

## Gaspesians strongly oppose New Brunswick pozzolan mine project

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON – Gaspesians expressed strong opposition to the pozzolan mine project proposed by Montreal firm EcoRock Dalhousie during a public meeting that attracted about 175 people in Carleton-sur-Mer on October 29.

This mine, along with its crushing and grinding facilities, would be located in Dalhousie, New Brunswick, only three to four kilometres from the Gaspé coast area of Miguasha. EcoRock Dalhousie's management wants to ship three million tonnes of production per year. Pozzolan, a volcanic stone, is used in the preparation of certain cement powders.

On October 29, opponents, including about forty New Brunswickers, first held a march on highway 132 before expressing their arguments to EcoRock Dalhousie's management regarding the development of the project. The absence of a specific environmental assessment for the Gaspé Peninsula marked the discussions.

"Are you able to commit to measuring the impact on the Gaspé Peninsula?" asked Léo Ouellet, an opponent living in Miguasha.

"The New Brunswick government will be judge and jury," replied Francis Forlini, chief executive officer of EcoRock Dalhousie, frequently pointing out that the location of the project in Dalhousie only requires an environmental assessment in the Maritime province, not on the Quebec side.

Three EcoRock Dalhousie executives, the firm's president, Guy Rousseau, vice-president Réjean Carrier and general manager Francis Forlini, nevertheless faced opposition, since they had committed in August to presenting their project to the Gaspesians.

These leaders were regularly heckled by opponents



Opponents of the pozzolane mine project have created symbolic tombstones representing health-threatening and aborted projects of the past 15 years in the Gaspé Peninsula. They hope EcoRock Dalhousie's project will meet the same fate.

Photos: G. Gagné

from both sides of Chaleur Bay, with opponents citing the environmental risks associated with the mine, whether it be water quality, noise and dust from blasting, crushing and grinding, as well as fairly large tonnage vessel shipments. Pozzolan contains around 52% silica, a worrying factor for opponents when it is reduced to fine dust.

### Dredging, marine life and salmon

The use of ships will require the dredging in Dalhousie's port. The channel leading to the port is contaminated, particularly with certain metals. It is on this issue of dredging that the impact on the Gaspé Peninsula is likely to be considered, due to the sharing of common waters between the two provinces.

In this regard, both the management of EcoRock Dalhousie and the opponents expect a study from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, ranging from the complete characterization of the sediments to be dredged to the impact on marine species, including lobster and clams, not to mention species that share their time between the sea and rivers, such as salmon and

smelt.

The Port of Dalhousie is geographically located in the delta of the Restigouche River, one of the world's most renowned rivers for its salmon stocks and sport fishing. Half a dozen other rivers, including the Matapedia, flow into the Restigouche.

Advisor to the Gaspésie Regional Environmental Council, Michel Chouinard, pointed out to EcoRock Dalhousie executives that "salmon are threatened," that the Restigouche River has a strong heritage character and that the assessment of the mine project

should be done through joint management, in the sense that the evaluation should include the Gaspé Peninsula.

"We are not neighbours of New Brunswick. We share the same house," he said, also recalling the presence four kilometres from Dalhousie of a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage site, the Miguasha National Park, internationally renowned for its fossils.

Michel Chouinard also mentioned the fight waged between 2003 and 2006 by citizens on both sides of Chaleur



Carleton's Ann MacBrearty, originally from Miguasha, questions if the project considers citizens' health.

Bay to counter the Bennett firm's contaminated soil incinerator project in Belledune, also in New Brunswick, a successful fight.

"We're waking up the old ghosts a little bit, but we love ghosts on Halloween, not any other time," concluded Mr. Chouinard, suggesting that there are other ways to revitalize the economy of Heron Bay, the new municipality encompassing Dalhousie, a locality with a past marked by heavy industry.

Carleton resident Ann MacBrearty, originally from Miguasha, expressed her concern about health risks.

"How much is the health of citizens worth? Is it worth 168 jobs? Who are the real winners in all of this?" she asked, addressing firm officials.

### Spinoffs data

EcoRock Dalhousie disclosed data on the jobs and revenues that the pozzolan mine would generate, although Francis Forlini has often pointed out that the project is currently a "concept."

The mine would create 168 direct jobs, 55 indirect jobs and 150 induced jobs, with direct wage revenues of \$13 million (M), to which \$4 million in indirect wages and \$11 million in induced revenues would be added.

The development of the mine, which has operated for decades as a quarry for construction aggregates, would require an investment ranging from \$200 million to \$300 million, spread over a year and a half to two years, notes Francis Forlini.

Asked about what appears to be low economic benefits for the Gaspé Peninsula, Mr. Forlini responded that some jobs could fall into "the Pointe-à-la-Croix sector, because of its proximity," and elsewhere in the Gaspé Peninsula for the subcontracting of services.

# POZZOLAN MINE: Constitutional and social issues remain

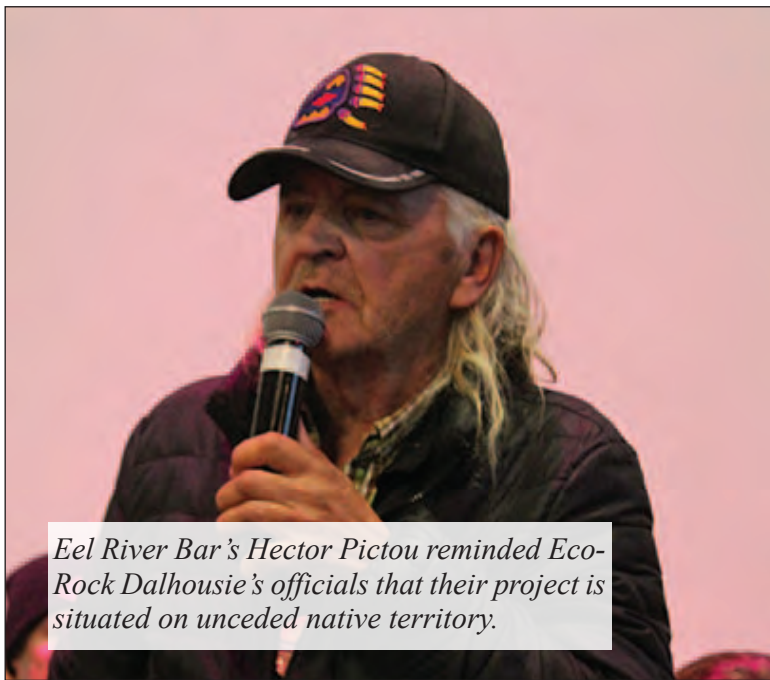
GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON: – On October 29, Hector Pictou, a Mi'gmaq from Eel River Bar, near Dalhousie, reminded the firm's management that the deposit is located on unceded Aboriginal lands and that the entire sector has already suffered enough impacts during its industrial years.

Then, attacking opponents and recalling that in the 1980s, he participated in national committees aimed at asserting Aboriginal rights with the federal government, he stated that "it is important for you to know that you do not need to hire a constitutional lawyer. I know constitutional law better than 90% of lawyers. I am available."

Francis Forlini admitted, based on the public meetings held so far, two in Dalhousie and one in Carleton, that social acceptability is lacking. He is counting on the results of the eventual impact study to advance the project.

Various factors increase the capacity of ground pozzolan to replace clinker to some extent in the manufacture of cement powder, he notes. The advantage of pozzolan, he says, is that it generates less green-



*Eel River Bar's Hector Pictou reminded EcoRock Dalhousie's officials that their project is situated on unceded native territory.*

Photo: G. Gagné

house gases than clinker, he says.

"Each tonne of cement produces 0.8 tonnes of greenhouse gases. In the case of pozzolan, it is less than 0.1 tonnes," he says.

When asked what the probability is that the mine will see the light of day, he answers: "Fifty-fifty (%). We knew we would lose the battle (on October 29), but we hope to win the war."

Francis Forlini also indicated that a group from Dalhousie supports the project.

This group has been making

its presence felt on social media for a month.

Faced with Mr. Forlini's references to the effect that for

the moment, people should talk more about "a concept than a project," Bilbo Cyr, well known for his environmental approach, retorted that "this evening's process is not a consultation. A company is not consulting on a concept. It (the company) is here to perfect the lines of communications. They are here to present the project to us in a more attractive package. Do you see it (social acceptability) in the room in front of you? You are here to find a way to fill your pockets at the expense of these people," hammered Mr. Cyr.

where the pozzolan deposit is located. It has already purchased the right-of-way of the old railway connecting the deposit to the port, a distance of about two kilometres. A feasibility study is underway to determine the best way to transport the pozzolan to the port, a conveyor or put the rails back into operation.

The feasibility study and environmental impact studies will be carried out in 2025, with results expected in 2026, the same year the port dredging will be requested. The firm expects a response from governments the same year.

