

# WILLOWBANK



2021 - 2022

# ANNUAL REPORT





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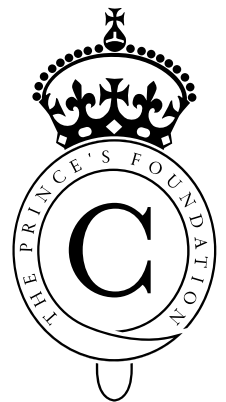
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Charitable Registration Number  
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Visit us on our social media platforms:



Willowbank is honoured to receive  
the Patronage of the former Prince of  
Wales - The King.



Willowbank is home to the Canada  
Chapter of the International Network  
for Traditional Building, Architecture  
and Urbanism (INTBAU).



# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR:

## WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

In last year's Annual Report, I challenged all our Willowbank stakeholders to "redouble our efforts to achieve financial stability, so that we (could) get on with the job of creating leaders of tomorrow's restoration arts."

**During this past year, I'm pleased to report, we have taken significant steps to address that challenge.**

Firstly, I want to bring to your attention the stellar efforts of our Vice Chair, John Scott. John has performed yeoman's service, bringing focus to our strategic deliberations, and devising tactical plans to achieve our strategic goals.

Details of the fruits of his efforts can be found in his Report on Strategic Direction and Operations. They make good reading and even better business practice.

Suffice it to say, the entire Willowbank community is pleased to be dealing forthrightly with issues of property utilization and moving along the road to stabilizing our capital position.

With that foundation, we can focus on the delivery of services to students that will attract them and will provide them with the basis for going out into the world and doing good things.

We are also working with governments and other institutions to identify opportunities for increasing the number of students and other operating income.

This Report offers a vivid picture of the people and organizations that provide much of the financial support that sustains our efforts.

I am in awe of the diversity of interests and commitment detailed on these pages. For those of us in the thick of things, your dedication is inspiring. Thank you.

A special note of thanks to Caitlin Wooll, the Director of Willowbank School, and Katie Houghton, who we welcomed as our new Director of Marketing and Business Affairs. I commend your attention to their operational reports.

**Patrick Little**  
Chair



## **A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHAIR ON STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OPERATIONS:**

Generating conditions for the long-term sustainability of the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts was the focus of extensive work undertaken by several Board members and staff through the year. Based on the results of two separate studies the Board of Directors determined that a key component would be the sale of the former Laura Secord Memorial School in Queenston given its substantial cost to maintain and upgrade as well as its modest campus use. Ultimately this transaction, which was completed at year end, will not only eliminate unnecessary costs but the income from the investment of the net proceeds will be a significant source of annual revenue to the School.

A second critical element in the pursuit of our objective was signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Niagara College which will allow us to confidentially explore areas of mutual interest over the next five years. The MOU almost immediately produced positive results for Willowbank in streamlining operational policies. We anticipate more substantial benefits over the coming year.

The third important adjustment was a more definitive separation of the operation of the School from the Willowbank Estate. The Board studies and work with Niagara College both identified that given the relatively short school year, the Estate can be used more extensively for several concepts which could include micro courses in restoration arts; lecture or music series; corporate retreats or social gatherings. Of course, the requirements of the School take priority as it will remain the prime “tenant”. This structural change has been facilitated through a redefinition of the respective roles of the Director of the School and the Director of Marketing and Business Affairs.



Finally, we reached out to several of our historic strong partners to secure the necessary financial support to enable these adjustments to take place. It was gratifying and extremely important that each provided a positive response to our overtures. We can't thank them enough!

In summary the concentrated activities through the year provided a strong foundational start in the Willowbank journey towards sustainability. We anticipate building on that promise in the year ahead.

**John F.T. Scott**  
Vice Chair





# WILLOWBANK SCHOOL

CLASS OF '23 STUDENT STONECARVING



## **WILLOWBANK SCHOOL**

The heart of Willowbank is our three year Diploma Program in Heritage Conservation. We embrace innovation, interdisciplinary problem-solving, and an integrated study of practice, place and people. Our faculty of leading heritage practitioners and our progressive and unconventional model enables students to gain knowledge beyond the classroom by engaging with the real world. Our students are passionate about history, conservation, traditional building methods, sustainability and community design. We are training the heritage conservationists of the future.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF WILLOWBANK SCHOOL OF RESTORATION ARTS:

Although Covid restrictions re-appeared, we were once again able to remain open and operating as (almost) normal for the 21-22 school year. The Class of 2022 set off on their 3rd year placements, ranging from program coordination at John Brown Homestead in St Catharines to stained glass restoration on the Centre Block rehabilitation project in Ottawa. On April 10 2022, the class graduated, with all six happily employed in their desired area of the heritage field: Bonnie Liu as a Junior Conservator at Traditional Glassworks; Rick Pali as Heritage Coordinator at John Brown Homestead; Holly Thompson as Heritage Site Technician at John Brown Homestead; Christopher Thorne as owner/operator of Atelier Heritage Restoration; Krystopher Dale as Project Manager at Traditional Neighborhood Developments.

Autumn 2021 saw the completion of the east portico restoration. It was incredible to witness the entire project: from the stabilization of the columns, the installation of three new column bases, to the deck and staircase rebuild, and the final coat of new paint. Doug Vickers, Ryan Donovan, and Holly Thompson, '22, worked tirelessly through the summer to restore our iconic Greek Revival facade to its intended splendor. This project was possible with funding from a Parks Canada grant.

In September, we welcomed 11 new students as the Class of 2024, our largest class since 2015. In October, we were able to hold our first in-person open house since Covid began, and welcomed over 100 people onto the campus.

Throughout the school year, work continued on the 3rd floor of the mansion, as we transformed it into a multi-use classroom space. As part of the school program, students laid both original and new floorboards, hung doors, and installed trim and baseboards. After having no dedicated space for several years, the David Murray Library was officially moved into the north-east corner room, with shelving designed and built by students, and is now a functioning, cozy study space.

The Port Dalhousie trolley stop also continued on the final leg of its journey to restoration. Students learned how to mix the chrome green paint for its exterior, completed the new cedar shake roof with metal ridgecap, and repaired and reinstalled the leaded glass windows.



The Love Garden, the Indigenous-led volunteer garden on the south-west corner of the Willowbank Estate, continues to thrive and grow. Willowbank is committed to walking the two row wampum. In the coming months, a drystone cairn representing a tear drop to recognize the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls will be built on the property.

Looking forward, we're planning the repatriation of our stained glass classroom and blacksmithing area to the Upper Campus, both of which formerly took place at the Laura Secord School.

As the heritage reset continues, we continue to adapt our program's offerings to reflect the changing landscape of this field. We strive to remain on the vanguard of heritage conservation, with traditional skills and cultural landscape theory as the program's core, instilling in the students the desire to keep redefining the "why" to the "how". This lofty goal is made relatively easy because of our incredible faculty, all heritage professionals at the top of their game, who donate their time and expertise year after year.


**Caitlin Wooll**

Director Of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts



CLASS OF '23 STUDENTS CUTTING FLOORBOARDS





“We believe in the excellent work Willowbank has been doing in the education of people interested in working in historic restoration.”

ANDREW HUMENIUK - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE HUMENIUK FOUNDATION



“It is so important to teach young people the Restoration skills Willowbank offers. Peter and I are delighted to support such talent.”

CAMILLA AND PETER DALGLISH – THE DALGLISH FAMILY FOUNDATION




# **A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS:**

In January of this year I joined Willowbank and am now firmly in the position of Director of Marketing and Business Affairs. I am responsible for the Communications and Marketing of the School and for all aspects of the operation of the Estate including policies and procedures pertaining to access, safety and security.

A large area of my strategic focus is marketing communications and fundraising; essential components for the sustainability and growth of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts. I am developing a marketing and fundraising plan alongside executing tactical campaigns, such as the quarterly e-newsletter, The Willowbank Wire, to help raise awareness of and develop the Willowbank brand. I am also developing public relations in the community so that we may widen our reach, and bring greater attention to the wonderful things taking place at Willowbank.

With Covid-19 restrictions easing we are excited to launch in-person fundraising events, with our inaugural Friends and Fundraising event taking place in November. The Willowbank community has been fiercely loyal for which we are tremendously grateful, but we are acutely aware of the need to nurture these relationships, and engage with new patrons who may then become Willowbank ambassadors. Developing a strategy to engage with donors is a priority.

