

[Page 2 - With Katie Margaret Gillis, Mabou Coal Mines](#)ISSUE : [Issue 38](#)

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lum, where those people were kept up here-- you know, those that were not well. (Do you mean, in their heads?) Yes. There were about--oh, I suppose there were about 80 in all--maybe 40 men, 40 women. And they had two women on the two floors. And I was on the upstairs floor with them. Mabou Asy? lum, that went on fire. They haven't got any more here. The odd poor person that didn't have a home was put there. But""it wasn't a hospital; it was an asylum. (Did it serve more than Mabou?) Oh yes, they were there from Cheticamp and Margaree and this side of Port Hawkesbury, and West Bay. (How old were you, going to work at the asylum?) I was 15 and 16. That was in the 1920s, early '20s. (What kind of work would you do there?) I was where they were very, very poor, and bad, and no medicine in those days, and very hard to keep clean. And I was on the upper floor, on the bad ward. You had to watch your P's and Q's, or they'll knock you down. They did knock me. I had long curls those days. And one morning, one of them knocked me down and tried to choke me. Only for the other pa? tients, I was finished. They came and screamed for the help, in the kitchen, for the others to help me. She was, like, go? ing on those turns, you know what I mean. She was to go to the strong room. (-What is a strong room?) Strong room is a place where you go, and there's not a bed, not a thing at all. It's one of those swinging windows up above, to give them air. But not a thing on them, because they're liable to choke. Oh, you know, it's like a prison. If you give them a sheet, they're liable to choke. Oh, when they go on a turn, they're right bad. We called it the strong room in those days. The walls were made very strong and the window was all barred. And when you gave them the meal, you had to look--sneak in-- and if you saw they were cooping in one little corner, and not paying any atten? tion to you, you'd just open the door quick. It had to be just so--the soup would come all over your head in a minute. Sometimes we'd have to go and get one of the men from over, that was taking care of the men there, to stay behind us. But if she saw that, she would get mad then-- she'd probably kill me. Oh, they were very poor. It was a poor place, too. They didn't have the things they have in tablets, like today. See, there was nothing to calm them down. If they had these epileptic fits, there was nothing to cool them. The doctor would come in, maybe once or twice a month, and just check a little bit. But there wasn't a thing like medicine, unless castor oil. Oh, I know the score. (You were only 15 years old?) 15 and 16. I left, well, I was going on 17, and that fall I went to New York. (How many other women worked with you on that?) My cousin worked with me on the lower ward, and my other cousin was in the kitchen. The woman over us--she was the supervisor--she liked the girls from the Coal Mines. We were, I suppose, stupid, and starting out. Well, we weren't afraid of anything. I wouldn't do it today, if you want to know something. I wouldn't go to that ward today. But those days, my mother went once, visiting up there, and, "Oh my gosh," she said to the doctor, "that Katie--she's not going to live through that! That's an awful J.A.Young&Son Vtfe want to be vour travel agent. For all your travel needs\*.. American Express Travel Service J. A. Young & Son Insurance &Travel Agent 181



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