

Black River News

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VOLUME 18 ISSUE 7

Building A Better Boat by Donald J. Feltmate

JULY 2023



This book is not directly about the longliner and the impact this vessel had on the NS economy. During the first half of the twentieth century, economic recession, a lack of government support and the incursion of large foreign and domestic fishing craft called draggers on the coastal fishing grounds meant that many inshore fishing communities were facing poverty and yes, starvation! The formation of the fisher's cooperatives started a movement towards recovery and the development of what became known as the "government approved" Cape Island - type longliner. What is unknown to many is that this recovery impacted every Nova Scotian both from a social and economic perspective and yes this included this geographical area.

Those who were not brought up on the sea are no doubt wondering, "What is longlining and what is a longliner?" The definition of the term "longlining" cannot be found in any nautical references such as the *Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*. It is a term unique to the fishing industry, used to describe a method of fishing groundfish we buy everyday like cod, haddock, pollock and similar species using a line buoyed at each end, moored on the fishing ground, and with smaller lines, each with a baited hook, attached at short intervals along its length. This method of fishing was used in Europe a good century before it was introduced to the Canadian fishery, and it may surprise some to learn that it was used with considerable success in the West Coast fishery long before it was accepted on the East Coast. In the days of the well-known Grand Banks schooners, trawl lines of this configuration were employed from dories that were carried on board the larger schooners for that purpose. Usually each dory carried a two-person crew and set out from the main ship with three tubs of trawl lines. The lines would be set out and hauled back by hand, and the catch would be returned to the main ship where it would be cleaned, salted and placed in the hold. This was dangerous and back-breaking work that was conducted during fishing trips to the Banks that lasted up to two months. This method for catching groundfish remained the domain of the offshore fishing fleet that is historically known as the "salt bank fishery."

Unlike the "salt bank" or offshore fishery of the time, the "shore" or inshore fishery was conducted on the coastal fishing grounds adjacent to the Nova Scotia coast. The boats used in this segment of the fishery were quite small, mostly powered by sail or oars with extremely limited range and seaworthiness. The most common method for harvesting groundfish was the handline, which uses a single hook. In some fishing communities, trawl lines of a sort were used, but the amount of gear was

limited by the size of the vessel and the ability of the fisher to purchase such equipment and bait. With the introduction of larger internal combustion engines in the early 1920's and the mechanical hauler in the early 1930's, the days of the schooner were numbered, and the use of dories diminished as the trawl lines could now be set and hauled from a single vessel. Thus, each set of trawl lines became significantly longer and became known as "longlines." It stood to reason, therefore, that the vessels employed in this type of ground fishing became known as "longliners", a term that remains to this day.

To most Nova Scotians who are familiar with the fishery, the term "longliner" applies to any type of vessel that engages in ground fishing with a number of tubs of trawl lines. Many would be surprised to learn that from 1927 to 1950, after considerable political turmoil and controversy, the federal and provincial governments established a clear definition for the specific type of vessel called a "longliner", and in the case of the wooden Cape Island-type longliner, they further defined it as a separate class of fishing vessel. Another surprising fact is that the classification of this type of fishing was not solely based on how the vessel was to be employed, but also on how the vessel was constructed and whether it met the qualification criteria for financial aid from the federal government in the form of subsidies. The traditional Grand Banks schooner gave way to the motor dragger, and longlining became one of the prime fishing methods of the small fishing communities along the Nova Scotia coast. The problem was that most shore fishers did not have fishing craft capable of engaging in this technology. They needed someone to build them "A Better Boat".

The Cape Island-type longliner was a major product of a very tumultuous period in Nova Scotia's seafaring history and brought with it a measure of economic recovery and prosperity to a number of small and medium-sized communities along the coast. The economic impact that these vessels had on the life of every Nova Scotian between 1950 and 1985 has hitherto gone virtually unnoticed. The story of the shore fishery and the eventual introduction of the longliner is one of an incredible journey in the economic and social development of Nova Scotia. In this area, the build up of the shore fishery brought with it a surge in the requirement for lumber and bait fish like gaspereau. It is one of heartache, political indifference, and perseverance that will actually surprise and shock many! To the "landlubber" this book is not just a sea tale but records a very important and forgotten segment of our provincial history. The design and introduction of the longliner to inshore fishery was but one element in the struggle for what was a matter of survival for a large population of our shore fishers, their families, and the communities that were home to generations. This book is an attempt to document the journey of the shore fishers from the dark days of the late 1920's, through the political upheaval of the 1930's and '40's, until the last known wooden "government approved" Cape Island-type longliner was built in 1984. Based on archival documentation and interviews with those who, during this period, built these magnificent fishing craft and a number of the remaining shore fishers that sailed them. What follows is the forgotten story of how a group of ordinary Nova Scotians, with a dream of a better future for their families and communities, overcame insurmountable odds to improve their social and economic situation and in the process develop, build and sail an iconic Nova Scotia Craft.

