

Heritage Property Registration Report and Recommendation



February 21, 2024

**Report & Recommendation
Heritage Property Designation Application
Willow Church Cemetery
Waugh's River, Colchester County, N.S.**

Application:

Mildred MacDougall, President of the Willow Church Cemetery Society, a volunteer organization who has been caring for the cemetery since 1972, has made application to the Municipality of Colchester to have the Willow Church Cemetery designated as a *Municipal Heritage Property* (refer to Attachment 1). The Cemetery is located at 1778 Willow Church Road, Waugh's River, Colchester County, N.S. (refer to Attachment 2).

Wellwood Waugh was the first Scottish Settler to locate in North Colchester (Waugh's River) in 1781. At that time there were no churches in the area. To provide the community with a place of worship, Waugh and his sons built the first Willow Church on land Waugh donated. In 1795, the cemetery, the first Protestant Cemetery in North Colchester was established.

As noted, the Willow Church Cemetery Society has been funding and managing the care of the Cemetery for the past 50+ years; however, the membership is declining resulting from members aging. Therefore, there is urgency to have the Cemetery designated a Heritage Property and its historical significance preserved for the future.

Building History and Characteristics:

The Willow Church Cemetery has a long history in North Colchester (Waugh's River). Wellwood Waugh built the first church in the Tatamagouche area in the late 1700's and

established the Willow Wood Cemetery in 1795. The original church was destroyed in a gale, and was replaced in 1820; however, that building was lost to a fire in 1935. The Cemetery is all that remains on the lot where the churches had been located.

Waugh's wife, Nelly, was the first to be buried in the cemetery in 1795. A tabletop tombstone marks the resting place. There is a poem as written by Wellwood engraved on the top of the tombstone. Wellwood Waugh's name is engraved on the same stone and dated 1824 (death date).



In 1971, a cairn and plaque were erected in the Cemetery by the Nova Scotia Museum and funded by the Willow Church Community. Currently, there are approximately 211 persons buried in the Cemetery; however, not all graves have markers.



As outlined, the Willow Church Cemetery maintains the site (cleaning stones, lawn care, bush cutting, etc). However, the tombstones, cairn, and plaques are deteriorating.

Its Current Role in the Community:

As the Willow Church Cemetery was the first Protestant Cemetery located in the Tatamagouche area, approximately 229 years ago, it is a landmark for the community.

Attachment 4, Letters of Support from various community members/groups are attached in support of designating the cemetery as a heritage property to maintain the site as a landmark.

Recommendation:

Wellwood Waugh and the Willow Church Cemetery forms a significant part of the history of North Colchester, N.S. This level of recognition will continue to play an influential role in maintaining the Cemetery.

Staff supports the request to designate the Willow Church Cemetery as a Municipal Heritage Property.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill McGillicuddy
Senior Planner

Attachments

Attachment 1.....Application form & Consent form

Attachment 2.....Location Map

Attachment 3.....Additional Photographs

Attachment 4.....Information Sources

Attachment 5.....Letters of Support



Heritage Application Form

Name of Property (*)

Willow Church Cemetery

Location (*)

*corner of Hwy. 311 and Willow Church Road,
Naugh's River, Colchester Co., N.S. Civic # 1778*

Present Owner (*)

Willow Church Cemetery Society (see attachment A)

Action Requested
by (*)

Willow Church Cemetery Society

Evaluation Criteria

1. AGE of Property?
(*)

Established in 1795 (229 years)

Condition?

*Site maintained (lawn care etc.) by Society but
tombstones, cairn etc. deteriorating.*

Estimation or
Source?

*Table-top tombstone and Nova Scotia Museum Cairn
and Plaque (located in Cemetery)*

2. ASSOCIATION
with Individual(s)?

Wellwood Naugh, the first Scottish Settler to

locate in North Colchester

Organization(s)?

Willow Church Cemetery Society

Historic Event(s)?

Wellwood Haugh was the first Scottish settler to locate in North Colchester. Also, the Cemetery and Willow Church were the first Church⁽²⁾ and Cemetery established in the Tatamagouche area. See table of contents #2 "Willow Church Cemetery a brief history."

