



# ANNUAL REPORT

AUGUST 1, 2019 TO JULY 31, 2020

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fiscal 2020 started strong with a party in October to celebrate our first 10 years at London Clay Art Centre (LCAC). We launched the Clay 4 Kids Program Fund, attracting donations that allow us to grant bursaries so we can share the joy of clay with as many kids as possible!

The first seven months were business as usual, running classes and workshops, piloting an inspiring experiential tourism package to show off our phenomenal Old East Village mosaics and commitment to our community, running vibrant artists' studios, our retail store and fall Potters' Market, and pulling off the most successful Empty Bowls event to date.

In mid-March, the COVID-bomb hit hard making the next five months considerably less usual. LCAC closed for three months forcing us to cancel the spring class session, Potters' Market, and artists-in-residence exhibition, along with closing the studios and retail store. Our three-year partnership with Hutton House ended due to the need to keep their clients safe from COVID-19. Dedicated staff kept our building safe, accomplished thousands of dollars of maintenance, provided curbside services to help our artists continue to create during trying times, and feverishly put the necessary COVID-19 policies and procedures in place before we safely re-opened in mid-June.

All in all the show went on thanks to our generous members, funders, and the various levels of government. Thank you! You helped give us hope and keep us afloat during the early days of the pandemic. In a heartwarming show of support, members left their money with us despite losing access to LCAC. Our two operational funders, London Arts Council and Ontario Arts Council, immediately saw the need and responded quickly to provide funds requested in early February. The City of London and Libro Financial suspended and lowered payments for several months. In addition, the federal government made it possible to keep staff working using the Canada Employment Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan. All of these contributions gave LCAC a strong lifeline and enabled us to see a way forward with a bright future beyond the challenges of COVID-19.



Our case for support could not be more meaningful as the COVID-related mental health of Canadians is a topic of national discussion. 4-6 weeks into the shutdown people expressed yearning for connectivity and creativity. Over the next several months, yearning evolved into lethargy and despondency. When we re-opened LCAC, students and members reported profound relief at having a safe place to commune and engage in creative play with clay. Months of social isolation and lack of creative stimulus continues to affect people's mental health.

Never has London Clay Art Centre's value been more evident. LCAC is a vital community asset that helps people feel belonging, self-worth, and connectedness through the simple act of playing with clay. We intend to survive the pandemic and thrive on the other side to serve more people in our community with free clay art programming. Just watch us grow!

Sincerely,



Judy Sparkes  
Board President



Darlene Pratt  
Executive Director

## Board of Directors



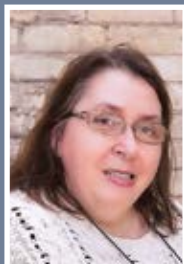
Lawrence Durham  
Treasurer



Marilyn Barbe  
Secretary



Karen Bailey  
Director



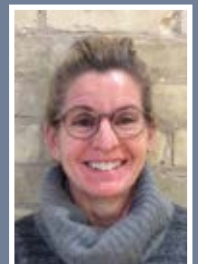
Cathy Herbert  
Director



Dorothy Howell  
Director



Jane Paterak  
Director



Christine Torres  
Director

# 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Ten years into our journey fulfilling our charitable purpose at London Clay Art Centre, we have built a reputation as a shining jewel in the crown of London's art community. To commemorate a decade of achievements and the hard work of the many volunteers who brought LCAC into being, we invited former and current members, funders, partners, local dignitaries, and our valued Old East Village neighbours to join us in an October celebration.

It is important to acknowledge that LCAC was built on volunteer power alone. The depth of voluntarism that built the organization and the facility is a strong indicator of our commitment to the many communities we serve. We also recognize we couldn't have built this legacy art facility without financial support from individual donors, all three levels of government, and several local foundations. We are forever grateful to our generous supporters.



