



# The Island Fiddler

The Newsletter of the Prince Edward Island Fiddlers Society



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March 2011

## Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival Receives Premier's Award for Tourism



**The Premier's Award for Tourism**

The Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival has just received the 2011 Premier's Award for Tourism in recognition of its long-standing contribution to tourism and culture in Prince Edward Island. The award was presented by Tourism and Culture Minister, Robert Vessey, during the Tourism Industry Association of PEI 30th Annual Conference and Awards Gala Dinner at the Charlottetown Rodd Hotel on March 2nd, 2011.

The prestigious award is presented annually to tourism operators or attractions who have moved the industry forward and inspired others to do the same. The Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival was chosen because it is a long-standing cultural festival that has attracted thousands of visitors to the Island for over three decades.

"The Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival has helped the Island become a destination for cultural tourism and we are pleased to recognize its 35 years of operation," said Minister Vessey.



The outdoor stage at the Rollo Bay Fiddle Field sits in a natural amphitheatre setting. Many great Island Fiddlers got their start here and come back to play year after year.

Stan Chaisson accepted the award on behalf of his father, Peter Chaisson, and the rest of the Chaisson family. Peter has been the chief organizer of the Fiddle Festival for many years now. Tim Chaisson, son of Peter's brother Kevin also attended. 2011 marks the 35th consecutive year for the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival which will be held July 15 - 17th this summer. More information on the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival can be found at [www.rollobayfiddlefest.ca](http://www.rollobayfiddlefest.ca).



(L-R) Stan Chaisson and Tim Chaisson accept the 2011 Premier's Award for Tourism from the Honourable Robert Vessey, Minister of Tourism and Culture.



Chaisson Family (back row L-R) Kevin Chaisson, Shirley Campbell, Peter Chaisson, Kenny Chaisson, Dianne Deagle, Darlene Campbell. (front row) Donna Chaisson, Gloria MacIntyre and Katherine Chaisson Melanson.

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#### Fiddling Related Websites

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Anne M. McPhee

## Eastern Kings Fiddlers Report by Anne M. McPhee

There has been no shortage of fiddle activities on the go all across the Island despite all the stormy weather. One of the highlights was the presentation of the Premier's Award of Tourism to the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival. With more

snow on the way, it was good of Stan Chaisson and Tim Chaisson to attend the Awards Gala and Dinner and accept the award on behalf of the family. What a great way to kick off the 35th Anniversary of the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival this summer.

Quebec fiddler André Brunet did a workshop in the Evangeline area in February. André was very inspiring. He's a fine teacher and a great player and he introduced the Quebec fiddling styles where the tunes are often very crooked. A couple of tunes he presented can be found on Roy Johnstone's website at [www.royjohnstone.com](http://www.royjohnstone.com).

The weather co-operated for the organizers of



Lots of fiddlers at the Fiddle Doo.

the February Fiddle Doo and Potluck and a huge bus filled with New Brunswick fiddlers and followers helped fill the Murray Christian Centre in Kensington.

Joined by Prince County Fiddlers and representatives from the Acadian, Southern Kings and Eastern Kings Fiddlers, there were tunes galore with over 60 fiddlers playing together. It was a great way to spend a winter's afternoon.


Closer to home, the Goose River Dances and the St. Margaret's Kitchen Parties have gone ahead when weather permitted. Monday night fiddle had some cancellations due to stormy weather but a few brave visitors have joined us and everyone is looking forward to the annual Family Night Concert to be held at the Souris Show Hall on May 9th. Everyone is welcome.

Speaking of St. Margaret's, Lorraine Jackson says the beautiful hall and great music of Kevin and Peter Chaisson is the perfect setting for falling in love. Gerard Hughes, nephew of well known fiddler, Merlin Quinn of Cardross, met Lorraine at the Kitchen Party on the long weekend in May last year. Lorraine is the niece of Blair and Al Myers, both wonderful fiddlers, that grew up down the road from Merlin in Martinvale. Sparks flew between the happy couple and the rest is history. They plan to come back in May to celebrate.



Lorraine Jackson and Gerard Hughes.

