



Culinary Historians of Canada Annual Board Reports For AGM

Prepared by Sarah Harrison, CHC Secretary

Date: October 15, 2023



Presidents' Report 2022-2023

Prepared by Acting President Sarah Hood
October 15, 2023

The mission of the Culinary Historians of Canada is to inspire appreciation and advance knowledge of Canada's food history. This year, I have had the honour of serving as interim president through a time that has seen CHC adapting to the post-COVID world, stabilizing our human and financial resources, and preparing to celebrate our 30th anniversary in 2024.

Before proceeding, I would like to note that we lost two of our honorary members this year: prolific authors Dorothy Duncan and Rose Murray. Dorothy's special interest was in Ontario social history, and she spearheaded the restoration of the 1840s-era Montgomery's Inn in Etobicoke, Ontario, where CHC has held many events, and where our members have prepared food on the open hearth and in the bake oven. Rose's childhood on a working farm informed her many beloved cookbooks, which document and share the knowledge of how to cook good wholesome food based on Canadian ingredients. Their loss leaves a gap not only within our organization, but in the Canadian culinary-history world.

Strategic Priorities

At the AGM of 2020, after many months of work by CHC board members, we unveiled a set of values and strategic priorities for CHC.

- The values – Diversity, Learning, Collaboration, Authenticity, Preservation, and Integrity – guide our focus and decision-making over the very long term.
- The strategic priorities were chosen to focus our activities through an initial three-year term, which ends today. Recently, the board has voted to extend these priorities for another three years, from today until our annual general meeting of 2026.

These three interlocking strategic priorities are: engaging members, reaching everyone, and increasing capacity.

1. The first of these, **engaging members**, means that we want people to be excited about joining CHC and to find it rewarding enough that they stay a good long time. My board colleagues will talk about some of our activities that support this priority, like our event programming, the Just a Bite project to collect seniors' food memories and the revival of our Culinary Chronicles publication. We check in from time to time – including today – to make sure we know what our members want, and we are working towards adding some new things, like members-only functions on our website.
2. The second is **reaching everyone**, which means attracting members and engaging people from coast to coast to coast, not just in Toronto. Since COVID forced us to move many activities online, we have done a better job with this. In the past year we have gained two board members in Alberta, and held our first-ever live event out of Ontario. Besides Toronto, our regular newsletter contributors live in Montreal, Vancouver and numerous smaller locations around Ontario and B.C. Our Facebook group reaches people in all parts of the country, as do our virtual events.



3. The third priority is **increasing capacity**, which has to do with making it easy and rewarding for people to volunteer casually, or to become board and committee members, so we can assure that CHC will continue to exist and remain relevant into the future. One step that we implemented this year, and that we intend to continue, is inviting members to board meetings. It's a simple way to let members know more about what the board is up to, and it was great to hear from the members who attended these meetings.

2022-2023 Goals and Objectives

Based on our values and strategic priorities, the board agreed on a set of general goals and specific objectives for 2022-2023, as follows.

1. **To take steps to get more value from our sponsorships of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and Taste Canada.** We value our association with these national organizations, but both of them are going through changes, and since we pay \$1,000 to sponsor the Heritage Preserving categories at The Royal and \$1,500 to sponsor the Taste Canada Hall of Fame, if we aim to live up to our value of Integrity, we must be certain that we are truly fulfilling our mandate and serving our members through these sponsorships.
2. **To increase membership.** One of the key objectives in this area was to explore meaningful membership perks such as member discounts. Therefore, we are very pleased to have been able to announce our new partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance, which will give CHC members discounts and promotional opportunities. Similarly, we announced an inaugural discount for an event with the Canadian Society for Decorative Arts, brokered by board member-at-large Kim Mouldsdale, and we hope to offer a shared event with them in future.
3. **To build board capacity.** We are delighted to have welcomed new faces and reconnected with former board members this year. We have come a long way from a few years ago, when we had difficulty in identifying enough board candidates to fill executive and chair positions.
4. **To balance income with expenses.** Over the past three years our previously healthy balance sheet has begun to show losses, because we now have expenses for digital tools like Zoom, while COVID has cost us important sources of revenue in live event fees and new memberships. Occasional grant support and sales of publications, which account for the rest of our revenue, have not made up for the shortfalls.

In September of 2022, CHC launched a GoFundMe campaign to raise a one-time sum of \$3,000 to address immediate needs. Several contributors were exceptionally generous, including one who gave \$500, and we raised a total of \$3,021, for which we are extremely grateful. In addition, we have been working towards increased membership (for example, by posting reminders on our Facebook page, where only one in 50 participants is also a member.)

