



Festival Notes

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Moving Forward...

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Moving Forward...
- 1 What a Month!
- 2 The McLean Berry Farm
- 3 Festival Ideas – *IlluminAqua*
- 4 Festival Tips – *It's a Cushy Job*

"I am hoping that others who have opinions and concerns..."

The *Festival News* section has now been available for over one month. I think we have now worked most of the kinks. However, you never know completely with computers and computer programs. That being said, the new section has been well received so far. We have even been able to have it listed, under Ontario Festival News, on the first page of all the major search engines, Google, Yahoo and Bing (formerly MSN). The Festival News section contains 3 main components, "*Headline News*", "*Feature Articles*" and "*Hot Topics*". There is even a weekly "*Festival Poll*"! For the Headline News page we collect "News" from various sources. These include "Google Alerts", "News Releases" from festival and event organizers and submissions from our new "*Festival News Submission Form*". The link to the news submission form can be found throughout our website. We invite anyone who has "festival or event news" to use the form. We will take the news submission and then post it in the "Headline News" section. We encourage all Ontario festivals and events to use the form to submit their latest news! The second section, **Feature Articles**, contains stories and information about the festivals we have visited and the people we have met. Most of the articles have been taken from my "*Adventures of the Festival Nomad*" blog. The third section is **Hot Topics**. Most of the articles, so far, have come from "*Gary's Blog*". These articles discuss current festival and event topics and ideas that are being talked about by organizers and the people who attend their events. I am hoping that others who have opinions and concerns will join the conversation by submitting articles for publication. Meaningful dialogue is always appreciated!

With *Festival News* now running smoothly, we turn our attention to the NEW *Festival Finder Search Engine*. Programming for this is being worked on and festival and event information is being collected. Always the perpetual optimist, I am hoping that this new section will be launched in mid-August. Please wish us luck!

What a Month!

I knew that June was going to be a busy month, but not that busy! It all started off with a three hour trip to Welland! I was traveling there to visit *IlluminAqua* and their first concert of the year.

Please see *What a Month!*... on page 2



"Royal Regiment of Canada"
Hamilton International Tattoo

What a Month! ... from page 1

The trip was definitely worthwhile! The concert was fantastic! That was Friday. The next day I had hoped to attend the closing weekend for **Luminato**. **Cirque de Soleil** had created a special performance and it was taking place at the **Harbourfront Centre**. Honestly, I was exhausted from my all day expedition to Welland. I didn't get home until 3 o'clock in the morning! However, after a day's rest, I bounced back and went to **Hamilton** for their **International Tattoo**. Judi was busy that day, so I asked my sister, Barbara, to come with me. We had a wonderful time! Mid-week, my sister-in-law, **Susan Caron**, had an **Art Show** at **Munro's Downtown** in Cobourg. She was displaying her "**Jazz Art**" collection. The show was well attended and I took plenty of photographs. On the following weekend I visited 2 festivals. The first was the **Burlington Sound of Music Festival**. What a great event! After Burlington I traveled back east to Mississauga and the **Mississauga Waterfront Festival**. This was a re-visit for me. This time I stayed long enough to take in the terrific evening concerts. I even got to hear **Mayor Hazel McCallion** open the festival! My next event was again, mid-week in Toronto. My daughter and I traveled to **Chapters** in Etobicoke to attend a **Book Signing**. The author was one of our favourites, **Janet Evanovich**! If you have never read one of her books, you should give it a try! They are very clever and witty, as was the Book Signing! My final event took me all the way to Harriston (northwest of Guelph). This was where the **Canadian Redneck Games** were being held. I had great fun watching all the "Canadian Rednecks" participants. I even got to meet **Harriston Mayor, David Anderson**! Well, that was my **June**.

Now for an easy July!? Not...

The following is a list of the events we have scheduled to visit in **July** and in the beginning of **August**:

July 1st - Canada Day Celebrations in Brighton, Warkworth, Campbellford and Hastings

July 4th - Brockville Riverfest

July 11th - St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival

July 17th & 18th - Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival(Smiths Falls)

July 18th - Stewart Park Festival (Perth)

July 25th - Wasaga Under Siege

July 26th - Uxbridge Highland Games

August 1st - Mill Race Festival (Galt)

August 8th - Puppets Up (Almonte)

August 9th - Festival of Textiles (Lang Pioneer Village)

McLean Berry Farm...

