

Greetings from Muskoka Chautauqua



If there was ever a year to demonstrate nimbleness, 2020 was that year. COVID-19 hit in March and left everyone reeling. As the winter turned to spring, many around us adjusted to a 'new normal', but this adjustment proved significantly harder for both our organization and for our many treasured artist partners. As we came to terms with what the summer of 2020 would allow, we decided to pivot. Muskoka Chautauqua has always been committed to supporting arts and culture in Muskoka and the pandemic created a scenario where the primary means of dissemination for all arts and culture programming was digital. We engaged a local production team and moved forward in the pursuit of helping our artist partners reach an audience through the creation of strong digital video and still photography assets. Concurrently we were able to create a gorgeous promotional video for our own organization that accurately represented the breadth of programming we hope to offer as we grow, and the true delight that comes in experiencing this programming in a stunning outdoor setting on the shores of Lake Rosseau.

We were also able to use the slower summer season to take stock of our future ambitions, securing some foundational assets such as a pop-up gallery space in Windermere, and a mobile trailer and stage, that will help to ensure our Festival has a home for years to come. We're proud of how our entire community of partners and supporters rallied together to make the best of a challenging situation, and we look forward to seeing the flowers that have grown from the seeds we planted in 2020, as our plans for 2021 have blossomed into a magical ten-day festival with sensational programming highlights.



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Chair's Message

It is an honour to be involved with an organization that supports and encourages artists from every discipline to express and display their talents in this lovely part of the world called Muskoka. Our unique heritage and geography, which includes the Pre-Cambrian Shield, the oldest rock in the world, provides a rich environment for artists to flourish and be inspired by the surroundings. Being part of the planning and the coordination of programs that inspire all ages to pursue creativity is humbling. I look forward to meeting you throughout the coming months as you attend one of our many events.

- Glad Bryce

About Muskoka Chautauqua



Muskoka Chautauqua is a not-for-profit organization fostering arts and culture, culminating in a summer festival in the historic village of Windermere.

Muskoka Chautauqua is community for the curious and the creative. Springing from a tradition that started 100 years ago, when the village of Windermere attracted North America's leading thinkers to its shores, Muskoka Chautauqua is one of the longest-running and more iconic cultural institutions in the region.

With more than 15 Chautauqua communities across North America, Muskoka Chautauqua is the only remaining Canadian chapter. After going dormant after the Great Depression, Gary Froude and Gayle Dempsey revived the concept in the late 1990's and officially relaunched Muskoka Chautauqua in 2004.

Muskoka Chautauqua continues to grow and evolve, with a goal of providing a breadth of diverse arts and culture programming to the residents and visitors of the Muskoka Lakes region.

Vision

To be internationally recognized as a leader in the provision of creating arts-based programming for entertainment and lifelong learning that enhances and enriches our communities.

Mission

To coordinate and support innovative multi-disciplinary and arts-based programs and organizations to inspire lifelong learning, personal growth, enrichment and renewal by celebrating creativity, the human spirit and Muskoka's unique heritage and natural environment.

Returning Home to Windermere

In 1921, Chautauqua landed on the shores of Windermere for its inaugural summer season in Muskoka. Just shy of 100 years later, we've officially returned to Windermere Village where we've been able to establish a home base for our festival.

Nestled in and amongst the trees, across the street from our good friends and supporters at The New Baldwins Resort, we've been able to create a small pop-up 'little theater in the woods' and a gallery space for art showings. The space is enclosed by a gate, which is a defining feature of Chautauquas across North America and makes for a spectacular entrance.

The Village of Windermere has embraced our festival with open arms, and we have developed and grown relationships with many community partners such as the Windermere Women's Institute, the Windermere Lion's Club, and the Windermere History Project (including a Windermere Walking Tour). And we're excited to unveil the Village Map art collaboration this coming season, which includes contributions from across the community.



Navigating Covid-19

At its core, Muskoka Chautauqua is about fostering arts, culture and heritage in Muskoka. We do this by forming partnerships – and ultimately deep relationships – with a huge roster of artistic and cultural talent, both locally and from across Canada. When the pandemic hit in 2020, we were forced to re-evaluate our programming plans. We challenged ourselves to find the most effective ways to use our funding to best support our network, many of whom had lost their entire livelihood when live events and classes shut down.

