

Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

Judique, Nova Scotia



The beautiful seaside village of Judique is located on the West side of Cape Breton Island along Highway 19, nestled between Port Hastings and Port Hood. It is the first permanently settled Scottish community on Cape Breton Island, adopted in 1775 by Michael Mor MacDonald, Sea Captain and Poet of Uist.

As the story goes, Michael Mor spent his first winter using his upside-down boat for shelter, which is reflected in the architecture of the village's Community Centre. Michael, innovated under duress. We still do that in Judique with a healthy “can do” attitude, bucket loads of community pride, goodwill, and humility.

So, without further ado, it is our pleasure to invite you to journey with us through our home, Judique, with an eye to highlighting what makes our active community of 700 people (350 households) strong, inclusive, proactive, resilient, generous, welcoming to everyone ... and most recently, allowed us to come out of Covid stronger, more vibrant and alive!

Judique projects and activities created during Covid:

The Judique Spirit Tartan

If you could choose one word to describe the magnetic pull of the beautiful Judique Spirit Tartan, it would be “inclusiveness”; for this grass-roots, heartfelt, culturally rich volunteer initiative, has exceeded everyone’s expectations and invigorated the community from tip to stern.

Our story begins in Spring 2020, when an enthusiastic group of Judiquers decided the community needed a tartan, something beautiful to physically represent the deep rooted culture and heritage they lived, passed on, and appreciated each and every day.

When the call went out to the Judique community to submit potential tartan colours and their meaning, response was overwhelming with the final tartan design capturing the heartbeat of the village through a mixture of “striking blues for the ocean and sky, green for the forest and fields, peach for the red-orange-yellow sunsets, white for the first settler’s winter arrival, and red for the faith and strength of the people”. The process was a labour of love.

In March 2021, the Judique Spirit Tartan was officially registered with The Scottish Register of Tartans and is now proudly displayed on their website.

These days, Judique Spirit Tartan volunteers are “weaving the village together” by leading the way with fabric arts, music, traditional food, media outreach, community building, collaboration, and revitalization for the cultural benefit and betterment of all around the table.

If you asked us why Judique’s creative arts and culture projects have been so successful, we would happily share that the secret is our commitment to “small, manageable, joyful projects”; if we are not smiling it’s not happening. In 2022, a Judique volunteer group of eight is working toward positioning our culture and heritage-oriented tartan process as a model for other communities to emulate. We are actively sharing what we are doing with other communities.

The Judique Spirit Tartan Community Quilt Project

In November 2021, The Judique Spirit Quilt Group received funding from Nova Scotia’s Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage to create a Judique Spirit Tartan community quilt. Like many rural communities, we have quiet, hidden artists. Some are quilt makers. We lit in them the vision of creating a museum quality quilt to tell the magical story of Judique...and to record the whole process to leave a record for those who come later.

The timely and historically relevant Judique community quilt will feature well-known Judique locations, traditions, and customs. Plus, it highlights the Seven Tenants of Gaelic culture as described by Lewis MacKinnon, Gaelic Affairs, Nova Scotia.

The entire community quilt making process will be a, “story”, in words, photos, and video to capture community outreach, interaction and inclusion in “real time” for present and future generations to enjoy. We were told the breadth and originality of our approach had project adjudicators smiling excitedly.

Once complete, the Judique community quilt will be displayed behind museum quality glass in a custom encasement at the Judique Community Center. A booklet profiling each artisan, and the design block they contributed, will also be published and a video will be created. Completion date is on track for December 2022.

In 2023, the Judique Spirit Tartan community of quilters will be participating in a community quilt project spearheaded by award winning fabric artist and quilter, Susan Teece (British Columbia).

As an aside, each community quilt gathering includes a delicious lunch and tea. A salute to the inclusiveness and warm hospitality offered in the homes of Judique. Strangers and friends are welcome here. These delicious, homemade lunches (using traditional recipes) are captured in photos for a future volunteer community project.

