

THE BROKEN GROUND

The Rise and Fall of Inverness Town

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Note:

For the best learning experience,
please watch *The Broken Ground*
documentary film before starting
classroom lessons.

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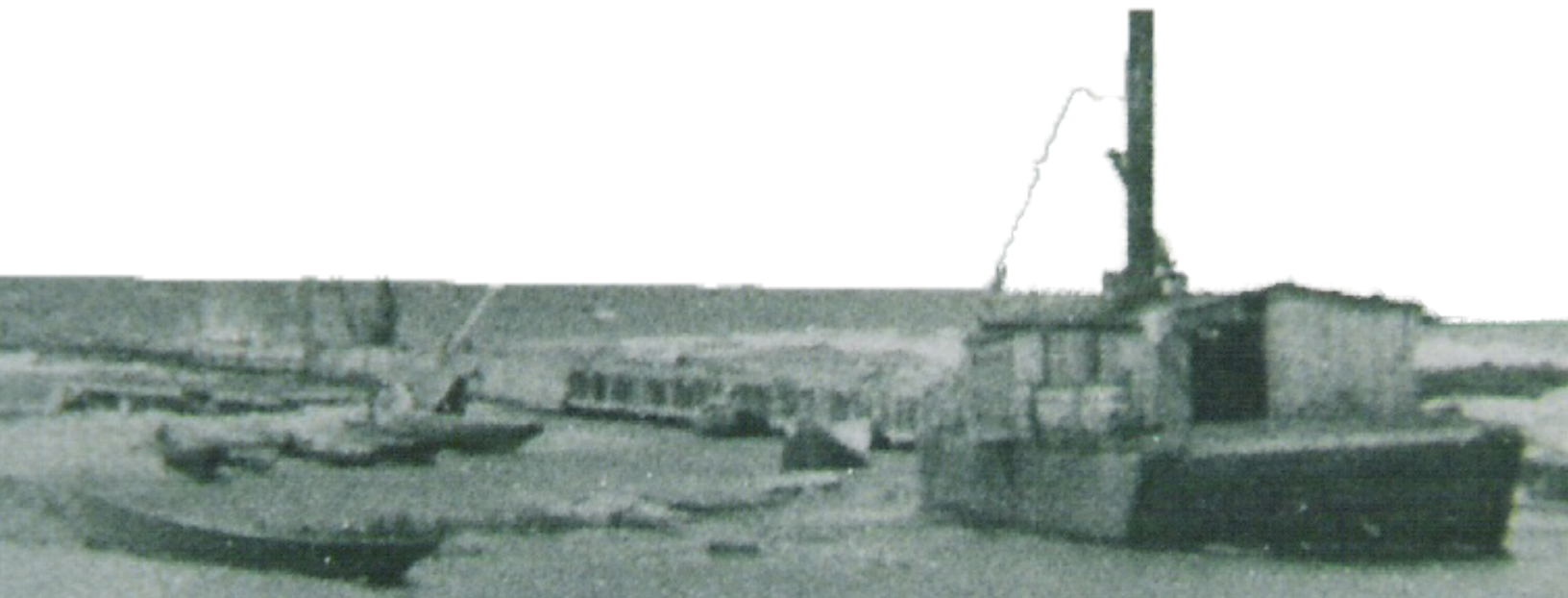
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Introduction

The evolutionary stages of Inverness were formulated through settlement by very few enterprising and adventurous individuals. Once established along the western coast of Cape Breton Island, other pioneers arrived and settled on the scattered clearings that made up the rugged geography. The immigration continued and the isolated settlements grew to communities that relied on the land and sea for survival.

In 1837, this area became known as Inverness County. The first indication that coal was in abundance was in 1863. The discovery caused a great deal of excitement. Some families used the coal for fuel but its main use was to generate heat for the local Blacksmith. It was not a feasible industry and interest was not such to warrant continued work. It wasn't until the arrival of two Moncton men, H.G. Wright and J.H. Ladd, that the first commercial shipments of coal were exported. Thus, initiating a new and legendary era for Inverness and its inhabitants.

I. The Dawn of Coal



The First Indication

The early history of Inverness was mainly agrarian in outlook. The people were satisfied with raising enough crops and animals for their own needs. Fishing areas off the coast abounded in potential catches to supplement a family's diet. They were aware of the presence of the black ore but did not take full advantage of it since wood was plentiful and cleaner. The little coal that was mined was mainly used for the local Blacksmith shop.

In 1863, John Beaton arrived from South West Mabou and purchased a farm at the Big River. He discovered the first regular seam of coal and although his work was crude, an excellent face of coal was exposed. The discovery caused a great deal of excitement. Prior to Beaton's discovery, the early settlers gathered coal with picks and shovels along Broad Cove Banks. John Beaton then sold his land to Rev. Hugh Ross, who started a small mine and went into production.

Rev. Hugh Ross' attempts to form a company ended in failure as he was known to many as a "fine talker that didn't excel in fruitful work." It was not until the arrival of two Moncton men, H.G. Wright and J.H. Ladd, that the first commercial shipments of coal were exported. This continued until 1880 when the wharf was destroyed in a major storm. The lack of facilities for high-quality coal was discouraging for all, though one key mining speculator named William Penn Hussey from Danvers, Massachusetts had his sights set to create tremendous change for the mining scene in the area.

An Industry Is Born

In the winter of 1884, William Huessey got an Act of Incorporation passed through the Legislature of Nova Scotia for the Broad Cove Coal Company Limited. Hussey began to purchase large tracts of land around his new mine and projected harbour. He then proceeded to build a narrow-gauge railway from the coal pits to the harbour, a distance of two miles. The mining industry in Inverness was taking form.

Hussey was determined to make the mines a success and hired close to fifty men from various regions of the county. Coal was taken from the mine, loaded into boxcars, and then pulled along the track to the shipping piers which could accommodate large steamers. At this point, the mine predicted they would ship 4,000 tons of coal to market per week. It was said that the Broad Cove Coal Company ranked among the richest mines in the world at the time.

As years passed, William Hussey withdrew from the operations in Inverness and sold the company. The estimated price tag for the Broad Cove Coal Company was \$3,600,000. Following the sale in 1889, the area had approximately 300 employees and residents. As the W.P. Hussey years closed, a new company titled the Inverness Railway and Coal Company was created. The guiding force being the renowned railway builders of Canada, MacKenzie and Mann, whose genius was attracting public money into their projects.

The Mass Extraction

As the coal seams began to produce large amounts of coal, two entrepreneurs, William MacKenzie and Donald Mann were busy devising a means of economically getting the black gold from Inverness to the harbor in Port Hastings.

Left in disarray was the mining venture - the Broad Cove Mining Company but due to the tenacity of William MacKenzie and Donald Mann they recouped the venture and moved forward. The year was 1900 and William Penn Hussey had vacated the area so with the subsidy of \$6,400 per mile from the Dominion government for the railway to be built from Point Tupper to the Harbor of Cheticamp and \$4,000.00 per mile from the Government of Nova Scotia and an additional \$2,000.00 per mile from the County of Inverness, which included the right of ways.

On June 15th 1901 the first passenger train for the newly minted Inverness Railway and Coal Company left Broad Cove Coal Mines for Port Hawkesbury. The Inverness Railway and Coal Company owned a rolling stock of seven baggage cars, two hundred 30-ton boxcars, 200, 30-ton gondolas, and 100, 30-ton flat cars. While MacKenzie and Mann were building their Inverness

Railway the mines were mostly idle but with the railway up and running their attention was drawn to the reason they built the Inverness Railway- to transport coal.

