

Message from Alan Walker, President, Shaw Guild



At the time I began writing this month's epistle, let's say my mood was somewhat dyspeptic: Tim Jennings, TC, Members of the Shaw's Board of Directors and its Board of Governors, the Guild EC, and a number of other Guild members had been involved in advocacy actions targeting the Ontario Government.

These actions, formulated by Performing Arts organizations across Ontario were taken to seek clarification on allowances with peer industries as we moved toward reopening, in the following areas:

- 1) Preparation for re-opening (rehearsals, etc.) like Sports, TV, Film, etc.
- 2) Live streaming and digital content capture (without audiences) like Film and TV
- 3) Parity and percentage-based/distance-based capacities like other gathering venue

For Shaw, this was specifically to clarify the protocols around rehearsals, and my dyspepsia was due to an apparent lack of, or delay in a response, by the Ontario Government to these advocacy actions.

However, as with all aspects of the roller coaster that has been a feature of our lives during the past 15 months, a response was received on June 10 from the Ontario Government, and we were all happy to see the following line in the official communique:

"Concert venues, theatres and cinemas may open outdoors for the purpose of rehearsing or performing a recorded or broadcasted concert, artistic event, theatrical performance or other performance with no more than 10 performers, among other restrictions"

Now that Shaw outdoor rehearsals begin on Friday June 11th, and as soon as Tim and TC are able to advise on the opening of the season, and our involvement in that season, we will update you all.

Interested in welcoming visitors to NOTL? Join us for the 2021 Ambassador Program

Last summer the Shaw Guild was asked by the Town to spearhead a new pilot program designed to welcome visitors as well as to provide information on COVID protocols. **The program was a great success!** Guild volunteers strolled the streets and had very positive feedback about their own experiences, and also about how visitors appreciated their friendly approach.

This year the Town has asked us to take on the management of the program again, and we're delighted to do so. Many people who acted as Ambassadors last year are eager to resume, and **we would like to invite anyone else who's interested to join them!** **The program is an excellent opportunity to display our greeting skills and enthusiastic support for our beautiful Town.**

What you need to know about the role:

1. The 2021 Ambassador Program will begin on July 9 and is expected to continue into the fall.



2. Ambassadors will stroll in pairs along Queen Street, side streets and parks. Depending on how many volunteers are available, we may be able to expand the territory.
3. Ambassadors will greet people on the street, help answer some basic tourism-related questions and mention the COVID protocols that are relevant at that particular time. The Town will provide that information and we will pass it on to you.
4. Two shifts a day will take place Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Hours are noon – 2pm, and 2pm – 4pm. Breaks can be taken as required.
5. Ambassadors will follow all COVID protocols including completing a screening questionnaire prior to each shift.
6. Sign-up for shifts will be done via MVP. We know it's been a while since Guild volunteers have used MVP, and some new members haven't used it all. We will provide support to help you learn the tool and/or refresh your MVP skills
7. Ambassadors will be provided a mask and branded attire so visitors will recognize them. (More info on the attire is forthcoming.) A Town-issued parking pass will let you park in the Market Square lot behind the Courthouse.

If you would like to know more, please contact the Ambassador Program Team Lead, [Margot Devlin](#) by June 28.

News from the Activities Corner

As you are aware, over the past few months, we have been focusing on staying in touch with the Shaw Company via a series of broadcasts and interviews over ZOOM and YouTube. Many of you have tuned in to hear conversations with . . . (click each link to view the broadcasts)

- [Jason Bendig](#)
- [Jenny Wright](#)
- [Lesslie Tunmer and David Edwards](#)
- [Kimberley Rampersad](#)
- Tim Carroll and Tim Jennings (this was a Zoom meeting and there's no recording)

These have been fun and informative, and we certainly appreciate the gracious contribution of all of these folks. It was a joy to hear so many interesting stories from such an amazing array of talented people.



Moving forward, **plans are in the works to be able to meet IN PERSON with the Guild family.** Details will be finalized soon, and we all look forward to being together again, face to face, in a safe manner, of course! Stay tuned for updates! Until then, stay well and strong!

Brenda Weafer, Activities Chair

15th Annual Shaw Guild Garden Tour: Tickets are selling quickly!



September 11, 2021, 10:00 am to 4:30 pm

With summer upon us, our attentions shift to the outdoors, with **gardens forefront of mind.**

Speaking of gardens, we encourage you to enjoy a lovely September day on a self-guided tour of eight fabulous private gardens, in and around Niagara-on-the-Lake, with your friends and family!

Mark your calendars for what will be a fabulous experience. To view this year's brochure, and to purchase tickets, [visit the Garden Tour website.](#)



This year, you will also be delighted by a few new entertaining features as part of your Garden Tour experience.

