Introduction

The Ottawa Folk Festival has been a spectacular success since its inception in 1994. The festival was established to showcase Canada’s folk traditions through music, dance, storytelling and crafts. It has grown from a vision to “one of the premier North American events of its kind”, according to Allan Wigney of X Press. Ottawa is home to many festivals. The Ottawa Folk Festival is known for its relaxed atmosphere, enthusiastic grassroots following and loyal volunteer contingent. What a great way to enjoy some of the best folk music offered in the country!

The festival was initially called the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival and was founded by Max Wallace and Chris White. Wallace, who was then the station manager of community radio station CKCU-FM, teamed up with White, a performing songwriter. They were joined by an enthusiastic organizing committee and an army of volunteers who helped to turn their vision into reality. The festival was launched with a magical day of entertainment on Victoria Island. The next year the festival moved to Britannia Park, where it flourished. In 1997, the festival became a not-for-profit, charitable organization, but kept “CKCU” as part of its logo until 2006.

Following a difficult financial year in 2010, the Ottawa Folk Festival came under the management of Ottawa Bluesfest with Executive Producer Mark Monahan. The festival relocated to Hogs Back Park in 2011 and attendance has grown considerably. Thanks to the continuing generous support of sponsors, granters, partners, donors, dedicated staff and volunteers, the Ottawa Folk Festival operates year-round as a vibrant cultural and community organization.

The inspiration for the Ottawa Folk Festival dates back many years. In 1959, the iconic coffee house Le Hibou opened its doors and until 1975 showcased many folk legends, including Canadians Joni Mitchell and Bruce Cockburn, and Americans John Prine and Kris Kristofferson. In 1976, the Ottawa Folklore Centre opened as a folk music emporium and has served the community as a combination retail store and musical educational centre ever since. The Festival for the Folks, a major Canadian music festival, was launched the same year and ran until 1979. After the Festival for the Folks ended, Ottawa continued to be a major centre for folk music. Canadian Spaces, the longest-running folk show on Canadian community radio, was launched in 1980.

In 1981, Rasputin’s, one of Canada’s finest folk venues, opened its doors. After thriving for 27 years, sadly the club closed in 2008 following a fire and owner Dean Verger retired from the restaurant business. Fortunately, Spirit of Rasputin’s formed the next year. This volunteer organization presents more than 130 folk concerts and events each year in the community.

A special thanks goes to Pam Marjerrison and Chris White, who carried out many careful reviews of this history over the years, as well as to Jake Morrison, who spent a great deal of effort in making the photos available in digital format.

Joyce MacPhee, a member of the original Steering Committee, wrote a history of the festival beginning with its inception. The history recounts the festival’s roots and provides a synopsis of each year. Rachel Hauraney assisted with the writeup for 2010, and Lynn Haggarty wrote the synopsis for 2011. In 2012, dedicated note takers included: Corinne Baumgarten, Elizabeth De Castro, Roberta Della Picca and Mary McHale. Read on to get a taste of the Ottawa Folk Festival’s flavour and relive some of its most wonderful moments.

See you at the next Ottawa Folk Festival!

Joyce MacPhee
Ottawa Folk Festival Timeline

1. 1994
- First CKCU-FM Ottawa Folk Festival is held on Victoria Island.
- Festival is cofounded by Executive Director Max Wallace and Artistic Director Chris White.
- One-day volunteer-driven festival is a success despite weather challenges.
- Five daytime stages, one evening stage sets pattern.
- Support came from CKCU-FM, Ottawa Folklore Centre, Rasputin’s Folk Café, Rogers Television, Nortel and dedicated organizing committee members.
- Concert series is launched in the fall thanks to a partnerships with the National Library of Canada (now Library and Archives Canada).

2. 1995
- Festival moves to Britannia Park and extends to two days (Saturday and Sunday).
- The first Helen Verger Award is presented.
- First festival auditions are held at Rasputin’s.
- Festival of the Friends Program is launched.

3. 1996
- Gene Swimmer assumes role of Festival Director.
- Festival expands to three days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday).
- Financial crisis at CKCU-FM leads to festival severing formal ties with the radio station; without any income reserves, the prospect of a summer festival is very much in doubt.
- In early December, much-needed funds are raised from two sold-out Arlo Guthrie benefit concerts and accompanying silent auctions (organized by Carol Silcoff).
- Festival website created by Alrick Huebener.

4. 1997
- Festival registers as a non-profit corporation and applies for charitable status.
- Festival banjo logo is created by Roberta Huebener.
- Thanks to additional concert revenues and government grants, the festival goes ahead.
- Bruce Cockburn has successful homecoming; he performs solo and in a reunion with The Children.
- First Festival Weekend Choir is led by Andy Rush.

5. 1998
- After hours concerts begin at Luxor Hotel.
- Radio and television broadcasts are made from the festival.
- FolkBits e-mail bulletin is launched by Brian Silcoff on November 26.

6. 1999
- First year of sponsored stages names.

7. 2000
- Acts from every province and territory are featured.
8. 2001
- NAC/Fourth Stage partnership launches second concert series.
- Festival has its first sold-out night with John Prine.
- Last year of Nortel sponsorship.

9. 2002
- First year of CUPE sponsorship/partnership.
- Green initiatives including reusable plates are introduced.
- CUPE EnviroTent is created and presents workshops.

10. 2003
- Festival celebrates tenth anniversary and expands to four days (Thursday is added).

11. 2004
- Emphasis is on youth acts including the Weakerthans, Feist and Broken Social Scene.
- Galaxie Rising Stars Award and One Fret Less Award are introduced.
- Videocassette released for sale titled “Inspiration” featuring performers from the 10th anniversary of the festival (produced by Chris White in conjunction with Rogers Television) and “Ten Years of Uninterrupted Folk”, a documentary celebrating the tenth anniversary of the festival (written, produced and directed by Joyce MacPhee in conjunction with Rogers Television).

12. 2005
- Rolling Stones concert leads to change of festival dates to third week in August.
- Emphasis is on youth acts, including the Weakerthans and Feist.

13. 2006
- Ottawa Folklore Centre cofounder Arthur McGregor receives Helen Verger Award.
- Rasputin’s Folk Café celebrates 25th anniversary.
- Thursday night programming held in downtown venues.

14. 2007
- Tamara Kater joins festival as Executive Director.
- Major site redesign reduces vehicular traffic and puts volunteers and artisans at centre of site.
- More green initiatives and connections to community organizations are created.
- Arthur II heads participatory mural project.
- GCTC Acoustic Waves series is revived to great acclaim.

15. 2008
- Fifteenth anniversary of festival.
- Paid staff includes Executive Director, Artistic Director, and Volunteer and Outreach Manager.
- New governance approach and strategic plan are adopted; board of directors is expanded.
- New larger office increases efficiency.
- More educational and outreach initiatives begin.
- Festival receives nomination for Best Festival at 2008 International Folk Alliance Conference.
- Dance tent is a hit!
16. 2009
- Tatiana Nemchin joins as Director of Planning and Operations.
- Artistic Director Chris White resigns in October 2009.
- Festival Green Team and partners create the first plastic water bottle-free festival.

17. 2010
- Dylan Griffith signs on as Festival Director.
- Programming focused on community involvement and sustainability.
- Last festival is held at beautiful Britannia Park.

18. 2011
- Ottawa Folk Festival comes under the supervision and artistic guidance of Mark Monahan, Bluesfest Executive Producer.
- New General Manager (Mark Morrison) is brought on board, with continuity provided through core staff members (sponsorship manager Ana Miura, volunteer manager Emily Addison and office manager Crystal Kirkpatrick).
- Venue changes to Hogs Back Park with a four-day format.
- Free section of festival features workshops and interactive sessions.

19. 2012
- Ottawa Folk Festival enjoyed continued success at new location and under new management.
- Festival moves to early September timeslot with a five-day format.
- Attendance doubles to between 25,000 and 30,000.
- Free section of festival flourishes with 4,000 to 5,000 visitors.
- Last festival appearance of longtime emcee and supporter Chopper McKinnon, who passed away in 2013.

Source: Roberta Huebener and Joyce MacPhee
In 1994, after CKCU-FM Station Manager Max Wallace wrote a brief article in the program guide Trans FM about the possibility of starting up the CKCU-FM Ottawa Folk Festival, he was delighted with the response. Many eager volunteers came forward to offer their services. Wallace worked closely with Chris White and a strong volunteer contingent to bring the project to fruition. After 10 months of preparation, the first annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival was held on Victoria Island. This idyllic setting nestled between Ottawa and Hull proved to be the perfect spot for a small festival. The one-day event ran from noon to midnight on August 28, 1994 and included afternoon theme stages and evening concerts. The festival has maintained this basic format.

The historic Victoria Island site provided an intimate performance space in a natural setting, and offered panoramic views of the Ottawa River, the Parliament Buildings, and other National Capital Area landmarks. The hospitality, storytelling and craft areas were housed in the picturesque ruins of the historic Carbide Building.

If the verdant island setting was idyllic, the lineup was equally impressive for a modest event operating on a shoestring budget. In the weeks leading up to the festival, an enormous amount of excitement and publicity was generated by the media when it was announced that David Wiffen would appear. Although the morning of the festival dawned grey, windy and rainy, the clouds parted and the evening main stage performances commenced beneath the canopy of a cloudless sky. Valdy, David Wiffen, Lynn Miles, Ian Tamblyn, Dario Domingues, The Bird Sisters, Penny Lang and Seventh Fire performed on the main stage.

Festival goers were greeted at the entrance gate by the African-inspired drumming of Kebba Jobateh and his drumming circle. The afternoon workshops proved popular, taking place simultaneously on five stages offering the audience a wide variety of musical styles and themes to choose from. Over a hundred musicians appeared throughout the day.

The main stage opened with Arthur McGregor, the owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre and a generous founding sponsor. He performed a beautiful acoustic version of “O Canada” to start things off in style. Arthur opened the festival with an acoustic version of the national anthem from each year until 2013. Although Arthur usually performed the anthem on acoustic guitar in a ragtime style, he played it on the mandolin one year (in 2006 or 2007).

Local artists at the festival included Alex Sinclair, Willie Dunn, Alex Houghton, Nathan Curry, Sneezy Waters, Guy Del Villano, Andrea Karam and Bob Stark. The workshops included the themes of First Nations, bluegrass, blues, protest, humour, acoustic guitar, international, women’s voices and vocal harmonies.

Two popular showcases celebrating the area’s traditional folk heritage included the Ottawa Valley Fiddling and Stepdancing Stage and a lively Ceilidh (Celtic jamboree). Gina Gilchrist, daughter of legendary stepdance champion Donnie Gilchrist, appeared with some of her stepdance students. Ottawa Valley musicians including veteran fiddler Wilf Gillis accompanied the dancers. A lively ceilidh hosted by Ian Robb of Friends of Fiddlers’ Green and Finest Kind followed. They were joined by a number of local musicians performing Celtic and Celtic-inspired material.

For pure nostalgia, it was hard to beat the three tribute stages: the Stan Rogers Stage, the Le Hibou Stage and the Woodstock Stage. Ian Robb hosted more than a dozen local musicians who performed their favourite Stan Rogers songs. The popular Le Hibou Stage featured artists who had appeared at the legendary Ottawa club such as Valdy, David Wiffen, Sandy Crawley and Bonnie Bradley. When the Woodstock Stage was halted
by a sudden downpour, Valdy led the audience in an impromptu rendition of “Rain, Rain Go Away” with the desired positive results.

Talented but not yet seasoned musicians had the opportunity to appear on the Discovery Stage. Acoustic Moon, a group of high school students, were among the youngest performers. Writer’s Bloc, a local songwriting group, also held a session on this stage.

The evening concert featured a triumphant return to the stage by David Wiffen, who was greeted by a thunderous standing ovation. The excitement continued with an energetic and polished set by Valdy, who proved he had not forgotten his Ottawa hometown roots.

Valdy was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his valuable contribution to Canadian folk music. This award was designed by Arthur McGregor, co-owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre. It was constructed from a 1940s handmade guitar by master builder Edward Dick. The evening wound down with a singalong around the bonfire, where fire juggler Tawney Ross gave a mesmerizing performance.

The main stage emcees, Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy, played an important role in the festival. The two enjoy a special chemistry onstage and their repartee is an important part of the main stage shows. Chopper provides the English introductions while Karen provides both French and English commentary.

Chopper McKinnon has been a vital force on the Ottawa music scene since the 1970s. His many accomplishments include hosting Canadian Spaces, the longest running folk show on Canadian community radio. Canadian Spaces first took to the airwaves of CKCU-FM in 1980 and has attracted a loyal following of “Space Cadets”. Chopper also hosts the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival Benefit Concert Series and the Acoustic Waves concert series.

Karen Flanagan McCarthy is a freelance writer and broadcaster whose work has been heard on CBC Radio programs including Morningside, Gabereau, Between the Covers, and All in a Day. She appears frequently as an emcee at local music and charitable events.
Buoyed by the initial success of the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival in 1994, the festival organizers decided to expand to a two-day format. Out of respect for the native occupation of Victoria Island by Algonquin Indians, the festival was moved to a new location. The natural choice was Britannia Park, a beautiful west-end site on the Ottawa River. Britannia Park was also the site of the Festival for the Folks from 1977 to 1979. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

Sunshine sparkling like a million diamonds on the water in Britannia Bay, a warm summer rain, a glowing pastel sunset, and a meteor crossing a dark Ontario sky. All of these natural elements helped to create an enchanting atmosphere at the second annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival held August 26 to 27, 1995. The festival exceeded all expectations with double the attendance of the previous year, and garnered rave reviews from critics and the community alike. “If a festival can be measured in moments of music magic, the second annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival was a resounding success,” enthused Lynn Saxberg of the Ottawa Citizen.

Ottawa’s fine folk tradition was celebrated with music, dance and storytelling. There was plenty to celebrate. Fifteenth anniversary theme stages paid tribute to two Ottawa institutions: Canadian Spaces, the oldest Canadian folk music program on community radio; and the folk club Rasputin’s. The Le Hibou Deja Vu stage tipped the hat to Canada’s longest running coffeehouse and featured several prominent artists who performed there.

Arthur McGregor, owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre, opened the main stage with a wonderful acoustic guitar interpretation of “O Canada”.

Ottawa Valley fiddling, stepdancing and singing were showcased during three sessions, including a tribute to the late Mac Beattie. The Ottawa Songwriters session hosted talented local performers, as did the songwriting group Writer’s Bloc. On both days, Ottawa storytellers wove magical tales for their attentive audiences. The Ottawa Citizen Family Area kept kids busy all weekend long with a variety of daytime activities, crafts, costumes and entertainment, including face painting and great performers.

The afternoon stages featured Celtic, country, bluegrass, gospel and world music. There were also afternoon sessions highlighting instrumental music, as well as sessions exploring the potential of the human voice and our connections to the natural world. A wonderful blend of familiar and new musicians performed 30-minute sets on the Showcase Stage. The lineup for the acoustic guitar theme stage was hard to beat: Don Ross, Stephen Fearing, Alex Houghton, Lynn Miles and Alan Marsden.

Audience participation was an important element of the festival. Kids clapped and sang along with Eric Nagler at a Saturday afternoon concert, while families sashayed around the hall during a traditional contra dance on Sunday afternoon. The Arrogant Worms were successful in getting adults and children alike to imitate a chomping alligator, with hysterical results.

Hundreds of stargazers were on hand Sunday afternoon to witness the Swingin’ on a Star stage. Murray McLauchlan performed along with the other stellar artists who had appeared on his national CBC Radio show from 1989 to 1994 including Colleen Peterson, Lynn Miles and David Wiffen. The sweethearts of the festival proved to be Malaika, a four-woman acoustic harmony group that specializes in a capella music performed in several different languages.
As if by cue, a meteor streaked across the sky during a passionate encore by guitarist Don Ross. The most poignant moment of the festival was when Murray Mclauchlan was presented with the first Helen Verger Award for his contributions to Canadian folk music. The award was instituted to honour the memory of the late Helen Verger, co-owner of Rasputin’s coffeehouse, mother of Dean Verger, and a friend to many in the Ottawa folk community. Helen’s generosity and love of music embodies the spirit of the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, and the award is a fitting tribute to a woman who did much to foster the local folk scene.

Finally, the crowd bid adieu to CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival Director Max Wallace, who left his job as station manager at CKCU to pursue writing opportunities in Montreal. The baton was passed into the capable hands of Gene Swimmer, an avid folk fan and a professor in the School of Public Administration at Carleton University.
In 1996, the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival flourished under the direction of Gene Swimmer and artistic director Chris White. The festival made another natural progression, and expanded to three days of folk at Britannia Park (August 23 to 25). It continued to offer an eclectic range of performers and styles. The main stage performers included Quartette, Bert Jansch, Lynn Miles, Moxy Frivous, Thomas Handy Trio, Laura Smith, Lennie Gallant, Danielle Martineau and Rockabayou, and Malaika. The year also marked the 20th anniversary of the Ottawa Folklore Centre. The Helen Verger Award was jointly presented to Colleen Peterson and Sylvia Tyson for their valuable contributions to Canadian folk music. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

Benefit Concert Series
The 1995/1996 Benefit Concert Series held at the National Library of Canada featured the following performers.
Dec. 16: Don Ross (with special guests Finest Kind)
Feb. 24: Imaginary Heaven (with special guest Karen Leslie Hall)
April 6: Connie Kaldor (with special guest Night Sun)
May 4: Colleen Peterson and Willie P. Bennett (double bill)

Friday, August 23
Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor started things off on the main stage with his acoustic guitar ragtime version of our national anthem. The Friday evening main stage opened with Les Hardis Moussaillons, an eclectic group of French-language performers with diverse influences: “rock, punk, flamenco and Latino thrown in a blender at high speed”. Montreal’s first lady of folk, Penny Lang, next graced the stage, followed by the exotic Latin American rhythms of Miguel Fenton. Songstress extraordinaire Lynn Miles performed to an appreciative crowd. Then the wild and wacky group Moxy Frivous exploded onto the stage. The evening of folk under the stars ended with the swirling sounds of Orealis, a Montreal-based Celtic band.

Saturday, August 24
The Saturday daytime entertainment was packed with talent. On the main stage you could choose from a country session hosted by Lonesome Paul, a bluegrass session hosted by Ron Moores, or a king-size performance of the Purple Dragon Puppet Troupe. For many, the highlight was the Ottawa Folklore Centre Tribute, celebrating the centre’s 20th anniversary. Participants included Alex Houghton, Lynn Miles, Ian Robb, James Stephens and Bob Stark.

Down by the water on the Point Stage, you could enjoy children’s entertainment with June and Kathy; a Nortel Showcase with the Miguel Fenton Band; a world-beat session hosted by Dario Domingues; and an Ottawa Folklore Centre session on how to play the harmonica.

In the cool confines of the Inside Stage, the audience sampled a guitar session with Alan Marsden, Alex Houghton, Bert Jansch and Allan Gorman. A session on toe-tappin’ tunes hosted by Marion Linton set the atmosphere for the participatory dance sessions that followed. Catherine Burns hosted a contra dance with musical accompaniment provided by The Old Sod Band. Danielle Martineau hosted the lively Dansez! session with Rockabayou.

The Red Stage was a showcase for singer-songwriters. The All in the Family session was hosted by the Bovine Sisters and included members of six families. The fabulous Laura Smith and George Antoniak were featured in
a Nortel Showcase, while the Heart and Soul session hosted by Beth Ferguson featured Bert Jansch and Penny Lang. The session See What I Say featured the music and stories of Malaika, Jennifer Cayley, and Ruth and Brian Bowen. Deborah Herr provided beautiful sign language interpretation combined with dance.

The Green Stage packed a lot of entertainment into one afternoon. The Le Hibou Revisited session was one of the most popular of the weekend. Host Richard Patterson welcomed Sylvia Tyson, Colleen Peterson, Penny Lang and Bob Stark for an hour of recalling the glory days of the legendary Ottawa coffeehouse, Le Hibou. The Generation F session showcased a younger generation of folk artists. Bob Stark hosted the Writers are a Strange Breed session, exploring the art of songwriting. Two showcases featured Doug Reansbury and Orealis.

Diversity was the theme on Saturday evening. The main stage opened with native singer-songwriter Willie Dunn, and continued with the bluegrass-fusion quartet The Emory Lester Set. Malaika, a four-woman a capella group that performs music from around the world, was followed by the Thomas Handy Trio. The trio combines a heady combination of jazz and East Indian rhythms to create music with an hypnotic effect. Up next was Quartette, a four-woman group that featured the considerable talents of Colleen Peterson, Sylvia Tyson, Cindy Church and Caitlin Hanford. Sadly, it would be one of Colleen Peterson’s last performances. She passed away barely six weeks later. British guitar legend Bert Jansch and the energetic Danielle Martineau and Rockabayou rounded out the eclectic evening.

Sunday, August 25
What better time to enjoy some gospel music than on Sunday morning? Host Andrea Karam introduced John Steele; Michelle Sweeney, a woman with a wonderfully powerful voice; and the many members of Voices of Praise, an Ottawa gospel ensemble. Other early birds were treated to devotional music from the Ottawa Shape Note Chorus, in a session hosted by Shelley Posen.

Traditions old and new could be found on the daytime main stage on Sunday. A ceilidh hosted by Ian Robb boasted the likes of Ann Downey, Shelley Posen, Janet Munson, James Stephens, Wilf Gillis and Dan Schryer. Meanwhile, the New Traditions session hosted by Ann Downey featured Jimmy George, The Toasted Westerns and Night Sun. Stepdance Heaven was the title of a toe-tappin’ session featuring the Ottawa Valley Dancers. The Ottawa Citizen Family Concert featured The Dinosaur Show with Kirk & Magoo.

The children’s entertainment continued at the Point Stage with concerts by Magoo and Tom Plant. The session Music from the Isles and a session on how to play the pennywhistle reflected a traditional theme. The session In the Groove, hosted by Suzie Vinnick, explored the art of grooving. Cabin Fever, one of the winners of the festival’s Last Chance Saloon competition, strutted their stuff out at the Point Stage.

For those who took refuge in the air-conditioned comfort of the Inside Stage, there was plenty to see and do. A lively square dance was hosted by Fred Weihs, with musical accompaniment by Paddies on the Tundra. The Words and Music session hosted by Alrick Huebener featured SugarBeat, thom barker and Aaron Zaadich. More words and music were examined in the Songs from the Heart session featuring Jody Benjamin, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Laura Smith and Lee Hayes. Nortel showcases presented performances by Night Sun, and Gerry Griffin & Dario Domingues.

The Red Stage was in danger of bursting into flames during the Fiddles on Fire session featuring the talents of Oliver Schroer, Janet Munson, Michael Ball, Pierre Schryer and Nathan Curry. One of the highlights of the day was the Maritime Stories & Songs session hosted by Shelley Posen and showcasing the talents of Lennie Gallant, Kevin Head and Tom Lips. More stories were shared during the Ottawa Valley Stories & Songs session hosted by Gail Gavan. Performers included Cal Cummings, Gord McAlpine, Tri-Lys, Le Grand
Portage and Donna Stewart. The daytime sessions ended with a Nortel showcase hosted by Neema Mugala featuring the Sifa Choir.

The Green Stage presented a session on blues music hosted by Larry “The Bird” Mootham and featuring Rick Fines, Suzie Vinnick, Guy Del Villano and Vince Halfhide. Festival goers could also listen to Spirit Voices, a session hosted by Cliff Thomas. Willie Dunn, Stephen Augustine and Mary Carpenter performed music and told stories that reflected their heritage. Brenna Rivier hosted a session called Songs of Freedom, with participants Lennie Gallant, Lucie Blue Tremblay and Willie Dunn. Two showcases presented the talents of Steafan Hannigan and Jimmy George.

The Sunday evening main stage opened with the fabulous sounds of the Folk Festival Children’s Choir. Celtic-inspired ensemble Jimmy George appeared next, followed by local favourites Finest Kind. This traditionally based trio consists of Ian Robb, Shelley Posen and Ann Downey. French-Canadian singer-songwriter Lucie Blue Tremblay performed a bilingual set. She was followed by Suzie Vinnick and Rick Fines. This duo combines the vocal talents of blues singer Suzie Vinnick with the guitar stylings of Rick Fines. The evening wound down with two superb East Coast performers: Laura Smith and Lennie Gallant. Laura Smith has been described simply as an actress who performs her own songs. Lennie Gallant is a native of P.E.I. who lives in Halifax. His music combines lyrics reflecting the struggles and dreams of real people with Acadian and Celtic influenced music.
Welcome Home Bruce!

The fourth CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, held from **August 22 to 24** at **Britannia Park**, was a hit. Bruce Cockburn returned to his hometown, much to the delight of the record crowds that gathered for his dynamic performances. Cockburn appeared at a main stage evening concert on the opening night of the festival. The next day he participated in the reunion of the famous sixties Ottawa group, The Children. The festival main stage lineup was particularly strong: Lawrence Gowan, Shari Ulrich, Robert Paquette, The Arrogant Worms, Alpha Yaya Diallo, Melanie Doane, Tamarack, Cindy Church and Rebecca Campbell. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

The year 1997 also marked the 20th anniversary of the first folk festival to be held at **Britannia Park**. The Festival for the Folks was held there from 1977 to 1979. Perhaps the most poignant moment of the 1997 festival was a special ceremony in memory of the late Colleen Peterson, which was attended by some of her closest friends and many fans.

Festival Director **Gene Swimmer**, Artistic Director **Chris White** and the organizing committee worked harder than ever to put on the 1997 festival. The funding from major sponsor CKCU ended due to the community radio station’s financial problems.

**Benefit Concert Series**

A tremendously successful Benefit Concert Series made the festival possible. The 1996/1997 benefit concert series included the following concerts held at the National Library of Canada.

- **Nov. 16:** Pamela Morgan
- **Dec. 7, 8:** Arlo Guthrie
- **March 6:** Laura Smith
- **April 10:** Soweto Singers
- **April 19:** Penny Lang, Georgette Fry
- **May 30:** Moxy Frivous

The festival held its first Silent Auction during the intermission of the Arlo Guthrie concerts on Dec. 7 and 8. Thanks to Carol Silcoff and a team of volunteers, and the many generous donations from local artisans and businesses, the event was a huge success.

The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, the Ontario Arts Council, Nortel, the Ottawa Citizen, Phase 2, Air Nova, CS CO-OP, Hershey, the SOCAN Foundation, the Luxor Hotel and the Glebe Loeb also provided vital support to the festival.

**Friday, August 22**

There was a sense of eager anticipation in the air when the festival opened on Friday night, as the audience awaited the appearance of **Bruce Cockburn, Arthur McGregor**, longtime sponsor and owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre played a wonderful acoustic guitar version of our national anthem to open the festival. Performers including the female group Travelling with Jane, popular Robert Paquette, the zany Arrogant Worms, the fiery African-inspired Alpha Yaya Diallo, and another Ottawa native, singer Rebecca Campbell. Cockburn’s polished and dynamic set was greeted with enormous enthusiasm by an appreciative hometown crowd. Although an international star in his own right, Cockburn made it clear he was enjoying a return to his
roots. Cockburn was presented with the keys to the City of Ottawa, as well as the Helen Verger Award for his valuable contributions to Canadian folk music.

Saturday, August 23
The daytime entertainment on Saturday featured a potpourri of styles and subjects. Quite a buzz was generated by The Children and Le Hibou workshop hosted by Richard Patterson. The musical group of hopefuls that first banded together in 1965 included many who would make considerable contributions to the Canadian cultural scene: Bruce Cockburn, David Wiffen, Richard Patterson, Sandy Crawley, Sneey Waters, Neville Wells and Chris Anderson. The Children often appeared at legendary folk venue Le Hibou.

Sessions focusing on the themes of passion and the lives of girls and women took place on the Green Stage. Guitars are Us was the amusing title for a session that showcased the many styles of this versatile instrument that is so prevalent in folk and roots music.

Participatory sessions abounded. The Ottawa Folklore Centre hosted a series of sessions encouraging people to sing along, or to play the slide guitar or harmonica. Debbie McWatty Reid hosted a session on how to stepdance, while Kate McKay encouraged everyone to dance, dance, dance. A country dance was presented by Lonesome Paul and the Valley Ramblers with Jody Benjamin. An enthusiastic group took part in the Ottawa Folklore Centre Weekend Choir Practice, hosted by Andy Rush.

The Ottawa Citizen Family Area was just the place to see juggling, magic shows, “kidsongs” with Tom Plant and stories with Dean Verger. Kids also ventured to the Inside Stage for a Valdy for Kids session.

The Nortel Stage featured a session highlighting the rhythms of Africa and a live version of the CKCU traditional country, western and bluegrass music show The Back 40; Alex Sinclair hosted an Acoustic Waves session featuring performers who had appeared in the longstanding folk/roots concert series. The Red Stage showcased double bills by Robert Paquette and Lizanne Evely; and Shari Ulrich and Melissa Lafrance; while Cindy Church appeared solo. The Green Stage offered double bills with Bill Bourne and Bill Huggins; Joe Hall and Barb Matticacci, as well as Alpha Yaya Diallo in concert. At the Point Stage you could go around the world in 30 minutes with George Sapounidis!

The evening main stage performances opened with Guy Davis, an acoustic blues revivalist. Singer-songwriter and instrumentalist Melanie Doane was followed by a band she once belonged to: Tamarack of Guelph, Ont. The group is well known for its traditional arrangements that tell tales of the history of Canada. Meryn Cadell provided her own unique spin on contemporary life through music and the spoken word. The Montreal-based band Zekuhl had the crowd hopping with an eclectic set of African and Latin rhythms.

Sunday, August 24
Some skeptics doubted that Lawrence Gowan could make the transition from arena rocker to folk festival headliner. Gowan proved that he could, and delivered his piano-based music with panache and style to spare. The former rock star illustrated that good music begins and ends with the story and song.

Sunday was another gorgeous day at the festival. The afternoon exemplified Gary Kristall’s idea of a good festival lineup: “a program with so much music you want to see, you do not know where to go”. The Nortel Stage featured a live broadcast of the CKCU Celtic music program, Music From the Glen; stories and songs with Dean Verger; and Meryn Cadell in concert. Fiddle Fever featured fiddlers aplenty, while the session It Was 20 Years Ago Today showcased Ian Tamblyn, Shari Ulrich, David Wiffen and others who had appeared at the Festival for the Folks at Britannia Park two decades earlier!
The **Inside Stage** was the location of a lively square dance with **Paddies on the Tundra**; and double bills featuring **Pamela Morgan** and the **Last Chance Saloon** competition winners the **Mudpouts**; and **Lawrence Gowan** and Meg Lunney. Kids were delighted with concerts designed with them in mind presented by James Gordon and Del Fuego. Those who camped out in front of the **Red Stage** were treated to double bills with Linda Morrison and Jennifer Noxon; Gaston Bernard and Kagiso Mpala; and a bluesy triple bill with Paul Fenton, Vince Halfhide and Guy Davis. Fans of the spoken word were entertained by members of SugarBeat, along with Alex Mortimer, Justin Haynes, Sandra Nicholls and Kagiso Mpala. On the **Green Stage**, CBC Radio recorded a live-to-tape broadcast of the acoustic/roots music show *Heartland Live*, hosted by Bill Stunt. The **Green Stage** also showcased the talents of the worldbeat acoustic band Raintree; Generation F performers Shoshona Kish, Lizanne Evely, Raven Kanatakta and Rob Commins; Melanie Doane and the Toasted Westerns. The session *Play Me a Rock & Roll Song* featured Valdy, Lawrence Gowan and Lizanne Everly.

At the **Point Stage**, way down by the water, you could take in performances by wind instrumentalist Robbie Anderman, or sample the acoustic blues of Larry “The Bird” Mootham, Vince Halfhide, Linda Morrison, Paul Fenton and Guy Davis. The **Family Area** showcased awesome feats by Tawney Ross; “kidsongs” with Linda Morrison and Russell Levi; and stories with Dean Verger. Doctor Magic provided what you would expect, and Del Fuego appeared unplugged.

The **Ottawa Folklore Centre Weekend Choir** kicked off the evening main stage performances. A flurry of fiddling next ensued with renowned instrumentalists Calvin Vollrath, Trent Brunner and April Verch. The dynamic Shari Ulrich performed next, followed by the bluegrass stylings of Steel Rail. Ottawa favourite Ian Tamblyn appeared with his usual assortment of musical gems. The evening ended with a heartfelt performance by Newfoundlanders Pamela Morgan and perennial festival performer Valdy.
A record crowd of approximately 12,000 attended the 1998 CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, held August 28-30 at Britannia Park. Despite intermittent downpours, rainbows appeared more than once in the festival skies, much to the delight of the participants. One of the festival highlights was a performance by folk veteran Arlo Guthrie, who played to an enthusiastic crowd on Sunday evening. Ferron received a warm response when she was awarded with the Helen Verger Award. The crowds were also dazzled by artists such as Americans Martin Sexton and Vance Gilbert. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

The highest number of performers to date participated in this year’s festival, showcasing a wide spectrum of styles. Traditional roots music was represented by acclaimed artists such as David Essig; Bourque, Bernard et Lepage; Gail Gavan and Cindy Thompson. Exciting musical hybrids such as the African-inspired ensembles Cheza and the Sifa Choir, the French/Cajun performer Danielle Martineau, blues crooner Georgette Fry, and the unique Celtic/klezmer/blues-influenced band, Night Sun, kept the crowd dancing. Canadian festival veterans Roy Forbes, Connie Kaldor, Moxy Früvous, Fred Eaglesmith, the Wyrd Sisters and Holmes Hooke rounded out the evening’s lineup.

**Friday, August 28**

“If anyone wondered about the future of acoustic and folk-style music they only needed to take in last night’s opening set of concerts at the Ottawa Folk Festival to see that there’s a bevy of new artists already taking up the torch,” reported Rick Overall in the Ottawa Sun. The fun began on Friday evening on the Nortel Stage in traditional festival fashion, with Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor performing an instrumental guitar version of “O Canada”. Eclectic singer-songwriter Christine Graves was followed by Oh Susanna, a Vancouver native who puts a new spin on traditional North American country music. The wonderful and witty Vance Gilbert wowed the crowd with his awesome vocal style and accomplished guitar playing. Many considered his dynamic performance one of the most memorable at the festival. The Mike Plume Band delivered a spirited plugged-in set that reflected the band’s alternative and country roots.

Following intermission, crowd-pleasers Moxy Früvous had the crowd in stitches during their lively performance featuring their recent hits. The mood shifted to the gentle acoustic sounds of Seattle-based Erin Corday. Fred Eaglesmith was accompanied by his stellar band including Willie P. Bennett and Washboard Hank. The evening ended on a high note with an infectious and highly danceable set by the irrepressible band Night Sun featuring husband and wife Chris Coleman and Ellen Hamilton.

The 1997-98 Ottawa Folk Festival Benefit Concerts featured an eclectic cross-section of talent. The successful series included the following concerts:

November 9, 1997: The Wyrd Sisters and Malaika (double bill), Bronson Centre
December 6, 1997: Lawrence Gowan (opening act SugarBeat), National Library of Canada
December 13, 1997: Ian Tamblyn (CD release concert), National Library of Canada
January 18, 1998: Dar Williams (opening act Jennifer Noxon), Great Canadian Theatre Company
February 21, 1998: Hot Music for a Cold Night (Winterlude event featuring a double bill with Georgette Fry and Rawlins Cross), Congress Centre
March 20, 1998: Connie Kaldor (opening act Beth Ferguson), National Library of Canada
April 17, 1998: Lennie Gallant (opening act Terry Tufts), Canadian Museum of Nature
Saturday, August 29

There was plenty of daytime entertainment at this year’s festival, giving festival goers many opportunities to enjoy intimate performances. The Nortel Stage kicked off the afternoon with The Old Sod, music from Great Britain and France, featuring Finest Kind, Erin Cassidy, Bobby Watt, Aengus Finnan, and Bourque, Bernard et Lepage. Christmas in August, hosted by Shelley Posen, was a collection of the songs you would expect as interpreted by Finest Kind, Roy Forbes, Mark Haines, Tom Leighton and Jan Andrews. Moxy Früvous took to the stage next for a lively 45-minute concert. The Saskatoon Moon session featured a double bill with Canadian folkies Connie Kaldor and Roy Forbes.

Richard Knechtel hosted the Songs from the Heart session on the Red Stage. The participants, all SOCAN award winners, included Jennifer Noxon, Ellen Hamilton, Glen Reid, Michaela Foster Marsh and Holmes Hooke. Legendary guitar player David Essig hosted the I Love My Guitar session with Brandon Scott, Rick Fines, Andy Sheppard and Shelley Jennings. Talented Irish flute player Erin Cassidy performed tunes from her album The Wind at Play. Lizzie Shanks and Brandon Scott were joined by a few musical friends during the Besharah in Concert session. The On the Fiddle session showcased a diverse lineup of talent: Gaston Bernard, Jami Sieber, Mark Haines, Gary Weinger and Peter Jellard. Tom Leighton hosted the My Main Squeeze session, a rollicking roundup of accordionists Danielle Martineau, Bonnie Dawson and Benoit Bourque, and concertina player Ian Robb.

The Green Stage opened the afternoon with It’s Only Rock & Roll, hosted by Roy Forbes and featuring Terry Tufts, Sherry Shute, David Essig and Fred Guignion. Local singer-songwriter Charlie Sohmer was up next with a 30-minute concert. The struggle against adversity was the theme in the Breaking Through session hosted by Sherry Shute and showcasing Ferron, Vance Gilbert, Bobby Watt and Deborah Herr-Allen. A 30-minute concert with Night Sun followed. Dance with Akpokli gave the audience an opportunity to sway to the rhythms of traditional drum music from Ghana. Gloria May Eshkibok hosted the Personal Politics session, a one-hour presentation of issues-oriented music with Bob Stark, Moxy Früvous and Nishtu.

