



ONTARIO

Festivals Visited

Festival

Notes

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Who K(new)?

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

Over the past month or so Judi and I have been working on posting as many festivals and events onto our event calendar as possible. We have been obtaining festival and event dates from various sources, including internet search engines and community published event guides. As we collected the information, it struck me how many community events there were! Some I had heard of, most I had not! I have heard somewhere that there are an estimated 5,000 festivals and events in Ontario. However, after doing our research, I am convinced that there are considerably more. All of the "new" events that we discovered were not necessarily looking for out-of-town visitors, but like most local festivals and events, all were the "backbone" or the "glue" of the community. That's why festivals and events are so important. If you need tangible proof of this assertion, think of how the recent Vancouver Olympics affected Canada and Canadians. Every time the Canadian National anthem was played, our collective chests expanded to an enormous size!

Please see *Who K(new)?...* on page 2

Back to the Future...

Every month in our second newsletter article it seems that I talk about the festivals and events we have visited over the past month and then list the festivals and events we hope to visit in the future. I have done this in quite a number of past issues. It seems that people enjoy knowing what festivals/events we have just visited and which ones we are looking to visit soon. Now that our "*Festival Nomad Correspondents*" program is up and running, I am going to make this second section permanent, something our readers can count on each month. The new "*Festival Nomads' Report...*" will give you a full report on past and future "*Nomad*" activities!

April: April seems to be the month of "Lifestyle Shows"! This month Judi and I visited two such shows. The first was the **Boomers Consumer Show** held in Lindsay. This is a new show that concentrated on "*Better and Healthier Living*" for the "*Boomer*" crowd. With an aging population becoming more dominant, this show was very timely and relevant. The second show we visited was the **Brighton Country Living Show**. This show emphasized the benefits of Country Living, especially in the Brighton area. The show not only showcased local businesses, but uniquely included both music and the arts. Both shows are part of a trend to help us live "*happier and healthier*"! Judi and I are all for that!

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"Learning the Ropes"
Event Co-organizer Twila Del Fatti
Boomer Consumer Show

Who K(new)?... from page 1

Recently I spoke to a festival organizer in California who was in the process of developing a new festival in her community. We talked about festivals and events in general and how they impacted communities. She told me how important festivals were to the fabric of her community and how excited she and her community were at the prospect of presenting their new event. The positive impact that festivals and events offer their communities know no boundaries, Ontario, British Columbia... Canada or the United States. The main difference seems to be in how we fund our events. In Canada, local and provincial governments seemed to be more prepared to financially support local events. Our governments seem to appreciate the value of promoting communities through their festivals and events. A good example of this appreciation is how much Ontario is helping to promote the upcoming War of 1812 Bicentennial Celebrations while New York State refuses to do so. No matter how festivals and events are funded or how they are organized, community events will always play a prominent part in how we perceive both ourselves and our communities!

Live and Learn!

It is always interesting to visit a festival or event and to learn something new! That's what happened during our recent visit to the **Boomer Consumer Show** held in Lindsay. One of the demonstrations featured at the show was a "*Dog Show*". Judi and I stopped to watch. The moderator was talking and demonstrating "*canine obedience*". Listening to the speaker made me start to think about our cute and cuddly English Springer Spaniel, Dusty and her obedience or, should I say her "lack of obedience"! What really hit home were the two puppies that were brought onto the stage. They were NOT very old! I couldn't believe how well trained and "obedient" they already were! I looked at Judi to say "I told you so..." She looked back at me and raised her eyebrows and casually said "Yes, dear, but ours has personality"! That was the end of our "*dog*" discussion! How does one argue with that kind of logic? And, who said "You can't teach an *old dog* new tricks"? **I DID!**



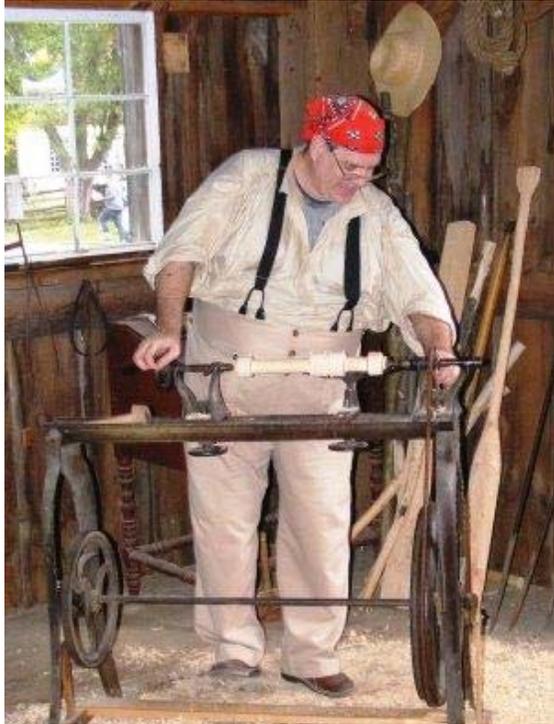
"Entertaining Quartet!"
Brighton Country Living Show



