



The Island Fiddler

The Newsletter of the Prince Edward Island Fiddlers Society



Vol. 5, Issue 1

June 2007

Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival, July 20-22

The 31st annual Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival will take place July 20th – 22nd. The Island's original Scottish fiddling festival will feature top performers from across Atlantic Canada. Hosted by the Chaisson Family, this year's line up will include Cape Breton Fiddlers Brenda Stubbert and Shelley Campbell, along with piano player Alan Dewar.

The "Festival Under the Stars" will also include dozens of Island performers such as Peter, Kenny, and Kevin Chaisson, the Queens County Fiddlers, Timothy Chaisson, JJ Chaisson, Francis MacDonald, Lemmy Chaisson, plus many, many more.

The Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival is the oldest festival of its kind on Prince Edward Island. It was started in 1977 to preserve traditional fiddling on P.E.I and has grown to include workshops, five concerts, and two old-time dances. Set in the beautiful rolling hills of Rollo Bay, the weekend festival boasts an amazing natural amphitheatre and has been pleasing crowds for over three decades with the best fiddling in the region.

Workshops will take place on the festival grounds on Friday and Saturday with instructors Ward MacDonald (fiddle), Anastasia DesRoches (fiddle), Jeff Matheson (guitar accompaniment), and Marlene McKinnon (step dance). A youth concert will be held in the Ceilidh Barn on Friday night, while Saturday and Sunday will each feature two outdoor concerts (2 – 5pm & 7 – 10pm) and a dance (10:30pm).

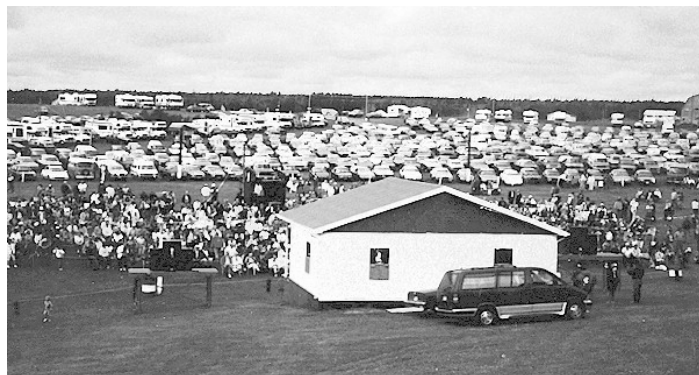


Peter Chaisson

Rollo Bay is situated on the east coast of Prince Edward Island, less than 5 minutes west of Souris and less than an hour drive from both Charlottetown and the ferry terminal at Wood Islands (car ferry from Pictou, Nova Scotia).

The festival grounds feature full campground facilities with 40 electrical hookups to accommodate all sizes of RVs and a designated groomed area for tenters. Beautiful, sandy beaches are within a three-minute walk, and modern washrooms and showers are available along with canteen facilities. More formal accommodations are easily found nearby in Souris (but you must book early!).

You may find more information at www.rollobayfiddlefest.ca or by calling Peter Chaisson at 687-2584.



The view behind the stage at the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival.

A Visit With Reggie Grady

By Anne M. McPhee

Who else could you talk to, have them look at your fiddle and get an honest opinion and a whole lot more? Two or more hours later and you're feeling like you couldn't possibly have spent your time in any better way than you just did. You've just gained a wealth of information about your fiddle that you didn't even know you didn't know. The model, the make, what the differences are, how old it might be, where it might have been made, where the sound post should be and how it should sound, what kind of tool is needed to set the sound post, where and how the bridge should be set, what kind of bow you might have, even the case may warrant some discussion if it is a particularly old one. The possibilities are endless especially since each and every one of these topics may lead to an interesting story about another fiddle that has passed through here at one time or another.

Then of course, in true Island fashion, there has to be some discussion about your family history, where you come from and who in your gene pool might have passed on the ability for you to play the fiddle. And naturally, there will be some more stories about what that person was like in the old days and some of the goings on from back then. Talk about enlightening!! And fun too.

Anyone who owns or even once owned a fiddle has probably had a conversation with Reggie Grady at one point or another and had a similar experience. Meeting Reggie and his lovely wife Rose is an experience you are not likely to forget.

So, where and how does this story begin? Despite the fact that there were no fiddlers in Reggie's family, the mere fact of having been born in East Baltic,

See Reggie, page 7

The Island Fiddler

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From the President



Sheila Fitzpatrick

Well, it's summer time and the green, rolling hills of PEI will be alive with the sound of fiddles for another season! From Abrams Village to Rollo Bay, there is never a shortage of great traditional music being played here on the Island.

We are very lucky to be home to many different styles of fiddling. We are also fortunate to have our regional chapters and other fiddling groups who are doing a great job of preserving their own brands of playing and culture. I encourage everyone to get out this summer to a concert, ceilidh, festival or square dance. And tell your families and friends, especially those visiting the Island, all about it! We all have a responsibility to preserve the traditional music and culture of PEI and we need to pass it on.

