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Jack Ingraham, Neil's Harbour INTRODUCTION: Jack Ingraham was one of the first people we interviewed 25 years ago, in the making of Cape Breton's Magazine. In his work shed beside the house, he did an oral book review of Watchman Against the World for the first issue • thus introducing us to the book we later reprinted as a Breton Book. He also told us wonderful stories about swordfishing, which went into Issue 4. The following is a stray • a short portion from our talks with Jack that somehow never made it into an article. We think it's something worth sharing. Jack Ingraham: Right here (Neil's Harbour) was a great place for fishing. In the spring and the fall--the fish would be going down in the spring, you know, going up in the Gulf (of St. Lawrence); and in the fall when it starts getting cold, they come back. And you get two good cracks at them. Well, boats from everywhere--even boats from the States--would be down here fishing off in the fall. But they had to fish outside three miles. But from Lunenburg and Newfoundland schooners--I don't know how many boats.... There was a pile of fish took in, I'll tell you. (Right here) in this little place. Mostly all small boats. I think there'd be days I think a hundred thousand would come in here--pounds. I know they had a boat--a collecting boat used to take them to North Sydney--and she took 80,000 (pounds), and there's lots of days she couldn't take them all. Wonderful catches of fish. I think probably about 100 years since Newfoundlanders came here (to Neil's Harbour). They came for fishing. You know, the fish was thousands here then. And there was a fella came there from St. Ann's--Buchanan and MacLeod--set up a fish business. Buy fish, and grocery store--oh, they had a big business. Anywhere's a Newfoundlander can go to sell fish, he didn't care where it was at. Good rock. If there was good rock, to build his house on--he didn't care about land at all. And all the good places there was, with good land--they picked this way. They weren't looking at land--it was somebody to buy fish. It was all rocks where they come from. There were cows, keep chickens--some people would have a little garden but they give it up--the land is hard to work. Take the sod off, nothing but rock underneath. It'll grow hay. There's nowhere in the world grass'll grow like it. You go down on some of the farms and here's the grass about six inches high. Grow that in nearly two weeks. The vapour off of the salt water probably does it. Cattle was always in, you know, pretty shape --you talk about a great place for cattle. Trade codfish for potatoes. People didn't mind working for money then--for a little bit of money, you know? Now, people's crazy. Well, there's people making 30, 34-35 dollars a day--going around striking for more money--but by god that was a month's wages. You're darn right. Yes, sir. A month's wages [one time], that 36 dollars. They're striking, and if they get some more, prices all go up and they got to pay rent and income tax--and they don't end up with a bit more than when they were making 30 dollars a month. Had no money then and they got none now. (Uncle Reuben)--he made a sealing trip one time out to the ice, around the first of March. You know, you've seen the drift ice, I suppose. They left here in this little boat, she was only 12 tons--no engine or anything--and they got off so far, and they got stuck (in the ice). And they got out



of that and they kept on going to Newfoundland. They got a few seals. They sold them in Newfoundland to STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 42 Cover Photograph: In celebration of our 25th year, we offer a photo of Donald and Dan Murdock Morrison of Wreck Cove, holding a photo of their sister Maisle and her beautiful hooked rug. Dan Murdock made an axe handle in the first issue of Cape Breton's Magazine, and sewed hay and oats in Issue 18. Maisie showed us how to hook rugs in Issue 3. Cover photograph of Issue 71 taken by Carol Kennedy and Ronald Caplan.