



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)

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Charitable Registration Number in Canada 891476400RR0001

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Willowbank is honoured to receive the Patronage of The King's Foundation.

Willowbank is home to the Canada

and Urbanism (INTBAU).

Chapter of the International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture





"The next generation will need to sustain and make better use of Canada's \$6.7 trillion building stock (notably its tricky older component); and Willowbank can show the way."

MARC DENHEZ - WILLOWBANK FACULTY



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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR:

MEMBERS OF THE WILLOWBANK COMMUNITY

It has been an honour to serve as Chair of the Willowbank Board of Directors over the past year. This period has been a time of substantial change as we directed our intellectual, financial and material resources towards a concentrated effort to ensure a sustainable future for the School of Restoration Arts.

Our first step was to dispose of the former Laura Secord Memorial School in Queenston which had served as a satellite campus for several years. The realized funds allowed us to retire a mortgage and invest the proceeds to generate interest to be used for the operation of the school. The second was to garner sufficient unrestricted donations to provide breathing room as we solidified the curriculum and educational venues. Insurance also required us to place some restrictions on access to and use of our historic mansion.

At the same time, we found Willowbank to be seriously deficient with the Private Career Colleges (PCC) of Ontario under whose mandate we issue our coveted diploma. Confronted with that reality and operating with an inexperienced staff complement supported by volunteer Board members the Board decided to exert all effort to rectify the problem. We realized it would take time and require retaining experienced personnel. As a result, we regretfully made the difficult decision to pause the first-year cohort of 2023.

Change is difficult and requires careful communication to all stakeholders. Unfortunately, we struggled with the latter point which created both misunderstandings and confusion. The Board is committed to developing a strong Willowbank Community communications strategy going forward.

The fiscal year ended with great promise as Dr. Faisal Arain agreed to assume the position of Willowbank President (Interim) with a mandate to ensure our standing with the PCC, develop a long-term plan for financial sustainability and ensure the smooth operation of the School of Restoration Arts. My deepest appreciation for their above and beyond efforts over the past year is extended to Director of Marketing and Business Affairs Katie Houghton and Board Member Steve Hudson. I can't imagine what would have happened to the School without their recognition of the issues; "can do" attitude; and steadfast dedication to the promise of Willowbank. Our community owes each of them a great debt!

As I write this note I realize that much of the heavy lifting is now in the past and that collectively we can readily focus on building the School and all that it offers to Heritage Conservation.

I thank the Board of Directors for their strong support. I also extend our sincere appreciation to all of the donors who have continued to stand by and support Willowbank. Your continued dedication has been beyond amazing.

The concept of Willowbank is a noble journey for all of us. We hold great optimism for the year ahead.

