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Buddy Wasisname in Whycocomagh, p.10

Eastbound on the Haunted 604, in Cheticamp p.11

Spring

Partici-Paper

April 1990 Volume 11, no.4

A free monthly newspaper for the people of Inverness County since 1979

Residents urged to vote on County planning

The Interim Committee of the Inverness County Planning Project is approaching the end of its task to draw up the final structure and bylaws for a permanent citizen's committe to monitor and assist in the social and economic development of the Municipality of Inverness County.

The Committee is sending out a draft of the Constitution and By-Laws of the new body to County residents who have been active in the planning process. The Committee is asking that these residents vote to accept or reject the proposed Constitution and By-Laws so that the Committee may call the first general meeting later in the spring.

Any County residents who are interested and would like to receive a copy of the draft documents are urged to contact a member of the committee and a copy will be sent out to them.

Interested residents may write or call the Interim Committee for further information:

P.O. Box 24,
Mabou, Nova Scotia
BOE 1XO

Or call:
Mary Jess MacDonald
625-0451
Ferne MacLennan
756-3180
Leandre LeBlanc
224-2665
Simon Pierre LeFort
235-2507

A Black Woods Frolic

Gussie Campbell of Judique contributed this vintage photo of "working in the black woods." When woodland was prepared for the planting of potatoes, the lumber was cut off and removed, the exposed land burned to help clear off stumps and brush, and then neighbours would gather to prepare the soil by hoeing and planting in hills. According to Gussie, the women were "hill experts," that is they were especially adept at forming potato hills and that is why there is a number of women in this early 1920's photo. The location of this photo is across the road from the old Meat Market in Judique behind a store on land owned at the time by Malcolm MacEachern. It is the site of Buddy MacMaster's old homestead where there were many barn dances. (The barn has since burned.) The photographer is a Mr. Hat from Inverness, first name unknown.

The photo was obtained by Gussie during a visit in Boston with Cathy (Curry) MacPhee, his second cousin. Two of the people pictured, Charles Fortune, and Dan Hugh MacEachern, both in their late 80's, are still living. Shown in the picture, from left to right (those in back first), are: Charlie Fortune, Donald MacMaster, Billy MacEachern, Allan D. MacEachern, Dan Malcolm Gillis, Mrs. Hugh T. MacDonell, Mrs. Sandy MacMaster, Charlie MacInnis (lying down), Archie "The Piper" MacMaster, Hughie Fortune, Mrs. Donald Jim MacDonald, Dan Hughie MacEachern, Alex Hugh MacIsaac, Charlie MacKay, Angus MacMaster. In front are Mrs. Malcolm MacEachern, Austin MacDonell, Cecilia Gillis, Mrs. Billy MacEachern, Malcolm MacEachern.

From the Editor

Lives of Service

What makes Inverness County so rich in volunteers? What is there about who we are in this place that fosters such depth of giving, helping behaviour? Each of the volunteer profiles in the March and April issues of Partici-Paper illustrate something very profound about the values of living where we do. We share special qualities with other rural places in Cape Breton and Atlantic Canada, qualities that studies have shown are less prevalent or absent in other places in Canada and the United States. Why?

Volunteerism is woven into our history, for one reason. Families have lived here for generations and know each other well. We live in a frequently harsh climate both in terms of weather and economics, and good-neighbouring is still a factor in survival. On the front page of this issue is the story of a *"Black Woods Frolic"* where neighbours, friends and relatives gather to help plant potatoes; there were also milling frolics, quilting frolics, barn-raising frolics,--in which social enjoyment was combined productively with mutual aid.

Traditionally, people here have raised up their children to be open to helping acts, both by example and by necessity. Studies have shown that children who have meaningful chores to do-- chores that are genuinely essential as life-giving, such as babysitting or caring for the elderly, bringing in firewood, tending animals, preparing food, farm work, working in gardens,--this kind of work often gives children a sense of their worth and importance in the family and gives them sympathy for the needs of others. These children make the personal discovery that they can carry burdens responsibly and the chores of childhood become rehearsal for later involvement in community work, and working for the interests of others in their occupations.

