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Festival Nomad Correspondent
Anne Brooks



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Ainsley Brush



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Benn Fisher

2013... and On!

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*
Judi and I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year. This is the time when we thank everyone who helped make 2013 such a successful year for us. As I have indicated in previous Newsletters, Judi and I visited over 75 festivals, events and communities in 2013, while our *Festival Nomad Correspondents* have combined to visit over 25. Special thanks go out to our resourceful correspondents for their great festival articles. They include *Anne Brooks*, London; *Benn Fisher*, Sault Ste. Marie; *Carol Law*, Newmarket; *Chris and Suzi Spraakman*, Cambridge; *Kevin Stuart*, Port Hope; *Mary Ellen Weigel*, Toronto; *Ron Clifford*, Northern Ontario; *Shawn King*, Oshawa; *Sylvie Spraakman*, Kitchener and *Laurence Stephenson*, Brighton. Photos of these Correspondents and more, are posted on this newsletter. Visits to our combined websites have now reached 825,000 plus. This includes both our *Ontario Visited* websites and our *Festival & Event Services* websites.

Speaking of *Festival & Event Services*, we have now incorporated all of websites and services under the name, *Festival and Event Services Inc.* This change was made to indicate our continued dedications to "discover, promote and service Ontario's and Canadian's festivals and events".

Please see *2013... and On! ...* on page 2

NEW and IMPROVED...

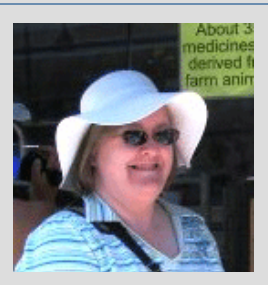
I've always like that expression. An acquaintance once told me that company's who were changing their products would use this line in their advertising. Advertisers felt, and still feel, that this "slogan" attracts new customers (*NEW*) and keeps old customers (*IMPROVED*).

So, with that in mind, we are pleased to introduce our *NEW and IMPROVED "Ontario Visited"* websites. Seven years ago, when we first introduced *Ontario Festivals Visited* to festival and event "goers", the technology we used was fairly basic. Since then a lot has changed!

Please see *NEW and IMPROVED ...* on page 2



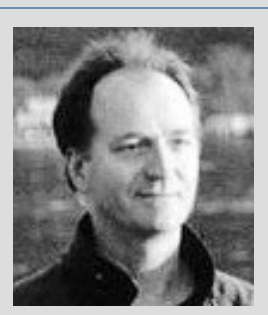
Festival Nomad Correspondent
Brad McInnis



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Carol Law



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Chris Spraakman



Festival Nomad Correspondent
David Brydges



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Jan Bonhomme



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Joanne Andrade



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Jon Law



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Kevin Stuart

2013... and On! from page 1

To add to the name change, we have revamped all of our *Visited Websites*. As you will read in our "*NEW and IMPROVED...*" article (below), we have redesigned our *Visited Websites* to incorporate the Regional changes (RTO's) that the Ontario Government instituted a few years ago.

Finally, you will note that **THE INSIDER** is now being sent out on the 15th of each month, rather than the 1st. As many of you may recall that last summer we started to list as many festivals and events for the upcoming month in each Newsletter. This created a small challenge in that the newsletter was sent out on the 1st and the listed event started on the 1st. This meant that some event listings were not seen until after the event was over. As you will see from this newsletter, events listed will be seen long before they occur. We hope that these changes will add to the our visitor experience.

Judi and I and our Festival Correspondents look forward to continuing our journey to discover and visit as many Ontario festivals and events as possible in 2014 and to meet as many new and old friends as well! If you'd like us to come to your community and event, let us know, we'll try to include you in our schedule! The sooner you contact us, the more likely we will be able to visit you!

If you or anyone you know would like to become one of our fabulous *Festival Nomad Correspondents*, send us an e-mail and let us know what Region you would like to cover and what type of events, fairs, festivals, attractions, heritage sites, museums and adventures you are interested in.

Finally, we'd like to thank all of our advertisers! By working with us, we are able to travel to visit Ontario communities throughout the year. As an appreciation to our advertisers, we have listed last years (2013) Banner Advertisers on our website's "[Meet the Advertisers](#)" page. Each listing is linked to the advertiser's website. Thank you to ALL!

