



When your parents were little boys and girls, they lived in these beautiful communities surrounding our school, Riverside. These communities had many people living there each having a store, a church and a one room school. If you were to travel down any of these roads you would see children outside playing after their household chores were completed.

Let's start by visiting the community of Bateston.

BATESTON

Driving along the Main-a-Dieu Road you will pass through Catalone and will soon come to Bateston. Bateston is a small community on the south side of the Mira Bay. It is named after the Bates family who live there. Mark Bates arrived from Ireland in the early 1800s and his descendants can still be found here.

Originally there were only a few homes before the flashing light in Bateston. Today, many homes have been built along the Main-A-Dieu Road into Bateston. These include: Spawn, Lahey, Sharpe, Bates, Spencer, Campbell, MacLeod, Kennedy, to name a few.

Along the highway here you will come to the site of the original on school house. (1) Pat Bates was the janitor at age 11. It was a one room school with a panelled truck for a bus, for 10-12 kids. The bus driver was Pat O'Neil.

In the 1970s a small canteen, owned and operated by Walter Hewak, was also located in this area. (2)

Continuing on the road you come to the District 14 Fire Department (3), founded in 1977. The year after the big fire. The present chief is Kelly Bates. There are 25 active members at this time.

Just past the Fire Department, you will come to the road leading to the wind turbine.(4) These huge "fans", can be seen from miles away. It is part of the new environmental project to make clean electricity.

****Please place #1,2,3, and 4 on their proper places now****

Just down the road you come to the flashing light. This light was installed in the 1980s, as there were several accidents at this site. (5) We will make a short detour left up Mira Bay Drive, known to locals as Boone's Road. The Bates, Boone, and Kennedy families lived on the road for many years. Most of these families fished along the Mira Bay, which is just below the road on the right hand side. In years gone by, boats would have been kept in MacKeigan's Pond, just up the road in Catalone Gut, Jim MacInnis ran a shack here to buy lobsters. Today, most boats are kept in Main-A-Dieu.

On the left we come to the Bateson Athletic Club, a community center used for dances, suppers, and a variety of events. (6)

Interview: Pat Bates

Just past the club you come to Joe Kennedy's home, where he operated a small store for a period of time. (7)

As you drive along you come to Buckley's Beach, at Catalone Gut, where the families often had fireworks on the Labour Day weekend.

****Please place #5, 6 and 7 on their proper places now****

Coming back to the flashing light and continuing down the road, it opens to the ocean once again with homes of the descendants of the Mullins, O'Neil, Bates, Lahey, Wilcox, and Ward families.

On the right we find the home of Leo Mullins, who ran a bus service in the early years. Most people would travel to Glace Bay for business or to work at fish plants in Louisbourg. Leo Mullins and formerly his mother, Elizabeth, ran the post office and a small store until the early 1970s. His wife, Alice Mullins, operated it after that until it closed. Leo also owned a hen farm. (8)

On the left was the home of Pat O'Neil, a bus driver in early days, in Bateston and later in Main-A-Dieu. He would have driven Mrs. Lahey to Main-A-Dieu High School.

In 2000, the first "Polar Bear Dip" was held behind Rob O'Neil's house at Lib's Beach. It lasted 10 years. (9)

Just past here you would come to Vince O'Neil's store which was a small corner store selling general merchandise.(10) On the left, you will also see the huge metal fishing building owned by Jay MacDonald. This style of building has replaced smaller fishing sheds.

A short way down the road we come to a property known as Berl Ives. This was a property bought and still owned by the family of Berl Ives, a famous folk singer and actor of the 50's and 60's. It has always been beautiful ocean front land where crowds of young people gathered to have bonfires and party. (11)

Across the road on the right is Quarry's Pond used for skating, parties and bonfires.

****Please place #8,9,10 and 11 on their proper places now****

Just down the highway we come to the former Rays Canteen, operated by Raymond Lahey and his family. It was famous for homemade fries. It was a gathering hot spot for teenagers in the 1960's as it had a jukebox for dancing, slot machines and delicious hamburger and food. (12)

Next we come to the Ward family land. On the left is the home of Tom Ward, a former bus driver at Riverside. Retired, he now runs a small repair shop.