John F.T. Scott Chair



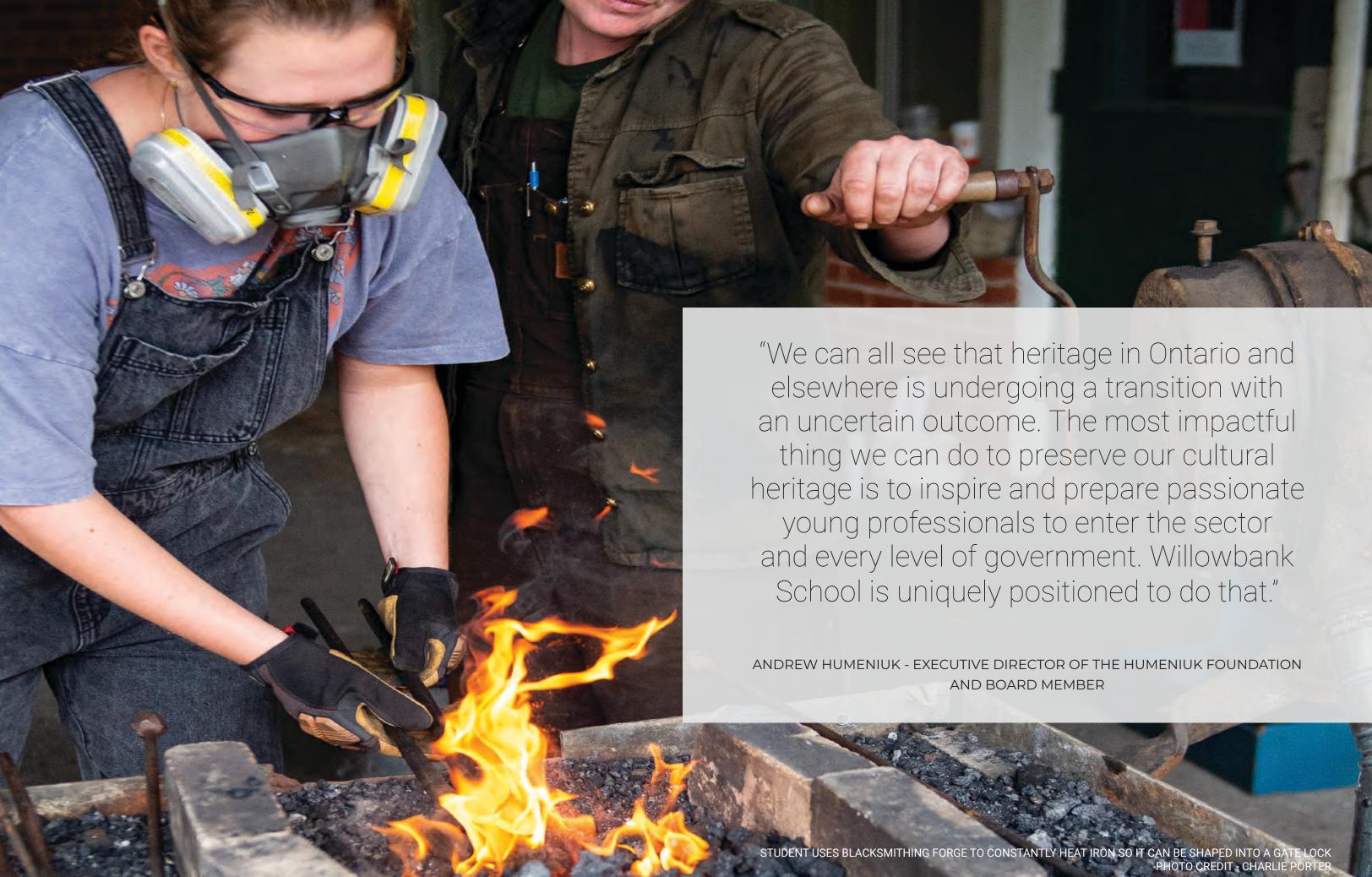
WILLOWBANK SCHOO

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.

CLASS OF 2024 WITH WILLOWBANK FACULTY DOUG VICKERS





A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT (INTERIM) OF WILLOWBANK SCHOOL OF RESTORATION ARTS:

Willowbank's applied education pedagogy balances theory with hands-on skills, and embraces the interconnections of our built, natural and cultural heritage resources. Our three-year Diploma Program in Heritage Conservation is the core. We embrace innovation, interdisciplinary problem solving, and an integrated study of practice, place and people. Willowbank continues establishing a stronger and meaningful rapport in the domain of heritage conservation nationally and globally.

Due to strategic requirements, Willowbank decided to pause the new intake in the first year of the program for the present academic year, this provided a due strategic platform and time to revitalize the program addressing academic compliance and financial sustainability issues. During the present academic year, the program's second- and third-year students are continuing as per their original academic schedules.

Program revitalization is inevitable for ensuring the standing of Willowbank with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, and for aligning the school on a sustainable path of growth. The program revitalization process requires reviewing present program structure, compliance issues, gathering feedback, listening carefully to the perspectives and values of all Willowbank stakeholders, and providing critical input to the Board and Administration as they deliberate the long-term direction of the school.

Willowbank conducted a Forum for shareholder consultation, re-engagement and sharing the path forward in October, 2023. A group of 'primary stakeholders' (students, alumni, faculty, staff, and board) was gathered at Willowbank with the goal of reconnecting and reengaging the Willowbank Community to chart a path forward together. The primary focus and shared outcome were to have Willowbank resume a first-year cohort in the Fall, 2024 with the launch of a revitalized program.

Following the Forum, an ad-hoc Core Steering Committee was established under my leadership to craft the path for program revitalization. The committee diligently works to define the core competencies (skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities) for Willowbank graduates, that sets the foundation for program outcomes. We are working on the gathered insights to revitalize our diploma program within the available time to be ready to welcome our new 1st year students to the revitalized program which will be academically and financially viable for the long haul.

We continue to review and enhance our program offerings to reflect the ever changing landscape of the heritage conservation domain. Our diploma program core emphasizes on the learners' ability to seek knowledge and analytical skills to better comprehend the cultural landscape and heritage conservation common grounds. We strive to remain on the vanguard of heritage conservation and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, with traditional skills and cultural landscape theory as the program's core, instilling in the students the desire to keep learning.

