



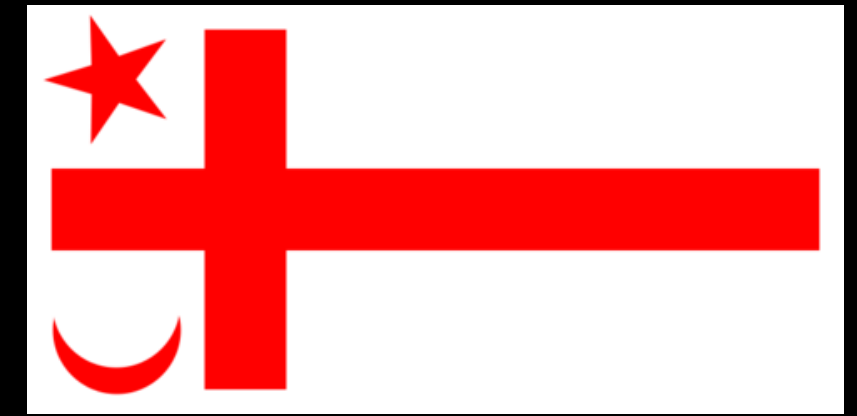
Gold River, Chester Basin N.S.

MY FAMILY & YOURS COMMUNITY TIES

PRESENTED BY: SARAH-LYN PENNELL/PETTIPAS



WHO AM I?

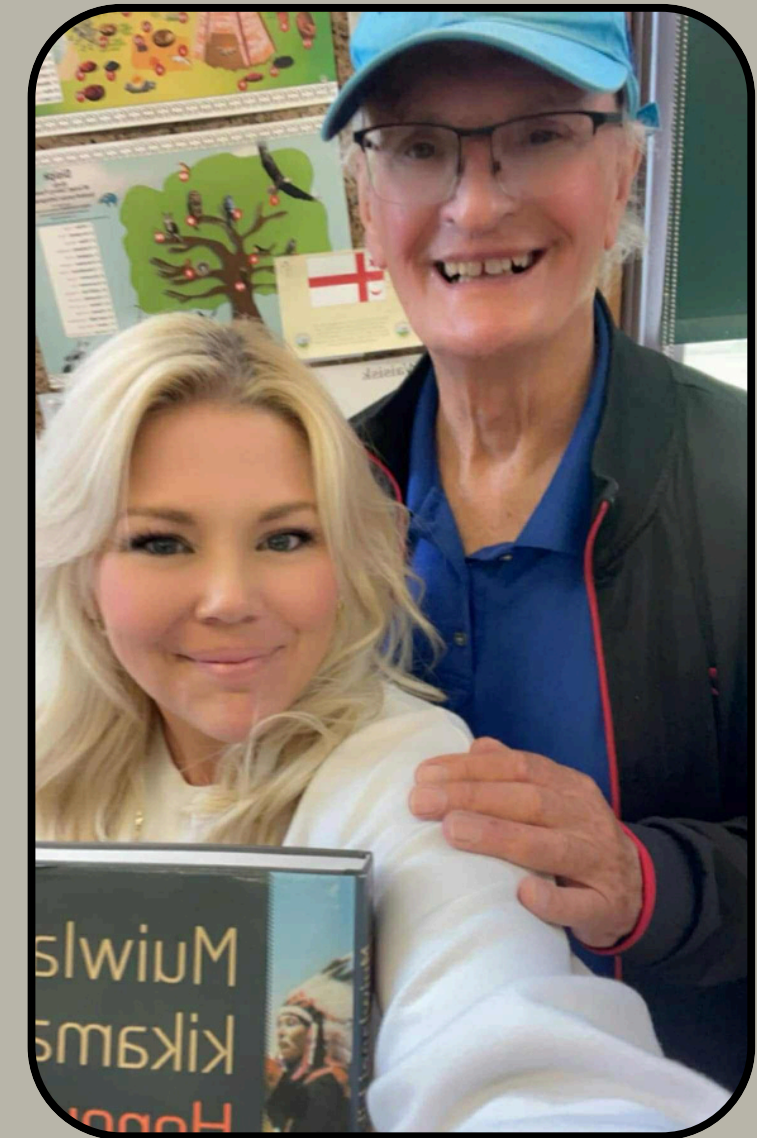


My name is Sarah Pennell/Pettipas, I am an indigenous Mi'kmaq woman who's ancestors occupied Gold River lands as far back as the 1700's.

I am also the Administrative Assistant for the Gold River Health Center and Band office for the Gold River Reserve and surrounding area of Wasoqopa'q First Nation formally known as Acadia First Nation.

I became interested in the History of Gold River in the year 2018 when I started my family tree and found there were very little documentation/information on my Mi'kmaq ancestors.

I began researching the history of Gold River in places like the Lunenburg Historical Society where I worked closely with historian Bob Sayer. I also spent many hours at the Nova Scotia Archives and libraries as well as endless hours on the Vital Statistics Genealogy and Ancestry.com websites gathering as much information I could.





Points of Discussion

Topics to be Covered

WHO AM I?
BANDS OF NOVA SCOTIA
MY ANCESTORS OF GOLD RIVER
WHAT APPEALED TO THE MI'KMAQ ABOUT GOLD RIVER
WHAT IS A WIGWAM
LANDS RESERVED FOR MI'KMAQ IN GOLD RIVER
GOLD MINING
TIMBER CONFLICTS
TIME LINE OF LAND OCCUPATION BY MI'KMAQ
SACRED BURIAL PLACES
WHY DID FAMILIES LEAVE GOLD RIVER
COMMON SURNAMES & OCCUPATIONS
COMMON MYTHS
WOMENS TRADITIONAL DRESS
MENS TRADITIONAL DRESS
MOWIO'MI JIJ EVENT
ANNUAL GOLD RIVER POW WOW

Mi'Kmaq Bands Of Nova Scotia

A Brief Discussion

The Mi'Kmaq are the founding peoples of Nova Scotia.

The image presented is the names of each Mi'kmaq band in the province.

There are other indigenous groups of people they are:

- North American
- Metis
- Inuit/Inuk

each culturally different from each other but share some of the same teachings and values.



What is a Band?

A Band is a group of First Nations People who are registered under the Indian Act of Canada.