At the Point Stage, near the Ottawa River, Arthur McGregor hosted a Singalong Folk Jam with plenty of audience participation. Animator Erin Cassidy hosted the Learn to Play the Pennywhistle workshop. Just For Laughs featured the lighthearted music of Richard Knechtel, Vance Gilbert, Steve Fruitman and Robert Atyeo and was hosted by Ann Downey. Vance Gilbert in concert featured one of North America’s most exciting folk performers.

In the cool confines of the air-conditioned Inside Stage, the Black Sheep Salute was hosted by Paul Symes, the owner of the Wakefield, Quebec club. Mike Plume, Christine Graves, Oh Susanna and Kwasi Dunyo were the featured performers. A double bill followed with artists Terry Tufts and Erin Corday. Host Nancy Ziebarth joined forces with Cindy Thompson and Bourque, Bernard et Lepage for the Learn to Stepdance workshop. The second double bill of the day showcased the talents of Ana Coutinho and Lindy. The day ended with a dance featuring the music of the Mike Plume Band.

The popular Family Area was a whirlwind of activity. Animator Judy Halla got things underway with Aerobics for Kids. Three separate Kindermusik sessions were animated by Claudia Mack, Kathy Ruggiero and Monica Wolf, who explored rhythms for the very young. Cindy Thompson was on hand to teach the Stepdancing for Kids session. The Dickie Bird for Kids session featured Richard Knechtel, an entertaining and versatile folkie. Crafts for Kids, led by crafter Janet Whittam, gave family members a chance to make decorations.

The evening performances on the Nortel Networks Stage kicked off with premier Ottawa Valley fiddler-stepdancer Cindy Thompson. The 25-member Sifa Choir was in the midst of performing when the skies
darkened and the rain poured down in torrents, sending the audience running for cover. The storm abated within 20 minutes and the Sifa Choir returned to the stage, gamely performing without microphones. Their music lifted the spirits of the festival goers, who were delighted when the sun came out and a double rainbow appeared in the sky above the stage.

Veteran folk festival performer Roy Forbes appeared in concert. Montreal singer-songwriter Danielle Martineau performed with the Stephen Barry Blues Band in a set that combined French-Canadian roots music, zydeco and reggae. Saskatchewan native Connie Kaldor performed her lyrical and humorous songs about life on the prairies.

Following intermission, The Unceded Band featuring Gloria May Eshkibok, Miche Hill and Sherry Shute performed with their usual passion and playfulness. The band gets its name from one of the largest unceded Aboriginal territories in the world. Martin Sexton wowed the evening crowd with his evocative vocal style and original material. Ferron mesmerized everyone with her powerfully poetic self-penned songs. Much of her material was so well known that the audience sang along. After her performance Ferron was presented with the Helen Verger Award. Georgette Fry ably demonstrated why she was awarded Jazz Report Magazine’s Blues Artist of the Year award when she delivered a rousing closing set.

Sunday, August 30
Sunday morning and afternoon offered plenty of folk fun at Britannia Park. On the Nortel Stage, the day opened with Aengus Finnan in concert. Canadian Spaces Live, hosted by Chopper McKinnon, showcased the talents of Space Cadets David Essig, Bob Stark, Lonesome Paul and Crow’s Feet. A double bill followed featuring Martin Sexton and The Wyrd Sisters. The Courriers in concert featured the legendary Ottawa folk group of the 1960s. Arlo Guthrie and Connie Kaldor were the dynamic duo who appeared in the Together Again for the First Time session. Heartland Live, hosted by Bill Stunt, recorded the performances by Robert Atyeo, Ana Coutinho, Crow’s Feet and Charlie Sohmer, which were later broadcast on Bill’s CBC Radio show.

First up on the Red Stage was the session Now That’s a Stretch with Ray Bonneville, Mark Haines, Tom Leighton and Deborah Kerr-Allen and was hosted by Lindy. Tall Tales and Strange Songs followed, featuring host Holmes Hooke and performers Robert Atyeo, Bobby Watt and Larry “The Bird” Mootham. Ron Moores hosted the That Good Old Time Music session with traditional songs by Lonesome Paul, Gail Gavan, and Bourque, Bernard et Lepage. A double bill with singer-songwriters Glen Reid and Gord Johnston followed. The Great Outdoors session hosted by Jan Andrews was a truly Canadian experience with Blackflies, Holmes Hooke, The Wyrd Sisters and Glen Reid. Alan Weekes hosted a rousing session of American Acoustic, honouring the CKCU-FM folk show of the same name. Musicians included Martin Sexton, Ann Downey, Vance Gilbert and Erin Corday.

The Unceded Band set the pace with a concert on the Green Stage. This trio expresses in song the plight of indigenous peoples and other social issues. A little gospel music does a soul good on a Sunday morning. Neema Mugala hosted the Glory, Glory session, featuring songs of joyous celebration from the Sifa Choir, May Lebrun, Gord Johnson, Mark Haines and Tom Leighton. Montreal musician Elana Harte showed off her infectious rhythms and sparkling vocals in a 30-minute concert. The audience had the privilege of an intimate concert with Ferron. Lee Hayes was host of For the Love of Music session, an international collection of songs presented by Malaika, Vance Gilbert, Robert Atyeo, Crow’s Feet, and Bourque, Bernard et Lepage. The closing session was Dance with Dam’Deride, featuring the Montreal women’s choir directed by Danielle Martineau.

Shelley Posen led the workshop titled Learn to Sing with Shape Notes on the scenic Point Stage. Larry “The Bird” Mootham and Southside Steve led the Learn to Play the Harmonica workshop. Vince Halfhide
followed suit with Learn to Play the Slide Guitar, and was assisted by two masters of the form: David Essig and Rick Fines. Host Georgette Fry was accompanied by Ray Bonneville, Martin Sexton, Larry “The Bird” Mootham and The Mighty Popo in the Acoustic Blues session.

The air-conditioned Inside Stage was a cool setting for the opening double bill with Rick Fines and Andy Sheppard. Rasputin’s owner Dean Verger hosted the Special Blend session, which featured Elana Harte, Lindy and Andy Sheppard. World music was the theme of See and Hear the World with Cheza, Gypsy Jive, M’El M’Rabet, Kebba Jobateh, The Mighty Popo, Ras Kagiso Mpala and host Stella Haybukhai. Erin Corday was the host of the I Still Love My Guitar, a round up of several styles as demonstrated by Terry Tufts, M’El M’Rabet, Ray Bonneville and Richard Knechtel. Dancing was definitely encouraged during the Dance with Gypsy Jive session. The dancing continued with Dance with Cheza, a session driven by African rhythms.

In the Family Area, Danielle Martineau hosted Accordion Tales, a round up of styles of this sometimes misunderstood instrument. Judy Halla led the Aerobics for Kids. The Baobab Young Performers showcased the talents of a drum and dance society whose members range in age from 12 to 17. The group’s teacher, Kathy Armstrong, was on hand to show off her students. The Crafts for Kids workshops were hosted by Heather Boyd (jewellery) and Ted Kordner (drawing). The day ended with Dean Verger for Kids, where “Uncle Dean” told tales for the entire family.

The evening entertainment on the Nortel Stage began with a lively set from Blackflies, a Cajun group that hails from Ontario. The Ottawa Folklore Centre Weekend Choir, directed by Andy Rush, promised to make the sun come peeking from behind the clouds and managed to accomplish this feat. This group had practiced throughout the weekend, and performed with panache. Popular Ottawa Valley singer Gail Gavan had a lively response from the audience, which welcomed her traditional songs and stories. Guitar wizard David Essig knew he was on the right track when he played “Sunrise II”, the theme song for Canadian Spaces. This song was the best received in his polished set. Bourque, Bernard et Lepage had fun singing and dancing their way into the hearts of the crowd. One audience-pleasing number saw Bourque stepdance and shave a volunteer from the audience.

After the intermission, The Wyrd Sisters, a Winnipeg-based trio performed their eclectic brand of music. The much-anticipated set by Arlo Guthrie delighted the audience, who were thrilled to hear their favourite songs from the author of “Alice’s Restaurant”. The festival presented Arlo with an original painting by Roberta Huebener, as a thank you for the role he played in helping to save the festival, which nearly foundered in its third year. In 1996, Arlo performed in two sold-out benefit concerts that helped raise enough funds to put on the 1997 festival. The amazing African-inspired rhythms of Cheza were featured as the last act of the evening and brought to a close the fifth annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival at Britannia Park.
Year 6 – 1999

CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival Reaches a New High

Best ever festival! That was the consensus of performers and festival goers alike for the 1999 CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, held from **August 27 to 29** at **Britannia Park**. The record-breaking crowds were treated to blue skies, warm summer weather and an impressive lineup. The festival attained a high level of professionalism evidenced by superb performances, and excellent lighting and sound. Several musicians including **Jane Siberry**, **Ian Tamblyn**, **Lucy Kaplansky** and **Lynn Miles** lavished praise for the festival. A particularly warm response was extended to **Chopper McKinnon**, who accepted the **Helen Verger Award**. **Chopper** and **Karen Flanagan McCarthy** returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

“The performers were ecstatic about this year’s festival,” said festival organizer **Pam Marjerrison**. The festival crowds were equally ecstatic and turned out in record numbers. Attendance was high for the daytime performances, Marjerrison was happy to point out. “This is what we’ve always wanted. The daytime performances are as important as the evening ones.”

Daytime sessions held in **Lakeside Gardens** were particularly well attended. The hilarious **Laugh It Up** session featuring **Trout Fishing in America**, **Vance Gilbert** and **Jane Siberry** was standing room only. Festival staff had to turn people away from the **Burgundy, Bailey’s and Bourbon** workshop with **Laura Smith**, **Georgette Fry** and **Margo Timmins**, as the hall was filled to capacity.

The CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival is now being held up as a model for organizers of other festivals. On the Labour Day weekend, **Ottawa Sun** reporter Ian Nathanson stated in a review of another local music festival: “If you want advice on how to properly organize a festival, check with the people behind the Folk Festival and the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival.”

A record number of performers from south of the border appeared. American acoustic music was well represented by **Karen Savoca**, **Trout Fishing in America**, **Annie Gallup**, **Cry Cry Cry** (Dar Williams, Lucy Kaplansky and Richard Shindell), **Vance Gilbert**, **Bill Morrissey** and **Chuck Brodsky**.

Some magical moments included **Jane Siberry** performing an improvisational version of “The Water is Wide” with cellist **Jorane Peltier** on Saturday evening. Those who gathered for a **Tom Wilson** showcase on Sunday afternoon were treated to a one-hour performance from the supergroup **Blackie and the Rodeo Kings**. Finally, Inuit performer **Lucie Idlout** proved that popular music can take on serious social issues and still rock.

**Benefit Concert Series**
The festival was the culmination of a busy year of concerts under the festival banner. The annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival Benefit Concert Series featured the following performers:

- November 28: **Nancy White** and The Toasted Westerns, First Unitarian Congregation
- February 6: **Fred Eaglesmith** and **Ray Bonneville**, Barrymore’s
- February 27: **Martin Sexton**, Bronson Centre
- March 20: **Don Ross** and Besharah, First Unitarian Congregation
- April 17: **The Arrogant Worms** and **Holmes Hooke**, First Unitarian Congregation
- May 28: **Christine Lavin** and **Tom Lips**, First Unitarian Congregation
- May 29: **Dar Williams** and **Tammy Raybould**, Glebe Collegiate
A special photo exhibit opened on Monday, August 23, at the National Press Club at 150 Wellington Street featuring photography of the folk festival by Nix Wadden, Jim Commins and Dave Haggerty. Mike McCormick, a member of the wacky and wonderful The Arrogant Worms entertained those who turned out for the event.

The festival preview concerts began on Sunday, August 22, when Trace Elements performed at the Chapters store in Kanata. A series of free lunchtime concerts held at the World Exchange Plaza began on Tuesday, August 24, with a double bill featuring Ian Tamblyn, along with Andrea Karam and Fred Guignon. On August 25, Wendy DeMos and the African-influenced rhythms of Mel M’Rabet were showcased. The Unceded Band and Laura Smith performed on August 25.

Several late-evening concerts were held at the Luxor Hotel from August 26-28. These popular concerts featured the likes of Laura Smith, Richard Wood and Trout Fishing in America.

The CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival is grateful for the generosity of its sponsors: Nortel Networks, Ottawa Folklore Centre, the Luxor Hotel, Ottawa Citizen, Rogers Community TV, Phase 2, CBC Radio One, Bell Mobility, Ontario Arts Council, Loeb, Ginn, CKCU, US Airways, VIA Rail Canada, Michael Davies Plymouth Chrysler Ltd., Steve’s Music Store, Pepsi, CS Co-op, Alexander Keith’s India Pale Ale, Chez 106, National Library of Canada, Mexicali Rosa’s, Nutshell Music, Chapters, Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, The Ottawa Food Bank, X Press, Canada NewsWire and Human Resources Development Canada.

Friday, August 27
On Friday, August 27, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings (Stephen Fearing, Colin Linden and Tom Wilson) performed a lunchtime concert outside the HMV store on Sparks Street.

Friday evening opened in traditional festival manner with Arthur McGregor, owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre performing a charming acoustic guitar version of our national anthem. First up was Ottawa singer-songwriter Jennifer Noxon, who entertained the crowd with her original compositions. The Angstones were next with an energetic set including the local favourite, “Bytown It’s My Town”. The musical surprise of the evening was Karen Savoca, a dynamic conga-playing singer-songwriter from Syracuse, New York. Njacko Backo presented African-inspired music. Jorane Peltier, a young Québécois cellist with a dramatic vocal style, dazzled the crowd with her imaginative original compositions. P.E.I. fiddling sensation Richard Wood gave a high-energy performance that was received with much appreciation.

The audience enthusiastically received Lynn Miles, whose set included music from her latest CD, Night in a Strange Town, and some new material inspired by her life south of the border. Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, a supergroup of performers Stephen Fearing, Tom Wilson and Colin Linden, delivered a powerful set that brought the evening to a rollicking close.

Saturday, August 28
Saturday afternoon had so much to offer that many festival goers expressed frustration that they could not see it all! These well-attended afternoon sessions were held on six stages, a record number for the festival.

The Nortel Networks Stage was the setting for the Living Traditions workshop hosted by Ian Robb and including Finest Kind, Kebba Jobateh, Matapat, Eve Goldberg and Alain Chatry. Ron Moores hosted Back 40 Live featuring the Cowboy Junkies, Sarah Harmer, Big Gravel and Sherwood Lumsden. The session was aired live on CKCU-FM for the popular program The Back 40, which features traditional country, bluegrass and old-time music. Bill Stunt of CBC Radio was also on hand to host Heartland Live, Part I featuring Terry Tufts, Fireweed, Tom Wilson and Katherine Wheatley. This performance was recorded for later broadcast on the CBC Radio program Heartland, which features music from Ontario. Separate concerts
were performed by Ray Bonneville and Stephen Fearing. The afternoon sessions wound down on a comical note, with Njacco Backo and Trout Fishing in America.

On the Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage, the entertainment began with Alain Lauzon in concert. Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor hosted a rousing Singalong Folk Jam. Terry Eagan, a folk enthusiast from Waltham, Massachusetts, hosted the Boston Connection featuring Annie Gallup and Bill Morrissey from south of the border, and Canadian performers Beth Ferguson and Rick Fines. Benoit Bourque and Alain Chatry held a session titled Learn to Play the Spoons. A double bill featuring Katherine Wheatley and Jorane Peltier, two distinctly different performers from Ontario and Quebec, ended the daytime performances.

The Phase 2 Stage opened with Ottawa performer Wendy DeMos in concert. East Meets West was the theme of the next session, hosted by Kurt Walther and featuring Victor Nesrallah, The Angstones and Njacco Backo. The poetic and beautiful Laura Smith next graced the stage. Paul Symes, owner of the Black Sheep Inn, hosted some acts that had performed at the popular Wakefield, Quebec club: The Grievous Angels, Sarah Harmer, Stephen Fearing and Jennifer Noxon. A double bill was provided by Richard Wood and John Prince and A Piece of the Rock in concert. There was fiddling aplenty at the cleverly named Fiddle Heads session hosted by Marion Linton, with Richard Wood, Gaston Bernard, Greg Brown and Peter Jellard. The audience was delighted when a half-hour session with Tom Wilson turned into a one-hour session of Blackie and the Rodeo Kings. Stephen Fearing and Colin Linden were welcome additions!

The entertainment on the US Airways Stage began with two local women in concert: Brenna Rivier and Sally Robinson. A session titled L’Amour was lovingly hosted by Benoit Bourque and showcased Jorane Peltier, Wendy DeMos and Luann Kowalek. The funky Stringed Things session included Mel M’Rabet, Ruth Bowen, Rick Fielding and George Sapoundidis, and was hosted by Ann Downey. Vance Gilbert hosted the American Acoustic I session with Bill Morrissey, Annie Gallup and Karen Savoca. The Edge of Folk session included Tom Wilson, Lucie Idlout and Martina Sorbara and was hosted by Stephanie Guzman. Ian Tamblyn was an apt choice as the host of a Back to Nature session featuring the talents of Jane Siberry and Bill Morrissey.

The Rogers Stage inside Lakeside Gardens opened with the comically named It’s a Dobro, Bro with Rick Fines, Doug Cox and Vince Halfhide. Guitars Galore, hosted by Alex Houghton, sizzled with the likes of Terry Tufts, Stephen Fearing and Alan Marsden. Rasputin’s owner Dean Verger was on hand to host Rasputin’s Live with Michael Timmins, Ian Tamblyn, Ray Bonneville and Luann Kowalek. Next it was time to do a Blues Boogie Dance with Kingston’s excellent Georgette Fry Band. The most popular session of the day was Burgundy, Bailey’s and Bourbon, a session of torch songs hosted by Laura Smith, with Georgette Fry and Margo Timmins. To end the daytime programming, the My Hometown session hosted by Jennifer Noxon boasted Luann Kowalek, John Prince and The Angstones.

Classical-style guitarist Andrew Mah was first up on the Ontario. More to Discover stage. Concerts by the Ottawa Harp Choir and Eve Goldberg followed. Avid picker and tenor Rick Fielding appeared in concert. Three double bills were presented on this stage: Alex Houghton and Martina Sorbara; Chuck Brodsky and Doug Cox, and Sherwood Lumsden; and Vance Gilbert and Colin Linden.

The Saturday evening concerts on the Nortel Networks stage opened with the contemporary country stylings of The Grievous Angels. Georgette Fry delivered a bluesy and emotive set. Quirky American singer-songwriter Annie Gallup was up next with a series of riveting story songs. Cox, Fines and Brodsky provided excellent instrumentation and vocals. American troubadour Bill Morrissey delighted and amused the audience with his charming adventures in song. The lively Matapat set included Benoit Bourque stepdancing while shaving a volunteer from the audience. The Jane Siberry performance held a few surprises including an impromptu opening number with Jorane Peltier that held the audience spellbound. The ever popular Cowboy Junkies
closed the most well-attended day in CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival history with their own special blend of inspired ballads.

**Sunday, August 29**
The weekend of first-rate folk music continued on Sunday morning, which dawned bright and sunny.

The **Nortel Networks Stage** was first graced with the presence of **Fireweed** in concert. The group’s harmonies are reminiscent of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. **Poetry in Motion**, hosted by **Alricket Huebener** of **SugarBeat**, featured **Jane Siberry**, **Annie Gallup**, **SugarBeat** and **Alex Mortimer**. The mood turned to blue when **Sue Foley** appeared in concert with **Tony D**.

Then it was time for **Heartland Live, Part II**. The CBC Radio show was hosted by **Bill Stunt** and showcased the talents of **Big Gravel**, **Eve Goldberg**, **Andrea Karam** and **Fred Guignion**, and **James Gordon**. The afternoon on the big stage ended with **Vince Halfhide and Larry “The Bird” Mootham** in concert.

The **Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage** had a diverse lineup of talent. A **Singalong Folk Jam** hosted by **Arthur McGregor** kicked off the day. The **Ottawa Folklore Centre Weekend Choir** was onstage for two practices, coached by **Andy Rush**. Workshops teaching participants how to play the harmonica, the didgeridoo, or to learn shape note singing followed. The rocking sounds of **Lucie Idlout** rounded out the entertainment for the day.

Sunday morning was an opportune time for singing **Hallelujah** on the **Phase 2 Stage**. Host **Doug Cox** introduced a spiritually oriented session with **The Unceded Band**, **Rick Fielding**, **Andrea Karam**, **Fred Guignion** and **Peter Kiesewalter**. **Shelley Posen** hosted **Christmas in August**, featuring **Chuck Brodsky**, **Finest Kind** and storyteller **Ruth Bowen**. **Lynn Miles** was the host of the **I Can Relate to That** session showcasing **Laura Smith**, **Beth Ferguson** and **Tom Lips**. A concert with **Dar Williams** followed. The mood then shifted to **Celtic** in a session hosted by **Michaela Foster Marsh** with **Rawlins Cross** and award-winning Ottawa Valley fiddler **April Verch**. Verch also joined the next session, **Old-Time Fiddling**, hosted by **James Stephens** and featuring **Shane Cook**, **Stacey Lynn Read** and **Fast Forward**.

The fun on the **US Airways Stage** began with a session called **Wood and Steel**, hosted by **Lynn Miles**. **Andrew Collins**, **Joey Wright**, **Andrew Mah** and **Paul Fenton** also appeared. **Dario Domingues** hosted **North Meets South** with **Lucie Idlout**, **No Reservations** and **Aquariniit**. **Jane Siberry** next appeared in concert. The final two sessions were acoustically inclined. The **Acoustic Blues** session hosted by **Larry “The Bird” Mootham** featured **Tony D**, **Sue Foley**, **Ray Bonneville**, **Vince Halfhide**, **Paul Fenton** and **Southside Steve**. **Angela Page** hosted **American Acoustic II** with **Dar Williams**, **Lucy Kaplansky**, **Chuck Brodsky** and **Richard Shindell**.

**We’ve Got Rhythm** was the theme for the **Rogers Stage**. Host **Karen Savoca** introduced an eclectic rhythm section including **Ken Harper**, **Ian Tamblyn**, **Keble Jobateh** and **Fast Forward**. **We’ve Got You Covered** featured **Cry Cry Cry**, **Chuck Angus** and host **Sarah Harmer**. It was time for dancing with two lively sessions: **Modern Square Dancing** with **John Charman** and **Contradance for Everyone** with **Shindigo**. **Jane Siberry** hosted the **Laugh It Up** session with **Tom Lips**, **Trout Fishing in America** and **Vance Gilbert**. The day’s activities ended with **James Gordon** in concert.

The **Ontario. More to Discover Stage** kicked off the day with **Trace Elements** in concert. **Jane Radmore** was onstage next. Four double bills followed: **Karen Savoca** and **Bill Morrissey**, **Michaela Foster Marsh** and **SugarBeat**, **Annie Gallup** and **Luann Kowalak**, and **Matapat** and **Monette et Poisson**.

Sunday evening on the **Nortel Networks Stage** began with the joyous sounds of the **Ottawa Folk Festival Weekend Choir**. Although storm clouds were gathering, the choir proclaimed in song that the storm was going
to pass over. And it did! **Big Gravel**, a Toronto-based ensemble exploring fiddle music, swing and new acoustic styles performed next. **Terry Tufts**, a favourite of Ottawa audiences, delighted the crowd with his inspired vocals and intricate guitar playing. The original and amusing story songs of **Vance Gilbert** provided a highly entertaining set. The dynamic Sudbury-based group **No Reservations** was accompanied by a mesmerizing dancer wearing a traditional raven costume.

There was barely a dry eye in the park when **Chopper McKinnon** accepted the **Helen Verger Award** for his role in promoting and supporting Canadian folk music. The host of the CKCU-FM Radio show *Canadian Spaces* for 19 years thanked his fans. The Space Cadets were out in full force to cheer on Chopper. Locally based and globally admired singer-songwriter **Ian Tamblyn** entertained the crowd with a sampling of his eclectic material. **Cry Cry Cry**, an American folk dream team, featured **Dar Williams, Lucy Kaplansky** and **Richard Shindell**. The singing poetry of the provocative **Laura Smith** stays in your mind long after you hear it and this performance was no exception. The lively sounds of the Newfoundland-based group **Rawlins Cross**, spanning Celtic, rock and traditional Maritime music, ended yet another incredible weekend of folk music at Britannia Park!
The CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival marked the millennium by celebrating some special anniversaries, including the 20th anniversary of the CKCU-FM folk music show *Canadian Spaces* (hosted by Chopper McKinnon), the 20th anniversary of *Rasputin’s Folk Café* (operated by Dean Verger), and the 10th anniversary of the CKCU-FM traditional country, western and bluegrass music show, *The Back 40* (hosted by Ron Moores). It was also a time to remember two cherished Ottawa performers who died in the past year: Beth Ferguson and Dario Domingues. The festival was held from **August 25 to 27** at Britannia Park. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

The 2000 festival had an outstanding lineup, wonderful weather and record attendance. Approximately 15,000 people visited the festival. “We were thrilled with the good weather, the great music, and the extremely positive audience response to our seventh festival,” said Festival Director Gene Swimmer. “The way the community has embraced this event over the years is inspiring for all of us.”

“This was our most elaborate festival so far, and also the smoothest,” commented Festival Artistic Director Chris White. “The volunteers, performers and festival goers all did their part to create an environment where magic could and did occur.”

With the theme of **Folk from Coast to Coast to Coast**, the seventh annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival presented at least one artist from each province and territory. Our American neighbours were also well represented by the outstanding talents of singer-songwriter Greg Brown, and Odetta, who is known as the Queen of American Folk Music. Odetta showed remarkable poise when she continued to sing after a power failure plunged the main stage into darkness during her performance. Without the benefit of a microphone, her magnificent voice reached the back of the park. Another highlight was Garnet Rogers who accepted the Helen Verger Award for his outstanding contribution to Canadian folk music before delivering a show-stopping performance.

**After Hours at the Avalon**

**After Hours at the Avalon** featured artists in late-evening sessions held on August 24 to 27 at the Days Inn Ottawa West. These popular sessions showcased the following performers:

**Thursday, August 24:** James Keelaghan, The Herb Girls, and Karen Savoca.

**Friday, August 25:** Moxy Früvous, Kim Barlow, Oh Susanna, Jacob Two-Two, Emily Celeste, David Keeble, Martina Sorbara, and Christina Smith & Jean Hewson.

**Saturday, August 26:** The Arrogant Worms, Théodore Fontaine, Melwood Cutlery, Chris Chandler and Magda Hiller, David Francey, Chris MacLean, Eugene Ruffolo, Les Crapaudes, John Charlton and Tannis Slimmon.

**Sunday, August 27:** The Sunday brunch featured Cowboy X, John Charlton and Tannis Slimmon.

**Friday, August 25**

Friday evening opened with Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor performing his customary acoustic version of “O Canada.” Next up was Great Balancing Act, a groovy band from New Brunswick that performed a spirited blend of folk and pop with great harmonies. They were followed by another fivesome: Colores Andinos, a group of South American origin that charmed the audience with the ethereal sounds of pan pipes, mandolin and Latin-style percussion. Accompanying them was Nubia, a passionate vocalist with Venezuelan roots.
The audience was next treated to the refreshing performance poetry of Chris Chandler & Magda Hiller. The American duo was a treat to the eyes and ears each time they performed. Chris and Magda were followed by the pulsating rock rhythms of The Mike Plume Band making their second festival appearance. The mood shifted to a performance of historical ballads from Prairie performer James Keelaghan.

Following intermission, the wacky, adorable and ever-popular Moxy Früvous took the stage with a high-energy performance. After a second appearance by Chris Chandler & Magda Hiller, Oh Susanna delivered a set of Appalachian-tinged ballads. The Jim Cuddy Band closed the evening with a mixed set of Blue Rodeo songs and material from Jim Cuddy’s first solo album, All in Time.

Saturday, August 26

The day began on the Nortel Networks Stage with the heavenly sounds of the Ottawa Harp Choir in concert. At noon, Folk from Coast to Coast to Coast showcased easterners Christina Smith and Jean Hewson, northerner Kim Barlow, and westerners UHF (Ulrich, Henderson and Forbes). During the afternoon, CBC producer Bill Stunt recorded his session Heartland Live 1, which featured Garnet Rogers, Darlene Sovran, Jacob Two-Two and Melwood Cutlery. The next session, Loonie Tunes, was hosted by Mike McCormick and featured the comical antics of the rest of The Arrogant Worms, Moxy Früvous and Chris Chandler & Magda Hiller. The afternoon ended with the session Acoustic Blues with blues harpist Gary Farmer, Tri-Continental and Ken Hamm.

The Rogers Stage opened with the comical musings of Laroque and Larolla (Richard Patterson and Sandy Crawley). The Ottawa Citizen Family Concert with Heather Bishop and The Arrogant Worms entertained kids of all ages. Next up was Théodore Fontaine and Les Crapaudes in concert. The audience participated enthusiastically in the next session, Learn to Samba, hosted by Mike Atyeo and featuring dancers and Samba Ottawa! The Women of Folk showcased three generations of women pushing the boundaries of folk: Odetta, Shari Ulrich and Martina Sobara. The last performance of the day was Moxy Früvous in concert.

The Phase 2 Stage presented My Guitar, an incredible concert featuring the guitar talents of Ken Hamm, Pete Heitzman and Bill Bourne. The American Acoustic 1 session, named for the CKCU-FM show, boasted the talents of Lucy Kaplansky, Greg Brown and Karen Savoca. Northern Exposure showcased traditional Inuit song and dance with Aqsarsniiit, and the northern voices of Kim Barlow and Tracy Riley. For a change of pace, the It’s Only (Acoustic) Rock & Roll session presented Bill Henderson, Laroque & Larolla, Sarah Harmer, and Madagascar Slim. Le Mouton Noir celebrated the popular Wakefield, Quebec club, The Black Sheep Inn. Owner Paul Symes hosted this session, which presented Garnet Rogers, Sarah Harmer, Kathleen Edwards and Mike Plume.

The US Airways Stage opened with a double bill: David Franey and Martina Sorbara in concert. The Next Wave gave the younger generation of folkies a chance to show their stuff. Jim Bryson hosted Emily Celeste and Mad Violet. A second double bill featured The Mike Plume Band and Great Balancing Act. The Prairie Power session, hosted by James Keelaghan, showcased Greg Brown and Heather Bishop. The stage’s last offering of the day was East Meets East, a down-home style kitchen party with P.E.I. native Lennie Gallant hosting Maritimers Christina Smith & Jean Hewson, and Mad Violet.

A double bill of Gary Farmer and David Keeble was the first entertainment of the day on the Capital Double Decker & Trolley Tours Stage. Another double bill followed with Jorane and John Charlton & Tannis Slimmon. The third double bill featured Karen Savoca and Lynn Miles. Kathleen Edwards hosted Generation F, a showcase of rising talents Oh Susanna and Jim Bryson. The final double bill of the day was a session with Darlene Sovran and the Kim Barlow Band.
The CS CO-OP Family Area opened with Aytahn Ross (formerly known as Tawny Ross) who juggled crystal balls and performed other amazing feats. The Inuit traditional group Aqsarniit, humorists Laroque & Larolla, and Michael Cass-Beggs also performed material geared towards the young and young at heart.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage opened with an hour-long singalong with Arthur McGregor, followed by HeartSong in concert, a Folklore Centre Festival Choir Practice, and a session on Learn to Play the Pennywhistle with Andy Daub. Next up was a double bill of Jacob Two-Two and Mad Violet, followed by a double bill with Oh Susanna and Melwood Cutlery.

The Nortel Networks Evening Concert began with Sarah Harmer, a fine singer-songwriter who once fronted the Ontario band, Weeping Tile. The group Aqsarniit is dedicated to the preservation of Inuit culture. Their performance demonstrated traditional Inuit drumming, dancing and throat singing. Festival favourites, The Arrogant Worms, entertained with their usual zany and side-splitting humorous material. Lucy Kaplansky, who wowed last year’s audience as part of the supergroup Cry Cry Cry, performed an engaging solo set that showcased her considerable talents as a singer-songwriter. The avant-garde ensemble F’loom combined social satire, improvisation and poetry with a sophisticated range of a capella vocals. Crowd pleaser, P.E.I. native Lennie Gallant, entreated the crowd with his original roots-rock material.

Following the intermission, Lynn Miles gave a wonderful performance to a crowd familiar with her music and exceptional singing style. It was a homecoming performance as Lynn had recently moved back to Ottawa. One of the delights of the evening was Jorane, who mesmerized the audience with her unique cello and vocal performance. Acoustic guitar wizard Jesse Cook demonstrated why he is considered a virtuoso and rising star on the international stage. The crowd warmly welcomed the last act of the evening, the exceptional singer-songwriter Greg Brown. It was the American singer-songwriter’s first Ottawa appearance. His magical but all-too-short set, featuring accompaniment from Karen Savoca, Pete Heitzman and Garnet Rogers, closed the evening in fine style.

Sunday, August 27

Sunday morning has become a popular time for lovers of gospel music at the festival. Voices of Praise, a local ensemble that offers a refreshing mix of gospel and soul, opened the day on the Nortel Networks Stage. They were followed by Shindigo in concert, and Heartland Live 2, hosted by Bill Stunt and featuring Jesse Cook, Chris MacLean, John Charlton & Tannis Slimmon. When Old Friends Meet featured good friends Greg Brown, Garnet Rogers and Karen Savoca. Jesse Cook followed, dazzling the audience with his acoustic guitar stylings. The wildly original session Celtic & Klezmer followed, with host Nicholas Froment presenting Beyond the Pale and La Volée d’Castors.

On the Rogers Stage, the day began with Back 40 Live, 10 Years After. This session celebrated the 10th anniversary of the CKCU-FM program, The Back 40, which features traditional country, western and bluegrass music. Host Ron Moores was joined by Melwood Cutlery, Roy Forbes, Ball and Chain, and Washboard Hank. This session was followed by the Ottawa Citizen Family Concert, a fun-filled session featured the whimsical bells, washboard and whistles of Washboard Hank, and the stepdancing youngsters of Fast 4-Ward. The young Ottawa Valley stepdancers stayed onstage for the participatory session Stepdancing 4 Everyone. After that, the wild and wonderful local ensemble, The Herb Girls, were joined by veteran western performer Heather Bishop in concert. Dance was the theme of the next participatory session, Contradance for Everyone, led by Shindigo. The afternoon ended on a resounding note with a Drumming Circle featuring Rob Graves of Shindigo.

Fine Old Traditions was the session that opened the Phase 2 Stage on Sunday. Christina Smith & Jean Hewson hosted a session showcasing Canadian traditions with Russell Levi & Mary Gick and Les Crapaudes. One of the most well-attended afternoon sessions of the festival was 20 Years of Uninterrupted...
Roy Forbes, one of the province’s most popular young groups, provided many magical moments during the first six festivals, whether playing his pan pipes on the main stage, performing in daytime sessions, or helping children explore the wonders of a wide array of instruments in the family area. A concert featuring Colores Andinos, presented Mike Regenstreif, who introduced Odetta, Magda Hiller and Eugene Ruffolo. Lynn Miles hosted The People You Love session featuring Lennie Gallant, Lucy Kaplansky and Jorane. The Vox session hosted by Mike Regenstreif celebrated the wonders of the human voice as demonstrated by UHF, Hart Rouge and Ball and Chain. A special session celebrating the 20th anniversary of Rasputin’s Folk Café was hosted by owner Dean Verger and featured Lynn Miles, Eugene Ruffolo, David Keeble and Melwood Cutlery. Plenty of fans were on hand to enjoy a spirited session celebrating the legendary Ottawa café that is an essential component of the local folk scene.

In the Beginning kicked off the afternoon sessions on the US Airways Stage. Host Bill Bourne explored the diverse roots of Canadian music, dance, story and song with Tri-Continental and La Volée d’Castors. American Acoustic 2 was hosted by Angela Page, who introduced Odetta, Magda Hiller and Eugene Ruffolo. Lynn Miles hosted The People You Love session featuring Lennie Gallant, Lucy Kaplansky and Jorane. The Vox session hosted by Mike Regenstreif celebrated the wonders of the human voice as demonstrated by UHF, Hart Rouge and Ball and Chain. A special session celebrating the 20th anniversary of Rasputin’s Folk Café was hosted by owner Dean Verger and featured Lynn Miles, Eugene Ruffolo, David Keeble and Melwood Cutlery. Plenty of fans were on hand to enjoy a spirited session celebrating the legendary Ottawa café that is an essential component of the local folk scene.

The Ragged Flowers kicked off the fun on the Capital Double Decker & Trolley Tours Stage with a short concert. Host James Keelaghan guided us on an historical journey with the help of Ken Hamm, Gail Anglin and Gary Farmer. Christina Smith & Jean Hewson appeared next in concert. Ken Hamm stayed to host the West Meets West session, which featured an outstanding crew of westerners: Bill Bourne and Lester Quitzau of Tri-Continental, and Oh Susanna. Then it was time for a change of pace with the New York, New York session with Festival Director Gene Swimmer hosting fellow New Yorkers Lucy Kaplansky and Eugene Ruffolo. The day wound down with a splendid combination of Words and/or Music as David Francey presented F’loom and singing duo Russell Levia & Mary Gick.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage began and ended the day with practices for the Folklore Centre Festival Choir. The second session was one close to the heart of the Folklore Centre: The Folk Process in Canada. Michael Cass-Beggs hosted an hour of entertainment illustrating the evolution of music, dance, story and song in different parts of the country, as demonstrated by Les Crapaudes and Great Balancing Act. In keeping with the Canadian theme, Shari Ulrich hosted the Strong & Free session, showcasing some of our most evocative singer-songwriters: James Keelaghan, David Francey and Michael Cass-Beggs. Remembering Dario was a moving tribute to Ottawa’s much-loved musician, Dario Domingues, who died during the past year. Dan Artuso, Ian Tamblyn, Nubia and Colores Andinos joined with host Jennifer Cayley to share stories and songs of remembrance. Dario provided many magical moments during the first six festivals, whether playing his pan pipes on the main stage, performing in daytime sessions, or helping children explore the wonders of a wide array of instruments in the family area. A concert featuring Lennie Gallant followed.

