

Did you know?

Grand Bay-Westfield has a rich history that is not well known within the community. Here are some interesting facts you may not be aware of.

Did you know that:

1. Grand Bay received its name from Samuel de Champlain in 1604.
2. Westfield is named after a town in Massachusetts where many of the early settlers came from.
3. Grand Bay and Westfield were joined together in 1996.
4. The towns were part of Acadia until 1759 when the British took control.
5. In 1784 land in the area was given to Loyalists both black and white who were refugees from the American War of Independence.
6. Black loyalists received 50 acres each in Westfield (which were unsuitable for farming) and had to rent the land while white loyalists were granted 100 acres of farmable land granted at no cost.
7. Many of the black settlers walked from Westfield to Halifax in December 1791 to catch a ship to Sierra Leone.
8. A small cemetery exists near the town containing several unmarked graves of early black settlers. It is believed that William Watson and Samuel Smith are buried there.
9. Mount Hope Farm was built by Col. Henry Nase in 1786 and is the oldest building in Kings County. The house has remained in the Nase family ever since.

10. Elizabeth Nase, daughter of Col. Henry Nase, was the first to be buried in the Mount Hope cemetery, in 1791. Hers is the oldest gravestone in Kings County
11. In 1845 Irish immigrants came to Grand Bay and Westfield due to the Irish potato famine.
12. In 1869 a rail line went through the towns connecting Saint John and Vanceboro Maine.
13. The first railway engine was off-loaded from Britain at Westfield Beach in 1868.
14. Brundage Point was once called Baxter Point and was home to the booming Wilson Box Factory.
15. The Stevens Cemetery in Ingleside was established in 1784 and contains about 150 graves of the Stevens family.
16. Joshua T. Brundage is buried in an abandoned burial ground near Brundage Point along with members of his family.
17. Until 1932, the Roman Catholic population in the towns held services in private homes with a priest who travelled from Petersville.
18. Located on a hill at the intersection of highways 7 and 177 is a Presbyterian graveyard which has been abandoned since the church burned down in 1921 destroying the church and all of the church records.
19. Several successful lumber mills operated on the Nerepis River which was originally called the Nirapis.
20. Bernard McGovern, an Irish immigrant donated land at Keatings Corner for a graveyard for Catholics around 1851. The graveyard is now overgrown and abandoned.

21. Pamdenec was once home to a thriving Jewish summer community of over 100 families.
22. Epworth Park was named after the birthplace of Charles Wesley. He was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England and became a leader of the Methodists. It was intended to create a Christian retreat there similar to the Beulah Camp.
23. The Thompson Mfg. Co. Grand Bay, NB. was located on the present site of Home Hardware and produced products for blacksmiths that are still in use throughout the USA and up into the Yukon.

These facts and lots of others are available on the town's heritage website (grandbaywestfieldheritage.com). The local heritage committee is still gathering facts, photos and stories from the past so if you have any information on the Wilson Box Factory, Thompson Manufacturing Company or ancient lumber mills or on any other item of interest please contact the committee.