



# Festival Notes

March 2009  
Volume 2 Issue 4

Ontario Festivals Visited, P.O. Box 272, Cobourg, ON, K9A 4K8, Canada  
www.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca info@ontariofestivalsvited.ca (888) 818-0255

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Finally!
- 1 The Ides of March...
- 2 Kevin Stuart – The Voice
- 3 Festival Ideas – The Stratford Festival
- 4 Festival Tips – Having Too Much Fun!

## Finally!

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

It has taken the best part of a month, but we now have two fully working new features on the Ontario Festivals Visited website. Although we had hoped that the new features would be up and working at the beginning of February, plans just didn't work out that way! The first feature we are introducing is the "**Visitor's Forum**". Here visitors to our website can post comments about any of the festivals we have visited and written about. The comment section can be found at the bottom of each event page. Festival organizers are encouraged to post updated information about their festival in this section. For those festivals and events that we haven't been able to visit yet, we have added an additional page, "**Visitor's Forum Plus**", that allows website visitors to tell us about their favourite (or least favourite) festivals and events. It's all about sharing information! The second feature we have added is "**Rate This Festival**". This feature encourages website visitors to complete festival and event surveys about the events that Judi and I have visited. We have designed the surveys to help festival organizers develop better and more interesting events. This feature can also be found at the bottom of each event page. Now festival visitors will be able to add their "two cents worth"! As I have mentioned before, this is just the beginning of big changes for Ontario Festivals Visited. Our next major project is the development of a dynamic "Festival" search engine. Stay tuned!

## The Ides of March...

The Ides of March is coming and so are the spring festivals and events! As with many of the winter months this season, I have spent much of my time "catching up" and developing new features for the Ontario Festivals Visited website. The previous article describes our latest additions. However, it is now time to "wake up" and search for new adventures! In February we were still in a "deep sleep". We managed only to visit one event, the **Canadian Home Workshop Show** in Mississauga. I visited this show with my brother-in-law, Nelson (better known as Mr. D.I.Y.).

Please see *The Ides of March...* on page 2



"Visitor's Forum"  
New Feature



"Visitor's Forum Plus"  
New Feature



"Rate This Festival"  
New Feature

*"The Ides of March ... from page 1*

It was an interesting event and well attended. The beginning of March hosts the **Festivals and Events Ontario Annual Conference** to be held in Burlington. The Conference runs from March 4 to March 7. I plan on attending the Saturday President's Gala. This is where the FEO Achievement Award winners are announced and the Top 100 Ontario festivals and events are recognized. Here is a list of the festivals and events we plan to visit in March:

- ❑ Saturday, March 7 - Festivals and Events Ontario President's Gala
- ❑ Saturday, March 14 - Warkworth Maple Syrup Festival
- ❑ Saturday, March 21 - Presqu'ile Park Waterfowl Festival
- ❑ Saturday, March 28 - Buckhorn Maple Syrup Festival at the McLean Berry Farm

## Kevin Stuart – The Voice

I have known Kevin Stuart for almost as long as I have lived in Cobourg (20 Years). Kevin is the afternoon "voice" on one of Cobourg's radio stations. The station, which used to be CHUC 1450, has now been upgraded to an fm station known as "The Breeze". (The Breezes Website: <http://www.1079thebreeze.com/>) Over the years I have worked with Kevin when he helped promote one or two of the festivals I was involved with. It has been a very friendly relationship and Kevin was always very helpful when he interviewed me. It wasn't until I started **Ontario Festivals Visited** that I got to know Kevin well, and that was by chance! One day as we were passing on the street I casually mentioned that we should get together for a coffee. He agreed and a time and place was set. As we drank our coffees, actually I think his was a hot chocolate; I had a "brainwave"! I told Kevin what I was thinking and he agreed that it might work and that we could have some fun doing it! "brainwave" was to create a series of "*Festival Nomad*" radio vignettes. The vignettes would be about the festivals that Judi and I had visited over the previous year. Kevin had access to facilities to professionally record and produce and I had the stories!

Please see *Kevin Stuart – The Voice...* on page 3

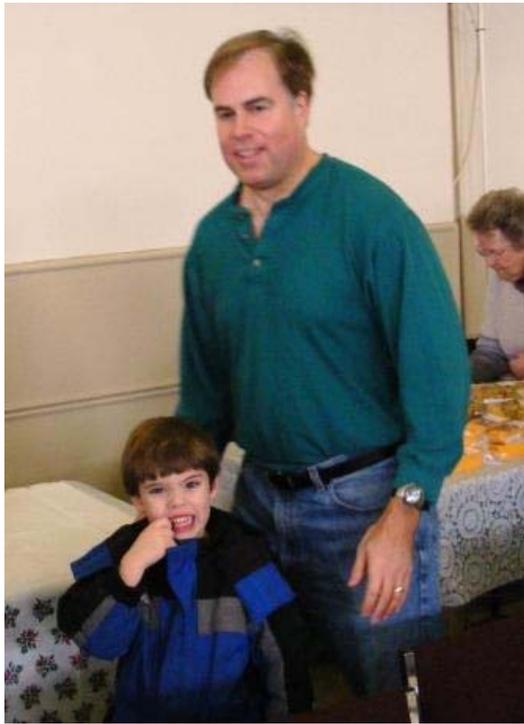


*"Canadian Home Workshop Show"*  
Mississauga



*"Award Presentations"*  
at the

**Festivals and Events Ontario Annual Conference**



*"Kevin Stuart"*  
The Voice

---

*"I do, however, remember  
the box lunch..."*

---



*"Festival Theatre"*  
The Stratford Festival

*Kevin Stuart - The Voice ...* from page 2

A team was born! Since our first meeting we have produced over 20 "*Festival Nomad*" vignettes. We have had a lot of fun making them and I think they add a lot to the website. (Click <http://www.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca/listen.htm> to see the list of the vignettes) The bonus of the whole venture is that I gotten to know Kevin much better and to truly appreciate him and his talents.