The CS CO-OP Family Area began Sunday morning on a high note, with Dean Verger’s fun-filled session, Storytime with Uncle Dean. Russell Levia, Les Crapaudes and Gail Anglin followed with music and stories for the whole family.

The evening of concerts on the Nortel Networks Stage opened with the energetic stepdancing of Fast 4-Ward. The Folklore Centre Festival Choir, directed by Jann Maloney-Brooks, delivered a beautiful set of heartfelt songs. La Volée d’Castors, a twenty-something ensemble of six Quebec musicians, demonstrated why they are one of the province’s most popular young groups. UHF, otherwise known as Shari Ulrich, Bill Henderson and Roy Forbes, share common musical roots stretching back three decades in British Columbia. As always, they
delivered a tuneful and harmonious set, as one might expect from musical friends who all happen to be excellent musicians.

After a brief intermission, the group Tri-Continental, consisting of Bill Bourne, Lester Quitzau and Madagascar Slim, delivered an excellent and eclectic set. Garnet Rogers gave a gracious speech when he accepted the Helen Verger Award for his valuable contributions to Canadian folk music. He completely won over the crowd with an energized, rocking set that exemplified his musical genius as a master storyteller and a singer of songs from the heart.

Some of the brightest moments of the millennium CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, however, took place in almost total darkness during a performance by folk music veteran, Odetta. She opened her set by leading the audience in a rousing singalong rendition of “This Little Light of Mine” and was just beginning the song “Careless Blues” when a power failure plunged the main stage and surrounding area into darkness. The audience spontaneously broke into “This Little Light” once again as people shone their flashlights to illuminate her, while backstage, workers scrambled to find portable lanterns to provide some light onstage. The effect was exhilarating, as the diminutive woman led the audience in song for half an hour, without the benefits of elaborate lighting or a sound system. Her unamplified voice rang strong and true, carrying to the edge of the crowd.

Odetta seemed undaunted by the disruption and graciously continued her performance, asking the audience to call out a request for a song they could all sing together. She settled on “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” and led the willing audience in several verses as they swayed back and forth in time with the music.

The audience was entranced by Odetta, who was resplendent in a maroon and yellow turban and a bejeweled scarf. She also sang two “field hollers”, getting the audience to help out on the choruses. Drummer Kebba Jobateh accompanied her from the audience on one song before partial power was restored and Odetta’s piano accompanist rejoined her onstage. Odetta picked up where she had left off, with the song “Careless Love” and followed with blues standards including “St. Louis Woman” and “Weeping Know How”. She finished the set with “This Little Light of Mine” and was greeted for her encore of “Willow Blues” followed by “Poor Man Blues” and “You Got To” with a well-deserved standing ovation.

Her performance was followed by a short set from Canadian supergroup Hart Rouge, who opened the performance with an evocative a capella version of the Neil Young classic, “Helpless”. And so ended the seventh annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival.

Financial Support
The festival received financial support from the proceeds of a series of benefit concerts held at a variety of venues in Ottawa. The 1999-2000 CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival concerts included the following:

November 27, 1999: Fred Eaglesmith and Fireweed at Barrymore’s.
December 11, 1999: The Arrogant Worms and Chris White at First Unitarian Congregation.
January 28, 2000: Cindy Church and J.P. Cormier, National Library Auditorium.
May 27, 2000: Laura Smith and Terry Tufts, National Library Auditorium.

The CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival thanks the following sponsors, partners and suppliers: Nortel Networks, the Ottawa Citizen, CS CO-OP, Days Inn Ottawa West, Phase 2, The Ottawa Folklore Centre, Canadian Heritage, National Library of Canada, City of Ottawa, Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, Human Resources Development Canada, Ontario Arts Council, CKCU-FM, Rogers Television, XPress, CBC Radio One, Canada
The 2001 CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival, held August 24 to 26 at Britannia Park, had a stellar lineup of performers. American folk hero John Prine thrilled the capacity audience with a two-hour concert. Canadian folk icons Kate and Anna McGarrigle were awarded the Helen Verger Award, while up-and-comer Evalyn Parry was presented with the first annual Beth Ferguson Award. CBC broadcaster and storyteller Stuart McLean was on hand throughout the weekend, including a session where he read letters from overseas CUSO volunteers.

Festival organizers were over the moon. “It was our most successful festival ever,” commented Festival Director Gene Swimmer. “Seeing the crowd waiting for John Prine was awesome. I couldn’t help thinking about a rainy Sunday morning eight years ago when I was pretty sure nobody would show up, and there would never be a second Ottawa Folk Festival.”

Co-founder and Artistic Director Chris White said the 2001 Ottawa Folk Festival was the most elaborate one ever presented in terms of the number of performers, the number of stages, the diversity of the program, and the number of attendees. “In spite of this unprecedented scope, the festival was also the smoothest one ever,” said White. “I love the way all aspects of the festival have evolved over the years, and the way the audience embraces the variety of programming we present.”

With the theme of One Canada, Many Cultures, the eighth annual festival presented five special theme sessions and showcased First Nations, Québécois, African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean musicians. The featured musicians included Celso Machado, Juan José Carranza, The Mighty Popo, Galitcha, George Sapounidis, Jeremy Moyer, Qiu Xia He, Women Ah Run Tings, Ball and Chain, El Hadi and Pierre Schryer. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

During the 2001 festival, we also paid tribute to Ottawa Folklore Centre co-founder Terry Penner and blues musician Larry “The Bird” Mootham, who both passed away since the last festival. The festival’s choir was renamed The Terry Penner Weekend Choir, and a one-hour tribute session to Larry called The Bird Still Flies, was held on Sunday.

Friday, August 24
Friday evening opened with the thundering rhythms of Japanese traditional drumming group, Oto-Wa Taiko, followed by Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor performing an acoustic guitar version of our national anthem. Raggamuffin, a lively reggae fusion band, next took the stage. The audience was then treated to a reunion of the folk band Pied Punkin, whose members include Rick Scott, Shari Ulrich and Joe Mock. The group’s last Ottawa festival performance was at the Festival for the Folks in 1976.

Following the intermission, festival goers warmly applauded a captivating performance by Jesse Winchester, a popular American-born musician and songwriter who has lived in Canada since the sixties. The Wyrd Sisters performed with their usual aplomb, their set running the gamut of styles from jazz to folk. Controversial Cape Breton fiddler Ashley MacIsaac caused a sensation when he launched into a whirlwind-paced set accompanied by John Allan Cameron on guitar. Hard pressed to keep up with MacIsaac’s frenetic fiddling, Cameron displayed characteristic Maritime humour when he opened a song with the comment “Now I’m going to do a song Ashley has never heard.” The evening ended with a set of hard-driving story songs by Fred Eaglesmith, to
the delight of the many Fredheads in the crowd. His six-piece band included both Willie P. Bennett and Washboard Hank.

**Saturday, August 25**

This year, the festival added a new daytime stage located in the food court area. In all, there were eight daytime stages, which started at 11:00 a.m. and ran all afternoon. Festival goers had to make sometimes difficult choices of which session to attend in a given time period. Fortunately, because of the informal nature of the festival, it was possible to move between the stages during daytime sessions.

Artistic Director Chris White was happy to see so many people arrive at the festival early in the day to enjoy the myriad opportunities for participation, as well as the performances. “There is a definite element of magic in the spirit of community that exists in that beautiful park by the river, and in the activities that take place there during the day,” White commented.

The CS CO-OP Family Area offered a variety of entertainment, workshops and activities, including face painting, instrument making, hat and jewellery making, bubble blowing, tie-dyeing and papier-mâché making.

On the Nortel Networks Stage, Saturday morning opened with a special live broadcast of the longest-running folk show on community radio in Canada: CKCU-FM’s Canadian Spaces. The session was hosted by Chopper McKinnon, with guests Joe Bishop & Kendall Sullivan, Roy Forbes, Selina Martin and Terry Tufts. Ron Moores hosted the second half of the broadcast, billed as CKCU-FM Back 40, with guests David Francey, Jenny and Dan Whiteley, Michele & John Law and Willie P. Bennett. The next session, CBC Radio’s Bandwidth Live, was hosted by Bill Stunt and showcased the talents of Don Ross, Ember Swift and The Cash Brothers. Shari Ulrich hosted the session Shari and Her Boyfriends, with Rick Scott, Joe Mock, Roy Forbes and Jesse Winchester.

The Ontario. More to Discover Stage located inside Lakeside Gardens, offered a diverse range of performers. The session alt.folk@saturday.com featured host Ember Swift with First Chance Saloon winners, alicide and Darlene. Dean Verger hosted Rasputin’s Folk Café with guests Kevin Cardamore, Nicholas Williams and Shari Ulrich. The Rick Scott for Kids family concert was well attended. My Favourite Things was hosted by Dan Whiteley and Joey Wright, with guests Joe Bishop and Selina Martin. The participatory session Dansez was led by Joséphine, Derek Debeer, a former member of the South African band Jonny Clegg and Savuka, led a drumming circle with enthusiastic audience participation.

The Phase 2 Stage on the hill opened with the lively session Six Strings, Many Cultures, hosted by The Mighty Popo and featuring Celso Machado and Juan José Carranza. Stephen Fearing hosted the session Sharing Our Stories with Kris Northey, Marcel Bénéteau and Willie Dunn. The Jay Willis Band and the Jenny Whiteley Band performed in a double bill. The Have Song, Will Travel session featured host Jim Bryson, Fred Eaglesmith, Kendall Sullivan and Stephen Fearing. The fast-paced Fiddle Fever session showcased the music of host Oliver Schroer, Anne Lindsay, Ashley MacIsaac, Pierre Lessard, Pierre Schryer and Valerie Vigoda. Mary Gick appeared in the last session of the day.

The Rogers Stage, located around the corner from the Phase 2 Stage, opened with a double bill featuring the Ottawa bands Siobhan and Satellite. A tribute to the popular Quebec club, The Black Sheep Inn, was hosted by Paul Symes and featured Darlene, Fred Eaglesmith, Susan Werner and Jim Bryson. The East Coast Kitchen Party was a spirited musical celebration. It featured host Greg T. Brown, Ashley MacIsaac, Siobhan, and surprise guest Pierre Schryer, who was rushed in from the airport just in time to join in the fun. Spirit Wind hosted the Harmony session with The Cash Brothers and The Wyrd Sisters. Jesse Winchester earned a standing ovation at the finale of the Beyond Borders session with Michele & John Law and host David Francey. The daytime entertainment ended with the eclectic Anne Lindsay Band.
The Capital Double Decker & Trolley Tours Stage wins the award for longest stage name! The stage, located in the west field, opened with a double bill featuring Jason Fowler and Kris Northey. Spirit Wind hosted the session When the Spirit Moves You featuring El Hadi and Kiva. The entertainment also included two more double bills: Anne Lindsay Band and Michele & John Law, as well as Terry Tufts and Willie Dunn. Guitarist extraordinaire Don Ross hosted the session A Sense of Place with Oliver Schroer and Marcel Bénéteau. Michael Jerome Browne’s half-hour concert was the final performance of the day.

The OFC Music Stage, sponsored by the Ottawa Folklore Centre, offered a splendid afternoon of participatory sessions. The first session, Sacred Harp Singing with Shelley Posen, introduced the audience to this American style of singing. Wendy Moore hosted an Introduction to Stepdancing. Willie P. Bennett led the Harmonica Workshop, and Arthur McGregor presented the Rise Up Singing singalong. There was also a rehearsal of the Terry Penner Weekend Choir and a Musical Mentor Showcase featuring Terry Tufts and teachers and students of the Ottawa Folklore Centre Canadian Musical Mentor program.

The CKCU-FM 93.1 Stage located in the food court, held captivating concerts with Ian Bell; Chinese pipa player Qiu Xia He; Joséphine; First and Last Chance Saloon winners: alidce, Kevin Cardamore, and The Jay Willis Band; and Spirit Wind. The Hot, Hot, Hot session featured a spicy menu of performers, including Juan José Carranza (host), Celso Machado and Women Ah Run Tings.

The CS CO-OP Family Stage in the family area opened the day with a Drumming and Music session with Spirit Wind. Nicky Brodie of Salamander Theatre hosted A World of Stories, followed by Just Kidding with George Sapounidis. Michael Jerome Browne appeared in the wonderfully named Tap, Clap, Snap session. Fit As a Fiddle featured Pierre Lessard. Ian Bell hosted The Good Old Days session. The afternoon entertainment ended with Dean Verger’s Storytime with Uncle Dean.

The CS CO-OP Family Crafts area featured demonstrations on how to make sun-catchers (Thomas and Naomi Burke of Glass Works), jewellery (Heather Boyd of Filament), wood plaques (Ron Tremback of Solar Woodcuts), and sock puppets (Phil Boyko of Valen Enterprises).

The featured concerts on the Nortel Networks Stage began on Saturday afternoon with concerts featuring the jazzy alternative music of Ember Swift and the country-tinged rock from The Cash Brothers. The vibrant group Women Ah Run Tings exploded onstage in bursts of colour and sound, with their heady mixture of reggae, hip-hop, R&B and funk/rock. Gypsy-flamenco guitarist Juan José Carranza performed with his six-piece band. Bluegrass was the predominant theme of an evocative set by the Jenny Whiteley Band.

The first Beth Ferguson Award, honouring the late singer-songwriter, was presented to Evalyn Parry for her ability to convey human experiences with relevance, intensity and wit through her music. Singer-songwriter Beth Ferguson, who died in 1999, was widely admired for the beauty and clarity of her songs, and for her commitment to communicating honestly about women’s experiences.

Passionate singer-songwriter Stephen Fearing was in fine form during his set, wowing the audience with his inimitable guitar playing and intense lyrics. The zany francophone duo Polly-Esther captivated the audience with their folk-rock music.

After sunset, John Prine came onstage to a wildly cheering sold-out crowd, many of whom were thrilled to see the American folk music legend for the first time. With his excellent band, Prine maintained the excitement for two hours, playing hit after hit, recent tunes, a four-song encore, and a duet with Jesse Winchester. The evening didn’t end there for some of John Prine’s fans. About a dozen of them stayed on long after the concert ended, singing his songs under the stars.
Sunday, August 26

On Sunday morning, the entertainment on the Nortel Networks Stage began with Galitcha in Concert. This eminently listenable group performed East Indian folkloric music fused with jazz, classical Indian and Latin styles. The Family Ties session included, appropriately enough, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Northern Sons, and The Wyrd Sisters. The One Canada, Many Cultures session echoed the theme of this year’s festival and featured a variety of styles presented by host Pierre Schryer, El Hadi, George Sapounidis Trio and Ball and Chain. Kathy Grant Mahon & Chosen hosted the gospel-influenced Sing Out session. The Northern Sons session featured a set with this Ottawa Valley bluegrass band. Ottawa singer-songwriter Jim Bryson presented his well-crafted songs blending rock and folk. The Ottawa band Cheza performed some of their danceable, African-inspired music.

The Ontario. More to Discover Stage started the day with a session titled 3 x 2, which featured three sets of duos: Clear (Christian Patterson & Sue Johnson), Joe Bishop & Kendall Sullivan, and Michele & John Law.

The Phase 2 Stage started the day with the fascinating session Speaking Out, with host Elana Harte, Evalyn Parry, Kris Northey and Susan Werner. Musical Journeys, hosted by Marcel Bénéteau, included Pangur Ban and Zainab Amadahy of Spirit Wind. The joyful Acoustic Waves Turns 20 session was hosted by Joe Reilly and featured performers who had appeared in this renowned Ottawa folk music series: Celso Machado, Oliver Schroer and The Wyrd Sisters.

The Bird Still Flies was a moving musical tribute to the life of the late blues musician Larry “The Bird” Mootham. Hosted by Vince Halfhide, this session featured Larry’s former student Southside Steve, The Mighty Popo and Johnny Russell.

East Meets West showcased the talents of host George Sapounidis, Galitcha, Jeremy Moyer and Qiu Xia He. The daytime entertainment on the Phase 2 Stage closed following a half-hour concert with Ball and Chain (Michael Ball and Jody Benjamin).

Just around the corner, the Rogers Stage drew a capacity crowd at The Vinyl Café Live with host Stuart McLean, Arnie Naiman & Kathy Reid, Ian Bell and Michael Jerome Brown. The youthful session alt.folk@sunday.com featured host Selina Martin, Jim Bryson and Polly-Esther. The Celtic Rathskallions hosted Electicism(e), which also showcased Joséphine. Ian Bell led the Musical Traditions session with Arnie Naiman & Kathy Reid and Kate & Anna McGarrigle. Host Michael Jerome Browne, Darlene, Southside Steve, Suzie Vinnick and Vince Halfhide were featured in the Blues Everywhere I Go session. The day wound down with Nicholas Williams in concert.

The Capital Double Decker & Trolley Tours Stage opened with a double bill featuring Marcel Bénéteau and Pierre Lessard. Next, famed fiddler Pierre Schryer took the stage. Host Vince Halfhide, Southside Steve, Lady Luscious (Women Ah Run Tings) and Michael Jerome Browne performed in the session Music Moves Me. Three double bills followed, showcasing the following performers: Selina Martin and VSH; Joe Bishop & Kendall Sullivan and Susan Werner; and Evalyn Parry and Polly-Esther.

The OFC Music Stage down by the water opened with a Terry Penner Weekend Choir Rehearsal led by Andy Rush. Andy Daub presented the session Tin Whistle for Beginners. The Gospel Sing session was hosted by Anna Williams. Duncan Gillis demonstrated during the Bodhran for Beginners session. The Celtic Rathskallions Kid’s Show was up next, followed by a second Terry Penner Weekend Choir Rehearsal. Tracy Vilbert’s session, Learn to Belly Dance, wound down the day’s entertainment.
The CKCU-FM 93.1 Stage in the food court featured a series of concerts with the following excellent performers: Pangur Ban, VSH, Darlene, Arnie Naiman & Kathy Reid, George Sapounidis Trio, El Hadi, David Francey and Clear.

The CS CO-OP Family Stage began the day with the Music Plus session featuring The Celtic Rathskallions. Celso Machado followed with a Children’s Concert. The Rag & Bone Puppet Theatre staged a kid’s show titled Secrets of Puppeteers. Monica Wolfe presented two Kindermusik sessions. A Sunshine Parade ended the day’s entertainment. Kids young and old walked across the grounds playing instruments and displaying articles made in the craft workshops.

The CS CO-OP Family Crafts featured demonstrations on how to make the following crafts: sun-catchers (Thomas and Naomi Burke of Glass Works), clay whistles (Brian Harper of Harper Pottery), and candles (Greg Brayford of Doozy Candle).

As the song goes, some days the rain must fall. And Saturday evening, the rain came down in torrents, which shut down the main stage for two hours. Undaunted, many of the festival goers crowded into Lakeside Gardens, returning when the entertainment resumed on the Nortel Networks Stage. While indoors, the audience was treated to a magical performance from the Terry Penner Weekend Choir, whose enthusiasm had not been dampened by the rainstorm.

The entertainment on the Nortel Networks Stage opened with Joséphine. CBC Radio’s Stuart McLean was up next, followed by singer-songwriter Susan Werner. Celso Machado and Qiu Xia He performed an exotic set combining music played on the guitar and the pipa, a traditional Chinese instrument. Kate & Anna McGarrigle performed and were also presented with the Helen Verger Award for their valuable contributions to Canadian folk music. Since releasing their first album in 1976, the sisters have won two Juno Awards and attained international renown for their delicate harmonies, sensitive lyrics and rootsy North American sound. The festival wrapped up with the set from fiddling sensation Pierre Schryer.

Benefit Concert Series
The festival held a series of benefit concerts at a variety of venues in Ottawa.

Financial Support
The year 2002 brought both Eastern and Western musical traditions and performers to the ninth annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival. “Our theme this year is ‘East Meets West’, both geographically and culturally,” said Artistic Director Chris White in an interview in the Ottawa Citizen, “and I think that stimulated us to be even more adventurous in our programming.”

In beautiful Britannia Park, festival goers were treated to musical acts from Eastern and Western Canada as well as to performers whose music combined Eastern and Western musical influences. The East Coast was represented by Blacks Mountain and Les Muses, two female groups from New Brunswick; as well as Nova Scotia acts The Cottars and Slàinte Mhath, and Newfoundland’s Ron Hynes. Ottawa’s own finger-picking guitarist Terry Tufts was an example of the fine talent featured from Ontario. Performers from Western Canada included The Bill Hilly Band and Mae Moore from British Columbia, and The Wailin’ Jennys from Manitoba. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival.

Diverse musical styles combining Eastern and Western influences included three groups with East Indian and North American influences: Toronto Tabla Ensemble, Harry Manx and Galitcha. Ottawa performer George Sapounidis sings in eight languages and he and his group perform music from Greek, Chinese, African and Western traditions. The Khac Chi Ensemble from Vancouver mesmerized the audience with traditional Vietnamese music.

Legendary performer Buffy Sainte-Marie was presented with the Helen Verger Award and was very well received by the crowd during her Sunday evening performance.

Festival goers seem pleased with both the location and atmosphere of the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival. In an informal audience poll, emcee Karen Flanagan McCarthy asked the crowd if they wanted the festival to stay at Britannia Park or move downtown. The crowd indicated it wanted the festival to stay put. “I think we have the best quality of life of any festival,” said Festival Director Gene Swimmer in the Ottawa Citizen. “We don’t want to be the biggest festival, we want to be a good middle-sized festival.”

Friday, August 23
The 2002 festival kicked off with the Afro-Brazilian rhythms of the percussion group Samba Ottawa, that drummed and danced its way in a lively procession from the festival gates to the main stage. Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli welcomed the crowd and gave a short speech and was followed by Arthur McGregor, who performed his customary charming acoustic version of “O Canada”. The evening’s entertainment began with Khac Chi Ensemble, a Vancouver husband-and-wife duo who perform traditional Vietnamese music. Engaging American singer-songwriter Bill Morrissey was followed by Les Batinses, a Quebec world music group and Blacks Mountain, a female bluegrass quartet from New Brunswick.

After the intermission, Harry Manx brought the crowd to its feet with his unique blues guitar playing seasoned with East Indian influences. The music swung to traditional Celtic with The Cottars, a group of four youngsters from Cape Breton. The evening ended with a bluesy set from the two “Colins” – guitar wizards Colin James and Colin Linden.

The after hours entertainment included Chris MacLean, Rachael Sage and Harry Manx at the Days Inn Ottawa West. The Wailin’ Jennys, Les Batinses and Slàinte Mhath performed after hours at D’arcy McGee’s Bells Corners.
Saturday, August 24
Daytime entertainment was provided on seven stages. The CKCU-FM Family Area hosted a variety of crafts, music and activities for children and their families. Another popular festival feature was the Craft Village, showcasing 20 artisans.

The CUPE Main Stage featured a “live-ly” instalment of the CKCU-FM folk show, Canadian Spaces, hosted live by Chopper McKinnon. The stellar talent on hand to perform for an appreciative audience included Mae Moore, Garnet Rogers and The Anne Lindsay Band. This was followed by Back 40 Live hosted by Ron Moores. Blacks Mountain, Ron Hynes and The Bill Hilly Band joined Ron and performed for an enthusiastic crowd. The afternoon also included an infusion of energy with Espresso Music featuring Norouet, a Quebec trio that plays a blend of French, Irish, Swedish and Eastern European music. Manitoba trio The Wailin’ Jennys sang original tunes with breathtaking harmonies, followed by New Brunswick female quartet Les Muses, Norouet and The Anne Lindsay Band.

Over on the Phase 2 Stage, the fun kicked off with Heather McLeod, an eclectic singer-songwriter from Montreal who combines jazz, flamenco, Aboriginal rhythms and sixties folk influences in her charming compositions. British guitar icon Richard Thompson, a founding member of the influential folk-rock band Fairport Convention, amazed the audience with his intriguing lyrics and stunning guitar playing. Violin music featured prominently in the double bill with GrooveLily and The Anne Lindsay Band. The session Madly Off… featured madcap performers including host Nancy White, Lorne Elliott and Jack Grunsky. The Hook, Line and Sinker session was hosted by Bill Morrissey and included two talented fishermen: Garnet Rogers and Greg Brown.

The first session on the Rogers Stage was the Vocal Beauty session, hosted by Catherine Crowe, a traditional singer who combines modern expression and Old World restraint. The bevy of vocal beauties featured included Les Muses and The Wailin’ Jennys. Next up was a set with Mad Violet, a guitar/fiddle duo, consisting of singer-songwriter Brenley MacEachern and fiddler Lisa MacIsaac (Ashley’s sister). This was followed by Keith’s Kitchen Party 1: a lively session sponsored by Alexander Keith’s featuring hosts Mad Violet, three members of the contemporary Celtic group Slàinte Mhath, and The Cottars, four Cape Breton youngsters who specialize in traditional material. The next session, The Story Behind the Song, featured three masters of songwriting representing different countries: host Garnet Rogers (Canada), Richard Thompson (England) and Bill Morrissey (United States). The humorously named Flamingo Double Bill showcased the talents of flamenco guitarist James Cohen and guests. Another double bill ended the day with sets from American singer-songwriter Karen Savoca, whose music combines soul, R&B and world rhythms, and sisters Nerissa & Katryna Nields, a duo known for its sublime harmonies.

The Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage kicked off the day with the flamboyant Rachael Sage, an American singer-songwriter who was a recent winner in the John Lennon Songwriting Contest. Quebec world music ensemble Les Batines followed. A Family Concert featured children’s performer Jack Grunsky and juggler and “nouveau vaudevillian” Aytahn Ross. Crowd participation was encouraged at A Contra Dance for Everyone with musical accompaniment by Flapjack and caller Catherine Burns. The Power of Love was the theme of the next session, which was hosted by Harry Manx and presented satirical songwriter Nancy White, Rachael Sage and Newfoundland singer-songwriter Ron Hynes. The day ended on an upbeat note with a dance with the irrepressible Maritime traditional band Slàinte Mhath.

The Bowie Electric Stage opened with a set by Patricia Murray and was followed by a session with Les Muses. Tara MacKenzie performed next, in a duo featuring voices, harp and cello. The David Woodhead Trio played a set fronted by the trio’s leader, who is a master of the fretless electric bass. That performance was followed by sets with Serena Ryder and Mad Violet.
The CKCU-FM Family Stage was the ideal place for people of all ages. Sessions included World of Wonders 1 with Aytahn Ross; Uncle Dean’s Storytime featuring storyteller and Rasputin’s Folk Café owner Dean Verger; Kindermusik, an early childhood movement and music program; Songs for All Ages with Heather McLeod; World of Wonders 2 with Aytahn Ross; The Cottars for Kids; and Hocus Pocus with Doctor Magic (George Sapounidis).

The algorithms inc. Stage opened with a session titled Inn the Black Sheep, hosted by Paul Symes, owner of the popular Wakefield, Quebec venue The Black Sheep Inn. Peterborough vocalist Serena Ryder, singer-songwriter and acoustic guitar player Cliff Eberhardt and guitarist extraordinaire Harry Manx performed in this eclectic session. The Sister Song 1 session, hosted by Mae Moore, also showcased the talents of singer-songwriters Heather McLeod and Serena Ryder. This session was followed by a set with world music ensemble, the George Sapounidis Trio. The American Acoustic session, named for the CKCU-FM radio show, was hosted by Karen Savoca and featured Nerissa & Katryna Nields and singer-songwriter Greg Brown. The day ended with a double bill with Flapjack, a group whose four members play a blend of fiddle tunes, original songs and early swing, and Patricia Murray, a native of Prince Edward Island who is a singer-songwriter in the folk and Celtic traditions.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Teaching Stage provided participatory sessions in several musical forms including Learn to Play Middle Eastern Rhythms with Devin Johnstone, Learn to Play the Didgeridoo with Rob Pelletier, Learn “Shape Note Singing” with John Henderson, Learn to Play the Bodhran with Duncan Gillis, Rise Up Singing for Everyone with Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor and Learn to Play the Tin Whistle with Andy Daub. A choir rehearsal was also held for the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir, named in memory of the late Terry Penner, co-founder of The Ottawa Folklore Centre.

The Saturday evening entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage opened with a sensational set with melodic Canadian singer-songwriter Mae Moore, followed by the innovative and energetic New York City trio GrooveLily, featuring the violin stylings of Valerie Vigoda. CBC Radio favourite, comedian Lorne Elliott, entertained the crowd with his hilarious comedy routine. The Beth Ferguson Award was presented to Darlene. Nerissa and Katryna Nields, two sisters whose music has been described as sublime harmonies and Generation X angst, also performed.

The Toronto Tabla Ensemble performed an entrancing set following the intermission, combining the traditional music of the tabla, a North Indian drum, with world music influences including jazz. American singer-songwriter Greg Brown demonstrated why his music has inspired an intensely loyal fan base across North America. The crowd enthusiastically greeted the legendary British guitar virtuoso Richard Thompson, whose intriguing lyrics and stunning guitar skills have won him a huge following worldwide. Ottawa Sun reporter Denis Armstrong described Thompson’s performance as follows: “In a dazzling, funny and touching solo performance, Thompson proved to still be the quintessential folkie, the aging artist at the height of his powers, who still burns with a telling story and a sense of social justice that hasn’t aged in 40 years.” Armstrong added that “Thompson had all 5,500 fans, including many of the weekend’s featured performers, hanging off his every word.” The evening ended with a lively set from Slàinte Mhath, the Canadian Maritime group who perform traditional Celtic music with a twist on tradition.
The after hours entertainment at the Days Inn Ottawa West included Les Muses, Cliff Eberhardt and Ron Hynes. The Wailin’ Jennys, Les Batinces and Slàinte Mhath performed after hours at D’arcy McGee’s Bells Corners.

Sunday, August 25
The entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage began with Bandwidth Live, a recording for the CBC Radio show, Bandwidth, hosted by Bill Stunt. The participants included guitar virtuoso Terry Tufts, duo Mad Violet and flamenco guitarist James Cohen. Mike Regenstreif hosted the Short Stories That Rhyme session with songwriters Ron Hynes, Cliff Eberhardt and Bill Morrissey. Calasaig, an energetic five-piece band from Scotland, which performs traditional music from the British Isles as well as original compositions, performed next. They were followed by a session showcasing vocalist and percussionist Karen Savoca, accompanied by her partner, guitarist Pete Heitzman. Ottawa blues musician Tony D and duo Mad Violet also performed individual sets. The daytime entertainment ended with a performance by the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir directed by Michael MacDonald.

In the Tradition was the opening session on the Phase 2 Stage. It was hosted by Tara MacKenzie and featured Châkidor, a Québécois band showcasing the talents of acoustic guitar player and singer André Varin and violinist Valérie Pichon. Sister Song 2, hosted by Rachael Sage, featured American “rock-folk” performer Melissa Ferrick and Australian singer-songwriter Emma Wall. Ottawa Valley folk music aficionado Brian Crook was the host of a session called Traditions Coast to Coast featuring The Bill Hilly Band and The Cottars. A double bill with Châkidor and Patricia Murray followed. The day ended on a Celtic note with Keith’s Kitchen Party 2 with host Calasaig, Tara MacKenzie, Patricia Murray and Grand North American Fiddle Champion Ivonne Hernandez.

The Rogers Stage began the day with The Flower Hour, hosted by CBC Radio Noon host Dave Stephens and featuring garden guru Ed Lawrence, festival co-emcee Karen Flanagan McCarthy and GrooveLily. Femmes Fiddles featured female fiddlers Anne Lindsay, Valerie Vigoda and Ivonne Hernandez. The Global Guitars session showcased the instrumental brilliance of host Terry Tufts and Harry Manx. Finally, the thought-provoking Songs with a Message session hosted by Melissa Ferrick featured two stellar songwriters: Greg Brown and Garnet Rogers.

The Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage opened with a lively set from the Toronto Tabla Ensemble, which also hosted the next session, East Meets West 2, featuring the George Sapounidis Trio. A Family Concert followed, showcasing Jack Grunsky, the Inuit Cultural Performers and Ottawa music therapist Kim Kilpatrick. The cleverly named session, You Say Savoca, I Say Savuca, featured percussionist Derek Debeer (formerly of the African band Johnny Clegg and Savuca), and American singer and percussionist Karen Savoca. The passionate rhythms continued with the session Drum-Along with Derek hosted by Derek Debeer.

Diverse cultural elements were in evidence on the Bowie Electrical Stage. Champion teenage fiddler Ivonne Hernandez started the day off and was followed by Inuit Cultural Performers, Galitcha, GrooveLily, Calasaig, The Cottars, and the upbeat ensemble Offbeat, a 25-member percussion group that uses unconventional instruments.

The CKCU-FM Family Stage started with the session Silly Songs, featuring humorous tunes composed and performed by Festival Artistic Director Chris White. Kim Kilpatrick followed with Dog Tales, while Nancy White performed hilarious songs during the Monnipotent session, which showcased songs from the album of the same name. A session with Kindermusik was followed by Move to the Music featuring Toronto Tabla Ensemble. Inuit Cultural Performers hosted the Dance to the Beat session. The day concluded with a Sunshine Parade, where the young and young at heart could participate in a happy and noisy procession leading to the main stage.
The algorithms inc. Stage hosted five double bills featuring Emma Wall and Rachael Sage; Chris McLean and Mae Moore; Jim Bryson and Nerissa & Katryna Nields; Ron Hynes and Melissa Ferrick; and Cliff Eberhardt and Harry Manx. The East Meets West 3 session was hosted by Galitcha, an Ottawa ensemble that combines traditional East Indian music with contemporary and world influences, and featured Harry Manx.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Teaching Stage opened with a rehearsal of the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir. This was followed by various teaching sessions including Learn to Play Acoustic Blues Guitar with Vince Halfhide, Learn to Play Harmonica with Southside Steve, and Learn to Belly Dance with Tracey Vibert. The day’s fun also included a Musical Mentor Showcase with Terry Tufts, and Gospel Singing for Everyone featuring local blues vocalist Maria Hawkins.

At the CKCU-FM Family Craft Area, participants had the opportunity to make several different crafts, including jewellery (with Heather Boyd of Filament), a piece of wooden fretwork (with Ron Tremback of Solar Woodcuts), and stained glass mosaics (with Thomas and Naomi Burke of Glass Works by Burkes).

Châkidor, a Québécois guitar/violin duo featuring André Varin and Valérie Pichon kicked things off on Sunday evening on the CUPE Main Stage. Virtuoso guitar player Terry Tufts was followed by acoustic blues player Guy Davis. The mood changed to hilarity with the satirical singer-songwriter Nancy White. Ever-popular singer-songwriter Garnet Rogers performed the next set to the great pleasure of the assembled audience.

Following the intermission, rocky folk artist Melissa Ferrick performed. After the presentation of the Helen Verger Award to the legendary Buffy Sainte-Marie, the veteran singer-songwriter performed an amazing set in a rare Ottawa performance. Backed by an accomplished full band, she performed protest and love songs that she had written and released throughout her long and prestigious career as well as more recent material. The audience responded very warmly to her evocative performance that included insightful commentary and renditions of favourites including “Universal Soldier”, “Up Where We Belong”, “Until It’s Time for You to Go”, and “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee”. The Bill Hilly Band’s lively bluegrass-inspired set was followed by a set from guitarist James Cohen, concluding what was perhaps the most eclectic CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival to date!
Year 10 – 2003
Ten Years of Uninterrupted Folk Festivals

The little festival that could! From its humble beginnings as a one-day event in 1994, the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival has developed into one of the best folk festivals in Canada. In 2003, we celebrated the sheer joy of showcasing Canadian culture through music, dance, storytelling and crafts for the 10th consecutive year.

Max Wallace, then station manager of community radio station CKCU-FM, discussed the idea of a folk festival on the CBC Radio show All in a Day. Wallace was soon contacted by Chris White, an Ottawa performer who headed the local songwriting collective, Writer’s Bloc. They met to discuss the idea and on a September evening in 1993 at Carleton University’s Mike’s Place, the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival was born.

The steering committee met regularly for a year to organize the first festival. The committee included Gene Swimmer, Chris White, Max Wallace, Pam Marjerrison, Sheila Ross, Barry Pilon, Roberta Huebener, Chris Brown, Suzanne Lauzon and Joyce MacPhee. Local businesses such as the Ottawa Folklore Centre offered financial sponsorship, while individuals such as Chopper McKinnon, host of the CKCU-FM folk radio show Canadian Spaces, and Dean Verger, owner of Rasputin’s Folk Café, offered valuable advice and support. Karen Flanagan McCarthy, the arts reporter on the CBC Radio show All in a Day agreed to co-host with Chopper and they have become regular hosts on the evening main stage.

The festival was launched on August 28, 1994, with a full day of entertainment on Victoria Island. The five afternoon stages featured Ottawa Valley fiddling and stepdancing, world music, a tribute to Stan Rogers and a ceilidh. The main stage performers included Valdy, David Wiffen, Ian Tamblyn, Lynn Miles and Dario Domingues. In comparison, the 2003 festival featured eight daytime stages and, for the first time, a fourth evening of entertainment.

Gene Swimmer, who took over as Festival Director in 1996, remembers his dismay when the first day of the festival began with pouring rain. “It rained all morning,” he recalled. “But by noon, the sun came out and we had a very good turnout.”

