



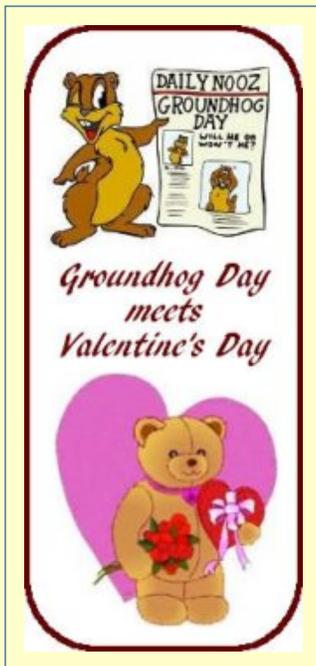
Festival Notes

February 2011
Volume 4 Issue 3

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February Celebrations!



"Tom and Connie McAleese"
Festival Nomad Correspondents

Love Is In The Air...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

February is one of those confusing months! It's still a "dark" winter month, but there is anticipation that "spring" is just "around the corner"! So, is it really "dark", or is it the beginning of "light"? You know the old saying, "Is the cup half full or half empty?". One thing that we do know is that it is the month for "lovers", *Valentines Day* and for "groundhogs"... (*Warton Willie, Punxsutawney Phil*), *Groundhog Day*! Heck, I've even received cards for both of these days! Very confusing! The Ontario Government thought enough of February that they gave us, a few years ago, a new "provincial holiday", *Family Day*! It's February the 21st this year. With all this, how can we consider February as a "dark" month? Perhaps one of the best declarations for February in North America is "*Black History Month*". *Black History Month* is a remembrance of important people and events in the history of the [African Diaspora](#).

Please see *Love Is In The Air...* on page 2

Festival Nomad's Report...

During 2010, Judi and I and our *Festival Nomad Correspondents* visited 49 Ontario festivals and events. We had a great time at all of the events and we thank all the organizers and volunteers for their hospitality. As a tribute to a wonderful festival year, we have decided you give you a "taste" of *three* of the events we visited.

Toronto Ukrainian Festival - The *Toronto Ukrainian Festival* was visited on Saturday, September 19th by *Festival Nomad Correspondents, Connie and Tom McAleese*. According to Connie and Tom, "*The Toronto Ukrainian Festival in the Bloor West Village took full marks for us this year. It is billed as "North America's Largest Ukrainian Street Festival" and on this we must agree. It was an exciting well-planned cultural event. The non-stop stage performers with their authentic costumes, the music and dance. The colourful vendors stalls, the street performers, the food ..everything was first-class. It was a day well spent in the sunshine and with the many friendly people out for a good time. We are looking forward to next year's event.*"

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report* on page 2

Love Is In The Air... from page 1

In the Toronto area the month is celebrated in many ways. Our friends, *George and Sher St. Kitts*, will be celebrating it through their lively "*Love Train Revue Show*". The show is on *Friday, February 11th* and is being held at the *Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts*. George and Sher always produce wonderful events and, according to their friend and Master of Ceremonies, *Spider Jones*, this will certainly be one to remember! You can learn more at their website, <http://the-revue.com> or see Judi's "*THE INSIDE SCOOP*" article shown on Page 6. Another great event taking place in Toronto, is "*KUUMBA*" at the *Harbourfront Centre*. Judi recently spoke with its organizer, *Melanie Fernandez*, *Director of Community and Educational Programmes* for the *Centre*. Melanie told Judi all about the event, *KUUMBA*. You can read Judi's interview with Melanie at "*THE INSIDE SCOOP*" Blog (<http://judisinsidescoop.blogspot.com>). *KUUMBA* celebrates all aspects of *Black History*, including dancing, music, drumming, games, food and much more! Check out the *KUUMBA* website (<http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba>) to see all that is happening. *KUUMBA* takes place *February 6th and 7th* and *February 13th and 14th*. Whatever way you look at February in Ontario, the events and activities that take place during the month will surely "*brighten it up*"!

Festival Nomad's Report... from page 1

The following is a portion of their article which is posted on the *Ontario Festivals Visited* website.

Toronto Ukrainian Festival...

