



# The Cape Breton Highlanders Association

P. O. BOX 248, GLACE BAY, N. S.

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NEWSLETTER

June, 1991

## A HIGHLAND LADDIE

*(A tribute to the late  
Joe Buck MacIntyre,  
contributed by his cousin,  
Judge Joseph G. MacIntyre.)*

I was asked by our capable secretary Bill Metcalfe if I would do an article on the late Joe (Buck) MacIntyre and I consider it a great privilege. As some of you know, Joe was my first cousin and he was born in Glace Bay and was the son of the late Michael and Alice (Webb) MacIntyre.

He grew up in the part of Glace Bay called "Caledonia", and although he was a bit younger than me, I have no doubt he engaged in the forms of mischief that many of us did around the old Caledonia Mine.

I lost track of Joe for a while during his early teens, but met him again in April of 1944 when he came up to our regiment on a draft from the holding unit just after we came out of the line from Arlell River. I was convinced that Joe was then only 17 and that he was much too young to be with a fighting regiment, but he was able to persuade me not to say anything and he assured me that he was then 18.

Joe was assigned to B company and he remained with B company until the end of the war. His first action was at "Belmonte Valley" which was located about three miles northeast of Cassino before Cassino fell. Any member of the battalion that was in Belmonte will not likely forget the terrible march in through the "inferno" and the frequent shelling by the German Fifth Jaeger Division. It will be remembered that the Germans were in possession of Monte Cifalco, which was 9,000 feet high and we



held Monte Cairo, which was 3,000 feet high. The enemy had a great advantage in that sector with the result that daytime activity was curtailed because of snipers, but the battalion carried on reconnaissance patrols, fighting patrols and Joe was on many of them.

We came out of the line at Belmonte valley in early May 1944 and we had time to rest and re-equip ourselves for the Hitler line battle which took place in late May 1944. It will be remembered that the German Army had the "Gustav" line further south, and then the "Hitler" line which ran from Cassino to the sea. The first Canadian Corps was given the task of breaking through the Hitler line after the Gustav line had been penetrated by other troops of the Eighth Army.

The overall battle plan was that the First Canadian Infantry Division would break the line and then the Fifth Canadian Armoured Division, which we were a part of, would forge ahead through the break and capture as much territory as possible. The army commander expected that both Canadian Divisions would have heavy casualties and a British Infantry Division and the Sixth British Armoured Division were in reserve to take over from us.

As a result of a brilliant feat of arms, the Second Brigade of our First Canadian Infantry Division broke the Hitler line near Ponte Corvo and then we proceeded through that break with our tanks in support and we swept up through the Liri Valley crossing the Melfa and Liri Rivers and capturing Caperno. Our division continued its advance and we stopped outside the Town of Frosinone, astride the road to Rome and we were relieved by American units. We then went south to the Caizzo area for much needed rest.

We spent about a month and a half in the Caizzo area and I had a chance to visit Joe (Buck) and I had many discussions with his company Sergeant Major J. W. Oldford, D.C.M. And I was quite happy with what I heard of his performance.

Our next attack point was the "Gothic" line and we were advised by our Divisional Commander that we were privileged to spearhead the attack. We crossed the Foglia River and that was the starting point of some of the toughest battles the battalion was in, in the Italian Theatre. We proceeded on through such places as Hill 120, Monte Morrone and then Graveyard Hill and the hardest fight of the lot was "Coriano Ridge". This was perhaps one of the most brilliant actions of the unit in that 500 of our men started for Coriano Ridge at 1:00 a.m. and at daybreak, the enemy had been driven from their position, but there were only 100 highlanders holding that position, the remainder having been killed or wounded in the bitter five hour battle. Casualties were high, but as a result of taking Coriano Ridge, the enemy had to withdraw its defence along the whole front. Once again, Joe (Buck), participated heavily in the fighting with B Company and did an excellent job.

Joe then went on through the battles at the Rubicon, the Savio, Lamone and Senio Rivers and participated in the capture of San Albaerto which was our last battle in Italy.

