

# Gathering of the Clans (GOC) and Canada Day report 2022

After a two year hiatus, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 70<sup>th</sup> Pugwash Gathering of the Clans and Canada was very successful. All normal events and competitions went ahead.

The day started with the Highland Dance competitions on the Harbourfront stage for the first time and ended with Dave Gunning and his son playing the Harbourfront Centre and fabulous fireworks – probably the biggest display Pugwash has ever seen.

The parade was as large as any could remember for a long time. The winners were:

## **Commercial**

- 1st     Cunningham Construction
- 2nd     By the Bay Farm
- 3rd     The Elm Tree

## **Non-commercial**

- 1<sup>st</sup>     George Lockhart
- 2<sup>nd</sup>     Pugwash Communities in Bloom
- 3<sup>rd</sup>     Friends of the Pugwash Estuary

## **Antique Vehicles**

- 1st     John and Nellie VandeWeil
- 2nd     Alvin MacAulay
- 3rd     #12

## **Most Original/Humorous:**

The Royal Funny Farm

There were 80 Highland Dancers competing PHC stage through the morning. The winner of the much-prized Bonny Gael Memorial Trophy was Gwendolyn Landry of Truro, NS. The judge was Ann Landry from Grande Digue, NB.

There were two pipe and drum bands this year, both from Cape Breton University. The Corrections Canada band entered the parade but did not compete. There were 9 pipers and 1 drummers who registered for a total of 28 solo competition events. Updated numbers from field entries are pending.

The midway games and rides were unavailable. They were replaced by inflatable activity area which was very popular. Just as the Midway charged for entry to their rides and paid the GOC a percentage as a vendor fee, this year there were wristbands to be purchased for unlimited entry or one-ride-only tickets. The GOC broke even on costs. Now we have explored this area of entertainment we can prepare and plan on an expansion of the kinds of inflatables and activities, reaching a wider audience in a cost effective way.

With the addition of beach toys and bubbles, the volleyball court became a very popular sand pit, entertaining youngsters for free all day.

26 vendors registered for the day. Four didn't show. Most of the vendors were new to the festival, COVID having taken its toll on many others.

The heavyweight games were held again at the Cyrus Eaton Elementary school playgrounds.

The Opening Ceremony was held on the Pugwash Harbourfront Centre. Competition and parade winners were announced from the stage and those present were awarded their prizes. A delicious, giant birthday cake was donated by Donna Guthro. Dr Stephen Ellis, MP helped cut the cake and distribute to the appreciative crowd.

The entertainment at the PHC were Paul Randy Mingo, Alycia Putnam and family, Christina Martin and Dale Murray band and finally Dave Gunning. The fireworks were set off around 10pm.

The gates were run by groups of volunteers. Advance sales and the six gates took in \$,19,403 selling 4,227 wristbands on July 1<sup>st</sup>. This was about 81% of our expected (budgeted) numbers. We put the lower numbers down to the cool weather and the continued hesitancy by some people to venture into big crowds post COVID-19.

Thank you to the 120 or more volunteers that helped the day go smoothly and coped with a very different festival this year. All the various events, parade security, the gates and bankers are all run by volunteers and all deserve big thanks! Other paid help also helped make the day run smoothly and professionally: Hub City Sound (sound and lights), Scotty Brown (stage manager), the competition judges and HRM Inflatables. The MC for the day, Stacie Fisher, helped the day go smoothly.

Thanks also go to the many sponsors whose generosity help make this historic event a success. There were fewer Bronze sponsors this year but more Silver and Gold level sponsors. They make a tremendous difference in keeping this festival going.

A Ceilidh in the Park was planned for Saturday July 2<sup>nd</sup> but was cancelled due to rain and high winds.

Having an assistant help with event organization and registration, particularly with the vendors and inflatable entertainment, was an enormous help. Advance sales at the Visitor Information Centre improved again this year and we see that as a useful means of selling wristbands in the future.

The financial report is included in the Village of Pugwash Financial Statement for 2023.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Betts, Coordinator

August 2022