

ROCK PANEL

POKESHAW---HISTORY

POKESHAW in Mi'gmaq (pu sa g) means (hole in a long narrow stone). It refers to the gouges worn by wind and water into the sandstone cliffs that jut out into Bay Chaleur. Nunu people had seasonal campgrounds in this, their 7th District, for 3000 years.

The Crossbearers +++

Stratified rocks in this region date back to the Late Carboniferous Period

In 1534 Breton-born explorer, Jacques Cartier, explored the seas and named these waters because of the warmth of the waves. Look across to the Gaspé Peninsula where he sailed along!

In the early 1800's "the south side of Bay Chaleur from Point Misonette 16 miles west, with the exception of a French settlement at Grand Anse and the location of M. John Young at Pokeshaw, was entirely unsettled. A continuous line of nearly inaccessible cliffs prevented any communication with the sea, and the area had been regarded as unfit for cultivation and improvement."

By 1812 Benjamin and James Hagar had cleared 30 acres of land and had built 4 buildings and a trading post at Pokeshaw Harbour. They shipped local furs, leather, salmon, cod and herring to the British colonies...the West Indies. John Young, at this time, was operating his sawmill and store at Pokeshaw River.

People began arriving here from the south of Ireland, mainly Co. Cork, because of deplorable living conditions there. Once the Napoleonic Wars were over in 1815, Europe was in a recession. England was sending Irish soldiers to settle in the "new world colony" and they were directed to Blue Cove and Waterloo. Numerous Irish relatives and neighbours chose to leave their homeland in the early 1820's, immigrating to communities near their kin in what would become 'New Bandon parish' in Gloucester Co., NB. Here they built a life for their large families alongside their French, Acadian and Jersey neighbours.

Autres Irlandais venant des communautés du sud de l'Irlande quitteront des mauvaises conditions. Dans leur pays natal ils étaient forcés de parler anglais au lieu de leur langue « Irish Gaelic » et ils devaient travailler pour leur propriétaire. « ?? Plusieurs eurent de nombreuses difficultés suite aux invasions des Anglais au 12^e siècle ainsi que par rapport aux tentatives de l'Angleterre de dominer l'Irlande depuis le 15^e siècle.

Irish relatives and neighbours chose to leave their homeland due to religious persecution, confiscation of their lands (by absentee English landlords), political oppression (laws that banned their language, their schools, their music, their vote etc.) and after 800 years of subordination to English domination the Irish left to find independence and freedom in America.