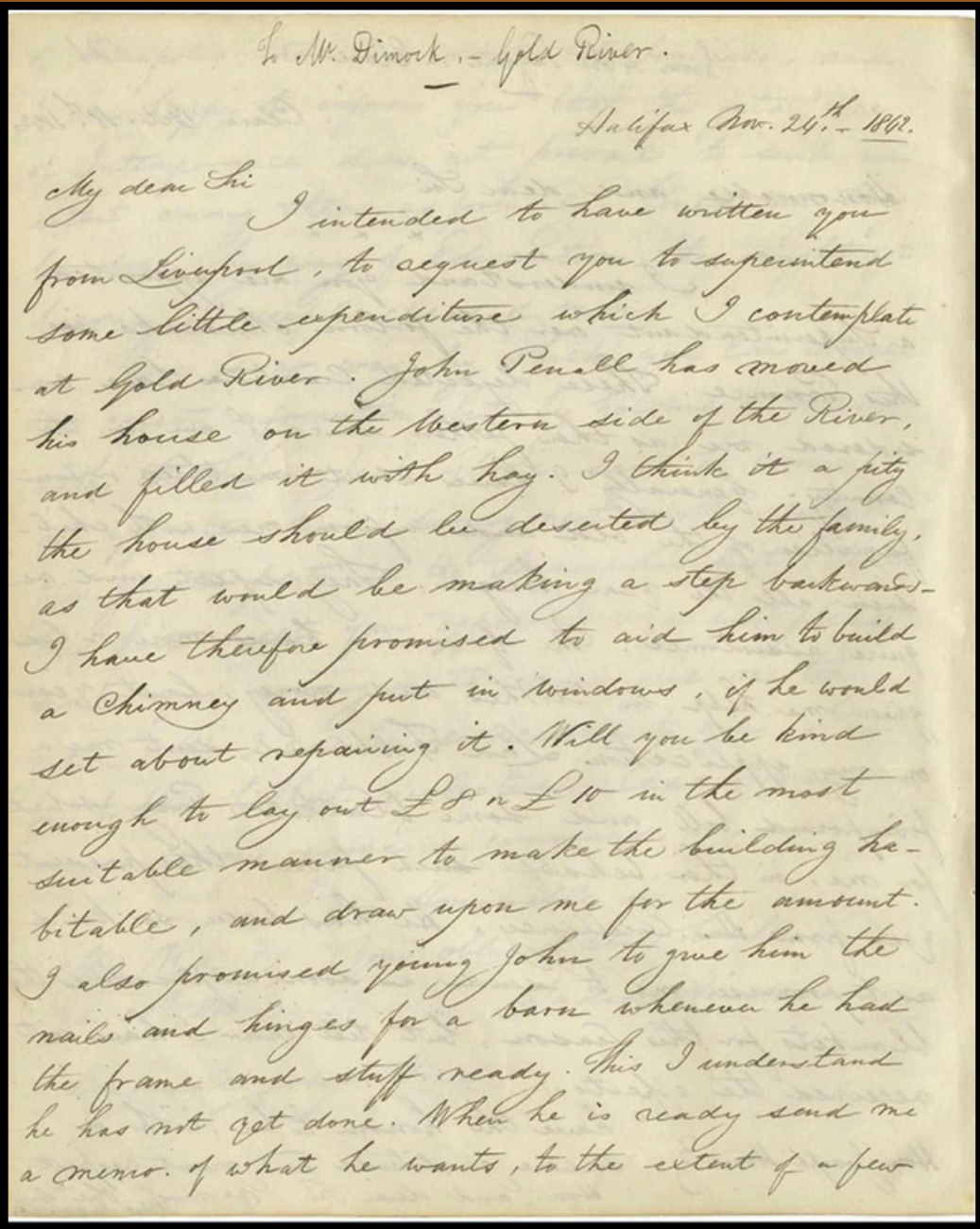
Each Band has its own:

- Leadership: Chief & Council.
- Governance: Local decisions such as, housing, education, health services, and land management.
- Lands: Reserve which is land set aside for Mikmaq peoples use. - Not all Bands have reserve lands.

My Ancestors of Gold River

Bernard (Pennel) Argomartin was Chief in Gold River from the late 1700's to his death in 1817. The title of Chief was passed down to his eldest son John Pennell Sr. & then to his eldest Son Joseph Pennell.

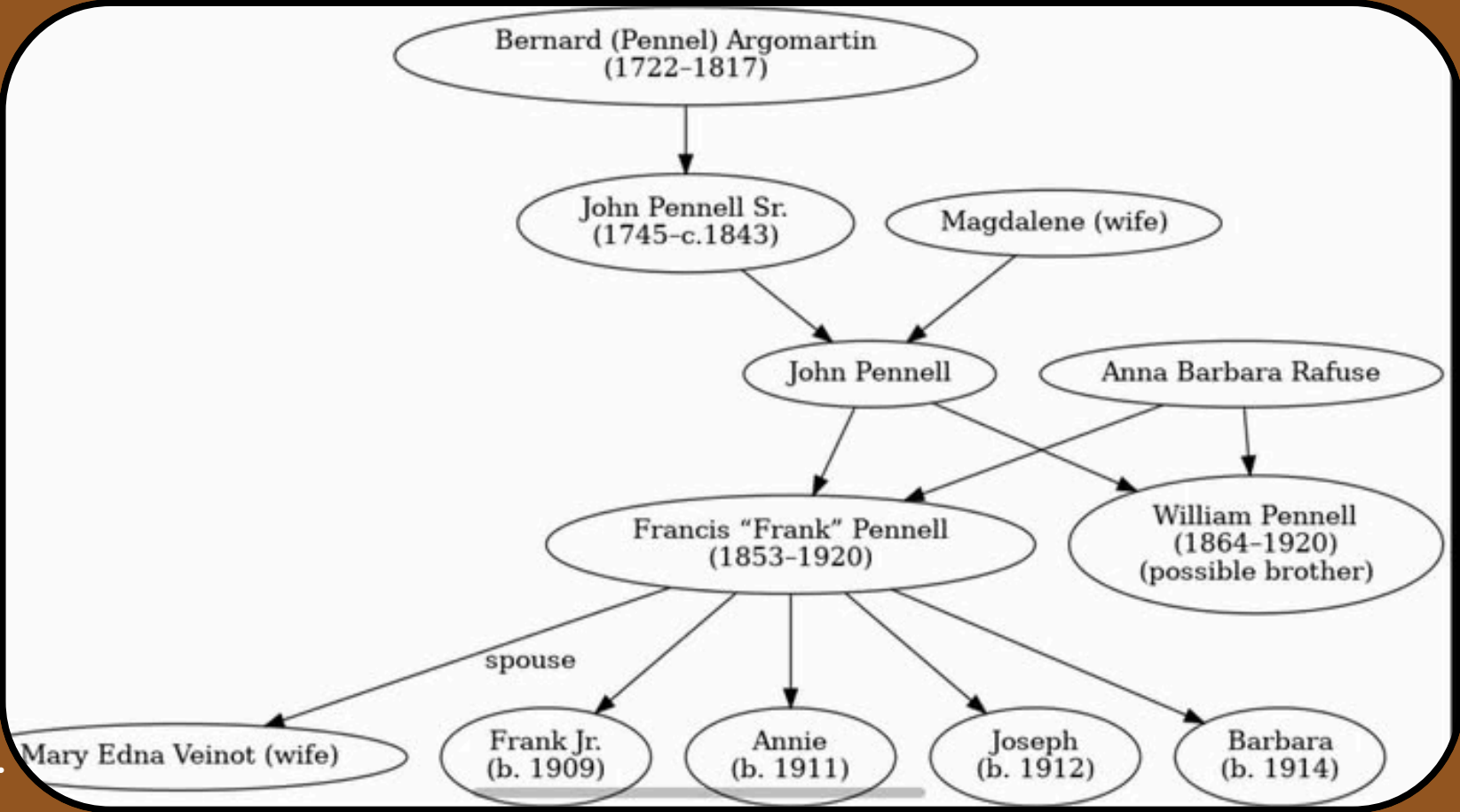
Chief Bernard (Pennel) Argomartin was my 3rd Great Grandfather and John Pennell Sr. my 2nd Great Grandfather.



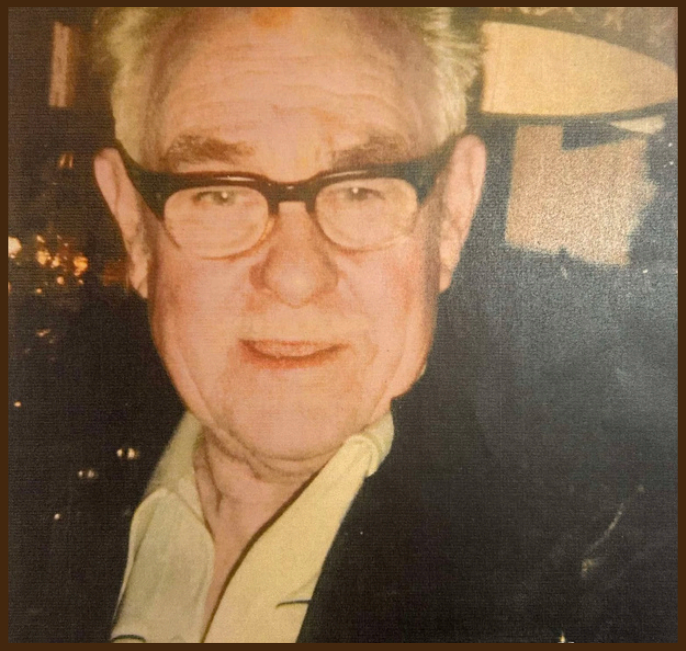
Nova Scotia Archives – Mi’kmaq Holdings To: L.W. Dimock November 24th, 1862

I intended to have written you from Liverpool, to suggest you to superintend some little expenditure which I contemplate at Gold River. John Penall has moved his house on the Western side of the river, and filled it with hay. I think it a pity the house should be deserted by the family, as that would be a step backwards. I have therefore promised to aid him to build a chimney and put in windows, if he would set about repairing it. Will you be kind enough to lay out L8 and L10 in the most suitable manner to make the building habitable, and draw upon me for the amount. I also promised young John to give him the nails and hinges for the barn, whenever he had the frame and stuff ready. This I understand he has not yet done. When he is ready send me a memo of what he wants, to the extent of a few pounds. You will oblige me by occasionally dropping me a line to say how the settlement gets along.

