

A Brief History of the Descendants of Donald “The Soldier” MacInnis

Donald MacInnis was born in 1755 in Arisaig, Scotland. At the age of 18 he was pressed into the British Army to fight against the Colonial Army in the American Revolution. Following the war, he returned to Scotland and would later enter into a second marriage. During the spring of 1803, Donald, along with his second wife and their eldest son Donald, boarded the Aberdeen Dove and sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, eventually arriving in Pictou, Nova Scotia, that summer. Due to illnesses on board the Aberdeen Dove, they were forced to remain offshore until the fall of that year.

Donald and his family would first join his brother Hugh MacInnis in Cape George, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia and spent the winter at his homestead. During the spring of 1804, Donald and his family moved to the Ohio region of Antigonish to join another brother, Andrew, who had a farm in the area. Donald and his family settled in the Ohio and he would remain there for the rest of his life. At the age of 80 and widowed for the second time, Donald and his son Duncan, travelled to the village of Judique in Cape Breton, bearing a keg of rum in exchange for a woman's hand in marriage.

Duncan, the eldest son of Donald “The Soldier” had a son John, who in turn had a son named Angus. Angus, who was better known as “Black Angus”, had seven children. He worked as a farmer and a contractor, spending many winters in Boston, leaving his son Alexander to run the farm at the early age of 12. The children of Black Angus are: Alexander “The Barber”, Roderick “The Barber”, Danny, Johnny, Laurie (Kell), Cathy and Annie. As noted in the names, two sons Alexander (Alec) and Roderick owned and operated a barbershop on Main Street in Antigonish.

Alec “The Barber” also owned a farmstead on what is now present-day James Street in Antigonish. He was well known as a businessman in the area and also well noted for his fiddle playing. Never missing an opportunity to make money, Alec used his knowledge of the fiddle as the grounds for a side business of fixing and repairing broken fiddles and bows for people in Antigonish and Cape Breton. In the barbershop, Alec and his brother Roderick would be joined later by Alec's son, Charles Roderick (Buddy), and Roderick's son, R.J.

Alec had eleven children in total: Charles Roderick (Buddy), Joseph (Dodie), Douglas, Dorthy (Thompson), Kathleen (MacDonald), Josephine (Horne), Anita (Orcarson), Lorraine (Nairn), Betty (Smart) and Barbara.

Charles Roderick (Buddy) MacInnis was a barber in Antigonish, who began his career in the trade working for his father and uncle alongside his first cousin R.J. Buddy would go on to work as a barber for 50 years, finishing his career where it started on Main Street, sharing a barbershop with Ricky MacInnis (son of R.J.) who still works in that same location.

Buddy married Adelaide Diagle and would go on to have 6 children: Charles, Brian (died in infancy), Anne (Myers), Ian, Joan (Weingartshopher) and Eileen (Melong). Buddy was a lifelong hunter and fisherman whose love of the outdoors was passed on to him from his father, and in turn, to Buddy's son Charles and grandson Nicholas. Buddy was a “crack shot”, a skill he attributed to his time spent training with the reserves in Prince Edward Island in 1944-45 prior to the end of World War Two. The three generations spent many days travelling the countryside in search of partridge and many

evenings hunting deer in upper Brierly Brook. Also avid fishermen, they spent many summer evenings fishing brook trout in the James River and Brierly Brook, two rivers that were restored by Charles MacInnis during his time at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Charles Adelai MacInnis was born in 1956, the first child of Charles Roderick (Buddy) and Adelaide (Deagle). He attended St. Francis Xavier University graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology. Following his education, Charles went on to a career as a fish habitat coordinator with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, well known throughout the fishing community of Nova Scotia for his specialization in restoring Atlantic Salmon stocks in rivers throughout Antigonish, Pictou, Colchester, Cumberland and Inverness Counties. Most notably was his work in the Brierly Brook, a tributary to the West River in Antigonish. This small stream served as a blueprint in stream restoration throughout Nova Scotia and beyond.

Charles married Judy Mettam of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia in 1986. Judy, the daughter of British immigrants, attended St. Francis Xavier University and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration with Honours in Accounting and further attained her Chartered Accountant designation. She would go on to open and successfully run her own accounting practice out of the family home in Antigonish.

Charles and Judy had two children: Nicholas Peter and Kyla Anne. Nicholas attended St. Francis Xavier University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in Aquatic Resources. Kyla attended Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia where she studied in the Bachelor of Commerce program with a major in Accounting.

Seven generations and 210 years after first arriving in Antigonish County, the MacInnis clan remains in the area. From soldiers, loggers, farmers, businessmen, barbers and biologists, the MacInnis's of Antigonish have maintained two lines of similar interests throughout the generations--a love of the outdoors and a spirit of self-reliance. By all accounts every MacInnis generation found themselves as both avid hunters and fishermen and passed on this passion to the next generation. The self-reliance found among all MacInnis clan members was most evident in their love of growing and raising their own food, from cattle in the rough hillsides of the Ohio in 1803 to potatoes and chickens in Meadow Green in 2012. The ability to provide for oneself is an unmistakable commonality between all generations. Perhaps the original clan motto, "E Labore Dulcedo", offers the best explanation as its translation in English reads: In Labour, Pleasure.

by Charles E. MacInnis, April 2013