

Gathering of the Clans 60th Anniversary

The 60th anniversary of the Pugwash Gathering of the Clans met with very pleasant weather on July 1st. Residents, visitors from near and far, paying guests, volunteers, vendors, parade entries and competitors accounted for over 7,000 people.

Over \$25,000 was taken in at the gates. Revenue of \$41,583 and expenses of \$30,382 left a gross profit of \$11,201. Although down 9% from last year's particularly excellent numbers, this will be more than sufficient to maintain last year's level of support to other local organizations.

North Cumberland Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, Pugwash Ground Search and Rescue, Pugwash Fire Department will each receive a donation of \$1000. Other groups that will see donations are those who helped run the entrance gates: HarbourFest, Pugwash and Area Chamber of Commerce, Pugwash Royal Legion and the LA Animal Shelter.

Without these groups helping run the gates, the event could not afford to carry on, as it is the entrance gate fees that are the most significant part of the funding of the festival. Further funding comes from sponsorships, raffle, Midway concession and vendor fees.

Organizations who ran their own fund raising booths, exhibitions or breakfast included the Route 6 Snowmobile Club, Pugwash Fire Department, Pugwash District High School "Reach for the Top" and the Oxford Legion.

There were four pipe bands this year, two from Dartmouth and District, one from the 78th Highlanders and new this year was Southern Victoria pipe and drum band from Perth-Andover, New Brunswick. The pipe bands are considered integral to the Gathering and we were pleased to be able to secure the future of the pipe bands returning to Pugwash to compete by offering a bonus of \$1000 to each competing band organization.

There were 90 Highland dancers aged five to 25 who competed in a variety of dances on Eaton Stage. The winner of the prestigious Bonnie Gael Huston Memorial Award was Meredith Miller from Nanaimo, British Columbia.

The traditional lobster dinners were much missed this year but unavailable because the Old Dining Hall on the Eaton estate was not available. It is hoped that pending renovations will have the building ready again for next year's Gathering.

The winners of the raffle were: three seat swing: Dan Cress of Malagash, party size keg cooler: Ian Murray of Wallace River, buffet table and solar lights: Sharon Simons, Pugwash.

The Parade prize winners were: Commercial: 1st Cunningham Construction, 2nd Harrison's Home Building Centre, honourable mention: Pugwash Co-Op. In Non-Commercial 1st HarbourFest, 2nd Northumberland Community Curling Club, honourable mention: Communities in Bloom. Most humorous prize went to: Paws for Fun.

The Gathering of the Clans could not happen without the countless volunteers who help out - not just on the day of the event, but through the year in preparations and fund raisers, and our thanks go out to them. Many of those volunteers gathered again in Eaton Park on July 30th to enjoy a volunteer's appreciation barbeque.

Preparations start again very soon for the 61st Gathering of the Clans which will be held on Monday, July 2nd in 2012. Volunteers, new fund raising ideas and sponsors are always welcome. Call Event Coordinator, Lisa Betts at 243 2946 for more information.