

Page 85 - Stories Told about the Bagpipes

ISSUE: Issue 50

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/1/1

was another MacGillivray that used to play the pipes. See, each one of those would take their turn, so they'd see who would get the first set going.... Oh my God, MacIsaac played the same tunes --he had more tunes than two violin players had, in his time. Because he'd learn so many tunes from all of the dif? ferent- -but his father had so many tunes that he played on the pipes. And then he had books, he was learning from books, and learning the best of tunes from the books. In all I would say that he must have had over 60 books. And he was a man that would Thanks for Keeping Us Number One in Cape Breton jcb 1270 am stereo "1929-1989 AM 1270 cjcb '0m ckpe FM 94.9 60 Years of Service to Cape Breton learn tunes, and flip over them--"That's a good tune"--he'd learn that one, that's all there was to it. He'd go to those places where they used to have frolics. Maybe it was some widow-- they'd have a frolic at her place, cutting hay or cutting grain, or going to the woods and cutting down the winter's fire? wood or whatever. Well of course, they'd have a dance at the house sometime--it wouldn't matter when--later on, but they'd have it, anyway. Well, he'd go to play the pipes for them. That was his share, his part in the frolic. The others would go to work. Whatever was going on, they'd go and do that work, and he'd go and play for them.... He'd play, and think nothing of it, all night. He must have been pretty well up in his 60's when I was real? ly well ac? quainted with him and his mu? sic. He could play, sure, it wouldn't bother him to play. Once he got go? ing good on his pipes, just the way he wanted them, he'd keep going. Well, his tunes were so darned long, and he had so many tunes--didn't bother him--keep the pipes going- -it was just as well. (And what would the dancers do?) Well, the danc? ers would per? haps rest, take time off, a few minutes. And when they'd fin? ish a set--5 figures in a set of quadrilles. They went through the first figure, and he'd play a tune in 6/8 tim? ing for that. He'd play the same--in 6/8 timing for the Celebrating 60 Years of AM and 25 Years of FM Radio 85