While we wait for spring to truly arrive, there is lots to look forward to. Excitement is building for the East Coast Music Awards which will be held from **April 14 - 17th** in Charlottetown. The Festival of Small Halls - an ECMA nominee - will hold more than 50 performances over 11 days in more than 30 rural community halls from **June 16 to 26, 2011**. Check [www.smallhalls.com](http://www.smallhalls.com) for details. The PEI Fiddle Camp is lining up instructors and taking registrations for a week of traditional music immersion from **June 19 - 25, 2011**. Go to [www.peifiddlecamp.com](http://www.peifiddlecamp.com) for details and to register.

And don't forget to mark your calendars for the 35th Anniversary of the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival and we'll see you there **July 15 - 17, 2011**. 



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Amy Swenson

## Southern Kings Fiddlers Report by Amy Swenson

For the winter months, the Southern Kings Fiddlers broke into two groups - one continued to meet in Montague at the Access Centre every other Monday night and the other group attended the weekly Community School Fiddle Class at Murray Harbour Community Center on Monday nights. (Except for a few snow days!!!) We are looking forward to coming together again in one big group meeting in Montague at the end of March to plan our pieces for performances this summer at Rollo Bay and elsewhere. Anyone in the area who is interested in joining or observing the group should call our President Urban Chaisson (962-3865) or Amy Swenson (962-2273), to find out the latest schedule for practices. Visitors are most welcome. I should mention that some of us learn entirely by ear, some of us read regular notation and some rely on my easy to read "Bubble Notes", so whether you like to learn by listening to and recording a new tune or need the written notes, we are able to accommodate you.

Our Murray Harbour group lost a good friend and relative of many of us, in the passing late last year of Carrie Herring, 93, of Murray Harbour. When I first taught fiddle at the Community School 12 years ago, Carrie was our piano accompanist. She was always ready to try old tunes and new ones, and helped make our classes a real joy. After a few years passed by, she found the accompaniment a little hard to do, so she showed up with her fiddle and participated with us as a member of the class. She and her sisters were known for their wonderful

singing and Carrie was the organist at her church for many years. She was an inspiration to all of us with her kind nature and her great love of many different styles of music. Our young local fiddle students continue to perform in their schools at special events and talent shows, and will play at the recitals in February and April at the Hillcrest United Church which are run by the Kings County Music Festival. More and more of them are getting advanced enough in their playing to join up with our Southern Kings group for performances, and we welcome their energetic contribution and especially appreciate their interest in learning locally written tunes. Emmett Hughes, Urban Chaisson, Archie Stewart and Wilfred Bernard are "hit" composers with the young fiddlers around here. We hope to see them perform some of their favorites at the upcoming ceilidhs in the area.



Some members of the Southern Kings Fiddlers:  
Marie MacIntyre, Frank Lechowick and Amy Swenson

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Carolyn Drake

## Queens County Fiddlers Report by Carolyn Drake

Like most people across Prince Edward Island, the Queens County Fiddlers have had to plan their winter schedule around the weather. School closures due to snow and wind have meant a few lost practices; however, a stormy night stuck at home is always a great time to get out the fiddle and play to your heart's content.

Before the end of the year and the true arrival of winter, several members of the group performed at a special Christmas party held at Geneva Villa in Charlottetown on the evening of Friday, Dec. 10. This was our second invitation to perform there and we were happy to go back to play a mixture of Celtic and Christmas music.

On Jan. 26, we paid a return visit to Andrews of Charlottetown for a night of entertainment with great music and some wonderful dancing by Alice Cheverie. We also had a few extra guests as a CBC reporter and cameraman were on hand to shoot some video for a story on Fiona MacCorquodale, who, at 12, was the youngest nominee for this year's Music P.E.I. Awards.

A big tip of the bow and congratulations go out to Fiona for being nominated in the category of Roots Traditional Solo Recording of the Year for her album, *Eleven*, which was released this past summer. Although she didn't win the category (it went to fellow fiddler Richard Wood), it was a well-deserved honour to be nominated. During the awards weekend, Fiona had a chance to perform at a number of locations including a showcase at the Olde Dublin Pub where she was accompanied by Aaron Crane on the piano at the gala awards show.

