



New Aberdeen Neighbourhood Newsletter

The Historic "No. 2" Issue 5, Summer 2021

*Brought to you by the New Aberdeen Revitalization Society,
Warden United Church, and the Tompkins Institute (CBU)*



Summer camp

The postcard on the left shows kids swimming at the Sanita Hills Summer Camp for Children of St. John's Parish, situated at Northside East Bay. See page 4 for more camp photos.

What are your favourite summer memories?

Thank you to the sponsors of this issue of the newsletter:

Cape Breton Regional Municipality
John John McCarthy, Liberal Candidate
John White, PC Candidate
John Morgan, NDP Candidate

If you would like to be the sponsor of a future issue, please contact Laurie at russ4@hotmail.com



The neighbourhood is in bloom!

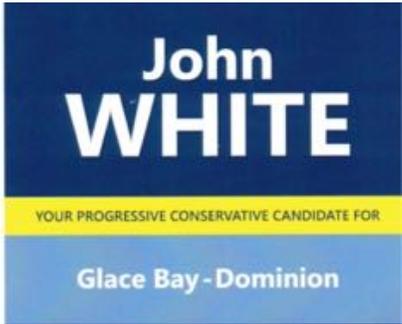
Pictured above are flowers in the Darrell Flynn Memorial Garden.

Company Houses of New Aberdeen

“Standardized ‘cookie-cutter’ houses line nearly identical streets in areas quickly thrown up to absorb the large numbers of miners employed in the early 20th century operations. The regularity of these streets points to the company management’s belief that workers could be considered a commodity to be controlled, rather than human beings with individual needs and aspirations. The evolution of these neighbourhoods, on the other hand, reflects the determination of mining families to build vibrant, cohesive communities that express their personal aspirations. Sports fields and other recreational areas are still visible, some the product of municipal authorities, some developed by miners themselves, at times with the cooperation of management.

The influence of the miners is visible in the ways particular houses have been modified and landscaped over time. This process accelerated after the Second World War, when large numbers of people began to buy their homes from the coal company. The neighbourhoods, then, represent locations where the conflicting wishes of management and labour intersected.”

- Gordon Fulton, Parks Canada *“In Situ Resources Associated with the Coal Industry in Glace Bay, Stellarton, and Springhill, Nova Scotia. November 1999.*



From Warden United Church

Proud to be the church in the No. 2!

Warden Church has been taken over by FUN this summer as we try out lawn games including Spikeball, ladder toss, giant Jenga, and croquet. A huge thanks to the East Cape Breton Community Health Board for their support in this project! There will be lots more opportunities to play lawn games in the Fall.

Our worship services are held every Sunday at 11:30 am with all COVID-19 precautions in place. We listen to upbeat music, pray together for the needs of the community, and have time to chat and catch up with one another. You would be very welcome to join! Children are also welcome any Sunday.

On June 21, the day of the summer solstice, we had a beautiful evening together beside Dominion Beach, where we held a hymn sing and prayer service just as the sun was setting. The beauty of nature was incredibly uplifting for all of us!

Many people have been asking about chair yoga. We were sorry to have to postpone due to the Spring lockdown. We will start it up soon!

We want to wish the whole community a safe, peaceful, and joyful summer.

Rev. Alison Etter

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Sunday September 5 at 4:00 pm we hope you will join us for an outdoor party to celebrate the completion of our new parking lot! We'll have all the lawn games available, as well as ice cream, bubbles, and sidewalk chalk. All ages welcome!

The Camp Sanita Hills, Northside East Bay

Father Robert Donnelly (see page 6) purchased the Sanita Hills camp property in 1942 and, beginning in 1943, there were four camp sessions for boys and girls held each year. Wooden cabins housed four bunk beds which accommodated eight campers. There was a large recreation hall where many impromptu concerts took place.

The camp grounds were the centre of all kinds of activities including picnics, baseball games, crafts, swimming, clam bakes, hikes, and sing-songs around the campfire.