We are also working with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and other academic institutions to create pathways for our students and to identify opportunities for increasing the number of students and other operating revenue. The focused strategies through the year provide a strong foundation for Willowbank on its journey toward sustainability.

Dr. Faisal Arain President (Interim) of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts





April 6 saw the class of 2023 graduate and their valedictorian, Mackenzie Campbell shared a passionate, compelling note which captures the true essence and philosophy at play, at Willowbank.

"Willowbank teaches you that "preservation isn't just about saving old buildings, it's also about protecting and saving the communities and values they embody". We need to be aware of why we are fighting to save these spaces in the first place. There is a physical history behind every laid stone, every hand material ever touched by another human being. How lucky are we to have a part in conserving these stories. But with any fortune, comes great responsibility. And I think this is something every Willowbank student understands.

If I could offer some advice to the first and second years here today, I would tell you to appreciate the time you have at Willowbank, because it goes by in the blink of an eye. And there's nothing cooler and maybe more nerdy than being a Willowbanker. A title I've been dreading to give up.

But on the positive side, Willowbank Alumni seem to be just as interesting. I encourage you to be present, to try and take every opportunity Willowbank has to offer. Attend conferences, participate in student programs and most importantly take lots and lots of notes. The knowledge that we receive from our instructors is nearly impossible to find anywhere else. But first and foremost, support each other, because I promise you, you cannot do this journey alone.

Thank you again to the people that made Willowbank three of the best years of my life.

Thank you to the board members and faculty for their passion to unite education and heritage conservation. Thank you to our amazing instructors for being so eager to share their knowledge with the next generation of conservators."



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS:

The past year at Willowbank has seen lots of change and fortunately we are now entering a more focused and stable future. The below report is my summary of the year, from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023. The report is quite lengthy as it also includes updates on the School which due to staff changes, saw me step into the interim role of Director of the School along with the support of Board member Steve Hudson. Given this I have separated the report into Willowbank progress and specifically the School of Restoration Arts. With Dr. Faisal Arain now in place as President (Interim), my focus will be on strategy, marketing, fundraising and general operations.

2022 - 2023 WILLOWBANK ANNUAL REPORT

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WILLOWBANK IN LATE SPRING PHOTO CREDIT - CHARLIE PORTER

WILLOWBANK PROGRESS

Partnerships allow Willowbank to be more impactful and provide greater opportunities to our students. In 2022 we were successful in receiving part-funding via the federal government's employment program for students - the Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations. The Summer of 2022 saw then second-year student, Charlie Porter, in receipt of this program, working in the Appel Barn workshop at Willowbank, repairing and retaining the estate's damaged windows and sashes, restoring as much of the original materials as possible. This partnership was mutually beneficial and the 'Hamilton House' is all the better for these significant restoration efforts.

We continue to walk the Two Row Wampum with the Indigenous Community who run the volunteer Love Garden at Willowbank and value this partnership greatly. Test pitting for a ten-foot tall teardrop shaped dry stone cairn took place in August, with Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) leading the archaeological dig. This drystone Cairn is dedicated to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This initiative is led by Marie Louise - Indigenous Community Knowledge Helper and Grandmother Marie Jones and Grandmother Jackie Labonte - Indigenous Knowledge Keeper community Elders of traditional medicines. The OHT report did not reveal any significant findings on the proposed location at Willowbank and as such, construction began in 2023. When the construction is completed by indigenous ally, volunteer and Willowbank faculty, Dean McLellan, it will serve as a reminder of the aboriginal landscape and raise awareness of the atrocities inflicted upon the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

September was a significant month, as we celebrated 15 years of the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts. A reception with the Board, staff and students was held, celebrating the provision of excellence in education to those studying heritage restoration. Renowned artist Mariyln Cochrane developed a painting of the Mansion, highlighting its two hundred year history and this artwork was then presented to Board Member Victoria Broer who represents the Bright-Urban family, and whose family facilitated the original purchase of the Estate and continue to provide significant operational support. A print was also presented to Dr. Elizabeth Oliver-Malone who is a longstanding volunteer, advocate and major donor. We look forward to celebrating many more years of the School of Restoration Art at Willowbank.

A number of weddings and smaller events were held over the Summer and Fall of 2022 with our local event partner 124 on Queen. These events take place outside of the School calendar and are a revenue generator, with funds raised via these events then invested into curriculum development, students and capital projects. We hope to host more events at the site so that we can raise more much needed funds, especially towards the expense associated with maintaining the building.