3. ARCHITECTURE (if applicable)

Type of construction?

N/A

Architect?

N/A

Builder?

Wellwood Haugh and sons built the first church⁽²⁾ and donated the land for both the church and cemetery.

5. LANDMARK

Do you or your association consider this property to be a landmark? Why?

Yes. The Willow Church Cemetery was the first Protestant Cemetery located in the Tatamagouche area (229 years ago) therefore, a landmark.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS (Maximum 8) *See attachment B*

If applicable, must show total building, plus doors, windows and details.

File sizes cannot exceed 1MB. *Choose File* no file selected
Add another file

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do you know of any other source ie. book, report, newspaper article or individual that has additional information about this property?

See attachment C

Is there any other information that you feel is important and should be included?

Yes. The Willow Church Cemetery Society has cared for and maintained the Cemetery since 1972. However our membership is declining (age) and we would like to ensure that the Cemetery and its historical significance are preserved for the future.

Application

Prepared (*)

Prepared by the Willow Church Cemetery Society

Address (*)

% Mildred MacDougall, President, Willow Church Cemetery Society, 80 Elmfield Rd., Scottdale, N.S., B0K 1R0

Phone (w)

Phone (H) *902-485-4694 - Summer Cottage # - 902-7832474*

Email (*) *mildredmacdougall@hotmail.com*

14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Signature *Michael Mac Donnell*

Clear

Sign Above

Security check (*)



I am not a robot

Submit

1 Church Street
Truro, NS B2N 3Z5
Phone: (902) 897-3160
Fax (General Inquires): (902) 843-4066
Toll Free (in Nova Scotia): 1-866-728-5144



In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, we acknowledge that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

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WILLOW CHURCH CEMETERY A BRIEF HISTORY

The Willow Church Cemetery Society , a volunteer organization, has been caring for the cemetery since 1972.

To better inform you of the cemetery's historical importance, please note the following:

- Willow Church Cemetery was the first Protestant Cemetery established in North Colchester in 1795.
- The cemetery was established by Wellwood Waugh .
- Waugh was the first Scottish settler to locate in North Colchester (Waugh's River) in 1781.
- At this time there were no churches in the area (people gathered in local houses or barns for religious services). Accordingly, Waugh felt there was a need for a place of worship for the community. In the late 1700's, Waugh and his sons built the first Willow Church on land he donated for this purpose.
- Actually, they built two churches on the property. The first was destroyed in a "gale" (hurricane) and the second was built in 1820 but burned in 1935.
- The cemetery is all that remains with space in the middle of the lot where the churches had been located.
- Waugh's wife, Nelly, was the first to be buried in the Cemetery in 1795.
- a tabletop tombstone marks her resting place. Engraved on top is a poem (written by Waugh) and dated 1795 .
- Wellwood Waugh's name is engraved on the same stone and dated 1824 (at the time of his death) .
- regrettably the stone has deteriorated over the past 229 years .
- Currently there are approximately 211 persons buried in the Cemetery- not all have markers .
- In 1971, a cairn and plaque were erected in the Cemetery by the Nova Scotia Museum and funded by the Willow Church Community.

- Our Society has been funding and managing the care of the Cemetery for the past fifty-plus years (cleaning stones ,lawn care, bush cutting, etc.) but our membership is declining (with age);thus the urgency to have the Cemetery designated a Heritage Property and its historical significance preserved for the future .

