What’s past is prologue. That being so, the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology’s 50th anniversary is an appropriate time to review the organization’s achievements to date.

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We reviewed 50 years of the CAG Board of Directors and the Annual General Meeting minutes and have produced a very selective summary of the main events. Whenever we tell our colleagues that we have done this we hear expressions of sympathy, or incredulity. How wrong they are. Reading these minutes opens up the personalities and windows on the past which are, from the perspective of 2012, hardly believable.

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The basic structure of the CAG was laid down within months of its incorporation and the great debates - the Foundation, the role of CAG in education, research directions and funding - were as lively 50 years ago as they are now.

There is a great deal of pleasure in reading how the organization took its first steps and of the many characters involved. They appear and disappear from the stage like actors in a drama. We are fortunate indeed that our predecessors left this trove.

Des Leddin, Bill Paterson, Phil Sherman
Past Presidents, CAG

The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology is dedicated to research, professional education, and patient care in all areas of digestive health and disease in support of the economic and social health of all Canadians.
1962 - 1969
1962 - The first meeting of the Governing Board of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG) was held in the Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, June 20. Committee structure consisting of the Nominating, Admissions, Finance & Bylaws Committee.

1963 - CAG was incorporated on January 13.

1964 - CAG joins the International Organization of Gastroenterology (OMGE).

1965 - Joint meeting of the CAG and AGA held in Montreal.

1966 - CAG conducts a survey of postgraduate training programs in gastroenterology.

1967 - CAG Board decides to establish a J. Gastroenterology in Gastroenterology.

1968 - First McKenna Lecture in honour of the first President CAG, Surgeons (RCPSC) on the development of recognition in gastroenterology.

1969 - CAG Board debates a proposal to form a national fund raising group to support research and education in gastroenterology.

1970 - CAG Board establishes a program to support research and education in gastroenterology.

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1971 - Accreditation of training programs underway. Standards agreed upon for training in gastroenterology.

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1973 - CAG Board debates a proposal to establish a Department of Gastroenterology.

1974 - CAG holds its first annual meeting in Vancouver. CAG Decision: Canadian Digestive Disease Week.

1975 - Advisory group convened on human resources.

1976 - CAG bylaws updated to encompass a growing membership.

1977 - CAG student research awards introduced to support research and education in gastroenterology.

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1981 - CAG Resident Research Award introduced; first recipients Paul Beck and Catherine Keenan.

1982 - CAG membership reaches 100.

1983 - Total CAG revenue is $25,750; pharmaceutical funding increased. CAG takes the lead on quality in endoscopy.

1984 - Discussion on the need for a Canadian Association of Gastroenterology – Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Physician/Pharmaceutical collaboration.

1985 - Start of the Gastroenterology Assistants Association (GAA).

1986 - CAG Liaison Committee established.

1987 - CAG & CCFC Student Research Prizes introduced; first recipients Khursheed Jeejeebhoy.

1988 - CAG takes the lead on quality in endoscopy.

1989 - CAG Young Investigator Award introduced; first recipient Ian Bookman.

1990 - CAG membership increases.

1991 - CAG Membership reaches 500.

1992 - Postgraduate course for residents (GRIT) inaugurated.

1993 - Endoscopy Consensus conference held.

1994 - CAG secretariat installed.

1995 - CDHF fully functional.

1996 - CDHF officially becomes the foundation of the CAG.


1998 - CAG becomes a member of the Royal Society of Canada (RSC).

1999 - CAG launches human resource plan linked to patient access to care wait times.

2000 - CAG launches the educational portal (ePortal).

2001 - CAG New Investigator Grant introduced (Nycomed); first recipient Anne Marie Salapatek.

2002 - CAG Distinguished Service Award introduced.

2003 - Kopelman Memorial Pediatric GI Lectureship introduced at CDDW, first lecturer: Frances Tse.


2006 - Order of Canada; Brett Finlay.

2007 - CAG Membership reaches 768.

2008 - Royal Society of Canada Fellow; John Wallace.

2009 - CAG membership reaches 775.

2010 - CAG National Office has four full time staff.

2011 - CIHR Researcher of the Year; Paul Kubes.

2012 - Survey of Access to Gastroenterology (SAGE) - April 16 - 23.
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