The group has been having a great time this winter learning new tunes and sets, including a jig set, along with a march, strathspey and reels that we expect to unveil this summer.

Before that, though, we'll be making our next stop at the Atlantic Baptist Nursing Home in Charlottetown on March 16. This performance was rescheduled from February due to an illness at the home.

And way down the road in the summer season, our calendars are already circled for the Rollo Bay weekend and our annual trip to West Prince for the Burton Ceilidh. I can almost feel that summer sun now.

## 12 year old Fiddling Sensation

2011 Music PEI Award Nominee Fiona MacCorquodale was the special guest at the first ceilidh of the 2011 Sunday Night Shenanigans at the York Community Centre on March 13, accompanied by her teacher/musician Aaron Crane, president of the Queens County Fiddlers. A student of The Judy MacLean Private School of Dance, Fiona is also an up and coming star stepper. There will be several ceilidhs before June and then weekly for the rest of the summer and fall season.



Fiona MacCorquodale and  
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### Prince County Fiddlers By Barry Thompson

The Prince County Fiddlers continue to be active in the community with practices every Monday night and regular appearances in the manors and seniors clubs in the area. There are usually ten or fifteen musicians when we gather, including guitar and piano accompanists.

One of the highlights of the last few months was the Fiddle Doo and Potluck held at the Murray Christian Centre in Kensington on Saturday Feb 5th. It was a great afternoon of music.



**Above: Jackie Biggar of the Prince County Fiddlers, leads the fiddlers at the Fiddle Doo in a lively set of tunes. Members of the Prince County Fiddlers shown in photo to the left; (L - R) Thelma Campbell, Barry Thompson, Theo Weiggers on drums, Lottie Locke, Jim MacDougall, Leith Thomson and Peter Robinson on bass.**

Some of the tunes we frequently play include: Princess Reel, Paddy on the Turnpike and The Farmer's Reel or Space Available, Munlochy Bridge and Sheehan's Reel. A great jig set is Jackson's Jig, Trip to Toronto and Stan's Jig. Anyone is welcome to join us. 🐾



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## Mary Smith A Force to be Reckoned With



**Mary Smith welcomes everyone to the Fiddle Doo as she MC's the event.**

Mary is well known for playing year round at community care facilities, manors and seniors clubs on the Island. She hosts a weekly ceilidh all summer at Stanley Bridge and for years she coordinated nightly shows at Rainbow Valley. She has also been known to go on musical bus tours with the New Brunswick fiddlers. In 2008 they toured 15 states and performed 35 times in 17 days. The tour included stops in Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee.

Oh, and did we mention she has made a couple of CDs? Where did she find the time?

A large bus filled with New Brunswick fiddlers and followers, along with Ivan and Vivian Hicks, attends the PEI Fiddle

**Some of the New Brunswick Fiddlers.**



Doos as well as the Prince County Fiddlers and fiddlers from across the Island.

And Mary Smith is on the go non-stop all afternoon. As well as greeting and playing host to everyone in attendance, she lines up the program and introduces each act or performer in the role of MC. She accompanies on the keyboard and plays her fiddle whenever she can.

A delicious potluck supper begins at 5:00 pm at the Fiddle Doos and one and all are welcome to come fill a plate.

That's when Mary



**A good crowd enjoys the music.**

shines. She plays her fiddle, tune after tune, usually with Barry Thompson accompanying on guitar, while everyone else enjoys their meal and it is very clear, it's the love of the music that drives Mary Smith. It surely is the love of the music.



**Mary Smith takes a minute to join in.**



**Dorothy  
Griffin-Farish**

### **Acadian News** by Dorothy Griffin-Farish

Greetings Everyone! In spite of a very unpredictable winter there has been a great deal of activity in our area. Here are just a few examples.

On January 26<sup>th</sup> Marie Livingstone, Louise Arsenault and Amand F. Arsenault played at a seniors' fun day in Wellington. Marie, Louise and several others step danced at this time. A great deal of fun was had by all.

On Sunday, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, La Chandeleur (a religious festival otherwise known as Candlemas which falls on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>) was celebrated in the Evangeline region with a full day of activities and with a winter festival theme.

During the months of February and March workshops in storytelling, dance and theatre are being held in French.