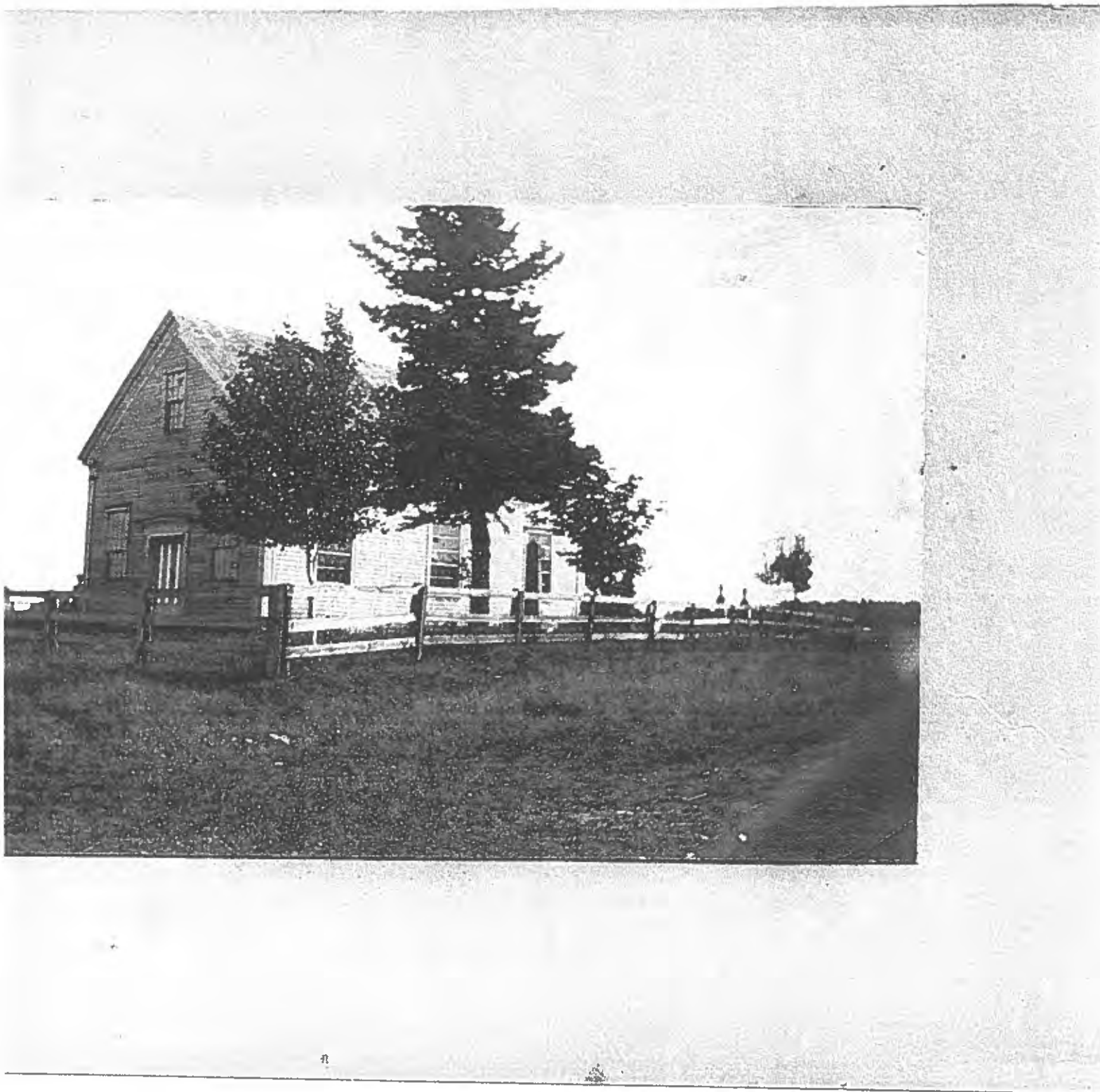
As we prepare the application for heritage designation, we have solicited ,
and received, the support of the following groups /individuals :

- the North Shore Archives Society
- the Creamery Square Heritage Society
- Colchester County Municipal Council
- Municipal Councillor-Mike Gregory
- Rev. Glen Matheson , Interim Moderator , Sedgwick Presbyterian Church .
- Tom Taggart M.L.A.North Colchester
- Dr Stephen Ellis M.P Cumberland / Colchester

Should more historical information be required, see application and attachments.