Construction of the infrastructure is planned for the second half of 2026, with operations commencing in 2027.

## A timeline

EcoRock Dalhousie has made the necessary commitments to acquire the quarry

## POZZOLAN

### ▶ Cont'd from cover

A long-time Gaspé opponent, Jean-Marc Beaulieu, suspects that EcoRock Dalhousie's management deliberately limited the capacity of the open-pit mine to 3 million tonnes per year to shield it

from a potential federal impact study, which could include the effects of the complex in the Gaspé Peninsula. This study would focus separately on the mine, regardless of the effects on the marine environment.

"It's not true that we did it on purpose. Even at three million tonnes, would we

have the capacity to sell all that? (...) We have good profitability at three million tonnes. We don't want to go any further," said Francis Forlini.

He estimates the potential market for pozzolan in eastern North America at 5 million tonnes, including competition.

# CNESST satisfied with corrections to demolition method of former Gaspé MTQ garage

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ: - Following a recent inspection, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) has confirmed that the contractor responsible for demolishing the former Ministère des Transports (MTQ) service centre in downtown Gaspé has implemented the requested safety corrections.

On October 18, the CNESST issued a correction notice requiring the project manager to modify the demolition procedures to address all risks associated with the site's structures and hazardous materials. The building, constructed in the 1950s, contains lead and asbestos.

Some industry observers close to the construction trades had reported that the

fences that are supposed to contain dust during demolition are not high enough. Another site visit was made on October 23.

"The CNESST carried out another intervention to ensure that the project manager had made the requested corrections. This allowed us to see that the work procedure is safe and protects workers from these contaminants. A sign was also put in place to indicate the presence of the contaminant. Two correction notices were also issued to the project manager regarding the specific demolition procedures," the government agency mentioned by email.

One modified practice now observable since the CNESST visit is that workers from Démolition des rivières de Lévis are systematically wetting demolition elements to prevent dust from dispers-

ing.

The CNESST mentioned that it is monitoring the situation closely and other follow-ups are planned. For its part, the Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI), which is responsible for the site, indicates that it is putting "everything in place to ensure safety in the projects under its responsibility."

"Work in asbestos conditions is standardized and the contractor is required to comply with the measures provided for this purpose. A specialized firm is hired by the SQI for this purpose. It supervises the demolition work and is responsible for ensuring that the decontamination enclosure and the mitigation methods used by the contractor, for dust control, comply with the standards," maintains the organization, which adds that if corrective



*Demolition complies with CNESST requests.*

Photo: N. Sergerie

measures are recommended by the CNESST, the SQI will ensure that they are carried out as soon as possible.

For its part, the Ministry of the Environment has not received any complaints regarding the demolition of this building. The ministry

noted that this activity is not subject to ministerial authorization or adherence to the Clean Air Regulations.

The contract, valued at \$876,000, was awarded to Démolition des rivières through a public tender process.

# Police report

Two employees of the Tim Horton's restaurant in Paspébiac have pleaded guilty to theft and fraud of \$65,000 against their employer. Martine Denis, 63, from Paspébiac, was sentenced on October 28 at the New Carlisle Courthouse to two years less a day, to be served in the community. Her accomplice, Ginette Briand, 61, from Port Daniel-Gascons, was scheduled to undergo her preliminary inquiry on October 29 but opted to plead guilty, cutting the hearing short.

"The crimes were committed over a period of two years, between May 30, 2019, and May 4, 2021. When their scheme was uncovered, Ms. Denis immediately admitted her acts to her employer. They were working at the drive-thru service. When they were seeing a customer ready to pay cash, they would take the money, give the change back and nullify the food order. They were putting that money in their pocket. At one point, Ms. Briand put a sign at the window to tell customers that the debit and credit card machine was out of order. So, people could only pay with cash, thus increasing her gains," explains criminal prosecutor Maxime Rocheville-Paradis.

The restaurant owner fired Ms. Briand but he eventually rehired Ms. Denis, due to the labour shortage, adds the prosecutor. Ms. Briand will return to court on January 14 for her sentence. As for Ms. Denis, Quebec Court Judge Célestina Almeida added usual conditions to a sentence that must be served at home, such as a curfew and the obligation to answer phone calls at specific moments. Judge Almeida added a \$5,000 fine. The insurance company of the Paspébiac restaurant paid \$50,000 to the owner.

Two brothers from Gaspé, Benoit and Marcel English, aged 59 and 60 respectively, are facing a series of charges in connection with a fight on a hunting territory in the Rocher-Percé MRC. Benoit English is suspected of harassment, assault, mischief and arson. He was released under several conditions as proceedings continue.

As for Marcel English, he is accused of harassment, death threats, arson and mischief. Following a mid-October court hearing, his bail hearing was postponed to November 11. In June 2021, he was sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to several charges, ranging from assault with a weapon and causing bodily harm to possession of a restricted firearm. He is currently on parole

after being released before completing his full sentence.

Suspected of sexual acts against several victims, Douglas Quirion, 72, from Gaspé, will finally know the date of his trial on November 11. At the end of his three-day preliminary inquiry in May, the individual saw two of the 11 charges laid against him, concerning one of his victims, withdrawn. In May, five witnesses were heard for the criminal prosecution and two for the defence. The events attributed to Mr. Quirion are said to have occurred between 1981 and 2011. The investigation was entrusted to the serial crime investigation management structure. This provincial coordination pools police resources whenever an investigation involves more than one victim and aims to arrest predators.

The Sûreté du Québec wishes to warn citizens of a fraud scheme that involves sending an extortion letter via email containing the potential victim's full name, phone number, home address, and a screenshot of the address taken from an online mapping service. The scammers claim that the targeted individuals have visited explicit websites and threaten to send a video to their contact list unless they are paid in cryptocurrency. A QR code is usually sent to facilitate payment in bitcoins. Scammers use fear and urgency to manipulate victims into making a hasty decision.

To gain access to this information, fraudsters use information that is publicly available, particularly on social media. Here are some prevention tips: Be cautious about sharing details online and limit social media posts. Don't rush into decisions and assess carefully the situation, ignore the email and do not make any payment. Consider reporting the scam to local authorities or to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

The Sûreté du Québec invites citizens to consult the Advice section of its website ([www.sq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.sq.gouv.qc.ca)) to learn more about fraud or to consult the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre website at [www.centreatifraude.ca](http://www.centreatifraude.ca). In addition, any information can be communicated at any time and confidentially to the Centrale de l'information criminelle at 1 800 659-4264. Report the incident to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre by telephone at 1- 888-495-8501 or by visiting [www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca).

## GESPEG: Chief Yan Tapp resigns not long after being elected

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The newly elected Chief of the Micmac Nation of Gespeg, Yan Tapp, has resigned.

The announcement was made through a brief press release on the Nation's website on October 26.

This marks the third chief to resign within the last decade, following Terry Shaw in January and Manon Jeanotte in February 2019.

"I have made the decision not to continue my path as Chief of our nation. Leaving a professional position is never an easy task and, in my case, stepping down early in my term is a choice that I want to make transparent with all of you," Mr. Tapp wrote on social media, preferring not to give an interview to explain his decision.

Mr. Tapp was elected as leader on September 27 after a series of events following the September 8 election. Initially, the results showed Mark Sinnett as the winner with 144 votes to Mr. Tapp's 143, while a third candidate, Céline Cassivi, received 122 votes.

After three recounts, a tie



Photo: N. Sergerie

*Yan Tapp discusses unhealthy climate at Gespeg council.*

occurred, with 143 votes to 143 votes.

According to the Nation's Electoral Code, a tie is resolved through a draw. Following Mark Synnett's withdrawal, Mr. Tapp was appointed to lead the Nation.

However, it seems the beginning of his mandate was not easy and reflects the difficult relationships within the members of the Nation.

"Without going into de-

tails, many former members know the routine that accompanies each council mandate for our community: political and personal conflicts, as well as a sometimes toxic work climate," recalls the resigning chief.

"Once again, another chief has left Gespeg prematurely. I remember that an elder from another community told me last year, and I quote: "You, the members of Gespeg, are very hard on your chiefs. It would be important for you to learn to better master these values," mentions Mr. Tapp.

"During my short mandate, I have noticed a flagrant lack of respect for the chief of the Nation within the community itself. (He was asked things like) "I have never had a chief before... What does a chief eat in winter?" No comment..." says the outgoing chief.

He has a desire to bring harmony to the Nation.

"I sincerely hope that a future leader in Gespeg will be able to benefit from clearly defined roles, responsibilities and powers, that he will be able to choose his vice-leader, benefit from an adequate salary, have his own expense account and have a role not

subject to the control of elected councillors. This would be beneficial for our nation!" he stated.

He indicates that he discussed with the electoral president on October 24 on the consequences of a contestation of the vote, but nothing would change under the current Electoral Code, "contrary to what is usually stipulated in penal codes," he noted.

