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Published by Ronald Caplan on 1996/12/1

My Meeting with Red Dan Smith • A Memory from the First 25 Years of Cape Breton's Magazine • by Ronald Caplan

Heading into our 25th year, I realize that a lot of Cape Breton's Magazine stories have not been told • because the story of getting the story wasn't the story. At least, not so far. I've always been more interested in presenting the stories as they were told to us. Still, readers ask questions about certain stories, call to mind events that I cherish, and I more and more want to share the view from the other side of the camera and the tape recorder. I have come to realize that the rest of the equation, my part in the story, to some degree, should be shared. Let's start with Red Dan Smith and the earliest days of Cape Breton's Magazine. Visits with Red Dan and his wife Mary at Jersey Cove resulted in "How to Make Rope from Wood" in Issue Number One of the magazine. Years later, Red Dan would also be part of an article on rumrunning. That was the time this man who never drank and certainly never ran rum found himself accused of piracy! But this first visit: It is important to know how nervous I was, calling ahead to set up interviews and then actually going for the visit. It just felt different from my first months in Cape Breton, when I was visiting my neighbours with more ease, asking a lot of questions that would, it turned out, be the kind of questions that would be in the magazine • but in those first months it was only that, meeting my neighbours, trying to find out how to get and use an axe handle, or build a kitchen fire that would actually produce some heat, and how to cook a piece of salted cod. I hadn't yet started going around asking

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"That's a wonderful far-rum you're living on." He had my hand, and somehow my arm as well, pulling me down beside him on the couch. 1 Ron May pontiac buick gmc ltd. Serving Cape Breton Over 15 Years • Sale of New - Used - Cars - Trucks • Goodwrench Service • Body Shop • Parts Dept. (902) 539-6494 • 1-888-4RONMAY • 1-888-476-6629 1 147 PRINCE STREET • SYDNEY 1 PONTIAC 1 MuraE 1 GAAC TRUCKS | 1 RON MAY 1