As the attention of the builders moved to mining coal, they opened a seven foot seam near the harbor that promised good soft coal. They now needed miners – and to house them, so the company contracted an Amherst firm, Rhodes and Curry to start the construction of 80 miners row homes which took on the name of the Red Rows and named Mac Kenzie and Mann Avenue. This was the first venture of subsidized housing since the rent was deducted from the miner pay checks.

Many residents worked as well as carpenters, electrical trades, suppliers of lumber and plumbers. Broad Cove Coal Mines was a boisterous, busy hub for the county and businesses began to sprout up to serve the needs of the miners and their families. The Coal Mines became a multi-national community based on coal. What remains of the Mac Kenzie and Mann era are the company houses which one by one become victims of the wrecking ball as they fall into disrepair. Another legacy is the Inverness station, which houses the Inverness Miners Museum on Lower Railway Street, on Station Street which is the last one standing that was built by William Mac Kenzie and Donald Mann.

Several nationalities moved into the community in search of work in the mines and some as shopkeepers to serve the needs of the growing population. Central Avenue moved from what is now Church St to its present location to serve the community. From one end of town to the other you could purchase groceries, furniture, liquor, have a meal, have a haircut, visit the undertaker or enjoy the bakery. The community was a boisterous and fascinating place with the residents enjoying employment and new housing.

By 1904 there were 482 men employed in the mine of a population of 3000 in the newly incorporated town of Inverness. The miners were paid \$1.25 per day and out of this salary deductions were made for the mine lawyer, the church, St.F.X. and the Dr. From miners interviewed later in life they seemed to enjoy the work, the camaraderie and the community. Like all communities built on a resource the industry was to fall on hard times. However, in 1904 the

mines were producing large amounts of coal and shipping 14 cars of coal per day to Port Hastings pier.

In 1905 the average production was 1200 tons per shift and by 1906 the mine had reached close to 3500 feet underground. The mine was now transporting the men to the various workings underground and by 1907 the Inverness mines had shipped some 124,960 tons of coal as compared to Port Hood's 24,274 tons. By 1909 the mine was 4415 feet underground and they required huge ventilation fans to supply air to the miners. The mines were in full production and there was ample work for the miners and plenty of places to spend the hard earned money. At one time Inverness boasted 40 bars. This may have been an exaggeration but liquor was in plenty of supply.

The miners enjoyed their relaxation whether it was a good competitive ball game, tennis on the clay courts or golf overlooking the ocean and life was good and it served as a prelude to the summer of discontent in 1909 when the militia was called in over the union dispute. Between 1911-1915 the annual production was staggering out of the No 1 and No.2 mines at 250,000 tons with 725 men employed within 70-hour weeks. It was the administrative decision that led to the Inverness Railway and Coal Company defaulting on the interest on their bonds forcing the company into receivership on July 1, 1915. Thus came an end to an era of prosperity for the small community of 3000 people as the Eastern Trust Company attempted to recoup money for their shareholders.

II. The Mines



No. 1 Mine

The No. 1 Mine was opened about 1899 by the Main Slope driven on the full pitch of the seam. According to the record presented by W.J. Dick in his report, the development of the Main Slope had reached below the No. 6 Level some 2,800 feet from the mouth of the slope by 1908. The dip at this point was 27 degrees. The coal was coming largely from workings located about one mile east of the slope. As the dip was increasing and a large portion of the coal was being hauled a considerable distance east of the Main Slope, the East Angle Slope was driven to improve haulage. Below No.9 Level, the dip increased to 40 degrees.

In 1915, No. 8 and No.9 East levels had reached the Plaster Fault where the coal was cut off. The Main Slope was bottomed at No.9 Level at which point the pitch was 40 degrees and the cover 1,600 feet.

No.6 West Level had run into faulted ground and dirty coal at a point some 2,500 feet west of the Main Slope. No.7 West Level was stopped for the same reason at a point about 1,800 feet west of the Main Slope.

Due to these conditions, the Company was forced into receivership in 1915. It was stated that mining operations were carried on under receiverships from 1915 to 1934, and an effort was made to overcome the problem of mining coal under conditions of increasing dip and heavy roof conditions. No. 9 West Level was extended from the Main Slope a distance of 4,00 feet in broken and faulted and dips in places exceeding 70 degrees. The East Angle Slope was extended to below No.11 Level and the coal mined to the eastern boundary at the Plaster Fault. The levels were also extended from the East Angle Slope to the Main Slope, a distance of 4,00 feet, where the dip increased to 65 degrees.

These operations were not successful and the receiver had to apply to the provincial government for assistance. From 1924 to 1933, the government guaranteed operations and, in December 1933, the provincial government took over full charge of operations.

Operations in No.1 Mine were discontinued on January 15, 1934, because the deputy inspector S.B. McNeil determined that a portion of the mine was unsafe. In his report, dated January 13, 1934, he said, "Many good reasons render this action necessary, the first of which is safety. The No.13 Angle Deep and No. 13 Level are continually closing and it seems impossible to keep them open with timber. Owing to the great pressure, the coal is ground to slack and must be sold for the price contained for slack. The pillar coal and no. 12 West and No. 12 East are also badly broken and over half of it is slack. I do not consider it safe, as a very slight bump would close No. 13 Level and Deep."

Following the closing of the deep workings, development was pushed in the West Angle Slope from 1934 to 1937, and practically all the coal came from this section. The slope was driven from No.4 Level to intersect the Main Slope at a point 400 feet from the portal and driven from No. 4 Level to the deep. In 1937, the slope had reached below No. 8 Level. Nos. 5,6, and 7 levels were driven west but, at 1,500 to 2,000 feet from the slope, water seepages were encountered on each level which forced the abandonment of the workings.

No. 8 and No.9 levels were started east and west from the West Angle Slope and these workings had to be abandoned on account of the coal seam being split by mudstone and the dip has increased to 65 degrees. A creep of major proportions closed West Angle Slope in November 1938 from No. 5 to No. 8 Levels. The West Angle Operations were abandoned in January 1939. The East Angle operations had been closed in 1934 and, therefore, all production from the lower levels of No.1 ceased. The mine was allowed to fill with water up to a predetermined level.

Any attempt to resume operations in the old deep portions of Mine No.1 is not feasible. The continuing effort of the Department of Mines to secure mine production from the upper levels of no. 1 Mine is recorded in the Annual Reports, from which the following facts are cited:

The mine operated throughout 1940, but the increasing thickness of the overlaying clay bands made it necessary to revise the method of mining. After much experimentation, a longwall was planned for No. 5 East Level. Equipment was purchased during the summer and the first cut was

made on this wall late in November. It was stated that if the longwall system were successful, additional walls would be started in the near future.

Although the mine operated steadily throughout 1941, there were increased losses resulting from the operation. A headway was driven from No. 3 Level, No.1 Mine to the surface where it was proposed to erect a Bankhead. This headway was to eliminate approximately 6,000 underground haulage and considerable maintenance cost. Workings off No. 3 East Level of Old No. 1 Mine were continued in 1943. On August 23rd, a portion of No. 3 East was sealed off on account of a fire.

No. 5 and No. 6 East Levels were advanced in 1944. Approximately 50,000 tons of mineable coal remained in this area of the mine. The coal preparation plant was improved by the installation of a vibrating screen and rearrangement of conveyors. Operations in 1945 were confined to work on No. 3 East Level and most of the available coal was extracted. The boiler plant was closed down and an electrically-driven hoist and compressor were installed.

This mine was closed on May 3, 1946, as all available coal that could be recovered economically by way of No. 1 Slope had been mined.

No. 2 Mine

This mine was opened about 1902 on the outcrop of the 7-Foot Seam to mine the coal immediately west of Big River. It was closed on December 31, 1904. From 1941 to 1945, the Rosebank No.1 Mine drew pillars in this mine.

