



ONTARIO

Festivals Visited

Festival Notes

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"Are you crazy, it's winter and it's COLD!"



*"George and Sher St. Kitts
Aurora Christmas Dream
(St. Kitts Music, Inc.)"*



The Holiday Spirit...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

It's hard to believe that Christmas 2010 is almost here! The year seemed to pass so quickly! How was the year for you? Some people don't seem to like the "*Christmas/Holiday*" season much. I do. Perhaps it's the anticipation of Santa or the New Year for many people, but for me it's the warmth of the season. "*Warmth*", you say! Are you crazy, it's winter and it's COLD! I, of course am not talking about "*physical warmth*", I'm talking about the "*warmth in our hearts*". People just seem to think more about others. Giving to others and not just to family and friends. Take an acquaintance of ours, as an example, *Sher and George St. Kitts*. George is a wonderful internationally recognized musician and Sher is, well, a "*fireball*"! Between Sher and George and others in their community, they have organized the "*Aurora Christmas Dream*". This is an annual event held in Aurora that provides "*a traditional luncheon to over 100 special guests on Christmas Day and going on to support The Welcoming Arms (6 local churches), the Salvation Army and the Aurora Food Pantry for those in need over the holidays!*" They raise funds for "*The Dream*" through donations and sponsorships. They even hold a *Kick Off Party* where George and his Band perform! If you want to find out more about this heartfelt cause, let me know and I'll put you in touch with Sher St. Kitts. It's caring people like George and Sher, with their "*Holiday Spirit*" that continue to make this the "*Season of Warmth*"!



"Board Game Competitions"
The Hobby and Game Show



"Group Photo"
Judi's "Surprise" Party



"The Floats and Vehicle were lite up"
Ajax Santa Claus Parade

Festival Nomad's Report...

November turned out to be a lot busier than anticipated! On November 6th, Judi and I traveled to Toronto. Initially to visit our grandson, and then to the *Hobby and Game Show* being held at the *Toronto International Centre* in Malton. This was a fun show with lots of interesting activities and exhibits. The next event also happened in conjunction with another activity. Judi and I headed to Ajax to attend a "surprise" party at the home of our friends Ross and Cathy Cannata. Little did Judi know that the "surprise" party was for her! She just turned "50"! Believe me, she was very surprised! After the party, we followed Ross and Cathy to downtown Ajax for the annual *Ajax Santa Claus Parade*. I had never been to a "night" parade, so I was fascinated by all the lights! Our new "Festival Nomad Correspondent", *Kevin Stuart*, with his wife Joanne and their son, visited *Christmas at Presqu'ile*. Judging Kevin's photos and article, it was an event worth visiting! Our final "official" event was the "*Harvest of Christmas Delights*". This event was held at the home of artist *Kathryn McHolm* in *Welcome* (located just north of *Port Hope*). One of the show's featured artist was *fabric artist Laurie Siblock*. Not only is Laurie a very accomplished artist, she is also the special events coordinator of *Lang Pioneer Village*! Speaking of *Lang Pioneer Village*, our last "non-official" event was at the *Lang Pioneer Village Volunteer Appreciation* luncheon. Judi and I had been invited to attend because of Judi's volunteer work for the Village. We were very impressed with both the turnout and the enthusiasm of the volunteers present. It is amazing to see just how many people it takes to run a facility such as *Lang Pioneer Village*!

It looks like December will be slower, but who knows what might come by chance! Here is a list of some of the events we are considering:

December 3 - *Christkindl Market* in Kitchener

December 4-5 - *Christmas by Candlelight* at Lang Pioneer Village

December 4-5 - *A Country Christmas Remembered* in Spencerville

November 27 - January 2 - *Simcoe Christmas Panorama*

November 12 - December 19 - *Buskertainment* in Downtown Toronto (Yonge Street)



"Rocking in front of the fireplace"
Christmas at Presqu'ile



"Judi with Laurie Siblock and Kathryn McHolm"
Harvest of Christmas Delights



"Making Gingerbread Cookies"
Christmas by Candlelight
at Lang Pioneer Village (2007)

INSIDE with the *Festival Nomad*...

Over the years I have attended, worked with and organized hundreds of festivals and events. With this new series, "*INSIDE with the Festival Nomad*", I want to give you an "*inside*" look at some of the festivals and events that I have been involved with or that I have visited. Along the way, I have had a lot of fun and sometimes frustration, but I have never been bored!

ACROSS CANADA ... Where to Sleep?