In its second year, the festival moved to Britannia Park, known for its scenic location on the Ottawa River, as well as for gorgeous sunsets. Then in 1996, the festival ran into its first major challenge. In the fall, CKCU was forced to withdraw its organizational support, putting the 1997 festival in serious jeopardy. The crisis was averted when Arlo Guthrie performed two sold-out benefit concerts at the National Library Auditorium in December. A group of volunteers led by Carol Silcoff raised additional funds by organizing a silent auction in conjunction with the concerts.

Volunteers continue to play a vital role in the festival’s continued success. Each year as the festival approaches, the core team of approximately 20 grows to more than 400 volunteers who work hard to make the event run smoothly. Some of the volunteers plan their vacation time around the festival, and there are a number of families who have been volunteering since the first year.

Part of the success of the festival lies in the positive media coverage it has received over the years. Allan Wigney, an entertainment writer with XPress, wrote that the festival had grown to be “one of the premier North American events of its kind.” Lynn Saxberg, an entertainment writer with the Ottawa Citizen, has covered the folk festival for most of the 10 years. In her opinion, “…the folk festival has developed its own unique vibe. It’s not the biggest festival in town, but it’s the nicest.”
Chris White echoes this sentiment. “It’s the whole environment of what happens down there, not just because of the (musical) lineup but because of the atmosphere,” says White. “It’s an experience that has value beyond simply going to a concert.”

Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor opens each festival by performing his trademark acoustic version of “O Canada”. He was not the only first-year performer who returned in year 10. Lynn Miles, Ian Tamblyn, Terry Tufts, Finest Kind and Tony Turner were among the many 1994 performers who returned in 2003. Our wonderful emcees, Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy, who have contributed enormously to the success of the festival since day one, made their usual spirited contributions to the festival. They were joined in their emcee duties by Michel Dozois, producer of the National Arts Centre’s Fourth Stage, and Rachel Hauraney, a professional writer and radio host who has been a festival volunteer since 1994. Rachel’s parents, Phil and Cari Hauraney, are among the scores of volunteers who returned for a 10th year to help the festival run smoothly.

Thursday, August 21
The first-ever Thursday evening concert at the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival opened with Arthur McGregor’s acoustic guitar rendition of “O Canada”. Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli welcomed the crowd. Shauntay Grant, a young performance poet from Halifax, delivered her spoken-word compositions to an appreciative crowd. Jesse Zubot and Steve Dawson, two brilliant Vancouver performers, demonstrated why they are rising stars of the folk and roots music scene. Their high-energy acoustic music is infused with elements of jazz, bluegrass, world music and folk.

Following the intermission, Prince Edward Island fiddler and stepdancer Richard Wood entertained with his instrumental virtuosity and stunning showmanship. Dar Williams received a warm welcome. Her evocative voice and beautifully crafted songs captivated the audience. The evening ended on a high note with the young Calgarian twins Tegan and Sara, whose performance showed a punkier, poppier edge to their acoustic sound. The twins were given a loud and enthusiastic reception, especially from the young fans who turned out for their show.

Friday, August 22
The evening entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage began with Leela Gilday, a singer from Yellowknife whose classically trained voice touches audiences on spiritual and emotional levels. Leela was followed by the traditional Québécois band Le Vent du Nord whose members sing and play instruments such as the hurdy gurdy, piano, violin, guitar and accordion. Many festival goers were familiar with stepdancer/accordionist Benoit Bourque, who had previously performed at the festival with the band Matapat. Juno Award-winner David Francey charmed one and all with his poignant and moving story songs. The singer-songwriter accompanied himself on guitar and was joined by guitarist Dave Clarke and multi-instrumentalist Geoff Somers. The mood next shifted to the infectious world-beat rhythms of The Mighty Popo who appeared with his seven-piece band. Influenced by the music of his native Burundi, the guitarist and singer combined blues, reggae and African styles in his set.

Two celebrated female performers, one Canadian and one American, followed the intermission. Lynn Miles entertained her loyal following with melancholy songs of love and longing. The singer-songwriter demonstrated her enormous talents, which won her a well-deserved Juno Award earlier in the year.

Emmylou Harris is an icon of contemporary American roots music. She was greeted with great warmth by the crowd, many of whom were hearing the veteran songstress in concert for the first time. Emmylou’s elegant set blended elements of country, folk, bluegrass and pop, and was punctuated by her commentary delivered in a charming Southern accent. The audience witnessed an outstanding performance by the queen of alternative country music.
After Hours Music at the Travelodge included performances from Alise Marlane, Angie Nussey, Harmony Trowbridge, Steel Rail, The Toasted Westerns, Kim Barlow and The Laws.

Saturday, August 23

The daytime sessions took place on eight stages starting at 11:00 a.m. Another popular festival feature was the Craft Village featuring 23 artisans.

The CUPE Main Stage kicked off with Here’s to Rasputin’s, a session hosted by Rasputin’s owner Dean Verger. Performers Ian Tamblyn, Lynn Miles and Terry Tufts have appeared frequently at the legendary folk café. Emmylou and Friends, hosted by Rich Warren, featured Emmylou Harris, Jane Siberry and The Laws. Michel Dozois hosted Québecexplosion, showcasing the talents of Le Vent du Nord, Éric Beaudry, André Brunet, Sandy Silva and Pierre Belisle. The tribute to Canadian Spaces session was led by Chopper McKinnon, host of the longest-running folk show on community radio in Canada. Artists who have appeared on the show, including Angus Finnan, David Francey, Jane Siberry and Steel Rail, were on hand to help Chopper and the Space Cadets in the audience celebrate.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage debuted with Fiddle Plus, hosted by Nathan Curry, a veteran Celtic musician who was joined by André Brunet, Gordon Stobbe, Olivier Demers and Soozi Schlanger. Arthur McGregor hosted a folkly singalong titled Rise Up Singing, named after the songbook of the same name. Exotic rhythms and expressive dance next took centre stage with a Learn to Bellydance workshop. The Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir had a rehearsal before piano wizard Peter Kiesewalter hosted Keyboard Basics. The day’s activities ended on a gentle note with Kindermusic led by Barb Smith.

The CKCU-FM Family Area, located in the main field, was a busy, fun place for kids of all ages. The crafts, games and storytelling began at 11:00 a.m. and went on until late afternoon. Mini-workshops that allowed family members to create their own masterpieces were hosted by Glass Works, Filament and Solar Woodcuts.

On the Bowie Electrical Stage, the Taking Turns sessions allowed performers to strut their stuff. Mike Plume; Alise Marlane and Leela Gilday; and Alicide and Christine Fellows entertained throughout the afternoon. Raven Kanatataka, an eclectic young singer-songwriter from Northern Quebec whose influences include his native Algonquin heritage as well as jazz, blues and folk traditions, and ShoShona Kish, a singer-songwriter, spoken word artist and dancer originally from Toronto, performed solo sets. Kim Barlow, a Whitehorse-based artist who plays guitar, banjo and cello, appeared with her trio. The New Brunswick duo Isaac and Blewett closed the day’s entertainment with music that featured Tim Isaac on cello and Jim Blewett on guitar.

The Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre kicked off with Galitcha and Friends featuring Benoit Bourque, Kathy Armstrong and the Kim Barlow Band. Planet Drum was a rhythmic event hosted by Kathy Armstrong showcasing the percussive talents of Kebba Jobateh, Pepe Danza and Wayne Hamilton. The Ottawa Citizen Family Concert 1, hosted by The Celtic Rathskallions presented the hilarious Trout Fishing in America. Joy Tou hosted Around the World in 60 Minutes, a workshop with an eclectic lineup of Dean Verger, Galitcha and Tracey “Halyma” Vibert. Dance with Popo challenged anyone within hearing distance to stay still during a set from the irrepressible bluesman The Mighty Popo.

Entertainment on the Nutshell Music Stage opened with Out of Left Field with Ann Downey (host), Angie Nussey and Bob Snider. Guitar Delights featured an impressive trio of guitar heroes including host David Woodhead, Dave Clarke and Roddy Ellias. Leela Gilday hosted Northern Exposure, a session with a roundup of northern artists that included Kim Barlow. All the News That’s Fit to Sing (Phil Ochs’ Legacy) was the intriguing title of a session that explored the music of the late great American folksinger. Phil’s sister Sonny Ochs hosted the session with Arthur McGregor and Maria Dunn paying homage to Phil Ochs. Ron
Moore, host of the CKCU-FM traditional country, western and bluegrass music show The Back 40, led a session of the same name featuring Keith Glass, Steel Rail and The Laws.

On the Rogers Stage, Karen Flanagan McCarthy hosted the Gardening Show with gardening expert Ed Lawrence and the poetry and music of Susan McMaster & Geode. Gord Peeling, host of the CKCU-FM Celtic music show Music from the Glen, led a session of the same name with Bobby Watt, Finest Kind, Linda Miller & Nathan Curry, and Nicolas Boulerice & Bernard Simard. Carolyn Sutherland hosted Heart Strings, an evocative session with string-y professionals Buddy Miller, Lynn Miles, Mike Plume and Wendell Ferguson. Atlantic Scene Revisited, hosted by Heather Moore, featured Gordon Stobbe, Harry Martin, Isaac and Blewett and Shauntay Grant. Shelley Posen hosted the Funny, Eh? session with punsters Bob Snider and Trout Fishing in America.

The algorithms inc. Stage rolled out with The Edge of Folk featuring Shauntay Grant (host), Alicide and Harmony Trowbridge. The latter performer hosted Generation F, showcasing young performers Amanda Rheamne and Stephanie Clement. Morna Ballantyne hosted Working Folk, a session with songs about work performed by David Francy, Ian Robb and Maria Dunn. Words Plus Music presented spoken word and musical accompaniment from host Sheila M Ross & Scot P Dunlop as well as David Woodhead, Sandra Nicholls & Roddy Ellias. The day wound down with a Gordon Lightfoot Tribute. The tribute, hosted by Aengus Finnan, featured Ian Tamblyn, Alise Marlane and Terry Tufts, who shared their favourite memories and tunes of one of Canada’s most beloved folksingers.

The Saturday evening entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage began with the rollicking supergroup Betty and the Bobs. The band had the audience grooving and swaying with their smorgasbord of country, jazz, blues and R&B. The energy level remained high with talents from far away: the Australian band Fruit, and the British-born singer-songwriter Zoë Lewis, who was accompanied by Roxanne Layton. Audience favourite Ian Tamblyn next entertained with some of the classic Canadian folk songs he has written, including “Woodsmoke and Oranges”. Between numbers, Ian reminisced about his performance at the first festival.

Following the intermission, festival favourites The Arrogant Worms delivered their own wacky take on Canadian life and culture. Audience participation was encouraged! The Helen Verger Award was presented to Jane Siberry before she performed a mesmerizing, moving set. The main stage performances ended with La Bottine Souriante, an exuberant nine-member group that performed numbers ranging from traditional Québécois tunes to jazzy originals.

The festival goers who weren’t ready to sleep yet on this particular Saturday night went to the After Hours Music at the Travelodge to groove with Bob Snider, Betty and the Bobs, The Arrogant Worms, Aengus Finnan and Isaac and Blewett.

Sunday, August 24

On the CUPE Main Stage, the day opened with Tony Turner hosting This Land of Ours, a session celebrating songs about Canada and featuring singer-songwriters Keith Glass and The Laws. Bill Stunt, host of the CBC Radio show Bandwidth, hosted Bandwidth Live 1, a session showcasing the talents of Ron Sexsmith, Sarah Harmer and Ray Montford. Simply the Song featured veteran songwriters Buddy Mondlock, Ian Tamblyn and Jane Siberry, and was presented by Mike Regenstreif, host of the Montreal radio show Folk Roots/Folk Branches. Two supergroups, Betty and the Bobs and VSH, as well as Bob Snider appeared in the session CBC Bandwidth Live 2, hosted by CKCU-FM station manager and CBC arts journalist Matthew Crosier.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage entertainment began and ended with the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir rehearsing with choir director Mike MacDonald. The All in the Family session was hosted by Searson,
a talented Ottawa Valley family quintet specializing in traditional music, and featured Ivonne & Kalissa Hernandez. Roxanne Layton led the Learn to Play the Recorder session. Livewire Zoë Lewis presented There’s Music in Everything (for kids). Banjo player Mary Gick, a lover of traditional American styles, hosted the Old-Time Music session with other trad fans including Ann Downey, Gordon Stobbe and James Stephens.

The CKCU-FM Family Area provided ongoing crafts, games and storytelling. Three nifty Crafts for Kids sessions were hosted by Kinsella Crafts, Glass Works by Burkes, and White Trash Ink. Costumes and musical instruments were optional, but fun was mandatory in the Sunshine Parade, which wound its way from the Family Area to the CUPE Main Stage and back. Kathy Armstrong led kids of all ages in a joyful and noisy parade.

The Bowie Electrical Stage opened with the traditional sounds of Red Wood Central, otherwise known as Michelle “Red” April and Al Wood. Three Taking Turns workshops featured solo sets by Bobby Watt and Bob Snider, Tony Turner and Suzie Vinnick, and Amanda Rheauune and Angie Nussey. The whimsical Magoo was followed by Searson.

The Kershmann-Wasserlauf Stage in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre was the setting for sessions featuring an array of traditional music. The old-fashioned fun kicked off with Linda Miller and Nathan Curry (host) and Magoo. The Contra Dance for Everyone session was led by The Old Sod Band with caller Catherine Burns and encouraged audience participation in a traditional folk dance. In a different flavour, the Cajun Dance Party featured Poutine Étoffée. One Instrument, Many Cultures was a session featuring guitarists Juancho Herrera (host), André Thibault, Nathan Curry and Ray Montford. The Mother Earth session featured the band Fruit (host), Shauntay Grant and Wolf Moon (Sheila M Ross and Scot P Dunlop).

The Nutshell Music Stage opened with Strings Unlimited featuring Ray Montford (host), Isaac and Blewett and Qiu Xia He. Things turned comical with A Laugh and a Half, a session hosted by The Arrogant Worms and featuring Magoo and Zoë Lewis. World music was the focus of Music of the Diaspora with Kleztory (host), Juancho Herrera & Michal Cohen. Paul Symes, owner of The Black Sheep Inn, hosted a session with performers who had played at the popular Wakefield, Quebec club including Alise Marlane, Mike Plume, Ron Sexsmith and Stephanie Clement. The day ended on a tasty note with Cajun Bagels showcasing the talents of Poutine Étoffée (host) and Kleztory.

The entertainment on the Rogers Stage began with the session Voices in Harmony with Finest Kind (host), Fruit (trio) and VSH. A Mighty Wind Instrument was hosted by The Celtic Rathskallions and showcased Mel Watson and Peter Kiesewalter. There was definitely something fishy going on during the Fishing with Worms session that brilliantly paired funsters Trout Fishing in America (host) with The Arrogant Worms. The mood shifted from the ridiculous to the sublime with the session Sources of Inspiration with Alicide and Christine Fellows. CKCU-FM Ottawa Folk Festival Director Gene Swimmer hosted the final session of the afternoon with the Director’s Choice session featuring Buddy Mondlock and Zoë Lewis & Roxanne Layton.

Christine Fellows and Maria Dunn were the first entertainers on the algorithms inc. Stage with the Prairie Sirens session. The Adventures in Music session hosted by Amanda Rheauune featured Maria Dunn and Raven Kanatakta & ShoShona Kish. Rocker Mike Plume hosted the Lost and Profound session with Christine Fellows, Elana Harte and Kim Sheppard. The adventure continued with the Acoustic Blues session hosted by Isaac and Blewett and featuring Raven Kanatakta and Red Wood Central. The entertainment for the day ended with The Travelling Musician session showcasing Aengus Finn (host), and Juancho Herrera & Michal Cohen.
The final evening performances on the CUPE Main Stage began with the wonderful three-part harmonies of VSH (Suzie Vinnick, Kim Sheppard and Elana Harte), whose group members are also solo performers in their own right. JouTou gets its name from the French phrase meaning “play everything”. And they do! Their exciting blend of influences includes Chinese, South American, Irish and Québécois cultures. American singer-songwriter Buddy Mondlock and the American folk festival favourites Trout Fishing in America, delivered sets before the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir performed, led by Mike MacDonald. A highlight of their music was the Stan Rogers classic “Bluenose”.

After the intermission, the trio Finest Kind gave a rousing performance of their traditional material. Ron Sexsmith, the wildly popular singer-songwriter from Toronto who is gaining international acclaim, delivered an evocative set. Rising star Sarah Harmer was received warmly by the audience throughout her spirited performance.

Near the end of the evening, many of the Festival organizers joined the Terry Penner Memorial Festival Choir onstage to sing “Happy Birthday”. The audience joined in and so ended the 10th annual Ottawa Folk Festival.
Year 11 – 2004
Most Diverse Lineup yet at 11th Annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival

The roster of the 11th annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival was studded with superstars of three generations, including Michael Franti, Arlo Guthrie, Judy Collins and Jackie Washington. These talented and accomplished performers exemplified the diversity of this year’s festival lineup. Festival goers had an opportunity to applaud artists from across Canada and the United States and to celebrate the richness of folk music, which today sits at the crossroads of numerous cultural influences. The recipient of the 2004 Helen Verger Award was Jackie Washington.

Anticipation for the festival was high. “With reggae activists Spearhead, the indie-rock collective Broken Social Scene and 1960s pioneers Judy Collins and Arlo Guthrie booked as headliners, the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival unveiled the coolest, most eclectic lineup of its decade-long existence,” said Lynn Saxberg in the Ottawa Citizen. “We felt we had to go for the best talent we possibly could,” said Festival Director Gene Swimmer, “and when these people were available, we just went for it.”

Two new festival awards were presented during the weekend. On Friday evening, Joe Grass received the Galaxie Rising Stars Award from Roch Parisien, programmer and producer of the Folk Roots channel on the Galaxie network of the CBC. Lis Harvey and Dave Carmichael were awarded the One Fret Less Award on Saturday evening. This award was made possible by a Community Foundation of Ottawa endowment established by Harvey and Louise Glatt, long-time supporters of folk music and singer-songwriters.

Thursday, August 26
Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor, who opens each festival with an acoustic version of “O Canada”, delivered a well-executed rendition of our national anthem. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival. Frida’s Brow, a group named after Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, consists of Chris MacLean, Alise Marlane and Jennifer Noxon. The trio charmed the audience with gorgeous harmonies and songs reflecting a range of musical influences. Gérald Laroche entertained one and all with unique storytelling, accompanying himself on a variety of harmonicas and percussive instruments. Senegalese brothers Karim and El Hadji Diouf fronted the energetic band Diouf, an ensemble that combined vocal harmonies, percussion, guitars and drums, and performed a mix of traditional and contemporary tunes. Next up was singer-songwriter Ember Swift, who with co-creator Lyndell Mongomery on violin, bass and bowed guitar, delivered politically charged folk-jazz-funk music. Broken Social Scene, the ultra-hip dynamic collective of Toronto’s vibrant experimental music scene, closed the evening with a series of eclectic jams. The music proved infectious for many in the first-night crowd, who jumped to their feet and danced long into the warm summer night.

Friday, August 27
Friday night opened on a dramatic note with Eagle & Hawk, a group that combined hard-driving rock with traditional Aboriginal vocals and rhythms. The audience soon warmed up to the Juno Award-winning group, which incorporated Native dance and costumes in its performance.

American singer-songwriter Rachael Davis contributed an eclectic set that illustrated influences ranging from jazz to folk to pop. She was followed by Winnipeg native Joel Kroeker, whose set featured alternative folk, rock and jazz.

The excitement was palpable when fiddler Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul opened with a dynamic set of traditional Irish music interlaced with African, Latin and American roots rhythms. Eileen Ivers amply
demonstrated the talent that stood her in good stead when she starred in Riverdance. It was almost impossible not to dance!

The high energy and dancing continued with Michael Franti & Spearhead. The phenomenally popular group dazzled the crowd with hip-hop roots fusion music championing peace and social justice. After putting in an intense and highly danceable performance that particularly appealed to the young members of the audience, the charismatic Franti was not ready to go home. He generously signed autographs for nearly an hour after his performance and offered kind words and hugs to his many fans.

Saturday, August 28
Saturday Daytime Sessions
The entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage opened at 11:00 a.m. with the well-attended Canadian Spaces Live session hosted by Chopper McKinnon. This popular session featured two singer-songwriters of East Coast extraction: Joe Grass and Gordie Sampson, humorist Nancy White, and newcomer Liam Titcomb. Another live CKCU-FM show followed with the Back 40 Live session hosted by Ron Moores. It featured Corb Lund, Rachael Davis, Rae Spoon and Michael Jerome Browne.

The excitement mounted for fans of both veteran singer Judy Collins and Canadian icon Leonard Cohen with the Collins Sings Cohen session. Collins performed selections from her just-released album Judy Collins Sings Leonard Cohen: Democracy. The performance was enriched by her many anecdotes about their long friendship. Collins related how she met Cohen in the mid-sixties when he was a fledgling songwriter. She helped to launch his career by recording his songs, most notably “Suzanne”, which was a major hit. The afternoon continued with NAC Alberta Scene Preview hosted by Heather Moore and featuring Corb Lund, Lindsay Jane, Rae Spoon and The McDades. The entertainment wound down as it had begun, with a CKCU-FM host. Laurie-Ann Copple hosted the Musical Connections session featuring Eve Goldberg, Wendell Ferguson and Sandy Scofield.

Taking Turns was the first session on the Bowie Electrical Stage and showcased the music of Dave Carmichael and Mark Reeves. Changing the World with a Song featured the Ottawa-based choir Just Voices led by Greg Furlong. Lonesome Paul was featured in the Welcome Back! session. Three successive Taking Turns sessions allowed the crowd to sample the talents of Art Turner, Shane Simpson & Paul Bourdeau; The Vanity Press and Ana Miura; and Joe Grass and Kate Weekes.

At the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage, a lively Dance session showcased the music of Eagle & Hawk. The ever-popular Connie Kaldor was featured in the first Ottawa Citizen Family Concert and performed songs from her hit children’s album, A Duck in New York City. CKCU-FM alumnus Roch Parisien hosted Galaxie Rising Stars, sponsored by the CBC digital music network Galaxie. Featured artists were Joe Grass, The Vanity Press, Ana Miura and Ryan Schneider. Sonny Ochs, the sister of the late American folksinger Phil Ochs, hosted the American Women session with Zoë Lewis, Lis Harvey and Natalia Zukerman. Another Dance session featuring Corb Lund and his band ended the afternoon performances.


On the Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage, Arthur McGregor hosted Rise Up Singing, a session titled after the songbook of the same name. The Terry Penner Memorial Choir, directed by Michael MacDonald, had its
first rehearsal. Instructional workshops included All About Flutes with Ron Korb, and Learn How to Play the Tin Whistle with Anj Daub and Jeremiah McDade. Other “how-to” sessions included How to Write a Song hosted by Connie Kaldor with Gordie Sampson, Shelley Posen and Mike McCormick, and How to Play Music Together with The McDades. The day ended with a half-hour session of a spiritual nature: Getting Started with Taoist Tai Chi.

First on the Nutshell Music Stage was Joel Kroeker, who hosted the Self Expression session including Ryan Schneider and Art Turner. The lively Pierre Schryer Band performed next. Down East Pudding was hosted by Cam Wells and featured Dave Carmichael, Gordie Sampson and Nancy White. Morna Ballantyne hosted Songs of Struggle and Hope, which showcased the considerable talents of Eve Goldberg, Vince Fontaine of Eagle & Hawk, Ember Swift and Just Voices. The jovial Laugh It Up session featured host Nancy White, Connie Kaldor, Washboard Hank, and Jay Bodner and Spatch Mulhull of Eagle & Hawk.

The wonderful East Indian-influenced music of Galitcha was the first offering on the eclectic Rogers Stage. Dean Verger, owner of Rasputin’s Folk Café, hosted Rasputin’s Presents with Frida’s Brow, The Vanity Press and Ember Swift. The Black Sheep Live session featured musicians who had appeared at the Wakefield, Quebec folk club and included Rae Spoon, Rachael Davis, Joel Kroeker and Lindsay Jane. The Pierre Schryer Band and The Old Sod Band performed in the Celtic Crossroads session. Festival Director Gene Swimmer hosted the Director’s Choice session with Joel Kroeker, Mark Reeves and Zoë Lewis.

Canada’s folk, roots and world music magazine, Penguin Eggs, sponsored the Penguin Eggs Stage. The entertainment began with From Far and Wide, featuring host Sandy Scofield, The Gruff and Kate Weeke. The Silly Songs session featured funsters Mike McCormick, Eve Goldberg and Wendell Ferguson. The mood turned more serious with the session titled The Art of Justice with host Chris MacLean, Oni the Haitian Sensation, Sandy Scofield and Alise Marlane. Long-time festival emcee Karen Flanagan McCarthy hosted the Across Cultures session with Gérald Larocque and Ron Korb. The day ended with the Guitars R Us session showcasing the talents of host Shane Simpson, Paul Bourdeau, Kristin Sweetland and Ray Hickey Jr. of the Ron Korb Band.

The CUPE EnviroTent, sponsored by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, featured ongoing displays, discussions and hands-on activities related to environmental issues and responsible living. Sessions included Organic Food and You with Laura Telford of Canadian Organic Growers; Vermicomposting with Lori Watt of The Worm Factory; An Environmental Festival with Kathryn Briggs (EcoRail Tour); The Fair Trade Movement with Chantal Havard of TransFair; and Alternative Energy Sources with author Bill Kemp.

Saturday Evening CUPE Main Stage
The Saturday evening entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage opened with Vancouver-based singer-songwriter Sandy Scofield, whose compelling material reflected her Métis roots. The McDades delivered a set of rootsy music that blended Celtic, world and jazz influences. The band includes fiddler, singer and producer Shannon Johnson and her brothers Jeremiah and Solon McDade. Albertan roots-country cowboys, the Corb Lund Band, performed a lively set that set toes a tappin’ in the audience.

Arlo Guthrie and Judy Collins were contemporaries on the American folk scene in the sixties and onward. The capacity crowd at Britannia Park was thrilled to witness back-to-back performances from these legendary silver-haired performers. Arlo Guthrie is an old friend of the Ottawa Folk Festival. His performances in two benefit concerts in 1996 made it possible for the festival to survive a difficult period. Arlo charmed the audience with amusing anecdotes and performed hits such as “City of New Orleans” and “Coming Into Los Angeles” as well as some Woody Guthrie songs. Judy Collins’ performance was nothing less than extraordinary. Her pure, beautiful voice proved as lovely as ever as she performed a variety of material from her long career. Collins also touched
on her connection with Canadians Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen. The evening ended with Dominican Republic artist Joaquin Diaz, who performed contemporary and traditional merengue tunes filled with syncopated accordion rhythms.

Other Saturday evening venues included the Alt-Folk Café, located onsite at the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage, and off-site at the Travelodge Hotel Ottawa West located on Carling Avenue. The Alt-Folk Café was hosted by Ember Swift and included sets with Spiral Beach, Joe Grass, Liam Titcomb, Lindsay Jane, Kate Weekes and Rae Spoon. After Hours at the Travelodge featured Pierre Schryer; Scarlett, Washington and Whiteley; Natalia Zukerman; and Zoë Lewis and Mark Reeves and Friends in the Beachcomber Room. Galitcha hosted a jam session in the Acoustic Room.

Sunday, August 29
Sunday Daytime Sessions

On the CUPE Main Stage, the morning opened with the New Voices session with host Sam Baijal, Natalia Zukerman, Rachael Davis, Mark Reeves and Darryn Grandbois. The soulful session Blues Without Borders was hosted by eclectic guitarist Harry Manx, and featured Jackie Washington, Ken Whiteley, Michael Jerome Browne, Solon McDade, Gérald Laroche and Joe Grass. CBC Bandwidth Live was a live version of the CBC Radio show focusing on Ontario performers, and was hosted by Bill Stunt. The diverse lineup included Oni the Haitian Sensation, Jane Bunnett, Eve Goldberg and Kristin Sweetland. DJ Mike Regenstreif hosted the Folk Roots/Folk Branches session with Jane Bunnet, Harry Manx, Rachael Davis and Jay Bodner of Eagle & Hawk. The Fiddle Focus session with host Pierre Schreyer featured Valérie Pichon and André Varin of Châkidor, Samantha Robichaud, and Shannon Johnson of The McDades.

The entertainment on the Bowie Electrical Stage opened with three Taking Turns sessions. First up were The Gruff and Ball and Chain followed by Kristin Sweetland and Lis Harvey, and Lindsay Jane and Ryan Schneider. Other sessions showcased the talents of Rae Spoon, Michael Jerome Browne and The Twin Rivers String Band, The Gruff and Junkyard Symphony.

A Tribute to the Past was the first session on the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage. Host Eve Goldberg performed and introduced Mose Scarlett, Michael Jerome Browne, and folklorist-musician Shelley Posen. The second Ottawa Citizen Family Concert called Music in Everything highlighted the music of host Zoë Lewis and a presentation of Junkyard Symphony’s Garbage and Guitars. Audience participation was highly encouraged at three Dance sessions led by Sandy Scofield, Joaquin Diaz and Ball and Chain.

The CKCU-FM Family Stage performances began with the Music Together session led by Liz Benjamin. Hoops and Flutes was a session with Bruce Fontaine of Eagle & Hawk. Kate Weekes performed in the Songs I Like session. Splash’N Boots performed two interactive sets. The Kindermusik session was led by Barb Smith and Chris Moore. The Celtic Rathsallions with Wendy Moore-McGregor performed an enjoyable and lively set. Kids of all ages were invited to participate in the Sunshine Parade, which involved marching and dancing with musical instruments. The happy and noisy celebration made its way to the main stage, gaining participants en route.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage opened and closed the day with rehearsals of the Terry Penner Memorial Choir directed by Michael MacDonald. How to Sing in Harmony featured the talented musicians of Frida’s Brow along with Ball and Chain. Miles Howe and Roxanne Layton hosted sessions teaching participants how to play the harmonica and recorder respectively. Rev. Ernie Cox led the session titled About Gospel Music. More harmonica tips were provided in the session Advanced Harmonica Techniques hosted by Gérald Laroche.
Sources of Inspiration was the first session of the day on the Nutshell Music Stage. It featured host Kristin Sweetland, Wendell Ferguson and Lis Harvey. The Taking Turns session included sets by Darryn Grandbois, and Valérie Pichon and André Varin of Châkidor. The Gruff and The McDades teamed up in the session Western Celtic. Galicha led the spirited Learn East Indian Dancing session. The day ended on a spiritual note with the Gospel Unlimited session showcasing host Ken Whiteley, Connie Kaldor, Eve Goldberg, Rev. Ernie Cox and Mark Reeves.

On the Rogers Stage, festival emcee Karen Flanagan McCarthy hosted The Flower Hour with celebrity gardener Ed Lawrence and humorist Nancy White. The laughter continued with Funny Folk with host Morna Ballantyne, Arlo Guthrie, Nancy White and Mike McCormick. A Tribute to Leonard Cohen was hosted by Nancy White and featured Gordie Sampson, Connie Kaldor, Spiral Beach, Jay Bodner of Eagle & Hawk, and Liam Titcomb singing their favourite Cohen songs. An Extraordinary Life (A Musical Conversation with Jackie Washington) featured veteran performer Jackie Washington and was hosted by his good friend Ken Whiteley. The day’s entertainment closed with the Window of Opportunity session with host Laurie-Ann Copple, Natalia Zukerman, Lindsay Jane and Darryn Grandbois.

Rise and Shine was the appropriately titled first session on the Penguin Eggs Stage and showcased the talents of Galitcha and Friends. Now That’s a Stretch – Yoga and Music was a participatory session pairing gentle yoga movements and music featuring yoga teacher Jo-Ann Osterman and musician Ron Korb. Shelley Posen, who leads a shape note singing group in Ottawa, hosted the participatory session Shape Note Singing for Everyone. The Doc’s Pick session was named for the popular segment on the CKCU-FM radio show Canadian Spaces. The mysterious Doc (Peter Conway of McCrank’s Cycles, a local business that is a long time sponsor of Canadian Spaces) was on hand, as were musical guests Jennifer Noxon, Gordie Sampson and Wendell Ferguson. To wind down the day, the Taking Turns session showcased Zoë Lewis and Shelley Posen.

The CUPE EnviroTent featured more displays, discussions and hands-on activities related to environmental issues and responsible living. Sessions included Sun Power with Sean Twomey of Arbour Environmental Shoppe, Getting Involved with Mike Kaubars of the Peace and Environment Resource Centre, An Environmental Festival with Arthur Goldsmith of EcoRail Tour, Fair Trade in Action with Nicole McGrath of Peri Dar, and Pesticide Safety with Mari Wellman of Coalition for a Healthy Ottawa.

Sunday Evening CUPE Main Stage

The Sunday evening entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage began with the Terry Penner Memorial Choir led by director Michael MacDonald. The choir consisted of festival goers who attended three rehearsals during the weekend and performed for an appreciative audience. An exceptionally high-calibre evening exemplified the festival’s diverse lineup. The five-piece Quebec band Châkidor regaled the audience with a high-energy set that included Irish, bluegrass, Celtic and classical influences. Connie Kaldor has appeared at several festivals and as usual she wowed the crowd with a cross-section of her vast repertoire.

Musical treasures Scarlett, Washington and Whiteley performed a set of their warm-hearted and sometimes amusing tunes that blended their talents in the world of folk, blues and swing. Jackie Washington was awarded the Helen Verger Award for his valuable contributions to Canadian folk music. Washington, who has an exceptional memory, recalled how he began his musical career as a child growing up in the 1930s in Hamilton, Ontario. His many accomplishments include becoming Canada’s first black disc jockey, participating in the 1960s coffee house scene, and composing more than 1,200 songs. He has toured and recorded with Scarlett, Washington and Whiteley since the 1980s. The group’s first CD, Where Old Friends Meet, received a Juno nomination in 1993.

Harry Manx & The Urban Turban delivered an exhilarating performance under the stars. Manx is a master of the slide guitar and mohan veena, an instrument that combines elements of the guitar and sitar. His music meshes
blues with India ragas and this unlikely combination of styles is nothing less than magical. Manx was ably accompanied by The Urban Turban: Niel Golden on tabla, Wynn Gogol on keyboards and backup singer Emily Braden.

The festival ended with a powerful performance from one of Canada’s top jazz musicians, Jane Bunnett, who appeared with her band, The Spirits of Havana. Bunnett is a virtuoso on the saxophone and flute and is passionate about Cuban music, which features prominently in her repertoire. On this warm summer evening the ethereal music of Bunnett and her band provided unforgettable memories for the audience. And so ended the most culturally diverse CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival.
Canadian talent shone as brightly as the stars over Britannia Bay at the 12th annual CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival. Willie P. Bennett, the Jim Cuddy Band and Natalie MacMaster reminded us why our folk tradition is so worthy of our support. Celebrations for the 25th anniversary of Canadian Spaces, the longest-running folk radio show in Canada echoed this sentiment.

Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy returned to host the main stage throughout the festival. Some controversy arose over the appearance of Alberta singer-songwriter Kalan Porter, who won the Canadian Idol competition in 2004. Porter was seen as a pop performer rather than a folk performer by some people. But Porter, who is classically trained, held his own when he performed on the main stage and in a workshop.

Peter Katz and Layah Jane were co-winners of the Galaxie Rising Stars Award. They were presented with the award on the CUPE Main Stage on Saturday evening by Roch Parisien, music programmer for Galaxie’s Folk Roots channel. Katz and Jane shared the award and a $1,000 cash prize.

Also on Saturday, the wonderfully named Terry Joe Banjo was given the One Fret Less Award and a $1,000 cash prize. This award is made possible by a Community Foundation of Ottawa endowment established by Harvey and Louise Glatt, long-time supporters of folk music and singer-songwriters. The winners were selected at the annual auditions held at Rasputin’s Folk Café and the NAC Fourth Stage.

Other features at the festival were the artisans at the Craft Village, who offered a wide array of handmade items, ranging from pottery to furniture to jewellery. The ever-popular CKCU-FM Family Area presented musical performances, craft workshops, face painting and a puppet playhouse. The CKCU-FM Stage featured music, dancing and magic shows. The Family Craft Area had workshops led by festival artisans. Participants could make colourful hats and percussion instruments for the Sunshine Parade on Sunday evening. The CUPE EnviroTent offered environmental demonstrations and discussions. The festival continued its green initiatives with reusable plates in the Food Court. A beer cup recycling program was created by the CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival and Arbour Environmental Shoppe. Prizes including a rain barrel from Arbour. Tickets to upcoming folk festival concerts were offered to participants of the beer cup recycling program.

A festival documentary film, River Tales, created by Gemini Award-winning filmmaker Scott Troyer and journalist Rose Simpson was shown in the Ottawa and District Labour Council tent. The film looks behind the scenes at the 2004 Ottawa CKCU Folk Festival, and includes interviews with organizers, volunteers and artists such as Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie, Michael Franti and Jackie Washington. The documentary creators were available on Saturday and Sunday afternoon to chat with viewers.

Thursday, August 18

Of course, Arthur McGregor, owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre, opened the festival with his customary acoustic stringed instrument rendition of our national anthem. The first evening of the 12th CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival was graced with an inspired set by veteran Canadian performer Willie P. Bennett, who was presented with the Helen Verger Award. Bennett performed with aplomb. He kept the audience entranced with a crowd-pleasing cross-selection of material from his long musical career that stretched from the mid-70s to the present day. This performance is a special memory for his fans as he tragically passed away in 2008 at the age of 57.
The lively Quebec trio Genticorum performed with their blend of traditional music and original songs delivered with strong vocals and an impressive range of acoustic instruments. Halifax roots-rocker Joel Plaskett, whose album Truthfully Truthfully was named best rock recording at the 2005 East Coast Music Awards, gave a heartfelt and well-received performance. The esteemed American folk performer Eliza Gilkyson treated the audience to a set showcasing her poetic and sometimes political folk tunes.

