



CRAIGDARROCH CASTLE®

CANADA'S CASTLE



2023

Annual Report



Mission

To preserve Craigdarroch Castle and bring its history to life.

Vision

Craigdarroch Castle is Canada's leading house museum, recognized internationally for excellence in conservation, education and visitor experience and is an integral part of Victoria's past present and future.



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Report from the President

SO MUCH OF THE WORLD NOW COMPARTMENTALIZES TIME INTO PRE- AND POST-PANDEMIC, YET IT'S STILL SOMETIMES HARD TO REALLY BELIEVE WE ARE PRETTY MUCH BACK TO A KIND OF PRE-PANDEMIC 'NORMAL.'

We're doing well at Craigdarroch Castle. Our visitor numbers keep increasing as tourism improves. Our staffing levels have increased, as have our volunteer numbers. Several of the initiatives we started and whose progress we nurtured before and during the pandemic have come to fruition.

The most notable (and this is a biggie, as it supported by ten-plus years of staff, board, and volunteer work) is our new old kitchen! In the fall of 2023, we launched our updated Craigdarroch kitchen and we were honoured by a supportive visit to the Castle for the unveiling by the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, Lana Popham. The kitchen's expanded setting and its interpretive tools – the (fooled-you!) plywood version of a 19th century cast-iron cooking range, the strange-yet-familiar kitchen utensils, the revelations of kitchen ritual and servants' roles, a recipe to take home – keep visitors mightily engaged and on-site ... and the kitchen is at the end of their Castle tour!

Our Christmas programming was back with the Castle magnificently decorated for a Victorian celebration and performances of *A Christmas Carol* by Jason Stevens.

We continued our support in developing a play about Marion Dunsmuir and the care she received from her Indigenous stepdaughter, Marie Houghton, in her final days at Craigdarroch. That should come to fruition in 2025. We also continued work on a new book by Jim Wolf about the construction of Craigdarroch Castle; that book is scheduled for publication later this year.

It is wonderful to see all that Craigdarroch has to offer becoming more and more apparent to the world and to witness its continued flowering within, and contributions to, the Victoria and Vancouver Island community.

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My thanks are immeasurable for the initiative, dedication, and hard work of the Castle's staff, led by Executive Director John Hughes. I would also like to thank Curator Bruce Davies, Assistant Curator Jenny Seaman, Operations and Development Manager André Garneau, Restoration and Maintenance Manager, Frank Tosczak, and Gift Shop Manager Catriona Wilson.

I'm also extremely grateful for the care and attention given to the progress of the Castle's affairs by my fellow board members. My friend Paula Carey's term on the board is winding up, and I will be sad to see her go. Her fresh ideas and insights have always been welcome. I know she remains a fan and a friend to Craigdarroch, and that's a big gift.

Volunteers, both experienced and new, continue to join us in sharing the Castle's story. It's always thrilling to see new people come aboard.

Finally, I thank Craigdarroch Castle and the Historical Museum Society formed to support its mission. The Castle inspires us to continue our work making the past accessible (and relevant) to people today, encouraging us to tell different stories as we move ahead in the 21st century.

It's invigorating to consider all that is possible and all that is propelling Craigdarroch Castle forward into an extended, flexible future of heritage stewardship and the sharing of historical narratives.

Thanks for your support.

Moira Dann
PRESIDENT



Report from the Executive Director

AS ALWAYS, IT IS AN HONOUR TO PRESENT MY REPORT AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SOCIETY. I CONTINUE TO BE THANKFUL FOR THE HARD WORK AND SUPPORT FROM THE INCREDIBLE STAFF TEAM AT CRAIGDARROCH CASTLE. PLEASE ALLOW ME TO SHARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023, A YEAR THAT SAW SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AND EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS AT THE CASTLE.

