

# A taste of San Francisco

## The Lowville Bistro

By DONNA DANIELLI

Nestled in a valley amidst the splendour of the Niagara Escarpment, the Lowville Bistro is a hidden gem. Housed in a building dating back to 1853, the upscale casual dining establishment is the pride and joy of husband and wife team Nino Giangrande and Dawn Doucette.

The couple purchased the property in January 2002, just a few short weeks following the birth of son Logan, and began renovations. Fourteen months later, the Lowville Bistro opened its doors and life hasn't slowed down for Nino and Dawn since.

"We were actually planning to move to Vancouver," says Nino. "But we just kept seeing the property everytime we drove to my brother's in Burlington." Although it took the better part of a year to finalize the sale, the young family quickly settled in amongst their neighbours. While the Bistro draws customers from as far away as Niagara Falls and Peterborough for its exceptional cuisine, it has also become a fast favourite of the locals. "We knew we were changing the landscape but we didn't realize that we were helping to bring back a sense of community," explains Nino. "That's what our neighbours have told us."

Although Nino is raised in Halton and has a long family history in the restaurant industry, it took a trip to Vancouver searching for new possibilities to bring Dawn into his life. "I actually went to Vancouver to look into the film industry," explains Nino, who met his bride to be at her father's restaurant. "I just knew that I would one day run a business with her." While Nino serves as the restaurant manager and maitre d', Dawn's stamp is clearly on the unique and seasonal menu. "Cooking is in my blood," explains Dawn. "I was trained in San Francisco and so my menu is often influenced by the West Coast."

The menu at the Bistro reflects Dawn's conviction that fresh local produce, served simply with a twist that's all her own, is what sets the Bistro apart. "For example, my Caesar salad is becoming a signature item," she explains of the popular appetizer that features a lemon vinaigrette dressing, homemade croutons using Ace Bakery Focaccia and shaved parmesan regiano. "It's different and unique and people really seem to enjoy it." She is also justifiably proud of the many fish dishes she serves and the sense of a global skillet she has brought to the varied and eclectic menu. "She doesn't coat or mask her flavours, she lets them stay true to themselves," says an admiring Nino of his wife's cooking.

One of the restaurant's most popular features is the monthly wine tasting event, which saw representatives of Graham Beck Wines in Africa serve as sommeliers for the evening in the past month. Wines are paired with a special menu to create a unique and enjoyable gastronomic experience. Menus and more information about the Wine Tastings is available on their website at [www.lowville.ca](http://www.lowville.ca), but act quickly, the

event sells out each month. Nino plans to add scotch and beer tasting events to the calendar later this year.

"People are comfortable here, it's like dining in your own living room," explains Dawn of the restaurant's cozy seating for 30. "People often make friends with the people at the next table." The outdoor patio seats another fifteen during the warmer months. Nino feels that it's the warm and welcoming atmosphere, combined with incredible food that keeps bringing people back. "Our crowd loves the fact that we are always evolving, we have no desire to be generic."

For Nino Giangrande and Dawn Doucette, one of the most important factors is that they have found a home they love in the small village of Lowville. "Our being here has a lot to do with the lifestyle," says Nino of their home above the restaurant. "There's the Lowville Park, the Niagara Escarpment, the river and so much more." The restaurant gives them the freedom to be with two-year-old Logan whenever they want. In fact, it's not unusual to find young Logan downstairs at the bar, enjoying dinner with Dad as Mom cooks in the open concept kitchen, chatting with the customers.

The Lowville Bistro is located at 6179 Guelph Line in the heart of Lowville. It is open for lunch Tuesday to Friday from 11 am to 4 pm and for dinner on Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday from 5 to 9 pm. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, dinner is available until 9:30 pm and a weekend brunch is also offered from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday and Sunday. Dinner reservations aren't required but they are strongly recommended. The well-kept secret that is the Lowville Bistro is getting out as more and more patrons seeking upscale food in a casual setting find their way to Lowville.