The music industry in general on the Island is a major element of the tourism sector. The following is an excerpt from Finance Minister Mitch Murphy's budget address on April 10th, 2007:

"Our Government recognizes the positive contributions to our culture and economy by the members of the PEI music industry. In this budget, our Government will invest \$130,000 in new program funding for the PEI music industry. We have long known our musicians and songwriters are as talented as any in the country and we understand strategic investment is needed to ensure that they continue to succeed. With this investment, our Government, will assist Island musicians with the production of their music and the marketing of their products in the region, the country and to the world."

Now that we have a new government taking power, I urge musicians and Islanders to talk to their MLAs and ask them to support this commitment that was made in the recent budget. With this support, the music and culture of Prince Edward Island can be preserved and taken to the next level.

Have a great summer and I hope to see everyone out and about fiddling, dancing or just clapping along!

Sheila FitzPatrick

President, P.E.I. Fiddlers Society

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	Ward MacDonald Fiddle	626-8084
	Kendra MacGillivray Fiddle	367-5606
	Gail Matheson Piano	628-1370
	Robert Arseneault (Sobers)	368-3237
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Richmond	MacKinnon Family Fiddle +	854-2245
Rollo Bay	Kathryn Dau-Schmidt Fiddle	672-2711
Summerside	Anastasia DesRoches Fiddle	854-3116

Step Dancing Teachers

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Jaime Bell	962-2846
Jocelyne Arsenault	854-2721
Judy MacLean	969-4100 or 902 566-5545
Monique Pendergast	367-9218
Susan and Libbe Hubley	836-3887
Shirley Burke	368-2416
Tracy Arsenault	854-3237

If you wish to be listed as a teacher, you may contact the editor at 626-8084 or celticsomething@hotmail.com

Fiddling Related Web Sites

Anastasia Desroches	www.anastasiadesroches.com
Billy McInnis	www.billymacinnis.homestead.com
Cape Breton Live	www.capebretonlive.com
Chuck & Albert	www.chuckandalbert.com
CJFX Radio	www.989xfm.supremeserver11.com
Courtney Hogan	www.courtneyhogan.ca/home.html
College of Piping	www.collegeofpiping.com
Cynthia MacLeod	www.cynthiamacleod.com
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Music on the Wheatley	www.musiconthewheatley.com
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P.E.I. Fiddlers Society	www.peifiddlers.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
The Fiddle Farm	www.thefiddlefarm.com
Tim Chaisson	www.timothychaisson.com
Waldron Leard photos	www.flickr.com/photos/shywriter55

Weekly Sessions at Brennan's

The acoustic sessions at Brennan's Pub will be expanded to take place every week starting in late June. Check the BUZZ or the Friday Guardian listings for exact dates. Until then, they are once per month. The Irish music and dance sessions are also once per month. Both are on Sunday afternoons 2 pm to 5 pm and these are open to everyone.

Hosted by Roy Johnstone, the sessions have been attended mostly by fiddlers but there are several mandolin players, bodhran players as well as concertina, bouzouki and banjo players joining in. The music is mostly traditional Irish but you may also hear Scottish, Breton and even the odd bluegrass tune. The first half is a slow session, mainly played from sheet music and the last half is regular tempo with tunes learned by ear. Everyone is encouraged to bring new tunes to the group to learn. The session cost is \$5 per person.

Cape Breton Fiddlers Pay Summer Visit

Guest fiddlers from Cape Breton will be featured at the Close to the Ground Concert Series this summer. The three musical guests are among the best Cape Breton fiddlers on the circuit today. Andrea Beaton, who is no stranger to PEI, will be appearing on August 9th along with Kimberly Fraser. Both of these ladies are accomplished fiddlers, pianists and step dancers and are favourites here on the Island.

Mairi Rankin will also make an appearance on August 30th. Mairi has played in PEI on several occasions with her group, *Bealach*, as well as part of "PEI Welcomes Cape Breton Concert Series" held at the Holy Redeemer Parish Hall in Charlottetown.

Island fiddler Cynthia MacLeod can also be seen every week performing with Fiddlers Sons through July and August, while Courtney Hogan will join the group for the month of September.

Hosted by Fiddlers Sons, the summer series runs every Thursday at 8pm from July 5th to September 27th at the Kaylee Hall in Pooles Corner, just outside of Montague at the intersections of Routes 3 and 4. Tickets are available at the door and for more information you may phone 394-1115.

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Eastern Kings Fiddlers Report

By Anne M. McPhee

One of the highlights of the spring social season in Kings County was, of course, the wedding ceremony joining Sheila MacKenzie and Robert Fitzpatrick in Holy Matrimony. The music was superb starting with the Queens County Fiddlers who filled the church with tunes as the guests arrived.



The Happy Bride & Groom
Sheila & Robert Fitzpatrick

During the ceremony, Kendra MacGillivray, Darla MacPhee, Mark Rooney, Lester Stubbart and Jon Matthews all provided a variety of musical accompaniment that only enhanced the power and the meaning of what was taking place.

