



The Island Fiddler

The Newsletter of the Prince Edward Island Fiddlers Society



Vol. 6, Issue 3

December 2008

Jimmy O'Connor

by Amy Swenson

Jimmy O'Connor, now 81, has always lived in Murray Harbour. He was the fourth born child out of eleven, having five brothers and five sisters. His father loved to sing and his grandmother O'Connor could step dance and "tune" the fiddle music. I found him at home on a foggy November afternoon, snug by his woodstove with his wife of 51 years, Fanny Young O'Connor. He was very surprised and pleased to be presented with a PEI Fiddlers Society Honourary Life Membership for his outstanding lifetime contribution to Island fiddling. He was very happy to reminisce about his life and his violins.



Jimmy O'Connor

During the past 16 years, Jimmy has survived multiple heart attacks, a stroke, an operation and a fall down the stairs which resulted in a broken neck, from which he has made an amazing recovery. It is rumoured that he must have a guardian angel, but the same cannot be said for his violins, as we shall see. The instrument he first learned on was made by his friend Leroy Muttart of Gladstone. Leroy constructed a fiddle-like object out of a ukulele which had a shingle glued over the frets to make a smooth fingerboard, and a rounded bridge. The bow was formed from a curved twig which had rosined cotton threads tied to it. Leroy played the Celtic harp and could tune this strange instrument. Perhaps because of this unorthodox 'violin', Jimmy developed a unique way of holding them on his chest by the heart rather than under the chin.

After Jimmy had made some progress as a young teenager learning to play on Leroy's creation, his uncle Parker Buell gave him a real violin, but he did not have it very long before his cousin sat on it by mistake and smashed it to pieces.

So Jimmy made a hen house and traded it with Ernie Hopkins for another violin. After Jimmy quit going to the little Gladstone School (10-20 students in those days) at the age of 15, he got a job working for Walter and Buster Jones at their cattle and mink farms. With his wages, Jimmy ordered a Lone Ranger Guitar from the Sears catalogue and he and Leroy spent hours together on the roof of Leroy's shed, Leroy whistling the tunes and telling Jimmy when to change chords. Jimmy's oldest brother Andrew

learned on this guitar from a book that came with a Sears Hawaiian model owned by Phyllis MacKay.

Later Jimmy acquired another "Paganini" labelled fiddle from Gordon Wilkie, who said his grandfather had brought it over from Scotland many years before. This violin was widely admired for its beautiful sound, but it was not in Jimmy's possession for too long before he got into a dispute with his brother Elmer, who dashed the fiddle against the wall and left the old dry instrument in splinters. Andy Cleary then gave Jimmy an old fiddle needing a lot of repair, but when Jimmy put it together he discovered that it had a nice sweet sound. With this violin, he and his cousin Garnet Buell won a talent contest in Murray Harbour, and they were soon in demand playing at showers, weddings, ceilidhs, benefits, & house parties. Jimmy also recalls playing with his younger brother Oral, and often up at his sister Janie and Angus MacPherson's place where their son Lester soon learned to accompany Jimmy. He also played with Harold Cuddy and Loretta Young and has fond memories of playing with Dot Macaulay at house parties in Souris and at the Montague Legion.

See Jimmy page 3

The Island Fiddler

Editor: Anne M. McPhee 687-1521
Asst Editor: Ward MacDonald 626-8084
Distribution: Patsy Cook 566-2424
Advertising: Blair Myers 569-4518

The Island Fiddler is the quarterly newsletter of the P.E.I. Fiddlers Society.

All editions of *The Island Fiddler* can be found on the internet at <http://www.peifiddlers.com>

The *opinions* expressed herein are not necessarily those of *The Island Fiddler*. *The Island Fiddler* does not assume any responsibility or otherwise with respect to the products or services advertised.

Mail: The Island Fiddler, 135 Kent Street,
 P.O. Box 3311, Charlottetown, PE C1A 8W5
Email: annemcphée@pei.sympatico.ca

P.E.I. Fiddlers Society
 Established 22 May 1977 * Incorporated 31 March 1983

P.E.I. Fiddlers Society Executive

Ward MacDonald, President 626-8084
 Anne M. McPhee, 1st Vice-President 687-1521
 Ray Brow, 2nd Vice-President 652-2225
 Paul Cheverie, Treasurer 566-3551

Prince County Fiddlers

Barry Thompson, President 836-3844
wbtompson@gov.pe.ca

Queens County Fiddlers

Linda Moran, President 963-2236
jenmor@pei.sympatico.ca

Eastern Kings Fiddlers

Anne M. McPhee 687-1521
annemcphée@pei.sympatico.ca

Southern Kings Fiddlers

Amy Swenson 962-2273
gagliano31@hotmail.com

Acadian Fiddlers

Dorothy Griffin Farish 436-7007
dfarish@isn.net

Privacy Statement
 Information collected is solely for use by
 The Prince Edward Island Fiddlers Society.



Ward MacDonald

From the President By Ward MacDonald

It's great to be back! Let me start by thanking the members who attended our AGM last month for selecting me for the role of president once again.

