



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 Hills Road.

## HILLS ROAD

Passing Morrison Road, along Highway 22, you approach Landry Crescent on the right. This was formerly part of the Sydney-Louisbourg Highway. Next, on the left highway is Kristen Court, a newly formed subdivision. Also, from this area are the residents of Whispering Pines.(1) Whispering Pines is a community of approximately 40 families. Students from these areas have chosen to attend either Riverside Elementary or Mira Road School.

Just past Whispering Pines we take a right off of Highway 22 on Hills Road. This was once a shortcut for residents travelling from Hillside to Sydney. Entering Hills Road, to the right, in the late 1800s there was a carriage shop run by John Ferguson. In later years, Morris Ross bought this land. He operated a store which later became a feed store. (2) The last known businesses, operated by Hughie Ashe, were a tire dealership and a golf driving range. The road had many farms, but once the Steel Plant opened in Sydney the residents moved for work at the plant. Only the MacInnis family remained being the lone residents of Hills Road. (3) Hills Road had a school which was just above Mikkelsen's Brook.(4) It was a log cabin heated by a fire place. It later closed and the children went to Hillside School. The road was developed with many families residing along both sides of Hills road as well as side roads such as: Ryeland Court, Courtney Lane, Rosewood Heights, and River Road.

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

Two Christmas Tree farms, owned by the Aucoin(5) and Travis (6) families also operate on this road. Coming back to Highway 22 we pass the Pyne and Dickson properties. These properties were also used as farmlands. Currently, Chester and Jacqueline Pyne operate a small greenhouse and flower business.(7) A short way along the highway is the property of the late Sid Howard. Mr. Howard was a famous wood carver. His work was displayed in several art shows throughout the province. Presently Roy Buckingham runs his cabinetry business on this site.(8)

*\*\*\* Please place # 5, 6, 7, and 8 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

Just up the road on the left was the home and site of Danny Allen MacDonald's saw mill. (9) Freddie's Drive-in was situated just past Danny Allen's property. This was a small drive-in canteen, where young and old would gather to share stories, dance to a jukebox and have french fries; a newer novelty at that time. Mrs. Lahey's first job was at Freddie's Drive-in. (11) She was only 13 years old! Later it was converted into a home where our janitor, Susan Spencer lived as a little girl, when her family first moved to the area. Next you come to the Old Hornes Road. This road once served as the original entrance to Hornes Road. On this road was the forestry business formerly known as Atlantic Lumber, operated by Daniel Williams and Gary Reginato. It is now known as Mira Forestry. (12) Let's loop back to Highway 22.

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

---

## HILLSIDE ROAD

Heading down the hill we pass Hornes Road and arrive at Hillside Road. Turning right we travel along the Mira River for approximately 15kms. The French were the first settlers in the area. The capture of the Fortress of Louisbourg closed this phase of early Mira history. The next group of settlers were the Loyalists from New England and the Scottish. Cupid's Cove is a short distance up Hillside Road. This property is being developed for both summer and year round residents. Your next left is Lancelve Crescent, land developed along the river once a part of the farm owned by Marion and Maurice Lancelve. An earlier school, on Hillside Road, was situated across from The Mira Boat Club, (13) closed in the 1920s, when a newer school was built further up the road, commonly referred to as the school at the "Big Maple Tree". Students attended this school until 1958 when students moved to the Albert Bridge School.

Up a bit you will come to The Mira Boat Club, which was formed in 1947, with 17 boat owners and fans. (14) A clubhouse and viewingstands were built for judges and fans. It had an early P.A. system for announcements and music would be played between races. In August, the Boat Club would hold it's annual race, which was a huge public event. Today, races are no longer held, but replaced with Poker Runs for families to enjoy.

In the same area of Hillside Road you will come to the site of Camp Breton Dean.(15) A property owned by Christ Church, of Sydney. At one time, this land was owned by a MacAulay family and part of the original Hill grant. Camp Breton Dean is a busy spot all summer long for children and families attending camps and day picnics.

*\*\*\* Please place # 13, 14, and 15 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

Early settlers were given large grants of land along the river. This land was mostly farmland. One family who received a grant of land was the Hill Family. They operated a grist mill and a shingle mill, at Gesner's Point (16). This probably led to the naming of Hillside and Hills Road. Evidence of the French at Louisbourg, as mentioned previously, can be found in the remains of a bake oven on Gesner Point. Jim MacDonald's point was the location of a Farmer's Picnic, in the late 1930s. (17) Jim MacDonald agreed to have the picnic, on his land, on the condition that all litter be picked up as there was no garbage collection in those days. Five thousand people attended the first picnic. There would be activities all day long for the young and old. These activities included: sack races, three-legged races,

throwing the rolling-pin contest for women, climbing a greased pole for men.(with a \$5.00 bill as a prize nailed to the top of the pole). There would be swimming, boat rides, and a Miss Farmerette Pageant.

