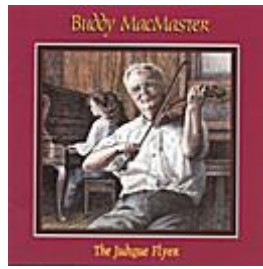


Mp3 Buddy Macmaster - The Judique Flyer



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Celtic : Cape Breton Fiddle 14 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: The Judique Flyer was a steam driven passenger train that replaced the old stagecoach line running between Inverness and Point Tupper on Cape Breton's west coast. In 1938, fiddler Buddy MacMaster boarded The Judique Flyer to return home from Troy after playing his first dance. From that time Buddy's reputation as a fiddler spread up and down the Judique line. In 1943, Buddy took a job as a telegrapher and traveling station agent with the CNR (Canadian National Railroad) working in stations from Truro to Inverness. For the next forty years the railroad would nurture his reputation as a generous fiddler and today he is recognized as the world's leading exponent of the Cape Breton fiddle style. Joining him on this recording are many of the fine accompanists he has played with throughout his sixty-year career as a master of the fiddle. Hugh Allan "Buddy" MacMaster was born October 18, 1924 in Timmins, Ontario to John Duncan MacMaster and Sarah Agnes (MacDonald). There, in a Gaelic speaking home, he was introduced to the sounds of the old music through the lilting (mouth music) of his mother. Although Buddy's father played the fiddle, it is his mother, Sarah Agnes, Buddy credits with awakening his interest in music and passing it on to him. They say the music is a gift. In those days people often used lilting to calm a crying child, to distract the child from fears or just to help pass the time while walking down the road or working. As a small boy, Buddy started making music using two sticks of kindling and, like his mother, would mimic the fiddle tunes using mouth music (jigging the tunes). A gift of music! Innocent oral transmissions become powerful musical impressions. For the young Buddy MacMaster, this gift was the foundation of his future style and repertoire. When Buddy turned four, his family returned to Cape Breton, settling on a farm in Judique. It was 1928 and this small community was nearing the end of an era. A steam-driven train, The Judique Flyer, had replaced the old stagecoach line and emigration to "the Boston states", which had

begun before the turn of the century, continued in frightening numbers. The first commercial recordings of Cape Breton fiddle music began to appear and radios were common. The horse and wagon was being replaced by the automobile. These innovations in communications and transportation were breaking down the isolation of Cape Breton communities and would lead to the ultimate decline of regional styles in music and language. Until this time, Gaelic speakers in Cape Breton could be identified by region through their accent, the lilt of their speaking. The same was true of the pipers and fiddlers who spoke the music with their own regional slang. This sound is a common thread through the generations: the accent, a way of speaking the Gaelic with the fiddle and, in the case of lilt, speaking the fiddle with the Gaelic. A Judique fiddler spoke the music with a sharp, robust tone and a rich brogue. "In Cape Breton, a fiddler from Mabou, you could detect a player from Mabou if you heard him. And somebody from the Iona area, Victoria County, well, you could detect their playing. That was in the horse and buggy days you know. I am from Judique, and I know that my style is somewhat different from Mabou. I guess I have my own style." (Buddy MacMaster from Fiddler Magazine, Cape Breton 2000 issue) For Buddy MacMaster's parents, music was a part of everyday life. Along with the sounds of blacksmiths, horse-drawn wagons, coopers and carpenters, the strains of the fiddle and drones of the pipes blended naturally with the fabric of community sounds. Judique and Port Hood were important crossroads and fiddlers and pipers from the more isolated communities of the Creignish Hills would frequently pass through these villages on their way to Inverness or Mabou. This tradition of itinerant musicians would sustain traditional music in Cape Breton during the latter part of the 20th century. Popular settings for music in Judique were the old-time parish picnics and dances and these were exceptional events with fiddlers and pipers showing up from the surrounding hills to play together. The domain of the fiddlers and pipers was the dance floor. "Judique on the Floor," an expression coined back in those days, aptly describes the competitive spirit of the Judique stepdancers. From the time he arrived in Judique, Buddy was exposed to many of the old-time fiddlers. In Port Hood, there was the Big Fiddler and Johnny Batherson (Matt Minglewood's grandfather). In Judique, there was Alexander MacDonnell and Angus MacMaster. It was fiddlers visiting in his home that made the strongest impressions on Buddy. Dan Hughie MacEachern (Glenora), Dan R. MacDonald, Gordon MacQuarrie, Dan Hughie MacEachern (Queensville), Bill Lamey, Winston Fitzgerald and Alexander MacDonnell, all were regular visitors to the MacMaster household. By the time Buddy began to play the fiddle all these early influences had left their mark. He could have been a piper or a lilter, but he

