

Regional Festivals

*A Celebration of
Regional Identity*

The Miramichi Folksong Festival

The following images were taken at the Miramichi Folksong Festival. The original photos are preserved at the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John, NB and now have been put on display as a part of a digital collection. Thanks to Louise Manny, they will be forever available to all; a piece of living history.

Traditionally, people would tell the story of their everyday lives through songs. These people were fisherman, involved in logging, etc. These jobs are part of the regional identity of people living in the Maritimes. Recordings of these songs were made by Louise Manny beginning in the 1950s (by request of Lord Beaverbrook). Manny created the Folksong Festival to showcase the talented singers she recorded.

Originally, the 3-day event saw people singing their songs acappella. Over time, people were allowed to bring instruments (guitars, banjos, harmonicas and, of course, fiddles). The stories in the songs, the instruments used, and the tradition of gathering to listen to 'the show' are all a part of the identity of people in the Maritimes. Now a 6-day event, this festival shows that regional pride is alive and well.

Allen Kelly, a performer at every Festival since it began, passed away in October of 2008. He made his final appearance at the Festival in August of 2008.



Alan Mills sings with Charlie Russell on guitar.



Alan Mills sings with Frances, Laura, and Louis Milson.



Folksinger, Alan Mills, sings with a group of children.



Folksinger, Alan Mills, signs some autographs.



Mrs. Edmund Robichaud sings, "Fair Florella".



Click the
star to
hear a
recording
of this
song

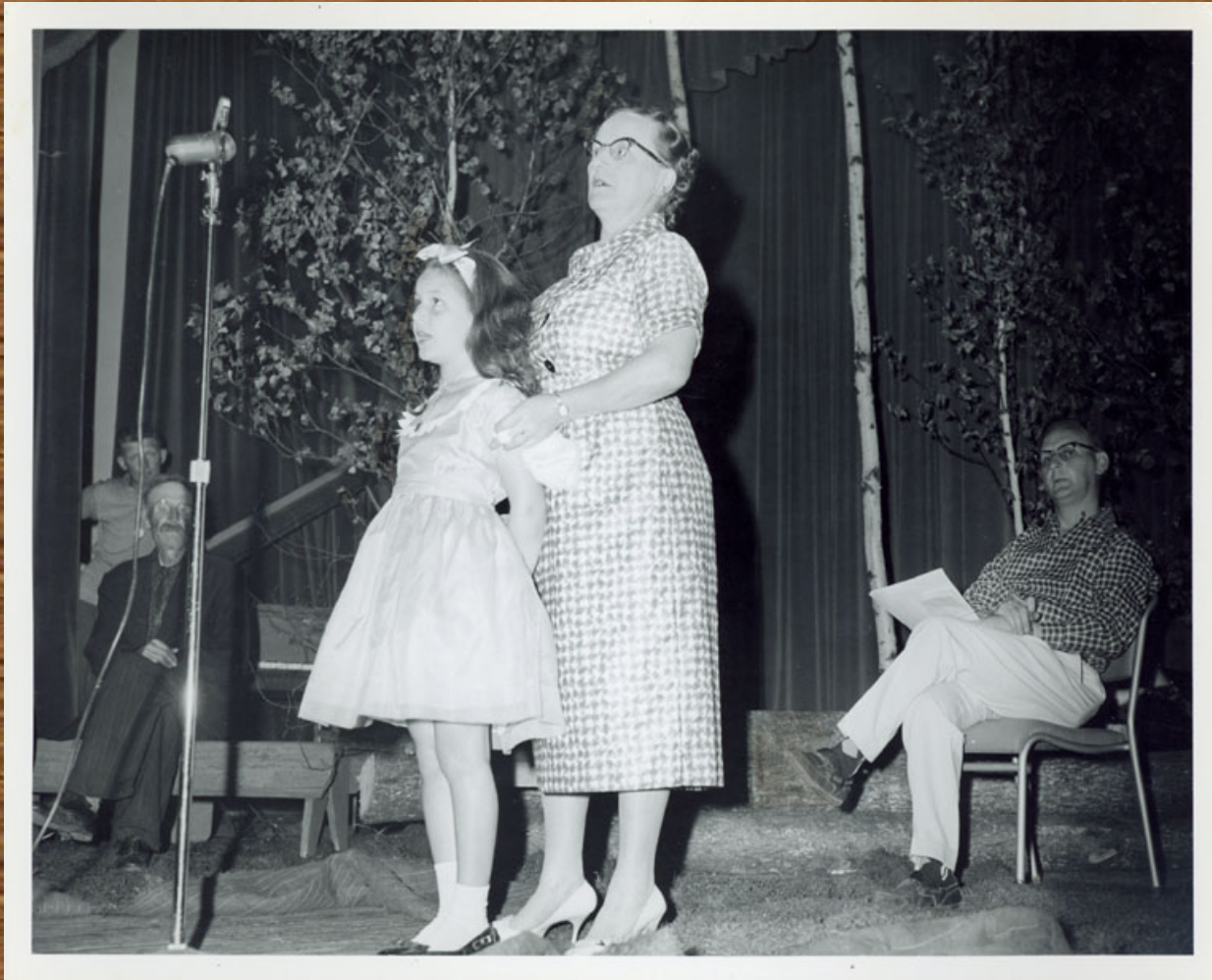
Wilmot MacDonald sings while the other performers look on.



**Marie Hare and Harold Whitney of
Strathadam sing while Wilmot MacDonald
and Nick Underhill look on.**



Marie Hare and Jane Elizabeth Whitney sing while Harold Whitney and others look on.



Sam Jagoe performs.



Johnny Irving's Old Time Orchestra



A stepdancer demonstrates his skill.



89 year-old Singer and Stepdancer, John Holland, receives “Oldest Entrant Award”. Presented by Harry Brown with Alan Mills looking on.



Lieutenant-Governor, J.L. O'Brien pictured with John Holland.



The audience and judges enjoy the show.



Audience participation.



People identify with their country, region, province, and communities. Historically, people identified with regions based on industry (ex. Lumberjacks, fishermen, miners, cowboys). Today, festivals keep these identities alive. They promote regional identity and pride, but they may also mean people who live there get stereotyped.

Now it's your turn. Start by listing 5 festivals that would show regional identity or pride. You will be going to the computer lab to find out some information about one of these festivals.