

ROSE CITY ROOTS MUSIC SOCIETY PREPARING FOR FIRST CONCERT

By Brett Browne, *Camrose Booster*, 2007.

A new group dedicated to promoting live music in Camrose is looking forward to its first concert. The Rose City Roots Music Society is presenting acoustic roots and blues musician Kat Dancer at the Hypnotika Lounge on Wednesday, March 28, starting at 8:00 p.m.

"The Rose City Roots Music Society is a non-profit group of motivated volunteers who want to bring original live music to Camrose in a non-smoking environment," explains society president Andrew Struthers, who feels there is an untapped audience in the community who enjoys live music, but avoids the smoky environment of traditional bars and lounges where it is typically performed. Struthers feels that Kat Dancer, a former Camrosian who recently released a new album entitled *Somethin' Familiar*, is the perfect choice as the Society's first act.

"I think she's a fantastic performer, a wonderful musician and I know she'll put on a great show. I can't wait to have her as our first act," he states.

Dancer's concert on March 28 is the first of three events booked for this spring. On April 28 the Society will welcome Le Fuzz, a world music group with Russian and Spanish influences. Then on May 23, Edmonton group Double A Sound System will bring its prairie roots rock sound to Camrose. If successful, The Rose City Roots Music Society will follow up this spring concert series with five additional dates through the fall of 2007 and into the spring of 2008. Struthers expects the musical talent featured by the Society to be fairly eclectic and says the "roots music" designation allows them to explore a wide range of original music performers.

"The group chose that name because it's very elastic. It doesn't have to be defined as folk music, or blues music, or even rock 'n' roll music," he explains. "To me 'Roots' is less of a defined musical term than it is an understanding."

Struthers says that while the Society doesn't necessarily plan to focus its efforts on local performers, it would be happy to feature local talent if the opportunity presents itself.

"I guess this is a plea in some regard. If there are local people out there, they may contact me by e-mail at rosecityroots@telus.net and let me know what they're playing," he explains.

Struthers says currently the Rose City Roots Music Society is working on achieving its society designation from the province. Eventually, he says the group will look at securing some funding from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts to assist in its efforts. He says if the group is successful they would also like to work with venues in surrounding communities such as Daysland, Forestburg, and Round Hill to promote live music. In time they may even be looking at renting their own stand-alone venue for concerts.

"If the Bailey Theatre project was to happen, this is a perfect example of an organization that would be ready to take hold of the opportunity to use that facility to book music and musicians," he said.

In the meantime, he says the Society will be working to build a membership of people interested in enjoying live music locally. He says there will be benefits for members of the Society including discounts on the price of concert tickets.

Tickets for the Kat Dancer concert are available at Augustana Bookstore, Cobblers and Craftsman, and Pop'lar Books.