



# Festival Notes

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# Happy New Year!!!

## Looking To The Future...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

2009 is finally here! Full of new hope and new resolve! I know that Judi and I are looking forward to the New Year and I hope you are too! In addition to visiting as many new festivals this year as possible (hopefully 40 or more, depending on weather and circumstances), we are planning BIG changes to the Ontario Festivals Visited website. We know that it will take a lot of hard work, but the changes will be definitely worthwhile! Although the website, as it stands now, has been very well received, we feel that we can make it much better. Over the course of the year, I will give you updates on what we are doing and how it will benefit you and our website visitors. I hope you like the changes and that you will make your own suggestions to help us. We always appreciate thoughtful comments! To give you a taste of what is planned, here are a couple of hints. Each festival or event that we have visited and written about will have a “Comment Section”. Soon you will be able to join in on the fun and write about what you experienced at the event! Additionally, we will be inserting a “Visitor Poll” that will allow you to rate each festival or event they we have reviewed. It is our hope that these two new additions will add to our website visitor’s experience!

## The Holidays!

As I mentioned in our last issue, December was a catch up month, and it was! Judi and I spend a lot of time at home, reading, writing, wrapping presents, unwrapping presents and, of course, eating! Especially turkey!! I have almost caught up on my article writing, but I still have some to go. It’s been difficult with so many distractions. We did manage to visit the Capitol Theatre in Port Hope for their “Capitol Christmas”. It was marvelous and a must see next year if you are in the area!



“Capitol Christmas”  
Capitol Theatre  
Port Hope

Please see *The Holidays!* ... on page 2

*The Holidays!* ... from page 1

We tried to visit the Toronto Zoo on Boxing Day for their annual "Treats Walk", but my annual "Flu Bug" took precedence. The "Bug" wasn't letting me go anywhere!

January should get our "Festival Visiting" blood flowing again! That is, weather permitting. Here is what is planned so far:

January 10<sup>th</sup> - Peterborough Snofest Winter Carnival

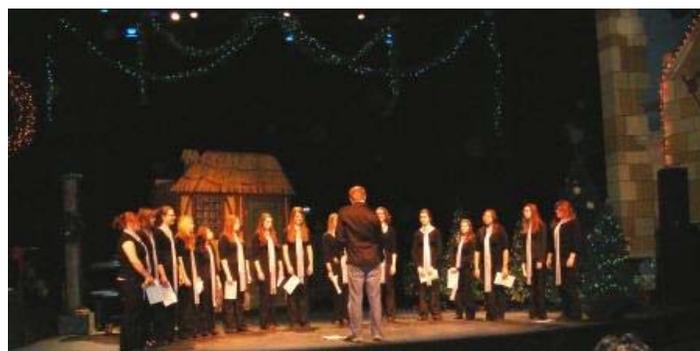
January 25<sup>th</sup> - Toronto All-Star Big Band (Toronto Harbourfront Centre)

January 31<sup>st</sup> - Campbellford Polar Bear Festival

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*"A few years ago I started writing a Blog..."*

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*"La Jeunesse Choir performing at the Capitol Christmas"*  
**Capitol Theatre**  
**Port Hope**



*"Hay Wagon Ride- 2008"*  
**Brighton Winterfest**

## Tim Hortons – "Where Every Cup Tells a Story"

*Tim Hortons is asking people to tell them their own Tim Hortons story. I have mine and have submitted to the Tim Hortons website. I thought I would share my story with you...*

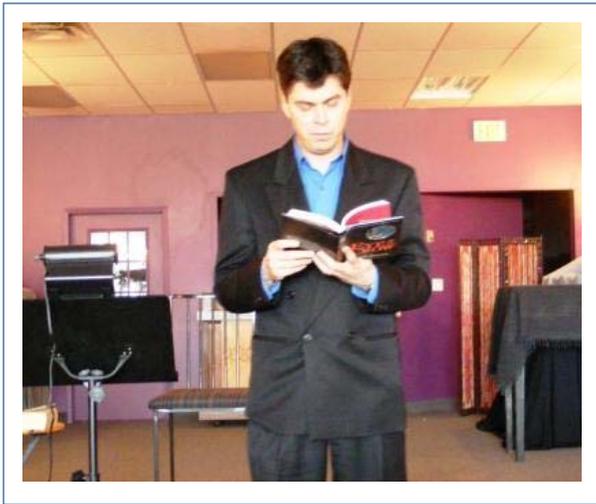
### My Tim Horton's Story...

