



Fort Henry Guard Club of Canada



FHGCC

Strategic Plan - 2017 to 2020

December 2016

Introduction

The strategic plan was developed on June 20, 2016. Contributing to the ideas it contains were Steve Mecredy, Mike Dabros, Michelle Foxton, Greg Gouthro, Chris Henry, Don Cranston and Sarah Kennedy-Hall



The plan was the result of a decision by the Board of Directors of the Fort Henry Guard Club of Canada to develop a longer term strategy that would ensure the Club moved forward in a thoughtful, effective and efficient way.

The timeline for the plan is 2020. At its discretion the Board of Directors can decide to continue its use beyond that end date.

The plan will be implemented based on the responsibility assigned to each action. Oversight will be exercised by the Strategic Planning Committee on behalf of the Board of Directors. To ensure actions are taken, the plan will be a standing item on the Board’s meeting agenda. Updates will be provided on progress and the plan adjusted as needed.

The facilitators for the planning day were former Guardsman Tom Little and his colleague Nancy Mouldsdale of CMCS Consulting Services, located in Oshawa. They provided their services free of charge as a contribution to the Club and its work.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic plan includes actions that address each of the roles identified by the Club as making up its mandate:

1. Increase membership
2. Provide mutual benefit and support / Enhance spirit of camaraderie / Advance member welfare
3. Promote and support the Guard
4. Gather and preserve records, information and memorabilia associated with the FHG and the Club
5. Encourage and support research into the history of the Fort and the people and the regiments that have served in it
6. Raise funds to carry out the objectives of the Club
7. Undertake other actions re the role of the Club

The plan also addresses the work of the Board of Directors in the final action area:

8. Enhance the work of the Board of Directors





1. Increase membership

**** Note - Blue shading indicates the action has been completed

Action 1.1 Explore benefits of expanding membership to other former employees (e.g. Interpreters etc), as well as others (visitors, donors) who may just want to support the efforts of the organization

By When: Completed
By Whom: Board of Directors
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- By-Laws section 5 - affiliate members are anyone who worked at Fort or anyone accepted by Club
- By-Laws permit current Guard to become members - Club has reached out to current Guard & have left a membership brochure at Fort admissions for anyone interested in joining Club - will speak with Fort about including these brochures in stores as well - may also include link to merchandise site

Action 1.2 Identify activities that would provide value and encourage more current and former guards, as well as others, to participate.

● Determine the life stages when people's engagement with the guard is more likely/more intense and identify activities that would appeal to those age groups

● Conduct survey

● Determine if barriers exist that discourage recent former guards from joining

By When: In progress
By Whom: Board
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Policy implemented to provide complimentary membership to current Guard and student employees of the Fort
- Board has discussed and is considering whether a move away from membership fees to more of an alumni type of approach would benefit the organization

Action 1.3 Promote utilization of relationships developed through the guard to foster career-related connections/mentorship and to provide added benefit to members

By When: Completed
By Whom: Don Cranston
Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- See 1.4 re website

Action 1.4 Further develop capacity of website to foster connections related to career path (build on current capacity to add business card)

• Utilize social media to appeal to younger former guards

By When: Completed
By Whom: Christy O'Neill, Rob Hamilton, Chris Henry
Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- Created a professional connection page on our website
- Professional Forum launched on the Club's website
- Looking for social media coordinator to organize social media sites and keep them current

Action 1.5 Develop a brochure to be handed out to former guards and others who may be interested, directing them to the Club website where dues can be paid right away. Include description of value of membership.

By When: Completed
By Whom: Michelle Foxton
Priority: Low

Progress Update:

- Brochure completed
- 50% off admission fee negotiated

Action 1.7 Identify whether there are regular communications that we could be sending out to non-members (ensuring compliance with current legislation) and develop a communication plan

By When: TBD
By Who: TBD
Priority: TBD

Other Actions Completed re Membership Not Included in Plan:

- Free membership offered to current guard and student staff
- Automatic membership renewal feature added to website
- Initiated telephone Membership and Reunion Registration drive
- Club membership is up to 368 as of October 2018
- Encourage Guard Seniors to be Club members through a spring BBQ event organized to promote the Club



2. Provide mutual benefit and support Enhance spirit of camaraderie Advance member welfare

Action 2.1 Identify Captains or informal leaders throughout the years who can be tapped to provide leadership to chapter groups and in other ways

