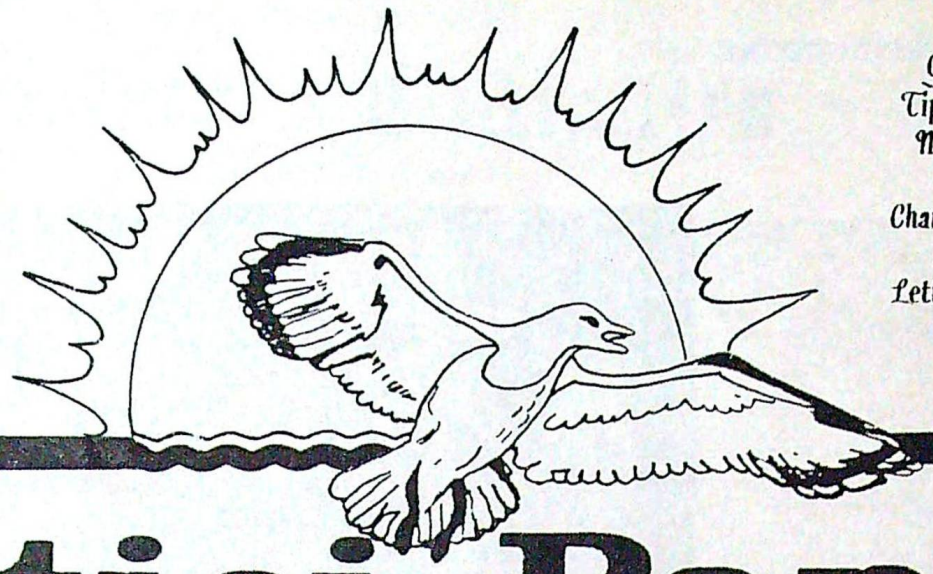
Mabou Heros, 1,2
Keeping the Homefires, 3,6,7
Village Square Program, 4
Keslin at Whycocomagh, 4
Cape Breton books, 5
Ron Caplan wins, 6
Au Coin du Nord, 6
Quit and Win, 8
Tourism Training, 8
Gerard & Annie Rose, 9
Tips for winter tune-up, 10
More on New Canada, 10
Seniors class, 10
Channel Island Connection, 11
Stonecarver Pring, 11
Letter from son in mines, 12
Tramp Miner, 12
Disabled, 12



