

Community Name: **TOWN OF MULGRAVE**
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Names of groups in community who support this nomination:

<u>CIVIC</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u>	<u>CORPORATE</u>
Mulgrave Marina Committee	Mulgrave Beautification Committee	Mulgrave Machine Works Ltd.
Mulgrave Post Office	Mulgrave Medical Centre	Mulgrave Professional Development Centre
Mulgrave Recreation & Physical Activity Dept.	Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre	Atlantic Association of CBDCs
Mulgrave Town Council	Mulgrave Museum & Cenotaph Committee	East Coast Hydraulics & Machinery Ltd
Mulgrave Volunteer Fire Dept. Ladies Auxiliary	Eastern Counties Regional Library	Ocean Nutrition Canada
Mulgrave Volunteer Fire Dept./Medical 1st Responders	Masonic Lodge #57	Strait of Canso Superport Corporation
Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 37	New Horizons Seniors' Group	
Scotia Days Committee	St. Andrew's Anglican Church	
RCMP	St. Lawrence Catholic Church & Catholic Women's League	
	The Resting Place Committee (non-denominational)	
	Trinity United Church	

All of the above organizations have been contacted and have endorsed this nomination. We are grateful for the opportunity to share the attributes of our Town of which we are so proud.

Our submission of this nomination permits the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award program to post our stories on the Award website and to share these stories online with the program's media partners.

Early History of Mulgrave

Situated on the western coast of the Strait of Canso, Mulgrave was named in honour of George Augustus Constantine Phipps, Earl of Mulgrave and Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia in 1859. The first permanent settler in Mulgrave was Cohn (Colin) McNair who was granted 690 acres of land. Therefore, the place where land met the sea was called McNair's Cove.

Around 1800 Mulgrave began to flourish as the settlers brought with them fishing and ship-building skills. Before mid-century there were as many as 500 vessels plying the Strait of Canso with fishing as the main source of livelihood. The other large employer was the forestry industry. Much Nova Scotia timber was exported to Britain for the building of ships. The population of Mulgrave at this time was around 500 people. As a result there arose other businesses such as shops, ship suppliers, small hotels and numerous socializing establishments.

In 1833 a car ferry was established leaving from a Main Street wharf near McNair's Cove and joining Cape Breton to mainland Nova Scotia. A most significant development in the town's history was the installation of a railroad in the 1880s. When the railway reached the end of the line at Mulgrave, train cars were transported to Point Tupper, Cape Breton by ferry. Once again the ferries and railroad employed many townspeople and many new businesses thrived. The railway yard in Mulgrave was a shipping terminal for Canso, Arichat, Cheticamp and Guysborough. Today the original railway bed is used as a hiking trail.

Much of Mulgrave's rich history has been captured in the poetry of a grand Mulgrave lady, Mrs. Lillian Williams, who was born in 1898 and died in 2006 at the age of 108, and in the music of Mr. Earl Peeples who still lives in the town. Despite the slow, steady economic downturn since the last car ferry sailed from Mulgrave on 20 May, 1955 and the decline in population, the people of Mulgrave remain proud of their heritage. Against all odds they defend their community and live with enduring hope for a brighter day.

Community Strengths

Mulgrave is blessed with an abundance of natural assets. The town lies adjacent to the deepest, ice-free, salt water port in the world and is built on a gently-sloping hill with dense tree cover and a solid granite foundation. All residents of Mulgrave have a view of the Strait of Canso and can watch the sun rise over Cape Breton Island every morning. Town drinking water is safe and clean and people can enjoy a long walking trail that extends through the entire town and on into Guysborough County. There are numerous small rivers that run through town which could be used for energy generation in the future. In the meantime, they provide a most pleasing aesthetic to walkers and wildlife.

Mulgrave neighbourhoods are safe for children and seniors; the town can boast a vigilant Neighbourhood Watch program. There are very few fences in Mulgrave, so children run freely from yard to yard and street to street, all the while within sight of someone who knows them.

Mulgrave possesses all the fundamental services necessary to accommodate growth and expansion. There are the five core industries; a P-8 school with school bus service for both the young children and the secondary school students who attend grades 9-12 in Port Hawkesbury; a convenience store; a branch of East Coast Credit Union and a branch of NSLC; three churches, a fire department and a large fire hall where many different social and community events are held. Mulgrave is ready for new growth.

Enduring Community

Residents of Mulgrave are fiercely proud of their heritage, history and their family connections and they are extremely loyal to community. Incorporated as a Town in 1923, the Charter remains firmly in place today despite residents having endured many kinds of adversity. This endurance speaks volumes about the tenacity of Mulgrave citizens.

