

# Clans gathering in Nova Scotia



Halifax, Nova Scotia



You don't have to be Scottish to enjoy next year's International Gathering of the Clans in Nova Scotia. If you like good food, good times and good people, then Nova Scotia is one place you should be in the summer of 1987.

The International Gathering of the Clans lasts for six weeks of music, games, contests, singing, dancing, story telling, eating and drinking. Scots — and others — from all over the world will join together for this biennial festival to celebrate their heritage.

Since 1979, the location of the festival has alternated between Canada and Scotland — making 1987 the third year that Nova Scotia has hosted the festival. In 1983, 91 000 people journeyed to Nova Scotia to take part; on one historic day, there were more than 6000 Rosses gathered at the Ross Museum celebrating the Ross family's own gathering.

Not all Nova Scotians are of Scottish descent, of course. There are areas of the province where French, Irish, Dutch, German and pre-Confederate Americans established themselves. The first Scottish settlers reached the province in 1773, settling in Pictou and starting the wave of Scottish migration that gives the province its rich Scottish heritage — and, of course, its name.

Summer festivals with a Scottish flavour have long been popular in the province. Until 1979, they were held individually, and it was only after Nova Scotia approached the International Gathering Trust in Edinburgh, asking if it would sponsor international gatherings in Nova Scotia, that the festivals were grouped together under a single banner.

The principal new festival, set up to celebrate the opening of the International Gathering, is the Nova Scotia Tattoo. It will take place in Halifax, from June 27 to July 2 next year. The Tattoo is pure spectacle. It's the largest show of its kind in Canada and considered to be one of the top three Tattoos in the world.

## Genealogical surveys

This year, the Scottish Societies Association of Nova Scotia is holding genealogical surveys to help people trace any members of their family who may have lived in Nova Scotia at some time. The province prides itself on its sophisticated record keeping, and while it cannot provide family trees for everyone, it can help those who have some information about their ancestors — where they lived, when they arrived, and so on.

Scots have been settling in Canada for more than 350 years — as indicated by such Nova Scotia place names as Antigonish, New Glasgow, St Andrews, Glencoe and Iona. Many of the major Scottish Clans have branches in Nova Scotia — for instance, the Camerons, who are holding two clan gatherings in Halifax and Yarmouth in June and July; and the Chisholms, who are holding a gathering in Antigonish on July 14.

Among the events planned for the 1987 International Gathering is the Fisherman's Regatta at Pugwash on July 1. The Regatta celebrations are held on the shores of the Northumberland Strait, where warm water and beaches offer seaside fun and relaxation.

The 1987 Antigonish Highland Games (to be held July 10–12) will commemorate The Games' 126th year. Competitors will come from Canada and the United States to test their skills and enjoy the fun and competition. Featured events are the kilted golf tournament, Highland ball, massed pipe band parade, piping and drumming competitions, highland dancing tattoo and concerts under the stars.

In Pictou, the Lobster Fisheries Carnival starts on July 9 and lasts three days. There will be lobster boat races, lobster suppers, a great parade and outdoor concerts.

Even small communities such as Whycomogah (pronounced why-cog-o-ma) will put on an impressive celebration. There'll be fiddling, piping, piano playing, Gaelic and English singing, step dancing and highland dancing — leading up to the festival's finale on August 8 at St Ann's. ❀