

Life and Times of Judique

The name Judique is believed to be of French or Mi'kmaq origin. The French had a fort nearby while cutting stone to build Fortress Louisbourg and the Mi'kmaq chose this area for its abundant harvesting grounds. Seven small brooks flow through the coastal lowland where the village sits.

The first European to facilitate a permanent settlement here was sea captain, fisherman, and poet Michael MacDonald from the Isle of South Uist, Scotland. He arrived with the Glenaladale settlers in PEI in 1772 and in 1775 he explored the coastline of the Judique shores about which he composed a Gaelic song translated as "Fair is the Place." In this new "land of the trees" families cleared land, built houses, and created a village.



St. Andrew's Parish church, destroyed by fire in 1919, and glebe (priest's residence).

The site for new stone church. Parish events, including celebration of the Mass, were held in the old hall during rebuilding. The hall later became part of D.J. MacDonald's mercantile business.



The parish of St. Andrew's had its first resident priest in 1816 and is the oldest Roman Catholic Scottish-Highland parish on Cape Breton Island. The stone church was built after two previous buildings were consumed by fire through lightning strikes.

The roof goes up on the stone church.



Celebration of opening the church.



Postcard of the new Kildonan Hall, built in 1936 across from the stone edifice. Photo: Parish



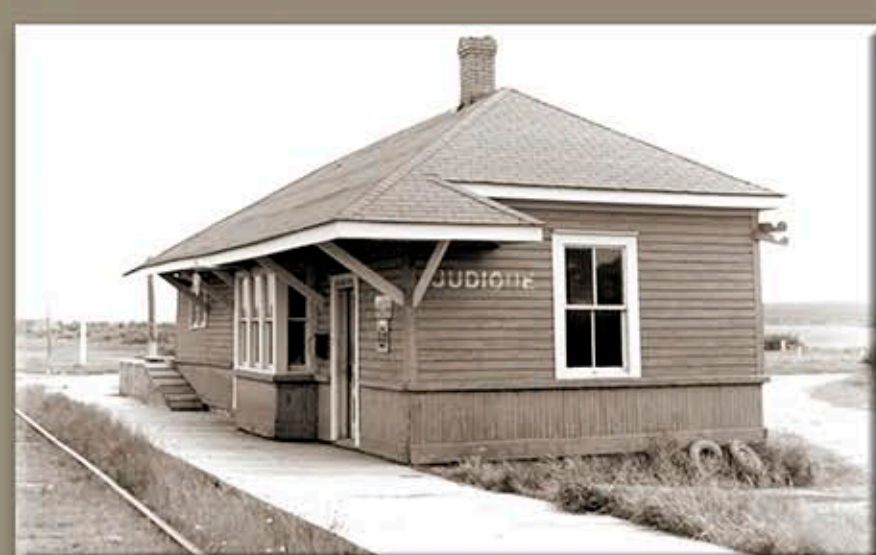
Fr. Ranald MacDonald, "the building priest." He wore coveralls and worked on construction with the parishioners. Photo: Ronald MacDonald



Bishop Morrison lays the cornerstone in 1924. Photo: Parish



Consecration of the steeple bell, donated by community elder, Stephen Graham, seated right. Photos: Charlie Graham/Parish



Judique Station, circa 1960



Schoolhouse at Hillsdale, circa 1960. Photo: Evie MacLellan

Judique School on River Denys Road in 1918. Photo: Hugh R. MacIsaac



The first school teacher in Judique was Mrs. Murphy, who taught in her home in 1804, and married pioneer Alexander MacDonald "Rhetland". The Kildonan parish hall also served as a high school before the consolidated school was built. One room school houses were the norm for many years and teachers had to keep the building warm and clean as well as instruct.

Farming, fishing, and forestry were the mainstays by which a family survived. Power and paved roads arrived in the 1950s, and the modern age began.

Woman with a team of horses pulling a hay mowing machine. Photo: Ronald MacDonald



Men were accomplished at many trades to keep the farm going, at using forestry tools, and building traps and nets for fishing.