It is another exciting time to be leading the charge! As I have experienced with each of my terms as Society president, I am surrounded by an incredibly talented group of individuals that make my work very easy. Our executive, our newsletter team, our web master, and our chapter representatives have all demonstrated their great passion for fiddling and community, and they share it through their varied and plentiful skills.

I am very proud of this issue. I believe the biographies and stories within this newsletter will give you a broad picture of the proud and priceless tradition of fiddling we are blessed with in Prince Edward Island.

Just a few months ago, one of our members shared an idea with me that I instantly fell in love with. Marlene MacDonald will tell you about a brand new initiative which I am sure will be an inspiration to all fiddlers and fiddle lovers on PEI [see page 4]. I am sure that this project will help to grow our membership, inspire a new generation of fiddlers, and fill us all with memories that will last a lifetime. And we're just getting started...again!



Blair Myers (left) and Allan MacDonald play a few tunes before and after the business of the PEI Fiddlers Society Annual Meeting.



Toll Free: 1-888-222-9155
24 Emergency 628-9332
or 626-6901

368-3016
16 Walker Drive

Fiddle and/or Accompaniment Teachers

Abram Village	Louise Arsenault	Fiddle	854-2830
Argyle Shore	Roy Johnstone	Fiddle	675-2541
Caledonia	Amy Swenson	Fiddle	962-2273
Charlottetown	Kathryn Dau-Schmidt	Fiddle	672-2711
	Kendra MacGillivray	Fiddle	367-5606
	Ward MacDonald	Fiddle	626-8084
	Jennifer LaLecheur	Fiddle	566-5430
	Aaron Crane	Fiddle	388-1040
Cumberland	Courtney Hogan	Fiddle	675-3593
Fortune	Mark Haines	Fiddle+	687-1404
Harrington	Cynthia MacLeod	Fiddle	672-2555
Kensington	Cathy Campbell	Fiddle	836-3887
Montague	Sheila Fitzpatrick	Fiddle	838-3334
Mount Stewart	Gary Chipman	Fiddle+	676-2599
Richmond	MacKinnon Family	Fiddle	854-2245
Rollo Bay	Kathryn Dau-Schmidt	Fiddle	672-2711
Rollo Bay	Jimmy Townshend	Guitar	687-2373
Summerside	Anastasia DesRoches	Fiddle	854-3116

Step Dancing Teachers

College of Piping	436-5377 or 877-224-7473
Jaime Bell	962-2846
Jocelyne Arsenault	854-2721
Judy MacLean	969-4100 or 902-566-5545
Susan Pitre	628-6566
Susan and Libbe Hubley	836-3887
Shirley Burke	368-2416
Tracy Arsenault	854-3237

If you wish to be listed as a teacher, contact the editor.
annemc1@pei.sympatico.ca or 687-1521

Fiddling Related Websites

Anastasia DesRoches	www.anastasiadesroches.com
Billy MacInnis	www.billymacinnis.homestead.com
Canadian Grand Masters	canadiangrandmasters.ca
Cape Breton Fiddlers	www.sfcelticmusic.com
Cape Breton Live	www.capebretonlive.com
Chuck & Albert	www.chuckandalbert.com
Courtney Hogan	www.courtneyhogan.ca/home.html
College of Piping	www.collegeofpiping.com
Cynthia MacLeod	www.cynthiamacleod.com
Gaelic PEI	http://www.gaelicpei.org
Ivan and Vivian Hicks	www.ivanhicks.com
Ken Perlman	www.kenperlman.com
Maritime Fiddlers Assoc.	www.MaritimeFiddler.ca
Nathan Condon	www.nathancondon.com
Ocean 100	www.ocean100.com
P.E.I. Music Awards	www.peiawards.com
Queens Co. Fiddlers	www.queenscountyfiddlers.com
Richard Wood	www.peisland.com/richardwood
Rollo Bay Fiddle Fest	www.rollobayfiddlefest.ca
Roy Johnstone	www.royjohnstone.com
Tim Chaisson	www.timothychaisson.com
Tune Transcriptions	www.fiddlecase.com
Valley Heritage radio	www.valleyheritageradio.ca

Jimmy cont. from page 1

The duo was also known to play at Johnson's dances in Murray Harbour North and at Woodland Gardens and more recently at the Murray Harbour Ceilidhs and the spring Murray River QEH Benefit concerts.

Jimmy learned many of his tunes from the radio station in Antigonish, and from his sister Ada Ross who would come home from dances and 'tune' the music for Jimmy. He learned the Flowers of Edinburgh from his grandmother's 'tuning' and remembers Walking Uptown, Maple Sugar, Road to the Isles, the Balkan Hills and Sheehan's Reel as among his favourite tunes. A few years ago he showed up at our Community School Fiddle Class at Murray Harbour and picked up the Ashokan Farewell.

