



Heritage Toronto

Heritage Toronto builds a better city by bringing people together to explore Toronto's shared past and peoples' lived experiences.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Heritage Toronto is located on the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Anishinaabeg, including the Chippewa and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, Toronto is host to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Toronto is within the territory of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty which requires responsibility of those who use the land to share it peaceably and care for it. Heritage Toronto acknowledges this responsibility and recognizes the efforts of these nations in maintaining the land.

Cover:
Registration for the
Full Moon Festival,
October 1, 2023.
Image by
Oscar Akamine.

Growing community through partnerships

In 2023, Heritage Toronto presented the largest program in its history. We did so while challenging ourselves to better serve Toronto's communities and residents. We did so convinced that heritage is a powerful tool in today's troubled world to build empathy and understanding.

This work was fixed in values we have embraced over the last three years as part of our Equity Heritage Initiative. Prioritized among them is the commitment to center our community programming in partnerships knowing that our sector will only thrive with diverse perspectives. At the heart of these efforts were our 26 Emerging Historians; many are members of equity-deserving groups who led the interpretation of their own community's heritage.

We were also able to hire four future leaders from equity-deserving communities to work with our eight person staff team. Their impact was felt across the charity. They formed nine new partnerships to produce events and digital programs celebrating the heritage of North York's East Asian residents and the Caribbean heritage of Little Jamaica. They undertook oral history projects highlighting the lived experiences of 27 community leaders and residents. They helped implement plans to attract new audiences and coordinated work on the 2024 State of Heritage Report.

For our small organization, these projects have meant an intense period of learning. We are grateful for the unwavering support of our donors, sponsors, and Toronto City Council. We are thankful for the commitment



to our Tours program and our Equity Heritage Initiative by TD Bank Group through the TD Ready Commitment that will allow us to both continue this work and increase its impacts.

There are many positive changes already brought about by this investment in the next generation of heritage advocates. Over 70% of both our 2023 digital stories and commemorative plaques explored equity-deserving histories.

With our partners, including you—our dedicated supporters—we will continue to bring people together to explore Toronto's diverse stories, engage in robust discussion and respectful debate, contributing to the creation of a more connected city.

Liza Chalaidopoulos
Chair, Board of Directors

Allison Bain
Executive Director

Supporters

Thank you to our 2023 supporters and heritage champions.



\$10,000



ANDREW AND SHARON HIMEL
AND FAMILY



Chong Family

**Playter Area Residents'
Association**

\$5,000

Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel
Cadillac Fairview
Downtown Yonge BIA
Law Society of Ontario
Old Town Toronto BIA
Ontario Association of Architects

Quadreal Property Group
St. James Cathedral
The Boulevard Club
Toronto Standard Condominium Corporation
#1759
Westbank

\$2,500

Atlas Corporation
Buttcon
Concert Properties
CUPE (National)
ERA Architects

GreekTown on the
Danforth BIA
JD Strachan Construction
Liberty Village BIA
Limen Group
Alexandria Pike

RAW Design
+VG Architects
Urbanspace Property Group
Yonge + St. Clair BIA
York Heritage Properties

\$1,000

Liza Chalaidopoulos
Dowdall Family Foundation
Estate of Birgitte Nielsen
Worrall
Foresight Strategic
Advisors, Inc.
Audrey Fox
Mark E. Hallman

Hellenic Heritage Foundation
Richard Isaac
Kate Marshall
Aaron Sanderson and Kevin
Keystone
Colin Smillie
Russell D. Smith

The Archaeology Centre -
University of Toronto
The LMC Riverside Foundation
Grace Westcott
William and Nancy Logan and
The Logan Family Foundation
Mary Williamson

\$200+

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Annex Residents' Association
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LGA Architectural Partners

Lite It Up
Justin Madhany
Faith Malach
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Flavio Marcocchio
Sophia Mavroidis
John McAlister
Laura McArthur
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Candice McCavitt and
Luke Gobert
Michael McClelland
Marjorie McLeod
Stephen Montano
Richard Moorhouse and
Jean Simonton
Glen Morales