Streamlining the administration and managing the operations of the 13 acre estate are also within my remit, including the Mansion, barn and drystone building - from managing insurance, coordinating logistics relating to the former Laura Secord School after its sale, to exploring grant applications, and everything in between related to the Estate. Working closely with site custodian, Rolf Schmitt, we have led on estate improvements including keeping on top of the sprawling grounds and buildings, to installing signage and security so that we can better protect both the students and this incredible national historic site we are so fortunate to steward. The Memorandum of Understanding with Niagara College has also helped greatly in developing sound operational policies and we look forward to developing this mutually beneficial partnership.



As I look to the year ahead, I am focusing efforts on how to sustain and grow Willowbank, through developing a robust marketing and fundraising plan. I am also creating health and safety policies and a priority list for enhancing the Willowbank Mansion - from interior and exterior lighting, a fully accessible washroom, to replacing rotting fascia soffit dental moldings, right down to the baseboards. There is never a dull day and I embrace the challenge of developing a sustainable future for Willowbank.


Katie Houghton

Director of Marketing and Business Affairs



CLASS OF '24 STUDENTS BUILDING A DRYSTONE WALL




A person wearing a red t-shirt is using a power drill on a wooden workbench. The background is slightly blurred, showing a workshop environment. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white background.

“When our good friend Nancy Smith introduced us to Willowbank last year, we were immediately impressed with its mandate and its unique approach to helping address the need here in Ontario, and afar, for graduates who will be able to contribute to heritage restoration, conservation and adaptive re-use. It is a unique and valuable program.”

ANDRA AND BRYAN TAKACS - DAVIES TAKACS FUND



A close-up photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and a beard, wearing a red shirt. He is looking down intently at his work, which appears to be a piece of wood or a tool. The background is slightly blurred, showing what might be a workshop or classroom setting. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white background in the center of the image.

“There are few things that have given me the sense of accomplishment my first months in this program has. My classmates and I have become safety and heights certified, completed a limeburn, black smithing, drystone walling, architectural styles, foundational principals and begin stained glass. The site visits to historic properties have given such valuable insight to the management, restoration and conservation of sites in the area. Each week brings something new and exciting - I can't wait to see what is next.”

MATTIA THILLAYE-KERR - CLASS OF 2025

# THE FUTURE OF WILLOWBANK IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH DONATIONS

Donations to Willowbank, both large and small, allow us to operate the Willowbank School Of Restoration Arts and facilitate our stewardship of this incredible 13 acre national historic site. Your support means viability for Willowbank which ensures that current and future generations may enjoy this beautiful space. Part of our role is to engage and widen our reach so that more individuals and organizations will connect with our cause and become ambassadors of Willowbank.


We know that support and connection comes in all manor of ways so understanding why people support Willowbank is essential. Some are compelled to donate due to their support of further education while others value the importance of historic restoration and the national historic site. Funds for general school operations are essential but they are also elusive which renders all levels of contributions to this facet increasingly valuable. Fortunately, in the fiscal year, we received a number of extremely generous investments towards both restoration and the school.

We were very privileged to receive an unrestricted investment in the amount of \$50,000 from our Chair, Patrick Little of Happle Holdings Inc. and his associates Art Ellis and Nino Donatelli of Port Dalhousie Projects Inc.

“Individually and collectively, we have personally been involved with the restoration and conversion of heritage properties in Niagara for over 50 years. This donation seeks to sustain the teaching – and the learning – of the restoration arts to ensure the preservation of our built heritage and cultural landscapes.” said Patrick Little, Art Ellis and Nino Donatelli.

Fellow historic restoration enthusiasts at The Humeniuk Foundation, yet again demonstrated their support for our mission and invested \$50,000 towards enhancing the school’s curriculum, and helping students attend European field schools in the summer of 2023. Andrew Humeniuk, Executive Director of the Foundation remarked, “We believe in the excellent work Willowbank has been doing in the education of people interested in working in historic restoration.”

The Weathertop Foundation continued to support Willowbank by investing in students and the Estate. Victoria Bright Urban Broer commented: “The Bright family is proud of its history in Queenston and the Niagara region. Willowbank embodies the spirit of honoring the past while preparing people, and the built environment for the future.”



For the fourth year in a row, The Dalglish Family Foundation is supporting students so that Willowbank remains accessible to the broadest range of applicants from across Canada. The Dalglish Family Foundation Scholarships provide up to 50% of a first year student's tuition. Three students were awarded this scholarship, making their time at Willowbank possible.