Following the ceremony, Sheila tried hard to walk sedately down the aisle but the urge to do a step to Kendra's jig was just too overwhelming. There was no way to control the smiles on both the bride and groom though. They were just beaming. Their happiness and joy was shared by so many others as well. So now it's done and we are all getting used to calling the new bride - Sheila Fitzpatrick.

This is a busy time of year in Eastern Kings. With the longer days and the promise of summer everyone is looking forward to great music and good times ahead. The Rollo Bay fiddle classes have wrapped up another successful year of lessons finishing off with their annual family night concert. The Monticello Ceilidh is preparing for a busy summer season with ceilidhs running every Sunday night through July and August. The Lorne Valley and Goose River dances have been going strong all spring and will only be getting bigger crowds from here on in.

Plans are well underway for the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival on July 20th – 22nd. With so many other events competing for everyone's time all summer long it's important to mark your calendars early so as not to miss out on the all the good fiddle music that's available during the warm weather. Hope to see you all there.

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'San dùdlachd 2006, chuir Rioghaltas na h-Albann Nuaidh Oifis Iomairtean na Gàidhlig air bhonn. Leis an Urramach Aoghnas MacÌosaig 'na Mhinistear air a son, bidh an Oifis seo ag obair le luchd na h-Albann Nuaidh gus cànan agus cultar nan Gàidheal a dh'ùrachadh 'sa mhòr-roinn.

Shuidhich na ciad tìrichean Gàidhealach ann an Albainn Nuaidh an Ear agus air Eilean a' Phrionns' Ìomhair. B' e a' Ghàidhlig a' chànan a bh' aca agus bha dualchas aca a bha làn brìgh. Nuair a dh'fhàg 'ad Eileannan agus Gàidhealtachd na h-Albann, thug 'ad leò òrain, sgeulachdan, ceòl, dannsa is cleachdaidhean. Tha iomadh pìos dhen dileab seo againn cheana.

Tha a' Ghàidhlig air a bruidhinn an Albainn Nuaidh cheana agus tha sùim às ùr aig daoine a bhith ionnsachadh barrachd mu dhéidhinn cànan agus cultar an sinnsearan. Chaidh modhannan ùra a thoirt astaigh bho chionn beagan de bhliadhnaichean far an urrainn do dhaoine a' Ghàidhlig a dh'ionnsachadh mar a dh'ionnsaich 'ad a' Bheurla. Troimh ghìomhan, ath-aithris agus gluasadan nam làmhan, tha inbhich a' faighinn gu bheil an t-ionnsachadh seo gu math furasda agus spòrsail. Cuideachd air Eilean a' Phrionns', tha daoine a' tighinn còmhla cruinn gus a' Ghàidhlig ionnsachadh.

Bidh Oifis Iomairtean na Gàidhlig ag obair gus fios a bharrachd, poileasaidhean agus planaichean a dhèanamh a thoireadh taic do leasachadh na Gàidhlig 'sna choimhearsnachdan againn.

Airson fios a bharrachd 'fhaighinn. Cuir fios air:

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fiosgaidhlig@gov.ns.ca
www.gov.ns.ca/oga

1-888-U-GAELIC

Airson fios a bharrachd 'fhaighinn a thaobh tachartasan Gàidhlig, faodaidh sibh sùil a chur air làrach-lìn Chomhairle na Gàidhlig aig www.gaelic.ca.

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Commun Gaidhig Eilean A Phrionns ~PEI Gaelic Society~

By Diana MacPherson Carver

In September 2006, the Gaelic Society of Prince Edward Island was formed. The only organization of its kind on the island, the society is striving to create awareness and educate the people of PEI of their Gaelic speaking origins through language acquisition.

The Gaelic language has strong roots here on PEI with the immigrants from Scotland and the many Scottish Isles who arrived here in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries speaking several different dialects as their mother tongue with limited, if any, English. PEI boasts the highest percentage of population of Scottish immigrants yet there is virtually no one who can speak Gaelic fluently or recall it being spoken in the home any later than mid twentieth century.

The PEI Gaelic Society as a non-profit, non-registered community group, regularly hosts Total Immersion Plus (TIPS) sessions with Lewis MacKinnon of Cape Breton in an effort to revive Gaelic here on PEI. The TIPS program consists of 200 total hours of spoken language, achieved with 5-hour workshops held monthly that are both easy to follow and fun to attend.

Should you like to join the PEI Gaelic Society in preserving the Gaelic language, you may do so by pre-registering with Reg MacDonald and joining us for our next TIPS session being held at the Sobeys Stratford Community Room on Saturday, June 2 from 10-4 (please bring a lunch) or you can contact some of our members for more information on how you can become involved. Please visit our website.

Chairperson Wanda MacGregor

wmac@eastlink.ca or 892-7157

Treasurer Reg MacDonald

regpei@hotmail.com or 368-5382

www.gaelicpei.org

Tune Transcriptions!