Waiting for the bus



Boarding the bus



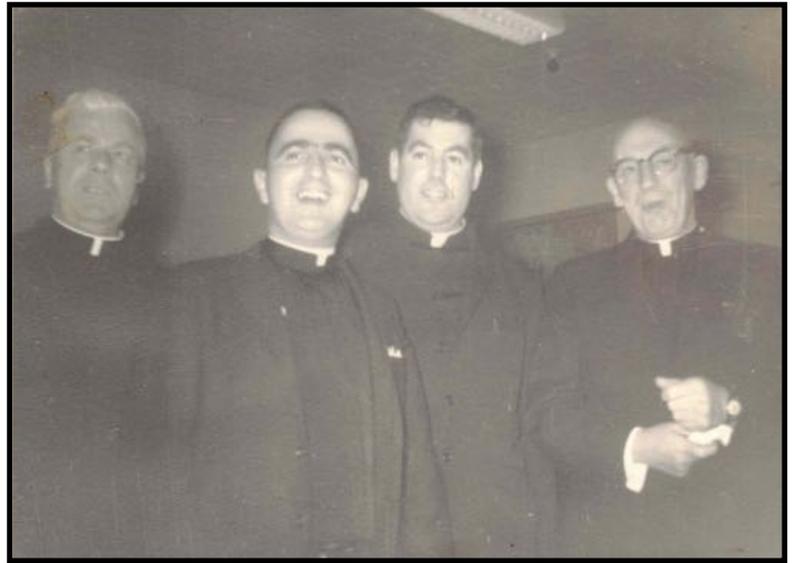
Washing dishes



The cabins



The farmhouse



Above: Praying at camp/Below: group photos
Photos are from the papers of Sister Martha Eileen

Father Robert Donnelly: A Man Who Made a Difference

Pictured here with fellow priests, Father Donnelly was a man who made a tremendous contribution to the No. 2. Warna Fraser shares more on the next page.



JOHN JOHN MCCARTHY

Liberal Candidate for Glace Bay-Dominion



That “Kind” of People

By Warna Fraser

Of Irish descent, Robert Donnelly was born in Scotland on November 22, 1907. His parents were Robert and Mary (McParland) Donnelly. The Donnelly family lived on upper Fifth Street, Robert obtained his entire elementary education at St. John’s School. After completing his grade 11 at Glace Bay High, he received a scholarship from A.O.H. Society and continued his studies at St. Mary’s University in Halifax.

Following graduation, he entered Holy Heart Seminary, also in Halifax. He was ordained in the chapel by the late Archbishop Thomas O’Donnell on June 24, 1934. Shortly after his ordination, he celebrated his first solemn High Mass at St. John’s Church.

Father Donnelly spent the first thirteen years of his priesthood as curate at St. John’s. From 1934-1939 he served as assistant to Father Ronald MacDonald, and from 1934 – 1947 he assisted Father Joseph Gillis in serving the parish.

I grew up listening to stories of people my grandfather thought made a difference in the #2 area, one of them being Father Donnelly.

One of the stories was that Father Donnelly could be seen with a horse and wagon hauling away ash piles from the yards, making an improvement to the yards and using the ashes to level off the land between Tenth and Eleventh streets (where the housing group is now situated). This is where Holy Name rink was built. In time, there was a club house built, with a pot belly stove for heat, and they had recorded music.

Father Donnelly built the playgrounds after the war was over on the site of the big school at St. John’s. The playgrounds were used by the children of St. John’s and #2 in general.

The Camp: The first Camp 1935 was held in a field in Mira. Later, Father Donnelly bought property from two elderly ladies from Northside East Bay. Over the years they erected the Mess Hall, Recreation Hall, Chapel, and several bunk houses.

Big Sye MacDonald was in charge of the Mess Hall and was cook at the camp for many years. Pat O’Connell, Wishie Kelly and Chic MacDonald helped at the camp, along with a number of other good souls from the Parish. In 1937, they had four camps: boys under 12; boys over 12; girls under 12; and girls over 12. The children camped for two weeks for \$3.00 a child. No child was turned away for lack of money.

