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Beach Boys offer transit, history lesson

■ Free shuttle service offers Shediac tourists, residents daytime rides, paired with music and a touch of local history

BY ALLISON TOOGOOD
TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF

The Beach Boys Shuttle Bus will get you from point A to point B in Shediac, but the free ride also

comes with a little history lesson of the town the bus operators grew up in.

Also included are stunning scenery, lunch, dinner and dessert suggestions and classic summer-time tunes.

Although they weren't even born in 1989, David Landry and Réjean Martin say that everyone in the region knows about the time the singers of "Surfin' U.S.A.," the Beach Boys, stormed Shediac, bringing

20,000 people out to the beach for the once-in-a-lifetime concert.

As they drive passengers to and from some of Shediac's downtown and waterfront hotspots, Landry and Martin, both from Shediac River, recite tidbits of interesting information.

"Parlee Beach became a provincial park in 1957," Martin said, as he drove into the entrance of the

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taking its toll on us," Mayor Collette Roy-Laroche said.

Yesterday afternoon, Prime Minister Stephen Harper toured the town where a large part of the downtown area has been levelled.

"This is an unbelievable disaster," Harper said. "This is a very big disaster in human terms as the extent of this becomes increasingly obvious."

Harper said the whole country is worried about the missing and is praying for the town.

"This is an enormous area, 30 buildings just completely destroyed,

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to travel two hours or more to give birth at a hospital — but certain rural regions record higher than

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Codiac RCMP, along with the Moncton, Riverview and Dieppe fire departments, were called to the banks of the Pettitcodiac River yesterday morning after a woman's body was seen floating near the causeway. The body was recovered near the old boat dock in Riverview behind the Byron Dobson Arena.

they could find more bodies once they reached the hardest-hit areas. Quebec provincial police Lt. Michel Brunet said yesterday that

Shediac bus service offered for free throughout summer tourism season

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famed beach on a recent trip.

"The Pointe-du-Chêne wharf used to be an airport in the early 1900s," Landry said as Martin looped around the wharf's parking lot. "Flights from North America to Europe were from here. It was the hydro-planes but it all died down after the war as they weren't used anymore."

When asked off-topic questions about Shediac — for example, how the school system works, by first-time Québec tourists — both Landry and Martin display their knowledge, taking turns answering and even telling them a bit about their own experiences growing up in the picturesque seaside community.

The pair, Université de Moncton marketing students in their early 20s, founded the business in 2011. Landry said the idea was sparked by his father, who he said mentioned one day that Shediac needed some type of quick and easy shuttle service.

"It's a busy little downtown,

there's lots of traffic in the summer and many are tourists," he said.

"Even though they are 'rubber tourists,' people call them, as they come in their cars, they're still on vacation so we think they should leave the car at the hotel or campsite, come downtown, have a few drinks and enjoy the beautiful weather and this beautiful town."

After looking at similar tour and transportation services in Halifax and Old Orchard Beach in Maine, some mentoring from local business people and residents, and many late nights in the library coming up with a marketing plan and budget, the pair established the company.

Now several weeks into their third year, the guys take turns driving and run the shuttle service with four round-trips a day, seven days a week throughout the summer. A full route only takes about 25 minutes and the bus, which can seat up to 24 people, is fully air-conditioned which is a big plus on hot days.

What's great about 2013, Landry said, is that they have a partner,



ALLISON TOOGOOD/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

From left: Beach Boys Shuttle Bus co-owner and operator David Landry, Shediac councillor Carmel Brun, Centre-ville Shediac Downtown Inc. president Pierre LeBlanc and Beach Boys co-owner and operator Réjean Martin.

Centre-ville Shediac Downtown Inc., which allows them to offer the service for free — a first in their history.

is a ticket from the participating attractions and businesses where the drop-off and pick-up zones are stationed.

"People are just starting to notice who we are and what we do this year," Landry said. "Our busiest times are the late-afternoon runs because people are going for supper or evening drinks."

The service swings by nearly all of the nine campgrounds in the area and several of the motels so that visitors can easily travel from one end of Main Street, from the big lobster at the Rotary Park, to the other, by Parlee Beach.

As for next year, Landry and Martin say they'll have the business incorporated, look at playing with their name and maybe remodel the Beach Boys image slightly.

"A business always needs to change, if not it'll die," Landry said. "It needs to keep evolving like a living organism so that's (what) we'll strive to do."

Beach Boys Shuttle Bus can be found online at beachboysshuttle.ca.