

Residents of Nova Scotia Mining Town Look Toward Village's Future

Editor's note: What will be the fate of Springhill, Nova Scotia, now that the first shock of the Oct. 23 Cumberland mine disaster has begun to wear off? UPI reporter Dick Bacon talked with survivors, widows, and mine and town officials and wrote the following report on the community's gloomy future.

By DICK BACON
UPI Correspondent
Springhill, Nova Scotia (UPI) — The earthquake-like shock that shattered the gas-filled Cumberland Colliery No. 2 two weeks ago and

sealed 74 victims in its depths appears also to have sealed the economic fate of this small community.

With each passing day it becomes more unlikely that Springhill ever will recover from Black Thursday, Oct. 23, 1958, when 174 men were trapped more than 13,000 feet from the pithead of North America's deepest coal mine. Only 100 came out alive, 19 of them after spending up to

nine days of harrowing helplessness before rescuers almost miraculously found them.

Twice before Springhill has rebounded from mine disasters.

Family Council

Margaret S. — Mother won't let me serve drinks.
Mrs. L. S. — One drink leads to another.

Margaret S. — I am a career woman in my early 40's. I live with my widowed mother, who is very strong-willed and opinionated.

One of our worst problems is Mother's strong objection to drink. She will simply not tolerate it in the house. When I come home from work I would love to have a cocktail pick-me-up before dinner. Sometimes I go to a cocktail lounge with friends, but you can't do that every day. Besides, I would like to entertain more and you can't invite people over these days without serving drinks.

I respect Mother's attitudes, but I don't think she has a right to impose it on others. I see no harm in moderate social drinking.

Mrs. L. S. — I am not imposing my attitudes on anyone. I merely feel that I can't live in a home where alcohol is used for any but medicinal purposes. Margaret is free to do as she chooses. If she loves cocktails better than her mother she can go to live where she can get them.

The mere fact that Margaret finds it impossible to entertain unless she serves alcohol shows how far this thing has gone. Nobody is even interested in keeping up decent social relations. They only want to visit a home for how many drinks they can get.

Unfortunately, I have seen too much alcoholism in my early life. I know that one drink leads to another.

The Council: Mrs. L.S.'s position is strong and clear-cut and we don't think there is any possibility of getting her to change it. Margaret ought to give up on that score. It is useless to discuss the rights or wrongs of such a position.

Margaret is left with only two choices — launching a new, independent life for herself or putting up with her mother's attitudes. Probably she doesn't want to live alone and to leave her widowed mother alone simply because of this area of disagreement, so the chances are that Margaret must make such adjustment.

We don't feel that Margaret should resign herself to a lonely, friendless existence because of this social handicap. She should use her ingenuity to create a social atmosphere in her home that is so attractive that friends will look forward to visiting her despite the lack of stimulating beverages.

We would suggest that Margaret give a lot of thought to planning interesting parties. Food is often as great a social stimulant as drink. Margaret might try pleasant luncheons, relaxed dinners and late suppers at which she serves unusual, foreign dishes. An attractively set table with special features such as an interesting centerpiece or surprise gimmick at each place will help stimulate conversation.

More thought should go into getting together the right combination of guests and Margaret should plan a few conversation — stimulators of her own. The best hostesses find ways of getting their guests to put forth their liveliest tidbits.

Mrs. L.S. is certainly right on one point. Far too many people depend upon drink to make the party. All too many guests do not even know what an enjoyable social evening consists of. Margaret should make up her mind to refuse to be stymied by the limitation imposed on her. It is a challenge, out of which she may be able to create an extremely successful social life.

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in 1891, 125 miners died. Two years ago this month, a subterranean rockfall took 39 lives.

They Always Returned

But always before, the doughty Springhill miners have gone back to work in the mines of the Cumberland Railway and Coal Company. Unless they left town, they had little choice, for Springhill is a one-industry town. All of its 5,000 residents depend, directly or indirectly, on the mine which sinks deep below the Cobquid Hills of eastern Nova Scotia.

Most of the town's working force of 1,300 is either employed at the mine or on the company's 32-mile railway spur between here and Parrsboro, Nova Scotia. By tradition and lack of other employment all are tied to the mine.

Now, the town appears to be on the verge of economic chaos.

Neither the Cumberland Company, nor its industrial parent, the Dominion Steel and Coal Corp., has said definitely they will close the mine. But the mines have been idle since the latest disaster. And a few days ago, a spokesman for a group that controls the parent company expressed doubt that the Springhill mine will ever operate again.

"We wanted to close the mine last year," Sir Roy Dobson said, "but the people of the town pleaded with us not to do it because the mine is the major source of employment there."

"But we don't want to go on mining coal and killing people there."

The Death Knell

The disaster appears to have accomplished the final shutdown. This was apparent to the people of Springhill immediately after the underground rockfall, Mayor Ralph Gilroy said:

"This may be the death knell for Springhill."

For the townspeople, despite their attachment to the mine, realize that besides having become profitless, it is too dangerous. Its gassy seams alone make it the most hazardous mine in Nova Scotia. Since the first major disaster in 1891, more than 600 miners have lost their lives digging coal out of the deep pits below Springhill. In all, there have been 463 "bumps" — underground shocks — ranging in intensity from minor shifting of coal to the earthquake-like upheaval of Oct. 23.

If the mine closes forever — and this seems likely — what then for Springhill?