Over the years, Jimmy worked at many jobs, packing cans of "Chicken Haddock" for overseas during WWII. He also worked "at the lobsters" and at a saw mill owned by Rob Gordon. He and Fanny raised five children, all of whom still live on PEI, and until recently he had horses, chickens and purebred Herefords. This past winter, he was stricken with arthritis in his left hand, which has stopped him from fiddling for now, but his many fans are hopeful that his guardian angel will get back on the job and that Jimmy will be able to get back to playing the music he loves so much, on that sweet toned fiddle of Fanny's that he now favours, always playing from the heart.



Roy MacDonald (left) and Lester MacPherson (right) playing with Jimmy O'Connor at Murray River.

PEI Fiddlers Society AGM Report By Secretary Anne M. McPhee

The annual meeting of the PEI Fiddlers Society was held on Saturday November 8th, 2008. President Sheila Fitzpatrick was unable to attend due to a death in the family but sent her report in writing. She regretfully resigned from her position on the Society's executive due to a very busy personal life and being unable to commit the time and energy she would like to the Society's goals. She promises to continue to support the Society in the future.

All the Chapters reported good fiddle activity in their regions and lessons have started again up with lots of interest.

Anne McPhee reported that the newsletter is getting very positive feedback and is in high demand. She says she has a hard time getting her coat off when she lands in Goose River with a new issue—everyone wants a copy. It was agreed by everyone at the meeting that this is a good sign.

There was discussion about the need for revenue for the Society. It was agreed to increase the general membership fee to \$20 or \$10 per Chapter member.

Marlene MacDonald got everyone excited about her idea to send a group of Island Fiddlers to Scotland !! More on that in the next column.

Elections were held and Ward MacDonald was unanimously elected to President, with Anne McPhee as 1st VP, Ray Brow as 2nd VP and Paul Cheverie remaining as Treasurer.

Anastasia gave a wonderful presentation on her project collecting Island Acadian fiddle music. See more on this later in the issue. The meeting ended on a positive note and Allan MacDonald was happy to get his fiddle out again.

PEI Fiddlers Planning Trip of a Lifetime Destination: Scotland



Hi Everyone:

I want to tell you about an exciting idea that I think is a fantastic opportunity for our Island group!

First a little background: many of you may know Burton MacIntyre from Cape Breton.

Marlene MacDonald

Burton is a step dancer and a fiddle enthusiast and is very supportive of up and coming fiddlers and fiddle events.

Burton recently shared an inspiring story with me about a group of ninety-five members of the Cape Breton

Fiddlers Association who traveled to Scotland in July of 2008. The group included 65 fiddlers and other supporters and they all had experiences of a lifetime: they traveled the Scottish countryside, toured the cities, performed in a castle, and shared music with new friends across the ocean!

Scotland



The group of ninety-five took on the task of fund raising for this trip through various events and also looked for sponsorships and funding from government and other sources.

After hearing Burton's story, I thought "If they can do it in Nova Scotia, we can do it on Prince Edward Island!" I witnessed the enthusiasm, the devotion, and the solidarity that the Queens County Fiddlers had when they were working on their award winning CD, "Forty Fiddles Flat Out". I think our group on a bigger scale [PEIFS] can come together to work hard to achieve the goal of traveling to Scotland.

I presented this idea at the PEI Fiddlers Society Annual General Meeting on Saturday, November 8 and it received overwhelming enthusiastic support from those in attendance. We are in the very early stages of embarking on this project and will have more details and information in the future. I just wanted to tell everyone about this incredible trip and I hope many of you are interested and willing to help with the work needed to achieve this goal!

Thank you,
Marlene MacDonald
Chair, PEIFS Fundraising Committee—Trip to Scotland

MCM BRICKLAYERS LTD

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.
CIA 7N34 (902) 368-3361

Supporting P.E.I. Fiddling

Bernadette's Flowers
— Where great designs start —

Bunbury Mall
Stratford



We Deliver
566 4000
Toll Free 1 877 766 1898

Bernadette & Gloria Praught
Every day is special!

Every day is a special day,

At Bernadette's Flowers

Arrangements

For all occasions

**Great Friendly Service
We Deliver Island wide**



Anne M. McPhee

Eastern Kings Fiddlers
by Anne M. McPhee

There's an excitement in the air when it's time to get back to fiddle in Rollo Bay. People stop to ask when we're starting up. They rearrange their schedules, tune their fiddles and start thinking about the tunes they hope to work on this year. This is my 12th year playing the fiddle and most Monday nights I'm in my car, heading up the road and walking through the door and I'm not really sure how I got there. Lots of nights I am just so tired. I don't feel like going out again. It's so cold and dark. It'd be so easy just to stay home and watch *Prison Break* on TV with Billy. But the habit of going to fiddle takes me out the door and the moment I put my bow to the string, well, there's this feeling that runs right through me that I can't put into words. It tells me I'm doing exactly what I'm supposed to be doing. It energizes me like nothing else does. Like Bishop Faber said this summer, it "feeds the soul". Now, does this mean I want to be a performer? Nope. Not a chance. I pretty much just scratch away with the worst of them. I'm just really glad to be keeping the tradition alive. To keep the music going. Just to keep my dad's fiddle in tune. It really is a great honour to play even a small part in this great Island culture. The group is a great help—we inspire and encourage each other and, the bonus, we cover up the worst of each others mistakes. Having the opportunity to play with someone as great as Peter Chaisson is a gift not to pass up either and I am just grateful that I can play at all, so I guess I'll keep at it, keeping the tradition alive. 