No. 3 Mine

The original No. 3 Mine on the 7-Foot Seam was known as the Old Hussey Mine. It was opened on January 1, 1903, and closed in 1904. According to J.H. MacLean, the seam in the area was

about four feet thick and carried several small bands of the splint and carbonaceous shale with considerable iron pyrites and carbonate in the cleats. The record of operations in recent years as given in official annual reports is as follows:

In 1941, No. 3 Mine, formerly No. 3 Level of No. 1 Mine, reached the Plaster Fault and development was underway to tap the body of coal known to lie below the level and east of other old workings in No. 1 Mine.

A strike, starting July 8, 1942, closed the mine; it was re-opened on August 30th. The workings in Old No. 3 Mine were largely on the rise and were discontinued on account of the coal not being of merchantable quality. Slopes were driven from the No. 3 Level and coal was hauled on No. 3 Level a distance of 6,000 to the Main Slope where it was hoisted to the surface.

The Annual Report showed the amount of development done during 1943 but included no comment on the operating conditions and costs. Some remaining coal downdip of the old Inverness No. 3 Mine was mined by Angus MacLellan, who started to operate on a small scale in 1945.

No. 4 Mine

This mine was opened on the 13-Foot Seam which lies 300 feet above the 7-Foot Seam. The seam contains several clay partings which make operations expensive and also prevent the mining of clean coal.

The mine was operated in 1920 by slopes driven at an angle to the east of the dip and levels were driven at 500-foot intervals. This was operated intermittently during the receiverships. It was closed and placed on a caretaking basis June 8, 1921, and remained closed until October 25, 1924. Exploratory work continued intermittently from 1926 to 1932, and No. 3 and No. 4 levels were opened. Very little coal was mined during this period. The government guaranteed

operations to a limited extent during part of the period October 25, 1924, to December 14, 1933, at which time the government took over control and management of the property.

In 1934, it was decided to re-open No. 4 Mine and a rock tunnel was driven from the East Angle Slope of No. 1 Mine to connect with No. 4 Level in No. 4 Mine so as to provide haulage facilities through the East Angle Slope. The mine worked only intermittently from 1934 to 1937, on account of the heavy clay band in the seam. Experiments were carried on with various methods of mining, but with little success.

When operations in No. 1 Mine were curtailed, it was decided to give employment to more men in No. 4 Mine. The various mining difficulties on account of faults and clay bands were reported. In parts of the mine, the clay parting was more than 40 inches thick. Longwall was tried on No. 5 Level, but was not a success due to roof conditions and high sulphur in the top coal. Stone lenses occurred in the lower section of the seam, making it impossible to undercut in time to have the wall ready for operations to start on the loading shift. The high cost of upkeep of No. 5 Level, the cost of haulage and transfers to No. 5 Level and from there to the surface, on small output, made the operations impossible.

Owing to labour difficulties, the mine was idle part of the year in 1942. In a report dated April 14, 1942, Dr. Alan E. Cameron, then deputy minister of mines, gave the production from December 1, 1941, to March 31, 1942, as 16,338 tons, and the operating loss due to No. 4 Mine as \$33,194.15.

Dr. Cameron described very graphically the difficulty experienced in mining the 13-Foot Seam in No.4 Mine. This is relevant as it indicates the mining conditions that prevail in the 13-Foot Seam. The customary practice in the No. 4 Mine was to leave the top bench, which varied from 10 to 14 inches and had high ash and sulphur content. When high sulphur coal was left in the gob, it frequently caught fire and longwall sections of the No. 5 Level had to be sealed off on this account.

Below the rider coal, there was soft claystone that fell to the floor when the bottom bench was mined. When this falling stone did not exceed nine or ten inches, it was possible to stow it in the abandoned workings but, where the stone was of greater thickness, it had to be taken out of the mine. In many parts of the mine, the claystone was from two to four feet thick. The mining was carried on in the bench beneath this claystone and the coal measured from 3 feet 6 inches to 4 feet 6 inches in thickness.

Stone lenses occurred occasionally at floor level and these prevented undercutting at floor level. The floor was soft clay and this squeezed into roadways causing heaving of track and timber, resulting in high cost for maintenance.

Different methods of mining were tried under these difficult conditions of seam, roof, and floors, such as rooms across the pitch, rooms up the pitch, and shortwall and longwall mining. Efforts to support the claystone during the mining operation were not successful. It was difficult to produce clean coal due to the falling roof and the soft bottom. Claystone, splint coal, and high sulphur coal could not be kept out of the shipped product.

Longwall mining was attempted in 1935 and 1936, and again in 1940 and 1941. Due to heavy roof conditions, it was not feasible to keep the walls open.

Dr. Cameron concluded his report by saying, "It is the considered opinion of the chief inspector of mines, Mr. T.J. Casey, of the mine manager, Mr. W. Simpson, and myself that economical mining of merchantable coal from No. 4 Mine is not possible; losses will increase rather than decrease.

No. 5 Mine

This mine was opened in 1941 at Inverside to recover the small body of coal in the 13-Foot Seam between the east workings of No.4 Mine and the Plaster Fault. The geologic conditions are somewhat the same as existed in No. 4 Mine, but the clay parting under the Rider Seam has been

excessively thick and “washouts” have stopped mining at certain points. All in all, mining operations have been difficult and operating costs have been high due to the natural conditions and the fact that a large barrier had to be left between No. 4 and No. 5 mines on account of the impounded water in No. 4 Mine.

The record of No. 5 Mine, as given in the Annual Reports, may be summarized as follows: The mine was opened in 1941 with a production of 271 tons. Bankhead, hoist house, and washhouse were completed in 1941. Development of the mine was continued in 1942 and the slope was advanced 425 feet. The tonnage produced was 6,526 tons.

In 1943, the mine was further developed and additional equipment was installed. The slope was advanced 520 feet; No. 2 East Level advanced 740 feet; and No. 2 West, 288 feet. Production was 12,634 tons. Development continued in 1944 and an additional air compressor was installed. The Main Deep was advanced 575 feet and No. 1 and No. 2 levels East and West were advanced. Production was 22,822 tons.

Development was continued in 1945 and the slope length was advanced 775 feet to a total of 2,100 feet. Two sets of levels were driven east of the slope a total distance of 1,400 feet. Operations were by the room and pillar method and all production up to this time was confined to the east side of the slope. On the north side of the area, the Big River runs parallel with the direction of the slope and this prohibited development work on the north side until such time as a greater depth of cover was reached. A larger ventilating fan was installed. Production was 29,629 tons.

The Main Deeps were advanced 630 feet during 1946 and the Main and Counter levels, 1400 feet. A large fault was encountered on the Main Slope between No. 4 and No.5 landings. Bad roof conditions in the South levels slowed development work and curtailed production. A fan house of brick and steel construction was completed and a building to house first-aid equipment and colliery offices was being built. Production was 46,861 tons.

Several faults were encountered in the sinking during 1947; this slowed development work. The slow was 315 feet. Daily output was approximately 300 tons. On October 3rd, a smouldering fire, due to spontaneous combustion, was discovered in the old workings at the top of No. 1 Balance, No. 3 South Level. The area had to be sealed off. Production was 44,775 tons.

The Main Slope was extended 575 feet during 1948, making a total slope distance of 3,755 feet. As the slope advanced, the distance between the No. 4 Mine barrier to the west and the Plaster Fault on the east decreased, thus limiting the area of mineable coal. The slope, therefore, was curved to the west so that, as it passes below the lower east corner of the mine barrier, the future length of the East Levels may be increased, thus allowing a two-sided mine operation in place of the present one-sided working. Nos. 3, 4, and 5 levels were driven west toward the barrier to provide more working places. Production was 33,362 tons.