Gary Myers and David Phipps
Earle and Berna Nestmann
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Emily Pascual
Penguin Random House
Canada
John and Maire Percy
Jay Pitter
Brian Provinci
Kathleen Quan
Frederick Robbins
Anthony Rubin
Greg Sadler
Linda Schuyler
Ida Seto and Jeffry Mason

Sandra Shaul and Christopher
Varley
Ivor Simmons
Cathy and Paul Singleton
Judy Skinner
James N. Stanley
Carter Susan
Rossif Sutherland
Helen Suurvali
Bernardo and Ana Sztabinski
Jill Taylor
The Sheepdogs
Traditional Cut Stone
Karen Whaley
Richard Yee

Community Partners

ACO
Annex Residents Association
Archives of Women's College
Hospital
Archives of Ontario
ArQuives
ASI
Banger Films
Bank of Canada Museum
Bibliothèque nationale de
France
Black Business and
Professional Association
Blackhurst Cultural Centre
Bloor/Gladstone Library
Cabbagetown Farmer's
Market
Cabbagetown Preservation
Association

Canadian Museum of History
CBC
CIBC Archives
City of Toronto Archives
Fung Loy Kok Institute of
Daoism
Gerrard India Bazaar BIA
It's Ok* Studios
Japanese Canadian Cultural
Centre
Junction Craft Brewing
La Societe d'histoire de
Toronto
Mississaugas of the Credit
First Nation
Museum of Contemporary Art
Neighbourlink North York
North York Central Library
North York Historical Society

Ontario Black History Society
Ontario College of
Pharmacists
Ontario Jewish Archives
Provincial Women's Softball
Association
Spacing
Spadina Avenue Library
St. Anne's Anglican Church
Terroni
TMU Archives & Special
Collections
Toronto Legacy Project
United Dairy Bakers
Urban Forestry



“Toronto should celebrate lost icons as an important part of our cultural heritage. Jackie was a pioneer and her music was her power to transcend.”

— Forbes Campbell

Plaques have the power to tell important stories about our past.

Located in public space, they’re free and accessible to read, but over the last few years, the Plaques program has grappled with the broader relevance of this traditional method of interpreting history. In 2023, we’re proud to report that 74% of commemorative plaques featured equity-deserving narratives.

An example of this work is the new Taylor v. Orpen plaque, which acknowledges a case of racial segregation. In 1906, a Black teen was denied the right to skate at a roller rink on Church Street. Having read about the story in the *Toronto Star*, staff worked with the



journalist, the Taylor family, and the Ontario Black History Society to create a permanent commemoration of the story.

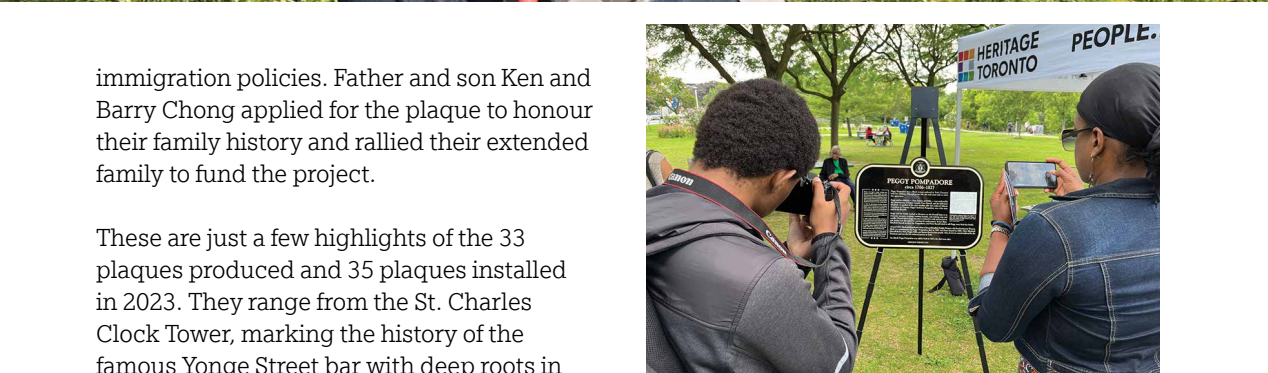
Taylor v. Orpen was created using our curated plaque fund, which we started in 2020 to address gaps in our coverage. The project also benefited from the contributions of a young emerging historian, whose contract was funded through our Equity Heritage Initiative.

