

[Page 53 - Joe Neil MacNeil: A Talk About Tales](#)ISSUE : [Issue 71](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1996/12/1

in a short time you'll forget a lot of those stories, because you were out of practice of telling them. (John MacIsaac himself....) He was a wonderful storyteller. He could perform-- you'd imagine that he was two different characters. He could speak, or act, like the two different (people). Oh yes, yes, yes. If he was telling a comical story, he could tell the different parts, what one would say and what the other would say--and oh, he could work it out. He did a real, real good job of telling a story. Not only to listen to him, but to sit down and watch him--that's where the good part of the story was. If you saw the like of that man on television telling a story, he'd be something to watch, and something to listen to, because, like I said, he'd act, he'd go through most of those performances. And he'd change his voice, he'd change his expression, you know. He could get cross, like if somebody got cross and he was peeved in some way, he could talk, just answer like that man. Or he could go almost like begging, like the other man would be. Oh, he was real, real good at it. He was the best that I ever heard on telling old stories. And he had so many of them. That was his heart's delight. When he'd sit down for awhile talking to all the people at a wake, and when things settled down, then he'd start away with telling a short story, and from there on. Usually start with a story about the--I think he said there were two Irishmen that bought the cow. They've settled who will be the owner of the cow--they'd be both owners. Well, one fellow would own the half the head was on, and the other fellow would own the (other) half, the hindquarters. And of course it was the fellow that owned the head

• OPEN EVERY
PAY: 9:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Country • Bluegrass • Rock • Folk Fiddle and
Newfoundland Music Largest Atlantic Region Music selection in Eastern Canada.
Tap your toe to Cape Breton & Newfoundland Fiddle, Accordion & Folk Music, &
"Down East" Presentations. Write or ask for our list of Newfoundland & Maritime
Music. ~ Available by Mail Order ~ 2 miles south of CHETICAMP, on the Cabot Trail
P.O.Box 516, Cheticamp, NS BOE 1H0 • Ph: (902)224-3782 that would have to
feed the cow.... And I suppose the milk was shared. It was all right. But then
when the cow freshened, when it was the time of the cow to freshen, well the
calf belonged to the other fellow because the calf came at that end, it was in
that half of the cow. So when the other fellow saw that, he was feeding the
Storyteller Joe Neil MacNeil and folklorist Dr. Jolm Shaw, about the
time they published their that he was book, the Cape Breton classic. Tales until
Dawn. through. So he said that he was going to kill his half of the cow. So he
killed (it) --struck the cow on the head, and went through the usual procedure
in butchering. So, then neither of them had a cow. Well, -he'd start away with
that story at first. But that was only just starting at the beginning of his
repertoire of stories. From there on it went along, and the stories were
getting longer and better as he was going along. Oh, he was a wonderful,
wonderful storyteller....

CONNOR'S MUOSHOTS & More SYDNEY SHOPPING
CENTRE, PRINCE ST. TEL/FAX 539-8235 WE CAN PUT YOUR PHOTO ON ALMOST
ANY OF OUR PRODUCTS OR TAKE A LIVE PICTURE * PHOTO MUGS * PHOTO



GLAZING * PHOTO CAPS * PHOTO BUTTONS * PHOTO CHARTS * PHOTO
KEYCHAINS * PHOTO FRIDGE MAGNETS * PHOTO T-SHIRTS * PHOTO POLO SHIRTS
* COLOR COPYING * LAMINATING * LICENSE PLATES * PHOTO SWEATSHIRTS
AND MUCH MORE... HOME OF HAIRSTYLES ON PRINT OR VIDEO lighthouse
Collection I V of newly composed Fiddle Tunes Original Melodies In the cape
Breton, Irish, and Scottish Tradition Compiled by Paul Cranford New Music! in the
Cape Breton Musical Heritage Series FROM THE ITINERANT LIFESTYLE fashioned by
his work as a lighthouse keeper and by his passion for Cape Breton violin music
and its tradition bearers, Paul Cranford's new book offers transcriptions of 294
melodies by Paul, and friends like Johnny Wilmot, Otis Tomas, Paul MacDonald, and
Tommy Basker. 100-page 9x12 Book includes the choice of CD < Cassette Tape of
57 tunes, played by Paul & friends BOOK-&-CD (or TAPE) \$27.95 • TAPE alone
\$11.95 AVAILABLE IN BOOKSTORES and MUSIC STORES • or use Order Form on
page 71 • 53