By When: In progress

By Whom: Strategic Planning Committee, Don Cranston will bring suggestions forward

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Next steps - Tom to send email to any people listed requesting updates

Action 2.2 Develop merchandising capacity:

- Recruit a merchandising person
- Explore utilization of merchandising supplier to process orders directly

By When: Completed

By Whom: Sarah Kennedy-Hall, Board

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- New merchandise website created with entripyshops.com
- New shako pins designed and in stock
- Will see if can leave brochures in stores with entripy site listed

Action 2.3 Continue to publish newsletter 2-3 times per year, eventually transitioning to online version only

By When: Ongoing

By Whom: Greg Gouthro

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- 2017 - 3 editions published
- 2018 - 2 editions published

Action 2.4 Develop the capacity to have uploaded photos posted (photos of current/former guard and employees)

By When: Ongoing
By Whom: Christy O’Neill and Chris Dearlove
Priority: High

Progress update:

- Underway - capacity there but still need to work on vehicle for posting etc.

Action 2.5 Organize Wellington-related dinners in locales that have interested members

By whom: Don Cranston & Chapter leaders
By when: Annually, around June 18 anniversary
Priority: Medium

Progress update:

- In progress, Greg to follow up with Don

Action 2.6 Organize 2018 Reunion. Fully utilize new technology to ease the workload of the board/committee members.

By When: Completed
By Whom: Board/Reunion committee
Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- 80th Reunion held on August 10-12, 2018. Included Friday golf, evening reception, Saturday opening of GMR, march past & show, silent auction and dinner, Sunday Drumhead and AGM.
- Attendance was 113 Guard, 53 guests, 20 current Guard and one VIP guest, for a total of 187. Small financial surplus.
- Sale of old merchandise was most successful fundraiser.
- Positive feedback from follow-up survey.
- Planning guide and job descriptions prepared for 2023 Reunion.

Action 2.7 Explore competitive bids for insurance, other personal services as a benefit for purchase by Club members

By When: June 30, 2017

By Whom: Michelle Foxton(Insurance only), others TBD

Priority: Low

Progress Update:

- In progress (auto & home insurance)





3. Promote and support the Guard

Action 3.1 **Continue to sponsor annual awards presentation of Fort Henry Guard. Promote attendance to former guards, and promote membership to current guards at the awards ceremony as well as others in attendance.**

By whom: Awards Committee

By when: Ongoing, annually

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Awards evenings sponsored in 2017 & 2018
- Planning for 2019 underway
- Review of awards program conducted
- New and changed awards introduced in 2018
- New terms of reference developed and implemented
- New sponsorship program in development
- Also see 2.6 re Reunion & 8.4 re Awards Sub-Committee

Action 3.2 **Continue to support guard when they travel**

- Financial assistance through in-kind support e.g.: services/products
- People to do home guard

By When: Ongoing

By Whom: Board

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- See action below re SLPC/initiatives

Action 3.3 Identify opportunities to advocate for importance of guard to all levels of government, parks commission, local businesses, NGOs, general public and media

By When: Ongoing

By Whom: Board in conjunction with identified champions (TBD)

Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- Requested by SLPC to identify initiatives of interest to FHGCC that might also be of interest to SLPC (also see 7.4)

Possible initiatives include:

- Develop a summer employment opportunity for a disadvantaged youth, possibly in conjunction with grant programs
 - May be an opportunity through the 100 Men Who Care group to seek funding for an initiative that targets this demographic
- Summer employment for a high school student; staffing for Fort
- Leadership training program;
- Workplace mentorship opportunities offered by former FHG (bring a guard to work day!)
- Contribute to Washington trip
- New colours
- Refurbishing the drums
- Post Sec Scholarship
 - Research fellowship position that focuses on topics that advance common interests (eg: similar to Museum of Health Care); Mike can follow up re getting more info/terms of reference if needed
- Photo program
- Volunteers for specific events eg: sentries; security

Next Steps:

- Flesh out list of initiatives the Club is willing to pursue; select favoured project from a short list and develop fundraising plan
- Investigate foundations/grants to see if funds could be accessed that might cover the manpower capacity required to undertake any of these initiatives
- Discuss list with Fort/SLPC to determine what initiatives supportable
- Poll members as to the kinds of things they feel the club should fundraise for - Christy to post; Chris to assist with drafting
- Negotiate with Fort/SLPC for additional member benefits

