



Co-Chairs Report 2022-23

Our year began with the December 2, 2022, Annual General Meeting. We presented a summary of a busy year with many events. We received and approved the financial report and budget, and the proposed slate of directors was accepted. Once again, we were pleased that so many members attended and participated in the online AGM. After the meeting, we enjoyed an online presentation about Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra, which evoked nostalgic memories for many members who had enjoyed this music with their parents.

As we planned, over the past year we have had a combination of online and in-person activities. There is a separate report about our events later in this meeting, so we will mention just a few. As we moved past the holidays and into the new year, it became apparent that we needed to continue with virtual events as well as face-to-face activities. This mix serves members who live at a distance from the GTA as well as those who prefer to stay in during the more severe winter weather or whose mobility is limited. For example, in late January we had an online presentation about romantic comedies.

While many of our members already volunteer their time for good causes, including those who serve on the GBCRA board, we tried a new volunteer activity in April. A group did a shift at the Daily Bread Food bank. This was a good way to get together while giving back to the community. It was so successful that we repeated this again in October and will consider doing it again in 2024.

Having lunch together emerged as a theme in 2023, often in combination with another activity. A Soulpepper presentation we expected to attend was unexpectedly cancelled, but several of us had lunch together anyway. In August, a group of us met for lunch at Harbourfront, followed by a harbour cruise on the Tall Ship Kajima. We were fortunate

with the weather. It was a beautiful summer day, and it was delightful to be out on the water on this historic vessel. We experimented with just inviting people to meet for lunch late in October, which was fun and which we will do again in the months ahead.

Throughout the past year, the board of directors, the bridge club, and the book club have met regularly. The bridge club has met most Mondays throughout the year, taking only a few short breaks. The book club took its usual break for July and August after selecting the books for the 23-24 year and resumed in September. Both groups have remained online for now.

This year our scholarship fundraising activity was an in-person silent auction at our Arts and Auction on the Avenue event on November 16. This was combined with lunch, a display of artwork, and a glorious piano recital. This replaced the online auction we have had over the past three years. Funds raised through the auction plus members' donations enable us to fund our annual scholarship and increase the balance in our endowed bursary. Many members want to continue to support George College students, and this provides a effective way to do this.

The relationship between GBCRA and the college has had some positive developments as well as some ongoing frustrations. The GBCRA executive met with Dr. Fearon in May. A second meeting in October was fell prey to challenges in his schedule and ours and has been rescheduled to early in the new year. We have been invited to send members to some college events, such as the launch of Michael Decter's new book, a kickoff event for the Brookfield Sustainability Institute, and convocation. We also have improved communication with Human Resources and have therefore been somewhat more successful in contacting retirees before they lose their George Brown email addresses. The loss of college email continues to be a pain point for retirees and we continue to advocate for this to be changed. We continue to have a strong relationship with the GBC Foundation and with Alumni Relations, both of which have been supportive in a variety of ways.

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 GBCRA 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.

Dianne and Georgia