

Table of Contents



15, 23

The Year's Best

Winners of the Downeast Bluegrass & Oldtime Music Society's Eastern Canada Bluegrass Music Awards and The Northern Bluegrass Committee's Central Canadian Bluegrass Awards



Look at Those NimbleFingers

See what's happening out west with one of Canada's best workshops, B.C.'s own NimbleFingers

28



Six-Month Festival Guide

Plan your year with this handy listing of upcoming Bluegrass Festivals

25



Material World

Part II of Carol Boyer's guide to plectrums. This issue, get to know your materials

20

Bluegrass Canada

Volume 13 Issue 1

Columns

- 5 President Murray Hale's Message
- 6 Mike Milner's Bluegrass Clippings
- 7 Joe Rohrer's Run Forrest Run
- 46 Editor Mike Kirley's Message

Lessons

- 8 Banjo with Dennis LePage
- 10 Mandolin with Emory Lester
- 12 Recording with Dave Searle

Listings

- 32 Festival Listing
- 34 Radio on the Air
- 36 BMAC Organization Listings

On the cover

Illustration by
Sarah Bea



A Picker's DREAM



An overview of NimbleFingers Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Workshop & Festival

By Linda Thorburn

Driving down the highway to Sorrento, British Columbia, I see many familiar corners of the road; my heart rate begins to race in anticipation of my favourite thing to do in my bluegrass life, which also happens to be a big part of my real life. I keep my eyes looking left for the turn onto Paschendale Road, where I will spend the next eight fun-filled days at NimbleFingers Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Workshop & Festival on the shores of Shuswap Lake.

NimbleFingers offers two week-long workshops. I always go

Week Two, as it is usually a little cooler; plus, I attend the festival on Saturday, and get an extra 2 days of jamming in that way. These workshops occur the last two weeks of August, with a bluegrass festival sandwiched between the weekly classes on that Saturday. I've attended the workshops for the past 9 years (with the exception being 2013, when I broke my wrist).

There are many classes you can take on your instrument, your voice, your presentation, and your song-writing, but they are all bluegrass and old-time related. Also, both workshops are

quite different. I do admit, there is quite a lot of info given out in a very short interval, so you can take both weeks if your brain can handle it.

I first attended NimbleFingers in 2010 and took banjo from Greg Cahill. At the time it was called the "British Columbia Bluegrass Workshop." It was the incredible idea of my friend Jay Buckwold, who founded the 5-day workshop in 1990. The BCBW was initially held at the Anglemont Estates Lodge in Anglemont, BC, and in 1996 it moved to its present location, Sorrento Centre, Sorrento, BC. In 2000, the BCBW added the second 5-day workshop, as well as the one-day festival in between; the festival features the workshop instructors' bands.

The Sorrento Centre, located on Paschendale Road, is an Anglican Church camp with a great message: relax mentally, spiritually and physically as you learn. When you arrive at the centre, you leave your worries behind. Meals are provided in a package, so you really don't have anything else to do but have fun, and learn the workshop material in the class you chose upon enrollment, way back in February. You are emailed when the class sign up opens. The popular classes and campsites fill up quickly, and it can be disappointing to find your chosen class is full and it is not even March yet.

Amazingly enough, people come



from all parts of the world to these exciting workshops in an ideal summer setting, beside Shuswap Lake. I arrive Friday afternoon, the day Week One is finished around midafternoon, so I can have my tent pitched, get registered, receive my nametag, be unpacked, and be ready for the classic Plaid Shirt BBQ dinner. Later that evening, there is jamming, mostly with Week One people who will magically disappear Sunday morning, clearing the grounds for the next influx of Week Two eager learners of bluegrass.

Saturday is the NimbleFingers Bluegrass & Old Time Festival which includes a day audience of people who are not enrolled in the workshops as well as the workshop participants. The day passes quickly, as I see

There are more performances - on and off stage, than you could catch

The event is an environmentally-friendly affair that draws a modest yet devoted crowd from around the country.



There is quite a lot of info given out in a very short interval, so you can take both weeks if your brain can handle it.

lots of familiar faces and after the entertainment is over, jam bluegrass with them long into the night.

Sunday is quiet and the festival crowd and Week One folk move out. The camp is quiet until Week Two people arrive, set up their campsite and attend the camp meeting. Everyone meets their instructor and prepares for a week of fun. After a great BBQ dinner, there are instructor concerts and organized jams for all to attend, followed with an overflowing snack time before heading out to jam for the evening.

The next few days just fly by with fun for everyone; great meals, and awesome camp camaraderie. There are instructor classes, band scrambles, dances, Karaoke at lunch, a student concert, afternoon workshops, and lots of instructor

concerts; so much, you can't do it all. And of course there is always lots of spontaneous picking, that's a given.

In 2012, Jay Buckwold and Ada Chung handed the bluegrass reins to Craig Korth and Julie Kerr, from Nelson. The BCBW came to be known as NimbleFingers Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Workshop & Festivals.

Throughout the transition, and since then, Julie and Craig have upheld the passion and vision that Jay had. NimbleFingers has become known throughout the world as an excellent bluegrass & old-time music camp.

Thank you Jay, for having that dream, and thank you Julie and Craig for continuing that vision. See you next year everyone!

For more information about NimbleFingers, visit their website: www.nimblefingers.ca.



Linda Thorburn is a banjo player and bluegrass community leader.



Players from around the country gather for the event's many excellent workshops