A little story taken with permission from
"A History of Scottish Fiddling in the Cheverie Family"
by Randy Cheverie

"Radio made its appearance to the (Souris) area in the '30s. There were few radios around but those that did have radios always had company especially on the nights the Cape Breton Fiddlers were on the air. The introduction of the radio was not without its colourful moments as illustrated by the following: When the first radios came out, Frank McGaugh, an elderly retired gentleman, was visited by a radio salesman. The salesman finally convinced Frank to buy one of these battery operated radios saying it would provide Frank with some entertainment. The salesman proceeded to install the radio with the ground wire and the outside aerial. The radio was finally installed and the salesman told Frank it was ready to go. Frank asked the salesman to play Lord MacDonald's Reel on the radio. The salesman tried to explain to Frank that you couldn't play any special tune on it, but that you had to listen to whatever was being played at the time. Frank then said to the salesman, "If this doesn't play Lord MacDonald's Reel you can take the damn thing out!" 



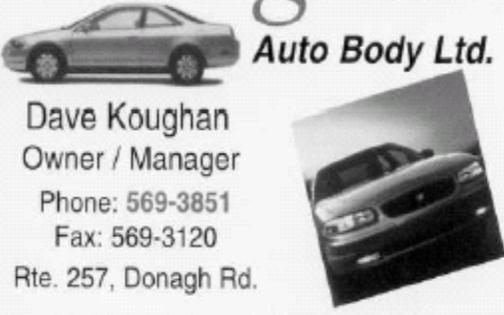
Francis McCormack plays a tune on a copy of his home-made shingle fiddle with fishing line on the fiddle for strings and on the bow and a ham can amplifier on the back.

"Collision Repair at its Finest"

BILL Koughan
Auto Body Ltd.

Dave Koughan
Owner / Manager

Phone: 569-3851
Fax: 569-3120
Rte. 257, Donagh Rd.



A & D Backhoeing



Owner Allan MacDonald
Phone/fax: 961-2105
Cell: 393-5727

We'll take care of all your digging, trucking, sewer system, and landscaping needs



Southern Kings Report by Amy Swenson

Amy Swenson

It is hard to believe that it is already time for the 2008 Christmas season! It was a busy fall at all the regular ceilidhs at Dundas, Murray Harbour, Kilmuir, Sturgeon and the Legion,

and the popular Fiddlers Sons Thursday night Ceilidhs at Poole's Corner did well extended through October, ending with a super concert featuring guest Cape Breton fiddler Wendy MacIsaac. Thanks to the efforts of Frank and Karen Senechal and friends, periodic ceilidhs are now being held at the newly renovated Cambridge Hall, located near Alliston and Murray River. Funds are now being raised for an extension on the back of the Hall for a tuning room.

On October 19th the Murray Harbour Five played at Cambridge for the first time, and we were all impressed with the renovations, harvest decorations, and the cozy and friendly atmosphere of the hall, which was packed with an enthusiastic crowd. Everyone was very glad to see fiddler Attwood O'Connor back in action after a nasty bout of pneumonia. He claims the doctors got tired of seeing him and turned him loose! He played some fast solo sets and played for step dancer Vanessa Bernard, and was then overheard giving an admirer backstage a line about how shy he is, so we know his sense of humour as well as his fiddling has survived intact. A button accordion player from Montague (via Newfoundland) delighted everyone with his lively tunes. Fiddler Bud Stewart and friends and singer Josie Patkai also provided fine entertainment that evening.

I was lucky this year to be able to get away from Saturday teaching for a few hours to attend the PEI Fiddlers Society Annual meeting. Many exciting ideas were presented, and it was great to hear from Anastasia DesRoches about the amazing collection of original tunes she has gathered from 34 Island Acadian fiddler composers. Marie Livingstone's reel Fisherman's Fiddle is already a hit with my private and community school students, and we are all looking forward to the future publication of a selection of these Acadian style tunes (mostly jigs and reels, naturally)!

Many Christmas concerts are planned around the area, starting with the benefit concert for St. George's Anglican Church on Dec. 4th at Montague High. A dozen young fiddlers will be playing Christmas carols with me there, and Grace Walsh of Wood Islands has been asked to do a couple duets. She impressed the audience at Kilmuir Ceilidh October 4th with her lovely renditions of some Robbie Burns songs, so everyone is looking forward to hearing her perform again. Murray Harbour Ceilidh is having their Christmas celebration Dec. 5th at 7 pm, the Cambridge Hall will be decked out for a Christmas concert featuring fiddler Sheila Fitzgerald and many others. Please check the paper or call 962-2976 for more details on this fun event.

