



December 2023

Issue 11

We wish you a merry Christmas,  
We wish you a merry Christmas,  
We wish you a merry Christmas,  
And a happy New Year !

Hello everyone,

'Tis the season and we all know about the stresses that can occur during the Holidays. The challenges that face so many who struggle to make ends meet as well as the number of homeless people out there who are not able to really enjoy the festivities. My Christmas wish this year is that everyone on this little chunk of rock floating about in the universe has a peaceful, stress-free and bountiful Christmas, We can all help our brothers and sisters by lending a hand to those in need, so give generously if you can, of your time and talents to help out in the community and enjoy the blessings of good will towards all.

In a short review of the year there have been many challenges and changes that we in the Hall of Fame have had to face, the loss of some of our cherished members and our incoming president Bev Gaston as well as vice-president Gerry Taylor.

We also had many good things to celebrate such as the Grand Opening of the Hall in its new location at the Fredericton Inn and our stellar 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala and Induction Ceremony.

We have had to fill some holes in our executive what with some members retiring from board positions. We have been fortunate to find a good cross section of members who are stepping up in leadership roles to carry us into the future.

We will carry on the amazing work of our President Ivan Hicks and his wife Vivian who for some 28 years have kept the ship afloat. They are an inspiration to us and we are very much in their debt for having kept Aubrey's dream alive.

Moving forward, please note the following message from the New Brunswick Archives:

On behalf of Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, I would like to invite you to participate in our new project – MUSIC & MUSICIANS OF NEW BRUNSWICK FONDS that will describe a musical landscape of New Brunswick and preserve your music for future generations.

We are planning to include records of all genres, all time periods, and all formats into this collection.

Please contact me if you have any records to donate or any questions to ask, I will be happy to hear from you!

Sincerely,  
Elena Cobb,  
Archivist

Sound/Moving Images Sector  
Provincial Archives of New Brunswick  
P. O. Box 6000  
23 Dineen Drive, UNB Campus  
Fredericton, New Brunswick  
E3B 5H1  
Tel: 506 444-4145  
FAX: 506 453-3288  
E-Mail: [elena.cobb@gnb.ca](mailto:elena.cobb@gnb.ca)  
<http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/>

This is an exciting and important project, especially if you are a songwriter and have a compilation of your music that you would like to preserve for future generations. I have sent material to the National Archives of Canada as requested from them and will be sending material to the NB Archives as well.

Here is a message from Vivian Hicks:

We don't have the photos yet from the photographers at the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala but that shouldn't be too much longer. In the meantime we have a small selection of photos from the Gala Concert that our assistant Cheryl Albert took. She says you are welcome to copy and use them for your own Facebook pages or for print if you wish. She was busy working at the event so wasn't able to get photos of everyone so apologies if there are some folks who were in the show but not in this set. When we have all the photos from the full event – We will be sure to share with you.

Here is the link to the photos: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/67XN9v5S7LufiPep6>

Attached is a copy of a newspaper story from the Times Transcript/Telegraph Journal on this year's Hall of Fame. Sending it along for your scrapbooks etc.

Thanks,  
Vivian



\*\* Please note I've shrunk this down to fit here but will attach the full size copy to the email for the newsletter for those that would like to have the full and readable copy \*\*

Every month we seem to lose another member and this time we have to say goodbye to Hall member Ernest DesPres who passed away on October 31<sup>st</sup> – I appologize for the delay in getting this information to you, as you know this should have been in the November column but it was already out by the time I received the news.

Thank you Ernest for your contributions to country music and the fabric of the musical community in New Brunswick. Rest in Peace.



## **Ernest Despres**

1928 – 2023

Ernest Joseph Despres, 95 of Residence Au Bénaisé and formerly of Moncton passed away Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at the Dr. Georges L. Dumont Hospital.

Born in Cocagne, he was the son of the late Alphonse Despres and Laura (Mazerolle) Despres. Ernest worked at Assumption Life for 34 years, retiring as a purchasing manager.

Ernest began to play the fiddle while still a teenager and his natural talent would also take him to the guitar, mandolin and later the drums. In 1955 he married Jeanine Arsenault, a Cathedral organist and choir director. They formed a band in 1957 called Les Gais Mariniers specializing in old time favourites and Latin American tunes to play dance halls and other venues. Then in 1960, Ernest formed another band, the Ercolle Catalli. Other music alliances followed in which Ernest played drums and percussion, as well as fiddle. These included the Crescendos from 1962-1977 and Strings and Keys from 1990-1996. Ernest taught violin for about 25 years to a wide variety of individuals and on October 13, 2007 he was inducted in the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame.