We eventually had a great meeting in Minneapolis. The Hadley House people couldn't have treated us better. After a breakfast meeting brunch and a tour of their facility, we were back on the road. The good night's sleep had done wonders for us. Now we were off, back to Canada and the City of Winnipeg. Winnipeg is almost directly north of Minneapolis and the trip can be a fairly tedious long drive! We played "*travel games*" to pass the time. We traveled the route without incidence and even crossed the border smoothly. The Canadian Boarder guards seemed to be less bored then their American counterparts. Of course, when we crossed the border this time, it was late afternoon. When we finally reached Winnipeg, it was early evening. we decided to drive around the city to get our bearings. We had an appointment to visit the *Assiniboine Zoo* the next day. Because of costs, we decided to find a safe place to park and then to sleep in the van. By the time we started to look seriously for a place to park, it was becoming quite dark. After much "*driving around*", we found what appeared to be the perfect spot! It was a parking lot located right on the edge of a river. It was a clear night, and the moon reflected in the ripples of the water. Very romantic! After we parked, we settled down for a good nights sleep! Judi was in the back of the van and I was lying back in the driver's seat. *What happened next was hard to imagine!*

We had just gotten to sleep when I was awakened with a flashing light! It was the police! The police car came to a stop behind our vehicle and an officer got out of his car and approached ours. He taped on our window and I rolled it down a crack (*you can't be too careful!*). The officer bent down and said "*I don't want to alarm you (he did!) But right across the river is a penitentiary and two convicts have just escaped! We would suggest you not open your door or window to anyone!*" I thanked the officer and he walked back to his car and drove away. What took place after that could have come straight from the *Peter Seller's* movie, "*The Pink Panther*".

Please see *INSIDE with the Festival Nomad*... on page 4

INSIDE with the Festival Nomad ... from page 3

Police cars came passed us, to and fro, over the bridge and then back! I was looking for men in "Gorillas Suits"! Lights were flashing! Everything was a whirl! Finally the action stopped and all was quite again (*so much for the romance!*) Judi and I had just gotten to sleep again when another police car, lights flashing, pulled up behind us! The officer got out of his car and then tapped on our window. Once again I rolled the window a crack (*still careful!*) The officer said "I don't want to alarm you, but there's a penitentiary across the river and two convicts have escaped! I would suggest you leave this area immediately!" Talk about being alarmed! We told him that we didn't know the area (*we thought that we were in the middle of no where!*) The officer said "Just go two blocks across the bridge and you'll come to a main highway. There's a truck stop right there! You'll be safe at the stop!" We of course, thanked the officers and moved quickly down the road. Another night of adventure and lack of sleep! By the way, we never did find out if they captured the convicts!

NOTE: This is part of a series that appears weekly in our "*Adventures of The Festival Nomad*". The Blog can be found at <http://nomadsblog.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca>.

Festival Ideas...

A Country Christmas Remembered

Last year an event contacted Judi and me to see if we would be interested in visiting their event. The name of the event intrigued me, "*A Country Christmas Remembered*". Unfortunately at that time I wasn't traveling anywhere. It was just a few weeks before my heart surgery. This year is different. I feel great and have been really trying to take care of myself. Judi will be volunteering at Lang Pioneer Village's *Christmas by Candlelight*, so I have decided to take the "plunge" and drive to the Village of *Spencerville*. *Spencerville* is located near Ottawa, so it's going to be a long trip, but I am sure it will be worth it! The event is being held on Saturday December 4th and Sunday December 5th. There are over 30 activities planned including *Santa's Workshop*, *Children's Shopping Emporium*, *Horse Drawn Shuttle*, a *Farmer's Market*, a *Craft Show* and much more. It sounds like a lot of fun! Hopefully I will see some of you there!



"Pink Panther Logo"

INSIDE with the Festival Nomad - Across Canada



"Judi with a **Santa Moose**"
Simcoe Christmas Panorama (2007)



"Christmas Trees up the entrance hallway"
Capitol Christmas (2008)



"Lone Drummer"
Fort Henry

"1812 type drumming is actually very hard. There are about 16 different..."



"Drummers in battle"
Battle of Stoney Creek

Christmas Bonus

Beating the War...

