

[Page 3 - Our Uncle, Dan R. MacDonald From Talks with John Donald and John Allan Cameron](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 53](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1990/1/1

But anyway, getting back to Dan R., he found out we could read mu? sic. And boy, pretty soon a beautiful big letter came to "John Donald Cameron, Vio? linist, South? west Port Hood, Inverness County." And it was from Dan R. in Windsor. And RedJohnnyCampbell. he sent 4 or 5 Right: John Allan Cameron. tunes. And one of the tunes was a great jig on the Key of F called "Gordon Quig- ley." And we were so delighted that peo? ple like that paid attention to us. And by that we really realized, talking to people like Buddy MacMaster, that Dan R. was an exceptional writer. And for him to take the time and write out tunes especially for us was tremendously encouraging. And that really got a lot of things going.... And one of the things that Dan R. im? pressed upon us--and this was always a big issue, in retrospect. I don't know if it's really a big issue, but he was always a stickler for playing the tunes correctly as they are written. I don't know if I al? ways totally agree with that. Because peo? ple like Winston Fitzgerald could take a tune and put his own embellishments into it, and oftentimes really improve it. There's one camp of people that say, "You play it as it is written--you play it cor? rectly." I think I lean more towards the individual putting his or her own person? ality into the tunes. Sometimes they can really make them even sound better. (How would Dan R. feel about Winston changing one of his tunes?) Um--you'd have to ask Dan R. about that. Well, I'll tell you. I think he respected Winston so much because of the technical merits of his playing. His embellishments were first class. And oftentimes I think Dan R. would respect Winston for playing that particu? lar tune his way. I mean, I have never heard him--in my life, never have I heard Dan R. saying, "Gosh..."--or condemning Winston for changing something. (How would Dan R. feel about other people changing his tunes?) Well, if he didn't respect you as a fiddler, then he wouldn't like it, (How would he communicate this?) Well, he probably would go straight to the point. I remember somebody one time went up and said, "Dan R., what do you think of this tune?" And they played this certain THE' FLEET Briands Cabs Ltd. Operators of Cape Breton Tours ( Discover the Beauty of Cape Breton J CC/I con A Airport Service 00\*\*'Od.JJ Parcel Pickups 24 KINGS ROAD, SYDNEY Limousine Service Taxi Fleet "Enjoy superb dining in a re[a?(in?? & [uTQirious atospfiere SPECIALIZING IN CHINESE CUISINE Canadian Dishes also available FULLY LICENSED TAKE OUT & DELIVERY ORDERS Mojr Credit Cords Accepted )eking lle'taurant 355 Charlotte Street Downtown Sydney Tel: 539-7775 Open daily 11:00 am ' )