



NDP Band '87

# An Eclectic Array

by Geoff Stone

**N**ova Scotia artists have tried to carve out a niche in the Atlantic region for their art for a long time.

A number of these artists donated some of their time for *Band 87*, a benefit by artists for New Democrats, held this past Sunday at the Queen Elizabeth High School.

The night was an electric blend of talent with a lot of impromptu performance and good-natured fun. Performers included Gerry Carruthers and Friends, Mary Dewolve, Leon and Beth Dubinsky, John Dunsworth, and a host of other dance, comedy, and musical artists from the maritimes.

But it was after the concert that musicians could talk about what they as artists have done to stay and continue their work in Nova Scotia.

John Dunsworth, as master of ceremonies for *Band 87*, did his best to promote Nova Scotia tal-

ent, and to explain to the audience the dedication artists have to stay in Nova Scotia, where the economic opportunities are limited compared to those in Ontario.

After the show, at a reception for the volunteers, Dunsworth said many artists are willing to donate time from their schedules in order to do benefits. "Artists in Nova Scotia are a generous lot," he said.

Dunsworth said performers might work every night of the week except Sunday. "Artists are so bloody busy, we don't have time," he said.

Rick Gautreau, a singer/songwriter/instrumentalist who wrote such songs as "No CANDU", a protest song to the building of the Point Lepreau nuclear power station, agreed with Dunsworth about the dedication of artists.

Gautreau is now working the bar scene, and finds it hard to relate to artists who don't see people like him as artists. "Musicians are people who are free-

lancing all the time. They are just working people."

Gautreau said his music has changed from 1982, when he wrote "No CANDU". "People just want to party and boogie (in bars)," he said.

He said the evening was a kind of reunion for him to perform again with an old member of the band that did "No CANDU", Gerry Carruthers. "Gerry and I haven't played together in seven years. It was totally unrehearsed."

Commenting on the whole evening, Mary DeWolfe, singer/songwriter/instrumentalist and organizer of *Band 87*, said, "I don't think we could have done it any better." She said the evening should be good for the state of the arts in Nova Scotia. "We didn't just have the on-stage performers. Everyone was able to get involved in this event," she said.

Geoff Stone is president of the Young New Democrats.

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