A few years ago I started writing a Blog about Ontario festivals and events. The Blog eventually grew into a full blown website, **Ontario Festivals Visited!** It was our idea to travel around Ontario visiting as many festivals and events as time and weather would allow. To date we have visited over 90 events! After we visit each event I write an article about what we have seen and heard. I then publish the article, with lots of photos and video clips, on our website. Between the website articles, two weekly festival related Blogs and two monthly newsletters, I write a lot! In fact, I write something every day! I do this in my home office and, believe it or not, it can become quite monotonous. Every week, on Tuesdays, I drive my wife to Whitby for a Doctor's appointment. During the hour plus wait, I was always looking for something to do. Then, about a year ago a new Tim Horton's opened its doors! It just seemed to be natural that I would spend my time waiting there and I have been going there ever since. But that is not the end of my story!

Please see *Tim Hortons...* on page 3



*"Ice Sculpting - 2008"*  
**Cobourg Winter Festival**



**Shane Peacock**  
 reading from his children's' novel  
*"The Boy Sherlock Holmes – Death In The Air"*

*Where Tim Hortons ...* from page 2

To make the time pass more quickly, I started writing my articles there! At first, I thought that there would be too many distractions, but just the opposite happened! I was relaxed there and could block out most distractions! Since starting, I have written over 150 articles! I'm not sure how many cups of coffee I have purchased, but a lot! It may seem odd, but the other people sitting around me don't bother me! In fact, I find them comforting. I believe that some of my best articles have been written there. And occasionally someone sees me writing and asks what the article is about. I am glad to tell them and to talk about Ontario's great festivals and events. Talking to them makes me feel good. Now, when I find I have writer's block, I pack up my paper and pens and head to our local Tim's! The block seems to clear immediately! Thanks Tim's! See you soon! My car knows how to find you!

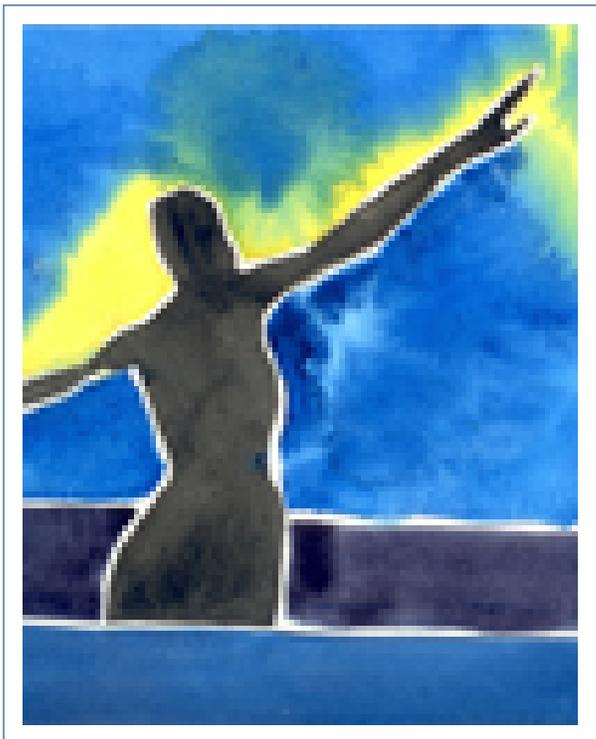
## Festival Ideas...

