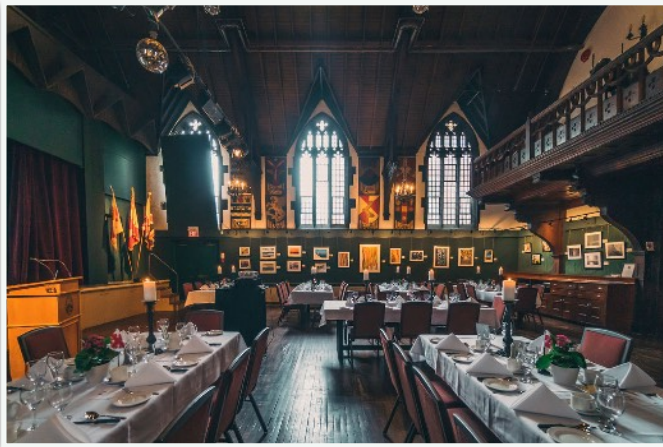


Spring Jubilee Gala

St. George's Society of Toronto

On May 27th The St. George's Society of Toronto opened the celebrations of the Queen's Jubilee in the City with an elegant gala dinner at the Arts & Letters Club.



Jennifer Green, 2nd VP of the Society was the emcee for the evening. Members and guests were honoured by the presence and Honorary Patronage of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

The evening marked a historic moment, as Her Majesty is the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee. In her 70 years of service she once commented that “Over the years, those who have seemed to me to be the most happy, contented and fulfilled have always been people who have lived the most outgoing and unselfish lives.” “Your Honour, you certainly exemplify that spirit of service. And it is the founding spirit of St. George's Society of Toronto.” added Jennifer Green.

Serving as the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell represents Her Majesty The Queen, and carries out constitutional, ceremonial, and community engagements. Her mandate focuses on ‘Ontario in the World’ and sustainability. Her Honour’s aim is to bring multiple perspectives to the table and cultivate new ideas for the betterment of Ontario and the world. She exemplifies public service.



Her Honour refers to herself as Ontario’s ‘Storyteller in Chief’. In her remarks, she noted that, now more than ever, we need to hear each other’s stories to build a more generous and just society.



St. George’s Society President, Mr. Aaron Bains, spoke about The Queen’s service to Canada and all nations in the Commonwealth. He also reflected upon The Queen as an individual – a wife, a mother and grandmother. Highlighting that The Queen’s steadfast dedication to the values of service, fidelity and kindness is reflected throughout her personal life and as our Queen. President Bains encouraged members to strive to uphold these values throughout their lives and in the celebration of the Jubilee.

Aaron presented the Awards of Merit to two individuals who have demonstrated passion and commitment to making meaningful charitable contributions to health, social and community services, education and the arts. This year's recipients of the Awards are Neda Pajooman and Victoria Maich.



Neda Pajooman is the Regional Director, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada (LLSC). Neda has dedicated over ten years to working in the non-profit sector with a focus on healthcare. Before her current role at the LLSC, she was Manager of Partnerships at Engineers Without Borders Canada. Neda previously worked on the “Light the Night” campaign with the LLSC. The event is the largest fundraising event in Canada to bring help and hope to the blood cancer community. Since its inception, the event has raised more than \$6,000,000 for critical research, community programs and advocacy for all 137 types of blood cancers.

Victoria Maich is a student in the Master of Nursing Program, Nurse Practitioner Field, Lawrence S. Bloom Faculty of Nursing at the University of Toronto.

Victoria is a second-year student in the Master of Nursing at U of T and a dedicated volunteer in her community. Her passion and commitment to social and community services and health is an inspiration to us all. Her volunteer work includes, collaborating with with an NGO in Nicaragua, attending to the medical needs of children in Cambodia; working with local community members in Kenya to build a maternal-child birthing centre; and volunteering as a clinician and student preceptor at a downtown Toronto clinic that offers care to the underserved and homeless populations. Victoria is passionate about Indigenous health and advocates for and works closely with Indigenous communities in Canada. She has worked as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the northern fly-in community of Moose Factory, Ontario, and will be returning to this community as an NP upon graduation.



Gary Shaw, member of the Society, lead the guests in saying Grace, followed by a Toast to the Queen, from our President Aaron Bains.

As guests were enjoying an exquisite British inspired menu especially prepared by the Arts & Letters Club, Jennie introduced the first performance of the evening: Jennifer Taverner, Soprano.



Jennifer has performed across Canada with organizations such as Toronto’s Tapestry Opera, Pacific Opera Victoria in BC, The Victoria Symphony Orchestra, the Banff Centre for the Arts, and most recently in March with Edmonton Opera where she sang in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*. For this special evening, Jennifer performed *The White Cliffs of Dover*, *A Nightingale sang in Berkley Square*, and *We’ll Meet Again* ~ getting the audience to sing along.



The evening would not be complete without a word from the Bard.

Actor and director, Sébastien Heins delighted the audience with a reading of ‘This Sceptered Isle’ from John of Gaunt’s speech in *Richard II.* , Sébastien Heins has performed at Stratford Festival’s *The Tempest*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *Breath of Kings*. Sebastien currently serves as Associate Artistic Director of Canada’s leading immersive theatre company, the highly acclaimed, *Outside the March*. This summer, *Outside the March* will premiere *Trojan Girls*.

For the final performance the Society presented Toronto-based pianist Geoffrey Conquer. Geoffrey was a two-time winner of the McGill Symphony Concerto Competition. He recently appeared as a pianist in the Royal Conservatory of Music's 2021 Violin Series publication alongside OSM Concertmaster Andrew Wan, and toured as a chamber musician with Lincoln Center Stage. Geoffrey is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the University of Toronto and prepared an exceptional selection from Queen/Freddie Mercury Somebody to Love to Elgar Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1 putting everyone to sing!



The evening concluded with a silent auction, good conversation and fun with good company.

We would like to thank the Society's Committee of Management (COM) and Executive Director, Idalia Obregón, who greatly contributed to the success of the evening.



