



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 Hornes Road, which runs from Highway 22 to the Broughton Road, a distance of about five kilometers.

HORNES ROAD

The very first property on the left is the site of our school, Riverside Elementary, which opened in September, 2000. (1) The first section of Hornes Road from the Ferry Road, as it was called, to the remains of the Old Hornes Road was a distance of 0.9 kilometers, and was always called "The Path". (2) This was actually a path or shortcut to the highway if you were going to Mira Ferry, or as it is called today, Albert Bridge. You can see the sign for Old Hornes Road where it meets the Louisbourg Highway.

The present Hornes Road is the new road. The original road was some distance down the hill to the river. It was quite flat, and had few hills, and went through all the fields and farm lands. This meant gates open and close. If you were travelling by horse and wagon you would have to get out and open the gate go into the field and go back and close the gate. You also had to do this at the other end of the field. This was to keep the cows and sheep on their own farm lands.

The first people living in the Mira were First Nations people, it was the Portuguese who followed by the Europeans. Some believe | named the river Mira. The French came later and many settled along the river. For instance, the Horne Grant of 400 acres was first occupied by Jacques Thomas, also known as St.Malo. He lived on the sandy and fertile soil known as Hornes Point. (3) Jacques Thomas was a sea

captain in the French military during the time of the Fortress Louisbourg. Men of high rank at this time could leave the fortress and move their families to Mira or Catalone where the weather was warmer and had less fog. They could grow their crops and have a comfortable home. They settled close to areas where native marsh hay grew each feed their livestock. Fishing was good in the Mira River. There was an abundance of fish to be had. They could visit their friends up and down the river. Life was good if you had this privilege.

Salmon fishing was a main income for people living along the river.(4) John Horne's father was the last remaining fisherman along the Mira River. He had a license and a berth along the river. When his father died in 1980 it was the end of salmon fishing on the river. In order to save your salmon from being eaten by the eels, the fishermen had to tend the nets all night. They would have a small shack to stay in with a stove and a bunk.

**** Please place # 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the proper places now.****

It is believed the first of the Hornes came with the invasion of Louisbourg, likely the second invasion. Following this, came the Empire Loyalists and the Scottish people. In the early 1900s, the Mrazeks, from Poland, and Weisners, from Germany, also settled in this area.

In the early days people farmed, fished, followed the sea, went to work in Boston and other parts of the US. The young women became teachers, wives or went to Boston to work as maids. The young woman would send money home to help support the elderly people.

Mixed farming was vital to the existence of families living in Mira. Each family would have enough cows to supply their own needs with milk, cream, butter and curds. Every farm had a good work horse. The horse was used to plow fields, cultivate, mow the hay, pull the wagon load of hay to the barn; also to be used in the woods for hauling out logs, timber, and firewood. Most farms had sheep, not only for wool but also for the meat. There were also hens for the eggs and meat, and sometimes there were ducks and geese too. There were three dairy farms in this area. Archie Ferguson owned one, then Joe Mrazek then Robert and Christine MackKeigan . They would ship their milk to Sydney to be processed.

Before the local mines and the steel plant were started young men would go to Scaterie and fish for the season. This was hand lining cod that would be salted. Also

living on Hornes Road was a cooper named Owens. He would make barrels to sell to the Scaterie fishery. He would make the parts for 13 barrels. These barrels were not put together, they were in "shook", meaning all the parts of the barrels were bundled together and would be assembled once he landed in Scaterie.

Mining brought a large industry to the Mira area. The local mines needed pit timber, and many people had large wood lots so they could cut timber on their own property. So this was good income. In the early day, the timber was taken to the Mira River, loaded on scows and taken to Mira Gut. Captain Phillips and Nicoll would start as soon as the ice broke up in the spring and continue until the freeze-up in late fall. The timber was then loaded onto flat cars and taken to the pits.

When the local mines and the steel plant opened, it gave work to men in the Mira area. Some families moved to Glace Bay and made their home there. Others would find a good boarding house and come home on the weekends.

Continuing on...A campsite called, "Horne's Y'All Come In", owned by Kendall and Helen Horne was very popular throughout the 1960s and early 1970s (5).

**** Interview - Helen Horne ****

In earlier years the passenger boats would stop at Henry Horne's Shore (6). The boat was not only for passengers, but also for freight.

The post office was at the home of Henry and Catherine Horne. Later, it went to the home of Archie and Jessie Ferguson (7).

There are two cemeteries on Hornes Road. River Side Cemetery is at the end of (8) Cemetery lane quite close to the Mira River. The cemetery is small and is not open to the public, only those who have descendants there. The other cemetery is known as the Spencer Cemetery. This Cemetery is used by the Spencer families and descendants of the Empire Loyalists. It is located not far from the Broughton Road and the Mira River.

