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Cape Breton Dragerman at Westray: George Muise, New Waterford Edited from "Diary of a Dragerman," an original CBC broadcast on "Information Morning" Interviewers Alan Guettel with Craig Crinkley • See George Muise's IVlap of the Westray Mine, on Page 4 • (CBC Announcer: For many people, information about ' the Westray mining disaster--May 9, 1992; 5:18 AM; Pictou County-- can't be made pub? lic quickly enough. And with the Westray in? quiry on hold, and the R.C.M.P. con? ducting their criminal investi? gation, there's been little news about the condi? tion of the mine. We asked George Muise to tell his story. He was a rescue team cap? tain there. His drager team went deeper into the mine than anybody else. Even while the rescue was go? ing on, he felt the public should have known more than the officials were saying.) This is George Muise speaking: Some of the information on what we were doing, or what we were facing, should have been given out. We were watching the news, and we kind of felt like, they had this map up here. And here was a reporter say? ing, "Okay, they're an inch away from where these people are supposed to be." The public are saying, "Well geez, if they're an inch away, why can't they just go in there and find out where they're at, or holler to them, or whatever." They didn't realize it didn't work that way. Just because they were at the end of one tunnel doesn't mean that we could just walk down that tunnel to get to them. I mean, we had to go through, like I say, a complete maze in order to work our way in? to the mine to get down there. So I think some of that information might George Muise, dragerman, and Karen MacNell have been passed on, and people might have understood a little bit about what we were doing. Why it was taking us so long.... (Announcer: George Muise is an electrical supervisor at the Phalen mine. He's also a dragerman. George got the call to go to Westray about an hour into his shift at the Phalen mine that Saturday morning. But he almost didn't make it. He was the sixth man to report for a five-man crew. George pulled strings and made his case: he want? ed to go, and they let him. (At Westray, his team was called to the mine late that afternoon. To understand what the dragermen did that first day, you have to have a picture of the structure of the mine. Think of a ladder. There are two tunnels, about 200 feet apart. They're connected, so air can circulate down one tunnel and up the other. That connection is called a crosscut. When workers origi? nally dug out the mine, they dug a cross? cut every 500 feet. And each time they dug Cape Breton's MAGAZINE • Number Sixty-Two Wreck Cove, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia BOC IHO Publications Mail Registration Number 3014