chose the fiddle and quickly struck on his trademark sound: a balance between the gentle sounds heard from his mother, Sarah, and the sounds of the powerful dance fiddlers he heard in the dusty halls of Judique and Port Hood. "The first dance I got paid for was in the Troy schoolhouse; I was about 15. There was no accompaniment and I played with Vincent MacMaster, a nephew to Angus the Piper. I got four dollars and paid my own way up on the bus and back on the train the next day, which left me three dollars clear. On the way home, I met Dan R. MacDonald and Kitchener MacDonald on the old Judique Flyer. Dan R. told me (regarding my pay), 'You did well!'" (Buddy MacMaster from *The Cape Breton Fiddler*, Sea-Cape Music Ltd. 1981) Buddy's reputation as an up-and-coming fiddler would soon spread along the Judique line from Troy through to Inverness. The older players quickly recognized the old-time values in his playing, his unique tone and sound, and his generous nature with the music. He began with a handful of local fiddle and pipe tunes and, after being encouraged by Dan Hughie MacEachern and pianist Mildred Leadbeater to learn to read music, eventually built a vast repertoire, spanning nearly three centuries of Scottish fiddle music. His association with the railway would continue for much of his life. In 1943, Buddy began as a telegrapher and station agent for the Canadian National Railroad where he worked, in a variety of positions, until his retirement in 1988. At the time the railway was the main mode of transportation for those traveling across the Strait of Canso and beyond. Buddy's duties began in Pictou and eventually he would travel a circuit from Truro to Inverness. All along the line, through his kind, generous nature, Buddy's reputation preceded him. Early in his railroad career, Buddy was stationed at the Valley depot, near Truro, and often worked the late shift. The train dispatcher, Allan MacGregor, was based in New Glasgow and communicated with Buddy and the other station agents on the CNR's dedicated lines, phoning in their "good-nights" when the tracks were clear. Sometimes he asked Buddy to play him a tune and the other agents up and down the line would listen in on their headsets. Soon the Halifax and Moncton divisions were asking to be patched in and Buddy's nightly serenades were eagerly anticipated at depots throughout the Maritimes. He would often practice his fiddle at work, finding time to play between trains. The CNR stations built in the early part of the century were wonderful places to play the fiddle. The traditional plaster and lath combined with generous Douglas Fir paneling made for exceptional acoustics. The smaller office rooms were great for the dance music and the large waiting halls, with their rich wooden ceilings, complemented the slow airs. Buddy sometimes played for waiting passengers and fiddlers such as Dan R. MacDonald and Dan Hughie MacEachern would often visit and

play with him. Having built up a strong reputation for playing dances, Buddy went on to develop a regular circuit, which he plays to this day. Communities like Glendale, Dunvegan, Scotsville, Strathlorne, Southwest Margaree and West Mabou have dance halls Buddy packs on any night of the year. He has also built a strong career as a concert fiddler and continues the tradition of community fiddler. He has never turned down a request to play for community, parish or benefit concerts. In 1970, along with Father John Angus Rankin, Buddy made his first trip to Scotland and was asked to perform at the Gaelic Mod in Oban. Throughout the 70's he performed as part of the "John Allan Cameron" and the "Ceilidh" television shows and eventually he toured and recorded with The Cape Breton Symphony. A solo 1983 performance at the Fiddle Tunes Festival in Port Townsend, Washington made his name on the west coast of America and, in 1987, a performance with Maybelle Chisholm in Philadelphia introduced his talent to Irish American audiences. All this without the benefit of his own commercial recording! By 1989, when he recorded his first album, Buddy's reputation was already firmly established worldwide and based mainly on word of mouth. Today, after releasing just two albums previous to "The Judique Flyer" ("Judique On The Floor" and "Glencoe Hall"), Buddy MacMaster is indeed a household name in the world of fiddle music. He has performed at hundreds of concerts and festivals across Canada, the United States and the UK and has conducted as many workshops and classes in Cape Breton fiddle. In Scotland, Buddy is respected as a keeper of the old Scottish traditions and throughout the world Buddy is renowned for his correctness in playing. In spite of this international recognition, it is the community dance that is at the heart of his music. "In Cape Breton, stepdancing and square dancing, I think, has a lot to do with the way we play, to make it lively for the dancers, and playing the strathspey for stepdancing. You have to give it a lift or a lively feel to make the dancer feel like dancing or perform better, you know. Then when you see a dancer responding to your music, that sort of puts you in a better mood to play. And the same at the square dances, dancing square sets. If you see the people enjoying themselves, it sure puts you in the mood to play!" (Buddy MacMaster from Fiddler Magazine, Cape Breton 2000 issue) It is this love of playing for dances that shines through in Buddy's music. The tiny Glencoe Mills parish hall has become a mecca for Celtic music and dance enthusiasts from around the world. His unadvertised weekly dances are a virtual United Nations at the peak of the summer. Older, local listeners will sit along the front of the stage, eyes closed, soaking up the music as if it were medicine. The dance floor is never empty and Buddy will sometimes play all night without a break. He simply loves to play for dancers. His music is