Jane Catcher, Garden Tour Convener

Even GB Shaw had some nice words about gardening

George Bernard Shaw > Quotes > Quotable Quote



"The best place to seek God is in a garden. You can dig for him there."

– George Bernard Shaw, *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*

Shaw Festival 60th Anniversary is coming up in 2022!

Next year, the Shaw Festival will celebrate its **Diamond Anniversary!** Volunteers have played an important role in the Shaw's history. From the first performances at the Courthouse in 1962, we have evolved from a small group of volunteers to the Women's Committee in 1964, until finally the Shaw Guild was formed in 1974. Today the Guild includes 300 volunteers, who undertake a number of important roles at the Shaw Festival.



Our first 50 years of volunteering at the Shaw was documented by **Nancy Butler** and **Faye Goodwin**. We now plan to write about the subsequent 10 years from 2012 to 2022, and we need your help!

Do you have a story or memory that you would like to share about volunteering at the Shaw during the past 10 years? If so, send an email to [Mary Mizen](#) and include a brief description of your experience, when it happened and names of any other Guild volunteers involved. We will be consolidating these stories and may be in touch with you for more details.

We're looking for all types of stories and memories at the Shaw. Unfortunately, at this time we can't promise to include every single submission from our Guild Volunteers, but we will try to capture as many as possible.



Let's celebrate this diamond anniversary with the many successes and achievements of our Guild Volunteers over the past 10 years!

Mary Mizen, Vice President

Projecting "Positivity" to Bring About Social Change



Recently I read an article in [The Atlantic](#) by Arthur C. Brooks, about why you should not feel guilty about being happy. Yes, that is a thing for many people. With all the bad news coming from everywhere in the world (well, maybe not [Finland](#)), it's sometimes difficult to see the way forward with a positive attitude.

One paragraph in the article stood out for me, as it expresses what we are trying to do in the [IDEA team](#):

*"If you believe that there is an opportunity to make things better through social change, you're more likely to achieve it if you're fired up, like it's an enterprise or a big life goal. The point is not that you should pretend the status quo is just fine, **but rather that optimism about positive change is the best way to make people want to be part of that change.** Instead of thinking of your concern as an unsolvable problem or a source of ongoing misery, make it an exciting project. If it is too daunting, break your end goal into more achievable steps. Let the effort energize you, and let others see that energy."*

Negativity can be contagious. Positivity can be contagious too, and it's a very nice condition that you may want to catch, and pass on to others.

Cheryl Morris, Communications Chair

Shaw and Guild take part in Town's Inclusivity and Diversity Focus Groups



Early in 2021, a survey was conducted in Niagara-on-the-Lake as a first step by the Town's Inclusivity Committee to understand resident attitudes and experiences related to diversity and inclusivity in the

community. The results were published in February and helped to identify topics for Zoom focus groups that were held in May and June.

The Shaw is actively involved with the Town's Inclusivity Committee (ensemble member Kiera Sangster is a member), and one of the subjects chosen for a focus group was Including the Shaw Community. Members of the Guild's IDEA team took part in that discussion. In addition, IDEA members and other Guild volunteers have participated in focus groups related to Fostering Anti-Racism and Pride All Year Long.

The Town's Inclusivity Committee plans to provide guidance to Town Council based on the focus groups. These initiatives go hand-in-hand with recommendations the Shaw's Equity and Inclusion Task Force will be issuing as the season begins. The Guild is honoured to play a role in making The Shaw and the Town welcoming, safe, respectful places that protect and promote diversity.



Stay tuned for more developments in the month ahead.

Susan MacDonald, Membership Chair

Sticks and Stones

Contributed by Margret Walker

I'd like to share my friend Mary Kilmer's new song, which she recently wrote and put to music. Mary is retired, has a doctorate in Spanish and most recently has been an instructor at Niagara College.

[You can listen to Mary sing it on YouTube.](#) I hope it provides some inspiration!

Here are the lyrics:



Sticks and Stones

Sticks and stones can break our bones
Names will always hurt us.

Black, white, red, brown---
yellow, green and blue.
We all create a world of song
You can join in too.

So what if we are different?
That's nothing to be feared
That's nothing to be sneered at
not even one bit weird

Sticks and stones

Your music's not my music?
Your belief system's not mine?
The things we eat, the way we speak
Why can't this all be fine?
Some people think they're better
if my skin is not the same.
Or think if I'm not like them,
I'm not "normal"? That's a shame.

Sticks and stones

No more use of racial slurs!
No more offensive names!
Be inclusive, not abusive
Name-calling is no game

Let's celebrate diversity,
No broken bones to heal,
No using names that hurt us
when a rainbow we could be.

Sticks and stones

We're all in this together
Together we are strong
We're super glue together
When we all get along

Sticks and stones.

Mary Kilmer, May 1, 2021