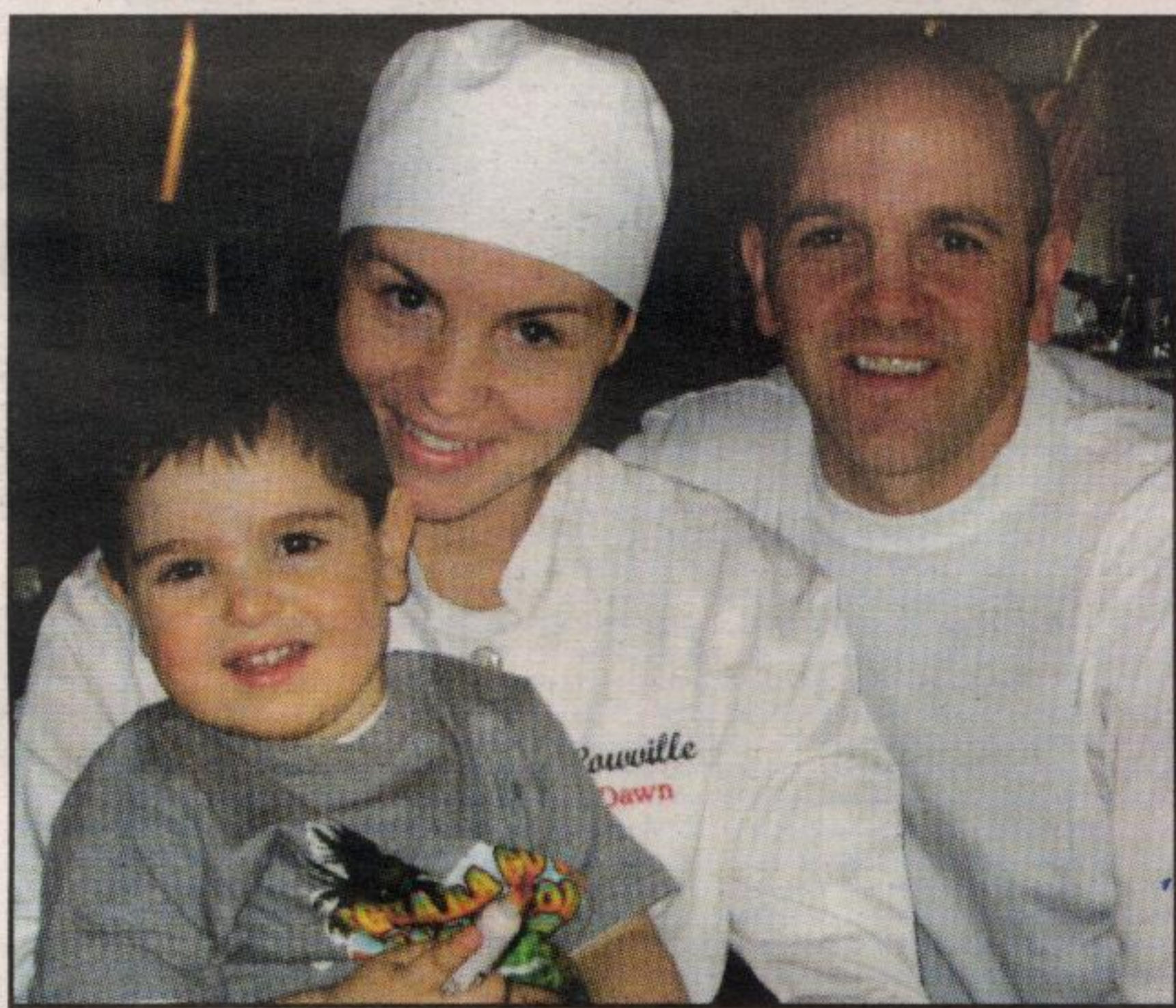
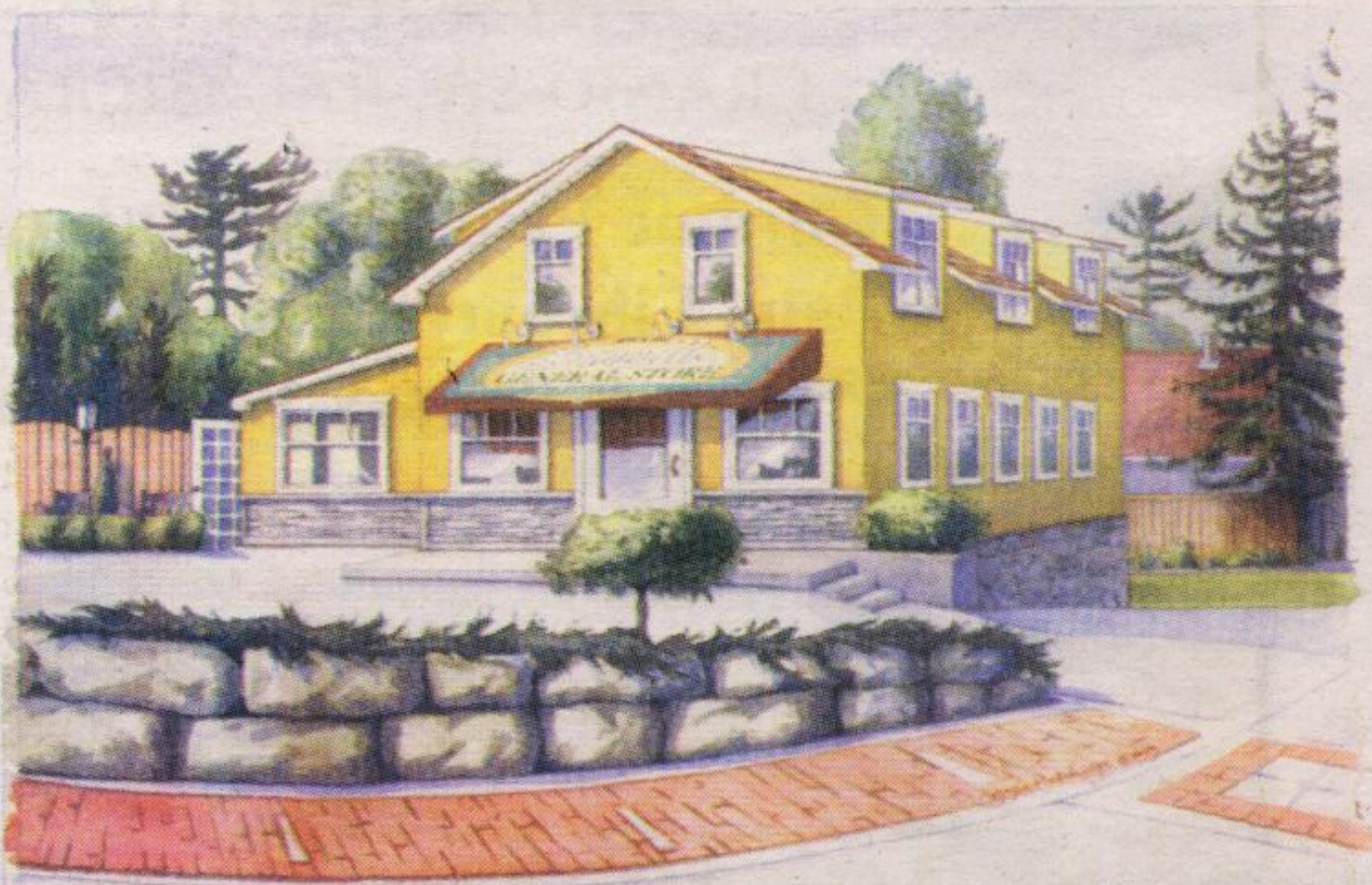
