

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION DES ANCIENS DE LA GENDARMERIE ROYALE DU CANADA

**ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING
RÉUNION DU CONSEIL DE L'ASSOCIATION**

Friday, May 25, 2018, 0800 hrs to 1530 hrs

Best Western Plus Airport Hotel, Winnipeg, MB
Vendredi, le 25 Mai 2018, de 8 heures à 1530
Best Western Plus Hôtel de l'aéroport, Winnipeg, MB

MINUTES of AEC

- 08 :00 hrs – 08 :30 hrs :
- 8 h – 8 h 30

1. Introduction and welcome by President Rivard

Rivard welcomed all the Presidents/delegates and Governors and said it is good to gather together to discuss ongoing issues that we all face on membership and inspiring those who do not join to reach out to them through positive programs that directly impact on them to become members of the Association. He then asked everyone to introduce themselves. Of note, Keith Trail, Governor, member of Central Vancouver Island Division stated this was his 39th consecutive AGM.

- 2.** Rivard reviewed the Agenda with everyone and stated that from the review of previous Executive Council (EC) topics and their status the following points are going to be discussed during this meeting. Rivard stated that we have come a long way since the first meeting of RCMP Veterans in Calgary on the 16th April 1886. A milestone was reached in 2014 with changes under the Canada Not for Profit Act (CNFP), and now we are one Association made up of 30 Divisions, Board of Directors, Board of Governors and the RCMPVA Office. We have conducted three (3) recent surveys soliciting advice, guidance and feedback on resolving recruitment of new members and strategic priorities and the BOD have worked hard to initiate new and positive methods of communication and support that will support our present membership and encourage new membership.

- 08:30 hrs – 09:45 hrs:
- 8 h 30 – 9 h 45

3. (Discussion leaders: Sandra Conlin, Director, Membership/Recruitment, Peter Sorensen, Treasurer, Bob McKee, Director, Communications) will now conduct discussions on the undernoted issues:

- 2015/17 – Reoccurring themes
 - - Growth,
 - - membership,
 - - outreach to partners,
 - - advocacy
 - - finance,
 - - Member services
 - - Communications

Sandra Conlin, Director of Membership/Recruitment reviewed her ongoing initiatives since AGM 2017 in PEI. Conlin stated that a lot of Ladies Auxiliaries (LAs) are now Associate Members. Vancouver has

already begun the process and Regina will be doing a special ceremony in September and have asked that a member of the RCMPVA BOD attend this special event.

Conlin provided an update on the meeting Ralph Mahar, Executive Officer (EO) they had with the RCMP with regards to amending the 1733, thus allowing members to provide consent for the RCMP to provide the RCMPVA with their contact information.

Once 1733 forms have been amended, information will be provided to the RCMPVA National office, who will in turn provide information to the appropriate division's membership director for their information and follow up.

Conlin spoke briefly regarding the need to target the Civilian Members who at some point in the near future will become Public Service Employees and looking for ways to actively recruit these members. We will be working with Ottawa Division to set up a booth at RCMP HQ with applications and information on the RCMPVA.

Conlin provided an update on the meeting held with the Royal Canadian Legion (RCL) and the similarities of our two organizations and more importantly the challenges we both face in attracting new members. Spoke of the need to be relevant and to be advocates for the RCMP Veterans as well as the serving members. RCL noted that the younger Canadian Forces and retirees use of Instagram, texting, Facebook and other methods of communications now.

Conlin spoke of the need to focus on being One RCMPVA and the need to have one stop shopping and the need for e-commerce.

We are engaging more with the RCMP and we have been advocates of support through letters from the President to Ministers of the Government of Canada on pay increases, Veterans pension benefits and the application process for the replacement of the retiring VAC Ombudsman.

RCMP members have no representative at this time and we have an opportunity to be their voice of advocacy.

Briefly touched on our strategic planning meeting and opened the floor for discussions.

Some of the feedback was as follows:

- need to do away with paper as younger generation do everything by internet, (response to 1733, ecommerce and joining process)
- need to be able to apply and collect dues via e-commerce (Bob McKee elaborated on this point during his discussion on ecommerce).
- discussions were held regarding the need to maintain separate databases (once again, as ecommerce rolls out, it will simplify or eliminate many duties held by our Divisions)
- several Divisions in particular Sandy Glenn, President of Nova Scotia Division provided an overview on their best practices and some of the initiatives they have implemented (Glenn encouraged other divisions to contact him and they would be glad to assist on how they implement and track their initiatives on recruitment).