The Main Slope was advanced 860 feet in 1949. Nine hundred feet of the Main Slope was brushed and retimbered between No. 2 and No. 5 levels and the roadbed from No. 4 Level to the face of the sinking, a distance of about 2,000 feet, was relaid with heavy rails. The clay bands thickened from four feet to nine feet in parts of the Main Deep but, in the lower workings, decreased to six and one-half feet. An attempt was made to hold this clay and mine the four and one-half feet of coal only. Preparations were in progress to install a conveyor in No. 8 West Level. Preparations were also being made to install 2,300-volt power to replace the 550-volt system. Two 40-HP pumps were installed during the year. No. 7 East Level was advanced 275 feet until it reached a washed-out area. The level was advanced 50 feet into this washed-out area in the hope that the thickness of the clay would be reduced and the coal seam would be thicker; however, the coal continued at two feet. The distance of the Plaster Fault was estimated at 200 feet and it was decided to discontinue driving the level. No. 6 East Level was driven to the Plaster Fault. Nos. 3, 4 and 5 West levels were started but, owing to the thickness of the clay in Nos. 4 and 5 levels, it was necessary to stop these 200 feet west of the slope. Production was 31,140 tons.

The Annual Report for 1950 states that a high percentage of development work was necessary in order to change the system of mining to a longwall method. During the months of April to

September, the limited amount of screened coal produced in development had to be sold at a reduced price. The West Angle Deep was sunk 50 feet in order to reach the depth required for No. 9 West Level. The total slope distance from the face of the West Angle Deep to the surface was 4,300 feet. It was necessary to brush and retimber several hundred feet of the main slope and return airways. The height of clay on top of the coal continued at 80 inches to the point reached in the deep and the height of the coal seam was 50 inches.

At the close of the year in 1948, it was felt that the upper portion of the clay could be held by steel booming; this method was tried, but last year it was beginning to show weight and the booms had to be taken down and the places retimbered. Short uphill walls did not prove to be economical, owing to a large amount of clay that had to be handled. In September 1950, a longwall system commenced on 9 West Level and advanced 140 feet during the balance of the year. Production was 18,080 tons.

MacDonald No. 1 Mine

The Margaree Steamship Company, Ltd., began mining operations in 1943 on the pillars left in the old Inverness mine workings on the 7-Foot Seam. The mine is entered by way of Old No. 2 Slope, formerly operated by the Inverness Coal Company. The slope was advanced 350 feet and the West Level, 400 feet. Production was 1,452 tons.

In 1944, the slope was advanced 225 feet and West levels advanced 900 feet. Production was 6,574 tons. The Bankhead was enlarged in 1945 and a 40-HP electrically driven hoist was installed. Undercutting machines were installed and shaker conveyors with duckbills were to be installed soon. Production was 9,286 tons.

The Main Slope was advanced 400 feet during 1946. Two undercutting machines were in use and four duckbill loading units were ready to be put in operation when conditions warranted. Production was 17,002 tons.

In 1947, production was 16,657 tons. Pillars near the outcrop were mined. Coal was undercut by machines but handed loaded onto conveyors. In 1948, the slope was advanced 365 feet; No. 2 Level was advanced 800 feet and No. 3 Level, 365 feet. The room and pillar system was being used. Production was 30,867 tons. The estimated life of the operation is less than one year.

MacDonald No. 2 Mine

In 1947, the Margaree Steamship Company, Ltd., started opening a new mine on the 34-inch Seam about 500 yards northeast of old No. 4 Mine. The geologic interval between the two seams is about 265 feet. The mine was to be entered by a slope.

During the year 1948, the slope advanced 160 feet. A 25-HP electric hoist and a small fan with tubing were installed. Due to an excessive flow of water, this mine was temporarily idle, pending the arrival and installation of adequate pumping equipment. Production was 64 tons.

The Main Slope advanced 50 feet in 1949. Two new pumps were added but due to a great deal of water, there was considerable difficulty in advancing the slope. New equipment received, but not installed, included the following: one 50-HP coal cutter, one scraper loader hoist, and one electric tugger. Production was 451 tons.

The Annual Report for 1950 stated that the Main Slope was down 725 feet and the second slope, 150 feet. The slope was 10 feet wide and the bottom was taken to give a travelling height of seven feet. The flow of water through cracks in the roof amounted to 50 gallons per minute and there was much difficulty in maintaining the electric equipment in working condition. A mining plan was approved by the Department of Mines. Production was 313 tons.

MacDonald No. 3 Mine

Permission was granted in 1947 to the Margaree Steamship Company, Ltd., to re-open the old West Angle Slope of No. 1 Mine. This old slope had been abandoned some years ago due to a crush developing on the main roadway, closing off the lower workings. A new roadway was opened for the purpose of reclaiming some coal on the west side of the deep.

The Annual Report for 1948 stated that a temporary Bankhead was replaced by a new Bankhead, 110 feet long; it was ready for the installation of a new screening plan. A hoist building was erected and a hoist driven by a 75-HP motor was installed. The coal was cut by a Siskol. A new screen was put into operation early in 1949, also an additional Siskol coal cutter and one Goodman coal cutter. Shaker drive and pan line were transferred from No. 1 Mine to equip the new wall on No. 1 Level. The East Slope advanced 250 feet and the West Sinking advanced 80 feet. Production was 9,408 tons. In 1950, the production was 17, 507 tons. The estimated life of the operation is less than two years.

Campbell Mine

This mine, operated by Archibald J. Campbell produced from a small block of crop coal on the north side of the old slope of No. 4 Mine. After considerable cleaning and timbering were done on the old slope and a Bankhead erected, hoisting of coal was started in October 1944. Production for that year was 180 tons.

A small addition was built to the bankhead in 1945 and a new 200-HP electrically driven hoist was installed. An electrically driven compressor, having a capacity of 300 feet per minute, was installed. Production was 4,629 tons.

No extensive improvements were undertaken during 1946. The intake airway, which was partially blocked with a falling roof, was cleaned up and fans were installed on the surface. Production was 8, 449 tons.

Operations were continued throughout 1947. A timberman was killed by a fall of stone on the Main Deep while doing some repair work. Production was 6,627 tons. During 1948, the bankhead was enlarged and a new coal pock constructed. The coal was cut by a radial machine and loaded in boxes by hand. Production was 9,784. In 1949, the mine worked single shift, employing 15 men. The production was 7,813. During 1950, the production was 5,232 tons. The operation had a life of less than one year.

Rosebank Mines

From 1941 to 1946, Rosebank No. 1 Mine drew pillars from the old workings in the crop coal of the 7-Foot Seam of Inverness Mine No. 1. In 1943, the slope was advanced 150 feet and the shaft sank 55 feet. Production was 1,064 tons. In 1944, sinking was advanced 50 feet and the aircourse advanced 175 feet west. Production was 1,064 tons. In 1945, advanced work reached the old workings of No. 2 Slope, which was operated by the Inverness Coal Company many years ago. Production for 1945 was 2,411 tons.

The original Rosebank Mine (No.1) was closed in May 1946 due to all available coal being extracted and all the equipment was transferred to Rosebank Mine No. 2. Production for that year was 928 tons. Rosebank Mine No.2 also operated in the 7-Foot Seam. A shaft 82 feet in depth was completed during 1947 and a coal pocket of 80 tons capacity was erected on the bankhead. The coal was undercut with a Siskol machine and loaded by hand.

The development work in 1947 consisted of driving a pair of deeps a distance of 275 feet. Production was 1,926 tons.

The development work in 1948 consisted of driving a pair of deeps a distance of 900 feet. A new hoist was installed. Production was 3,999 tons. In 1949, two screens were installed at the surface plant. Production was 4,423 tons. The mine was entered by a shaft 80 feet deep and the airshaft of old No. 3 Mine served as an intake airway and second opening. In 1950 production was 5,640 tons. At the present rate of production, this operation had a life of about five years.