One of the biggest highlights of 2023 was the unveiling of the restored Dunsmuir Era Kitchen in October, many members of the Society attended the event that included remarks from Board President Moira Dann and the Hon. Lana Popham, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. In 2021, we received \$288,000 in heritage infrastructure funding through Heritage BC and the Province of British Columbia for the project. The restoration of the kitchen represents a significant milestone in Craigdarroch Castle's ongoing commitment to preserving our rich heritage. The Castle's original Kitchen and Pantry rooms were radically altered in 1919 with the opening of the Craigdarroch Military Hospital. Walls, windows, moulding and floors were removed along with mechanical elements such as the laundry chute and annunciator panel for the intercom (speaking tubes). The work to the Kitchen included; the restoration and replacement of shutters, new wainscoting and mouldings around windows and doors, repair and painting of plaster surfaces and the installation of flooring.

During 2023, staff members; Julia, Echo, And Nifemi worked to create a series of virtual tours designed for both use in the Castle and online via our website. These new digital offerings for museum guests also form a part of our accessibility initiative, allowing us to deliver a more accessible museum experience for visitors with disabilities. When choosing topics for these tours we focused on areas of the Castle story that guests often ask for more information on. There are 10 tours total with topics ranging from the layout of the original 28-acre estate to the artwork within the Castle, the Architecture of the building and the stories of the women that have made the Castle their home. We have also created several tours aimed at children, including an interactive I-Spy tour and a seasonal Christmas tour. We are working with Forager Media and Forager Education to develop and deliver this tour content. The Castle Society digital tour project is supported by a \$72,330 grant from Pacific Economic Development.

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Our staff worked hard in 2023 to create more engagement through the use of social media, one of the popular social media segments this year was: the #ArchitectureAlphabet. Every 2 weeks, a unique architectural feature was discussed alphabetically. As someone who frequently interacts with guests in the Castle, I have noticed that there is an increasing group of visitors that are interested in the architectural story of the Castle. The segment aims to address and connect with those that have this interest.

Our staff numbers have continued to grow, I was pleased to welcome André Garneau as Operations and Development Manager, and Jenny Seeman, as Assistant Curator in 2023. Our goal has been, and continues to be, to be an employer that provides a positive, inclusive, and enjoyable work environment. As such we initiated the 4 day-36 hour compressed work week in the Collective Agreement negotiated this past August. We have also been developing more career paths so our employees have increased opportunities to grow within the organisation. We have amazing people on staff, and it is important that the Society do all we can to attract and retain them.

Our theatre productions and special events continued to be popular in 2023, in March and April, Jason Stevens brought *Treasure Island* to life with his classic one-man production. In the fall, Jason returned with his one-man version of *Frankenstein* and The Paper Street Theatre Co. returned in November for a sold-out run of *Murders on Paper Street: An Improvised Mystery in a Real Life Castle*. Back for a 10th year, Jason's perennial favourite, *A Christmas Carol* was popular throughout December, with most performances sold-out.

Celtic band *Cookeilidh* entertained us on Member's Night and performed again for on New Year's Eve Day for a Castle full of tour participants.

I am pleased that we are now open for tours, five days a week, from Wednesday through Sunday.

I want to thank the Board of the Society for their on-going support to the entire staff team at the Castle, their financial oversight and their dedication to their work on our behalf.

Finally, my thanks to our members, volunteers, donors and the community who have supported and encouraged us.

John Hughes
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Report from the Treasurer

THE SOCIETY EXPERIENCED VERY POSITIVE FINANCIAL RESULTS IN 2023 WITH VIRTUALLY ALL OPERATING FINANCIAL MEASURES BEING WELL AHEAD OF AMOUNTS RECORDED IN THE PRIOR YEAR. IN PARTICULAR, ADMISSIONS REVENUE EXCEEDED THE 2022 AMOUNT BY GREATER THAN 40%.

The resulting increase in positive net revenues for the Society reflects the ongoing increase of tourist activity in BC and on Vancouver Island in particular. The results are also testament to the very hard work of the management and staff of the Castle who have diligently controlled costs and provide an exceptional experience for visitors to our very special historic site.

