

Spirit

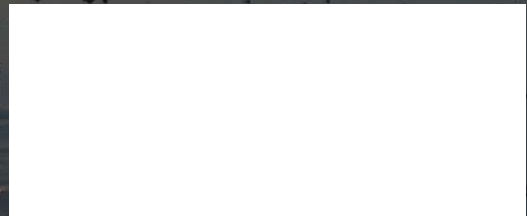
OF THE CITY

Singled Out!
Festival Fever
Business Profiles
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REINVENTION

BELOW

**Taking Flight:
One Man's
Journey from
Darkness to Light**



PAINT THE TOWN RED

GO Canada!

“One day a lady came into the bakery,” remembers La Villa Bakery owner Johnny Bozzo, “and she wanted to know why we, the BIA, weren’t decorating the village or doing anything for Canada Day?”

Thus a community challenge arose and Bozzo carried her question forward as Promotion Director for the Port Credit Business Improvement Association (PCBIA). After speaking with other Port Credit business owners along Lakeshore Road, new questions started percolating: What would they do? And how would they do it?

They began with a framework for the day. It would begin in the morning with a mighty parade along Lakeshore Road, then the afternoon would offer children’s activities and music concerts in

Memorial Park, and after dark the event would be capped off by grand fireworks launched over the Credit River.

Now, what to call it?

“One night at Brogue Pub, after a beverage,” Bozzo warms to the story, “Jesse Collins and Tommy Donnelly came up with the name ‘Paint the Town Red.’ Frank Bailey Graphics designed the logo and the original poster for the event.”

Their idea was taking shape, but they had no budget. The PCBIA gave them some money, as did the FRAM Building Group and Slokker Developments. The City of Mississauga, Heritage Mississauga and dozens of local businesses also stepped up. Bozzo guaranteed to cover any budget overages.





As they began looking for floats, marching bands, antique cars and dancers, one small question kept emerging. Johnny blinks: "If we did put it all together, would anybody come?"

They were pleasantly surprised by a terrific turnout: 30,000 visitors!

"We were afraid there were so many people that the bridge might collapse," Bozzo smiles. "We want to thank them all, the families and individuals—they have been so good, so friendly. We hardly have to clean up."

Now 10 years later, Paint the Town Red averages over 50,000 attendees for a truly remarkable day. The parade has grown so large they need to marshal it at the Port Credit Harbour Marina before entering Lakeshore Road at Stavebank Road and marching east nearly two kilometres to La Villa Bakery and the grand finale: a "ginormous" birthday cake cutting event, sharing hundreds of pieces of the biggest cake in Canada.

"It takes a week to prepare and we put all the pieces together the night before," says Bozzo the baker.

This year, Juno-nominated musical star Tom Barlow will lead his band in covering some of the greatest Canadian hit songs ever, as the bigger-than-ever fireworks cascade over the river. It will be another unforgettable show following a day of fabulous music and a

picturesque parade of Canadiana that owes its ongoing success to so many there isn't space to name them all.

However, it's unfair not to mention the contributions of some truly outstanding supporters. Paint the Town Red wouldn't be the same without the support of Dave Timms, Frank Giannone, Aldo Lista, the Port Credit BIA and the Port Credit Community Foundation. John May and Jonathan James have always been actively supportive. Other local heroes include Brian Meikle, Pat and Wayne Anderson, Cam and Maureen O'Neil, Scott Smith, John Pappas, Jason Segato, Luigi Macerola, Russ Drennan, Bruce Forth, Paul and Roy Clifton, John Krush and Billy Gordon. And of course, the event's board without whom it would not be possible: Howard Klein, Eunice Luis, Donna Brookes and Julie Knox. Last but not least, the Tim Horton's Southside Shuffle has been very good to the cause.

"We have 140 volunteers and a small part-time staff including Beatrice Moreira-Laidlow, Brenda Armstrong and Karen Cecy," Bozzo nods humbly. "Thankfully the community really comes together because we need them all to help make this happen."

On Canada Day, there is a welcome place for you in Port Credit.