Attachment 3





9510 NS-311

4 years ago · [See more dates](#) >







"Thirty and six years are past and gone,
Love and unity did still abound
She was the mother of my tribe
The dusty path shall near my dwelling side,
Before my door that I may see
The place she lies I'll shortly be
She was zealous for Christ's cause
Agreeable to Scotland's covenanted laws.
Now Nellie is dressed as a bride
In garments that are white and side
That was dear bought by Christ for thee
While he was hanging on the tree.
Thy soul in Heaven now sings praise high
Although thy body mouldering in dust doth lie
At the dreadful trumpet sound
Both Heaven and earth will then resound
The next voice that thou shalt hear
It shall be sweet unto thy ear
The Judge says 'Ye righteous come to me
And have pleasure through eternity.'"

Wellwood Waugh composed this poem
to his wife, Nellie Henderson to be placed
on the large horizontal table over her grave
at the Willow Church Cemetery

Nellie Henderson, Waugh's wife died in
1795 at the age of 61 years.





Wellwood Waugh first Scottish settler in Tatamagouche area

BY ETHEL MACCONNELL.

TATAMAGOUCHE - Within sight of where this is being written is the old Willow Church Cemetery where Wellwood Waugh, the first Scottish settler in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, is buried among his family and descendants. His mother is also buried there and a large head stone, having the inscription which Mr. Waugh composed himself, engraved on it and which, after 154 years, is still quite easy to read.

She was ninety years of age when she died in 1809, and her name was Catherine. She had been married twice and this stone had been erected by her two sons, Wellwood Waugh and William Campbell. The inscription contains 169 words and at the end of it are these words: "In memory of so much goodness, and of a parent so devotedly dear, this stone has been erected by their sons. The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

A story is told of Wellwood Waugh's grandmother, whose name was also Catherine. At the time of the religious persecution of the Scottish covenanters, Catherine's father (in Scotland) was marked for death as he was a leader and a wealthy man. At the very least he would be arrested, his property confiscated, and his daughter taken.

DREADED DRAGONS

Catherine went across the moor one day to visit and take some delicacies to a former servant of the family who lived in a small cottage on the estate. While there the dreaded dragons were seen coming. So the old lady hastily concealed Catherine in a huge meal chest, the lid of which did not altogether close and where there was a large key hole which permitted breathing.

While she crouched in terror, the dragons sat around the chest and threw dice on the cover to decide which one should have Catherine for his own after they had killed her father.

They demanded food and after eating everything which was edible in the cottage, demanded to be directed to Catherine's home. The old lady misdirected them as much as she dared. When they left, Catherine ran swiftly home by a short-cut across the moor, warned her father who escaped with the members of his household to a refuge prepared months before.

His grand daughter, who was Wellwood Waugh's mother, married Alexander Waugh of Dumfriesshire, Scotland, and after his death married a Campbell whose son William settled in Pictou. He had five sons, three of whom came to Tatamagouche and engaged in ship-building.

Mrs. Ingram Banks of Waugh's River, Wellwood Waugh's great-great-granddaughter, has many records of the early days. She has Mr. Waugh's diary, also the diary written by his great granddaughter, Mary Ann Waugh, in which she tells of the good qualities of her forefathers, and of the hardships which they endured.

She wrote of Wellwood Waugh being possessed of great firmness of mind and of being a man of great ingenuity. He was a wheelwright by trade, but he was also a maker of clocks, many of which may still be seen. (Mrs. Banks has one—a beautiful piece of work.)

FIRST CLOCK

He made the first clock for the Presbyterian Church in Truro, N. S.—the first church in Truro. He started the building of the first church in Tatamagouche (Waugh River) and planted many lovely willows around the graveyard. (There are no willows now—neither is there a church, but the cemetery still is called the Willow Church Cemetery.)

The first church was built of logs by Mr. Waugh and his sons. They built a framed building afterward, which was burned in 1836—in it were burned all its valuable records. (Many of the Waugh descendants from all over the country are sending in requests to the Willow Church Cemetery Committee to look after the grounds and graves and are accompanying their requests with a cheque.)

Writing of the hardships, Mary Ann tells of her grandfather be-

ing well off until all was lost in a fire. She had often heard him tell of carrying a lobster through a bog and being afraid to throw it away because of lack of food. Then one year the mice ate everything in the fields and near famine set in.

