

[Page 36 - Amelia Cook: The Port Hood Explosion](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 26](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1980/8/1

When the explosion went off, Daddy laid down. And they say the gas lays about two or three feet from the bottom • it goes in a ball like • and a certain distance from the top • and Daddy laid down and the gas went over him • but there were scorches on Daddy's coat just the same. But he was handy enough to the surface to get out. Daddy sent word home that he was all right but that he was staying behind to help the men. Then he went back in the mine--and that's when he found John Campbell. Nearly killed Daddy. It broke his heart. (Well, what caused the explosion?) These poor Bulgarians. The boys used to tease them because they talked" different and everything. Used to steal their picks and powder and all this • and they had the open teapot lamps in those days, used to have the flame on their heads. And the poor Bulgarians, they used to hide their tools in behind a brattice. Well, there was a pocket of gas behind the brattice this day, and when the examiner was looking for gas, he didn't find it • but whenever the Bul? garians went into that little cubbyhole, their lamps lit the pocket of gas. There were 10 men killed • some of them Bulgarians. And Papa and Mama always said that they don't think that those Bulgarian wives ever found out whatever happened to their husbands • because nobody knew their addresses, nobody knew the place they were really from, any more than they knew they were Bulgarians. Papa and Mama always said there was money there for their widows. But they're buried in Port Hood in.the Catholic graveyard. (Were they buried in the graveyard right away?) No. My Daddy and some more of our neighbours were see? ing about getting them buried. And Papa said to them, "I want to have those men buried in the Catholic cemetery." And they said to him, "Well, how do you know they're Catholic?" "Well," Papa said, "they are, they bless themselves." "Well, how many fingers do they use to bless themselves?" Papa said they blessed themselves with two fingers, anyway. Papa was getting pretty mad. And they told Papa, "Well, if it was only two fingers, they were a sort of a Protestant." That made Papa awful mad. And he made a JTjnp for the fellow, but they held him back. Papa was an awful good man, and eve? rybody that knew him always gave him a great name • but he didn*t like that be? cause it bothered him to think, you know, the men were dead, and nobody to fight for them or their rights • and Daddy was a Prot? estant. And when they said, "Well, they're sort of a Protestant..." • that got Daddy mad. Daddy was Church of England. Daddy wouldn't bury them in the Protestant ground, no sir. Daddy said to them, "They're Catholic, and they're going to be buried in a Catholic ground." Anyhow, they buried the three Bulgarians outside the fence of the Catholic grave? yard. Then they wrote to the Pope, in Rome I suppose, and when they got the message back from the Pope, he said they were Catholic people, all right--that the Bul? garians as a rule were of the Catholic faith. And they didn't dig them up as they do today. They put the fence out around them. I N OFTffi iXtIN O rvl I UntN Ponzos ' n d pizza 429 Prince Street, Sydney, 562-5538 . C.B. Shopping Plaza, Sydney River, 539-3983 20 Regent Street, North Sydney, 793-8248 (Soft Ice Cream Bar) Ponzos Originated in Cape Breton l'??(DLLfi5T[0N TOE SKTTE COLLEcN, • ?? e \$14.95 ppd. (il North



Ameriu) from: SKYE COLLECTION P. O. Box 30 Whitney Pw P. S. Lobster Kettle
Wharfsid? R?iriovrafi?? *'Steamed Claim. Boiled, Lobsters. Chowder 2877 Look for
us enroute to the Lighthouse! CONTEST! Enter GEORGE'S ENTERPRISES'
Once-In-a-lifetime WRITE AN AD FOR GEORGE Contest. Write a 1-inch ad and
receive a special as yet undetermined prize. Send your ad to George at GEORGE'S
ENTERPRISES AND LAUNDROMAT. GEORGE'S ENTERPRISES AND LAUNDROMAT,
BADDECK A Warm Welcome to LOCATED IN SOimnfESTERN CAPE BRETON
RICHMOND OOUNTY OFFERS ITS VISITORS MILES OF OCEAN SHORELINE,
NUMEROUS LAKES AND RIVERS FOR FISHING AND CANiffiniS. SPECTACULAR HIKING
TRAILS, AND GOUNTRY ROADS IDEAL FOR BICYCLERS' (36)