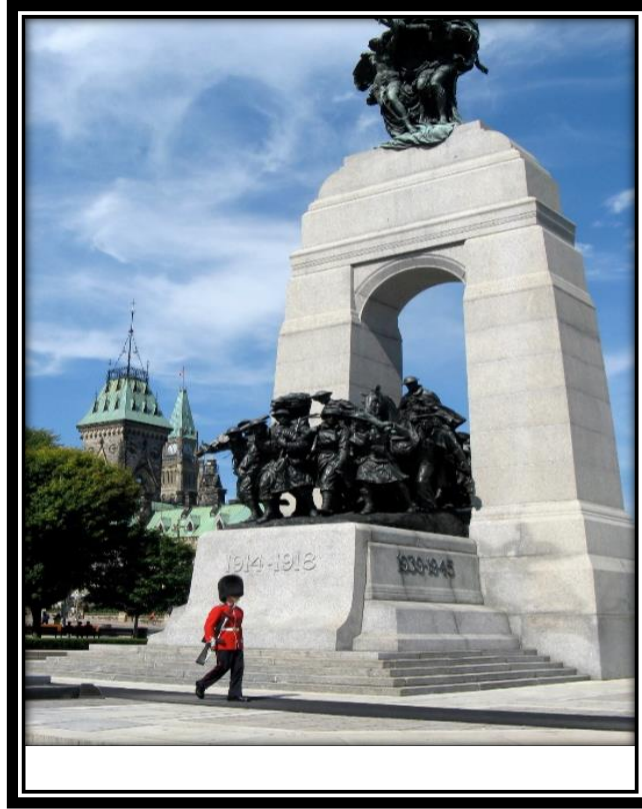


The Friends of the Canadian War Museum ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021/2022



HONOURING HISTORY FOR A BETTER FUTURE



INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends of the Canadian War Museum (Friends) we are now emerging after two years of functioning under pandemic constraints which have limited our access to the Canadian War Museum and restricted our operations. Nevertheless, we are sound and healthy as a federally incorporated registered charity.

I am pleased to advise that donor and membership support has increased and we conclude the year in an even more favourable position than at its outset. Under the leadership of your board of directors, steady progress continues in supporting the Museum; I am extremely proud of the work which has been done.

Financially we remain in a sustainable and most favourable position due to the generosity of donors together with prudent financial management. The Friends has not suffered the catastrophic losses experienced by some other charities and we were able to make a generous donation of \$52,000 to museum programs; indeed, in the budget for the 2022/23 fiscal year, we have earmarked a gift of \$100,000 supporting: the Research Fellowship Project, the Supply Line Project, Remembrance Day events and parking for veterans.

On behalf of your BOD, I would like to express our appreciation to all Friends and donors for your continuing support throughout the year. We strive to be relevant, sustainable, contributing and valued.

THE STRATEGIC AND OPERATING FRAMEWORK

Our work as a federally incorporated registered charity is anchored in our established statement of purpose, strategic objectives and concept of operations.

Purpose and Vision

Our purpose is to promote and support the Canadian War Museum in its role as a vital Canadian institution. We aspire to be a pan-Canadian registered charity supporting the Museum through fundraising, volunteering and program support.

Strategic Policy Statement

In all endeavours, the Friends is guided by the **fundamental strategic objectives** of **building constituency** and **strengthening financial position**.

Strategic Objectives

We have established four strategic objectives which support our purpose and our vision:

To raise funds;

To build constituency across Canada;

To optimize support directed to the CWM; and,

To govern and administer the Friends corporation effectively and efficiently.

Delivering the Product - the Board of Directors (BOD) and supporting Committee Structure

At the heart of our work is the BOD. Elected by the general membership, it is empowered to manage the business of the Friends. Its membership includes those with the commitment, skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the purpose and the needs of the Museum. Membership is refreshed or renewed annually at the Annual Members Meeting (AMM) after which the BOD chooses its corporate officers. While the pandemic restrictions are being relaxed we have retained the broad outreach and participation benefits of the virtual approach and the AMM this year will be conducted virtually in September 2022.

The BOD provides oversight, approval and direction in the context of policy and procedure. In order to operationalize delivery against the strategic objectives, five committees of the BOD have been struck: Museum Support; Ways and Means; Communications and Marketing; Governance; and Corporate Services. Lateral communications have been facilitated through the support of an *ad hoc* committee comprising the Corporate Officers and Committee Chairs (COCC).

This committee structure has been in place for several years and has served us well. Notwithstanding, in the coming year we plan to review and update our strategic plan and its supporting committee structure in order to further strengthen our capability to support the Museum. The COCC has proven to be particularly worthwhile and may be established on a formal basis.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

General

Notwithstanding the restrictions occasioned by the pandemic, with the commitment and creativity of the BOD, a great deal has been accomplished. I now touch upon some representative highlights.