Have you ever listened to a set of fiddle tunes and said "I'd like to learn those tunes! I wonder where I can find the sheet music?" Now you can have a transcription of any fiddle tune!

Island fiddler Anastasia DesRoches has recently launched a new website offering a transcription service which will be a valuable asset to learners of all ages. Furthermore, the version of the tune will be as close as possible to the one you have been listening to!

Getting the sheet music is as easy as emailing a music file in mp3, .wav or .wma (Windows Media File) format and having the sheet music in your inbox within a day or two. Visit www.fiddlecase.com for details.

www.fiddlecase.com

Five Houses Summer Workshops

Five Houses Summer Workshops will take place the week of August 13 to 17th in St. Peters Bay. The workshops are daily for the entire week and include music, art and writing. The fee for workshops are \$50 for the week for each class.

Organizer Marie McEachern is please to have Timothy Chaisson teaching Fiddle and Guitar throughout the week: Beginner Fiddle 10 to 11:30 am; Intermediate Fiddle 12 to 1:30 pm; and Guitar 2 to 3:30 pm. Fee includes tunebook and practice CD. Stepdancing workshops are also being planned.

For more information, you may reach Marie at 1 508 771 2395 or fivehousesworkshops@hotmail.com.



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Queens County Fiddlers Report

By Carolyn Drake

The Queens County Fiddlers presented another successful spring concert at the Carrefour Theatre in Charlottetown, Saturday, June 9, 7:30 p.m.

Special guests included Anastasia DesRoches, J.J. Chaisson, Buddy Longaphie, Jesse Francis, Iain MacInnes, and Grady Poe, performers from the College of Piping in Summerside, as well as group and solo fiddle numbers and several entertaining stepdancers.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of life memberships and honorary life memberships to several people to recognize their contribution to fiddling over the years. On hand to receive their honorary life memberships were Mary 'Rose' and Reg Grady, while Father Andrew MacDonald, Marlene Gallant, George Weatherbie and Clyde Demone received life memberships. Also honoured with life memberships this year, but not able to attend the concert, were Gerry Cheverie, Dalvay Scott and Buddy Dunn. Congratulations and thanks for everything over the years.

Up next for the group will be a performance on June 17 at a special anniversary event planned for well-known fiddler Father Charlie Cheverie. The group will also be playing at the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival in July and at the Prince County Fiddlers concert in August. And be sure to catch individual group members as they play

at ceilidhs, concerts and festivals throughout the summer months. Also, watch the fall issue of The Island Fiddler newsletter for the name of the young fiddler who was the recipient of this year's Queens County Fiddlers Gaelic College scholarship.

Pete Doiron honoured with PEIFS Life Membership

By Barry Thompson

Peter (Pete) Doiron, a native of North Rustico and second eldest in a family of 11, began playing fiddle at the age of 11 years. Pete used the time recuperating from an appendectomy to take down his father's fiddle from its place on the wall and begin to learn to play. His first recognizable selection was 'On the Isle of Capri'. Pete received instructions from Matthew Lafore who played second fiddle on the Don Messer and his Islanders radio program in the mid 1940s.

During his career in the Canadian Military Pete served in different locations across Canada. Pete played with such groups as "The Country Cousins" in PEI, The Western Rhythm Boys" in Quebec and "The Norwesters" in Alberta.

After returning to PEI in 1971 Pete gained substantial recognition performing in Fiddling contests, entertaining, delighting and amazing listeners with his versatile playing styles. A long time favourite with audiences being his popular version of 'The Mocking Bird'.

Pete was introduced to the P.E.I. Fiddlers Society in 1976 which had recently been formed by Father Faber MacDonald. He soon after assisted in the formation of the Prince County Chapter. Pete provided instruction for several years for aspiring young fiddlers including Nathan Condon and his grandson Adam Driscoll, with whom he produced a recording entitled, *Grampa and Adam* in 1995. Pete also produced an earlier recording entitled, *The Fiddling Chef*.



Pete Doiron honoured with a PEIFS Life Membership on June 11, 2007. In photo, Pete along with members of the Prince County Fiddlers



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Reggie...cont. from page 1

located about halfway between Souris and East Point PEI, would explain why he would naturally have had an interest in all things fiddle. The area is steeped with old fiddles and fiddlers of all ages. With poor roads and telecommunications arriving somewhat later than in other more urban areas, the fiddle was the primary form of entertainment and enjoyment for many generations.

Reggie got his first fiddle from Jim Dan Campbell at the ripe old age of 16. Even playing left handed, Reggie was able to pick out St. Anne's Reel in no time. He married Rose in 1949, no stranger to the fiddle herself being a member of the Paquet family from Souris. They eventually built a home and settled in East Royalty. When his son brought a fiddle home from school, Reggie was inexplicably drawn to the instrument. He took it out of the case and after many years, was still able to play St. Anne's Reel, like it was yesterday.