Nevertheless, he does not intend to give up. "I am contesting the electoral process, because the members were not adequately informed. I have always wanted and asked for a fair electoral process for all. In this sense, I refuse to continue with a council elected by acclamation," said Mr. Tapp, who concluded his message with a union of forces.

"It is essential that we cultivate a climate of respect and kindness, both towards our leaders and among ourselves. It is by joining forces and working hand in hand that we can build a better future for the Micmac Nation of Gespeg. Let us continue to move forward with compassion and openness, ensuring that each voice is heard and

valued," concluded the resigning chief.

On January 26, former chief Terry Shaw resigned, citing family reasons. "This difficult decision is strictly motivated by personal and professional considerations. After much reflection, I have chosen to prioritize my family life above all else and to devote more time to my loved ones," Mr. Shaw stated in the press release.

Terry Shaw was elected chief in February 2020, promising a "wind of change." Before Mr. Shaw was elected, there was a crisis of confidence within the Nation over the reform of the Electoral Code. Serving as a councillor during this time in 2019, he had hoped to resolve this issue before holding elections.

Former Chief Manon Jeanotte also left her position early in February 2019 "for personal and family reasons" after three and a half years as the community's leader. At the time, she denounced "an atmosphere of intimidation within the Nation" and filed a complaint with the Sûreté du Québec in January 2020, alleging "manipulation of the electoral list."



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

## A high-speed train must be backed by regional trains

On October 28, Radio-Canada leaked information indicating that the Canadian government is about to announce that it will finally opt for a high-speed train between Quebec City and Toronto, instead of the high-frequency train announced in the summer of 2023.

The high-frequency train was following a previous decision to pursue a high-speed train, following decades of back and forth about how the country would deal with train transport. Two steps forward were then frequently followed by two steps back, sometimes three or four steps back, as a country standing still, is, in fact, backing up.

Canada is the only country of the seven most industrialized countries, the G7, that functions without a high-speed train. The word "functions" is exaggerated as far as moving people is concerned. We get by, mostly leaving commuting between cities and between regions to individual initiatives, which means individual vehicles.

The result is appalling, environmentally-speaking. The number of cars, sports utility vehicles and pickup trucks that never roll on a dirty road is increasing faster than the population in certain areas. The country and the provinces are therefore repeatedly missing their greenhouse emission targets.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent, sometimes wasted, over the last 40 years to assess either a high-speed train or a high-frequency train. Not a single kilometre of track has been laid in that file. Consultants are cashing in impressive sums of money and potential riders are buying more cars.

In the meantime, Canadian National Rail, privatized in 1995 by the federal government, is laughing at VIA Rail, a public transporter that must use freight lines to move people without counting on a priority right for its passengers. CN is consequently laughing at the government and at Canadians.

Successive governments in Ottawa must find this situation normal, because nobody has moved since the creation of VIA Rail in 1977 to change the prior-

ity of freight over people.

### The project is likely ill-fated

The high-speed train will likely be announced at one point in November, probably by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The leak that favoured Radio-Canada, news-wise, was probably well-planned, as there was undoubtedly a strategy to stop the Liberal Party slide in surveys as soon as possible.

The Conservative Party leader, Pierre Poilievre, a major partisan of automobile use, is however not very keen on a project that could cost a fortune. This is an understatement. In fact, he has so far shown little enthusiasm for certain transportation projects that are already at a more advanced stage. For example, his government would not invest "one cent of federal money" in a tramway project in Quebec City.

It is almost certain that a government led by Pierre Poilievre will axe, again, a high-speed train.

The bill for such a train will be humongous, at an interval between \$80 billion and \$120 billion, according to most experts. This factor feeds the arguments of Pierre Poilievre.

However, at one point in the not-so-distant future, moving people efficiently will become a must for so-called "modern" countries, as efforts to reduce pollution will become compulsory. By then, the cost of building a high-speed train, or at least of offering a decent service to the population, will have become compulsory, and more prohibitive.

In mid-October, Canada's Transport Minister Anita Anand started preparing the media ground by assuring that Ottawa would "move forward", cautiously mentioning a "high-frequency, high-speed train." A day after Radio-Canada's October 28 leak, she pointed out that "the options available to us are extremely exciting," refusing to go any further.

### In the meantime, in the Gaspé Peninsula...

The comments of Minister Anand come almost a year to the day after a November 1, 2023 meeting that regrouped the president of VIA Rail, Mario Pélouquin, two of his assistants and representatives of the Coalition of Gaspésians for the Return of the Passenger Train.

During that meeting, Mr. Pélouquin committed to coming to the Gaspé Peninsula at the end of January or the beginning of February 2024, and meet some stakeholders and further discuss the needs of the population.

Well, a year later, we are still waiting for the president of VIA Rail visit. It is hard to believe that in a full year, he hasn't found the time to come to the Gaspé Peninsula, where that public corporation's service has been suspended for 11 years.

Mario Pélouquin is not managing a corporation that runs over hundreds of routes daily. He is administering, with a large team, a network of tens of routes, in the lower tens, and less than 100 daily departures.

He could have coupled his flight - as VIA Rail's schedule is so depleted that a VIA Rail president rarely travels by train - with a visit to Moncton or Halifax, cities that also suffer from the transporter's shortcomings. About 2 million people live in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, yet only three weekly trains link that part of the country to Central Canada.

The Gaspé Peninsula track has always been serviceable between Matapédia and New Richmond. Since 2020, the Cascapédia-Saint-Jules bridges that seemed to scare VIA Rail's management have been replaced by brand new structures.

A few days or weeks down the road, the line will be serviceable to New Carlisle and Port Daniel before the summer of 2025.

Goodwill commends VIA Rail to resume its service to New Carlisle, considering the negligible impact it would have on its budget, and given that over the last 11 years, the corporation has used the Gaspé Peninsula money to offer services elsewhere. The only service provided to Gaspésians on their territory is a stop at the Matapédia station, where there is no agent.

The Matapédia-New Carlisle service must be reinstated before the next federal election, which will likely take place at the end of the spring or over the fall of 2025. It would then be more embarrassing for a Conservative Party government to axe it.

A year ago, despite making promising statements about the service resumption in the Gaspé Peninsula, Mario Pélouquin was also quick to point out the factors that could delay the return of the passenger train. In the pure tradition of VIA Rail, the hurdles seemed enormous, while a touch of imagination can make them disappear.

The VIA president was worried about the shortage of rolling stock, recruiting staff, the safety of the line and the state of the stations. What has he done over the last year to solve those problems?

If he can't find solutions, he should ask Gaspésians. They are faster than him at solving problems. A passenger train could be back by the second quarter of 2025, if not before, with a touch of common sense.

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# Fisheries Fund allocates \$830,000 to support five innovative projects

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**CHANDLER** - The Quebec Fisheries Fund is investing \$830,000 in five companies in Gaspé Peninsula and Lower Saint Lawrence for innovation projects.

Minister Diane Lebouthillier made the announcement on October 18 in Newport, in the absence of a representative from the Quebec government. The fund is financed 70% by the federal government and 30% by the government of Quebec.

The largest amount, \$450,000, is awarded to the Regroupement des pêcheurs professionnels du Sud de la Gaspésie, for the installation of a new type of trap support.

This will allow approximately a hundred lobster fishermen to place traps one behind the other, enabling them to work more efficiently and more safely during fishing, changing bait and releasing traps.

The federal government is contributing \$316,000, while the Quebec government is contributing \$135,000 for this \$1 million set of projects. Private firms are contributing for the balance.

Aquaculture Gaspésie is receiving \$100,000 to install an ozone water treatment system, which will increase productivity by optimizing water quality, a \$274,000 project. Raymer Aquaculture is receiving \$86,000 for a similar project estimated to cost \$99,000. Two companies in the Lower St. Lawrence are also receiving contributions from the fund.

Organic Oceans Incorporated receives \$100,000 for the acquisition and installation of a bottling line for liquid seaweed extract for the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges plant, near Trois-Pistoles. This project, aimed at automating production processes, will increase productivity and address the challenges of labour shortages. The new equipment will also allow the company to bottle smaller formats of seaweed extract, ranging from 0.5 litres to five litres. The project is valued at \$128,000.

Lastly, Pêcherie IANC and Ian Chouinard will receive \$95,000 for the acquisition and installation of a complete automation system for baiting to hauling in the Atlantic halibut fishery aboard a longliner.

This system will improve fish quality by reducing handling and exposure time out of the water. The \$105,000 project will also reduce the risk of injury to the crew.

"It is important to support the entrepreneurs who presented the projects and to highlight the important work to prepare our world for today's fisheries, but also for the future," explains the Minister of Fisheries and Member of Parliament for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Diane Lebouthillier.

"We still have many projects on the table that are being evaluated and projects that will affect redfish because it is important. When we reopen the redfish fishery, we need funds to help the sector adapt to this new "old fishery," which was closed for 30 years," added Ms. Lebouthillier.

