

The War Years



The Judique cenotaph, erected in 1948, honours our heroic veterans and war dead of 1914-18 & 1939-45.

Cadet Cindy Northen stands guard at a Remembrance Day service circa 1985. The Judique-Creignish Army Cadets celebrated 50 years of service in 2009.



Lieutenant Nursing Sisters Mary Gillies (Young), of Port Hood, [second from left in bottom photo, and second from right, in second row, in top photo] and Kaye Kennedy (Strickland), of Inverness, (fourth from right, in bottom photo, and third from right, in second row, in top photo) travelled on the Judique Flyer prior to being posted to field hospitals in Europe. These nurses were with the No. 2 Canadian General Hospital, Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (R.C.A.M.C.)

Medals issued to Lt. N/S Mary Gillies.



When local newspapers ran headlines that spoke of imminent war in the British Empire or beyond, our youth knew they would be the ones called upon to do the fighting. The Judique Flyer was the main transportation which took our young men and women to enlistment centers. There they signed up for the four major wars fought during the life of this railway. The Boer War (1899-1902) in South Africa was the first. Next came World War I (1914-18), then World War II (1939-45) and finally the Korean War (1950-53). Fully ten percent of our Inverness County population enlisted in both world wars.

When soldiers travelled home on leave, often after receiving news of a posting overseas, the trip was usually by rail. On the return journey their families would see them off at the station with a lump in their throat and a tear in their eye --- not knowing what the future held for them.

The military personnel often travelled home in groups. Their journey particularly in fall and winter would see them gathered around a coal burning stove in one of the cars. Here were told stories of tough military training and daring escapades, sometimes over a drink and occasionally with a soldier playing his fiddle.



Stoker Alexander Mac Donald (1918-1940) of Colindale died when the HMS Jervis Bay was torpedoed and sunk on May 5, 1940.



Wallace R. Mac Donald



Flight Sergeant Wallace R. MacDonald (1917-1943) of Port Hood was shot down over Holland and killed on May 13, 1943.

On a rare trip a comrade who had died or been killed during training exercises would be making his final journey home for burial in a local cemetery.

When fighting ceased and treaties were signed our military sons and daughters returned home on this same Judique Flyer to much relieved families.



Army recruits on military issued motorcycles



Cape Breton Highlanders World War I, 185th Battalion-Pipe Band. Piper "Black" Angus Mac Donald of Colindale stands second from left in back row.



Three World War I brothers: Private Oswin, Captain Angus L. and Sergeant John Colin MacDonald of Dunvegan and Port Hood. Sgt. John Colin was killed in action in August, 1918.

Roy MacEachern, from Inverness, who served with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battalion, was an extra in the movie 'A Bear Named Winnie'.



Archie MacDonald of Creignish



Front L-R Unknown, John Murdock MacLeod, Ralph MacIntosh
Back L-R Murdock MacLean, unknown, John C. MacDougall from Inverness



Text: John Gillies
Photos Chestico Museum collection, Port Hood, NS
Gut of Canso Museum & Inverness Miners Museum.
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Property of Inverness County Trans Canada Trail Project.



Inverness County soldier plays his fiddle while on home leave.