



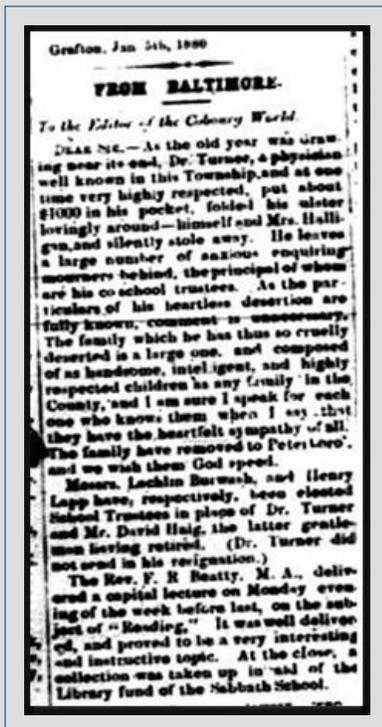
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"Click on above **BUTTON** to visit Blog"
[Ontario Tales Blog](#)



"Where is Dr. Turner?"
 Newspaper Article
 January 5th, 1880

Ontario Tales...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

A few weeks ago Judi and I had the opportunity to interview the Honourable Michael Chan, Ontario's Minister of Tourism and Culture. At the end of the interview I asked the Minister if he had any suggestions on how we could use our websites to better promote Ontario tourism and culture. He immediately responded "by involving our new immigrants!" I asked him "why?" He said, "by involving them in our festivals and events, they will become more familiar with who we are and will more easily become integrated with Canadian (Ontario) culture". The Minister, himself, is a first generation Canadian. He came to Canada many years ago, from Hong Kong, and as it can be readily seen, he has become a "fixture" in Ontario! With these thoughts in mind, I started to think how we could help new Ontarians learn more about our heritage. To this end, I thought about all of the interesting stories I had heard, as we traveled from community to community. I even thought about our own family's heritage, as described in one of my father's sister's diary.

Starting this month, I have created a new weekly Blog entitled "**ONTARIO TALES**". This new Blog will tell stories about the people who went before us to help form this wonderful Province we live in! Some of the "*Tales*" will be "*uplifting*" others will be "*thrilling*" and still others will be "*un-fortunate*"! To start this new series off, I am going to tell you about an "*unfortunate tale*" about my own family. We all have "*skeletons*" in our closet" and with this tale I will "*expose*" ours. To read the Blog, go to [ONTARIO TALES](#).

Festival Nomad's Report...

Each month, as I write my report, I am struck by how quickly the month has passed by. The month of *August* was no different, and here it is, now September, and the summer is almost over. I count *September 21st* as the end of summer! August, as I suspected, was a very busy month. It started off with a trip to *North Bay* where Judi and I visited my cousin *Jim Brien*. I hadn't been to North Bay in some time, so I was very appreciative of having Jim tour us around the town. After 3 days, we reluctantly left North Bay and headed back south.

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

Festival Nomad's Report... from page 1

From Huntsville, we travelled to *Baysville* and then *Dorset*. In Dorset we walked about Dorset's famous General Store, *Robinson's*. After Dorset we drove to and through *Algonquin Provincial Park*. Our tour through Algonquin brought back many pleasant childhood memories. I will be writing and publishing articles about *North Bay*, *Huntsville* and *Algonquin Provincial Park* in the weeks to come. Our first festival of the month was at *Lang Pioneer Village's Festival of Textiles*. The Festival featured *The Grand Opening of the S. W. Lowry Weaver Shop and Jacquard Loom Interpretive Centre*. In the week that followed, I returned to Lang for *Minister of Tourism and Culture, Michael Chan's* tour of the facility and a second opening ceremony of the weaver shop. On the following Saturday, Judi and I traveled north to the *Collingwood Arts, Jazz and Blues Festival*. The weather "dampened" the festival somewhat, but we were happy to meet up, again, with festival organizer *Yvonne Gibson*. She told me that even in spite of the afternoon rain, the morning had been glorious! The following weekend I headed to *Niagara-on-the-Lake* with my daughter *Ainsley*. We were headed to *Niagara Passion*. This was a fabulous "Wine and Food" event and it showed off the "culture" of the area beautifully!