Just past Wards, on the right is Clarkes Road. Now a 4 wheeler trail, in the 1940's it was used as a road to bring supplies from Louisbourg to farms; and also to cut and deliver pulp. (13)

As we leave Bateston we come to the Martell homes. This is the home of the famous Martell Sisters, owners of Michique Handbags. Michelle and Monique, design purses which are sold worldwide and have been shown even at the Oscars. (14) Leaving Bateston the road continues to Main-a-Dieu.

****Please place #12, 13 and 14 on their proper places now****

MAIN-A- DIEU

As we follow the road past Bateston we come to Long Site, an obvious name, a part of the road often used for racing in the early days. On the site is Lover's Lane, a spot known to most young lovers in early years.

This leads into the community of Main-a-Dieu. On the outskirts we now find homes owned by the Mailman, Timmons, Campbell, and Spencer families to name a few. We come to the home of Tom and Lucille Ley who owned and operated Ley Kennels (15), for many years. They raised Labrador Retrievers and Shih tzus. Tom also raised silver foxes at the Silverlee Fox Ranch in the 1980s.

On the left of the highway you will find the Anglican Cemetery. This cemetery is still cared for by their parish even though there is no Anglican Church presently operating (16).

You are now in the area where the Great Fire of 1976, burnt most homes and all in its path as well as 9800 acres of forestland. This fire destroyed 20 homes, the Catholic Church, and Glebe House, but thankfully burnt its way through the backwoods out to the ocean. This was a devastating time for the community, especially with the loss of church, but thankfully there was no loss of life. Families were resilient and rebuilt their homes and eventually their church. Life slowly returned to normal.

Coming down the road we pass the home of Janie Harris who operated the post office out of her home for 38 years. Now mail is delivered by Brenda Kendall, with mailbox delivery. (17)

****Please place #15, 16, and 17 on their proper places now****

Further along the road we arrive at the crossroads. Turning left we enter the harbour area. We pass the homes of the Wadden, MacDougall, and Forgeron families. We pass the home of Elizabeth and the Late Dan McDougall. Dan built many boats in his boat shed over the years. (18) Across from Elizabeth's home is the old Martell home, now owned by Bud MacDougall.

At the turn we pass the site of the Anglican Church which operated at this site until it fell in the fire of 1976. There is a small cemetery still seen at the original site of the church.(19)

Beside the church we found the former Main-a-Dieu Credi Union which operated for years serving the many fisherman and community families. Across from the Credit Union we find the Boat Building shed of David Forgeron. Today his son, Seymour, still builds boats wick he uses for fishing. Other famous harbour boat builders were Dan and Wallace MacDougall, Ambrose Forgeron and John Hall. As we drive past the Credit Union we come to the Harbour. It has a cluster of homes along the road including the McDougall, Mullins, Lahey, Wadden, Spencer, and Lathigee families.

The government Wharf (21) is a center of activity during the fishing months of May to October. The harbour comes alive with boats going out early and coming in all hours fishing lobster, crab, scallops, sea urchin, swordfish, and more.

In years gone by several factories operated on the site including Burnham and Moral in 1919, Dickens, Co-Op, Mullins, and others. Workers at the factory would have unloaded lobster boats, cleaned, cooked, and canned the catch. Gerald Lahey also operated a small store for a time in the same area.

****Please place #18, 19, 20, 21 on their proper places now****

Just past the wharf on the left was the site of Mullins Store(22) which operated for 62 years in the harbour (1933-1995). It was a general store which sold everything from groceries meat, clothes, shoes, boots, lumber, plumbing supplies and all types of fishing supplies. Many people in the early days didn't own cars and did all their shopping at the store and seldom went elsewhere for goods. Communities were more self-sufficient with their own store, school, church, and post office. In 1995 the store was moved to Albert Bridge and is now operated as Mullins Rite Shop.

In early years there was a store past the Mullins site and also a boarding house. Today, past Mullins, you can still find the oldest home in Main-à-dieu owned by the Burke Family. It had stone on the bottom and wood on the top (23).

