

Lobster hatchery

This lobster hatchery, originally located in Chiasson Office on Lamèque Island shows the importance of the lobster fishing industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many canning factories or “canneries” sprung up during this period in New Brunswick and in the Maritime Provinces. However, a decline could be observed around 1887, leading to an inquiry commission suggesting the establishment of lobster hatcheries.

In 1904, a hatchery is opened in Chiasson Office, near the lighthouse built in 1880. The well-known builder, Arcade Landry, is in charge of the job. This hatchery was to help the propagation of the species and had a production capacity of 224 incubating jars. The first manager was Sébastien Savoie and in his first year, 50,000 lobster eggs were picked and incubated. The record for one year was 150 million in 1910.

Eight employees make up the staff of the hatchery: the manager, the engineer, an assistant engineer, day and night shift helpmates and employees in charge of collecting eggs and releasing the hatchlings. Those workers were paid between \$3.00 and \$1.50 per day.

The hatchery closed its doors in 1914 due to political conflicts and a general attitude of indifference towards the project. This climate of dissension, along with the start of the First World War brought about the closing of this piscicultural station, which was concluded in February. The building was sold to the W.S. Loggie Company of Shippagan, who moved it to the back of their store and used it as a warehouse. The building went to different owners and was finally sold to the Village Historique Acadien, then moved to the Village.