Following Willie P. Bennett’s performance, the amazing veteran British performer Joan Armatrading closed the evening with a high-energy set that had the audience dancing beneath the stars. This Member of the Order of the British Empire is a singer-songwriter who plays a mean guitar. Armatrading performed many of her hit songs such as the evocative “Show Some Emotion” as well as newer material.

Friday, August 19
On the Nutshell Music & Event Management Stage, renowned drummer/percussionist Derek Debeer led a Community Drumming Jam. Many local drummers participated while the audience got into the groove. Debeer was born in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). He is well known for his work with Johnny Clegg, and with Clegg’s bands Savuka and Juluka, both of which celebrated African rhythms.

CUPE Main Stage
The Texas based duo The Dreamsicles (Cary Cooper and Tom Prasada-Rao) gave us a set of sassy and sweet love songs. Lucie Idlout, a powerful Inuit performer from Nunavut who spent many years living in Ottawa, mesmerized the audience with her hard-hitting and emotional tunes. American singer-songwriter Chuck Brodsky performed a set that showcased his diverse repertoire of funny and touching story songs. The Weakerthans were up next with a set that incorporated rock, folk and alt-country with lyrics with a literary bent. Feist wowed the crowd with a dynamic and danceable set. The Calgary singer-songwriter’s performance featured intimate lyrics, catchy melodies and her seductive, haunting voice. Alternative rock band The Jim Cuddy Band includes the co-founder of Blue Rodeo along with Bazil Donovan, Anne Lindsay, Joel Anderson and Travis Good. The band country-rocked the park with original tunes by Jim Cuddy and Blue Rodeo standards. It was wonderful to see Anne Lindsay having such a great time playing her fiddle!

The Beth Ferguson Award was presented to 16-year-old Meredith Luce who received a bursary and an original painting by Geoff Sangster. The award is presented to an Ontario female songwriter under the age of 30 in memory of Beth Ferguson (1953-1999) who was greatly admired for her body of work as a solo singer-songwriter and as a member of the a capella group Malaika.

Alternative evening programming also took place on the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage. Catherine Burns, the regular caller for Ottawa’s monthly Old Sod contra dances, performed those duties at a Contra Dance featuring Genticorum. Beginners were welcome and instruction was provided.

Offsite, After Hours Folk at the Travelodge Hotel’s Beachcomber Room featured New Brunswick trio Hot Toddy and Edmonton’s Painting Daisies, as well as a midnight set with country rebels The Swiftys.

Saturday, August 20
Daytime
Things got off to an inspiring start on the CUPE Main Stage with a Gospel Sing featuring Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir, Penny Lang and host Ken Whiteley. There was more inspiration at the Sources of Inspiration session featuring Lucie Idlout, Harmony Trowbridge, Jason Fowler and host Anne Lindsay. Genticorum hosted Vocal Focus with Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir. Ron Moores, host of
the CKCU-FM old time country show The Back 40, led Back 40 Live, Part 1. His country dream team included The Dreamsicles, Crescent and Frost, and Sarah Lee Guthrie & Johnny Irion.

On the Bowie Electrical Stage, the fun began with a concert showcasing the talents of Peter Katz. Three Taking Turns sessions featured Crescent and Frost and The Swiftys, followed by Tito Medina and Casadore, and ended with Layah Jane and Meredith Luce. Cam Wells hosted the Musical Friends session with Chris Frye, Dave Clarke and Penny Lang.

Folka Voca, a community choir led by Lee Hayes opened the day with a concert of popular contemporary tunes at the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage. Dave Clarke hosted Expect the Unexpected with Hot Toddy and storyteller Ruth Stewart-Verger. The National Arts Centre sponsored Alberta Scene Revisited with Kehewin Native Performance, Painting Daisies, The Swiftys and host Jen Covert. The NAC had presented several Alberta performers in its Alberta Scene series earlier in the year. H’Sao got the crowd up dancing with the Danse africaine session. More dance opportunities followed with a Latin Dance Party featuring Joaquin Diaz.

The Nutshell Music & Event Management Stage entertainment began with a concert with Crescent and Frost. The Guitar Tales session featured Yann Falquet of Genticorum, Stephen Carroll of The Weakerthans, and host Rachelle van Zanten. The Rural Roots session featured Feist, Concession 23 and host Chris Frye. A collaboration of musical styles was presented when the Blues Meets Jazz session showcased Hot Toddy, Grant Stovel of The Swiftys, and host Ken Whiteley. Chopper McKinnon hosted Canadian Spaces Live with Ken Whiteley, Harmony Trowbridge, Meredith Luce and Arthur McGregor. This session had particular significance as it was the 25th anniversary of the CKCU-FM show Canadian Spaces.

A concert with Casadore was the first performance on the Crosstown Traffic Stage. The Story Songs and Song Stories session included musical storytellers Chuck Brodsky, Penny Lang and host Dean Verger. The Galaxie Rising Stars session hosted by Roch Parisien showcased the music of Layah Jane, Peter Katz and Joe Grass. CBC Fuse featured John K. Samson of The Weakerthans, Feist and co-hosts Amanda Putz and Bill Stunt. Festival Director Gene Swimmer hosted President’s Choice, a session with Anaïs Mitchell, Tom Prasado-Rao and Chuck Brodsky. Great choices, Gene!

At the Rogers Stage, the Canadian Woman session hosted by longtime festival volunteer and journalist Rachel Hauraney started things off with Harmony Trowbridge, Lucie Idlout and Daisy Blue Groff. Following a concert with Kehewin Native Performance, it was time for the Americans to get into the act with the American Woman session. This session was hosted by Angela Page and presented Anaïs Mitchell, Cary Cooper, and Sarah Lee Guthrie & Johnny Irion. Anne Lindsay and Genticorum alternated in the Taking Turns session. The day’s entertainment ended with a concert with Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir.

Bluegrass and blues music were the themes in the OFC Music Tent. Performances by bluegrass artists Leavin’ Train, Jan Purcell & Pine Road, Handsome Molly and Concession 23 were followed by blues musician Miles Howerd and friends.

The participatory sessions on the Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage got off to a lively start with the Rise Up Singing session led by Arthur McGregor. The session was named for the popular folk music songbook. David Keeble hosted the Songcraft session with Pat Moore, Lee Hayes and Tom Lips. Miles Howe led a crowd with his Harmonica Basics workshop, while Terry Joe Banjo hosted the Banjo Basics session. Folka Voca, a community choir led by Lee Hayes, gave a concert. The Terry Penner Festival Choir held its first rehearsal. The session Spotlight on the Diddley-Bow with Crescent and Frost focused on the unusually named
The diddley bow, which is a single-stringed American instrument that influenced the development of blues music.

**For the Love of Music** with **Kindermusik** was the first bit of fun on the **CKCU-FM Stage**. Other children-oriented material included **Kid Stuff** with **Rich Hinman** of Crescent and Frost and **Magic for Kids** with **Doctor Magic** (**George Sapounidis**). After a **Traditional Dance** performance with **Kehewin Native Performance** it was time for the **Taking Turns** session with **David Keeble** and **Tom Lips**. The day ended on a relaxed note with a **Balance and Stretch** session led by the **Taoist Tai Chi Society of Canada**.

The **Family Craft Area** featured workshops with **Bead-licious**, **Jason Bellchamber Celtic and Medieval Goldsmith**, **Barefoot Toys**, **The Leathersmiths** and **Emily Wood**.

Participatory environmental demonstrations and discussions took place in the **CUPE EnviroTent**. The topics included the upcoming pesticide decision in Ottawa, building a home from car tires, human-powered vehicles, how to make biodiesel fuel, and trading fairly.

**Saturday Evening**
The **CUPE Main Stage** concerts kicked off with **Sarah Lee Guthrie & Johnny Irion**. Sarah Lee is the daughter of **Arlo Guthrie** and granddaughter of **Woody Guthrie**. She joined with her musical partner and husband **Johnny Irion** to create exhilarating folk-rock. They were followed by **H’Sao**, a Montreal group that fuses traditional African music with soul, jazz, R&B and gospel. Bluesy American folk performer **Chris Smither** treated the crowd to his dazzling guitar work, and philosophical lyrics delivered in his trademark gravelly voice. Ottawa-based blues star **Sue Foley** demonstrated why she is considered one of the finest blues/roots artists by delivering an evocative set. This Juno Award winner had also received a record-setting 17 Maple Blues Awards. **Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir** is a six-voice ensemble from San Francisco whose mission is to preserve Black American music. They performed a variety of percussion-driven vocals rooted in the deep South and in their West African and Caribbean traditions. Canadian favourite **Natalie MacMaster** had the crowd buzzing with her high-energy performance of Cape Breton fiddle music. The evening ended on a soulful note with **Hothouse Flowers**, a Dublin-based band that has been described as “Ireland’s finest folk-rock export” by BBC Radio.

**Alternative evening programming** included the **Alt-Folk Café** on the **Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage** featuring **Painting Daisies** (hosts), **Harmony Trowbridge**, **Anaïs Mitchell**, **Layah Jane**, **Meredith Luce** and **Peter Katz**. After **Hours Folk** at the **Travelodge Hotel Ottawa West** showcased **Crescent & Frost**, **Lucie Idlout** and **The Weakerthans**.

**Sunday, August 21**

**Daytime**
On the **CUPE Main Stage**, the **Black Sheep Live** session was hosted by **Paul Symes**, owner of the Black Sheep Inn in Wakefield, Quebec. It featured **Ana Egge**, **Jeremy Fisher**, **Chris Smither** and **The Swiftys**. **Laurie-Ann Copple** hosted the next session, **Words and Music**, featuring **Jason Fowler**, **Doreen Stevens**, **The Dreamscicles** and **Arthur McGregor**. Humour was the theme of the next session, titled **A Funny Thing Happened**. Fun-loving performers were **The Arrogant Worms**, **Jean-Marc Lalonde**, **Chuck Brodsky** and host **Carolyn Sutherland**. Folk enthusiast **Mike Regenstreif** hosted the **Musical Influences** session with **Natalie MacMaster**, **Anne Lindsay**, **Kalan Porter** and **Derek Sharp**.

The **Bowie Electrical Stage** had four **Taking Turns** sessions: **Terry Joe Banjo** and **Jean-Marc Lalonde**; **Anaïs Mitchell** and **Ana Egge**; **Concession 23** and **Hurry Up and Wait**; and **Jeremy Fisher** and **Harmony Trowbridge**.
Guitar Styles was the theme of the first presentation on the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage. Michel Dozois hosted the session, which featured Tony McManus, Jason Fowler, Slavek Hanzlik and Dave Clarke. There were two Cross-Cultural Sound Exchange sessions. The first featured Mushfiq Ensemble, Anne Lindsay, and the George Sapounidis Ensemble. The second showcased Mushfiq Ensemble in a second appearance, Derek Debeer and Tito Medina (host). There was also an African Roots session with Baobab Tree Drum Dance Community, hosted by Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir.

The Wailin’ Jennys hosted People and Places, the first session on the Nutshell Music & Event Management Stage, featuring Chuck Brodsky and Chris Frye. The Wailin’ Jennys, whose name is a play on the name of country star Waylon Jennings, returned for the second session, Rasputin’s Live. It was hosted by Dean Verger and also showcased the talents of Rick Fines and Ian Robb. The Life Changes session included performances by Anais Mitchell, storyteller Ruth Stewart-Vergor and Penny Lang, and was hosted by Karen Flanagan McCarthy. The Country Style session featured music that was just that and included Slavek Hanzlik and Dave Clarke, Pat Moore, Hurry Up and Wait and host Zita Murphy-Brascoupié.

At the Crosstown Traffic Stage, the Doc’s Pick session, named after a regular segment on the CKCU-FM folk show Canadian Spaces, was hosted by Doc himself (Peter Conway of McCrank’s Cycles, a local business that is a longtime sponsor of the show). The session included Rick Fines, Joe Grass and Sue Foley. Things took an historical turn with the Ottawa 150 Anniversary Celebration featuring Alex Sinclair, Jean-Marc Lalonde, 7IM-VWA, Jim McIntyre and Victor Emerson (host). Shades of Blue was the theme of a session hosted by Rick Fines and featured Sue Foley and Joe Grass. The day ended on a philosophical note with What Was I Thinking? Lighthearted responses were provided by participants including The Arrogant Worms, Lee Hayes, Alex Sinclair and host Bruce Steele.

Songs for the Earth was the first offering on the Rogers Stage. Hosted by Arbour Environmental Shoppe owner Sean Twomey, the session featured the talents of Doreen Stevens, Alex Sinclair, Chris Whiteley and The Dreamscicles. Songs of Hope and Freedom was an inspiring session with Linda Tillery & the Cultural Heritage Choir, The Original Sloth Band, Sarah Lee Guthrie & Johnny Irion, and host Morna Ballantyne. Music from the Glen was a session named for the CKCU-FM British traditional music show. It was led by the show’s host Gord Peeling and included Tony McManus, Ian Robb, Genticorum and Natalie MacMaster. Ron Moores, host of the CKCU-FM old time country show The Back 40, hosted Back 40 Live, Part 2 with The Swiftys, Southside Steve Marriner and Genticorum.

Bluegrass and blues music were again offered in the OFC Music Tent. In four separate sessions, performers Jan Purcell & Pine Road, Concession 23, Handsome Molly and Leavin’ Train treated us to bluegrass performances. Miles Howerd performed with friends in the second blues session.

At the Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage, first up was the Terry Penner Festival Choir Rehearsal. The Taking Turns session saw Chris Smither and Joe Grass delighting the audience with their original tunes. After another Festival Choir rehearsal, the George Sapounidis Ensemble performed in the session titled A World of Music.

The CKCU-FM Stage kicked things off in the Family Area with Kindermusik in the session For the Love of Music. The Taoist Tai Chi Society of Canada presented a Balance and Stretch session. The Kid Stuff session featured Terry Joe Banjo. Chris Frye joined hosts The Original Sloth Band in the Jazzin’ It Up session. The Moving to the Beat session showcased Baobab Tree Drum Dance Community. This group led the annual Sunshine Parade, a happy and noisy celebration that wends it way from the Family Area to the main stage. Children and adults are encouraged to dress up and march along, making as much noise as possible with a variety of percussion instruments.
The Family Craft Area gave children the chance to create their own treasures. Participants included Brighid’s Bard (papier mâché vases), Emily Wood (bubble play), Filament (flip-flop necklaces with beads and wire), The Leathersmiths (custom leather keychains and barrettes) and Barefoot Toys (traditional wool felt mats).

More participatory environmental demonstrations and discussions were held in the CUPE EnviroTent. The topics included Keeping Rivers Healthy (Ottawa Riverkeeper), Safe Alternatives to Pesticides (Coalition for a Healthy Ottawa), Renewable Solar and Wind Power (Arbour Environmental Shoppe), The Peace Kitchen Project (Ottawa Peace Kitchen) and The Ethical Consumer (Peri Dar).

Sunday Evening
CUPE Main Stage
The entertainment began with The Original Sloth Band, a folk-rock group that formed 40 years ago in North York, Ont. featuring brothers Chris and Ken Whiteley and Tom Evans. They were joined onstage by Bucky Berger and Victor Bateman on drums and string bass. Next up was Tony McManus, a virtuosic Celtic guitarist who performed songs that incorporated tunes from Cape Breton, Scotland and Brittany. The popular group Painting Daisies dazzled the crowd with its incredible harmonies, inspired instrumentation and heartfelt lyrics. The Terry Penner Festival Choir, whose members included festival goers who come together at each festival, performed to an enthusiastic audience. Festival favourites The Arrogant Worms injected laughter and levity to the evening’s entertainment with their humorous songs and onstage antics. Vancouver-based Jeremy Fisher spent the last four years touring and performing across the country travelling by bicycle. He performed a spirited set that had toes tapping. The evening ended with Kalan Porter who gave us a set that incorporated covers, original tunes and fiddle playing. He was a delight to the hordes of teenage fans who were on hand.

Alternative evening programming on the Kershman-Wasserlauf Stage featured a blockbuster Super Session with Rick Fines (host), Penny Lang, Slavek Hanzlik, Dave Clarke, Chris Frye, Rachelle van Zanten and Joe Grass.

Monday, August 22
The Festival Wrap-Up Concert was held at the Black Sheep Inn in Wakefield, Quebec and showcased the talents of The Dreamsicles and Painting Daisies.
The 2006 CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival presented an appealing variety of entertainment ranging from American alt-country sensation Steve Earle to singer-songwriter Ferron to the Burundi-inspired The Mighty Popo Band. Blues, Celtic, klezmer and gospel artists and a ukulele virtuoso demonstrated the diversity of folk music. The 25th anniversary of Rasputin’s Folk Café was celebrated in fine style, while former Bronson Avenue neighbour Arthur McGregor of the Ottawa Folklore Centre, received the Helen Verger Award.

This year also marked the departure of Executive Director Gene Swimmer who had made an exceptional contribution to the festival in this role since 1996. Gene was recognized by many people on the main stage and was presented with mementoes for his 14 years of dedicated volunteer service.

Festival goers had many different ways to participate, whether singing with the Terry Penner Festival Choir, performing at the Ottawa Folklore Centre’s open mic session, joining a singalong, or learning to play the harmonica, ukulele or pennywhistle. There were also chances to dance to musical styles from Cuban to Cajun to klezmer, and to perform with a community drumming circle.

The CKCU-FM Family Area was bigger and better than ever and featured two of the best children’s acts on the circuit: Fran Avni and Sho Mo and The Monkey Bunch. As usual, kids could make musical instruments, and participate in crafts workshops. Kathy Armstrong organized the Kids Weekend Drumming Ensemble, giving kids a chance to learn and rehearse African drumming and perform during the Sunshine Parade held on Sunday afternoon.

The CUPE EnviroTent offered ongoing talks, demonstrations and hands-on activities for adults and children. Topics included renewable energy, raw vegan foods, attracting butterflies to your backyard, water, patchwork quilting, terminator seeds, and rekindling our relationship with Mother Earth.

Thursday, August 17
On Thursday, August 17 two separately ticketed downtown shows launched the 13th festival. An all-star song circle of Lynn Miles, Ian Tamblyn, Bill Bourne and Erick Manana celebrated the 25th anniversary of Rasputin’s at Library and Archives Canada. Many wonderful memories and amusing anecdotes were shared at the tribute and owner Dean Verger was in great spirits. A lively show at the Capital City Music Hall featured a dynamite quadruple bill of The Sadies, Ridley Bent, The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir and Amy Millan.

Friday, August 18
Friday afternoon in Britannia Park at the Metro Ottawa Stage began rhythmically with a Community Drumming Circle with Kathy Armstrong, Leo Brooks and Rusty Eckland. The evening main stage opened with Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor performing an acoustic version of “O Canada” in his inimitable ragtime style. Arthur was followed by the Kelli Trottier Band, the wonderfully named ensemble The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir, Erick Manana, ukulele virtuoso James Hill, festival staple Ian Tamblyn, and bluesy duo Dawn Tyler Watson & Paul Deslauriers. Steve Earle received a rousing welcome from the enthusiastic crowd who responded to his extraordinary and deeply personal brand of country music.

Alternative evening programming took place in the World Harmony Stage inside the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre. A song circle was held with Mark Wilson, Old Man Luedecke (a surprisingly young banjo songster),
Zach Stevenson (well known for his interpretations of Phil Ochs material), Rachelle van Zanten and Amy Millan. At an After Party held at the Travelodge Hotel Ottawa West, the entertainment included Jan Purcell and Pine Road, Erynn Marshall & Chris Coole, and Robert Michaels.

Saturday, August 19
On the CUPE Main Stage, the day opened with a Family Concert with Sho Mo and The Monkey Bunch. Mike Regenstreif hosted the Fiddle Frenzy session with Dirk Powell, the April Verch Band, Sarah Burnell, Erynn Marshall & Chris Coole, and the Kelli Trottier Band. Dawn Tyler Watson & Paul Deslauriers, DiggingRoots, Rachelle Van Zanten and Andy Cohen participated in the Saturday Blues session hosted by Rich Warren. The Canadian Spaces session hosted by Chopper McKinnon featured artists often featured on the CKCU-FM folk music show of the same name: Charlie Sohmer, Ferron, Paul Mills, Holmes Hooke and Stella Haybukhai. The magnificent ensemble, The Maple Leaf Brass Band, performed with great gusto beside the main stage.

Over at the Bowie Electrical Stage, four separate groups appeared in concert: a double bill with Mike Evin and Zach Stevenson, the funky Indian-jazz fusion band Autorickshaw, Sarah Burnell, Paul Mills & Friends, and Tiitu Millistiver and ElizaBeth Hill. An excellent spoken word session, Word Play, followed with the wordy talents of master storyteller Holmes Hooke, beat poet Lillian Allen and lowercase poet bill bissett.

At the World Harmony Stage in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre, a CBC Live Fuse show hosted by Alan Neal was taped featuring Ridley Bent along with Ndidi Onukwulu & Madagascar Slim. Nubia Cermeno hosted a lively Cuban Dance session with Valle Son. Later in the day, there was more dancing when Steve Pritchard hosted Cajun Dance #1 session with Grouyan Gombo. Two separate concerts showcased the talents of Erik Manana, The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir and Dan Frechette. Kathy Armstrong also hosted a Kids Participatory Drumming Ensemble.

A diverse day of entertainment took place on the Metro Ottawa Stage. Two groups of musicians appeared in concert: Balfa Toujours and the Kelli Trottier Band, and The Supers and DiggingRoots. The Nature of Things session hosted by Karen Flanagan McCarthy featured Ian Tamblyn, Sheila M Ross and ElizaBeth Hill. The Nature of Strings session, on the other hand, showcased James Hill, Old Man Luedecke and Silk Road Duo and was hosted by Rachel Hauraney. The day ended with a session titled It’s Latin to Me featuring Valle Son and the Robert Michaels Band.

At the Loeb Glebe Stage, many musical explorations took place, beginning with the Musical Journeys session hosted by Steve Pritchard featuring Tiitu Millistiver, Andy Cohen and Dan Frechette. Gene Swimmer hosted the Director’s Choice session with Ridley Bent, James Hill, and Dawn Tyler Watson & Paul Deslauriers. Two separate concerts showcased Eileen Laverty and Silk Road Duo. Erin Barnhard hosted the Appalachian Echoes session with the Dirk Powell Band, Erynn Marshall & Chris Coole, and Old Man Luedecke. The fascinating East Meets West session hosted by Rachel Hauraney included Autorickshaw, Silk Road Duo and renowned sitar player Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, who was once the teacher of Harry Manx.

There was plenty happening at the Rogers Stage. Colin Henein hosted the Music from the Glen session inspired by the CKCU-FM radio show, which featured Orealis, Eileen Laverty, Sarah Burnell and April Verch. Pat Moore hosted the Salutin’ Rasputin’s session with Charlie Sohmer, Stella Haybukhai, Rick Hayes and Don Fletcher. The Big Smoke session hosted by Bill Stunt featured Toronto performers Ron Sexsmith, Mike Evin and Amy Millan. Ron Moores hosted the Back 40 Live session inspired by his traditional country, western and bluegrass music show on CKCU-FM, featuring Amy Millan, Ridley Bent, and Dallas & Travis Good of The Sadies. The Songwriters’ Songwriters session featured the calibre of songwriters you might expect: Eliza Gilkyson, Ferron, Ron Sexsmith and Rich Warren. The day ended with a solo concert from Eliza Gilkyson.
The CKCU-FM Stage hosted music as diverse as the station’s programming. MaryLou Hulan and Monica Wolfe kicked things off with the Kindermusic session. Separate concerts were performed in a range of styles by Fran Avni, Sho Mo and The Monkey Bunch, Folka Voca, Silk Road Duo, ElizaBeth Hill and Andy Cohen.

The Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage entertainment opened with a concert with Folka Voca. Two educational sessions followed: Singing Tips for Everyone hosted by Lee Hayes, and Learn to Play the Harmonica with Miles Howe. Arthur McGregor hosted the song circle session Rise Up Singing. The day ended with an Open Mic session allowing participants the opportunity to perform onstage to a receptive audience.

In the CUPE EnviroTent, sessions were held to educate people in environmental topics including Renewable Energy for Home Owners with Sean Twomey of Arbour Environmental Shoppe, Healthy Lifestyles with Raw Vegan Food with Natasha Kyssa of SimplyRaw, Bringing Your Garden to Life with Sandy Garland of Fletcher Wildlife Garden, and Environmental Politics with David Chernushenko of the Green Party.

The Family Craft Area provided lots of fun for families including the following sessions: Drum Making for Kids with Gaelen Hart, Making Paper Bag Puppets with Liz Murphy, Making Jewellery with Heather Boyd of Filament, and Making Wire Art with Emily Wood.

On the CUPE Main Stage the night kicked off with the lively French-Canadian ensemble Mauvais Sort and continued with Ridley Bent, the Cajun group Balfa Toujours, and the accomplished flamenco guitarist Robert Michaels. Two superb singer-songwriters at the top of their game, Ferron and Ron Sexsmith, followed with excellent solo sets.

Alternative evening programming on the World Harmony Stage opened with the mesmerizing Autorickshaw whose music is a wonderful melange of South Indian classical music, Bollywood-tinged jazz standards and Indo-jazz originals. The Supers and the popular alt-folk group The Sadies rounded out the night’s entertainment.

The After Party at the Travelodge Hotel Ottawa West showcased a diverse cross-section of roots music with Ndidi Onukwulu & Madagascar Slim, April Verch and DiggingRoots.

Sunday, August 20
On Sunday morning, the First Annual Musical Festival Brunch featured great food and the talents of Frida’s Brow, Ndidi Onukwulu & Madagascar Slim, Michael Munnik, Ann Downey and host Cam Wells. An Ottawa Folklore Centre Celebration featured Ian Tamblyn, Eliza Gilkyson, Jan Purcell and Pine Road, Eileen Laverty, Chris MacLean and host Arthur McGregor. An Afternoon Raga showcased the renowned sitar player Vishwa Mohan Bhatt. The East-West Extravaganza hosted by Eric Stein featured Beyond the Pale, Silk Road Duo and Galitcha.

Four excellent concerts were held on the Bowie Electrical Stage featuring Dan Frechette and Old Man Luedecke; Kelli Trottier Band and Pat Moore; Jan Purcell and Pine Road and Zach Stevenson; and Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and Galitcha. The session Speaking Words featured poets John Akpata, Sheila M Ross, Lillian Allen, and bill bissett.

The World Harmony Stage in the cool confines of the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre was a happening place. The entertainment started with concerts with Mostly Harmless and Mark Wilson, as well as a group comprising Erynn Marshall & Chris Coole and Andy Cohen. Two dance sessions celebrated dance styles: Klezmer Dance (Susan Watts & KlezKanada All-Star Dance Band with instructor Michael Alpert); and Cajun Dance #2 (Balfa Toujours and Jody Benjamin).
Sho Mo and The Monkey Bunch were the first group to appear in concert on the Metro Ottawa Stage; Mauvais Sort was the second. The Tout le Monde session hosted by Karen Flanagan McCarthy featured Balfa Toujours, Mauvais Sort, and Erick Manana. Sharon Fernandez hosted the session 2 Pianos, 6 Hands with Marilyn Lerner of KlezKanada, Braydis (Valle Son) and Mike Evin. Cam Wells hosted the Musical Traditions session with Ndidi Onukwulu & Madagascar Slim, Kelli Trottier Band, and Erynn Marshall & Chris Coole.

Laurie-Ann Copple hosted the Lost and Found session on the Loeb Glebe Stage with Eve Goldberg, Eileen Laverty and Holmes Hooke. The East-West Blues session showcased the considerable talents of Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Rachelle van Zanten, Rick Fines and host Sharon Fernandez. Carolyn Sutherland was the host of the session titled African Guitar Pinnacle with Madagascar Slim, Erick Manana and The Mighty Popo. The amusingly titled Stringed Things session was hosted by CKCU Ottawa Folk Festival volunteer Zita Murphy-Brascoupé and featured Vanya Zhuk, Robert Michaels and The Mighty Popo. The day ended with the Galaxie Rising Stars session featuring musical luminaries Mark Wilson, Rachelle van Zanten and Michael Munnik.

On the Rogers Stage, Morna Ballantyne hosted the Politically Direct session with Eliza Gilkyson, Lillian Allen, John Akpata and Alise Marlane. A Phil Ochs Tribute was hosted by his sister Sonny Ochs and featured Zach Stevenson (who had formerly appeared in a Phil Ochs musical play), Eve Goldberg and Alise Marlane. Host Mike Regenstreif led the Common Ground session with the Dirk Powell Band, Dan Frechette and Robert Michaels. Doc (Peter Conway) was on hand to host the Doc’s Pick session showcasing Eliza Gilkyson, Rick Fines and Jennifer Noxon. The First Verses Only session, hosted by Mitch Podolak, featured Sneezy Waters, Arthur McGregor, Andy Cohen, Ann Downey, Dan Frechette, Eve Goldberg and Rick Fines.

The audience at the CKCU-FM Stage was treated to concerts with Silk Road Duo, Fran Avni, Old Man Ludecke, Holmes Hooke and Klezmer: The Next Generation. The last item on the folk agenda was the annual, always fun, noisy and wonderful Sunshine Parade, a musical percussion-rich procession of kids of all ages that wound its way to the main stage.

On the Ottawa Folklore Centre Stage several instructional sessions were presented: Blues Guitar for Beginners with Andy Cohen, Learn to Play the Ukulele with virtuoso James Hill, and Learn to Play the Tin Whistle with Andy Daub. The day ended with an Open Mic session.

The CUPE EnviroTent was the site of several information sessions with environmental themes: Water: A Basic Human Right? with Tony Clark of the Polaris Institute, Food Security with Juniper Turgeon of Just Food, Patchwork Quilting with Joanne Hyslop, Terminator Seeds with Pat Roy Mooney of the ETC Group, and Renewing the Sacred Balance with Kristina Inrig of the Faith and the Common Good organization.

Little ones in the Family Craft Area were treated to the following sessions: Drum Making for Kids with Gaelan Hart, and Making Paper Bag Puppets with Liz Murphy.

The CUPE Main Stage evening concert opened with a lively Klezmer showcase featuring Beyond the Pale and continued with the Cuban sounds of Valle Son and American singer-songwriter Dar Williams. The Terry Penner Festival Choir with Mike MacDonald graced the stage with a typically uplifting performance. The Burundi-flavoured pop of The Mighty Popo was followed by an American husband and wife who performed separate sets: Greg Brown and Iris DeMent. Contemporary singer-songwriter Greg Brown performed in three
previous Ottawa Folk Festivals, while this was the first performance here by his spouse, country folk performer Iris DeMent.

Alternative evening programming was found on the World Harmony Stage in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre. The featured sessions were Cajun Dance with Balfa Toujours, Frida’s Brow, and Super Session 2006 featuring Rick Fines, Rachelle van Zanten, James Hill, Eve Goldberg and Miles Howe.

The music continued after the festival gates closed Sunday night with two Festival Wrap-Up Concerts on Monday night. At the Black Sheep Inn in Wakefield, Quebec, a double bill featured singer-songwriters Dar Williams and Dan Frechette. The Dirk Powell Band whooped it up at The Bayou in Ottawa.
Changes were everywhere at the 2007 Ottawa Folk Festival. Following the departure of long-time Festival Director Gene Swimmer, Tamara Kater came on board as Executive Director, bringing a fresh approach and new ideas to the festival. The layout of the festival changed with the main gate and box office repositioned and the artisans and vendors moved closer to each other. Enhanced bus service made it easier to get to the festival without taking the car, while more visible signage helped folks find their way around. Greater community involvement brought in more local organizations to set up tables, and more green initiatives were introduced. Other changes made it easier to dance and to enjoy the volunteer experience.

Woody Guthrie was celebrated at the festival in many ways. An interactive, multi-media presentation was given by Woody’s daughter Nora Guthrie on Saturday afternoon. An interview about Woody Guthrie’s life and influence featuring Kris Kristofferson, Nora Guthrie and Jimmy LaFave was conducted by journalist Mike Regenstreif on Saturday afternoon. It was followed by a 90-minute main stage tribute to Woody Guthrie entitled “Ribbon of Highway” featuring Kris Kristofferson, Jimmy LaFave, Eliza Gilkyson, Ray Bonneville and Joel Rafael. A spectacular display was set up in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre that included photos from the Woody Guthrie Archives, along with samples of Woody’s handwritten lyrics and visual art. A concert featuring Woody’s children’s songs was held on Sunday. Finally, an award-winning film entitled “Man in the Sand”, about Woody Guthrie’s life and influence was held at the National Library and Archives on Monday, August 20.

Other festival highlights included performances by Kris Kristofferson and Buffy Sainte-Marie, as well as Penny Lang receiving the Helen Verger Award. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy hosted the main stage throughout the festival.

Thursday, August 16
This year the festival returned to Thursday night programming at Britannia Park. Arthur McGregor performed his ragtime-style acoustic guitar rendition of the national anthem on the CUPE Main Stage, as he has done each year since the first festival. The Meredith Luce Band, calypso band Kobo Town, the innovative Amos the Transparent and banjo songster Old Man Luedecke followed. The evening ended with the danceable music of Ottawa’s own jazz-fusion group, Souljazz Orchestra.

Friday, August 17
The entertainment on the CUPE Main Stage opened with an Ottawa bluesman and his musical pals: Tony D & Friends. A spellbinding performance from Kiran Ahluwalia followed. The Canadian singer specializes in ghazals and Punjabi folk songs, and her soaring vocals were one of the highlights of the festival. Oh Susanna, a Canadian vocalist steeped in roots and Appalachian-style traditional music appeared next and was followed by the wonderfully named bluegrass band The Foggy Hogtown Boys. The greatly anticipated performance by the legendary Kris Kristofferson ended an exceptional evening of entertainment. The American singer-songwriter extraordinaire wowed the larger than average crowd with a set that included a combination of old and new material. Luckily, Kristofferson also appeared in workshops during the rest of the weekend.

Performances also took place in the Bowie Electrical Hall (in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre) including the traditional ensemble the Carolina Chocolate Drops, the rootsy Doug & Jess Band, Juliana, and Mansa Sissoko, a kora player from Mali.
Saturday, August 18
In the Bowie Electrical Hall, the excitement began with a Festival Drumming Workshop for kids aged 8 to 15 with Kathy Armstrong followed by a session with The Boys and Girls Club Drummers. The Results of Cross-Cultural Music Experiment #1 session featured the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Jah Youssouf and Lewis Melville, and was hosted by Petr Cancura. An interview hosted by Mike Regenstreif chronicling Woody Guthrie’s influences featured a panel of Kris Kristofferson, Nora Guthrie and Jimmy LaFave. I Know an Old Lady was the unusual title of a tribute to Alan Mills hosted by CBC arts guru Alan Neal that featured Bram Morrison and Lorne Brown.

The Penguin Eggs Garden was named for the Canadian folk magazine Penguin Eggs. The entertainment on this stage opened with the African Morning session with Mansa Sissoko. The session This Land Is Your Land: The Story of Woody Guthrie was a multimedia presentation hosted by his daughter Nora Guthrie. The Music of Rev. Gary Davis was celebrated by Andy Cohen. From the Heart was a session showcasing the talents of Mary Murphy with Paul Keim, Jimmy LaFave and Lewis Melville.

Over at the Ten Thousand Villages Beach Stage, the Once Upon a Time session hosted by Anne-Marie Brugger included story songsters Heather Dale & Ben Deschamps, Michelle Desbarats and Nathan. The Living Traditions session featured Andy Cohen, Arthur McGregor and host Bram Morrison. You Must be Joking was a jovial session hosted by Terry Eagan with The Arrogant Worms, and Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman. Roch Parisien of Galaxie, CBC’s Continuous Music Network, hosted the Rising Stars session featuring David Gaudet, Lindsay Jane and Rose Cousins.

Doc, a regular on the CKCU-FM folk music show Canadian Spaces, hosted Doc’s Pick featuring the talents of Kate Weekes, Oh Susanna and Ray Bonneville. Doc is Peter Conway of McCrank’s Cycles, a local business that is a longtime sponsor of Canadian Spaces.

The fun in the CKCU Kidzone started out with the Carolina Chocolate Drops and continued with Stories for Kids with Lorne Brown, a Musical Instrument Petting Zoo and an Instrument Making for Kids session. Curtis Jonnie (Shingoose) was followed by a wire sculpture workshop for kids with Heather Boyd of Filament and a craft workshop for kids with Helen & Ingrid Sherling of Nicbela. The kids were also treated to a session showcasing Easy Flamenco Rhythms with Juliana, and a mini-concert with Penny Lang.

At the Ottawa Folklore Centre Point Stage, the All about the Groove session hosted by Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman included Pepe Danza and Ray Bonneville. The Music of South America session featured Turpial. Juliana hosted the Rhythm and Shoes session with poet Stuart Ross and musician Pepe Danza. The evocative Painting Pictures session was led by master storyteller Buffy Sainte-Marie and included Christian Masotti and Kaie Kellough. A tuneful Vocal Harmony session hosted by Mike McCormick showcased The Arrogant Worms, Chris Whiteley & Diana Braithwaite, and The Good Lovelies.