Reggie maintains, "I was never really a fiddler, it was Rose who could really play." Rose was one of the first fiddlers to get a letter from Bishop Faber MacDonald to help in the formation of the P.E.I. Fiddlers Society. Reggie fondly recalls sitting at the back of the room while the "fiddlers" played away.

One day a neighbour dropped in and saw a fiddle sitting on Reggie's kitchen table. He picked it up and looked it over and asked Reggie who "set it up" for him. Reggie didn't know what he meant. The neighbour told him the sound post was in exactly the right place, the bridge was perfect, everything about the way the fiddle was set was exactly right. Reggie then told the neighbour that he had done it up the way he thought brought out the best sound. Unbeknownst to Reggie, the neighbour turned out to be a long time fiddler originally from Ontario and he asked Reggie if he would mind "looking at" his fiddle.

That was back in 1970 and little by little, Reggie became known as the person to talk to about your fiddle. People started coming to see him from all over the Island as well as Cape Breton, New Brunswick and Îles de la Madeleine. Reggie says "I've looked at over 5,000 fiddles in the last 37 years." Now that's a lot of fiddles.

Quite awhile back, Reggie came across an old book called "The Violin: How to Choose One" written by Wm. C. Honeyman (d. 1919) of Dundee, Scotland and published by his daughter in 1951. Reggie was surprised to read that Mr. Honeyman recommended that a bridge be set up exactly the way Reggie liked his to be done. Mr. Honeyman also firmly believed that the "best fiddle" is one modeled after those made by *Gasparo da Salo*. Needless to say, when this writer brings her fiddle along for a visit (a *da Salo*, inherited from her father, Danny McPhee formerly from Bayfield), Reggie is all eyes on that fiddle, holding it like a treasure.

In all truth, Reggie treats every fiddle and every fiddler as if they were treasures, such is his love of everything fiddle. As hard as it is to believe, Reggie

turned 80 years young this summer past while attending the 30th Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival. Reggie says he hasn't missed many fiddle festivals, if any. Look out into the first line of parked cars at the Rollo Bay Fiddle field and you can be sure to see him there in his trusty orange Volkswagen van.



Rollo Bay Workshops 2007

Workshops have returned to the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival! Workshops in fiddle, guitar, and step dance will be held Friday, July 20 and Saturday, July 21.

Participants are asked to pre-register by emailing Ward at celticsomething@hotmail.com or by calling 902 626-8084 and leaving a message. Payment must be made in cash on the day of the workshops. Each workshop is 2-hours and the cost is \$20.

Friday, July 20

Registration on site at 3:30pm, classes 4pm - 6pm


ADVANCED FIDDLE with Anastasia DesRoches
STEP DANCING with Marlene McKinnon
INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Ward MacDonald [4:30pm start, this class only]

Saturday, July 21


Registration on site at 8:30am, classes 9am - 11am

ADVANCED FIDDLE with Ward MacDonald
INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Anastasia DesRoches
GUITAR ACCOMPANIMENT with Jeff Matheson
STEP DANCING with Marlene McKinnon

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Acadian News by Dorothy Griffin-Farish

Fiddle music and step-dancing seems to get more and more popular in this region, with many young musicians taking a great interest in traditional violin music - particularly music made popular by Eddy Arsenault, Louise Arsenault, Edward P. Arsenault and others. Many go to learn, but everyone goes to have fun.

Too many activities are going on in the area to mention them all, but a few I will list here for our readers. On April 15th the Friday Night Jammers performed for approximately two hours at the Acadian Museum in Miscouche to a large and very enthusiastic crowd. Some of the performers included lead fiddler Marie Livingstone, her brother Edward P. Arsenault, Norman Arsenault, Marcia Arsenault and her daughter Jocelyne, guitar players Orrin Livingstone, Claudette Arsenault, and Amand Arsenault, and keyboard players Paula Arsenault and Dorothy Farish. Flying feet also accompanied flying fingers as many people, including some of the above-named fiddlers as well as members of the audience, step-danced to the lively music. Visitors at the fiddlers' jam also had a chance to see the exhibit "*Island Acadians in the Two World Wars*", featured at the Museum until June.

One Friday night in April the Jammers were honoured to have a lady from Manitoba join the evening's fun. She easily fit into the group and everyone had a great time. On May 3rd the Wellington Boys' and Girls' Club was really rocking - twelve fiddles, three or four guitars and two keyboards, and the following Friday night some of the players who had been absent for some time were in attendance. Brandon Arsenault brought a mandolin to add variety to the session. Over the winter and up to now just some of the people who played with the Friday Night Jammers include Ward MacDonald, Anastasia DesRoches, Louise Arsenault, Helen Arsenault, Kevin Chaisson and Marlene Gallant.