The Vernon River Community School has been well attended. The fiddle class has had a lot of fun learning Urban Chaisson's new Halley's Waltz, written for his granddaughter, and Sheguindah Bay, a lovely tune by the late Don Pettigrew of Thunder Bay. We have conscripted the guitar class to play along with us at the closing and always fantastic potluck supper on December 8th. Murray Harbour Community School starts in January and offers many interesting classes throughout the week at the Community Centre. Fiddle classes for adult beginners and more advanced are held Monday evenings at 7 pm. For more information, call me at 962-2273.

The PEI Fiddlers Society are awarding an Honourary Life Membership to fiddler Jimmy O'Connor of Murray Harbour. He has been battling arthritis this past year and has been unable to play, but he was active for many decades in our area, playing for dances, benefits and ceilidhs as a very popular performer. We all wish him the best for the coming year, and congratulate him on his much deserved award.



Safely Home

This fall the Island lost several fiddlers and supporters. They include Bennett Campbell, Robert Crane, Jim Faye, Ralph Gay, Delton Riley and Carl Webster. Also Dr. Alton Craig of Ottawa, a regular visitor to the Island and Scott MacAuley of the College of Piping.

They will all be missed.

Queens County Fiddlers Report by Carolyn Drake

A new fiddle season, a new location and new members — it all adds up to good news for the Queens County Fiddlers. The group made the move to its new home, Parkdale Elementary School in Charlottetown, early in the fall and is settling in just great. People are still welcome to come and listen, as always, but they must arrive between 7:30 and 7:45 p.m. Because we are in a school, the doors must be kept locked in the evening due to security reasons. We have someone at the door during that 15-minute period to make sure people get in. Also, outdoor footwear must be removed.

We'll be taking our usual break over the Christmas period, but please feel free to drop by throughout the rest of the winter. Please note that if schools in the Eastern School District are closed due to winter weather, then our group will not be meeting either.

As for the new members, we have welcomed five people to the group this fall. They are Marlene Cox, Fiona MacQorquodale, Marsha McCormick, David Rankin and Katie Sonier. It's great to have you.

Also, we have 22 paid-up members for the coming year and 12 life members who attend practice, so we have been enjoying having 18 to 20 players every Wednesday. In addition, we thank Vince Keoughan for his ongoing patience with leading the group and Jennifer Garrity for accompanying us on the piano.

Looking ahead, the group is getting ready to begin the Sunday afternoon potlucks which members enjoyed last winter. They were held once a month at a member's home with plenty of good music and food. The first one is scheduled for Nov. 30 at Allan MacDonald's.

In other planned outings, a group of Queens County Fiddlers will be playing in Montague on Nov. 26 for Bud Ings' book launch. On Dec. 3 the group will be playing a mixture of fiddle tunes and Christmas music at Andrews Lodge of Stratford.

And finally, the Queens County Fiddlers have been asked to close the Christmas Concert at St. Dunstan's Basilica in Charlottetown on Dec. 21.

Also, keep watch for notice of the group's annual meeting which will likely be held sometime in late January or early February.

And, finally, looking even further ahead, the Queens County Fiddlers are looking forward to adding an off-Island date to their schedule in 2009 as the group will play at the Festival of Cape Breton Fiddlers in Cape Breton in August. There will be more about this in the next newsletter.



The Judy MacLean Dancers (left-right) Vanessa Bernard, Bethany MacLeod, Paige LeClair, (Judy MacLean) and Janine Chapman as seen at the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival this year. All students are featured at the Sunday Night Shenanigans at BIS in Charlottetown, hosted by Judy MacLean - an ongoing monthly show/ceilidh. The next event is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 30 and the Christmas Special Show is Sunday, December 14, 7pm at BIS with special guests and fiddle performances by all students (all are taking fiddle instruction). Other dancers to perform are: Kristyn Visser, Emily Jewell, Barrington Duffy, Sarah Jenkins and several newcomers to the dance school. Regular fiddler for the show/ceilidh is Aaron Crane with brother Ryan. All events are fundraisers for various causes.

Fiddle Practices Open To The Public

Acadian Fiddlers Wellington 436-5532
Fridays 8:00 pm Boys & Girls Club
Prince County Fiddlers Summerside 836-3844
Mondays 7:30 pm Community Connections
Queens County Fiddlers Parkdale 569-4592
Wednesdays 7:30 pm Parkdale School
Morell Fiddle Group Morell 961-2962
Thursdays 7:00 pm Above the Pharmacy
Eastern Kings Fiddlers Rollo Bay 687-1521
Mondays 6:45 pm at the Rollo Bay School
Everyone is Welcome



Barry Thompson

Prince County Fiddlers
By Barry Thompson

The Prince County Fiddlers continue to meet at Community Connections Summerside for practice on Monday evenings at 7:30. We currently number 13 fiddlers, and in addition are fortunate to have one member on keyboard, two on guitar, and one on accordion. The Prince County Fiddlers continue to perform at nursing homes and community care facilities when invited. During the past summer we performed at the Queens County Fiddlers' Annual Concert and the Highland Gathering hosted by the College of Piping in Summerside. I am pleased to report our well attended annual concert in August was another success, special thanks go out to the Queens County Fiddlers, The Long River Players, The Lady Slipper Dancers and Junior Prince County Fiddlers for their valuable contributions.

