



Church Street School Cultural Centre – operating as the Aurora Cultural Centre

Executive Director's Q2 2014 Managerial Commentary

Intended to accompany the Centre's April to June 2014 Second Quarter financial statements.

Highlights – 2014 Second Quarter

- 14 Instructional Programs Ran during Q2
- 6 Musical Concerts Presented
- 9 free Community Events Presented
- 3 Exhibitions of Art Presented
- 3 Heritage Events (including 1 Display of Artifacts)
- 6,387 Visits
- 805 Programming Hours
- 1,407 Volunteer Hours donated to Centre in Q2



September 12, 2014

PROGRAMMING Q2 2014

Our programs are enjoying the support of a large number of participants. We are committed to presenting top quality cultural programming for our community. The Centre provides a mix of free, by donation and registered/ticketed events.

Art Exhibitions Q2 = 3

The Art Gallery program forms a major part of our operational plan to make the Cultural Centre accessible to everyone. All galleries are open free to the public to explore, be inspired and learn from. The exhibitions are changed regularly with great variety.

Mar 19 – Ap 26 29 th Annual Juried Exhibition & Sale: Toronto Watercolour Society	Meridian, Blue & Reception Galleries
May 7 – June 28 <i>Indiginesse</i> : Exhibition of Works by Contemporary Native Women. Guest Curator: Nathalie Berton	Meridian/Blue/Great Hall & Reception Galleries
March 27 – May 3 <i>The Gaze</i> : Arline Malakian Exhibition & Sale of photography	Great Hall Gallery

Heritage Displays of Artifacts Q2 = 3

There is always a display of artifacts from The Aurora Collection exhibited in the main reception area of the Centre. As well, the Centre has developed our own “*Community as Curator*” program where Aurora citizens, organizations and businesses are invited to display their artifacts and collections throughout the year, most often at the front reception area.

<i>The Nesbitt Family in Aurora</i> - Artifact Display	Community as Curator: Reception Display Case
<i>Railways of Aurora</i>	Aurora Historical Society: Reception Display Case
<i>Church Street School Artifacts</i>	Aurora Historical Society: Library Room Display

Concerts Q2 = 6

Classical, world music, dueling banjos, Metis fiddling and a Quebecois kitchen party rounded out the musical concert slate for the Second Quarter.

<i>The Banjo Special</i>
<i>Le Vent du North</i>
<i>Great Artist Piano Series: Fung-Chiu (rescheduled due to Aurora United Church fire)</i>
<i>Great Artist Piano Series: Jane Coop</i>
<i>The Sultans of String</i>
<i>Memere le Colibri: Metis Fiddle Concert</i>

Special Community Events Q2 = 9

Community events are initiated by the Centre, partnered by the Centre with other groups, or the Centre provides the location for a community event facility rental. However it comes about, a community event always welcomes the community into the facility for a special activity; often at no charge.

<i>Acquavision</i> : Toronto Watercolour Society - Opening Reception
<i>The Gaze</i> : Arline Malakian – Opening Reception
Ontario Watercolour Society - Docents in the Galleries every Saturday
<i>Indiginesse</i> Opening Ceremony
Margaret Roseman: Ways of Seeing - Artist walk & talk
Arline Malakian: Fine Art Photography – Artist walk & talk
Nadya Kwandibens: “Concrete Indians” Artist walk & talk
Multi Media Film Festival of York Region – Aurora screenings
It’s a Long Way to Tipperary Community Sing-Along
Free Family Art Activities at June 28 Aurora Farmers’ Market

Instructional Arts Programs Q2 = 14

Our professional artists share their expertise and teach an array of creative classes.

Spring Session:

Mixed Media Fun	child
Cartooning & Anime	Child/youth
Beginning Small Group Guitar	Adult
Drawing, Sketching & More	Adult
Pen & Ink Techniques: An Intro	Adult
Ukulele for Beginners	Adult
Ukulele Level 2	Adult
Spring Photography	Adult
Acrylics Level 1	Adult
Acrylics Level 2	Adult
Watercolours – afternoons	Adult
Watercolours – evenings	Adult
Wire Garden Sculptures	Adult
Bark Carving	Adult

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION Q2 2014

Community participation flows through everything that happens at the Centre and is evident in all we do. January and February were slower than anticipated due to the heavy winter we endured, and people stayed home. We also had to close the Centre to the public for maintenance for a few days and of course there were times when the parking lot and sidewalks could not be cleared as often as usual, making access difficult.

Here are just some activities that occurred at the Centre in Q2 2014...