After retiring from his day job in 1983, he opened a studio to teach violin, note reading and tablature, as well as mandolin and guitar and in 1991, he founded the Greater Moncton Fiddlers.

Ernest enjoyed staying busy and that once included painting and woodcarving.

He is survived by his daughter Ginette Despres; grandchildren Mathew, Melyssa and Thomas Lake, Brandon Sellers and Kathleen Despres; sister Maria Belliveau (Henri). Predeceased by his beloved wife Jeannine; son Terrance Despres; daughter Jocelyne Despres and sisters Alphonsine and Andréa.

A Celebration of Ernest's Life, Kitchen Party Style will be held at a later date. Arrangements are in the care of Salisbury Funeral Home (506-372-4800). Private interment at Fair Haven Memorial Gardens.

If desired, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society or Alzheimers Society would be appreciated by the family.



The following is a message from President Ivan Hicks:

November was another exciting and interesting month of music beginning with a successful fiddle doo at the Apohaqui Community Hall (Nov 4). On Sunday (Nov 5), Vivian and I attended a well-presented concert by Terri Croft (violin and vocals) and Shelby Murray (keyboard, accordion and vocals). If you ever have the chance to see this amazing duo perform live, make sure you get tickets!

Vivian and I had the honour to once again play for the veterans at Ridgewood Veterans Wing in Saint John (Nov 11). This event always gives us a feeling of satisfaction that we have given our music in thanking these folks who have given of themselves for our freedom. To top off this day, we attended an evening concert at Kingswood University, Sussex with Tammy and Gary Morris of Cape Breton's The Men of the Deep. This was most enjoyable and well attended.

On Sunday, November 12, we were again on the road, this time to Fredericton for our first Board of Directors meeting of the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame since the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala held in October (Fredericton Inn). A big thank you goes out to all Board members present and our new Executive Director, Linda Gaston. Vivian and I served on the Board and in other capacities since 1995 and have decided it was time to pass on the torch to very capable hands. We do wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support, encouragement and efforts over these years in keeping Aubrey Hanson's dream alive and making sure this successfully carries on into the future.

We offer sincere congratulations to Reg Gallant, the new President of our Hall of Fame! We ask all members to give full support to Reg and Linda. Vivian and I will be there when there are occasions that we may be able to give a helping hand with.

Like many musicians in New Brunswick at this time of year, we are doing our share of Christmas events, including an appearance on the CTV Christmas Daddies Telethon (Dec 2 from 11am to 6pm), playing at senior homes and concerts and if anyone is interested in attending a fiddle doo, then take in one at the Lions Hall on Peter Street in Salisbury NB, Saturday, December 9 from 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Admission is by cash donation and by non-perishable food items for the local food bank. Bring along your musical instrument and dancing shoes and if you do not play, feel free to come listen and as my father (Curtis) use to say "And bring along your dog and knitting work" as you enjoy an afternoon of fiddle tunes and fellowship.

Vivian and I take this time to wish each and everyone a most enjoyable Christmas season with family and friends and lots of good health and music in 2024.

Thank you Ivan and Vivian for your leadership and guidance through the years. We hope you enjoy a well-deserved break but please don't go too far!

The frames for the new inductees are now up at the Hall in Fredericton and show Tom Hoyt, Wanda Grant, Joyce Boone, Tim Wallace, and Sam Johnston. They look great as always! Take a minute to stop in for a look if you're in the area.



On November 21, 2023, Hall member Flo Durelle was inducted into the Hall of Fame (French version) in Saint Antoine NB. It's called 'Le Mur De La Renommée De La Musique Francophone' (The Francophone Music Wall Of Fame!) Congratulations to you Flo for your contributions to the French community in New Brunswick through you wonderful music!



Flo also writes:

We had a very successful Christmas concert in my hometown of Baie Ste Anne on November 19, 2023. It was so nice to be able to sing for my hometown crowd.



*Noël à la Baie*  
avec Flo  
et ses invités!!!

le dimanche 19 novembre à 14h  
au théâtre de l'école ERBSA.