The Junior Prince County Fiddlers include several members of the Lady Slipper Dancers and are under the capable direction of Cathy Campbell a valued member of our group. The Junior Fiddlers have performed at various venues during the Summer including the Harvest festival parade in Kensington and with the Senior fiddlers at the Harvest Festival Official opening. The Prince County Fiddlers are pleased to be a sponsor and assist in keeping the tradition alive.

On September 30th we held our annual meeting. Barry Thompson will serve again as president, Leith Thomson will act as Vice President, and Robert Gallant will continue to perform the duties of treasurer and secretary.

The Prince County Fiddlers will continue to welcome all to our practice and continue to seek new members.

With the Christmas Season fast approaching the Prince County Fiddlers would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.




Island Painting and Decorating Ltd.

- INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR PAINTING
- WALLPAPER HANGING AND VINYL WALLCOVERING
- WALL REPAIRS AND SEAM FILLING OF NEW GYPROC

ALLISON DRAKE

TEL: 892-6677
CEL: 628-7066
FAX: 628-2284

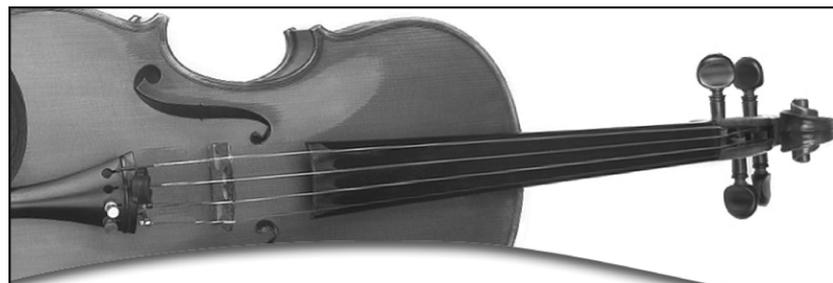
5 WESTHAVEN CRESCENT
CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.
CANADA C1E 1L6



Sign Craft Signs

COMPLETE SIGN SERVICE

18 PARK STREET
CHARLOTTETOWN P.E.I.



Proud Supporter of Island Talent

Shop outside the box.



OPEN: MON -WED 9:00AM-5:30PM, THURS & FRI 9:00AM-9:00PM, SATURDAY 9:00AM-5:30PM
DOWNTOWN CHARLOTTETOWN • OVER 90 SHOPS • INFO 894-9505 More online at WWW.CONFEDCOURTMALL.COM



Dorothy Griffin-Farish

Acadian News by Dorothy Griffin-Farish

On October 18, 2008 Le Centre Belle-Alliance, 5 Maria Stella Ave., Summerside hosted the official launching of the *C'est à Nous Project*, a joint effort between the Acadian Cultural Federation, Heritage Canada, the P.E.I. Government, and Anastasia DesRoches. The *C'est à Nous Project* is a collection of approximately 300 original contemporary Acadian fiddle tunes from composers from across Prince Edward Island. Anastasia visited with 34 composers. She collected recordings of the composers playing their own tunes then transcribed all the tunes into standard notation. She also collected a biography and a photo of each player. This collection, covering several binders, is now housed at the Acadian Museum in Miscouche. Future plans for this music are to publish a book and record a CD in collaboration with the composers.

An excellent article on the above project was done by Jacinthe Laforest for the October 22nd issue of **La Voix Acadienne**.

On Friday, October 24th a social evening with Anastasia DesRoches and guests took place at the Brothers Two Restaurant in Summerside from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. This was in conjunction with the Second Annual Pumpkin Festival.

On Saturday, October 25th Suroît and the Chaissons, consisting of Timothy, Brent, J.J. and Elmer, entertained at the Pumpkin Festival at Le Centre Belle-Alliance with a great variety of blues, jazz, rock, country, bluegrass, cajun, folk and traditional music.

Gala Jeunesse took place on Sunday, November 10th at Le Centre Belle-Alliance, starting at 2:30 p.m. Close to 40 kids were involved. The gala was put on to showcase talented francophone youth. Brandon Arsenault, Mitchell Richard and Trevor Proffitt were three of the performers. Les Tapageuses and other step dancers were there. The young people involved had a chance to do training sessions with professionals like Helen Bergeron, Rémi Arsenault and Caroline Bernard.

A small group received training with Geneviève Ouellette. The participants were in charge of the decor at this event.