We left Italy by ship, arriving at Marseilles, then we travelled in convoys through France and to Belgium where we had a chance to rest and re-equip. Then we went into the lines in Holland again in March 1945 and we operated as an Armoured Division and we made a number of fast moving attacks to cut the Zuider Zee area, the Ijssel River and this was climaxed by a major attack on the night of April 30, 1945, on the town of Delfzijl. This was one of the hardest fights the battalion had in Holland, but by late afternoon of May 1, the Town was under control and 1,800 prisoners had been captured.

I was wounded for the third time there and Joe (Buck) heard that C Company had quite a shoot up and that I had been killed. He was firmly of the view that he could not return to Canada unless he was able to tell my father that he saw my body so he started toward C Company from E Company and he went through quite an ordeal with artillery fire, sniper fire and machine gun fire, and finally he arrived at C Company, only to discover that the ambulance had just left with Sergeant Allenby Waden and I in it and that we were both in reasonably good shape.

Joe (Buck) remained with the unit until it arrived back in Canada in 1946. He then returned to civilian life and while I have no hesitation whatever describing him as a smart, tough soldier, one of the smartest moves that he made in 1947 was to marry Eileen McNabb and they remained together, raising a family of two children until his death in August, 1990.

Joe (Buck) worked in Caledonia Mine after his discharge, but he joined the Militia in 1947 and in 1949 he attended Militia camp. He was offered sergeant stripes if he would join the regular army which he did. During his tour of duty in the regular army he was in much of the free world. He was a member of the first Battalion Blackwatch, later R. C. R. and he also served as District R. S. M. with the Cape Breton Militia for five years. He received the Order of Military Merit and upon retirement from the service, he joined the Corps of Commissionaires in Sydney and worked at the Civic Centre for ten years.

Joe (Buck) participated actively in community affairs after his discharge from the service and he was very active in our Regimental Association. He was one of the group of seven that worked so hard, not only to make our Association an active, vibrant body, but also participated in obtaining the beautiful memorial to the battalion in Wentworth Park in Sydney. Joe (Buck) was a great leader and he had a wonderful ability to get things done. He displayed a great deal of energy in completing any required task. He had many friends, all of whom liked and admired him, but his greatest friend was his good wife, Eileen.

It will be remembered that in the summer of 1989, he was the guest speaker at our banquet in Sydney Mines and he was also elected President of the Cape Breton Highlanders Association and he retained that post until his death in August, 1990.

He was a great soldier in war time, a great soldier in the peace time army and he was a great leader in community projects and particularly the affairs of our Association. He can truly be described as living up to the battalion motto "Siol Na Fear fearail" one of "a breed of manly men".

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#### Acetylsalicylic Acid. Anyone?

One morning early in May, I hoisted two new flags at our monument in Sydney. When I had finished my chore, I paused for a moment to again read through the names of our fallen comrades. This time, however, my eyes were fixed upon one name as though there were none other: that name was Pte. John T. Fraser.

Pte. John Truesdale (Tooley) Fraser, was beloved of all, and he laid down his life for his friends on 9th April 1945, in action on Nijmegen Island. He was one of our first casualties in Holland.