Yours truly, Joseph Howe



Francis “Frank” Pennell/Penall (1853-1920)

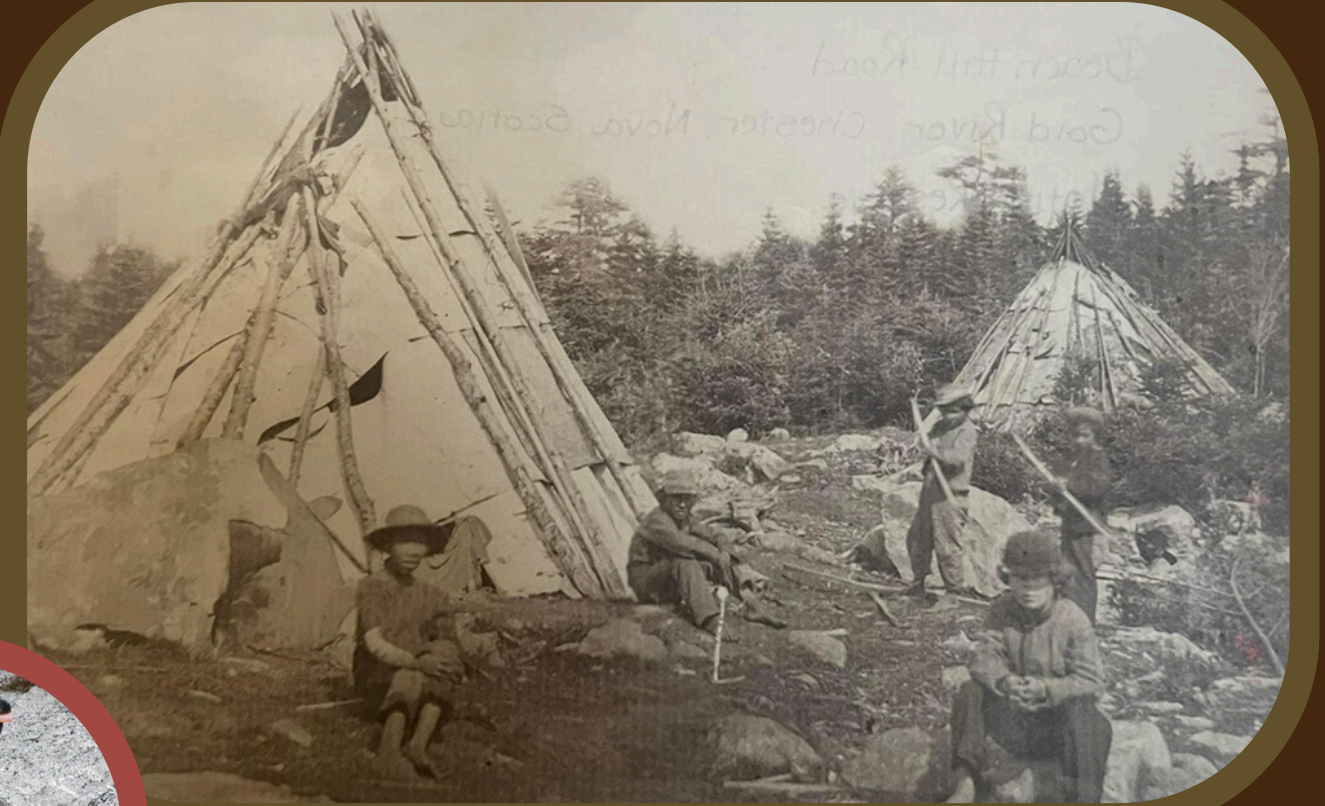
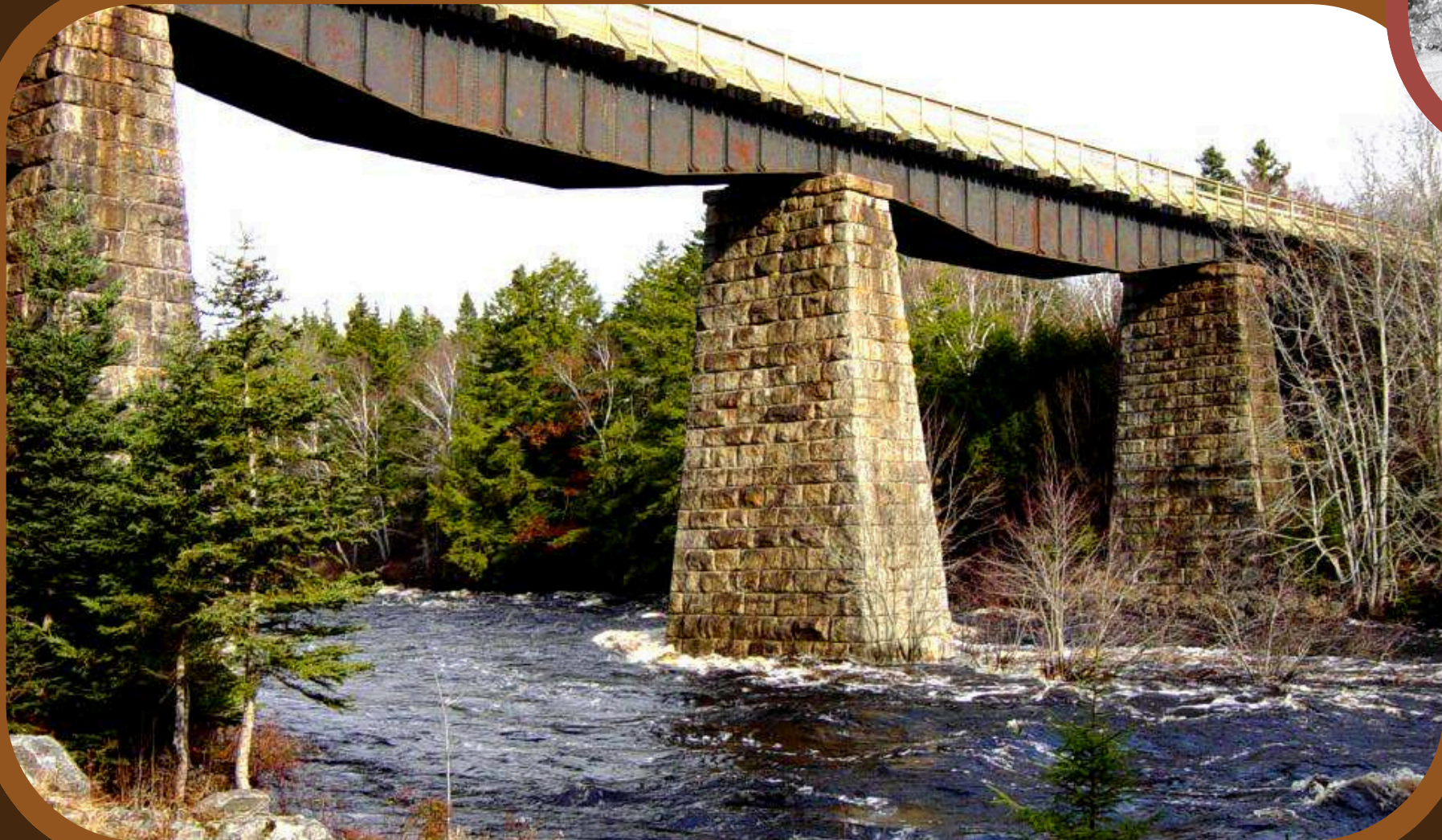


Joseph Pennell/Penall Son of Frank (1913-1986)

What appealed to the Mi'kmaq people about Gold River?

the Mi'kmaq were drawn to Gold River because of its rich natural resources and strategic location.