Also in 2023, we hosted our first crowdfunding campaign, which resulted in our first plaque about a transgender person. Honouring the soul and R&B singer Jackie Shane, the campaign was spearheaded by Amanda Burt of Banger Films and exceeded its funding



target within weeks. We presented the plaque on June 23—Toronto's first Jackie Shane Day—during Pride Month.

Soon after, on July 1, we unveiled a plaque about the Charlie Chong Farm to mark the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Successful farmers in North York for 50 years, brothers Charlie and Henry Chong faced significant hardships due to discriminatory



These are just a few highlights of the 33 plaques produced and 35 plaques installed in 2023. They range from the St. Charles Clock Tower, marking the history of the famous Yonge Street bar with deep roots in



“My ancestors never sought attention or praise, but I know they would be humbled and thankful of this recognition from Heritage Toronto ... they had to abandon everything they knew in China, but they did it for their family, they believed in Toronto's promise to provide a better life and future for all.”

— Ken Chong



the 2SLGBTQ+ community, to a series of four plaques exploring the legacy of the Honest Ed's and related Mirvish family businesses.

Importantly, these examples also speak to our commitment to expand the impact of our program, innovating new approaches from working with a young graphic artist on a comic featuring Toronto's Chinese community, whose digital publication reached 3,854 people, to celebrating the iconic Toronto invention of the Whoopee Cushion with an improv night held at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.



Heritage Toronto Awards



“We are proud to have been the presenting sponsor of the 48th Heritage Toronto Awards, where our very own Eileen Costello took the stage to present the Crafts and Trades Award. Thank you to all who attended and joined us in recognizing the extraordinary contributions to Toronto’s heritage.”

— Aird & Berlis LLP

In October 2023, the Heritage Toronto Awards celebrated a diverse slate of 46 inspirational nominees.

While these individual projects ranged from books to films, from public art to buildings, collectively they reflect an evolving definition of heritage where lived experiences are at the centre of creative expressions and architecture. What all these nominated projects also share is an aspiration and confidence that in doing this work, we can envision and achieve a better future for our city.

Guests, which included 33 emerging historians, and leaders from across the culture, development, and policy-making sectors, attended the Mayor’s Reception and Awards Ceremony at The Carlu. Hosted by CBC journalist and host, Saroja Coelho, the ceremony recognized the achievements of five winners across

three juried categories: Public History, Book, and Built Heritage.

In addition, a Peoples' Choice Award was announced. Selected by Heritage Toronto supporters and event attendees from among the Public History nominees, the award includes a \$1,000 prize. The Heritage Toronto Board also presented the Volunteer Service Award to Erin Mackie for her support of the charity's public programs from walking tours to community events.

The winning projects all speak to the transformative change that is possible when we build on the past. The Award winners include urban planners, developers, historians, activists, and residents, and attest to the power of strong teams and partnerships in making possible this change to both empower communities and enrich urban life.



"Congratulations to my friend @Jay_Pitter for her exceptional work on Toronto's Little Jamaica Cultural Plan, earning the Heritage Toronto Award! Your dedication to preserving and celebrating our rich cultural heritage is truly inspiring. Big up, Jay!"