Bloor West Village...

It was perfect weather for the last weekend of summer. Tom and I rode "*the rocket*" (the subway) to the *Toronto Ukrainian Festival*. Sunday afternoon to one of, and I quote, "*North America's Largest Ukrainian Street Festivals*". The Festival is held in Toronto's *Bloor West Village*. There is non-stop entertainment on the *Jane Street Stage* and along *Bloor Street*. The performers included vocalists, dancers and musicians from the Greater Toronto and surrounding area, Canada, the USA, and as far away as the Ukraine. There was a "*Youth Segment*" on the grand stage and a midway for the children. There was a colourful *Parade* on Saturday morning. On Friday and Saturday evenings, you could join the *ZABAVA/Street Dance* and enjoy the performance of Ukraine's Music Sensation *MAD HEADS XL*. They having been together since 2004 playing Ukrainian folk, reggae and rock 'n' roll.

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report..* on page 3



"George St. Kitts"
Performer/Producer
Love Train Revue Show



"Melanie Fernandez"
Director of Community and Educational
Programmes - Harbourfront Centre
KUUMBA Festival



"Street Performer"
Toronto Ukrainian Festival



"Mosaic"
Toronto Ukrainian Festival



"Bloor Street"
Toronto Ukrainian Festival



"The Chef"
Fortune Cooking Food Festival

Festival Nomad's Report from page 2

On the Streets...

We enjoyed the street performers and the sights and sounds of all the colourful vendor stalls. They offered food, beverages, clothing and souvenirs. As well, there was a *Sidewalk Sale* put on by the local businesses. A new attraction this year was the *Art Show and Sale*. This was organized by *Canadian Ukrainian Artists*.

(Please go to *Ontario Festivals Visited* at www.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca to read the rest of the article)

Fortune Cooking Food Festival (Toronto Harbourfront Centre) - The *Fortune Cooking Food Festival* was visited by *Judi McWilliams* on Saturday, August 21st. Judi describes her visit "I was amazed at the vast array of activities, the high level and quality of the performances and the participation of all the festival visitors. I was completely surprised and excited by all that there was to see and do".

The following is the article Judi posted on the *Ontario Festivals Visited* website.

Fortune Cooking Food Festival (Toronto Harbourfront Centre)...

Divide and Conquer...

This past weekend, on an overcast but warm summers' day, I decided to venture out "solo" to the *Harbourfront Centre* in Toronto to their "World Routes - Fortune Cooking Food Festival". This was a FREE day at the centre. The *Festival Nomad* and I had decided to divide and conquer for this weekend festivals and events. The *Festival Nomad* made the journey north to Collingwood for their "Peak to Shore Music and Art Fest". I hadn't been to the Harbourfront in some time and I had definitely never attended "solo", so it was with a great deal of anticipation that I approached the Centre for their "Fortune Cooking Food Festival". I knew the general area of where the festival was taking place. The Harbourfront Centre has a wonderful website with all the details including a great site map. As I neared the waterfront, I was instantly reassured that I had arrived at the right location. There were many tents set up, full of wonderful and colourful merchandise. As I had arrived quite early (*the festival did not get underway until noon*), I had time to visit the Queen's Quay building. I wanted to explore all the treasures it had to offer, and to pick up a coffee before I started the days activities. Because I was so early, I had a lot of time to "poke" around the "International Marketplace & World Café". The vendors were extremely helpful and they offered many unique items such as jewelry, silk scarves and hats... "treasures from around the world".

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report...* on page 4

Festival Nomad's Report from page 3

The vendors were extremely helpful and they offered many unique items such as jewelry, silk scarves and hats... *"treasures from around the world"*. The food that was offered smelt delightful and there was an ample selection of new foods from various cultures to discover. I watched the busy Harbourfront Centre volunteers set up the days' activity stations and prepare for the crowds to come. I managed to secure a front row seat (*a huge comfy plastic pink chair under a massive umbrella*) to watch the first dance/workshop of the day.