BOULT MILLS

At one point all he had to eat was one veg which he divided with a younger sister and brother.

It was not long after building

a place of worship that Mr. Waugh built grist and saw mills. The grist mills are gone, but the ruins of the dams may still be seen on different brooks near the Waugh River and the lumber which had made in the mills is to be found in some of the buildings.

In 1795 Wellwood's wife died at the age of sixty-one, and in his diary he wrote that she had left nearly sixty offspring. Over her grave he had placed a large stone table and the long inscription. The work had been well done and is as clear today as it was when it was inscribed, 167 years ago. Her former name had been Nellie Henderson, and they had been married for thirty-six years. He died 20 years later, aged 83.

Wellwood Waugh and his family arrived from Pictou by boat and he liked the rich intervals along the river—intervals dotted with sugar maples, ash, oak, elm and beech, and in between the trees were many kinds of small fruits and pretty flowers. He applied to Des Barres to purchase all the intervals along Waugh's River but Des Barres would not sell. So he leased the land for 99 years. And later was successful in its outright purchase.

M61
Vol 27 file 6
at 2

By Ellen Millard
Special to The Light

The Acadians came to settle in the Tatamagouche area in the early 1700s. As well as enjoying the bountiful food in the rivers and nearby shores, they diked the marsh land and began

In 1808, Rev. John Mitchell became a resident minister in River John and he began regular services in Tatamagouche in the Waugh's barn. By 1820 the settlers felt that a church or meeting place should be built to serve their religious needs and during the initial plans everyone was in agreement as to its location. But before the actual work began, a disagreement arose and Waugh wrote in his diary that "he, his sons, Thomas, William and Wellwood, encouraged by their minister, Rev. John Mitchell would build the house of worship on their land in near their homes in Waugh's River."

Today the people who sat within its walls are all gone and the beautiful willows that surrounded the church are gone as well. But the monument to mark its site and the well-tended graves in the Willow Church Cemetery remind us of the first families to come to Tatamagouche.

Tree roots run deep (Part 2) - Welwood Waugh

By Carol MacKay

For The Advocate

The Advocate is pleased to partner with the McCulloch House Museum & Genealogy Centre in a series of articles about the research being undertaken by the centre. Genealogy Gems are provided by the researchers of McCulloch House Museum & Genealogy Centre. The Centre provides access to thousands of archival records, genealogies and documents related to Pictou County. This is the next in the series.

There are few people living in the Tatamagouche area who have not heard the Welwood Waugh name, or know one or more of his descendants. A joiner and wheelwright by trade, he and his family of "boat people" came from Galloway, Scotland, on the Lovely Nellie in 1774 to P.E.I., then to Pictou in 1776, where he suffered harsh treatment for his hatred of all things British.

Colonel Frederick DesBarres was under pressure to have his land grants settled, especially the fertile land of Tatamagouche. Mary Canon, DesBarres' mistress and business partner, had heard of Waugh as a man of shrewd capacity and energy. Shortly after he moved to Tatamagouche, Canon summoned him to Windsor—a journey by horseback to Truro, then by boat to Windsor—to personally meet him. Favourably

impressed, she appointed him to be her local sub-agent. This appointment would have a tremendous impact on such settlements as Waugh's River and New Annan.

Since Waugh received a long term lease, as well some of the best land, he faced resentment from the Montbeliard farmers who came from Lunenburg. There ensued much legal wrangling and pressure tactics by Waugh to force tenants to pay up on overdue leases. By 1787, many left for lands in River John, paying less than the rent DesBarres was charging. By 1795, there were only 19 families in the settlement, and his wife, Ellen, died.

Following his wife's death, Waugh spent time in Scotland learning to make clocks. Discouraged by the lack of settlers wanting to lease land at Tatamagouche, he had begun enticing Scots to the area, one of whom is well-known John Bell, my 4X great-grandfather, a forerunner of others who stayed at the Waugh farm for some time before he moved inland to New Annan, probably because he could not purchase land from DesBarres and did not want to be a tenant farmer.