2020 forced a pivot to digital that was not easy for everyone. Some quickly progressed online, but many of our artist partners lacked the resources to create the quality of digital content that was suddenly required to compete against every artist globally who was also being forced online.

As a strong video of our offerings had always been on our wish list, Muskoka Chautauqua decided to use our funding to support some of our key artist partners by helping to create high-quality digital assets (edited video and photos) that they could use to build an audience and showcase their talents at a time where in-person exposure was limited. At the same time, we were able to produce a video for our own organization, using this footage, that showcases the best of what we offer. A coming together of art, culture and heritage in the beautiful Muskoka outdoors.

We were also able to procure equipment (portable stage, chairs and a trailer/mobile venue) that will allow us to deliver our programming outdoors, as we continue to navigate Covid protocols for live events.

We hire local talent and businesses for everything – infusing as much back into the community that has always supported us.

The repercussions of the pandemic have lasted far longer than any of us expected, and we're heading into a second season of compromised programming, but once again we're excited to find innovative ways to support our local community, and our vast network of arts and culture talent, with a hybrid of in-person (outdoor, distanced) events and virtual programming that allow for the greatest reach possible.



Looking Back: A Virtual Festival



Looking Back: A Year of Learning

Our monthly 'Company of Good Cheer' Coffee Houses ended abruptly just before the March concert as we tried to understand the impact of the COVID pandemic. For more than a decade these 'house/gallery concerts', hosted with Beverlie and Charlie Roberston of Brandy Creek Music, have sustained the local community through the long Muskoka winters. This year's performers included: coffee house favourite Jon Brooks with multi-instrumentalist Vivienne Wilder; traditional duo Mac-Talla Road and singer-songwriter Sean Cotton.



The learning curve was steep. Our Canada Day Celebration event was our first attempt in pivoting to a virtual format. We staged a socially distanced video shoot to bring our programming to our audiences virtually. We presented local children's performers Jam Sandwich and Bazza's drum circle with a DIY backyard film setup. Jam Sandwich invited families to join them online with songs and games about what it meant to social distance and stay 'a paddle length' apart to help kids understand and adjust to some of the new COVID protocols.

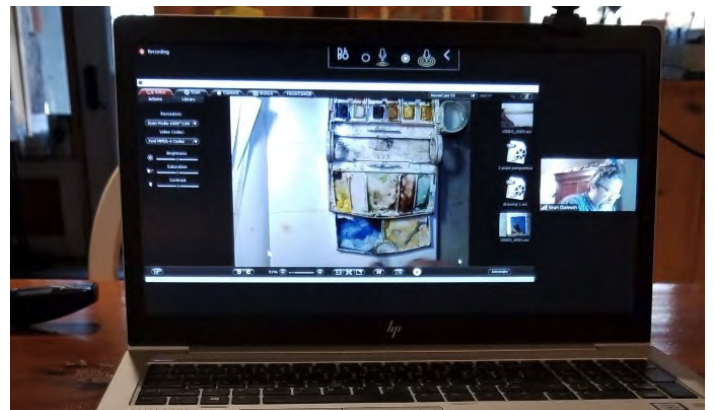


We wrapped up our summer programming with virtual performances by Toronto City Opera and Mississauga Symphony Orchestra. Toronto City Opera shared an encore virtual performance of Les Contes d'Hoffman featuring interviews and a behind the scenes tour. Mississauga Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Maestro Denis Mastromonaco, hosted a 30 minute concert filmed at the Mississauga Living Art Centre that featured their principal players who shared a selection of specially chosen works performed in small, socially-distanced ensembles.



As our season and fiscal year came to an end, we continued to find ways to ease the impact of the COVID pandemic in our community, particularly for seniors who were feeling isolated and alone. We were inspired to plan fall and winter virtual art workshops with the YWCA of Muskoka and artist Sean William Dawson.

From our earliest learnings about virtual programming and through opportunities with partners including YWCA and Culture Days, we are proud of our accomplishments in a most challenging year.