Local entertainers from the Evangeline region entertained at the Chez-Nous in Wellington, Andrew's Lodge in Summerside and various other venues. Some of the entertainers included Peter Arsenault, Eddy and Amand Arsenault, Margaret Gallant, Gary Gallant, Tracy Arsenault ...to name but a few. More entertainment in the area is forthcoming, depending on the weather.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!
See you in 2009



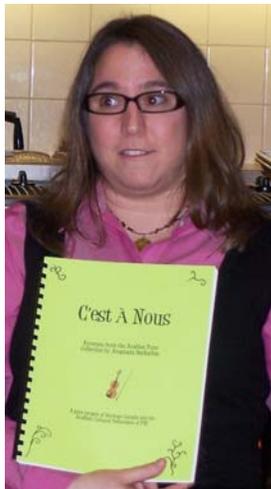
Anastasia DesRoches Speaks at PEI Fiddlers Society AGM

Anastasia DesRoches was warmly welcomed by the PEI Fiddlers Society members at the recent annual meeting. Anastasia presented a captivating and inspiring presentation on the work she has been doing over the past year collecting and compiling original compositions of fiddle tunes from fiddlers of Acadian descent. Anastasia described the process involved in her project and the reaction from the composers. Many were very shy about playing their music for her feeling "it was nothing". She described one lady who wouldn't practice her music around her husband, she didn't think it was good enough. He didn't know she had written any tunes. Now he is trying to learn her tunes to surprise her.

Anastasia concluded her presentation with a few samples of the music she had recorded and passed around a copy of the book of tunes she has compiled, "C'est A Nous." She says the title has a double meaning. The direct translation is "it's ours." It's part of our Acadian culture, it belongs to us and also, it's our responsibility to preserve and protect it."

There were many familiar names in the list of composers Anastasia recorded including Marie Livingstone (who has composed about 200 tunes), Brent Chaisson, Edward P. Arsenault, Kevin Chaisson and many others.

Everyone was extremely impressed with the project and inspired with the work that Anastasia is doing. Anastasia remained after the meeting to talk to the members and elaborate more on her project. Congratulations Anastasia, on a job well done. 🐦



Anastasia DesRoches

UNITED JANITORIAL INC.

Complete Cleaning Services

* Office	* Construction	* Windows
* Commercial	* Floor Care	* Carpets

Building Solid Relationships on Quality Service

Island Owned and Operated
- Bonded and Insured -
Free Estimates

Local: **(902)569-1822**

Toll Free: 1-866-486-4526

www.unitedjanitorial.com

email: admin@unitedjanitorial.com

Don't see what you're looking for? Tell us!

The Old Lorne Valley School

Submitted by Rhonda Fisher

On Route 355, the Lorne Valley Road which is connected to Riverton, is a little community known as Lorne Valley. Perhaps it's not well known yet but it is getting to be as the years go by. In that little community there is a little yellow building which was once the one room school; it's now used as a community hall. It's used for different functions; birthdays, reunions, showers, meetings and during the winter sometimes game night.

On Wednesday evenings From 8:00 – 11:00 pm there is a real treat for those who enjoy the old time music, square dancing and waltzes. We are pleased to have Peter and Kevin Chaisson play on a regular basis. Their names speak for themselves. What wonderful talent! These gifted men are joined by friends who drop by on occasion to play us a tune or sing us a song. We have been so blessed over the years by the talent that has found its way to Lorne Valley.

Like that old saying, the Lorne Valley Dances are where old friends meet and new ones are made. The atmosphere is friendly, the people are great. We have our regulars and if someone is missing it's noticed and people are concerned. We have our occasional people who come when they can. Other Islanders might have heard about us and come to see for themselves. We have many tourists who come to check it out as well. Some have never square danced before but many will jump right in and try it. The regulars will guide them along and tell them or show them how it's done. We're never short of people willing to help them along. There are others who are a little more cautious and would rather watch a little first. This is one case where you learn more by doing and usually everyone catches on rather quickly.

Either way there are a lot of laughs and fun had by all. At the dances we have a 50/50 draw and also a free lunch. The lunch is a big part of the social end of things. Anyone who can help will bring milk, cheese, sweets, sandwiches, biscuits, candies and, on occasion other special treats. These people can't be thanked enough.

So we say a great big thank you to all of those who help in any way; there are too many to mention. For those we support the events of our community hall, thank you. Together we can make a difference, we can continue to see our future dreams of renovations and expansion become a reality. We'll keep our place for meeting and enjoying. This little old school in Lorne Valley is in need of some tender, loving care, so it will be with us for a long time to come. Let's preserve our heritage and keep it here for future generations. 



Roy Johnstone

Fiddle Shop Talk

by Roy Johnstone

Unfortunately, the Sunday sessions are no longer continuing at Brennan's pub. The pub was sold to a Dutch developer and apparently it's going to become a disco bar! There's some good news though, another Old Triangle pub is opening up in the old playhouse in Charlottetown. Perhaps there will be some new sessions starting up there. Thanks to everyone who came out to the Benevolent Irish society to support the fundraiser for Jim Faye's wife Maria and their son Seamus. Jim died in Toronto in October. Jim was a talented musician who played around the Island for several years. He will be sorely missed.