With August now over, we look forward to September! *September* seems to be the month of agricultural fairs. Here's a list of some of the events that we and our Festival Nomad Correspondents are considering visiting:

- September 3rd - [Quinte Exhibition](#)
- September 4th - [Corn Roast \(Lang Pioneer Village\)](#)
- September 4th - [Paris Fair](#)
- September 10th - [Picton Fair](#)
- September 10th - [Orono Fair](#)
- September 10th - [Trenton Scottish Irish Festival](#)
- September 11th - [Uxbridge Fall Fair](#)
- September 11th - [Cabbagetown Festival](#)
- September 17th - [Beaverton Fall Fair](#)
- September 17th - [Port Hope Fair](#)
- September 17th - [Jazz & Blues in the Village \(Sarnia\)](#)
- September 23rd - [International Plowing Match \(Prescott-Russell\)](#)
- September 24th - [Lindsay Exhibition](#)
- October 2nd - [Applefest \(Lang Pioneer Village\)](#)

Inside Review...

The *Inside Review* is a monthly review of festivals and events that we have visited over the past month or two. In doing so, we will take a closer look at each event and then make suggestions on how events could improve themselves. Where possible, we will also mention areas that were well done! We are hoping that all of this will help broaden the scope of our reviews and help event organizers.

Please see *Inside Review...* on page 3



"Gary and Jim Brien on city pier overlooking Lake Nipissing"
City of North Bay



"Painted pony on the North Bay Carousel"
City of North Bay



"Huntsville Civic Centre"
Town of Huntsville



"Outdoor Group of Seven Gallery replica paintings"
Town of Huntsville



"Killarney Lodge"
Algonquin Provincial Park



"Opening Ceremonies for S.W. Lowry Weaver Shop
& Jacquard Loom Interpretive Centre"
Festival of Textiles
Lang Pioneer Village

Inside Report... from page 2

WHERE ARE WE?

Have you ever gone to a large event, seen something you like, and then walked away thinking that you will come back to it later? Then, after a while, trying to find it again? It can be very frustrating. Judi and I were at such an event recently. In walking through the grounds, it occurred to Judi that it would be nice if they marked the grounds with "*mileage markers*". This would allow visitors to know exactly where they were at any given time. The "*markers*" could also be used as money makers by allowing sponsors to advertise on them.

RAINY DAYS

No one can predict the weather! Heck, even weathermen can't predict the weather! So how can festival organizers be expected to? For the most part the "*weather gods*" have been fairly kind to us this season, but not always. The only way I know to minimize the effects of poor weather or, for that matter, unpredictable circumstances, is through careful "*contingency planning*"! This involves taking into as many unforeseen challenges as possible and then planning alternative solutions. Judi and I have visited a number of events where rain was a factor. Most of the events were able to "*weather the storm*" because they had prepared for the possibility in advance. Sometimes, however, the best laid plans can become unworkable because of even greater circumstances. The stages in Ottawa and Ohio are good examples of what can happen if proper precautions are not made. Sometimes taking the "*drastic action*" of cancelling an event is the best solution. We recently attended an event that took the "*drastic action of cancelling for the afternoon*" and earned the respect of the vendors and attendees alike, as "*safety came first*"!

ONE DAY EVENTS

As you can imagine, Judi and I have visited a lot of events. It always is a disappointment when we go to the second day of a 2 day event only to find that very little had been planned for that day. It's like the second day was just an after thought! I believe that it is better to have a great one day event, then to have a disappointing two day event. Imagine someone going to day one, enjoying it and then recommending it to their friends and family. And then, imagine the friends and family going that second day, only to be very disappointed. It is unlikely any one of them would return the following year. This was really brought to home when my daughter and I visited *Niagara Passion*. This is a one day event, actually a one afternoon event. It was exceptionally planned and had a lot of happy people attending. By concentrating on the one day, the organizers were able to create an exciting, well attended event!

Please see *Inside Review...* on page 3

INSIDE with the Festival Nomad...