15\$ pour les membres  
et 20\$ pour les non-membres.

Contactez les personnes suivantes  
pour réserver vos billets :

Janice Turbide au 506-228-3681  
Natacha Thibeault au 506-624-8464  
Janice Daigle au 506-228-2045

Scott & Gerald  
Delahunty

Buff Durelle

Flo Durelle

Mireille McIntyre  
& Jade Collette

Scott Girvan

Sharon Jones



Hall member Alysa Collins has been busy as well, she writes:

I thought I'd share some news from the North. I am launching a new Christmas album on November 25<sup>th</sup> at a special concert. It is at Central United Church in Clifton, NB and features lots of local performers including fellow NBCMHF Derek Knowles. The concert is sold out and we know it's going to be a great way to kick off the holiday season.

The album contains 12 cover songs and 3 originals; it is my first time putting originals on an album. The album is named for the title track and one of the original songs called You Made Christmas For Me. I attached the album cover as well as the poster so you can pull information from it should you have space in an upcoming newsletter to add it in.

Thanks for all you do for the NBCMHF,  
Alysa



**Alysa Collins**  
**You Made Christmas For Me**

**Christmas Concert & Album Launch**

*Featuring*  
Alysa Collins  
Eddie Edwards  
Claudette Belliveau

*Special Guests*  
Rosalind Kennedy-Townsend & Dorothy Roy-Nini  
Derek Knowles  
Take Note  
Angela Knowles  
Trent & Hudson Collins

**Saturday, November 25th @ 7pm**  
Central United Church, Clifton, NB  
Tickets \$15

Alysa Collins  
alysa.daley.collins@gmail.com  
Text or Phone 506-543-2943

Eddie Edwards  
eddie\_lds@hotmail.com  
Text or Phone 506-543-7022

**A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to Central United Church.**

**Albums will be available to purchase for \$20.**

Thank you Alysa, looks like a great album and fantastic line-up for the launch concert!

Below are a few photos of Ivan Hicks and the Sussex Avenue Fiddlers appearing on the Christmas Daddies Telethon:



Hall member Eddy Poirier and Grassline Bluegrass Band will be performing at the Elgin Fire Hall on December 2, 2023 (today!!) from 2 – 4 pm. Here is the poster:

**Bluegrass Concert**  
The Elgin Fire Hall 2 Gowland Mt Rd  
December 2nd From 2 Pm to 4.30 PM  
Featuring  
Eddy Poirier & Grassline Bluegrass Band



Admission; \$ 12.00 Per Person at Door Only  
Door Open at 1 PM  
There will be a canteen.  
Pop and light Snack  
A 50/50 draw

For Info, Contact Eddy Poirier  
1-506-384-8655 or 1-506-863-4682  
email: eddyfiddle @gmail.com

Hall members Gary and Tammy Morris will be hosting their Valley Jamboree Christmas show at the Sussex Corner Hall on December 3, 2023 (tomorrow!!) starting at 2pm. Here's the poster:

# Valley Jamboree Christmas



**Gary and Tammy Morris**

**Cyril McNeil**

**Joyce Boone**

**Allison Incl.**



**Alexa Arnold**

**Maurice Fleming**

**Jenn Morris Donna Stephenson**

**Rayah and Jackson Toomey**

**Charlotte Lockhart & "Lily"**

**Sussex Corner Hall**

**Sunday December 3 2pm.**

**Tickets at Morris Music 433-5556**

**Salisbury Pharmacy**

I have to tell you folks that this is just a small taste of what is going on all over the province at this time of year. I would be up all night trying to get everything that is happening musically.

Please remember that if you have items of interest that you would like to see in the Music Notes column send it along and I will make every effort to include it. Just remember that the dead line for submissions is the end of the month for the following month's column. For example, for January's column, please send submissions no later than December 30.

Don't forget our monthly 50/50 draw, the money raised helps the Hall of Fame with programs and projects, the pots keep getting bigger, and you could put a little jingle in your pockets for the season too !



<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/nbcmhf>

Well folks that's it for this column and the last column of 2023! On behalf of the Board of Directors we wish you and yours the very happiest of Holiday seasons and a wonderful New Year.



Keep it country!  
Reg Gallant  
Vice-President (current) / President (incoming)  
NBCMHF (2009)