COUNTY of INVERNESS

Partici~Paper

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 1986

Lew Parker: The Cape Breton Project

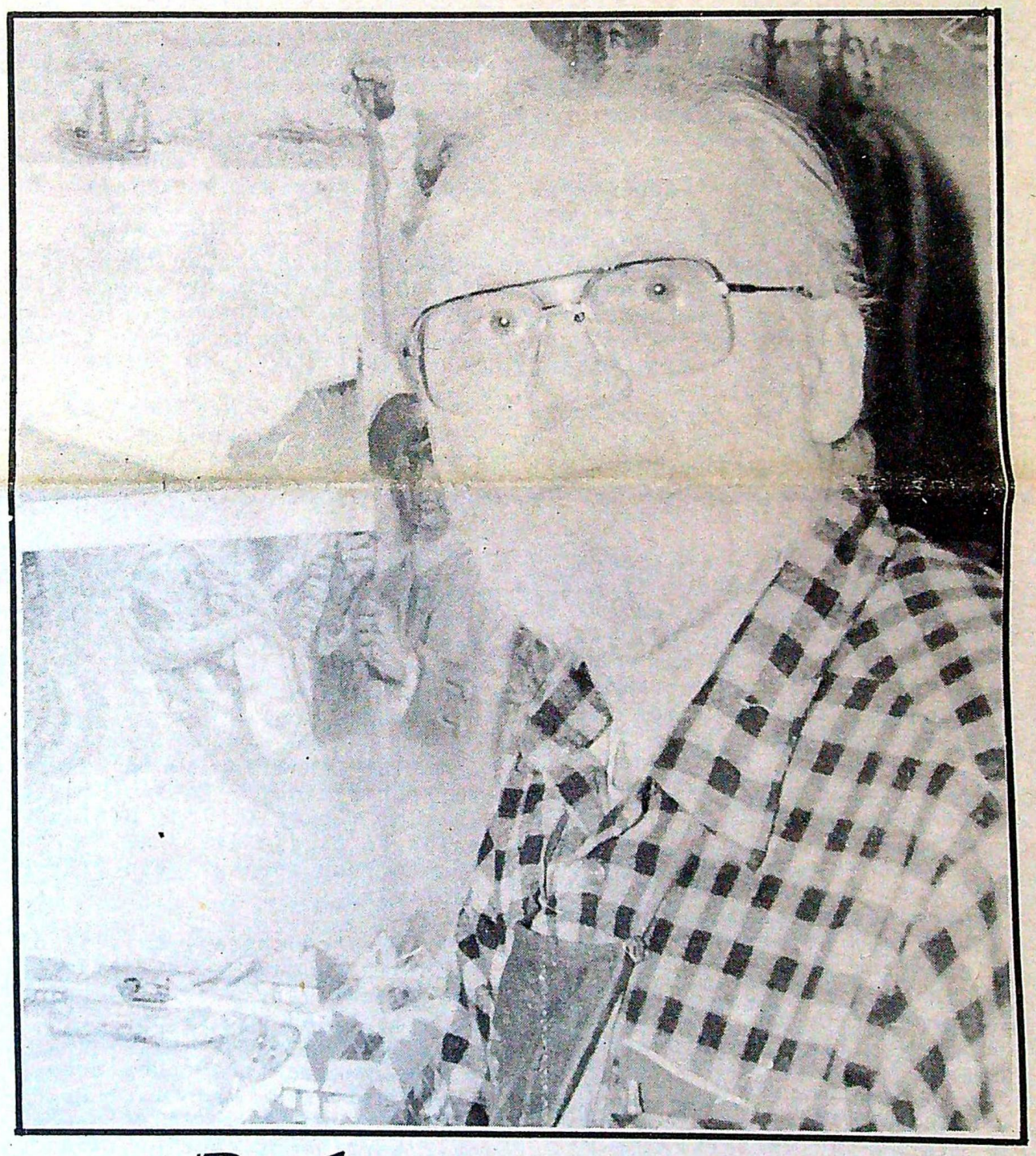
The 12 paintings in the series:

1. Mic Mac Indians in 1400's set at Malagawatch.
2. John Cabot 1497
3. Nicolas Denys 1650
4. Louisbourg 1720-1758
5. Charles Robin, Arichat 1763-1805
6. Cheticamp 1810
7. Sydney 1785-1850
8. Mabou 1830
9. Ingonish 1850-60
10. Coal, steel, labour unions: 1890's-1920's.
11. Decision pending: perhaps Alexander Graham Bell and Baddeck, or perhaps a regional treatment.
12. Canso Causeway

When he began the Cape Breton project, Parker didn't realize how much research would need to be gathered before he could start. He had to speak to numerous people, visit many sites, and depend on others to help in research. Rev. Donnie Campbell, President of UCCB at the time, and Bob Morgan used the Beaton Institute for source material. Terry MacDonald of New Waterford and John Gillis of Mabou provided study sketches and research. Parker began compiling a file box of reference materials for each painting including maps, ariel views, notes, costume details, tools, animals, buildings, coaches, weapons, as well as interesting faces.