On the left, just past Gesner Point Road, you arrive at the property of Allister MacGillivray, a world renown Cape Breton singer/songwriter. Allister MacGillivray is famous for writing the "Song for the Mira". He graciously permitted Riverside Elementary to use his signature lyrics, "Out on the Mira", as our school catchphrase. Ciaran and Fiona, the children of Allister and Beverly, attended Riverside Elementary School. This duo have also gone on to be young legends in the music industry. They also rung an antique and gift shop at the site. (18)

*\*\*\* Please place # 16, 17, and 18 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

The Post Office was located Just up the road a bit, at the home of Norman MacKeigan. (19) Norman was a carpenter who originated from North Uist, Scotland. Mail would arrive by train to Mira Gut and then taken to Hillside. This Post Office was operated by Edna MacKeigan from 1942, until rural delivery began. Edna MacKeigan was a well respected member of the community who attended every Mira Community Fair until just before her death. Further along we come to the area of Oakfield Cemetery and Spruce Point Park.(20) The park which began with 3 cabins has now expanded into a popular tent and trailer camping site. For a period of time, it also had a large waterslide. Today it is owned and operated by Bud Greer. Hillside is populated with many permanent homes as well as numerous bungalows, the first which were built in the 1940s.

*\*\*\* Please place # 19, 20, in the proper places now.\*\*\**

And then, we will loop back to Highway 22.

Back on Route 22 we approach the land of Walter Burke and his family who owned and operated Burke's Campsite. Families from the area often camped on this beautiful piece of the Mira River during the summer months. (21) Next door is the site of the former Albert Bridge School, which opened in January, 1959, as a Primary to Grade 9 school. This school combined schools from Hornes Road, Hillside Road, Mira Gut, and Mira Ferry Union School. This property was owned by the Burke family. Pat and Virginia Burke and their son, Bernie, were janitors at this school until its closure in the year 2000. Today, this property is the home of Jimmy Dale and Lori Kennedy: owners and operators of Mira Bay Seafoods.(22) The land to the bridge was owned

by descendants of the Burke family. Pat Burke and his family lived on the left hand side with many summer bungalows being built below them on the river's edge. On the right side of the road was a local tea room owned and operated by Mrs. Maher and Mrs. Burke.(23)

*\*\*\* Interview - William Burke \*\*\**

We are now at Albert Bridge. When the French were in Louisbourg they had a settlement at Albert Bridge. They used a small ferry to cross the river at the place where the bridge stands today, hence the name, Mira Ferry. The remains of the Old French Road can be found running through the Burke and Spencer properties. The ferry was replaced by a swing bridge in 1855. The name of the community was changed to Albert Bridge, named for the son of Queen Victoria. In 1970, the current, 2 lane bridge was built. Today as you drive across this bridge you will often see young enthusiasts diving off the bridge to the refreshing river water below.

*\*\*\* Please place #21, 22, and 23 in the proper places now. \*\*\**

Just over the bridge is the historic Union Presbyterian Church. (24) In 1850s, the members of this congregation were expected to help in the building of this church. The logs were cut from along the Mira River, sawed, then used to construct the frame of the church. In 1857, the church opened to serve 600 families. It could seat 1000 people. A manse was constructed in 1895. In 2007, Union Presbyterian celebrated it's 150th anniversary. One unique activity was having members of the congregation ringing the bell 150 times. The original tower was lowered because the previous tower would sway in the high winds. Many upgrades have taken place in the last few years, including the building of a new church hall. This church is now classified as a historic building.

Spain's Pavilion can be found on the left just past the church. There was a dance hall where every Friday night locals could go dancing for the price of 50 cents. People came from as far away as New Waterford to attend the dances. (25)

*\*\*\* Please place # 24, and 25 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

---

## TROUT BROOK ROAD

Turning right you will find yourself on the south side of the Mira River. called Trout Brook Road. This road gets it's name from the Trout Brook. To the right, up on the hill, is St. Joseph's Roman Catholic . Church, which dates back as far back as 1877. In the 1970s, St. Joseph's expanded the once tiny building (seating capacity of 70), to a larger church (seating 215), serving a permanent populations as well as summer residents. (26) Just behind the church on this property is Camp MacLeod, which is owned by the Presbytery of Cape Breton. It was purchased in 1952 from the Kiwanis Club of Sydney, who had operated the camp for 35 years. The camp is used every day all summer long for church groups, the Girl Guide Movement and day camps. Every September the Mira Community Fair is held at this site. (27)

Around the turn you will see a fire hydrant. This is a dry hydrant that gets water from a natural spring. It is used by the Albert Bridge Volunteer Fire Department to fill their tankers.

