

West Pubnico

“The Story of Us” began in 1653, when Charles de La Tour gave to Philippe Mius d'Entremont the choice to settle wherever he wished. He chose what was then known to the Mi'kmaq as “Pogomkook ” meaning "a place where in winter one can go and fish eels in the harbour by cutting holes in the ice.”

Charles de La Tour bestowed the title of Baron upon Philippe Mius d'Entremont and created the first constituted barony in Acadia and the second in all of Canada.

When the French arrived, they changed the name to "Pobombcoup", which was shortened to "Pombcoup", and eventually to "Pubnico".

On July 28th 1755, British Governor Charles Lawrence and the Nova Scotia Council decided to deport the Acadians. About 6,000 Acadians were forcibly removed from their colonies. The British military ordered the Acadians' communities to be destroyed and homes and barns burned down. The expulsion did not end in 1755. By 1758 more who had fled were recaptured and deported. This expulsion, known as the Grand Derangement displaced from 10,000 to 18,000 Acadians. Thousands more were killed.

Upon their return to Nova Scotia in 1767, they had no other choice than to settle at the Pubnico, west of the harbour, which had not been occupied by the Acadians before the Expulsion. Pubnico was now settled for a second time by the Acadians.

Hard work and determination to make a good living coupled with the strong desire to help one another, has been a strong trait and value instilled in their descendants. Proudly it is very much our way of life.

Pubnico is considered the oldest village still occupied by the Acadians, and also the oldest village in Canada which is still occupied by the descendants of its founder.

Historical Acadian Village of Nova Scotia

The Acadian people have a great sense of pride and a deep appreciation for their heritage. Born from an ambitious idea of the Société historique acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest in 1989, Le Village historique Acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse is located in Lower West Pubnico, on a breathtaking 17-acre point of land overlooking picturesque Pubnico Harbour. It represents the unique culture, language, and the family life the Acadians. Life on the sea is demonstrated through the building of boats, lobster-fishing traps, and mending fishing net, as the Acadians upon their return from exile, resettled on lands less than ideal for farming and were compelled to turn to the sea for their livelihood. The Acadian village, with the help of countless volunteers and donations of artifacts, has proven to be a project of tremendous value to Acadians, Pubnico, Nova Scotians and the country. It is a successful attraction, and part of the museums of Nova Scotia. It makes each of us very proud.

Église St Pierre Parish and Council

Wherever Acadians settled in post-Deportation Nova Scotia, the Roman Catholic Church was an institution of importance. This was the same case in West Pubnico. The first church in West Pubnico was completed in 1815 on Old School road, and in 1816 Fr. Jean-Mandé Sigogne established the parish of Saint-Pierre for an area that included both sides of Pubnico Harbour. That church was replaced in 1840 with another built across the road from the old one, near the old cemetery. A third church, St. Peter's, was completed between 1890 and 1892 and is still standing. Typically, the priests and religious sisters were forces for education, economic development, health and welfare, and community cohesiveness. There was a convent, now gone, and their remains a presbytery next to the church. The church has always had an active parish council, with members of all ages. Despite a decline in church goers, the parish church and council still plays a great role in our community and all residents are involved in its' wellbeing and maintenance. They have an active choir and band of musicians. A recent fundraising campaign for a new roof reached \$67,000 in record time. Parishioners are always very supportive.

Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos et Centre de recherche

In 1973, a group of interested citizens from West Pubnico got together and decided to organize an historical society as one way of working toward the preservation of their Acadian heritage. It now bears the name of "La Société Historique Acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest". It has been quite active since its foundation and in 1977 its members purchased a dwelling house in the village which they promptly transformed into a museum. Through local help, donations, and grants from the Federal and Provincial governments, museum compares favorably with other museums of the same size. Since its official opening in 1979, the museum has acquired an impressive selection of artifacts which depict how life would have been for our ancestors at an earlier time. Volunteers play a role in the museum, from members and board of the Historical Society to social events and planning. The research centre is one of a kind.

