



PRESS RELEASE

Canada Stands Proud With Festival Marking UNESCO Honor

Rideau Canal Festival aims to honor and preserve an iconic Canadian site

OTTAWA, Ontario—April 18, 2008—The Rideau Canal Festival Committee today announced Ottawa's first celebration of Canada's most recent UNESCO World Heritage Site - the Rideau Canal. The inaugural edition of the festival is slated for the August Civic Holiday long weekend (August 1st – 4th, 2008).

"This festival demonstrates that tourism, leisure, and environmentalism, and heritage can indeed converge very successfully," said Henry Storgaard, the first Volunteer Chairman of the Rideau Canal Festival Committee, a group of prominent local citizens who pooled their time and resources to make the festival a reality. "It always impresses me to see how friends and colleagues across Canada speak with such pride about the canal and the activities that surround it. It's a real Canadian icon and it is wonderful that it will now become a heritage site for the world to enjoy," he added.

This free festival will have myriad activities for everyone: Colonel By Heritage Fair, the first Rideau Canal Night Flotilla, World Heritage Flotilla starting from Fort Henry in Kingston, the world's largest parade of bicycles (aiming for a Guinness World Record), Ecosphere - The Green Rendezvous, and more.

The Ontario Government was instrumental in bringing the festival to fruition. "The McGuinty Government is proud to be a partner in this exciting festival that celebrates our rich culture and heritage and commemorates the Rideau Canal as Ontario's only UNESCO world heritage site," said Madeleine Meilleur, M.P.P. for Ottawa-Vanier.

The festival has partnered with Zerofootprint, a Toronto-based not-for-profit organization that helps organizations work towards eco-friendly events and activities.

"We are excited to be helping the Rideau Canal Festival reduce its environmental impact," commented Deborah Kaplan, the Executive Director of Zerofootprint. "As a World Heritage Site, it is important that we help preserve the Rideau Canal and ensure that those attending this event are aware of how they can act to help preserve the area for future generations."

To ensure the sustainability of the festival, organizers are encouraging people to participate in the Adopt-A-Meter campaign. For a price of twenty dollars, participants will be able to offset carbon emissions by adopting a meter of the Rideau Canal for the duration of the festival. This is part of an effort to minimize the environmental footprint.

For further information: www.rideaucanalfestival.ca

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