Partici-Paper
November 1991 Volume 12, no.11

Mabou Busy Helping War Causes

The Cape Breton Homefront

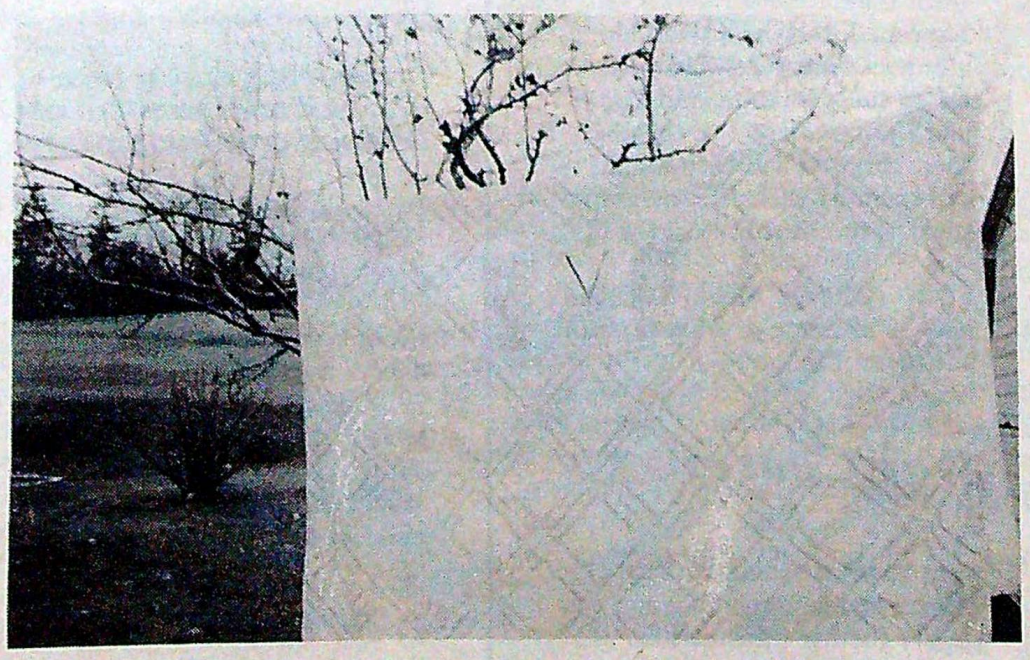
by Mary Anne Ducharme

In 1942, the ladies of Mabou were busy helping "The War Effort." For .25 you could have your name hand embroidered on a special coverlet to raise funds for the Red Cross and the "Queen's Fund." The Queen's Fund was to purchase supplies and food for people in Britain who were suffering because of the activities of German submarines and constant bombing.

Dozens of names were carefully stitched in the white cotton of the coverlet, in a pattern of squares surrounding a central medallion which listed the men of Mabou who were serving in the military that year. In the centre of the emblem, (see illustration) was the V, everywhere recognized at the time as the symbol for Victory. Under it was the Morse Code for V, three dots and a dash. Perhaps the best known opening of any symphony during World War II was Beethoven's Fifth: three short notes and a long one, da-da-daduumm, a piece of music played at the beginning of many newsreels and war reports.

The list of names, of course, is not of all the Mabou men who served in the War, for there were many others after this year. The spellings given in the illustration are as they appear on the coverlet.

The coverlet was raffled off after it was completed, and it was won by John C. MacMillan, who was the uncle of Jean (Mrs. Fred) Smith of Mabou who now owns the coverlet. Her mother, Mrs. James H. (Christina) MacMillan, was one of those who worked on the creation. A 1942 photo carried in The Halifax Mail gave the following caption: "Above are pictured a number of the women of the progressive community of Mabou who are carrying on splendid work in the local Red Cross Society, headed by Mrs. A.J. MacNeil, who is the President. Mrs. Arthur Smith is treasurer, and Mrs. William MacNeil, VicePresident. Mrs. F.W. Hunt, who is Convener of the Quilt and Blanket Committee, has two sons overseas." (Jean Smith believes that the last statement is incorrect, because Mrs. Hunt had a son and a daughter overseas, not two sons.)



There were other projects undertaken in Mabou and other communities for the war effort, including dances, and fund drives.

Mrs. Smith remembers the war years as quiet in Mabou. Her husband Fred served in the Air Force, and spent time in Burma and Ceylon, among other places. While rural life went on despite the war, Mabou people were anxious to listen to the big radio sets of the time, especially short wave, to hear overseas news. The distinctive and unforgettable voices of Winston Churchill and Lorne Green were familiar to all. However, many residents weren't fully aware of the extent of warfare taking place in the waters of the North Atlantic around them. On two occasions, they were startled by crashes of Canadian military planes nearby. One survivor, from a crash at the Coal Mines, walked through the woods to Chester Stark's house. There was a second crash at the edge of Cape Mabou, the South Cape near MacKinnon's Brook, but details of this are sketchy. A local resident spotted shiny metal on the hillside and

continued page two

From The Editor

Changing Styles in Names

In interviewing Mrs. Fred (Jean) Smith about the 1942 coverlet, I was struck by her style of naming the ladies who worked on it, and it brought into focus how much styles have changed from the time of World War II to now. Then, once a woman was married, neighbours, friends, and even cousins no longer called her by her first name, and to do so was being overfamiliar, perhaps even disrespectful. Mrs. Hunt was never called Ethel, except by her husband, siblings, and parents. Elizabeth MacNeil certainly would not be referred to as anything but "Dr. Mrs. MacNeil." That would be how she signed correspondence, and how she expected to be addressed by others in polite conversation. It was possible to know a married woman very well, see and speak to her in the village often, and not know her first name. There seems to strong vestiges of this style left among older people who were brought up in an age of greater social formality.