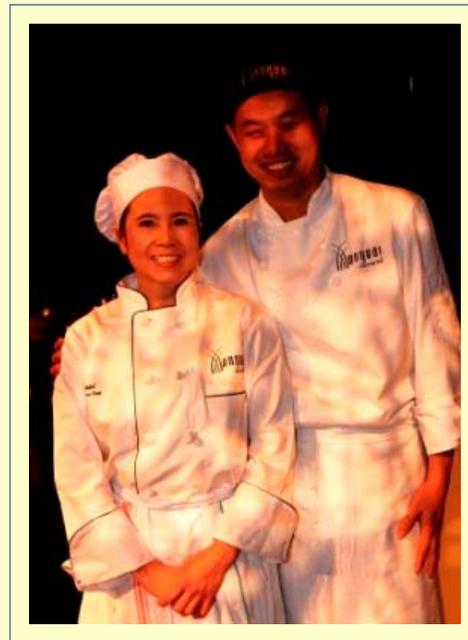
The Dancing Begins...

The "*Little Pear Garden Collective Performance and Workshop*", featured visiting *Beijing Dancing Academy* teacher, Mr. Li Beida. He had just arrived from Beijing a week ago. The costumes of the dancers were spectacular as were their calm peaceful dance movements! They performed two dances, depicting birds, with beautiful fluent movements. The amazing part, other than this beautiful performance, was Mr. Li Beida workshop. He guided, through the assistance of an interpreter, everyone who chose to take part. He took each movement, section by section, taught it to the crowd and then everyone "*danced*" to the music. I was surprised at how many people participated, young and old, men and women. Even people in wheel chairs participated with their arms! Everyone appeared to be in deep concentration but all seemed to be enjoying the experience intently! It was truly a joy to watch. Right at the end of this dance/workshop a brief rain shower occurred and everyone scrambled to the tents for cover! It stopped as soon as it started and people went on to enjoy all the other activities that the *Fortune Cooking Food Festival* had to offer. The kids' craft tent was packed with children of all ages. They were learning the fine art of making origami Fortune Cookies and other origami creations. While I waited for the "*Breakdancing*" workshop with "*Supernaturalz*" to begin I took the time to stroll around the booths.

(Please go to *Ontario Festivals Visited* at www.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca to read the rest of the article)

Cornwall Lift-Off - The Cornwall Lift-Off was visited by both Judi and myself. We spent the weekend of July 9th to the 11th at the request of Jim Brownell, MPP for *Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry*. "*The courtesies given to us by Jim and all the Cornwall Lift-Off organizers was simply amazing! Judi and I had a wonderful time attending all the events and discovering the wonderful city of Cornwall. We hope to go back to the area soon.*"

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report...* on page 5



"Longo's Winning Chefs"
Fortune Cooking Food Festival



"Longo's - Culinary Results"
Fortune Cooking Food Festival



"Jim Brownell and the Nomad"
Cornwall Lift-Off

Festival Nomad's Report from page 4

The following is the article that I wrote and posted on the Ontario Festivals Visited website.

Cornwall Lift-Off...

The Offer...

About a year ago, a man we met made us an offer we couldn't refuse. That man was **Jim Brownell**, MPP for *Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry*. The offer was that we should come to Cornwall to visit the "*Cornwall Lift-Off*" festival and that he would take care of everything for us. The offer sounded intriguing and I filed it in the back of my mind. That's where it remained until I received an e-mail from Jim asking us if we were still interested. We e-mailed him back that we were. At that, he said he would make all the arrangements! He did! The drive to Cornwall takes about 3 hours from Cobourg. Yes, it would be a long trip, but I knew that Judi would prepare and pack plenty of "*festival provisions*". We wanted to arrive in Cornwall in time to "*get the lay of the land*" before darkness set in. It was about 3:30 when we checked in to the **Best Western Parkway** in Cornwall. The room that we had been given was beautifully appointed, complete with a stone electric fireplace which added to the ambience of an already great room.

Friday Night...