## Festival Ideas...

*Each month this section features ideas gained from attending so many festivals. For the March issue we want to talk about the Stratford Festival. A few weeks ago I wrote an article on "The Adventures of a Festival Nomad" blog about the Stratford Festival. We are republishing it for your enjoyment/information?*

## The Stratford Festival...

My earliest memory of the **Stratford Festival** was when I was a kid in public school! Just getting there was a big adventure! My school friends and I excitedly boarded the school bus and then we were off! Back then it seemed like a really long trip, but in reality it was only a few hours. I don't remember much about the play we saw. I am sure it was one of Shakespeare's. I do, however, remember the box lunch we were served! I know that all the kids really liked it. I had never experienced anything like it. Over the years I have been back to Stratford and the **Stratford Festival** many times. Stratford is one of my favourite places to visit. The downtown area is very quaint and the Festival Park area is beautiful. Victoria Lake forms the centre of the park with the Festival Theatre overlooking it. The white swans floating effortlessly across the water add to the park's peace and majesty. There are plenty of options if you decide to stay overnight, from Bed and Breakfasts to Quaint Inns and everything in between. Of course, staying overnight means "going to the theatre"! The Festival was founded by Tom Patterson in 1953 and has had some of North America's finest actors perform there. While the Festival's primary mandate is to present productions of William Shakespeare's plays, it also products a wide variety of other types of plays.

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

*Festival Ideas ... from page 3*

This year's (2009) plays include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Westside Story* and *The Importance of Being Ernest*. There are some 14 plays in all. A far cry from when the Festival first started. The number of theatres has increased, as have the number and types of plays. If you enjoy traveling to interesting places and want to experience one of North America's finest theatres, Stratford and the **Stratford Festival** is a must! To find out more, visit the Festivals Website at <http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/>.

## Festival Tips

### Having Too Much Fun!

In January Judi and I visited the Polar Bear Festival in Campbellford. There we joined my brother Chuck, his wife Flo and their two friends, Wilf and Win. The first activity we attended was the Chocolate and Cheese Festival at the United Church. This was supposed to be one of a number of activities we were going to visit. After entering the Church, everything when downhill from there! The problem was, we started to have too much fun! We didn't want to leave! And, before we knew it, it was well after 12:00 noon! The main event we wanted to see was almost over! We did make an attempt (feeble) to get to the event, but it was all over except for the "chattering" teeth! There was nothing left for us to do, we made back for the Church. (But not before we visited the local bakery, YUM!). Back at the Church it was more of the same, FUN! Wilf had been "nominated" as "guest" auctioneer, with my brother Chuck as his "lovely" assistant! We didn't leave the Church until later that afternoon! My **FESTIVAL TIP**... beware of having too much fun!

#### Ontario Festivals Visited

P.O. Box 272  
Cobourg, ON K9A 4K8 CANADA

**Phone:**

1-888-818-0255

**Fax:**

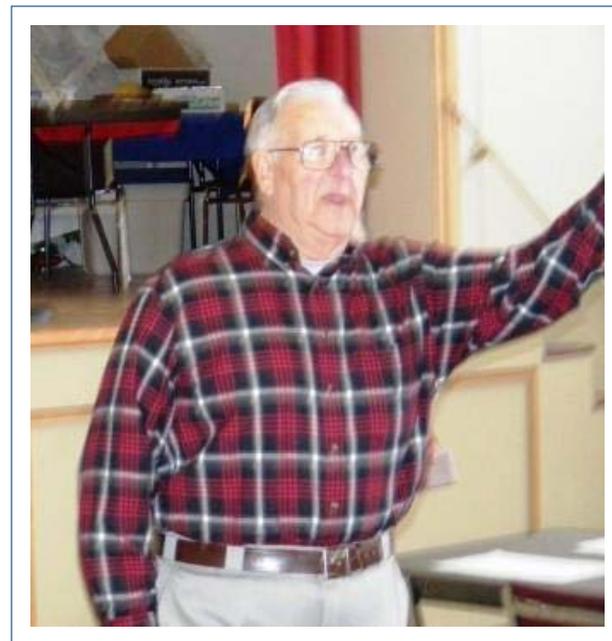
1-888-818-0255

**E-mail:**

[info@ontariofestivalvisited.ca](mailto:info@ontariofestivalvisited.ca)



*"Bridge over Victoria Lake"*  
**Stratford**



*"Having Too Much Fun!!"*  
**Wilf at the  
Polar Bear Festival  
Campbellford**

