



# REFLECTIONS REPORT ON 2023



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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We're now in our fiftieth year of operation as a Society, having been formed in September 1974! We look forward to celebrating this milestone anniversary in the fall. As time goes on, what SALTS does in taking young people to sea on wooden tall ships seems even more counter-cultural, and even more important and necessary. We continue to hear story after story of young people and families positively impacted through this remarkable program.

For many years now we've been offering bursaries for indigenous trainees and building strong working relationships with First Nations on the BC coast. Over a dozen indigenous youth from all over BC joined in on our summer 2023 sailings. Another highlight of the year was our first-ever sailing in our history entirely for indigenous trainees. In fall 2023 we welcomed aboard a group from WSÁNEĆ Leadership Secondary School from Brentwood Bay. They were very engaged in the program and seemed thrilled to be on board, and our crew enjoyed learning from them and sharing this experience. We also enjoyed our first-ever sailing entirely for homeschoolers, in cooperation with Regent Christian Online Academy.

In 2023 we launched a pilot project for an innovative new program. The year prior we had done our first sailing with Take a Hike Foundation, a charity that works in the school system to provide a separate classroom for vulnerable youth, with both a teacher and a registered clinical counsellor assigned to each class. Our connection to

Take a Hike Foundation came because a former SALTS crew-member, Liam Law, is now on staff there. In 2023, we invited Take a Hike Foundation back for three separate sailings of four-days each, with expenses covered through our bursary fund. These sailings gave our crew an opportunity to experience what it was like to have a Registered Clinical Counsellor participating in the SALTS program. During a strategic planning process in 2021, we'd evaluated thirty potential ways that SALTS could deepen our missional impact. Of those, one of the top ideas was to start sailings for parents and teens together. Another of the top ranked ideas was to provide group therapy with clinical counsellors in our program. In fall 2023, we launched a pilot project for the Family Connection Program—our first overnight family sailing in decades, and our first group therapy program for families ever. The sailing took place in March 2024 with Liam Law and his wife Asia Wilcox serving as the Registered Clinical Counsellors, and we received wonderful feedback from participating families. We are working on what our next steps will be for this exciting new program.

Ship maintenance projects included the replacement of over a dozen hull planks aboard Pacific Grace (details later in this report) at a cost of over \$300K. We ended the year with a successful search for a 100' tall Christmas tree—for a new Grace foremast. It is becoming quite a challenge to find suitable old growth timber like this, so when we finally found a source we bought two additional logs for future masts.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We're grateful for generous bequest donations from the estates of former SALTS member and volunteer Colin Turner and the late Roy Edward Crouse. Their gifts boosted unrestricted cash donations to over \$500K for the year. We were also blessed by the donation of 19 boats at a total value of \$641K. SALTS is here, and continues to be here, because people believe in what we are doing and continue to support this work.

As for challenges, though our summer programs are filling up each year, our spring and fall school group sailings are not yet back to full capacity since the pandemic. Overall for the year, we operated at ~66% capacity in 2022 and ~82% capacity in 2023, and we project to reach ~87% capacity in 2024. We've done a lot of program promotion in spring 2024 in a push to get us back to full capacity for our 2025 sailing season. Our financial health depends on it. We are also in need of new bursary funding as the generous commitment of \$100K/year from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation concluded as planned in 2023 (their donations totalled \$800K in all).

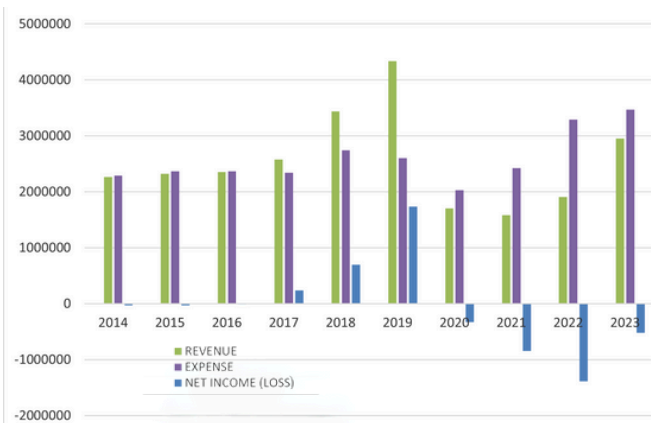
It also remains a challenge to find qualified crew-members at all levels, and especially in the officer ranks as those roles require more training and experience (and all roles require more training and experience than in decades past due to increased regulations). There is a widespread shortage of workers in the marine sector, though we tend to train up people from within our own program. One of the ways we've responded is by significantly increasing compensation and time off for our ship's Captains to bring them closer to industry standards in these areas (we had already increased compensation for other crew roles).