imbued with the same kind and generous spirit instilled in him so many years ago by his mother, Sarah Agnes. Today, Buddy is as encouraging to the younger players and dancers as Dan R. MacDonald was to him on that night he rode home on the Judique Flyer after his first dance. Many of the old ways are now gone. Most of the early homesteads are represented only by a few rock piles, overgrown foundations and, sometimes, an old apple orchard. The traditional trades have given way to the modern. Many fragments of the old world remain only in museums. However, in Buddy MacMaster's music we have the living tradition. While his world and his repertoire have changed throughout his career, he has sustained the same sound, a unique connection to the world left behind. Today, after almost seventy years of playing the fiddle, his delicate Gaelic phrasing, learned at his mother's knee, remains as the central element of his complex style. His playing is a living and breathing tribute to centuries of tradition. (Bio by Paul MacDonald, Spring 2000)

Listening closely to *The Judique Flyer* is a rich experience. Each accompanist throws a subtly different light on MacMaster's playing, making you even more aware of the inspiring lilt of his phrasing, his rock-solid timing, and the wealth of subtly-integrated graces that make his sound and rhythm sparkle. Stephen Pedersen : *The Halifax Chronicle-Herald* *The Judique Flyer* is one of this season's most wonderful CDs, an incredible and most historic recording. This is something that everybody with an interest in the music should have. After more than 60 years, Buddy MacMaster is still The Master. Dan MacDonald : *The Cape Breton Post* An exceptionally fine recording from the Ace of Cape Breton's fiddle players. On "*The Judique Flyer*", this mastery is well to the fore but he also gives an equal share of the stage to his able accompanists. Peter Fairbairn : *The Living Tradition*, Scotland The sturdy virility with which his bow prances and seesaws through songs both swift and slow is electrically soul-stirring with its precision, even tenor and emotion. Add to that the guest appearances of East Coast heavyweights like Dave MacIsaac, Hilda Chiasson and Tracey Dares, and you've got a CD that any fiddle enthusiast would be happy to have in their collection. Melissa Buote : *MediaPipe*, Canada Now in his seventies, MacMaster seemingly has not lost any drive and fire, as the music often seems to explode off his bow. And all the players are perfect, highlighting and driving the fiddle. There are fine liner notes evoking the setting from which MacMaster's music springs. Stacy Phillips : *Roots World*, USA MacMaster is to Celtic music what Dizzy Gillespie was to jazz, an elder statesman who inspires and instructs others while maintaining his own distinctive style. Stephen Cooke : *The Halifax Chronicle-Herald* . . . a clean bowing style that produces a sound that is both sweet and robust. Like the other fiddlers of the region,

MacMaster is used to playing for both stepdancers and square dancers, and his intricate playing is imbued with the kind of spirit that produces the proper lift for dancing. A very informative 24-page booklet is included. Paul-Emile Comeau : Dirty Linen, USA This CD will become one of the definitive Cape Breton fiddle recordings. You will be thrilled by the quality of the recording and Buddy's relaxed comfort. 62 minutes of Cape Breton joy. Very highly recommended. Jim Scarf : New and Notable Celtic CDs, San Francisco This album will appeal to fiddlers on all counts. The Box and Fiddle, Scotland One of the acknowledged masters of the Cape Breton fiddle style, and on this album he demonstrates brilliantly the attack and precision that characterise the genre. Chris Mills : Fiddle On, England (He combines) a distinctive and infectious lift with an eminently enviable, absolutely solid rhythmic flair that's just irresistible, while still managing to find countless subtleties between the melodic lines. Quite simply, he has to be one of the finest fiddlers I've ever heard. I'd recommend this release wholeheartedly - to call it cheering and life-affirming is a hell of an understatement. David Kidman : Rock 'n' Reel, England Buddy is in masterly form here; possibly the finest recordings that he has made. He seems to be the fiddler who has it all: remarkable tone, fine attack in his playing that can also be full of subtlety. Vic Smith : Folk Roots, England The 76-year-old teams up with 13 of the greatest pianists from the Scots tradition of his native Cape Breton and lays down tracks as unstoppably powerful as the old Canadian steam train on the cover. Norman Chalmers : Scotland On Sunday

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