



# The River Round Up

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## My father's daughter:

The best advice he gave came not from words but from his actions.

By: Dana MacPhail

I can still hear the music.

My father and I are downstairs listening to records. My mother and my two older brothers have gone to Saturday night mass and we have been left behind, my father by choice and me by decree. I was too young and too curious to be trusted with good behaviour.

I'm dressed in my Sunday best with my long hair held back by ribbons, which match my dress. I put on my black "dress-up" shoes that my mother complained scuffed the floor. We'll clean up later, my father says. She'll never know.

We search through our scant record collection until we find just the right tune.

Then we dance. To be more accurate, my father dances and I stand on his feet or giggle in his arms.

To the rest of the world, Sidney Wayne MacPhail is a husband to Nancy and a father to Darcy, Dale and me, his six-year-old dance partner. Raised in St. Peter's, NS, he was born on August 5, 1945, and is one of 15 children. He quit school at age 14 and began working in forestry and construction because, as he says, "there was more money in the woods." He stresses he was not forced to quit school, he was just "helping everybody out" with what he earned.

Fast forward to 2001 and you'll find him self-employed in forestry and working construction when the jobs came along. He and my mother have just celebrated their 24<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and seem closer than ever. He has recently been honoured by the Royal Canadian Legion for his volunteer work and he is also a member of Labourers International Union 1115.

As a child I used to go with my father when he went to pay his union dues. What I remember most about those excursions, even more than the secretary

who gave me a shiny loonie each time, was what everyone had to say about my father. I was told by numerous people at the union hall that he was the hardest worker in Cape Breton, that nothing could keep him down. He had the strongest work ethic they had ever seen. I remember walking away proudly each time. Nothing could keep my father down.

I always thought I knew what that meant. I was wrong.

In February of 2001 my father was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Now I know.



*Author Dana MacPhail sits in her Dad's lap while her two brothers, Darcy & Dale, lean in.*

Over the years my father has given me lots of advice. Everything from "Never trust a guy" to "follow your conscience." But the best advice he ever gave came not from his words but from his actions. I spent my life watching my father and mother make it all seem so simple. They can stretch a penny into a dollar and they raised three children to appreciate our gifts in a way that inspires, rather than demands, respect. They are doing it once again.

On July 23 my father began radiation treatments, the first part of the two-year treatment process. Every weekday for seven weeks he and my mother drove to Sydney, more than an hour's drive each way, for my father's afternoon appointments at the Cancer Center.

He could have spent the morning resting, reading the books he only has time for in the evenings. He could have slept in and watched ESPN. He didn't.

Instead, he would rise with the sun; eat an early breakfast with my mother and then do the barn work. After he tended to the animals, he changed into his work clothes, put his chainsaw in the back of his blue Ford truck and headed for the woods. After a few hours of cutting in the hot sun he returned smelling of balsam and wiping sweat out of his light blue eyes. He took off his glasses and ran a hand through his sandy brown hair. It was time to go to Sydney.

Shortly after we arrived at the Cancer Center one day we saw a man who my father had met several times before. He sat in a wheelchair with pale skin and rapidly thinning hair. He smiled weakly. They shared words of encouragement and a handshake. As we moved to the waiting area, my mother whispered, "Poor man, he's gone downhill fast."

My father said nothing. He took my arm, mustered a smile for my benefit and kept walking.

Arriving home in the evening he changed back into his work clothes, checked on the animals in the barn and spent the next couple of hours hammering in the shed or splitting wood outside. He might also be seen coming up the hill in his school bus yellow tree farmer with his day's work in tow. When the sky turns dark, and only then, will he call it a day. It's hockey time.

Tomorrow morning he will rise and do it all over again.

Friends and family will ask how he is doing. My mother replies that he's hanging in there and "still comes up the stairs whistling." In fact, after years of being told by his sisters that he is too thin, he has actually gained weight. Nothing keeps him down.

A couple of years ago as I was preparing for university I became ill and was forced to take time off. I made arrangements with the university to save my admission and scholarships for when I would be able to attend. After being diagnosed with a rare blood disorder I was able to receive treatment and move on. I kept my job at the local pharmacy and saved my pennies for when I would finally be able to arrive at St. Thomas University.

People back home were quick to say that I would never go to university. It happens all the time, they would say. I would get comfortable and lazy and forget my dream. I knew I would make it here so I just replied, "Sure I will, I'm my father's daughter." I can still hear the music.