We continue to be excited about the mission of SALTS and how it is transforming lives, and we thank you for your interest and support!

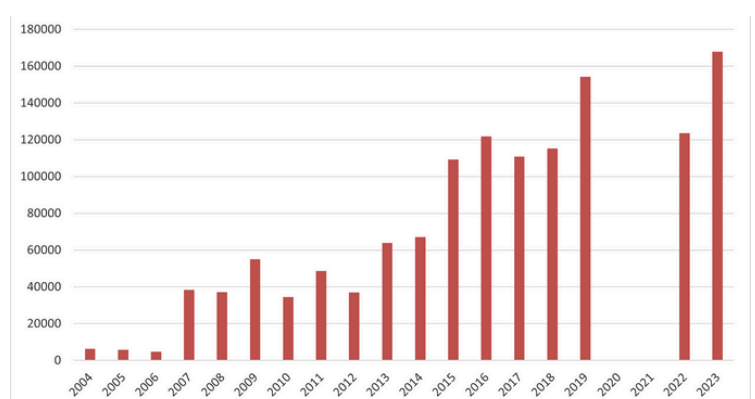



Loren Hagerty  
Executive Director since 2006

Net Income (or Loss), 2014-2023



Bursary Funds Provided, 2004-2023



[Audited Financial Statements for 2023 with additional details are available here.](#)

# FROM THE TRAINEES

Spending time on the water with new and old friends led to many great stories from our crew members – memories like rafting the boats together for a shared beach day and dance party, sailing through late-night fog, experiencing flat calm broken by a pod of orcas with calves, and deep conversations with young people as they consider who they are and their purpose in the world.

And the stories didn't stop there – floods of letters and comments from the young people who sailed tell a multitude of stories as well.



"This trip has helped me have more confidence and love for others and myself...I could be the real me and not worry about what they thought of me. I could go on forever about how much I loved this incredible adventure. Thank you for everything that you do. It has changed my life, I now see the beautiful things that I took for granted before."

- 2023 Bursary Recipient (not pictured)

"Looking back, the trip was as much about internal discovery as it was about exploring the breathtaking external landscapes. The rhythm of the waves, the songs of the wind, and the camaraderie of newfound friends combined to create an unforgettable symphony of experiences."

- 2023 Bursary Recipient (not pictured)



"I found that when my specific group of people on that trip came together, we created a safe space where everyone could share their true selves. There was never any pretending, and never any exclusion. I felt supported no matter how I was feeling. Being out on the ocean in the complete wilderness was also life changing. I found that I could focus on every small detail, while at the same time, seeing the bigger picture of what really matters in life – the people."

- 2023 Trainee (not pictured)



"I learned countless skills like how to steer a boat, set sail, and weigh an anchor. But perhaps the most magical thing about my trip was the community that we formed. With no distractions, just vast blue waters encompassing you, it's so much easier to focus on building connections with the people in front of you."  
- 2023 Bursary Recipient (not pictured)



"S.A.L.T.S has this magical way of bringing strangers closer in friendship. I have found everyone to be so kind, supportive, and knowledgeable. It makes me think about the type of person I aspire to be: to treat others kindly, to spread laughter and positivity, and to respect nature."

- 2023 Indigenous Youth Bursary Recipient (not pictured)

SALTS program participants are sent a post-trip survey about their experience once they return to land. Here are the results from a few of the questions asked in 2023:

**92%** somewhat or strongly agree "My confidence grew as a result of the voyage."

**89%** somewhat or strongly agree "I have a stronger sense that I am valuable and worthy of love."

**96%** somewhat or strongly agree "I was challenged to do things I had never done before."

**91%** somewhat or strongly agree "My mental health and well-being improved on/through the voyage."

**95%** somewhat or strongly agree "I could be my real true self on board (rather than being fake)."

**99%** somewhat or strongly agree "I grew closer to other trainees on the voyage."

# MAINTAINING THE SHIPS

Part of the work of providing a space for the transformative experience of SALTS to happen is making sure both ships are well maintained! Much work happens during the regular sailing season, but once the boats return to dock in October, dedicated maintenance time starts in earnest.