The Loeb Glebe Hill Stage opened with the Up North, Down South session with Jimmy LaFave and Kate Weekes. The Back 40 Live session named for the CKCU-FM radio show featuring traditional country, western and bluegrass music was led by Ron Moores and featured Dirk Powell, the Foggy Hogtown Boys, and the Doug & Jess Band. Steve Pritchard hosted the Prestidigitation session featuring the nimble fingers of the Foggy Hogtown Boys, Lindsay Jane and Miles Howe. Cam Wells, co-host of the CKCU-FM folk music show Canadian Spaces, hosted The Sum of the Parts session with the Doug & Jess Band and The Gruff. The Spoken Word session showcased spoken word specialists Kaie Kellough, Michelle Desbarats, Sheila M Ross, Stuart Ross and host Sean Wilson.

The Rogers Tree Stage entertainment began appropriately with New Beginnings, a session hosted by Eliza Gilkyson that highlighted the talents of Lindsay Jane and Martha Scanlan. Tales from the Road was hosted
by Paul Symes, owner of the Black Sheep Inn and featured Oh Susanna, Old Man Luedecke and Rose Cousins. The Songs of Peace session attracted a huge crowd. It was hosted by Sonny Ochs, the sister of Phil Ochs and featured the stellar talents of Kris Kristofferson, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Penny Lang. Music from the Glen was a session named for the CKCU-FM Celtic music show and was hosted by Colin Henein. It included Andy Daub, Heather Dale & Ben Deschamps, and Mary Murphy with Paul Keim. The day wound down with the Mountain Music session hosted by Dirk Powell and presenting the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Martha Scanlan, Michael Jerome Browne and Old Man Luedecke.

In the CUPE EnviroTent, workshops were held on topics including Switching to Renewable Energy at Home with Sean Twomey, Speaking Out: Public Speaking Tips with Pamma Durin, How Technology Affects the Environment with John Buschek, Green Energy for Everyone with Bullfrog Power, and the Life, Money and Illusion session with author Mike Nickerson.

The OFC Music Knoll featured the N’Goni Building Demonstration with Jah Youssouf and Basic Flamenco Rhythms with Juliana, followed by The Craziest Right Hand Banjo Picking Pattern Ever session with Max Cossette. This was followed by a Folk Jam with Tony D session that encouraged audience participation using provided instruments. A second N’Goni Building Demonstration was followed by an Open Mic session.

Other activities included Taoist Tai Chi workshops near the EnviroTent.

In the evening on the CUPE Main Stage, Hoots & Hellmouth opened the evening entertainment. Ray Bonneville delivered a wonderful set of his original singer-songwriter material for his third festival appearance. Penny Lang received the Helen Verger Award. The Canadian singer-songwriter was honoured for her exceptional career that spanned more than 40 years. Her longstanding connection with the festival began with performances at the inaugural festival on Victoria Island in 1994.

Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman performed a rhythmic and tuneful set before Buffy Sainte-Marie performed to an appreciative audience. The Carolina Chocolate Drops transported us to a bygone era with their rootsy music of the southern U.S. The evening ended with the first Canadian presentation of the magnificent Ribbon of Highway Tribute to Woody Guthrie. The 90-minute tribute to the words and music of Woody Guthrie featured Kris Kristofferson, Eliza Gilkyson, Ray Bonneville, Jimmy LaFave and Joel Rafael, with narrator Bob Childers. The tribute celebrated a unique individual whose massive influence continues to be felt.

On the Bowie Electrical Stage in the air-conditioned comfort of the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre, the audience was treated to performances from traditional folk stylists The Gruff, singer-songwriters Nathan, and Jason Lang (son of Penny) along with Michael Jerome Brown and Petr Cancura. This was followed by a set with The Good Lovelies. The evening ended with a rootsy quadruple bill of David Gaudet, Meredith Luce, Old Man Luedecke and Rose Cousins.

Sunday, August 19
The final day of the festival kicked off in the Bowie Electrical Hall with a Festival Drumming Workshop for kids aged 8 to 15 led by Kathy Armstrong, followed by a performance from Bram Morrison. The session Results of Cross-Cultural Music Experiment #3 showcased Chris Whiteley & Diana Braithwaite, Mansa Sissoko and host Petr Cancura. The Blues Sources session featured Ray Bonneville, Tony D and host Michael Jerome Browne. The final session of the day was an energetic Klezmer Dance with Oy Division.

Over at the Penguin Eggs Garden, Curtis Jonnie (Shingoose) appeared in concert and was followed by the Banjorama Unplugged session hosted by Ann Downey featuring the Doug & Jess Band and Old Man
Luedecke. Making It Up as We Go Along showcased Andy Cohen, Christian Masotti, Miles Howe and Petr Cancura.

At the Ten Thousand Villages Beach Stage, the session Results of Cross-Cultural Music Experiment #2 showcased the talents of The Gruff, Mushfiq Ensemble, Pepe Danza and host Petr Cancura. The African/American session featured Dirk Powell, Jah Youssouf, Martha Scanlan and host Andy Cohen. The Mixed Blessings session hosted by Mike Regenstreif included David Gaudet, Eliza Gilkyson, and Mary Murphy. The Good Vibes session featured The Gruff and Hoots & Hellmouth. The day ended with Danse Africaine, a session with Elage.

In the CKCU Kidzone, things started with a bang at the Percussion Petting Zoo and continued with performances by Christian Masotti and Mushfiq Ensemble, as well as craft and drumming workshops and performances. Joel Rafael led a Woody Guthrie Songs session and the day ended with the joyous annual Sunshine Parade where everyone was invited to join a musical, percussion-filled procession to the main stage area.

At the Ottawa Folklore Centre Point Stage, the day opened with the Rise and Shine Session with Eliza Gilkyson, Jason Lang and host Sheila M Ross. An improvisional dance session by the Grasshoppa Dance Exchange was followed by the A Capella session showcasing Mary Murphy, Nathan and host Diana Braithwaite. Curtis Jonnie (Shingoose), Michelle Desbarats and host Lindsay Jane appeared in This Land Is Our Land session. Old Man Luedecke hosted the session titled I Quit My Job with The Good Lovelies and Kate Weekes. The final session, Matters of the Heart, featured Lindsay Jane, Nathan and host Stuart Ross.

The Loeb Glebe Hill Stage opened for the day with Looking Back, showcasing Michael Jerome Browne, Martha Scanlan, Oh Susanna and host Louis Meyers. Jennie Stratton hosted the Music as a Bridge session with Elage, Joel Rafael, and Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman. The Human Nature session featured Heather Dale & Ben Deschamps, Rose Cousins and Kaie Kellough, and was hosted by Karen Flanagan McCarthy. The Grasshoppa Dance Exchange showcased improvisional dance. Chopper McKinnon hosted the Canadian Spaces session with Chris Whiteley, Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman, and Rose Cousins. A very special event followed. The Ottawa Folklore Centre distributed 300 free pennywhistles to the audience and Andy Daub gave everyone a free introductory lesson on this traditional instrument. How folkie can you get?

The fun on the Rogers Tree Stage began with Celtic Jam with Alf Warnock. Tom Werbo hosted the Spontaneous Combustion session featuring The Arrogant Worms and Hoots & Hellmouth. Grasshoppa Dance Exchange contributed improvisional dance. The Music from the Andes session featured Turpial. Ann Downey was the host of the Deep Roots session featuring Dirk Powell and Oh Susanna. The final session of the day was Super Blues Jam hosted by Tony D and showcasing the talents of Andy Cohen, Chris Whiteley & Diana Braithwaite, Jah Youssouf, Penny Lang and Ray Bonneville.

The CUPE EnviroTent featured discussions as well as sessions including Against Uranium Mining with John Kittle, and Non-Toxic Personal Care Products with Patti Murphy & Tamey McIntosh.

On the OFC Music Knoll, Petr Cancura was featured in the session titled Improvising Over Chord Changes. Arthur McGregor led the Rise Up Singing session followed by a Harmonica for Beginners session hosted by Catriona Sturton. Ellen MacIsaac introduced Irish music to the crowd at the session Introduction to Sean Nos. After improvisational dance with Grasshoppa Dance Exchange, an Open Mic session ended the day.
Other activities included the Second Annual Musical Festival Brunch hosted by Cam Wells and featuring the Doug & Jess Band, Mary Murphy and surprise guests. The festival goers also had a chance to try out Taoist Tai Chi near the EnviroTent.

The CUPE Main Stage evening entertainment opened with the Mushfiq Ensemble performing Afghani and North Indian folk music in many languages. Andy Rush and the Terry Penner Festival Choir gave a particularly moving performance that included a wonderful version of “This Land Is Your Land” and other Woody Guthrie tunes. Up and coming P.E.I. singer-songwriter Rose Cousins was followed by favourite festival funny guys The Arrogant Worms, who performed their famous alligator song to the delight of the audience members who got into the act with the usual wild hand motions. Performances by Dirk Powell & Martha Scanlan and American songstress Eliza Gilkyson were followed with a highly danceable set from Cheza, an Ottawa band that blends African styles with rock and folk influences. The final segment brought the evening’s performers back to the main stage for a dramatic finale.

The music in the Bowie Electrical Hall opened with Heather Dale & Ben Deschamps. It was followed with Pepe Danza and Friends, Jah Youssouf, and Chris Whiteley & Diana Braithwaite. The festival wrapped up with the female trio of Ann Downey, Kate Weekes and Lindsay Jane.
The 15th Ottawa Folk Festival certainly lived up to its billing as a party for the people! And party we did, while listening, singing, dancing, building, painting and celebrating. A 2,000 square foot dance tent, a free ukulele-building workshop, a ParticiPaint mural honouring the late Willie P. Bennett and the Terry Penner Festival Choir were but a few of the opportunities people had to “party-cipate”.

Festival highlights included a moving performance from Odetta (who died on Dec. 2, 2008 at the age of 77); and appearances by The Experimental Farmers, Catherine MacLellan, Don Ross & Andy McKee, Finest Kind and the Healing Divas. A moving tribute to Rasputin’s Folk Café was particularly well attended after a July 2008 fire at the legendary Ottawa folk club led to its closing.

An exciting feature at this year’s festival was the 2008 Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Collaboration featuring Anne Davison (Nova Scotia), Benoit Bourque (Quebec), The Carolina Chocolate Drops (North Carolina), Claire Jenkins (Toronto), James Hill (Nova Scotia), Jaxon Haldane (Winnipeg), Mohamed Diarra (Guinea/Gatineau), Petr Cancura (New York/Ottawa), Radoslav Lorkovic (Nashville), Roda de Samba (Brazil/Ottawa), Shara Weaver (Ottawa) and Timothy Mason (Boston).

This year’s festival was the greenest yet. A festival Green Team was established and new initiatives included providing water stations to refill reusable water bottles, making compostable water bottles available on-site, arranging food for a volunteer lunch to be supplied locally from the Lansdowne Farmers Market, and composting food scraps. Other innovations included a vehicle-free site, pedal-powered cargo trikes to haul equipment and supplies, and using solar power to wash plates. Green printing materials were used for festival promotional material, banners and T-shirts. A partnership with Ottawa Riverkeeper and Ecology Ottawa was also established to educate people about local water and watershed management issues.

Continuing initiatives included the reusable dish program, electricity from renewable sources supplied by Bullfrog Power, compostable beer cups provided by Big Rock Brewery and “cupsucker” receptacles provided by Blue Heron Solutions. Folks were encouraged to walk, bike or take public transit to the festival.

Grasshoppa Dance Exchange gave impromptu dance performances all around the site and was joined this year by Dancing in the Street, a project of the Ottawa School of Dance.

The Community Corner was designed to foster discussion and promote awareness. The following organizations had tables this year: Green Party of Canada/Ottawa Greens, ArtsCan Circle, Ecology Ottawa, Ottawa Riverkeeper, Amnesty International, Canada 211, Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa, Oxfam Canada, The Ottawa Food Bank, Ottawa Community Immigration Services Organization, and USC Canada.

There were many awards presented at this year’s festival. J. Chalmers Doane received the Helen Verger Award, which is presented to an individual who has made valuable contributions to folk/roots music in Canada. While working as the Director of Music Education in Halifax in the 1970s, Doane developed a method of teaching students to play music using the ukulele. More than 50,000 schoolchildren and adults throughout Canada and in parts of the U.S. learned to play the ukulele as a result of his efforts. He was recognized with the Order of Canada in 2004 and recently collaborated with ukulele virtuoso James Hill to develop the Ukulele in the Classroom program. Margaret Feuerstack and David Johnstone received the One Fret Less Award.
sponsored by Harvey and Louise Glatt. James Farr was presented with the Galaxie Rising Stars Award. Ana Miura was the recipient of the Beth Ferguson Award.

Arthur II is a gifted Ottawa artist and musician who designed this year’s participatory mural project to honour Canadian folk music legend Willie P. Bennett, who died in February. The huge success of the ParticiPaint mural project at the 2007 festival inspired Arthur II to create an 8 foot by 40 foot mural, which he named after one of Willie’s best-loved songs, “Music in Your Eyes”. The result was a fantastic and heartwarming tribute to one of Canada’s finest singer-songwriters and musicians.

Windhorse Yoga offered participatory yoga sessions to help festival goers stretch, relax and breathe while Santosa Yoga offered a group singing session.

Thursday, August 14
Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor kicked things off with his acoustic ragtime version of “O Canada”. Colores Andinos, a Latin-Andean musical ensemble of South American and Canadian extraction, opened the festival with panache on the CUPE Main Stage. The wonderfully named group, The Experimental Farmers, stole the show that evening. The Farmers included Lynn Miles on vocals and mandolin, Lonesome Paul on vocals and guitar, and Keith Snider on banjo and fiddle. Finest Kind, a group who has performed at the festival since the first year on Victoria Island, took the stage next. Ian Robb, Ann Downey and Shelley Posen performed a mix of traditional songs and original tunes with their usual exquisite three-part harmony. Brilliant fingerstyle guitarist Don Ross was joined by percussive guitar sensation Andy McKee, renowned for his YouTube rendition of “Drifting” that has garnered over 14 million hits. Vieux Farka Touré closed the evening with a lively set that combined traditional Malian blues music with rock and reggae. The group’s performance was recorded by CBC Radio for Canada Live.

In the Dance Tent, the Carolina Chocolate Drops set the audience in motion with their old-time string band music of the Carolinas. The delicious Drops were followed by the D. Rangers, a band whose music has been described as “mutant bluegrass”. The evening closed with Brisa Latina, a group known for their enticing fusion of classic and contemporary Latin rhythms, and their ability to get any crowd moving to the beat!

Friday, August 15
The lovely Ana Miura opened the CUPE Main Stage with her gentle, acoustic self-penned tunes. Bryan Bowers, a native of Virginia now living in California, mesmerized the crowd with his virtuoso autoharp performance. The Jerry Douglas Band featured another virtuoso. Jerry Douglas, renowned for his resophonic guitar playing, has appeared on a staggering 2,000 albums and has won a dozen Grammies. The audience witnessed a stellar performance from this master picker/slide guitarist and his bandmates. Dala features two 20-something vocalists who play guitar and piano. The duo created a set with uplifting sweet harmonies and folk-pop songs. The excitement built as indie favourites Broken Social Scene took the stage. The band delivered a free-flowing, guitar-driven and dynamic vocal performance.

In the Dance Tent, the fun began with a lively, infectious set with Genticorum, a Québécois band that has toured in over 15 countries worldwide. They were joined by the ever-popular Benoit Bourque. Bourque, who garnered a Juno Award and a Canadian Folk Music Award as a member of Le Vent du Nord, is an exuberant accordion player, a virtuoso percussionist on bones, spoons and feet, and a world-class Québécois step dancer. Spiral Beach, a band that includes the offspring of two well-known folkies, returned to the festival with their rhythmic indie rock and performed a rollicking set that was well received by the dancing throng. Donna the Buffalo, a five-member band from upstate New York, were up next with an eclectic offering of folk-rock, country folk, zydeco, reggae and bluegrass tunes. The evening concluded with a wonderful Big Bad Bluegrass
Jam featuring Jerry Douglas, the D. Rangers, Leavin’ Train, The Experimental Farmers and Doug Cox. We could have danced all night with this gang!

The entertainment on the Hall Stage in the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre kicked off with a round-robin Good Vibrations session hosted by Doug Cox. The talented group included Catherine MacLellan, the Healing Divas and Radoslav Lorkovic. They were followed by Claire Jenkins Avec Band, featuring the theatrical actress and singer and her accompanists, who performed quirky and catchy tunes in both official languages. The Doc’s Pick session, named for a regular feature of the CKCU-FM folk music radio show Canadian Spaces was hosted by Doc and featured a diverse and talented lineup. Doc is Peter Conway of McCrank’s Cycles, a local business that is a long time sponsor of Canadian Spaces. The Carolina Chocolate Drops, whose music is steeped in the string band tradition of the American South, was joined by modern bluesman Jaxon Haldane, cellist Anne Davison, and Boston-area spoken word artist Timothy Mason.

Saturday, August 16
Saturday Daytime

Entertainment and activities abounded in the many daytime venues and on the three evening stages.

In the Dance Tent, The Experimental Farmers got toes tapping and were followed by spirited performances from the Carolina Chocolate Drops and Donna the Buffalo. Anne-Marie Brugger, host of the CHUO radio show Hop the Fence, led the My Chemistry Experiment session featuring spoken word guy Timothy Mason, members of Broken Social Scene and Ana Miura. The last performance of the afternoon was a Cajun dance featuring Harlan Johnson & Grouyan Gombo, Michael Jerome Browne, Jody Benjamin, Michael Ball and Mary Gick.

On the Hall Stage, a double bill showcased the talents of Catherine MacLellan and Doug Cox. Anne-Marie Brugger hosted the Hop the Fence session, named for her CHUO radio show that features Canadian musicians of all genres. Participants included Chris Velan, an unplugged Spiral Beach, and two members of the Claire Jenkins band. Andy Rush led the Terry Penner Festival Choir in its first rehearsal. Jowi Taylor hosted the Six String Nation Guitar session featuring pickers and grinners Shelley Posen, Catherine MacLellan and Sean Cotton. The afternoon’s entertainment wound down with a supersonic double bill with two fascinating ensembles making their festival debuts. The five Toronto women comprising the Healing Divas entranced the audience with their positive energy, primal rhythms and luscious vocal harmonies. They were the best-kept secret of the festival. Raymundo & Balam dazzled the audience with their Spanish and Latin guitar styles.

On the scenic Beach Stage, the opening act was Village Harmony, a choir made up of 24 teenagers from Ontario and the eastern United States. The group performed music from Bulgaria, Georgia and South Africa. Roch Parisien, programmer of Galaxie’s Folk Roots channel, hosted the Full Moon, Rising Stars session with James Farr, winner of the Galaxie Rising Stars Award; emerging artist Mélisande; and guitarists Raymundo & Balam. Claire Jenkins hosted the wonderfully fun Cheesy Songs We Love session with guilty pleasure conspirators Spiral Beach and Finest Kind. The Unaccompanied Ballad Singing session with Riley Baugus and Finest Kind was hosted by CBC Radio 2 host and traditional Newfoundland music enthusiast Tom Power. Genticorum hosted the Nos racines musicales (translation: our musical roots) session and was joined by Peter Andrée & Natacha Ducharme and Mélisande.

In the Artisan Village, audience members were fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in the following hands-on workshops: Working with Wood – Solar Woodcuts (Ron Tremback); Wear Your Message – Global Aware (Sarah King); Healthy Products for Your Skin – U.fabu (D. Passmore); Reclaiming Old Fabric – Sew Very Vintage (Carol Elchuk); Working with Glass – Miller’s Glass Reflections (Randi Miller); and Re-working Jewellery for Metal Allergies – Creations of the Heart (Tunica Haris).
On the Hill Stage, Bryan Bowers hosted the Story Songs session. Joining him was Woody Johnson, an individual who creates guitar music for a variety of material dating back to the 1800s. James Hill hosted the Words and/or Music session with Margaret Feuerstack & David Johnstone and Timothy Mason. The Hand Me Down session featured Tao Rodriguez-Seeger and Alexandre de Grosbois-Garand, and was hosted by Michael Jerome Browne. Don Bird was the host of the Hummin’ and Strummin’ session with Dala, Bryan Bowers and Doug Cox. Maura Volante led the audience in a Songcircle to round out the afternoon entertainment.

The verdant space of the Tree Stage set the scene for A Touch of Jazz. The session was hosted by Petr Cancura and showcased Radoslav Lorkovic and Margaret Feuerstack & David Johnstone. Dallas and Travis Good of The Sadies teamed up with members of Broken Social Scene for the Behind the Scenes session. Anne Davison hosted Sources of Inspiration with Woody Johnson and Petr Cancura. Tao Rodriguez-Seeger hosted the Global Villages session with Village Harmony. The day concluded with the first concert in the 2008 Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Collaboration.

On the Point Stage, the afternoon kicked off with the Banjo Banjo Banjo session hosted by Ann Downey and featuring Dirk Powell, Riley Baugus, and Donna the Buffalo bandmates, Jeb Puryear & Tara Nevins. Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor led the audience in the Rise Up Singing session. Chopper McKinnon, host of the CKCU-FM radio show Canadian Spaces, led the session honouring his late, great friend Willie P. Bennett. Chopper told many anecdotes about his pal. Remembering Willie P, also included heartfelt performances by Jaxon Haldane, the D. Rangers, Dallas Good, Travis Good and Lonesome Paul. The Healing Divas hosted the Musical Connections session with Peter Andrée & Natacha Ducharme and Chalmers Doane. The Ukulele 101 session was hosted by virtuoso performer James Hill and also included Chalmers Doane.

In the Kidzone, a wide variety of crafts and activities were available all day. For example, kids could make a kimono or a drum. There were also performances by musicians and jugglers as well as storytelling. Yoga for Families gave everyone a chance to stretch and relax.

At the EnviroTent, green activities were happening all day. Jason Sonier of The Otesha Project presented the session Cradle to Grave: The Life Cycle of a Banana. The Greening the Home session was presented by Sean Twomey of Arbour Environmental Shoppe. Leaf Bellaar-Spruyt of Berg en Dal Honey Farms spoke about Honey, Health and the Environment. USC Canada members Kate Green and Sarah Mohan addressed the topic Food, Farmer and Climate Chaos. The session Muscle Testing Techniques was presented by Katherine Willow of the Carp Ridge EcoWellness Centre. Charles Jonah of Jademark gave the presentation The E-Bike: A Power-Assisted Electric Bicycle.

Windhorse Yoga sponsored a number of activities. In the morning the Catholic Immigration Centre’s CIC Community Cup Celebrity Soccer Match took place in the field behind the Dance Tent. The 30-minute Yoga Tasters presentations held in the morning and afternoon included the following flavours of yoga: Hatha, Vinyasa Flow, Yin and Final Relaxation. Uke Building for Kids allowed children to make their very own ukuleles. In the Dance Tent there were the 1,000 Cranes: Origami for Everyone activity and a display of the Six String Nation Guitar.

Our main stage hosts deserve special mention. Chopper McKinnon and Karen Flanagan McCarthy have hosted the festival main stage every year, starting in 1994 when the first festival was held on Victoria Island. Chopper McKinnon, an important figure in the Canadian folk roots music scene, is perhaps best known for his CKCU-FM radio show Canadian Spaces. The show first aired in 1980 and is the longest-running folk music show on community radio in Canada. Karen Flanagan McCarthy, affectionately known as KFM, is a communications expert who has played a significant role in the festival’s evolution, having served as a member of
the festival’s steering committee and board of directors. She is also a former board member of the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals. **Tom Power** is a Newfoundland musician, broadcaster and writer and the host of CBC Radio 2’s *Deep Roots*. **Alan Neal** is a journalist and radio personality who hosts two CBC Radio 2 shows: *Canada Live* and *Bandwidth*.

Thanks also to the many hosts who helped things run smoothly at the daytime sessions.

**Saturday Evening**
The Québécois band **Genticorum** opened the **CUPE Main Stage** and were warmly welcomed by the crowd. **Country Joe McDonald**, the iconic figure who played at Woodstock, sang his famous anti-war anthem, “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-to-Die Rag”, and showed he still has a radical bent and an unfailing sense of humour. Two blues artists followed. First up was **Roxanne Potvin**, a 26-year-old Gatineau-raised singer who has earned Maple Blues and Juno nominations for her soulful, sultry singing. Her high-energy set was followed by **Colin Linden**. Linden, a master of the country-blues guitar, gave a powerful performance that reverberated throughout the audience. The evening closed with the charming **Sarah Harmer**. It doesn’t get any better than listening to Sarah singing under the stars on a Saturday night!

The **Dance Tent** performances began with **Wil**, a West Coast roots rocker known for his intense live performances. Next up were the **D. Rangers**, a Winnipeg band who served a heaping helping of their “mutant bluegrass” sound. Ottawa favourites **Ball and Chain** are always fun and their set was no exception. Country vocalist **Jody Benjamin** and fiddler **Michael Ball** are **Ball and Chain**. They were backed up by **The Wreckers**, and together they delivered classic country hurtin’ heartache with a Cajun twist. Just the thing to dance to on a warm summer night. **The Sadies**, led by **Dallas and Travis Good**, combined hillbilly and punk influences in their set.

In the **Hall Stage**, **Tao Rodriguez-Seeger** drew an audience eager to hear his songs of struggle and hope and stories about his granddad, Pete Seeger. The crowd enjoyed his “subversive acoustic traditionalist” approach to making music. A rousing set by **Village Harmony** rounded out the evening’s entertainment.

**Sunday, August 17**
There was plenty happening in the many daytime venues and on the three evening stages.

**Sunday Daytime**
In the **Dance Tent**, **Roda de Samba** presented **The Story of Samba**. **Donna the Buffalo** performed next. The session **Latin Breeze** was led by dance instructor **Nubia Cermeño** who taught festival goers how to samba. The dance floor was jam-packed! **The Experimental Farmers** hosted the **On the Edge** session with the **D. Rangers**, **Wil** and **Lonesome Paul**.

**Andy Rush** gathered members of the **Terry Penner Festival Choir** on the **Hall Stage** for a second rehearsal. **Claire Jenkins Avec Band** did a showcase set followed by a performance by **Wil**. A session posing the musical question **How Can I Keep from Singing?** featured **Odetta**, **Tao Rodriguez-Seeger** and **Finest Kind** and was hosted by **Mike Regenstreif**, host of the Montreal CKUT radio program *Folk Roots/Folk Branches*. The last choir rehearsal wrapped up the afternoon stage.

On the scenic **Beach Stage** a **Ukulele Jam** featured virtuoso **James Hill** and uke educator extraordinaire **Chalmers Doane**. They were joined musically by audience members. An American patron of the festival for many years, **Terry Eagan** of *Patio Records*, hosted the **Uncommon Ground** session with **Dirk Powell & Riley Baugus**, **Benoit Bourque** and blues vocalist **Roxanne Potvin**. The Old Blues session hosted by **Colin Linden** showcased the talents of **Michael Jerome Browne**, **Woody Johnson** and **James Farr**. A very inspirational session, **Spirit Connections**, showcased the **Healing Divas** and **Village Harmony**.
A large crowd gathered for the Here’s to Rasputin’s session honouring Rasputin’s Folk Café. The revered Ottawa folk club was forced to close its doors in 2008 following a fire. Lynn Miles, whose musical journey included a close involvement with Rasputin’s in the early years, hosted this session and shared the stage with Colin Linden and Catherine MacLellan. This session provided some of the most poignant moments in the history of the Ottawa Folk Festival. Stories, songs, tears and laughter were shared. Owner Dean Verger spoke briefly and was given a standing ovation and many hugs during and following this moving tribute.

In the Artisan Village, there were presentations all day. Heather Boyd of Filament presented a workshop on Wire Jewellery Techniques. The Lo-Down on Chair-Making was given by Jonny Lo of Lo-Chair. From Cutlery to Jewellery was the theme of the workshop hosted by Bloom/Ash/Postart Gallery. Ania Geerts hosted a Silver Smithing workshop, while Robert Webster of Maple Leaf Studio demonstrated Working with Stone. Artisans Around the World was presented by Ian Brown of Ten Thousand Villages. The day concluded with Randy MacNeil of Canadian Bluesbook who discussed Photo Techniques for Music Events.

At the Hill Stage, the entertainment began with the second concert of the 2008 Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Collaboration. The Carolina Chocolate Drops hosted the Heaven and Earth double bill with the Healing Divas.

Black Sheep Live was hosted by Paul Symes, owner of the famed Black Sheep Inn in Wakefield, Quebec. This session featured James Hill, Anne Davison, Roxanne Potvin and Catherine MacLellan. Themes and Variations was a session with Laura Cortese (Tao Rodriguez-Seeger), Jeb Puryear of Donna the Buffalo, and hosted by Pascal Gemme of Genticorum.

Over at the Tree Stage, Maura Volante led a song circle. The 20 Something session showcased two young groups: Spiral Beach and Dala. Anne Davison hosted the eclectic session Exploratorium with Timothy Mason and Genticorum. Instrumentalism was a session featuring Doug Cox, James Farr and Aaron Goss of D. Rangers. The third concert of the 2008 Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Collaboration was very well received.

The Point Stage opened with Colin Henein of the CKCU-FM radio show Music from the Glen hosting The Art of Accompaniment with Tom Power, Yann Falquet and Ann Downey. Arthur McGregor, owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre, hosted the Songs with a Message session featuring Country Joe McDonald (of Woodstock fame) and Finest Kind. Karen Planagan McCarthy led the Tuned In to Nature session with Sarah Harmer, Jaxon Haldane and Ana Miura. The lively Accordian Overload session showcased Benoit Bourque, Radoslav Lorkovic, Harlan Johnson, Tara Nevins and Treasa Levasseur (Claire Jenkins Avec Band), and was hosted by Dirk Powell. Chalmers Doane and James Hill introduced the uke in Ukulele 101.

In the Kidzone, there were musical performances and many activities including kimono-making, drum making and craft workshops. There was also a session called Yoga for Kids.

The EnviroTent provided talks and demonstrations throughout the day. Albert Dumont (Algonquin, Kitigan Zibi, Anishinabeg) spoke about The Healing Power of Nature. Why Rivers Matter was the topic addressed by Christopher Kelly of the Ottawa Riverkeeper organization. Sean Twoney of Arbou Environmental Shoppe spoke about Renewable Resources. Practical Mud Pies: Cob for Building and Art Projects was the theme of a discussion by Leigh Thorpe and Brent Hyde of City Repair Ottawa. Katherine Willow of the Carp Ridge EcoWellness Centre spoke on The Soul of Sustainability. The newly formed Folk Festival Green Team presented the How Are We Doing? session to discuss the progress of the festival’s green initiatives.
Windhorse Yoga sponsored afternoon events including Uke Building for Kids, 1,000 Cranes – Origami for Everyone and the all-day Six String Nation Guitar display. The 30-minute Yoga Tasters presentations held in the afternoon included the following flavours of yoga: Hatha, Vinyasa Flow, Yin and Final Relaxation. At the OFC Music Knoll, educational programs ran all afternoon. In the Catholic Immigration Centre (CIC) Language Village, you could get a language passport and learn a few words in up to 10 languages.

Sunday Evening
The evening opened on the CUPE Main Stage with an exuberant set by The Duhks followed by the final performance of the 2008 Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Collaboration, which was recorded by CBC Radio for later broadcast. The collaboration showcased the talents of more than a dozen performers from across Canada and the United States.

The entertainment continued with James Hill and Anne Davison. Hill, a virtuoso musician and world-class composer, was accompanied by classically trained cellist Anne Davison. The duo are known for creating magical performances and this one was no exception. Andy Rush and the Terry Penner Festival Choir performed a wonderful set of songs, including Willie P. Bennett’s “Music in Your Eyes”.

Festival goers were privileged to see Odetta in one of her final performances (she died three months after the festival). Performing in a wheelchair, Odetta was in fine voice and demonstrated why she has inspired so many in the civil rights movement and legions of folkies including Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. Her rendition of “This Little Light of Mine” was particularly poignant because she had memorably sung this song unamplified and unaccompanied during a power blackout at the festival five years before. Odetta’s performance was recorded by CBC Radio.

The wild and wonderful Rufus Wainwright closed the evening with a thrilling performance. His mother Kate McGarrigle accompanied him on the grand piano for a few songs.

The performers in the Dance Tent included Spiral Beach and Prairie sensations The Dukhs, whose performance set toes tapping and feet flying. They were followed by Québécois band Genticorum. The evening ended with a Big Bad Blues Jam with Roxanne Potvin, Michael Jerome Browne, Radoslav Lorkovic and surprise guests.

Country Joe McDonald was the popular first performer on the Hall Stage inside the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre. A set by the luminous singer-songwriter Catherine MacLellan followed. The First Annual Ottawa Folk Festival “Kirtan”, a participatory session of singing, was hosted by Santosa Yoga. There was still time for spirited sets by Dirk Powell, Riley Baugus and Friends, and The Dukhs before the sun set on the 2008 Ottawa Folk Festival.
The 16th annual Ottawa Folk Festival gave everyone a chance to “dig their roots” in a glorious community celebration of music, dance, culture and healing.

The festival warmly welcomed Tatiana Nemchin, Director of Planning and Operations, who joined Artistic Director Chris White and Volunteer and Outreach Manager Julia Adam, office staff and more than 700 volunteers to present the “sweet sixteen” edition of the festival.

And sweet it was. In addition to music from a wide array of performers, the festival offered a Kidzone, gardening village, sound healing conference and many participatory activities. The latter included learning swing and Cajun dance steps in the beautiful dance tent, singing in the Terry Penner Festival Choir, and painting a giant mural.

Some popular traditions continued. The Third Annual Cross-Cultural Artist Collaboration featured 25 artists from a range of musical traditions who appeared in groups throughout the festival. The Artisan and Craft Village and the Food Fair continued to be popular elements of the festival experience.

This year’s main stage hosts were CBC broadcasters Amanda Putz and Tom Power. They were ably joined by Ana Miura, a local singer-songwriter who also took on the task of coordinating the gardening theme introduced at this festival.

Each year the festival presents the Helen Verger Award to an individual who has made valuable contributions to Canadian folk music. This year’s deserving recipient, Paul Mills, has been an integral part of the Canadian folk scene for more than 30 years. Paul has worn many hats in his roles as a multi-instrumental musician, performing songwriter, arranger, producer, recording engineer, and founding partner of Borealis Records. He has produced more than 140 albums for artists such as Stan Rogers, Ron Hynes, and Sharon, Lois & Bram. Some of the albums he produced or engineered have reached gold or platinum status, and won both Juno and East Coast Music Awards.

Three cheers for the festival’s Green Team! The greening of the Ottawa Folk Festival continued with the introduction of reusable cutlery and ending the sale of bottled water on-site. Festival goers were encouraged to bring their own water bottles and fill them at hydration stations and thus avoid having plastic bottles filling up the trash. This plastic water bottle-free initiative was achieved with the help of Ottawa Riverkeeper, CUPE, The Water Store and The Council of Canadians.

In the months leading up to the festival, staff, volunteers participating on the Ottawa Folk Festival Green Team and partner organizations put in many hours of work. They ensured that the festival became the first regional festival to become 100% plastic water-bottle free and to actively promote city water as a healthy, sustainable alternative to bottled water. Hydration stations were provided at key points on the site where people could refill their water bottles. The main hydration station consisted of a mobile water dispenser, a large stainless steel tank with five hoses and nozzles for refilling water bottles. The tank was filled continuously from a hose connected to one of the Ron Kolbus Centre’s exterior taps. Thanks to a donation by CUPE local 503 – which represents the city’s own water department employees – we were able to sell stainless-steel bottles to those who didn’t bring their own. And, in collaboration with Ottawa Riverkeeper, we developed and distributed a fact sheet outlining “10 Reasons to Say No To Bottled Water”.

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Two partners actively participated on-site at the festival talking with festival goers about the water-bottle-free initiative, distributing educational information at satellite hydration stations, and assisting the Green Team in refilling and dispensing city drinking water to festival goers. The most impressive part of the operation was the low-tech white board where the usage statistics were recorded all weekend. Festival attendees were very interested to see concrete results: by Sunday evening, 3,819 litres (or more than 1,000 gallons) of water had been dispensed.

Gardening demonstrations and workshops blossomed in the Gardening Village. Here you could get expert advice and information from master gardeners and gardening guru Ed Lawrence, explore a themed patchwork garden or relax in the calming Zen Garden created by Rebecca Cragg. The Worm Factory was also on hand to entertain and educate one and all about worms and the joys of recycling.

The Matsuri Room inside the Ron Kolbus Centre featured traditional Japanese culture ranging from origami (paper folding) and ikebana (flower arranging) to calligraphy, poetry and music. The Ottawa Japanese Cultural Centre, Camellia Teas of Ottawa and KaDo Ottawa graciously provided displays and demonstrations at this and other venues.

The CUPE EnviroTent was in full swing with talks and demonstrations given by USC Canada and Ottawa’s Arbour Environmental Shoppe, to name a few. The Sound Cycle performances by the energetic band Mr. Something Something, featured Canada’s first bicycle-powered sound system.

One of the most exciting festival initiatives this year was Ottawa’s first annual Sound Healing Conference, which incorporated interactive and experiential workshops, dancing, drumming, singing, chanting, sound healing sessions and a panorama of live indigenous music. Sound healing is a therapeutic practice that makes use of chanting, a variety of bowls, gongs, drums, tuning forks and sound tables. Two stellar examples were David Hickey and Debbie Danbrook. A popular sound healing practitioner, David gave an exceptional evening performance of meditative healing music presented with crystal bowls, gongs and chimes. Debbie expertly played the shakuhachi, a traditional Japanese bamboo flute. She is one of the first women to have mastered this ancient sacred instrument.

Perennial festival favourites included the Kidzone where kids of all ages enjoyed music, storytelling and a variety of crafts and games. A 40-foot mural offered another fun way to get involved at the festival. Young and old took up brushes to paint their favourite festival images to accompany those created by veteran artist Arthur II. This was Arthur II’s third festival mural in as many years and he was assisted by Patricia Rodi.

