

costs. Canadian musicians living in Paris often perform, as does the Hamilton All Star Jazz Band, a frequent guest of the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival. Sometimes there are special touches: in 2004, embassy staff launched 400 red and white balloons in the sky, marking the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city of Québec.

At the Canada Day celebrations in Berlin, “Branding Canada as a culturally rich country of remarkable natural beauty is at the forefront of the embassy’s intentions,” says Stéphane Charbonneau, a public affairs, culture and academic relations counsellor. In 2008, guests had the chance to watch numerous videos on Canadian themes—the city of Québec’s 400th anniversary, the Arctic, the national parks of Nunavut—as well as Zacharias Kunuk’s celebrated film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*. For refreshments, guests savoured maple ice cream and ordered beverages at a bar... made entirely of ice. At the end of the celebrations, guests received a CD by Leonard Cohen, who was performing in Germany that summer.

Recent celebrations in North America have taken on a high-tech flavour. For their Canada Day Across America event, the Washington embassy uses Twitter, Facebook and other social media tools to connect events taking place across the continental United States.

“Canadians and Americans alike participate,” says Lisette Ramcharan, Minister Counselor (Public Affairs). “We ask them to tell us how they celebrate and where, and we generate a Google map that displays all of the festivities across the U.S. so people can find local events and paint the town red together.” Last year, there were close to 200 events—at least one in nearly every state. Participants sent in photographs showing such things as partygoers wearing Canadian flag T-shirts, a cake decorated with icing in the shape of a Canadian flag and a humble plate of Nanaimo bars.

In Los Angeles, the celebrations are often thematic. Last year, the consulate general celebrated a few days early so that Canada Day celebrations would coincide with the National Hockey League’s Entry Draft on June 25 and 26 at the Staples Center. Collaborating with the Los Angeles Kings hockey



Consul General David Fransen, with staffers Geneviève Mesmer and Cameron Islas, helped brand Canada while celebrating Canada Day at the 2010 NHL Draft in Los Angeles.

team, the consulate general hosted many guests at the NHL commissioner’s brunch, which included a tribute to Canada Day. A Canada Day booth was set up in the centre of L.A. Live, an entertainment complex next to the Staples Center, and there were special seating sections at the Center where guests of the consulate general could watch the draft take place. “Everyone knows that Canada and hockey go together,” says Carl Hartill, Consul and Program Manager. “By the end of these celebrations Canada was firmly branded in Los Angeles and we had promoted a host of key business development objectives.”

Canada Day at foreign missions is sometimes not at all about ceremony. Two years ago, to mark its 10th anniversary, the Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah spent Canada Day beautifying a downtown park. Staff painted the children’s playground, planted flowers, spread sand in the play area, removed weeds and cleaned up the park. Their work supported the city’s centennial beautification campaign and showed Ramallah residents how Canadians love to do volunteer work on Canada Day. “The whole office took part, including many spouses and children, and we got to showcase the Canadian value of giving back to the community,” says Nancy Bergeron, Political Officer.

However they celebrate Canada Day, our missions have one goal in mind—to cement the friendship and affection that many people around the world feel for our vast and beautiful country.