On the subject of the redfish fishery, the minister points out that the fishing was announced in January, and discussions with the redfish advisory committee are ongoing.

"We want to avoid food waste. We are moving forward slowly with the market openings. That is why the reopening was done over two years precisely to allow for adaptation. It is still progressing smoothly, and I hope that in the coming years everyone will be able to take advantage of it and have some on the table to consume," says the Minister.

In Quebec City, the office of the Minister of Fisheries indicated that André Lamontagne and his assistant, the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, were unavailable for the announcement. Minister Lebouthillier did not explain their absence. "At the federal level, it is important to support entrepreneurs who have submitted projects," she said.

## Newport Slipway

During the press briefing, boater Vincent Moreau questioned the minister about the slipway, which is no longer functional due to its advanced deterioration.

"We are stuck and, now, are we going to be forced to leave our boats in the water this winter? Requests have been made by the Crabbers Association," stated Mr.

Moreau.

"The slipways are a provincial government responsibility. It would have been interesting to have representatives of the provincial government here today. It is a provincial responsibility. They are the ones who can answer. We, at Fisheries and Oceans, are responsible for the wharves," replied Diane Lebouthillier.

Three sailboats and several fishing boats were unable to be taken out of the water for the winter.

"They're passing the ball. That's what we see. I'm not in politics, but we're experiencing a real problem and when the ball bounces, it doesn't move the issue forward," Mr.

Moreau emphasizes.

In Quebec City, Minister Lamontagne's office responded by saying that they are "sensitive to the situation. It's an important infrastructure for the region's economic activity. We are already in communication with regional stakeholders and the various ministries. We are currently exploring solutions," they stated in an email.


## Confidence in the Prime Minister's leadership

Recently, four additional ministers announced their departure at the end of the current mandate, amid a letter circulating among some thirty elected officials calling for the

resignation of Liberal leader and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Minister Lebouthillier does not believe this has shaken confidence in her leader. "No, not at all," she replied immediately, explaining that each of the four ministers had personal reasons for stepping down, Marie-Claude Bibeau, for instance, has expressed interest in running for mayor of Sherbrooke, and Filomena Tassi is stepping down due to her spouse's illness.

"But that does not call into question the leadership of the Prime Minister, not at all," the minister assured, reaffirming her support. She also confirmed that she plans to run in the next election.


Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada
Pêches et Océans  
Canada

## Notice of Application to Dispose of Waste or Other Matter at Sea

Notice is hereby given that Fisheries and Oceans Canada, located at 104 Dalhousie Street, Québec, (QC), intends on this 6th day of November 2024 to apply to Environment and Climate Change Canada for

FOUR DISPOSAL AT SEA PERMITS  
under the *CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1999*

to load dredged material in the following harbours in the Gaspé Peninsula for the purpose of disposal at sea at the disposal sites mentioned below, and by the following methods: clamshell dredger, excavator or hydraulic dredge and towed scows.


Harbour	Quantity in cubic metres (m <sup>3</sup> ) place measure	Disposal site	Proposed dates for loading and disposal activities
Port-Daniel (48.18233° N. and 64.96150° W. NAD83)	4 000	PD-6 (48.13500° N. and 64.94167° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2025 to March 14, 2026
Anse-à-Brillant (48.72117° N. and 64.28950° W. NAD83)	5 500	ABR-1 (48.73200° N. and 64.28200° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2025 to March 14, 2026
Anse-à-Beaufils (48.47200° N. and 64.30607° W. NAD83)	6 000	AB-5 (48.45000° N. and 64.25000° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2025 to March 14, 2026
Saint-Godefroi (48.07310° N. and 65.11478° W. NAD83)	8 000	SG-2 (48.04500° N. and 65.08333° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2025 to March 14, 2026

For further information regarding these activities, please contact:

Maxime Doyon  
Project Technician  
Small Craft Harbours  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Quebec Region  
104 Dalhousie Street  
Québec, QC  
G1K 7Y7  
Maxime.doyon@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

The public may raise environmental concerns related to this notice or obtain information on the permit issuance process by contacting the nearest Disposal at Sea Program regional office:

Environment and Climate Change Canada, Quebec Region  
Environmental Protection Operations Directorate  
Disposal at Sea Program Coordinator  
105 McGill Street, 4th floor  
Montréal, QC  
H2Y 2E7  
Tel.: 438-342-1563  
Immersionqc-disposalatseaqc@ec.gc.ca



# Possible strikes in the region's CPEs

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER - Workers at Early Childhood Centres (CPEs) affiliated with the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) have begun strike votes, with initial results indicating strong support for pressure tactics. Members of the Union of CPE Workers in the MRC of Bonaventure approved a five-day strike by 94% on October 22 and, on October 23, workers at the New Richmond facilities unanimously supported the measure to be used when necessary.

Salaries and working conditions are the main issues. "But also the recognition of educators in CPEs. Increasingly, there is untrained labour, setbacks on leave. There is all the catching up with the public sector. Educators are going to the public sector because the salaries are higher," explains the regional vice president of the Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux de la CSN, Gaétan Leblanc.

Other CSN affiliated CPEs in the region will complete



53 spaces in a new CPE are unoccupied due to a lack of educators.

Photo: Facebook

their strike votes by November 15. "The workers are mobilized. The votes are coming out very, very strongly everywhere. We expect similar results," says Mr. Leblanc, adding that the negotiations are currently stalled.

The current conditions make it difficult to recruit new staff. "The conditions are better in schools or in the public service. Since there is a shortage of staff, the workload is higher. Children with special needs require a lot of supervi-

sion. The more we improve working conditions, the easier it will be to recruit," believes the union representative.

The newly opened CPE La Belle journée in Chandler, which opened in early October, is already facing staffing issues due to the lack of qualified educators. The average CPE educator earns \$29 per hour, according to Mr. Leblanc. "We are at least looking for parity with the school environment and for the CPEs in the region. We are asking to

integrate the regional disparity premium. This is one of the requests," says Mr. Leblanc.

Although a general strike is not on the table, Mr. Leblanc notes, "If we do not reach a

settlement, we will go back to consult the members. We know that the workers are very mobilized."

The CSN points out that in 2021, the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) estimated that it would need nearly 18,000 additional workers to create 37,000 new subsidized spaces by March 31, 2025.

The government thus committed to "ensuring that every child can have a space in educational childcare services." However, as of July 31, 2024, over 34,000 children remained on the waiting list.

The union points out that current recruitment efforts rely heavily on hiring unqualified staff who lack essential training, which, according to the Auditor General's report from May 2024, has led to quality issues in services.

## Daniel Leboeuf is the new mayor of Percé

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ - Former pharmacist Daniel Leboeuf will lead Percé for the next year, following his victory in the by-election triggered by Cathy Poirier's resignation on July 2.

Mr. Leboeuf obtained 49.5% of the vote, defeating his closest rival, Olivier Lafontaine, who earned 34.2% in his second attempt at the position. The two other candidates lagged behind, with Linton Couture receiving 8.52% and Alexandre Vibert Daraïche 7.69%.

"I want to thank the citizens of Percé who gave me this mandate," said the new mayor following the announcement of his victory on October 27. Mr. Leboeuf's victory was to be made official on November 1 after the usual checks, specified the returning officer, Gemma Vibert. That is when the work will officially begin.

The mandate will last only one year, until the next general election in November 2025.

"The priorities will be imposed by force of circumstances: the new assessment



Percé's new mayor, Daniel Leboeuf

Photo: N. Sergerie

role has just been filed and it will be necessary to study it, to make a budget accordingly and to begin union negotiations in addition to the report of the Commission municipale du Québec which will be filed in November," indicated the new mayor.

The work climate has been strained in recent months between the town hall and the employees.

"I am convinced that many of them voted for me! We will also have union negotiations.

We will try to find a climate of agreement that will restore harmony. See to the hiring of staff who have resigned or who have left," hopes the newly elected.

Observers had anticipated a slightly closer election.

"I thought so, but I'm happy to see that, after 25 years, I've made connections with citizens from Val-d'Espoir to Barachois. I know people at the professional and community level. I think that's what it reflects," says Mr. Leboeuf.

## CPE unable to operate at full capacity due to an educator shortage

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - The newly opened Centre de la petite enfance (CPE) La Belle journée in Chandler, which added 71 new daycare spaces, is not able to operate at full capacity due to a shortage of early childhood educators. Since opening near the town centre on October 8, only 18 children have been accommodated out of the facility's 71 available spaces.

The CPE currently requires ten additional educators to reach full-service capacity. The director, Hélène McInnis, mentions that two people are in training in an 18-month study path program. Presently, 10 of the 15 spaces designed for infants are filled, and an additional group of eight 'multi-age' children has been created.

Management assures parents and the community that efforts are underway to open up the remaining spots as soon as possible.

