

Celtic Colours: Buddy MacMaster, John Allan Cameron celebrated

STEPHEN COOKE Arts Reporter

Published October 13,

Buddy MacMaster wasn't the only Nova Scotian music legend celebrated on Monday. The songs of the Godfather of Cape Breton music, John Allan Cameron, were shared in his birthplace, Glencoe Station, by his friend and collaborator Buddy MacDonald.

The Glencoe Station Hall is down a dirt road, literally off the beaten path — or, if you prefer, “the Beaton path” — and by show time, the hall was packed with Cameron's fans and friends.

“Is there anyone here who's unfamiliar with the music of John Allan Cameron?” asked MacDonald, who grinned as not a single hand was raised.

“That's good, well done. Of course if John Allan was here, he'd certainly let you know who he was.”

Hardly a song passed without most of the crowd knowing it. They murmured in approval when MacDonald began The Four Marys, “from the top of the Mabou hit parade in 1969,” which naturally led into the tongue-twisting Mary Mac, “the Celtic hip-hop classic.”

“Whether he was performing for 4,000 people or 4 people, he always made it seem like the most important show he could be playing at that moment,” said MacDonald, who saw the man in action from the U.S. to Scotland.

“All of us who knew him learned a lot from that.”

John Allan Cameron was a man with a mission, to share his love of Cape Breton with the rest of the world, sowing the seeds for Celtic Colours to invite the world to see the island and its culture at its best.

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/artslife/1243466-celtic-colours-buddy-macmaster-john-allan-america-celebrated>

Hard to imagine a lovelier time than at Celtic Colours

STEPHEN COOKE Arts Reporter

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Keeping in mind Celtic Colours co-founder Max MacDonald's immortal words, "Remember, it's a marathon, not a sprint," I checked out of the Friday night Festival Club at 2 a.m., following a classic set by Allie Bennett on fiddle and Howie MacDonald playing keyboard and a singalong chorus of Buddy MacDonald's Getting Dark Again.

After all, Saturday would be something of a marathon of its own (...)

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/artslife/1243267-hard-to-imagine-a-lovelier-time-than-at-celtic-colours>

Louisbourg Playhouse

Dan MacDonald

Cape Breton Post

08 October 2014

I stopped by the Louisbourg Playhouse twice in the past few weeks. On Sept. 30 Buddy MacDonald and Rachel Davis were onstage. The audience wasn't that large as the tourist season wanes but people were there from Germany, Austria, and various parts of Canada and the U.S. As always they were entertained by lovely singalong songs, in English and Gaelic, along with the mellow sounds of the viola and the hard, driving sounds of the fiddle and guitar in full flight. (...)

<http://www.capebretonpost.com/section/2014-10-08/article-3897489/Lennie-Gallant-live-on-CD,-and-soon-at-MTCC/1>

Our Cape Breton Buddy

Sep 28, 2012

Posted by Max MacDonald

In my last blog I told you about the [Celtic Colours Festival Club](#). While you never know exactly what might happen on any given night at the Club, there has been one constant every night since the beginning in 1997. That constant is also the glue that holds the club together, host [T.R. Buddy MacDonald](#).

Buddy is a singer/songwriter from the North Shore of Cape Breton Island. When festival organizers initially discussed who would be the best person to fill the host role at the Club they only put one name on the list, Buddy MacDonald. Fortunately for them, he agreed.

Buddy has the respect of fellow artists because of his talent and life long dedication to the music and culture of Cape Breton. This, combined with his love of laughter and life in general, also means that festival audiences feel truly welcome and comfortable.

This great combination of talents makes Buddy the ideal Festival Club host. He always starts the evening with a few songs and stories. The songs might be traditional or one of his many original tunes like the famous, "[Getting Dark Again](#)".

The stories might be about something that happened at the Festival the night before or something that happened in Cape Breton a hundred years ago. Buddy is a modern day bard in that respect. He carries and shares the culture with him wherever he goes.

Drop by the Festival Club in St. Ann's any night from Oct. 5-13 and say hello to the only person who has been at every Celtic Colours Festival Club night since 1997. Our Buddy is sure to make you smile.

www.celticheart.ca

Cape Breton Post

North Shore troubadour a true patriot

Published on July 24, 2012

June 2009 was the first time I experienced Buddy MacDonald. It was at a house concert in Ellsworth, Maine. The man I saw was a warm, energetic, caring individual.

When he sang, I felt truly warmed by the passion he has for his fellow man in his native land of Cape Breton. He sings from his heart.

MacDonald captivates you with his persona. His tunes are of the good times and the bad times; they make you remember the want of these people, their struggles to exist in their everyday lives. He has lived this way his whole life. He is not an extravagant, boastful man. His plain and simple attire demonstrates that there is more to life than tangible possessions. I sense friendship is the cornerstone of his life.

In my opinion, MacDonald is a Canadian patriot. His love of his land is ingrained in his life. His need to perform in his homeland never ends. He carries a message: goodness is tantamount in your life. Never forget your past and where you come from.

