

## Pictou Lobster Carnival

The Lobster Carnival is a staple tradition for the Town of Pictou and has been for more than 84 years now. When the carnival first started it in 1934 it was advertised as a free carnival where visitors, fisherman and their families could come and enjoy a delightful day of music and entertainment without having to pay for it. The only thing to pay for was the lobster being sold all over town, there was even a lobster “garden” that a person could go pick out a lobster and have it fresh from the pot. The streets were decorated with lobster claw garland, pictures of lobster on poles, banners and flags by day and at night there were multi coloured flood lights making the place look like a fairy-tale.

Something that may surprise most is the attendance for the first Lobster Carnival, which was a whopping 15,000 people coming down to Pictou to see this free carnival in action. With people from all over the Province to come see the festivities. Which is no surprise as even in it’s early days the Lobster Carnival had amazing events and sights. One such is from 1938 where there was a ship created to simulate the Burning Phantom Ship from the Northumberland Strait. As the ship sailed, it caught fire starting at the bow, to then be engulfed by flames and fireworks.

The premise behind starting the Lobster Carnival was to give people something joyful to look forward to after the lobster fishing season. One of the first goals for the Carnival was to set forth the value of Pictou to the lobster industry and to express some sort of measurement to the fishermen and other industry workers the appreciation from the community. The second goal was to mark Pictou as the center position of the industry. The third unintentional “goal” created was the entertainment and good time for the tourists who come to Nova Scotia allowing the Lobster Carnival to be one of Canada’s best festivals.