We are planning a major fundraising event in the form of a massive book sale in Toronto in the spring of 2024. By late 2022, since we were paying close to \$3,000 annually for digital platforms, we began a process of rationalizing our use of digital media. Since then, we've reduced costs by almost \$1,500 annually:



- a. Board members Liz Truchanowicz and Fiona Lucas pursued a rather onerous process to confirm our non-profit status with Google. This increases our services, including our email and document storage systems, while saving \$150 per year. A side benefit was that we were required to compile official documentation of our non-profit status, which will be useful in future.
- b. We are reorganizing our email system and transferring online files out of the more costly Dropbox. Meanwhile, we have changed our Dropbox plan to a lower tier that saves about \$480 per year.
- c. We are pursuing the addition of a Facebook “page” to our current Facebook “group” presence, which would allow us to promote events and collect donations.
- d. We have streamlined our Zoom account, saving about \$840 per year.

We have not finalized our goals for 2023-2024, our 30th anniversary, but the board has agreed that they will include an upgrade to the CHC website. We have compiled a wish list of improvements, such as a better online membership-purchase process, members-only online content, and an updated look, and are collecting fee quotes from potential providers while exploring avenues of funding.

A second goal for next year was to have been exploring programming of a CHC event outside the GTHA, but board members Kesia Kvill and Ryan Whibbs got ahead of the plan by programming a hybrid in-person/virtual visit to Calgary's Heritage Park Historical Village in September!

CHC 30th anniversary

To mark the 30th anniversary of the CHC, coming up in 2024, we are planning some special events, including the book sale I alluded to earlier. Fiona Lucas will tell you about a partnership with Archival & Special Collections at the University of Guelph that will be launching in April. We welcome suggestions for other ways to mark this milestone.

Thanks to Board Members

Finally, I would especially like to thank my board colleagues for their hard work this year in helping build a more solid base from which CHC can grow and evolve into its fourth decade and beyond. They are Vice-President Kesia Kvill; treasurer Fiona Lucas; who was a founder of CHC 30 years ago; secretary Sarah Harrison; past president Carolyn Crawford; membership chair Judy Chow; programming chair Sylvia Lovegren; education chair Jane Black; refreshments co-ordinator Sherry Murphy; volunteer co-ordinator Jennifer Meyer, who has just returned after a short absence, and members-at-large Samantha George, Kim Mouldsdale, Susan Peters, and Liz Truchanowicz. Most recently, Abbey Stansfield has joined us in the Communications function, and Ryan Whibbs has reconnected in a new capacity, Outreach.

This is a talented and energetic group of people, and together they command a deep pool of knowledge about Canadian culinary history. Further, I would like to express appreciation for their kindness and support to one another through the home, school, and work challenges that we all face. This is a critical quality of a healthy organization. Thank you! I look forward to working with you all in our big 30th anniversary year.



**Financial Report for 2023 AGM
(1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)**

I Membership

Annual membership dues increased to \$35 individual for one year and \$60 for two years on 1 January 2023. Total income from membership fees for this fiscal year was \$2945, which was \$350 more than the previous year.

II Operations

Total expenses for all the annual or monthly fees we pay to manage our technology, and cover our insurance, postage and banking costs for this fiscal year was \$4898, which was \$883 less than last year. All fees increased, of course. We reduced Zoom fees by downgrading our membership level and switching to an annual payment. We had a one-time expense of \$149 to Google Workspace because we had to provide Service Ontario documentation to prove our non-profit status under Ontario's Not-For-Profit Corporations Act, which enables us to not pay taxes.

III Outreach / Education Programs

We held a GoFundMe campaign to raise some operating funds. We set a goal of \$3000 and achieved \$2931, which included \$500 paid via cheque instead of the online GFM portal.

IV Ticketed Programs

Our six online programs were profitable, bringing in \$688, which was \$1,068 less than last year.

V Merchandise

Total income was \$48, down from \$105 last year.

Available Funds

Our **bank account** remains okay at \$4,882, but that is \$499 less than the previous fiscal year. With the **GIC**, CHC has \$12,748 available in cash, which is down by \$267. In February, TD Bank suggested the GIC be switched from a monthly to a 100-day payment because of its better rate. Consequently, as of 31 August the GIC had earned \$114, compared to a mere \$3.77 for the whole of 2022.

The second page of this report shows the income / expenses for the 2022 to 2023 fiscal year (1 September to 31 August).