Mrs Dalglish remarked, "It is so important to teach young people the Restorations skills Willowbank offers. Peter and I are delighted to support such talent" - Peter and Camilla Dalglish – The Dalglish Family Foundation.

We also welcomed new investors in Willowbank who value heritage restoration, conservation and adaptive re-use and we are very excited to have Andra and Bryan Takacs supporting our mission. Their contribution is both personal and professional,

"My wife, Andra Takacs and I have a strong interest in built heritage. For my part it took root when, as the then Deputy Minister of Culture in Ontario, I had the privilege of observing the restoration of the Elgin/Wintergarden Theatre complex in Toronto. One of the challenges facing that project was obtaining people with the skills needed to undertake restoration work. When our good friend Nancy Smith introduced us to Willowbank last year, we were immediately impressed with its mandate and its unique approach to helping address the need here in Ontario, and afar, for graduates who will be able to contribute to heritage restoration, conservation and adaptive re-use. It is a unique and valuable program."

We are extremely grateful and honoured to be in receipt of donations and investments in Willowbank. Beyond making studying more accessible for students, investments also allow for improvements to the Estate. The Director of Marketing is developing a priority list of Estate improvements. Whether this is installing lighting to the interior of the Mansion where most rooms are lit by lamps, providing a fully accessible washroom, or removing rot and installing fascia soffit dental moldings with new moldings - everything costs, but are also essential so that the building is maintained and protected.

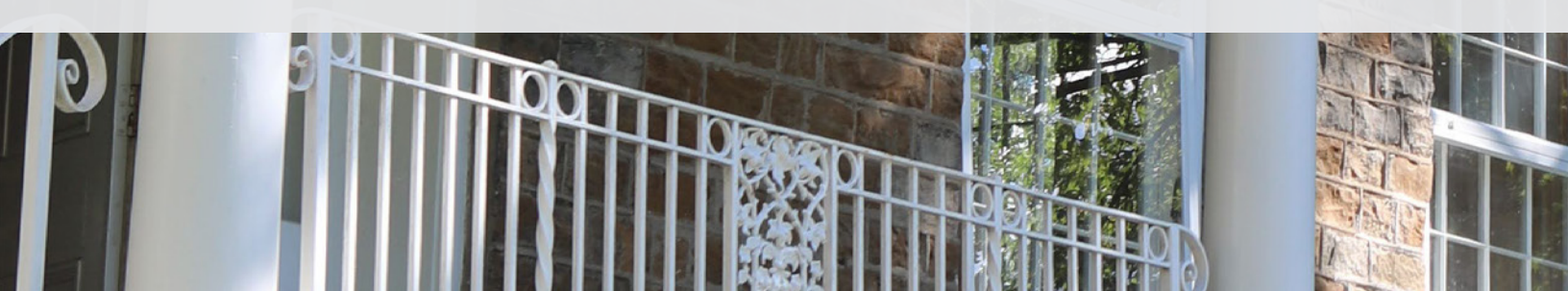
Donations allow for the continued investment in Willowbank the School and the Estate. Any and all contributions are truly appreciated! Visit [www.willowbank.ca/donate/](http://www.willowbank.ca/donate/) to learn more.






“Individually and collectively, we have personally been involved with the restoration and conversion of heritage properties in Niagara for over 50 years. This donation seeks to sustain the teaching – and the learning – of the restoration arts to ensure the preservation of our built heritage and cultural landscapes.”

CHAIR, PATRICK LITTLE OF HAPPLE HOLDINGS INC. AND HIS ASSOCIATES  
ART ELLIS AND NINO DONATELLI OF PORT DALHOUSIE PROJECTS INC.







“Willowbank provided me with a foundation of knowledge that has allowed me to be successful in my ever-changing career as a carpenter. Not a day goes by that I do not critically consider the materials I am working with and how people will interact with them later on. Wood, whether as a tree, in a piece of furniture, or as a structural member in a building, is never inanimate, and seeks to tell a story. Students and alumni from Willowbank learn to become storytellers of both the past and present and seek to breathe life back into places that may have previously gone unnoticed.”

SASHA KNIGHT - WILLOWBANK ALUMNI CHAIR





# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

Each and every donation to Willowbank is received with much gratitude and appreciation. From July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 the following donations and investments were received.

