

Greg Henry takes the prize(s) in Shelburne



Shelburne Deputy Mayor Ken Bennington is seen with Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Champion Greg Henry. Submitted photo

This year's almost constant summer rain held off for a few days and the sun shone on the 63rd Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Championship in Shelburne.

This year's Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Champion, Greg Henry of Sombra, Ontario, was crowned at the finals Aug. 10. This was Henry's first championship.

Henry also won the Canadian Tune of Choice trophy and award with Reel de Montebello by Richard Frost.

With just a little more than 70 contest entries from as far away as Devon, Alberta, and 1,400 audience members attending over the course of the event, another successful edition of Canada's premier fiddle championship has passed into the history books.

"We are excited about the success of this year's championship and are already looking forward to next year," commented Sandra Gallaugh, chair of the Shelburne Rotary Club's contest organizing committee. "Thank you to all of our contestants, judges, audience members, sponsors, helpers and supporters for assisting us in making it such a success."

The Saturday night entertainment and competition was opened by three-time Juno award winner Ashley MacIsaac, a guest of the Dufferin County Museum and Archives, on whose float he entertained during the afternoon parade. His fiddling, along with the dancing of Sarah Robinson, three-time Canadian Open Stepdance Champion, brought enthusiastic rounds of applause.

The youngest competitor this year was four-year-old Gibson Lemelin; the oldest was 83-year-old Leon Stachnyk.

This year, the Junior Championship (13-18 year olds) and the Championship were almost equally hotly contested, with 13 competitors in the former and 12 in the latter. This was the largest number of competitors in the Championship class in several years.

The Junior Championship was won by Celine Murray of Dorchester, Ontario, home of the Donnybrook Fiddle and Stepdance Competition. The Nine and Under class had 12 competitors, a recent high water mark, and was won by Mary Frances Leahy of Douro, Ontario. Look for both of these young ladies in the Championship class at future contests.

The Invincible Vince Mountford Memorial Trophy for Most Entertaining Fiddler was presented to Julie Fitzgerald who won the Novelty class and is always wearing a smile.

After a heartfelt plea to the Saturday night audience, Miss Teen Ontario Canada Hope Schneider was able to raise \$515 for the Teddy Bears of Hope Foundation to send teddy bears to underprivileged children.

The traditional corsage presentation, sponsored by the Hardick family, was made to Alice Hind, who was at the first contest in 1951.

The Saturday afternoon show at the arena featured Cape Ceol (the Jenish sisters and the Provencher brothers with special guest Tessa Bangs) fiddling, stepdancing, and singing for a crowd of over 250.

Thursday night, Everything Fitz were a hit, with a crowd of more than 300 treated to a variety of fiddle and stepdance tunes.

The 64th Championship will be Aug. 6 to 10, 2014.

For more information visit www.ShelburneFiddleContest.com