After unpacking, we armed ourselves with a city map and headed downtown to find the festival site. With the map and directions from hotel staff we found the festival site easily. One of the features of the *Kinsmen Cornwall Liff-off* is its evening concerts. Tonight the main attractions were "*Lighthouse*" and "*Randy Bachman*" (formerly *Bachman-Turner Overdrive- BTO*). When we had left the hotel, it was overcast but not raining. By the time we finished our dinner and had headed to the park, the rain had started coming down. Undaunted, we donned our rain gear and headed for the festival entrance. Once inside the festival grounds, we found festival chair, **Chris Savard**, and introduced ourselves to him. Chris, who is the founder of this event, was very gracious. He spent time talking with us and then offered to let us stay in the V.I.P. tent to watch the evening performances. We were grateful for this because the rain had really started to come down. Just before the performance of *Lighthouse* began, Chris introduced us to **Candy Pollard**, who is in charge of the events marketing and public relations. Candy is also Marketing and Events Co-ordinator for the Cornwall and Seaway Valley Tourism. Candy gave us a lot of information about the area. Shortly after that, *Lighthouse* took to the stage and their performance began.

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report...* on page 6



"Randy Bachman"
Cornwall Lift-Off



"Strongman Competition"
Cornwall Lift-Off



"Bug Balloon"
Cornwall Lift-Off



"Mr. Peanut Balloon"
Cornwall Lift-Off

Festival Nomad's Report from page 5

We sat watching and listening to this great Canadian band. However, the best was yet to come in the form of none-other than *Randy Bachman*. To say that we were in awe of his talents and his performance would be an understatement. But then again, everyone in the audience (*and there were thousands under rain soaked umbrellas*), were in agreement with us. The whole scene was surreal. As we looked out of the tent, all we could see was a sea of umbrellas swaying to the sound of the music! The backdrop to all of this were the "*bright lights*" on stage and on the of the festival Midway rides. After the show was over, we went back to our hotel, a little rain soaked, but loudly humming some of the tunes we had heard. This had been a wonderful first night at the *Kinsmen Cornwall Lift-Off*.

(Please go to *Ontario Festivals Visited* at www.ontariofestivalsvisited.ca to read the rest of the article)

The Inside Scoop...

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing George St. Kitts. George has produced and is performing in the *Love Train Revue Show* that takes place on Friday, February 11th, 2011. The Show celebrates *Black History Month*.

The following is an excerpt from my interview with George:

The Inside Scoop with Judi McWilliams

"Informative interviews
with Ontario's festival
and event leaders."

<http://judisinsidescoop.blogspot.com>



A musical celebration
in honour of
**Black History
Month**
8pm Friday,
February 11th, 2011

Click Here to
Enter Website

Richmond Hill Centre
for the Performing Arts

Ontario Festivals Visited

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This *Love Train Revue Show* has been produced and choreographed by none other than *Mr. George St. Kitts*. After speaking with *Spider Jones* (the MC for the evening), I understood that all the "*back-up*" singers could "*sing!*" Upon speaking with *George*, he was quick to correct me saying that there really weren't any "*back-up singers*". According to *George* they are all lead singers in their own right and that the production of the music is such that they take turns shinning in the spotlight! *George's* job, as the producer, is to put the pieces of all the amazing talent together. The biggest surprise *George* says is that this show is mainly "*Local talent*". "*These amazing performers are from right here in our own backyard*". I asked *George* if, with all the artistic combination of folks, do "*egos*" ever get in the way and how would/does he manage such "*egos*". *George* chuckled, saying ... "*This is the Love Train, if you're not on the train, you're not on the train; it's not the "ego train"*". *George* says that everyone performing is there for a reason and they know their roles and responsibilities. This evening of *The Love Train Revue Show* not only is a celebration of *Black History Month*, through music, but a chance for *George* and others to *reflect and appreciate all the great people that paved the way throughout the years in this culture*. *George* takes time to reflect and learn different things about the culture. *George* wants all the cultures in our community and beyond to enjoy, learn and share the experiences of the music from the *Black Culture*. It's not just for *Black* or *African Canadians*. "*Any chance to enjoy music and learn at the same time*", according to *George*, "*is a good thing!*" *St. Kitts* says "*we're all different, but all the same, and we all have to come together and get along in life*". *Mr. St. Kitts* promises to deliver a fun filled evening of music and hopes that we all get up and dance. The "*music speaks for itself!*"