

[Page 11 - With Mungie MacNeil of Iona Rear](#)ISSUE : [Issue 59](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1992/1/1

Louise and Jamie MacNeil and their family clothes. With a lot of self-sacrifice at times. She would sit until 2 in the morning, sewing something to have it finished for a dance or something I was going to the next day. Lots of patience, you know. Just, full of patience. I guess I was very fortunate, yes. And then when I had my own children, I really realized how patient they were to put up with all these demands that this spoiled child was demanding of them. With never a complaint. Never. (You figure you were a spoiled child.) Well, I was. There's no two ways about it. How else would you describe • I never had to do any? thing. It was there, it was done for me. I never had to help in the house or help outside or do anything like that. My father died when I was 6. Mother was 97 when she died. I was 34 when she died. She was 83, I think, when I got married. When I was about 8, I guess, I started going to Glace Bay for summer vacations. With Mungie • she was then in Glace Bay with Fr. MacKinnon. And that was quite an exciting thing, for a girl from Iona to go to Glace Bay every summer. Thought it was wonderful. Till I was 14, and then I thought more of this. Boys in Iona are better looking than the boys in Glace Bay! Laughs. More to do in Iona. More dances to go to. So, that was the end of my summer holidaying in Glace Bay. (You said there was more to do in Iona Rear • what was more to do?) Well, we didn't have organized entertainment or anything; we made our own entertainment. I played piano a little bit and my girl friend played the violin. And we went to people's houses where they had ceilidhs, and other people played the violin and the piano. And we just visited back and forth. It was just • It wasn't like it is now. We were never bored. There weren't enough hours in the day for us in those days. We'd sit down by the crossings and light a bonfire, and scare all the neighbours away, and make lots of noise, and sing and talk. Somebody would be taking a walk in the night • some lady my age now would be walking along, going to ceilidh with someone, and she'd hear it, and she'd go home! She wasn't about to face these...wild people sitting in the woods, with a fire. Everybody went to dances, pretty well. All age groups went. There would be a dance in Barra Glen, and there'd be a dance in Gillis Point, on different weekends, or MacKinnon Harbour. And Iona, and Whycocomagh. Sadie treated (my children) the same as she treated me. Every one of them • all 8 of them were special to them, I'm sure. Picture some? one walking into your house with 8 kids. When I came with 8, the oldest was 11 and the youngest was 1. And we just walked in there MUNGIE CONTINUES: home, they didn't know what they were getting. But they knew what she was--they knew who her mother was, and her grandfather.... Her mother used to come to see her, after she was here. My mother said, "You can come to see her any time." And I asked her one time, I said, "Now, if she'd come and ask for (Louise), would you give her to her?" She said, "It would break my heart, but I wouldn't keep her from her own mother." But she'd never ask for her. She knew she was in a good home, you know. She was happy. She never worried about her. She used to come to see her, you know. Even after she was married, herself and her husband came to see her. My mother was 97 (when she died). My brother that died was 92. But the rest of them



died young. My father died at 73. He took a bad heart attack. He had high blood pressure, I guess, and at that time--they didn't look after it as much as they do now. He ate oat bread, lots of it. But he drank rich milk and cream and butter, and he was an awful one for fat meats and stuff. And nobody ever thought that was harmful. But he was only 73. Which wasn't too young, but it was.... Sadie: Mother was 97. Mungie: And she wasn't a bit careful about her diet, ei? ther. But she would never eat fat meat. It MUNGIE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE and.... If I saw someone coming up my driveway now with 8 kids, ag? es 11 to 1, I'd go out that door and go to the woods! Laughs. No, I wouldn't, I suppose. But they were wonderful people when it came to • 'they never complained. They never got cross at the kids, which I often wished they would have. There were times that they needed to be put in their place. One time we came home, and I had 6 at that time. And Jamie and his sister and I and Sadie went to P. E. I. And Mungie looked after 6 little kids.... Mungie then would have been • '30 years ago • '58.... That's how old I am now. And she never had a child. She wasn't married; she had no children. She had me, and she didn't have me all the time. Sadie had me all the time, not her. And she wasn't used to kids. And she loved kids. She just loved kids. Any kind of a kid. Good, bad, anything.... (Do you think, with your situation, that you matured faster than the kids you were hanging around with?) No. No, I didn't. Because I didn't have the responsibilities that they did. I matured after I got mar? ried. Ask my husband, he'd probably say I didn't mature yet! He's still waiting! Laughs. No, because I was carefree • didn't have to worry about anything. And it was very difficult • I had an ideal childhood, but it was hard in many ways, in the long run, when I started my own family. When I realized how I haveto look after this baby, I haveXo make supper, and I havelo do these things. Up until that point, I didn't have to do anything. I did what I wanted to do. END