Action 3.4 Promote Fort Henry employment to Club members

By When: February 28, 2017, then ongoing each year

By Whom: Board

Priority: Low

Progress update:

- Forwarded Fort's advertisement to membership et al via twitter & facebook in 2019 & posted on website in 2018

Action 3.5 Continue to sponsor end of recruit training period event, or other events

By When: May 15, 2017

By Whom: Board

Priority: Low

Progress update:

- 2019 planning seniors BBQ

Action 3.6 Sponsor small or full contingent FHG field trips to other historic sites

By When: June 30, 2019

By Whom: TBD

Priority: Low



4. Gather and preserve records, information and memorabilia related to the Fort Henry Guard

Action 4.1 **Continue to archive and inventory the Club Collection pursuant to the Club Collections Policy**

By whom: Club Archivist & Steve Mecredy

By when: Ongoing

Priority:

Progress Update:

- Welcomed new Club Archivist, FHG 2186, Daniel Rose.
- Revitalized Guard Memorial Room to include interactive exhibit about history of FHG, through grant from City of Kingston Heritage Fund. Changes include new exhibit panels, object labels, two tablets with an improved APP and stands. Themes include: Spirit of the Fort Henry Guard, Strong Bonds, Special Relationships, A Culture of Success, Women in the Fort Henry Guard, and Fort Henry Guard Training Timeline. Objective is to give visitors a clear understanding and appreciation of the quality of interpretation provided by the Guard. Revitalized GMR exhibit opened on Reunion 2018 weekend. Link to GMR Exhibit added to FHGCC website.
- Visitors had access to a survey that assessed their impressions of the Exhibit from August 11 to October 12, 2018. During this period, 75% of visitors who responded to the survey would highly recommend the Exhibit to others. Items that were particularly memorable for respondents included Regimental Flags, McHenry Key, Swords, Tribute to the Mascots and the information on the panels.
- Continued cataloguing FHG records and memorabilia obtained from original hand-written document, circa 1985. Over the course of the next year, the goal is to continue cataloguing the Club's collection with accession numbers, descriptions, dimensions etc.
- Archivist has already compiled large binder of artifacts.



5. Encourage and support research into history and the regiments that served at Fort Henry

Action 5.1 Digitize Club collections to enhance public access to archival information/resources

Action 5.2 Build capacity to promote history of guard

- Through use of guest authors with expertise in various aspects of activities that take place at the Fort
- Recruit a “historian” who is passionate about sharing the history of the Fort and stories of people who have been connected to the Fort
- Identify families and individuals with connections to the Fort who have capital to invest in projects such as this

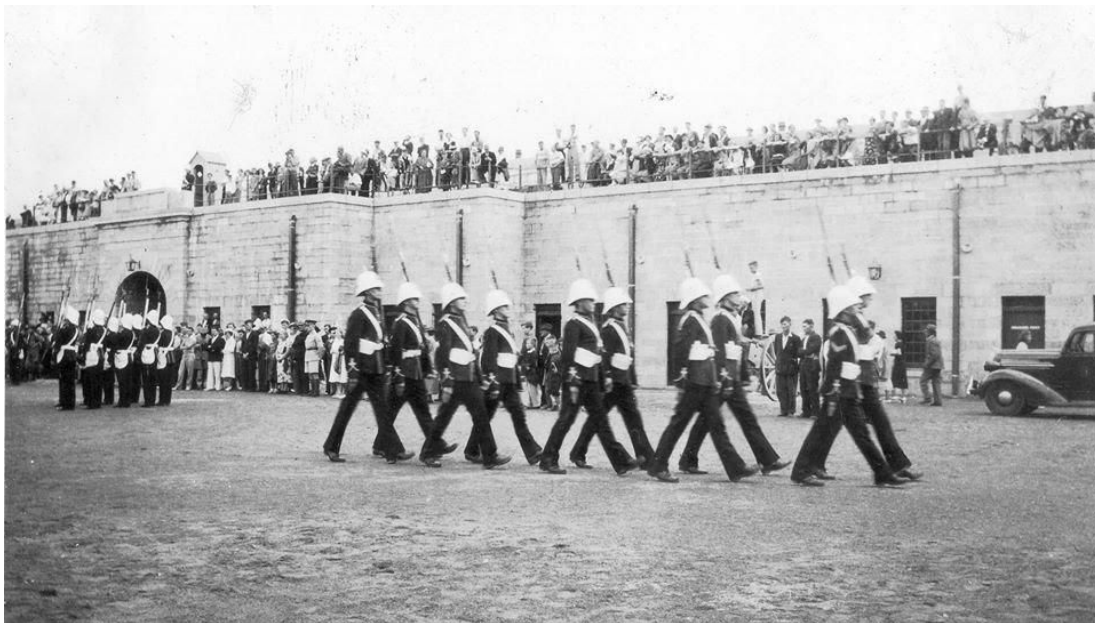
By when: Ongoing

By whom: Club archivist (currently Daniel Rose), Board

Priority: Low

Progress Update:

- See Archivist Dan Rose and actions above as well as articles written by Dan and Mike Murphy
- 5.1 is ongoing: 5.2 needs further attention especially re historian





6. Raise funds to carry out the objectives of the Club

Action 6.1 Explore the feasibility of changing the process by which people join (EG: membership is automatic, your guard number becomes your association number) and not charging dues.

- Would require having new fundraising mechanisms in place prior to transition
- Develop a major fundraising campaign as first step to move towards a due-free membership and fund capital/other projects
- Would need \$200,000 to fund current annual activities at a 3% withdrawal rate

By Whom: Rob, Chris
By When: TBD
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Next steps - Identify ways to enhance the membership fee model while further researching the free membership-fundraising model (also see notes below).

March 21, 2019 Discussion:

- free membership could mean we immediately start communicating with those who are not members, engaging them on a more regular basis
- could allow us to build relationships with more recent guards who don't have the money to spend now, but may over time
- membership fees (\$6,000 annually approx) currently cover operating costs, donations go to foundation for items such as awards; real concern about losing that revenue (website, newsletter, awards)
- expenses have been decreasing recently
- could consider phasing in fees for recent guards eg: for first several years there is no cost, after that there is an intermediate period where membership is a reduced amount finally reaching full membership several years down the road
- could do more to communicate what the funds are needed for
- could offset potential revenue loss by going with less expensive website options; charging a fee to those who want paper copy
- grandfathering in the free membership would give us time to plan and execute fundraising initiatives
- so many more tools available to fundraise these relatively small amounts that we are looking at
- would have to make sure we have the personnel willing to do the work required
- one option could be to maintain current fee model, but concurrently implement a pilot, offering recent guard grads free membership for a defined period; assess

whether this approach results in increase in paid memberships once the free period is over

- could utilize next reunion as opportunity to communicate new path
- could also strike a membership task force (including non board members) to undertake a survey of identified demographic to obtain input on their willingness to donate to the club

Commentary - Registrar

- FHG number 2000 was awarded during the summer of 2005. The Guard Club has only 12 paid up members with FHG 2000 or higher, which means we are averaging ONE new club member per summer since 2005.
- the current high Guard number is ~ 2400, so there are ~ 400 recent FHG (since 2005) that are not members. This is the demographic the club needs to figure out.
- next step is to figure out if it's possible to get an annual due membership commitment from this group. If not, the club should look into options for moving to a free membership with a fundraising element that covers costs.

Action 6.2 Explore feasibility of organizing and finding sponsor for photo day

By When: June 30, 2017
By Whom: Greg Gouthro, Alex McLean
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Providing free photography of the Guard - Christy O'Neill offered to provide - requires organization

Action 6.3 Organize Club group events and include participation with the current FHG (e.g.: bus trips, sporting events)

By When: TBD
By Whom: TBD
Priority:Low

Progress Update:

- Next steps - combine with social items noted above

Action 6.4 Identify and pursue grants that would finance the various initiatives the Board

would like to undertake

By When: TBD
By Whom: Dan, John, Don Cranston
Priority:TBD

Progress Update:

- Next steps - Investigate what other similar organizations have done (re grants; partnerships etc)-Note: move to actions re Parks Commission
- Identified parameters for requesting funding from Davies Charitable Foundation.



