

[Inside Front cover - Leslie Shedden, Glace Bay Photographer](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 32](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1982/8/1

Leslie Shedden, Glace Bay Photographer The photographs here, on the back cover, and in the magazine are offered as a kind of preview/book review of Mining Photographs and Other Pictures, published jointly by College of Cape Breton Press and The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. The finished book (in final production at this writing) will contain 330 black-and-white photographs, two examples of hand-tinted prints, and essays by Robert Wilkie (Project Editor), Allan Sekula (Instructor in Film and Photo, Ohio State University), and Don MacGillivray (Instructor in History, University College of Cape Breton). The photographs are the work of Leslie Shedden of Glace Bay. They are the most detailed portrait of the coal mining industry of the '50s and '60s that non-miners are ever likely to see, the local mining industry caught at a critical juncture where mining methods (and thus the use of labour) were radically changing with the introduction of the Dosco Continuous Miner. The book also includes social photographs • the more usual work of a studio photographer, recording as required other aspects of life of the mining community. All of these photos were in one way or another "commissioned." We do not have here the work of a man who strolled the community, searching out photographs he wanted to take. Leslie Shedden was a commercial photographer. It is clear that when he retired, sold his business, and turned away • he was through with it. He left behind cameras others might have taken along (if only for their sentimental value); and, important to this new book, he left behind his negatives. There was no sense that these photographs might appear one day in a book, certainly not that the book would be offered from a press that carries with it implications of the work as a form of art. Cyril MacDonald (present owner of Shedden Studios) brought the negatives to the attention of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Bob Wilkie has overseen the work of production. While it should in no way diminish the value of the finished work for us, it is interesting to note that Mr. Shedden did not participate in the selection of photographs. He has not determined the cropping (that is, the portion of the negative actually used). He has not printed the photographs used, so we don't know what he would have decided to dodge out or burn in. He has not determined the order of presentation. He has not, in short, participated in this project to the extent one would have had he thought of himself as an artist. "Oh, no, no, no. There was nothing like that."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 47  FRONT COVER PHOTO: At a Cooperative Movement Study Club Meeting. It is a still made during the filming of RISING TIDES, National Film Board.