

Uxbridge hosts cultural extravaganza

By CHRIS SHANAHAN
Staff Reporter

What may be the world's first outdoor projected art exhibit is one of many attractions planned for the inaugural Uxbridge Celebration of the Arts.

A who's who of the area's theatre, music, film and visual arts communities have banded together to stage a three-day cultural extravaganza Aug. 22 to 24.

Chairman Ron Tindley and other members of a board of directors promoted the celebration Wednesday during an information night at Mr. Tindley's Hobby Horse Arts restaurant and pub.

If successful in its first year, he says the festival will become an annual event and hopefully develop into a tourist attraction.

His concept was born out of the fact "there's not any sort of pure

music and arts festival that goes on" in Uxbridge at present.

Artist John Richmond has played a key organizational role by uniting various factions of Uxbridge's performing arts scene.

And the Claremont-area man says he's excited about the many original ideas discussed during initial planning sessions.

These include a slide presentation of Canadian cartoonist Duncan McPherson's work on the side of a building. It's to be engineered by Whitevale's Gordon Willson, former senior designer with the Ontario Science Centre.

Uxbridge Township sculptor Ron Baird is also formalizing ideas for a massive plastic creation to grace downtown streets during that weekend.

"If everything comes together, we'll add to the menu next year," Mr. Richmond says of the festival, which he hopes will introduce visitors to the large pool of talent in and around Uxbridge Township.

The director wants to capitalize on the overflow of spectators attending Steam Threshing Days, an annual historical show taking place that same weekend at nearby Uxbridge-Scott Museum.

A highlight is to be a film festival in the renovated gymnasium at Uxbridge Secondary School.

Oscar-winning Sunderland film-maker Christopher Chapman is organizing that three-day cinematic showpiece. He says it'll offer a rare chance to view many of the documentary and short subject efforts that helped earn Cana-

da its high international reputation in the field.

A screening of the classic Canadian movie *Nanook of the North* will help kick things off on the festival Friday. And during opening ceremonies at USS that same night, Gerald Pratley will present the Ontario Film Institute's annual Special Award for Excellence to Donald Shebib.

Tom Baker of Zephyr is overseeing the musical side of the arts celebration. The former musical director of Second City Revue has planned everything from a Saturday afternoon 'water' theme concert on the shores of Elgin Pond, to jazz nights and Sunday's organ and harpsichord recital.

Theatre is being handled by versatile stage performer Roz Pritchard, who has lined up much of Uxbridge's top talent for a cabaret night on Saturday, Aug. 23. It begins in the Music Hall at 8:30 p.m.

'Street Action' will see the downtown core full of jugglers, mimes, folksingers and a variety of other entertainers. There'll also be several theatre and cinema workshops.

Uxbridge Celebration of the Arts Inc. has been formed as a registered non-profit corporation. Festival funding is to come largely from private donations, supported by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture and ticket sales.

For more information, contact board chairman Ron Tindley at 852-6126.




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A Spring Fling

The Unionville South Markham Rotary Club is presenting a Spring Fling night Saturday, April 26 at the Markham Club.

The event, meant to raise money for Rotary Club projects, begins at 6:30, running until 1 a.m., with music provided by the

Showcase Band.

A buffet will be served at 7 p.m. and there will also be door prizes, draws and spot prizes.

Tickets are \$60 per couple and can be bought at the Royal Bank and the Bank of Nova Scotia in Markham.

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