

January 19, 2024

**CHAIR’S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023**

The Rockcliffe Park Foundation (the Foundation) is a registered charity that raises and manages funds for our community. It is a grant-making foundation that is distinct from, but collaborates closely with, the Rockcliffe Park Residents Association (RPRA). This report outlines the projects funded in 2023, the Foundation’s board activities and its efforts to grow the fund.

**2023 Disbursements**

The RPRA annually submits grant requests to the Foundation, covering our community’s ongoing and yearly programs and events, for the upcoming year. In 2023, the Foundation granted $34,077 to the RPRA via the City of Ottawa, supplanted by $9,823 from the previous year’s grant, totaling $43,900 for 2024 programming. These programs and events are organized by our three shared mandate areas: environment, heritage and community. The 2024 breakdown by mandate area is as follows:

Environment
The Foundation fully supported the RPRA’s 2024 Environment projects and events. These are largely ongoing programs managed by the RPRA along with the biennial tree pruning in Jubilee Garden. The RPRA 2024 Environment budget also included the return of the Garden Tour. The 2024 Environment projects and expenses are projected by the RPRA to total $7,500. There was a rollover of $1,929 from the 2023 programs. As such, an additional $5,571 was sought by the RPRA for this funding area, and that amount was included in the grant made.

Heritage
The Foundation supported ongoing Heritage projects for 2024 and earmarked funds for a special heritage event for 2024 with details forthcoming later in the year. With $5,330 in rollover funds, an extra $2,670 was allocated for heritage initiatives.

Community
The Foundation fully supported the RPRA’s proposed 2024 community events covering annual programs such as the Speakers Program, the Children’s Holiday Party, the Christmas Tree Lighting, the Rockcliffe newsletter, the RPRA website, A-frame signs, soccer field maintenance, and the Heritage East ski trail sponsorship. With $2,564 rollover funds, an additional $25,836 was granted for community initiatives.

**2023 Development**

In 2023, to ensure the ongoing health of the Foundation’s investment fund, the Foundation held its 13th annual appeal. For the third consecutive year, we collaborated with the RPRA on the appeal and RPRA membership, to clarify the roles of both entities and advocating for both the appeal and RPRA membership. Thanks to the community’s generosity, the appeal raised $26,691 for Rockcliffe’s investment fund with contributions from over 130 households, including more than two dozen first-time donors.

Additionally, after a four-year hiatus, the Foundation’s signature event and fundraiser, *Dining with the Ambassadors,* returned in 2023. With the help of our Rockcliffe diplomatic hosts and event partners, *Dining with the Ambassadors* raised $35,483.46 for the fund. The biennial event will return in the spring of 2025.

**Financial Management**

The Foundation’s investment account continued to be managed by Bernard St. Lewis of Scotia Wealth Management in Ottawa. In 2023, we welcomed Sarah Waters to the executive team, as Foundation Treasurer. Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP was re-appointed as public accountant. As of December 31, 2023, the Foundation’s portfolio stood at approximately $997,952.

**Supporting Committee Work**

Communications
Aligned with our strategic priorities, the Foundation’s board dedicated efforts to enhancing communications, particularly, regarding the roles of the Foundation and the RPRA in our community. This has included work with the RPRA board and its committees on various initiatives including the Rockcliffe News newsletters, a joint explanation on the Appeal and the Membership Drive, and the “Rockcliffe A to Z” booklet.

Dining with the Ambassadors (DWA)
In 2023, *Dining with the Ambassadors* made a triumphant return. The sold-out event, a beloved tradition for over two decades, stands as the largest gathering of neighbours in our village. The pre-dinner reception, dedicated to honouring the heads of mission who host the dinners, took place under a tent at the Community Hall. Dinners followed at 12 official residences throughout the village. Thanks to the generosity of our hosts and event partners, we raised over $35K.

The DWA organizing committee and event benefitted greatly from the addition of new members in 2023 and I was joined by Fiona Murray as co-chair for event. A heartfelt thank you goes out to my fellow members of the DWA2023 Organizing Committee: Marilyn and Robert Collette, Joseph Cull, Cynthia Cusinato, Jill Dickinson, Marianne Feaver, Kristen Healy, Fiona Murray, Jane Newcombe, Sarah Waters, Marilyn Wilson.

The Centennial Garden
This once magnificent commemorative garden at the heart of Rockcliffe Park has sadly fallen into disrepair over the past decades. Designed by Canada’s esteemed landscape architect and Rockcliffe resident, Humphrey Carver, the garden was meant to celebrate Canada’s centennial. The initial rehabilitation planning received significant support from expert landscape architects, Linda Dicaire and Gerald Lajeunesse.

In 2023, the Centennial Garden Rehabilitation project gained preliminary approval by both the Foundation and the RPRA boards. Spearheaded by Jane Panet and Marilyn Collette, a grant application for 50% of the estimated costs was submitted to the City’s Community Partnership Major Capital Program. Subsequently, in October 2023, Ottawa City Council approved in principle a $150,000 contribution. Grant application work continues to reach the 50% goal. For the latest updates, please visit the Foundation website where we anticipate sharing progress. Special acknowledgement goes to Jane Panet and Marilyn Collette for their dedicated efforts on this endeavour.

A Note of Thanks
Although the RPRA and the Foundation operate as separate entities, our volunteer efforts intertwine seamlessly throughout the year on various Village projects and events. We are fortunate to have an exceptional group of neighbours, including former board members, whose commitment and willingness to dedicate their time and effort to our neighbourhood and its programs, makes a tremendous difference in our community. A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers for their invaluable contributions in sharing their knowledge, fostering connections and preserving the essence of our neighbourhood.

Special recognition is extended to the 2023 RPRA board of directors and the Foundation board members who transitioned to new projects during 2023 – Fiona Murray and Dennis Waite. Additionally, gratitude goes out to my fellow 2023 board of directors – Marilyn Collette, Cynthia Cusinato, Kristen Healy, Ryan Kilger, Jane Newcombe, Jane Panet, Paul St. Louis, and Sarah Waters.

Sarah Baxter
Chair, Rockcliffe Park Foundation