— @GarfUrbanism



2023 Award Recipients



PUBLIC HISTORY AWARD

A Big Vision for Little Jamaica: Black Cultural History & Mapping Process

Project Lead: Jay Pitter

BOOK AWARD

The Heart of Toronto: Corporate Power, Civic Activism, and the Remaking of Downtown Yonge Street

Author: Daniel Ross

Publisher: The University of British Columbia Press



CRAFTS AND TRADES AWARD

North Wing Coat of Arms Conservation, Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Owner: Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

Precinct Properties Branch

Architect: +VG Architects

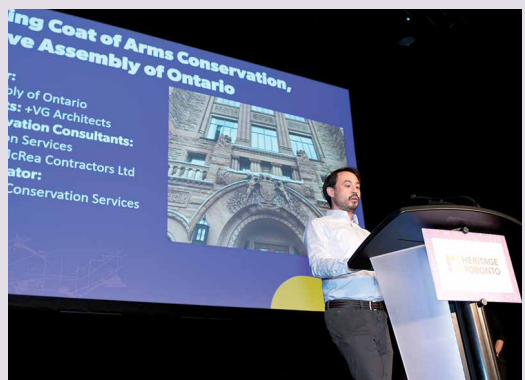
Masonry Conservation Consultants: Capital

Conservation Services

Contractor: DJ McCrear

Masonry Conservator: Trevor Gillingwater

Conservation Services Inc.



2023 Award Recipients

ADAPTIVE REUSE AWARD

Albert Campbell District Library

Owner: Toronto Public Library

Architecture and Interior Design: LGA

Architectural Partners

Indigenous Consultant: Trina Moyan, Bell and Bernard LTD

Indigenous Garden Design and Installation:

Miinikaan Innovation and Design

Landscape Architect: Aboud & Associates

Mural Wall: Red Urban Nation Artist Collective

Contractor: Pre-Eng Contracting

HERITAGE PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

80 Richmond Facade Restoration and Storefront Renovation

Owner: Dream Office REIT

Heritage Architect: Philip Evans

Heritage Craftsperson/Consultant: Chris Huntley

Project Representative: David Takacs

Facade Condition Assessment: Entuitive

Lighting Designer: Lightstudio

Project Representative: David Takacs
Facade Condition Assessment: Entuitive
Lighting Designer: Lightstudio



PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Sketched Out: The Digitized Graffiti Series

Project Lead: Colm Hogan

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

Erin Mackie





“I appreciated the intersectional lens that the tour guide had and how thoughtful she was when speaking about different historical pieces on the tour. Overall, as a person of colour, I felt welcome and included in the discussion. I'll be sure to tell my friends and go to more tours! Overall, 10/10.”

— Attendee, *It Takes a Village*

Last year, we continued to rebuild the Tours program to reflect a more inclusive heritage of Toronto.

Over 50% of our walks featured stories from equity-deserving and immigrant communities, and almost 60% were developed and led by emerging historians.

We managed this achievement while also delivering our largest Tour program in almost a decade. Running from June until October, this engaging program featured a total of 72 events on subjects ranging from our Black heritage to Chinatown's past, and from Toronto's urban development to its entertainment history.

Our popular tours were all new for 2023 and included *Baby Point Uncovered*, which explored the area's Indigenous heritage, colonization, and early 20th-century transformation into a garden-inspired residential community. This tour was

“Great tour. I’ve been to Chinatown often, but this tour showed me spots I’ve not stopped at, and added a new perspective. Including info re: Jewish & British eras makes this tour truly worthwhile.”

— Attendee, Changing Chinatown

delivered in partnership with ASI, the largest archaeological and cultural heritage consulting firm in Ontario. For Changing Chinatown, a tour developed by an emerging historian under our Equity Heritage Initiative, we examined the shifting demographics that saw a thriving Jewish community transition to Toronto’s Chinatown along Spadina Avenue. The sold-out Indigenous Art & Nature tour achieved the highest ratings from attendees. We worked with an Indigenous historian and educator on this interactive experience highlighting how nature has inspired Indigenous traditions and culture.

In addition to the focus on diverse stories and new voices, our revitalized program explored new formats. Our 58 paid walks were complemented by two bus tours (the first we’ve offered since 2019) and twelve new free community events. Of these, the free event-based experiences provided opportunities to partner with different community groups to





“Another beautiful day with @heritagetoronto ! Love seeing places in our city I’ve never been, and learning more about the places I have. Today it was Guild Park & Gardens... so beautiful! (And interesting!)”