The first group of settlers to Mulgrave in 1788-89 were Loyalists fleeing the American Revolution while others were immigrants from Northern Ireland. They brought family names such as Peebles, Sherman, Moore, Clancy and Keating, all of whom left Ireland because of economic difficulty or religious persecution. Around 1800 names such as Hadley, Wallace, Carey and Hattie arrived in the community from Scotland and can still be found in the local phone book. In addition, for centuries Mulgrave has been home to Black Caribbean immigrants and to some families from England.

There is a wealth of historical information and artifacts about the town in the Mulgrave Museum. The four principal sections of the Museum highlight histories of the railway and ferry services, the fishing industry, the military contributions made by Mulgrave men and women in the two great wars, and the significance of the Black community to town culture.

Population and Diversity

Caucasians (Scots, Irish, English), African-Canadians and Acadian French all live harmoniously in Mulgrave and many have intermarried. Mulgrave is an integrated community with people from all ethnic backgrounds working, playing and praying together. The three churches collaborate well and share resources when needed. For example, a Protestant Minister has been known to deliver funeral services in the Catholic church when attendance is high.

The population of Mulgrave today is lower than it used to be because of the out-migration of youth and people in their 20s and 30s looking for work. However, the number of seniors in town is below the provincial average at 26%. Council and Town staff are formulating a vision for the future of the town in such a way that young families will be drawn to live here.

Community Pride at Work

Mulgrave people continually exhibit an ability to band together during good times and bad. Following are several examples:

- Endurance of annual week-long Scotia Days Parade and Festival – **30 years in 2011**. “Scotia Days”, the well-publicized summer festival, happens because of a dedicated committee of volunteers who work for months to create a week-long celebration of activities for people of all ages. All of the floats in the parade are sponsored by volunteer groups and private individuals. The purpose of Scotia Days is to honour the long sea-faring history of this port town and to bring people home. Because the festival is held in summer, it is a bigger draw than even Christmas with up to 1,000 people attending from all over Nova Scotia and other Canadian places;
- Likewise the week-long Winter Carnival is sponsored by the Town but its success is owing to volunteers. Its purpose is to relieve the winter doldrums by getting families outside to skate, sled, play games and enjoy what the season offers. Traditionally around 500 people brave the weather to participate in the week of fun. A dedicated group of men donate their time and resources to repair and make useful the outdoor skating rink next to the Fire Hall. (They also organize themselves in summer to mow the grass in cemeteries around town);
- Outpouring of support in the form of food, money and fund raising events for families experiencing tragedy or family crisis. For example, support for the Cameron and MacDonald families who each lost a son in a freak dirt bike accident (Oct., 2010);
- Two other families recently have been supported by community efforts – a bottle drive was held for one to help purchase medical equipment for a disabled child and a benefit dance was held for a young woman who has been on kidney dialysis for years. Her son is donating one of his kidneys to his mother.
- All churches share the non-denominational Resting Place, a building where wakes are held. Community members provide luncheons after funerals and many citizens donate money to keep the place going;
- The entire Town turns out for annual Remembrance Day services and laying of wreaths at the Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre (MMEC);
- MMEC is a truly “Community School” - the base for a wide variety of events and activities for all age groups;
- A volunteer Town Beautification Committee, headed by Alvina Snow, her husband and daughter, installed a boardwalk, gazebo, flower beds and boxes, picnic benches, seats and signage at the Mill Street Duck Pond and an attractive footbridge has been replaced spanning the pond and waterfall. Their work is enchanting. Other colourful

- bench seats and flower boxes have been placed around town and residents were recruited to “adopt” and care for a flower bed for the summer;
- Ecumenical Choir (volunteer) – sings at funerals, Christmas, Easter celebrations and includes members from Port Hawkesbury and the surrounding area;
- Robyn Meagher – Mulgrave's own Olympian inducted into the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame on October 30, 2010. Mulgrave celebrated Robyn at MMEC one morning so all the children could ask her questions in order to understand what the life of a runner is like. A more formal reception was held at the Museum that evening to present Robyn with a framed picture of the Strait area at night and the Mayor placed a Mulgrave lapel pin on Robyn's shirt;
- Town Recreation Coordinator would not be able to carry out her programs alone. Thankfully dozens of volunteers turn out every year to keep programs going for everyone. There are summer minor ball and soccer programs, women's fitness, men's basketball and soccer, badminton, volleyball and more;
- Value of and respect for seniors - Wednesday afternoon Seniors' Club has seen up to 90 people turn out for lunch, games, laughter – all supported by volunteers, preparing the Seniors' Christmas Dinner; acknowledging those who reach milestones such as years serving on committees; reaching significant ages;
- There was a public celebration of Ruth Digdon's 71 years serving Trinity United Church in 2010 and she is still serving!