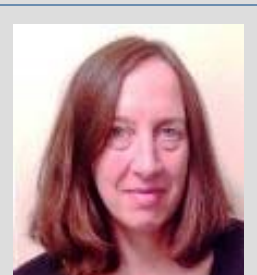
NEW and IMPROVED from page 1

Now, instead of taking hours to input articles and information, it now takes only minutes. The way websites look and how they react, has also changed. They are much easier to use and more responsive to web visitors. Also, the way the *Ontario Government* now promotes tourism has changed. A few years ago the Provincial Government introduced 13+ RTO's (*Regional Tourism Organizations*).

Please see *NEW and IMPROVED ...* on page 3



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Laurence Stephenson



Festival Nomad Correspondent
m.e. weigel



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Malcolm Andrade



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Philippa Wild



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Tammy Wilson



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Terry Mulcahy



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Tom Coke



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Wendy Brick

NEW and IMPROVED from page 2

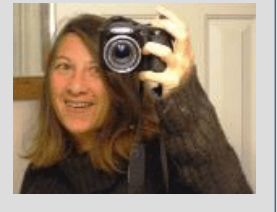
Here is how the Ontario Government see it. " *Each Regional Tourism Organization is independent, industry-led and not-for-profit and each provides leadership and coordination to support competitive and sustainable tourism regions. As a result, Ontario's tourism industry now has a stronger combined voice and is better equipped to attract more visitors, generate more economic activity, and create more jobs across the province.*" (Quote from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism's website -

<http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/regions>) In response to all of these changes, we have revamped our " Visited" websites to include and embrace these Regions. Now, when you enter any of our *Ontario Visited* websites, you will be welcomed by a Map of Ontario. The Map has been divided into 13+ Regions. I say (+), because Northern Ontario, RTO13, has been divided into 3 sections, east-central-west. By moving your computers " cursor" over the Map, you can "click" onto the Region you are interested in. This will take you to a " Dialogue Box" where you can press the "Enter Button". By doing this, you will find a list of all the " Visited" articles that have been written for that Region. This is where the " IMPROVED" (OLD) comes in. These are the same articles that we have written and posted after each visit. Plus there many more new articles about our adventures in 2013! Please take a look at the " NEW" and " IMPROVED" websites and let us know what you think. If you notice anything that needs improvement, let us know and we will try to make the changes where possible. This is the start of improving all of our *Ontario Visited* websites. We will let you know when other changes occur. We hope you are excited as we are about our fresh NEW look, the colourful changes, the " de-cluttering" and the ease of use. We hope you enjoy " travelling" and "visiting" the *ONTARIO VISITED* websites! A word of thanks to our mentor and friend, *Shawn King*, owner of [Web World Strategies](http://www.webworldstrategies.com), who helped make our "NEW" and "IMPROVED" websites a reality!

Festival Nomad's Report...

In *December* Judi and I enjoyed a few events. At the beginning of the month we travelled to Lindsay to interview *Andy Letham*, Manager of the Lindsay Exhibition. We are presenting a seminar at the upcoming *Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAS)* Convention in February about "Promoting Fairs, Festivals and Events" and are featuring the *Lindsay Ex* as a great example of how to promote the right way. We are preparing a video interview (about 20 minutes in length) with Andy describing his thoughts on promoting his events.

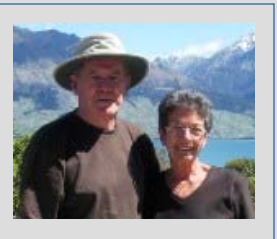
Please see *Festival Nomad Report...* on page 4



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Judi "Scoop" McWilliams



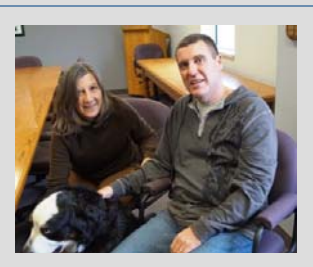
Festival Nomad
Gary McWilliams



Festival Nomad Correspondent
Connie & Tom McAleese



Web Master
Shawn King



Judi in conversation with
Andy Letham and Titan



"Judi with Astrid Braun"
Christkindl, Kitchener



"Looking Down on the Market"
Christkindl, Kitchener



"Music at the Market"
Christkindl, Kitchener



"Skating at the Market"
Christkindl, Kitchener

Festival Nomad's Report... from page 3

The same week that we interviewed Andy, we travelled first to Kitchener to the *Christkindl Market* (*great fun!*) and then to Spencerville to *A Country Christmas Remembered* (*also great fun!*). Fortunately the weather for all our trips were perfect. This was not the case for our planned trip to *Westfield Heritage Village*. We were all set to travel on Saturday morning, but the weather gods were against us and the skies were filled with snow. Last that afternoon we received a message telling us that the whole Village had closed down due to weather. We have rescheduled a trip to Westfield in the spring and more predictable weather! The rest of the month was dedicated to Christmas and New Years with family and friends. We hope that your holiday time was as enjoyable as our!