We participated in the Ontario wide initiative, Doors Open in October, sharing our cultural site with the general public. Later that month we held the Alumni Homecoming reunion which also celebrated 15 years of the School and brought together keynote speakers, an alumni panel discussion, campus tours and an afternoon mixer. Engaging alumni is an area that needs to be developed further and is a focus for the future - and key to Willowbank's sustainability.

November saw us launch our first fundraising event in many years, in the form of 'Reimagining Willowbank' working with the Willowbank Friends and Fundraising committee, led by board member Ginny Green. The concert featured classical music from the eras during which the estate was inhabited by the Hamiltons and the Brights in the 1840s and 1930s. Special thanks goes to Bright descendent and Board member, Emily Bright, who shared an amusing and touching account of her childhood memories spent at Willowbank. We intend on hosting more fundraising events at Willowbank as a way to connect with the community, raise awareness of Willowbank and to fundraise.

In May we were delighted to welcome Andrew Humeniuk to the Willowbank Board of Directors. Andrew brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as co-founder and Executive Director of The Brown Homestead in St. Catharines, Ontario. The Brown Homestead is a model of how historic sites can become creative educational leaders and community catalysts and there is much that Willowbank can learn from this model, and Andrew's vision.



SCHOOL OF RESTORATION ARTS

The 2022-2023 school year saw a return to pre-pandemic teaching operations, with students learning in-person at Willowbank, and off-site when the course required as such. We welcomed everyone back on campus in September and six new students into the class of 2025, all of whom have shown great passion and a zest for heritage, conservation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

September through to early April saw first and second year students on campus, experiencing and immersing themselves in the vast range of subjects that inform Willowbank's Heritage Conservation diploma. The first year curriculum focuses more on craft skills, such as plaster, stone carving, blacksmithing, and dry stone walling. In the second year, the balance shifts its focus towards theory, such as conservation management plans, cultural landscapes, and heritage planning, with hands-on courses sprinkled throughout.

Students were able to apply some of their acquired skills to enhancing the Estate - all part of the 'Living Lab' philosophy at Willowbank. For example, under the guidance of their carpentry instructor, the second years laid most of the floorboards on the third floor meanwhile the first years completed the finishing touches, including laying the final boards, hand planing out any machine marks and hand mixing the colour applied to the floorboards which was based upon samples found underneath the baseboards. It is wonderful to see students applying their learnings to restoring Willowbank, and a testament to the unique skills they develop in their diploma.

The second year students in receipt of student bursaries successfully completed their respective responsibilities, ranging from Barn fellow to Archivist, Library keeper, Social media fellow to Student events coordinator. Two students were in receipt of the Susan Buggey fellowship and Per Neumeyer bursary. We are thankful to all the donors who make these opportunities a reality. The generosity of our community members not only helps provide students with a great education but also assists in producing passionate heritage professionals who champion the role of cultural heritage preservation in our communities here and beyond.



CLASS OF '25 REMOVING THE TRIM SO THAT THE DOORWAY COULD BE FRAMED IN FOR THE FUTURE THIRD FLOOR BATHROOM

SPOTLIGHT ON CLASS OF 2023

The third and final year of the diploma consists of a small number of classes on-site, but the main focus is the third-year placement. The class of 2023 completed their thirdyear placements and graduated on April 6 in front of their peers, faculty and the wider heritage community. This class excelled in their placements and upon graduating, all six were employed - five of whom are employed in the heritage field. Below details a little background on the students' career paths at the time of their graduation.

Sean Blank's placement was with ERA Architects in Toronto, and he was hired permanently in January. Sean works primarily as a Heritage Planner, specializing in the firm's portfolio of single-family residential projects. Additionally, he is the research lead for a forthcoming book about the work of prominent Canadian architect Frank Darling.

Rémy Bles spent her third year with Heritage Architect John Rutledge out of Blyth, Ontario. Here she assisted with projects such as the Fugitive Slave Chapel in London, Ontario, the Greenwood Chapel in Owen Sound, and the Canatara Cabin for the Lambton County Museum. Rémy is currently working as a project manager/space planner at the London Hospital.

Mackenzie Campbell is working as a Project Manager at The Brown Homestead, focusing on researching and analyzing the historic interior finishes of the home. She has been heavily involved in the design, planning and execution phases of the restoration and plans on continuing her education in architectural preservation while working at The Brown Homestead.