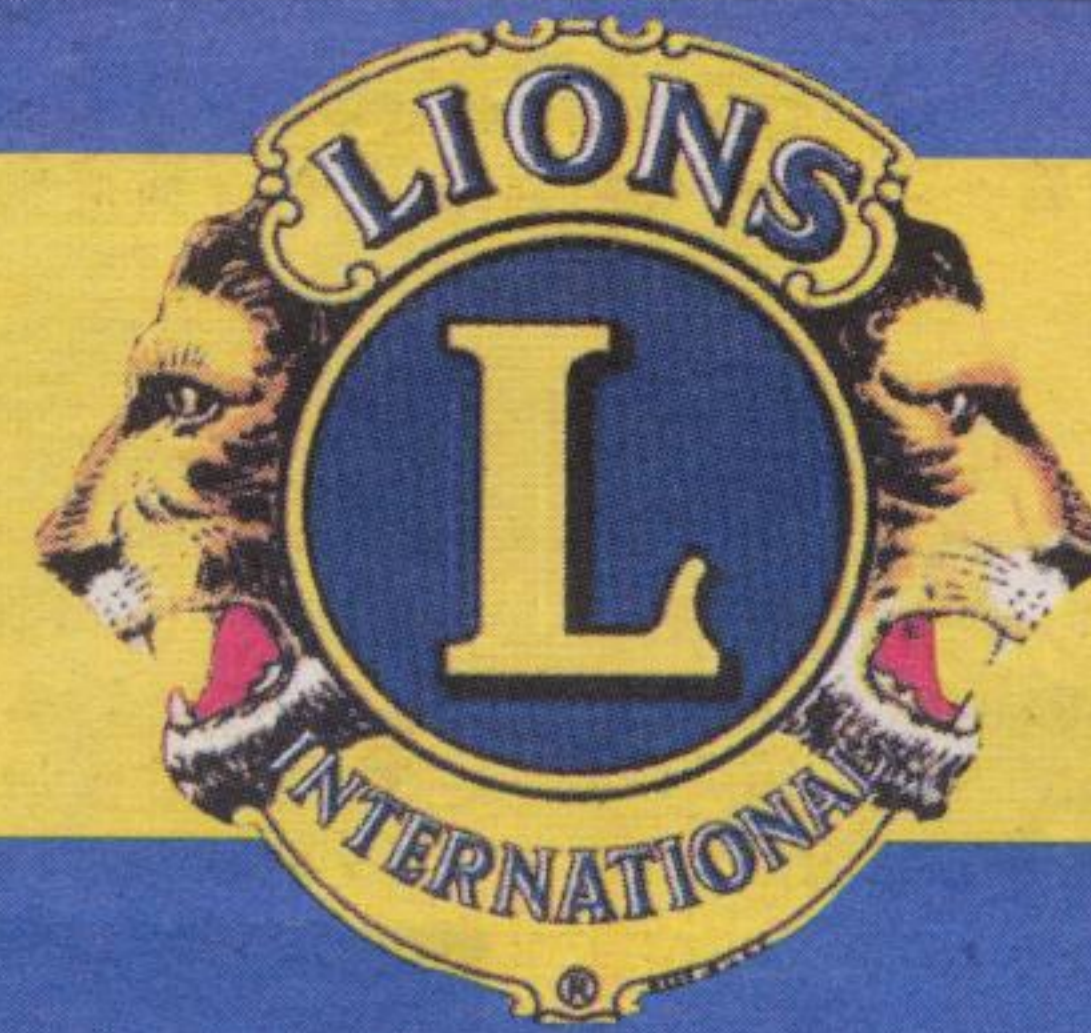