This extended to the men, in some circumstances. For instance, one did not refer to a superior at work by his first name. It was always Mr. MacNeil, etc. Now even the Prime Minister may not rate the appellation "Mr.," except on very formal public occasions.

In this generation, to call a cousin "Mrs." instead of by her first name, would seem standoffish, overly formal. The same applies to neighbours you know well, and nearly all acquaintances. Among my acquaintances, I am sometimes greeted as Mrs. Ducharme by older people, but seldom by those my own age or younger.

I would not have dreamed of using the first name of an older person in my youth, without the prefix of Mr. or Mrs., nor would I have the teremity to refer to Uncle Roy without the uncle, or Aunt Beulah, without the aunt. However, I rarely hear those titles given to my generation by nieces or nephews. They might say, "my aunt, Mary," but rarely Aunt Mary. I am not quite sure if I resent that, or if I should.

In the present egalitarianism it is not unknown for doctors, teachers, and sometimes even parents to be called by their first names without social censure. Women have asserted their individuality and personhood beyond the role of wife and mother, and some even resent being, in name, an appendage to the identity of their husbands. That is where, as we all know, the "Ms." came from. Some hyphenate their maiden name with their husband's name. Others keep their maiden names entirely. I have been startled, —no, ***astounded*** — to learn (on more than one occasion) that two people I was acquainted with were married to each other! In one case, it did not dawn on me until they happened to bring a small child along to a meeting. The little boy called them Mommy and Daddy and I put two and two together. If their children had been taught to call them by their first names instead, I might still be in the dark.

I don't quite see where this trend may be leading, or what it means, but there it is.

These are the Mabou ladies who worked on the "Our Heroes" coverlet: back row, from left to right - - Laura Doyle, Katherine Burke, Mary Agatha Burns, Jean Smith, Alice MacLeod, Margaret F. MacMaster. Front row: Mrs. John Donald Cameron, Mrs. James H. (Christina) MacMillan, Mrs. Rory MacNeil, Mrs. Dr. A.J. (Elizabeth) MacNeil, Mrs. Fred (Ethel) Hunt, Mrs. Tom (Sarah) Burke.

War Causes

went to investigate. Perhaps other Mabou people remember and can supply further information.

Are you suffering from rheumatoid arthritis or the common cold?

Discover remedies for your ailments.

Bringing Research to Life

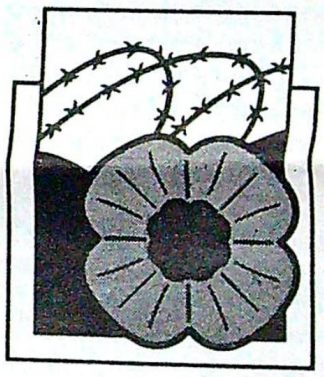
a new exhibit at the
CAPE BRETON CENTRE FOR HERITAGE AND SCIENCE

A history of Canada's pharmaceutical industry

a travelling display from
The National Museum of Science and Technology

Don't miss it!
Open now to after the New Year.

The Centre is located on the ground floor of the Lyceum Building, 225 George Street, Sydney. Hours of operation are Tuesday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm and Saturday, 1 pm to 4 pm. Admission is free. For further information, call 539-1572.



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 Recreation/Tourism Department

SUBSCRIPTION inquiries:
Eloise MacIsaac
Box 179, Municipal Building
Port Hood, Nova Scotia, BOE 2WO
Phone: 787-2274

Printed by
The Pictou Advocate