(This article is from our War of 1812 Discovery Series, written by Judi McWilliams)

My older sister, Carol, is an amazing "Drummer". She plays the drums for the *Newmarket Citizen's Band* in parades and concerts. She also plays the tympanis extremely well! My heart stands still when I am at a performance or when I know she has a solo or important piece to "nail". Recently she attended a festival as a *Festival Nomad Correspondent* for our *Ontario Festivals Visited* website. She took pictures for her article, while marching down a hill in a parade, playing the drum. It was an amazing perspective and an amazing feat (*although I'm amazed she did not trip over her feet*). I asked Carol about her thoughts of playing the drum for re-enactment's for the period for the *War of 1812*. As accomplished as she is at "drumming" she informed me that *Drumming for Re-enacting* was completely different and much more difficult! She felt it would take constant practice and time to be able to confidently do re-enacting drumming. Carol says *Drumming* is very serious business. To quote her, "1812 type drumming is actually very hard. There are about 16 different patterns that one will fit any song. The drummer was one of the most important people in the unit. They also had drum signals for all sorts of things - like "get out of bed", "retreat", etc. The fancier the drum the more \$\$\$ the officers had and probably the better taken care of by the troops." I took some time to do some research on "Drumming" and found out that there is a LOT more to Drumming then I realized.

The initial decision in becoming a drummer might depend on choosing whether to become a drummer for Battle re-enactments, or to become one for educational living history purposes. It is an expensive hobby that begins with a few hundred dollars for a uniform and the equipment and a few hundred dollars for encampment re-enactments necessities, as tents and blankets. I understand that joining a unit may not be too expensive, if the unit has equipment to lend you. The drums can cost from \$350-\$600 and probably much more! No matter what the actual financial costs, you will need to be prepared to invest your TIME! As an integral part of re-enactments, the troop depends on you (*the drummer*) to attend! It takes time, effort, and loads of practice.

Please see *Christmas Bonus...* on page 6

Christmas Bonus ... from page 5

The terminology used in *Drumming* is complex. There are many stages in just preparing for drumming, each time you venture out. You need to "*strap up your drum*". That is place the rim around your hip almost on your left side. You need to build up your muscles in your shoulders and back to be able to survive the day at a re-enactment (*not to mention your sore feet!*) You will need to learn how to hold the sticks correctly, learn how to let the sticks naturally rebound without being so stiff yourself. There are many terms used for drumming the sticks (*as my sister said*), such as *double stroke roll, ruffs, flams, sextuplets, paradiddles*. My sister, Carol, tells me that there is always the danger of your drum strap breaking and to quote her ... "*you end up hop, fling, drumming along. Loose a stick and get blisters double beating (hopefully you don't get court marshaled when the flying stick hits the officer)*". There are specific names for the drills of sets of drumming such as *Breakfast call, Reveille, Assembly, Drummer's Call, Retreat* and so many more. And don't forget your "*good posture*", a must for proper *Military Etiquette*. On a windy day, your posture might go right out to pasture! As my sister says ... "*just be sure you don't slip on the cow patty or horse poop!*"

Festival Tips

by Judi McWilliams

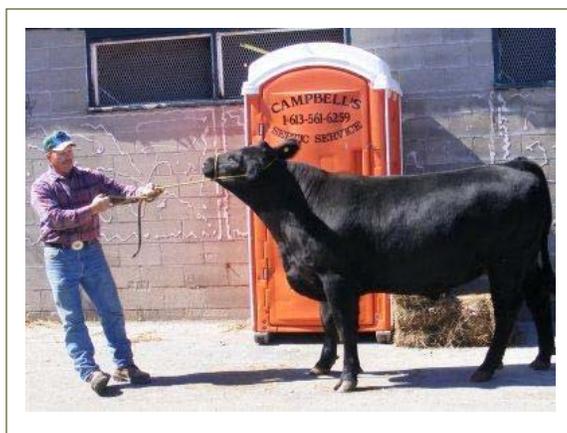
Festival and Event Survival 101 (Part Two)...

Continued from last month's Festival Tips Article...

Another phenomenon is the amazing fact that empty *Port-o-potties* become busy and have long line ups at certain times of the day. There is really no guarantee way of avoiding nature. There are several things you can do though to speed up this endeavour so you can get on with enjoying the festival/event. If possible, avoid the first *Port-o-potty station* you come to. After arriving at the festival/event, usually after some time in the car, many people need a "break" right away. If you walk further into the festival/event grounds, (using my "*Walking Backwards*" tips), you may find there are NO line ups at all. The Festival Nomad and I have also discovered that if you ask the volunteers at the gate, they can direct you to the best location to use the facilities. Another tip here is to always carry tissues and hand sanitizers with you. These tools may become particularly useful at the end of the day when sometimes *Port-o-potty stations* run out of these supplies. It has been my experience that often the *Port-o-potties* are cleaner than the permanent facilities offered at a venue. Surprised and grateful. Whatever you do, don't forget to use these *Port-o-potties* before you leave for home. The journey home may take longer than you think.



"Leading the drums"
Cobourg Santa Claus Parade



"Trouble at the Port -o-potty!"
Kingston Fall Fair

"We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!"

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