WELCOME TO MAHONE BAY

The Town of Mahone Bay is part of the Mi'kma'ki territory of the Mi'kmaw who have inhabited their traditional lands for over 13,500 years.

FORSHAW DAY'S *AT MAHON'S BAY LOOKING EASTWARD*
Painting is Forshaw Day's *At Mahon's Bay Looking Eastward*, 1865. From the collection of CFFI Ventures Inc, as collected by John Risley.

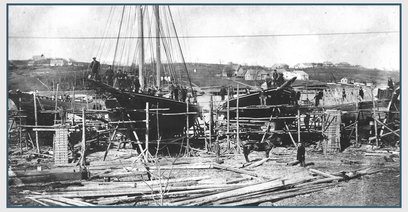
Prior to arrival of the Europeans, Mi'kmaw lived in and around what is now Mahone Bay. Indian Point, just outside the town, was an important summertime settlement where the Mi'kmaq could enjoy the sheltered waters and plentiful food sources. In the winter, they would move inland from the coast using the rivers that flow into Mahone Bay harbour. There are many Mi'kmaq who live in the area today.

Msit no'kmaq is a Mi'kmaw construct which roughly translates into "All My Relations." Msit no'kmaq speaks to the relational interconnectedness between every human being and all forms of life and is one of the reasons that early settlers were welcomed when they arrived in Mi'kma'ki.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

During their early encounters with the French, the Mi'kmaq traded animal furs and pelts for manufactured goods. This, as well as the Mi'kmaw belief that no one, not even them, owned the land, led to an alliance between the Mi'kmaq and the French, which resulted in the French Acadians settling the area (which they called Acadie) in 1605. Acadie incorporated many parts of Mi'kma'ki which today are known as Nova Scotia, PEI, as well as most of New Brunswick. However, this all changed with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, wherein the French granted possession of most of Acadie, land that was not theirs to grant, to the British.

To attempt to keep control of the land, the British government decided to develop a new naval centre for the colony in Halifax. In these discussions, little or no thought was given to the concerns of the Indigenous Peoples living in this region and it wasn't long before the Mi'kmaq regarded the founding of Halifax, without their consent, as a breach of the terms of the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" they had signed with the British Crown in 1725. However, the British continued to expand in order to support their new naval establishment at Halifax. They recruited protestant farming settlers from Europe, starting in 1750, to counter the existing Mi'kmaw and French Acadian Catholic population. For more information about the Mi'kmaw history of the area, visit the Mahone Bay Museum at 578 Main Street.

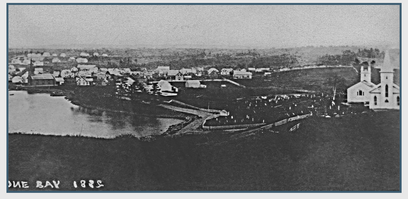


SHIPBUILDING
Over 500 vessels have been built in Mahone Bay area. Photo courtesy of Mahone Bay Museum, ACC #07.6.3.38.

British officials placed public notices in Germany, southern France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands stating that those willing to move to their planned settlement in Nova Scotia would receive grants of land, food for a year, and a few farm animals. Between 1750 and 1752 more than 2,200 such "Foreign Protestants" made the long journey from Europe to Halifax. For more information about these families, visit the sign of family names from the Mahone Bay area located between 562 Main Street and 572 Main Street.

In 1753, most of the new immigrants were brought from Halifax to Lunenburg, which was to be the centre of the planned settlement. Mills were established at the mouth of each of Mahone Bay's two rivers and over the decades a separate community evolved at Mahone Bay with blacksmiths, merchants, a large school, churches, and shipyards. For more information about the shipbuilding industry in Mahone Bay, visit the sign located at the Mahone Bay Civic Marina located at 681 Main Street or the Mahone Bay Museum at 578 Main Street.

In the early days of the colonization of Mahone Bay, the Mi'kmaq and the British Crown signed various Peace and Friendship Treaties. The purpose of these treaties was to outline solemn agreements that set out long-standing promises, mutual obligations and benefits between the Mi'kmaq, the British crown and settlers, so that everyone living in Mi'kma'ki could live peacefully together. Even today, the source of the Town of Mahone Bay's authority over land remains connected to the Peace and Friendship treaties that were signed with the British over 250 years ago.



VIEW FROM BAYVIEW CEMETERY
St James Anglican and the Presbyterian Church at the top of Bayview Cemetery. Photo courtesy of Mahone Bay Museum, ACC #2019.1.6.

THE THREE CHURCHES

In 1833, the Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian denominations joined to build a Union Meeting House in Mahone Bay on Edgewater Street. When their congregations grew, separate churches were built. The first church erected was St. James Anglican Church, built in 1833 above Bayview Cemetery (then the burial ground at Mush-a-Mush). The Presbyterians soon followed, building a church in the same cemetery in 1861. St. John's Lutheran Church was built in 1869 on Edgewater Street, making it the first of the "Three Churches" in their present-day location. By 1885, St. James Anglican Church was too small, and the Anglicans built a new church at Edgewater Street next to St. John's Lutheran Church. The Presbyterians also decided in 1885 that they too wanted a location on Edgewater Street. They had their building lifted and set on logs to be moved down the hill to Edgewater Street. In 1925 the Mahone Bay Presbyterian and Methodist congregations combined, and the Presbyterian Church became Trinity United.

Scenic views focusing on the three side-by-side churches began appearing on postcards as early as 1900. By 1934, people referred to Mahone Bay as a tourist attraction and the town already had a Mahone Bay Tourism Association in place. In an essay contest that year about Mahone Bay's tourism potential, one grade 9 student, named Vera Mae West, stated that "Those who spend their vacation here will return to their work, invigorated, refreshed, and rested". We hope you agree!

VIEW FROM THE MUSH-A-MUSH RIVER
A view of the three churches from the Mush-a-Mush River. Pictured from left to right, St. James Anglican, St. John's Lutheran and Trinity United. Note that the United Church still has a steeple in this photo, the steeple was removed in 1926. Photo courtesy of the Town of Mahone Bay.

TRANSLATION

Für die deutsche Übersetzung scannen Sie den QR Code.

Scannez le QR Code pour la traduction française.

WWW.MAHONEBAYMUSEUM.COM/RESEARCH/TOWNHISTORY

- *For more information about the Mahone Bay area's history, visit the Mahone Bay Museum at 578 Main St.*
- *To learn more about the ship building history of Mahone Bay, check out the heritage sign at the Mahone Bay Civic Marina, 681 Main St.*
- *To learn more about the European Settlers of Mahone Bay, check out the heritage sign at 562 Main St.*
- *To learn more about Mahone Bay's municipal history, check out the heritage sign at Town Hall, 493 Main St.*

For more information on things to do in Mahone Bay, visit Mahone Bay's Tourism and Chamber of Commerce website at **WWW.MAHONEBAY.COM**

MAHONE BAY MUSEUM
EST. 1979