Peter Sorensen – Treasurer (Provided statistics and detailed numbers on costs to operate the Association, what the Association provides every member on the \$37.00 contribution) and long-term goal for membership:

<u>2017 Statistics</u>		<u>2018 Statistics</u>
5240 Active Members	-	5272
440 Life Members	-	430
1115 Associate Members	-	1170
Active Paid – 93%	-	Active Paid – 86%
Short fall: \$16,000	-	Short fall: \$29,000

Division Value:

- ✓ Organize social events
- ✓ Fund raising.
- ✓ Support widow's (Dinners, Christmas Baskets etc.)
- ✓ Attend Annual General Meetings.
- ✓ Website showing good work of Divisions
- ✓ Division profiles on the website showing importance of their divisional ongoing work
- ✓ \$1 Million total Association cash with over \$400,000 invested on improving the Association

Dues Support: (\$37.00 covers the undernoted)

- ❖ Association Office Administration Executive Officer / Executive Assistant / Board of Directors
- ❖ Insurance for all members (up to \$5 Million coverage for functions)
- ❖ Audit costs for Public Accountant (30 Divisions, Office and BOD)
- ❖ E-Vote for all Active Members and Life Members
- ❖ Website maintenance.
- ❖ No cost for accommodation/network

Potential RCMPVA Members that can be recruited: 18,000 – 20,000. At the moment we have around 5,800 members and that would mean we need 600 / Division to meet this total.

Best Practices of RCMPVA BOD:

- Need to continue to discuss and share ideas
- RCMPVA sitting on Government Advisory Groups:
- Pensions for retirees
- VAC Ombudsman
- Family (Benefit Trust Fund)
- Dental coverage
- Homeless Veterans
- Support for Operational Stress Injuries (SOSI) – National Coordinator (RCMP)
- RCMP Peer to Peer program

The Treasurer will continue to work with all Divisions.

- Website – update – One Association/One website (Discussion Leader: Bob McKee, Director, Communications).
 - a. E-Commerce:
 - i. Dues collection
 - ii. Sales
 - iii. Advertising

Communications Director, Bob McKee: Ecommerce /website discussion. McKee reminded everyone that for reference, his report to the Board of directors and the membership regarding the current status of the RCMP VA Website was sent to all members and is posted on the website: rcmpva.org – under AGM 2018. I have the enviable opportunity to move the Association into the 21st Century. How am I going to do that? Well by starting with a new form of communication – the RCMPVA Website.

You have received a number of Mail Chimp messages in the last while but we also have a wonderful website.

INTEGRATION OF DIVISION INTO WEBSITE.

The integration of the Division websites into the RCMPVA Website will further the concept of **one Association, one website**. The added benefit to the Division is that they will **no longer require** a formal webmaster to maintain the Division website. **All that will be required** is a coordinator to provide the update information.

- At this time Ottawa Division is fully integrated and the integration of Nova Scotia Division is progressing. It will be fully integrated in the near future. In addition, interest has been expressed by Toronto Division and Newfoundland/Labrador Division.
- Final decisions are being awaited from these Divisions. It is understood that the smaller Divisions may not be in a position to integrate at this time.
- 17,000 hits on our website recorded to date.
- Costs and updates to be absorbed internally.

THE E-COMMERCE PORTION OF THE WEBSITE. (Ecommerce coming mid- June 2018. Fully automatic by 2020).

PURPOSE

What is the purpose of the implementation of the e-commerce portion of the website. The purpose is to make it easier for the Divisions and or Membership to **make payments for the annual fees**. **To be able to join the Association** with ease while maintaining continuity through the Divisions. This is an opportunity for a **potential applicant to view the website and subsequently** join the Association by completing the application form and **at the same time making the required payment** of annual fee. Members will be automatically entered into the database once application completed. Hard copy will still be available.

The opportunity is present **to sell goods and services** such as the subscriptions for the Quarterly magazine. As time moves on there will be other items for sale through the e commerce program. Payments will be processed for the Divisions with the funds forwarded to the respective division Bank account.

DUES COLLECTION

At present there **are varying fees schedules** depending on the Division. The program has been set **up to accept the fees by Division**. The member will go to the Division and the fees will be outlined. Once paid there will be **a division of the fees** for the National fee and the Division fee. The Association fees of

\$37.00 is standard throughout the Association. At this time Ottawa Division and Lethbridge Division will be the test their Divisions for this portion of the program. The Quarterly is already on line.

ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIPS

At present we have sponsors that have provided funds for certain events such as the dinner this evening. Those sponsors are given advertising on the Website. This is a great opportunity for our Association to gain funds for various events.

This brings up the level of sponsorship. How do we determine the level of sponsorship? As an example, we could have three levels of sponsorship i.e.

- Member Level
- Director Level
- Presidents Level

Each one will have a greater funding level and thus a greater visibility on the website. This is something that has to be worked on further and will come about as the matter is further reviewed. We all benefit by sponsorships. Would it not be nice if we could have a full-blown AGM with full sponsorship? A dream maybe but without a dream nothing happens.

