

Page 79 - Charlie MacDonald, Taxicab Driver ISSUE : <u>Issue 52</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/8/1

Four. And the next teacher--all the records were there, you know, in the gueer thing--the big book, they call them. And Five and Six, one year. Well, I went to Grade Eleven--5 more years. I was through school in June; I wouldn't be 13 until January. Grade 11. In '25, when the steel company was on strike, and they had the military in, I used to walk from the Syd? ney Academy after writing my exam, over to One Gate to listen to them playing music. They had a big band, the military. Lot of stealing going on, and rimracking the steel plant. That's why they brought the militia in. The militia had to go all through the plant. Guys sneaking in, get? ting in under fences, and destroying, see. So, he said, "Charlie, when you're through school in June, you're going to get a truck. I have it. I'll bring it out from Sydney--a good Ford truck. Get you a job on the highway, driving on the highway, up at Grand Mira." So, he gave me a letter to take up to the councillor, and the coun? cillor said, "Go right to work." That same councillor, in November when the highway was through for the winter, "Here. Take that letter up to British Metals. Go to work up there, sir." And then, when Brit? ish Metals went broke the following June, the same councillor Gillis, "Here. Go to Big Pond, Charlie, and go to work." That's how I got on the road. (That's been the only work you've ever done.) Ever done, was drive, drive, drive. The only work I ever done. Oh, I did a lit? tle woods work. There was one or two win? ters we cut pit timber for a couple of months. Then have to haul it to the S & L Railroad and ship it by car. And wait. Well, instead of them paying me--I'd be out on the road in the truck in the summer-- (instead of) paying me for last winter's wages in the woods, they'd pay it to Mum. (But most of your life was on the road there.) On the road. On the wheel. (When you were small, did you ever have any oth? er idea of what you wanted to do with your life? Did you ever have any other plan?) Not that I can run across, long as I could get--I'd steal a car or a truck to drive it. And not meaning nothing, too, that I stole it, but just to drive it. See, T started so young. And I liked it. As long as I was behind the wheel, whether I got paid or not, I was driving. (Were you interested as well in how cars work, or did you just want to drive them?) Oh, I was learning how to--I'd watch them fixing them and everything. And by God, I BUILDING SUPPLIES 21 McKeen Street, Glace Bay Our Carpet & Paint Displays are all set up... Waiting For You! Our Hardware and Building Supplies are arriving daily. Come and visit us in our bright new surroundings. HARDWARE, BUILDING SUPPUES, CARPETS & VINYL FLOORING BENJAMIN MOORE PAI.NT, BONNEVILLE V,1NDOWS '"'9?s"lp.m. 849-0047 849-1100 WE'RE PROUD TO SHARE... Scottish and Acadian Festivals Hiking trails, picnic and camping parks Museums and heritage The warmest waters north of the Carolinas! Cottage crafts and works of art The Cape Breton highlands National Park Fresh and salt water fishing Horse racing, canoeing, and other sports Fine accommodations, gift shops Restaurants Wildlife The Sunset Side of Cape Breton Requests for Visitor's Guide, brochures, and general information may be made to: Inverness County Department of Recreation/Tourism P.O. Box 179. Port Hood, N.S. BOE 2W0 (902)787-2274 A few years ago, drinking was part of a good time, but



too many "good times" ended in tragedy. Today drinking and driving is socially unacceptable and tough laws are in place to enable police to detect and stop drinking drivers. If alcohol makes up part ofyour celebrations • Select a designated driver who doesn't drink to get the rest of the group home safely. Take a cab or other public transportation. Arrange to stay over until you've sobered up. As a host, make food, non-alcoholic drinks and activities the highlights of the party, if you do offer a bar, shut it down at least an hour before guests plan to leave. Provide accommodations, or a drive home for guests who've "had too much". And, never offer anyone "one for the road". Don't risk your life • and those you love for a **good time*! Department of Transportation and Communications