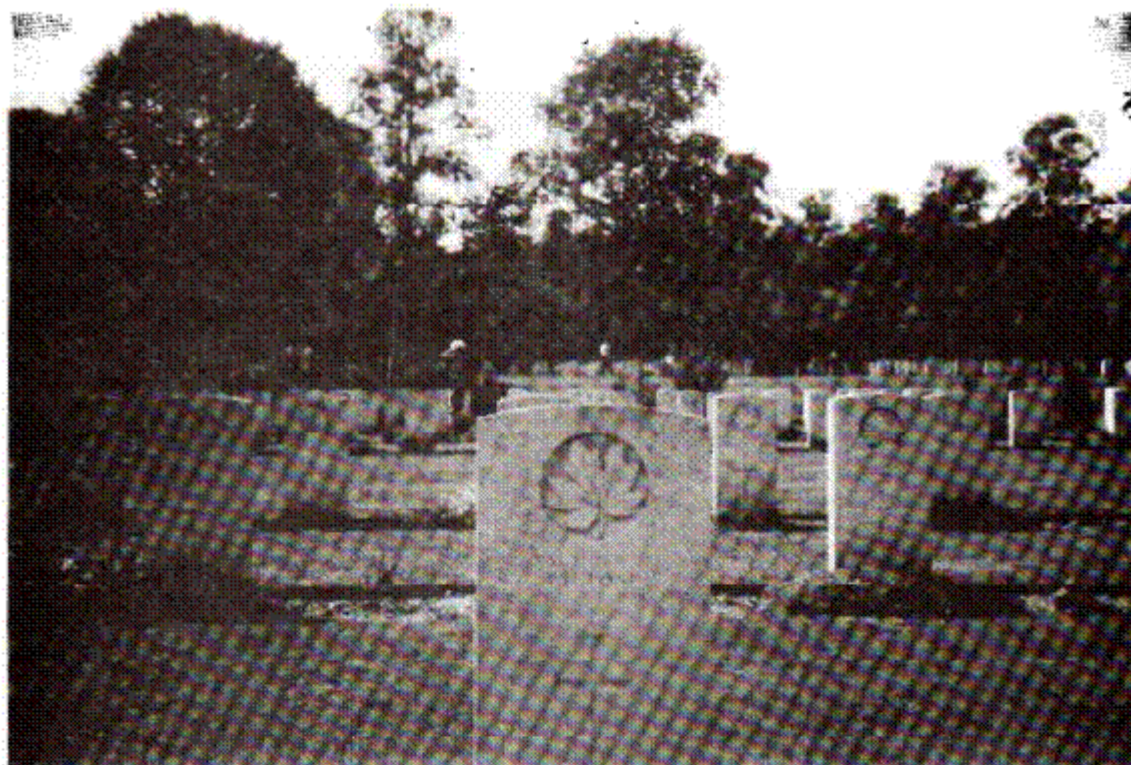
Tooley came from a poverty stricken home in Sydney in the 1930's. Seldom, if ever, did any gravitate to higher learning from such circumstances, but this never cloaks their native talents which often come to the fore with great humour. In this respect, he missed his calling as a druggist. He always had a name for his blends. Some in particular, you may recall, were the "chum-chum" the "fruity-tooty", the "Necktie" and the "lunch can". The names of his compounds and mixtures were altogether marvelous. Take, for example, the mixture of these four blends which he named "Hey there chum-chum fruity-toot ties who ties your tie the lunch can"! - Did I notice a gold tooth?

We will remember him.

Your letters. Again we thank you for your many letters and generous contributions. Some of you have been very kind both in your giving and with words of encouragement for our efforts, without which it would be impossible for us to operate.

For those who are not well at this time, we would assure you that you are ever in our thoughts and prayers. I was talking to Ralph Diplock and he sends a word of thanks for all the cards and notes of encouragement you mailed him. Mike Campbell from P.E.I. has had a really bad time of it over the past year. If any of you would like to drop him a line, his address is: 15 Birchwood St. Charlottetown, PEI C1A 5B4.





### OBITUARIES

Dicks, Solomon (Dougall)	70	Sydney, Cape Breton
Kelly, Gerald M.	69	Cambridge, Ont.
Kerr, Q. C. Roderick (Red)	90	Ottawa, Ont.
MacDonald, Stewart (Stu)	70	Thorburn, N. S.
MacDonald, David A.	69	Glace Bay, Cape Breton
MacLean, Allan J.	86	Glace Bay, Cape Breton
Mattocks, W. E. (Bill)	78	Burlington, Ont.
Miller, Francis (Frank)	77	Sydney Mines, N. S.
Moore, James W.	77	Donkin, Cape Breton
Morgan, Charles	70	Glace Bay, Cape Breton
Pyne, Alex F.	70	Mira, Cape Breton
Turnbull, Douglas C.	67	Brantford, Ont.
Whitehouse, Wm (Billy Joe)	67	Toronto, Ont.

*I've reached the land of corn and wine,  
 And all its riches freely mine;  
 Here shines undimmed one blissful day,  
 For all my night has passed away.*

*O Beulan Land! sweet Beulan Land!  
 As on thy highest mount I stand  
 I look away across the sea,  
 Where mansions are prepared for me  
 And view the shining glory shore,  
 My heaven, my home for evermore.*

## 22ND ANNUAL REUNION

Except for some last minute preparations, our Reunion Committee Chairman, Steve Humenick reports that all systems are go for the 22nd Annual to be held at Royal Canadian Legion, Whitney Pier Branch 128, Sydney.

