

2013 Pugwash Gathering of the Clans

Report

The 62nd anniversary Pugwash Gathering of the Clans went exceptionally well, despite the ominous weather forecast.

The Canada Day Parade was declared by many to be the best in many years and the fireworks were the best, some said, they had ever seen in Pugwash. The competitions carried on without a hitch and the entertainment in Eaton Park was enjoyed by a large crowd throughout the afternoon and evening. The rain held off for most of the day, with a little shower activity around lunchtime.

Five pipe bands competed this year. Grade 3 was won by Dartmouth and District Pipe Band. In Grade 4, first place went to the Old Scotia Pipe and Drum band and second to Clan Thompson. Grade 5 was won by Dartmouth and District and second went to the Belfast Pipe Band from PEI.

A hundred dancers competed on Eaton Stage in Highland Dance. The Bonnie Gael Huston Memorial award went to Amelia English of Pictou.

The theme for Canada Day was "The Year of the Korean War Veteran". Harold Patterson, a veteran of the Korean conflict, was Parade Marshall. There were some very imaginative entrants in the Canada Day Parade. Winners in the non commercial category were Pugwash District High School, 2nd was Ridgewood Farms and 3rd went to the Springhill Miners Museum. In the commercial class, first went to Canadian Salt Company Ltd, 2nd was Cunningham Construction and 3rd went to Sunrise Salvage and Uhaul. There were plenty of beautiful antique and vintage vehicles to pick from this year. First went to Sid and Gail Baker with their 1959 red and white Ford Custom 300, 2nd went to Vic Matheson and his 1925 dark blue Star and third went to the Wells family for their 1953 Massey Harris Colt tractor.

Numbers were down a little from previous years and that was likely a result of the unsettled weather. The entrance gate returns of \$22,840 and wristband count of 4,838 adults and students tallied within 0.4%. There are nearly a thousand additional participants that are not included in the paid wristband count. These include competitors and judges in the Highland Dance and 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.

Additional volunteers, security gating and procedures made the entrance gates and banking go very smoothly. The fact that the gate returns were only down slightly from previous years suggests that the added security on the gates was very effective and that in previous years there were many people who managed to avoid paying for entrance. Those that did pay entry helped the Gathering continue for another year and also 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, the LA Animal Shelter, the Feral Cat Program, the Wentworth C@P site. Other groups that ran fund raising events or booths during the Gathering this year included: Route 6 Snowmobile Club, the Pugwash Yacht Club and Relay for Life.

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.