By 1802, the Waughs leased 1,430 acres, with only 29 other families as tenants, many of them with descendants there today: Langille, Chalmers, Jollimore,

Welwood Waugh's Clock



Pictured is Welwood Waugh's clock.

(Contributed photo)

McBurnie, Ross, Mattatall, Patriquin, Millard and Henderson. By 1809, DesBarres was dissatisfied with Canon and Waugh's handling of his grant and filed a Bill of Complaint against them, a litigation that went on for years. More troubles beset Waugh and others in the community: in 1815, The Year of the Mice, acres of land were ravaged by their vicious assaults; in 1816, they endured 'The Year Without a Summer' when there was enough frost to carry a horse in June.

An indication of how impor-

tant religious practice was for Waugh: he bought a 1/3 share of a pew at the Truro Meeting House for 37 shillings and three pence; the minister was Rev. Daniel Cock, my 4x great-grandfather. In addition, Waugh frequently hosted church services in his home, barn and outside on his property by visiting ministers. After years of trying to get an agreement on where, when and how to build a church in Tatamagouche, Waugh and his sons erected one on their property in 1820, known as Willow Church, and frequently topped up the minister's salary from his own pocket. He maintained those who had not contributed to the church should not be buried in the cemetery where Waugh and his wife, Nellie, are buried in Lot 24. Colonel DesBarres died that same year, and the lawsuit died with him; his lawyer said, "Plaintiff cannot safely proceed to trial."

Source: Tatamagouche, N.S. 1771-1842, by Hon. Frank H. Patterson

Carol MacKay is a retired teacher living in Braeshore with her husband. She is a mother and grandmother with strong roots in Pictou County. She is a hobby genealogist and researcher. She was a Board Member for the Pictou County Genealogy & Heritage Society for a number of years, as well as active volunteer.

OTHER SOURCES

North Shore Archives Society- (see Letter of Support)

Creamery Square Heritage Society-(see Letter of Support)

Colchester Historeum:

We visited the Historeum to review the historical information of Tatamagouche and area .

Dale Swan(Local Historian):

Dale is a long -time resident of the Tatamagouche area with whom we had several discussions re the history of Tatamagouche, including the history of Waugh's River as well as the Willow Churches and Cemetery.

Tatamagouche , N.S. 1771-1824 :

This book , written by the Hon. Frank H. Patterson,Q.C., presents the early history of Tatamagouche and surrounding area. We used this publication to fact check and gain a more complete understanding of area history.

Frank Wilson (Local Historian):

Frank has been a most valuable resource for our Society . He has a wealth of knowledge re the history of the Willow Churches, the Cemetery, Waugh's River as well as the Tatamagouche area.

Mary Hunter(Secretary/Treasurer,Willow Church Cemetery Society):

Mary has been our records -keeper for a number of years, and has been instrumental in helping us compile the information for our application and supporting information .

Annie Leslie (Former Secretary/Treasurer, Willow Church Cemetery Society):

Annie is a retired Teacher/Principal and a life-long resident of the Tatamagouche area. She was our secretary/treasurer for 30+ years .Her records have been a valuable resource as we prepared our application and supporting information . Of note, she will be 100 years of age soon .

**NORTH SHORE ARCHIVES SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 402
39 CREAMERY ROAD, TATAMAGOUCHE, NS
B0K 1V0**

September 12, 2023
Councillor Mike Gregory
Municipality of the County of Colchester
PO Box 77
56 Blair Avenue
Tatamagouche NS B0K 1V0

Dear Councillor Gregory:

The North Shore Archives Society wishes to express their support of the Willow Church Cemetery Society's endeavor to establish the Willow Church Cemetery as a Provincial Heritage Property.

The Willow Church Cemetery is one of the oldest known cemeteries on the North Shore area and dates to the late 1700s.

A North Shore Archives Society member, Donald A. Beeler, researched and compiled a publication on the 47 known cemeteries in the Tatamagouche area entitled "Cemeteries of North Colchester County with Headstone Inscriptions" (2010, 2nd edition). Using the information gathered by Beeler we can determine that the Willow Church Cemetery contains the oldest gravestone that clearly mark and identify the person buried.

