County of Inverness

Partici~Paper

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ÉIGINN!

A commentary on the status of Gaelic
by Mary Anne Ducharme

"We should declare a Gaelic language emergency," Father John Angus Rankin says. "That is what it is, ÉIGINN, an emergency! If something isn't done who will be speaking Gaelic twenty years from now? A few years ago, I told people that the Cape Breton fiddler was disappearing, and everybody was mad at me for saying that. I challenged them to prove me wrong. So they started looking in their communities for fiddlers. They saw how few there were, and they did something about it. Now we got the Glendale Concert, with a hundred fiddlers, including the young ones. We must go to the people for the answers. They'll come up with them."

Father Rankin voiced one of the main areas of consensus at a recent conference which focused on the future of Gaelic in Nova Scotia. The conference, dealing with "community initiatives" for Gaelic language and cultural development was titled "OPTIONS FOR THE 1990'S" and was sponsored by The Extension Department of St. F.X. University, and Cape Gael Associates Co-operative.

The 23 invited delegates represented some of the institutions, organizations and individuals with a concern for the preservation of Gaelic language and culture. The major objectives were to share ideas, "to build consensus on the future of Gaelic language and culture in Nova Scotia," and to "further stimulate the initiative arising from the International Conference for Gaelic Studies in October of 1987."

A number of those present are members of an ad hoc committee which has been meeting for the past two years to study twelve proposals arising from the 1987 conference which may lead to a Gaelic language policy for the Island.

In the fall of this year, a follow-up to the '87 conference will asses changes in the status of Gaelic, evaluate initiatives such as Gaelic playschools, and plan further strategies.

The Gaelic language in Cape Breton, as well as the rest of Nova Scotia, is an issue charged with personal emotion, and strongly held political, institutional and individual views. It is easy for

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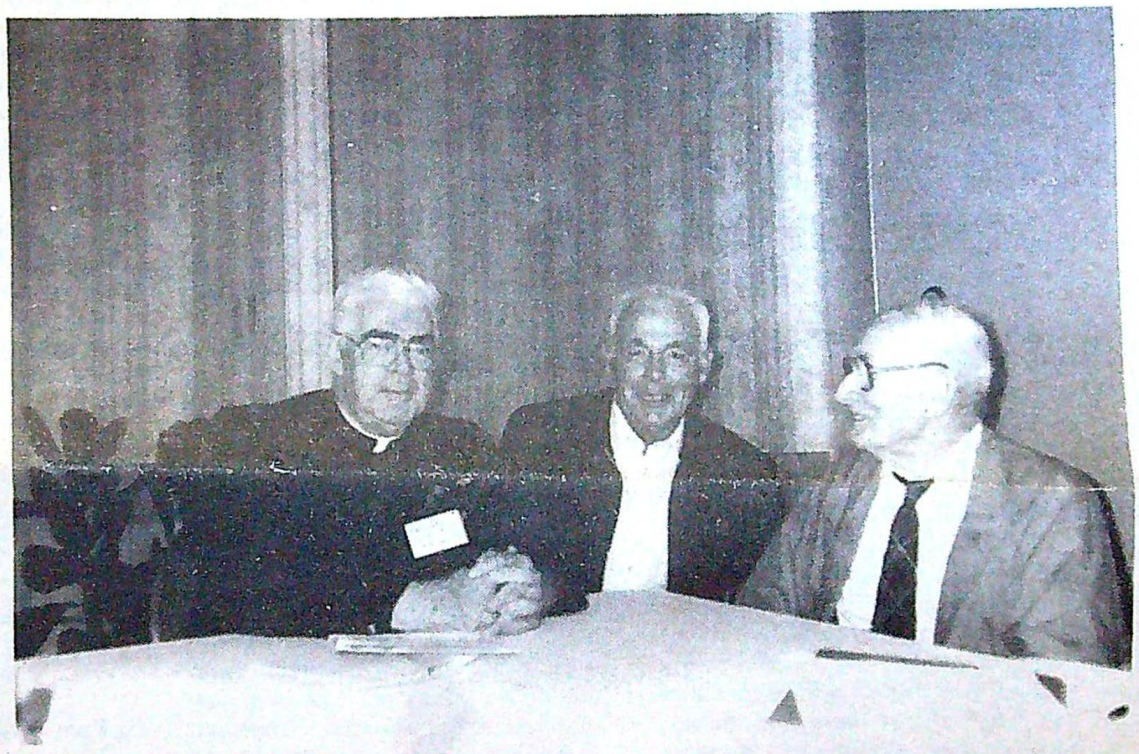