Father Donnelly formed a spiritual organization - Holy Name Society - for men, and the men of this group became known as Father Donnelly’s boys. This this was not only a spiritual group but a group of men who helped Father Donnelly establish the things he created and establish social programs such as the Annual Carnival and Garden Parties on the school lot, with races, games, spin the wheel, etc. Holy Name society also help raise money to support the Camp.

Unfortunately, after Father Donnelly finished his time at St. John’s, the playground he erected was taken down and stored in the basement of the church and eventually permission was granted for it to be taken down to the property of Wishie Kelly on Center Ave. Wishie erected the swings in his yard to be used by the children of #2. All children were welcome.

I would like to thank my friend Cecilia Kelly for filling in the blanks.

Did You Know?

1. On November 18, 1929, an earthquake was felt in the region. What, reportedly, was spread over the beach by the resultant waves?
 - a) Rocks
 - b) Fishing gear
 - c) Whisky

2. In the 1930s, Father Ronald MacDonald used to give out prizes of \$5 and \$10. What did you need to do to win?
 - a) Have an attractive yard
 - b) Attend church regularly
 - c) Teach catechism classes to children

3. Each evening at six o'clock a whistle was blown for the miners. What did two long blasts mean?
 - a) There was work
 - b) There was no work

4. Why were schools closed for 20 days in 1934?
 - a) The teachers were on strike
 - b) There was flooding
 - c) There was a measles epidemic

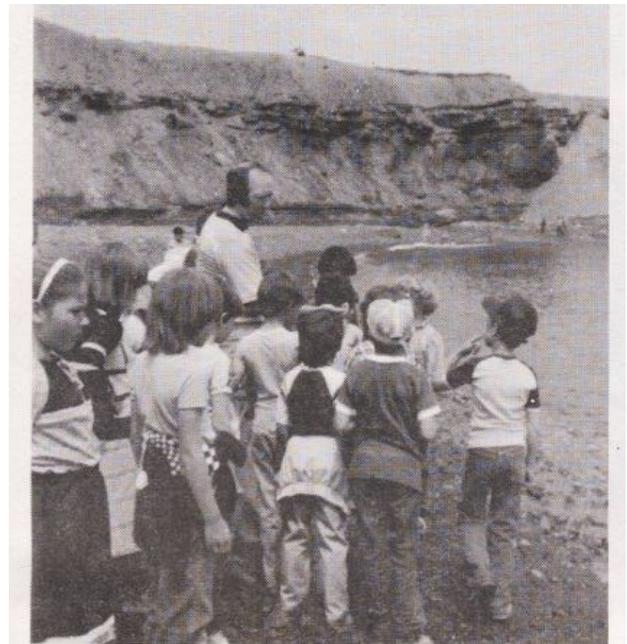
5. What was found in the basement of Lang's Grocery Store?
 - a) A pub
 - b) A sausage factory
 - c) The Lang family apartment

Answers: 1c; 2a; 3b; 4c; 5b

A Letter from a reader

I remember my grandparents' company house, always very warm and welcoming. I was always amazed at the pantry in the kitchen. You just never knew what Nana was going to bring out and place on the table. The kitchen stove shone like glass.

Remember when?



Blessing of the water at the bottom of 11th St., June, 1983 Father Hughie MacNeil

Swimming is one of the great joys of the summer season! In years past, no one would go into the water until the priest held the Blessing of the Water. Once the water was blessed, Catholics and Protestants alike would jump in!



JOHN MORGAN
Glace Bay-Dominion

This sensory path was created in the basketball court at JBC. It's intended to be used for free play as well as classroom teaching. SchoolsPlus Outreach Worker, Ryan Robson, designed and painted the area with help from local youth in middle and high school.

Photo credit: SchoolsPlus



We'd love to hear from you!

Please send ideas, notes, photos, articles, or any interesting facts for the **New Aberdeen Neighbourhood Newsletter** to wardenunitedchurch@gmail.com.

Or by mail to:

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