In addition to household items, there are documents and literature dating back to the 1700's which are of great interest to the genealogist and historian. The museum's new wing boasts a fine display of cameras, photographs and associated paraphernalia.

The West Pubnico Acadian Festival, Chez-nous à Pombcoup

There is no better time to come home to Pubnico “Chez-nous à Pombcoup” than at festival time. Anyone who lives away knows that. The community bustles with culture, songs, Acadian food, seafood, and flags! More than 50 years old, the annual festival continues to be a favorite !

Le Petit Courrier

Le Petit Courrier was founded in 1937 by a board of 12 directors. The founder, Désiré d'Eon, conceived it because the people of South-West of Nova Scotia had few opportunities to read French. It began as one page of local news. From January 1939, Le Petit Courrier was printed and published in West Pubnico for the next thirty years. In 1970-1971, the Acadian Federation of Nova Scotia purchased Le Petit Courrier to use as a means of communication. The company L'imprimerie Lescarbot Ltée bought the newspaper and its name was changed to Le Petit Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse. In October 1977, the name was changed again to its current name Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Its new mandate was to develop links between the francophone and Acadian communities of Nova Scotia and to promote their interests. In 1987, the Fédération Francophone (Acadienne) de la Nouvelle-Écosse became the new owner of Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

West Pubnico Credit Union

Initiated by citizens of the community, they formed a West Pubnico Credit Union back in 1940. The Credit Union has always played an important role in our community and the staff there are well known for being volunteers whenever possible, assisting in schools, farm markets and fundraising events.

DeLatour Cooperative Society

What was started locally as a fishermen co-op and was called the “U.M.F.” (United Maritime Fishermen), the De La Tour Co-op Society Ltd. Also began operating as a general store in March of 1947 in what was formerly the William B. Store. A warehouse was built and the store was enlarged many, many, times over the years. At one point, it housed the Lower West Pubnico post office. In 1962, the co-operative store went into the oil business. In 1971 a meat department was started to provide meat products to the customers. In 1984 and 1989 more enlargements were made, including a new entry. The grocery area, meat department and building supplies were modernized. Our store was named for Charles de Saint-Étienne de La Tour, an early founder and governor of L'Acadie, who came to the “new world” in 1610. He was also a merchant and fur trader... and one of our ancestors.

West Pubnico Legion Branch 66

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #66 has a story that makes us all beam with pride. As with many legions, memberships began to dwindle and so did weekly events. This resulted in less funds to do repairs and to keep up with costs of heat and power. The West Pubnico legion realized they needed help, and the younger adults needed to be involved as they were the future. They approached a local musician with an offer to use their space, play music, shoot pool, and bring your wives; something that was rarely done. A group began to gather once a week and soon it became a popular outing for many. They made a membership drive for younger members. In an effort to raise \$5000 to renovate washrooms, the community development office, a local volunteer, and the president set down to make plans for a Chase the Ace. The first night was a huge success, netting sales of over \$1200. The final night in October netted sales of over \$1200 per minute. What happened in those 33 weeks was astonishing and like nothing we have ever seen. Every Friday different volunteers played music and the intergenerational get together was a born and successful! Seven venues opened for sales, and each week more and more volunteers expressed interest in helping. Some even brought cake and goods to the volunteers. Almost 300 volunteers participated and they truly enjoyed playing an important role. When it was over, the Legion made over \$600,000. What stands out when we think about year 2016? It's not the money we made for our legion; it's the volunteers and the success we had. It's the camaraderie and the pride. Residents claim this was the best thing ever for community spirit and volunteerism.

Fundraising efforts made easy

The Acadians were always looking out for each other, and today is not different. When a family suffers a hardship and a cake parade or fundraising event is organized, the amount of volunteer time spent and donations that this close community can produce is more than anyone can imagine. People from age 4 to 100 volunteer to help; some for the entire day. The baked goods fill the hall in an hour. People donate money if they cannot attend. Businesses and residents donate door prizes. An afternoon event lasting 1.5 hours can bring in \$13,000.