Importance of Supporting Youth

- Annual Science Fairs at MMEC – different volunteer judges every year;
- The town public swimming pool offers lessons for children in summer and a physical activity option for all members of the community;
- For the past four years Mulgrave has been involved in the Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up campaign, a national initiative designed to draw much-needed attention to the health of all our coastal areas. In April of each year, our Recreation Coordinator collaborates with MMEC to take groups of children around town to collect litter which is visible after the snow melts
- Girl guides and Scouts are very active in the community; they have weekly meetings, outings to local businesses and organizations. They contribute to the community by taking part in projects such as planting flowers in the town parks, collecting food for the

- local food bank, helping out with Seniors events, visiting the seniors complex, bottle drives for charitable interests, volunteering in the Christmas Light exchange, among other things;
- Youth educational and activity nights consisting of youth-organized and facilitated initiatives. Youth leaders from the Mulgrave Youth Group take part in workshops to better their leadership skills, develop conflict management strategies, communication skills and organizational habits. These youth meet regularly to plan events and activities that consist of educational and physical activity initiatives with support and guidance from adults and the RCMP. Cooperation is the key to a successful project. Youth take a leading role in the development and delivery of programming in order to induce a sense of ownership and pride in their accomplishments. A major goal is to create a place for our youth to go where they feel safe, not judged; where they feel proud and where they can talk openly about community issues such as crime prevention (vandalism, drugs and alcohol); where they can gather with friends, and become more physically active. Our goal is to create a youth-friendly environment to entice youth off the streets, alleviate boredom by keeping them constructively active, thereby reducing crime in our area

Volunteers

A reliable measure of the kind of backbone that keeps the town of Mulgrave viable is the extent of volunteerism. There are the following organized volunteer groups in addition to countless random acts of kindness that are quietly given every day without recognition:

Beautification Committee
 Scotia Days Committee
 The Resting Place Committee
 Marina Committee
 Ecumenical Choir
 MMEC Breakfast Program & Christmas Dinner
 Mulgrave Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
 Girl Guides and Boy Scouts
 Museum Committee Old-Fashioned Christmas
 Mulgrave Recreation & Physical Activity Advisory Committee

In addition, the Masonic Lodge #57 undertakes extensive fund raising for community causes in and around Mulgrave, including the handing out of annual bursaries to Grade 12 students who plan to attend university. The criteria are that the students must be residents of the Town of Mulgrave and they must be pursuing post-secondary education at institutions recognized by the Lodge. This year the Lodge donated \$500 scholarships to two students who met the criteria; it donated \$100 to the Christmas Daddies this past season; \$1,000 was given to the Mulgrave Fire Department First Responders last year; \$1,000 has gone to the Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre Breakfast Program for the last three years, and last year when

one of Mulgrave's residents, Joyce Hearn, was confined to the intensive care unit of a Halifax hospital, the Masonic Lodge raised \$300 to help with the family's transportation costs.

The genuine level of caring and generosity of spirit demonstrated by Mulgrave people is what keeps the place going. You may be able to take a person out of Mulgrave (for a while) but you cannot take Mulgrave out of the person!

Welcoming Community

Visitors are always included in whatever is going on at any time in town and, of course, natives of Mulgrave who have moved away for university or employment are always enthusiastically embraced when they return home. Some Mulgrave-born people who are now retiring baby-boomers are moving home to be closer to aging family. Every year dozens of Mulgrave natives come home from other parts of Canada to enjoy the Scotia Days Festival in July and to reconnect with friends and family.

Emily Forrest, who walked 2995 km around the coastline of Nova Scotia from May to August, 2010 to raise awareness of Brigadoon, a year-round facility in the Annapolis Valley for children and youth living with chronic illness, was warmly welcomed in Mulgrave by the Mayor and several others clad in walking shoes on July 27th. Pictures were taken and an article was written for publication in the Guysborough Journal. Emily promised to come back one day.

At the 2010 Scotia Days Pancake Breakfast Town Council had the pleasure of welcoming The Honourable Ramona Jennex, then Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and her mother and father. The Pancake Breakfast is always a popular event with our Member of Parliament, Mr. Rodger Cuzner and our MLA, Mr. Jim Boudreau who are both coerced into "flipping pancakes".