"A short time ago I traveled north to the Buckhorn area to visit the McLean Berry Farm and Sam McLean. This is my article about Sam, his family and their farm."

Every once in a while you meet someone who you consider extraordinary! Sam McLean is one of those people! It's not that he is an outwardly figure. Actually, he's not. In fact, he seems to be low key and unassuming (at least to me) However, he exudes a quiet confidence, especially when he talks about his farm and his family.

Sam was a cabinet maker, but not anymore. Now he is a "full fledged" farmer and a successful entrepreneur! Although Sam wasn't raised as a farmer, he has farming in his blood. Both his grandfather and father were farmers, but not the young Sam. Sam was raised in Peterborough, but moved to Alberta as a young man. He and his wife Jane live there for a number of years. Sam liked it there, but Jane "convinced" him to move back home, Ontario and Peterborough. Once they had settled back in the area, Sam traded his cabinet making tools for farm implements. The McLean Berry Farm and the climb for survival were born! Sam and Jane purchased a neglected berry farm located between Lakefield and Buckhorn. There with their two children, daughter Erin and son Ben, they started to build their future. A mere mortal would have been happy just building a successful berry farm, but not our "hero" Sam! Yes, it all started with berries (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries), but then it grew! More varieties of produce were added, sweet corn, peas, beans, potatoes. Eventually he out grew his own 25 acres and started to look for more. Today he now farms 100 acres (75 acres leased). They all contain everything from berries to corn and potatoes to tomatoes! You would think that this would be enough!

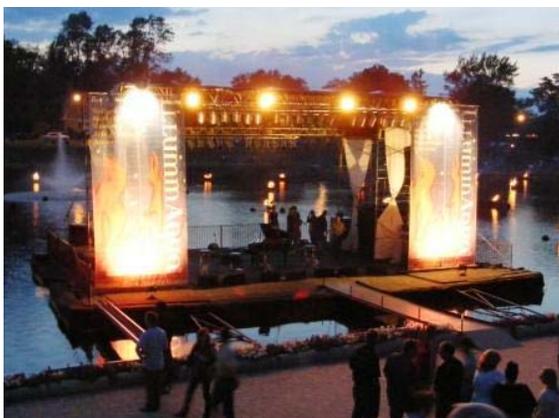
Please see *McLean Berry Farm...* on page 3



"Jane and Sam McLean"
McLean Berry Farm



"The Wilkinsons"
Burlington Sound of Music Festival



"Fire, Music, Water"
Welland's IlluminAqua

McLean Berry Farm ... from page 2

Remember, this was all happening with two growing children and he and Jane were doing this all on their own! I can only imagine the long days and nights Sam spent building his dream! As the business grew other components were added, "Pick Your Own Berries", a "Produce Store", participation in "Farmers Markets" (3 of them, 2 in Peterborough and 1 in Toronto) and they host and run two festivals (one in the spring and the other in the summer)! And, I forgot to mention, they own a larger grove of Maple Trees. In the spring they tap the trees. They do it the old fashioned way. They collect the sap with buckets. Sam feels it's less intrusive. The two festivals I mentioned before are the Buckhorn Maple Syrup Festival and the McLean's own Strawberry Festival. On top of all this, Sam sells a lot of his produce to local wholesale customers!

Fortunately Sam and Jane's children have grown up appreciating and loving farm life. His son, Ben, is now Sam's "right hand man" and his helping his parents in their "golden years"! Erin, who has taken a year off to work and travel Europe will be back home mid-summer, to once again "crack the whip" at the Farmers Markets and to look after the McLean's Country Store. With all this happening Jane will be looking after the family garden and making sure that Sam behaves himself! The dictionary defines "extraordinary" as "exceptional in character, amount, extent, degree, etc.; noteworthy; remarkable: extraordinary speed; an extraordinary man". This certainly describes Sam and his family perfectly! The McLean's and the McLean Berry Farm are a wonderful example of what drive, imagination and determination can do! If you love fresh produce, it certainly is worth the drive to Buckhorn and the McLean Berry Farm! You will be glad you did! To find out more about the McLean's, check out their website at <http://www.mcleanberryfarm.com>

Festival Ideas...