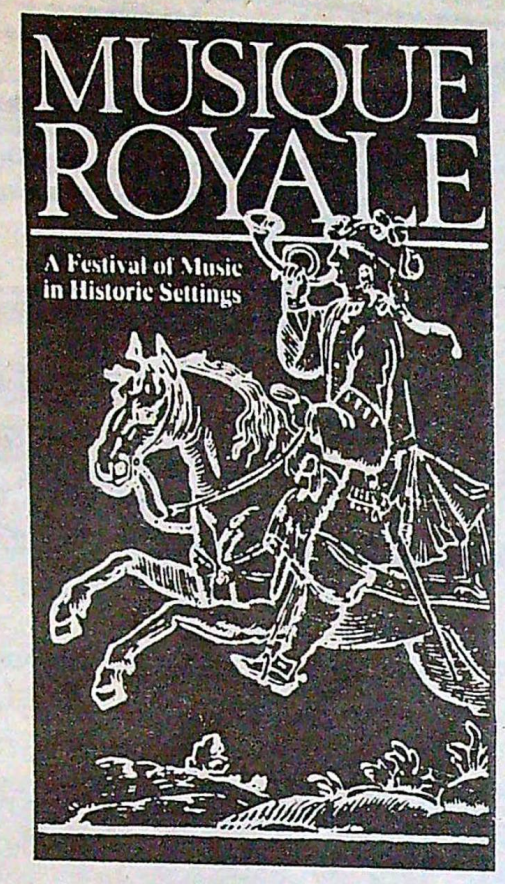
Father John Angus Rankin, Hector MacNeil and Joe Neil MacNeil were three of those who attended a two-day conference in Sydney in early July on the future of the Gaelic language in Nova Scotia.

The conference was organized by the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University and the Cape Gael Associates Co-operative. Says Culture Minister Roland Thornhill: "The current generation of Gaelic-speaking Nova Scotians represents Canada's share of a cultural legacy of international importance. It is vital at this time to plan for the retention and development of this important aspect of our cultural identity."

Father Rankin believes that the present is a time of EIGINN, of Gaelic language emergency, for virtually no new Gaelic speakers are growing up with the language.

Can Gaelic be saved?

"Go to the people for the answers"



Six nights in August

by Kerstin Mueller

There is something magical about music on an August night. When voices and instruments loft high into the warm summer air, so does the spirit of the audience.

This August, in Cape Breton, there will be six such magical musical evenings. At each destination the internationally acclaimed musicians of Musique Royale will be offering evenings of unrivalled music and charm.

What's so special about an August Musique Royale concert? In August we are in the twilight of summer, and we instinctively realize that this is a time to make the most of our days and nights, before the onset of another autumn.

Consider next the musicians. The Musique Royale series boasts some of Canada's and the world's most accomplished performers in the field of early music.

Finally, there are the locales where the music will be performed. These settings are distinctive in their own right, and once the concert begins they take on an aura that is rich in mood and memory.

The group leading off the season is *'Anonymus,'* an unusual and dynamic group of six musicians from Quebec City. *'Anonymus* specializes in music from the late 13th to the 16th century, using a variety of period instruments. They will be presenting *THE BOOK OF HOURS*, illustrating in music and song the cycle of the seasons in a fresh re-interpretation of Medieval life.

Then years old, they have had successful tours across Canada, the United States and Europe, and are now working on a production with Theatre de Nouveau Monde in Montreal.

Gordon Murray, harpsichordist, from Nova Scotia, now resident in Vienna, Austria, had an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response his first-ever North American tour with Musique Royale in August of 1988. His is noted in Europe both as a performer and as professor of harpsichord at Vienna's renowned Academy of Music. This year he will perform together with Erik Oland, a young baritone from New Brunswick. Erik Oland has received rave reviews from his recent performances in Toronto and is predicted to be a future Jon Vickers.