The positive financial results of the Society provide it with funds to cover the significant maintenance costs and renovation projects that accompany the ownership of a very large building that is over 130 years old, as well as the other adjacent properties owned and operated by the Society. Thank you very much to the members of the Society for their ongoing support, we look forward to welcoming each of you on your next visit to the Castle.

Full 2023 financial statements are available at:
thecastle.ca/pages/become-a-member

Kevan King
TREASURER



Acquisitions

THE SOCIETY'S MUSEUM COLLECTION IS USED TO PRESENT STORIES OF THE DUNSMUIR FAMILY AND THE INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE OCCUPIED CRAIGDARROCH.

COVID 19 and its risk to the Society's financial position was still on our mind in 2023. Buying artifacts for the collection in 2023 was undertaken very judiciously. There were some notable donations from a descendant of Robert and Joan Olive Dunsmuir.

Further work on expanding the physical descriptions and stories associated with objects in the collection has had positive results. There are now over 1,480 object records on The Castle Society's publicly accessible artifact database: <https://collection.thecastle.ca/>

Here are some of the highlights of 2023 acquisitions:



2023.1 | Oak Hallstand

is a circa 1890 oak hallstand manufactured in North America, and possibly even in Victoria, B.C., by Weiler Bros. or Jacob Sehl. I first saw it in about 1982 at the residence of the late Carl Rudolph. He was a shipwright and early supporter of The Castle Society, sometimes hosting the Society's annual general meetings in his spectacular 1885 mansion at 1501 Fort Street (now known as Amethyst Inn Bed & Breakfast). During the 1960s and early 1970s, Carl filled his house with furniture and building fragments from Victoria's greatest mansions. He attended numerous auctions and demo sales, including those held at the Dunsmuir houses Ashnola and Mt. Adelaide.

This hallstand was purchased for Craigdarroch's back hall, where its sloping back echoes the staircase behind it. Dunsmuir family members routinely used the kitchen entrance – especially if out riding horses. The Dunsmuir horses could be tied to one of the bollards installed near the kitchen door. A hallstand like this one, with a seat and stationed in the back hall, would be useful for removing or putting on boots, and hanging coats, and for temporarily storing riding crops and headgear.



2023.2 | Ceiling Light Fixture

A circa 1885 brass and cut-glass ceiling lantern purchased for the Castle's Garden Entrance. It compliments the pair of important Hatley Park ceiling lanterns nearby in the main hall, and the repeating shell-motif fringing decoration at its top is echoed in the tops of the oak niches at the four corners of the garden entrance.



2023.3 | Photographs

This accession is twenty three items, including photographs, letters, legal documents and a book donated by a great great grandson of Robert and Joan Olive Dunsmuir. They all relate to the Dunsmuir's second daughter, Agnes Crooks Harvey, and in particular, her daughter, Margaret Joan Harvey.

Margaret Harvey's sister Elizabeth married from Craigdarroch in 1903 and was photographed outside the garden entrance. A 1903 print of that photograph is part of this donation.

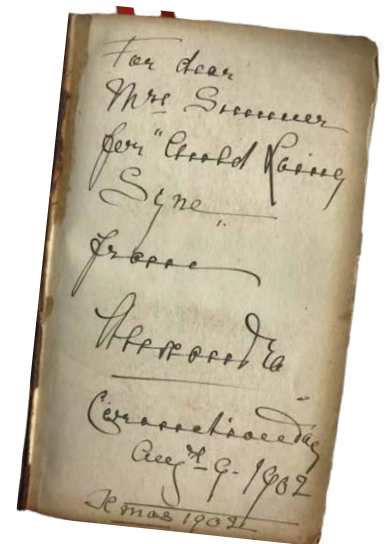
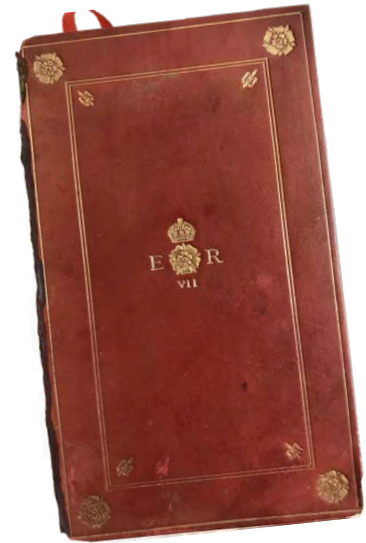
2023.003.007 | Photograph of the wedding party of Elizabeth Georgina Harvey and George Alan Kirk

