

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

LEGACY: 40 years of the Donor's Guide

Welcome to the 40th annual edition of the Canadian Donor's Guide – your authoritative annual directory of fundraising organizations in Canada. I am honoured to provide you with this comprehensive reference resource and related editorial content to assist with your respective responsibilities in legacy and planned giving.

We continue to deliver more than 17,000 copies of our publication to key decision makers and professional advisors in Canada's donor community. This would not be possible without the relationships the Canadian Donor's Guide shares with the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP), the Canadian Bar Association (CBA), STEP Canada and Imagine Canada. Their support and commitment to our efforts is truly appreciated. In addition, we could not provide this Guide without the many charitable organizations across Canada who put their trust in us to bring their messages to their key audience – those charities that purchase advertising in our pages.

I take this opportunity each year to look back over the time since our last edition and to review some of the things that have taken place in Canada's charitable sector. This time, I am looking back a little further.

As my team and I proudly present the Ruby Anniversary edition of the Canadian Donor's Guide to fundraising organizations in Canada, I think back to its history.

Back in 1985, Roy Abrahamson and his wife, Carol Kirsh, founded the Donor's Guide. I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Carol. Although her beloved Roy has been gone for many years, Carol still speaks of him with great love. Through her anecdotes, I feel like I got to know a bit about Roy.

Carol described that Roy was looking for a project in the publishing field, as he had been a writer, editor and publisher since he was a young man. The couple recognized that the 'Third Sector' – the charitable sector – was growing back in the early 80s. Roy had served on several fundraising boards over the years and Roy and Carol had both been brought up with charity as a base for the way their families lived.

Carol described that she had a technical background and was one of the first women working in electronic technology. Carol helped set up the technology and, with Roy's publishing background, they created the Canadian Donor's Guide by using the information about Canadian charities from what is now Canada Revenue Agency. It was interesting to learn that the Guide had a different name in the beginning – but it is hard for me to imagine it being called anything else.

When I asked Carol what she thought Roy would think of the Canadian Donor's Guide printing its 40th annual edition, she said he wouldn't be surprised. Carol added he may have been surprised at the sophistication of fund-



Alison Stoneman
Publisher, Canadian Donor's Guide

raising today but the Guide, as always, remained a place for good, printed material and information.

I asked Carol her thoughts on the 40th anniversary of the Guide. She thought it was wonderful that it continued to be useful and was thrilled it has had a lasting impact. One of the last things Carol said in our conversation was "what a legacy!" What a legacy, indeed.

In 2002, Anderson Charters became the next publisher of the Canadian Donor's Guide. Anderson brought the Guide into the digital age with the introduction of an online version which continues to be available to anyone with access to the internet. The project to bring the Guide online took some time, and I am sure it wasn't easy, but in 2007, the first digital edition of the Canadian Donor's Guide was available to one and all.

I joined Anderson's team in early 2007 and was mentored by Mary Burnel and Anderson and I began to learn about the charitable sector and about publishing. We worked well together even though Mary and I worked remotely for the most part – Anderson was way ahead of the curve by offering that option to his team. I looked forward to our weekly meetings in Anderson's office where we would put our heads together about the Canadian Donor's Guide.

Anderson's son Matt, CEO of CharityCAN, which Anderson founded in 2006, provided some words on behalf of Third Sector Publishing and the Charters family.

“On behalf of Third Sector Publishing, publisher of the guide from 2002 to 2017, I’d like to thank Alison Stoneman for the chance to celebrate 40 years of the Canadian Donor’s Guide and to congratulate her on the continued success of the publication. Publishing the Guide was our company’s first foray into the world of Canadian fundraising, a sector we are honoured to continue to work in and support. Canadian charities deserve to be celebrated and supported, and the Donor’s Guide is an invaluable resource for donors, fundraisers and gift planners. Here’s to the continued success of the Canadian Donor’s Guide for the years to come!”