— @jaxhoops



reach new audiences in local neighbourhoods. Working with farmers markets, Business Improvement Areas, and Residents Associations, we were able to engage 1,134 people, sharing the local heritage of the places where they live, shop, and work.

These free community events reflect a new effort to grow our commitment to accessible programming for all Torontonians. At the same time, we are maintaining our engagement with digital audiences by offering new online experiences. In 2023, we published 10 digital stories, all developed by emerging historians. Our digital experiences saw a record number of over 39,000 visits, a 39% increase from the previous year, and will remain an accessible programming priority for our agency in 2024.

“Excellent walking tour today with my mom and @heritagetoronto about the Jewish life and history of the Bathurst and Lawrence area. The tour leader Avi was very knowledgeable and the volunteers were very friendly and helpful. Final stop was a tasting of yummy pastries at @unitedbakers. Brought home the most delicious split pea soup I have ever had in my life!”

— @cynfulcreationscanada



Emerging Historians



“Working with Heritage Toronto showed me that I can play a part in keeping alive the rich stories that make our city special. I’ve lived in Toronto for a year and a half, but it wasn’t until I dug into Toronto’s theatre history that I started to feel at home here.”

— Thomas Sayers

In 2023, we worked with 26 emerging historians growing the program to include deeper engagement with young professionals.

While much of their work continues to support our Tours program, we have layered new contracts so that emerging historians can both develop and lead an in-person tour, but then also produce a digital story based on the subject, and might even develop an audio experience. These contracts not only provide more remuneration but they also allow our emerging historians to explore different strategies and approaches to sharing information on the same subject with diverse audiences.

We also continue to offer longer contracts, including two six-month positions for Programs Assistants, and added unique opportunities like the creation of a comic and video production.

Equity Heritage Initiative



“It has been an absolute pleasure to see some of the projects I helped facilitate sponsorships and fundraising for come to life, especially the JustGiving crowdfunding pages for both the Jackie Shane and Charlie Chong farm plaques. In this role, I’ve been able to connect our organization to like-minded individuals and groups who share and value the importance of heritage in our city.”

— Mira Celper

With the Equity Heritage Initiative (EHI), we’re investing in a new generation of heritage advocates who often face systemic barriers to building their careers.

In addition to the 64 paid contracts issued to emerging historians since the program’s inception, the Equity Heritage Initiative has allowed us to significantly diversify our programming and establish new community partnerships.

In 2023, we worked with four full-time EHI Coordinators. Victoria Atteh completed her study of Toronto’s Little Jamaica with the Likkle Heritage Treasure Hunt. This free community event in June featured an interactive game to immerse participants in the area’s lived experiences. Mira Celper continued to grow and diversify our supporter base, researching new funding opportunities for community programs and coordinating our crowdfunding launch for our Plaques program.

We hired Jingshu Yao to profile stories from Toronto's East Asian community. She led four popular tours on Toronto's Chinese heritage, enjoyed by 196 participants, crafted two digital experiences, and led the development of engaging events—including our first Full Moon Festival in October enjoyed by 275 attendees at the North York Centre.

We also hired Claire Jansen-Faught to coordinate the State of Heritage Report,

a public policy project on how heritage can further contribute to city building. For this project, to be published in 2024, we built a community-centered take on our city's heritage—one that prioritizes fresh perspectives and new narratives.

Moving forward, we will continue to support new voices and young professionals to lead the sector into the future, and to develop inclusive programming on the diverse cultural history of our city.





“Conducting community-based research for the State of Heritage Report presented a unique challenge, and the results have been hugely rewarding. It’s been eye-opening to examine heritage issues in less institutionalized, formal ways. I’ve learned that heritage is about people, and that people’s relationships to the past can be fraught, joyful, and plenty of things in between.”

— Claire Jansen-Faught

Doors Open

Among our 2023 high points was our in-person return to Doors Open, offering guided tours of the 54th floor of the TD Centre. Considered one of the best Modern buildings in Canada, 1,318 members of the public were able to experience the space for the first time since its extensive restoration in 2020.