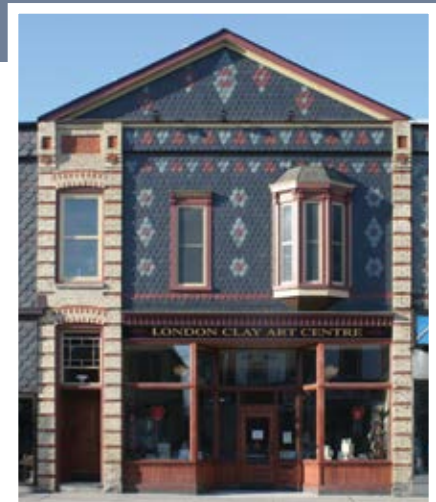
Logo by Natalia Danczak

At the 10-year mark, we chose to further our commitment to providing free clay art education by launching the Clay 4 Kids Program Fund (C4K). In addition to our regularly advertised classes, workshops, March Break and summer camps for kids, LCAC provides customized clay education sessions throughout the year for community organizations and school groups in our region.

Our professional artist-educators nurture imagination, critical thinking, resilience, and persistence in a safe and supportive environment using the tactile medium of clay. Sometimes we are not able to accommodate the price an organization can afford for one of our specialized workshops, which means they can't take advantage of our great programs.

With the C4K fund, we are able to provide bursaries that help us give important educational opportunities in clay to more kids, more often!

"Over the years Simon has been identified as living with five different diagnoses. At LCAC, he worked away cooperatively with both his teacher and with student volunteers. He beamed with pride when the instructor held up his work to point out something to the class and especially loved the photos of him on the potter's wheel."



# Empty Bowls

# of  
Volunteers  
95

# of  
Volunteer Hrs  
2,474

# of  
Kg Clay  
600

# of  
Kiln Firing Hrs  
268.5

Empty Bowls is an annual fundraiser supported by our volunteers to address hunger in the community. Each year, we make up to 700 unique bowls, most of which are produced at London Clay Art Centre. Ticket buyers choose the bowl they would like to take home as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. They share a simple meal of soup and bread donated by local restaurants. The proceeds of the event have gone to worthy local organizations that address food insecurity.

## 2020 Recipient: Ark Aid Street Mission

“In 2020, Ark Aid Street Mission was the grateful recipient of over \$25,000 toward our meal programs. The funds have been a lifeline for the Ark, especially due to the increased demand for our services due to COVID-19.

Communities thrive when people have places to belong, build relationships, be creative, learn new skills, and give back to others through their gifts and networks. The London Clay Art Centre fulfills so much of this. They add beauty, connection, and opportunity in the Old East Village, as well as helping provide basic needs and food security to organizations across the city.”



*Sarah Campbell, Executive Director,  
Ark Aid Street Mission*



# Business as Usual

August 1 to March 23

In retrospect, the beginning of the fiscal year was blissful!

Based on the trend, we anticipated increased participation in classes and workshops. To mid-March, 1175 students learned about clay and clay practices at London Clay Art Centre. In November, we piloted an experiential tourism package to a group of 35 highly engaged tourism operators, business owners, creatives, and destination managers. Their positive response and feedback helped us plan for a public launch of the revenue-generating program in April 2020. The Fall Potters Market enjoyed over \$46,000 of sales by 1216 shoppers. And, a mere two weeks before the COVID-19 shutdown, we held the most successful Empty Bowls event to date!



# Unusual Business

March 24 to July 31

London Clay Art Centre closed on March 24 and re-opened June 15 on a limited basis. The total shutdown had immediate impacts that will show longer-term effects.

## Cancelled or Suspended:

- ♦ 23 in-progress spring classes/workshops with 147 participants;
- ♦ 12 instructor contracts;
- ♦ Spring Potters' Market;
- ♦ Experiential tourism launch;
- ♦ First artists-in-residence exhibition at Jonathon's;
- ♦ Sales booth at Home County Music and Arts Festival;
- ♦ Studio use by summer students, including for the recipient of our Edith Pierce Memorial Award;
- ♦ 24/7 access to LCAC's open, semi-private, and artist-in-residence spaces, affecting 140 ceramic artists;
- ♦ Workshop by renowned west coast potter, Sarah Pike;
- ♦ Sales in the LCAC retail store.