*Since this article was originally written the future has begun to look up. My father has finished the radiation treatments at the Cancer Center in Sydney, though he continues to receive injection treatments. At a recent six-month check-up at the Cancer Center*

*he was told that his tests were all good and, though they will continue to monitor him closely, things are going well. Dana*

Dana is a student in the journalism program at St. Thomas University. This article was published in "The New Brunswick Reader" in Feb. and again in the Cape Breton Post on Father's Day.

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## A Fond Farewell



*Photo by Gerry Fougere*

On Sunday, June 23rd a very large crowd gathered to honor Fr. Sandy Mac Neil at a reception held at the Tara Lynne Community Center. Seen here presenting gifts are Ann Clow for the CWL, Anne Sampson for the Senior's 50+ Club and Monica MacPhee representing the RB Community Services Society.

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## War Veterans Honored by Dutch



*From L to R-Gervase Landry, Cletus Landry, Raymond Robertson and Rita Landry.*

On Sunday, Aug. 16<sup>th</sup>, four of River Bourgeois's own were honoured for their role in the Liberation of Holland. Cletus Landry, Gervase Landry, Raymond Robertson along with Rita Landry who represented her late husband John were recipients of medals from the Dutch government. All four men were serving in Holland in 1944 when the south was liberated from Germany. "They freed us and the Dutch will never forget" said Johnannie Martens herself a native of Holland. They along with their guest were treated to a beautiful dinner at Branch 47. Twenty-two

members from Richmond County were also honoured. Holland and River Bourgeois are very proud of our native sons Cletus, Gervase, Raymond and John.

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## RB Community Services Society



*Summer Students 2002. (Seated L to R-Brenda Burke, Heidi Stone. Back-Peter Tanner, Jackie Digout)*

RBCCS received \$7500 in funding under the Enterprise Cape Breton Festivals & Events Program. This program provides assistance to various incorporated, non-profit organizations who meet the criteria of providing strategic economic impact by improving the quality of the experience and guest satisfaction as well as not having an effect on local competition. Funds are to be used to build an exterior deck on the Tara Lynne Community Center as well as provide an enhanced website, marketing brochures and update kitchen supplies for our festival. *Joe MacPhee*

### CAP Site News

The hours for the fall will be from 2-4 Mon to Fri afternoons & 6-9 Mon to Thurs evenings and Saturdays by appointment only. The fall schedule for volunteers is presently being worked on. If you are interested in volunteering at the CAP site, please call Sherry at 535-3182.

The executive of our CAP site will see some changes in the next coming months. Summer students, Jackie Digout & Brenda Burke had taken over as secretary/treasurer for the summer months. In September Sharon Digout will become treasurer and Paul Zinck secretary. We hope to fill vice-chair at our September meeting.

Jackie Digout began working on June 9<sup>th</sup> by doing the spring-cleaning of the CAP site. Jackie and Brenda have typed the current Round Ups and have finished typing 2 of the 5 old scrapbooks that were left with them. Brenda has been attending festival committee meetings, coordinating the festival events along with assisting chairpersons of each event. Both girls have also been busy doing the day-to-day business for the CAP site.

The students held a CAP Volunteer Appreciation Night on August 28th. They will also have to get

everything ready for the Festival-printing off tickets, schedules and brochures as well as anything else that may come their way at the same time as the September River Round Up goes to press.

Join us in thanking the girls when you see them out and around over the festival weekend. They have done a tremendous job this summer! *Sherry Baccardax*

### Youth Development Committee News

The Youth Development Committee was busy with summer activities for kids of all ages. With the help of a \$2,500 grant from the Municipality of Richmond, equipment was purchased and Heidi Stone was hired as co-coordinator/instructor for many activities this summer. The committee hosted T-Ball, softball, mosquito baseball, bicycle rally, kayaking, camp out, bonfires, bounce-a-rama, and dances. Some activities were well attended but some had a disappointing turn out. The committee was also awarded a \$750 grant from the Bank Of Montreal, and paving should soon be under way for our basketball/hockey ball court. The committee would like to thank Heidi for her assistance with activities during the summer.

Community Services Society received a Municipal grant and employed Peter Tanner for 8 weeks. Peter painted the canteen building, wheelchair ramp and front railings, cleared brush, repaired chairs, put stain on benches, tables and garbage cans, cleaned ovens, washed walls and mowed grass on the grounds.

