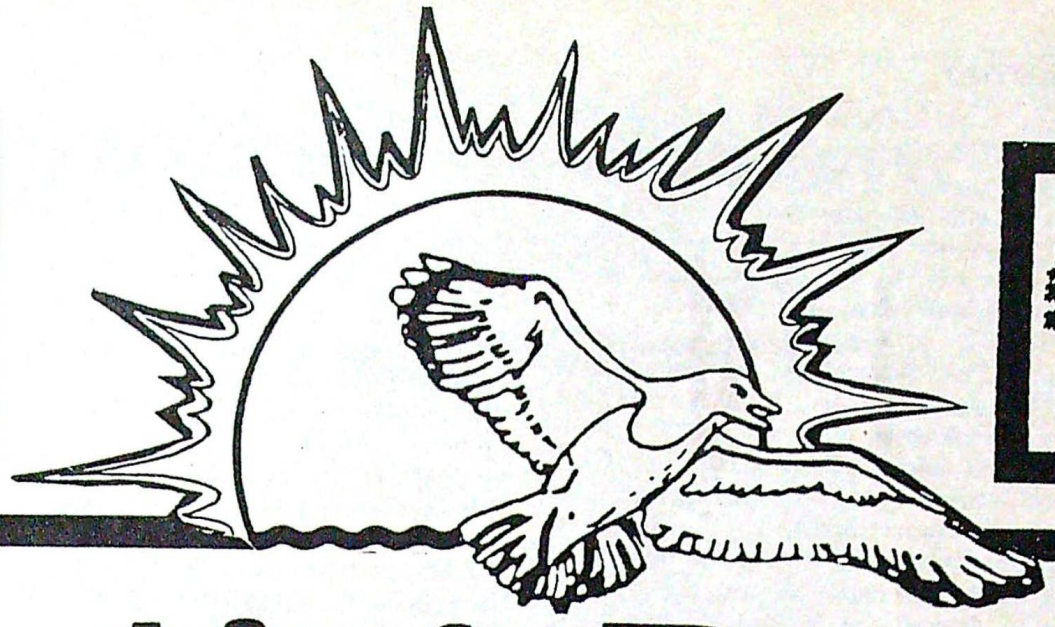
Father Jimmy Tompkins, 1,4,6,12
Gaelic Proverbs, 3
Development Association, 5
Volunteers, 7-12



A great way to grow: *Volunteer!*

Partici-Paper

April 1991 Volume 12, no.4

"The seed of future things is in ourselves"

by Mary Anne Ducharme

In 1942, Father Leo Sears stood on the pulpit in Reserve Mines determined to pay tribute to a fiery little priest on the fortieth anniversary of his ordination. From the sanctuary, the irritable voice of 72 year old Father Jimmy Tompkins insisted that it was *not* his anniversary. He repeated this statement two or three times. However, Father Sears ploughed on; it was close enough, he said. What came about was a beautiful tribute from the parish Father Jimmy served so well.

The response from the old father was typical of his later years. He asked his flock why they didn't follow his ideas, if they thought them so good? Why didn't they read books and find out what social justice and spiritual mercy were? After a minute of this, he fled the church.

Father Jimmy was then in mental decline, just as he was becoming most famous. This fragile Margaree boy, born on September 7, 1870, did much to transform the lives and thoughts of Nova Scotians. He was full of shortcomings: he was fiery, he hated routine, his mind was aflame with ideas but some of them were ill-considered, he was openly critical of people who were lethargic and ineffectual, his voice was somewhat high-pitched. He was raised by his Grandfather Coady and knew childhood poverty. He never excelled in academic studies in university, because he spent so much of his time working.