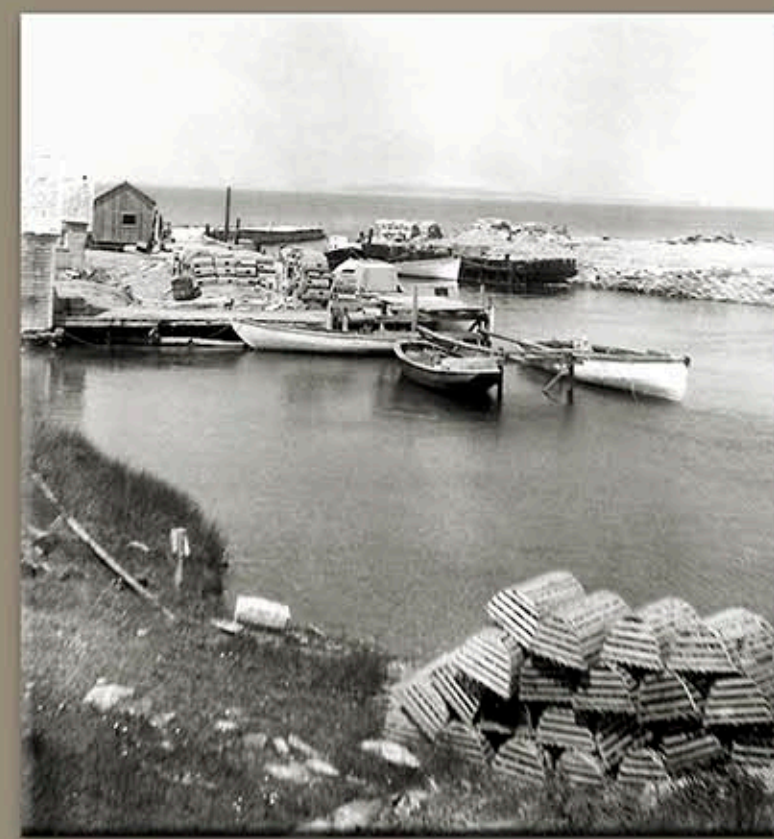
Horses were used for ploughing, harrowing, haying and transportation.



Mobile sawmill Photo: Hugh R. MacIsaac



A calm day at the harbour in the 1940s. Little Judique Harbour continues to serve an active fishery.



Winter comes to Baxter's Cove in 1989. Our temperate climate brings warm summers and cold winters.

Little Judique Harbour in the 1950s. The adjoining shore is a popular swimming area.

Prosperity arrived in the form of automobiles. The early merchants and cousins-from-away often sported the first vehicles seen in the community. Photo: Archie Gillis



Colin Chisholm was an early merchant who owned Long Point Lumber Company. The truck, above, carries the first load. Photo: Ronald MacDonald



Fiddle classes with Buddy MacMaster at the Celtic Music Interpretation Centre.

Visiting family and neighbours and taking time to "make a ceilidh" were enjoyable pastimes of days gone by. Now a ceilidh means a gathering to enjoy fine music. Many local musicians descend from Clan Sheumais and Clan Bogainn, family branches of clan Donald (MacDonald) including Buddy MacMaster, Dan R. MacDonald, John Allan Cameron, Winnie Chafe, Doug MacPhee and Jeffrey Gosse. Celtic music on Cape Breton Island is played by musicians of many ethnic backgrounds.

The call of "Judique on the Floor! Who'll put'er off?" was a challenge to step dancers or fighters, depending on whom you ask, and is the title given to the annual summer festival.



A musical family of Beatons, MacMasters, Grahams, and MacDonalds. Photo: Kinnon Beaton

Musician Dan. R. MacDonald, born in Judique, was a noted composer of over 2000 fiddle tunes. Photo: Glen MacEachern



A folk dance group from the 1950s. Photo: Dorothea Scott



Fiddlers in the forefront: (L) Johnny Archie MacDonald and (R) Little Jack MacDonald. Detroit was a popular gathering spot for Cape Bretoners away from home and these fiddlers entertained there often. Photo: Isabel Graham

"Judique Dan" engaged in 945 professional wrestling matches. In 1910-11, he toured America and finally claimed the world middleweight title in the 1912 bout against Sam Anderson of Sweden held in St. John's, NFLD



Donald A. MacDonald "Judique Dan." World Wrestling Champ 1912

Judoka Amy Cotton, in 1994 represented Canada at the Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece.



Hockey on the Pond, 1920.

Physical challenges of tug-of-war, hockey, and fighting; cultural stimulation of music and dancing; appreciation for education, and community values such as hospitality and volunteerism, and a clannish sense of justice remain in the people of the area who are still for the most part, of highland descent.



1928 tug-of-war champions won the Walker Shield

1980s tug-of-war team crowned in Antigonish.

Photo courtesy: Winnie Rankin



Judique is tucked tightly between the Creignish Hills and the coast, with many facets to explore between the forested back roads and the secluded coves.



Text: Virginia MacIsaac
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