Continuous coffee and tea will be a free offering from Branch 128. Tim Horton donuts will be provided by Earl Wilson, while sandwiches will be provided by service clubs through the efforts of Branch member Abbe Neville.

Friday evening buffet will include plenty of salmon along with other entrees. We will have a cold plate lunch at noon on Saturday. The banquet Super will be roast beef.

A Friday evening programme of songs and music will be provided free by Branch 128 and will include:

The Legion Singers  
Ethel Miller, Singer  
Kenny King, Singer  
(Specializing in Italian songs)

Music for dancing Friday and Saturday is being funded by Normie Morris, and this certainly is very much appreciated at this time.

Angus MacLeod (MM) from Glace Bay will be special speaker at the banquet and we look forward to an excellent message.

Registrations will commence as usual at 1300 hrs. on Friday, 19th July. The fees remain as in previous years:

Singles: \$25.00  
Couples: 40.00

(There will be no G.S.T.)

We look forward to a good turnout at this reunion. Do your very best to come seeing that the time is short.

Art is long, and time is fleeting,  
And our hearts though stout and brave,  
Still like muffled drums are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.

(A thought from Longfellow's "A Psalm of Life.")

## REGIMENTAL HISTORY

Your response to the feeler we put out in the last newsletter concerning the possibility of developing a Regimental History was most favorable and encouraging. However, we decided against mailing work sheets to you because of the high cost of printing and mailing some four hundred units. To get you started, we have printed this simple guide that we received from Capt. Ted Slaney. He suggested that you use this as a guide only; you may have more headings, and perhaps a page or two for each. Remember that your personal experiences, simple, funny and serious are extremely important as are photos and clippings. Things like, where you were born, family occupation and events leading to your joining the unit, would be helpful.

<u>REG. NO.</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>COY/S</u>	<u>DATES SERVED</u>
HEADINGS:		Fill in what you can remember under headings		
1.	Prior to WW 11	Camps, courses, where stationed, names of coy comds, RSM, CSM, Pipe Major etc.		
2.	Mobilisation			
3.	Coastal Duties	Duties, where coy's were stationed, fire in St. John, loss of life, etc.		
4.	Connaught Ranges	Recruit training, live firing, Lewis gun, Guard mounting on Parliament Hill inniculations, tents, etc.		
5.	Camp Borden	Training, living in tents, cold outdoor showers, dust storm, live bren gun, ack ack firing at balloons in Long Branch. Camp guards, eating in drill hall.. Duke of Kent visit.		
6.	Debert	Preparing for overseas, new kit, embarkation leave.		
7.	Boat trip to England	Advance party and duties commander and others, seasickness, hammocks, boat drill, duties.		

8. Aldershot and other locations. Eng. Hardening exercises, battle drill, including parade square, blackouts change and departure of officers, special parades, Bisley March, Guards of Honour, pipe band activities funerals, courses in Scotland and England, Mascots, Sparton Scheme, Maida Barracks, Hunstanton, Eastbourne.
9. Boat trip to Italy Good food, good weather, lots of entertainment, music, boxing on deck, attack on convoy
10. Italy  
Altamura, Orsegna  
Hitler line, Liri,  
Ceprano, Gothic  
Line, Coriano.  
Lamone. 11 Bde. Guardmounting in Altamura, preparing unit for battle, living in former POW camp, activities such as pipe band, marching, unit out of Coriano under fire, boat crossing the Lamone River.
11. Departure for N/W Europe, Island North of Nimgegan, Ijssel River, Terest, Barnveld Friezland, Delfzijl. First fatal casualties in Holland, cusack,, Fraser, MacKeigan, individual: part played by members, company, and platoon tasks.
12. War ends Delfzijl and Frieoland Guard mounting, pipe band performances in local towns and villages, leave periods, rotations, Pacific volunteers.

THE ABOVE MENTIONED IS A GUIDE ONLY, YOU MAY HAVE MORE HEADINGS AND PERHAPS A PAGE OR TWO FOR EACH HEADING.