MacLellan Mine

This mine on the 7-foot Seam is situated in Inverside on the west bank of Big River about one mile from the Town of Inverness. Pillar coal left in the old workings of Inverness Mine was being removed in this operation which started in 1943. The slant was advanced 25 feet and production was 144 tons in 1943.

In 1944, the slant was advanced 79 feet and the air course, 164 feet. Production for that year was 777 tons. In 1945, the production was 2,399 tons and was disposed of locally. The main sinking was advanced 75 feet during the year; No. 2 Level, 700 feet. A 30-HP gasoline-driven hoist was installed and the Bankhead enlarged sufficiently for two new coal pockets. Production was 2,399 tons. In 1946, the depths were advanced 100 feet during the year. No. 3 and No. 4 levels were advanced 350 feet. Radial machines were used for undercutting and the coal was loaded by hand. Production was 2,676 tons.

The development work in 1947 consisted of advancing the Main Deep 110 feet. A new wash house was built during the year. Production was 2,981 tons. A new hoist was installed during 1948 and the bankhead was enlarged and strengthened. Due to a heavy feeder of water being encountered in No. 2 West, production was suspended for August and September while a dam was being constructed. Production was 2,064 tons. During 1949, the narrow work advanced a total distance of 600 feet. A new pump was installed and a screen was set up and other improvements made to the bankhead. Production was 1,607 tons. In 1950 the production was 1,857 tons. The life of the operation was estimated as less than two years.

III. The Workers



The Men of the Deep

In the dark and damp caverns 2500 feet below the earth's surface, coal miners were hard at work extracting the precious black ore. By 1904, the miners consisted of traditional Scots, Irish, French, Belgians, Italians, Russians and a dash of other nationalities. The miner, for the most part, was satisfied and enjoyed his work. Even though they seldom had the chance to enjoy fresh air, the sun, the sky, flowers and the gently rolling waves upon the sand; who continually put his life in jeopardy in his underground home of never-ending darkness, was a very special person. The miner would work six days per week to a total of seventy hours. After work, some miners found comfort in the local saloons, where one could sit and dispose of much of their \$1.25 per day salary.

The miner would often find himself protesting against unfair treatment and pay in the coal mines. As miners tried to unionize, they were met with opposition from the coal company. Even going as far as stripping some outspoken miners right to underground work. The protests were so heated that an army force was called in at the expense of the town. However, these forces were hardly needed and the strike ended with a severe economic impact on the miners that stood up to their oppressors.

The Children of the Pit

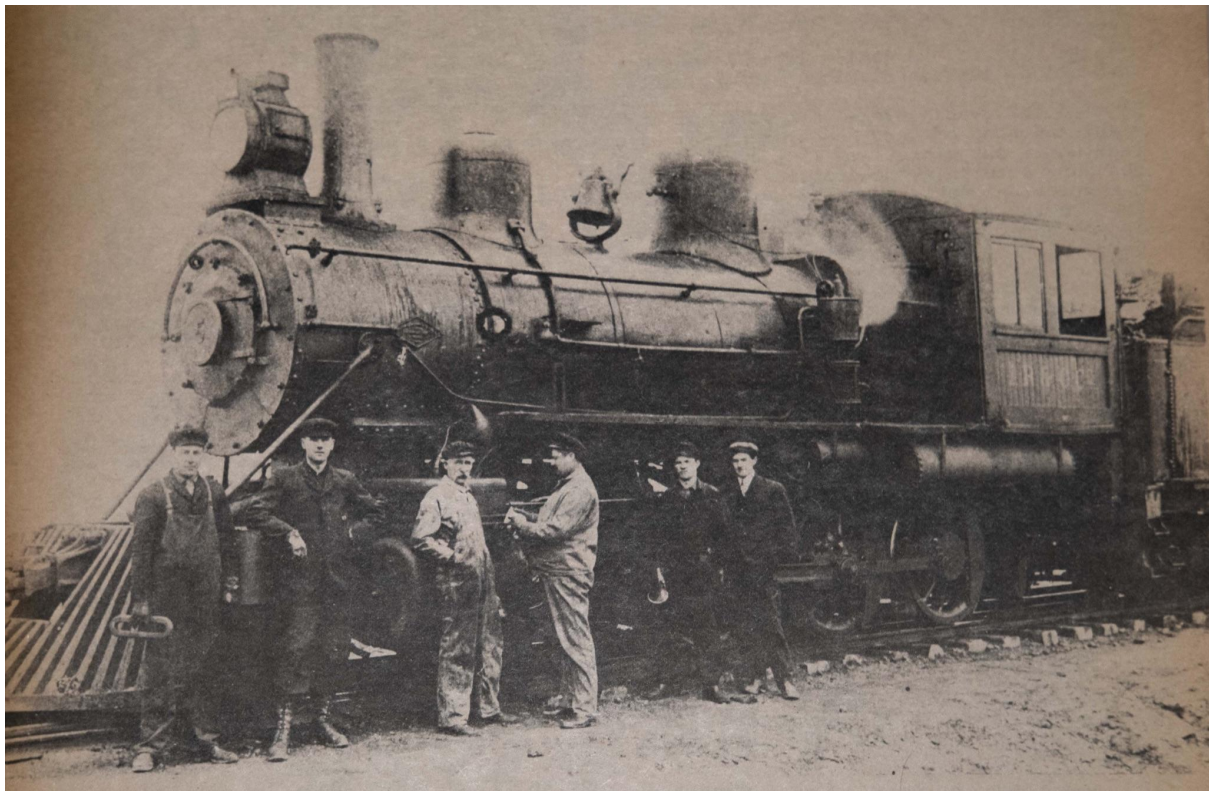
It was not uncommon for children, often at the age of 12-years-old to begin work in the mines. Their duties varied from working the fan houses, using their small frames to dig in hard-to-reach places and assisting with the pit ponies; a challenging job at any age. Often these brave young souls would climb the ladder as they grew and integrate into more traditional mining roles. Unlike today, there were no laws against youth working in such dangerous conditions.

As a result, a tragedy occurred on September 20, 1902, when a cable broke and released three tons of railing, which crushed and killed 16-year-old Angus Allan Kennedy. John Alex, brother to Angus Allan, told the story of how he tried to wake his younger brother twice that morning. On his third attempt, he said, "...if he does not get up, I will try no more." Angus Allan arose, had breakfast, and made his last seven-mile trek to Inverness for his first shift in the coal mines.

The Draegerman

It is without question that mining is an extremely dangerous occupation. The Draegermen were specialty-trained miners who would rescue miners in hazardous conditions after disasters and tragedy. They wore special breathing equipment from the company Draeger (hence Draegerman) to protect them from gas, smoke and other deadly chemicals. Becoming a Draegerman was a rigorous process, one needed to be a First Class Miner, between the ages of 20-45, in excellent health and operate well in teams of 4-5 people. These elite few often travelled across North America to participate in competitions and training seminars to advance their skills.

The Judique Flyer



The primary reason for the train was to serve the coal mines. According to History of Inverness County, the line was begun by William Penn Hussey in the late 1880s, as part of his Broad Cove Coal Co. The train carried coal to the pier at Port Hastings, and men served as trimmers as the

coal was loaded aboard vessels. Eventually, the trains would serve as passenger transportation, which led to Inverness being more accessible to the rest of the province.

The Judique Flyer was an important means for social and economic activity, which brought people from all walks of life together. Waiting at the station for the incoming trains was an opportunity to exchange views, play a game of cards and make long-lasting friendships.

Teenagers, in the 1920s and '30s, waited with anticipation for the weekend to wait for the trains in the wee hours of the morning. Economic activity flourished with the coming of *The Flyer*. It was a vehicle by which produce was brought to market. Up to ten to fifteen cans of cream were brought to market every Tuesday and Friday.

