

B.C. OLD TIME FIDDLERS' ASSOCIATION SPRING NEWSLETTER

Prince George Branch #1



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NEWSLETTER *Beth Bressette, Editor*

MAY 2021

HAPPY NATIONAL FIDDLING DAY – MAY 15

In case you don't recall this proclamation 6 years ago, here's the legal jargon:

National Fiddling Day Act

S.C. 2015, c. 6 Assented to 2015-03-31

An Act respecting National Fiddling Day

Preamble

Whereas the art of fiddle playing has a significant role in the cultural and social history of Canada and is practised in all of the regions of Canada;

Whereas newcomers to Canada and their Canadian descendants have enriched the culture and the different styles and repertoires of fiddle music during many generations;

Whereas in 2012 an international campaign began among fiddle players to encourage popular recognition and acclaim of a World Fiddle Day on the third Saturday in May each year, to celebrate the appreciation, beauty and history of fiddle music, and in honour of Antonio Stradivari, the renowned crafter of stringed instruments;

And whereas it is in the interest of all Canadians to become more familiar with the traditional and contemporary importance of fiddling and its importance to Canadian heritage and Canadian society;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1 This Act may be cited as the [National Fiddling Day Act](#).

2 Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the third Saturday in May is to be known as “National Fiddling Day”.

3 For greater certainty, National Fiddling Day is not a legal holiday or a non-judicial day.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING – NOT MUCH!!

Eight musicians from our club dusted off the fiddles and guitars and had a little jam in the park on Saturday, in honour of National Fiddling Day. It was great to get together (spaced apart in our chairs, of course) and share a few of our old tunes and a few new ones. When it began to sprinkle we just moved onto the covered stage!

Most of us find it harder to practise at home by ourselves, especially when there are no events to prepare for. Some continue to take on-line instruction from Ivonne Hernandez, Daniel Lapp, 'Tune of the Week Challenge' on Instagram, and Red Desert Violin, to name a few, and enjoy Jamming with JJ on Sundays.

Anyone interested in being on a waitlist for advanced or intermediate instruction with Gordon Stobbe and JJ Guy July 23-25, please contact Beth at beth.bressette@telus.net. Space is limited, since covid rules will be strictly followed and classes are very small, but there is a waitlist in case provincial guidelines change by then.

MEMBER NEWS

Jackson Williams (who also plays guitar, sax, and just about anything else he tries), surprised us by dropping in at our park jam while in town for a few weeks. He just finished his third year at UBC's School of Music (majoring in Education). He's really enjoying his studies and looking forward to 4th year; meantime he'll be working in Coquitlam over the summer.

Besides being a great fiddler, Alex Arnott has shown she has other talents. . . . she has come up with a novel way to help boost the spirits of musicians who are unable to tour. She's using her new interest and talent for shuffle dancing (a footwork tradition that began in Melbourne over 20 years ago) to make her own choreography to Canadian fiddle music, a unique endeavour which may not have been done before. At this point she's choreographed shuffle dances to the music of Twin Fiddles (Stobbe/Guy), Ivonne Hernandez, Calvin Vollrath, Patti Kusturok, Alex Kusturok and Ashley MacIsaac. Alex branched out to other genres too, and kept learning and providing tutorials, and her dance videos are really taking off! The Ivonne dance hit almost half a million views on TicTok, and since then another video reached 3 million views. If you want to see or learn some of Alex's great dance steps (well worth watching) you need to download TicTok or Instagram and check out Alex Wildrising.

Maria Newton has returned from the Chilcotin where she was working on ranches for the past 2 years. She will be working as part-time rancher, as well as other work in the PG area.

Congratulations to the Mattes, Logans and Crossleys on becoming new parents!! It seems we have a number of newborns joining our club these days, so we hope they will carry on the traditions in the years to come! The Matte family added little Simcha 18 months ago, on November 22 (a potential 7th fiddler for the family?), Arielle Logan (our previous group instructor) had a baby boy, Aurelius, on February 4, 2021 - a brother for her first son - and Breanne Crossley is expecting her first baby, a girl, in late June. All three babies have fiddling mommies . . . anyone know of any good deals on miniature fiddles?

While the Matte household is expanding on one end, it's also contracting on the other as Raina and Joel are no longer at home, but studying and working in Saskatchewan and Whitehorse.

Arielle Logan must not have been busy enough with a new baby (??), as she has embarked on an exciting new enterprise! On May 1 she opened her new business, *Rose and Thistle*, a beauty shop, with 4 - 5 staff. Drop in and see her at her newly renovated store at 1455 - 10th Ave (near Subway) and check out the website www.roseandthistlecollective.com. Good luck, Arielle.

Accordianist Harry Collier, who played for a time in our jams and playouts, has moved to Kelowna.

Birthday wishes to a few of our seniors: Doreen Denicola and Walter Kamerlingh turned 92 on Mar 9 and Apr 8, Harlow Cabat was 87 on Apr 24, and Jim Mackenzie will be 88 on July 28. We are really proud of these very active club members! (While I didn't carry on the former newsletter tradition of birthday greetings to *a//* the members, if you're post-85 we'd like to acknowledge your milestone - let me know your date!)

Jim's wife, Marguerite (keyboard player), has just returned home after a number of weeks in hospital. Understandably, she's happy to be home!



Rita Ida Switzer 1935 - 2020 One of our earlier Life Members has passed away on December 10, 2020. She was predeceased by her husband, Kerry, also a Life Member, who was well-known in Branch #1 for his fiddling and foot-stomping. Rita lived her latter years in Alward Place and always enjoyed any live musical entertainment provided there.

Here's a cute history of one of our club favourite tunes, the *Log Drivers' Waltz*, to lift your spirits and bring a smile (thanks to Jim Mackenzie): <https://youtu.be/upsZZ2s3xv8>

Beth Bressette