Donors & Partners



Thank you to our donors, sponsors, and partners without which our charity's work would not be possible.

We appreciate all of our donors who supported our programs and our emerging historians. We are grateful for the support of Toronto City Council and for the renewed commitment to our Equity Heritage Fund by TD Bank Group through the TD Ready Commitment.

We are happy to report that the Heritage Toronto Awards, our largest fundraiser, has now rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. Thank you to our colleagues in the heritage, union, development, and private sectors who attended and sponsored the Awards.

Sharing our stories goes beyond commemorating history—it bridges gaps, creates opportunities for people to come together, and celebrates community voices in shaping their own narratives. Thank you all for sharing this vision with us.



Volunteers



“The tours allowed me to both learn, like the people on the tour, and interact with them as well, by asking questions of the tour leader that the public may have prompted. Seeing peoples’ joy and fascination with the tours made helping out a rewarding experience for me.”

— Steve Collins

Our 160 volunteers dedicated more than 1,480 hours to our agency in 2023.

It is incredible to see so many passionate individuals support our charity, all of whom are enthusiastic to share our city’s heritage, attend our events, take part in board and committee meetings, and work on important tasks behind the scenes.

As a small organization, our numerous events in 2023, many of which highlighted the charity’s ongoing dedication to equity, diversity, and inclusion, would not have been such a success without the tremendous efforts of our volunteers.



Board of Directors

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Vince Parolin
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Staff

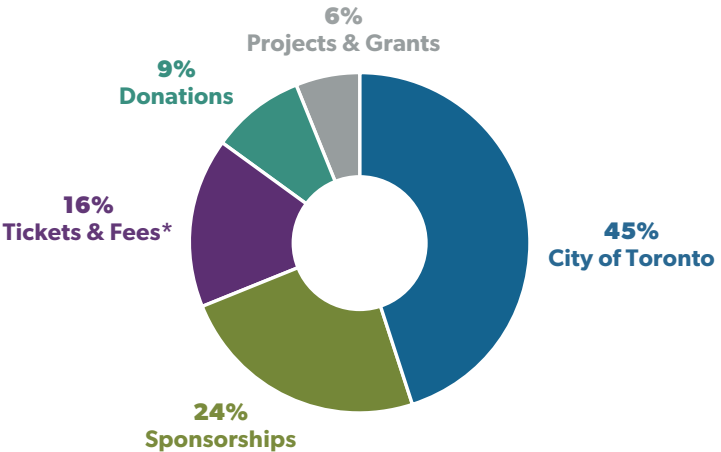
Victoria Atteh, *Programs Coordinator*
Allison Bain, *Executive Director*
Chris Bateman, *Manager, Plaques*
Dr. Laura Carlson, *Manager, Public Programs*
Mira Celper, *Development Coordinator*
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Nadia Sule, *Programs Assistant*
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Jingshu Yao, *Programs Coordinator*

2023 Financials

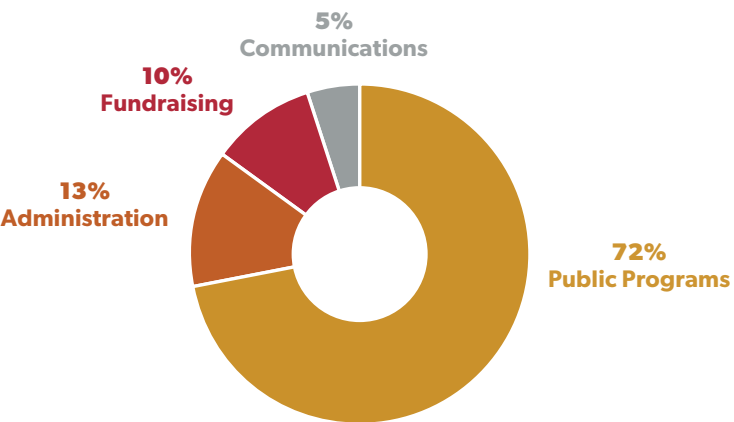
Revenue Total 2023

\$1,272,215



Expenses

\$1,307,914



*Final 2023 Financial Statements, audited by Grant Thornton, will be available at heritagetoronto.org on May 1, 2024.

