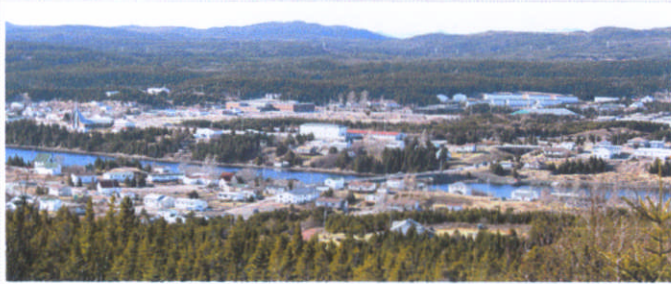


Marystown readying for Come Home Year festivities

Come one, come all ...

BY PAUL HERRIDGE

The Southern Gazette



A view of Marystown, showing much of the heart of the community. Paul Herridge Photo

Friends and family from near and far will find their way back home to Marystown this summer. The town is celebrating Come Home Year 2008 from July 30 to Aug. 5, and has a weeklong schedule of events planned that promises to make sure no one is left wanting for a good time. Coun. Keith Keating, who chairs the Come Home Year Committee, acknowledged arranging such a celebration is no easy task. He first brought the idea before council for approval some two years ago, and has been hard at work ever since. He noted most of the major preparations are now complete; all that's left are just a few loose ends that need to be tied. "All our music has been booked, all our breakfasts, and lunches and dinners – pretty well everything is done."

CONCERT

The big event during Come Home Year is a two-day, outdoor concert featuring an excellent lineup of acts Aug. 2-3. Among the performers are Halifax's 'Joel Plaskett Emergency', who picked up six East Coast Music Awards earlier this year, along with Canadian Idol runner-up and Newfoundland-native Rex Goudie.

Other well known groups include folk-bluegrass group 'The Masterless Men' and classic country outfit, 'The 8-Track Favourites'. Some 50 local entertainers will also grace the stage over the two days.

Mr. Keating suggested "this is probably the biggest lineup of musicians ever to come on the Burin Peninsula at one given time."

The concert will also see the construction of a new stage at the Marystown Track and Field Complex, which he noted would bode well for hosting similar concerts down the road.

"It's a lot of dollars to get it done, but at least it's going to be there and we got it for future years."

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

There are numerous other highlights throughout the week.

The opening ceremonies July 30 will feature a parade through town and several invited guests, including Miss Teen Newfoundland Laura Woodworth of Grand Falls-Windsor.

The Marystown Fire Department will host its 2nd annual Demolition Derby, an event that went over extremely well in its inaugural year last summer, attracting some 3,000 spectators.

Mr. Keating indicated the town's veterans, along with those currently serving in the military, would serve as Come Home Year Patrons, pointing out Canadian Navy ship 'HCMS Shawinigan' would make a call to port during the week and will be open for tours.

Meanwhile, there's a whole host of other events from dances and block parties, to sporting events and variety shows. The festivities wrap up with what's being dubbed as one of the biggest firework displays even seen on the Burin Peninsula. "Everybody in the town is pretty well involved – all the service groups, the Lions, the Kinsmen, St. Gabriel's Hall, the heritage groups, the Little Bay groups. Everybody is coming together, I must say."

BUZZ

Mr. Keating indicated the buzz is beginning to build for Come Home Year 2008, noting there's bound to be plenty of old, familiar faces around the town during the week as well as some new ones.

"A lot of families have things planned and there's a good many school reunions. There's a lot of stuff on the go.

"A lot of people have had their vacations planned for years. Others working out in Fort McMurray are telling me already they're trying to change their turnarounds so they'll be home for that week."

A more detailed list of events is available at www.marystowncomehomeyear.com.

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