The Pacific Swift crew members had a very busy winter preparing the Pacific Swift for sailing season. Our crew members were involved in refinishing and repairing the dories, refinishing all lower spars and both yards, and maintaining the engine room with a deep clean, engine painting, and other extended maintenance. Our crew members were also aided by contractors as they did anchor winch repairs, hydraulic stainless-steel tubing replacement, and generator removal, repair, painting, and reinstallation. Chris and Patrick from the SALTS Shop completed aft cabin trim and beam soles, finishing details of the Swift's aft deck replacement. Swift crew members also took advantage of the time on land by reviewing and updating the teaching and testing material we use during sailing trips with SALTS.

The Pacific Grace also had work completed in many different areas onboard, some completed by contractors, and some completed by crew members from the Pacific Grace aided by Patrick, Chris, and Sam from the SALTS Shop.

In November, SALTS crew took the Pacific Grace down to Port Townsend USA, to begin the job of replacing some planking on the port quarter and transom. SALTS hired the Port Townsend Shipwright's Co-Op to do this work as well as the removal of the rudder and both drive shafts for our four-year Inspection by Transport Canada.

Ahead of the above work, crew took the opportunity to remove all the masts and associated spars above the deck before the Grace went into the covered shed so that we could complete our own regular four-year inspection of the rig in Victoria while work was progressing on the hull in Port Townsend. Inspection of the masts found that we needed to replace the foremast, so with a flurry of activity we located a lovely tree in the Cowichan Valley and brought it home to begin the new spar. In addition, our crew disassembled all rigging components, refinished blocks, painted all the supporting wire and re-installed all the masting and rigging once the Grace arrived back home in the new year.

Work below decks on the Grace included a new heater, maintenance on the steering system and some electronic updates.



*The Pacific Grace in Port Townsend - including crew member Vanessa seeing what a figurehead would look like!*

All in all, many hands helped maintain the ships this past year and ensure they were well prepared to set sail with trainees in March – thank you to everyone who played a role in getting the ships ready to sail!

# BURSARIES AND GIVING



*Trainee enjoying the view from aloft*

Each year, generous donors provide thousands of dollars in bursary funds that allow young people—who would not otherwise be able—to participate in a SALTS trip. In 2023, the SALTS bursary program provided a total of \$167,636 in trip funds, which supported 41 individuals in our summer program and 82 individuals in our group program.

In 2023, our non-profit partners (who helped select youth bursary recipients from their programs and/or participated in bursary trips) included the Cridge Centre for the Family, Extreme Outreach, Take a Hike Foundation, and new partner WSÁNEĆ Leadership Secondary School—which led to our first ever sailing entirely with indigenous youth.

As part of each trainee's acceptance of their bursary, they agree to spend time volunteering at various community organizations to spread the blessing of our bursary program and further their own learning and growth. In 2023, recipients completed a combined ~300 hours of service.

## 2023 Bursary Recipient Quotes:

*"This opportunity was so incredible. I've learned the importance of teamwork, leadership, and adaptability, all while being surrounded by the natural beauty of the strait of Georgia. The knowledge and confidence I've gained from this experience are immeasurable, and I know they will serve me well for the rest of my life."*

*"This is a tremendous opportunity that has changed my life! It has allowed me to meet, connect and make life-long friendships with people I would not normally have met. I am also experiencing adventures I would never have been able to experience...I am an adopted Indigenous person in a non-Indigenous family, and I always appreciate the chance to connect with the land in my traditional territories in ways I wouldn't otherwise get to experience. The Indigenous Bursary helps me to do this."*

*"The SALTS trip has truly changed me as a person, I have become happier, more open, putting myself out there, I've become less afraid of the world and can only thank you for such an amazing experience."*

Thank you to those who made donations in 2023 towards new bursary funding: the John Russell Cooper Memorial Bursary Fund through the Victoria Foundation, the Laughton Charitable Trust, those who made new contributions to the Keith McKeown Bursary Fund, those who made new contributions to the William H. Cairns Bursary Fund, and the many individuals who specifically directed their gift towards bursary funding. We are also deeply grateful to those whose donations in past years continue to provide young people with life-changing SALTS trips each year.



*Trainees working together*

Finally, special thanks to The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, who have supported SALTS bursaries since 2013 and given a total of \$800,000 in funds towards making these trips accessible to more young people. Their planned bursary funding with SALTS has now ended, and we are so grateful for their years of partnership and their generosity in providing such significant bursary support!

