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Joy Metcalfe isn't really everywhere, it just seems that way. Openings, premieres, interviews, news conferences, celebrity sightings...it's fast-paced, energetic, and effusive, like Joy herself.

Joy's Journal April 24th, 2013.

There are so many, many fond memories of Nova Scotia's singing treasure, Rita MacNeil. For 25 years, CKNW had invited Rita to be a star performer at various concert venues which, naturally, always sold out. She, being Rita, was always so grateful to be asked by John Plul, 'NW's Vice president and head of the promotion department, that every Christmas, she would send him a lovely Christmas card with a wee bit of mistletoe enclosed. John just loved this unassuming and talented individual.

For CKNW's 50th anniversary, John and his team had several brilliant ideas to celebrate this special occasion including inviting Rita to perform on stage on that special day at the Pacific National Exhibition. Rita agreed immediately. John met her at the airport, took her to the PNE grounds and told her how happy he was that she was in Vancouver to celebrate 'NW's Golden Anniversary. John explained how the afternoon festivities would unfold, adding that they would like to present her with some flowers. "No, no, you've done enough already", said Rita, dismissing with a wave of her hand any extra attention.

(The words "painfully shy" does not nearly cover just how shy she truly was.) John insisted, saying that General Manager Rodd Gunn would be onstage to thank her and to cut the official birthday cake accompanied by The Top Dog.

"Dog!", asked a horrified Rita, "Did you say dog? Oh no, I'm not good with dogs, they don't like me, it'll probably pee all over me! Oh No! No dogs!"

You can imagine her feelings after performing several top-selling songs for a very appreciative audience, to have The Top Dog (John Plul in costume) walk on stage and present her with a beautiful bouquet of red roses. She was as red as they were.

It was so like her to give the mourners at her funeral a chuckle. Her instructions were, that after cremation, she wanted her ashes to be kept in her tea room in a teapot, and always aware of her weight, opined that "if you need two, that's okay". Sing with the angels and rest in peace, Rita McNeil...

It could have been a sunnier day to officially open Reflections, the outdoor patio at the Rosewood Hotel Georgia. But that didn't keep the hordes of guests away from mixing and mingling. Executive Chef Ken Nakano offered a dazzling array of taste treats while the drink of the hour was the Hennessy Welcome Cocktail. Managing Director Steve Halliday, gearing up for his imminent retirement at month's end, shook almost every hand and gave a very nice speech to the more than 150 guests. Entertainment proprietor Vance Campbell was there as were developer Bruce Langerais, politico Kevin Falcon, Ascot Mining's David Jackson and his wife, Elizabeth Colman, who have homes in London and Costa Rica, Gourmet Warehouse's Caren McSherry, famed jurist Wally Oppal who was surrounded by lovely ladies like Renu Bakshi, Marina Newson, dentist Dr. Michelle Sayour and Sisterfilms' Laurie and Sandra McLay, daughters of RCMP's Superintendent Protective Policing Don McLay. Reflections is such a pretty spot – even in the rain...

Certainly wasn't raining as Frenchy and his team officially opened the gorgeous roof garden at Joe Fortes yesterday in the bright sunshine. And what a perfect time to be sipping prime Tequila cocktails. This was the preview launch of the 2nd annual Vancouver International Tequila Expo. Founding partners Eric Lorenz, Manuel Otero, Darryl Lamb and Mirko Morhac announced the formation of the Tequila Expo's Azunia Tequila Cocktail Competition where 12 bartenders will compete for a trip to Tequila Country – Jalisco, Mexico. The Tequila Expo date is May 24 at the Hyatt Regency where an added attraction will be several restaurants supplying delectable hors d'oeuvre including Las Margarita's, Joe Fortes, The Edge in the Chateau Granville, Donnelly Group's Clough Club and the Hyatt's Mosaic Bar & Grill. The B.C. Hospitality Foundation will be the benefitee from this fun event. Guests included BCHF's Allan Sachs, media's Judith Lane, Lenora Hyman, Joe Leary, Cassandra Anderton, Jim Gordon, along with Authentic Wine & Spirits' Richard Carras, the Mexican Consulate's Fernando Alvarez Garcia and Katherine (Katherine The Grape) McEachnie, looking very glamorous as always...

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Tequila Expo's Manuel Otero and BCHF's Allan Sachs



Katherine Mceachnie and Eric Lorenz

Then it was a quick walk over to the opening of the Hyatt's new main floor bar called Grain. It's been open for a few months but this was the official unveiling, well-handled by SpectacularInc's slim, trim Jane Lloyd-Jones. Good to see General Manager Ulrich Samiecz with his good-looking team of F&B Director Michael Halloran and Executive Chef Thomas Heinrich welcoming such guests as Plan It B.C.'s Wendy Taylor, broadcaster and cookbook author Stephanie Yuen, Canada Wide's Kate McLennan, food guru Jason McRobbie along with the crowd from the tequila do. Nice afternoon in a very pretty place...

Most heartwarming event of the week occurred on Monday afternoon when two of my favourite fellows got together to launch the newest Keg Steakhouse and Bar on Dunsmuir. Owner David Aisenstat had spent months revamping his former Shore Club which now offers stunning decor, dramatic design and contemporary art works. To launch the new Keg, patrons were invited to enjoy the restaurant's legendary steaks and prime rib in exchange for a \$5 donation to the Rick Hansen Foundation. So Monday it was a beaming and delighted Man In Motion, Rick Hansen who accepted a cheque from David for \$15,000 to aid in Rick's mission to empower youth, to encourage them to reach for their dreams. What an example for young people he is! We're fortunate to have such people as Rick and generous David in our midst...



good buddies Rick Hansen & David Aisenstat

If you have any SCOOPS, email Joy at joymetcalf@shaw.ca

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