Life on The Flyer was characterized by hard work, adventure, excitement and good times. Men who worked on The Flyer knew and accepted the hardships of their profession. Lacking proper equipment of the modern age, these men used their intellect, practical wisdom and bare hands to overcome barriers. The Flyer was usually equipped with a staff composed of an engineer, a brakeman, fireman, conductor and section man. One can only imagine how dangerous this job was when one considers the fact that these men worked regardless of weather conditions. they worked in blizzards, torrential rainfalls, and below-freezing temperatures.

The inside of the trains was composed of large, comfortable seats. On either side of the coach was a potbelly stove fuelled by coal that smoked if improperly stoked. The common consensus of the people who rode the train was that it rattled, shook, and moved from side to side on its journey down the tracks at a slow 20 mph. The Judique Flyer was a symbol of an age when the quality and character of society was a closeness to a neighbour and community when individuals joined in celebrating their achievements and when life moved at a pace that could be enjoyed with a sense of fulfilment.

Remembering the *Judique Flyer*

Gussy Campbell: They called this train the “Judique Flyer.” Why it got that name I can’t tell you. Judique was noted for rough men, and they got their fame in Gloucester and all those fishing countries for scrapping and getting into rackets — fame for being powerful men, though I don’t think they were better than anyone else. But they got the name, the Judiquers. And I guess that’s why the train was christened the “Judique Flyer.”

Here we have just the one mainline from Port Hastings to Inverness, with sidings here and there. But listen, you can’t believe it. In the ‘forties, now, coming home at night, Judique Station was pretty much like Truro is today. You couldn’t move a round there with horses and wagons and the platform loaded, people coming to meet the ones coming on the train.

Hughie Dan MacIssac: Same thing here in Creignish. Crowd of young fellows gathering around mail time, train time. Many more people around then than there are today.

Gussy: The mines were going. The farmers had to get their products to the market. You take now at that time at every station there’d be 10 to 12 to 15 cans of cream. That went Tuesday and Friday. Then they were chipping calves away from here.

Hughie Dan: And there were oil cars on the trains, hauling in oil for the public — gasoline and all that.

Gussy: Then there’d be so much pit timber shipped. The pit timber was what the country fellows did. So much of the pit timber went to Sydney to the Dominion Coal Company. Some more went for the mine in Inverness. And we’d be down there in the ‘forties with our loads on the sleighs, waiting to see if the cars were going to come in for the lumber. And you’d be fighting for a car at the time.

Hughie Dan: Men did it all the way down the line till you got to Inverness. Well, they worked the mines.

Gussy: And then you waited for your returns. And you went to the store and you purchased your groceries on credit till the returns came for the pit timber. And very seldom you got money for it.

And then there were passengers. At that time there was no way of travelling, only by buggy -- so the train was an awful improvement. Sometimes I've seen them with 5 & 6 coaches on here, when I was a kid. And them loaded. You ought to be here Christmas Eve when the fellows would come with their loads of liquor. They went to Hawksbury to get their booze for Christmas. Coming off and fighting and everything else. That wasn't so hellish long ago.

Hughie Dan: That passenger train, she left Inverness in the morning about 7 o'clock and she went through on a timetable -- and she stopped at every station and she was dead on time.

Gussy: But at the last of it, it did take hours and hours to go from Inverness to Port Hastings. But not at first. You could set by it. We used to ship cream to the creamery at Port Hawksbury, and you had to be there at the station quarter to 8 or the train was gone.

(Were there any wrecks?)

Hughie Dan: There were a lot of train wrecks.

Gussy: She'd just go off the track. The worst wreck that I think was here was the time that Philpott was killed. The one at Judique Harbour. There was a washout. They were coming up and he was a strange driver on the road -- he wasn't used to this road -- the old drivers would know where the bad spots were. But this was after an awful store and he came along and didn't expect a washout and he plunged right into it. And the train toppled over on her side and it was a steam engine and he was scald to death.

Hughie Dan: It was between Christmas and New Year's, in the 'forties. I think it was Frank Philpott. Alex MacKinnon could tell you about that. I think this fellow was replacing him during the holidays.

Alex MacKinnon, Engineer: My father was the first driver that ever took an engine over the I&R road. He came to Cape Breton when they were building the railroad, with a company called MacKenzie & Mann. He ran a shovel and he ran an engine both. That was in 1899. His name was James MacKinnon. So he married here and he stayed here, at Inverness -- and then he bought a home here in Port Hastings. A shunter job opened, looking after all the freight between Inverness Junction and Point Tupper.

(Your father taught you to be a driver?)

Yes. But all the fellows that I fired for on the I&R, if you wanted to know anything you asked them -- and they knew an engine because they had to do most of their own repair work. I became a driver in 1934. There wasn't a special school. You studied it and they took you in and questioned you on different parts of the engine, air brake and all that.

(Were there ever people struck by the train?)

Oh yeah. I killed two. We had gone to Inverness with the plow. And we were hauling a freight of coal, coming back. So when we called, coming into Glencoe -- we had a cold day anyway and I had the window shut. So this little fellow was standing alongside the track, but he had his head down. So I waved. He had a black and white plaid jacket on. So he never picked his head up. I opened the window and looked back and I didn't see him. All I saw was two rubber boots. So I stopped right off the bat and I said to the fireman, fellow by the name of John Dan MacLean was firing for me -- "I think we got old Cameron." So we got off the engine, went back. It was another fellow. He was under the engine -- back about third or fourth car.

Now where he was standing, the two rubber boots were still standing right there.

Right together.

You couldn't place them any better alongside the tracks.

Hughie Dan MacIssac: I think it was the automobile that was the killer of the passenger train.

Gussy Campbell: I really think the first decline of the thing was when they took the mails off. That was in 1954 -- and she started going down then.

Hughie Dan: Instead of a passenger train, they had a jitney on here for awhile too. Just one car for passengers. It was not up-to-date.

Gussy: Then they gradually started cutting out the stations. Now there's no stations at all.

Not even in Inverness.

Humorous Railroad Stories

Life on the railroad was not all doom and gloom. There were humorous times, as well. There have been many funny stories told of the famous device for catching cows. This cow catcher was placed in front of the train. Cows roamed wherever there was grass, even if that grass was near or between the railway ties. Usually, these stubborn cows refused to move off the tracks with the sounding of the train whistle. Cows or no cows, The Flyer kept to its schedule.

A local resident, John Murdoch MacKinnon, of Kenloch, reflected on the first time the train passed by his home in 1901. "I had my barn near the tracks and the horses were grazing. Once the train came the horses would go away the hell in the woods. I remember that well. Once I got them back in the barn, the damn train would come back and the horses took off again in the woods, They stayed there 'til my father came back."

Nicknames

Nicknames were a means of limiting the oral and written message and quickly identifying the clans, families and individuals, particularly the Scottish and Irish. For instance, if one were speaking of the MacIsaac families' nicknames, it always facilitated the conversation. There were literally dozens of MacIsaac families and many with the first surname. A likely example was the

name Angus the Growler MacIsaac. He adopted his pseudonym by the reticence that became part of his presence. And then followed Tena the Growler, Billie the Growler and Bella the Growler. However, the eldest son, Archie, assumed the name of Archie the Heaver because of his lifelong kinship with the equine community. Alas, he had an appetite for old failing nags who always ended up with a bout of the heaves and the name seemed appropriate for community cataloguing.