Judique Spirit Tartan Scarves and Throws/Blankets

Since the Judique Spirit Tartan is a “living” tartan, representing the heart and soul of the community, we sought to create beautiful, 100% lambswool scarves and throws for everyone to enjoy. Our vision was manifested with the help of Deana Lloy (Red Label Kilts and Tartan Design, Sydney), and in October 2021, the Judique Spirit Tartan volunteers received their first large shipment of custom Judique Spirit Tartans, woven in Scotland. All the scarves and throws were pre-paid. In April 2022, we placed our second large order with delivery expected in Summer 2022.

In the spirit of community service and altruism, this endeavour is 100% volunteer with a portion of each pre-payment earmarked for the Judique community to help “seed” future arts and culture projects. We have already made donations to community groups such as a beautiful Judique Spirit Tartan scarf (Firefighter’s Appreciation BBQ); a generous monetary donation (Tartan Gardens of Judique Society) for a lawn trimmer, and a delicious chocolate cake with sea foam frosting to the Strait Richmond Community Health Board. We love to say that Judique is “Big in its Littleness”; with our focus being on donating creative gifts from the heart, beaming with community pride.

In 2022/2023 the Judique Spirit Tartan Group will build on their success by engaging local artisans to create Judique Spirit Tartan-themed craft items such as potholders, aprons, hats, placemats, t-shirts, mugs, cards, etc. As with the above, a portion of sales will go back into the Judique community to seed other projects; and so the project continues to sustain itself in the spirit of goodwill, creativity, and inclusiveness.

The Judique Spirit Tartan Reel and Community Singing

In February 2022, well-known local fiddler, Andrea Beaton, composed the “Judique Spirit Tartan Reel” upon the request of the Judique Spirit Tartan Group. This uplifting tune was debuted for International Tartan Day 2022 and will serve as a recognizable musical “theme” for the Judique Spirit Tartan.

The Judique Tartan Friday Night Singers have been meeting Friday evenings since 2020 (Covid guidelines observed). The engaging sing-a-long repertoire includes more than 200 Celtic and Atlantic Canada folksongs collected by the group members. In March 2021, the group recorded two lively, 15-min audio recordings for the Inverness County’s “Community Voices” project. Weekly sessions include songs in English, French, and Gaelic with group members ranging in age from 55 to 87 years.

Each gathering includes a delicious homemade lunch (Singing 7-8PM, Lunch 8-8:30PM, Singing 8:30-9:30PM). We look forward to sharing this warm, welcoming inclusive musical template with other small, rural communities.

Traditional Food and Innovation

In April 2022, the Judique Spirit Tartan was featured on Mary Janet MacDonald's "Tunes and Wooden Spoons" show for International Tartan Day. Here is a link to the show, with the Judique Spirit Tartan segment beginning at the 50-minute mark and running approximately one hour: <https://www.facebook.com/TunesAndWoodenSpoons/videos/264245819250493>

In March 2022, the Judique Spirit Tartan volunteers connected with the sensational "Hebridean Baker" from the Isle of Lewis. In late 2022, the group will create a custom Judique Spirit Tartan dessert with The Hebridean Baker featuring wild berries native to Cape Breton and the Hebridean Isles. In terms of cultural currency, the Judique Spirit Tartan volunteers will be welcoming The Hebridean Baker* to Cape Breton when he launches his Canadian Book Tour in Summer 2022. Website: <https://hebrideanbaker.com/>

**The Hebridean Baker has been featured on the BBC Travel, CBS, Elle Magazine and has 243.5K TikTok Followers, and over 17.5 million video views.*

We see this "hands across the water" partnership as a way to celebrate the best of both worlds; plus, enhance shared cultural and historical connections for people of all ages.

In addition, we are exploring possibilities with the Nova Scotia-based group ScotsConnect and looking forward to being an enthusiastic presence at the Scottish Business Network online conference (June 2022).

Book: Weaving a Village Together

Inspired by concept of weaving a village together, long-term Judique resident and Judique Spirit Tartan Group member, Deborah Graham, created a whimsical story about the creation of the Judique Spirit Tartan and the origins of the village name of "Judique".