Les Girls, consisting of Louise Arsenault and H  l  ne Bergeron of Barachois fame, along with the all-female and all-cousin cast of Clack'Azinc, will give, beginning July 11, a veritable Acadian soir  e with fiddle, step-dancing and traditional fare. Members of Clack'Azinc include: Samantha Gallant, Janelle Richard, Stephanie Collicutt, Robyn Richard and Paige Gallant. *Les Girls* will perform at the Confederation Centre's 2007 Charlottetown Festival in the Studio Theatre for two different sessions: the first from July 11 to July 14, and the second from August 22 to August 25. Both sessions begin at 7:30 p.m.

On July 22, at the Charlottetown Festival, the internationally acclaimed Ode    l'Acadie will perform. This Acadian show was created for the 400th anniversary of Acadie in 2004. Since then, the group has played everywhere in Canada, in various parts of France, Switzerland and Africa. Patricia Richard is part of this successful presentation. The show will be this summer's international treat for the Charlottetown Festival.



Les Girls - Louise Arsenault and H  l  ne Bergeron, well-known as members of former PEI troupe *Barachois*, team up with the all-female group *Clack'Azinc* in a dynamic show featuring fiddles, percussive footwork and traditional songs. Playing July 11-14 and August 22-25 at 7:30 p.m. in the Confederation Centre's Studio Theatre.

The Atlantic Fiddlers' Jamboree, with traditional and Acadian fiddling, step-dancing and other musical presentations will take place from August 3 to August 5, 2007. Keep your eyes open for posters concerning this event, or check the web site at www.regionevangeline.com E-mail: centreexpo-festival@pei.sympatico.ca. Telephone: 902-854-3300. Fax: 902-854-3533.

Also, keep in mind L'Exposition Agricole et Le Festival Acadien, to be held from August 30 to September 2, 2007 in Abram's Village, P.E.I. There certainly will be great fiddling and step-dancing here. Check the web-site <http://www.expositionfestival.com> for information on entertainment during this three-day event.

Kindly e-mail me at dfarish@isn.net with your news from the Acadian community or telephone me at the following number: 902-436-7007. Till next time, Cheerio!

www.regionevangeline.com

Get well soon...

The Island Fiddler would like to send best wishes to all fellow fiddlers who are sick or recovering from illness, especially Pete Doiron, Virginia Kinsman, Randy Reid, and Daniel McKenna.

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Fiddle Shop Talk With Roy Johnstone



Roy Johnstone

I am often asked to characterize Irish fiddling compared to Scottish or Cape Breton fiddling. It's a challenging question since there are tunes common to both styles and many players these days listen to a wide variety of styles.

Both styles are very dynamic and expressive and the music, for the most part has evolved as accompaniment for dancing. The Strathspey dance and music originated in Scotland but the tunes are played in Ireland. The jig, although originating in Italy, was embraced in Ireland but it is commonly played and danced in Scotland. The hornpipe dance and music seem to be original to Ireland but the music is played in Scotland, often as a reel. There were many cross fertilizations of tunes and styles with players traveling either by sea or land, sharing their music and dancing but a unique characteristic sound for each still remains.

To my ear the sound of Irish music is more lyrical, more fluid, the ornamentation is also smoother and less angular than the Scottish style. Perhaps this relates to the nature of the landscape of each originating country. The rugged harsh climate of the Scottish highlands has lead to a more rugged, angular style of playing while the rolling countryside or Ireland has produced a smoother more rolling style of sound. Again, this is an oversimplification since within Scotland and Ireland there are many local styles within each country, and even within a county.

The relative isolation of peoples in the 19 and early 20th century meant that local fiddling 'dialects' developed and were maintained. This is the main reason why Cape Breton fiddling is so highly characterized and is truer to the playing of fiddlers in Scotland in the early 1800s. The Scottish immigrants brought the music with them in the early 1800s and the relative isolation of Cape Breton preserved the music relatively unchanged. While back in Scotland, after the migrations to the New World there were many outside influences including classical and European music which changed the traditional music. There will be more on specific styles in future talks.

As we can see music is a very dynamic and evolving art form and this continues to this day.

Till next time keep the bow rosined and the fiddle in tune!!!

ECMA multi-nominee, performer and recording artist, Roy Johnstone has a website at:

www.royjohnstone.com

Southern Kings Report Amy Swenson

The April 15th recital held by the Kings County Music Festival at Hillcrest United Church in Montague was the largest yet, featuring over sixty young musicians, including 25 fiddlers aged 6 to 16, many talented pianists, three singers, a trumpeter and a guitarist.

Many of the performers went on to capture prizes in the Music Festival competitions, including fiddler Rachel Collier, 13, who won first place in 5 piano divisions. She is also starting to teach fiddle to beginners in Murray Harbour North. It was great seeing my first "grandstudent" on stage at this recital!

On May 6th, an enthusiastic crowd of Wood Islands area residents were treated to a fascinating talk at the Plow the Waves Centre by schooner Captain Tom Trenholm, 97, and his wife Mary, 92, who celebrated their 75th anniversary in January.