Each month this section features ideas gained from attending so many festivals. For the July issue we want to talk about the "Welland's IlluminAqua". A few weeks ago, I wrote an article on the "Nomad's Blog" about this imaginative series of concerts. We are republishing it for your enjoyment/information?

IlluminAqua...

On Friday, June 12th Welland's Merritt Park Theatre hosts the first in a series of seven concerts. ***IlluminAqua*** is about to start its 3rd triumphant season. Helped by funding from Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, this year's "fire, music and water" season will be the best yet! The **Destino Tenors** are the first featured performer. "The three Canadian tenors, who make up Destino, combine the musical passion and power of opera with the accessibility (and boy-band good looks) of pop." (Website: <http://www.destino3.com/>)

Festival Ideas ... from page 3

The second performance is on Friday, June 26th. **Justin Hines** is the featured performer. The brief bio on the IlluminAqua website says, "*Justin's is a blend of folk-flavoured music with a song writing and vocal style reminiscent of James Taylor, Cat Stevens, Jim Croce and Harry Chapin.*" (Website: <http://www.justinhines.com/>)

Performance number three is on Friday, July 10th. There are two featured performers, **David Francey** and **Kathleen Edwards**. Francey's IlluminAqua bio says, "*From carpenter to songwriter - Scottish-born Canadian, David Francey is recognized as one of today's finest singer-songwriters.*" (Website: <http://www.davidfrancey.com/>) IlluminAqua says of Kathleen Edwards, "*Kathleen is an alternative country singer-songwriter from Ottawa. In 2008, she released her 3rd studio album Asking for Flowers and is touring this summer with stops at Toronto's Massey Hall and London's (ON) Rock The Park with the Tragically Hip.*" (Website: <http://www.kathleenedwards.com/>)

Friday, July 24th is the fourth performance. **The Joys** are the featured performers. "*London Ontario rockers, The Joys, were awarded Best Live Act and best female-fronted band at the Toronto Indie Awards. With the high-powered voice of Sarah Smith, the band produces a heavy rock sound, but some songs are lighter with emotional lyrics.*" (Website: <http://www.thejoys.ca/>)

The **Tom Fun Orchestra** is the featured entertainment at the Friday, August 7th concert. This is the fifth concert in the series. "*The Tom Fun Orchestra is a nine-piece cluster-rock ensemble from Cape Breton Island that has been impressing music fans and critics alike with their raucous stage presence and high-energy show.*" (Website: <http://tomfun.ca/>)

The sixth concert will be held on Friday, August 21st and features **Nikki Yanofsky**. "*Nikki Yanofsky is a 16-year-old musical prodigy. She is the youngest singer ever to be signed to the iconic jazz label, Verve Records.*" (Website: <http://www.nikkionline.ca/>)

The seventh and final concert is on Friday, September 4th. The **Leahy's** are the featured performers. Canada's Juno awarding winning Celtic music group is known and loved around the world. Their bio on the IlluminAqua website says, "*Canada's Celtic Powerhouse - A musical group of brothers and sisters, a sound, a style of music, a way of life, a volcanic explosion of talent and energy, emotion, and passion.*" (Website: <http://www.leahymusic.com/index.html>)

Each concert has two performances before the feature performance. The shows start at 8:00 PM and are held rain or shine.

Check out the ***IlluminAqua*** website at <http://www.illuminaqua.com/EN/index.htm>.

See you there!!

Festival Tips

It's a Cushy Job...

In my previous article I talked about the wonderful concert series, IlluminAqua. Like many of the festivals of this type, it requires a lot of sitting. And, normally it's on a hard surface... metal, wood, cement, stone and the bare ground! Judi and I have plastic cushions that we were given as an advertising promotion. While these are nice to have, they are quite thin and eventually feel the same as not having a cushion. While I was at the IlluminAqua concert, I noticed that they were selling thick foamy cushions. I am sure that they would have been many times better than the ones we got for free. So you might ask, "Did you buy one for you and Judi?" The answer unfortunately is "No!", but I plan on purchasing two as soon as possible. So, my fellow festival and concert goers, this month's Festival Tip is "Be kind to your tush. It makes sitting through long concerts and other bench activities much easier and more comfortable!"

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"Amphitheatre Seating"
IlluminAqua