"Having Fun at the Art Table!!"
Brighton Country Living Show



"New Tricks!"
Boomer Consumer Show



"Working with Wood the Old Fashion Way!"
Lang Pioneer Village
 (a *Kick It Up in the Kawarthas* participant)



"Sam McLean looking after the maple Syrup"
McLean Berry Farm
 (a *Kick It Up in the Kawarthas* participant)

Festival Ideas...

Strength in Numbers...

It's not a new concept, but many communities are now banding together to form marketing alliances. This makes perfect sense to me, "*strength in numbers*". Finding a common theme that suits and helps all events seems to me to be the biggest challenge. In a way it's like choosing a name for a festival or event. It needs to be both interesting and informative, plus it needs to be "*search engine*" friendly! One of the best programs I have come across is from the Peterborough and Kawartha area. The name of their marketing campaign is "*Kick It Up in the Kawarthas*". This is a "*catchy*" name and conveys that the "*Kawarthas*" have a lot to offer visitors! The marketing program has been designed to promote Kawarthas' four seasons. Although the program is fairly new, most of the festival and event organizers that I have talked to have embraced it and find it very helpful. Managers of the program seem to always be looking for ways to improve the program and the festivals and events that support it. With marketing dollars becoming more difficult to obtain, banding together seems only natural. I believe that this will happen more and more, even with an improved economy. As I have stated many times, festivals and events will continue to play an extremely important role in our communities! That's why it's important to keep "*spreading the word*" as efficiently and effectively as possible!

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May: May is the start of the "*festival season*". Here is a list of some of the festivals and events we are considering to visit in the future, **May** and early **June**.

May 1-2 - Battle of Longwoods (London)

May 7-8 - Brockville Multicultural Festival

May 22 - Bayside Boutique Art Show (Buckhorn)

May 22-24 - Buckhorn Spring Craft Show

May 22-24 - Black Creek Pioneer Village - "*Alice in Wonderland*"

May 27-30 - Schomberg Fair

May 29-June 6 - Lindsay Lilac Festival

June 3-6 - Brooklin Spring Fair

June 4-6 - Pickering Ribfest

June 6 - Aurora Chamber Street Festival

Festival Tips

By Judi McWilliams

Judi's Festival Spring Clean-up Tips

The "Festival Nomad" Car

Have you noticed that the sun is shining very brightly this Spring? As we are heading off to a number of wonderful festivals and events this spring, I have decided to take on the challenge of "Preparing the Festival Nomad Car" for the season. It doesn't matter how much the "Festival Nomad" tells me that the car is clean because of the rain, the fact is that the inside windows are dense with dirt film from our long winter. So, I take the time to climb into the car during the warmth of a spring day to thoroughly clean all the inside windows. I am amazed at just how clearly I can now see! Just in case it rains, I top up on the windshield fluids in case of bugs, mud and who knows what else! Now that the sun can actually get into the car, I make sure to take all the winter snacks, that may melt in the warm weather, out of the car. It's a great time too to make sure that your "handy wipes" are not dried out but fresh and useable. I replace them if necessary. I always take a "safety circle of the car" before I leave for festivals and events to make sure no little kids bikes, toys etc. are in the way. I also take the time to check the tire air pressure. Much to my dismay I recently discovered that air-pumps at our local gas station required 50 cents to top up the air. We have debit cards and loonies and toonies but it, of course, only took quarters! So, don't forget to take at least 50 cents to leave in a safe place in the car just in case. Going into the trunk, I take the time to freshen up the "First Aid Kit" and "Emergency Car Kit" and to fully re-stock them. The typical re-stocking of a festival "nomad" trunk is important. Such items as lawn chairs, cushions, blankets (for picnics), umbrella's (for rain or shine) are important. It's a good idea to obtain a current road map as many of our highways and byways do change over the years. The final idea for your "Festival Spring Clean-Up" is to obtain the Festival and Events Ontario (FEO) event booklet for the current year. By having the FEO booklet on-hand while you are traveling to a festival or event, you might just discover another close-by event and decide to visit it also while you're in the area. Whatever you do, take the time to "prepare", and make sure you put on your sunglasses... it will be bright in your "festival nomad" car.



"The Festival Nomad car? No, not my car!"
Norfolk Fall Fair



"How about this one? No, it's not the Festival Noamd car either!"
Waterford Pumpkinfest

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