

“Four Mac’s”- Co-op Study Club in 30's

- D.J. MacEachern
- Joe MacIsaac
- Gus MacDonald
- Neil MacNeil

Known as Four Mac’s- Co-op field men from St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia.

During late 30's, they conducted fieldwork all over Newfoundland especially on the west coast of the island

Four Mac’s spread cooperative philosophy in this province.

1937- First Co-op Credit Society of NL was set up at Lourdes on the Port Peninsula.

In late 30's the St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish, Nova Scotia was renowned for its work in cooperative development as a form of Adult Education. Gerald Richardson who was a product of St. Francis Xavier University introduced cooperative education methods in Newfoundland which were being used at that time in all over Nova Scotia. In his discussion with the local people of Newfoundland, Richardson put examples of local fishermen and farmers from Eastern Nova Scotia who were benefitted from cooperative movement. He introduced study clubs as a means of sharing cooperative knowledge and introducing local people in group activities.

During late 30's, study clubs sprung up all over the province as a preparation for the emergence of many small credit societies that would eventually become realities. Consequently, study clubs acted as an informal space to share and gather cooperative knowledge and the idea was to avoid the formality of a regular school.

Four Mac’s organized study clubs following one format like, 10-15 people per club where they selected their own leader and used to meet weekly in any convenient places either in member’s home or any public space. Then approximately 1200 active study clubs were formed around the island but mostly in the west coast because Joe MacIsaac and D. J. MacEachern were actively working there to spread the cooperative philosophy.

Eventually, in 1937 MacEachern organized NL’s very first Co-op Credit Society at Lourdes on the Port Peninsula which served over 30 years and died out as a result of the unavailability of suitable management.