The Biggies and More (Part One)

Judi and I have attended and volunteered at a number of fundraising auction dinners. These are a lot of fun and, of course, raise money for worthwhile causes. In the next few articles I am going to tell you about two of the larger and more interesting fundraising dinners we have visited and about some of the funny things that we have seen at other fundraising auctions we have attended! To read more about our *experiences*, visit ["The Adventures of the Festival Nomad" Blog](#).

The Warren Michigan Banquet (Set-up)...

The *Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS)* represents thousands of *Ruffed Grouse* and *American Woodcock* hunters across the United States and Canada. To help perpetuate their good works, they hold a number of fundraising auction dinners a year. Their Warren Michigan Banquet was, and perhaps still is, one of their 2 largest fundraising dinners. The other large banquet was held in Pittsburg. Judi and I attended the Warren Banquet when it was much better times for the "Big Three" auto makers. This event would draw over 1000 attendees. At the time, we were supplying RGS banquets with most of their framed art. We had a great relationship with the Society and when the *Executive Director, Sam Purseglove* asked if Judi and I would like to come to Warren and help with the banquet, we jumped at the chance! The event was being held on a Saturday evening, so Sam asked us to come up a day or two in advance. When we arrived all the boxes were laid out and ready to be set up. Sam asked if we were ready to pitch-in. Judi and I took a deep breath and said yes!?

This was a huge banquet and a lot needed to be done to set the banquet hall up. The RGS staff had pre-organized everything back at their headquarters in Coraopolis, PA (a suburb of Pittsburg), so everything was well packed and well marked. Even though everyone (*the RGS staff, not Judi and me*) knew what needed to be done, it all still seemed to be mass confusion. Eventually the hall was set up and everything was in its place. Exhausted, we all headed to our hotel rooms to rest, clean up and later to eat. The plan was to arrive early the next morning to make any final adjustments that needed to be done. A little after noon, all the remaining tasks were completed, We were told by Sam to go and get some rest and then come back at about 4:00 pm. This, even though the doors wouldn't open until 6:30 pm. Judi and I went back to our rooms to rest and then get ready for the evenings activities. *We had no idea what was in store for us!*



"Jacquard Loom"
Festival of Textiles
Lang Pioneer Village



"Tourism Minister, Michael Chan tours
Jacquard Loom"
Lang Pioneer Village



"Nomad with Yvonne Gibson, Event Organizer"
Collingwood Arts, Jazz & Blues Festival

The Inside Scoop...

by Judi McWilliams

Interview with the Honourable Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture.

PART THREE

I'll now switch gears a little and give you more **INSIDE SCOOP** about *Tourism and Culture* from *Minister Chan*. I have written a lot about volunteers and the importance of these dedicated people to our society! Minister Chan added to this issue by saying "can you imagine going to a festival or event (or even our local hospitals) without volunteers!" Michael Chan feels "Ontario is one of the most generous jurisdictions in Canada and (he) is very proud of this"! He states these volunteers greatly help our economy. *Minister Chan* was emphatic that he was correct on his statistics, as he himself worked on them. They even surprised me! As many of you may know, I have volunteered at *Lang Pioneer Village and Museum* in Keene, Ontario for the last couple of years. Here, I help the 120+ volunteers during the course of the visitor season. I was surprised, when speaking with *Melanie Fernandez* the *Director of Community and Educational Program's* at the *Harbourfront Centre* in downtown Toronto, that she is responsible for co-ordinating 4,000+ volunteers for Harbourfront's events and activities. *Minister Chan's*, statistics state that approximately 5 million volunteers, in Ontario alone, are helping our economy, by not only increasing revenue into our communities, decreasing personnel costs, but, by adding a work force that *Minister Chan* goes on to say "this adds 8-10 billion dollars in time costs alone". All this done by the hard work and dedication of these volunteers!

If you would like to read more about my interview with *Minister Michael Chan*, visit my weekly **THE INSIDE SCOOP** Blog at <http://judisinsidescoop.blogspot.com/>.

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"Traveling Art Gallery - Chris Nahrgang & Doug Comeau"
Collingwood Arts, Jazz & Blues Festival



"Entrance to Niagara Passion"
Niagara Passion



"Ainsley enjoying the wine & the atmosphere"
Niagara Passion