

NEW GLASGOW

Culture Days kickoff Sept. 29

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As autumn approaches, the outdoor scenery is changing. What better time to host a culture days festival than during what may be the most colourful time of year?

The Town of New Glasgow has partnered with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library, the Celtic Circle, the Multicultural Association, African Nova Scotia North Central Network, the Pictou County Historical Society, a graphic designer, Communities in Bloom and the New Glasgow Downtown Development Association, to offer a four-day educational, cultural experience which will be an annual event.

Culture Days is a national initiative, although the first official festival for New Glasgow.

"This is very important to the Town of New Glasgow because it's part of one of our key strategy areas," explains Kim Dickson marketing and communications director for New Glasgow referring to arts and culture. "And we are very fortunate to have strong community partners helping us."

The kick-off for Culture Days will be Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Community Destinations Centre, in the back of the New Glasgow Library, and will include a public session with three Nova Scotia College of Art and Design students who will be beginning a residency at the studio.

"We need more awareness of arts and culture in the area and we want to celebrate," explains Geryl MacDonal, director of Community Development for New Glasgow.

The library will also be host-

ing an art display and demonstration Sept. 30 with Friends By the Sea artists and will be screening the documentary 'A Drummer's Dream' at 7 p.m., as well as possibly having events with Monica Graham, writer in residence, as October is library month.

Glasgow Square will be the site of various events as well including the Fusion Festival October 1, organized by the Multicultural Association.

"When we celebrate our culture this way it enriches our community and the economic impact on the community is incredible," says Carlton Munroe, events/program manager for the town.

"For every dollar spent on culture in our community, three dollars is spent in the community - for example the pubs, bars and hotels."

Culture Days will also impact the area economically in that it is hoped to attract people from across the province. "These types of events attract and help retain people in the area and make it a place people want to stay," explains Dickson.

There will be self-guided tours through downtown featuring architecture, dance, theatre and more as well as a display at the town hall featuring the historic paintings of Dave MacIntosh on September 30.

The Celtic Circle, as its own historical site, will be hosting an open house, walking tour and art display as well as a performance October 2 by Amanda Gillis entitled The Bell of Amherst, chronicling the life of Emily Dickinson.

"It's sponsored by the New Glasgow Communities in Bloom so it is free of charge," explains owner Jannine Howell.

Dickson adds, "We are very excited to sponsor this event because most people think Communities in Bloom is all about greenery; but we are about celebrating our heritage and encouraging community involvement."

Culture needs to be celebrated because that's what defines New Glasgow and Pictou County as a whole, says Dickson.

"It welcomes people to the community and it is important for people to have a sense of belonging," says Howell.

The event is timely, says Munroe because, "it is the week-end before we start our fall programming at Glasgow Square so this, in a way, kicks everything off."

Other events are still in the works including a screening of a film based on Viola Desmond.

"We are also working with the Pictou County Historical Society to have a local historian come to the events," explains Dickson.

MacDonald adds, "The downtown area is the living room of a community... where people gather and where the first impression for the town is made." So it is only fitting Culture Days take place in the heart of New Glasgow.

The Farmer's Market will be involved during the Fusion Festival.

All events have been posted on the town's website as well as the provincial website for culture days.



From the left: Trecia Schell from the New Glasgow Library, with Jannine Howell, owner of the Celtic Circle, Carlton Munroe, program/events manager for the Town of New Glasgow and Wendy Hughes of the Pictou County Multicultural Association gather to share ideas about the upcoming Culture Days in New Glasgow Sept. 29-Oct. 2.
(Harvie photo)