SALES

Again, this is your website One association one website. We all need to seek sponsorships. I can think of a couple of sponsorships that I will be seeking such as Celebrity Cruise Centers and Edward Jones Financial. There are many other ones. Executive officer Ralph has secured the BMO as a sponsor. They will have their logo placed on our website.

This is not a fait accompli. This is an opportunity for the Divisions to join into the process and move a number of functions into the electronic age.

Discussion on work accomplishments and coming changes:

- Name of membership director
- Bank information for division
- Fees for each division
- Generic email for each division to be entered on system
- Create – Policy Guidelines and send to each division. McKee will communicate with Divisions
- 1st January 2020 to become operational
- Budgeting: Every transaction will cost \$1.38 (5,000 on line will cost \$6,900. Will come from the Association portion of \$37 for dues)
- Notice on dues: This will be clarified by McKee.
- Gambit entries into secure database
- Each division can get an abstract for the website
- [RCMP Veterans' Association Foundation – donations through website](#)
- Each member will update their own profile
- Advertising/sponsorship: To verify if this can be put on the National or Division?
- Edmonton RCMPVA Gift Shop - can be linked.

- Quarterly subscriptions can be paid online.
- RCMPVA website is linked to the RCMP - possible enhancement may be needed.

4. Support/promotion of membership: generational & territorial insignia for members. (Ralph Mahar, Executive Officer).

Ralph Mahar stated that everyone has received recent Mail Chimps on the insignias and the criteria for this year's initiative. After discussions with CSM, Al McCambridge, it was resolved that non-members of the RCMPVA had the right to receive the insignias and if qualified they would be able to receive the generational and territorial insignias. The Board of Directors approved the new criteria. The RCMPVA will continue to receive applications from RCMPVA members, but this year applications will also be received from non-RCMPVA members. All applications must be received by Division President and be forwarded to Ralph Mahar at the RCMPVA Office. Members of the Association will be assessed a \$20.00 administrative fee and non-members a \$30.00 administrative fee. Once approved by the CSM, the insignias will be forwarded by the RCMP to Division Presidents and onto those approved to receive the insignias.

5. Maintiens le Droit Trust Fund (MLD) – Governor Keith Trail, Chair

Trail stated that this has been quite a journey for the Trustees and meeting the rules and policy required by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has been the major stumbling block. CRA has a problem with the purposes of the MLD Trust Fund). The RCMPVA B.T.F somehow over the years ended up being a TRUST. A TRUST has no provisions for any amendments. There are no provisions for bursary programs basically reserved for dependents and RCMP members and families and this was seen as being too restrictive.

Through assistance from Ottawa Division, a lawyer from a Toronto Law Firm, with expertise in charities, CNFProfit Act and CRA policy was hired to guide the Trustees. He has recommended to close down the MLD Trust Fund and stated that the name needs to be changed to reflect what the charity is and a name familiar to the general public. Therefore, the name has been changed from "**Fonds fiduciaire Maintiens Le Droit Trust Fund**" to "**RCMP Veterans' Association Foundation**" / "**Fondation des vétérans de la GRC**" and this has been approved by the BOD.

Trail advised that there are six trustees: Jerry Plastow, Bob Hurman, Ian Atkins, Roy Berlinquette, John Francis (Treasurer) and himself as Chair.

It is hoped that the RCMPVA Foundation will be approved by CRA in the near future. The balance in the fund is in excess of \$216,000,00. Approx., \$10,000 will be needed to pay for legal advice and guidance. As an example of how the funds must be distributed to a specific donee, a recent case from a lady in Nova Scotia was cited: She wanted the funds to go to issues dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to benefit former members of the RCMP and their dependants. The Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health have a working relationship with the RCMP and being the Centre of Excellence for PTSD and, the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group (a registered charity) was identified as an appropriate recipient and a \$5,000 donation and a tax receipt was then issued.

6. RCMPVA – Quarterly: Ms. Tanya Baglole, Editor Quarterly - Baglole stated that she has been the Editor of the Quarterly for the past eleven (11) years and this is her first AGM and very much appreciated attending and being able to talk to our Veterans. Baglole highlighted points from their Annual Report to the RCMPVA on changes to make the Quarterly more visibly attractive relating changes as far back as 1933. They have focused on a mix of stories from humour to report on the RCMP Tartan, cold case murder investigations. The pensioners membership subscriptions are quite stable (at 6,000) and they have implemented ecommerce for the first time to make subscription applications easier. They have

used a on line survey experiment to perk up interest as well as many recent and ongoing articles of historic importance involving RCMP members on Facebook which has given them positive feedback.

