

Opening of Debert Elementary Playground

Story and Photos by Linda Harrington

Debert Elementary Principal Stephen Fultz welcomed everyone to the Grand Opening of the new Debert Elementary School Playground on Sept. 5th, 2023. He noted talks of updating the school's playground had been happening for years and it was understood eventually the old structure would be condemned but with the NS Mass Shootings in April 2020, this community and school were greatly impacted by the tragedy. "Covid had also changed the way students were able to spend their outdoor play time, during school hours. The school yard was divided into zones and not all zones had something for the students to enjoy," says Mr. Fultz adding, "Our Parent Teacher Association rallied quickly and decided creating a new play space for the school and community would be our way of doing something positive, during a time of darkness, and as a tribute to much loved teacher Lisa McCully."

With overwhelming support from the community, what was supposed to be a three or more year project was executed in two years.

Cobequid Consulting generously donated their time, working with the PTA to design a playground that worked for the school, property, and project goals. They created a concept and visual and later played a huge role installing many components and seeing the project come to fruition.

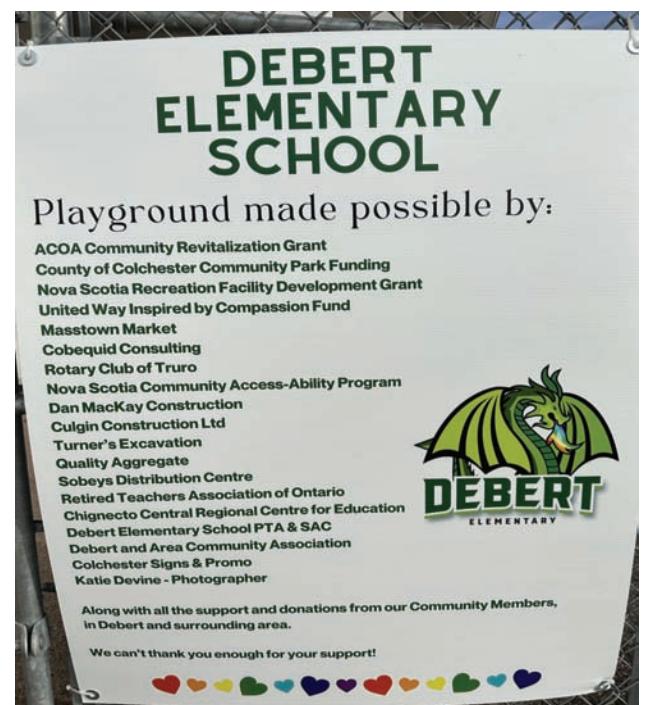
Support came from across the country to the initial Go Fund Me page. Local businesses and more individuals donated incredible prizes towards a virtual silent auction which was a huge success. This outpouring of support allowed for the Committee to apply for various grants and funds including: ACOA's Community Revitalization Grant, The County of Colchester's Community Park Funding, Nova Scotia Recreation Facility Development Grant, United Way Inspired by Compassion Fund, The Rotary Club of Truro, Nova Scotia Community Access-Ability Program and Retired Teachers Association of Ontario.

The local community didn't hesitate to help or offer in-kind support including Culgin Construction Ltd., Turner's Excavation and Quality Aggregate. Masstown Market graciously provided the materials for the construction of the outdoor classroom, which was built thanks to Dan MacKay Construction and Tidal View Construction. The CCREC staff provided many hours of labour getting the structures installed.

The BBQ at the Grand Opening was made possible by Sobeys Distribution Centre and Wilsons Fuels.

Principal Fultz passed along a huge thank you and appreciation to everyone who helped in any way. "We have achieved our goal of creating a play space for the school and community to enjoy. We are so proud of our achievements, and we hope we can continue to work together to care for this space so it can be enjoyed for years to come."

The Honourable Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) was unable to attend but sent along a message to be read at the Grand Opening, saying, "What better way



Development of the new playground at Debert Elementary was made possible by the participation of many organizations and firms as listed on the entrance gate to the playground. Colchester Signs & Promo were one of the participants. (Submitted)

to usher in the new school year than with the opening of this marvellous new playground?" and passing along congratulations to the Debert Elementary Parent Teacher Association and Principal Fultz for recognizing the need for a playground make-over and getting the project done with the help of the community. "Thank you to everyone who helped make this a reality. Your dedication, commitment and caring will bring smiles to many young faces for many years to come. Enjoy your new playground, dragons! Please take a ride on the slide for me," said The Honourable Gudie Hutchings.





WOOD PRODUCTS NATURALLY

LUMBER
Sawn to order. Custom sizes as well as standard.
Lumber in stock, various sizes, call for availability.

BULK LANDSCAPE MULCH
Black, Red and Natural. Pickup or ask for delivery.

FENCING
Post & Rail, Fence Posts, Tree Stakes, Deer Fence.

SIDING
Shiplap, Clapboard, T&G, Board & Batten

Visit Us Online:
www.novatree.ca

2715 Hwy #4, Glenholme NS B0M 1G0
902-662-3129
Open - Monday to Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm
Saturdays by appointment



Prefab Wood Wall Panels

Save Time & Money!

Build to Spec, delivered to your Job Site

- Commercial • Single Unit Homes
- Multi Unit Residential, Townhouses, Hotels, Motels
- Projects Designed for Studded Wall Construction

902•442•1574 www.cobequidprefab.ca
email: info@cobequidprefab.ca

There was a great turnout for the Grand Opening of the Debert Elementary School Playground.



Marcus Scott found the spinner to be lots of fun.



Cosmic, the school mascot was transformed into a lovely bench, just one of the surprises Cobequid Consulting added to the playground.

Strengthening Communities Through Outdoor Recreational Development

Cobequid (also known as Cobequid Trail Consulting or just Cobequid Consulting) is a family run business specializing in the creation of uniquely captivating outdoor playscapes for children of all ages. While we are distributors of top quality, international playground equipment, our passion for nature and our belief that children benefit from experiencing a mixture of structured and unstructured play has led us to focus on creating playgrounds that are either made almost entirely of natural products or a hybrid of natural and traditional playground equipment.

Inspired by you, our playgrounds are constructed from locally sourced cedar, hemlock and pine logs that are hand peeled and smoothed before being used. The result is spaces that encourage motion, problem solving and imaginative play.

Based in Nova Scotia, we are one of Atlantic Canada's most experienced outdoor recreation companies. We have over 20 years of experience in environmentally sustainable trails, the design and construction of natural, traditional and hybrid playgrounds, and bringing these various recreation elements together to serve our clients. You'll find examples of our work in schools, early childhood learning centres and parks all over Atlantic Canada.

Planning, facilitating and community development have become integral aspects to our business. Cobequid approaches every project with the community development model in mind; facilitating and inspiring discussion surrounding goals and outcomes. We are dedicated to each project regardless of the size or budget.

3361 Highway 2, Economy, NS, Canada B0M 1J0
<http://cobequid.ca/> • 902-647-2271



Cobequid

Outdoor Recreation Consultants & Contractors

RR1 Economy, NS B0M 1J0. 902.647.2271
cobequidconsulting1@gmail.com