

May 25, 2009

## 10th anniversary Doors Open Toronto record-breaking weekend – 250,000 visitors

Over 250,000 visitors, young and old, eagerly discovered and explored Toronto's buildings on Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24. They toured 175 Toronto venues of architectural, historic and cultural significance shattering last year's attendance records in celebration of Doors Open Toronto's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The ROM party on Friday May 22 had over 6,300 revelers, including Mayor David Miller, kick-starting the weekend with readings, music and more. City Hall, the new Doors Open Toronto headquarters, welcomed 10,000 participants to the Mayor's Office, Council Chambers and Observation Deck. Everyone wanted to go to jail this weekend, with line-ups at the Don Jail starting at 6:40 am on Saturday.

The public came out for both architecture and authors, as books met buildings with the grand finale of Lit City -- a three month festival that celebrated writers who find inspiration in Toronto and use the city as a setting in their work with site-specific events. . Robert Rotenberg read from his popular legal thriller, *Old City Hall* on site at this year's most attended site Old City Hall with 12,280 visitors. Anthony De Sa read to a packed audience at the Factory Theatre from *Barnacle Love*, with crowds of people waiting outside for his guided walking tour through Little Portugal -- the Toronto setting of the novel. Union Station's unforgettable "Journeys to the City" magical program of readings, theatre and spontaneous performances, presented by Diaspora Dialogues, brought both smiles and tears to thousands passing through the iconic building.

Doors Open Toronto building highlights included last year's favourite BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir temple still drawing crowds with 10,751 visits to this masterpiece of intricately hand-carved marble, limestone, sandstone and wood. The new eye-catching Doors Open Toronto banners drew virgin participants and veteran enthusiasts to buildings new to this year's roster: TTC Greenwood Maintenance Shop had 4,000 visits (Saturday only), Fire Hall 423 – The Junction welcomed 1,000 and the 1950s retro 5-pin bowling alley, Shamrock Bowl, had 1,280 Doors Open Toronto bowlers.

Perennial favourites that proved to be popular include Black Creek Pioneer Village (9,913), art deco darlings: Carlu @ College Park (5,094), Canada Permanent Building (3,855) and Commerce Court (3,448); Distillery Historic District (10,000), Gardiner Museum (3,934), Gladstone Hotel (1,694), MaRS Discovery District (3,870), Osgoode Hall (9,767), Spadina Museum: Historic House & Gardens (5,670), St. James' Cathedral (4,027) and 2,300 people got a penthouse view of the city from the Toronto-Dominion Centre.

A representative from St. Thomas's Church summed up the weekend by saying, "...the act of opening the church doors to the larger community to celebrate Eden Smith's beautiful architecture has both enriched the lives of the members of our parish and thrilled many of our visitors who are seeing the building for the first time. Thank you for the privilege of being involved with Doors Open Toronto."

Doors Open Toronto was an incredible success thanks to our innumerable gracious volunteers and building owners. Feedback welcome at [www.toronto.ca/doorsopen](http://www.toronto.ca/doorsopen) -- enter for a chance to win dinner at the Keg Steakhouse, movie tickets from Cineplex Entertainment and one night complimentary stay for two in a Fairmont Deluxe Guestroom (total value over \$400).

Planning is already underway for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Doors Open Toronto on Saturday, May 29 and Sunday May 30, 2010.

Doors Open Toronto is produced by the City of Toronto and Toronto 175, sponsored by the Toronto Star. Media sponsor: CBC; program sponsor: Woodcliffe.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years, Toronto has won more than 70 awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

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