

The Inverness Oran

For Communities for Coul

It was the new century and we were hoping to prevent an old coal-mining town from becoming a ghost town, the plywood was already covering many businesses and things got worse everyday.

Inverness' businesses were closing monthly, people were moving away, government services were being lost and the community had a defeated outlook on the future. There were few young people.

However, we had a wonderful piece of links land between Inverness and the Gulf of St. Lawrence where a local group, the Inverness Development Association (IDA), was attempting to attract someone to build a world class 18 Hole golf course.

The IDA had suitors, like Jack Nicklaus and others, but then we started to talk to Mike Keiser about Inverness. But then the financial crisis of 2008 happened and things were placed on hold but Mike never walked away from the project. Thank God!

Then Mike decided to create his golf course on use our Links and, after negotiations with the IDA and the municipality, Cabot Links Golf Course was a reality. The golf course became known across the golf world and a second course, Cabot Cliffs, was built to, in Mike's words, "make a destination".

Before Mike Keiser built the golf courses, Inverness was on its death bed and would have shrunk to a small village that visitors would have discovered once and a while. The only thing left was a small fishery and without Mike we would have lost the school, the hospital would have become a clinic, and the seniors and those with summer cottages would be its last hurrah.

There were growing pains, which were eventually ironed out, and eventually we all came together for the new day coming to Inverness. The courses draw people from around the world, the town is growing with new homes and businesses and the young people are returning. We are one of the growth regions of the province and there is an atmosphere of confidence that things will just get better.

There have been a couple of trade offs with the environment pertaining to the land designation but there is never harm done to the beauty and pristine nature of the area. There will always be the grumblers but it is that chat that kills your community and drives investors away. Compromise is always possible.

Cabot golf links is the engine that is driving our new economy so our future looks bright without us losing the heritage and charm that makes this a special place, the thing that drew the development here in the first place.

The development has given life to our county!

Rankin MacDonald

Rankin MacDonald is the founder, owner and editor of 'The Inverness Oran' (www.invernessoran.ca), a community newspaper serving Inverness County in Nova Scotia.