

PICTOU COUNTY ROOTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

June 2026 Volume I Issue IV

UPCOMING DATES

The Monthly Meeting of the Pictou County Roots Society will be Wednesday, June, 2026, at the temporary location of the New Glasgow Library. We will meet in the Community Room at 2pm. Barry MacKenzie of the Antigonish Heritage Museum (Train Station) will be the speaker.

Wednesday, July 8th, 2026 – Monthly Meeting of the Pictou County Roots Society

July 18 - Digitization Lab

Aug 8 – Clyde MacDonald's book launch

Aug 13-16 is Festival of the Tartans

Aug 22 is Heritage Fair

Aug 29 is Matthew Moat's talk



PICTOU COUNTY ROOTS UPDATE

The **Pictou County Roots Society** presents

Barry MacKenzie

Curator, Antigonish Heritage Museum



"Resources & Roots: A Guide to Materials held by the Antigonish Heritage Museum"



WEDNESDAY JUNE 10, 2026 (2 P.M.) AT THE NEW GLASGOW LIBRARY

 610 East River Road (Aberdeen Business Centre), New Glasgow, N.S. | All are welcome to attend! Visit us at www.pictoucountyroots.ca



We would like to hear from you 😊

We have been working on filling our calendar with guest speakers for our monthly meetings, suggestions are encouraged to keep up momentum!

Q. Send your questions & interesting finds, articles, etc to eacoadyDNA@yahoo.com to be included in future editions

Money doesn't grow on trees, but ancestors do.

History of Moose River & Woodfield (compiled 1967)

Of course, the first inhabitants of my community were the Indians who were of the Micmac tribe. The Indians last lived in Woodfield only about 30 years ago. The first white settlers to arrive were Donald Campell, John Munro and Moose Fraser. They arrived in the year 1820.

The post office in Moose River was run by 3 generations of John Munroes' / The first post office in Woodfield was run by James MacLeod. This property is now owned by Dan MacKinnon. This was around 1885-1906. Next, it was run by Cumming MacDonald until the present post office which is in Merigomish. The first school in Moose River burnt in the 1890's. The next school still standing, but not in use was built directly after the old one burnt.

The Moose River School is not in use today. The students attend Blue Mountain and Woodfield schools. The property now owned by John Patterson. Before that, school was held in the house owned by William MacKinnon around 1870. The enrolment in Woodfield school is 9 pupils, which come from 4 families. The first school in Moose River burnt through carelessness of the teacher. The teacher always saved the ashes, as they were used for fertilizer and they were kept in a wooden box in the school room, and thus the fire developed from this.

INDUSTRIES: The first saw mill in this area was owned by Neil MacLaren around 1870. It was on the farm which is now owned by Neils' great grandson, Donald O'Brien. This mill was run by water power. There was a saw mill owned by J. J. Irvine which was run by steam power. It was on the property now owned by Lester MacDonald. It was in operation around 1920. The last saw mill was owned by Lester Anderson who also operated it and this was around 1958 to 1962. Other industries include lumbering and small farms. Most of the people work either in New Glasgow or somewhere in that vicinity.

The first Blacksmiths' shop was on the farm now owned by Dan Chisholm, Moose River. The original owner was Robert Chisholm who was Dan Chisholms' father. The building still standing but not in use. This was around 1875.

MODERN AGE MOVES IN: Telephone came through around 1904. The first person to own a telephone was Robert Dan Chisholm. Electricity was installed in May 1948. The first car in Moose River was owned by John D. MacLaren. The second car was owned by Dan Chisholm, two days later. The kind was a model T Ford. I guess everybody had to keep up with the Jones' then too! The first car in Woodfield was owned by Dan MacKinnon. The first owners of cars bought their gas in New Glasgow until a station was opened in Blue Mountain owned by William MacDougall. The pavement came though Moose River in 1966. Although there is no pavement in Woodfield, Plans are being made to do so. The Rural Route came through in 1928. It was operated by Dan MacKinnon. They used horse and sleigh in the winter and car in the summer.

STORES ETC: The first store started was in 1936, operated by Mrs. Dan Chisholm. It was operated for 24 years and was closed in 1960. The first customers were in the morning Geordy Smith from Barneys River, who

bought a pound of tea. In the evening Mrs. Robert Dan Chisholm came to the store. The only other store was operated in 1963 for a year by John Patterson. The only cast station and still in operation was built in 1931. It was there until the next one was built in 1949. It is owned by Judson MacLean and his son Gerald. The nearest store now is in Blue Mountain which is three miles away. There was a shoe maker named Donald Munro, in Moose River around 1870, who lived on a farm which was in back of the Moose River School.