Don Feltmate

Driving Lesson



o ... let me describe the setting. It was a beautiful day in the summer - mid 1970's. We were heading to Kentville for a practice session before the driving test. Our chariot was a 1966 Chevrolet Impala.

Now, this was not our first trip. We had started driving around on the mountain roads for a couple of weeks to start off. Once things were going well with that, we moved on to driving through New Minas. After a number of trips to get groceries, etc. I felt it was time to start driving around Kentville on the possible route the driving test would follow. We drove the circuit of one-way roads around to the Centennial Arena where we practiced the proper lane change procedure. It was a bit rough at first but soon the transition was smooth.

My student and I left for a driving lesson in the mid-morning. All proceeded well until we approached the old Western Tire garage in New Minas. It was at this time that I saw a gravel truck slowing down to make a left turn into the garage. I saw, but my student did not. We managed to stop within a hands width of the rear of the truck. Maybe I should have recognized this as a sign of things to come, but who was to know?

After that little scare, we proceeded toward Kentville. Now, many of you probably remember when they used to park a trailer in front of Fritzes. It would be backed in and the tractor would park elsewhere. The end of the trailer would cover a part of the lane heading west into Kentville. Of course the thing to do was to wait until traffic allowed and then turn to the left to avoid the trailer. I suggested we pull around the trailer but my student didn't think so. Instead we proceeded to slide under the trailer. Until that time, if someone would have said that a car would fit under this obstruction, I would have called him a liar. I was wrong. It fit. One thing that did happen was the radio antenna, that was equipped with a spring, was laid back along the roof and when we emerged from the other side of the trailer it sprung forward and hit the fender. It sounded like a rifle shot.

Once again we proceeded to Kentville. I was, and still am, a slow learner. Did I mention that we had the lane change procedure down pat? Not that day. When I suggested that we make a lane change by the arena, there was a rapid jerk of the steering wheel into the left lane. This resulted in the sound of screeching tires and blaring horns. Ok, it was time to go home.

It was an uneventful trip through the rest of Kentville and New Minas. I have to admit to a feeling of relief as we turned onto the Deep Hollow Road but this feeling was a bit premature. As we approached the sharp left hand turn just before Long's Mill I noticed a slight increase in speed. I said that we should be slowing down. I was informed that she was trying. I said, "Well you better try harder!" The car went into passing gear. Foot on the wrong peddle. As I saw the rock wall rapidly approaching in front of us, it was not my life I saw pass in front of me. At this point, there was a hard turn to the left and somehow amid screaming tires and lost breath, we made the turn. But, there was another corner to the right coming up. With a rapid turn and a skid we managed this curve as well! Mario Andretti would have been proud! This was not the feeling I had as we slowly made our way through the intersection in White Rock and it wasn't until we were nearly to the top of the mountain that I heard a faint "I think I scared myself back there".

Once we were safely home it was time to explain to my student that I could not take her driving anymore. It was the last time I took my grandmother, Barbara McInnis, for a driving lesson.

Ed Schofield

Leslie Ann Levy- Equestrian

Have you see these Levy children walking and riding their cows around Sunken Lake? Leslie Ann Levy has taken another animal under her belt. She recently starting riding at Paloosa Ridge Stables on Deep Hollow Road. She cleans stalls for Loretta Buchanan 3 days a week. Loretta knew she wanted to learn to ride, so for the past 9 months she has been taking riding lessons under Bobbie Lynn Bezanson and excelling at her tasks. Recently Leslie Ann decided to start showing western classes. In her first horse show she took home a 3rd Place Ribbon, Second and a First Place Ribbon. We were all so happy for her to place in her first horse show. June 2, 3 and 4 Leslie Ann was in the Colour Classics Horse Show in Windsor, NS. In this show she took home 2 Fifth Place Ribbons, 3 Second Place Ribbons and 2 First Place Ribbons.

Leslie Ann won many prizes with her riding that weekend. They threw her into some English classes on Sunday, though she hasn't practiced English riding, she managed to win a Second Place and a First Place Ribbon in her English division. She also managed to win High Point Champion with her English and Western riding over the weekend.

Black River

... from the Wolfville Acadian

This column was originally printed in the Wolfville Acadian and was printed without the wife's name, as was the practice of the time. Where it is known we have included it in brackets.

July 6, 1950

The Community Club met with Mr. L.W. (Mabel) Long on thursday. The evening was spent working on quilts. The next meeting will be with Mrs. Arnel (Helen) Levy.

Mrs. Merlin (Verna) Forsythe and Dale, and Mrs. Milford (Leta) Schofield, and Mr. Schofield, Windsor Forks.

