

# Casey Wants Railway & Beaubassin Sites Developed

By Maurice Rees

Even though he retired from active politics in October, after 30 years as the area's Member of Parliament, Bill Casey has not given up on his passionate work regarding the failed Chignecto Marine Ship Railway, which is being further eroded by rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

In a story published here nearly a year ago, pictures were part of the coverage of the British Broadcasting Corporation film crew visiting Fort Lawrence in August 2018 to film a segment for the network's Great American Railway Journeys.

Casey wants the province, which owns the property, to save the railway stones, which were used as the base for the hydraulic machinery to lift a ship out of the water at one end and onto a rail car for transport across the isthmus



**Bill Casey**

then place it back in the water at the other end using a hoist and lock system.

A proposal was made in 1881 and construction began in 1888. It was three-quarters completed in 1890 when financial problems hit the project, causing it to grind to a halt in 1891.

Casey's family owned the 142-hectare, 27-kilometre long property for more than 40 years before selling it to

the province in February 2012.

Casey has aspirations some form of tourist attraction and interpretive centre located near the site that would also include information and displays featuring the former Acadian village of Beaubassin that was burned to the ground by the Acadians in 1750 to prevent it from falling into English hands.

The ship railway property is provincially-owned and Beaubassin federally-owned, he said the two governments should be able to work together to create an attraction to get tourists off the highway as they enter the province.

Development of the Beaubassin site has been started by the Federal Government.

# Parrsboro Tree Lights up the Night

By Rosemary Rowntree

The weather forecast for Friday's annual Christmas Tree Lighting was dire, but as 6pm rolled around it was cold and the rain had stopped. Over 200 people crowded around the Bandstand to sing, enjoy the celebration and sample chocolate treats.

The Parrsboro Citizens Choir, directed by David Towns, led a sing-along with all the old favourites. Everyone - big kids and small - loved it.

Then, the suspense was palpable. Norm Rafuse, Municipal Councillor, stood centre stage holding the basket of children's names. Young Mack Spencer did the honours by drawing lucky Ava Welton's name and the countdown to light the magnificent tree began.

Hot chocolate, donated by Tim Horton's and Giselle Henwood's home made cookies added a wonderful touch to the cold, crisp night. The goodies were served by Cecilia Albanese, Hanna Brambach, Emeril Leights and Kegan Currie; youth from PRHS. At the end of the ceremony, Wally Mohamed, owner of Pizza L'Amore, drew two more names; Gracie Taylor and Harley MacAloney each won pizza. The merriment was captured for posterity by Lawrence Nicol, photographer.

The Parrsboro & District Board of Trade is so fortunate to have The Claus Cause, an eager cadre of enthusiastic and energetic souls, as members. The Claus Cause plans designs and



Norm Rafuse, Ava Welton and Mack Spencer at the tree lighting ceremony. (Rowntree Photo)

installs so many of the wonderful Main Street and Bandstand Christmas decorations. Their fundraising efforts and hard work are appreciated by all.



Mack Spencer draws name. (Rowntree Photo)



The switch is thrown to light up Parrsboro's Christmas Tree located in the Bandstand. (Rowntree Photo)

# Marsh & Cobequid Pass Highway Closures

By Maurice Rees

When the wind and weather is unfavourable the Tantramar Marsh and Hwy 104 Cobequid Pass causes grief to all motorists. The Marsh area is most susceptible to poor visibility and high winds as experienced recently on November 1 when southwest winds of

80 to 90 km/h closed the highway for several hours, backing up trucks in Amherst and Sackville as well as in Aulac, N.B.

When these situations occur, there is havoc and no clear definition of who is responsible for closures. It takes all hands on deck - RCMP, Amherst Police, Fire

Departments, EHS and Cumberland's EMO office, but there is no defined decision maker. Mike Johnson, Cumberland EMO co-ordinator is pushing for a meeting of all parties with NSTIR to set up a command structure and a set of guidelines.

On November 1, and in almost all cases, Amherst Police and RCMP assist with direction for parking of high-sided vehicles and notifying parked vehicles once the decision is made to reopen the highway.

At a recent meeting of stakeholders, Johnson said stakeholders met following a February 2015 closure to develop contingency plans that provided clear thresholds, roles and responsibilities when weather conditions warrant the closure of the highway across the marsh.

However Nova Scotia's Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Department did not adopt those thresholds identified in the contingency plan and the plan is also not being followed by New Brunswick. With lives at stake Johnson hopes a plan can be developed and followed by all stakeholders.

# No Broken Bones

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Nothing but twisted metal and a b-train load of logs spilled everywhere was what greeted Parrsboro Fire Department when they responded to a call in Halfway River at 3:54 pm on Monday, December 9th.



This is what the tractor looked like after it was flipped upright. The driver survived after being rescued from a small space with his head below his knees. Like a miracle he did not suffer any broken bones.



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