There are older gravesites in the area associated with the Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and Montbeliards but none have identifiable markers.

The oldest gravestone listed in Beeler's book is for Nelly Waugh (wife of Wellwood Waugh) who died in 1795 and was reported to have been the first person to be buried in the Willow Church Cemetery. Nelly (Henderson) Waugh's is the earliest complete headstone in the local area with a name and date of death clearly inscribed. The monument is termed a table stone and is approximately 2 x 1 metres in size. Her husband Wellwood Waugh's inscription was added to the bottom of the stone after his death in 1824. With both names on the stone, the provenance of the Waugh's resting place is solid.

The Waughs and their family arrived in Tatamagouche by 1781. Waugh held many important positions during his life with the chief one being the local agent for Colonel Joseph Frederick Wallet DesBarres. He also acted as the local magistrate and was appointed as Justice of the Peace in 1805. Waugh became DesBarres' agent to manage the 20,000 acres of property in the Tatamagouche area known as the DesBarres' Grant. DesBarres had started the leasing of land to Montbeliard settlers close to a decade earlier but the settlement experienced difficulties and had not grown. Wellwood Waugh was able to increase the number of tenants, which formed a base for the development of the area. Waugh was instrumental in bringing John Bell of Annandale, Scotland to Tatamagouche. Bell later went on to establish New Annan and enticed other Lowland Scots to move to this area of Nova Scotia. Waugh also built Willow Church which was the first Protestant church in North Colchester in 1820.

The community of Waugh's River and the Waugh River are reminders of how influential Wellwood Waugh was in the area.

We believe that designating the Willow Church Cemetery as a Provincial Historical Property would: 1) recognize the oldest identifiable gravestone of the area 2) value the historic age of the graveyard. 3) honour the first permanent Scottish family to the area

and 4) credit the contributions of Wellwood Waugh to the history of the Tatamagouche area.

For the above reasons we offer our support to the Willow Church Cemetery Society's application.

Yours sincerely,

Floyd Tucker
President
North Shore Archives Society

Sources:

Israel Longworth's History of Colchester County, Nova Scotia Circa 1886

Hon. Frank H. Patterson, Q.C., D.C.L. TATAMAGOUCHE, N.S. 1771-1824

Donald A. Beeler Cemeteries of North Colchester County with Headstone Inscriptions 2010 2nd edition
Dictionary of Canadian Biography, University of Toronto

CC: Mildred MacDougall, Willow Church Cemetery Society



Creamery Square Heritage Society
PO Box 402
Tatamagouche, NS
B0K 1V0

September 18, 2023

To whom this may concern,

The Creamery Square Heritage Society fully supports the application by the Willow Church Cemetery Society to have the Willow Church Cemetery declared a Heritage Property.

Among others of that time period, buried in that cemetery is Wellwood Waugh and his wife, Nelly. Wellwood Waugh was prominent in the settlement of Tatamagouche during the mid to late seventeen hundreds. He was responsible for the Scots contingent which is thriving in our area today.

In our Heritage Centre, we have an exhibit explaining the sequence of events which pertain to this settlement. The cemetery extends this story. We sincerely hope that this application by the Society will be accepted. The cemetery needs to be preserved.

With regards,

M. Driver

Maralyn Driver
Director

December 5, 2023

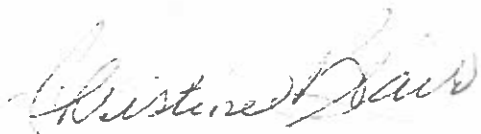
Mildred MacDougall
Willow Church Cemetery Society
80 Elmfield Rd.
Scotsburn, NS B0K 1R0

Dear Ms. MacDougall,

On behalf of Council and the Municipality of Colchester, I would like to express support for your application to have the Willow Church Cemetery designated as a Heritage Property by the Province of Nova Scotia. Being established in 1795, we recognize the significance the cemetery has to the rich history of both Tatamagouche and all of Colchester County.

We appreciate the Society's dedicated stewardship of this historical gem over the past fifty-plus years. We wish you all the best in your efforts to achieve the well-deserved Heritage Property designation.