A group of musicians, singers and dancers recently gathered for a fundraiser to help expand a school in Haiti. Seven hundred dollars was raised from this event. Marie Bernard from Mont Carmel initiated this event, which was spearheaded by the Congrégation Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur in Moncton.

Peter Arsenault and Gary Gallant entertained several times at the Acadian Museum during special events there, one of which was a book launching by Georges Arsenault. Patricia Richard accompanied Peter Arsenault on his violin at an Evening of French storytelling at the Acadian Museum on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Friday Night Jammers continue their weekly sessions and are learning new tunes during the one-hour workshop each week. Marie Livingstone, leader of the Jammers, mentioned that in the ten and a half years since the Jammers started only two jam sessions have been missed on account of storms.

Anastasia DesRoches and Louise Arsenault are two of the people from the Evangeline area that are teaching fiddling. Step dancing lessons are very popular and are being taught by Jocelyne Arsenault, Tracy Arsenault and Marie Livingstone - to name but three.



**Evangeline step dancing students - Les Coups d'Pied, proudly demonstrated their skills at the Atlantic Fiddlers Jamboree this past summer. Taught by Jocelyn Arsenault, they have been dancing together for about four years. Dancers are (left to right): Breannah Gaudet, Isabelle Bernard, Joceline Leblanc, Alex Arsenault and Colby Arsenault.**

On Saturday afternoon, February 5<sup>th</sup>, Dorothy Griffin-Farish represented the Friday Night Jammers and the Acadian region at the Fiddle-Doo and Potluck at the Murray Christian Centre in Kensington. A great afternoon and early evening of music, including an excellent meal, was provided. Entertainers from various parts of the Island and New Brunswick, including Ivan and Vivian Hicks, performed to a packed house. The weather was great for the occasion and a great time was had by all in attendance.

**See Acadian on page 9**



**Dorothy Griffin-Farish on keyboard at the Fiddle Doo.**

**See Acadian page 9**



**Acadian from page 10**

Alice Bérubé and Gerry Gill, part of our Friday Night Jammers, were hosts to an Island House Concert, which included some great vittles, on Friday night, February 11<sup>th</sup> at their residence, the Warn House Bed and Breakfast, Summerside. The guest entertainers were renowned violin player Gillian Boucher and guitarist Seph Peters, both from Cape Breton. This concert was part of the Home Routes circuit, which began in Western Canada as a way of bringing world-class performances to rural settings. Boucher has been travelling the world with her violin in hand since the age of 15. After living abroad for a number of years she returned to Nova Scotia to record her debut album "Elemental". Two other concerts, one at Fernwood and the other in Charlottetown, were performed by the duo. For those who missed the concert and wish to check out Boucher's sound, check the web site at <http://www.myspace.com/gillian-boucher>.

About a week after the concert at the Warn House, Gerry Gill's mother died in Western Canada. Our sincere sympathies to Gerry and his family in their loss.

Norman Arsenault, his father Amand, Fred Arsenault and Dorothy Griffin-Farish continue to provide musical entertainment at manors and senior citizen homes in the area. Depending on the weather and their schedules, other entertainers such as Norman's wife Paula, Alice Bérubé, and Leona Cheney form part of the group entertaining the seniors.

An entertainment night was held recently at Mont Carmel Parish Hall in aid of the parish. Among the entertainers were Louise Arsenault, Zelma Arsenault, Albert and Mona Arsenault, Jacques and Alex Arsenault, Terry, Clarence and Norman Gallant.

The weekend of February 19<sup>th</sup> at the Evangeline School, André Brunet from Quebec, a dynamic, talented performer, gave a series of workshops in fiddling. A good crowd was there and a good time was had by all.


A group, including many of the Friday Night Jammers as well as Jim MacDougall from Grand River, recently performed at a house party at the home of Eric and Debby Montgomery in the Port Hill area. A good time was held by all.

