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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Gold Fever Days At Cape Wolfe

By NEIL A. MATHESON

SOME YEARS AGO I did a column on the Gold Mine attempt at Cape Wolfe. A number of Charlottetown men purchased a plot of land that included the place where gold was believed to be present.

There was gold there all right, but the percentage quantity was not enough to be worth the work of mining it.

This week I found in an old scrap book a story on "Gold Fever Days" – that was the heading used in the Examiner on May 23, 1883.

The Examiner writer said he was shown "a button of gold weighing one and a half pennyweights, and a button of silver weighing an eighth of an ounce".

It was John Hughes of Charlottetown who showed the bits of precious metal and he and his partner, Frederick Peters, were leaving for Boston that week "to be present during the process of extracting the mineral from one and one-half tons of ore that had been shipped there from the Cape Wolfe area.

AT THAT TIME tests showed the ore to be worth \$13.30 (?) per ton. Apparently that was good at that time for the Examiner added "The precious metal is remarkably rich in color, and from appearance will compare with the gold, or silver of any country in the world."

A few days later the Examiner said that it had received a letter from an anonymous correspondent in Cape Wolfe saying "Gold fever is striking hard here. You will scarcely meet a man who has not got a pocket full of dirt which is supposed to contain inestimable riches." Exaggerated as that story likely is, the good people of Cape Wolfe told me that the amount of gold present in the rock would not pay for the work of extracting it. So the effort died.

William Fish, a highly respected veteran member of the community, was one to whom I talked. There was a Mrs. Stewart whose first name I have forgotten, and several others.

Catching Gold Fever

AT THE SAME TIME, the old Examiner piece reported, other parts of the Island "were catching the gold fever".

One S.P. Campbell, Souris East was said to have found "near the seashore, at a distance of some 30 feet from the top of a cliff, traces of what is likely to prove a valuable gold find".

The same item says that a few days later Conductor McGowan advises that "Ed Gallant, while digging a cellar at Tignish, struck a vein of pebbled quartz that is likely to prove a valuable find".

The item said the location was being kept secret, for the present, but that a company would be formed without delay, if indeed it was proven that the quartz was valuable.

The same Examiner issue said that one Capt. Joseph Campbell, foreman of J.H. Myrick's fishing establishment, Rustico Island, struck a vein of what he believed to be gold-bearing quartz while digging in that vicinity.

Apparently nothing of real value came of any of those hopefully reported "finds".

A Real 'Hall Of Fame'

MY FRIEND, Sports Columnist, John McNeill, Summerside appears to have really started something, when he suggested there should be a Sports Hall of Fame "in the flesh" as he put it, not merely a paper one that is created by the efforts of the men who select three athletes each year for inclusion in Prince Edward Island's Sports Hall of Fame.

John used the example of Phil MacDonald, Toronto who was inducted last year along with George A. Callbeck, Summerside and the late John "Whacky" MacEachern.

Imagine Phil coming home to his native Island, says John, and telling a friend "I am in the sports hall of fame here" and then having to explain there is no hall, really.

Since writing the above we learn that arrangements have been made to house the Hall of Fame in Summerside.

My colleagues at the Guardian-Patriot here agree with John and so do I. Mr. McNeill has a more than casual interest in the Sports Hall of Fame. He is the secretary of the selection committee, or board of directors, if you want to give them the really fancy name.

Nominations Invited

I MAY ADD here that nominations for this year's selection will be received by Mr. McNeill, or myself up to and including July 3. The directors meet Saturday afternoon, July 4 to make the selections, so all of the nominations should be in by that time.

There are upwards of 20 nominations on hand that were mailed in last year. Those nominations will be considered this year, along with any others that may come in.

By the way, a friend of mine suggested this week that the name of the late A.J. MacAdam should be included. So there's a name for some of you people who know his athletic career.

My memory tells me that he was the only man ever to win all four Sport letters at St. Dunstan's University. Be that true or not, I know that A.J. did have an outstanding career both as an athlete and coach at St. Dunstan's.

Married In 1776

LAST WEEK'S reference to Ira Brown and his desire for information from descendants of Donald Graham, said Catherine Brown married Mr. Graham in 1775. Mr. Brown informs me that the marriage date was 1776.

This remarkable lady lived to be 111 years of age. Mr. Brown thinks she must have been the oldest living resident of this province. If anyone knows of Mrs. Graham's relatives, Mr. Brown would appreciate a letter or a call. He lives at 244 Cumberland Street.

Was Formerly Local Man

JACK HENNESSEY lives now in Truro, but he's well known here where he grew up and participated in sports. A note from Jack tells of the death of another former Charlottetown man, John Joseph Kenslow.

Jack tells me that Joe Kenslow was one man who was in attendance at a sports event in Truro, when and if an Island team or Island athletes were performing.

He did this even up to last year, Jack reports, "even though Joe was pretty well crippled when he suffered a stroke a couple of years ago."

Mr. Kenslow had lived in Truro, Jack tells me, since the end of the last war.