Friday, August 21

Evening

On the CUPE Main Stage, Arthur McGregor’s delightful acoustic version of our national anthem opened the 2009 Ottawa Folk Festival. Thanks to Arthur, owner of the Ottawa Folklore Centre, for continuing to open the festival with this charming festival tradition!

A set with great gusto followed with the Third Annual Cross-Cultural Artist Collaboration. Old-style performers Sheesha and Lotus were up next on fiddle and banjo. The Prince Edward Island group Vishtèn got a great response from the crowd with their fiery fiddling and stunning stepdancing. B.C. resident Kinnie Starr has performed at the festival both as a poet and as a musician. This time around she introduced the receptive audience to her hip-hop groove.

Following intermission, Amy Millan, a member of Stars and Broken Social Scene, took the stage. The evening closed with Steven Page (formerly of The Barenaked Ladies) whose spirited set and amusing banter received a rousing response.
In the big, beautiful Dance Tent, Toronto alt-country rockers The Sadies got the audience up dancing. The crowd was entranced by Mihirangi’s soulful hip vocals in English and Maori. Mr. Something Something, an ecology-minded band with a bike-powered sound system, closed the evening.

At the Hall Stage inside the Ron Kolbus Centre, the entertainment began with Asani, a trio of Aboriginal women from Edmonton. Victoria Vox, a ukulele-wielding woman from south of the border followed. Festival favourite Ray Bonneville performed an emotive set. Bryan Bowers lived up to his reputation as a virtuoso of the autoharp, a stringed folk instrument. Lively piano and accordion wunderkind Radoslav Lorkovic and friends had as much fun performing their blues zydeco music as the audience had listening!

Saturday, August 22
Festival goers enjoyed music, dance, talks and demonstrations at eight daytime and three evening venues.

Saturday Daytime
The fun in the Dance Tent began with the joyful cacophony of Junkyard Symphony. Debbie Danbrook, a master of the shakuhachi (a Japanese bamboo flute), was accompanied by Wendy Morrell for a session of Sacred Dance. The dancing continued with the Ottawa Ondo Dance session, presented by the Ottawa Japanese Cultural Association. A surprise hit of the festival, the band Mr. Something Something entertained with a bike-powered sound system and infectious world beat songs. The Favourite Colours session featured Amy Millan, The Sadies and newcomer Charlotte Cornfield. The next performer was That 1 Guy, famous for his homemade instrument The Magic Pipe, which is a seven-foot-high conglomeration of pipes and strings. The day concluded with a performance by Group 1 of the Cross-Cultural Artist Collaboration.

The weatherproof indoor venue known as the Hall Stage offered a wide variety of musical experiences. Things kicked off with a double bill featuring guitar-playing duo Tall Trees and American ukulele virtuoso Victoria Vox. The Dig Your Roots session presented Lyndell Montgomery, That 1 Guy and brothers Travis and Dallas Good of The Sadies. The Uke-Cello Duos session gave us a chance to see two of the best musical pairs around: ukulele virtuosos James Hill and Victoria Vox, and cellists Anne Davison and melaniejane. The mood shifted with the Life in Japan session showcased Ellen McIlwaine who grew up in Japan, and Debbie Danbrook, who studied flute there. They were joined onstage by Linsey Wellman, Catriona Sturton, Ana Miura and Kyoko Tsumetomi. The session Your Brain on Music was presented by Daniel Mauro and Gary Baker. The Balloon Orchestra was one of the most amusing sessions ever presented at the festival. University music students “played” balloons using various techniques and achieved surprisingly entertaining results.


Up on the Hill Stage, Amelia Curran, Mihirangi and Charlotte Cornfield took part in the Sources of Inspiration session. The Music to Garden By session featured master gardener Ed Lawrence who was joined by musicians Penny Lang, Anne Davison, Robbie Anderman and Petr Cancura. Vishtèn in Concert showcased this Acadian ensemble from Prince Edward Island. Tom Power, James Keelaghan and the Good Lovelies graced the stage for the powerful Deep Roots session. Dirk Powell, Vishtèn and Troy MacGillivray joined together for the Waterbound session. The day closed with a mother and son collaboration: Penny Lang and Jason Lang in Concert.
The **Point Stage** opened with the **Three** session, which featured talented Australian **David Ross MacDonald** and Canadian **Catriona Sturton, Joel Plaskett** had been scheduled to perform in this session but was delayed due to transportation problems. A diverse group of musicians was showcased in the **Musical Arrangements** session: newly solo singer-songwriter **Steven Page**, Newfoundland **Amelia Curran** and piano/accordion player **Radoslav Lorkovic**. There were musical harmonies in abundance at the **Harmony Singing** session with **The Arrogant Worms, The Breakmen** and **Michael Ball and Jody Benjamin**. Rich **Warren** hosted the **Blues and Beyond** session featuring a premier bluesy lineup of **Ray Bonneville, Terra Hazelton** and **Idy Oulu**.

The **VIP Tent** was the site of **Musical Yoga** with **Tanya Nash** and **Jeremy Sills**. **Vocal Warm-Up** with **Meredith Matthews** preceded a **Terry Penner Festival Choir** rehearsal with **Andy Rush**. **Spins and Needles** led a **Kite-Making Workshop**, where festival goers could make a kite in an hour.

In the **OFC Music Tent**, Ottawa Folklore Centre co-founder **Arthur McGregor** led a vocal session called **Rise Up Singing**, named for the songbook of the same name. The **Tin Whistle Workshop**, led by **Ross Davison**, offered a free tin whistle to the first 20 participants. Other participatory sessions included **Intro to Irish Stepdance** with **Michael Farrell** and a **Didgeridoo Workshop** led by **Chris Lavigne**. The first 30 participants in the didgeridoo session received free mini-didges. The day concluded with an **OFC Music Open Stage**.

In the **Garden Tent**, a variety of activities came to fruition. **Advice Clinics** were presented by the **Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton**. **Earthworm Choreography** was a session with **The Worm Factory**. The **Just Food** session explored aspects of community gardening. The **Zen Gardening** session was presented by **Rebecca Cragg**. A talk on gardening without pesticides by master gardener **Ed Lawrence** was followed by a question-and-answer session and book signing. The **USC** session was titled **Seeding for the Future from the Past**. The day’s activities concluded with a **Kimono Demonstration**, showcasing some beautiful Japanese garments.

**Saturday Evening**

On the **CUPE Main Stage**, Aboriginal artists **DiggingRoots** wowed the crowd with their musical presentation melding roots, rock, hip-hop and blues. Perennial festival performers **The Arrogant Worms** made us laugh with their silly stories and songs. From the ridiculous we moved to the sublime with renowned ukulele virtuoso **James Hill**, and his life partner, cellist **Anne Davison**. After intermission, the **Good Lovelies** delivered a set of heavenly vocal harmonies. Headliner and Ottawa hometown hero **Bruce Cockburn** offered up a superb set of songs featuring many fan favourites.

Between sets, awards were presented to the winners of the local auditions that precede the festival each year. **Tall Trees** (**Kelly Peltier** and **Trevor Pool**) received the **Galaxie Rising Stars** award given annually to the under-25 winners. In the open category, **Stewed Roots** (**Neva Tesolin** and **Jeff [Jennifer] Hale**) received the 2009 **One Fret Less Award** sponsored annually by **Harvey and Louise Glatt**.

In the **Dance Tent**, the entertainment was perfectly suited to dancing the night away. However before the boogeying began, **Crystal Journey with David Hickey** gave a profoundly relaxing presentation of meditative healing music using gongs, bowls and tuning forks. A feeling of peacefulness and spiritual harmony filled the tent. The music then turned to the mellow musing of **Michael Jerome Browne**, a brilliant interpreter of vintage blues and Cajun and Appalachian music. Things really kicked into high gear with a **Saturday Night Cajun Dance Party** with **Ball and Chain & the Wreckers**, featuring **Jody Benjamin** and **Michael Ball**. They were joined by **Christine Balfa** and **Dirk Powell** of **Balfa Toujours**, a traditional Cajun band from southwest Louisiana.

At the **Hall Stage, Jody Benjamin** got audience members kicking up their heels with a participatory Cajun dance lesson. **James Keelaghan**, who has delighted festival audiences over the years with his wonderful stories in song, performed next with renowned bass player **David Woodhead**. They were followed by the lovely
Newfoundland singer-songwriter Amelia Curran. That 1 Guy hosted the Power of One, which included a mesmerizing vocal performance by Mihiirangi, a native woman from New Zealand.

Sunday, August 23
Festival goers enjoyed music, dance, talks and demonstrations at eight daytime and three evening venues.

Sunday Daytime
Sunday morning opened in the Dance Tent with a performance by Group 2 of the Cross-Cultural Artist Collaboration. The members of Junkyard Symphony followed and filled the tent with infectious rhythms created with a variety of funky instruments. No experience was needed for the Hip Hop with Frank! session.

Festival goers also got into the swing of things with an Intermediate Charleston Lesson presented by the Swing Dynamite Dance School. Geoff & Andrea presented the Beginner 1920s Charleston Lesson. The Woodchoppers Association with Jah Youssouf and special guest Abdoulaye Koné provided the next dance tracks. The day ended in style with a Sunday Swingtacular, presented by Dance with Alana and featuring the jazzy Terra Hazelton & Her Easy Answers. Terra is a jazz vocalist who was mentored by the late Jeff Healey.

At the Hall Stage, the day’s entertainment began with a double bill featuring Captain Dirt and the Skirt, and The Breakmen. Flowing with the Go was the enigmatic title of the next session featuring sax/flute player Linsey Wellman, cellist Anne Davison and flute player Robbie Anderman. Instructors Alana & Fred led two dance sessions: Beginner Swing Dance Lesson and Intermediate Lindy Hop Lesson. Focus on the Guitar was the theme of a session with Kristin Sweetland and Jason Lang (son of Penny Lang). The afternoon ended with an amazing performance by Group 3 of the Cross-Cultural Artist Collaboration.

On the Moon Stage, the Uke Addiction session presented an impressive performance by James Hill, Jason Lang and Victoria Vox. Theda Phoenix was up next with her healing and meditative music. She was followed by an eclectic set with Stewed Roots. There were sweet harmonies aplenty in the soulful Sing It Sister session with Terra Hazelton, Penny Lang and the Good Lovelies, accompanied by multi-instrumentalist Radoslav Lorkovik. Uke 101 was a participatory session with ukulele master James Hill. The final session was a double bill with Jeremy Sills and the female Aboriginal group Asani.

The Hill Stage rang with Spirit Voices, which showcased a diverse group made up of Raven Kanatakta, ShoShona Kish, Mihiirangi, Albert Dumont and Asani. The Human Condition was the emotive theme explored in a session with a talented lineup including Ray Bonneville, Ellen McIlwaine, Michael Jerome Browne and hosted by Montreal folk DJ Mike Regenstreif. Bruce Cockburn, Joel Plaskett, Steven Page and Ana Miura were featured in the popular session Songs from the Road. The Outstanding in Their Field session brought together gardener Ed Lawrence and “earthy” musicians The Arrogant Worms, DiggingRoots, Stewed Roots, Tall Trees and Charlotte Cornfield. The afternoon closed with Albert Dumont, Mr. Something Something, and Vishtén lifting their voices in the Natural Harmony session.

The Point Stage opened with the African Roots session featuring the rhythmic offerings of Jah Youssouf, Abdoulaye Koné and Lewis Melville. The Canadian Spaces session, a salute to the CKCU-FM folk radio show, was hosted by Chopper McKinnon and featured David Ross MacDonald, Captain Dirt and the Skirt, and James Keelaghan. Toes were tapping at the next session showcasing Troy MacGillivray & Canadian Grand Master Fiddlers. The Be the Change session was hosted by Peter Conway and featured Asani, Catriona Sturton and members of The Woodchoppers Association. The Participate session highlighted the talents of Todd Crowley, The Breakmen and Petr Cancura.

In the VIP Tent, Tanya Nash began the day with a Musical Yoga session. Meredith Matthews followed with Vocal Warm-Up, which led into a Terry Penner Festival Choir rehearsal with Andy Rush. Debbie Danbrook, a virtuoso of the shakuhachi, led the session Breath Work. The Balladry session brought together
two Maritime singer-songwriters, Tom Power and Amelia Curran, along with Brian Bowers, a master autoharp player from the U.S. A second Vocal Warm-Up session with Meredith Matthews led to the third and final Terry Penner Festival Choir rehearsal.

In the OFC Music Tent, Arthur McGregor started off the afternoon workshops with a Jaw Harp workshop. The first 25 people who attended Marc Seguin’s Harmonica Workshop were given a free blues harp courtesy of the Ottawa Folklore Centre. Jesse Greene gave a Blues Guitar Workshop, while Dean Adema gave a Banjo Workshop.

On the OFC Music Open Stage, Jack MacGregor closed the afternoon with a Drum Workshop and Free Dance.

The Garden Tent was a popular site that offered a wide variety of information and activities. Advice Clinics were given by the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton. This group also presented a session on Gardening in Hypertufa Troughs. Tea enthusiasts flocked to the Zen Garden for a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Ed Lawrence gave a talk about gardening without pesticides, followed by questions and answers and a book signing. Rebecca Cragg demonstrated ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arranging. The Dig Your Roots session offered advice about gardening in your backyard. The USC gave a talk on Seeding for the Future from the Past. The day ended with the lively session Come and Dance the ONDO!

Sunday Evening
The early evening performances started with one that many people look forward to each year: the Terry Penner Festival Choir directed by Andy Rush. Thank you to Andy and this dedicated group of singers who volunteered their time and energy to practices throughout the festival. They spread a little light and love in song in memory of Terry Penner, the late co-founder of the Ottawa Folklore Centre. The audience was in for a treat with a set by the charming Ellen McIlwaine, a master of the slide guitar and a consummate storyteller. The Circle of Song was hosted by silver-haired folksinger Penny Lang, who shared the stage with Ray Bonneville and James Keelaghan. Joel Plaskett showed us why he is one of the young stars on the Canadian music scene. He performed a folkly set accompanied by his father Bill. African world music and reggae was the flavour of the last musical guest of the evening. Idy Oulu and his band performed with instruments both traditional and modern.

The music in the Dance Tent began with Sunday Swingtacular, a swing dance extravaganza with Terra Hazelton & Her Easy Answers. That 1 Guy (a.k.a. Mike Silverman) gave us a unique set that only a classically trained one-man band who plays wild and wonderful homemade instruments can. The Vancouver foursome The Breakmen dispensed a little bluegrass joy to help the audience get that dancin’ feeling.

At the Hall Stage, the effervescent Good Lovelies showed why they have been described as “the perfect antidote to world gloom and doom”. Australian songwriter and fingerstyle guitarist David Ross MacDonald amazed the crowd with his nimble-fingered performance. Classically-influenced instrumentalist Lyndell Montgomery and singer-guitarist Kristin Sweetland, known collectively as Captain Dirt and the Skirt, delivered an enjoyable set. The evening closed with a Kirtan session featuring The Bhakti Connection. This Ottawa ensemble gave participants a chance to experience blissful devotional music.

On the Monday night after the festival, a mix of volunteers, staff and general public who hadn’t yet had their fill of the wonderful musical array that was the 2009 festival, met at the Elmdale House Tavern for the Festival Wrap-up Concert. It featured the ever-popular Ray Bonneville and one of this year’s festival “finds”, Victoria Vox.
A special thank you to **Chris White** who co-founded the Ottawa Folk Festival with CKCU-FM station manager **Max Wallace** in 1993 and served as artistic director for all 16 festivals before stepping down in the fall of 2009. Chris has passionately and with boundless energy helped the festival grow from a small one-day event to a multi-day event that has earned widespread acclaim. We wish him well in his future endeavours!

We must also express gratitude to the festival’s founding hosts, **Chopper McKinnon** and **Karen Flanagan McCarthy**, who co-hosted the main stage from year 1 to year 15. Chopper is an important part of the Canadian folk scene and is the creator and host of *Canadian Spaces*. Now in its 30th year, it’s the longest-running folk show on Canadian community radio and can be heard Saturday mornings on CKCU-FM 93.1. Karen is a lively presenter, experienced broadcaster and communications expert who contributed to the festival in myriad ways, encouraging partnerships and participating as a member of its board and steering committee.

A fond farewell was extended to **Tatiana Nemchin**, Director of Planning and Operations. Thanks also go out to Volunteer and Outreach Manager **Julia Adam**, whose work at the festival over the past two years was greatly appreciated.
The 17th annual Ottawa Folk Festival was held at Britannia Park for the final year at that location in 2010 with a new Festival Director at its helm. **Dylan Griffith**, from the Dawson City Music Festival, led the event, which ran from **August 13-15**. The streamlined program had no Thursday night concerts or off-site concerts as was the case in many previous years, and operated Friday night and during the day and evening on Saturday and Sunday.

The festival’s sustainable practices were further enhanced in 2010. Reusable dishes, solar heating to heat the dishwashing water, and not selling bottled water on the site were just a few of the ways the Ottawa Folk Festival worked toward holding a future zero-waste event. The **EnviroTent** ran sessions on Saturday and Sunday, which included discussions about urban gardening, veggie cars and solar energy. The popular cob-building demonstration returned.

Some of the site layout changes, however, were controversial. For the second year, the food vendors and artisans were located in the parking lot where many found the traffic to their booths was reduced. This site change also didn’t allow city buses to drive directly to the main gate. OC Transpo buses were rerouted to a nearby back street.

Programming in 2010 focused on community involvement, sustainability and an eclectic mix of acts that included several festival favourites, such as the **Jim Cuddy Band**, and emerging artists or cross-over acts, like **The Weakerthans** and **The Hidden Cameras**. There were many non-traditional choices, including **Arrested Development**, as well as world music offerings **The Mighty Popo**, **Delhi 2 Dublin** and **Namgar**. The Canadian Aboriginal community was well represented by Inuit singer-songwriter **Tanya Tagaq**, who has a unique style of solo throat singing. With several local choirs performing on the main stage, the festival continued to foster inclusivity and active public participation. American musical legend **Ramblin’ Jack Elliott**, a contemporary of Woody Guthrie who influenced Bob Dylan, gave evocative performances throughout the festival with fascinating stories and anecdotes to match.

The sessions and demonstrations were some of the ways our children were involved at the festival. **Todd Crowley** returned to the Kidzone with his musical petting zoo, and the **Catholic Immigration Centre** hosted pick-up soccer games outside the Dance Tent. The annual children’s parade (the **Sunshine Parade**) did not take place because of a rainstorm, but the Kidzone had storytelling sessions, a drum circle, and yoga to keep kids occupied.

Ottawa artist **Arthur II** coordinated and led Participaint, which was a great way for both children and adults to create a beautiful large-scale mural during the festival. There were many opportunities to get involved in the music making, dancing and artistic projects, including an instrument lock-up available to festival goers, the **Terry Penner Festival Choir**, the ukulele-building session, and **Librivox**, which is an opportunity for performers, volunteers and audience members to read and record classic Canadian poems. In the food tent and at the trolley station, organized jam sessions continued throughout the day on Saturday and Sunday, and continued long after the scheduled sessions had ended.

The **Helen Verger Award**, named in honour of the co-founder of Rasputin’s Folk Café, was presented to **Harvey Glatt**, a major contributor to the Ottawa music scene. Harvey opened the first of 15 Treble Clef music stores in 1957. He went on to finance the legendary folk music venue **Le Hibou** and helped numerous folk musicians with their careers. In 1977, Harvey founded CHEZ-FM, a station notable for its commitment to Canadian artists. Harvey and his wife, **Louise Glatt**, continue to contribute to the Ottawa musical community with major donations to the National Arts Centre, as well as establishing the **One Fret Less Award**, given in
2010 to Clarksdale Moan. Delhi 2 Dublin received the Supernova Award, and The Musettes were presented with the Galaxie Rising Stars Award.

The Community Tent was an opportunity for organizations to raise awareness among festival goers regarding various environmental and social initiatives. The following organizations participated: City of Ottawa Heritage Museums, University of Ottawa Heart Institute, OXFAM, Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy, Carp Ridge Ecowellness Centre, Spirit of Rasputin’s, USC Canada, Bikes for Beats, Ottawa Centre NDP, Ecology Ottawa, and the Guatemalan Stove Project.

Friday, August 13
On the CUPE Main Stage, Albert Dumont, an Algonquin Aboriginal elder, hosted the opening ceremony. After Ottawa Folklore Centre owner Arthur McGregor played his customary acoustic ragtime version of “O Canada”, Folka Voca, the Ottawa Folklore Centre’s community choir led by Lee Hayes performed. The group of about 40 singers shared their love of folk music with a large crowd. The choir was followed by Jon Brooks, who delivered his brand of well-crafted protest songs reminiscent of Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton and Bob Dylan.

The Ottawa band The Acorn took to the stage next with its rural, rootsy sounds. Rock Plaza Central, a Toronto band that encompasses folk, rock and alt-country sounds performed before Arrested Development took to the stage. This much-lauded American group was formed in the 1990s as an alternative to gangsta rap and is a positive force to be reckoned with. The band wowed the opening night crowd with a powerful, high-energy performance packed with spellbinding lyrics.

In the Galaxie Dance Tent there was plenty of lively dancing, toe tapping and swaying to the accompaniment of groups with evocative names including Bruce Peninsula, the Foggy Hogtown Boys, and Hoots & Hellmouth. Bruce Peninsula showcased traditional world music, while the Foggy Hogtown Boys are a bluegrass band. Hoots & Hellmouth, on the other hand, fuse diverse influences including gospel, bluegrass and punk.

Saturday, August 14
The first session in the Bowie Hall Stage was Strung Out, featuring Gareth Pearson, Christine Bougie, Kenny Pauze, Dan Whiteley and Kris Drevar. The Musettes appeared in concert followed by Poutine and a Pint with Galant, tu perds ton temps and LAU. The Woe Is Me session showcased Horse Feathers, Clarksdale Moan and Jenny Whiteley.

The entertainment on the Hill Stage began with a session titled It’s Indie Lovely with Horse Feathers, The Acorn, Bahamas and Aidan Knight. The Folk the 80s! session featured Bahamas, Krista Muir, Craig Cardiff, Peter Katz, Aidan Knight and Gareth Pearson. Jill Zmud appeared in concert, and the day ended with the Voices Carry session showcasing Arrested Development, Galant, Tu perds ton temps and Bruce Peninsula.

On the Point Stage, the sassy I Spit on Your Rave session featured LAU, Godknowswhat and Hoots & Hellmouth. Jon Brooks, Peter Katz, Lynn Miles, Frank Turner and Joel Gibb participated in the Political Affairs session. Clarksdale Moan appeared in concert. The eclectic A Place Called Home session attracted a large crowd that turned out for sets by The Acorn, Namgar, Tanya Tagaq, Kim Beggs and Calexico.

Audience members participated in the Wake-Up! Yoga session at the PSAC Moon Stage. The amusingly named Wake Me Up Before You Blow Blow session simply featured “horns and more”. When Chopper McKinnon, host of the longstanding CKCU-FM folk music radio show Canadian Spaces could not attend the Canadian Spaces session due to illness, Mike Regenstrief, host of the Montreal radio show Folk Roots/Folk Branches stepped in to lead the session. A large crowd of “Space Cadets”, fans of Canadian Spaces, turned out

In the Ottawa Folklore Centre Tent, Rick McGrath hosted the Jam Etiquette session, while Arthur McGregor led the Jaw Harp session. Mary Gick hosted the Clawhammer Banjo session. The Tin Whistle session was led by Ross Davison. A Ukelele Crash Course was hosted by Mark McHale. The last session of the day was the Spirit of Rasputin’s Open Stage.

Participants could eat and drink while taking in the performances at the Food Court Tent, including a Trad Singing Jam, a Celtic Jam, a Singable Songs Sing-A-Long session, and the Old Time Appalachian Jam. Over at the Trolley Station, people gathered for a Drumming Jam. Spirit of Rasputin’s Open Jam, a Bluegrass Jam and a Ukelele Jam.

In the Kidzone, children participated in the Origami for Beginners session with Maya Papayasan. The Storytelling & Bird Feeder Making session was hosted by Dina of Barefoot Books; Yoga for Parents & Kids was hosted by Sheila Craig. There was a Percussion Instrument Making session as well as a Drum Circle session with Leo Brookes. More sessions were also held with Prof. Webfoot & Creatures from the River as well as Extreme Origami with Maya Papayasan.

On the CUPE Main Stage, the evening entertainment began with Tone Cluster, a tuneful choir with membership drawn mainly from Ottawa’s gay, lesbian and transgender community. The five females comprising the francophone band Galant, tu perds ton temps performed traditional Québécois and Acadian tunes with great panache. The rootsy mood continued with LAU, a trio that features material rooted in Scottish folk traditions. Carolyn Mark & the New Best Friends left us laughing with satirical songs and imaginative patter, while Ottawa favourites Jim Bryson and The Weakerthans charmed the crowd with quirky yet brilliant selections. The evening ended with a lively performance from the eclectic seven-member Arizona band Calexico, which combines diverse musical influences including country, folk, Latin and jazz.

The Galaxie Dance Tent had the crowd hopping with an especially eclectic range of music. Namgar, a traditional Mongolian female musician and vocalist from Russia, gave a fascinating performance of music that is rarely witnessed in Canada. She and her band played traditional instruments such as the yatag, a zither-type instrument. English singer-songwriter Frank Turner turned in a solo performance tinged with punk influences. Inuit performer Tanya Tagaq provided an evocative and emotional performance that showcased her unique style of vocalization fusing contemporary styles with solo throat singing. Tanya was ably accompanied by fiddler Jesse Zubot and percussionist Jean Martin. The fun wound down with The Hidden Cameras, a nine-member band that combines complex and diverse musical influences.

Sunday, August 15
On Sunday morning, a torrential downpour and high winds left the festival organizers no choice but to shut down all of its outdoor stages for safety reasons. Daytime concerts on Sunday were cancelled or moved inside. The CUPE Main Stage did not reopen. Since the Ron Kolbus Centre had only one stage, there was no way to accommodate all of the programming. This resulted in many unscheduled collaborations between artists and plenty of unanticipated but interesting musical pairings. In fine festival tradition, the performers and audience rallied to the occasion and cheerfully went with the flow, making the best of a less than ideal situation.

Mike Regenstrief hosted A Conversation with Ramblin’ Jack Elliott in which Jack related fascinating stories drawn from his more than 50-year career in folk music.

Musicians slated to perform on Sunday included Amy Millan, Carolyn Mark, Chris Eaton, Chris McLean, Coco Love Alcorn, Craig Cardiff, Dan Whiteley, Delhi 2 Dublin, Frank Turner, Galant, tu perds

Sessions scheduled to take place included Hand Drumming with Dave Bossmin, a Ukelele Crash Course with Mark McHale, Nose Flute with Arthur McGregor, and Beginner Harmonica with Marc Seguin. Jam sessions were also scheduled for shape note singing, storyteller story swaps, a ukulele orchestra and old-time Appalachian music.

By the evening the Dance Tent reopened, and many acts that were scheduled for the CUPE Main Stage, including the Terry Penner Festival Choir performed. Standout performances included one by the legendary Ramblin’ Jack Elliott, who delivered original material developed over more than half a century. This “musician’s musician” inspired both Bob Dylan and Arlo Guthrie, the son of his good friend Woody Guthrie. The high-energy, eclectic Delhi 2 Dublin got the crowd on its feet and dancing enthusiastically, setting the pace for the festival’s electrifying final set by The Jim Cuddy Band, with featured performers Luke Doucet and Melissa McClelland.

The trolley station at the main gate also served as an impromptu jam site, where artists, volunteers and festival goers who had brought their instruments, or had just learned a few ukulele chords, joined in.

Unknown to all, 2010 was the last year that the Ottawa Folk Festival would take place at much-loved Britannia Park, the festival’s home for most of its history. The natural beauty of the park and beach afforded unforgettable scenes such as double rainbows, and gorgeous sunsets often followed by shooting stars, greatly enhancing the festival experience. The Ottawa River, whether sparkling like a million diamonds, calm or white-capped, was an amazing backdrop for the festival. The opportunity to stroll by the riverside between performances was wonderful, and greatly appreciated by festival goers.

This was not the first change of venue for the Ottawa Folk Festival. The first festival in 1994 was scheduled to take place at Vincent Massey Park and shifted six weeks before the event to Victoria Island. The festival began at Britannia Park in 1995. Although the festival would come under new management and relocate to Hogs Back Park in 2011, the location proved not as important as the spirit of the music and good will that permeates the Ottawa Folk Festival.

Financial Support
The Ottawa Folk Festival thanks the following sponsors, partners and suppliers: OFC Music (The Ottawa Folklore Centre), Canadian Heritage, City of Ottawa, National Library of Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Ontario Arts Council, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, Government of Canada, Public Service Alliance of Canada, Galaxie, Big Rock Brewery, Steve’s Music Store, Crowne Plaza Hotels and Resorts, Pattiison, Canadian Union of Public Employees, wall sound-lighting, Raven, Cameron, Ballantyne and Yazbeck, Metro, Yellow Tail, Birddog Design, McCrank's Cycles, Siren Bakery, HOPE Volleyball, SummerFest, Arbour, Carmello’s, The Table, Dolleco Printing, Event Water Solutions, Bowie Electrical Services, McKeen Metro, Diffusart.biz, Bridgehead, ECOGEN Energy Inc., Bagel Bagel, Ebam Enterprises Ltd., B. goods, Ottawa Riverkeeper, Life Without Plastic, The Council of Canadians, and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. Sincere thanks as well to all who donated to the Sustainability Fund to ensure the festival and its many community activities continue in the future.
Audiences attending the 2011 Ottawa Folk Festival experienced many changes, along with a reassuring number of familiar elements. In the fall of 2010, the board of the Ottawa Folk Festival was faced with a high debt load accrued over several years exacerbated by the torrential rains of the final day of the 2010 festival. The board decided to gratefully accept an offer by Ottawa Bluesfest to take over management of the Ottawa Folk Festival under the supervision and guidance of Executive Producer Mark Monahan. A new general manager (Mark Morrison) was brought aboard, with continuity provided by core staff members, including sponsorship manager Ana Miura, volunteer manager Emily Addison, and office manager Crystal Kirkpatrick.

The second major change for the festival was its relocation to Hogs Back Park at Heron Road and Riverside Drive. The new location was chosen not only for its natural beauty but also for its more central location, readily accessible by bike and public transit, and with ample parking nearby.

The festival returned to a four-day format (Thursday and Friday nights; afternoons and evenings on Saturday and Sunday). Increased programming funds became available. The festival featured a number of “side projects” by major Canadian and international artists with wide reputations and followings from their bigger, more familiar bands or careers. The central location and advertising theme – “Meet the Folkers” – were aimed at attracting new and younger audiences. But also present were familiar elements of years past such as daytime workshops and the popular mixing and mingling of artists and styles; small stages where roots and acoustic acts drew intimate audiences; kid-friendly music and crafts; and the long-standing commitment to the environment and progressive educational and community activities.

Three major stages dominated the expansive site built along either side of the public bike path: the CUPE-SCFP Main Stage (with the PSAC Moon Stage alongside for “tweener” performances); the Ravenlaw Stage with its magnificent natural-bowl acoustics; and the Falls Stage with a larger than ever sprung-floor dance tent. Three smaller daytime stages (Legacy, Heron and Slackwater) and Workshops on the Point were programmed by the Ottawa Folklore Centre. Food vendors and artisan crafts, as well as Arthur II’s annual participatory mural project rounded out the site.

Except for a cooler final day, the warm weather brought out large audiences and was conducive to kicking back and enjoying the music well into the evenings. There was plenty of space in the vast lawn in front of the main stage for lawn-chair and standing/dancing crowds to coexist happily. Overall consensus: the changes were largely positive, and the essence of the Ottawa Folk Festival remained intact and healthy.

Thursday, August 25
On the CUPE-SCFP Main Stage, Arthur McGregor launched the weekend with the festival tradition of his unique acoustic version of our national anthem. This was followed by a tribute to recently deceased NDP leader Jack Layton by PSAC Regional VP Larry Rousseau and CUPE National President Paul Moist.

With the audience growing steadily larger over the warm evening, the main stage was opened by Ottawa’s Megan Jerome, singer-songwriter-pianist and 2011 Galaxie Rising Stars Award winner. Next up was Canadian rocker-songwriter Hawksley Workman who performed a crowd-pleasing, dynamic set. The evening ended with American pianist and singer Bruce Hornsby and the Noisemakers, back in Ottawa after a 21-year absence. The set ranged widely across folk, jazz and bluegrass, delighting the audience all the way.
Two award presentations took place on the PSAC Moon Stage. Board Vice-President Penny Bertrand presented the inaugural Festival Builders Hall of Fame awards to 18 people whose involvement in the first years of the festival gave it early momentum: Karen Flanagan McCarthy, Rachel Hauraney, Roberta Huebener, Suzanne Lessard-Wynes, Joyce MacPhee, Rod McDowell, Chopper McKinnon, Arthur McGregor, Alan Marjerrison, Pam Marjerrison, Barry Pilon, Sheila Ross, Carol Silcoff, Gene Swimmer, Max Wallace, Chris White, Dean Verger and Peter Zanette.

At the next break, Gene Swimmer, Ottawa Folk Festival Executive Director from 1996 to 2006, returned to the stage to receive the 2011 Helen Verger Award, presented by Mark Monahan.

Drawing good crowds over on the Ravenlaw Stage were Ottawa roots-rocker John Allaire, gypsy folk band Dry River Caravan, and roots collective Punch Brothers, led by mandolin virtuoso Chris Thile.

In the dance tent at the Falls Stage people kicked up their heels to the country and western sounds of Ottawa’s Gerry Wall band (featuring the festival’s own Ana Miura) followed by improvisational singer-songwriter Peter Himmelman. A big crowd gathered to hear Justin Townes Earle, the son of Friday’s headliner, Steve Earle.

Friday, August 26
All three stages were again active throughout the warm Friday evening. Leading things off on the CUPE-SCFP Main Stage, with their foot-stomping, old-time fiddling and songs were The B-Flat Sisters (Kimberley Holmes and Sherryl Fitzpatrick). In a change of pace from this rootsy start came singer Dallas Green (City and Colour) who attracted a large and enthusiastic audience. Closing out the evening to one of the weekend’s largest crowds was New Orleans country, blues, and folk rock act Steve Earle and the Dukes (& Duchesses) featuring singer Allison Moorer. Between sets, John Allaire and Jayme Stone appeared on the Moon Stage.

The hillside in front of the Ravenlaw Stage also drew large, enthusiastic crowds. The evening’s entertainment included creative drumming (on anything and everything!) from the Los Angeles ensemble Street Drum Corps. Veteran singer-songwriter Garland Jeffreys delivered a spirited performance of hits and new material. The U.S. festival-circuit favourites, upstate New York’s Gandalf Murphy & The Slambovian Circus of Dreams also performed.

As an alternative to the big sounds on the main stage, the more intimate Falls Stage featured banjoist and world-music afficionado Jayme Stone, followed by the social commentary of deep-voiced American singer-songwriter Vance Gilbert.

Saturday, August 27
The CUPE-SCFP Main Stage ran solidly from 2 p.m. until closing time. Veteran folk-blues finger-guitarist Rick Fines led things off, followed by singer-songwriter and master storyteller, Steve Poltz. Transitioning to the evening program, the Street Drum Corps got everyone on their feet with infectious beats. The audience grew steadily, attracted by indie-rock group Rural Alberta Advantage, followed by the hard-hitting political songs of Tom Morello (The Nightwatchman), and culminating with Conor Oberst and his roots-rock band Bright Eyes (joined for the final number by Tom Morello).

Between sets, the Moon Stage was the venue for Spencer Scharf, TJ Wheeler, Kim Churchill and The Little Stevies.

The Ravenlaw Stage operated steadily from 1:30 p.m. until 11:00 p.m., with offerings from around the world through sets by Memphis bluesman TJ Wheeler, Australia’s The Little Stevies, New York duo Chris Brown...
& Kate Fenner, and Californian Matt Costa. By 7:30 p.m., the hillside bowl was packed for Polish-Canadian singer-songwriter Basia Bulat and on into the late evening with Australian musician Colin Hay.

The Falls Stage dance tent started the day getting people up with an Intro to Contra Dancing featuring Ottawa’s Old Sod Band. The dance-beat continued with Montreal’s Havana-inspired Doc Weiss and band, Victoria, B.C. folk-rockers Jon and Roy, folk-country-rock band The Wooden Sky, the harmonies of Madison Violet (Brenley MacEachern and Lisa MacIsaac – this year’s Galaxie Supernova Award winners), JJ Grey & Mofro, blending southern rock, blues and Florida swamp soul, and young guitar sensation Kim Churchill. The last act was Lazybones (East Coast duo Matt Wells and Tim Neill and their hillbilly-reggae style kitchen party). Lazybones replaced the American performer J. Mascis who was prevented from attending the festival by hurricane-related travel difficulties.

Daytime Workshops
Afternoon workshops took place on the three smaller point stages on Saturday and Sunday. On the Legacy Stage the annual Terry Penner Festival Choir formed for two rehearsals Saturday and another Sunday, under the direction of Lee Hayes. Their final performance, originally slated for the Slackwater Stage, was moved to the Sunday 4:30 p.m. slot on the CUPE-SCFP Main Stage in keeping with the festival’s tradition.

Also on the Legacy Stage a series of instrumental skills workshops were presented under the title Pass It Down. They included Intro to Ukulele with The Little Stevies, Banjo Basics with Ann Downey, Don’t You Put It In Your Mouth? (tin whistle, nose flute, and kazoo with Andy Daub) and I’ve Got Rhythm with Ottawa drummer Don Gibbons.