The Nomad's January/February Event List

As mentioned, we are shifting the dates of the newsletter to the middle of each month. As a result, the list of events that we will be posting will include last half of a month's events and the full list of the upcoming month. We hope that this will help you locate events that you'd like to visit in a more timely manner. So, here goes! First, *January 16-31, 2014* and then *February 1-28, 2014*. We apologize to any event that we might have missed during this change over.

January 2014

January 16 - 18, 2014 - [The London Wine & Food Show](#) (Western Fair District, London)

January 16 - 25, 2014 - ["Nine"](#) (The Grand Theatre, Kingston)

January 18, 2014 - [Huron Fun Skate Competition](#) (Midland)

January 18, 2014 - [Guided Moonlight Snowshoe](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

January 24 - 26, 2014 - [Lifestyle Home Show](#) (Western Fair District, London)

January 24 - 26, 2014 - [Hamilton Wood Show](#) (Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, Hamilton)

January 24 - 26, 2014 - [Canadian Woodcarving Championship](#) (Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, Hamilton)

January 25, 2014 - [Quartette](#) (St Clair College Capitol Theatre, Chatham)

January 25 - 26, 2014 - [Cannington Dog Sled Races & Winter Festival](#) (Cannington)

January 25 - 26, 2014 - [Winter Survivor Overnighter](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

January 26, 2014 - [Lowville Winter Games](#) (Burlington)

January 31, 2014 - [Shelter Building](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

January 31 - February 2, 2014 - [Winterfest](#) (Midland)

January 31 - February 17, 2014 - [Winterlude](#) (Ottawa)

Please see *The Nomad's January/February Event List...* on page 5

The Nomad's January/February Event List... from page 4

February 2014

February 1, 2014 - [Astronomy Night](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

February 1 - 2, 2014 - Novice & Atom Local League Hockey (Midland)

February 6 - 9, 2014 - [Feb Fest](#) (Downtown Kingston)

February 7 - 9, 2014 - [North By Northwest Sale](#) (Western Fair District, London)

February 7 - 9, 2014 - [Kuumba](#) (Harbourfront Centre, Toronto)

February 7 - 9, 2014 - [Seeley's Bay Frost Fest](#) (Seeley's Bay)

February 8, 2014 - [Forest City Derby Girls](#) (Western Fair District, London)

February 8, 2014 - [Campfire Building & Campfire Cooking](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

February 8, 2014 - [Feb Fest](#) (Port Perry)

February 9, 2014 - [Kearney's Dog Sled Races](#) (Kearney)

February 14, 2014 - [Love Train Revue](#) (Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts, Richmond Hill)

February 14 - 16, 2014 - [Winter Brewed Festival](#) (Ottawa)

February 14 - 17, 2014 - [London RV Show](#) (Western Fair District, London)

February 15, 2014 - [Heritage Day](#) (Buckhorn Community Centre, Buckhorn)

February 15, 2014 - [Cobourg Winter Festivities](#) (Cobourg)

February 15, 2014 - [Guided Moonlight Snowshoe](#) (Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

February 15 - 17, 2014 - [Hamilton Kids-Fest](#) (Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, Hamilton)

February 15 - 17, 2014 - [Voyageur Winter Carnival](#) (Thunder Bay)

February 15 - 17, 2014 - [Family Day Weekend](#) (Blue Mountain)

February 15 - 17, 2014 - [Family Day Weekend at the ROM](#) (Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)

February 16 - 17, 2014 - [Toronto Kids-Fest](#) (International Centre, Mississauga)

February 17, 2014 - [Family Day](#) (Pickering Recreation Complex, Pickering)

February 20 - 22, 2014 - [Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies Convention](#) (Royal York Hotel, Toronto)

February 20 - 23, 2014 - [Ottawa Boat & Sportsmen's Show](#) (EY Centre, Ottawa)

February 21 - 23, 2014 - [London Boat, Fishing & Outdoor Show](#) (Western Fair District, London)

February 21 - 23, 2014 - [Canadian Ice Fishing Championship](#) (Sutton West)

February 22, 2014 - [Valentine Dinner & Auction](#) (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival, Prescott)

February 22 - 23, 2014 - [London Golf Show & Sale](#) (Western Fair District, London)

