

the Down Home Jubilee comes in the midst of a busy touring and recording schedule, "but we wouldn't miss it for the world," Brown says. "This type of event is a real joy for us to play. It's more than a concert; better than a concert: It's an event. The group likes to meet the people we play for and share some of our joy in this music with them. It's going to be a terrific day."

Rounding out the concert talent line-up is Wayne Thompson, a 14-year-old stepdancer from Summerside, P.E.I. Cameron saw Thompson perform "when he was just 7 or 8 and he was a tremendous showstopper then," Cameron says. "I told him I'd have him on my show at Confederation Centre in Charlottetown next season. He was a great success; brought the house down. He's got a great stage personality, too, for so young a performer. He really enjoys performing and, of course, that sort of thing is infectious."

The First Annual Down Home Jubilee is sponsored by McCain Foods Ltd., says John Brook, sales and special project consultant for Roy Thomson Hall. "It is a Maritime firm with national involvement. The management views this as an opportunity to showcase the exceptional talent of the Atlantic region."

The format of the day is designed to afford the most opportunities for enjoyment, audience participation, family activity and personal exchange between the performers and audience, Langstroth says. The afternoon concert, scheduled for 2 p.m., is a family affair, with the performers styling their sets with an eye to the great number of young children present. Before the performance, in keeping with the up-tempo, fair-like mood of the concert, a picnic is arranged for the lawns adjoining the hall.

"We're looking at the possibility of offering a box lunch for sale, featuring Atlantic-type foods," says Leigh Booth, food and beverage manager for Roy Thomson Hall.

"The performers can join in the picnic, too, and meet the audience," Langstroth says. "I chose these acts for that very reason: Each likes to be with the people, to talk to them in a relaxed atmosphere. It's like old friends getting together to chat over a picnic lunch."

At 5:30 p.m., Booth is planning a lobster dinner to be served in the Dunington Grubb Court. Selections might include a half lobster, served either grilled or boiled on the patio or chilled, New Brunswick mussels, Clearwater crab claws, a seven-item salad bar, fresh fruit trifle and lemon or chocolate mousse.

There are plans to have a local Celtic band entertain on the patio during the dinner to whet the musical appetites of the evening guests for the 7:30 p.m. concert.



*Bobby Brown (above) and The Cape Breton Symphony Fiddlers stir the hearts of audiences of all generations and tastes.*

The evening performance will be a repeat of the afternoon show but with longer sets for each artist and more time for them to explore more ballads for the older audience. "The fun element will remain intact," Langstroth says, "but we can show more of the variety of Maritime music with a more mature audience."

Langstroth's credentials as producer for this first Down Home Jubilee are exceptional. A fifth generation Maritimer, he was born in New Brunswick "into a house filled with music." He was already performing at his grandmother's Wayside Inn at the age of 5. Raised in Montreal, he took a degree in fine arts before joining CBC Halifax in 1954.

"In those early days," he says, "you learned from the ground up by doing everything. There's no substitute for it as a learning experience — and it's fun too."

Part of the "everything" was producing the Max Ferguson Gazette for CBC Radio in 1955. Don Messer

And The Islanders were guests on the show and Langstroth was so impressed, he begged to produce a show for them if they ever did one. In 1956, Don Messer's Jubilee started as a local television show. In 1957 and '58, it was a regional show. In 1959, it was picked up by the CBC national network. Langstroth was producer from day one.

That first national Don Messer's Jubilee replaced Country Hoe-down with Gordie Tapp, Tommy Hunter and Tommy Common. After two years of broadcasting without a break, Langstroth found a summer replacement show so the Don Messer crew could have a vacation. The show was Singalong Jubilee, which hit the national CBC-TV network in 1961 with guests such as Anne Murray, John Allan Cameron, Edith Butler and Bobby Brown. In 1964, Singalong Jubilee replaced Don Messer's show for the fall season. Langstroth left the show in 1970 to produce John Allan Cameron's new television series.

Langstroth's involvement with music and talent of the Maritime region made him a natural choice as producer for the First Annual Down Home Jubilee. "There are two cultural elements at work in Toronto," Langstroth says, "people who go to the symphony and people who go to square dances. They are not the same people, usually. But there is more than one type of culture and this show aims to hit both ends of the spectrum. We're staging a musical event of cultural importance, celebrating the heritage of part of our country. I think that'll appeal to just about everyone."

"This isn't an event just for Maritimers living in Toronto," Geoffrey Butler says. "It's designed to appeal to everyone with a taste for fun and music. The performers we've got lined up are guaranteed to set toes tapping and put big smiles on our audiences' faces."

"This will be the First Annual Down Home Jubilee," he says, "and we hope it will be the start of an annual celebration of this distinctive musical culture of Canada's East Coast."

*Peter Crossley is a Toronto freelance writer and editor*