Leslie Ells returned home from E.K.M. Hospital Saturday afternoon after speinding the past two months there.

A crokinole party was held in the school house Friday night. Ice cream and fudge were sold and the proceeds of \$11.00 are to be used for a worthy cause.

Roy Gilroy, principal of the school, left Saturday for his home in Springhill.

Mr. and Mrs. Morley (Hilda) Nowlin and family and Miss Jean Nowlin, Wolfville, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Emory (Vera) Nowlin.

The pass and prize list for the Advanced Department of the Black River School, Roy Gilroy, teacher, is as follows:

Grade 9-10: Ruby Nowlin; Grade 8-9: Mary Eagles, Pauline Schofield; Grade 7-8: Constance Atwell, Grade 6-7: Rufus Adams, Joy Levy, Bruce Long, Larry Long, Elaine MacInnis, Frank Spinney; Grade 5-6: Jacqueline Atwell, Freeman Levy, Madeline MacInnis, Gail Nowlin, Charles Schofield, Vincent Schofield, Anne Spinney, Shirley Stultz.

Prizes were awarded to: Gail Nowlin for perfect attendance; Ruby Nowlin, Constance Atwell, Larry Long and Jacqueline Atwell for attaining the highest averages in their respective grades.

We are beyond proud of Leslie Ann for her hard work and dedication. She is 12 years old and dreams to be a large animal veterinarian someday. We encourage her to reach for the stars. Her next horse show is in July in Lawrencetown, NS.

Tammy Levy



Leslie Ann 1st Place Ribbon



Leslie Ann 1st Place Ribbon

Annapolis Valley High Speed Internet

We thank the AVHS for the complimentary internet at our community hall. CONTACT them at 902-692-9100 or annapolisvalleyhighspeed.com.

LOCAL BUSINESS • NO CONTRACT • UNLIMITED TRANSFER

JULY events ●●●



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1 STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE 1-3 PM
2	3 Sewing/Crafts Meeting 11 am Ways/Means & Maintenance 7pm	4 45's Card Game 7-9 Adm: \$4 50/50	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 45's Card Game 7-9 Adm: \$4 50/50	12	13	14	15
16 Monthly Meeting 7 pm Directors Meeting 7pm-	17 Sewing/Crafts Meeting 11 am Book Club 7pm-	18 45's Card Game 7-9 Adm: \$4 50/50	19	20	21	22
23 / 30	24 / Heritage Meeting 31	25 45's Card Game 7-9 Adm: \$4 50/50	26	27	28	29

• **45's card Games 7-9 pm.** Come out and enjoy the fun. **Tickets are \$4** for the game. 50/50 Tickets Available and a light lunch included. All are welcome. Contact Zelma Long 902 542 2842 or sunkenhaven@gmail.com for further information.

• **EAT IN STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE SOCIAL** includes Strawberry Shortcake, ice cream or whipped cream, tea, coffee and juice



Black River Community Hall
989 Deep Hollow Rd
Saturday, July 1, 2023

Join us for a Canada Day celebration of Strawberry Shortcake

\$5

Photo taken at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic at the time of the book launch of *Building A Better Boat*, by Donald J. Feltmate, May 16, 2023. Don's grandchildren back left to right: Mason Cool, Claire Atkinson, Don Feltmate, Lochlain Galliot, in front: Colin Atkinson. Don's book is available at Coles Book Store, New Minas, Chisholm's, Kenville and can be ordered on line from Amazon.ca and Nimbus Publishing, Halifax or give him a call.



NEWSLETTER : The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the following month.

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LIVE LINKS TO OUR FACEBOOK, NEWSLETTER & PODCASTS below:

<https://www.facebook.com/blackrivercommunityhall/>

<http://blackrivercommunityhall.weebly.com/>

<https://anchor.fm/storiesfromblackriver>

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1zMHYxDMwQ9uUjCNQSmN7U?si=m5N2VSsQQZufzbSNR96dyQ>

CONTACTS: Hall Rental/Events Booking: Daily Rental-\$100, Damage Deposit \$50 Contact: Jayn Kenny 902 542 0002

jayneileenkenny@msn.com

Quilting & Crafts:

Book Club: mary.tanner.long@hotmail.com

Card Games: Zelma Long 902 542 2842 or sunkenhaven@gmail.com

Classifieds...