Ronald Ferri

Franklin, Maine

Rising Tide Magazine – May-June, 2011

Dan MacDonald

Cape Breton's Travelling Troubadour

T. R. (Buddy) MacDonald is noted as one of Cape Breton's better songwriters with a signature piece, Getting Dark Again, that is as well known as Song For The Mira or Girls of Neil's Harbour. A balladeer with the ability to hold an audience in the palm of his hands, he is a troubadour who has played Canada from coast to coast to coast for more than thirty-five years.

A product of a family rich in Celtic culture, Buddy grew up in North Shore, a fishing community along the Cabot Trail between Englishtown and Ingonish. Gaelic was the first language for many in the community and his father, Tommy "Peggy" MacDonald, was a noted Gaelic singer.

For those familiar with traditional Gaelic songs, you understand the natural rhythm and flow of the music, the structure that makes so much of it stand out. This was the musical background that Buddy grew up with, a certain cadence and rhyming where he was comfortable. It seems natural that this is the same structure that he used for many of his early works, many of them lengthy ballads with a greatly detailed story. Retreat From Ross Ferry and The Tar Sands Lament would be perfect examples. With material like this, English songs written in a traditional Gaelic format, Buddy bridged the world between the two cultures.

While the main focus of his early years was based on his traditional background, Buddy was just as influenced by the likes of Gordon Lightfoot and John Prine, and he's not above singing the odd Stan

Rogers song as well. Writers from Scotland and Ireland come in to play as well, Dougie MacLean being a favourite.

Every song he performs has a story to it, and Buddy is always more than willing to share this with the audience. Often times the story can be longer than the song, but that is what gives him such a great stage presence. I recently caught him doing a matinee at a local watering hole. He showed his stamina by doing one three-hour set with the audience singing along with the songs and laughing at all the stories. He said afterwards that he was having too much fun to take a break.

Over the past number of years Buddy has become one of the official faces of the Celtic Colours International Festival. Since the beginning of the annual nine-day event he has been the host for the Festival Club, the after-hours show that is currently held at the Gaelic College in St. Ann's. During that time he has hosted over 125 successive shows.

He has also travelled to Scotland on several occasions to co-host the after-hours shows at the Celtic Connections Festival with their long running host Gil Todd. And he's been the regular host at the East Coast Music Awards annual Cape Breton night festivities for many years as well.

Throughout all this time Buddy has continued to write. He has also recorded a number of CDs, the latest of which, "*myself...my shadow...and me*", was released in 2010. This contains some great new material but there is also a nice smattering of some of his older work.

Buddy is one of the hardest working artists around, regularly doing 200 to 250 shows a year. These could be an afternoon in a local pub, a festival in Scotland, gigs in Vancouver or Toronto, a St. Patrick's Day gig in Wyoming, a tour through New England or a guest appearance on a Natalie MacMaster TV special. While he does the majority of his shows solo, through the years he has teamed up with other performers such as John Roberts, Donnie Campbell and John Ferguson. Most recently he has been travelling with young Baddeck fiddler Rachel Davis, an interesting and very complimentary combination.

If you see that Buddy MacDonald will be performing, you should stop in. You will enjoy the stories and the songs, and likely learn a bit more about Cape Breton as well as about the man and his music. You can sing along with *Getting Dark Again* and check out Buddy newest pair of trade-mark red shoes. And I know that you will have a good time!

“Celtic Colours” Late night host Buddy MacDonald in Maine with fiddle sensation Rachel Davis

May 25, 2011 New England Celtic Arts will present Celtic Colours International Festival late night host Buddy MacDonald with Cape Breton's young fiddle sensation Rachel Davis. Performances will be held at Lakeside Theater in Rangeley, Maine on Tuesday May 31st, at Skye Theatre Performing Arts Center in South Carthage, Maine on Wednesday June 1st, and at Unity College Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday June 2nd. Curtain is at 7:00 pm at Lakeside and Skye and 7:30 pm in Unity. There is a pre-show jam session 45 minutes prior to curtain at Skye and Unity. Audience members are encouraged to bring their instruments and jam with the artists for a few minutes.

Buddy MacDonald is one of Canada's most respected singer song-writers and comes from a tradition steeped in Celtic and Folk music. Buddy has hosted the world famous Celtic Colours Festival Club for the last 14 years without missing a single evening. He is best known for setting to music his keen observation of life lived in the cities and rural parts of Eastern Canada. Audiences warm instantly to his infectious writing style and showmanship.

Buddy's career as a singer, songwriter, entertainer, began thirty years ago. Born and brought up on the Northern Shores of Cape Breton Island, he was exposed at an early age, to the singing and story telling of some of the great Celtic singers of his native Island. Much of his song writing is still influenced by this style he was so familiar with as a young boy. Over the years he has traveled and entertained audiences throughout Canada, the United States, Germany, Scotland and the Scandinavian countries, performing as a solo act and in different combinations with other musicians from Cape Breton.

“It's been a busy and great year...with lots of miles and lots of smiles...lots of new friends made...and crossed paths again with old friends...it's what the gig is all about. I Released a new cd..”myself,my shadow...and me..”in September and it's going well with good reviews...”

