

Dufferin Arts Council to mark 25th anniversary next month

By Constance Scrafield

During the 1990's, there was a period of true Renaissance for Dufferin County, a time when the arts began to come into their own through the founding of such fine cultural establishments as BookLore, Theatre Orangeville, the Dufferin County Museum and Archives, In the Hills Magazine and, celebrating its 25th Anniversary on September 9, the Dufferin Arts Council (DAC).

"Dufferin County changed for the better during those years," declared Wayne Townsend, speaking on behalf of the DAC. He proceeded to talk to us about the upcoming day-long festival in support of the DAC and the many artists and kinds of artists in this very rich neighbourhood.

"There will be performances and sales all day - Morris Dancers, art sale but of old and re-cycled art - paintings and pottery - all kinds of talent - young people from all the different studios."

With Orangeville's Broadway as the centre of activities, every shop will be buzzing with opportunities; the theatre is hosting a show; Westminster United Church is the information centre as well as much more.

"As you may know, a lot of us are older folk," Mr. Townsend said humorously, "and we have been in our basements digging for the biggest garage sale of the year with all sorts of treasures and odd things. The garage sale is at the Westminster Church, starting at 9:00 a.m. to noon."

Likewise, at the church are various vendors, including those with Vintage arts and crafts sale, all day through to 9:00 p.m. Mr. Townsend was emphatic about how wonderful this is - "a chance for everyone to take home a piece of art for a really reasonable price."

Shortly after noon, the Morris Dancers with their sticks and drums, flowers and costumes will dance on Broadway for couple of hours. You can sometimes see the gang of dancers from Orangeville in Kensington Market in Toronto on a Sunday during the summer.

From 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. at the Orangeville town hall opera house is a "good old fashion variety show," as Mr. Townsend put it. It will feature many of the youth of this community who have been featured in productions with Christian Chop, Theatre Orangeville Young Company "and more!" according to the online information.

Sponsored by BookLore, the "written word" part of the day comes, as well, to Westminster United Church, with Terry Fallis and Pat Railble to read from their books and talk about writing. Mr. Fallis is launching his new book at this occasion.

The town's library is involved with the story tellers. This is an exciting art form, drama in a different way, small one-person shows but so thrilling with the presentation that can involve music, costume. The energy of the story teller, the poetic phraseology is just wonderful. With it running from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m., with four individual raconteurs, there are lots of chances to see at least one of them.

Broadway and, by extension, Mill Street, are thrilling that day with all the interest and action. Up and down Mill Street, the shops will offer sale prices on some their goods and the party atmosphere will be alive.

The day will end with an "Evening Showcase" at the made-for-it new interior of Westminster church, with a terrific line-up of comedy, music and art display.

A \$50 ticket covers admission to all the events and is a part of the discounts in some shops.

The amazing neighbourhood party is for a good time and to fund raise on an interesting level for the DAC. The DAC's mantra is to support young artists with funds in the way of grants, scholarships and awards.

Mr. Townsend advises, "We put artists into schools because the schools are cutting arts programs. The artists teach dance, drama - all sorts - we even put a magician - just to give the kids a taste of something besides business, computers and so forth.

"People should attend this day [September 9] because they'll find something amazing to take home; enjoy all the talent and spend the day on Broadway."

For the details, check out info@dufferinartscouncil.com.