On the Heron Stage, Vance Gilbert led the session Judgement Day: Crash Course for Performers. This was followed by the first part of a two-day Music Olympics featuring Lynn Miles and Keith Glass. Old Traditions, New Songs showcased Rick Fines, Vance Gilbert and Jayme Stone. An Interview with Colin Hay was led by Joe Reilly. Song Maps with Orchid Ensemble & Kim Churchill was the final act.

The intimate Slackwater Stage featured Storytelling & Mythology with Anaïs Mitchell, Garland Jeffreys, Josiah (of Gandalf Murphy and the Slambovian Circus); and two sessions of Bluebird North (presented by the Songwriters Association of Canada), the first featured Lynn Miles, Jeremy Fisher and Dry River Caravan; the second showcased Rick Fines, Megan Jerome and Ana Miura.

Accompanied by all-day face-painting and crafts, programming at the Kidzone tent began with Yoga for Big and Small with Sheila Craig, delighting kids and adults with an imaginary camping trip to introduce yoga stretches and moves. An afternoon of rhythm activities began with the Bang! session with the Street Drum Corps, who made music on buckets and almost everything but actual drums. As well, Leo Brooks of Treefrog Percussion led a make-your-own drum workshop and rhythm jam session. Wabi-Sabi Textile artist Carol Secord led a create-your-own-art workshop, teaching the basics of felt making. The day ended with an imaginative, all-ages history of blues and jazz by TJ Wheeler.

A small tent near the community displays housed Jam Sessions open to anyone with a yen to join in on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Saturday’s lineup featured Open Acoustic Folk Jam/Spirit of Rasputin’s, and a Klezmer Extravaganza led by Don and Peter of the Sunday Ottawa Bagel Klezmer Jam. Arthur McGregor of the Ottawa Folklore Centre hosted Singable Songs and Ukulele Jam with the Bytown Ukulele Group (BUG).

Again this year, Arbour Environmental Shoppe’s Sean Twomey programmed an eclectic two days of EnviroTent lectures and workshops. Saturday’s topics were Go Solar and Make Money with Seanna and Steve Watson; Birth Options with Gillian Szolios of Ottawa Labour Support; Wild Edibles with Peggy
Calder; Exploring Hogs Back Park with the Macoun Field Club; and Growing Gardeners: Gardening with Children by Geri Bilnick.

**Sunday, August 28**

With a sudden cool front and threats of rain, daytime audiences were somewhat sparse, although the evening’s programming, especially the lure of headliner **Levon Helms**, brought larger crowds. Many sported ski jackets in the chill of the evening.

The **CUPE-SCFP Main Stage** ran steadily from 1 p.m., starting with **Lazybones**, continuing with Californian experimental band **Pepper Rabbit**, Canadian folk-pop troubadour **Jeremy Fisher**, and concluding with the annual performance of the **Terry Penner Festival Choir**. The evening lineup featured Newfoundlander **Sean McCann**, Texan singer-songwriter **Hayes Carll**, and American country-music duo **Kelly Willis & Bruce Robison**. The festival drew to a rollicking close with the eclectic **Levon Helms Band**. It was led by the legendary drummer and member of **The Band**. This group was renowned for being the backup band for Bob Dylan.

Between sets, the **Moon Stage** showcased Ottawa’s **Anders Drerup**, and **Alex Boyd & Ian Sabourin** (from Ottawa band The Riot Police). A **Volunteer Recognition** presentation by Volunteer Manager **Emily Addison** awarded 5-, 10- and 15-year volunteer pins. Singer **Rick Fines** did a set before the presentation of the **Galaxie Rising Stars Program Award** to **MadisonViolet** (Brenley MacEachern and Lisa MacIsaac).


Starting mid-afternoon, the **Falls Stage** presented ways to keep people warm, starting with **Intro to Cajun Dance** featuring **Ball and Chain**, followed by a steady stream of talented singers who made the crowd forget about the cool weather. Also included were sets by locals **Lynne Hanson**, **Anders Drerup** and **Kelly Prescott**; Vermont-born, world-traveller **Anaïs Mitchell**; Canadians **Catherine MacLellan** and **Lynn Miles**; American alt-rocker, singer-guitarist **Thurston Moore**; and Ontario indie-star **Serena Ryder**.

**Daytime Workshops**

The **Terry Penner Festival Choir** held its third rehearsal on the **Legacy Stage**, along with more of the **Pass it Down** series including **Intro to Harmonica with Catriona Sturton**, **Intro to Ukulele with The Little Stevies**, **Sea Shanty Singalong** with **Chris Ricketts**, **Accordion** with **Megan Jerome**, **I’ve Got Rhythm** with **Don Gibbons** and **Delta Blues Basics** with **Rick Fines**.

The **Heron Stage** was the scene of the second day of the **Music Olympics**. The events included an interview with Newfoundlander **Sean McCann** by **Joe Reilly**, and **The Write Way** workshop with Canadian singer-songwriters **Jimmy Rankin**, **Bruce Robison** and **Serena Ryder**. This was followed by another interview by **Joe Reilly**, this time with **Thurston Moore**.

The **Slackwater Stage** workshops began with **Cigar Box Guitar Jam-Along** with **TJ Wheeler**, **My Home Town** with **Nils Edenloff** of Rural Alberta Advantage and Halifax’s **Steve Poltz**. The fun continued with **Sirens** with **Strings** with **MadisonViolet** and **Basia Bulat; Southern Folk** with Ottawa’s **Lynne Hanson**, **David Wax Museum** and Texans **Kelly Willis** and **Hayes Carll**; and **Together & Apart** with **The Little Stevies** and **Chris Brown & Kate Fenner**.
The **Kidzone** featured a workshop with American improvisational singer-songwriter **Peter Himmelman** where the participants wrote a song. **Sophie Latrielle** of **Fireweavers** led a **Poi Workshop** for kids of all ages to learn some moves with poi (Maori-inspired performance instruments) and to make poi to take home from recycled materials. After rehearsing a couple of lively tunes with **Brian Sanderson**, kids of all ages took to the site with the annual **Sunshine Parade** (accompanied by a tuba and a bass drum). Buffeted by strong winds, everyone hunkered down after the parade, and did origami and finger braiding in the shelter of the tent.

**Jam Sessions** included a **Storytellers Story Swap** led by **Ottawa Storytellers**; a **Celtic Session** with **Daev Clysdale**, **Paul Hawtin** and **Alexis MacIsaac**; a singalong session led by **Almonte Trad Sing**; and the open-to-everyone **Carleton Tavern Appalachian Jam Session**. Jam session participants also performed for the hard-working volunteers at the **EnviroDish** tent that afternoon. The **Klezmer** group entertained for the volunteers on Friday and the **Ukulele** group performed for them on Saturday night.

Sunday’s **EnviroTent** workshops were **The Wisdom of Trees** with Algonquin elder **Albert Dumont**, **DIY Bike Repair** with **Mark Rehder**, **Climate Change** with **Helene Maynard** (**Climate Project Canada**), **The Clean Energy Future** with **Adam Harris** (**Ecology Ottawa**), and **Is Being Green a Moral Issue?** with **Kathryn Guindon** (**Green Sacred Spaces**).
For five freewheelin’ days, folk fans flocked in record numbers to the 2012 Ottawa Folk Festival, in its second year at Hogs Back Park. Headliners included Lindsey Buckingham, Bon Iver, Great Big Sea, Kathleen Edwards, Dan Mangan and Patrick Watson.

Executive Director Mark Monahan was happy to report that the attendance had doubled from the previous year to between 25,000 and 30,000 visitors. This was the highest attendance for the festival, and did not include the workshop-centred free programming that attracted an additional 4,000 to 5,000 visitors. The weather ranged from cloudless skies to cloudbursts and from warm to cool temperatures, but the spirits were not dampened by inclement weather on Friday and Saturday.

“The combination of free programming plus the major acts we brought in resulted in a very successful year,” said Monahan. “Fans really enjoyed the changes we made to the festival site, so we hope to continue to improve and to build on this success.”

A new presenting sponsor, TELUS, came on board this year. “TELUS is pleased to have supported such a remarkable event – from the tremendous fan turn-out to the incredible performances of all the talented artists,” said TELUS Vice-President Michael Sangster. “The Ottawa Folk Festival truly brought the community together in an unforgettable and enjoyable fashion. What a fantastic way to finish the summer.”

Admission was free on the west side of the park, which was the location of the food vendors, beer garden, the Artisan Village and the info tent. The free area also included the ever-popular Kidzone, the funky Dance Tent and the EnviroTent, which hosted informative presentations about all things environmental and living green. Performance spaces for workshops and free concerts included the PSAC-AFPC Stage, the Slackwater Stage, the Legacy Stage and the Workshops on the Point area. The free workshops in this area were programmed by the Ottawa Folklore Centre.

Tickets were needed for the east side, which included three large, well-equipped stages: the CUPE-SCFP Main Stage, the RavenLaw Stage and the Tartan Homes Stage.

Sustainability remained an important aspect of the festival, with green features such as reusable dishes, compost and recycling services, and a policy excluding the sale of plastic water bottles. You could fill your own water bottle at one of many water stations. At the EnviroTent, there were a variety of earth-minded workshops on topics such as natural cosmetics, wild edibles, solar power, natural healing and more. In the first-ever Envirocafe, festival goers relaxed in bistro seating and enjoyed refreshments from vendors such as B. Goods Bakery.

A Community Tent gave people a chance to learn about public awareness campaigns and not-for-profit organizations working to inform and improve the Ottawa community.

At the General Store, festival goers could pick up Ottawa Folk Festival souvenirs, as well as CDs, T-shirts and posters from performing artists. The Artisan Village continued to play a vital role in the festival, enhancing the atmosphere and giving people a chance to bring home hand-crafted treasures such as groovy tie-dyed T-shirts and custom-made jewellery.
The **Legacy Stage** hosted a variety of interesting hands-on workshops, including yodelling, breakdancing, beatboxing, and sessions on how to play the oud (a lute-type instrument used for Arabic music), mandolin and bouzouki. “Folk music isn’t just people playing banjos,” said Meredith Luce, coordinator of the workshop series at the festival during an interview in the *Ottawa Metro*. “Folk music is what grows out of community experience and the resources available.”

The times they are a-changin’ and the festival embraced the latest technology. Festival attendees shared their comments and pics in an online blog on the festival website. There’s an app for that! You could download a free app to share photos and create calendars.

The *Ottawa Citizen* hosted The Digital Lounge, an online space that featured exclusive videos, interviews, reviews and live performances. On-site at the festival, you and your friends could have a photo taken at the Digital Lounge Booth and appear online as a daily front-page cover. What fun!

Many smartphones were raised high during the festival to record video and images as well. By comparison, at the first Ottawa Folk Festival mobile phones were bulky items about the size of a brick that had to be recharged constantly. And digital cameras were not yet widely available for consumers.

The Ottawa Folk Festival was grateful for the support of TELUS as well as two major sponsors, 14 official sponsors and suppliers, five hotel partners, an environmental partner and six government funders.

This year’s sponsors included TELUS, CUPE-SCFP, PSAC-AFPC, Aerographics Creative Services, Auto Trim and Signs, BOB-FM, Carleton University, Carleton University Students Association (CUSA), Galaxie, Live 88.5 FM, MediaPlus, Mill Street Brewery, the *Ottawa Citizen*, Ottawa Folklore Centre (a founding sponsor), RavenLaw, Steve’s Music Store, and Tartan Homes. Our environmental partner was Arbour Environmental Shoppe and hotel partners included Albert at Bay Suites Hotel, ARC The Hotel, Best Western Plus Victoria Park Suites, Delta Ottawa City Centre, and Lord Elgin Hotel.

I was assisted in the information gathering for this year’s festival history by my dedicated note takers: **Corinne Baumgarten, Elizabeth De Castro, Roberta Della Picca** and **Mary McHale**. Thanks for helping out and hanging in there through the downpours and sunshine!

**Thursday, Sept. 6**

The festival opened on a beautiful sunny evening with a soft breeze that carried aloft the acoustic guitar strains of “O Canada” played by **Arthur McGregor** on the **RavenLaw Stage**. Thanks to Arthur for opening the festival on various stringed instruments each year for the past 19 years!

On the **RavenLaw Stage**, singer-songwriter **Danny Michel**, who attracted an enthusiastic crowd, sang and performed with his band and guest **Quique Escamilla**. Many audience members, ranging from a seven-year-old boy to a senior citizen, sang along on lively tunes such as “Feather, Fur & Fin”.

**Matt Mays & El Torpedo** enthralled the audience gathered at the **CUPE-SCFP Main Stage** with a rock-infused performance. Mays is a recipient of multiple Juno Awards and East Coast Music Awards, and has been described as “a cross between Rod Stewart, Leonard Cohen and Mike Reno.” The band included four guitarists, a drummer and a keyboard player. Maritimers in the audience were particularly appreciative when a song was dedicated to them!

**Matthew Good** performed solo for more than an hour, accompanying himself on a 12-string guitar. He was very well received by the youngish crowd, some of whom knew his music from the days of the Matthew Good Band. Several audience members waved their cigarette lighters high in the air during his performance.
The sole performer on the **Tartan Homes Stage** was **Mirel Wagner**, a twenty-something blues-folk singer born in Ethiopia and raised in Finland. Her angelic voice and poetic lyrics mesmerized the intimate crowd.

The setting for the **PSAC-AFPC Stage** was idyllic, being fringed with fir trees set against a cloudless blue sky. **Kelly Sloan**, the winner of the **Galaxie Rising Stars Award**, delivered a 45-minute set of jazzy folk/soft rock music. This award is presented to local, emerging Canadian performers. Past recipients include **Megan Jerome**, **The Musettes** and **Joe Grass**. Ottawa singer-songwriter **Missy Burgess** was in fine voice and was accompanied by **Todd Snelgrove** on acoustic guitar. She gave a splendid performance of her evocative tunes of love and life.

The beautiful evening ended with a spirited performance under starry skies by **Ben Harper** on the **CUPE-SCFP Main Stage**. The charismatic American singer-songwriter and activist attracted a crowd of about 10,000 who stayed to dance and sway to his blend of folk, blues, funk and reggae.

**Friday, Sept. 7**

The entertainment on the **CUPE-SCFP Main Stage** opened with popular Ottawa singer-songwriter **Kathleen Edwards**, clad in a striking orange dress. Her sweet, country-tinged vocals were complemented by her band, which included **Jim Bryson** on guitar and keyboards, **Julie Fader** on backup vocals and **Gord Tough** on guitar. A large and enthusiastic crowd assembled under overcast skies to listen to her personal and heartfelt songs that ranged from mellow to upbeat.

Fans of classic rock band **Fleetwood Mac** were thrilled with the performance of **Lindsey Buckingham**. The 62-year-old American musician appeared solo, and easily won the crowd over with his personal stories, original material and Fleetwood Mac numbers. Hearing Buckingham play hits like “Go Your Own Way” made it hard to believe that the Fleetwood Mac *Rumours* album came out in 1977! Buckingham’s amazing guitar playing wowed the ever-growing crowd and his charismatic performance closed the evening on a high note.

**Alberta Cross** was first up on the **RavenLaw Stage**. This Brooklyn-based band rocked out to an animated crowd. Then came the upbeat acoustic solo musician **Old Man Luedecke**, who charmed the toe-tapping crowd with homegrown banjo-led tunes like “I Quit My Job”. Despite his stage name, this native of Chester, Nova Scotia is in his mid-thirties. This is Old Man Luedecke’s third year at the Ottawa Folk Festival and hopefully will not be his last.

On the **Tartan Homes Stage**, solo performer **Joe Horowitz** opened. Although sound bleed interfered somewhat with his music, the New Yorker persevered with songs of love, politics and social commentary while accompanying himself on acoustic guitar. Canadian folkies **Timber Timbre** followed with an interesting set from a group whose music has been described as “beautifully restrained blues from an alternate universe, which creates an atmosphere that is cinematic and spooky.”

The **Pat Moore Trio** opened the evening’s musical entertainment on the **PSAC-AFPC Stage**. Singer-songwriter **Pat Moore** appeared with her band, including amazing guitarist **Pat McLaughlin**, fresh from a Gram Parsons tribute concert tour of Australia, and veteran bass player **Ann Downey**. Moore’s music melds elements of folk, bluegrass and country. Her beautiful voice was showcased in original tunes such as the fast-paced “Wrong Train”, and an inspired cover of the Warren Zevon song “Carmelita”. The four-piece band the **Kingmakers** next performed a rollicking rockabilly set that had everyone dancing in the rain. A trumpet player named Miko added pizzazz to some of the numbers. **Brock Zeman**, an Ottawa Valley alt-country performer from Carleton Place, appeared with a tuneful three-piece band. His set was punctuated with intriguing lyrics and great storytelling.
Saturday, Sept. 8
Saturday and Sunday featured four stages of free programming that attracted impressive crowds of 4,000 to 5,000 people over the weekend. That is a larger attendance than we had at the first Ottawa Folk Festival in 1994!

Saturday was a rainy day at Hogs Back Park, but the crowds still came and braved the wet weather, which ranged from a drizzle to a heavy, pelting downpour. Folk fans dancing in the rain were as common a sight as those taking shelter under the colourful umbrellas dotting the crowds.

There were many ways for the community to participate in free activities this year. Workshops on the Point were programmed by the Ottawa Folklore Centre. Anyone could participate in themed jam sessions, hosted by individuals or groups from the Ottawa music community.

The Kidzone returned as it had every year of the festival’s history, to offer all-ages interactive workshops, and specialty programming for children and youth. A musical petting zoo gave kids of all ages a chance to try out more than 100 instruments, including ones most people don’t have a chance to experience, such as dulcimers and autoharps. Another fun venue, the Dance Tent, allowed participants to free form dance to musical accompaniment or learn styles ranging from breakdancing to Bollywood during short demonstrations.

CUPE-SCFP Main Stage
First up was Joe Horowitz in his second appearance at the festival. This American singer-songwriter who is also a professional golfer, performed his bluesy, acoustic songs. One memorable number was “Daisy’s Diner” a tune set in small town Louisiana. With the rain over, Albertan Corb Lund followed with a country-flavoured set. Lund, who was accompanied by his band, was happy to announce that his latest album, Cabin Fever, was number one in Canada. His music drew an enthusiastic response from the huge crowd. Yee haw!

Wind and rain preceded a performance by the Great Lake Swimmers. The Toronto band drew a large crowd that didn’t run for cover despite the weather. Their melodic rock charmed the onlookers, who enjoyed listening to material from the band’s last two albums. The Great Lakes Swimmers were a prelude to a natural watery progression, the closing act of the night, Great Big Sea.

The rain had already stopped when the hugely popular Newfoundland band Great Big Sea was greeted by a great big audience of about 7,000 for their first Ottawa Folk Festival appearance. “We finally made it to the Ottawa Folk Festival,” proclaimed lead singer Alan Doyle, as the band has performed to large crowds at many other venues in the nation’s capital. Great Big Sea was in fine form and the audience danced and sang along to their interpretations of traditional East Coast music till the park closed for the night.

RavenLaw Stage
The fun began with Nudie and the Turks. This P.E.I.-based band specializes in tunes with a classic country sound and a contemporary spin. The band is led by a fully-clothed guitar player and lead singer named Nudie, who spins amusing yarns between songs. The set included songs about small-town P.E.I., a yodelling tune and even a ditty about Ottawa. The pedal steel guitar was an especially appealing element of the music.

Also appearing was American Kina Grannis who is known for her sensitive lyrics and emotive vocals. Her straight-ahead folk was accompanied by a cello player. She amused the crowd by taking a video of the audience. Her closing number, “Message from the Heart,” was sweet and philosophical. Paul Langlois, who is also a guitarist with The Tragically Hip, performed a rocking set with his band consisting of two guitarists and a drummer. A few of the songs, however, veered into folk territory.

There was a huge buzz before the festival about the artist known as LP (Laura Pergolizzi). She is a songwriter and recently turned performer who has penned material for Rihanna and the Backstreet Boys. At the festival she
lived up to all the hullabaloo. A small woman with a mop of dark curly hair, this New Yorker who lives in L.A. was accompanied by a six-piece band as she sang and played a ukulele. LP easily won the audience over with her incredible voice and high-energy vibe as she worked her way through original material such as the monster hit “Into the Wild” and awesome covers from artists such as Roy Orbison and Beyoncé.

**Tartan Homes Stage**

The day’s festivities began in the mid-afternoon under heavy rain. Umbrellas were open across the audience as hardy festival goers hunkered down to hear Newfoundland band The Once. This popular Canadian trio includes a female vocalist and two musicians who play acoustic instruments (guitar, mandolin and violin). Their repertoire spanned traditional Maritime music, original tunes and inspired covers, and was warmly received by the audience.

Next up were the Abrams Brothers, two Canadian siblings who sang and played a variety of instruments. The duo included John on guitar, mandolin, keyboards and percussion, and James on violin. The crowd loved their mix of bluegrass, country and folk.

There were also blues-inspired sets that afternoon from Texas performer Guy Forsyth and American singer-songwriter Cassie Taylor. Forsyth performed solo, and played a vintage guitar with internal amplification. He really shone with numbers that had a bluesy, gospel feel. Taylor is the striking, red-haired daughter of blues musician Otis Taylor. She played electric bass guitar and sang, performing with her band in an inspired rhythm-and-blues influenced set. For the finale number “Iko Iko”, a traditional New Orleans song, Taylor and her band were joined by the Abrams Brothers, and members of the Rag and Bone Puppet Theatre.

In the evening, the music was rockier. Hooded Fang proved themselves to be masters of indie pop. The Toronto-based group energized the audience with a frenzied guitar-driven set. The alternative four-piece rock band Yukon Blonde drew a mostly young crowd that thoroughly enjoyed their high-octane performance. The set from this B.C. band was punctuated by soaring four-part harmonies.

**PSAC-AFPC Stage**

TJ Wheeler & James Cohen, acoustic guitarists who combine influences spanning blues, jazz, flamenco and rock, were up first. They were followed by a set with influential English folk guitarist and singer John Smith.

**Slackwater Stage**

The performances included a set by Sincerely Yours. The Guitar Hero session was hosted by Ottawa blues musician John Carroll, who traded licks with an impressive group of guitar heroes: Danny Michel, Michael Jerome Browne and Luke Doucet. The group also shared stories about their musical adventures. The session Somebody Else included sets by LP, Danny Michel and Brock Zeman. The day wound down with a set from Les Stroud, a blues-influenced singer-songwriter and environmentalist, who is well known for his television show Survivorman.

**Legacy Stage**

On Saturday morning and afternoon there were live broadcasts of two long-standing CKCU-FM radio shows: Canadian Spaces and The Back 40. Chopper McKinnon, the creator and host of Canadian Spaces, hosted a live version of the longest-running folk show on Canadian community radio. His guests included Ottawa Folk Festival co-founder Chris White and Mark Delorme, a long-time production manager of the festival.

Chopper interviewed White about his exemplary contributions to Canadian folk music as White was receiving the 2012 Helen Verger Award. White chatted about the origins of the folk festival and the impact that three major influences, Canadian Spaces, Rasputin’s and the Ottawa Folklore Centre, had on the local folk community.
In 1993, White co-founded the Ottawa Folk Festival with Max Wallace and was the festival’s Artistic Director for 16 years. In a news release, White said he had “met an amazing number of talented and really nice people along the way, and I dedicate this award to them.” Chris was involved in countless musical and community events in Ottawa, and in recent years served as the co-host of Canadian Spaces.

This was Chopper’s last appearance at the Ottawa Folk Festival. Sadly, Chopper passed away in March 2013 after hosting Canadian Spaces for 33 years. Many people believe the Ottawa Folk Festival would not have come to fruition without his unfailing support and encouragement. Chopper hosted many live broadcasts of Canadian Spaces over the history of the festival. He co-hosted the evening main stage with Karen Flanagan McCarthy for 15 years and was well loved by folk festival audiences.

It was a testament to Chopper that he was able to continue with the show on a volunteer basis for over three decades. He hosted Canadian Spaces right up until his death in 2013 in what would have been the 33rd year of the show. Luckily the show lives on with host Chris White and guest hosts.

At noon, The Back 40 live show was hosted by Ron Moores. The long-running show features traditional country, western and bluegrass music. Moores supplements the tunes with live performances and plenty of interviews, taped live in the studio or on location at musical venues across North America.

In the afternoon, people took part in participatory workshops including Beatboxing Basics with Julie Dales; Rise Up Singing (the title is taken from a popular book of singalong folk songs), led by Arthur McGregor; Storytelling with Ruthanne Edward; and Harmonica 101 with Catriona Sturton.

Jam Sessions
The Appalachian Jam was cancelled due to rain, but there was a Celtic Jam and the Terry Penner Festival Choir came together for a rehearsal.

EnviroTent
In the EnviroTent, workshops were provided on topics including German New Medicine, The Otesha Project (a charity providing bicycle tours for young people), Wild Edibles, and Healing & Singing Folk Music.

Kidzone
Crafts, games, performances and workshops were available for kids of all ages.

Dance Tent
During the day, sessions were provided on two divergent art forms: breakdancing and step dancing. Saul Williams, the American singer, musician, and hip-hop poet, was interviewed by journalist, musician and poet Ian Keteku, and performed some of his riveting poetry.

Gordie MacKeeman & His Rhythm Boys provided a stellar set in their second festival appearance. They were later presented with the Galaxie Rising Stars Supernova Award for outstanding live performance at the festival. This P.E.I. band of four seasoned performers combined bluegrass and country influences with excellent showmanship and lots of fun. This session, originally planned for the PSAC-AFPC Stage, was moved due to the rain.

The entertainment ended with a set from the American singer-songwriter and guitarist Raúl Midón whose music reflects jazz, blues, R&B and folk influences.

Sunday, Sept. 9
Sunday proved to be mostly overcast and cool but the crowds came in record numbers and enjoyed all the festival had to offer.
CUPE-SCFP Main Stage
The Terry Penner Festival Choir is named for the late Terry Penner, who cofounded the Ottawa Folklore Centre with her husband Arthur McGregor. The choir is made up of volunteer participants who unite to celebrate the sheer joy of singing. This year’s repertoire included “Wake Up” by Arcade Fire. The enthusiastic crowd loved the performance. The choir was sponsored by Arthur McGregor and Hollis Morgan who also provided acoustic accompaniment on guitar and dobro respectively.

Amy Helm, daughter of the late music legend Levon Helm, is an accomplished roots musician and vocalist in her own right. She performed a set infused with country and blues that included standards such as the Muddy Waters tune “The Life I Want” and original compositions like “I Lay Down”. Helm’s band, including members playing acoustic and electric guitars and drums, provided the perfect accompaniment for her gorgeous voice.

Double Juno Award-winning singer-songwriter Dan Mangan, who had recently returned from a tour in Europe, received a great response from the crowd. His band instrumentation included three electric guitars, an electric violin, drums, trumpet and saxophone, while Mangan played acoustic guitar and sang. Mangan’s set made it easy to see why he is becoming increasingly popular in Europe as well as in Canada.

The Galaxie Rising Stars Supernova Award was presented to Gordie MacKeeman and His Rhythm Boys. The four-member P.E.I. band was given a $1500 bursary, as well as potential airplay on the Galaxie music channels. “The competition for this award included some amazing talent,” commented Ottawa musician and folk festival staffer Ana Miura. “Having seen Gordie MacKeeman and His Rhythm Boys at this year’s Ottawa Folk Festival, I would say the jury got it right.”

Singer-songwriter Kelly Sloan was presented with the Galaxie Rising Stars Award, which is presented annually to a local, emerging Canadian performer. Sloan is a classically trained singer with roots in the Ottawa Valley and has released two successful albums. Her music has been described as soul-infused folk, and country-root rock. She is well-known for her expressive voice and riveting live performances.

RavenLaw Stage
An electric violin punctuated the edgy country rock set of Fiftymen, adding to the band’s sonic landscape of electric guitar, keyboards, banjo, drums and vocals. Mark Michaud was featured on electric guitar as the band performed catchy songs like “Let Me Not Be Forsaken”.

Bombino, led by Oram Moctar, provided an upbeat world music sound. Moctar is a young, Tuareg guitarist born in Niger who was influenced by Saharan rock bands. To the delight of the audience, his band of three electric guitar players and a drummer (all dressed in traditional robes) really rocked out.

Said the Whale attracted a large, youngish audience that had a whale of a time. The Vancouver-based indie band entertained with a selection of memorable songs such as “Setting off Some Fire” and “Addicted to Technology”. The audience was treated to great vocals and spellbinding storytelling, demonstrating why the group won a Juno Award for Best Band in 2011.

Montreal singer-songwriter Patrick Watson performed with a large ensemble that included brass instruments, electric violin and keyboards, and exotic percussion instruments. The band’s folky indie rock songs and Watson’s appealing vocals were greatly appreciated by the large crowd who assembled to listen and dance along. Diverse elements included music from cowboy movies, choir boy-like backing vocals, Jimi Hendrix-style guitar riffs and classical violin!

Tartan Stage
The first performers were Gavin and Will of the Black Dogs, two Ottawa lads who both sing and play stripped-down acoustic guitar. The songs were haunting, with shades of early Dylan and lovely arrangements. The audience included both of the performers’ parents!
The world music set of **Haram** was heady Middle Eastern-jazz fusion music that attracted a large group of people who clapped to the rhythms and danced along. Soaring vocals were supported by an amazing array of instruments including doumbek (African drum), saxophone, trumpets, clarinet, fiddle, flute and lute.

**Michael Jerome Browne** opened with a wailing traditional Delta blues song that he co-wrote with his partner, **Bea Marcus**. Born in the U.S., Browne moved to Montreal with his parents and grew up immersed in the coffee house scene. He eventually mastered several instruments and attained an encyclopedic knowledge of American roots music. Browne’s set encompassed original songs such as “Low Tide”, written on Hornby Island, B.C., and traditional blues, jazz, Appalachian and Creole tunes.

Winnipeg singer-songwriter **John K. Sampson** is a member of the folk-indie band **The Weakerthans**. In this solo outing, he appeared with a guitarist/backup vocalist. Many in the crowd were familiar with his material and enthusiastically sang along to tunes such as “I Hate Winnipeg”.

**Belle Starr** featured three beautiful women fiddlers/vocalists who are “a whole lot country”. Stepdancer, fiddler and singer **Stephanie Cadman** hails from Ottawa. The trio is rounded out by **Miranda Mulholland** (a member of **Great Lakes Swimmers**), and **Kendel Carson**, who also plays guitar. This incarnation of the band included two male instrumentalists. Belle Starr was the belle of the festival, entrancing the audience as the band members worked their way through a set that included original tunes and covers from artists such as Lynn Miles and Dolly Parton.

The highly anticipated indie folk act **Whitehorse** closed the evening on this stage. Whitehorse is husband and wife duo **Luke Doucet** and **Melissa McClelland**. They nimbly accompanied themselves on guitars, keyboards and percussion, frequently switching instruments. Quite a logistical and artistic feat! They delivered a lively and moving set of original tunes such as “Get Me Through December” and covers like “I’m on Fire” from Bruce Springsteen.

**PSAC-AFPC Stage**

Sessions on the **PSAC-AFPC Stage** included Ottawa alt rockers **Full Tipped Sleeve**, beat box specialist **Julia Dales**, and popular Ottawa Valley bluegrass band **Jan Purcell & Pine Road**.

**The Kitchen Party** session was a hoot, and showcased “down home” songs from bass player **Ann Downey**, harmonica whiz **Catriona Sturton**, folkie **Birdie Whyte** and her husband, blues singer-songwriter **John Carroll**.

The audience was thrilled to see the American folk supergroup **Red Horse** (**John Gorka**, **Eliza Gilkyson** and **Lucy Kaplansky**) perform.

**Slackwater Stage**

Musician **Jill Hennessy** is well known as an actress in **Law & Order**, **Crossing Jordan** and **Robocop 3**. In an interview session, Hennessy spoke about her early career in Edmonton where she was a busker, her recent projects, and her twin sister Robi who is also a musician. Hennessy’s career has led her to live in the U.S. but she still enjoys working as a musician and performing in Canada when she can. “Music is a joy,” said Hennessy who believes social media has opened up a whole new world for artists because they can receive immediate feedback from fans. She accompanied herself on acoustic guitar and performed songs such as “Ghosts in My Head”, the title track of her 2010 CD.

**Arthur McGregor, Nudie** of **Nudie & the Turks**, **Eliza Gilkyson** and **The Once** participated in **Any Way You String It**. The stringed instruments included guitars, banjos and mandolins. McGregor opened with an instrumental banjo tune and later played an acoustic version of the American national anthem. Nudie countered
with a Sam Cooke folk/gospel number. Gilkyson asked John Gorka and Lucy Kaplansky to join her on “Death in Arkansas” and later played the title track from her album, “Roses at the End of Time”. Three members of The Once demonstrated their mandolin and guitar skills and were joined by Nudie on “I’ll Be Your Baby Tonight”. The session wound down with Kaplansky leading a sing-along song, “Slouching Towards Bethlehem”.

Hellos & Goodbyes was a session chronicling songs depicting beginnings and endings, and featured Said the Whale, John Smith and Lucy Kaplansky. Tunes included “I’ll Be Saying Farewell” from Said the Whale, a Scottish folk song from Smith, and a Mother’s Day ditty from Kaplansky.

The City Slickers, Country Songs session was hosted by Ottawa’s Pat Moore, who summed up things nicely when she said “Just because we live in the city, doesn’t mean we don’t have country in our blood.” She was joined by city slickers Gordie MacKeeman and His Rhythm Boys, Pat McLaughlin, harmonica player Catriona Sturton, Amy Helm and Don Littleton. Highlights included Moore’s “Take It to Heart”, Helm’s Woody Guthrie cover “I Ain’t Got No Home” and a humorous ditty about the Wheel of Fortune television show by Sturton.

The Wild Things session featured the wild sounds of Yukon Blonde, Black Dogs and Belle Starr. According to workshop coordinator Meredith Luce, this session was overflowing with talent. It featured all three members of Belle Starr, a group of Ontario women who blend exquisite harmonies and pop sensibilities into their folk music, and the serene songs of Ottawa duo Black Dogs. They were joined by three members of Yukon Blonde, who performed acoustic versions of their raucous and danceable music.

Legacy Stage In the Guitar Masterclass, host John Carroll and Michael Jerome Browne discussed blues and country music artists such as Robert Johnson, Leadbelly and Big Bill Broonzy. Carroll, Browne and guests showcased their guitar skills.

Jodie Benjamin led the Yodelling session, discussing techniques and tricks, and encouraging the crowd to participate. Benjamin enlightened the curious crowd about the Jimmie Rodgers style of yodelling, cowboy yodelling and the “epiglottic click”. People bravely yodelled along while Benjamin performed songs like “Country Sweetheart”.

During the Mandolin & Bouzouki session, members of Newfoundland’s The Once provided a thoughtful seminar on these two closely related instruments. The session combined instruction and information with demonstrative performances.

Jam Sessions

A Bytown Ukulele workshop was held in the early afternoon. The Terry Penner Festival Choir had its final rehearsal.

EnviroTent

In the EnviroTent, there were talks including Fair Trade Ottawa, Earth Quilt: Mother of Makers, Saving Ottawa’s Ash Trees, Going Solar, and Natural Cosmetics.

Kidzone More crafts, games, performances and workshops were available for the little ones and their companions.
Dance Tent

People of all ages participated in the Bollywood Dance session led by Kuljit Sodhi of Galitcha. The session featured a rousing, hand-clapping, foot-stomping hour of fun set to Bollywood music sponsored by Studio Mouvement in Gatineau, Quebec. An Elaborhythm Dance Session was also held later in the afternoon.

Monday, Sept. 10

RavenLaw Stage

The entertainment began in a big way with The Low Anthem, a six-piece indie folk ensemble from Providence, Rhode Island. It featured male and female vocals and an eclectic array of instruments including guitars, trumpets, unusual string and percussion instruments, and drums. The band opened with a slow ballad featuring New Orleans-style trumpet and progressed through a very interesting set of traditional and contemporary numbers, such as the eerie “Ghost Woman Blues”.

The Big Dipper shone softly in the sky during the performance of Hey Rosetta!, a popular indie band from St. John’s, Newfoundland. The Lumineers were scheduled to perform but had to cancel. Luckily, Hey Rosetta! was able to fill in on short notice. The band has a reputation for great songwriting, and layered instrumentation that includes keyboards and a variety of stringed instruments. This incarnation included three guitarists, a fiddler, cello player and drummer. The set inspired many moods via poetic lyrics and tunes ranging from dreamy to rocky. A colourful light show that would have been right at home in a stadium served as a backdrop. Confetti rather than rain showered down at the end of the concert!

CUPE-SCFP Main Stage

Anaïs Mitchell

It was refreshing to hear the deceptively sweet and simple music of Anaïs Mitchell who performed with a small ensemble. Her performance contrasted nicely with the large, mostly male bands performing the rest of the evening. In her early thirties, the American singer-songwriter has four successful albums and has been described as the queen of modern folk music. This was Mitchell’s first date as the opening act for Bon Iver. The two groups also performed together in other venues over the following week.

Bon Iver was the band many of the festival goers were itching to see. By the time the American band hit the stage, the crowds swelled to become the festival’s largest-ever audience, an impressive 12,000. Mysterious burlap-type material was draped in unusual shapes over tall columns on the stage, which created interesting patterns during the light show. Front man Justin Vernon created the first Bon Iver album by himself in an isolated Wisconsin cabin, but he soon found musical comrades to help him create a lush, layered sound. At the folk festival, Bon Iver gloried in instrumentation including brass, woodwinds, a variety of stringed instruments and percussion. The songs were interesting but not always easy to understand on first listening. Many in the crowd seemed familiar with the music and sang along however. The set concluded with a cut from Bon Iver’s first album, For Emma, Forever Ago.

And so ended the most highly attended Ottawa Folk Festival ever!