Kind regards,



Christine Blair
Mayor

Letter of Support, Willow Church Cemetery.

From: Michael Gregory
To: mildredmacdougall@hotmail.com
Date: Mon, Dec 4, 2023, 8:24 PM

Dear Mildred MacDougall,

I write this letter in support of the Willow Church Road Cemetery Society's application for heritage designation. I am quite familiar with this cemetery, and the great historical importance that it has for this community and the fact that it is the resting place of Wellwood Waugh. I have always taken notice of the fact that this cemetery has been so well maintained since I came to Tatamagouche in 1989. Anyone who knows or reads the historical facts about the cemetery will immediately understand the importance it has to this small community and to the many descendants of Wellwood Waugh. This is a big part of the history of Tatamagouche, and I feel it should be given the historical designation that it deserves.

Yours truly,

Michael Gregory
Councillor, District 7



Municipality of Colchester

1 Church St, Truro, NS, B2N 3Z5

Phone: 902-305-4002

   [Colchester.ca](https://www.colchester.ca)



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Dr. Stephen Ellis

Member of Parliament
Cumberland-Colchester
Shadow Minister of Health

Monday, January 15, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to take this opportunity to write a letter of support to designate the Willow Church Cemetery as a heritage property in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia.

The Willow Church Cemetery is an important part of history in both Tatamagouche and North Colchester.

In 1795, The Willow Church Cemetery was the first Protestant Cemetery Church established in North Colchester by Wellwood Waugh. He was the first Scottish settler in the Tatamagouche area in 1781.

Since there were no other churches in the area, Mr. Waugh saw the need for a place of worship. He and his sons built the first Willow Church. After a storm destroyed the church in 1820, they rebuilt but unfortunately it was destroyed in a fire in 1935. All that remains is the cemetery.

The Willow Church Cemetery Society, which maintains the property, is a dedicated group of volunteers who work tirelessly to continue the maintenance of this property. I fully support their endeavour to have this site designated as a historical property in Nova Scotia.

I hope you will consider their request as they aim to preserve the historical significance and future of the Willow Church Cemetery.

Kind personal regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Ellis".

Dr. Stephen Ellis
Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester



Tom Taggart
MLA Colchester North

Mildred MacDougall

October 24,2023

President-Willow Church Cemetery Society

Dear Mrs.MacDougall,

I am writing to you today in support of the Willow Church Cemetery in Waugh's River, Tatamagouche and of the importance of having this cemetery designated as a heritage property.

As the MLA for Colchester North, I lend my support to this project, and I recognize the importance of preserving the history of these sacred properties. It is an important part for us to hold onto our roots and recognize their significance.

It is my hope that this cemetery will be recognized as a historical site and the application will be considered for heritage designation.

Please reach out if there is anything I can do to assist in this process.

Regards,

Tom Taggart MLA

Colchester North

Bethel Presbyterian Church
1162 Campbell Hill Rd.
Scotsburn, NS B0K 1R0

September 30, 2023

Re: Willow Church Cemetery

To Whom it May Concern:

For over 40 years I've been serving multiple congregations in Cumberland, Colchester and Pictou County as a Presbyterian minister. For much of that time served as the Archivist for the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces within The Presbyterian Church in Canada which is housed in First Presbyterian Church in New Glasgow, Pictou County.

The past few years across the northern region of Nova Scotia I've witnessed first-hand a rapid decline in caretakers for rural cemeteries, mostly due to the deaths of those who for years volunteered to do so.

Old headstones are tilting and breaking. Bushes and trees are overtaking cleared land and getting lawns mowed is becoming more difficult each year. We are rapidly losing our old cemeteries as nature takes over.

The first known burial in the Willow Church Cemetery was in 1795. Volunteers have been fantastic, but the few currently able to care for the cemetery are now reached the situation where age and health is weakening their ability to maintain the property without assistance.

The Willow Church Cemetery Society and I humbly support wholeheartedly the need for the Willow Church Cemetery to be designated a Heritage Property as one of the oldest known graveyard in that area of North Colchester.

Sincerely,



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