Tom was taught to play the fiddle at age 12 by his father, who was very musical and always kept a fiddle and an accordion on board his boats. Tom became a captain at a young age, sailing to Barbados from Louisburg with Mary, three crew, and a load of shingles at the age of 23. He and Mary were part of the Merchant Marines during WW2, sailing around the Maritimes and up to Newfoundland, with just the two of them running the boat because deckhands were scarce. Fifty years ago, they settled in Murray Harbour and Tom started building fishing boats, some 60 of them. (Legend has it that at times Mary had to lock Tom in his workshop so that neighbors would not drop in to distract him by asking him to start telling sea stories!)

At the end of the afternoon, we persuaded Tom to play us some tunes on my fiddle, accompanied by Garnet Buell and Sandra Emery. Naturally, he started with Over the Waves, and even gave the Shannon Waltz a good go, including the tricky part in fifth position. He promised to come back soon with more tales of their sailing days and his own Stainer model violin.

We are happy to report that the spring series of Murray River ceillidhs for the QEH has been a great success again this year. Fiddlers Atwood O'Connor, Nathan Condon, Bud Stewart, Bethany MacLeod, Reg Banks, Amy Swenson and young fiddlers Ryan MacPherson, Grace Walsh, Meghan Johnson, Trent Gillis and Rachel Collier have played for these ceillidhs. Organizer Garnet Buell hopes to raise over \$20,000 in 2007, to make the total for the seven years of QEH ceillidhs reach \$125,000!

Fiddlemania 2007 is being held at Murray Harbour Community Centre on May 27 at 2pm. This benefit for the Food

See Southern, page 10

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The Instrument Finish

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Violin varnishes vary widely in their composition and the way they age. They are designed to be fragile and are expected to wear. The tougher a varnish is, the more it restricts the vibration of the wood. Often what appears to be damage might in fact be no more than the normal aging of a varnish film.

Aside from the usual wear, heat and dryness can damage an instrument, by causing either the glue to fail, cracks to develop, or the varnish to be degraded. Just leaving the violin under the direct sun - even in its case - can cause the varnish to bubble and flake off. If the damage on your instrument goes beyond normal aging, you may need to have the instrument's condition evaluated. Restoring the varnish is a delicate process that requires experience and care to preserve as much of what is left of the original as possible.

Keep in mind that nicks and scratches happen all the time, and you can console yourself with the thought that they always look a lot worse than they are. They can be filled and retouched so that they are, at worst, hardly



Peter Dawson

visible. Under no circumstances try to take care of this on your own--you will quickly find a disaster on your hands, one that will be much harder for a repairer to put right (and therefore expensive, too). The best you can do is keep the area clean.

Scrapes and scratches are most noticeable on new instruments, where they really stand out. They can be retouched. Sometimes it is the wear that contributes to the beauty, character and allure of instruments, an inevitable part of aging.

Retouching an old instrument gets to be a problem when too much of it is done. This is a state of affairs that is becoming all too common, current taste calls for an evened-out look that requires extensive over-varnishing and polishing, in the process destroying the texture and patina of great old varnish. The result is a glassy, monochromatic finish that robs the instrument of its warmth and individuality. If you are lucky enough to have a fine old instrument, do not let an overzealous repairer sell you on the idea that must be without imperfections and have a high shine. Once it has reached that stage, it can never go back, and you will have sacrificed one of the most valuable aspects of your instrument.

Peter Dawson, a well-known luthier, composer, and recording artist in Ottawa, has a website at : www.peterdawson.ca

Southern...cont. from page 9

Bank features some 35 fiddlers from age 6 and up, with special guests including Ronita Baird on keyboard, Brittany Harper from the Donagh School fiddle program, and George Docherty playing the fiddle and the harmonica at the same time, which is surely a fairly rare talent.

String program students at Sherwood School are being joined by players from Stonepark for an end-of-year concert on Tuesday, June 5 at Sherwood elementary at 7pm. Fiddle program students of Ronita Baird's at Donagh School are giving a recital at 7pm on Thursday, June 7th. Amy Swenson and some of her students will be special guests.

Everyone is looking forward to the summer season, with regular ceilidhs at Kilmuir Hall on the first Saturday of every month starting June 2 and ending Oct. 6. The Murray Harbour Drama Club is hosting Friday ceilidhs every two weeks at Murray Harbour Community Centre, starting May 11th. The Plow the Waves Centre at Wood Islands will also be hosting summer concerts featuring local musicians, and perhaps again Captain Tom Trenholm as well!

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It is with sadness that we report the passing of fellow fiddlers **Edgar Millar** and **Frank O'Connor**.

The P.E.I. Fiddlers Society wishes to send condolences to their friends and families.



