



# WEIGH ANCHOR AND SET SAIL for Pirate Fest 2014

By Lorraine Payette

A hoy, mateys', and welcome aboard. The port o' Gananoque be right willing to see ye and yer friends for Pirate Fest 2014.

The 1,000 Islands Pirate Fest will be hitting Town Park in Gananoque from July 11-13 this year, and is guaranteed to be three days of piratical fun and games for all who attend.

This event started small in 2010 with a few balloons and a Captain Jack Sparrow impersonator, and has been growing ever since. It is a time when people can let their hair down, dress as pirates, "larn the lingo", and truly indulge all for the fun of it.

"We recommend this festival for all ages, and especially families, as it is such a fun theme," said Kathrine Christensen of the Thousand Islands Accommodation Partners (TIAP). "It resonates with our spirited history of piracy, which is fairly recent (150 years), and a lovely quirky part of our history."

TIAP has been supporting the Festival for

three years and is looking forward to more.

"The 1,000 Islands Pirate Fest brings another great, exciting weekend to Gananoque and the area", said Lori Higgs, Marketing and Sales Associate for the Gananoque Inn & Spa. "One of many summer signature events for Gananoque and the area, it gives adults, young at heart and children of all ages a look into the life of a pirate."

"It's not just a festival where you sit back, watch and enjoy," said Kathy MacRae of the Gananoque Boat Line (GBL) and the organizer of the main event. "You have multiple opportunities to become a pirate and get involved in the festivities, such as the pirate parade, grog contest, 'Blades of Glory' interactive sessions, pirate puppet making for the kids and lots of other questionable pirate activities."

MacRae has been involved since the beginning, and is always looking for volunteers and ways to make the event

bigger, better and all encompassing for the town of Gananoque. Every year she seeks new acts and entertainment, making sure it never becomes stale.

One brand new component of Pirate Fest is the grog competition. All of the businesses in town that sell beverages have been invited to participate and have been asked to come up with secret recipes for grog, whether alcoholic or non-alcoholic. Once the contest starts, the recipe cannot be altered. A business may sell both types of grog, but only one recipe of each. Judging is done by the public ballots assessing every aspect of the drink with a one to five tankard system. The competition is all in fun, and those who fill in ballots qualify for a draw for a special prize package. The winning businesses get an engraved tankard for their efforts in the category and bragging rights.

Two popular restaurants have already signed up. They can't wait to share their special menus and secret grog recipes with all who stop in.

"The Pirate Fest is another great event that brings our community together to showcase the many great things we offer," said Jamie Higgs, partner at Cousins on King Bar and Grill. "Although we are at the far end of town, we have always supported this event by offering our own themed food and beverage menu as well as entertainment to add to this great weekend. We look forward to the Grog Contest this summer. Stop in, try us out and be sure to vote for Cousins on King."

Favourite entertainers will also be returning to the festival. Among these are Ronnie Rodriguez in his role as Captain Jack Sparrow, popular band Celtic Kitchen Party and Capt'n Tor and the Naer-Do-Well Cads.

Canadian recording artists, troubadours, and thespians Capt'n Tor & The Naer-Do-Well Cads Pirate Invasion ([www.piratesparties.ca](http://www.piratesparties.ca)) provide a total immersion experience for all-ages audiences with their highly-interactive pirate musical-theatre shenanigans. The Pirate Troupe is based out of Brockville, and is highly versatile in its activities – performing either All-Ages or Bawdy Adult-oriented material at Festivals, Corporate Events, Pubs, Schools, and Private Parties and more recently, in Pirate Flash Mob/Invasions in Kingston, Brockville, and Ottawa. They will be taking part in the Pirate Parade on the Friday, and performing on Saturday (2 shows) and Sunday (1 show) on the stage located in the Gananoque Town Park.

"Blades of Glory" is a new edition to the Festival which adds a new dimension of fun and history to this popular event.

"Blades of Glory' provides all entertainment for a Medieval Festival in your town or city," says their website, <http://www.bladesofglory.ca/>. "Performers include: Medieval Dancing (interactive), Falconry show, Magician, Story Telling, Medieval Weapons Display and show, Medieval Armour Display & Show, Chainmail making activity, Heraldry Shield making activity, Face painting, Western Medieval Martial Arts Display (Sword Fighting School), Medieval gift shop, and of course the Blades of Glory Knights will provide fighting shows throughout the day. Our DJ provides medieval background music to enhance the experience."

The Knights have agreed to give safe passage to the Pirates, and assure them they come in peace and with consent.

"What a great way to spend a weekend in the summer in Gananoque & the 1,000 Islands," said Lori Higgs.

For a full program of events and other information concerning Pirate Fest in Gananoque, please go to [www.piratesofgananoque.weebly.com](http://www.piratesofgananoque.weebly.com). The site also includes links to songs and colouring pages for children, an English-to-Pirate translator, and pirate style maps of Gananoque or anywhere else you might want to go as well as lots of pictures from previous Pirate Fests.

Welcome aboard, Gananoque be lookin' farwahrd to seein' ye! **LH**