Illustrations have been contributed by well-known local artist and painter Dianne MacInnis, historical commentary by local historian and archivist, Virginia MacIlsac, and a special blessing (English, Gaelic, French) by Judique's much-loved parish priest, Father Allan McMillan. Publication is scheduled for Fall 2022. Gaelic and Mi'kmaq translation to follow.

Sharing and Teaching with YouTube Videos

In addition to the successful Judique Spirit Tartan official Scottish registration process, we created a three part, educational YouTube video series: "Tartan Talk: Celebrating the "Judique Spirit" Tartan with the Scottish Register of Tartans!" (May 2021), "Weaving the Judique Spirit Tartan with Diane Quimby, Master Weaver, The Gaelic College" (June 2021) and "Creating the Judique Spirit Tartan with Deana Lloy, Red Label Kilts and

Tartan Design”(June 2021). Here is a link to our first video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mrUbzSHwiA>

Promotion and Media Outreach 2022

The Judique Spirit Tartan has been very fortunate in attracting media and social media attention in 2022. Here are some examples:

The Cape Breton Post (Yvonne Kennedy, March 31, 2022) "Tartan celebrates strong, vibrant culture of Cape Breton community": <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/lifestyles/yvonne-kennedy-tartan-celebrates-strong-vibrant-culture-of-cape-breton-community-100712888/>

The Inverness Oran (Rankin MacDonald, April 6, 2022) "Judique Spirit Tartan inspires community projects!", Full color, full page coverage.

Social Media: The Gaelic College, Wednesday Night Ceilidh, CB*FM (internet Radio)

In addition, the Judique Spirit Tartan was featured by Wendy Bergfeldt of CBC "Mainstreet Cape Breton" as part of a segment on community groups working together on April 27, 2022: https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-36-mainstreet-cape-breton/clip/15909182-judique-spirit?fbclid=IwAR1JE5JRLqCG0A7N0mmKyc-GEwHuA2j8OEBRKAYjKP1TunnvQ_fji4otChI

On May 14, 2022, the Judique Spirit Tartan was highlighted at the Judique Firefighter BBQ, and featured in an April 27, 2022 article in The Inverness Oran.

Promotion and Media Outreach 2021

In 2021, in recognition of the Judique Spirit Tartan's official registration in Scotland and National Tartan Day, we received excellent media coverage. Our story was picked up by Destination Cape Breton, Saltscapes Magazine, Port Hawkesbury Reporter, Inverness Oran, Strait & Area Chamber of Commerce, The Hawk 1015, Inverness County, Cape Breton Roots, JADDA, JCC, and the Judique & Area Community Aid Group.

Social Media: The Judique Spirit Tartan feedback was very encouraging with our Facebook post receiving an impressive 1,015 "Likes", 244 "Comments", and over 250 "Shares".

Reaching our Provincial and Federal Elected Officials

On the electoral side of things, we are proud to share that Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, Gaelic Affairs and Labour Relations, Allan MacMaster, has confirmed that the Judique Spirit Tartan will be presented to the Nova Scotia legislature in 2022. In addition, Member of Parliament for Cape Breton—Canso, Mike Kelloway

featured the Judique Spirit Tartan on his official Facebook page on April 6, 2022 for International Tartan Day.

Engaging Community Groups and Organizations

The Judique Spirit Tartan Group enthusiastically nourishes arts and culture-oriented relationships through inclusiveness, collaboration, and facilitation. Our community partners and supporters include The Gaelic College, The Celtic Music Interpretive Center, Gaelic Affairs Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia's Communities, Culture, The Tartan Gardens Society of Judique, Tourism and Heritage, The Municipality of Inverness County, Destination Cape Breton, to name just a few. We actively strive to enhance the creative and cultural currency of the region and look forward to additional expansion in 2022, and in the years to come.