7. Undertake other actions re the role of the Club

Action 7.1 **Ensure that contact information for members is current.**

- Utilize LinkedIn and Facebook to support this action
- Promote membership in local chapters with the goal of increasing likelihood of members keeping their information up to date

By whom: Christy O'Neill, Rob Hamilton, Alex McLean, Chris Henry

By when: Ongoing

Priority: High

Action 7.2 **Enhance relationship with Fort management**

By When: Ongoing

By Whom: Board President

Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Welcomed new Fort manager Dawn Ellis-Thornton who attended April 2018 Board meeting. Dawn advised of influx of funding at that time which permitted an increase in student staffing and operations at Fort, including more student positions, extra hours, pay for overtime and new uniforms and accoutrements for Guard!!!! Hats off to Dawn and her staff, as well as to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission for making this happen.
- Promoted idea of the FHG going to Washington to perform with the USMC at 8th and I Barracks.
- Discussed issue of Honorary Guard Commander
- Also welcomed new General Manager & CEO of the SLPC, Hollee Kew who attended February 2019 Board meeting - President & Ms. Kew have had discussions regarding opportunities for the Club to work with the Fort & SLPC on joint projects - appreciation of Club's support has been expressed - Club is in progress of building a strong relationship with SLPC & Fort

Action 7.3 Develop a formal volunteer program with an assigned lead

- Identify roles that volunteers could play

By When: May 15, 2017

By Whom: Board

Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- FHG #2100, Alex McLean, Curator and Program Support Officer at Fort Henry, now coordinating the volunteer program between the Fort and the Club.

Action 7.4 ~~Identify organizations/bodies that have impact on the Fort/Guard and seek to have representation on those, i.e., Club rep on SLPC~~

By When: June 30, 2017

By Whom: Board

Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- See 3.3 re SLPC

Action 7.5 Explore feasibility of privatizing guard, similar to Citadel and Fort York

By When: August 31, 2017

By Whom: Don Cranston and Mike Dabros

Priority: Low

Progress update:

- Don Cranston attended February 2018 Board Meeting & submitted paper on this item Don was to explore climate for contributions from donors - awaiting his report on same
- Tom contacted Don for update - Don has no progress to report at this time



8. Enhance the work of the Board of Directors

Action 8.1 **Develop a checklist/calendar for the board with all critical event dates/deadlines to ensure that full advantage is taken of capacity to market to membership**

By When: Completed
By Whom: Rob Hamilton and Michelle Foxton
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Checklist/Calendar adopted and in full use by the Board

Action 8.2 **Review existing committee structure and adjust as needed based on identified priorities. Recruit interested parties to assist with committee work**

● Recruit additional members for Strategic Planning Committee (e.g.: senior guard, drums)
● Strike working groups of the Strategic Planning Committee

By When: Completed
By Whom: Strategic Planning Committee
Priority: High

Action 8.3 **Ensure that someone takes responsibility for managing the FHG Wikipedia page and adding and maintaining links (priority)**

By When: Ongoing
By Whom: Chris Henry/Mike Murphy
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Tom asked Chris for update but did not hear back

Action 8.4 **Develop Terms of Reference for the Awards Sub-Committee**

By When: March 31, 2017
By Whom: Matt Archibald, Rob Hamilton, Steve Mecredy
Priority: High

Progress Update:

- Terms of Reference for Awards financial sponsorship developed
- Also see 2.6 re Reunion, 3.1 re Awards Ceremony

Action 8.5 **Develop Terms of Reference for the Reunion Sub-Committee**

By When: March 31, 2017
By Whom: Christie O’Neill, Alex McLean
Priority: High

Progress update:

- See Christy’s 2018 Reunion After Action Report

Action 8.6 **Investigate need to transition to the new Ontario Non-Profit Corporations Act**

By When: August 31, 2018
By Whom: John Grenville, Board
Priority: Medium

Progress Update:

- Work underway to ensure FHGCC meets requirements of Ontario Corporations Act as it relates to non-profits.
- The projected date for the new Ontario act is 2020 at which time all existing non-profit corporations will have a three-year transition period to make any necessary changes to their incorporating and other documents to bring them into conformity.

Action 8.7 **Organize social events that involve the Board and club members living in the Kingston area**

By When: TBD
By Whom: Greg will recruit for the position(s)
Priority: TBD

Action 8.8 Enhance website and social media presence

- Complete website evaluation
- Send out a request (via email blast) for interest in taking on role of communication coordinator; Advertise on Facebook
 - Build up contact database
- Contact provider to get our open and click rates on previous email blasts
- Explore selling advertising space in newsletter

By When: TBD

BY Whom: Christie, Chris re communication director; others TBD

Priority:High

Progress Update:

March 21, 2019 discussion

- Need to identify point person(s) for social media, or individual platforms in order to maintain regular communication
- Concurrent issue is building list of people's twitter handles etc in order to reach people