# BOAT DONATIONS AND SALES

In 2023, 19 boats were donated to SALTS at a value of \$641,460.00. There were 12 boats and 1 trailer sold, which raised \$251,050.00, helping keep SALTS afloat and ensuring that young people will continue to be impacted on future SALTS trips.



Boat donations and sales included the “Passat V” (pictured, SOLD) and Permaglass Trawler (pictured, SOLD). Visit [www.salts.ca/buy-a-boat.html](http://www.salts.ca/buy-a-boat.html) to view all active listings!

## PEOPLE

### *We are immensely grateful for...*

The faithful and skillful service in 2023 of Captains Tony Anderson, David Eggert, Tristan Hedley, and Sam Vaale, and crew members Gabriella Barrett, Janae Duerksen (relief crew), Hannah Durkovic, Theodore Fenske, Sarah Gray (relief crew), Julia Hood, Annika Lassen, Taylor McDonell, Brock McNeill, Trinda McNeill, Vanessa McRae, Jessica Morton, Annika Rebel, and Daphne Vegter. Special congratulations to First Mates Brock and Taylor for both achieving their Chief Mate 150GT Domestic tickets, allowing them to step into increased areas of responsibility on board and marking another exciting step in their marine careers!

The leadership of staff-members John Andrachuk, Marita Atwood, Chris Barritt, Tina Bergum, David Eggert, Gillian Ens, Glynis Gittens, Loren Hagerty, Takayo Kono, Ruth Pinlac, Patrick Sharman, Sherilyn Thomson, Sam Vaale, and Dana Way

Those who served on our volunteer Board of Directors in 2023: Krista Chase, Dan Cumming (Board Secretary), Jim Huzzey, Sarah Krzymowski (Board Treasurer), Sarah Meyer, Lisa Monteiro, Jason Nassichuk, Derek Rand (Board Chairperson), and Ryan Smith (Vice-Chairperson)

David Blacoe for his faithful shoreside volunteering

Each person who lent a hand in 2023 to help with events, logistics, and everything else that needs to happen to accomplish the work of SALTS. We couldn't do this without you!



# THANK YOU!

The work of SALTS to transform lives would not be possible without the support of so many in our community. Thank you to everyone who donated to, prayed for, spread the word about, and supported SALTS in a myriad of other ways in 2023. In particular, we want to thank the following people and organizations:

## *Volunteer Crew Members:*

Simon Anderson, Ben Cross, Janae Duerksen, Carissa Dye, Zac Eggert, Nicholas Ens, Gillian Ens, Nadia Faehndrich, Shamus Faulkner, Tom Fedenczuk, Felicity Fehr, Rachel Fletcher, Suz Frank, Esther Goodell, Caity-Rose Gordon, Ali Gourley, Emma Holmes, Paige Hudak-Kesteven, Leah Jones, Jenna Leggett, Sarah McDonell, Jack Mcrae, Claire McRae, Sage Pryor, Annika Rebel, Devon Slade, Karen Steeves, Daphne Vegter, Mia Wieler, Elana Wood

## *Charitable Foundations:*

The Foster Family Charitable Fund via Strategic Charitable Giving Foundation, Grant Thornton Foundation, Investor's Group, JRG Family Fund at Calgary Foundation, Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, R.J. Nelson Family Foundation

## *Estate Gifts:*

The Estate of Colin John Turner, the Estate of Roy Edward Crouse

## *Boat Donors:*

Haijo Westra - 23' Arctic Tern	Anonymous - 40' Chris-Craft Conqueror
Anonymous - 37' Alberg 37	Brian Stilling - 40' Permaglass Tri Cabin Trawler
Deen Brosnan - 37' Oyster 37	Arlene Rutherford & Terrence Lunn - 27' CS 27
Mark Fisher - 30' Santana 30	Anonymous - 31' Double Ended Cruiser
David Black - Novurania 460	Philip Foster - 28' Herreshoff Rozinante
Frederick Bishop - 42' Spencer 42	Gilbert Wensley - 26' Tollycraft 26 Sedan
Anonymous - 25' Vertue II	Ron Pashkewych - 26' Thundercraft 260
John Celona - 33' C&C 33 MKII	Douglas Arnold - 35' Shepherd Express Cruiser
Anonymous - 25' C&C 25 MKII Solace	
Donalda Meyers & James Faragher - 32' Ennos Sapphire	
Carolyn & Herbert Rothenbacher - 41' Ernst Evers Pilothouse Ketch	

We are grateful to be under the Distinguished Patronage of:  
The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC  
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

To the entire SALTS community: thank you for training young people, by the sea, for life!