The question of Springhill's survival is being studied on all levels of government, clear up to the Canadian cabinet.

Many residents are openly skeptical, however, over Springhill's chances of attracting new industry.

As miner Layton Amon put it, "Springhill is off the beaten track. A new industry locating in Springhill might fold in a year or two. And by that time the public will have forgotten about us."

He shares his loss with your children



This man was a college professor. Unfortunately, his talent to inspire young minds will not be used again.

Why? An incredibly low salary drove him from the classroom. He was forced to take a job elsewhere to make ends meet.

Alarming enough, this sort of thing is happening with increasing frequency. As a nation whose destiny depends on the development of brainpower, how can we afford to let it go on?

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Car Strikes Ashland Teacher

Ashland — Miss Mary McLarnan, Ashland high school teacher, 318 Hargadine st., is in the Ashland General hospital with a broken left leg following a pedestrian-car accident Friday night, Ashland city police reported.

Hospital attendants said Saturday Miss McLarnan was in fair condition but not allowed to have visitors yet.

A car driven by Laurel Hakes, 1010 Clay st., Ashland, was going west on Siskiyou blvd. when it struck Miss McLarnan as she was crossing the intersection at Sherman st., police said.

City police reported it was a well-lighted street. However, the driver was not arrested. Neither the pedestrian nor the driver saw each other, officers said.

Sarasota, Fla. — (UPI) — The Clyde Beatty circus and the Cole Bros. circus announced they have signed a 10-year merger agreement to make them the "biggest tented show in the country."

Mecca, sacred to millions as the birthplace of Mohammed, is 65 miles east of the Red Sea Port of Jiddah.

Rainfall on the Atlantic Coast of Central America is three times heavier than on the Pacific side.

More than 2,000 delegates attended the 43d Esperanto Congress in Mainz, Germany, in August.

Sheikh is an Arabian and Moslem title for a chieftain or magistrate, meaning literally "old man."



TEMPERAMENTAL DIVA — Maria Meneghini Callas is shown singing the title role of "Medea" in Dallas, after her contract with the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York was canceled by Manager Rudolph Bing.

Quotes From the News

By UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Miami—The Rev. Roy C. Angell, pastor of the Central Baptist church, who withheld from parishioners knowledge of a bomb threat on the church until after the services were over:

"It went off all right but we sweated it out and I held my breath all the time. It was a crank. I guess."

Knoxville, Tenn.—Hamilton County Sheriff James Turner of Chattanooga, on the riot in which students of the University of Chattanooga and Tennessee participated after a football game:

"The police provoked it when they interfered as our boys broke down the goal posts."

Montreal—Mrs. Jenny Jones, one of the injured, about the explosion and fire that swept a tenement house:

"It was just like a fiery hell."

Lisbon-Lt. (jg) Joseph P. Jackson, pilot of a U.S. Navy search ship, on the disappearance of a Portuguese flying boat over the Atlantic with 36 persons aboard:

"If the pilot succeeded in landing, I would pay high tribute to his skill since the seas were really rough."

Dallas—Diva Maria Meneghini Callas, on Metropolitan Opera General Manager Rudolph Bing, who last week cancelled her contract:

"I am willing to forget being fired but I don't think any gentleman should insult any artist. I won't even say woman, they keep forgetting I'm a woman."

Jacksonville Museum Has 2,289 Visitors

Jacksonville—A total of 2,289 persons visited the Jacksonville Museum last month, according to Miss Mary Hanley, curator. The total is an increase of 109 more than visited the museum during October, 1957, and the largest number to visit it in any October.

The total brought the number of visitors to the museum to 309,332 since the museum opened July 10, 1950, Miss Hanley said.

Visitors came from 35 states and Canada and Alaska. Groups included Boy Scouts from Jackson school and Cub Scouts from Den 5, Medford, Bluebirds and Robins, Talent, Brownie Troop 26B and Girl Scout Troop 87, Medford, and Girl Scout Troop 129, Grants Pass.

Miss Hanley said many visitors commented on having read Ken Metzler's article about Jacksonville in a recent issue of Sunset Magazine, and one man, waiting for a plane at the Medford airport, rented a car and visited the museum.

Microfilms of old newspapers are now available and are being used by students and other interested persons, she reported.

Gifts and loans during October were from John A. Levine, Camp White; Alfred Mercer, Medford; F. C. Crosslin, Ashland; Joe Johnson, Jacksonville; Jack Sutton, Grants Pass; LeRoy Hubbell, Santa Rosa, Calif.; Mrs. C. H. Raymond, Medford; Edwin

Snark Repeats Round-Trip Flight

Cape Canaveral, Fla. — (UPI) — The Air Force, in an unprecedented feat of missile economy, fired a long-range snark on its second 6,000-mile round-trip Saturday and again landed it safely back at home plate.

The air-breathing snark, actually a radio-controlled bomber without a pilot, was the first missile ever flown twice from this Atlantic missile test center. More than 60 other snarks have been tested, many of them completing the round-trip halfway down the Atlantic tracking range. But this was the first ever fired a second time.

The snark is equipped with landing skids to allow it to return intact, nursed home by radio. Today's missile was believed to be the one that made a round trip on Oct. 23.

An original goal in the snark program was to build a "test version that could be recovered and flown again in order to save the money in the training program" of launching crews, the Air Force said.

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