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Down the road on the left we find the home of Tyrone and Flora Gardiner (9). Tyrone is a famous Canadian Lightweight boxing champion. He won four titles, the Nova Scotia Crown, the Maritime, Eastern Canadian, and Canadian titles. He is a member of

the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame. In his retirement, Tyrone and his wife operated riding stables for a period of time.

The Mira River was like a highway. Every home close to the river had a boat. The typical river boat was called a "lapstrake" or "clinker-built". The boat's planks were pine, the ribs were juniper, also called larch. The local boat builder was Mr. Lewis Stout. (10) Many often referred to his boats as "Stout-built boats". He was married to George Spencer's daughter, where Fred and Sheila Hill now live.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Jimmy Norman MacDonald organized and coached a baseball team for Little League. He called the team the Hornes Road Hornets. They played in a league with Port Morien, Donkin and Birch Grove.

A store called, "Charlie Brown's Store" was owned and operated by George and Aline Carabin (11). It served the public for a number of years. The store offered many of life's conveniences as well as a pizza shop, a model airplane area, and Aline's sewing shop. People travelled from surrounding areas to buy Charlie Brown's delicious pizza. When Mrs. Timmons was in high school, her summer job was working at Charlie Brown's Store". That's where she learned to make her delicious pizzas!

Just down the road on the right you will find Lockmire Farms owned and operated by Susan MacKeigan (12). The farm was originally owned by her grandparents Bobby and Christine MacKeigan. Children from Mira and surrounding areas take riding lessons and board their horses here.

**** Please place #9, 10, 11, and 12 in the proper places****

The first school on Hornes Road was below the home of Neil MacKeigan(13) on the north side of the highway. The next school was on the west side of Island View Drive (14). At times there were very few children in the school. They had a potbellied stove in the centre of the school, a coal house, and lots of coal. In the winter there was a janitor who made a fire early in the morning. The drinking water was taken from the spring in a bucket called a creamer. Close to the bottom was a tap to get a drink of water. The toilet was outside, a small building called the outhouse. When children first went to school it was by horse and wagon, or horse and sleigh in the winter. Years ago, the school had very little money to pay the teacher and other expenses such as coal and maintenance. So, the "Box Social" was a very popular event. The ladies would bring a small box of choice food wrapped up and tied with

fancy ribbon. The young men would bid on a box and if they were the top bidder, the reward was eating lunch with the young lady who made up the box. There would often be a fiddler present for a square dance.

Here is a little story about one such social.

**** Interview - John Horne ****

During WW2, the soldiers did some training in the Hornes Road area. Soldiers would march up and down past the school. They spent time in the woods doing survival training. Eleven young men served from the Hornes Road area, just down as far as Black Brook.

Hornes road had a hockey team back in the 1920's and 1930s. The team played east of Morrison Point, in a shallow marsh connected to the Mira River. The rink had boards all around and also a clubhouse. The women also had a hockey team. In later years the boys had a hockey team playing their games at the Old Sydney Forum.

The people living on Hornes Road had their own telephone company called Mira River Mutual Telephone Company. The stamps they had were dated 1920. The operator was Greta Spencer MacLean who lived very close to the Broughton Road (15). The telephone poles were black spruce cut on each person's wood lot. Poles were all peeled and put up by the local men.

Years ago, people would cut their own logs with local mill to saw the lumber. The first sawmill on Hornes Road was water powered. The brook that is called Spencer's Brook (16) was originally called George's Brook. Close to the Mira River, there was a dam built on the brook to supply the water to run the mill. The hill on Hornes Road by this property was called Whent's Hill. Another saw mill on Hornes Road was also a water powered mill. It was built on Spencer's Brook not far from the Broughton Road. Other saw mills included mills operated by, MacKeigan, MacDonald, Mrazek and Spencer. The last large commercial mill to operate on Hornes Road is owned by Neil MacKeigan. It has been operating for the last 30-35 years. This mill is powered by diesel engine. (17)

Traveling past Black Brook Bridge will bring you to Broughton Road and the community of Mira Gut.

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BRICKYARD ROAD

On Highway we past the Albert Bridge, we turn left to Brickyard Road. Just down on the left side of the road is Pleasant Walk. (18) This small side road once had only a few bungalows including the home of the late Duncan and Haroldine MacKay. In late years it became the permanent home of his son Allan MacKay and in 2015 was replaced by a beautiful home owned by his granddaughter Laurie and her family. Now the road has several new homes along the lane.