Please see *The Nomad's January/February Event List...* on page 6



"Christmas at the Mill"
A Country Christmas Remembered, Spencerville



"Sitting with Mr. and Mrs. Claus"
A Country Christmas Remembered, Spencerville



"Carollers"
A Country Christmas Remembered, Spencerville



"Vendor Market"
A Country Christmas Remembered, Spencerville



"Hay Wagon Ride"
Ajax Winterfest



"Downhill Fun"
Ajax Winterfest



"Clearing the Ice"
Brighton Winterfest



"Playing the Game"
Brighton Winterfest

The Nomad's January/February Event List... from page 5

February 22 - 23, 2014 ~ [Winter Survivor Overnighter](#)
(Gordon Park, Manitoulin Island)

February 23 - 24, 2014 ~ [icefest](#) (Bloor-Yorkville, Toronto)

February 27 - March 1, 2014 ~ [Festivals & Events Ontario Conference](#) (Parkway Sheraton Toronto North Hotel, Toronto)

February 27 - March 2, 2014 ~ [Kingston Canadian Film Festival](#) (Kingston)

NOTE ~ This is not a complete list of all of Ontario's great festivals and events held in the period mentioned. They do, however represent the ones we have been requested to list. If you know of any festival or event that should or would like to be listed on either our *Ontario Event Calendar* and our *Ontario Event Finder* (search engine) websites, please send their information to us at gary@ontariovisited.ca.

Scoop... The Big Dish!

by Judi "Scoop" McWilliams

This past year, many of you have followed Gary (*aka The Festival Nomad*) and me on our numerous adventures and travels throughout Ontario. Our travels carried us to fantastic festivals, fairs, attractions, heritage sites, events and communities. This year I have enjoyed "THE INSIDE SCOOP" interviews that were conducted with many of Ontario's leaders, experts and organizers. I am always amazed by each interviewee's insights, knowledge, innovative ideas and sometimes, humorous anecdotes. "THE INSIDE SCOOP" also offers a great platform for organizers to "get their message out there".

Over time, I've learned several key components that have contributed to creating great articles. Here are some, in no particular order:

1. Never waste time asking questions that you can obtain answers of through research (*such as Google, magazines, T.V.*). Why ask questions that have already been answered.
2. Ask questions about what the interviewee is passionate about. This usually generates tons of information and insight. Traditional reporting often misses out on interesting facts and information. Without passion, it's just another story!
3. LISTEN! If you listen, you will hear these insights. And, if you yourself are passionate about what you are hearing, you may find yourself so engaged that time flies and the interview is completed with little effort.

Please see *Scoop... The Big Dish!...* on page 7

Scoop... *The Big Dish!*... from page 6

4. Always leave them wanting more ... both the reader and the interviewee.

Here are some of my favourite interviews from 2013 ~ This past year, at the *St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival* in Prescott, we were privileged to sit in on a rehearsal for their performance of *Hamlet*. I was able to talk with these professional actors, actresses, artistic director, *Ian Farthing* and show producer. I even meet the author and award winning playwright, Lucia Frangione, whom I previously interviewed via e-mail while she was in Vancouver. She wrote the play "*Maid for a Musket*". I also collected, hot off the press, a fun t-shirt, "*Two Bee ~ Not Two Bee*", which was generously autographed by all the "*Stars*"!

Another great interview this past year, was with *Any Letham, Manager of the LEX, Lindsay Agricultural Society*. We are preparing for the upcoming Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies Annual Conference at the Royal York in February in Toronto. *Ontario Visited* will be presenting a Seminar about Marketing. As I was nervous about video taping the interview, I asked Andy if we could sit together to discuss how he would like to tackle the project. Before we knew it, Gary was video taping Andy and I talking genuinely and casually. We were so engrossed in our preliminary discussions we completely forgot that the "*camera was rolling*". It made for a great interview. We were also fortunate that *Andy Letham* is very articulate, knowledgeable and personable.

My interview with *Fort Henry's* manager, Mr. *Will Baird*, from *Fort Henry National Historic Site* in Kingston, was great. *Will* offered interesting information and was very generous with his time. We talked about "*Edutainment*" and their "*Alive in Five Strategy*", both were very insightful!

Virginia Govier of the *International Plowing Match and Rural Expo* gave us insight into 100 Years of Success and the Key to Success ~ Volunteers.

My *Pathways to Peace* interview with *Adrienne Horne*, guided us through some of the *Western Corridor 1812* projects, including *Route 1812, Barn Quilt Tour* in the South Western Ontario Region.