- The Optimists Club craft beer tasting fundraiser filled the Centre and was a great success for the club.
- On Friday April 11 the devastating fire at the Aurora United Church unfolded affecting the entire downtown core of the town. The Centre was closed and our classical piano concert scheduled for that evening was forced to be rescheduled. What we saw from the northwest corner windows of Brevik Hall was heartbreaking. Fortunately no one was injured and we have worked with the congregation to assist with some emergency space needs and on one very special partnership that resulted in a wonderful display that opened at the Centre in Q3. We are saddened to lose this beautiful, historic and important neighbour.
- The opening ceremony for the *Indigenesse* exhibition curated by Nathalie Berton, was very special with contemporary works from Inuit, First Nations and Metis female artists from across Canada on display and many of the artists in attendance. We celebrated with a large crowd with opening remarks, a Metis Elder's prayer, drumming, spoken word and even a double round dance in Meridian Gallery. Thank you to *Prime Data* for printing the beautiful catalogue designed by Nathalie.
- On May 22 former Prime Minister Paul Martin was a surprise visitor to the Centre; the guest of (then) MPP Candidate Chris Ballard. It was a thrill to spend 45 minutes with Mr. Martin walking through the galleries and discussing the *Indigenesse* exhibition with him. He is very knowledgeable of, and has great respect for Canada's Aboriginal Peoples and their art.
- Centre staff and volunteers enjoyed participating in the Yonge Street Festival. This was a wonderful day of community engagement. A few weeks later we had a booth at the Aurora Farmers' Market as well.
- Our annual community sing-along this year was held in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War 1. We partnered with the Aurora Seniors' Centre and their Silver Star Singers and the Aurora Legion who provided an honour guard and played last taps. There was a talk about the impact of the war/s, and then a large group of seniors from throughout Aurora enjoyed singing the songs of that period together.
- On June 7th the Centre worked in partnership with the Heritage Advisory Committee of the Town of Aurora in the committee's first student heritage art exhibition which was presented at the Centre.
- The Centre's Annual General Meeting was held on June 11 and three residents of Aurora joined the Board, bringing the complement to a full 14. This was also the Centre's second Public Meeting of 2014.
- In June I was happy to attend Council to watch as the Cultural Master Plan was approved; this being the result of many months work by the Town and stakeholders, ourselves included.
- We were thrilled to receive funding enabling us to expand our children's summer arts programs and hire three talented students to facilitate the programs which started at the beginning of Q3. We are grateful for funding received from *The Canadian Museums Association's Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations* program which supported two student instructors. As well, Centre Business Partner, *Machi Badminton Training Centre* helped bring sport and culture together when they generously funded the hiring of the Centre's third summer student. Thank you!

OUR VOLUNTEERS Q2

Volunteers are another important measure of community participation at the Centre. Our volunteers donate thousands of hours of their time. All ages offer to volunteer at the Centre in operations; including couples and families volunteering together. We are always happy to welcome more people to our volunteer team. We offer a thorough orientation and interesting volunteer opportunities. Our Board of Directors and citizens sitting on occasional ad hoc committees are all volunteers and donate a huge number of hours to the governance of the Centre. We simply could not operate the Centre without our dedicated volunteer force.

VOLUNTEERS donated a total of 1,407 hours April to end June 2014.

Operational Volunteers TOTAL hours donated Q2	610 hours (not including Board Of Directors)
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Governance Volunteers Board of Directors & committee work TOTAL hours donated Q2	796 hours
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FACILITY RENTALS – AN INDICATOR OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION Q2

Facility Rentals bring diverse community groups and organizations to the Centre where we are then able to further engage them with culture. We are seeing more and more return bookings who are now asking ...*"What will be showing in the galleries this time when we come?"* Providing rental space to community organizations is an important service facilitated by the Centre.

In Q2 2014 we facilitated long-term, standing rental relationships with the following organizations:

- Quilters of York Region
- Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA)
- Aurora Community Band
- Pine Tree Potters
- Spotlight Theatre
- Theatre Starts

Examples of *some* interesting bookings of note in Q2 were:

- Women's Support Network - 2 Seminars
- Dr. G.W. Williams High School - Grade 12 student Art Show
- Optimist Club - Craft Beer Community Fundraiser
- Sandgate Women's Shelter - 2 Seminars
- My Pop Choir - Choral Class
- Third Age Learning - 2 Seminars for Seniors
- Yellow Brick House - Volunteer Appreciation
- Kinark Child & Family Services - Volunteer Appreciation
- York Region Children's Chorus - Recital
- Aurora High School - 2 Student Recitals

- Girl Guides
- Markham Stouffville Hospital
- Roger White Academy
- Town of Aurora (Parks)
- Blue Hills Child & Family Centre
- Paseske Quartet
- Several private student piano recitals
- Various York Region Departments
- Volunteer Appreciation
- Team Building
- Student Theatre/Musical Recital
- Community Stakeholder Meeting
- Staff Appreciation
- Classical Concert

SUMMATION

During the Second Quarter of 2014 the Centre experienced similar results as shown in Q1 in terms of numbers of visits, programs running, volunteer hours donated and programming hours for example. This is reflective of the Centre maturing and operating with a finite amount of programming space, hours in a day and staff for example.

It is preferable to read this Managerial Commentary in conjunction with our Q2 financial statements (unaudited- GAAPS) in order to more fully understand how the activities reported in this document drive our financial standing. Q2 2014 continues to show an increase in revenue and decrease in expenses over the same period in 2013.

We are grateful for the support of our volunteers whose donated hours continue to grow over those given last year and enable us to achieve great success.

In June we were pleased to fill the newly created position of Community Investment Manager with the hiring of Anuja Varghese. We are grateful for Ontario Trillium Foundation funding which has enabled us to hire Anuja who will work to increase community awareness and support for the Centre.

Thank you to *Meridian* and *Rickards Banjos* who each generously sponsored a musical concert in Q2!

Everyone is invited to pop by the Centre to view our changing exhibitions and just say “hi”. Visit our website often for current information on all the activities happening at the Centre. You can follow us on facebook and twitter as well. Hope to see you soon!

Laura Schembri
Executive Director
September 12, 2014

Thank you to our major community and corporate sponsors in Q2:

