

The Mandate

The Trust affirms its enduring commitment to:

1. Ensuring that HMCS Sackville is preserved in perpetuity as a cherished Canadian naval icon and major artefact of one of the country's defining moments, for future generations of Canadians to experience and enjoy;
2. Ensuring that the service and sacrifice of Canadian sailors during the Second World War is commemorated;
3. Promoting education and awareness of the stories associated with the Canadian Navy's extraordinarily important contribution to the Allied effort to safeguard democracy, and secure peace during the Second World War;
4. Continuing to develop, and make accessible to the public, the historical archives held by the Trust (including both physical objects and stories); and
5. Ensuring that the Trust has sufficient resources and support for the fulfilment of its Mission.

**Canadian Naval Memorial Trust
Semi-Annual General Meeting
27 January 2024
Chair's Report**

Dear Trustees,

Happy New Year to one and all! I am pleased to say that the past year was a busy, but highly productive and successful one for the Trust. In my report I will highlight some of our major accomplishments in the past year, identify areas where I see us focusing our efforts in 2024, and mention some of the challenges we face. I thought it would be useful to include our Mandate Statement above as a helpful reminder of our enduring pursuits and responsibilities.

Strategic Plan

Far and away, our biggest accomplishment in the past year was the development of our Strategic Plan "*Charting a New Course, Embracing Canada's Naval Achievements Through the Preservation of HMCS Sackville*". The plan was passed via Special Resolution at our AGM held in June and came into effect on 1 July 2023. It is designed to coordinate and focus our efforts over the next three years, aimed at progressing four key goals: Goal #1 – Business Transformation; Goal #2 – Marketing Communications; Goal #3 – Fundraising and Membership and Goal #4 –

Preservation of the ship. At the end of the three-year period the plan will be refreshed and updated to adjust our efforts three years hence. The following paragraphs expand upon some of our accomplishments in each goal area.

Goal # 1 (Lead: Roger Chiasson)

This goal is aimed at strengthening, updating, refining, and codifying the business organization, practices, policies, and governance needed to sustain, grow, and propel the Trust forward. A significant effort was undertaken over the summer and fall months to conduct research and complete a comprehensive file search of archived data. A risk analysis was undertaken, and work activities prioritized. Actions to date have included hiring staff (Executive Director, Office Manager, Public Relations and Social Media co-op student, and Collections Assistant co-op student); refining and developing Standard Operating Procedures for the ship; updating personnel administration (job descriptions and contracts) and implementation of updated information technology infrastructure to improve efficiency, collaboration and document management. Over the next six months focus will shift to organizational structure, Board policies and Board succession/ refresh.

Goal # 2 (Lead: Ann Mech)

Goal 2 is aimed at leveraging knowledge to enable the Trust and to engage with and educate the public. The last six months have been primarily focused on developing the Trust's brand. This activity culminated in contracting a marketing professional to development and promulgate a Request for Proposals that resulted in hiring a Marketing Communications Firm just prior to Christmas. Also, work has been ongoing to advance the curation of our extensive collection of artefacts and historic photographs. During the first half of 2024 work will continue to focus on creating our brand and will develop a new website. Attention will also turn to the development of a marketing and communications plan on a national scale.

Goal # 3 (Lead: Pat Charlton)

Fundraising and growth in membership are the focal points of Goal 3. Key objectives include the development of a Capital Campaign to raise funds for the "re-skinning" of the ship and grow membership in terms of a broader Canadian geographic base while attracting the interest and involvement of younger age groups. To support the activities of designing and implementing a Capital Campaign, a Campaign Cabinet of key influencers has been created and a Fundraising Consultant has been hired.

Goal # 4 (Lead: Greg Cottingham)

Aimed at developing engineering solutions to preserve the ship, Goal 4 has focused on research, liaison with like-minded organizations, broadening connections and further refining the materiel health of the ship. In November Greg gave an outstanding presentation about Sackville at the Royal Institute of Naval Architects Historic Ships Conference held in London. In

December he and Jeff Morrison (our Chief Shipwright) visited Galveston Texas to tour the USS Texas, a 27,000 ton First World War Battleship undergoing a hull replacement. This turned out to be an invaluable fact-finding mission and provided great insight into the viability, challenges and lessons learned in pursuing such a monumental undertaking. Finally, just before Christmas Joe Lombardi, a well-known American expert in the restoration of historic ships, came to Halifax to conduct an internal survey of the Sackville's hull and frames. A very positive report on the internal condition of the ship was completed by Joe and has been posted to our website as supporting documentation for this SAGM.

Ship Operations

2023 was another successful year for the ship on the Halifax waterfront and, as I mentioned in the call letter for the SAGM, was capped off with our participation for the first time ever in the Halifax Evergreen Festival. This was only made possible by extending our stay downtown until the end of November, the latest we've ever stayed at our berth there. Our Commanding Officer, Gary Reddy will have much more to say about ship operations in his own report.

Letter of Intent (RCN/ CNMT)

We've been working for quite awhile now to formalize, in a more substantive way, the relationship between the Trust (a not-for-profit charity) and the RCN. After much discussion, negotiation, review, amendments, and further review, I am so pleased to say that a Letter of Intent (LOI) was signed off by Commander RCN and I, laying out the basis of the enduring relationship between the Trust and the RCN. A copy of the LOI is contained in the supporting documentation for the SAGM and is posted to our website. There are two items I would like to bring to your attention that resulted directly from our close work with the RCN on this initiative. The first was the decision initiated by the RCN to celebrate the importance of the Trust by honouring the service and accomplishments of two of our very own Trustees, Rowland Marshall, and Sherry Richardson. A "Hometown Heroes" ceremony was organised by Parks Canada and held at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. It was the last day for HMCS Sackville to be alongside downtown and the ship was berthed right outside to support the event. This was a very fitting ceremony for two very special people! The second item I'd like to bring to your attention is the intent captured in the LOI to Ceremonially Commission HMCS Sackville as Canada's Naval Memorial. A lot more will need to be done to prepare for such a significant event, but the Trust and the RCN are committed to make this happen. This is tremendous news, and we will keep you posted as this event develops.

Finally, our decision in 2022 to develop a Strategic Plan for the Trust signalled the beginning of a deliberate decision to transform the Trust and ensure we continue to inspire Canadians to appreciate the accomplishments and sacrifices of the RCN for generations to come. I can't imagine where we would be today without taking this important first step. That said, it is one thing to develop a plan but quite another to implement it. The expression "no plan survives first contact with enemy" comes to mind. We do have our challenges. Some that are

top of mind at the moment are: setting the right priorities; fleshing out the Capital Campaign; bringing in sufficient funding or “seed money” to help finance the resources needed to professionally execute the Capital Campaign; effectively managing the balance between planning, expectations, and capacity and last but certainly not least; succession planning. We have our work cut out for us and to be frank we can use all the help and support that is offered.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge our Board, our crew, our volunteers, our staff, our donors, our Trustees, and indeed everyone who believes in us and, in one way or another has offered support. We’ve had a good year and I’m excited about the months ahead, however none of our accomplishments to date would have been achievable without the continued help of so many. Thank you!

Respectfully,

Bill Woodburn
Chair
Canadian Naval Memorial Trust