Innovation in the Wind

Some local residents had a dream to harness the strong winds that blow on our shores, and they worked diligently on the project. Taking the time to informing leery residents and forming partnerships. On May 22, 2002, they held an open house in the Fire Hall at

West Pubnico and formally introduced the project to the community, which was well received by most present. The project was not an easy one, but their persistence eventually paid off. Pubnico is now home to the first wind farm in Nova Scotia. Pubnico Point Wind Farm has 17 turbines with a generating capacity of 30.6 MW.

Fishing and Farming

Having settled in a place with poor agricultural lands, it stands to reason that most Acadians became expert fishermen. The area remains an area of fishing and we are home to Dennis Point Wharf, the largest commercial fishing wharf in Atlantic Canada. Over 1000 fishermen and women make their living at the wharf, and fish for a variety of ground fish and shell fish, most notably lobster. The fisherman and their families are close knit and they are the economic glue to the community. They help others, and look for each other. Our Acadian culture is graced by distinct foods, fishing and innovative agricultural technology; namely the dyke system, or aboiteau as it is known the Acadians. The Aboiteau is a wooden sluice fitted with swinging doors that allowed excess fresh water to drain from the salty marshland, but shut to prevent re-entry of salt water at high tide. One such aboiteau can be seen at the West Pubnico Museum. The aboiteau approach used by the Acadians was imaginative and ingenious, an adaptation of techniques used in Europe and elsewhere for centuries before French colonists arrived in North America.

Volunteer Service Clubs and Organizations

One would be hard pressed to find a place with more volunteers and service organization per capita. Many West Pubnico residents volunteer for more than one organization. The following is a partial list where you would find our citizens donating their time and making a difference: friends of TNR (trap, neuter and release), Parish church council, Fire dept and ladies auxiliary, Papillion and Pissenlits, Health Club, Pubnico Improvement society, Pubnico Point Trail Association, Conseil Acadien de Par-en-bas, Société Historique, Lions and Lionettes, Knights of Columbus, West Pubnico Wastewater Committee, Legion, West Side Rifle and Bow Association, West Pubnico Acadian Festival, Argyle Municipality Historical & Genealogical Society, New Horizon for seniors, Pont du Marais Home, Village Acadian, Coastal Financial Credit Union, DeLatour Co-operative, West Pubnico Funeral Association, West Pubnico Golf and Country club, Saint Vincent de Paul society, Les Dames de Sainte Anne Society, Musee Acadien, Matilda Fund, and Foyer Ecole Pubnico Ouest. Our volunteers proudly serve on committees and volunteer outside our community as well: Ecole Par-En-Bas, Drumlin Height consolidated Scholl, Belleville school, Nova Scotia Golf Association, Emergency Management Organization, Nakile Home for Special Care, Sou'West Nova Bikers Association, NS Birders society, ATVANS, Yarmouth County Minor Hockey Association, Fisherman's LFA association, Nova Scotia Fisheries Council Sector, Nova

Scotia fish Packers Association, and the Nova Scotia Boat Builders Association.

Active Living

Keeping active is important to our residents and with determination they have always found the means to stay well. Over two decades ago they remodeled a local store to house a health club, run by membership, and it continues to operate today. With West Pubnico Athletic society, they built a softball field and softball continues to be played summer long, adult females, males and minor baseball teams. The community has fundraised to build a 5km walking trail, with more than 75% of the trail being manually built by volunteers of both sexes. The community has two tennis courts, initiated by the community and petitioned with more than 200 names to revitalize the surface. It is now one court and one multipurpose court. Community members have initiated an Over 40 Bike Club, and running group and a walking group. We also lobbied government for a sidewalk that is in constant use. The West Pubnico Golf course, opened in 1968 and rebuilt in 1999 thanks to volunteer efforts, continues to be a huge asset to our community.

Annual Harvest Festival

In an effort to revive a festival that originated in the 40's to the 1960's, a local champion worked with a team of volunteers to bring back the fall harvest festival in 2012. Complete with vegetables and pickle competitions, the festival attracted many. It had an ox pull, farm animals, tractors, music and old carnival games. People from near and far came and all loved the old time feel of the event. It brought together the young and old.