Moving along the road on the right is the Ceilidh Subdivision, which was developed by Bobby Ferguson, opening in 1990. Numerous homes have been built in this beautiful riverside community. (28) As you wind your way through the turns you come to a popular fishing area for locals. Cars can often be found parked along the edge of the road in both summer and winter.

*\*\*\* Please place # 26, 27, 28 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

Further on down the road you reach Sangaree Road. In the early 1900s Sangaree was a popular spot. "Kamp Kill Kare" was owned and operated by Lou Petrie. It had a large hotel named "The Mayflower" with a bright red roof. It was opened all year round. Tourists from nearby and far away spent all summer at the hotel. The hotel featured a bowling alley which drew a lot of attention from the people. The only way to get to the hotel in the early years was by boat or horse and wagon. He owned a ferry service to provide tourists with a mode of transportation. Locals picked berries and sold them to the tourists. As time went on cars became popular and Kamp Kill Kare slowly died out. (29) Along the river on the left side we come to Hanson's Lane. Charlie and

Eileen Hanson operated a farm on a large acreage. Today, several of the family members have their homes built along this property. They welcome the community to visit the farm, which still operates with horses, ponies, a donkey, chickens and other livestock. (30)

*\*\*\* Please place # 29, and 30 in the proper places now. \*\*\**

The first Italian families moved to the Trout Brook area in the 1930s. These family names include: Reginato, Ravanello and Polegato.

*\*\*\* Interview Victor Ravanello \*\*\**

Rinso Reginato operated a lumber and wood business in the same area.

*\*\*\* Interview- Anna Reginato \*\*\**

At the end of our Trout Brook Road journey we come to the property of Jim Wilson. Mr. Wilson operated a strawberry farm for many years at this location. (31)

*\*\*\* Please place # 31 in the proper place now. \*\*\**

Let's loop back to Highway 22. Directly across from Trout Brook Road you will find Island Crystal, a new business featuring items made from blown glass. (32) Across the highway, we come to the current Mullins Rite Stop. Previously this was a gas station and garage. The last operator was Buddy MacDonald. The Mullins brothers operated this until 1989 when they replaced it with a more modern store. On this same location in the early 1940s Merchant Burke ran a store and Lodging House; known nowadays as a small hotel. People travelling from Sydney would often rent rooms if it became late or the weather was bad. (33)

Next door to Mullins Rite Stop is the Albert Bridge Volunteer Fire Department, formed in 1976. The original building was built in 1977. The hall was built in 1982 and the newest building was constructed in 2003. This Fire Department had the first female firefighter in Nova Scotia and the first female Fire Chief in the CBRM. Because of being located on the Mira River, these firefighters are trained in water and ice rescue, as well as fires and first responder calls. (34)

Just behind the fire department you will find 2 sports fields. In the 1980s and 1990s the Albert Bridge Recreation Association, in conjunction with the fire department, worked toward the completion of a baseball and soccer field.(35) Across from the Fire Department you would have found the Mira Ferry School, known as Union School, which was built in 1916. It served the area until

1959 when Albert Bridge School opened.(36) Today, above the school on the right side of the highway, you will find All 4 U Hair Salon, owned and operated by Marlene Shepherd. (37)

*\*\*\* Please place # 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37 in the proper places now.\*\*\**

---



## NEW BOSTON

Continuing on Highway 22, we arrive at New Boston Road. This road loops around to Highway 22 in Catalone. Most of the land in New Boston was farmland, as in most country areas at that time. (38) The children in this area attended school in Albert Bridge or in Catalone. There were several mills over the years which operated here a mill was operated by Hector and Archie MacCuish.(39) Rannie MacDonald operated a forge, and people from all over the Mira area relied on him for work that was needed at their farms. Today this road has been built up with many new homes along the way. Looping back to Highway 22, we take a right, and on our way we pass the home of Joe MacArthur, former bus driver at Riverside School.(40) Also on this stretch is land owned by the MacIntyre and MacKenzie families.

Continuing on you will enter the community of Catalone.

\*\*\* Please place # 38,39, and 40 in the proper places now.\*\*\*