The project, valued at \$3.2 million, was completed within the revised budget.

To help address the childcare needs in the area, the MRC du Rocher-Percé has renewed its financial assistance program, allocating \$85,000 to encourage people to become childcare providers in the region. The first funding envelope, financed through the wind energy royalties, has been fully utilized.

"The first program was very effective. New childcare services were created. Educators also renewed all of their equipment," explains the Rocher-Percé MRC prefect, Samuel Parisé.

Through this first program, more than thirty people received support.

The CPE La belle journée coordinates the service, and the community service in Val-d'Espoir, which had been temporarily closed, has now reopened under new management by a couple. Additionally, a pilot project has been submitted to the Quebec government to offer a similar service in Chandler, in collaboration with a local company.





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# Remember yes, but what...

TOM EDEN

With every passing year, the memory of the remarkable contribution of those from our region who served during times of war gradually fades away. None of us are old enough to remember the First World War, and there is less than a handful of Gaspesian World War Two Veterans still living today. The impact of places names such as Vimy, Ypres, Juno Beach, Ortona has lessened with each successive Remembrance Day. Yet the events that occurred on those far away battlefields fundamentally transformed our region in ways that are felt to this day.

At the time of the First World War, young people from our region volunteered in droves to join in on a fight an ocean away motivated by a combination of elements such as an appetite for adventure, an opportunity to earn a steady salary, and a sense of duty towards our country. Peer pressure, whether implied or explicit, also loomed large. "If



Photo: T. Eden

Unknown Canadian soldier, Sai Wan Military Cemetery, Hong Kong.

my friends and neighbours are willing to sign up to fight, I too must go..." The result of this effort was the loss of hundreds of young men sacrificed on the killing fields of France and Belgium, and even more who returned badly injured, maimed, and forever transformed from overseas. The Town of Gaspé for example, with a population of less than

2000 at the time, saw 38 of its young men fall in the fighting of World War One, with many more returning with physical and mental injuries the severity of which most of us cannot begin to imagine. If that wasn't enough suffering, the following generation was also called upon to bear arms in the name of justice and freedom, and just as those before them,

they answered in droves, and marched off to war.

A group of 203 Gaspesians, motivated in large part by a willingness to help in the fight to help liberate Europe from the grips of Germany's tyrannical, fanatical, military machine, instead found themselves across the Pacific to assist in the defence of one of Great Britain's faraway

colonies in Hong Kong. A mission that was doomed from the start. Consider the impact for a town like New Richmond, where, within a radius of 20 kilometres or so, 52 young men, members of the Royal Rifles of Canada, suffered through a brutal battle that saw them overwhelmed by a fanatical enemy, who held a distinct numerical and firepower advantage, and were then held as prisoners of war, used as slave labour, while suffering through disease, malnutrition, as well as physical and psychological abuse. Thirteen of those 52 did not return, those who did, were forever transformed.

Most of us, whose families have lived in the region for generations, have our own connection to military history. A grandfather, an uncle, a brother or sister, who served. While we may not have any personal memories of war, we can all do our part in keeping the memory of their service and sacrifice alive by learning about the previous generations' experiences. Let the internet searches begin...



## Remembrance Day Tribute

A Salute to

Their Courage,  
Service and Sacrifice



























**Les Matériaux Gaspésiens**



125 rue Desroches, Paspébiac, Québec  
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**11 NOVEMBER**  
REMEMBRANCE DAY

THE GASPÉ SPEC

## Remembrance Day Schedule

**Gaspé**  
10:45 a.m. Meeting at the Cenotaph.  
11:11 a.m. Shooting of the cannon.  
12:00 noon Closing.  
12:30 p.m. Lunch at the Legion with veterans.

**New Carlisle**  
10:50 a.m. Meeting at the Cenotaph.  
11 a.m. Ceremony begins.  
The community is invited after the ceremony to the Legion for a luncheon.

**New Richmond**  
10:50 a.m. Ceremony at the New Richmond Cenotaph.  
Followed by a lunch at the Golden Age.



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Remembrance Day




**CASA**

11 NOVEMBER  
REMEMBRANCE DAY

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**Municipality of New Carlisle**  
138 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd,  
New Carlisle, Quebec  
418-752-3141

Lest We Forget





## Fallen Leaves

Oh, the Autumn leaves are falling,  
And Remembrance Day draws near.  
And we wonder just how many  
Of our Vets are left this year.

From bygone wars and battlefields,  
No pen can really tell  
Just what those souls, who gave their best,  
Saw in that living hell.

The coloured leaves lie on the ground  
And soon are blown away,  
Yet fallen sons and daughters  
Are still in our hearts today.

When we mark that special day  
And hear the bugle sound,  
And taps are played and wreaths are laid,  
A prayer in every heart is found.

Oh, God, please grant them perfect peace  
For which they fought and many died,  
And every living soldier have  
A heart that overflows with pride.

To us to whom they passed that torch,  
As told 'In Flanders Fields,'  
May we remember every day  
The special freedom victory yields.

We salute the brave this time of year  
And never let the memories fade  
Of those who made that valiant stand  
And that supreme dear price have paid.

-Art MacPherson

## Remembering the Brave

Throughout our small towns Canadians recognize what November 11 represents. It is a day for remembering the brave young men and women who served in the military, armed forces, and navy, who paid a heavy price for their sacrifices that allow us to be here today.

Let's stand and pause on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month, to honour their courage, strength and bravery with a moment of silence. It is because of them that we are free today. Keep in your hearts that all of them gave us this right to live as we do.

Appreciation is a token of the dedication and freedom we hold today, which will stay in our hearts forever. It's hard to forget someone who gave us so much. Let's remember them.

-Ken Ross

## Musée militaire de la Baie-des-Chaleurs Military Museum



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[www.mmbdc.ca](http://www.mmbdc.ca)

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### Grande Rivière

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**Website:** [DLebouthillier.Liberal.ca](http://DLebouthillier.Liberal.ca)

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REMEMBRANCE DAY  
*Lest We Forget*



# SOLAR ENERGY TENDERS: A positive step, according to Nergica

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Hydro-Québec's recent decision to seek 300 megawatts of solar energy through upcoming calls for tender is being welcomed by Gaspé-based renewable energy expertise centre, Nergica.

Hydro-Québec aims to have these solar projects connected to its network by 2029, with the first tender for 150 megawatts expected by the end of this year.

With these initiatives, the Quebec government is addressing current and future energy needs while growing the solar sector and providing affordable electricity to Quebecers. "We are entering a pool that is already well-occupied. We are behind when we compare ourselves to other jurisdictions, even at the Canadian level," notes Nergica chief executive officer Frédéric Côté.

"Hydro-Québec remains cautious. It is 300 megawatts that will be cut into small pieces, with several small-scale projects that will favour land or surfaces that are already used or undervalued. We are thinking of former technical landfill sites and roofs - to avoid taking land



Photo: Hydro-Québec

*Hydro-Québec's solar farm in Varennes, Montérégie.*

that could be used for other purposes," notes Mr. Côté.

"However, this small-step approach risks elevating prices. We risk ending up with solar projects that are perhaps a little more expensive in terms of the cost per kilowatt/hour rather than a larger project approach to achieve economies of scale," explains the director.

Hydro-Québec has two experimental projects in Montérégie. "Hydro-Québec built small 10-megawatt farms on the South Shore of Montreal to get a foothold. What we're seeing today is Hydro-Québec

saying it is up for it. We also see the maturity of the sector. Costs have fallen sharply over the past 10 years. It's a form of production that meets Hydro-Québec's requirements," explains Mr. Côté, adding that it is difficult to compare the costs of solar versus wind, especially as future projects will involve thousands of megawatts.

"But wind remains the most economical solution. For solar, I hesitate to give a figure, but we will see the results of the calls for tender. We can expect that solar will be a little more

expensive than wind," he says.

The Quebec government aims to double Hydro-Québec's production. This project will contribute to achieving Quebec's carbon neutrality target by 2050.

The development of solar energy aims, in particular, to complement the supply of wind energy since the use of solar panels is a promising way to produce energy during the summer, while wind turbines are more useful in the winter.

"This statement can be qualified, but there is indeed more sun in the summer. There is indeed more wind in the winter. We operate a solar test site in Rivière-au-Renard and our best production month is April.

In addition to the longer sunshine, we benefit from the low temperatures. The cooler temperature means that the panels produce more and we benefit from the albedo effect, which is the reflection of light on the snow," explains Mr. Côté.

The first call for tenders aims to acquire at least half of the 300-megawatt block, to be

launched by December 31, 2024. The second tender will secure the remaining megawatts for connection to the grid by December 31, 2029.

Hydro-Québec estimates that new energy supplies will be necessary starting in 2027 to meet Quebec's growing energy needs.

Hydro-Québec's 2035 Action Plan outlines the integration of solar farms into the distribution grid to reach a total of 300 megawatts.