Over time, Gold River became more than a seasonal site- it was a place of cultural continuity, economic activity (like fly-fishing & guiding), and community resilience.



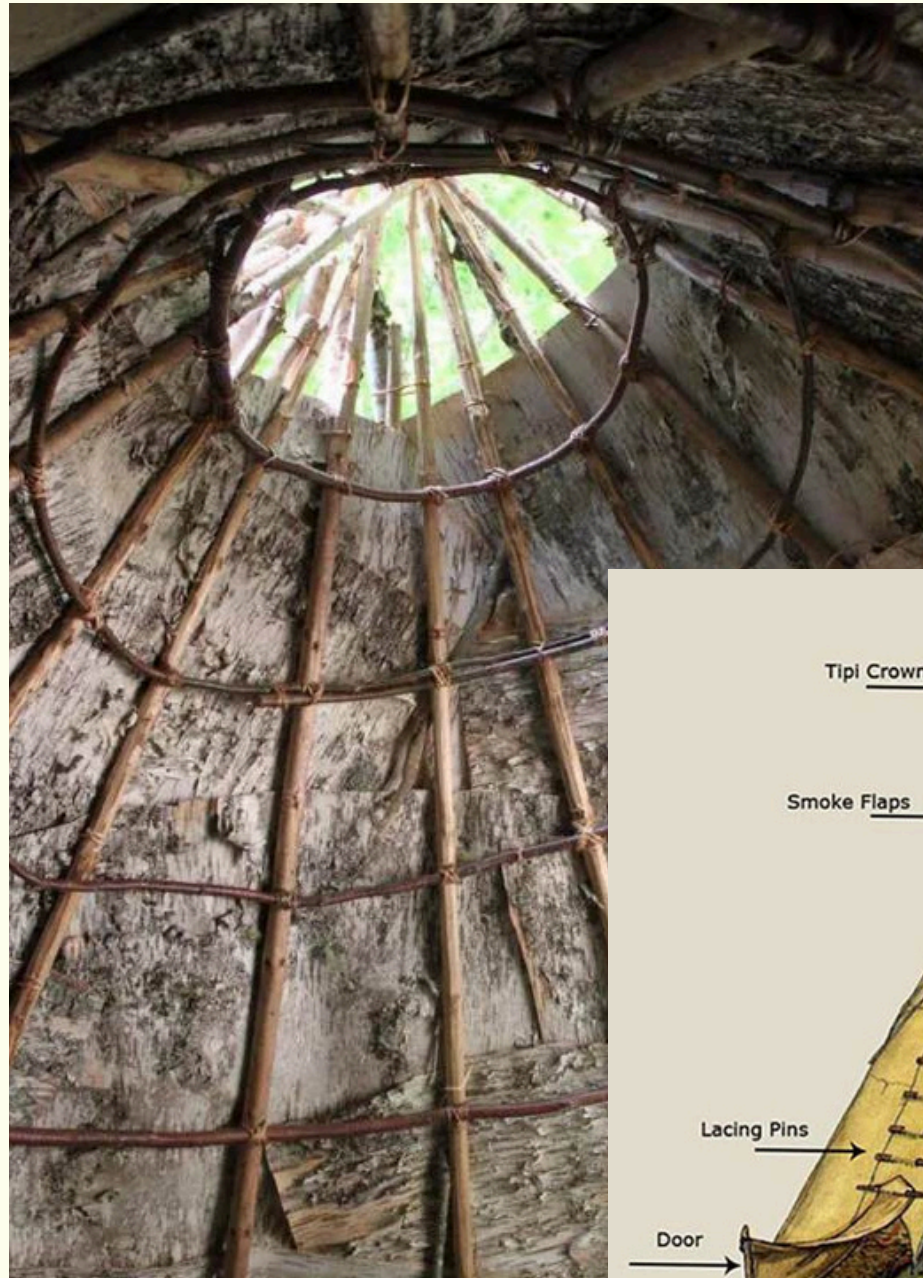
Forested Lands: Full of materials like birch, spruce, and ash for building wigwams, making baskets, and crafting tools.

Abundant Salmon and trout: Vital for food and trade

Sheltered Terrain & Fresh Water: which made it suitable for family life, gatherings, and year round camps.

Seasonal Access: to both inland hunting grounds and coastal fishing areas, making it ideal for traditional nomadic and semi-sedentary living.

Wigwam's & Teepee's



WHAT IS A WIGWAM?

A wigwam (or “wigouom” in Mi’kmaq) is a traditional Mi’kmaq shelter made from birch bark, spruce poles, and natural materials, shaped in a cone or dome. It was lightweight, portable, and easy to assemble or disassemble, making it ideal for the Mi’kmaq’s seasonal, nomadic lifestyle. The structure provided warmth in winter and ventilation in summer,s.

WHY THE MI’KMAQ MIGHT PREFER WIGWAMS OVER MODERN HOMES:

- Cultural Connection: Wigwams are deeply tied to Mi’kmaq identity, traditions, and ancestral knowledge.
- Spiritual and Natural Living: Living in wigwams strengthens the connection to nature, the land, and the Creator.
- Sustainability: Made from natural, renewable resources, wigwams leave little environmental impact.
- Mobility and Adaptability: Designed for seasonal movement, they support a lifestyle based on fishing, hunting, and gathering.
- Community Values: Building and living in wigwams encourages collective work, teaching, and storytelling, passing down traditional knowledge.

Lands reserved for Mi'kmaq in Gold River :

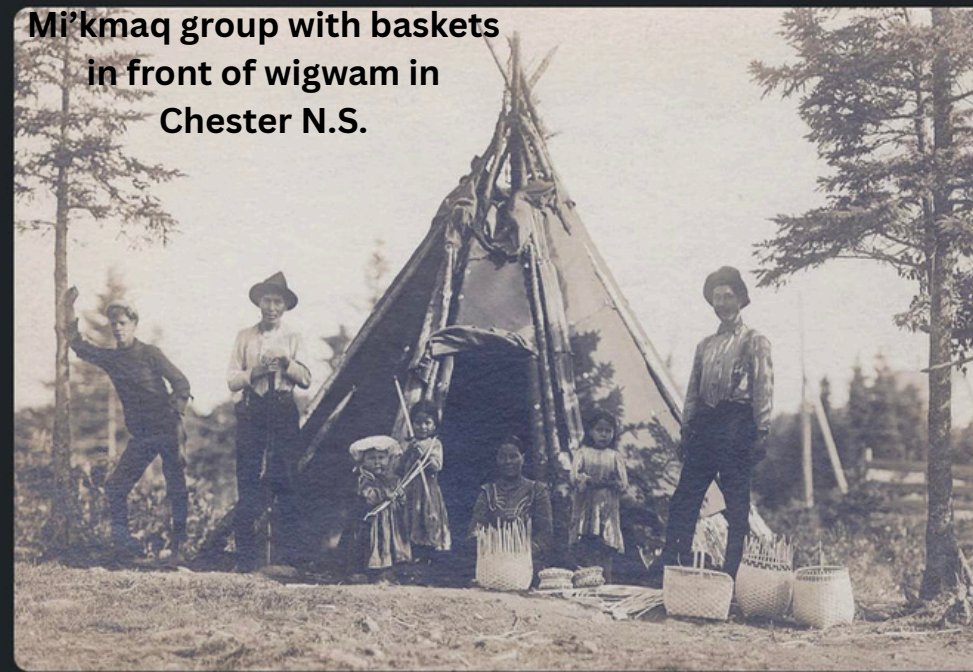
Indian Commissioner Joseph Howe's first
"Report on Indian Affairs"