That brings us to 2017. Anderson decided to retire after the 2017-18 edition of the Canadian Donor’s Guide and I was fortunate to have the opportunity to become the publisher and purchase the Guide from him. I am so very grateful to Anderson and his wife Susan, who put their trust in me to continue to take care of this valued publication.

It remains my honour and privilege to continue working with charities across our country and publish the Canadian Donor’s Guide. I thank them for the trust they place in us to bring their message to donors and advisors across Canada.

Thanks also to our partners, the CAGP, Imagine Canada, STEP Canada and the CBA, for working with us over many years – you are truly appreciated.

Thank you to the special friends of the Donor’s Guide – you know who you are – you are the Guide’s supporters, who believe in what we do. You encourage us and celebrate us and share how much you value the Donor’s Guide to others, in so many ways. My early days as publisher were made much easier knowing you had faith in me and the Guide.

I also thank the people I have met along the way who have advised me, educated me and worked with me.

Some of these folks were at our print shops. In the early days it was the teams at Rose Printing and Simcoe Press. Next was Martin Seto at Webcom. At Maracle Inc., Sherry, Bill, George and others took the time to teach me all about printing and worked with Anderson, Mary and I – and then with me alone – to help make



Carol Kirsh and Roy Abrahamson founded the Donor’s Guide.

the Canadian Donor’s Guide a better product. They taught me things I would otherwise never have learned. I was very sad to hear that Maracle had officially shut its doors this summer after more than 100 years in business. For the 2024-25 edition of the Canadian Donor’s Guide, we moved to a new Canadian printer, TCI. The friendly people there, including Chrystal, Shaun, Nick, Scott and others made the transition easier than I thought possible. We will be seeing them again – in just days from this writing – to print the Ruby Anniversary edition of the Guide.

I had the pleasure of working with a trusted “web guy” for almost 20 years, including the years I worked with him under Anderson’s guidance. It was wonderful to be able to rely on Rich all those years to be there for our public facing website, our database and the members’ site. A trusted partner and friend who will be missed as we both transition. Rich introduced me to my new web team – Expogain. So far, it has been great working with them and I look forward to having them help bring the Guide along in the ever-evolving digital world.

The others to whom I want to give my sincere and heartfelt thanks are the team that has been part of bringing you the Canadian Donor’s Guide. First, to Mary Burnel, who came out of retirement to



Anderson Charters, previous publisher of the Canadian Donor’s Guide.

help me get through my first edition as publisher after I had suffered a medical setback – your kindness will never be forgotten. Then to Barb, Aly, Katie, Laura, Kaitlyn, Sara and Calvin for doing what needed to be done, from sales to social media to data entry to customer relations. Each of them have contributed to the success of the Canadian Donor’s Guide, too.

A key part of the Donor’s Guide team is the magical Alex, who does layout and design and takes the data and makes the Guide what it is. It has been phenomenal working with Alex for over 10 years. Alex is calm and never seems to get flustered – even when I bring him changes or new

And to my beloved husband, Jim, who says he just carries things, I thank him for EVERYTHING he does to support me. Jim brings his decades of communications experience to help out with the editorial section. He has done some sales in the past when we were falling behind. He accompanies me to conferences, is my sounding board and makes sure I take care of myself – even when we are in the final push of putting the Guide together and so many other things. Jim's unwavering support is what sustains me at times. And, yes, he does carry things, too.

Thank you again for your dedicated support of the Canadian Donor's Guide as a valued resource. If you have suggestions, ideas or questions, feel free to contact me directly. May this Guide always be helpful in your endeavours to easily and effectively match donors with charities. What a legacy, indeed.

This word cloud represents all the cities where the charities listed in the 2025-26 Canadian Donor's Guide are located. We appreciate the staff, volunteers and donors at charities across this country. No matter the size of the charity, each one represents hard work being done in communities in Canada – doing the best they can to improve the lives of others in various ways. Orillia, Ontario is the home of the Canadian Donor's Guide.