Beginning his placement in Spring 2022, Joshua Chan has been working as a Conservation Intern at the Toronto office of EVOQ Architecture. Since Fall 2022, Joshua has moved into a more focused Heritage Planner role. His focus has been directed on research and assessment of public sector and institutional projects involving sites of significance.

Dawn Chan's third year work placement was with the City of Ottawa's Heritage Planning team completing research and planning tasks, including the designation of a modernist home, issuance of heritage permits, helping staff update the City's Heritage Conservation District Guidelines, and advising on the heritage grants program. Dawn now works as an apprentice mason at the Centre Block Project in Ottawa.

Since September 2022 Johanna Keus has been working as a Heritage Intern with the heritage planning team at the Town of Grimsby and is now a full-time employee. As of March Johanna had researched and written 18 designation reports and she recently presented two designation reports to the Grimsby Heritage Advisory Committee.

Looking to the year ahead I hope to build on the foundations being laid - to build the school and its sustainability, and be a part of a thriving organisation serving our students, the heritage community and to respectfully steward this wonderful piece of Canadian history.

Katie Houghton Director of Marketing and Business Affairs



THE BOARD AND THEN NOTL MAYOR RECEIVE MARILYN COCHRANE'S ARTWORK OF WILLOWBANK PHOTO CREDIT - MACKENZIE CAMPBELL



MARILYN COCHRANE - ARTIST



"In best practice, the beauty of the restorative arts is that they work against the influence of cultural apathy towards quality in construction. One way this happens at a grassroots level, is through the stewardship and transfer of timetested, quality craft knowledge. I believe this transfer of knowledge should also be seen as a sharing of responsibility. To that end, I cannot understate the value of providing a space where students can study the built heritage of our past to better understand the responsibilities of the future."

STUDENT USING POWER TOOL AND DRILL IN CARPENTRY CLASS PHOTO CREDIT - CHARLIE PORTER



NATHAN SCHAFER - WILLOWBANK FACULTY



THE FUTURE OF WILLOWBANK IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH DONATIONS

Each and every investment in, or donation towards Willowbank facilitates the operation of the School and the 13 acre estate. Tuition covers just over a third of the annual cost of providing each student with the best education in Heritage Conservation. As Willowbank is not eligible for provincial funding, we must make up the difference through the generosity of our community. Ddonations help provide students with the best Heritage Conservation education in Canada and produces passionate heritage professionals who champion the role of cultural heritage preservation in answering the challenging questions our communities are facing today. Below details the most significant donations received by Willowbank from July 2022 - June 2023.

The sale of the former Laura Secord School in Queenston, enabled the Willowbank Board of Directors to fully discharge a \$650,000 privately held pooled mortgage secured against the Estate property. Subsequently, two of the holders of portions of the pooled mortgage - Ms. Taylor and the WeatherTop Foundation - both donated their \$50,000 principle to Willowbank unrestricted funds. In addition, Dr. Elizabeth Oliver- Malone also donated half of her portion (\$25,000 plus the interest) as a restricted fund towards the construction of a washroom on the third floor. All participants in the pooled mortgage declined acceptance of their final quarterly interest payment (an aggregate of \$6,500) further supporting the general fund. The Willowbank Board of Directors was overwhelmed by the generosity of these people. These contributions made a significant difference as Willowbank embarked on its long term sustainability initiative.

Colliers generously donated \$10,000 from the sale of the Laura Secord Memorial School which they brokered in July 2022, and this money has been used towards buying new tools for students to use in the Appel Barn.

In early December 2022 we were honored to be in receipt of a very generous bursary donation from Ecclesiastical Insurance - a specialist insurer to the arts, culture and heritage community. They will be donating \$30,000 towards second year student bursaries over three years, from 2023 - 2025. To kick off this sponsorship, members of the Ecclesiastical team visited Willowbank for a tour of the facility, meeting some students and making a cheque presentation.

Avid heritage supporters The Weathertop Foundation continue their support towards operations, and The Dalglish Family Foundation continue to provide their Foundation Scholarship which provides up to 50% of a student's first year tuition. With the pandemic receding we were able to take advantage of the generosity of the Humeniuk Foundation and facilitate the attendance of four students at European summer schools.

Thank you to all our supporters for their generosity which makes Willowbank possible.

YOUR SUPPORT COUNTS

If you would like to support Willowbank and its mission, consider donating to Canada Helps (www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/Willowbank/) or directly to Willowbank via cheque or etransfer at willowbank@willowbank.ca. Willowbank is a registered charity so you will receive a tax receipt.