- **PORCUPINE CREEK PRODUCTIONS** - handcrafted by Nellie Schofield - nellieed.schofield@gmail.com. Tel: 902.542.5134
- **JESSICA MYRA - NATURAL FIBRE CREATIONS**-mothermuse@outlook.com
- **JACK SPINNEY is offering QUALITY, DRY KINDLING \$6** for a full feed bag. **DROP INTO THE HOUSE AT 85 UPPER SUNKEN LAKE RD or CALL 902.713.5094.**
- **HUMBLE HILL HOMESTEAD** offering: farm fresh eggs in a variety of colours, frozen-fresh rabbit, veggies and transplants seasonally. Contact via Facebook Farm Page or call/text 902.300.5482
- **FOR SALE: Locally grown lean ground beef \$6/lb.** Custom beef orders for sides and quarters \$5/lb. Call Shawn Levy 902 300 4432
- **Need a little help around the house or yard? Some cleaning, organizing or light yard work? If so, call Amber Hermie-Long at 1 (506) 280-1568. She can help you out!!**

Birthdays

Leander Clancey	July 1
Zelma Long	July 2
Keigan Levy	July 2
Emily Levy	July 6
Charlene Davies	July 7
David Milligan	July 7
Diane Ells	July 9
Don Feltmate	July 12
Alyssa Gee	July 14
Glenn Hawkesworth	July 15
Lucie Levy	July 16
Philip Pick	July 17
Gladys Long	July 21
Victoria Tait	July 23
Abby Davies	July 25
Shawn Munro	July 26
Morris Ells	July 27
Paul Russell	July 29
Cohen Munro	July 29
Justin Davies	July 30

Anniversary

Jack & Rita Spinney	July 14
Wayne & Sandi Schofield	July 20
Leonard & Mildred Levy	July 23

EXECUTIVE ...

Black River Community Hall

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Please Respect Bicyclers

It is now almost summer and bicyclers are out in their glory and a few of us go up Deep Hollow Road (full disclosure: I am one of them). Going up the hill and around Smith's Bend is usually at the end of a trip so it's a struggle and the bike might wobble a bit (Another disclosure: I'm over 70 so when I say struggle I mean it!). Vehicles coming up behind bicyclers on the hill should exercise extra caution by doing one of two things: one, if there are no vehicles coming the other way overtake the cyclist by going wide, meaning get out of the right-hand lane and straddle the centerline; there is no reason you have to stay in that lane. An option: you can slowly go around; there is no reason to floor it. Two, if there is an oncoming vehicle slow down and pace the cyclist until the other vehicle has passed, then go out and around. Have patience and respect. Today when I was going up the hill approaching Smith's bend, a van overtook me even though we both could see a car approaching coming down the other way. The van insisted on staying in the right-hand lane resulting in a space of about 30 cm between my elbow and its mirror. All three of us were in a line across the road at the same time with the van overtaking me going about 80 klicks. Scared the wits out of me so I wobbled, thankfully after the van went by and it was not being followed by another vehicle.

I'm sure vehicles give Levy's honey wagon a wide berth or slow down behind it when it's travelling on Deep Hollow Road. Well, I'm someone else's honey and I wish to make it home so please give me and other cyclists the same respect on the road that you give the honey wagon.

Peter Wallace, Black River

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ...

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Sunken Lake and Area Journal of Wildlife Observations

recorded by Clara Spinney

- This past month has been busy for us that watch nature. In the past few years there has been a drop in the number of baby ducks. Well this year I've had more than I have had in the last ten years. I find that so exciting.
- The loons have been very quiet but now they are nesting - hoping for a good outcome.
- Melissa McDonald reported that she and Shawn Levy had a dark eyed junco at their feeder with a condition called leucism and is quite rare. So glad she let me know. (*Leucism is caused by a reduction in pigments that prevent pigments from reaching some or nearly all of a bird's feathers. It is a genetic condition and is sometimes mistaken as albinism.*)
- Earl Redden reported seeing a red fox on the Miner Meadow Rd. I find them so pretty and there has not been many seen in this community in many years.
- We had a large bear walk through our garden. It left some nice sized paw prints. Wish I could have seen him or her.
- I don't seem to have as many hummingbirds as other years. Maybe they are still on their nests.
- The season is here for the dragonflies - one of the most interesting insects. So many people don't know where the dragonfly comes from. They are surprised to find out they come from the water as a big, black ugly bug. The bug comes out of the water, crawls and attaches itself to a surface. Then the bug's back splits open and a dragonfly unfolds from there. Once its wings dry it flies off to eat blackflies and mosquitos. They should be treated like royalty around here.
- Driving around the lake last week I saw a porcupine again. This time having lunch in a poplar tree growing in the ditch.



Dark eyed Junco with leucism



Dragonfly nymph



Dragonfly

Telephone Clara 902.542.3180 with any of your wildlife observations and she will add them to her own or email: claraspinney123@gmail.com

HALL RENTAL:

• Daily Rental \$100 • Damage deposit \$50
Effective January 1, 2022

Hall Rental/Events Booking: Jayn Kenny
jayneileenkenny@msn.com, 902 542 0002

Accepting bookings for Hall Rental Now