

**North Mountain Community, Kings County, Nova Scotia**

**Application for**

**Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award**

**May 2018**

**North Mountain Community**

**Introduction – North Mountain News - Community Connections**

North Mountain Community consists of: Morden Community, Burlington Community Club, North Mountain United Tapestry Cultural & Heritage Society, Harbourville Restoration Society and Black Rock / Canada Creek. Geographically, these groups are all situated along the North Mountain near the Bay of Fundy.

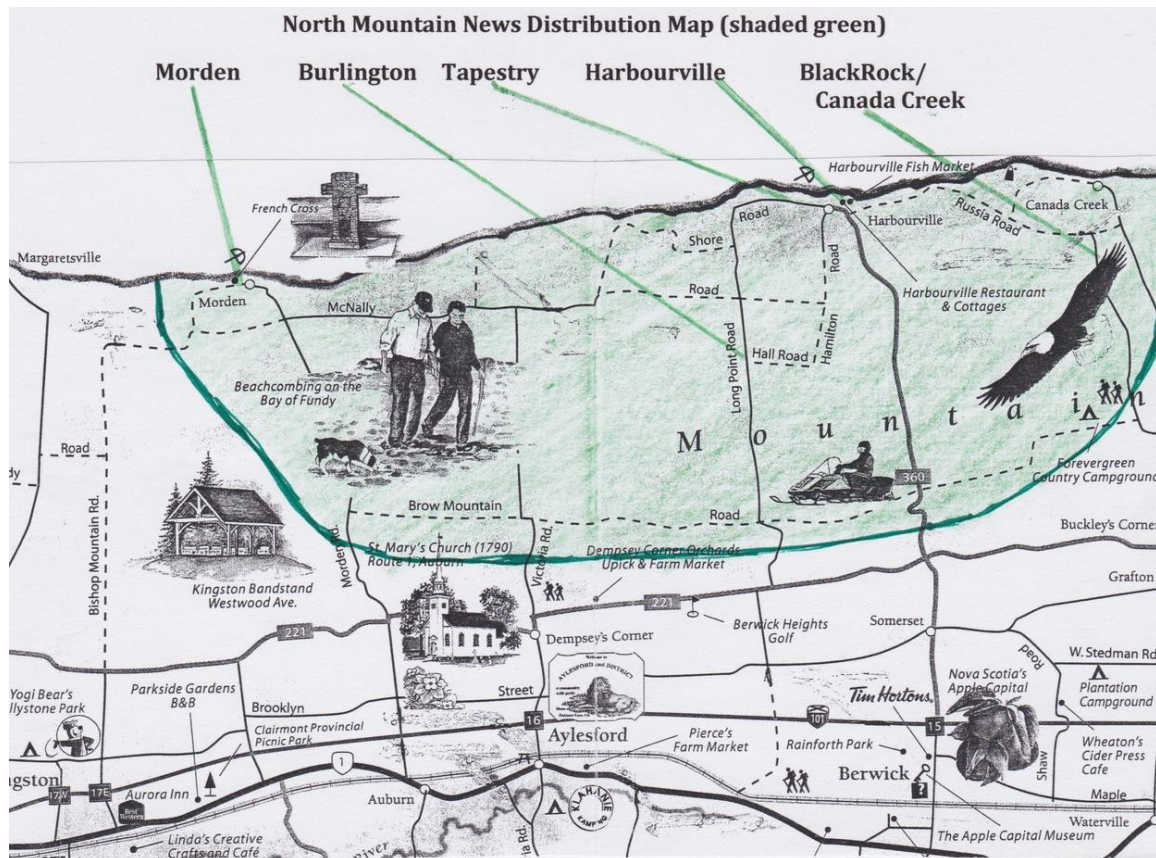
Each of these community groups functioned independently, providing opportunities for their citizens to connect. Each maintains a community hall that is the hub of their community, used to celebrate their own unique culture and heritage. Most had their own newsletter that announced events and happenings that encouraged community participation.