We also want to extend our gratitude to the dedicated service of Rolf Schmitt who served as Willowbank site custodian. Rolf was extremely proud of his responsibilities at Willowbank and showed great dedication to the site. He sadly passed away in the Summer of 2023 and he shall be sorely missed by those who crossed his path at Willowbank.

"Willowbank is the place you go for something different. It does not teach you how to become an architect or master carpenter, but instead enlightens you about all that exists between. Willowbank students are creative, innovative, and most importantly teachable. Trades workers were once the leaders of the building industry and are responsible for the places that we look up to, aspire to restore, and wish to visit so badly. Willowbank emphasizes the benefits of promoting equity and respect across different specialties. I try to seize every day at this amazing school, knowing I will look back on this experience, wishing it hadn't ended. I speak from experience when I say that Willowbank will inspire you to believe in yourself and forge your path ahead."

JULIA HODGSON - WILLOWBANK STUDENT, CLASS OF '25



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023 the following donations and investments were received.

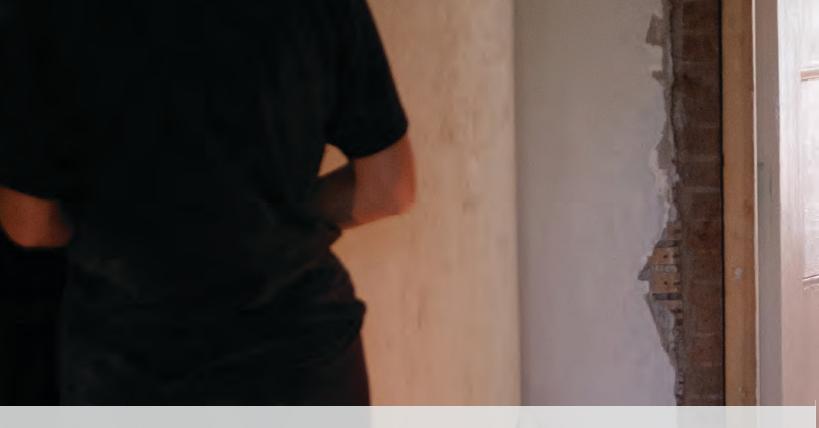
\$25,000 +	Mr. & Mrs. Peter and Camilla Dalglish The Humeniuk Foundation Dr. Elizabeth Oliver-Malone Ms. Corlene Taylor The WeatherTop Foundation	\$1,000 +	Clinto Mr. M Patric Perry Marga Marga
\$10,000 +	Colliers Ecclesiastical Insurance	Up to \$500	Robe Mrs V Elaine Ted P
\$5,000 +	Paul and Ginny Green Mrs Wendy Luce Bryan Davies and Andra Takacs		Sarah Terry Lori S

\$2,000 +

Marilyn Cochrane Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy Andrew Stewart nton Brown and Alma O'Connell Brown : Marc Denhez trick Devine erry Hartwick argaret Huber

argie Zeidler

bert Allsopp rs Vikki Broer aine Eigl d Piggott and Barb Hunsberger Foundation rah Lynch rry Mactaggart ri Scheffel



"Our school carried on during COVID thanks to our "trades" (masked) and lectures on Zoom. Many thanks to passionate input from alumni, students, faculty and our Board of Directors. Willowbank will continue to teach Heritage Conservation (theories and practical work) for adaptive reuse of our buildings in a culturally appropriate, environmentally saving way. We rise again."

DR. ELIZABETH OLIVER-MALONE - WILLOWBANK BOARD MEMBER

STUDENT APPLYING HEMP OIL PAINT, N Y HAND IN AN 1860S **PHOTO CREDIT - CHARLIE PORTER**

WILLOWBANK LEADERSHIP

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

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

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

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

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Katie Houghton BA Director of Marketing and Business Affairs

Christine Kennedy-Crabbe Bookkeeper

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"The Bright/Urban family has supported Willowbank for more than two decades. Congratulations to all of the stakeholders for undertaking the challenge of keeping Willowbank relevant for the next decade."

VICTORIA BRIGHT URBAN BROER - THE WEATHERTOP FOUNDATION

Without graduates from Willowbank, the cultural heritage sector in Canada would be lacking in so many ways. From those of us in government, or as consultants or contractors, we all heavily rely on these bright new talented and passionate people, now and for the future."

PHILLIP HOAD - WILLOWBANK FACULTY

RADITIONAL LIME BURN USING DECEW LIMESTONE FROM THE QUEENSTON QUARRY PHOTO CREDIT - CHARLIE PORTER



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