(see Journals of the House of Assembly, 25
January 1843, Appendix 1, p. 3)

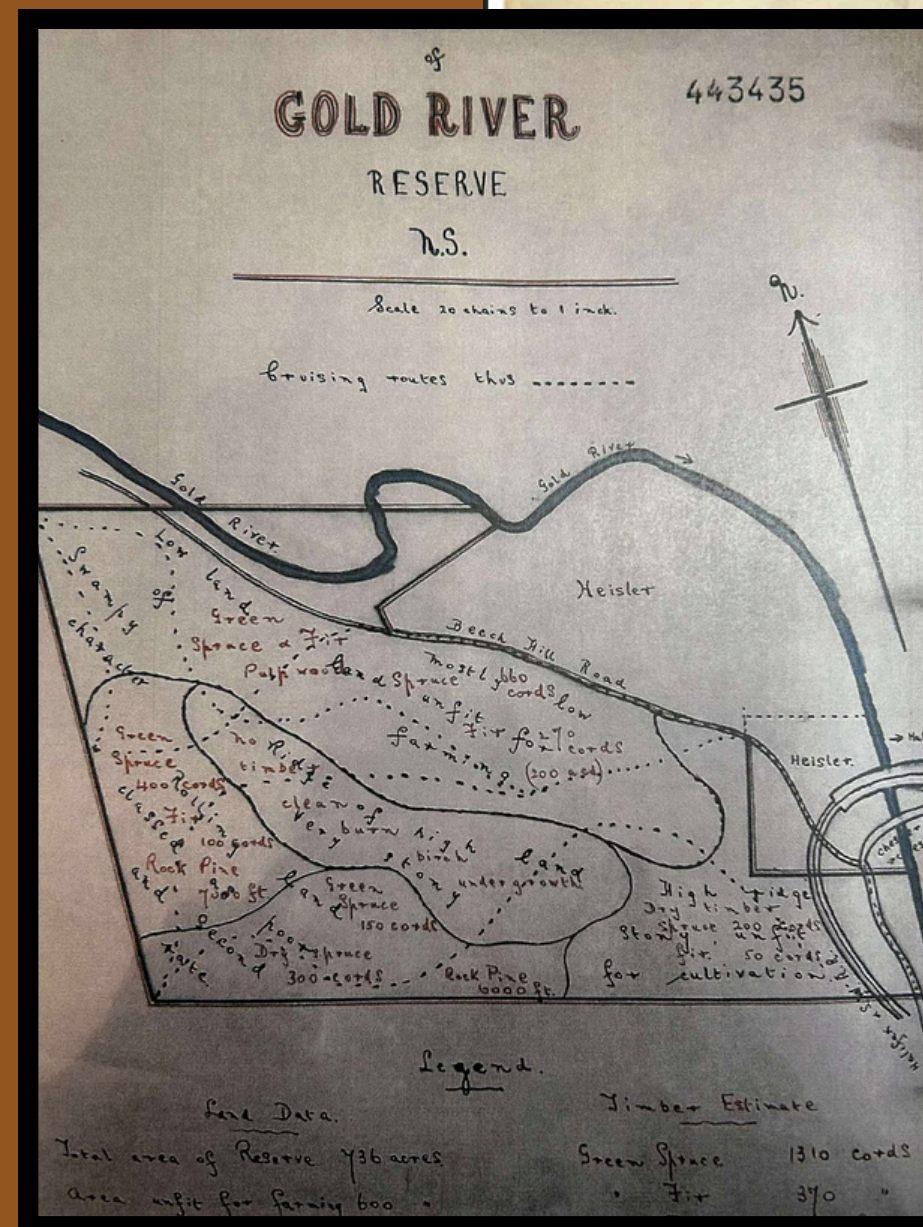
states that Howe had received plans of
Mi'kmaq Reserves in Nova Scotia from the
Surveyor General and copied them into his
note book (RG 1 Volume 432 pp. 28-40).
Original map comprises nine individual plans
on one sheet; each plan is signed by John
Spry Morris, Surveyor General, May 20, 1842.
Howe's note book copies are embedded in
narrative descriptions of his thoughts and
encounters as he visited each reservation.

An earlier and similar version of the original
Surveyor General's map may be viewed on
microfilm 14011.

Date: 1842



Mi'kmaq group with baskets
in front of wigwam in
Chester N.S.



Gold Mining In Gold River

The Negative effects of Gold Mining

- Displacement of communities
- Contaminated drinking water
- The destroying pristine environments
- Water & land pollution with mercury and cyanide
- Endangering the health of people and ecosystems

Producing gold
for one wedding
ring alone
generates 20
tons of waste



The Micmac Gold Mining Company
Leipsigat Gold District, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia

POST OFFICE ADDRESS: Bridgewater, N. S., April 17th 1907. 190

H. B. Pickings Esq.,
Mines Office,
Halifax, N. S.

Dear Sir:-

Your letter of April 15th at hand. Thank you for the hint about the Mines Act. I will immediately act upon it. I have already written to my mill man at Gold River to have him surrender the new licence. As the Leipsigat mill book is in New York, if you will send me the date of the last return you have from the Leipsigat Gold Mining Co., I will fill out the blank that is necessary. The Leipsigat Gold Mining Company has been amalgamated with the Micmac Gold Mining Company, and consequently one mill will now do for both properties. I will speak to the president of the company about the Micmac Returns. T. W. Moore is the man to write to in regard to this as he is the bookkeeper.

Yours truly,

Letter, Philip H. Moore to H.B. Pickings, Mines Office, Halifax, 17 April 1907.

The MicMac Gold Mining Company

The Cashon-Hines property was purchased in 1900 by the Micmac Gold Mining Company for \$22,000.

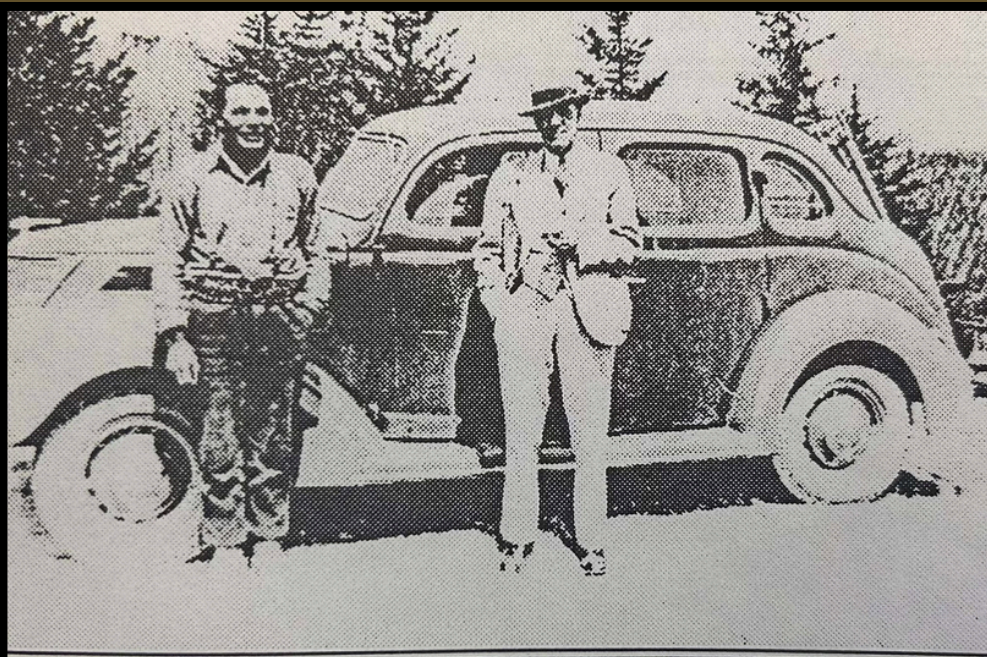
Micmac vein contained silver as well as gold, and the company was able to generate additional revenue by producing 1,113 ounces of silver between 1903-06. Before 1903 mercury was used to separate the gold from the sand. Gold dissolves in mercury but mercury does not absorb other impurities.