Artist, Pamela Scharback

## Our Response:

- ♦ Implemented drop-off, pick-up, and delivery services for LCAC studio-users to ensure they could be creative from home during the shutdown;
- ♦ Weekly communications with valued members to keep them well informed;
- ♦ Contracted local artist, Pamela Scharback, to paint colourful messages of hope in our store windows;
- ♦ Advocacy meetings, surveys, and letter-writing to ensure our voice was heard among many organizations in need of vital support;
- ♦ Grant writing for funds related to rebuilding in response to COVID-19;
- ♦ Maintenance work at LCAC – staff refinished all hardwood floors, patched and painted battered walls, saving us thousands of dollars;

## Community Support:

We are extremely fortunate to have strong supporters. Without them, we may not have made it through the initial perils of COVID-19 as strongly as we did. We extend our deepest thanks to the following for keeping LCAC moving forward for future generations to enjoy:

- ♦ Members of the LPG at London Clay Art Centre who left their fees with us and made donations as well, despite loss of facility access;
- ♦ London Arts Council for operating funds;
- ♦ Ontario Arts Council for operating funds;
- ♦ City of London for deferral of loan incentive payments;
- ♦ Libro Financial for interest only mortgage payments, March to end of July;
- ♦ Government of Canada, Canada Employment Wage Subsidy;
- ♦ Government of Canada, Canada Emergency Business Account loan;
- ♦ Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation for its Safe Opening Program;
- ♦ Old East Village BIA for digital marketing micro grants.

## Vital Volunteers:

Our volunteers have a long history of community involvement. Since 1981, we have been providing clay art education at local festivals and events such as Home County Music & Art Festival, the Annual Traditional Pow Wow & Harvest Festival, Doors Open, Culture Days, and other opportunities at schools and community centres.

Until March, our volunteers did what they always do; they helped keep our studios and classrooms clean, mix glazes, load and unload kilns, run Empty Bowls, enter data, and tour people through our amazing centre! For three months, volunteers couldn't access LCAC. When we re-opened in mid-June, they helped staff uphold the newly instituted COVID-19 policies and procedures and sanitizing regimen to ensure everyone's health and safety.

A hearty thank you to all our dedicated volunteers!



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS



Each year we strive to grow our connections to help us better deliver on our charitable purpose.

Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation (SWOTC) and Tourism London chose LCAC as one of four local organizations to receive sponsorships for a 10-month mentorship program to develop an experiential tourism package. We worked under the expert guidance of industry leader, Celes Davar, and a dedicated team of community coaches, including representatives of Growing Chefs, Libro Financial, Green Economy London, Lavery Culinary Group, Old East Village Business Improvement Area, SWOTC, and Tourism London. Our full-day group experiences focus on telling the story of our decades-long community involvement, the global significance of ceramic art, and the local value of the work we do each day at LCAC. Experiences allow us to attract new audiences and revenue while touching people's lives through the humble medium of clay.

Unfortunately, our three-year partnership with Hutton House ended abruptly due to concerns about COVID-19 and the well-being of Hutton House's primary clients. Their location in London west allowed us to run two additional classes per week, providing easier access for people on the other side of the city.

On the other hand, we started a new partnership with Fusion: Ontario Clay and Glass Association to live-stream several of their Makers Meet events from LCAC. This allowed our artists to witness the making techniques of well established, Ontario-based clay artists while others watched in cyber space, which exposed our wonderful facility to a completely new audience!



# EDITH PIERCE MEMORIAL AWARD



Nicolette  
Kearney

Each year, the LPG provides the Edith Pierce Memorial Award to a BealArt student in ceramics who displays outstanding talent and discipline in working with clay and who wants to continue their ceramic studies at a post-secondary institution.