Margaret Harvey married Royal Navy Lieutenant Berkeley Holme-Sumner in Victoria in 1896, and moved to England. They spent the rest of their lives there.



2023.003.005 | Photograph of Berkeley Holme-Sumner, RN and Margaret Joan Harvey, granddaughter of Robert and Joan Olive Dunsmuir

Margaret's husband and his parents were long-term friends with TRH The Prince and Princess of Wales. They consequently attended their Coronation as King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in 1902. Part of this donation includes one hard-bound Book of Common Prayer, Ancient and Modern, bound in red Morocco leather and bearing the incised and gilded Royal Cypher on the cover. It was given to Margaret by HM Queen Alexandra and inscribed: *For dear Mrs. Holme-Sumner for "Auld Lang Syne" from Alexandra Coronation Day August 9, 1902 Xmas 1902.*



2023.3.19B | Book of Common Prayer, Ancient and Modern

This was a gift to Robert and Joan Dunsmuir's granddaughter Margaret Harvey from HM Queen Alexandra.



2023.3.6 | Photograph of Henrietta "Maud" Dunsmuir

Maud Dunsmuir was the youngest daughter of Robert and Joan Olive Dunsmuir. This is the only known print of this photograph. Margaret Harvey was Maud's niece, and they kept in touch with each other all of their lives. Maud Dunsmuir lived in Craighdarroch from 1890 until 1898.



2023.3.12 | Photograph of Georgiana Holme-Sumner

This is a photograph of Georgiana Holme-Sumner, a daughter of Berkeley Holme-Sumner and Margaret Joan Harvey, and a great granddaughter of Robert and Joan Olive Dunsmuir. It was taken in a prestigious New York City studio when she was 15 years old. Georgiana's sister Marjorie Holme-Sumner, also a Dunsmuir descendant, was performing on Broadway at the time.



2023.6 | Picnic Basket (circa 1903)

This is a wicker and wood refrigerator picnic basket donated by the spouse of a Dunsmuir descendant. It was made by the Burlington Basket Co. of Burlington, Iowa in about 1903. The 28-acre grounds of Craigdarroch had many pleasant, secluded areas in which to enjoy a picnic prepared in the Castle's kitchen. A basket like this one would have been perfect for such a picnic. It is now on display in the Castle's kitchen.

Our Team

THIS PAST YEAR SAW AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VISITORS TO VICTORIA AND THE CASTLE. WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE INCREASED REVENUE TO CONTINUE ADDING STAFF MEMBERS TO OUR VISITOR SERVICE TEAM.

We hired two seasonal employees for 6-month contracts to assist with the increased visitor loads between May and the end of September and, in the fall, we added two more museum floor supervisors. It is likely that we will hire one more person to fill the vacant maintenance technician position in early 2024 which will bring us up to a full staffing compliment that can carry us into 2024 and beyond.

Our volunteers are very important to the operation of the museum, and we are actively recruiting new people to support those who have already returned as docents.

