

# Warkworth welcomes all to maple festival Mar. 12 and 13

CALBORG CHRONICLE Feb 17/05



**Sweet and Low:** Alice Potter demonstrates the traditional way First Nations' people made maple syrup: placing hot rocks into the sap. George and Alice own and operate Sandy Flats Sugar Bush at Warkworth. They have been producing maple syrup for over 30-years.

The 19th annual Warkworth Maple Syrup Festival falls on the weekend of March 12 and 13, 2005. Thursday, festival organizers held a preview event. The Sandy Flats Sugar Bush remains open throughout the maple syrup-producing season.

PHOTO BY MARY LOU DUMKA

**Team effort:** The team of horses, Jake and Jenny, take visitors through the sugar bush.

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**BY MARY LOU DUMKA**  
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WARKWORTH - Just east of Roseneath in the County of Northumberland lies the picturesque community of Warkworth.

Each year, the people of Warkworth gather together to welcome and celebrate one of the first rites of spring: the age-old tradition of maple syrup production.

Time was, producing maple syrup was a very common activity in rural and agricultural communities. However, as a child growing up in the city, it seemed to me to be as mysterious as the

alchemy of turning lead into gold.

I knew what maple syrup was; we learned about it in school. Tapping trees to gather the sap that eventually turned into candy by simply rolling boiling sap in snow seemed too good to be true. It was not until I became an adult and moved to rural Ontario that I had my first trip to a sugar bush to watch the production of maple syrup first-hand.

If you have never seen a sugar bush or the production of maple syrup, the Warkworth Maple Syrup Festival is the place for you. A visit is a day of fun for you and your family. Sandy Flats Sugar Bush offers more for the visitor to enjoy than a plate of pancakes and

sausage.

Horse-drawn sleigh rides through the sugar bush, syrup-making demonstrations, taffy sampling, log sawing, snowshoe and plank racing will also be available.

If that isn't enough to entertain you, there will also be square dancing and step dancing demonstrations, as well as clogging demonstrations. The Potter Family Band will supply old-time fiddling and country music.

George Potter plays the fiddle and wife Alice plays the bass with 88-year-old Mary Herminton on the keyboard.

George and Alice own and

operate Sandy Flats Sugar Bush. They have been producing maple syrup for over 30-years. This will be the festival's 19th year.

"The first two years, we didn't have the pancake house and we served people outside at picnic tables," Alice Potter says.

Surveying her sugar bush of tall stately sugar maple trees, Alice says there is evidence the trees have been tapped as far back as the mid-1800s. She credits the success of the festival with word-of-mouth advertising and, after a cold winter, people are anxious to get out.

The village of Warkworth coordinates activities to coincide with the annual spring festival.

An antique show and sale, woodworks and wonder craft show and sale, the juried art show of the Spirit of the Hills arts organization, the seniors' tea and white elephant sale, a petting farm and pony rides are on offer.

Stroll down Warkworth's main street and discover its wonderful stores and galleries.

**This year's festival falls on the weekend of March 12 and 13, 2005. To learn more about the production of maple syrup or times and dates for the Warkworth Maple Syrup Festival you can visit their web site at [www.maplesyrupfestival.com](http://www.maplesyrupfestival.com).**