

Press Release

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Archaeological Land Trust of Nova Scotia and Shaw Family Sign Agreement to Protect Acadian Site

On **July 22**, the **Archaeological Land Trust of Nova Scotia (ALTNS)** and the Shaw Family of Poplar Grove, Hants County will sign an agreement to protect a portion of the pre-expulsion Acadian site known as Thibodeau Village.

David Shaw runs Oakridge Farm, a large beef cattle operation located on the northern banks of the St. Croix River. The Shaw family has lived and worked on this land for almost 250 years. He and his family have a long-standing connection to this land as his ancestor, Arnold Shaw, arrived in Nova Scotia from Rhode Island shortly after the Deportation of the Acadians in the 1750s.

In the mid-1980s, Richard Thibodeau of Massachusetts was on vacation in search of his Acadian ancestors and become convinced that Poplar Grove had once been an Acadian settlement known as *Village Thibodeau*. David Shaw was able identify the location of numerous sites on his farm that he believed were the remains of Acadian settlement.

In 2004, David and Joanne Shaw allowed archaeologists, under permit from the provincial government, to test a feature on top of French Orchard Hill. The excavation confirmed the presence of an Acadian site, now believed to be a part of Thibodeau Village and the information from this excavation will help archaeologists and historians gain a better understanding of Acadian settlement in the area.

During the summer of 2004, when Acadians from all over the world came to Nova Scotia to celebrate their history, heritage and culture as part of the Congrès Mondial Acadien, David and Joanne graciously invited the extended Thibodeau family to come back to the site of Thibodeau Village. Hundreds of Acadians spent the day with the Shaw family, sharing stories and rediscovering their past.

Today, visiting the site has become a pilgrimage of sorts, and not just for the Thibodeau family, but for many Acadians - even those who are not of Acadian decent but who seek a greater understanding of this area and its history.

ALTNS is a non-government organization with the goal of conserving one of Nova Scotia's most precious non-renewable resources - archaeological sites - for all Nova Scotians. As a non-profit group run by volunteers, ALTNS is the only organization in Atlantic Canada dedicated to acquiring and preserving important archaeological sites. Its main source of funding comes from memberships, as well as special contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

By identifying important archaeological sites across Nova Scotia, and working with local heritage groups and landowners to establish perpetual protection for these lands, the Archaeological Land Trust of Nova Scotia will fulfil an important role in preserving Nova Scotia's history.