

JAMMIN' *to Live For*

Letterheads gather in Cornwall, Ontario for a historic mural festival.



After a long day of travel, guests spilled out of the Sign It Café, where Nancy and Noella were waiting with wine and cheese and a place to unwind.



Jam Anyone?

Cornwall is a community on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence River, which forms the border between the state of New York in the United States, the Mohawk Nation and Canada. It's about an hour drive up river (south) from Montreal.

The St. Lawrence was an important trade route that Native Americans and early European settlers used to access the Great Lakes. Cornwall's rich history goes back to pre-Revolutionary War times. Along its picturesque river frontage, evidence exists of many years of commerce.

This history became subject material for the Walldog Jam, which took place June 7-10 and was hosted by Nancy Beaudette, Noella Cotnam and their crew at Sign It Signs & Design in Cornwall.

After a welcome reception Wednesday evening at Sign It, participants converged at Nav Canada, a state-of-the-art campus, housing the training center for Canada's air traffic controllers. Nancy and Noella arranged the use of Nav Canada's gymnasium, which is where the blank panels were set up. For weather-related and other logistical reasons, and to keep everyone together, the gym proved to be an excellent place to stage the event.



The meet took place at Nav Canada. Nav Canada? A lot of people didn't really understand what this place, situated on the banks of the picturesque St. Lawrence River in Cornwall, Ontario, was all about. Later, we found out it is the training center for Canada's air traffic controllers.



Getting started. Activity levels were high on Thursday morning. Soon all of the blank sign boards were covered with outlines and pounce patterns. Colors quickly emerged in parts of others.





Mark Oatis and Noel B. Weber make last minute color revisions.



Bill Reidell painted these faces on Noel B. Weber's "Northwest Company" mural. Funny how the people of 300 years back bear an uncanny resemblance to Mark Oatis and David Butler...

Even though a few earlybirds had the first mural painted and installed as part of a local festival and promotional event about a month earlier, there was still plenty to do for the rest of the group that showed up in Cornwall during that first week in June. Eight murals remained to be completed before Sunday, June 10 -- and the sign boards were completely blank that Thursday morning.

The gym floor was protected and the eight remaining blank panels were temporarily erected inside the gym. The panels consist of an aluminum tube frame, with sheets of Accubond attached with VHB double-sided tape, in sections that would fit through the gym doors. The floor was set up with knock-down easels, paint stations and plenty of room to work — and socialize.

I had taken a few excursions around town and found it full of helpful, friendly people — who didn't quite understand the concept of a Walldog meet. They soon found out, to their surprise and delight.

By Saturday, Cornwall locals were stopping in to see what was going on. Some were familiar with the scenes they saw depicted on the panels. A woman remembered how, as a nine-year-old girl, she was awakened in the middle of the night to the tremors that shook the town, and yes, people were running around in pajamas. Another visitor lives in a nearby town made up of re-located homes, stores and churches that were moved when the St. Lawrence was dammed and harnessed for electricity.

— Eddie Wieber



Works in progress: Nancy and Noella arranged the use of Nav Canada's gymnasium. For weather-related and other logistical reasons, and to keep everyone together, the gym proved to be an excellent place to stage an event of this magnitude.



Not only did they organize the meet so that all essential materials were provided (including plenty of chow), Noella and Nancy found the time to get up and sing too.



Good, Wholesome Jam

We have spent the last couple of weeks trying to catch our breath after an exhausting, but exhilarating Walldog weekend. We know we will recover from the hours of planning and preparation involved with this event, but there is one thing we're certain we will never forget: the incredible outpouring of generosity and support from the Letterhead Movement, and our Cornwall community. For those of you trying to figure out what we're talking about, we're referring to the creation of nine new murals gracing the walls of our fair city.

The first mural was created at Cornwall's Spring Home & Garden show in April as a promotion to the main event. The other eight were completed during the four-day meet, which was held at Nav Canada (a training facility for air traffic controllers). We were blessed with some of the best talent in the industry at this meet, including project leaders: David Butler, Mark Oatis, Noel Weber, Elaine Wallis, Dan Sawatzky, Gary Anderson, Robin Seibert and Jack Blanchard.

As well, business tycoons Jeff Wallis & Chip Carter, and design wizards Gary Godby and Doug Downey gave seminars to eager participants. We were also the first letterhead group to be challenged by the new hit game show, "Who wants to be a Signmaker", created and hosted by none other than the always

sexy Doc Welty and that crazy-funny man, Larry Whan.

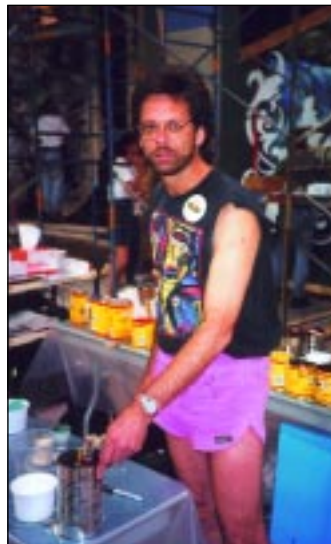
Karaoke on Saturday night was also a big hit, but the surprise was a performance of a Nav Canada student from Cape Breton Island (Nova Scotia), who serenaded us in the wee hours Sunday morning.

At 10:00 a.m., on Sunday, Cornwall Electric's team showed up to begin installing the murals. Where else in the world could you get a city utility to volunteer time and equipment on a Sunday? By 6:30 p.m. all the murals were erected. Our city residents are overwhelmed with the generosity of the Letterheads. This movement is a tradition that stands proud with a humble glow. We are so fortunate to be a part of this wonderful group.

— *With much gratitude,*
Nancy Beaudette & Noella Cotnam
Sign It Signs & Design



If you weren't watching, the blank panels seemed to transform by magic into colorful works of art. By Sunday evening, all were finished and installed.

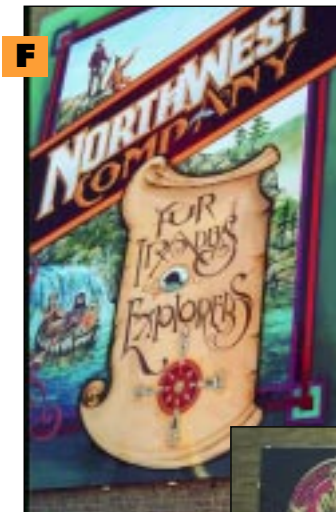


Rumor has it that this meet cost Jay Allen his shorts. Thankfully, some things are irreplaceable.



It can be a real challenge getting a group like this to sit still long enough for a photo. As it is, some big-haired dude in the back row had to turn around and say something to the wall just as Larry Whan jumped up to snap this photo.

Answers to the GUESS WHO? quiz found on page 12 of the August issue of Sign Business:



A	Mayor's Picnic — Elaine Wallis
B	St. Lawrence — Jack Blanchard
C	Capital Theatre — Gary Anderson
D	Cheese & Butter — Noella Cotnam and Nancy Beudet
E	Imperial Oil — David Butler
F	Northwest Company — Noel B. Weber
G	Cornwall Shook — Mark Oatis
H	Cotton Mills — Robin Seibert
I	Mohawk Manufacturing — Dan Sawatsky