Corporate Officers and Committee Chairs (COCC)

As stated above, this committee, while not formally established has demonstrated its value by strengthening inter-committee awareness, considering emerging issues and supporting the BOD by proposing items for its consideration. As all the corporate officers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary) are members of the COCC it helps focus their commitment and service to the full board.

Museum Support

Ultimately, all efforts by the Friends are intended to support the aims, programs and activities of the Museum; in this regard, the fundamental purpose of the Museum Support Committee is to develop relationships and personnel and financial support as they pertain directly to the Museum. The Museum Support Committee may be considered the agent of the BOD where the entire volunteer effort is focussed and delivered.

During the past year, this capability of the Friends was maintained through the close virtual cooperation among the President, the Museum Director General, the War Museum/History Museum Director Major Gifts and Contributions, the COCC and the BOD. The principal product of this co-operative approach is the contribution agreement which sets out the particulars of the Friends' support. The 2021/22 agreement supported the "Second World War Supply Line Educational Program", the "In Their Own Voices: Stories

from Canadian Veterans and their Families Project” and the “Virtual Schools Program” as well as parking for veterans and “Adopt-a-Book”. In July 2021 we presented a cheque in the amount of \$104,000 representing both the 20/21 and 21/22 contributions. The smiles in the image which follows tells the story better than words!



Ways and Means

The Ways and Means Committee serves to identify internal and external funding opportunities, develop sponsor relationships and grow the Friends’ constituency of support.

The committee has been in the forefront of activity this year leading as it does on the newsletter front and introducing our first online virtual Friends Forum to broaden the outreach of the highly popular on-site events which remain a partner initiative. As in the past year, this committee has worked hand-in-glove with the Communications and Marketing Committee; indeed, it is likely that these two committees will be merged under the Ways and Means brand as the lesson of the past year is that the functionalities are inseparably integrated.

While the scope of the work of this committee is broad, it is fair to say that the focus this year has been upon the electronic newsletter and developing its potential to serve the corporate purpose in supporting the Museum. During the year this online electronic product has been distributed monthly and upon special occasions. Available in both official languages over the year its readership has more than doubled including both members and other parties who have expressed interest in being included in the distribution. Content has matured over the year and has been enriched with the contributions of members and external readers. The newsletter has contributed to greater awareness of the Friends resulting in growth in membership and a significant increase in donor financial contribution.

In the website and newsletter, there is close cooperation with the Museum with respect to oversight, content and translation. This has been enormously helpful and benefits both parties as all funds raised and interest generated represent value added to the Museum. I would like to make particular mention of the language oversight group comprising both anglophones and francophones and in which the Museum Director General and Acting Chief Executive Officer plays an active role!

Of course, no ways and means discourse would be complete without mention of our Book Room. In spite of closures and restrictions it has continued to make a modest financial contribution by way of sales of used books through the Museum Gift Shop in the periods when it has been open and the cooperation displayed here is characteristic of the healthy relationship between the Museum and the Friends. Very recently the Book Room has been open on a reduced schedule but sales have been encouraging. Over the years of the pandemic, hundreds of books have been donated and are poised to be offered to the public. The reputation of the Friends Book Room as the best military history used book store in the country has been sustained and the potential for growth in fiscal year 2022/23 is enormous.

Communications and Marketing

The Communications and Marketing Committee develops and supports the carrier and communications services to promote the Friends, to support the Ways and Means initiative and to facilitate donor connectivity and outreach.

With the successful launch last year of the new website and with the newsletter having just enjoyed its first anniversary, it is clear that this function is inexorably linked with the Ways and Means initiative and as mentioned previously, the two committees will likely be integrated. In point of fact since the beginning of the year, the two teams have been working together.

A principal advantage of this approach is that new ideas for outreach and fundraising can be developed jointly and the concepts and carrier communications can be tested and refined together. Over the year, the Communications and Marketing team has furnished the website and newsletter team with the analytics to assess user access and interest even to the extent of information concerning the time spent by a reader on the material. This has helped shape the presentation of information and the ease of linking between the newsletter and the website. The ability to refine and adjust rapidly has already led to expanding reader engagement. In the current fiscal year 2022/23, the communications platforms will be examined to determine if further improvements may be introduced. This work will also consider if capabilities available in our current products are fully understood and exploited.

