

# CAPACITY CROWDS AT THE 2023 GAMES

...and now it's on to the 75th Edition in 2024



submitted photo—Glengarry Highland Games



John Wensink, Guest of Honour with Eric Metcalfe, Games President and RCMP Deputy Commissioner, Bryan Larkin at Official Luncheon.  
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The weather in a season where warnings have become common, was absolutely perfect with warm temperatures and sunny skies. The crowds kept on coming and coming with a forty-five minute wait at noon hour on Main Street to enter the parking areas.

The sporting events like the heavyweights, the tug of war, the kilt run and the rugby tournament all brought out crowds of fans to cheer them on. The Wee Bairns Area was overwhelmed with three thousand children enjoying themselves with bouncy castles, facepainting, magic shows and more. The Scottish fiddle area was wall-to-wall for their events both days and the Clan Buildings saw a steady flow of Scots finding more about their history while also filling the showcase area to listen to fascinating presentations of celtic songs and dancing the Glengarry two-step. The Harp workshop brought in a record number of harpists from experts to beginners and scores of people just enjoying the music while the Scotch Tasting sessions had to turn people away.

The vendors could hardly keep up with the shoppers as visitors snapped up their Scottish souvenirs and Games mementoes. Even though there were scores of food vendors, most had long line ups for their tasty meals ranging from thai curry to chicken shawarma and chips on a stick. Vegetarian treats were also very much in evidence and of course, there were at least two vendors selling haggis and other Scottish fare.

The entertainment areas were jammed as favourite celtic bands filled the floor with dancers of all ages - fathers and toddlers, grandparents, and everyone in between. Those who weren't on the dance floor were swaying to the beat in their seats. When the Derina Harvey Band, the Friday night headliner, played their set on Saturday in the Metcalfe Centre, there was standing room only.

Blessed by perfect weather, the Friday night Tattoo was a spectacular show of music, pageantry and tradition showcasing the RCMP's 150th Anniversary. The fireworks display at the closing of the Tattoo was the perfect end to a magical evening and day.

Of course, the main event at the Games is the piping and the North American Pipe Band Championship™. This year's solo piping and drumming events brought in a record number of entries so much so that the competitions had to be broken into two groups to facilitate judging.

The 78th Fraser Highlanders won the North American Pipe Band Championship™ over former Games champions, the 78 Highlanders (Citadel) from Halifax who came second and the City of Dunedin from Florida who took third place. It was the last Games for



photos—Colleen Parette/Seaway News

the Fraser Highlanders before leaving to compete at the World Championships in Glasgow. It was their fourteenth win of the title since the band was formed in 1981. The Peel Regional Police completed a perfect Ontario season undefeated in Grade 2 before also making the journey to Scotland to compete at the World's.

Fresh from his win of the Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal (Canada) the day before, Daniel Carr of Collingwood, Ontario, was the Professional Piper of the Day, and Hamilton, Ontario's Cameron McKail was the Professional Snare Drummer of the Day. Results in all events will be posted as they become available on the Games website and Facebook.

A special moment took place at the massed bands when the Grade 1 and 2 drum corps played the famous "Max Rayne" salute by the great Alex Duthart, led by his son, Drew, which brought the capacity crowd to its feet.

The Games came to a close as twelve hundred pipers and drummers played the stirring tune, Amazing Grace, and silence fell over the gathered thousands ringing the

field followed by a huge cheer as everyone celebrated a memorable closing and another fabulous edition of the Glengarry Highland Games.

Reflecting on the Games, President Eric Metcalfe was overwhelmed and stated, "Even as Games President, I was amazed and thrilled at the response for this year's Games. Unbelievable! Thanks to everyone who had any part in this year's fantastic Games."

The 2023 Glengarry Highland Games are in the history books now, but work is already underway for next year's Games when the 75th edition of the Games will take place on August 2-3, 2024. Stay tuned.

