

Background – Highlights of Costa Mesa's 50th Anniversary Celebration

1. A 15-member committee was formed in fall 2002: 12 City Staff members, 1 CVB rep, 2 Historical Society reps. As the planning phase gave way to implementation, the core group consisted of about 6 people. Amy Kuchta was the coordinator.
2. The celebration period began on Monday, June 30, 2003 and ran for a year. The event was named CostaMazing. Apparently the name was trademarked. There was a telephone number and web page dedicated to providing info on the various anniversary events. Local businesses and organizations were solicited to purchase 3x5-foot street banners featuring the CostaMazing logo and the business/organization name.
3. A kickoff ceremony was held at City Hall on Monday, June 30, 2003. A new official City flag was raised, followed by a BBQ and ice cream social.
4. An Anniversary Party was held on July 10, 2003 at the Pacific Amphitheater. This free event featured food, entertainment and a fireworks sky concert.
5. A CostaMazing exhibit was created by the Historical Society and shown at the Orange County Fair. Volunteers serving a total of 162 shifts supported this blue-ribbon exhibit. After the fair, this exhibit was moved to the NCC and displayed until June 2004.
6. A smaller travelling exhibit was prepared by the Historical Society. This exhibit was displayed in the lobby of City Hall for several months. About \$5K were reimbursed to the Historical Society for both the OC Fair and the Travelling exhibits.
7. In cooperation with City TV department, twelve oral history interviews were video taped. The interviewer was Mary Hornbuckle. Those interviewed included original or long-term residents, officials and business people.
8. The Costa Mesa children's Coloring Book was updated, printed and distributed.
9. A "Hoe-down" was held at the Senior Center
10. A family-oriented "CostaMazing Pride in the Park 5K Fun Run/Walk was held on Feb 7, 2004.
11. The Daily Pilot solicited e-mails and letters from readers: "Why do you live in Costa Mesa?"
12. The grand finale event, "Dining Through the Decades" gala was held at the MV Country Club on Friday, June 25, 2004. (Five-courses - one course for each of the City's decades – with wine pairing) This event was intended to show appreciation for the CostaMazing sponsors and contributors. Major sponsors included OC Fairgrounds, Plums Restaurant and Hoag Hospital. A check for \$10K was presented to the CM Community Foundation. Souvenir wine glasses were given to event participants. Tickets for this event sold out quickly.
13. A closing ceremony was held on Wednesday, June 30, 2004. At the ceremony a redwood tree was planted near the northwest corner of City Hall. The tree had the potential to grow to more than 350 feet in height - the tallest object in Costa Mesa. Unfortunately the tree died because of prevailing soil conditions and has been replaced by a Deodar Cedar tree that is thriving. The CostaMazing plaque remains.