In 1903, Micmac built a new shaft house and installed a new boiler and an air compressor. The company also built a cyanide plant to reprocess tailings and recover gold that Cashon and Hines had failed to recover in their milling. The capacity of the plant was 50 tons per day. stamp mills, where heavy stamps were raised and dropped, and the ore was crushed between them.

The movement of the stamps, the grinding of the ore, and the various mechanisms involved in the process generated sound waves of varying frequencies.



Kent Lumber Mill, and Crew, Gold River ca. 1914.



Herbert Wedgewood Manager Gold River Pulp Co. with Jim Pictou.

YEAR 1912:

William Pennel was charged with taking 375 logs without a permit and selling them to the Kent Lumber Company.

The same spring, Frank Pennel (Williams brother) was also charged with timber trespass after cutting 527 railway ties.

Frank claimed he has sought permission from Indian Agent N.P. Freeman, but his wood was seized regardless.

The Indian Department labeled these incidents as “timber theft” negatively influencing how Mi’kmaq land claims were viewed by the government.

In November 1913, Judge Benjamin Russel dismissed Mi’kmaq land claims, ruling that Heisler & his heirs owned the land they occupied.

As a result, the Gold River Reserve was reduced to 735 acres.



The Gold River Lumber Co., Gold River -
Are getting out from two and one-half to
three million feet of spruce. They will saw
for the South American market
principally.

Ship being loaded with pulpwood
Gold River



Legal Disputes & Timber Conflicts

TIME LINE OF LAND OCCUPATION BY MIKMAQ IN GOLD RIVER

1600's - 2000's

Pre-1600s: Mi'kmaq people occupy the Gold River seasonally for fishing, hunting and gathering, living in wigwam near the river.

1600-1700's: Continued traditional use of the land. Mi'kmaq maintain sovereignty and stewardship, despite increasing colonial presence.

Late 1700's: Bernard Argomartin (Later Pennell/Penall) is recognized as a Mi'Kmaq leader. His family receives informal recognition of land rights.

1818: John Pennell SR. and other Mi'Kmaq family heads petition the colonial government for formal recognition of land at Gold River.

1820's: Government drafts plan for a 1000 acre reserve at the mouth of Gold River.

1840's: Joseph Pennell and his brothers run an expert fly-fishing and guiding business, blending traditional knowledge with new techniques.

1854: Pennell Indian Reserve No.19 (107 acres at Wallaback Lake) is surveyed and confirmed for Joseph Pennell.

1860's - 1880's: Mi'kmaq community faces pressure from settlers and resource companies. Encroachment and trespassing.

1895: Joseph Pennell files legal petition regarding land trespass and loss of access to traditional resources.

Early 1900's: Mining and rail development threaten Mi'kmaq lands. William & Frank Pennell resist through petitions.

1910-1920: Only a few Mi'kmaq families remain at Gold River, maintaining cultural practices amidst environmental decline.

1928-1933: New Germany Reserve (No. 19A) is surrendered. Centralization policies lead to land loss.

Post - 2000's: Mi'kmaq descendants begin returning to Gold River. Cultural resurgence and land reclamation efforts continue under Acadia First Nation now known as Wasoqopa'q First Nation.

Sacred Burial Places

The Indians had several places of burial in the county. At Indian Point, near Mahone Bay, there is a graveyard, to which Captain Cope's remains were taken, and the bodies of others who died at La Have and other settlements.

Brought from Gold River, the remains of Francis, Newell, and Peter, father and brothers of John Penall, who lived near Gold River bridge, and who was a most expert fly-fisher for salmon, while Joseph, another brother, who also died at Gold River, "sleeps his last sleep" in the Roman Catholic burial-ground at Chester.

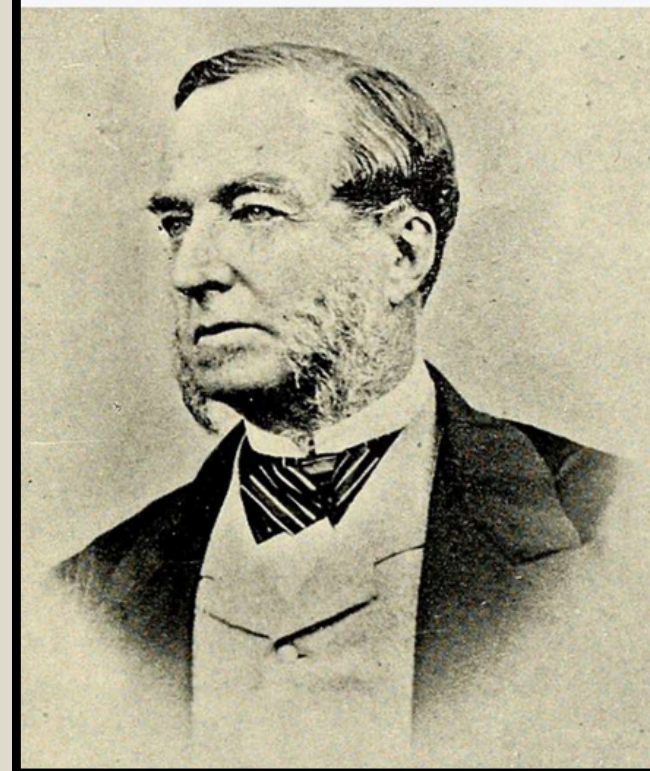
Captain Chearnley erected over the grave of his forest guide a neat stone with the following inscription:

"In Memory of Joseph Penall, Indian. By William Chearnley, A.D. 1859. Gone to death's 'Call' is Indian Joe. Moose-deer, rejoice!
Here, buried, rests your deadliest foe."

The last Indian burial at Indian Point

The man was taken sick in the woods, and was carried into the porch of John Andrews' house, where he died. It is said that some of the graves were opened a few years ago, and bones taken away. This offence is made severely punishable by the criminal code of Canada.

William Chearnley



Starting in the 1850s, William Chearnley served as a Commissioner of Indian Affairs (similar to Indian agent) for Nova Scotia. He held the role from 1853 to 1862.

Surveys from 1786, 1849, and 2003 clearly identified the Indian Burying Ground on land later owned by John C. Bourinot.



TAMMY FANCY PHOTO

Mi'kmaq BURIAL SITE REDEDICATED

Mi'kmaq Elders Todd Labrador and Rose Morris play traditional instruments while taking part in a rededication ceremony of a Mi'kmaq burial ground on St. Phillips Street in Bridgewater on November 26. The burial ground dates back to the 1800s and Mr. Labrador knows that at least one ancestor, his uncle Louis Labrador, is buried here.

Indian Point Burying Ground

Is a sacred burial site since at least 1753. Archaeological evidence suggests even older cultural activity in the area.

In the early 2000s, development plans threatened this historic site. The burial ground was unknowingly bulldozed after municipal permits were granted.