Around the harbour, you will find a high hill where people would drive up to watch boats sailing in and out of the harbour. On the top of the hill you could walk Moque's Trail which led out to the back shore where you can see the vastness of the ocean and on a clear day watch whales as they chase fish (24). Today, land has been sold and homes have been built here.

****Please place #22, 23 and 24 on their proper places now****

Back at the end of the Main-A-Dieu crossroads if you were to turn right we pass the Forgeron lands, and home of Muriel Forgeron who was a teacher in Main-a-Dieu School until her retirement. Muriel's son, Michael, is a former Olympic gold medallist, in rowing.

Just on the right, we come to the Main-a-Dieu Seniors Home (25) where the former church hall stood. This was destroyed in the fire of 1976. Although owned by the church it was a community center used for school concerts, all community events and Pig and Whistle dances which were very popular in the 1970s. On the hill above was the Glebe House, which also burnt in the fire.

On the opposite side of the road, behind a huge hill; really large rock, was the school. (26) The original school was farther along the road and Maclsaac High School was on this property. It was a High School, run by the church and Sisters of St. Martha, but later became a public school. In 1960 a new elementary school was built on the site. It remained open and served Bateston, Main-a-Dieu, Little Lorraine until its closure in 2000 when Riverside School opened. Since 2004 it operated as a community center. It hosts: the Big Wave Cafe, a library, CAP Site, History Museum, and for some time a lobster and Fish Hut, and the Credit Union until its closure.

Beside The school is the Immaculate Church Cemetery, and across the road is the church. (27)

**** Interview - Roy Forgeron ****

****Please place # 25,26, and 27 on their proper places now****

Continuing past the church you come to the area known as The Shore (28). People who lived on the shore were mostly fishermen and kept their boats on frapes (rope anchors) unless bad weather threatened, when they would go to the safety of the harbour. In early years children always walked to school along the shore road, often one behind the other, with the older children breaking the wind as this area was so open to the ocean winds.

MacDonald's Sand and Gravel operated on the beach along this area for many years in the 60s. Today the beach is protected. A boardwalk was built and people enjoy the walk along one of the most beautiful beaches in the area (29). A small store operated opposite the beach owned by James I Lahey and later Sandy Evans. (30)

Down the shore on the right you come to John Hall & Sons Boat Building Company, operated by John Hall and his sons for many years (31).

Further along on the right you pass two ponds, known to locals as Boone Pond, and Cecil's Pond but older people remember them as Kane's Pond and Martell's Pond. Nearby Cecil Locke operated a canteen as well as a lumber business in the 70s. (32)

Past this site you will come to Ice House Hill, named for an ice house owned by William D. Burke, that operated for many years here.

Family names from the shore included Mailman, Lahey, Locke, Campbell, Hall, Bourinot, Barnstable, Spencer, Wadden, Perry to name a few.

Travelling along you come to Ocean View Lane to the left before leaving Main-a-Dieu. This road continues on to Baleine, Little Lorraine, Big Lorraine and then Louisbourg.

****Please place #28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 on their proper places now****

SCATERIE

Scaterie Island is a large island off the coast of Main-a-Dieu. It was a thriving community, as it had lighthouses (33) on both (34) ends to help boats, many who were lost on the rough coast. Many Families lived on the island including Timmons, Wadden, Spencer, Campbell, Bourinot, and Trimms. Fishing was the main way of life.

There was a school (35) and a church (3) on the island. Life was especially difficult as there was illness, people often couldn't get to the mainland due to bad weather. The passage, known as the Tittle (37) was a rough area between the island and Main-a-Dieu.

Slowly families moved to Main-a-Dieu, Louisbourg, and Port Morien to have better access to necessities for their families.

****Please place #33, 34,35,36 and 37 on their proper places now****

Today, the island is a protected wildlife area, a pristine wildlife preserve. However, in the late years the families have received the lands and hunting camps have been built there.

In 2011, the MV Miner (38), a salvage boat which was being towed to Turkey, went ashore during a storm. It took years of hard work by local community members to have the wreckage removed,

Every year the (39) Immaculate Conception Parish holds a memorial mass where large family groups travel by boat to the shore of the island. Mass is followed by a picnic, entertainment, and walks on the island. Lots of memories abound.

****Please place #38 and 39 on their proper places now****