Rachel is an award winning twenty one-year-old fiddler from Big Baddeck, Cape Breton, NS. From an early age, she was exposed to the Cape Breton style of music, as it was prevalent among a great many members of her family. As a result, she has listened to the Cape Breton style music all her life. Inspired by her grandfather, Clarence Long, also a fiddler, Rachel began taking lessons from him at the age of twelve years. For the past six years, she has been performing with Buddy on stage at festivals and local Cape Breton events. Rachel's self-titled CD has won wide acclaim throughout Atlantic Canada. Rachel was a featured performer at the Maine Highland Games in Topsham and the American Folk Festival in Bangor, last August. She has just returned from an extended tour of Australia with The Cottar's

Buddy & Rachel have been selected to launch a new harbor-side series in historic Boothbay Harbor at the Fisherman's Wharf Inn on Friday June 3rd. The series celebrates their 65 anniversary and will feature other performers from the Maine Celtic Tour throughout the Summer. More information on the series can be found at <http://www.fishermanswharfinn.com>

Lakeside Theater is on Main Street in Rangeley. Skye Theater is located 3 miles West of East Dixfield village at 2 Highland Drive off Winter Hill Rd and US RT. 2 in South Carthage. UCCPA is at 42 Depot Street in Unity. Ticket price is \$15.00 at the door*. For reservations at the theater you wish to attend call: Lakeside Theater at 864-5000 or Skye Theatre at (207) 562-4445 or Unity Center for the Performing Arts at (207) 948-7469.

*(Lakeside Theater is \$15.00 in advance and \$20.00 at the door. Advance tickets may be purchased for Lakeside at the theater or on the website, <http://www.rangeleymovies.com>)

More information is available at: <http://www.necelticarts.com>

Anne Louise Campbell – whatsgoinon.ca – Dec 14th 2010

Buddy MacDonald

myself...my shadow...and me

Independent (2010)

myself...my shadow...and me is the fifth album by Cape Breton singer-songwriter Buddy MacDonald. Released back in September, this latest collection of eleven songs will have you singing along with every one of them. One of Canada's best songwriters in our time, MacDonald has a way of capturing life's true sentiments and turning them into a great sing-a-longs.

"Nobody Home" is already on its way to being MacDonald's next big song (following in the footsteps of kitchen party anthem "Getting Dark Again"). The song sings about leaving for the west in order to find better things, or what we perceive to be better. "There's nobody home no more, there's nobody home. There'll be no rest till they hit the west. There's nobody home no more." This song definitely struck a chord with many during this year's Celtic Colours International Festival when MacDonald sang it during the last night of the Festival in St. Ann's. Tears were shed by those knowing that in the next few days they would be on their way off island again for work.

myself...my shadow...and me is kept simple, which makes it a pleasure to listen to. The majority of the tracks are just MacDonald and his guitar. He is joined on a few selections by Dave Gunning on background vocals and his partner in crime Rachel Davis on fiddle and along with backing vocals on "Bright Star Shining".

"Slow down, look around and grow. There'll be lots more dreaming at the end of the day down where the river flows." A great quote by MacDonald's father and one we can all strive to live by. "Down Where the River Flows" is one of those songs that you cannot help but sing along to.

MacDonald has also included some old favourites "Atlantic Seabreeze", "Six Strings and Me" and "We Remember You Well". Whether you are a lifetime fan of MacDonald's or a newcomer to his music, this album is a must for all who enjoy listening to a singer-songwriter sing about the truths in life. And with the holiday season upon us, keep in mind family members living "away". You can never go wrong by filling their stocking up with a cd from home. myself...my shadow...and me is a nice, easy-listening cd that, if you close your eyes and sit back, you will find yourself singing the choruses for all the neighbours to hear.

Cape Breton Post / September 2, 2010

Dan MacDonald

Feedback

Buddy MacDonald is a masterful entertainer, someone who has been at it long enough to be considered a Cape Breton musical institution. He's also one of the most gifted songwriters that this island has to offer, with an eye for detail that gives him the ability to see a song in many situations and the talent to paint that picture with his words. Buddy has just released his latest CD, an interesting collection of material, some of which is brand new and some of which goes back almost thirty years. Titled *myself...my shadow...and me*, it was produced by Dave Gunning at his Wee House of Music studio in Pictou County.

Dave adds some guitar work, Rachel Davis does the backup fiddle work, and both do backup vocals. Dave is also featured in a duet with Buddy on *We Remember You Well*, an always touching song that is also included on Dave's new project, *Tribute To John Allan Cameron*, which will be released this fall. Allie Bennett and J.P. Cormier also perform on this cut.

This is some of Buddy's best work, an introspective collection that shows an evolution in his music over the years. Rooted deeply in the Gaelic area of Cape Breton's North Shore, much of his early work has a sound and pacing distinctive to that culture, while you can often spot a new song just from its feel. A good comparison is the older Atlantic Seabreeze and the much newer Mountains Never Sleep. Whatever the comparison, this CD has the variety that you would hear at a live Buddy performance...old and new...and always good.

Buddy has the CD just in time to head overseas. He and Rachel are spending the next week in Scotland at the Blas Festival. Meanwhile, go looking for *myself...my shadow...and me*. It's a dandy CD!