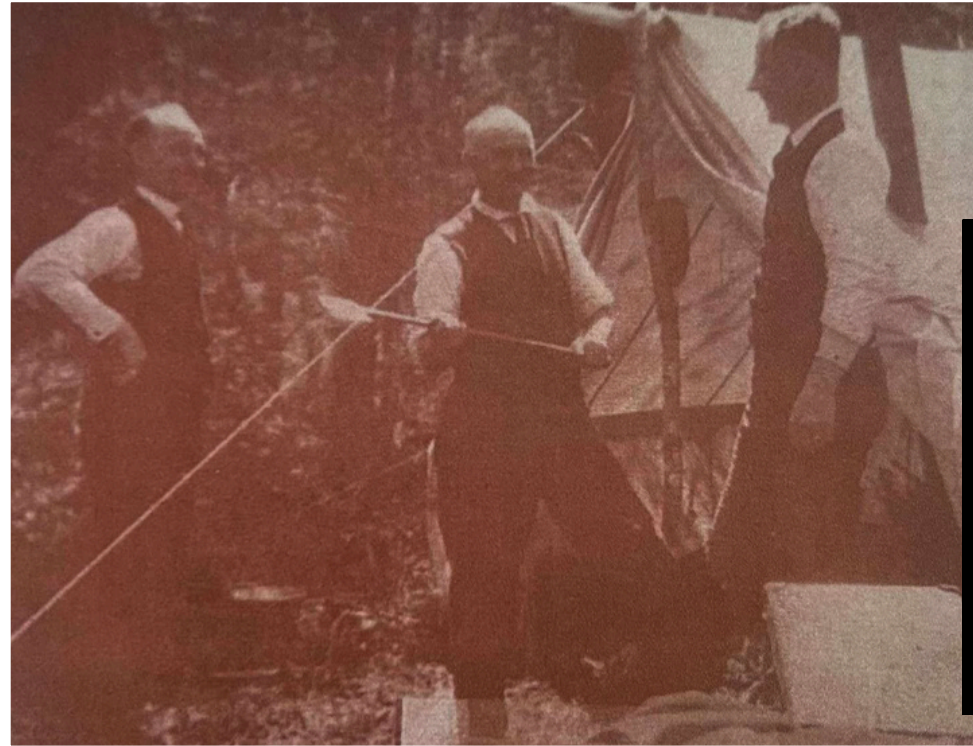
Why did the Mi'kmaq leave Gold River?

Pollution from mining ruined the once-famous salmon fishing, and people illegally cutting trees left the nearby forests nearly empty.

The Mi'kmaq who stayed behind on the reserve barely got by, making baskets and ship parts for boats in Lunenburg County.

Younger members of William's and Frank's Pennell's families moved away to find jobs in Halifax, the Annapolis Valley, Digby County, and the eastern United States.

Economic Displacement:
Settlers & Companies: took over land and access to resources, leaving the mi'kmaq people with little to survive on.

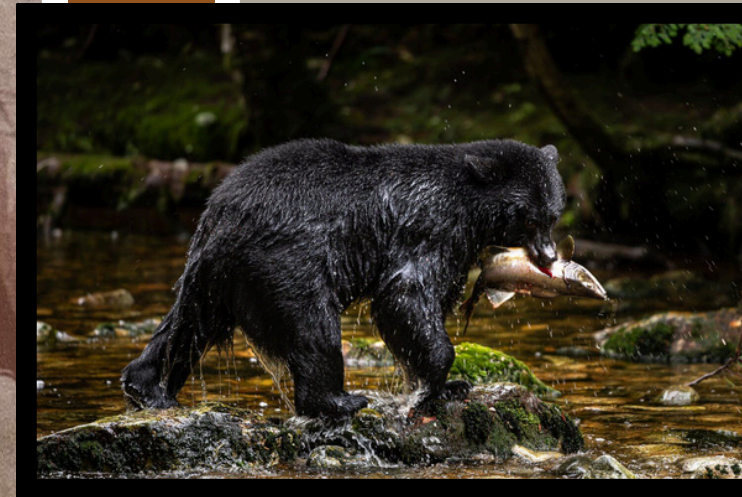


Our many lakes, rivers and streams have given Chester Basin and area a reputation as a "Fishermans Heaven".
1920: Owen Corkum, Del Webber & Howard Oxner at thier camp on Beech Hill.



Legal & Political Pressure

As resources declined, Mi'kmaq families could no longer sustain themselves through traditional activities like fishing, trapping, and hunting..



April 9th,1914:

Indian Agent N.P. Freeman falsely claimed the Mi'kmaq might surrender their Gold River Reserve.

Ottawa was allocating timber leases on the reserve & powerful interests were eyeing water power on those lands.

Freeman began discouraging companies from hiring Mi'kmaq workers, to reduce competition from indigenous loggers

The indian Act allowed outsiders to profit from timber on reserves while the Mi'kmaq had little control over harvesting or selling wood.

As a result, Mi'kmaq views on economic opportunity shifted and pushed many to leave Gold River.

Past & Present Most Common Mi'Kmaq Surname's & Occupations in Gold River, N.S.

PAST

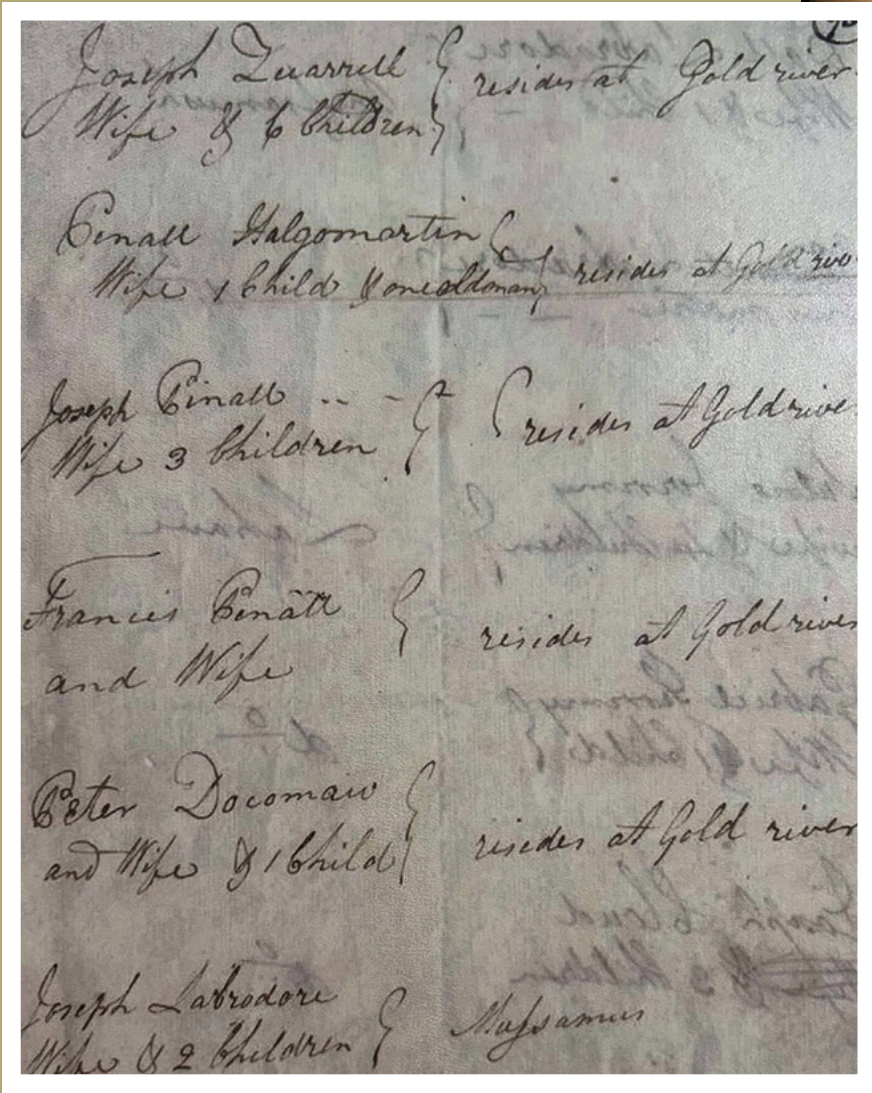
Galomartin/Argomartin
Penall/ Pinall/Pennall/Penal/Pennell
Labradore/Labrador
Hammon/Hammond
Kaizer/Kaiser
Glode/Gloade
Veinot/Veinotte/Veinott
Rafuse
Eisoner/Eisner
Duncan
Malti
Myra
Knockwood
Francis/Frances
Paul
Cope
Docomaw
Demont
Robinson
Frank
Jermey/Jeremy
Mosher

