

2017 Pugwash Gathering of the Clans and Canada Day Report

The 66th anniversary Pugwash Gathering of the Clans was held in conjunction with Pugwash HarbourFest and Rendezvous2017 (tall ships). This involved additional time in organization for the two Pugwash festivals, so not to adversely affect each other. Some costs, such as publicity and sanitation were shared. HarbourFest's festivities started in the evening of Friday, June 30th and continued through the weekend with many events focused at the salt mine wharf.

For the first time in many years, the weather did not cooperate with Canada Day and the Gathering. The day started overcast and a little cooler than usual with rain developing in the afternoon. Rain cancelled the appearance of The Elliott Brothers on Eaton Stage and shortened the time on stage for Liz and Ben. However, the rain moved off and the crowd moved back in for Alycia Putnam and family and Gordie MacKeenman and his Rhythm Boys.

As it takes several hours to prepare the fireworks, the decision had to be made in the afternoon whether to risk having them that night or not. They were postponed to the next evening, when several thousand people came back into Pugwash again, just to watch the absolutely fabulous fireworks display.

Gate

Entrance gate returns were \$23,826 with 4,318 adults and 740 students purchasing wristbands. It is estimated that there is at least a thousand additional participants not included in the paid wristband count. These include competitors and judges in the pipe and drum competitions, participants in the heavyweight Highland games, the Canada Day parade, vendors and the 150 or more volunteers that made the day so special for all involved, residents and visitors alike. Many purchase a wristband anyway, which is greatly appreciated. HarbourFest events were not gated and included free access to the tall ships.

Highland Dance

The competition date was moved to August 12th due to conflicting, larger competition held in the region on July 1st this year. The day started with 125 registered dancers competing on Eaton Stage in Highland Dance. The weather turned on us again and the second half of the competition was held at the Pugwash Legion. The Bonnie Gael Huston Memorial Trophy was awarded to Stephanie Goodwin, Beechville.

Parade

The theme for the Canada Day Parade was "Canada 150". The Parade Marshall was Ray Jamison. Ray is a long time volunteer with many organizations including the Pugwash C@P Site. The Parade results were:

Commercial

- 1st: Cunningham Construction
- 2nd: Northshore Antique Tractors
- 3rd: Aggregate Equipment

Non- Commercial

- 1st: Countryview 4H
- 2nd: Colin and Simon Mundle
- 3rd: PDHS

Antique Vehicles

- 1st: Tatamagouche Creamery
- 2nd: Carl Black
- 3rd: 1050 Dark green Ford

Most humorous: O'Brien's Pharmacy

Pipes and Drums

Four pipe and drum bands competed this year. In Grade 4, first place went to Dartmouth and District Pipe and Drum Band. In Grade 5, first place went to 36 Halifax Pipes and Drums, 2nd went to Dartmouth and District Pipe and Drum Band and 3rd was Correctional Services of Canada Community Pipe and Drum Band. After the competitions were over, the bands massed and marched up Water Street as far as Black Street. The President of

Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia, Tom Wallace, was on hand to present the band prizes.

Heavyweights

The heavyweight exhibition games were held on the Cyrus Eaton Elementary School playgrounds with national and international champions showing their prowess at events such as hammer throwing and caber toss.

Entertainment

The entertainment of Eaton stage rocked throughout the afternoon and evening with The Fun Tones, Liz and Ben, Paul Randy Mingo, and Alycia Putnam and family, ending up with Gordie MacKeeman and his Rhythm Boys.

Finances

Unaudited financial statement shows a profit of \$13,296.

Opening bank balance (October 2016): \$45,764.32

Closing bank balance (September 2017): \$60,396.63

Future costs

We suggest the Gathering of the Clans contribute towards the cost of a new stage.

Gate income helps support local and area community non profit groups. The groups benefiting this year include: the North Cumberland Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, The Pugwash and District Volunteer Fire Department, the Pugwash and Area Ground Search and Rescue, HarbourFest, Pugwash and Area Chamber of Commerce, Pugwash Legion Peach Branch 60, Friends of the Pugwash Estuary and the Wentworth Learning Centre.

Preparations are under way for 2018, which will be held Monday, July 2nd as per the long standing tradition when July 1st falls on a Sunday. One of the more important reasons for this is because the Parade route includes Church Street at a time of day when church services are in progress. In order for parade participants, particularly the pipe and drum bands, to be available for their competitions and other events, the parade has to be held in the morning.

Many, many thanks go out to the volunteers who do a tremendous job helping with events and helping our visitors enjoy their time in the beautiful little Village of Pugwash. Many thanks also to our many sponsors who help keep this unique festival going with their support.