

# ♥ spades down

♥ by Tom Murphy

Newfoundland is Canada's different province. They are all different of course, but Newfoundland is different different. So little is known about it, so much is said about it. From the story of the Newfoundland dog in our grade eight reader to the recent barrage of Newfie jokes. More reason to wonder.

As I approached the foggy shores of Port Au Basques on an early July morning, any sense of beauty was destroyed by what I saw. The whole area was desolate, craggy, barren, and unbeautiful. The village itself was perched on the rocky landside. Since there was no soil in which to dig a foundation, houses sat on stilts, and graves protruded from the earth, often covered with a pile of rocks. Plains or flat areas of land in this vicinity were more than scarce, they were non-existent. Slowly the boat docked.

The engines rumbled and re-rumbled as the echoes bounced off the dungeon-like walls of the car hold in the ferry. Light filtered in as the car filtered out of the ship which kept it prisoner for the previous eight hours. The ribbon of roads was knotted with construction crews trying to improve its unhealthy condition. Two thousand and fourteen broken white lines had passed by, and each line had expressed nothing by monotony for the fungus-covered rock plain which it had helped to divide. Divide but not conquer.

In the near distance were shaggy, snowcapped mountains. Higher than hills, not really high enough to call mountains. Once they were; once before the bitter rains and the blistering snows, the cutting winds and the acidic fogs had bitten, eaten and digested the mountains. Now they were simply lumps of earth that lacked any grace or majesty. Seldom the recipient of mountainous adjectives.

Between Port Au Basques and Cornerbrook, there was little reason to believe that I would be working for the Department of Forestry. There were no trees. At least there were no trees that reached the enormous height of fifteen feet. This was understandable, because trees seldom flourish well on rocks. Much of the black spruce was about my height, yet more amazing was its age of 200 years or more. (The yearly growth was so small that one had to use a microscope to count the rings.) It grew very densely, so that it was possible to uproot the trees with the pull of one hand. Above Cornerbrook, however, the forest more closely looked like that of New Brunswick.

Much of Newfoundland's landscape found salvation in the vast number of lakes. Particularly when they were decorated with flaming sunsets and moonlight reflections. Awe and wonder. A sombre joy. Peace and tranquility. All these things were part of it.

Back in the mid-nineteenth century, a chap by the name of Buckle was an adherent of a theory called geographical determinism. He believed that such things as climate and landscape shaped the character of a society. This theory is quite far removed from reality, but can be an aid, nevertheless, in describing a people.

The people with whom I had contact in Newfoundland were like the mountains. They lacked grace and majesty, perhaps they lacked sophistication relative to other Canadians. But like the mountains, they reflect their history, the ages gone by. Yet they have not been destroyed by the winds and the seas; they have been hardened by them. What has been exposed is the core, the very heart of the people.

Some say that Newfoundlanders are the friendliest of people. That is quite true as long as there exists a certain common plane of understanding. In some instances during the summer, my words were not those of praise—and I felt that Newfoundlanders were quite rude. After cooling down, I realized that the seeming lack of courtesy of those with whom I was living was simply a reflection on the fact that these people had done very little group living in the style that I was accustomed to. That is their prerogative.

Let us project a certain element of fairness into this by clearing up some mis-conceptions. Not all, in fact, few people are fishermen. Fewer are sons of fishermen. St. John's, the capital city is perhaps the most sophisticated of all Atlantic cities, including Halifax and Saint John. It has a unique modern architecture that blends in well with the old. It is a city worth seeing.

There is so much to say about Newfoundland. There is a greater amount that cannot be said, but only experienced. You must be the judge. Canada is a great country, one that is so large that most of us never get to know it, or even see it. I can only say that if Newfoundland does not come your way, try and go its way.

And by the way—Newfies love Newfie jokes.

## THE TRUTH REVEALED...

There is a University of New Brunswick at Saint John. Its president is T. Forbes Elliott.

Next year UNBSJ will move from downtown Saint John to its new Tucker Park campus, ideally located for expansion.

Some people believe UNBSJ should be a four-year, degree-granting university.

Others believe UNBSJ should remain a two-year junior college for the Fredericton campus.

Why should people at UNBF control people at UNBSJ, especially if they don't want to be controlled?

Would it hurt someone's ego to lose control of UNBSJ?

## No pity for housing crisis victims

KINGSTON (CUP) - It was like a bad western. Kingston Alderman Kenneth Matthews, set his chin, straightened his back and told Queen's University principal John J. Deutsch "One of us has got to go."

The two squared off at a city council finance committee meeting Wednesday (Oct. 2).

The alderman claims the university is growing too fast for its briches.

"That's the reason for the housing shortage," said "Bat" Matthews. "Every time students band together and bed

down in an apartment, one of our families is out."

"Queen's must either slow down its building program," came the ultimate threat, "or move outside of town."

"Foxy" Deutsch was not willing for the last showdown. He urged common action and told the council it was "an absolute necessity" for Queen's and the city to embark on a joint planning system for university expansion.

Mayor Robert Tray opened the meeting by asking Foxy to produce Queen's "master plan" for expansion. Foxy said no such plan existed. The principal promised though that new buildings would be higher and less "sprawling".

## Foreign-student excise rules

The department of national revenue in Fredericton has issued a release informing non-resident students of their rights under customs and excise regulations.

The regulations apply during the school year and summer employment.

Students may bring or ship durable goods, foodstuffs, clothing and other soft, consumable goods into the country subject to customs regulations.

"All automobiles owned by non-resident students must be covered by No. E-29B permits at all times, valid for a six-month period," says the release.

## CSL director to speak on RUNB

Student Loans Director Rod Mills comes under fire in the studios of Radio UNB Wednesday night. Students will question Mills about the system of loans in New Brunswick by telephone on the live program *Crossfire* at 7:00.

Mills, a graduate of UNB and a former *Brunswickan* editor, has been involved with student loans for the past three years.

*Crossfire*, hosted by Allan Pressman, has featured National Student Christian Movement president Tom Murphy and Student Building Committee chairman Gary Davis.

Future speakers on *Crossfire* include president of Saint Thomas University Monseigneur Duffy.

## Circle K starts eye-bank drive

Circle K is beginning a campus drive to support the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The drive's purpose is to get pledges for the CNIB's eye bank.

"Through the CNIB arrangements are made for eyes no longer useful to one person, to be used to help restore sight in another," said a Circle K press release.

"Students can help in this humanitarian work and at the same time ensure that part of one of your most precious gifts has been offered to help the blind see again."

The release said that club representatives will be in Neill House Wednesday and Thursday nights to give information on the eye bank and the drive.

## sorry readers!

SORRY READERS.....  
An apology to Edward Ogunbayo who's name was mis-spelled in the Track and Field story.  
Sorry Edward!

## LAUGH IT OFF



"Certainly I'm scared. I thought you said we were coming here to shoot the RABBITS!"

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