Edgar Millar

Events Forecast

For an up-to-date events, visit www.peifiddlers.com

20-22 Jul 2007	Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival	Rollo Bay	902-687-2584
26 Jul 2007	Lot 16 Ceilidh	Richmond	902-675-2541
01 Aug 2007	Donegal Fiddlers from Norwood, ON		
	Murray Harbour - Community Centre		902-962-3746
02 Aug 2007	Orwell Ceilidh	Orwell Corner	902-675-2541
03-05 Aug 2007	Atlantic Fiddlers Jamboree	, Abram-Village	902-854-3300
03-05 Aug 2007	Fiddlers and Followers Weekend		
	North Rustico - North Star Arena		902-836-3610
11 Aug 2007 8 pm	PEI Fiddlers in Concert	Kensington	
	Community Gardens Arena		902-836-3844
13-17 Aug 2007	Tim Chaisson's Fiddle and Guitar Workshops		
	St Peter's Bay - Circle Club		902-961-3130
24 Aug 2007	JP Cormier and Friends	Indian River	
	St Mary's Church		866-856-3733
Sun 8 pm (01 Jul - 02 Sep)	Monticello Ceilidh, Monticello - Log Hall		902-687-2547
Sun (Jul and Aug)	Roy Johnstone	Charlottetown	
	Brennan's Pub and Eatery		902-675-2541
Sun Mon Wed Thu 7:30 pm	Scottish Ceilidh Concert	Richmond	
(13 May - 11 Oct)	MacKinnon Homestead		902-854-2245
Sun (08 Jul - 09 Sept)	Summer Ceilidhs with Courtney Hogan		
	Afton Community Centre		902-675-3593
Mon	Ceilidh & Dance, St. Peter's Bay Circle Club		902-961-2899
Mon 7:30	Ross Family Ceilidh, Stanley Bridge		
(25 Jun - 10 Sep)	Women's Institute Hall		902-569-4551
Tue 8 pm (03 Jul - 25 Sep)	Kendra MacGillivray & Bruce Rainnie		
	Charlottetown - The Guild		902-620-3333
Tue 8 pm (10 Jul - 28 Aug)	Tim Chaisson and Tian Wigmore in Concert		
	St Peter's Courthouse Theater		902-687-3464
Tue and Thu 8 pm	Fiery Faith and Fiddles, Clinton		
(03 Jul - 28 Aug)	Red Road Country Inn		800-249-1344
Wed 7:30 pm	Tim Chaisson and Tian Wigmore in Concert		
(25 Jun - 27 Aug)	Malpeque Hall		902-687-3464
Wed 7:30 pm	Ceilidh, Malpeque		
(20 Jun - 05 Sep)	Women's Institute Hall		902-836-4310
Wed 8 pm	Silver Threads Ceilidh, Souris		902-687-2396
Wed 8 pm	The Tim Chaisson Band in Concert, Charlottetown		
(11 Jul - 22 Aug)	The Guild		902-620-3333
Wed 8 pm (all year)	Lorne Valley Square Dance,		
	Old Lorne Valley School		902-687-2584
Thu (Jul and Aug)	Roy Johnstone, Summerside, Shipyard Market		902-675-2541
Thu 7:30 pm	Ceilidh, Stanley Bridge		
(21 Jun - 27 Sep)	Women's Institute Hall		902-836-4310
Fri 8 pm (11 May - 28 Sep)	Ceilidh at the Irish Hall, Charlottetown		
	582 North River Rd.		902-892-2367
Fri	Ceilidh Dundas Ploughing Match Grounds		902-583-2113
Fri 8 pm	Friday Night Ceilidh St. Peters Circle Club		902-961-2899
Fri 6:30 pm (06 Jul - 31 Aug)	Ceilidh on the Water, Montague		800-986-3444
Fri 7:30 pm (22 Jun - 28 Sep)	Mary Smith and Friends, Stanley Bridge, WI Hall		902-836-3610
Every Other Friday 7:30 pm	Drama Club Ceilidh, Murray Harbour		902-962-2157
Sat	Goose River Dance		902-961-2205
First Sat 8 pm	Ceilidh Kilmuir Hall		902-838-4768

*** Congratulations *** To Fr. Charlie Cheverie

who is celebrating his 75th birthday this year as well as his 50th year as a priest! There will be a parish celebration June 17 at the North Shore Community Centre

A Couple of Milestones

Congratulations to June and Gerard Cheverie who will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sept. 14!

Birthday wishes as well to Gerry who will celebrate his 70th birthday on July 3rd.



Kendra MacGillivray and Bruce Rainnie, share their talents for music and storytelling Tuesdays through the summer at The Guild.

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Reel des Acadiens

Edward P. Arsenault

The Acadian Reel (or *Reel des Acadiens*), is one of the most popular tunes composed by Edward P. Arsenault. It has become a standard in the repertoire of Acadian fiddle players on Prince Edward Island.

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Transcription courtesy of www.fiddlecase.com

Fiddle Practices Open To The Public

Prince County Fiddlers

Mondays 7:30pm - Community Connections, Summerside 836-3844

Queens County Fiddlers

Wednesdays 7:45 - St. Pius X Hall, Parkdale 569-4592

Eastern Kings Fiddlers

Mondays 7:00-8:00pm - Rollo Bay Consolidated School 687-1521

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Peter, Kevin & J.J. Chaisson, Keelin Wedge,
and many others

For more information call 902-854-3300