Because people tend to have long associations with their neighbours here, through church life and social contact, they are not afraid of asking for help. But it is often the case where the help is entirely spontaneous, and astonishing in its generosity of spirit. Families who have been helped in the experience of illness, death, accident, severe hardship because of lack of employment, or the loss of a home or barn in fire, know fully the warmth of community support. In interviewing people who have been helped in the past few years, I have found that many will be overcome with emotion about the kindness of those who have helped them.

But aside from these dramatic events, the help of volunteers is frequently not so highly visible. Instead it is woven of small nurturing, supportive acts such as a farmer clearing snow from the driveways of neighbours, baking for fundraising events, Santa's helpers at Christmas, free rides for the elderly, visiting shut-ins at the hospital, babysitting, lending and sharing, giving time for student activities, and so much more.

While many people volunteer as individuals, service organizations, mentioned so frequently in the volunteer profiles, also demonstrate the true spirit of Inverness County altruism. If all of our service organizations were to disappear, the effects to the County would be appalling-- both socially and economically. We do not have the institutional resources of urban centres here; sometimes we do not have politicians working in our best interests; we have harsh economic conditions; we have long, harsh winters--without our service groups, and without the work of individual volunteers, it would be vastly harder to go on with life here. Fortunately, our individual volunteers and service groups are strong and vibrant.

Their lives of service demonstrate the bond of connection here that is our most profound value.

Art & Music in our schools

Dear Editor,

I support the editorial by Mary Anne Ducharme {in the March issue of *Partici-Paper*}, and the letter written by Winnie Chafe as spokesperson for the Cape Breton Arts Council.

I was extremely proud to hear of the accomplishments of the SAERC School Band in their competitions last year, but it is a clear reminder of the deficit of music in our other county schools.

The children are missing an important part of their education and an entire generation is going to miss the opportunity of sampling the field of music to see if there is a niche here for them in their future. I would like to see music taught by qualified teachers in Inverness schools.

E. Jardine,
Orangedale

Cape Mabou Memories

Dear Editor:

I read the article printed in *Partici-Paper* regarding Chlory Fasquel Smith.

Chlory is my first cousin and her father and my mother were the only members of a family of 16 to immigrate to Canada from France.

What stories they had to tell about the hardships after their arrival! They were not able to speak the language or adjust well to the severe winters. However, they loved their new home and enjoyed a full life.

I was born on MacLean St. in Inverness but was raised in New Brunswick. In 1935 I married Malcolm MacKay, the son of Dan S. MacKay of Cape Mabou where Chlory had attended Sunday School.

I so enjoyed the article. I am sure other "Cape Mabou folk" had special memories reading it.

Sincerely,
Mary Thuillier MacKay
1347 Manawagonish Rd
Saint John, N.B.
E2M 3X8

Next deadline:
April 23

Eastern Counties Regional Library

in conjunction with

The National Book Festival

presents

Ellison Robertson

Readings from his work

Friday, April 27
1:30 pm

SAERC Conference Room A

All are welcome to attend

For further information:
Kirsten Mueller
747-2597 or 625-2729

Readings from the work of Ellison Robertson, well-known Cape Breton artist and writer living in Scotch Lake, will be enhanced by slides of his art which deals with the labour history of the area.

Robertson demonstrates his "sense of history and a profound love of Cape Breton working class people" in both his writing and art. He will explore with the audience how his experiences of growing up in Industrial Cape Breton are translated into the writing of fiction.

His published works include "*Cranberry Head*," which appeared in *THE CAPE BRETON COLLECTION*, THE CAPE BRETON ISLAND SKETCHBOOK, SEALLADH GU TAOBH, and illustrations for *THE CAPE BRETON BOOK OF DAYS*. and . He is concerned with Cape Breton folkloric and linguistic issues, including the preservation of the Gaelic language.

Partici-Paper

Editor
Mary Anne Ducharme

Published by the Inverness County Department of Recreation/Tourism

Contributions of articles, photos, letters dealing with issues and opinions, information and promotion about community events are welcome.

Send to *Partici-Paper*, R.R.#2 Whycocomagh, Nova Scotia, BOE 3MO

Telephone: 945-2982

Printed by
The Pictou Advocate