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September 6 to September 19, 2010

Victoria County, Cape Breton

1946 - 2010

Robert MacLellan

by Jim Morrow

One of the greatest pleasures of covering Victoria County Council for the last 18 years was the opportunity to spend time with Robert MacLellan.

As the Councillor for District # 8 (from the County Line on the Meat Cove Road to Effies Brook including Bay St. Lawrence, Cape North and Dingwall) for the past 19 years, Robert understood the needs and the aspirations of his constituents and the potential for all of Victoria County. He did not need fancy words or political subterfuge to achieve his goals.

He called them as he saw them.

And Robert led by doing.

Whether it was as a fisherman, Chief of the Bay St. Lawrence Volunteer Fire Department, the Community Centre, working with the Department of Justice, Highland Manor or cooking crab, Robert was there.

He was generous to a fault. There wasn't anything you could give him that he wouldn't give you many times back.

He advocated for his community quietly at Council, and often times saw the rest of the Municipality benefit from programs he agreed with that had little affect on his constituency.

The Liberals and the Habs gave him much pleasure and he wore his partisanship proudly.

He was a man who inspired trust. He gave you the feeling that he could get things done. The kind of guy you would want with you if you found yourself in a tight spot.

One of Robert's many impressive

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1st Annual Old Time Picnic



The grounds of the original Baddeck Academy was the scene of the Baddeck & Area Historical Society's first annual Old Time Picnic. Good crowds enjoyed photo displays, memory sharing, homemade biscuits, bonnach and jam, a lemonade stand, old fashioned fudge and classic children's games.

Room for everyone

In Ignatieff's big red tent

by Jim Morrow

The Liberal Express rolled into Baddeck at the end of August to hold its summer caucus retreat.

Just having crossed the country, travelling in excess of 40,000 kilometers, Michael Ignatieff recounted some of his experiences and the messages he was receiving from Canadians to a partisan crowd at Inverary Resort's MacAulay Conference Centre on August 30th.

The Liberal Leader was treated to thunderous applause when he said, "One woman in Victoria, I think it was, said to me, 'Schools not prisons' especially when the crime rate is going down."

He further accused the Harper government of choosing ideology over fact when it discarded the long form census. "The Prime Minister made an attack on

an institution that Canadians trusted and he did so in order to make you afraid of group of people you have never been afraid of in your life - the census taker.

"We are not here to make Canadians afraid. We are here to give Canadians hope," he said.

Mr. Ignatieff went on to point out that when Parliament gets in his way, Stephen Harper shuts it down; when the Supreme Court of Canada rules that the Charter of Rights and Freedom is being broken by allowing Canadian citizens to be held in Guantanamo Bay, Stephen Harper ignores the Supreme Court of Canada. When the veteran's ombudsman stands up for the veterans, he fires the ombudsman.

"One of the things you learn when you do a tour, 142 stops in every single province and region in the country, is that this country is too rich, too diverse,

too complicated to be governed by blind ideologies imported from the United States," Mr. Ignatieff said.

He admonished the Government for having the G8 in Toronto and building a fake lake.

"Harper could have had the conference right here on the Bras d'Or Lake, one the most beautiful lakes in the world!"

Speaking without notes Mr. Ignatieff also recognized that the NDP were really pretty good folks who wanted universal child care but then so did the Liberals.

He also appreciated there was a large gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal education. "We have to close the gap on aboriginal education."

On the environment Ignatieff said, "Give Stephen Harper another four

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see Liberals, page two

From Capstick to Meat Cove

Devastation from record breaking rain event

by Jim Morrow

Retired meteorologist Bill Danielson, who lives in Smelt Brook across Aspy Bay and on the lee side of the Aspy Fault Range, did not record as much rain as fell on Meat Cove. Still the 6.5 inches of rain which did fall on his weather station in a 12 hour period on August 21st surpassed all previous records.

"There could have been as much as 12 inches of rain in the mountains behind Meat Cove," Mr. Danielson suggested.

This is an unprecedented amount of rain in this region. Mr. Danielson sur-

mises that even though there was very little wind with this weather event, most of the activity was happening 5 to 10 kilometers aloft where a low pressure cell made the air column unstable and pumped the moisture up into the atmosphere and the slow moving system deposited a highly exceptional amount of rain supersaturating the land and inundating the rivers and brooks beyond their capacity to hold.

The resulting devastation to the infrastructure from Capstick to Meat Cove isolated close to 100 residents and visitors from the rest of Cape Breton.

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Rural health

Report sees need for improvement

by Jim Morrow

In June 2010, the Cape Breton District Health Authority (CBDHA) held meetings in five rural communities which included Neils's Harbour and Baddeck in Victoria County, Cheticamp and Inverness in Inverness County and Louisbourg in Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The focus of these meetings was to have people in the community tell the CBDHA about the issues facing their community and their health service priorities.

CBDHA had already issued a discussion paper on rural health in April which looked at the key factors impact-

ing the overall health of rural communities including socio-economic, an aging population, out-migration, accessibility to services, chronic illness and more. The policy paper's first recommendation was to hold public discussions on health issues facing rural Cape Breton. The June meetings were a follow up to the prime recommendation.

Participants at the June meetings were asked to work in groups to answer the following questions 1a) What do you consider to be the most important issues facing your community? 1b) What role should the District Health

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