

# Sports

# Cobourg Highland Games

**Imagine tossing around a 175 pound (79 kg) tree - for fun!**

For many of us that is the most memorable aspect of Highland Games. But it is just one of the sporting events you'll see at Cobourg's Highland Games which also include lots of pipe & drum bands and highland dancers.

**The history of such games is believed to go back some 4,000 years to Ireland**, with the move to Scotland in the 4th or 5th Century and then to the New World with Scottish immigrants.

An early Scottish Games in Cobourg, similar to today's Highland Games, took place at Donegan Park on **July 29, 1905**. It was sponsored by the Cobourg Chapter of the Sons of Scotland, a Scottish patriotic society. Chapters from Toronto and Hamilton participated in games such as the Caber Toss and Stone Throw, and at the end of the day the men played a game of baseball.

The first Cobourg Highland Games, as we know them today, were held Aug. 3, 1963, and **attracted about 14,000 people**. They were the brainchild of David Carr of Clan Kerr, a barber

and travel agent, who got the idea after hearing of games in Maxville, Ontario. He felt so strongly **he mortgaged his family home** to make it happen. Working with Clarence McIvor, a factory worker, insurance representative Arthur Bowland Cobb and accountant Jay Sidney Hinman, they started the tradition which continues today.

Donegan Park was the site for 49 years, but in 2013, **for the 50th Anniversary, the Games were moved to Victoria Park**, a more family friendly environment with better infrastructure.



**Ciad Mile Failte**  
100,000 Welcomes

**50**  
COBOURG HIGHLAND GAMES YEARS  
1963 2013

June 15, 2013 Victoria Park, Cobourg, Ontario

COBOURG

**CONCERT**  
Boghall & Bathgate Caledonia Pipe Band  
June 14th 2013 7:30 PM Cobourg Community Centre

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## The Games

### The Caber Toss

The distance thrown is unimportant, but the caber must make one full turn and fall forward within a clock radius ranging from nine to three o'clock. The toss that falls closest to twelve o'clock, or straight forward, is the winner. Each athlete is allowed three tosses, with the best of the three being judged.

### Weight Throw

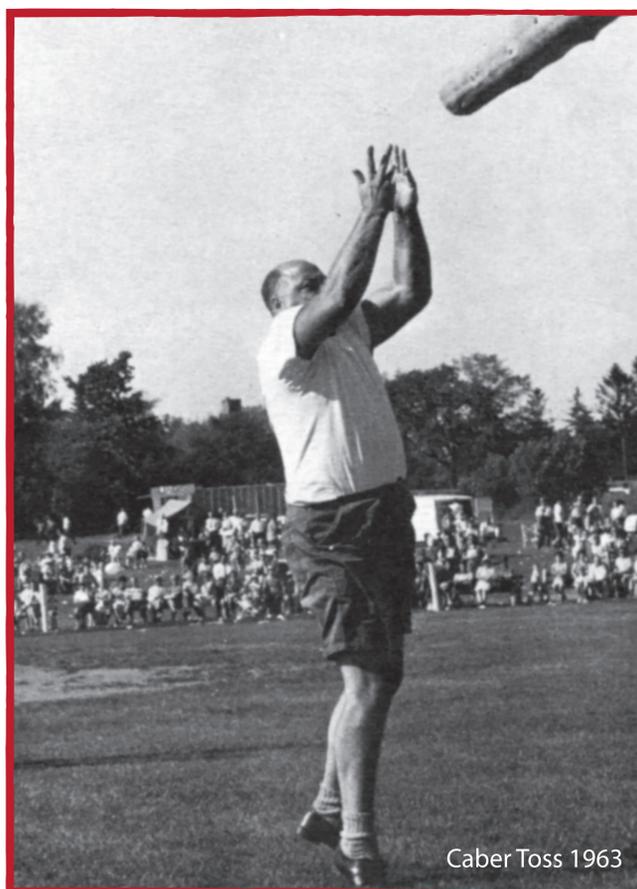
The weights consist of a ball or block attached by a chain to a ring or triangular handle with a total weight of 28 or 56 pounds. Its length cannot exceed 18 inches. The contestant must use only one hand to throw and the best of three throws counts.

### The Height Toss

Similar to the weight throw with the contestant tossing the weight over a crossbar such as that used in the pole vault. Each competitor gets three tosses at each height. The bar is raised until only the winner remains.

### The Sheaf Toss

Athletes toss the 16 pound sheaf of hay, wrapped in burlap, over a bar using a pitchfork. They are allowed three tosses at each height. The bar is raised six inches at a time until all contestants but the winner are eliminated.



Participation is not limited to men, and **even the caber toss attracts women contestants**. Categories include Amateurs, Masters, Open and Women with contestants competing in all events.

Photos courtesy of  
The Cobourg Highland Games