Fiona Lucas

Treasurer

6 October 2023



2022-2023 CHC Financial Summary: 2022, Sep 1 to 2023, Aug 31

| # | Item | Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 | | | Notes |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|---|
| | | Income | Expenses | Totals | |
| I - Membership Dues | | \$ 2,945.00 | | \$ 2,945.00 | |
| II - Operations | | | | | |
| | AGM Expenses (Q1) | | -\$ 50.00 | | |
| | Fees - Bank | | -\$ 96.90 | | |
| | Fees - DreamHost (Q2) | | -\$ 222.21 | | |
| | Fees - Dropbox | | -\$ 1,017.00 | | |
| | Fees - EventBrite | | -\$ 99.86 | | |
| | Fees - Google Workspace | | -\$ 149.84 | | non-profit documentation |
| | Fees - Mailchimp | | -\$ 720.45 | | |
| | Fees - PayPal | | -\$ 123.43 | | |
| | Fees - Square | | | | didn't use this year |
| | Fees - Zoom (Q3) | | -\$ 698.34 | | |
| | Insurance - Jones DesLauriers (Q4) | | -\$ 1,271.16 | | |
| | Ontario Historical Society (Q2) | | -\$ 65.00 | | |
| | Other | | -\$ 25.00 | | reimburse Secr Sarah Google webinar |
| | PO Box (TFPO) (Q1) | | -\$ 195.00 | | |
| | Postage & Mail | | -\$ 76.02 | | |
| | Printing (non-program) | | -\$ 88.10 | | |
| | Net Operations | | -\$ 4,898.31 | -\$ 4,898.31 | |
| III - Outreach / Education Programs | | | | | |
| | Grant | \$ - | | | |
| | RAWF (Q1) | | -\$ 1,000.00 | | annual sponsorship |
| | Taste Canada (Q1) | | -\$ 1,500.00 | | annual sponsorship |
| | GoFundMe | \$ 2,431.00 | -\$ 83.74 | | |
| | Donations | \$ 716.00 | | | \$500 donation to GFM through chq |
| | Net Outreach | \$ 3,147.00 | -\$ 2,583.74 | \$ 563.26 | |
| IV - Ticketed Programs | | | | | |
| | 1 Speaking Cod (Sep 21) | \$ 170.00 | -\$ 203.00 | | |
| | 2 Miracle of Salt (Nov 17) | \$ 157.50 | -\$ 78.75 | | |
| | 3 Hearthwarming (Dec 4 and 11) | \$ 256.00 | | | |
| | 4 Saffron (Jan 22) | \$ 276.00 | | | |
| | 5 Mrs Raffald (Apr 23) | \$ 93.50 | | | |
| | 6 Figgy Duff (Jun 11) | \$ 17.00 | | | |
| | Net Ticketed | \$ 970.00 | -\$ 281.75 | \$ 688.25 | |
| V - Merchandise | | | | | |
| | 1 Culinary Chronicles (\$10) | \$ 40.00 | | | |
| | 2 Victorian Baking (booklet) (\$8) | \$ 8.00 | | | |
| | 3 Victorian Baking (video) (\$18) | | | | |
| | Net Merchandise | \$ 48.00 | | \$ 48.00 | |
| | | | Net Total | -\$ 653.80 | |
| Summary | | | | | |
| | Chequing Account as of Aug 31 | \$ 4,882.53 | | | Grant #1 \$ 3,800.00 Grant #2 \$ 4,775.00 |
| | GIC Investment Account as of Aug 31 | \$ 7,865.89 | | | Zoom -\$ 3,335.31 |
| | Total cash available | \$ 12,748.42 | | | Just a Bite -\$ 3,330.33 |
| | | | | | balance \$ 464.69 \$ 1,444.67 |

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Culinary Historians of Canada – 2023 Annual General Meeting

Membership Report

Membership statistics (as of Oct. 10) –

127 members (with memberships current to 2023)

13 honorary members

Membership trends in 2022-2023 showed similarities to past years. The membership chair has continued to propose ways to bring more value and benefits to members. The chair has also been evaluating ways to improve the maintenance of the member database and ways to enhance the member registration process. Proposals are under consideration by the board of directors.

Submitted by Judy Chow



CHC Communications Committee Report

Prepared by Committee Chair Sarah Hood

October 15, 2023

The committee continued to manage print and digital resources, including website content and social media, produce the newsletter, and distribute the membership directory in order to support CHC's strategic priorities of engaging members, reaching everyone and increasing capacity.

Publications

Over the past year, the committee has facilitated the print and online publication of numerous CHC projects:

- Articles based on the Just A Bite project, which documents Ontario seniors' food memories, are being published in the newsletter and on the CHC website.
- The relaunched Culinary Chronicles publication has been distributed to members and made available for sale via the website.
- On January 1, the committee circulated the annual member directory to all members in good standing.

Newsletter

The CHC newsletter, *Digestible Bits & Bites*, is circulated on the first of each month to 1,734 subscribers (an increase of almost 200 subscribers since last year). It is also circulated on Facebook and Twitter.

Several board members and volunteers continue to assist editor Sarah Hood with writing and editing, including Destinations reporter Jane Black and a rotating roster of writers documenting the Just A Bite project; all contributions are very much appreciated. Finally, Vicki Gregory is the regular conference editor and a very dedicated proofreader, for which she deserves grateful acknowledgement.