La Belle-Alliance, through their project DéCouverTe 2011 presented the dance group

Rapetipetam at the Harbourfront Theatre February 26<sup>th</sup> following a day of workshops in step dancing and music. For more information on Rapetipetam visit the website. This is just one of the cultural items being featured since the beginning of the year. The members of La Belle-Alliance Ltee, regional committee for the Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin (SSTA) for the greater Summerside-Miscouche area have created a project offering Francophone community members an opportunity to explore the cultural arts of dance, theatre, and story-telling. The project is organized and implemented by Hélène Bergeron and Sylvie Toupin. The workshops, which will include concerts and live performances, will take place until the end of March.

Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup> featured an Intergenerational Fun Day at the Centre Belle-Alliance in Summerside for people from ages 9 to 100.

Between the fall and Mother's Day there is a Music Jam being held each Sunday afternoon at Expo-Festival Centre in Abram-Village. A mixture of bluegrass and country singing, old-time fiddling and step dancing can be found at these Sunday events - never is one the same.

Marlene Arsenault Gaudet, daughter of Edward P. Arsenault and granddaughter of the late Polycarpe and Rosita Arsenault, has been honored this year with the Order of Merit of Brossard, the highest honor for the city of Brossard, Quebec. Marlene has directed the choir melodies for that area with energy, dedication and skill since 1993 and has sung every Sunday morning for 20 years at Notre Dame Bonsecours. We all rejoice with Marlene and her large musical family in being honored with this Award of Merit. Cheers till next time! 

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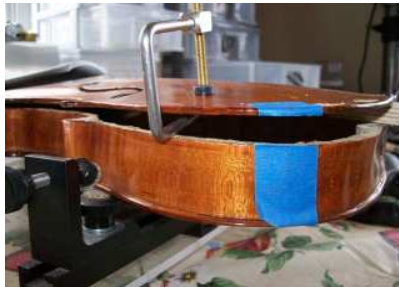
## Stayed Tuned Instrument Repair and Piano Tuning



There is no doubt that the name Lester Stubbert has become synonymous with Celtic music in PEI. The Cape Breton native is just one of those guys that can

pick up and play any instrument with strings...and play it well. Of course, we've come to know him best for his fancy guitar picking and versatile piano playing. But not only is he a talented musician, he is also a highly skilled and experienced carpenter.

Over the years, between his own instruments and those of his music students and close friends, Lester has tried his hand at small repairs and adjustments, the installing of new electronics and even one day decided to try and tune his own piano! Marrying the two things he knows best, music and carpentry, just seemed to make a whole lot of sense and the more he did it, the more he enjoyed the work. It was also becoming obvious that there was a large void on the Island in the areas of instrument repair and piano tuning. For this reason, Lester set out to educate himself as much as he possibly could on everything related to stringed instruments.




With a large amount of time and money invested in the proper tools, supplies and education, he took on a few projects to get himself started.

Without even promoting what he was doing, people had guitars and fiddles for him to fix everywhere he went it seemed! He accepted all challenges from smashed guitars to old fiddles and everything in between. He's been busy over the past year fixing, learning and honing his skills, making instrument owners very happy all across PEI.

Stubbert is now ready to officially launch "Stay Tuned Instrument Repair & Piano Tuning", which he operates out of his home in Brooklyn, just outside of Montague. From luthier services to tuning pianos to simply restringing a guitar or re-hairing a bow, Lester is set up for any kind of job you can bring him.

"He knows what instruments should sound like and how they should feel when played which is what sets him apart I think. He understands how music works as well as the technical side of things" says fiddler Sheila FitzPatrick. "I've been very happy with the work he's done on both my fiddles."

For more information on Lester's repair and piano tuning services, phone 902-838-3171. 



**PEI Fiddlers Society Executive Members - Marie MacIntyre, Jason Campbell, President Ward MacDonald, Anne McPhee and Paul Cheverie**



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## Events Forecast

For up-to-date events visit [www.peifiddlers.com](http://www.peifiddlers.com); [www.festivalspei.com/events](http://www.festivalspei.com/events) or check local listings

