

[Page 74 - With Jessie Morrison of Cape North - A Cape Breton to Alberta Pioneer](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 66](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1994/6/1

Visiting northern Cape Breton, July 1940, Jessie stands on the footbridge between Grandfather's and Aunt Sarah's. Of course, and she taught me, "Teth, teth" for being "Hot, hot" when I'd put my little hand near the stove or "Tha e math" for "How good" when she would be feeding me some tidbit. And the dear lady died soon after we left Cape North. So Grandfather, the MacKinnon, Uncle Dan and Aunt Rachel were left at the old home. Now my first memories of Boston (were a) first floor tenement in Roxbury. Now, strangely enough, I remember the address: 24 Regent Street; and later at 5 Catawba Street, West Roxbury. And I started school, kindergarten, at the Borden School in West Roxbury, and had the first grade there. And I remember my teacher's name! Now isn't that strange for a dear old lady of 88 with a very eased memory?... And after Father left for The West (Alber? ta) in May of 1910 we moved and stayed with Aunt Grace, who had married by this time. And there I (finished) Grade Two and Grade Three before we came west. Now the reason that my father came west was because- I don't think he was happy working as a day labourer. He wanted to be his own boss. And the pay was low. And the chances for advancement, I am sure, were limited. So about this time--I'm not sure whether Phillip MacPherson would have been a relative, but he certainly was a neighbour of my father's family on the Big Intervale. They attended school together. And Phillip had gone west--it must have been prior to 1905--and homesteaded near Nanton. He came back to Boston full of tales of the Great West, of wide open country, jingling the coins in his pocket--that's where the money was to be made. Ah, you were your own boss. You had--imagine!--160 acres of land in one-quarter sections. And no western farm was limited to one-quarter section. They were, at least, a half-section or, more commonly, a section which would be 640 acres. Well, to a Cape Bretoner--a large farm would be 60 or 80 acres, perhaps--this just sounded like heaven. So my father, I think, was restless. He wanted to be on his own. So in May of 1910 he and Uncle Chris--Aunt Grace's husband-- decided to go west. Well, Uncle Chris lasted about a month. The West wasn't for him. But my father stayed. Now during these years that we spent in Boston and my father was in the West--they are wonderful memories because we spent the summers in Cape Breton at the old MacKinnon home. I was the only child on both sides of the family. And, no doubt, spoiled. I'm sure I was. I always received a great deal of attention from the relatives. There were aunts and uncles and THE CAPE BRETON Summertime "Irresistible" The Kingston Whig Standard "A boatload of Maritime fun" MAY 25-28 30-1 Mj?? 2-A 5-7 9-15 16-17 19 20 21-22 24'25 JULY 5 7' 10-11 16 19-20 21-22 27-28 29 GLACE BAY PORT HAWKESBURY PICTOU ANTIGONISH HALIFAX TRURO SAINT JOHN FREDERICTON MONCTON SYDNEY The Savoy S.A.E.R.C deCoste St. F. X. The Cohn C.E.C. The Imperial Playhouse The Capitol Centre 200 CALGARY VANCOUVER EDMONTON REGINA WINNIPEG THUNDER BAY TORONTO LONDON ST. CATHERINES KINGSTON CORNWALL OHAWA BROCKVILLE Calgary Centre The Playhouse Festival Place Centre of the Arts Pantages TBA O'Keefe Centre Grand Theatre Centre for the Arts Grand Theatre Aultsville Hall National Arts



Centre Arts Centre Cape Breton ILAND I CANADA/ NOVA SCOTIA COOPERATION  
AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CanadS >C Canadian NATIONAL TOUR  
'94