Image Credits

Page 1: Allison Bain and Liza Chalaïdopoulos, February 20, 2024.

Page 5: Jackie Shane plaque unveiling, Toronto, June 23, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine.

Pages 6-7, L-R: Toronto's first Black doctors, plaque unveiling, Seeley Hall, Trinity College, February 9, 2023; Sam Richardson plaque unveiling, Toronto, May 11, 2023. Image by Herman Custodio; Peggy Pompadore plaque unveiling, August 3, 2023.

Page 8, top to bottom: Kew Gardens Red Oak plaque unveiling, May 25, 2023; Charlie Chong Farm plaque unveiling, July 1, 2023. Image by Gabriel Li.

Page 9: Audience at the Awards Ceremony, Heritage Toronto Awards, October 30, 2023. Image by Herman Custodio.

Pages 10, clockwise: Mayor Olivia Chow speaking at the Heritage Toronto Awards; Guests at the Awards reception; Attendees from LiUNA Local 183 and Clifford Restoration Ltd.; All three images taken October 30, 2023 by Herman Custodio.

Pages 11, top to bottom: Jay Pitter accepting the Public History Award; Anna Gallagher-Ross accepting the Book Award; Derek Quilliam, architectural project manager, accepting the Crafts and Trades Award; All three images taken October 30, 2023 by Herman Custodio.

Page 12, clockwise: Brock James of LGA Architectural Partners and team, winner of the Adaptive Reuse Award. Image by Ashley Duffus; Colm Hogan accepting the People's Choice Award. Image by Herman Custodio; Erin Mackie, recipient of the Volunteer Service Award. Image by Ashley Duffus; Brad Keast of Dream Unlimited and team, winner of the Heritage Planning and Architecture Award. Image by Herman Custodio; all four images taken on October 30, 2023.

Page 13: Tour participants, Indigenous Art & Nature, July 23, 2023. Image by Agnes Manivit.

Pages 14-15, clockwise: Tour participants, Baby Point Uncovered, July 29, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine; Tour participants, Space Age at the Park, June 25, 2023. Image by Ashley Duffus; Tour participants, Modern Scenes on St. Clair, July 15, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine; Tour participants on Lowther Avenue, Writing Change in the Annex, June 11, 2023.

Page 16: Tour participants at Yeshivas Lubavitch, Jewish Life on Lawrence, July 9, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine.

Page 17: Emerging Historians, Heritage Toronto Awards, October 30, 2023. Image by Ashley Duffus.

Page 18: Interview with Victoria Atteh (middle) by Kelda Yeun (right) in Little Jamaica, February 16, 2023. Courtesy of CBC News.

Page 19: Tour participants, Huron Street Public Square, June 8, 2023. Image by Johnny Wu.

Page 20, top to bottom: Heritage Toronto tent at Emancipation on Bloor, Christie Pits, August 1, 2023; Rabbit origami activity station at the Full Moon Festival, October 1, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine; Boardroom, 54th Floor, TD Bank Tower, Doors Open tour, May 25, 2023.

Page 21, top to bottom: Mayor Olivia Chow, Councillor Brad Bradford, Executive Director Allison Bain, and Councillor Anthony Peruzza, Heritage Toronto Awards, October 30, 2023. Image by Herman Custodio; Amy Korczynski from TD Bank Group speaks at the event, Storytelling: Are we getting it right?, November 30, 2023. Image by Ashley Duffus; Appreciation event, Elgin and Winter Garden Theatres, November 21, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine.

Page 22: Volunteers pose for a photo at the Likkle Heritage Treasure Hunt, June 3, 2023. Image by Oscar Akamine.

Page 23: Heritage Toronto Board of Directors, September 27, 2023. Image by Ashley Duffus.



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Heritage Toronto is a charity and arms-length
agency of the City of Toronto.



heritagetoronto.org



PEOPLE. PLACES. EVENTS.