Sundays 2 - 5 pm	Weekly Music Sessions	Old Triangle Irish Alehouse	Charlottetown	902-892-5200
Sundays 7 - 9:30 pm (monthly)	Sun Night Shenanigans	York Community Hall	York	902-566-5545
Sundays 7:30 pm	Kitchen Party	St. Margaret's Parish Hall	St. Margaret's	902-687-2584
Sundays 2 - 9	Sunday Music Jams	Expo-Festival Centre	Abram Village	902-854-3300
Third Sunday 1:30 pm	Ceilidh	Seniors Active Living Centre, UPEI	Charlottetown	902-628-8388
Third Sunday 7 pm	Kellys Cross Ceilidhs	Kellys Cross Church Hall	Kelly's Cross	902-658-2290
Last Sunday of the month 7-9 pm	Ceilidh/Concert	Bonshaw Community Centre	Bonshaw	902-675-4282
Second Sunday 2-4pm	Kitchen Party/Ceilidh	Cotton Centre	Stratford	902-569-2732
Alternate Mondays 7:30 pm	Ceilidh Kitchen Party	Bingo Country, Riverside Dr.	Charlottetown	902-940-6702
Tuesdays	Georgetown Ceilidh	Kings Playhouse	Georgetown	902-652-2316
Wednesdays 8 pm	Ceilidh	Silver Threads	Souris	902-687-2396
Wednesdays 9 pm	J.J. and Koady Chaisson	Old Triangle Irish Alehouse	Charlottetown	902-892-5200
Wednesdays 7:30 - 9:30	Irish Set Dance Classes	Benevolent Irish Society Hall	Charlottetown	902-566-3447
Fridays 8 pm	Ceilidh & Dance	St. Peter's Bay Circle Club	St Peter's Bay	902-961-2899
Fridays 8 pm (start May 13)	Music, Song and Dance	Benevolent Irish Society Hall	Charlottetown	902-892-2367
Saturdays 9 pm	Goose River Dance	Goose River Hall	Goose River	902-961-2205

March 17 St. Paddy's Day Hooley with Baile Beag, Norm Stewart and Lester Stubbert and more - Old Triangle Pub, Charlottetown

March 17 St. Paddy's Day with Roy Johnstone, Courtney Hogan and more - Old Dublin Pub, Charlottetown

April 14 - 17 East Coast Music Awards, Charlottetown, PEI

May 9 Rollo Bay Fiddle Students and Kitchen Group Annual Family Night Concert - 7:00pm, Souris Show Hall, Souris

June 16 - 26th Festival of Small Halls - [www.smallhalls.com](http://www.smallhalls.com) for details

June 19 - 25th PEI Fiddle Camp - [www.peifiddlecamp.com](http://www.peifiddlecamp.com) for details and to register

### Fiddle Practices Open To The Public

**Eastern Kings Fiddlers** Rollo Bay 687-2584  
Mondays 7:00 Rollo Bay School

**Prince County Fiddlers** Summerside 836-3844  
Mondays 7:30 pm Community Connections

**Southern Kings Fiddlers** Montague 962-2273  
Alternate Mondays 7:00 pm Active Communities

**Queens County Fiddlers** Charlottetown 569-4592  
Wednesdays 7:30 pm Queen Charlotte Intermediate

**Morell Fiddle Group** Morell 961-2962  
Tuesdays 7:30 pm Above the Pharmacy

**Acadian Fiddlers** Wellington 436-5532  
Fridays 8:00 pm Boys & Girls Club

### PEI FIDDLERS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Charlottetown, PE C1A 8W5

Quarterly Newsletter: E-mail Yes  No

Snail Mail Yes  No

# Steak Caper Reel

by Kenny Chaisson

In honour of the Premier's Award for Tourism presented to the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival on March 2, 2011, it seems fitting to publish, for the first time, the Steak Caper Reel written by Kenny Chaisson. Kenny is one of three sons and six daughters of the founding member of the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival, the late Joe Pete Chaisson and his wife Margaret. 2011 marks the 35th Anniversary of the Fiddle Festival.

Kenny tells the story of how this tune came to him after his dog managed to lift the lid off a picnic cooler and make off with a huge steak at the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival one year. The race was on to catch the dog before he ate the whole thing and Kenny came up with the name Steak Caper Reel. The tune was transposed by Anastasia DesRoches from the "Road to Rollo Bay" CD by The Chaisson Family of Prince Edward Island. On the CD Peter Chaisson plays the first measure of the A part a couple of different ways. It's worth a listen to determine how you will play it.

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