In 2016, Burlington, Tapestry and Harbourville acknowledged the common threads that these communities share and collaborated on creating the *North Mountain News* (NMN) that would support the opportunity to network as communities. Within the year, Black Rock/Canada Creek and Morden joined the NMN team. The NMN is delivered to 630 households 4 times a year and is also available digitally.

Rural communities come together to support each other through social events and supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs. The current focus in Nova Scotia on "Buy Local, Stay Local" has its grass roots in rural community networks. Communication in rural communities nurtures community development. The *North Mountain News* is designed to support and celebrate our community connections.

People need to connect, and rural communities facilitate this through community fairs, markets, dinners, breakfasts and so on. New comers to a community are embraced. When "life happens" (new arrivals, illness, property damage) community folk work together to support the affected community members with emergency financial support and /or physical assistance. While the *North Mountain News* serves a function to promote our various fundraising events, it primarily supports our vision for social and cultural connections that in turn foster healthy communities, both mentally and physically.

Submitted by Sheila Munro, Treasurer, North Mountain News



## **MORDEN.....HOME OF THE FRENCH CROSS**

The village of Morden began as a refuge for a small band of French Acadians fleeing the British expulsion of the French from Nova Scotia in 1755. The Acadians hoped to cross the Bay of Fundy to freedom but winter set in and most died from disease or starvation. The remaining 60 who did survive were transported by canoe to Cape Chignecto. In 1756 a memorial wooden cross of driftwood was erected and the village that grew around it became known as French Cross. The beach stone cross standing today was erected in 1964.

The village was renamed Morden in recognition of James Morden who developed the area as a transportation hub for goods bound for Halifax from Upper Canada via the Bay of Fundy. A large wharf was built in 1868 to support the sea routes and eventually Morden became an active fishing village.

The Bay of Fundy, boasting the highest tides in the world, draws many visitors to our rugged coastline. To encourage visitors to return, Morden has developed recreation facilities that promote activity such as three picnic parks, a new children's play park and a beach picnic area. The community centre is the focal point of most activities including potlucks, coffee parties, weddings and music events. We host seven monthly breakfasts from April- September, serving over 200 people each time. It is not uncommon to see volunteers ten years old to eighty pitching in to serve our guests. It is our biggest fundraiser and all proceeds stay within the community.

There are approximately 250 full time residents and 75 seasonal; most everyone takes part in the activities. We have fun and it is a great place to live. As our welcome sign says "Living By the Bay and Loving It".

Submitted by Penny Lowe, NMN Editor for Morden

## **Burlington Community Club**

### **A Story of Community Spirit From the Brow to the Bay**

Since the early 1800's Burlington has had a rich history in agriculture and forestry. In 1953 the "Burlington Community Club" was created. Time, money, materials and labour were donated in 1989 to restore our community hall and it has continued to thrive ever since.

A Board of Directors addresses community needs by supporting community events, such as the annual Canada Day Celebration/Horse Pull. This event is the epitome of Burlington's pride: neighbours come together to celebrate our history and culture through local entertainment, parade, Children's Carnival and food. This event hosts over 1200 people as families enjoy the opportunity to connect with neighbours!

The Board has supported volunteers who have: written a 380 page book chronicling community history; maintained a community ice-rink, park and recreation area; established a community choir; hosted house tours, ice cream socials, Christmas Teas, Community Breakfasts. Our new kitchen is efficient and our hall is wheelchair accessible. Community support, provincial and municipal funding have helped us achieve these upgrades. Our volunteer cemetery committee has become a leader in the province in developing and promoting a Green Burial Site within our traditional historic cemetery.

Burlington hosts a summer day camp organized by the Municipality. Activities allow youth to experience our woodland, farming and ocean-based community. Youth volunteers manage the Canada Day Children's Carnival, serve at

breakfasts/teas, and participate in facility maintenance. We sponsor two bursaries for our local high school graduates to continue their education.

Fundraising events are two-fold: raising money for community initiatives (such as purchasing an AED) and facilitating community connections between neighbours, new and old. Event admission is usually by freewill offering to allow inclusion.

Our slogan is “To be a Community, We Need to do Community Things”.