The progress of the series, Parker says, depends on continued funding from UCCB for both Terry MacDonald and himself. " Terry takes some of the pressure off me," says Parker, " which is a great help since the heart bypass operation last year. Terry draws extremely well, and I am able to help him develop as a painter. We work as a team."

"UCCB is a great organization to work for," he continued, " they put off the deadline after the operation, giving me an extra year."



(Ann Sherrington Photo)

Lew Parker: The Cape Breton Project

by Mary Anne Ducharme

Lew Parker, often called "Canada's, most accomplished historical illustrator," is shown here working on one of of the twelve paintings in the Cape Breton project. Depicted is Louisbourg 1720-1758.

The paintings were commissioned by U.C.C.B. and illustrate the history of Cape Breton Island for permanent display. Of special interest to Inverness County residents are the paintings of Mabou and Cheticamp, now in progress.

SEE PAGES 4 & 5

Viewpoint

By Mary Anne Ducharme

THE REALITIES OF RUM HISTORY LOCKED INTO THE PRESENT ?

What understandings of our history can be gained by the study of rum?

Many people who did not participate, were puzzled by the recent "Rum by Gum" conference in Yarmouth sponsored by the Federation of Nova Scotia Heritage.

A national T.V. news reporter said the conference was a gathering of "connoisseurs of rum". A newspaper allowed that the conference "must be a hilarious time with many stories of those exciting times....."

Actually, these impressions do not describe the conference very well at all, although there may have been a connoisseur or two there, and there were moments of humor. The object of the conference was to learn more about an integral part of Maritime history through the presentation of serious scholarly research. The topic is complex; the information available often distorted by years of folklore; and the researchers in the field are scattered.

Speakers and delegates at the conference gathered from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, St. Pierre and Miquelon, and Maine. The topic of rum was approached on a regional basis from seven thematic points: early settlement, the law, the museum, the economy, folklore, the navy, and the temperance movement.

After listening to the speakers, panel discussion and informal conversation, an overview of rum history could be gained from the conference, though much has yet to be studied. The present truth is that "demon rum" is still a political and controversial topic.

David Cassidy, who spoke of the historical perspectives of alcoholism treatment at the conference, perhaps phrased a keynote when he quoted the famous line from George Santayana:

> Those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it.

He was particularly referring to a time when alcoholism was considered a moral weakness which should concern churches, not government legislators. Alcholics Anonymous has, Cassidy said, learned from history. It now declares non-allegience with religion, politics, controversy, and any organization at all.

In a larger sense, the Santayana line can be threaded through many concepts touched upon in the conference. How each concept relates to modern trends could fuel many long debates.

The fur trade would never have developed without rum. Temptation for rum was used to exploit native people.

Rum was cheap because it cruelly exploited black slaves and, later, freed blacks in the West Indies. Exploitation was the reality of Nova Scotia economy and history in reference to the rum trade.

The Canadian law in reference to Prohibition: "Lots of laws, lots of rhetoric, lots of loopholes to please everyone." (Quote from speaker Jean-Pierre Andrieux).

The "conspiracy trials" of Prohibition days were ineffective. The judges were severe, the juries were inclined not to be.

Government revenues grew enormously as a result of Prohibition. Public disillusionment over government double-standards and hypocrisy fostered the breaking of laws.

Rum-running was "the employer of last resort" in a time when the traditional economy had failed miserably. In this pre-welfare period, smuggling for some people was the only means of livelihood available.

Ottawa, historically neglected the roots of regional economic disparity. Rum-running was a symptom of this neglect.

Now, "living off memories" is the principal occupation of the Maritimes. We need to encourage less "antiquarianism," and more history shown in the true light of reality. We can't lock our countryside into one time-period.

The ordinary rum-runner got a very small share of profits in the trade. Organized crime syndicates reaped the lion's share of the wealth.

Laws must be reasonable or they will not be obeyed and will be unenforceable. Prohibition and smuggling flourished together. When Prohibition ended, smuggling declined. (However, smuggling is not to be thought of in the past tense. It is still going on.)

The present "epidemic of drug abuse" and the recent 120 million dollar "hash bust": do they have any resemblance to events in rum-running?

Perhaps the symptoms have changed a little, but the disease stays the same.

CRUCIAL TO ARTS COUNCIL November 5th meeting

On November 5th the annual meeting of the Inverness County Council of the Arts will be held in the municipal building in Port Hood. It is a crucial meeting that will shape the future of the council in promoting the arts in Inverness County

The meeting is described as a 'serious crossroads for this council', by Jim St. Clair, Secretary. Too much of the work involved is falling on the shoulders of two few. The financial situation must be addressed, with the priority of finding a means of providing a sound financial foundation.

Recreation and Culture Newsletter
Municipal Department of Recreation
Inverness County, Cape Breton, N.S.

Send all contributions to:
Mary Anne Ducharme
Recreation/Tourism Dept.
P.O. Box 179, Mun. Bldg.
Port Hood, N.S. BOE 2WC

Partici-Paper

EDITOR: MARY ANNE DUCHARME
TYPIST: ELOISE COADY MACISAAC

Next deadline:
NOVEMBER 24
Next printing:
DECEMBER 4

Special thanks to the Port Hood Post Office for cooperation