



L-R Miss Periwinkle Swabbin', Capt'n Tor & Rusty Feathersword.  
Submitted by the 1000 Islands Pirate Society



# PIRATES INVADING THE PORT OF GANANOQUE IN TIME FOR SUMMER FUN

By Lorraine Payette

It's time to sharpen up the cutlasses, put on the tri-corns, and get ready to head to sea. Buccaneers are returning to Gananoque for the annual Pirate Invasion on July 7th and 8th.

"We are pleased to report that last year's success led us to be internationally recognized and voted the number one pirate festival in Canada (according to the magazine, L'Echo des Mers)," said Terri-Lynn Bayford, member of the 1000 Islands Pirate Society. "Our very own society has also been invited to represent Canada in France at the International Pirate Rendezvous."

From its humble beginnings in 2010 as Pirate Days, the event has gone through a variety of forms and changes. What had begun with a few balloons, a band, and a Jack Sparrow impressionist, had grown to a very large event involving a parade, several bands and entertainers, and a Jack Sparrow double brought in from California.

Unfortunately, it could not sustain its momentum, and was on the verge of financial collapse. In 2015 the decision was made to give the event a rest and see if it could be revived in 2017.

But Gananoque wasn't ready to give up its

pirates. Several people came together to form the original TI Pirate Society, reaching out to ask the community to help them revise and refine the event, trimming it back and compacting it to reduce costs but still keep all the fun of piracy.

They decided to band with a pirate theatrical troupe, Capt'n Tor and The Naer Do Well Cads Pirate Invasion, making Tor the chairman of their committee. Working together, they created a new version of pirates, calling it the Gananoque Pirate Invasion.

"This year's festival has been moved to Joel Stone Park due to the renovations to the Town Hall," said Bayford. "We have hired a horse-drawn trolley to transport visitors from the waterfront park to various stops in the downtown business area. Admission is \$2.00 for a Passport which gives attendees the opportunity to visit businesses, shop, get stamped & enter for a chance to win prizes.

The festival now includes a pirate encampment with vendors, concessionaires, and a variety of live entertainment such as music, games, and the chance to learn and hone assorted pirate skills. Event goers can enjoy storytelling and face painting, tug-o-

war and costume competitions, all aimed at giving them a swashbuckling good time.

Various fundraising events in the community are being hosted to help finance the event. They include a "Rock the Night" Fundraiser at the Royal Theatre on June 6th (4 local musicians, cocktails, silent auction, 50-50 draw); \$5 matinee of "Muppet Treasure Island" at 2:00 pm, Silver Cinema Theatre on June 16th (face-painting, music, and more – 345 Herbert Street, Gananoque); Divide and Plunder Donation Jars throughout town; a Local Business Treasure Hunt (passports are free with \$2 admission to the festival - great prizes for those that follow the map); a Sponsor/Donor Draw for prizes and a 50/50 Draw During the festival.

"We have more exciting news," said Bayford. "We are pleased to say we are expanding the French Quarter section, adding The Thirsty Kraken Pirate Pub & Collective Eatery & increasing vendor demonstrations. For a chance to see everything we have to offer, please check out our website at [www.pirateinvasion.ca](http://www.pirateinvasion.ca) or visit our facebook page @GananoquePirateInvasion." To sign up as a vendor or volunteer contact Myrla Grant @ [mirada\\_red@hotmail.com](mailto:mirada_red@hotmail.com) or call 613-382-2100. **LH**