Under the very able direction of book review editor Ivy Lerner-Frank, our cross-Canada team of book reviewers covered 40 books relating to Canadian food and culinary history in both English and French, bringing our total to almost 200 reviews over time.

Thanks are due to volunteer reviewers Julia Armstrong, Julian Armstrong, Judy Corser, Luisa Giacometti, Sher Hackwell, Frances Latham, Ivy Lerner-Frank, Maya Love, Jan Main, Dana Moran, Abbey Stansfield, Elka Weinstein and Ania Young.

Digital Platforms

The committee is busy year-round with the "back end" of CHC operations, maintaining the website, our social media channels, and our email functions, as well as producing text and video content as needed.



Highlights:

- We continue to add research sources to the Canadian Cookbooks Online section of the website.
- Our Facebook group has grown slightly to just over 5,000.
- Our professional Instagram feed reaches just under 1,100 followers.
- We have not added much content to our YouTube channel this year, but our posted videos continue to garner attention, and we have 90 subscribers to the channel.
- CHC also has 886 followers on X (formerly Twitter.)

Culinary Historians of Canada

Report of the Program Committee, 2022-2023

Two important aspects of CHC's programming are engagement and education. We strive to bring programs that teach us something about Canadian food history and our fellow Canadians, while trying to respond and reflect the interests of our membership. Gathering online, while not allowing us to break bread in shared space, has enabled us to bring speakers from many different parts of Canada, not to mention the world. And it has enabled people who don't live near Toronto to participate in our programming. We are working on having more in-person events, but we would really like to be able to offer them as hybrid events, which presents a number of technical and staffing challenges. So, anyone who would like to help with that effort would be welcome!

We have experimented with offering free tickets for events to CHC members this year. This was done for three reasons: first, as a membership benefit; second, as an inducement to non-members to become members in order to enjoy that free ticket; and third, as a way of driving membership engagement and higher attendance at events. The immediate result of this was that our monetary intake from events fell quite dramatically. The Programming Committee and the Board need to evaluate this going forward.

After six years of chairing the Programming Committee, Sylvia Lovegren is stepping away from that position. She would very much like to thank all the many people who have helped her over the years including (but by no means limited to!): Liz Truchanowicz, Sarah Hood, Sherry Murphy, Meaghan Froh-Metcalf, Carolyn Crawford, Samantha George and many more helpers and supporters. Thank you, all.

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Program Committee Events since AGM 2022

Naomi Duguid Talks About Her New Book, *The Miracle of Salt*, November 17, 2022

Hybrid event – Zoom and in person at Campbell House, Toronto: Our first and only hybrid event. It was quite a challenge but with Meaghan Froh-Metcalf's hard work, it was a success. Because we didn't know if it would work, we did not charge for online tickets. 97 tickets sold: revenue \$287.92.

Hearth Warming Holiday Traditions: December 4 and December 11, 2022

Zoom event: CHC member John Ota hosted this two-day event featuring Canadians talking about their personal winter holiday memories, food traditions and family fun. 16 tickets sold: revenue \$256.

A Certain Fascinating History of Saffron, the World's Most Expensive Spice: January 22, 2023

Zoom event: Sam Bilton talked about her new book and the history of saffron, including some intriguing Canadian content. 28 tickets sold: revenue \$276.

Mrs. Raffald: British Cooking & Housekeeping in the 1700s with Neil Buttery: April 23, 2023

Zoom event: Dr. Buttery talked about the amazing Mrs. Raffald and his new book about her. Our first event with free tickets for members. 51 tickets sold: revenue \$150.50.

From Figgy Duff to Loblolly: History on the Newfoundland & Labrador Table: June 11, 2023

Zoom event: Jennifer Leigh Hill treated us to an entertaining tour of the Rock and some of its foods. 22 tickets sold: revenue \$27.00.

Canada Food Day Celebration: August 5, 2023

In-person workshop event at Campbell House, downtown Toronto. CHC members Carolyn Crawford, Sherry Murphy, Mya Sangster, and Tess Sciberras interpreted and presented recipes from some of Canada's earliest cookbooks. Thanks to all but especially Sherry Murphy for organizing this. No registration, attendance was free.

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Historic Foods Tour at Heritage Park Historical Village: September 17, 2023

Zoom and in-person event: A tour of one of Western Canada's oldest and largest living history museums, Heritage Park in Calgary, Alberta, led by Chief Curator, Kesia Kvill. This was a first for us, running an event outside of the Greater Toronto Area, generously planned and carried out by Kesia. The Zoom event had 14 sign-ups for revenue of \$11.64. There were no sign-ups for the in-person event.

Events coming up in 2023

Where We Ate: A Field Guide to Canada's Restaurants, Past and Present, with Gabby Peyton –
November 5, 2023, Zoom Event

And more to come!