



Co-Chairs report 2020-2021

As we all know, our lives did not resume their previous patterns during the past year and many of the changes we instituted in last year have continued. We held our first online Annual General Meeting last November. It went smoothly and we were delighted that so many of our members participated. We had 27 members online and 19 submitted proxy votes. The proposed slate of directors was accepted. The \$15 annual membership fee was continued and we instituted the option of a lifetime membership fee.

We continued to offer online events through the year, following our prior pattern of offering more frequent events than we have in previous years, even as restrictions became less constraining. Events included online music presentations. Music-focused presentations included sessions on Judy Garland and on Woodstock. Fashion in the 50's, the career of Margaret Thatcher, and Canada's National Parks were the topics of other presentation. Several members participated in an informative and delicious virtual chocolate tasting which combined an online presentation with eating actual chocolate. Members participated in online bingo and Scattergories, which were fun and raised some money for our scholarship.

Throughout the past year, the board of directors, the bridge club and the book club have met regularly. The book club took its usual break for July and August after selecting the books for the 21-22 year and resumed in September. The bridge club has met most Mondays throughout the year, taking only a few short breaks. We also supported two Trent nursing student placements, as placement opportunities were still very limited. This has led us to develop some guidelines about hosting future student placements so we can ensure that the placements benefit both the students and GBCRA.

On June 17, we hosted a well-attended event for new GBC retirees to welcome them to GBCRA. This event was also an opportunity for new retirees to be congratulated by the President, representatives of the faculty and support staff unions, and some senior managers. We congratulated Anne Sado on her upcoming retirement and thanked her for her ongoing support. The event was crowned by a live online tour of Moscow's Red Square.

In addition to other events, we held our second online auction this fall to raise money to endow our scholarship with the GBC Foundation. We are pleased to report that we raised over \$3000 and have now reached the required amount of \$20,000 to endow our scholarship in perpetuity.

We are grateful to the many members who have chosen to support this initiative through participation in the auction, in the games events, and through direct donations. We will continue to raise funds to increase this endowment as well as for our regular annual student bursary.

We have been actively in touch with our members through the newsletter and surveys. We expect that we will still be meeting online for another few months and are hopeful that in-person events will resume this winter. That said, we expect our future choices to be informed by what we have learned during this time. For example, we will probably alternate between in-person and online Board of Directors meetings, meeting in person only every second or third month. This will make it easier for members who live at a distance to participate and, we hope, may encourage other members to consider joining the Board. Online activities have also appealed to members who have restrictions due to mobility, distance, or competing responsibilities. We expect to offer a mix of online and in-person activities going forward, guided always by the preferences our members express.

We thank the other members of the Board for their diligent work and involvement throughout the past year. We have been glad to see more members participating, including some of the new retirees, and look forward to seeing one another in person as well as online in the months ahead.