\$25,000 +

Peter and Camilla Dalglish  
Art Ellis and Nino Donatelli of Port Dalhousie Projects Inc  
The Humeniuk Foundation  
Patrick Little of Happle Holdings Inc (Chair)  
Dr. Elizabeth Oliver-Malone  
Corlene Taylor  
Dorothy Ure  
The Weathertop Foundation

\$5,000 +

Paul and Ginny Green  
Perry Quinn (in kind)  
Davies Takacs Fund

\$2,000 +

Carmen Masi  
Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy  
Frank Racioppo  
Michelle and John F.T. Scott  
Wendy Shearer  
Nancy Smith




\$1,000 +

Clinton Brown and Alma O'Connell Brown  
John Dunn  
Margie Zeidler

Up to \$500

Gail Benjafield  
Crystal Bossio  
Patrick Devine  
Elaine Eigl  
Rebecca Golding  
Megan Hobson  
Ted Piggott and Barb Hunsberger Foundation  
David Kimberley  
Sasha Knight  
Jack and Barbara Lowrey  
Sarah Lynch  
Niagara Community Foundation  
Alexander Topps





“The Bright family is proud of its history in Queenston and the Niagara region. Willowbank embodies the spirit of honoring the past while preparing people, and the built environment for the future.”

VICTORIA BRIGHT URBAN BROER - THE WEATHERTOP FOUNDATION





“Willowbank allows us to love and experience history like so few get to. We learn to adore what our communities are made of, and those who made them.”

RILEY MCMAHON - CLASS OF 2024





# WILLOWBANK LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Patrick Little BA, LLB** (*Chair*)  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
Senior Partner, Heelis, Little & Almas, LLP

**Dr. Steven Hudson PhD Education, MBA, MEng, ICD.D**  
St Catharines, Ontario

**John F.T. Scott BA, ICD.D** (*Vice Chair*)  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
Past Chair, Niagara College

**Ginny Medland Green**  
Niagara on-the-Lake, Ontario

**Carmen Masi CPA, CA** (*Treasurer*)  
Niagara Falls, Ontario  
Partner, Crawford, Smith and Swallow

**Dr. Elizabeth Oliver-Malone MD FRCPC**  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
Retired Anesthesiologist

**Sasha Knight** (*Alumni Chair*)  
Alumnus '14  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Construction and Finish Carpenter, Nestwork Construction Ltd.

**Frank Racioppo MBA, LLB**  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
Founding Partner, RZCD Law Firm LLP and  
President, Queenston Quarry Reclamation Ltd.

**Emily Bright BSc**  
Virgil, Ontario  
Past National Home Economist, Sears Canada

**Nancy Smith**  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
Retired CEO NextMedia; past Director Lakefield College School and Foundation.

**Victoria Broer BA**  
Cleveland, Ohio  
Burton D. Morgan Foundation

**Clinton Brown FAIA**  
Buffalo, New York  
President, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, PC



## PROGRAM STAFF

**Katie Houghton BA**  
Director of Marketing and Business Affairs

**Caitlin Wooll MA, MLitt**  
Director of the Willowbank School  
of Restoration Arts

**Janet Marcynuk**  
Bookkeeper

**Rolf Schmitt**  
Site custodian

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Victoria Angel FRCGS, CAHP**  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Ashleigh Bell, Alumna '13**  
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**Clinton Brown FAIA**  
Buffalo, New York (*Board Liaison*)