*"I am honoured to be the recipient of the generous Edith Pierce Award for Beal Art Ceramics. I cannot thank you enough for this amazing award and the generosity you have. Having had a summer membership at the London Clay Art Centre last year, I know the value of this award and want to thank you for gifting me such a rich opportunity. Not only have you provided me with a beautiful space to continue my discoveries and understanding of ceramics, but also providing me with an environment filled with extraordinary clay loving people.*

*I cannot wait to get into the studio again and continue my growth as a young artist. These precious moments over the summer will help me reach my goals and get the most out of my following years at Sheridan. Having missed crucial studio time and being without clay for so long, due to COVID-19, I am unbelievably grateful to have this opportunity as well as the financial support you have given me.*

*I aspire to help young artists one day the way you have helped me"*

Nicolette Kearney, 2020 Recipient

# ARTISTS-IN- RESIDENCE PROGRAM

LCAC's artist-in-residence (AIR) program was created to give up-and-coming ceramic artists an opportunity to work for free in a well-equipped studio space with a supportive community of artists in exchange for 5 hours weekly of technical help. Residencies allow emerging artists to pursue their creative endeavors while contributing to the local community of artists.



Amy Klinkhamer,  
Canadian AIR,  
Sept. 2019  
to present

*"LCAC provides a much-needed sense of belonging, boosts artists' sense of self and worth, and teaches much needed technical and entrepreneurial skills as well."*



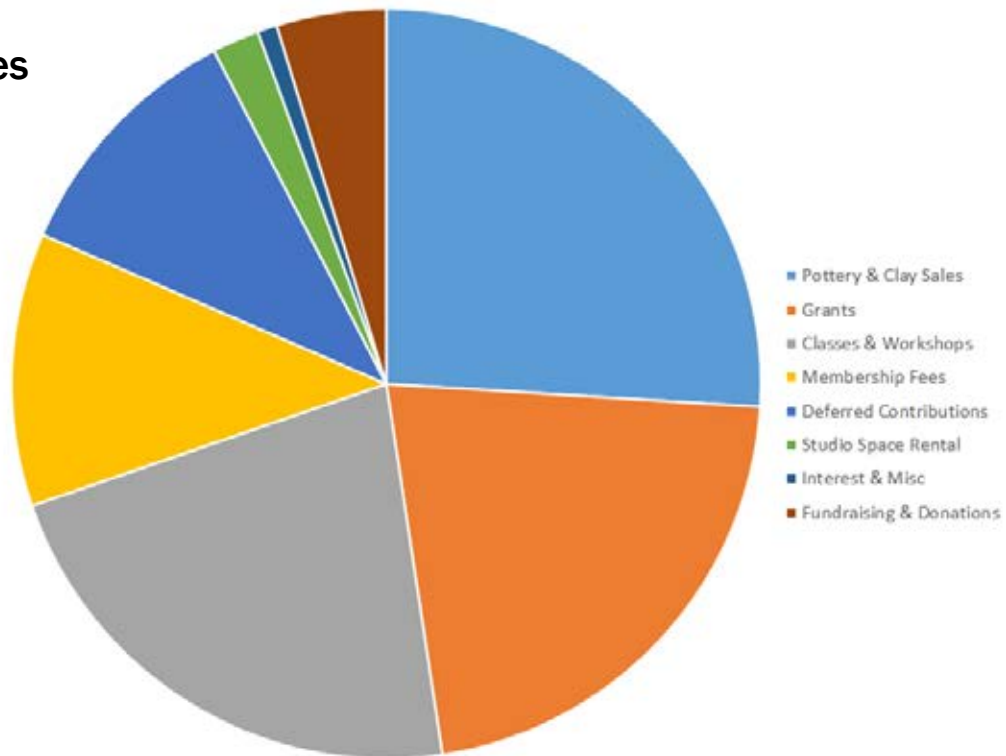
Dauma Stirbyte,  
International AIR,  
July 2017 to  
Aug. 2020