Thank You to Our Team

Board of Directors

Our board of directors plays a key role in shaping the direction and strategy of Muskoka Chautauqua. All directors are deeply committed to the value of arts, culture and heritage programming in Muskoka. We are grateful for their unwavering support and oversight.

Glad Bryce, Chair
Beverlie Robertson, Secretary
Laurie Campbell, Acting Treasurer
Diane Adamson-Brdar

Dr. Bernie Gosevitz
Jen Morgan Anderson
Susan Hindle
Sean William Dawson

Advisors

Marsha Skain
Leah Leslie

Founders/Administration

Gary Froude, Executive Director
Gayle Dempsey, Director of Development

Administration Support

Kelly Hart, Marketing and Communications
Emily Gribbin, Summer Student

Volunteers

Muskoka Chautauqua is proud to have many volunteers and we would like to express our deepest gratitude for their exceptional efforts. We would like to give special thanks to them.

Thank You to Our Supporters

In times like these, Muskoka Chautauqua is more thankful than ever for the generous support we receive. A very warm thank you to all of our artists, partners and donors.



TAYLOR FARMS



HELLYER FOUNDATION

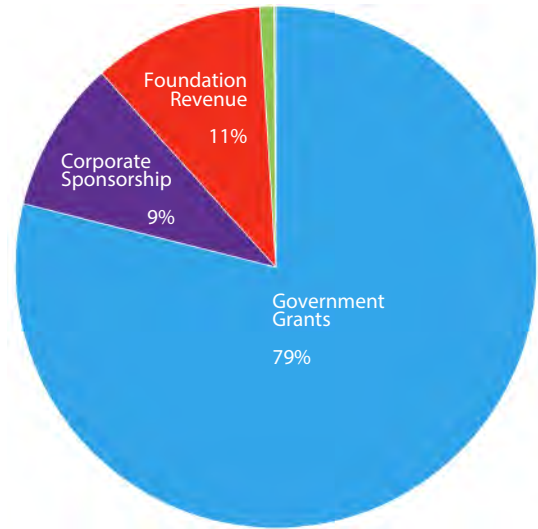
DON & KAREN LANG

JACKMAN FOUNDATION

2020 Financial Summary

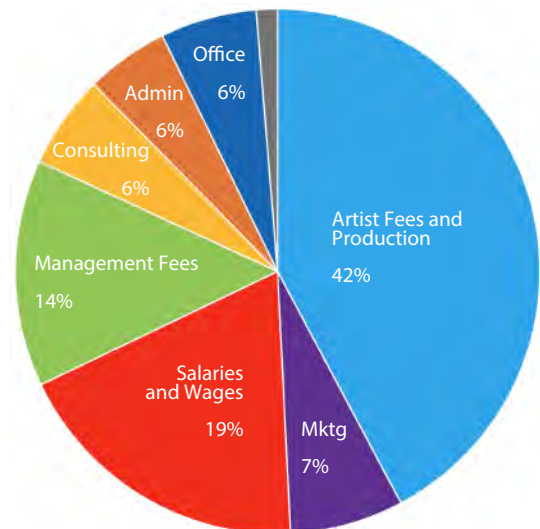
Revenues