RELIGION, ETC: There is no church in Moose River or Woodfield but most people attended Knox Presbyterian Church in Blue Mountain. Some also attended Garden of Eden church and some attended church in New Glasgow. One of the first persons buried in the Moose River Cemetery was Margery Campbell, mother of Dan Chisholm. She lost her live giving birth to Mr. Chisholm! Another of the first to be buried there was a teenage Campbell girl.

OLDEST & YOUNGEST PEOPLE ETC: The oldest person now living in Moose River is Dan Chisholm who is 86. In Woodfield the oldest person is Mrs. Robert Dan Chisholm who is in her 90th year. The youngest person in Woodfield is Lorna Jane Fraser who is 4 months. The youngest person in Moose River is Brenton Cameron who is 1 ½ years. The oldest farms are the property of Johnny Munro now owned by Robert MacLaren in Moose River. Also, Alex Chisholm's farm now owned by Lowell MacDonald who raised blueberries on the farm. The oldest farms in Woodfield was owned by John MacKinnon and is now owned by Fred MacKinnon, the original house is still standing.

MISCELLANEOUS: Although it is nothing to brag about, the first murder in Pictou County occurred in Moose River. The murderer MacFaggen kidded for money. Kerr, the victim, had \$80.00 on him at the time of the murder. MacFaggen was tried and hung in Pictou for his crime. As legend goes, it was a cold day and the hanging took place 2 hours earlier than it was supposed to because MacFaggen said he was cold and to hurry up and get it over with. Moose River was so named because the first settler was Moose Fraser therefore this is how the name is derived. Woodfield was so named because when the first school was built it was surrounded by trees and fields and was thus named Woodfield.

The preceding information was given by Dan C. Chisholm who died in the year of 1972. This information was typed by Debbie A. Cameron in the year of 1976.

Article came from the personal collection of Jessie MacInnis. Stapled to the front was a letter from:

The Nova Scotia Hospital for Insane. Halifax, April 1st 1878.

This is to certify that this Mary McMillan has been employed for the past fifteen months at the Nova Scotia Hospital for the Insane. Her attention to duty and her industrious habits have secured her early promotion to the office of Attendant. She has proved herself honest, efficient and kind hearted, and has won the good will of the patients committed to her care.

[Signed] James R. DeWolfich (sp)
Superintendent

PAST FORWARD

Stories that shaped NOVA SCOTIA

Discover the events that shaped Nova Scotia's history at **Past Forward**: a summer 4-week speaker series. Our guests are experts in their fields and have unique insights to share. All are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be provided. Need transportation? Let us know! Call us at 902-485-5021 to arrange.

Location: Pictou Library, 99 Water Street, Pictou, Nova Scotia

Schedule, speakers, and topics: (please note *start times*)



TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026 — 6:00 P.M.

A.J.B. JOHNSTON • Parks Canada (ret.), Nova Scotia

"French and Acadians in 18th-Century Nova Scotia: Upheaval and Beyond"



TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2026 — 6:00 P.M.

ADAM JORTNER • Auburn University, Alabama

"Nova Scotia's 'No': Rejecting the American Revolution, 1775-1781"



TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2026 — 11:00 A.M.

JAMES LEES • Dominion Historical Consulting Ltd., Nova Scotia

"Sap and Sea Power: Nova Scotia, Tar-Making, and the Naval Stores Industry in the Long 18th-Century"



TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026 — 6:00 P.M.

HILARY DODA • Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia

"Fashioning Acadians: Clothing and Cultural Identity Before 1755"

This series is funded by the Aberdeen Health Foundation and presented in partnership with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library.



Unable to attend a talk in-person? You can watch live on ZOOM.

Email pictou@parl.ns.ca for a streaming link.



"VIEW of HALIFAX from GEORGES ISLAND." [April 29 1801.] British Library: Maps K.Top.119.79a.

Genealogy & Library Update



Heritage Room Updates



Library Events:

The library is hosting a Regency-era tea on June 20th, based on the Bridgerton novels by Julia Quinn. This is a free event, but registration is required to give us an idea of numbers for food/tea (talk to Susan or call the library to register).

The Digitization Lab will take place on July 18th at 11am in the Heritage Room. We will be offering to scan photos/documents, and convert VHS tapes to a digital file.

We are looking for participants for the Heritage Alive fair. Anyone who wants to share their family history and set up a display (photos, family tree, newspaper articles, etc.) can talk to Susan or email at sparker@parl.ns.ca. The fair will be from 11am-2pm on August 22nd, with a BBQ outside and tables with displays throughout the library.

Genealogy Updates:

May was mainly requests for images and baptism records for Americans. One request asked for information on the Douglas/Harris family of Caribou Island and Pictou (John Douglas and Margaret Harris).