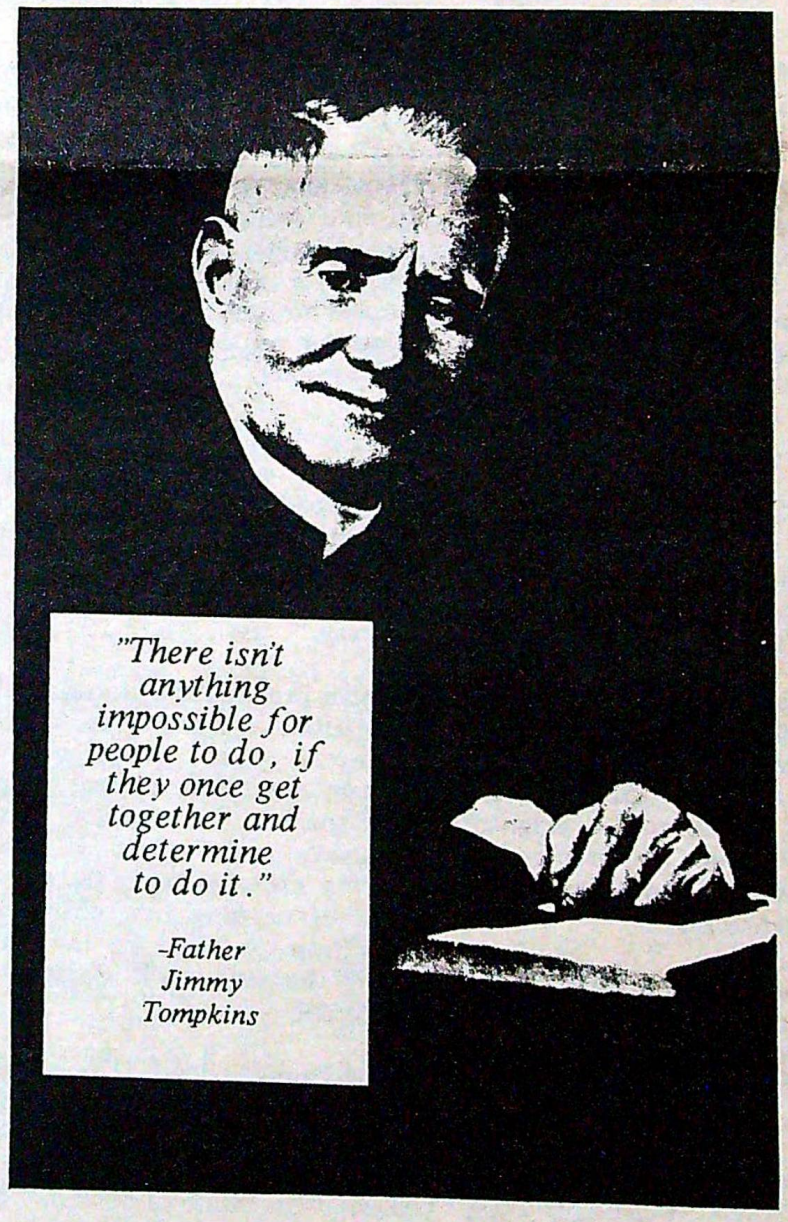
But long before the time of his death on May 5, 1953, the world knew his genius for influencing people with ideas.

Father Jimmy Tompkins was a man who believed in democracy, not just as an ideal, but as an everyday way of life. Democracy, like Christianity, is a profound idea, a revolutionary, an even radical idea, if actually lived. Many people express a belief in the principles of these concepts, but the belief does not extend to the way they act in human relationships -- socially, politically, or economically.

He also had in his mind "the seed of future things," for he believed that the ideas he planted were not just transient measures suited for his particular time, but universal.

One of his most valuable contributions was his insistence that a university should not be an institution for the elite, but open to all. In 1920, he published *Knowledge for the People*, a pamphlet that left an enormous impact on educational thinkers of his time. It dealt with the idea that universities should employ themselves in carrying knowledge "to the people of the soil."

In response to the pamphlet, Rev. MacKinnon, a well-known priest, commented: "Not until such change is effected in the spirit of our universities will a system of popular education be evolved that will meet the requirements of rural life." The pamphlet was a blueprint for adult education and is one of the reasons Father Tompkins is often called the father of the Antigonish Movement. The



continued page four

Letter from Marcel Masse

Dear Editor:

Your letter regarding the management of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has come to my attention. I thank you for expressing your views.

I understand your concerns regarding the future of the Corporation but I can assure you that the CBC will continue to provide all Canadians with quality programming in both official languages.

Radio will continue to provide local, regional and national programming. CBC Television will now concentrate its efforts on regional, national and international programming. Local news will be covered during regional broadcasts. The Corporation has added a number of news bureaus, staffed with CBC reporters, to insure that events receive coverage in area served by CBC transmitters, all of which remain in operation.

The Government of Canada has made available, both directly and indirectly, more than $800 million in additional funds to the CBC since 1984. In this period, the Corporation's total resoures climbed 23.8% or 1.8% more than the increase in total goverment discretionary spending. CBC's total planned resources for the 1990-1991 fiscal year amounts to $1.4 billion.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation remains a vital force with the Canadian broadcasting system.

Yours sincerely,
Marcel Masse

Smiths of Cape Breton
available in second printing

The Smiths of Cape Breton by Perley W. Smith, privately published in 1967, contains information on the Port Hood mines, churches, cemeteries, breakwater, fire of 1942, railway, fishing industry and much more in the years 1610 to 1967. It is now available in its second printing, with the proceeds from sales to aid the Chestico Museum and Historical Society. The price is now $20.00, a savings of $5.00 from the original price.