All of the students at the complex except for Heidi were back for their second summer. If you see Heidi and Peter around remember to also give them a thank you for a job well done. *Debbie Landry*

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## Youth Report



Crowds. Line-ups. Blazing Heat. World Youth Day 2002 was held in Toronto from July 21-28. It was fantastic in the pictures and articles in the paper, and amazing on television, but the actual experience of it is indescribable. On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Mark Digout, Matthew Landry, Joel Burke, and myself (Michelle Sampson), along with our chaperones Pamela Sampson and Father Zbigniew left Antigonish with the rest of our diocese delegates.

After a few stops along the way we made it to Edmundston. We were greeted with open arms even though we were several hours late. They gave us food and a place to stay for the night.

When we got to Toronto, we found our new accommodation site to be smaller, have more people, less showers, and be two hours away from the grounds. After we got settled in, we decided to go get the bus down to exhibition place to go to the welcoming mass for the pilgrims.

On Wednesday we started our "daily routine". In the morning, we got up really early after a late night, got ready and went to chatechesis. Once that was finished we had mass. After this we would eat. We did this Thursday and Friday as well, however, the time spent afterwards was quite different. Wednesday we got to go spend a day for ourselves. Go places and see things in Toronto.

On Thursday we got to see different things around Exhibition Place like concerts and shows, or simply just rested under a tree. Afterwards we all met up again and got our spot for the Mass of Welcome for the Pope. This is the first time we would get to see him and some of us got quite close, but the others could feel his presence there anyway. After the mass we walked around Toronto, and went to the CN Tower. Friday we went to St. Michael's Cathedral in the afternoon. Then in the evening we went to the Way of the Cross, which was absolutely amazing. Saturday we had to walk to Downsview Park. It was a really long hike and the heat and lack of water was a bad combination. After some trouble, we finally found a spot to stay overnight and tried to get comfortable and listen to the concerts.

We were to be sleeping under the stars that night but the heat was horrible and one of our girls had to go to the hospital and be treated for heat stroke before the vigil started. The pope arrived and the vigil went until around midnight. The candle lighting was at this vigil and it looked so amazing. Sunday Morning we woke up at 6 a.m. in the pouring rain. Needless to say we were soaked and most of us not so happy. It didn't seem to take very long before the mass started. We unfortunately didn't get to stay for the entire mass (other than Father) and headed back to our accommodation site that we had for the week, but found that it was changed for that night because there was no air conditioning.

The food was interesting, the sleeping arrangements were not the best, it took us 5 buses to get there and back, and we averaged 4-5 hours of sleep a night. The experience of WYD 2002 is one that will not be forgotten by any of the people that attended. We all have good and not-so-good memories of it, but celebrating your faith with

300,000 youth together was an amazing experience and I feel privileged that I got to attend. *Michelle Sampson*

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## Weddings

**Boudreau/Martell**-The wedding of Vickie Boudreau to David Martell of L'Ardoise took place on Sat., Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> in St. John the Baptist Church. Vicki is the daughter of Annabelle and Michael Boudreau and David is the son Velma and Steve Martell. Congratulations to all.

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## Deaths

**Donahue**-Mary Ellen, daughter of the late Donald David (DD) and Kate (MacIssac) Boyd, died in Halifax at the age of 89. Eileen as she was called was predeceased by husband Senator Richard Donahue. Her father was the brother of the late W.F. Boyd (father of Blaise and Peter).

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## Special Anniversaries

Fifty years ago on August 21<sup>st</sup>, Casilda Samson wed Fabian Richard and Fabian's little sister Monica married Joe Stone. On their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary both couples celebrated quietly with their immediate families. Our warm wishes to both couples.

Congratulations to Pauline, daughter of the late Alice and Maurice Burke of RB, and her husband Bryce Walsh of Halifax on their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Janice and Irvin Touesnard celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> on July 29<sup>th</sup>.

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## Bits & Bites:

- Seniors 50+ Club Meeting-Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1:30.
- CWL meeting-Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in Church Vestry.
- Mini Bingo Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 1:30.
- RBCCS meeting-Wednesday, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.
- CWL Merch. Bingo-Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> 2pm at the TLC.
- Anyone wishing to book the Tara Lynne Centre should call Debbie Landry (2573); needing a liquor license for a function call Eddie Pottie (2515) at least a month ahead. For use of the funeral home call Leona or Gerald Campbell at 535-2927.
- The Round Up is available at Howard's Grocery, First Richmond Credit Union or RB Post Office. Subscriptions are available for \$12.00 locally, \$15.00 within Canada and \$16.50 internationally per year.

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