Additional Creative Cultural Community Projects (2020-2022)

Since its inception in Spring 2020, the Judique Spirit Tartan volunteers have added to the creative economy of the Judique community and surrounding area the offering following fun, culturally rich, age-friendly, and inclusive projects to much success and community participation. All of these popular projects promoted community spirit, goodwill, and engaged the community:

- Firefighter Appreciation BBQ (May 2022)
- Worldwide Quilting Day Celebrates the Quilts of Judique! (March 2022)
- "Spread a Little Love & Random Acts of Kindness" Project (February 2022)
- "Fall's Colourful Footsteps" Trail Walk! (October 2021)
- The Puzzle Box and Positive Thoughts Project (Feb to May 2021)
- Judique Post Office Comes Alive for Christmas! Project (December 2020)
- Christmas Baskets of Love Project (December 2020)
- "Deck the Doors" Project (December 2020)
- Judique's Magical Harvest Moon Trail Walk! (October 2020)

The above events attracted Judiquers of all ages, special accommodations were made for the disabled in the community, and all events are positioned as family-friendly.

The Tartan Gardens of Judique

The Tartan Gardens of Judique Society is a 25 year-old, organization that created an award-winning ornamental garden in Judique. During Covid, they stepped up to transform much of their ornamental garden into what is perhaps the largest community vegetable garden in rural Cape Breton. They focused on facilitating food sustainability, inclusiveness, innovation, resourcefulness, and community pride. Here are some of their accomplishments:

Partnering with the non-profit, Inverness County Cares, and community group, Holly's Helping Hands, they grew and gave away (donations accepted) 15,000 pounds of organic potatoes. This project, "The Great Judique Potato Lift", was covered on CBC Radio.

They created the largest outdoor public event during the first summer of Covid. "Bubble Day" brought kids and seniors together for fun outdoor activities including a huge walking maze that the kids loved.

They used 200 pallets donated by Port Hawkesbury Paper, the Port Hood Co-Op and North End Building Supplies to build sixteen, 30" high, "no-bend" planters for seniors in Judique at no cost. This essentially changed how people garden in Judique. Seniors who had given up gardening due to physical challenges (bending), returned to gardening with renewed enthusiasm and vitality.

Communities Nova Scotia funded the Tartan Garden to create The Judique Food Web, connecting gardeners, a local food bank, in a circle of growing and giving and held several community food events. All at no cost.

The award-winning ornamental garden was restored. It looks beautiful as you drive along Highway 19 (through the village). and gives everyone a lift

They held a successful "Glebe House Painting Frolic" attracting many Judiquers to paint and repair the historic, Victorian building and restore it to its former glory. Over \$19,000 was donated in painting, supplies, and in kind.

A popular Canada Day BBQ was hosted with fun activities and fireworks.

Celtic Trails

The Celtic Trails is the pride of Western Cape Breton. It is led by a Judiquer and our section of the trail has a very large volunteer community supporting it. The Trails group used the Covid period to plan. They successfully advocated for more activities and extensions to the Trails. It is a huge tourist attraction and community asset.

The Inverness County Internet and Cell Committee

Judique volunteers led the organization of the county-wide group that pushed Develop Nova Scotia to both increase their pulling of fibre to more Nova Scotians and to change the network from 70% fibre/30% radio to all fibre. This required a massive campaign of powerful media images and meetings with a Federal Minister and many elected officials, Develop NS, our MLA, and engagements with ISED and CRTC Directors, and heavy media coverage. The end result was an extra \$3 million spent in rural Cape Breton and now only 3,000 Nova Scotians won't have fibre. The Inverness County Internet and Cell Committee is now focused on the lack of cell coverage in rural areas.

Celtic Music Interpretive Centre (CMIC) Award

In 2021, The Celtic Music Interpretative Centre (CMIC) was awarded the Strait Chamber of Commerce award for Excellence in Business. Another example of a Judique organization (non-profit) meeting challenges, showing resilience, and moving forward in a good way during Covid.

Thank you!

Thank you very much for considering Judique for the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award 2022. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to participate in this wonderful program designed to help make Nova Scotia a better place to live, work, and play.

**Please refer to the accompanying collage of visuals to experience the "look and feel" of the above events. Also included is a MP4 of the Judique Spirit Tartan Reel, and the official tartan registration certificate from The Scottish Register of Tartans. Thank you very much!*