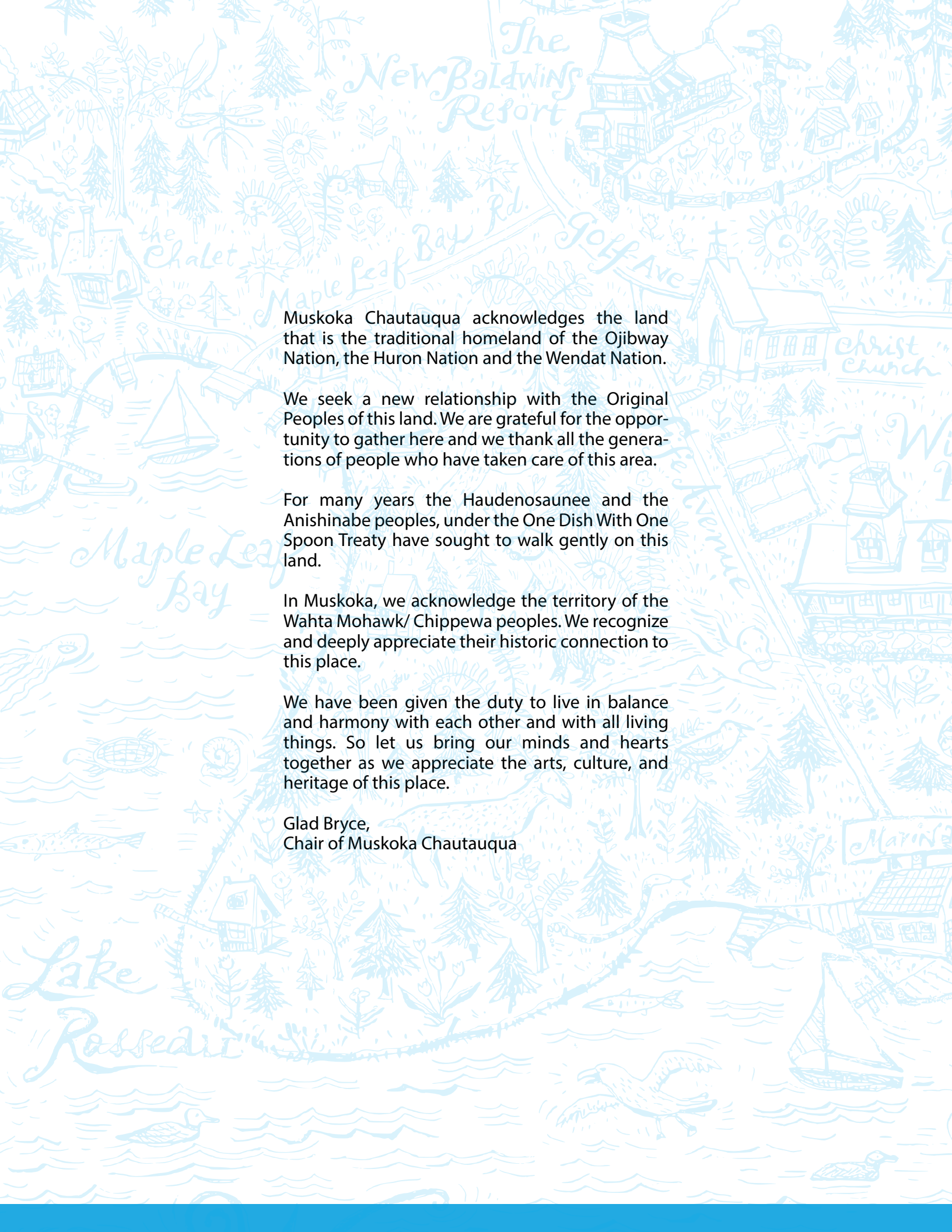
Government Grants	\$ 185,197
Corporate Sponsorship	\$ 22,115
Foundation Revenue	\$ 25,000
Donations	\$ 2,100
Ticket Sales	\$ 0
Investment Income	\$ 247
Total	\$ 234,659



Expenses

Artist Fees and Production	\$ 92,234
Marketing	\$ 15,645
Salaries and Wages	\$ 41,729
Management Fees	\$ 31,200
Consulting Fees	\$ 12,866
General Administration	\$ 11,439
Office	\$ 13,250
Amortization of Capital Assets	\$ 2,913
Total	\$ 223,276





Muskoka Chautauqua acknowledges the land that is the traditional homeland of the Ojibway Nation, the Huron Nation and the Wendat Nation.

We seek a new relationship with the Original Peoples of this land. We are grateful for the opportunity to gather here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this area.

For many years the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinabe peoples, under the One Dish With One Spoon Treaty have sought to walk gently on this land.

In Muskoka, we acknowledge the territory of the Wahta Mohawk/ Chippewa peoples. We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place.

We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and with all living things. So let us bring our minds and hearts together as we appreciate the arts, culture, and heritage of this place.

Glad Bryce,
Chair of Muskoka Chautauqua