Civic Government

The election of 2008 saw the highest voter turn-out in the history of Mulgrave at 77%, resulting in a number of changes for the town. Not only was there a new Mayor elected for the first time in over 20 years, but also the new Mayor is the first woman Mayor of the town and the only elected woman Mayor in the province of Nova Scotia this term. In addition, there is a progressive Council of four residents, three of whom are new, able to work together to make effective decisions and who genuinely want what is best for the town. Council and staff have cultivated a harmonious and collaborative working relationship and the Town has a new Chief Administrative Officer who is working diligently to move the Town forward. The administrative staff are highly knowledgeable about their respective duties and are dedicated to the interests of their community.

Council and staff communicate their thoughts and actions to the residents of Mulgrave through a quarterly newsletter. The newsletter is a good way to reach people who prefer not

to attend Council meetings. Frequently the letter elicits welcome feedback that otherwise would not be forthcoming.

Community Input

In 2009-2010 a governance study was done to help determine what path the Town of Mulgrave should take in the future. The exercise was designed to start townspeople thinking about what they wanted for their town and how they wanted to achieve their goals. The study facilitators were amazed at the number of events and celebrations this town supports throughout the year and at how many hundreds of volunteer hours are devoted to making events happen. The concluding statement in the final report was "If nothing changes, Mulgrave will not be financially viable beyond five years." By that time, however, things had already begun to change for the better, not only making the governance study report redundant, but also making Town Council and administration more determined than ever to brighten the future of this beautiful little town.

In 2009 the head office of the East Coast Credit Union threatened to close its Mulgrave branch. A public meeting was organized at the Fire Hall to give people an opportunity to question ECCU directors and to express their disappointment. After much backlash and publicity the decision eventually was reversed and the Mulgrave branch remains open.

Modern Business Climate

There are five major businesses that sustain Mulgrave's commercial tax base: Atlantic Association of CBDs; East Coast Hydraulics & Machinery Ltd.; East Coast Credit Union; Mulgrave Machine Works Ltd., and Strait of Canso Superport Corporation. A major Strait area employer in the natural resources sector, Martin Marietta Materials, will be expanding its operations into Mulgrave in 2011. In addition, there is a small convenience store and a branch of NSLC. While many local people are employed by these businesses in town, others travel elsewhere for employment. Self-employment forms an important part of the local economy as well, supported by businesses such as bookkeeping, hairdressing, a Bed & Breakfast establishment and a variety of trades.

There is great potential on the Mulgrave waterfront for expansion of the marina. Presently the marina consists of a boat launching ramp and floating docks that can accommodate about a dozen boats. The Mulgrave Marina Committee and Town Council are working on attracting economic investment and development, and efforts are being made to secure funding for marina improvement. The plan for the future includes providing amenities such as fuel, showers, laundry and a place to buy provisions. An increase in marine traffic at the Mulgrave Marina ultimately will benefit the entire Strait region.

Community Challenges

The challenges facing Mulgrave are similar to those of other small municipalities in Nova Scotia at this time, namely declining population and government budget cuts. The most significant challenge facing Mulgrave now, however, is that of reinventing itself. Strangely the town's recorded history stops at 1955, as if it has been holding its breath waiting for something to happen. This Council believes the time has come to make something happen.

Mulgrave Council and administrative staff are developing a vision to bring the town into the 21st century in such a way that it can capitalize on its assets and encourage more people to move here and start up a variety of businesses. In this technological age anything is possible. The work to develop a strong vision and strategy into the future will be supported by a public participation program that will enable residents of all ages to contribute their thoughts, hopes and aspirations. In keeping with Mulgrave's strong community spirit citizens are expected to bring forward-thinking, imaginative and workable ideas to the project, and be willing to contribute their time to implementing the vision and strategy.

FUTURE HOPES AND PLANS

The future of Mulgrave is largely contingent on how well its wharf and port facilities are promoted. Mulgrave's land mass and easy accessibility to unusually deep, ice-free water are the keys to future expansion and economic development. The future of the Strait area lies in shipping. For many years the Strait has been grossly under-utilized; however, people in Mulgrave envision a day when the waters are teeming with vessels once again.

This community owes its endurance to the strength, pride and tenacity of its families and to the involvement of everyone in a wide variety of community projects. Mulgrave is safe, crime-free, family-oriented, peaceful and beautiful. In addition, it is one of the few places in the world that can offer every home owner a water view. The spirit of the community continues to grow in the hearts, minds and actions of its residents.

As a community Mulgrave is well-serviced and ready to grow. There is great spirit among her people, an abundance of natural beauty and clean water, outstanding port facilities and opportunities for tourism and economic expansion. Perhaps one day there will even be another ferry linking the town directly with Cape Breton!

Mulgrave – where our historic roots and love of our safe, peaceful community are as deep as the waters of our world-class port!