**Tamara Anson-Cartwright**  
Toronto, Ontario

**Victoria Dickenson FCMA**  
Montréal, Quebec

**Robin Garrett**  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

**David O'Hara OALA, RPP**  
Toronto, Ontario

**Michael McClelland OAA, FRAIC, CAHP**  
Toronto, Ontario (*Chair*)

**Amy Swift**  
Detroit, Michigan

**Philip White FCSLA, FASLA**  
Gatineau, Quebec

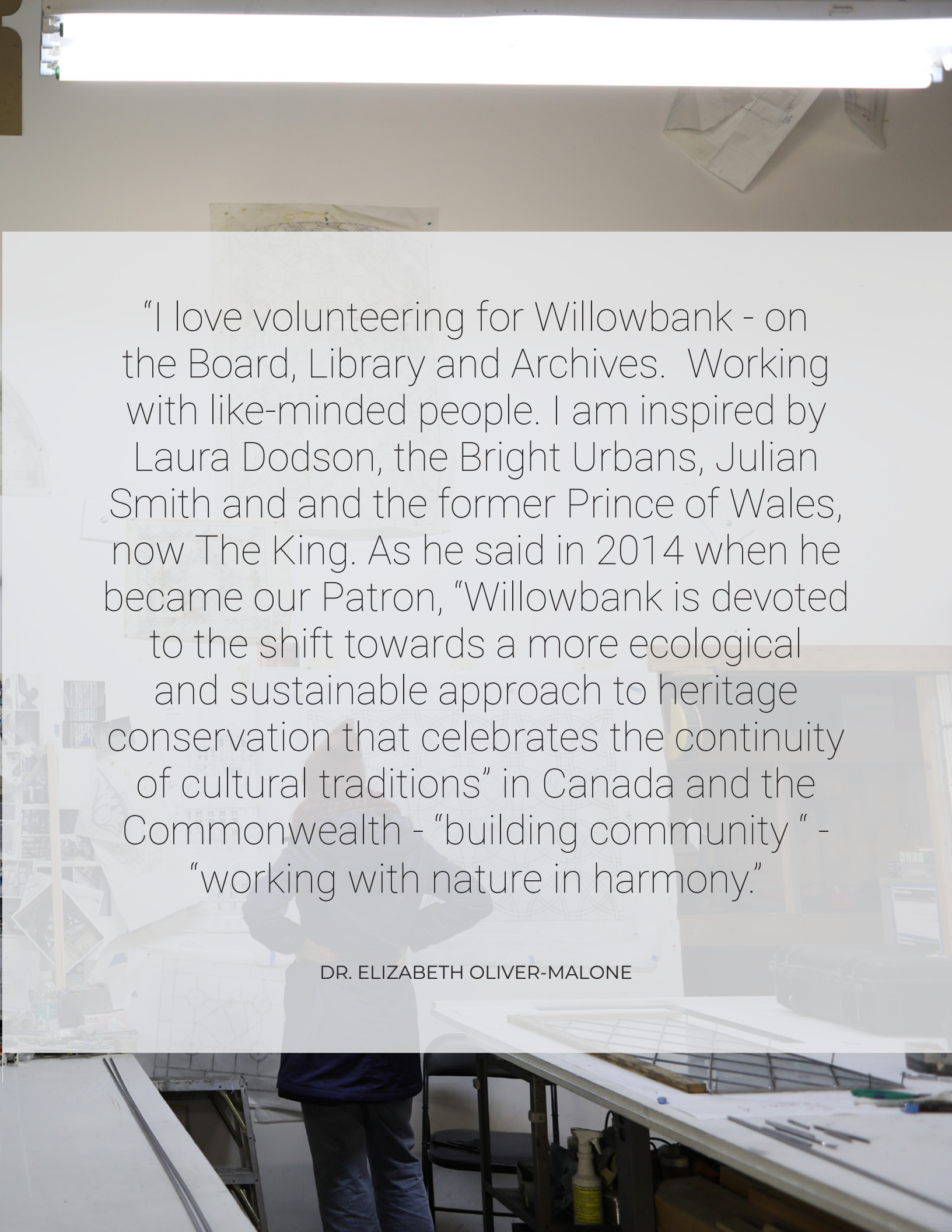
**Chris Wiebe**  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Ashley Wilson AIA, ASID**  
Washington, D.C.



CLASS OF '23 STUDENTS VISITING VITREOUS GLASSWORKS



A person wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and dark pants is standing in a workshop or library. They are positioned behind a long white table that has various papers, a ruler, and other tools on it. The background shows shelves with books and papers, and a bright light source at the top of the frame. The overall scene is a busy, creative workspace.

“I love volunteering for Willowbank - on the Board, Library and Archives. Working with like-minded people. I am inspired by Laura Dodson, the Bright Urbans, Julian Smith and and the former Prince of Wales, now The King. As he said in 2014 when he became our Patron, “Willowbank is devoted to the shift towards a more ecological and sustainable approach to heritage conservation that celebrates the continuity of cultural traditions” in Canada and the Commonwealth - “building community” - “working with nature in harmony.”

DR. ELIZABETH OLIVER-MALONE



Alumnus 22 and Class of 2023 with Faculty member Keith Blades

Front cover photo taken by Charlie Porter. All other photos taken by Mackenzie Campbell.

## Land Acknowledgement

Willowbank is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Ojibway/Chippewa and Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people. (Source: DSBN)







[WILLOWBANK.CA](http://WILLOWBANK.CA)