Donald the Bear

Donald Finlay MacDonald was known as the Bear. The name suited. Although he was a kindly and friendly man, his approach was akin to the friendly bear protecting the cubs. And the name Donald Finlay MacDonald was so prevalent throughout Inverness Town and County that a pseudonym was critical to ease the burden of family clarity. Hence, the family was known as the Bears and each member bore the inscription - Donald the Bear, Jim Alex the Bear, Hughie the Bear, etc. Few people were aware of their last name because the term Bear was adopted by the entire community. Naturally the grandchildren were known as the Cubs and their children took on the moniker of Cubby. Probably no family in the entire County of Inverness despised the nickname Bear more than the Donald Finlays and, if it was ever mentioned in their company, a strong rebuke and the possibility of a slap in the face would result.

Fifty-Cent Dan

Dan Gillis lived on the outskirts of Inverness and was known by all as Fifty-Cent Dan. He achieved the moniker when, in desperation, he sent the customary 50 cents to the annals of Ste Anne to find a wife. There was a quick response — a French lady, Esmeralda, was available. Dan, a man of action and decision, got his friend, the town clerk of Inverness, Duncan MacIsaac, to write to his intended. He enclosed the sum of \$12 for train fare in the envelope and asked her to meet him at Port Hastings Junction. Since cameras were a luxury in those days, neither had photos to exchange. Dan came up with a brilliant idea that she should wear a red rose in her coat lapel and he would, likewise, wear a red carnation.

Dan took the *Judique Flyer* to meet his soon-to-be-betrothed, Esmeralda (Essie for short). He soon found out that Essie was French speaking and had not one word of English. This small annoyance did not distract Dan in his quest for a wife and he whisked Essie into the waiting *Judique Flyer* for its return to Inverness. The four-and-one-half-hour journey was made in complete silence. It took Dan almost seven years to teach Essie English. As a matter of fact, she was a fluent Gaelic scholar long before she attempted an English conversation.

At the end of the seven years, Dan discovered that Essie was not the bride that the good Ste. Anne promised. In fact, Essie (her real name Gabrielle) was a native of the Magdalen Islands who was on her way to attend a cousin's wedding in Arichat when she was abruptly swept off her feet by Dan. Essie picked up a rose from a lady vendor on a stopover in Truro and, since she had no place to put it, she conveniently pinned it to her new winter coat. As for the lady who Ste Anne dispatched from Quebec, she went to North Sydney, met a Newfoundlander who worked on the boats; they married, had a family of eight. As for Dan, there were no heirs and he spent his entire life praying to the Angel Gabriel for an heir.

IV. The Town



The Early Years

The first pioneers arrived in 1803 when the area was called Juste-au-Corps, the early history of Inverness was mainly agrarian in outlook, with people raising crops and animals for their own needs. The initial priority of the people was self-sufficiency and therefore one had to work long hours on the farm in order to make this a reality. The second movement of Scottish settlers established the community of Shean. They came in batches, independent, proud and sturdy as they made their homes beside the sea, ponds, rivers and streams in the valleys and glens and on the rolling hills. They experienced many hardships, but they didn't have to face culture shock.

Although the land was harsh, once they experienced this newfound freedom, the education of children and improving the community's way of life was a major concern. Several schools opened their doors and educated the young students. Meanwhile, as the discovery of coal was occurring throughout the land, it attracted various independent merchants and people from across Europe, which expanded the population, culture and viability of the community.

The mining operation continued throughout the years and more miners arrived to work underground. As a result, eighty double tenement houses were erected and referred to as Company Houses. All houses were painted red and the residential area of which miners lived became known as the Red Rows. The miner never found himself trapped in his house for too long. During their off-days, the miner would still be at work, building the town's many structures such as hospitals, churches and businesses for little to no pay.

Incorporation 1904

Previously named Broad Cove Shean, Sithean, Broad Cove Coal Mines, Loch Leven to name a few, it was decided a renaming of the area would occur after the economic mining boom. Since most of the citizens came from Scotland, the community chose to honour their homeland and selected Inverness as the official title. On April 6, 1904, the town was incorporated with a vote of

164-12. The new town celebrated with parades, concerts and much fanfare. The people took to the streets wearing their finest apparel.

Soon after, Inverness had a competent Fire Department, an impressive Federal Building which served as a Post Office, Custom House and Telegraph Office. It boasted six school buildings, two churches, and Gentlemen's Clubs. The three hotels were significant architectural structures. The town was a vibrant place and open for business. Inverness News and Mining and Shipping Gazette was the first newspaper of the area. The newspaper had a tendency to exaggerate the potential of the town, sold for two cents and was printed weekly.

With the increased production of the mines, the population of Inverness grew to nearly 5000 at its peak. In July, the mines would close down for a week to celebrate and rejuvenate. Athletic events were among the various coal mining companies and mines culminating in feasts, dances and renewed friendships. Everything one needed in life, such as healthcare, a variety of shops/services and employment could be found in Inverness.

Belgium Town

The largest single group of immigrants next to the Scots in Broad Cove Coal Mines were the Belgians. Due to the expansion of the mines and the demand for experienced miners, Alex Glabais Sr. went to Belgium and recruited experienced miners to come to the fledgling community. Between 1903-1904, 250 families came to the Mines to establish a community within a community. Like all mass migrations, the Belgians had a tendency to settle together to protect their culture, religion and music.

Their settlement became known locally as Belgium Town, an area on top of Forest St., a few houses below the present day Dr. Bernie MacLean Cultural and Recreational Center. The Belgium miners were hard workers and did well in the fast paced Number One Mine. Very musical, the miners comprised their own band and took part in parades and social functions in

the community. On the corner of Forest St. and Joe's Lane stood the Belgium Hall that was overseen by a committee from the Belgium community, built by them and maintained by them. Every Saturday night the band tuned their instruments and lively dances would take place and would be enjoyed by all of the residents. The Belgians that came over were trained miners and craftsmen who contributed to the busy community. According to Arthur LeMal, a Belgian descendent, the ten cent dances became very popular and began to attract leary Scots who would overdo it on the gilleck and begin to pick fights, accusing the Belgians of taking the Scots jobs.

This became the norm every Saturday night until one Saturday night the fighting was especially intense with doors pulled off hinges, windows broken and the final indignity, the piano smashed. After a meeting of the hall committee the next day the hall was boarded up bringing an era to an end. It never reopened, depriving the community of a place to gather socially and musically. As the fortunes of the mines began to wane in the 1930's many miners moved in search of gainful work to B.C. to Joggins, NS, as well as Ontario while some returned to Belgium.

According to Arthur LeMal, his parents packed up their family and went back home to their native soil but were treated badly for leaving for Canada and were shunned so they returned back to Cape Breton. That was a major ordeal to undertake with children by train and an arduous journey by boat. When the Belgians arrived they were shunned by the Scots who formed the larger part of the population. According to Mary Ann Monnon in her essay, MY BELGIAN CONNECTION, the Belgians could not speak English well. Their native languages were French, Flemish and Walloon.

But this improved in time. The other problem they encountered was the community thought they were transient and not going to stay long term. Like any large workforce there is an element of transience. The first Belgians to arrive in Cape Breton were enticed by the Dominion Coal Company in 1880 and they arrived from Hainaut. This company operated mines in Glace Bay, Dominion and Reserve Mines. Dissatisfied with wages and living conditions they had to endure while employed by the Dominion Coal Company they pulled up stakes and sought employment in the smaller mines in Cape Breton namely Inverness and moving then to Stellarton and Pictou.

As the mining jobs became marginalized by strikes and lost work the productivity suffered and many Belgium families became Inverness entrepreneurs, thus adding to the multi cultural facet in Inverness. Joe van Volsen, owned and operated the first ice cream wagon in Inverness according to the recollections of Mary Ann Monnon. On the corner of Central Avenue and Upper Railway Street was the Monnon Barber Shop and Hair Salon operated by Joe and Melvina Monnon for many years.