Governance

Compliance with the strategic objective of governing and administering ourselves effectively and efficiently calls for continuous vigilance and due diligence. It has been several years since we developed our strategic plan and it has served us well as a fundamental anchor for our work in supporting the Museum. Nevertheless, good governance warrants a regular review and this fiscal year 2022/23 we plan to update and refine the plan. In this regard it will be particularly important that we remain fully aligned with the Museum which is also polishing its focus, one element being to enhance its role as a centre of excellence in historical research. May I add that in the current fiscal year 2022/23 some \$50,000 of our financial gift will support this particular Museum program.

Also, for more than two years now, we have operated well under the committee structure set to work in fiscal year 2019/20 but as mentioned above, in the spirit of continuous improvement we will introduce refinements in order to better fulfill our ability to support the Museum and be fully aligned with our strategic objectives and supporting plan.

The governance work embraces how we are structured to deliver against our charitable purpose and the effort extends to the size and shape of your board of directors. At the forthcoming virtual AMM scheduled for Thursday 15 September, you will be presented with a motion to approve a revision to our Articles of Continuance and to our Bylaw to set the number of directors. This will permit a modest reduction in the size of the board to enable a greater focus on oversight, governance and control and to place operational matters in the hands of the committees. These proposals reflect how our governance and operating approach has developed over the past two years and echoes the spirit of continuous improvement mentioned earlier.

Of course, at the AMM you will be asked to approve a slate of directors which will be presented for your consideration. The development of the proposed slate is currently a

work-in-progress in the hands of the nominating committee and you will be furnished with the necessary well in advance of the meeting. May I also add that the AMM is your opportunity to participate actively in the governance of the Friends; your involvement is strongly encouraged.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Committee oversees all of the activities which support the business of the Corporation, namely: general administration, financial accounting, human resources, procurement, information management and technology.

In the hands of its committee chair the several support elements have been meeting on a regular basis to foster communication and inter-operability. The outputs include a cloud-based data depository, regular monthly data updates concerning membership and member and donor contribution and volunteer hours contributed. I have been very impressed with the work to align membership data (both participation and financial) which are captured on a calendar year basis for taxation purposes and financial operating data which are aligned to the Government of Canada fiscal year.

The Corporate Services group also develops the annual budget which demands input of all directors and committee chairs and careful alignment with the work of the Treasurer. Additionally, all correspondence with members, donors, and contributors of all stripes are skillfully coordinated through the administrative office team; maintenance, upgrade and renewal of our supporting technology suite is also within the committee mandate.

It is certainly no exaggeration to state that the fundamental objectives set out in our strategic policy statement could never hope to be achieved without the key support work of this committee.

CLOSING COMMENTS

As I prepare this report I reflect on the fact that for a period of more than two years almost all of our work has been conducted virtually. I am impressed with the manner in which your board, its committees and you our members have accommodated to this and have gained from the experience.

When you receive this report fiscal year 2021/22 will be well behind us and by the AMM in September 2022 we will be more than five months into the current fiscal year. In my verbal report at the AMM, I plan to update you on progress. There has been, there is now and there will continue to be progress; in spite of the lingering pandemic, I am optimistic.

The notion of a return to normal has become somewhat shop-worn but for the Friends the notion warrants reflection. Prior to the pandemic our operations were essentially based in

a presence in the Museum; we cherish this honour as an essential element of our commitment and engagement and we look forward to its renewal! Nevertheless, reflecting on the virtual experience of the past year during which we broadened the constituency of interest, donation and support and significantly strengthened financial position, we took advantage of the virtual reality and benefitted from electronic outreach and communication. Our regular board and committee meetings as well as the AMM were conducted electronically with success and with wider reach. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the fiscal 2021/22 AMM will be conducted in this manner to facilitate our developing pan-Canadian presence.

Looking ahead, then, means retaining the valuable practices of our onsite presence (our museum-based Friends' Forum for example) but continuing to develop innovative electronic outreach (our electronic newsletter and our Virtual Friends Forum for example) to enhance delivery against our strategic objectives and to strengthen support to the Museum. Yes, we appreciate that the pandemic continues to constitute a risk but for the Friends the new normal will exploit the valuable lessons of the past two years. For all of us it will indeed be a new normal.

We are blessed with a supportive membership and donor base and a knowledgeable, energetic and enthusiastic BOD. The successes and contributions of the past year are all attributable entirely to their commitment and support.

Members, donors and supporters, please stay with us. We the Friends need your support as we serve the Canadian War Museum, a truly national treasure.

A final comment

After five years in post, I will be stepping aside as President and as a member of your board. I plan to remain as a board advisor and if requested may support the renewal of the strategic plan; of course, I will remain an active member and supporter.

It has been an enormous honour to have served you and a most gratifying personal experience; thank you so very much for this privilege!

Yours aye,



Robert Hamilton

President

The Friends of the Canadian War Museum