The book, is not only about Smiths, but contains information on a large number of other families and is a valuable resource for genealogists and historians. Among the family histories is information on: Camerons, Coadys, Dunns, Doyles, Embrees, Ethridges, Frasers, Gillis, Harts, Hunts, Hawleys, Laidlaws, MacMillans, MacDonalds, MacKenzies, MacNeils, Morrisons, Mullins, Murrays, Murphys, Myers, Rices, Tompkins, Watts, Worths and Tobeys, among others.

Anyone interested in ordering *The Smiths of Cape Breton,* please write to:

The Chestico Museum and Historical Society
P.O. Box 144
Port Hood, Nova Scotia
BOE 2WO

Or you may phone Vivian Tobey, 787-2232, or Glenda Campbell, 787-2808.

Cape Breton's Magazine life histories
Morningside to air plays by Silver Donald Cameron

CBC Radio's *Morningside*, hosted by Peter Gzowski, will air five short plays by Silver Donald Cameron, based on *Cape Breton's Magazine.*

Called *Cape Breton Lives*, the five plays were created from stories collected by Ronald Caplan, many of which are in his book, also called *Cape Breton Lives.* It is a book of life histories told by Cape Bretoner and first published in the magazine.

This isn't the first time *Cape Breton's Magazine* has been the basis of drama. For example, The St. Ann's Bay Players have carried *Down North: the Play of Cape Breton's Magazine* to nearly 100 performances, including representing Nova Scotia at the Winter Games in Prince Edward Island. And a chapter of *Cape Breton Lives* became a poignant radio play about Cape Bretoners in World War I, performed on Remembrance Day.

But the radio play by Silver Donald Cameron represent the first time an artist has approached Caplan's work as raw material, writing with all the freedom and newness that implies.

Silver Donald Cameron has followed Caplan's work in *Cape Breton's Magazine* for almost 20 years. But it was the St. Ann's Bay Players' production of *Down North* that triggered these radio plays.

"You tend to dip into the magazine for what catches your eye," said Silver Donald, "but the St. Ann's Bay Players' production of *Down North* had gathered all the plums in the pudding. It was quite overwhelming to see the quality, the power of those stories. And I wanted to find a form that would allow that material to be told in the radio format.

"I was just blown away by the material, which was downright Shakespearean in its mix of savagery, pathos, comedy and farce. I wish I could really do it justice--but I've done my best anyway."

Caplan presents the stories in the magazine very much as he has collected them on tape--they remain the voices of real people that speak in the magazine. Silver Donald's radio plays in *Cape Breton Lives* has taken the artistic step of creating new characters, new lives--inspired by the often using the very words Caplan has collected.

Silver Donald added: "The material cried out to be taken across the lines from Caplan's research into art--to be shaped and unified and used as the fabric of drama. I felt that the multitude of voices should be compressed into a handful of strong, eloquent characters. A few of the strongest anecdotes deepened and developed into full-fledged story lines. That's the essence of what I have tried to do."

"I've not read Silver Donald's scripts," said Caplan. "But I'm sure of one thing--those radio plays won't be a simple re-telling of stories from *Cape Breton's Magazine.* He's had a completely free hand. So I'm really excited about this project. And I'm looking forward to hearing these plays at the same time the rest of Canada first hears them."

Silver Donald Cameron has written for radio, television, and magazines, and he is the author of several books including *The Circumnavigation of Cape Breton Island*, which will be published in October by Macmillan of Canada.

Caplan created *Cape Breton's Magazine* in 1972. Since then, he has travelled the island with a tape recorder and a camera, talking with Cape Bretoners about their lives. Now it its 19th year, the award-winning magazine is said to be the oldest of its kind in Canada--and there aren't that many quite like it. Most of the articles are oral history, published pretty much as they are spoken. Those words, in combination with Caplan's photographs, have made for a growing portrait of Cape Breton Island.

The book *Cape Breton Lives*, now its second printing, is published by Breakwater Books an is available through bookstores everywhere.

The plays of *Cape Breton Lives* will be performed on CBC Radio's *Morningside* five days in a row--April 8th through April 12th.

For more information contact Ronald Caplan: (902) 539-3817, or 929-2372 or 929-2001.

Next deadline:
April 29

Partici-Paper

EDITOR
Mary Anne Ducharme
R.R.#2 Whycocomagh,
Nova Scotia, BOE 3MO
Telephone: 945-2982

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

Published by the Inverness County Department of Recreation/Tourism

Printed by
The Pictou Advocate

"The best apple is on the highest branch"

and other proverbs from the Scottish hearth

by Mary Anne Ducharme

Long before the alphabets of the world, there were proverbs expressing collective wit and wisdom from one generation to the next. We still still use them all the time. Many Gaelic proverbs have parallels in global use, among them sayings such as "Hunger is the best sauce," (Ismath an cocaire an t-ocras), or "A man is known by the company he keeps," (Aithneachar duine air a chuideachd). Among the proverbs most delightful are those drawn from the lowly hearth and rural life of the Scots.