Like all nationalities some put down roots in their new home and some wanted more adventure and better working conditions. Those Belgians that remained in the community saw it incorporated with great fanfare and like all other families celebrated weddings, birthdays , funerals and new births. They have become immersed in the community through marriage and have made Inverness prouder by their presence. In conversation with Mrs. Adelaide MacLellan Burney she recounted families that lived on Forest Street that brought skills with them from Belgium and the sense of community that was experienced in Belgium Town. Names like the Burneys, Quigleys, Glabais, Monnon, vanVolson and LeMals as well as the Morets, Vandenburgs, all live and remain in the community while the Corbishers, Vanden Brookes and Shoits are names not recognizable except for family connections.

Inverness was a multi- national workplace with Scots, Irish, Italians, Slovaks, Belgians, Russians eeking out a living from the black gold. Many of these workers left when the mines started to fail and trekked to British Columbia, Pennsylvania, Ontario and mainland Nova Scotia.

One interview recollected a group of 48 Belgians arriving at Pier 21 in 1903 or 1904 and taking a train to the end of the line in Orangedale and setting out on foot-men, women, children and babies to Inverness. As darkness began to loom the babies were crying from hunger. At this point they had reached Skye Glen and went up to a farm and knocked on the door and the lady of the house gave them milk for the babies, fed them all and put them to sleep in the barn and the rest in the house. In the morning, fed them all and away they set foot for Inverness. True hospitality at its best and this is how the communities grew.

Domestic Life

The following quotes are from residents of Inverness during the mining era. The discussions below recount daily life, living in the company houses and more in the early 20th century...

The Company House

“You had a single, the basic house was half a double house and the basic share of that was four rooms, two up and two down and the bedroom had to be shared by both boys and girls and they all seemed to survive very well. The typical house had running water and electricity. We had no water meters, no electric meters, no gas meters. The rent you paid included the electricity but the electricity was fairly limited to 15 amp service.” - Mr. S, born 1920

Childhood

“My memories of my childhood were very pleasant. We didn’t have toys that children these days have. We had to find our own games and ways of entertaining ourselves. I can remember my father Christmas bought me a doll, I thought that was just wonderful. All we got was one doll. These days everybody gets 10 or 15 different things for Christmas.” Mrs. R., born 1914

Cuisine

“We were poor but we had enough to eat. My mother used to make bread. And there was this woman who used to bring and sell homemade butter and fresh eggs from the farm every week with her little one-horse buggy. There was a farm and once in a while, they used to kill to cut the meat down into thin pieces and layer it with meat, bay leaves and all kinds of spices, salt and pepper and then another layer of meat. So many layers until it came so high and then they used to put a heavy stone to weigh down the meat.” - Mrs. F, born 1915

Firsts for Inverness Town

First named Sithean (a Gaelic word meaning the land of the fairies, then called Loch Leven and Broad Cove Shean prior to the arrival of W.P. Hussey), the name was changed to Broad Cove Coal Mines and later to Inverness by the mine manager of MacKenzie and Mann, J.L. Brass in 1901.

First Settlers - Angus and Donald MacIsaac (1803) not related.

First discovery of coal for the community - by John Beaton (Red) in 1863.

First coal lease - McCully and Blanchard (1865).

First Industrialist - William Penn Hussey (1888-1899) and Mine Manager

First Mayor - Dan Rory MacLean (1904)

First Council - James MacIsaac, Donald MacLeod, Hugh G. Cameron, John J. Ranking, John E. Beaton, Archie J. MacIsaac. First Town Clerk & Treasurer - William D. Lawrence. First Stipendiary Magistrate and Solicitor - Frank MacEachern. First Chief of Police - A.D. Fraser

First Businessman - Donald E. MacKay who operated a sawmill, grist mill, and carding mill in 1885.

Other Businessmen: Brine and MacIsaac, George MacLeod, John L.D. Cameron, Lauchie MacEachern, Howard Smith, George Rhy, Donald MacLeod & Sons, Jack Quigley, J.B. Henderson, John MacFarlane, Bliss MacNutt.

First Drug Store - Dr. Charles MacMillan

First Hotel - Grand Central (Alexander MacInnis) 1902: other included The Inverness (J.H. Jamieson & Dan Coady), The Imperial (L.J. MacEachern), The Queen (A.J. Campbell).

First Fire Chief - Alexander MacInnis.

First Fire Horse - “Big Sam” handled by Pat Hannigan and Pat Romard.

First Boarding House - MacKay House Corner (1890) John G. MacKay, Manager.

First Livery Stable - operated by Lauch Rory MacNeil, then by John E. Beaton and A.J. Campbell.

First Coal Company - Broad Cove Coal Company (1894)

First Commercial Railroad - Built by MacKenzie & Mann, July 15, 1901.

First Government Building - Old Post Office built 1906 and served as Post Office, Customs House, and Government Telegraph Office.

First Newspaper - “The Inverness News” August 4, 1904. The first edition carried a cover page story on the Husseys. The paper was published by A.S. MacAdam of Sydney.

First School - Wright’s School Section (Corner).

First Teachers - Archie N. MacLellan and Alex S. MacLellan.

First Teacher in Inverness Proper - Annie Delehanty (Mrs. D.A. MacIsaac who taught in the Salvation Army Hall (1903-04) with an enrollment of 200). Rose MacKay acted as an assistant.

First Public School - The Inverness Academy (1904). This school was built by Black and Adams for \$2,750.

First Principal - M.S. Munro.

First Building of Holy Family School - built in December 1904 under the direction of the Provincial Superior of the Congregation of Notre Dame - Sister St. John of the Cenacle.

First Teacher Sister - Sister St. John of the Cenacle.

First Mother Superior - Sister St. Mary Georgina.

First Convent - Holy Family built in 1909

First Resident Parish Priest - Fr. Alex L. MacDonald - December 8, 1906

First Resident Minister of St. Matthew's Church - Rev. J.W.A. Nicholson, (Jan. 18, 1906)

First Presbyterian Pastor - Rev. Donald MacDonald

First Doctors - Angus MacLennan, Charles MacMillian, Dougall J. MacMaster, T. Howard MacDonald, Ronald St. John MacDonald, James A. Proudfoot.

First Inverness County Memorial Hospital opened on December 7, 1923.

First St. Mary's Hospital opened May 24, 1925.

First Bank - Union Bank of Halifax, February 14, 1901 (opened at the Corner in the store of John C. MacKay). The first manager was James MacLean of Port Hood.

First Professional Photographer - Ernest Hatt.

First R.C.M.P. officers - Constables Frizzell and Newton.

The Shean Monument



Hugging the western coast of Inverness, just above the main beach parking lot lies the Shean Cemetery, the resting place of our first settlers and others who came to our shores. As fall approaches and the vegetation loses its life stand back and you can see the undulating mounds on the hill that signify the graves of Allan MacIsaac, Mary {MacDonald} MacIsaac, Angus MacIsaac, Catherine {Mac Pherson} MacIsaac, James MacIsaac, and other passing souls.

The cairn was dedicated on July 27, 1991 to mark the final resting place of some of some of our pioneer settlers and the arrival of the Highland Scots to our shores. The building of the cairn was initiated by the Inverness Historical Society and the descendants of Allan and Mary {MacDonald} MacIsaac and Angus and Catherine {MacPherson} MacIsaac, many of whom still reside in the area.

The Miners' Memorial



Beside the Inverness Miners Museum on Station Street was erected a monument to honor those hard-working men who lost their lives while working to support their families and create an internationally renowned community of 3000 people. The casualties occurred between 1902- 1947 in the Inverness Coal Field. The names appear on the monument in the order in which they were killed in the official documents. Of note is the first casualty - Angus Allan Kennedy who was working his first shift in the coal mine at the age of 16.