In anticipation of this launch, economic, social and environmental concerns have been raised by the Quebec government, including the installation of photovoltaic solar energy production equipment on artificial surfaces; a secondary electricity production activity to the main use or a revaluation of the site; the maximization of Quebec content; the adhesion of the local community in order to promote harmonious development of ground-based solar photovoltaic installations and the connection to the Hydro-Québec distribution network.

## New temporary work on the René-Lévesque House

Nelson Sergerie

NEW CARLISLE - The Ministry of Culture has undertaken work to protect the integrity of the René-Lévesque house in New Carlisle while plans for its restoration are developed, which could take several more months.

Renovations began on October 28 to keep the building in a stable condition while various studies and assessments are conducted. This work will precede the eventual restoration and rehabilitation of the heritage home.

"The work that will be carried out aims to prevent water infiltration and to solidify certain structural elements of the house. They include the demolition of certain exterior elements that are not original, the stabilization of the east part of the gallery as well as the installation of a temporary white vinyl covering on certain façades," mentions in-writing the ministry, which took two weeks to respond to the request filed by The SPEC. The work is expected to be completed by December 6.

Planning for the restoration and rehabilitation of the house is progressing alongside the preservation efforts.

The development of the needs program and the production of the functional and technical program with a view to producing the plans and specifications will provide an estimate of the real costs, although a booklet produced following the Government of Quebec's acquisition of the building in 2021 estimated the work at approximately \$800,000.

"The next steps to be taken for the restoration and rehabilitation project are as follows: conducting a summary code study to confirm the possibilities of use, developing the needs program and producing the functional and technical program with a view to producing the plans and specifications," the ministry states.

"A significant amount of work to document the house has been started and is still in progress. Old photographs have been found, providing evidence of the appearance of the house at the time of its occupation by René Lévesque's family in the 1920s," explains the ministry.

"The expertise of the Centre de conservation du Québec is also being used to document the persistent material traces that bear witness not only to this period, but also to the broader evolution of the house since its construction around 1905. In the restoration and rehabilitation project, the ministry wants to restore the appearance of the house, on the outside, when it was occupied by the Lévesque family, and to preserve the significant traces still present on the inside," the ministry emphasizes.

As for the future of the house, discussions are ongoing with various local partners, including Espace René-Lévesque.

"Announcements will be made at the appropriate time," the ministry emphasizes.

## Labour relations are said to be difficult within the Gaspé fire brigade

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - A toxic atmosphere is reportedly affecting the work climate within the Gaspé fire brigade.

According to information obtained by The SPEC, the chief, Carl Synnott, was recently suspended for a week in connection with a harassment case. The Town of Gaspé, citing employee confidentiality, could neither confirm or deny this information. When questioned by The SPEC, the CNESST confirmed that "a prevention-inspection intervention file was opened for the Town of Gaspé fire station and an intervention was carried out on July 23, 2024, to verify compliance with the Act respecting occupational health and safety and the regulations applicable to psychosocial risks."

An order was issued by the inspector for the employer to train workers on psychosocial risks. The employer was also asked to designate a responsible person regarding the procedure for filing and processing complaints and for workers to have access to the 2024 version of the prevention program. The employer has committed to addressing these issues and the CNESST will follow up by the end of the year.

"There was an investigation opened following a complaint but, recently, the investigation was closed following a follow-up with us and with the complainant. I can't go into more detail because the file falls under human resources," stated the Town's Director General, Jocelyn Villeneuve.

The Town has commissioned a study on the entire department. "There is an analysis of the work climate that is underway. We did business with the Carrefour du capital humain, which is a branch of the UMQ," notes the Director General. The UMQ is Quebec's Municipal Union.

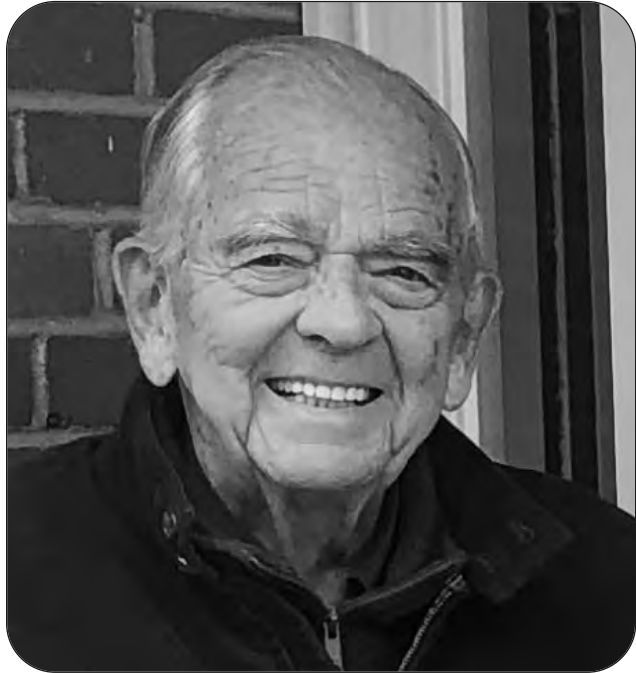
"This is a first step to have a good picture and possible solutions if there are elements to improve," he added, noting that participation in the meetings has been high.

This review is part of a larger initiative by the Director General, who has been evaluating all town services since his appointment in February 2023, to enhance efficiency.

# Announcements



## Obituary



### CHISHOLM: James (Bob) Weston

April 13, 1930 – October 20, 2024.

Bob passed away peacefully at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Hospital in Toronto in his 95th year, after a brief illness with cancer.

Bob was predeceased by his wife and best friend of 42 years, Betty (née Empringham, 2008).

Survived by his children Stephen, Anne Gostick (Rick) and Catherine Mills (Chris d. 2023) and his grandchildren Amy, Ryan, Claire and Marcus. Also survived by his special friend, Beatrix Krug.

Bob was born and raised on the Gaspé Coast in New Carlisle, Quebec, where he began his 41-year career with the Bank of Nova Scotia that took him across Canada, eventually settling in Toronto. He retired in 1989. In retirement, Bob and Betty enjoyed traveling to Clearwater Beach, Florida, and spending time at the family cottage on Farlain Lake, Penetang, where they entertained friends and family for many years.

He was an amazing husband, father, grandfather and friend. He always looked forward to frequent family visits and loved spoiling his grandchildren. His grandchildren adored him, with his playful manner and loved learning about his vast knowledge of science and listening to his endless stories.

Bob was very interested in family history and wrote books on Betty's Heron and his Chisholm families in addition to writing his personal memoirs. These will be cherished for many years to come.

Bob was an active member in the Don Mills community, where he lived since 1965. He was also very involved with Bethesda United Church and later Jubilee United Church. Bob and Betty enjoyed playing bridge with friends in several groups from the church

and attending many social events.

A private family interment will take place. A celebration of life will be held at Kane-Jerrett Funeral Homes, 8088 Yonge St, Thornhill, Ontario, L4J 1W3 on Saturday, November 30, 2024, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society or Sunnybrook Palliative Care would be appreciated.



## Tribute

### COFFIN: Carter

1933-2024

"I am a firm believer in luck and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."

More than fifteen years ago on an early Monday morning I was washing dishes at Century Lodge in Haldimand. We had hosted a large party on Saturday night. The Sunday had seen heavy snow and howling winds. Monday was the nearest day for cleanup. I parked my car on the street, climbed over the huge snow bank and cleaned off the front entrance.

I had drawn hot water and put a kettle on. Then I heard a noise outside. I peeked out the window and saw a familiar truck with a plow attached. A half hour later the door opened and in came Carter Coffin. He and I were lodge members for the past twenty years and Carter and I had sat as school commissioners for twelve. All the members of the lodge saw Carter as a highly valued member, a man who repaired our plumbing and opened our yard, all free of charge.

Carter brought a chair out to the kitchen and sat down. "I'm just about to have a cup of tea. Why not join me?" Carter replied that he would but that he could not stay too long as he and Ada always had their noon lunch around 11:30 a.m. I poured each of us a cup.

For some inexplicable reason we began to speak about our lives. I complimented Carter for his successful happy life, his beautiful and spacious home, all the farm equipment he owned, his achieving family and his impeccable care to his property. "Yes," said Carter. "I've really had good luck. But I married a hard-working woman who has supported me every step of the way." I agreed with him, but then added, "but don't forget what the father of the US Constitution said about luck." I then repeated the quotation from Thomas Jefferson with which I preface this memorial.

"You see, Carter, your good luck comes from the hard work and careful choices you made throughout your life." "Well, you're right in saying that. I did work hard in my sailing days upon the Great Lakes, my years at Murdochville and the years I worked for the sisters at the Monastery."