The earthy, incisive wit drawn from the everyday rural lifestyle of the Scots, as found in proverbs, reveals glimpses of attitudes about family relationships, friendship, observations about animals that apply to humans, satiric observations about those higher up on the social scale, the Gaelic sense of fate, and the world view of the Gael.

That the Gaels did not like social pretension is illustrated in many sayings, such as "the weed that grows on the dunghill lifts its head the highest," and "slippery is the door step of the mansion house." and "one man can do with impunity what another man cannot."

And the sense of fatalism that came from generations of hardship and oppression hardened into a world view that gave the Scot his reputation for being dour and contentious. Here are a few examples:

"He who is fated to hang shall never be drowned."

"There is hope of return from the sea, but not from the grave."

"One cannot bypass his fate,"

"Each man's death is to another man's advantage."

"Many trifling things are more lasting than man."

"Truth is bitter in the telling."

But these alone do not do justice to the wryly humourous side of the Gael which gave rise to sayings such as "If you seek praise, die; if you seek ridicule, marry," or "Where the people are blind, a one-eyed minister will do," or "do not try licking the back of the ladle while it is full."

There are a number of collections of these proverbs, including thousands of sayings. Among them are Alexander Nicolson's *Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Sayings*, Edinburgh, 1881, which was reprinted in 1951. There is T.D. MacDonald's *Gaelic Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings*, Stirling, 1926; M.F. Shaw's *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*, London, 1955; and *Gaelic Proverbs* by Babi Nic Leoid, a small book printed in Inverness, Scotland, in 1973.

This brief selection may suggest to readers of *Partici-Paper* proverbs that were handed down in families in Inverness County and still exist in current usage. I would be very pleased to gather and print proverbs in GAELIC, ENGLISH, FRENCH, DUTCH, MICMAC, or any other heritage language in the County. If you have proverbs you would like to share with your friends and neighbours through this paper, you are encouraged to write them down and mail them to Mary Anne Ducharme, *Partici-Paper* Editor, R.R.#2 Whycocomagh, BOE 3MO. Include your name and address.

By doing this you may inspire others to make a beginning in saving this delightful part of language heritage.

Family Lore

Offend one member of a family and you offend them all.
Buail mise agus buailidh tu an t-eilean.

What children see, children do
Mar a chi na big,'s e ni na big.

An active mother makes a lazy daughter.
Ni mathair easgaidh nighean leasg.

Pleasant away from home, surly at home.
Taitneach a muigh is grannach a stigh.

A house without a dog, a cat or a small child is a house without cheer or laughter.
Tigh gun chu, gun chat gun leanabh beag, tigh gun ghean gun ghaire.

Horse Sense

A borrowed horse in never tired.
Cha bhi each iasaid a chaoidh sgith.

Do not expect a large egg from a wren.
Cha tig ugh mor a toin dreadhain.

Much cackling and the egg but small.
Gagan mor is ugh beag.

A 'miry' cow likes another in the same condition.
Is math le bo sputach bo sputach eile.

The silent pigs eat most.
Na mucan samhach as mo a dh'itheas.

A greedy dog is in danger of burning his mouth.
Theid an cu goinach a scalldadh.

Friendship

A friend's eye is a good mirror.
Is math an sgathan suil caraid.

Friendship is of little worth if it has to be bought often.
Is suarach an cairdeas a dh'fheumas a cheannnach tric.

Adversity shows your true friends.
An am na h-eiginn, dearbhar an cairdean.

The hand that gives receives in turn.
An lamh a bheir is i a gheibh.

Friendship cannot be one-sided.
Cha seas cairdeas air aon chois.

Men can meet, not so mountains.
Coinnichidh na daoine far nach coinnich na cnuic.

Sport Scholarship Program

The Chronicle-Herald Sport Nova Scotia Scholarship Program will recognize students who are entering the first year of the postsecondary education within Nova Scotia. A minimum number of awards will be presented in each of the six geographic regions of the province. Successful applicants will be chosen on scholastic achievements, their level of community involvement, and athletics. Application forms are available from principals and guidance counsellors in local high schools. Application forms must be returned to:

Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 938, Halifax,
Nova Scotia, B3J 3J5.
DEADLINE: MAY 1, 1991.

National Physical Activity Week: May 24-June 2

If your organizations wants to promote fitness through this program, it is time to get organized. For more information:
John Cotton, Director
Inverness County Department of Recreation/Tourism,
Port Hood, 787-2274.