Submitted by Sheila Munro, Treasurer, Burlington CC

### **North Mountain United Tapestry Cultural & Heritage Society (Tapestry)**

Tapestry became a reality in 2013, realizing a common community vision that built on the unique strengths within the communities surrounding Harbourville, NS. The concerns of like-minded volunteers regarding the future of the historic Harbourville United Church inspired the partnership with the United Church to repurpose the building. The church has become a welcoming and inclusive meeting place celebrating and promoting local culture, history, commerce and quality of life of the surrounding North Mountain communities.

Through adaptive reuse and extensive repairs, this beloved historic landmark has been preserved and the Harbourville United Church has become Tapestry's permanent home allowing for a high degree of citizen participation in community projects of a wide variety, range and interest.

Our 2014 season (June – October) started with the weekly Saturday local Farmer's Market, environmental and art workshops for all ages, monthly music concerts, an exhibit of our local history, and the continuation of the beloved annual community Christmas Eve and anniversary services.

The Farmer's Market became Tapestry's staple, as a place of local commerce, youth employment and gathering place on Saturday mornings to connect with friends and neighbours of all ages. In 2016 Tapestry opened the Artisan Market, giving local artisans a new home, and both venues have grown over the years by 30% supporting Tapestry's focus on creating an enduring community.

Beyond both Markets and the monthly music concerts (attendance: 60-100), Tapestry now houses an annually changing History Corner including reflections of the Harbourville Sewing Circle, a Weaving Shop, Fibre Circle and a Cafe.

Clear evidence of community pride is further reflected in the new residents of our North Mountain communities, ranging from artisans, young families and seniors. Tapestry works together with our fellow communities, offering an attractive place to live.

Submitted by Katrin Sommerfeld, Tapestry Volunteer (PR) and Artisan Market member

## **Harbourville, Kings County**

### **A Community Reborn**

Harbourville is a small North Mountain community, north of Berwick, perched on the rugged shore of the Bay of Fundy around a natural harbor, the community's physical centre, its namesake, and one of very few safe harbours on the Nova Scotia shore of the upper Bay of Fundy. This is the story of the rebirth of a harbour, the community that surrounds it, and a growing positive engagement with the neighbouring communities.

Harbourville has a long history as a sea going and fishing community, but in 1999 the wharves desperately needed to be replaced. The community responded to this need and formed the Harbourville Restoration Society (HRS) to spearhead the fundraising, design and construction efforts. Over the next 16 years, through the collective efforts of many dedicated volunteers, and financial support from the community and provincial and federal funding programs, the wharves were rebuilt.

HRS is also responsible for the Community Hall and, as the wharf project progressed, a variety of community events evolved: a volunteer appreciation party, a kitchen party sing-along, a community birthday party, lobster roll sale, the annual High Tide Festival on the wharf, an annual beach cleanup, summer solstice on the beach, the Fishermen's Breakfast, Christmas Tea, Christmas Potluck, and private dinners, including wedding parties. On Friday mornings, October-June, we host a "coffee Klatch", well attended by folks from neighbouring communities. All events attract participants from infants to 90 year olds!

As the wharf project drew people of all ages together, the number and variety of celebratory events also grew, as did collaboration with surrounding communities.

Sharing of tables, chairs, and information has grown. HRS is proud to contribute to the *North Mountain News* (funded through advertising). It is an informative, tangible manifestation of the growing collaborative spirit among communities.

Submitted by Brian Van Rooyen, Board member, Harbourville Restoration Society

### **The Black Rock/ Canada Creek Community**

The Black Rock / Canada Creek Community (BRCCC), was established in the early 1800's by settlers from England, Ireland, Scotland and Germany. As a coastal community, it was a hub of settlement and commerce: farming, forestry, fishing, and shipbuilding.

Today, our community is more cohesive as our community groups collaborate to share information about our various activities through the *North Mountain News* and our community Facebook page created in 2016.

We have two community halls! Constructed in 1985, the Black Rock Cultural and Recreational Hall (BRCRH) fell into disrepair but has been recently brought back “to life” by community volunteers. It really has ignited a new community excitement with good attendance at activities such as bingo, darts, dances, plays and music Jam sessions. The Black Rock Community Association (BRCA) recently purchased a generator. The BRCRH will be a “warming centre” in case of power outages where folks can come to get warm in the winter, have a hot cup of refreshment, or to charge their phones.