"There, you see Carter, you earned your luck by working sun up to sun down. You and Ada even took cleaning jobs after your regular day had ended. You and the family cleaned warehouses and offices. My wife told about you and your wife and kids cleaning the student residence where she lived. Your children were polite and happy, always with a smile on their faces."

I reminded Carter that we had first met at Wakeham School in 1969. It was a Saturday evening. Carter was coming up from the school basement with tools in hand and wearing a pair of overalls. He was a local commissioner and had already begun his repair work in any school he represented. If the break was within his ability to repair, Carter would be found at the site after his regular day had ended. His motive was simple: to save impact on the school's maintenance budget with plumber and electrician bills. Again, I said "You earned your good luck by your hard work."

Carter knew in fine details about the plumbing and electrical systems of Wakeham, Gaspé Elementary and Belle Anse Schools. In 1988, in early August, at a time in which I was commissioner of Belle Anse, the entire septic system of the school shut down. Toilets would not flush and water appeared in the back wash drains. In spite of super human efforts by Orley Devouge, the then janitor, the problem persisted. Orley and I were soon joined by Carter in a four-day effort to solve the blockage. Fortunately, Carter knew where all the exterior drainage pipes were located. We hired a back hoe and disturbed a minimum of excavating ground in the yard.

I remember well the final day of our work at Belle Anse School. Carter picked me up in Douglastown. As we drove down to Belle Anse, Carter looked across and said, "Well, Gary, I think we'll clean her out today." Confused, I replied, "What?" "The pipes at Belle Anse. What the hell do you think I meant?" I then realized that Carter had personified Belle Anse School. It was now a 'she'. An inanimate building had been raised to the status of person! Remarkable!

Carter's more than forty years as school commissioner saw him guard the Board's budgets with intense scrutiny, denouncing waste and irresponsibility, but always with comic interventions. He abhorred incompetence and, above all, laziness. During all of his comments at Century Lodge and at New Carlisle, I never once heard Carter swear. His language was colourful but always clean.

Space does not allow me to write more about this unique and hardworking and "lucky" man. Carter gave to the Gaspé the very same values that his Nantucket ancestors brought to our shore. I don't believe that we will meet his kind again. Rest well, dear mentor and eternal friend. From all who knew you, a deep thank you. - Gary Briand




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# Announcements



## In Memory



**DEVOUGE: Lorna Harrison**

In memory of my loving wife, Lorna Harrison Devouge who passed away November 8, 2021.

Sadly missed by Ivan and his sons Doug and Gord. Loved forever.

[thegaspespec.com](http://thegaspespec.com)



**LEGRAND: Evelyn**

November 7, 1932 - November 6, 2018

In loving memory of a wonderful wife, mother and grandmother.

*So dearly loved and never forgotten.*

Loved and remembered by the family.

**Deadline for this page is Wednesday at 4 p.m**

## Card of Thanks



On behalf of the family of Mr. Carter Coffin, we would like to thank everyone for their heartfelt sympathies, thoughts, and prayers. The family sincerely appreciates the visits and phone calls from loved ones, the beautiful flowers, cards, and food. During this time of sadness, it is very heartwarming to witness our community's generosity.

*Thank you*

# COAST ROUND-UP

COAST ROUND-UP: \$8 per week  
CLASSIFIED: \$8 per week

**YORK:**

**York AWC**

**November 16:** The York ACW will be holding a Christmas Tea and Sale at 2 p.m. at the York Hall. There will be handicrafts, baked goods, mystery parcels, white elephant table and used books. Afternoon tea will be served for \$7. All are welcome.

**BARACHOIS:**

**Barachois Legion Branch 261**

**November 11:** All military members, serving and retired are invited to the Legion for an Open House from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. The Legion Open House will provide an opportunity for us to come together as a community and pay tribute.

**HOPE TOWN:**

**Sports Club**

**November 30:** A Christmas gift bingo will be held at the Hope Town Community Centre starting at 7 p.m.

**HOPE:**

**Hope Baptist Church**

**Sundays:** Sunday School starting at 10 a.m. Worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

**NEW CARLISLE:**

**LIFE Association**

**November 19:** The LIFE Association will hold its Annual General Meeting at the Anchor beginning at 4 p.m. Come and learn what our association has been doing for mentally handicapped adults this past year and get a report on our financial situation. All are welcome.

**NEW CARLISLE:**

**New Carlisle Legion**

**Remembrance Day:** If you would like to purchase a wreath for Remembrance Day, they can be picked up on November 6 between 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the New Carlisle Legion. The cost of a wreath is \$25. If you have any questions or require further information please contact Betty Chedore at

581-233-2068.

**Mondays:** Mini bingo beginning at 7 p.m.

**Wednesdays:** Line Dancing beginning at 7:30 p.m.

**Every Friday:** Open at 7:30 p.m. drop in to play pool, shuffleboard, etc.

**NEW CARLISLE:**

**Bible Chapel Meetings**

**Sundays:** Breaking of Bread for believers - 9:30 a.m., Gospel meeting and Sunday School - 2 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Prayer Meeting and Bible Study - 7 p.m. Everyone welcome! For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

**NEW RICHMOND:**

**St. Andrew's United Church**

**November 30:** Come join us between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. in our Coffee shop with music and storytelling. Coffee, tea and sweets will be provided, as we listen to music and share stories of

our memories of St. Andrew's throughout the years.

**December 1:** A celebration with Holy Communion will take place. All partners who helped us throughout the years are invited to the service, which will be followed by a luncheon in the hall.

**CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: 50+ Club**

**November 16:** Craft Sale at 319 Rte 299, Cascapedia-St-Jules. If anyone is inter-

ested in having a table please contact Linda at 418-392-0595.

**Tuesdays:** Grocery bingo every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. \$10 for three cards. Extra cards are \$1 each.

**CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: Book Room**

Please be advised that the book room is now open. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

**UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND**

**November 10**  
10 a.m. Service

**UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN**

**November 10**  
2 p.m. Service

**PARISH OF GASPÉ**

**November 10**  
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# A History of the Protestant Churches of the Cascapedia Bay Area

CYNTHIA DOW

**CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES** - This November, St Andrew's United Church in New Richmond will celebrate 185 years of service to the surrounding communities. A number of special events are being held this fall, including a "Teaspoon night" cooking competition on October 19, a Coffee Shop afternoon on November 30, and Holy Communion on Saturday, December 1.

In light of this milestone, SPEC is therefore taking a look back, sharing a series of historical vignettes of a very special building and congregation, with ties to British nobility and the very roots of the United Church of Canada.

*This article was prepared with assistance from Alice Campbell Dell, her uncle Arthur Prentice Campbell and her mother Mary Maclean Campbell.*

## The roots of St Andrew's United Church

By: Alice Campbell Dell

When our Protestant forefathers arrived in New Richmond in the late 1700s, there was no established church to minister to their religious needs. The New Richmond Bay area was the site of an established Mi'kmaq community. The first European settlers to arrive in the

area were principally displaced French Acadians searching for a place to dwell in peace, United Empire Loyalists who had lost all in the American Revolution, Irish immigrants escaping famine and land enclosures, and dispossessed Scottish crofters.

These groups of unwanted and dispossessed came together in this beautiful but stern land. Side by side and largely ignored by the rest of the world, they cleared the land and began small farms. They fished and found that the sea and the rivers could yield a good harvest. A shipyard was established by Mr. William Cuthbert who came from Prince Edward Island in the early 1800s, and the local settlers were employed in harvesting timber for sale in Great Britain.

As there was no established church, the early settlers had to organize their own worship and rely on visiting Ministers or travel to Dalhousie, New Brunswick, for baptisms and marriages. The evolution of the first Church of Scotland - later Scottish Presbyterian, and finally the United Church of Canada, was not a smooth process. Official records detail difficulties, obstacles, efforts, challenges, dramas, disputes, and adversities.

Today, St Andrew's United Church in New Richmond still exists as a result of the strenu-



Photos: Courtesy Alice Campbell Dell

*St Andrew's New Richmond, taken about 1900 with the Manse in the background.*

ous devotion and work of hundreds of people who attended, supported, worked, and gave gladly without recognition for this beloved church - some of these come from our own lifetime - and many have gone nameless over the years.

## The first Protestant church is in Black Cape

According to local history, the first Protestant Church to be built in this area was a log structure erected about 1831 in Black Cape. It was a Church of Scotland because of the many Scottish settlers here - and it was erected on land donated by Daniel Fairservice. Sometime in the late 1800s the church was converted into a schoolhouse and a new building was constructed in 1895 on land pro-

cured from the Brake and Johnston families.

This little Presbyterian church became a United Church in 1925, and served its members until 1963, when it was closed. It was dismantled in 1974 when the property was expropriated by the Department of Roads when Highway 132 was modified.

Before Rev. Peter Lindsay came to the New Richmond Presbyterian Pastoral Charge in 1879, services were held exclusively in the church at New Richmond. After 1879, services were held every second Sunday afternoon at Black Cape.