Beeler
Muise
Hardley
Noel
Newell

PRESENT

Pennell	Duncan
Kaizer	Johnson
Labrador	Swinemer
Myra	Robinson
Morris	Zwicker
Francis	Joudrey/Joudry
Thomas	Jermey/Jeremy
Hartlen	Mackenzie
Carver	Mosher
Wentzell	Rafuse
Weagle	Tarbox
Pictou	Glode/Gloade
Paul	
Hatt	
Conrad	
Whynot	
Cope	

List of Mi'kmaq Family heads left remaining, that occupied the Reserve in Gold River in



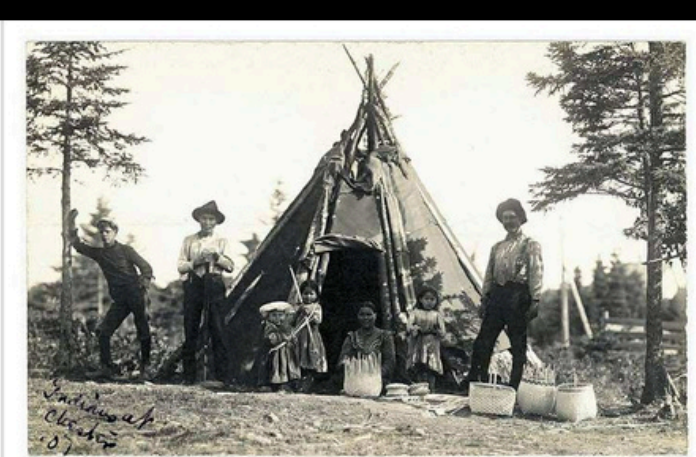
Joseph Luarrell -Wife & 6 Children
Penall Galomartin-Wife & Child
Joseph Pinall-Wife & 3 Children
Francis Penall-Wife
Peter Docomaw-Wife & 1 Child
Joseph Labradore-Wife & 2 Children

Common Occupations in The Past



Fisherman
Hunter
Farmer
Logger
Miner
Guide

Basket Maker



Real Photo postcard of a Mi'kmaq camp in Chester, Nova Scotia. Beautiful assortment of baskets on display. Dated 1907. Pictured right is Gold River Elder Rose Morris's Uncle Joe Knockwood from Maine



Common Myths



Finances:

Aboriginal people get paid to live on reserve or for being a band member.

Band members of Wasoqopa’q First Nation do not get paid for being a band member nor do they receive any monies for living on reserve or off reserve.

Only those who live on reserve and are disabled or unable to obtain employment receive financial assistance much like Nova Scotia’s Assistance Program. On reserve Aboriginals can not apply for Provincial assistance, they go through their band for financial assistance.

Tax Exemption:

Aboriginal people don't pay tax on anything they purchase.

Not all business/store establishments will honor tax exemption, it varies depending on the owner/company.

Most companies/businesses require additional documents such as currier slips along with proof of status before even considering tax exemption.

Other places make it a requirement to have any purchased items delivered to reserve lands to receive the tax exemption. Then of course a delivery fee is required, which often costs more then they would have saved having the tax exemption.

Housing:

All Aboriginal people get free land and housing.

The reserves within each band are owned by all the members of that particular band and not the occupant who was allocated a house/land.

Each band member is entitled to land or a home but interviews and allocation is done at the band’s chief & Council’s discretion, based on the need of those interviewed.

Applications requesting housing on reserve can take often 10 years or more to even be considered for an interview, possibly never. Only a small fraction of band members have homes allocated to them on reserve.

Education:

Aboriginal people have their education paid for.

There are funding options available for most aboriginal people depending on the Band they belong to.

Not every student who applies gets accepted for funding, as funding is limited and students graduating high school looking to pursue secondary education are prioritized.

Students must maintain grade percentages of 75% and above to continue to be funded and must also have good classroom attendance or they risk losing their funding all together.

Taxes:

Aboriginal peoples don't pay taxes.

Only personal property, including income, situated ON A RESERVE, is exempt from tax under section 87 of the Indian Act.

Income made off reserve is taxed and any property is taxable if situated off reserve.

Women's Traditional Dress

The jingle dress symbolizes the spirit of healing.

Traditionally, the dress is adorned with 365 visible jingles or cones. The story behind its inception is a testament to its healing power. An indigenous medicine man's granddaughter fell ill, prompting him to craft a Jingle Dress at the behest of spirit guides. They prophesied that the dress would heal the child when she danced in it.

The tribe came together to witness this magical transformation, a symbol of resilience in the face of adversity, particularly during the 1918 flu pandemic and the subsequent federal ban on ritual dancing at Indian reservations in the 1920s.

A dancer who does the jingle dance wears regalia featuring many metal cones that knock together to make a beautiful sound.



Peaked Caps

The peaked caps are considered sacred Mi'kmaq regalia. The wearing of peaked caps date back 1000's of years ago & are even depicted in petroglyphs found in Queens County.

The peaked cap are worn only by women and are designed to encompass who the wearers are each one made individual to them.

no man is to touch the peaked cap.

Red colored caps are for children - purple are for women of child bearing age - black are for elders each representing transitions in a woman's life.



Ribbon Skirt

Ribbon skirts are worn by most indigenous people. They symbolize each individual woman.

They are often worn to ceremonies and can be worn by anyone. Anyone of any culture or background can wear these in their daily lives or to traditional Mi'kmaq events such as Mawio'mi (gathering).



Men's Traditional Dress

War bonnet Head Dress:

symbolizes respect and honor, typically worn by individuals who have earned a high status within their community, such as chiefs, warriors, or those being honored for achievements. It is a sacred item, often seen during ceremonies like weddings, powwows, or other traditional gatherings, and is not worn as everyday clothing.



Representation of Identity

Male regalia is a powerful visual representation of a person's connection to their tribe, clan, and family. It can show their role in the community, such as a warrior, dancer, or elder.

Traditional regalia is a symbol of who we are.



Sacred and Respectful

Regalia is often seen as sacred and respectful, not just as clothing but as a representation of spiritual power and connection. It's worn with pride and responsibility.

Symbolism and Meaning

The items and designs within male regalia often have specific meanings and symbolic value. For example, feathers, beads, and specific patterns can represent nature, spirituality, or historical events.



Saturday, June 7th 2025

1:00PM

**Gold River Community Center & Pow Wow
Grounds**

83 Pennell Road, Chester Basin

ALL community members welcome!

**Come join the community of Gold River for our
first Mawio'mi Jij!**

Learn Pow Wow Etiquette

BBQ

Witness & learn the traditional dance:

Ko'Jua

Grass

Jingle

Fancy



Vendors with Mi'kmaq crafts

PRIZES



Learn dance styles with:

Muin Paul

Jennifer Maloney

Denise John

Myranda Roy

PARTICIPACTION
Let's make room to move

**OPEN TO ALL
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS!!**

MAWIO'MI JIJ

Come learn and be active with us!!!

**Saturday, June 7th
1pm**

Gold River Community Hall

Prizes

**Grass
Jingle
Fancy
Traditional**

Ko'jua

**Pow Wow
Etiquette**

Snacks



Annual Gold River Pow Wow

**Always the second weekend in
September
Friday, Saturday & Sunday.
at the Gold River Pow Wow Grounds
and Community Center
(83 Pennell Road, Chester Basin)
Everyone welcome**



Fireworks Display- Saturday Evening!

BBQ/Canteen

PRIZES

Vendors/Market

**Complementary breakfast
Saturday & Sunday
Complementary Dinner
Friday & Saturday**