During our "*behind the scenes*" tour, I had the opportunity to ask *Katie Gray*, Public Relations Supervisor for the *Toronto Zoo*, a number of "*INSIDE SCOOP*" questions about her love of her job, what's new at the Zoo or what's coming to the Zoo. Here's a "*Scoop Tidbit*", did you know about the Zoo's on-line "*dating service*"? You will have to check out my *Toronto Zoo* Blog articles which will be posted in February!

Please see *Scoop... The Big Dish!* on page 8



"Tic Tac Toe Ice Style"
Cobourg Winter Festivities



"Ice Slide"
Cobourg Winter Festivities



"Where are the Fish"
Family Fishing Day



"A Great Day to Go Fishing"
Family Fishing Day



"Convention Hall"
OAAS (Fair) Convention



"Ontario Visited Booth"
OAAS (Fair) Convention



"Seminar"
Festivals & Events Ontario Conference



"Fun with Ken and the Pigs"
Festivals & Events Ontario Conference

Scoop... The Big Dish!... from page 7

There are many more interviews this past year, too many to name here. My thanks go out to each and every one who contributed!

The most amazing part about "*THE INSIDE SCOOP*", for me is realizing that people seem to enjoy reading the *Blog Articles* and do read them. On our travels throughout Ontario this summer, several times we were approached by participants and vendors who recognized our *Ontario Visited* hats and shirts. They mentioned they enjoy reading both "*THE INSIDER*", our monthly newsletter, and "*THE INSIDE SCOOP*". I was skeptical thinking that these folks were just being friendly ... until they quoted statements from my "*SCOOP*". The *BIG DISH* keeps growing. If you would like be interviewed for our "*INSIDE SCOOP*", or know someone who would, just let us know ... you might just become the latest "*SCOOP*"!

The Formula...

by Gary McWilliams

When Judi and I first started out visiting events, (*some 7 years ago*), we had no plan on what events to choose or how we would choose them. Over the years we have come up with our own, not so professional, formula. Basically, it's "*find*", "*research*", "*confirm*", "*plan*" and "*go*". Perhaps the most basic part is "*find*". For us, this is fairly easy, because we are always receiving invitations from events that would like us to visit them. For the normal visitor this is more of a challenge. Fortunately, there are a number of websites that allow you to "*discover*" upcoming events. We, *Ontario Visited*, have 2 ways to help you search, *Ontario Event Calendar* and *Ontario Event Finder* (search engine). The provincial festival association, *Festivals and Events Ontario* (FEO) has one, as does the *Ontario government* - the "*Travel Ontario*" websites. The final site that we refer to is the *Summer Fun Guide*. Each of these websites contains 100's of possible events to visit. It would be impossible for any one of these websites to contain every Ontario festival or event, there are simply too many, and a large number of them are only local in nature. Judi and I are continually looking for new festivals and events to add to our websites. So, if you do hear about an event that isn't on our websites and you'd like to learn more about it, e-mail us at gary@ontariovisited.ca and we will try to track down the information for you.

Please see *The Formula...* on page 9

The Formula... from page 8

Once you have found the event you want to "visit", it's time for "research"! You could try to phone the organizers and ask them about their event or you could "hop" onto your computer and "Google" the event. The only challenge with this is that you normally discover just a list of the festival's events. The website may also give you the event particulars, but it does not normally give you the "feel" of the event. Hopefully, that's where one of *Ontario Visited* "Visited" websites can help. Over the years *Ontario Visited* and our "Festival Nomad Correspondents" have visited and reviewed hundreds of events, festivals, fairs, attractions, heritage sites and communities. Each article tells the story of our visits. Unfortunately, as I have mentioned above, there are thousands of events taking place in Ontario over the course of a year. If you don't see a review or an event you're interested in, let us know and we will try to find out more about it for you.

To continue the formula... if after "finding" and "researching", you have found an "exciting" event you would like to visit, you might want to confirm with the organizers that the event is still going to take place and on the dates shown on their website! This may seem to be an unnecessary step, but Judi and I have learned, through frustrating experience, that confirmation saves a lot of time and "frustration". Next month I will complete our "formula" and tell you about how we "plan and go"!



"Winter at the Ontario Parliament Building Tour"
Ontario Legislature, Toronto



"Inside look at Parliament"
Ontario Legislature, Toronto



"Overlooking the Rideau Canal"
Winterlude, Ottawa



"Skating the Rideau Canal"
Winterlude, Ottawa

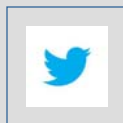


"A View of Parliament Hill"
Winterlude, Ottawa



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