## The challenge of finding ministers

One of the biggest challenges for the fledgling congre-

gations was finding ministers. The Stewart family possess a letter written in 1824 by an early Stewart settler to a brother in Scotland stating that it would indeed be a good thing if a minister could be persuaded to come and preach in "the forests of North America".

Early records detail the lengthy negotiations and extensive searches undertaken to find the first ministers. Sometimes years passed between ministry appointments. The first church building may have been completed in 1831, but it was not until 1839 that the Rev. John Brooks, newly ordained, moved to the area to serve the Cascapedia Bay community.

With the arrival of Rev. Brooks, the congregation decided it was time to build a new and larger church. The site was a matter of divided opinion - some wanted the building to be erected on Munroe's (now Taylor's) Point, others preferring the Grove - or Burying Ground property. (Before 1839, the cemetery located beside St. Andrew's was known as "the Burying Ground". Local tradition says that the Burying Ground was first used for a sailor named Peter Oar, who drowned trying to swim ashore from a ship at anchor in the harbour. A crude stone with the letters P. O. marks his grave.)

Cont'd on page 15

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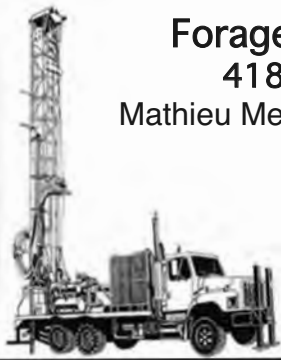
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## CHURCH:

▶ *Cont'd from page 14*

Eventually it was agreed that whichever side of the Little Cascapedia River contributed the most money to the building fund should have the church. The New Richmond side won with 164 pounds 19 pence compared to Black Cape's 84 pounds 16 pence.

The New Richmond contributions were bolstered substantially by donations from William Cuthbert, the ship-builder and lumber baron. Mr. Cuthbert and his successors, the Montgomery family, were called upon many times to shore up the flickering finances of the church with loans and timely gifts. The settlers had little or no money. Many made their contributions in produce, lumber, and labour for lack of cash, and these donations are faithfully recorded in old church records.

### St Andrew's is raised

The current New Richmond United Church was built on land donated by John Doddridge, with the cornerstone of the new church laid on St. Andrew's Day, November 30, 1839. Mr. Robert Brash prepared the plan and framed the building. The cost of the building was £453.12.2 ½ (approximately \$764.71 in today's dollars) and was raised by the parishioners and heavily subsidized by the William Cuthbert family. A manse to house the incumbent was to follow in 1854.

At Mr. Cuthbert's death in 1854, the church still owed him £51, but Mrs. Cuthbert and her daughter relinquished all claims to the debt providing the church not be allowed "to fall into decay for want of the expenditure of a few pounds".

### Sale of pews and woodstoves

From memory, R. L. Montgomery provided a description of the floor plan of the interior of the early church. A row of pews hugged the wall on each



*The Presbyterian and then United Church in Black Cape was dismantled to make way when Route 132 was changed.*

side from end to end. These pews were straight-backed seats closed in by a little door. Where the side seats are now situated were two pairs of larger box-shaped pews with seats along their four walls and a table in the center. These pews drew a higher price, as families were required to buy their pews.

The pulpit was high, and reached by a stairway, there being no platform in the early years. Over the pulpit, a canopy hung to act as a sounding board to amplify the voice of the minister. The door to the small vestry, the only addition to the main building, was at the left front.

At the back of the church, near the entry, stood two stoves. Their pipes passed over the heads of the congregation to the chimney behind the pulpit. Oil lamps with reflectors were bracketed to the walls. As the congregation grew, a third row of pews was placed down the center of the church. Seats were also sold in the gallery, which was larger than at present, extending nearly half the length of the building. It is believed that the seats currently in the gallery are the original ones.

### A noble attendance in 1896

*By: Cynthia Dow*

Sir John Campbell Hamilton Gordon of Aberdeen, Scotland, served as Canada's Governor-General from 1893 to 1898. Lord Aberdeen had purchased the Stanley House from his predecessor, Lord Stanley of Stanley Cup fame; and Lord and Lady Aberdeen and their family spent their summers at Stanley House, lo-

cated at the mouth of the Cascapedia River. They attended St Andrew's.

In her Canadian Journal in 1896, Lady Aberdeen wrote: "We have been to church every Sunday, and a curiously Scotch church it is. All the men stop outside in groups until the bell begins to ring at the five minutes, and then troop in, and the countenances and attitude of the congregation and the smell of the peppermint strongly remind one of the old country. Then the trooping out and the procession of vehicles — only these latter are all four-wheeled instead of being gigs, and have been tied up round the church during the service. And another difference is that they are all driven off at a break-neck pace."

### Changes over the years

*By: Cynthia Dow*

Repairs and renovations over the years have left a very different church from that which was built. In 1870 the church steeple was heightened and a bell installed. In 1902 the gallery was shortened, a furnace installed, and the stained glass windows were added. A hall and small kitchen were appended to the back of the building.

Most recently, the church has disconnected its oil furnace and installed several heat pumps to reduce the impact on the environment.

### The Chapel in Caplan

*By: Alice Dell*

In 1881 the pastoral charge circulated a subscription list to secure funds for repairs to the Caplan schoolhouse, so that it

may also serve as a place of Public Worship every third or fourth Sunday. In 1959 the school closed and the building was purchased, redecorated and furnished and, in 1962, the building was rededicated as a Chapel for Protestant Worship. Unfortunately, it only served as a place of worship for a few years, and was sold in 1970.

### The Church in Cascapedia

*By: Alice Dell*

Once a bridge was erected across the river, giving people easier access to Grand Cascapedia, a decision was made to build a church there. Construction was started by Peter Nadeau in early 1899 for the sum of \$400.00 on land donated by Albert Robertson. The building was dedicated on August 1, 1899. Work on the inside was finished the following year and pews were purchased in 1901. The Presbyterian church in Cascapedia became St. Andrew's United Church after the creation of The United Church of Canada in 1925.

The Church in Cascapedia was strongly supported by the Robertson family over the years. This support included the supply of stove wood until a furnace was installed in 1953. At that time a basement was put under the Church and a hall was built on the back.

The first Church organ was donated by Mr. Austin McKay, who also served as organist. Other organists over the years included Mrs. Herbert Dimock, Ruth Robertson, Helena Harrison, Doris Harrison, Thelma Seale, Mary Campbell, Claudia Kitson, Dorothy Barter and Sheila Starrak.

It was a sad day on May 20th, 2018 when the service was held to decommission this beloved church. It is now privately owned and has been remodelled into a home.

### Unto the Hills

*Cynthia Dow and Alice Campbell*

John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland Campbell, 9th Duke of Argyll, was the Marquis of Lorne and was married to Princess Louise Alberta, one of Queen Victoria's daughters. The Marquis served as

Canada's Governor-General from 1878 to 1883 and during that time he had Lorne Cottage built in Ottawa and then had it brought down the St Lawrence to be re-assembled on the banks of the Cascapedia River as a fishing lodge.

During the Centennial of St. Andrew's United Church in Cascapedia in 1999, the late Arthur Prentice Campbell contributed this background of a well-known hymn, "Unto the Hills."

"The Marquis of Lorne, John Campbell, wrote the lyrics for the hymn beginning with "Unto the hills around do I lift up my longing eyes." The Marquis and his wife, Princess Louise, spent summers at Lorne Cottage on the Cascapedia River in the 1880s so the author had first-hand acquaintance with our Cascapedia hills.

Whether he was inspired by the Chic Choc hills or the Rockies or the braes of Scotland makes little difference. Our river, our hills and our church combined to give our Cascapedia valley its very special significance. Lorne's hymn in association with the inimitable beauty of the hills was a source of great comfort in times of spiritual need. They consoled the grieving, they encouraged the faint-hearted, they gave hope to the dispirited and always reinforced a faith in God. Ever so many people have requested that Lorne's hymn be sung at their funerals. Many of those who emigrated to other parts of our country or the world felt closer to home when recalling or singing this hymn."

### Clarke Hall

*By: Alice Dell*

The Brethren Hall was built on Range 4 between 1890 and 1900, on land donated by Gavin Fallow. It served as a place of worship, Sunday School, Bible School and for conference meetings. It was purchased in 1967 when Rev. Stewart Clarke was minister of St. Andrew's and was named after him. It was used by the United Church for Sunday School, Cubs, Scouts, UCW meetings, hymn sings and some meetings until it was sold.



*A large gathering was held during the centennial year in 1939, with Rev. George Pidgeon, the first Moderator of the United Church, in attendance. Ladies in the photograph include Dorothy (MacLean), unknown, Mrs. White Sr., possibly Gertrude (Mrs. Charles) MacLean and Mabel McKenzie.*



*The church in Cascapedia before it was renovated to create a private home.*



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