

Page 63 - From Visits with Alfred P. MacKay of Big Harbour Island ISSUE : <u>Issue 66</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1994/6/1

Alfred P. MacKay continues from page 12 And I sold them to a Truro fish market for 9C a pound. I had to ship him 200 pounds every Thursday, while the season was open. So I made some money that way. I'd get \$18 for the 200 pounds of lobsters, cooked. The train went up-- one went up at night and one went up in the morning. And we shipped the lobsters alive to the States, too, with no ice. They'd have a car on for lobsters, a re? frigerator car. Back in the '30s, you know. (When you started fishing for a living, was it nets or was it handlining?) Handlining. We'd have nets set for herring, for bait. You'd have a couple of nets set in those places we fished, and you'd go out there--my mother used to complain that he was making me get up too early. We'd get up at half-past one at night. And we'd go out there in the boat- • he'd row. And it was dark • But there was an island here at the mouth of the harbour, and there was a big rock at the end. And he'd just get at that rock. And he'd light the lantern, and he'd put a compass on the seat in front of him. And he pushed on the oars that way and he'd watch the compass. And he counted the strokes. And generally he'd stop when the strokes was up, and you could see--the net would be right there--right alongside the boat. He knew how many strokes. And if there was wind blowing some, he knew how many he'd have to add to it, you know! Just naviga? tion, you understand. Laughs. When it was foggy, you'd go out on the course you came in on. You'd hear this coarse scratching on the bottom of the boat; you'd be going over the nets, so you were there! It was dark--you couldn't see it! (So he'd come up to the net....) It'd be half past two then; it would soon be getting daylight. Haul the net, and you'd get a few herring. And the minute you'd get one or two, a fellow would cut it up in chunks and try a chunk on the hook. Right there, yes. You'd start to fish--they'd be around the net. You generally got 10 or 12 nice fellows first because (the codfish) were chasing the herring around the nets; they'd gather. You'd keep on till--they were pretty par? ticular about the fish, the oldtimers. Once the sun got up, if it was going to be warm, he'd want to go in and dress the fish and get it in salt before it'd spoil. They wouldn't leave it out. He had a table right on the edge of the water in a place. You dressed the fish there. And he had a little shack--barrels of fish in, that you'd salt them in. The heads and gut out, and take the bone out. Split them flat. (For drying.) Yeah. Your Cape Breton Highlands Vacation Resort... GkaiM TEL: 285-2049 / / RESORT LTD. INGONISH. NOVA SCOTIA • 90 Units • Licensed Dining Room • Gift Shop • Golfing • Private Ocean Beach • Swimming Pool GLENGHORM Scottish Gaelic Translation "THE GREEN AND THE BLUE" The green lawns rolling down to meet the blue of the ocean. More than just a place to stay overnight: a vacation resort 17th Annual DOWNEAST OLDTIME SPECIAL GUESTS LEE RICHARD CREMO WOOD HOST: AL HOLLINGSWORTH August 19th & 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the Sackville & District Community Arena First Lake Drive, Sackville, Nova Scotia Come join us for some toe tapping family fun. Tickets available at the Sackville Sports Stadium, Halifax Folklore Centre, and Metro Area Tourism Association outlets: Bedford & Sackville. Visa purchases available at the Sports Stadium. ' FOR INFORMATION CALL 864-2700