

# Heritage Day continues to impress

By Dianne Hamill

Sunshine and smiles filled the grounds of the Cooks Creek Heritage Museum as hundreds of visitors came out to celebrate the 40th annual Heritage Day.

Founded in 1968 under the direction of Fr. Alois Krivanek, priest at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, the museum is dedicated to preserving and sharing the culture and experiences of the pioneers who settled in the Cook's Creek area.

First held in 1972, the Aug. 26 celebrations included favourites such as the scarecrow decorating contest, blacksmithing demonstrations and a tractor display courtesy of the Springfield Tractor Club.

As always, visitors gathered early in front of the stage to claim their spot for the day's entertainment. This year's lineup included harpist Sheila Grycki, the Selo Ukrainian Dancers and local favorite Wayne Wazney.

And, of course, Heritage Day would not be complete without the Polish food, made by the Catholic Women's League, and the fresh bread baked on site in the outdoor clay oven.

"It was excellent," Liz Hogue, museum president, said following the event.

Along with the traditional favourites, Hogue said new attractions including the kiddie train and 'Passport through Time' – a game that encouraged youngsters to explore the various buildings to find out about the past – were a big hit with the estimated 800 visitors.

"It was wonderful," Hogue said.

Along with the daytime celebrations, the event also included an evening concert hosted by St. Michael's Church in celebration of its 100th anniversary.

Featuring Ray St. Germain, Free Ride, The D Drifters, a Johnny Cash tribute band and Gary Gach and the Banned, an estimated 700 spectators came out to take in the night's entertainment.

"The bands were absolutely phenomenal," organizer Mike Dobell said.

He added the event marked the first time The D Drifters had performed all together in three years – bringing the crowd to their feet after finishing their set.

"Everybody had a great time."

A continuation of last year's Harvest Homecoming concert – where musicians performed to an estimated 3,000 of spectators in the grotto of the Immaculate Conception Church to benefit the local community club – Dobell said St. Michael's would definitely be up to hosting the concert again.

The concert series – started as a fund raiser for local organizations – is expected to alternate between the community club, Ukrainian and Roman Catholic churches.

"When our turn comes up again we'll definitely look at doing it again."

After another successful Heritage Day, the museum closed its doors for the season last week.

For more info on the museum, including off-season tours, visit [www.cchm.ca](http://www.cchm.ca)



Photos by Dianne Hamill

*Above: Piper Thomson (left) and Drew Hall play storekeeper inside Trader Jake's General Store.*



*Left: Olexiy Zahucov and Florence Lucko bake bread, a Heritage Day staple, in the clay oven.*