

[Page 35 - With Alex Currie, Frenchvale](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 73](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1998/6/1

(Oh, that's beautiful. It's not just heel and heel as it is on the strathspey. It's heel, toe-heel--is that what it is?) Yeah, you can do it with your toe. On the reel, you're doing it the toe and the heel, see. On the strathspey you can do it with two heels going, or the toe and the heel, see. (And with the march before that, how do your feet go with a march?) March? Well, the march goes with the tune. It's a 2/4, 2/6, or 2/8. Whatever time they want you to play on the march. Is it a 2/4 or 2/6-- you go by the beat. (Alex jigs the tune and taps out the beat.) You're marching along. One foot is hitting the ground, different time. The time is the main part of music. Regard? less of the march, strathspey, or reel, or what it is. You've got to have the time with it. Every time is a different beat. Like a reel and strathspey have got a different beat. Marches have got a different, slower beat, like 2/4, or something like that. But when I joined the army, I didn't know what 2/4 (or) 2/6 meant, see. So when I got in with the band--well, we played "The Campbells Are Coming" 2/4 style. Then you know it. They'd take off, and you'd have to follow the beat with your feet. Once you got going, you'd see the other guy how he's doing. But there was no talk of strathspey or reel in the army. (None at all.) No. When I went through Montreal, we were--in 1940 or '42, we were on a recruiting tour. We came through Valcartier, down through Quebec. And we stopped in Richmond, Que? bec. Supposed to be a lot of Scotch in Richmond. So...that was early in the eve? ning. So this old fellow came over to the bandmaster, or the pipe major. He said, "I've got two daughters. Any of you fel? lows can play pipe music for them?" "No," he said. And he's a pipe major, he's sup? posed to know all the tunes. But he never did that. He never played strathspey or reel; just marching, you know. "No," he said, "I've got a fellow here from Cape Breton Is? land. And I cer? tainly believe he'd play for you." So he came over to me, "Would you play for this old fel? low's daughters?" I said, "What do they want?" "Strathspey and reel." Well, I got up on the stage there.. in Quebec. I'd start to play. They got on the

APPLE Auto Glass SERVICE DIRECTORY •  
Windshields - Mobile service at no extra charge • Windshield Repairs - Stone  
bruises etc. • Auto Upholstery • Vinyl Tops • Convertible Tops 'Sun Roofs •  
Trailer Hitches • Van Accessories • Rear Sliders • Running Boards • Mirrors  
• Plate Glass • Thermo Units 1-800-506-5665 |PH: 564-6141 FAX: 562-811' 45  
Industrial Drive, Sydney 12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE I O.A.C. Community Roots  
University College of Cape Breton "Meeting the Educational, Cultural and  
Community Development Needs of our Island." Arts-Sciences-Engineering  
Technology-Business- Trades-Art Galleries-Playhouse The Beaton Institute of Cape  
Breton Studies is unparalleled as a research centre and archives of Cape Breton  
culture and heritage. People from around the globe - in person, by mail and on the  
Internet - utilize the Beaton's holdings of artifacts, documents, personal papers,  
photographs and audio tapes. The Mi'kmaq Resource Centre collection includea"  
important legal and cultural documents and culMI'. artifacts unique to tribal and  
regiojaiU history. V;: 'Mk University College of Cape Breton iPO Box 5300,  
Sydney, NS BIP 6L2 (902) 563-133?? www.iiccb,ns.Ga Beaton liistIt??t? (902)



5'-1339 www.??ech.ii\$4:;a/beatoa '.!?!\*#%,s;'4.v