Our other community hall, The Black Rock Community “Jolly Workers” Hall organizes Saturday morning “Freewill” breakfasts, from May until October each year, providing funds for community assistance for over 80 years, supporting many people in times of need.

The Black Rock Trails Society, a volunteer group, maintains 30 kilometers of trails, open year round with a detailed map board located behind the BRCRH. They host a spring plant sale and a fall Fairy Walk for all ages.

The Black Rock Baptist Church, established in 1840, provides many community services: hymn sings, special services, weddings, funerals and regular Sunday morning services. The Church community supports the Berwick Food Bank with “Cereal Sundays” (folks attending the breakfast donate cereals) and the Youth Group organizes an annual fall Food Drive.

Submitted by Karen Sanford, Black Rock community volunteer.

### **North Mountain Community - A few Statistics**

Some of our community activities are annual events as described in our community stories and somewhat predictable for numbers of volunteers and attendees involved. However each year we try different activities such as an ice cream social, a textile arts group or a nature walk in a woodlot. These events are open to all ages and are totally unpredictable as to attendees.

Volunteers are literally a moving target: some of us regularly volunteer within our home community and, as needed, may help out with a supper or children’s event in a neighbouring community. Some volunteers are more structured in their time while others are more impromptu. Regardless, our communities are richer for their contributions and we try to let them know publicly how much their commitment and contributions are valued.

Our community volunteers may actually work at an event or may be someone who belongs to a group that knits hats for preemies at the local hospital or belongs to a quilting group that provides quilts for folks in need. Other volunteers may bake for events or help with advertising. Volunteers mow lawns, maintain gardens, build signs, clean beaches.

Any statistics provided here will be guesstimates at best. Knowing that once committed to paper, we will hear about other people and other initiatives.

**Number Of Self-Generated Community Initiatives/ Volunteer groups - 65**

**Number Of Residents Attending Community**

**Examples of specific activities & attendance**



Community Breakfasts: 120-200 people  
Community Dinners: 60- 190 people  
Musical or Drama Performances: 60 -100  
Jam sessions musical gatherings: 25-40 people  
High Tide Festival: 800 people  
Canada Day Celebration: 1200-1400 people  
Day Camp: 20 children /week  
Workshops (craft/First Aid) : 8 – 20  
Beach Clean Up: 50 people along the 4 communities  
Coffee Klatches: 20-40 people  
Choir – 45-55 people

## **Conclusion**

### **Community Engagement on the North Mountain**

The strength of our North Mountain Community is attributed to our dedicated volunteers, many of whom are self employed or retired with unique skills and interests in the fields of technology, construction, leadership, musical ability, the arts, community building, and food service to mention a few. Some of our volunteers have been recognized for their service locally through Burlington's Community Spirit Award, and The Municipality of the County of Kings Ted Meldrum Award.

Cross community engagement on the North Mountain enhances the mental and physical health of our citizens who connect to learn and share skills. The North Mountain Choir consists of over 50 voices from our communities and beyond. We sponsor and promote opportunities for healthy activity with yoga classes and nature walks focused on preserving our environment. We have hosted various education sessions including Food Safety and First Aid Courses. Members of our community share their learning's from attending presentations on promoting healthy living especially for seniors. Artisans from Morden to Black Rock share their skills at local workshops and informal gatherings.

Our citizens across the five communities demonstrate a common community pride by participating in beach clean ups, park development, and facility maintenance. Each of the five communities organizes events such as concerts, coffee klatches, breakfasts, farmer's markets, shoreline yard sale and plant sales. These all provide networking opportunities. Since we started the common

newsletter we have noticed a broader sense of pride and appreciation of our neighbours.

We have learned the value of community events in that it brings neighbours together to support each other. Hence all of our fundraisers are designed to bring neighbours together to organize and work at events. Our combined communities readily plan and support fundraisers to help local families in need.