I've included a new waltz tune to try out [see page 12]. I wrote this for my aunt Millie and I play it a little on the slow side and with some dignity although she was a very energetic and vibrant lady. She operated a little cafe in Vancouver called the Strawberry Lane and my brother and I loved the French fries and strawberry milkshakes which she was famous for. I recorded it on mandolin on my new CD. You can listen to part of the tune at www.royjohnstone.com.

Here are a few things to remember when you're learning a new tune. Check what key it's in, in this case A major, three sharps. Notice the time signature is 3/4 so it's likely a waltz or perhaps slow air. Tempo is not indicated but I play it around 72 beats per minute. Part of the challenge in this tune is to keep the string crossings smooth and even so you don't lose the 3/4 rhythm. Slide your first finger into third position on the high A in bar 33. There's quite a bit of slurred bowing so just try it out and develop your own feel for the tune. Have fun.

Keep your bow rosined and the fiddle in tune. 

*ECMA multi-nominee, performer and recording artist,
Roy Johnstone has a website at: www.royjohnstone.com*

Peter Mallard
CARPENTRY LTD.



185 MacCallum Road, Marshfield
Charlottetown, RR#3
PEI, C1A-7J7

• NO JOB TOO LARGE OR SMALL •

Ph: 629-1232 Cell: 628-7464

Specializing In
Finish & Custom
Mill Work &
Cabinet Making

- Roofs
- Patios
- Suspended
Ceilings
- Residential &
Commercial

Events Forecast

For up-to-date events visit www.peifiddlers.com; www.festivalspei.com/events or check local listings

Sundays 8 pm	Monticello Ceilidh,	Monticello - Log Hall	Rte 16 Monticello	902-687-2547
Sundays 8 pm	Sunday Night Shenanigans	Benevolent Irish Society	Charlottetown	902-892-2367
Every Second Sunday 6:30	Ceilidh	St. Paul's Parish Hall	Sturgeon	902-962-3918
Last Sunday 7-9 pm	Ceilidh/Concert	Bonshaw Community Centre	Bonshaw	902-675-4282
Every other Monday 7:30	Ceilidh Kitchen Party	Bingo Country, Riverside Dr.	Charlottetown	902-940-6702
Wednesdays 8 pm	Square Dance	Old Lorne Valley School	Lorne Valley	902-687-2584
Wednesdays 8 pm	Ceilidh	Silver Threads	Souris	902-687-2396
Fridays 8 pm	Music, Song and Dance	Benevolent Irish Society	Charlottetown	902-892-2367
Fridays 8 pm	Friday Night Ceilidh	St. Peters Circle Club	St. Peter's Bay	902-961-2899
Every Other Friday 7:30 pm	Drama Club Ceilidh,	Murray Harbour Hall	Murray Harbour	902-962-2157
Saturdays 9 pm	Goose River Dance	Goose River Hall	Goose River	902-961-2205
Every second Saturday 8 pm	Square Dancing	York Community Centre	York	902-629-1869
Every third Saturday 8 pm	Reuban's Jamboree	Sea View Hall	Sea View	902-836-3844
First Saturday 8 pm	Ceilidh	Kilmuir Hall	Kilmuir	902-838-4768
Thursday, Dec 4, 7:30 pm	Tim & Kevin Chaisson in Concert	Benevolent Irish Society	Charlottetown	
Sunday Dec 14, 2—4 pm	A Mark Haines Christmas Concert	Legion	Souris	902-687-1404
Sunday, Dec 7, 7:30 pm,	A Celtic Christmas with Sheila FitzPatrick, and friends	BIS	Charlottetown	
Sunday Dec 14, 8:00 pm	Ceilidh Christmas Party	Monticello Log Hall	Monticello	902-687-2547
Sunday Dec 21, 7:00 pm	Old Fashioned Christmas Concert	Monticello Log Hall	Monticello	902-687-2547
Tuesday, Dec 31, 9:00 pm	New Years Eve Dinner and Dance with Peter Chaisson		Goose River	902-961-2205
Sunday, Feb 7th, 2009 2—7 pm	Fiddle Doo and Potluck	Murray Christian Centre	Kensington	902-963-2356

Eddy and Amand Reel

Marie Livingstone

Droits D'auteur/Copyright: La Fédération Culturelle de l'I-P-É pour Marie Livingstone ©

Score

Millie's Waltz

Roy Johnstone

Violin

Cape Breton Fiddle Tunes...



A Collection of
Original Compositions

by Raymond Ellis

There's a new book of fiddle tunes on the go by well known Cape Breton fiddler, Raymond Ellis. The book is a collection of 65 of Ray's own original compositions. He's selling it for \$15.00 (plus \$2.00 shipping and handling) and it can be ordered directly through Raymond from his home in Inverness by calling (902) 258-2368.

Mark your calendars for the

Fiddle Doo & Pot Luck Supper

at the Murray Christian Centre in Kensington from
2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Feb. 7th 2009.

A bus load of Fiddlers & listeners are coming over
from the mainland. Island fiddlers and
accompanists are encouraged to come and
participate in these great musical afternoons.

Mary 902-963-2356