Moving along the road, the land opens to the Mira River. On the right side of the road was a field, known as the Ant Hill. (19) It was owned by the Catholic Church. All summer, miners and their families would come out and camp in canvas tents on the site. Hundreds of people would spend the summer, many coming up from Mira Gut where they arrived by train.

Next you come to the land of the MacIntyre family. Their descendents still live on this land including the Beaver, MacIntyre, MacKenzie and MacRury families.

As in each area in early days, there was a mill at Minister's Cove. (20) It was operated in the 30's and 40's by Donald Angus MacDonald. Many young hockey players could be found in the evenings or on Sundays playing on Minister's Cove. Also the story is told of Angus Macintyre who shot a bear from the upstairs window of a barn because it was killing his sheep.

Moving down the road on the right, we find the oldest home on the road. It was the former home of Rannie Deleski, and was later owned by the Burns family and is now owned by Paula Kowal. (21)

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A little further along you come to MacLellan's Peninsula, which is the site of the brick yard. (22) Bricks for the Fortress of Louisbourg were made here as early as 1727 and it operated up to the early 1900's. These bricks were put on barges and floated down the river. The famous clay found here made bricks for many buildings in the surrounding areas, such as Argyle School, St. Andrew's Church, Ukrainian Hall and Glace Bay General Hospital. This company became the Mira Brick Company in the late 1800's when a new kiln was put in with a tall smokestack. Bricks from this site can still be found along the shores in the Mira Provincial Park.

As in Scotland, MacLellan's property had a private family cemetery built to strict dimensions, as in their Scottish homeland. (23) The Ferguson family who live further down the road, also have a private family cemetery.

The Provincial Park opened on this site in 1967. (24) Mr. John Ferguson, grandfather of Colin Ferguson, was the first caretaker of the park. It is a beautiful park with camping sites and walking trails and two swimming areas. It is enjoyed by people from all surrounding areas each summer.

The Catholic cemetery, still used today, can be found in the fork of the road to the park. (25) In the trees at the Park they discovered a spring which was restored and named Sadie's well. This was to remember Sadie MacLellan, one member of the two MacLellan families who had their land expropriated to build the Mira Park. (26)

**** Please place # 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 in the proper places now****

Moving along the road you come to a brook, known by the locals as Big Bridge Hill Brook. (27) This brook runs down into the Mira River.

A little past the brook, on the left, you will come to Mason Point Road (28). Originally there were only a few bungalows on this road but today it is well developed with several permanent homes and bungalows.

Across the road on the left, is the site of the Brickyard School (29) which was built in 1874. Previously school was held in the home of big John MacLellan. In 1901 a one room school was built to accommodate 35 students. In 1950 it only registered 4 students. The school later burned down, leaving the students to attend Union School at Albert Bridge.

There are three more original homes on Brickyard Road. Past the site of the school, on the right, you will find the home of the late Alan MacDonald, presently the home of Donnie MacDonald. (30) A little ways down on the left, is a lane that leads to the home of the late Alex Ferguson who was the station master at Mira Gut for over 40 years. (31) Just down the road on the left, you will find Florence's Lane. It leads to the home of the late John and Florence Ferguson, now the home of Colin and Kim Ferguson; as well as new permanent homes and numerous bungalows dotting the shores of the river. (32)

**** Please place # 27,28, 29, 30, 31, and 32 in the proper places now.****

In 1947 a forest fire swept from Catalone through Brickyard and jumped the river to Mira Gut. Three families were left homeless in Mira Gut. Sydney and Louisbourg Railway had a special train to evacuate people.

**** Interview- Shirley Ferguson- Noseworthy****

Travelling further along on Brickyard Road, on the left, you will come To Malcolm Road which leads to the Oyster Cove Subdivision. (33) This property was developed by Kevin Pembroke and Joe Parsons. It hosts a scenic new community close to the Mira River on Oyster Cove.

Only one house originally stood between here and Mira Gut and that was on the left, owned by the late Dan Ferguson. (34) Today, there are numerous homes along the Brickyard Road to Mira Gut.

The river was always important as it was the transportation avenue of the day. River ice was hard but had dangerous spots and would be bushed and trees would be used to forge a road for travellers to follow. Ice was often cute in Ferguson's Cove. (35) Large blocks would be cut with a cross-cut saw and loaded on sleighs and brought to Colin Ferguson's ice house where it would be cut and stored in sawdust, to keep cream and milk cool. Only a few farms had an ice house but they would supply the needs of other farms.

****Please place # 33, 34, and 35 in the proper places now****

In the 1920s, there were only 14 houses on the Brickyard Road. Today, there are numerous new homes and bungalows all along the road from the Ferry to the Gut, all enjoying the beautiful Mira River.