently (since 2004) the community has celebrated Christmas at the Creamery. This involves a delicious turkey dinner followed by an afternoon of entertainment. There is no admission charge for this gala. All food, service and entertainment are provided by happy volunteers. The tremendous success of this party is reflected in its growing number of participants each year. It truly embraces the real “Spirit of Christmas”. It was started by a small group of

newcomers taking advantage of superb available facilities. It was quickly adopted by the whole village. Now, people of all interests work together to provide a merry Christmas for many people who might not otherwise have one.

Tatamagouche also enjoys an unusually large number of churches of different faiths. There are Buddhists, Mennonites, Presbyterian, United, Baptist, Union, Roman Catholic, Church of God and Jehovah Witnesses, all with their own churches and congregations. They co-exist unquestioningly. When the need arises, they work together, without prejudice, for the benefit of the whole community.

This type of cooperation reflects the enormous community pride of citizens. Further evidence of this pride may be seen in a simple drive through the streets. Homes and grounds are well maintained, beautiful flower baskets hang on power poles (compliments of the Village Commission), and attractive entrance signs welcome visitors from either end of the village. The downtown area is well decorated for occasions such as Oktoberfest, Halloween, Christmas and Communities in Bloom.

This local group has ensured that the village is always picturesque and welcoming to tourists and locals alike. Not surprisingly, in the 2007 provincial Communities in Bloom Contest, Tatamagouche was awarded four of a possible five blooms, a well deserved achievement.

This same pride is reflected in our children's sports teams traveling to other towns. It has been noted by towns in which they have visited what great ambassadors these young people are for their community.

How many small communities can boast more than eighty active volunteer organizations?

A recent success story of such a group is found in the local hospital fundraiser. The hospital is the vital core of the area. The provincial government challenged users to raise \$500 000 to assist in expansion and repairs. As usual, the citizens rallied and reached this goal within a year - not bad for a village of fewer than a thousand people.

Another successful venture is the annual Oktoberfest. Held continuously for over a quarter of a century, it is second only in size and success to a similar festival in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Volunteers for this event include children, adults, working people and retirees, basically the whole village. Proceeds from this event are put back into the community, as needed, through generous donations.

Local seniors are well attended through ample accommodations, an active Meals on Wheels program, the North Shore Seniors Group (supporting bus trips, card games and other social events) and organized visits from Katimavik and local school children.

In return, these same seniors are involved in an elementary reading program. This has noticeably improved literacy in the area. It also promotes a mutual respect between elders and children.

This high volunteer participation rate is reflected in other organizations such as the North Shore Community Development Association supporting village enhancement projects, North Shore Recreation Centre, boasting a fine rink and recreation/social hall, and the River Restoration Project, devoted to turning the French River to its original, pristine beauty.

Another noteworthy strength is the mindset of the community. Most citizens believe that the village is only as good as the people in it. This is frequently taken as a personal challenge to constantly improve life here. The older people teach by example. Young children take the offering or read aloud in church alongside their parents or participate in social events such as serving meals at community suppers. Through this early involvement, they learn the value of community

volunteerism, such as fund raising for team uniforms and equipment. In turn, they grow up to be committed volunteers.

A further strength is found in the unusually high number of artists, musicians and authors. These strengths are regularly displayed at the local farmers market, film night, concerts, and an extensive archives collection. The Fraser Cultural Centre also exhibits the works of different local artists.

It is this combination of community strengths that gives Tatamagouche its uniqueness. No doubt this aura of high expectations has helped some of our more notable sons to the pinnacle of success. This is the home of the founder of the Tim Horton organization, and, by extension, home of one of only four Tim Horton's Children's Camps in Canada. It also boasts Jost Winery, the largest of its kind in the province. Here, too, is the home of the founder and owner of Fitness Depot, the second largest fitness specialty retail operation in the world.

Other attractions include the very popular Train Station Inn, a unique experience featuring the largest private collection of train cars in Canada; it offers sleeping quarters in an actual railway car from our colorful past.

There is a beautiful marina just minutes from the village, a nearby golf course, and a short trip to Nova Scotia's largest ski hill.

Six new businesses have opened here within the last year. None has erected a new structure, but each has renovated an historic building already in place. Three outstanding examples of the use of such buildings include the aforementioned Train Station Inn, the Fraser cultural Centre (once the hospital, but since donated to the village to showcase local artistic talent), and Creamery Square. This latter concept includes the makeover of the original Tatamagouche Creamery as a tourist destination. Presently well into its development, it will include a farmers market, North Shore Archives, a fossil museum, a creamery museum and the existing North Shore Museum.

In the near future, it will also have a performing arts center. This unique project is located on the shore of the historic Waugh River, overlooking Tatamagouche Bay.

The local high school has a long record of academic success and the elementary school has achieved national recognition.

Above is a record of many of the success stories which make Tatamagouche such an outstanding community.

It is this unrivaled combination of strengths which give Tatamagouche its uniqueness.

The influx of newcomers has provided for this to be the only provincial area outside of HRM to enjoy an increase in population.

The location, geographically, is within two hours of two major airports, and in the center of a triangle among four substantial towns. Located on the coast, overlooked by the rolling Cobequid Mountains, it enjoys beautiful scenery.

There is a common civic pride which is consciously passed down to each new generation. This is reflected in the use of existing historic buildings for new businesses, rather than razing the old to make way for the new.

There is a tolerance toward and warm welcoming for newcomers, regardless of creed or custom.

And finally, there is that "Look you in the eye and never say die" attitude.

This is our home, we welcome you to visit it and invite you to stay.