STAFF

Barb Bergstrom / Autumn Brown / Bruce Davies / Naomi Duska / Beverly Fraser / André Garneau
John Hughes / Jasmine Li / Heather Macnab / Jennifer Seeman / Echo Smith / Julia Theim
Frank Toszczak / Catriona Wilson / Mohsen Zare

BOARD MEMBERS

Paula Carey / Moira Dann / Patricia Foster / Colleen Hoggarth / Kevan King / Stephen Lyons
Julie Murtha / Nancy Reason / Kelly Somogyi



Premium Members

TOWER MEMBERS

Barbara Armstrong / Michael Audain / Randy & Katherine Bosen / Paula Carey
Helen Edwards / Barry Gough

BULDER CIRCLE MEMBERS

Jack Bryden & Britta Gundersen-Bryden / Charles Christie / Kim & Dave Cook
Kathy Harris / Sandra Hudson / Margie Mayfield / Larry Scott

FRIENDS OF THE CASTLE

Godfrey Archbold / Joan Cousins / Peter & Beryl Cox / C.R. Gagnon / Kate Humble
Mary Kennedy / Jean Kucy / Margaret Klatt / David & Robyn Larsen Sr. / Miriam Nelson
Patricia Pitts / Stephen Richardson / Leonard & Dianne Roy / Paul & Jennifer Thorkelsson

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Alix P.B. Campbell / Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia / Mayor City of Victoria

Thanks to Pacific Economic Development for their contribution to the Digital Tour Project.

Thanks to the Province of British Columbia for their support through the BC Major Anchor Attractions Grant for operating funding and the Unique Heritage Infrastructure Grant.

Thanks to The City of Victoria for their permissive property tax exemption.

Long-term Members

20+ YEARS

Maureen Applewhaite / Godfrey Archbold / Michael Audain / Mauro Azzara / Colin & Jennifer Barr
Randy & Katherine Bosen / Marilyn Boyce & Mark Pawluk / Marilyn D. & Peter Brown / Barbara Bryan
Alix P.B. Campbell / J. Elaine Carson / Charles Christie / Kim & Dave Cook / Bernie & Jeanne Côté
Joan Cousins / Peter & Beryl Cox / Jan & Janice Drent / Peg Edgar & Tammy Edgar / F. Elizabeth Edmunds
Helen Edwards / Wenche Eilertsen / Barbara Fields / Peggy Foott / C.R. Gagnon / Katherine Glew
Gwendoline Gold / Laura Griffin / Janette Hennigar / Valerie Holden / Andrew and Patricia Laks
David & Robyn Larsen Sr. / Margie Mayfield / Diane McArthur / Beatrice Miller / Miriam Nelson
Patricia Pitts / Monica Reekie / Patrick Ringwood / Leonard & Dianne Roy / Beverly Tandberg
Irene Tosczak / John Veillette / Ann Wright

15+ YEARS

Mary Kennedy / Jean Kucy / Jeff McIndoe / Carol Munro / James Ormrod / Pauline Scherr
Jarrett Teague / Betty Washbrook / Lyla Wilkins

10+ YEARS

Jack Bryden & Britta Gundersen-Bryden / Paula Carey / Moira Dann / Gail Dawson / Barry Gough
Clarence Hack / Kathy Harris / Beverley Kallstrom / Margaret Klatt / Nancy Murray / Stephen Richardson
Keith Rodrigue & Amy Hart / Judy Thompson / Heide Toner & John Cshany / Ann Wenman
Van Williams / Brian Wright

5+ YEARS

Joseph Anthony / Barbara Armstrong / Valerie Couture / James & Carmen Dykes / Susan Gurney
Sandra Hudson / Kate Humble / Ron Kerr / Louise Langman / Elizabeth Liddell / Don & Charmaine Lovell
Rick McArthur / John & Crea Milroy / Sean Murray / Susan Poole / Barbara Roberts & Mr. Fred Huntsman
Larry Scott / Angel Star / Paul & Jennifer Thorkelsson / James Tirrul-Jones / John Wenman
Rosina Whittaker / Deborah Williams



CRAIGDARROCH CASTLE®

CANADA'S CASTLE

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