



**RONCESVALLES VILLAGE BIA COMMUNITY BUILDING:
NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY**

Established in the summer of 2020, the Roncesvalles Village BIA [Social Justice & Anti-Racism Committee](#) is focused on offering education to our members and amplifying community events which can help remove barriers to equity, diversity, and prosperity for marginalized groups in our neighbourhood. By providing these resources, the committee aims to bring our main street together with the community in the ongoing effort towards continuing to make Roncesvalles Village a welcoming and safe place to visit and live.

This year, one of these initiatives was for an awareness event for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Local Community Collaborators:

The Roncesvalles United Church, home of the first Indigenous mural (by Philip Cote) painted inside a church in Canada, as noted in Parliament by MP Arif Virani, is a community hub located at 240 Roncesvalles Ave.

Lead: Reverend Anne Hines.

The Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden, the first initiative of its kind between a BIA, the City of Toronto, and an Indigenous Group, is located at 2201 Dundas St West.

Lead: Friends of the Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden Chair, Abby Bushby.

The initiative:

Working with the Roncesvalles United Church and the Friends of Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden, as well as community volunteers, the RVBIA SJAR Committee funded, created awareness, and participated in the 3rd annual Orange Shirt walk and event in observation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.



This included a community event on September 22, organized by Friends of Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden, and hosted by local studio, Back Lane Studios. The community was invited to participate in the Moccasin Identifier project by painting the stencils of moccasin on to the event signage printed for the RVBIA which was then displayed in the Peace Garden and the 24 RVBIA garden beds all along Roncesvalles Ave – the poster about activities on the 30th on one side and displaying the stencils of the moccasins on the other.

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The RVBIA engaged an Indigenous graphic artist to produce both the signs installed in the garden beds and the posters distributed to businesses to create awareness of the events.

On September 30th was a gathering ceremony that took place at the northern most point of Roncesvalles Avenue at the Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden where attendees were led by Indigenous community member, founder of Msit No'kmaq and cofounder of Turtle Protectors, Carolynne Crawley.

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After Carolynne’s words and some local musicians performing, the crowd began the 1 km walk down Roncesvalles from the Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden, south to the Roncesvalles United Church.

Once inside the sanctuary of the Roncesvalles United Church, Haida Cree New Music Sensation Kristi Lane Sinclair performed for the gathered crowd.

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This year, this event was attended by approximately 150 community members and neighbours, including Indigenous Artist, Young Spiritual Elder, Artist, Activist, Historian and Traditional Wisdom Keeper Philip Cote MFA, MPP Parkdale—High Park Bhutla

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Karpoche and Parkdale—High Park MP and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Arif Virani.