*Each month this section features ideas gained from attending so many festivals. For the January issue we want to talk about two interesting Canadians, a writer and a painter. A few weeks ago I wrote two articles on "The Adventures of a Festival Nomad" blog about these Canadians. We are republishing them for your enjoyment/information?*

### Shane Peacock - Author/Playwright

Several years ago Judi and I were involved with the founding and organizing of a new festival in Port Hope. We wanted to create a festival theme that would be specific to Port Hope. We found that theme in the form of William Leonard Hunt or, as he became known worldwide, the Great Farini! Hunt, or Farini, was a larger than life character who roamed the world in the mid to late 1800's. From tightrope walking over the Niagara Falls to inventing the Human Cannonball and beyond, Farini's career was nothing short of spectacular! In order to find out more about Farini and his life and feats, we turned to Canadian author and Port Hope native, Shane Peacock! Shane's book, *"The Great Farini"*, is the definitive reference book when it comes to William Leonard Hunt. The Farini Festival only ran for 3 years, but Shane's input allowed us and the whole community to celebrate the extraordinary life of one of Port Hope's favourite, but largely forgotten, sons! Over the years I have gotten to know and appreciate Shane's many talents. His ability to "spin a yarn" is second to know one! The Farini biography could have been staid and stuffy, but that's not Shane's style, nor was it Farini's!

Please see *Festival Ideas...* on page 4



*"Serenity"*  
 Original Watercolour by  
**Judi McWilliams**

*Festival Ideas ... from page 3*

Instead the book was a wonderful tale of mystery, intrigue and adventure. Shane's attention to accuracy and detail is amazing. Since writing the Farini book in 1995, Shane has taken on many other challenges. His play about another Port Hope native, Joseph Scriven who wrote the Hymn "*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*" played for two seasons at the 4th Line Theatre in Millbrook. Other works have included several children's novels. His newest are sure to become classis. They are about the "*Boy Sherlock Holmes*" and are rich in detail and mystery. Although I purchased the first two in the series for my Grandson, I couldn't miss that opportunity of reading them first myself! They were both a great read and I can't wait until Shane brings out the next book! It's great to know that Canada breeds such amazing authors! To find out more about Shane and his books, go to <http://www.shanepeacock.ca/> or to <http://www.theboysherlockholmes.com/>.

## Judi McWilliams - Watercolour Artist

Judi McWilliams is one of those artists whose art triggers the imagination. As a result, collectors from around the world have purchased her paintings! Judi has had a love and flare for art ever since she was a little girl. As a matter of fact, her father was a graphic artist and her mother and sisters were very crafty! Her twin sister, Sue Caron, exhibits her Original acrylic paintings locally. Judi's and my first real foray into the world of art was our visit, so many years ago, to the Buckhorn Wildlife Art Festival! We met so many wonderful artists at the festival and I am sure that many of these artists inspired Judi and caused her artistic passions to flow! A few years after our first art show, we entered the art world ourselves by becoming sales agents for Edwin Matthews and Buckhorn Fine Art Publishing. Eventually this led to our owning two fine art galleries and a wholesale custom framing business. By immersing herself in the art world, Judi discovered the infinite opportunities to pursue her own artist talents. Although Judi has tried several mediums and styles, she always comes back to free flowing watercolours! She likes the immediacy of the watercolours and by using her unique techniques, they seem to have a mind of their own! The images and subjects she paints come from reality, but are translated onto paper through her imagination. Over the years Judi has participated in many fine art events and festivals. She is always amazed and appreciative of how people enjoy her creations! Recently she embarked on a new journey and has developed her own originals virtual gallery. If you would like to see Judi's original watercolours, please go to <http://www.judimcwilliamsfineart.com/>.

## Festival Tips

### Going Green!

For some time Judi and I have been "threatening" to **Go Green**. Yes, we recycle at home and I have now reduced my speed on the major highways to 100 km, but we haven't really gone totally **Green** when visiting festivals! Heck, I've even written an article or two about the subject. I guess we have just procrastinated! That is until now! This Christmas my "**Green**" sister-in-law, Carol and her "**Green**" daughter, Catherine, gave us recyclable water bottles! They are great! They are quite large and they hook onto our belts or backpack! Judi is already trying out hers at home! I hope you will join us! **Go Green Go...**



"Going Green!!"

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