



Dancers at the Windsor Public Library during Culture Days

Cultural Diversity

Windsor has long prided itself on the diversity of its people. Windsor was founded by the coming together of Aboriginal, Black, English and French people. Today this pride in diversity continues with the city being home to a tremendous range of nationalities and ethnicities.

Since the beginning, these communities established their own schools, churches, and social clubs. For example, during the time of the Underground Railroad, the early Black community were shunned from the school system and as a result built one themselves.

Catholics in the postwar period offered social services through the Catholic immigration Centre on Cadillac Street. This period also saw burgeoning recognition of multiculturalism through the

Windsor Ethnic Council and the Canadian All Nations Cultural Association.

In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau announced Canada's Multiculturalism Policy. Reaction was immediate, with 30 local ethno-cultural groups meeting at St. Clair College to discuss forming a local multicultural council. Momentum continued and by 1973 over 100 leaders in community cultural organizations decided to form the Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County.

Festivals and events celebrating diversity began almost immediately with the Multicultural Festival debuting in 1974 and a downtown bazaar in 1975.

These were the seeds that

eventually flourished as the award-winning Carrousel of Nations in 1976. The latest iteration of the Carrousel of Nations spans three weekends in June, offering food, hospitality, music and cultural experiences. The event garners national prize, ranking high on tourism polls.

Currently there are over 170 ethnicities and 70 spoken languages making Windsor the fourth most ethnically diverse city in Canada. A popular daily multicultural experience includes going to one of the many ethnic restaurants in Windsor. Examples include Ethiopian, Indian, Lebanese, Malaysian, Salvadorian, Thai, and Vietnamese cuisine. The Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County continues to play a critical role in this diverse city with a mission of promoting and encouraging a harmonious society that is multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multi-faith.



Youth Art Project at the Downtown Farmer's Market



Chief Tecumseh artwork



Cultural celebration at the river