

Judique Station



This section of The Trans Canada Trail in Inverness County is called The Judique Flyer Trail, a monicker for famed "Judique Flyer" which were a series of coal fired locomotives that replaced the earlier commercial mode of transportation, the stagecoach. Rail traffic ran from 1901 to 1985 carrying passengers, livestock, pit timber, coal, fish, molasses and flour. Along the coast of Judique, the terrain is relatively flat the engine tried to make up time, however the Judique Flyer was not noted for it's speed. The train steamed through here around 5 o'clock a.m. and for a while, the birth rate in Judique was 23% while the rest of the province stood at 1.2%. This was humorously attributed to the early morning blast of the train whistle as it passed through the village. At least sixteen sets of twins were born between the 1940s and 60s in a local population of approximately 1000 people. The "Judique Flyer" was a pivotal part of rural life and the train's presence created employment, took people away to larger centres, to war, and brought news and mail into the tiny villages.

The Judique Flyer
by Stanley Collins 1956

*Oh here comes the old black beauty
With her engineer on duty
She is shure a rolling cutie
On the old inverness line.*

*If it's speed you desire
Climb aboard the Judique Flyer
There's no need for other hire
For she'll take you in on time.*

*Watch her roll my what vision
There's no danger of collision
Traveling to fulfill her mission
Running on a perfect line.*

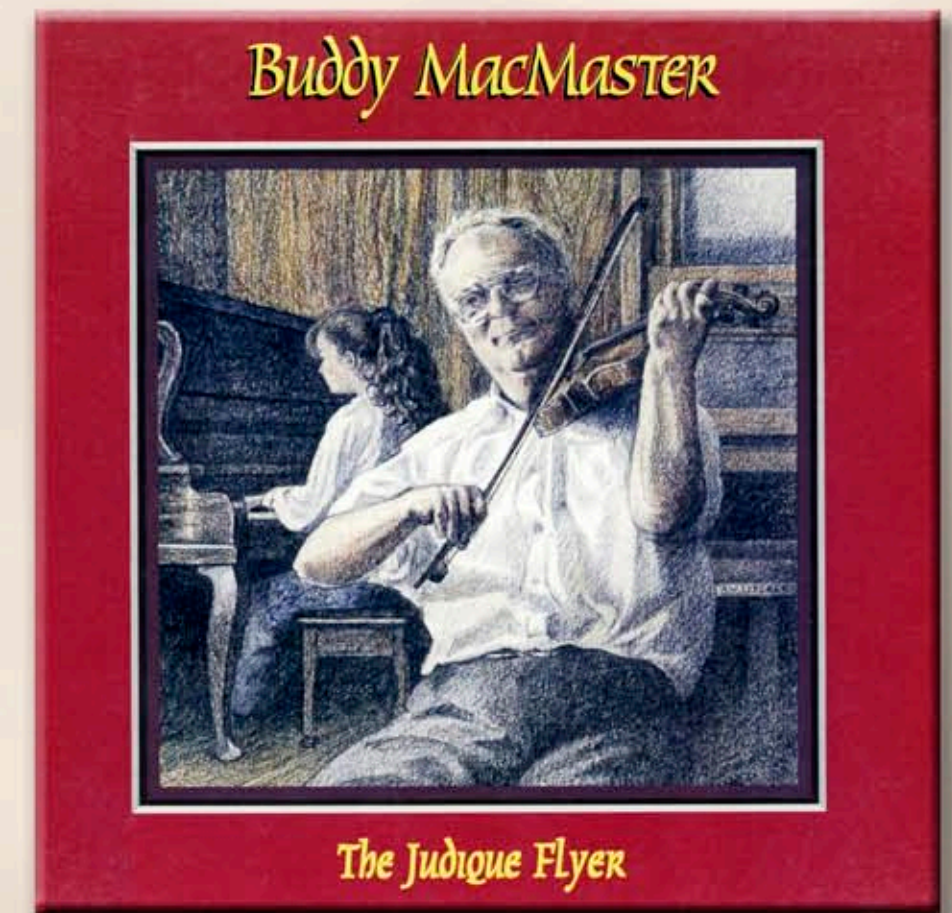
*Sitting mid splendor beaming
Soft fluorescent lights a-gleaming
traveling with no careening
Tis a feeling oh so fine.*

Buddy MacMaster - Master Fiddler and Station Master

Late one evening in 1938, fiddler Buddy MacMaster boarded the Judique Flyer in Troy to return home to Judique after playing his first dance. In 1943, Buddy took a job as a telegrapher and traveling station agent with the Canadian National Railway. He worked at the station here and in stations throughout the region. For forty five years, the railroad would nurture his reputation as a generous fiddler and today he is recognized as the world's leading exponent of the Cape Breton fiddle style.

Buddy is also Judique's first Order of Canada recipient. Buddy sometimes played for waiting passengers, and occasionally when the tracks were clear, other station agents would phone in their good-nights and sometimes ask Buddy to play a tune.

To learn more about about Judique's many celebrated musicians who played throught the county in the age of rail and to discover upcoming talent, visit the Celtic Music Centre in Judique or: <http://celticmusic.com/>



His citation, in 2000, for the Order of Canada, reads "as ambassador of Canadian music and a mentor to many, he is leading a Gaelic renaissance in Canada and abroad."

Sketch for The Judique Flyer album by Anna Spyereck.



Wedding party at Judique station, 19--.

The station was a gathering place where people met to share news and comment on the world and also a place for departure and return of the young for work in the prarie harvest, hard-rock mining, on the lakeboats, finding employment in the Boston States or taking nurses' training on the mainland. The train conveyed the mails, precious Christmas orders from Eaton's or Simpson's, and currency to and from the banks and Credit Unions.



Text: Judique Flyer Trail Association
Photos: Chestico Museum Collection, Port Hood, NS and Gut of Canso Museum & Archives, Port Hastings
Photo restoration & layout: MV Design, www.wdmv.ca
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Hughie D. MacDonald, Long Point-first station operator at Judique railway station, circa 1902



Dan MacLellan, Angus MacEachern, Duncan Macinnis & Hughie T. MacDonnel