PHOTO AND STORY BY DONNA DANIELLI

Lowville Bistro owners Dawn Doucette and Nino Giangrande spend a quiet moment with two year old son Logan before the lunch rush begins at their incredibly popular restaurant.



Lowville Bistro



# HUTTONVILLE LIONS CLUB 44TH CRAFT AND ANTIQUUE SHOW

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Sunday April 3rd, 2005  
10 A.M. to 5 P.M.**

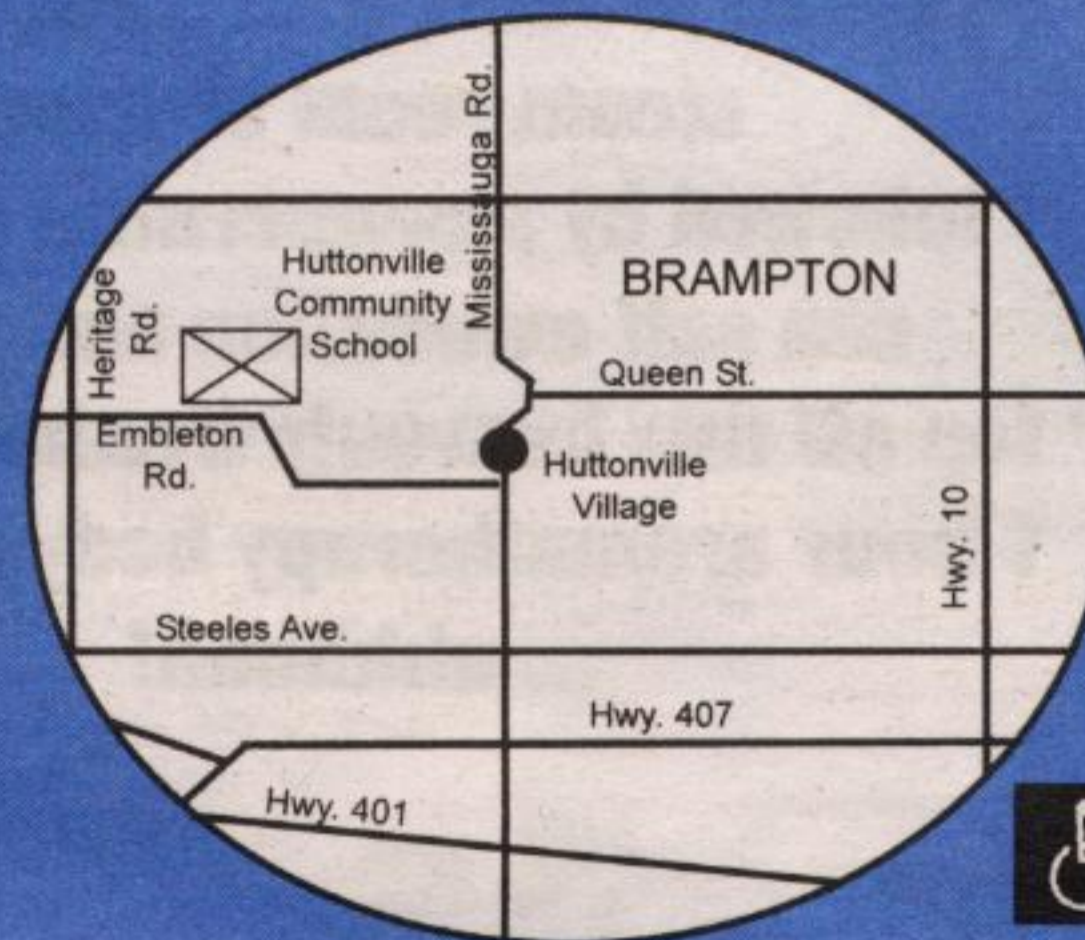
The show is entirely managed and run by volunteers - proceeds are used to support the Brampton and area Community.

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• 20 Crafters are new to this show

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