*"I very much enjoyed my freedom, and the 24/7 access was amazing. I loved getting to learn about kilns and glaze making, and getting teaching experience too."*

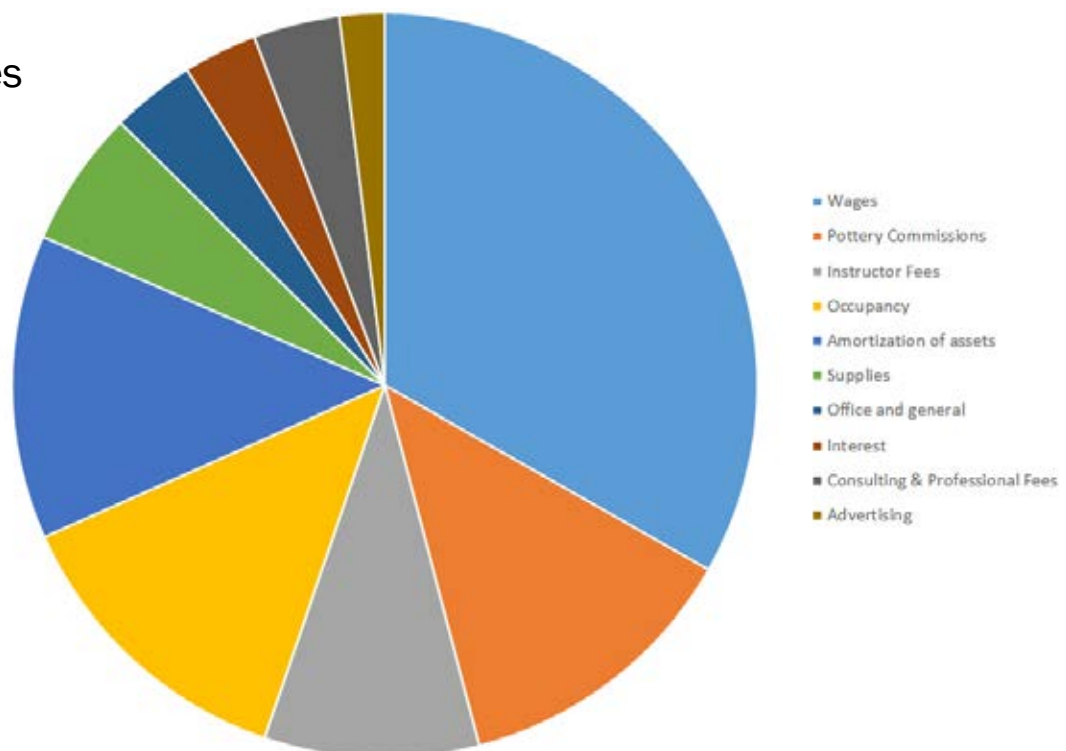
# FINANCIAL

The information below is for the year ending July 31, 2020 and is derived from the financial statements audited by Davis Martindale. Our complete audited financial statements are available in the Annual Report section on our website.

