

## Heritage Mica Days named a Top 100 event

For the second consecutive year, Lanark County can boast it is home to one of the Top 100 Festivals & Events in Ontario.

At the 2014 Festivals and Events Ontario annual conference held in Richmond Hill earlier this month, the Heritage Mica Days event at Murphys Point Provincial Park in Tay Valley Township was recognized by the provincial organization for service excellence.

"This award represents all the hard work of our many volunteers and the support of all our partners," said Beth Peterkin, festival coordinator for the Friends of Murphys Point Park. "The recognition by FEO of the quality of our event will aid us in our marketing for 2014 as the Top 100 designation is well recognized in the tourism industry. We thank everyone for their support."

The awards, presented by VIA Rail Canada, are given to festivals and events "that excel within the industry." Submissions from across Ontario are considered by FEO members each autumn and judged by an independent panel.

Heritage Mica Days is in its 5th year and features events from late June through to Thanksgiving weekend at Murphys Point, including underground tours of the Silver Queen Mine, Spirit Walks, a Junior Mica Miner program, music, games, theatre, food and more. The event is planned and operated by the volunteers of the Friends of Murphys Point Park, a not-for-profit charity that supports the natural heritage education program at the park. Last year there were 31 events making up Heritage Mica Days.

"The festival began as a way to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of mica mining in the area," explained Stephanie Gray, Friends of Murphys Point president. "Small-scale mining was prevalent here in the late 1800s and early 1900s and the park interprets the lives of those early miners and the families who settled here."

Over the years, many visitors have praised Heritage Mica Days and its volunteers and interpreters, as well as the opportunities it presents to volunteers in the community. "It means so much to us that (our daughter) learned about her own community and ancestors," said local residents Regan and Sheila Lee, whose family has lived in the area for seven generations.

Last year Perth's Stewart Park Festival received a Top 100 honour from FEO. For more than 20 years it has been bringing three free days of music to beautiful Stewart Park in downtown heritage Perth, drawing thousands of visitors each year.

"We are extremely proud of both of these signature events, which attract so many visitors to Lanark County," said Marie White, Lanark County Tourism manager. "They also take place at two of our Seven Wonders of Lanark County: the Silver Queen Mine at Murphys Point and Stewart Park in Perth."

Learn about these and other great events in the *2014 Lanark County Festivals and Events Guide* at <http://lanarkcountytourism.com/products-page/brochures-2/2014-lanark-county-festivals-events-guide/>. Info about Heritage Mica Days can be found at [www.heritagemicadays.ca](http://www.heritagemicadays.ca) and Stewart Park Festival at [www.stewartparkfestival.com](http://www.stewartparkfestival.com).

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