In the third week of the series we will listen to *THE MANNHEIM TRIO*. This group is make up of Glace Bay native Valerie Kinslow, soprano, Montrealers Sherman Friedland, classical clarinet, and Boyd McDonald, fortepiano. This trio was formed expressly for Musique Royale's 1989 Festival, both to give audiences an opportunity to hear the "expressive and sweet steady voice of Valerie Kinslow" (NEW YORK TIMES) again, and for the first time, the fortepiano and classical clarinet, played by distinguished artists Sherman Friedland and Boyd McDonald. All three perform frequently on CBC and Radio Canada and with many other early music groups, including *Tafelmusik* and the *Studio Musique Anciennne de Montreal.*

A performance of Nova Scotia's own *THE HALIFAX CAMERATA SINGERS* with the *ARION DUO* concludes the series. Former in 1986 by Truro choir director Jeff Joudrey in association with the City of Halifax, *THE CAMERATA SINGERS* are a chamber choir made up of 22 singers. This talented group with members from all parts of the province hold weekly rehearsals in Halifax. The 1989 Musique Royale Festival will enable them to perform across Nova Scotia for the first time. With 'a remarkable infusion of fine playing,' Betsy MacMillan, baroque cello and Hank Knox, harpsichord, of the well known *Ensemble Arion* will perform with them in a delightful programme of period choral music.

The whole series of four concerts is scheduled for the Chapel at Fortress Louisbourg. The concerts start at 7:00 pm, and visitors are asked to rendezvous at the Visitor;s Reception Centre at 6:30. These four concerts take place on Saturdays, and the dates are:

August 5: *Anonymus*
August 12: *Erik Oland and Gordan Murray*
August 19: *The Mannheim Trio*
August 26: *The Halifax Camerata Singers with the Arion Duo*

This year, a Musique Royale concert is performed for the first time in L'Eglise St-Pierre in Cheticamp. *L'Esemble Anonymus* will perform on Monday, August 7 at 8:00 pm. La Societe St-Pierre is the co-ordinator of this presentation.

For the third time Music Royale is returning to St. Margaret's of Scotland Church on River Denys Mountain. This concert, featuring *The Mannheim Trio* takes place on Sunday, August 20, at 5 pm.

Ticket prices for the Musique Royale concerts are standard, regardless of the performers. Per concert tickets are $10.00 a person ($7.00 for seniors and students). These tickets can be purchased at any Musique Royale outlet, for any of the concerts. The best deal, however, is to purchase a $30.00 subscription ticket. The subscription ticket is a passport to attend all four regular concerts. Tickets may be purchased at Fortress Louisbourg (733-2208), at Les Trois Pignons in Cheticamp (224-2642, as will as the Drs. Coady & Tompkins Memorial Library in Margaree Forks (248-2821), the Port Hawkesbury Library in SAERC (645-2729) and at Eastern Counties Regional Library in Mulgrave (747-2597). Tickets may also be ordered my mail from Musique Royale board member Kerstin Mueller, Box 117, Mulgrave, Nova Scotia, BOE 2GO.(747-2265 or 747-2597). Advance ticket purchase is recommended.

Family fun

at the National Park

by Pam Doyle

With school almost over for another year, families are looking for a way to pass the long hot summer days ahead.

Cape Breton Highlands National Park offers families a variety of experiences and most fees remain the same as last year.

For those planning on touring the Cabot Trail with visiting friends and relatives, all lookoffs, interpretative trails and regular hiking trails are now open. Some of our displays, like those on MacKenzie Mountain and at Lakie's Head near Ingonish, are accessible to wheelchairs. Motor vehicle permits must be purchased at either the Ingonish or Cheticamp Visitor Centres, gateway kiosks, or at Park campgrounds, if you plan on stopping to use Park facilities. The $20. annual permit can be used in any National Park in Canada. Four-day and one-day permits cost $6.00 and $3.00 respectively. Canadian senior citizens may pick up a complimentary vehicle permit by showing their motor vehicle registration and proof of age.

If you have more time to spend and want to camp, all sites in all six Park campgrounds located along the Cabot Trail are now open. Each is different, yet special in its own way. Corney Brook Campground, located along our western shore, offers tenting next to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Ingonish Campground, a 10 minute walk from famous Ingonish Beach has surfguards on duty. Campers pitching their tents at either MacIntosh Brook or Big Intervale will be lulled to sleep by the brooks flowing alongside these campgrounds. Broad Cove and Cheticamp campgrounds offer three-way hookups for trailers, washrooms and with showers, kitchen shelters with firewood, playgrounds and nightly interpretive programs. Some sites in Cheticamp Campground have individual fireplaces while two recently renovated sites in Broad Cove are reserved for wheelchair users.