## Revenues



## Expenses

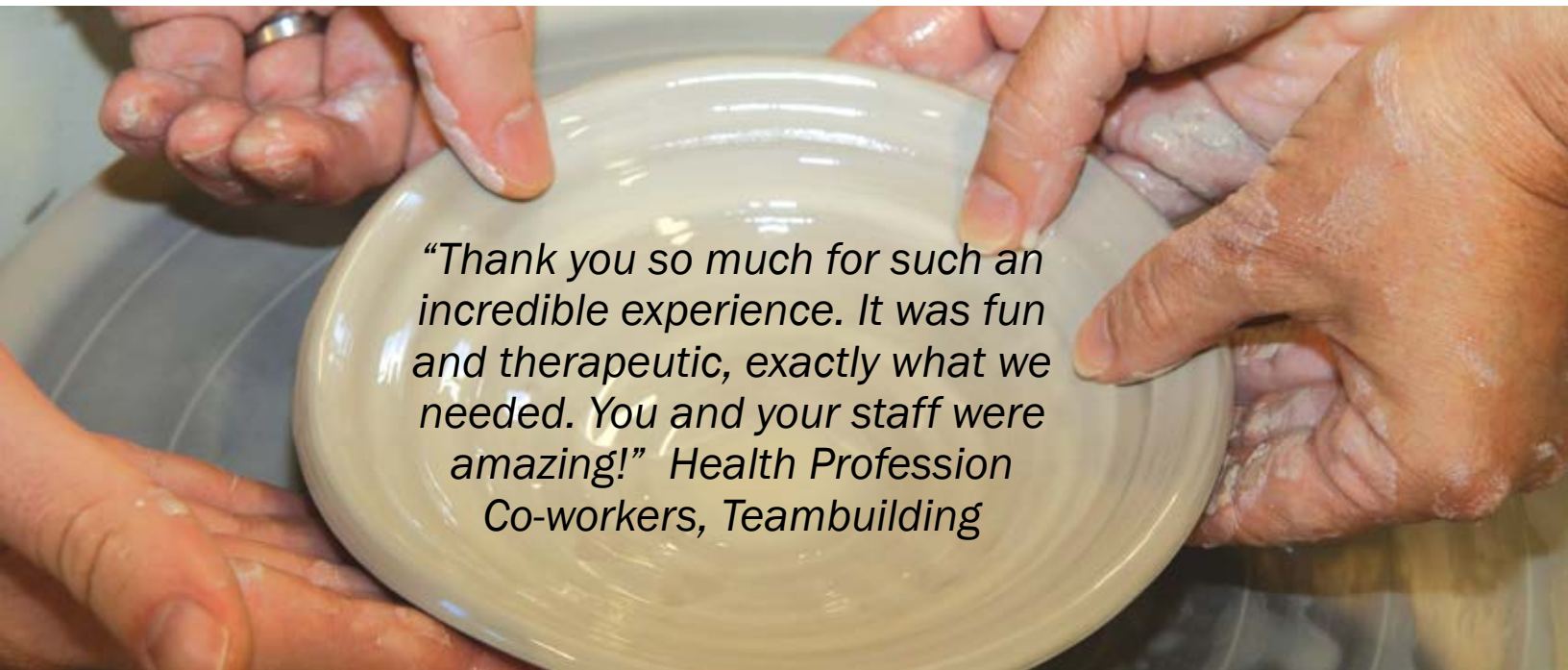


*"Everyone came out  
with something they  
could be proud of  
regardless of their  
level of skill."  
Combo Class Student*



*"Thank you very much for your dedication and enthusiasm working with  
us to create an unforgettable summer break for the children and staff at  
Rotholme. This program went beyond my expectations. I am thrilled to  
report back to our donors on what an amazing experience this has been!"  
Rotholme Women's and Family Shelter*

*"Thank you so much for such an  
incredible experience. It was fun  
and therapeutic, exactly what we  
needed. You and your staff were  
amazing!" Health Profession  
Co-workers, Teambuilding*





The London Potters Guild (LPG) is a charitable arts organization whose purpose is to provide clay education to the community. We achieve the majority of our mission through programs offered at London Clay Art Centre (LCAC) - a 7,000 square foot facility in a century-old heritage building on the commercial corridor of London's Old East Village. LCAC is the only guild-owned and operated facility in Canada solely dedicated to clay art education, production, and promotion.

**Vision:** to be the leader in the education and promotion of the clay arts in Southwestern Ontario.

**Our four-fold mission is to:**

1. provide high-quality educational programming;
2. nurture the development of professional clay artists;
3. collaborate with other community organizations; and,
4. encourage fellowship in an inclusive and accessible facility.

Charitable tax number: 88667 6790 RR 0001



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