

[Page 29 - Johnny Wilmot, Fiddler "Another Side of Cape Breton"](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 65](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1994/1/1

Mildred Continues from Page 27 name of it But it was in a very- it was in minor key. And it was holy terror to learn to chord to.... But I don't know; he al? ways seemed to enjoy my accompani? ment . And I enjoyed playing with him, too. Because it was inter? esting. And thing. I liked the music, that's the (And did you continue to take jobs with Johnny? Or is "jobs" the right word for what you did?) Not so much jobs, in those days. It was more or less, if an organiza? tion wanted a dance. Well. Johnny would volunteer to play. I don't think he was ever paid very much for anything he did. honestly. He just played for the enjoyment of playing. Something to do. And he'd go from house to house. You know, weddings, and different things like that, we played. (Would he call you and say, "We have a date to play here, or there"? Was it as formal as that?) Oh no, he'd just come to the door and say. "Well, they asked me to play here tonight. Can you come with me?" I'd go. Oh yes. I'd always go with him. I was working. I was a secretary for a lawyer in Glace Bay at that time. My mother used to get so cross because I was out so late. But then after I married, and we lived in Antigonish--well, Johnny and his wife and his mother-in-law, and whoever else could pile in the car, would come to Antigonish. Of course, we had the piano there, and we always had music. Played quite a few pro- grams on CJFX, Antigonish. Of course, I had my own piano program there for 2 or 3 years, when I lived in Antigonish. I played regularly, once a week. (Just so? lo?) Yeah. I think it was just "Piano Mel? odies by Mrs. Len Leadbeater." I think that was basically it. It was done live. Half an hour. Solo all the time. I had boxes and boxes of letters, and I'm so sorry I destroyed them. Every little-- there were places in Inverness County I had never heard of. until I started get? ting letters. And I had boxes of letters. I'm telling you. it was great. (Play for about half an hour.) Some commer? cials in between. I'd usually play. say. a slow air, or strathspey and reels, or maybe 3 or 4 jigs, or just maybe 3 or 4 reels-- whatever people would ask for. It was a re? quest program. They would read the request from Mrs. So-and-So in Nevada Valley, or Chimney Corner, or some place like that. (You weren't chording then.) No, I was playing, actually playing. Lloyd MacDonald --Tokyo Lloyd--used to come on my program periodically and play, when he was going to university.... There used to be a set time on Saturday evening, for local talent. And you would call the radio station, probably the first of the month, and ask if there was a space. Like, Johnny would say, "I'd like to play for half an hour." They'd say, "Well, there's a space available on such- and-such a date." Well, we would go. Sort of invite yourself. The space was there for the taking. Becuse I know. Dan Joe MacInnis played quite often. Sandy MacInnis. And there would be sometimes stepdancers, you know. Oh yes, it was a great time back in those days! It was fun. The (record) that I made with Johnny was made here at CJCB--Robbie Robertson did that one.,We were excited about it. I know Johnny was very excited about it. Because, you know, it was one of the few times that I ever saw him say. "Well. now. this has to be absolutely perfect." You'd stop right on time and you'd start right on time, and the chords just have to be just so. And he wanted it to be absolutely perfect. And it turned out just that way!



Laughs. I ' • Audiological evaluations • Most technologically advanced
computerized test equipment • Hearing aids - customized to individual losses
MARCO HEARING HEALTH CENTRE V ?? • Extensive assessment and counselling -
before and after the hearing aid fitting • No referrals necessary • DVA taps cards
accepted 295 George St., Suite 302 Sydney, N. S. 567-2929 or Toll Free
1-800-667-2929 Odilia MacDonald, M.Sc.Aud.(C) Audiologist Janet Thompson, B.A.,
B.BA Hearing Inst. Specialist