Following a financial review, *the Quarterly* transferred \$26,000 to a liability account because we had not been recording subscription sales properly. Despite that transfer, *the Quarterly* realized a net income of \$4,794, which was turned over to the Veterans' Association. Had it not been for that one-time liability, we were on track to show a \$30,000 profit for the year. *The Quarterly* maintains \$100,000 in a special reserve and expects to increase its net earnings in the coming years. We also received \$53,000 through the Heritage Canada Aid to Publishers Grant. Further, an amalgamation of administrative positions with the Veterans' Association, has resulted in significant salary savings for both the Quarterly and the Veterans' Association. And lastly, *the Quarterly* sold over 300 dozen Christmas cards and much credit goes to Chantal Renaud, Circulation Manager and Scribe.

The Quarterly, as noted in the report, are focusing on breaking issues such as the impact of opioid crisis and drug issues, cold case murder (based on North of 60 TV Series), human interest stories involving the work of our veterans and advocacy issues to be included in future editions.

7. 11:30 hrs: C.O. "D" Division, Luncheon with – (Executive Council): C.O. "D" Division, Asst. Commissioner, Scott Kolody hosted the noted luncheon and gave a brief overview of the ongoing operational and community programs that occur daily throughout over 88 Detachments in Manitoba. At this very time members are actively assisting Indigenous communities in evacuations as a result of forest fires. He is very proud of the members of his Division but he also is very proud of his direct and ongoing association with the Manitoba RCMPVA Division and is grateful for our support. He will happily join us tonight at the Formal Reception and Dinner and stated that he looks forward to one day joining our ranks. Al Rivard thanked Kolody for attending and hosting the luncheon.

AEC Continues (AEC Continue) -

- 13 :00 hrs – 15 :30 hrs :
- 13 heures – 13 h 30

8. Supt. Mike O'Beirne, Ms. Katie Holtzhauer, Mr. Dan McBride, Sgt Kim Hendricken, VAC Liaison and Len Meilleur, Support for Operational Stress Injuries. RCMP Peer to Peer program. Confidential service.

- Benefits, VAC, RCMP ID Card, 1733 Access, Ensign

Briefing notes:

On Friday May 25, National Compensation Services, Member Benefits Services attended the AGM and presented on the various units.

The session was opened by Senior Director, Supt. Mike O'Beirne who provided background on the Member Benefits team and services. Created in 2016, Member Benefits Services is the conglomeration of units that are fundamentally related to the well-being of our Members. The genesis to bringing these together was to provide for one overarching umbrella to recognize the interface that exists between the units and to ensure there is a continued and concerted effort in the care of the Members. These units are:

1. Health Benefits Program
2. Insurance Group
3. Support for Operational Stress Injury Program (SOSI)
4. ID Card Program
5. Veterans Affairs Canada: Liaison

Supt O'Beirne introduced the Managers that had attended the AGM and they then presented on the following:

Len Meilleur, National Program Manager SOSI

- The Support for Operational Stress Injuries (SOSI) Program provides confidential peer and social support for RCMP employees and RCMP Veterans. SOSI also intends to educate families of employees through presentations about the cause of operational stress injuries and referral agencies offering assistance both internal and external to the RCMP.
- SOSI was developed after the RCMP conducted a year-long pilot project modeling an on-going program offered by the Canadian Forces Operations Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) Program. In the past, many RCMP employees have received support from OSISS.
- SOSI Coordinators are public servants who meet with employees “confidentially” one-on-one or conduct group meetings based on need. These meetings occur at agreed upon locations. Notes are not taken.
- SOSI Coordinators are not counsellors. They are peers who listen, assess what is being heard, and provide referral information to the peer.
- Presently there are Coordinators in B, J, NHQ, National, O, F, and E Division (Vancouver Island).
- Further information can be provided by Acting Program Manager, Mr. Len Meilleur at 250-380-6101 or by email to len.meilleur@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Sgt. Kim Hendricken, VAC Liaison Officer

Caregiver Zone

In March 2018, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) in partnership with Saint Elizabeth Health Care announced the launch of an e-learning tool that provides instruction, education, videos and tools on a wide range of care giving topics to family members taking care of RCMP and CAF Veterans. This is a free and bilingual resource to these caregivers so they can protect, improve, and sustain their own health. They will also have access to a caregiver coach. Please visit <https://caregiverzone.ca/#!/forefront/home> to sign up and to learn more about this tool.

Veterans Well Being and Family Fund

Commencing April 1, 2018 VAC announced the creation of the Veteran and Family Well-Being Fund which will award contributions and grants to private, public or academic organizations to conduct research and implement projects that support the well-being of RCMP and CAF Veterans and their families. VAC may award grants up to \$250,000 per fiscal year for a maximum of five years and contributions up to a maximum of \$1 mill per fiscal year for a max of five years. The first call out for applications has a diary date of June 15, 2018. Please visit <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/information-for/families-and-survivors/well-being-fund> for more details.

VAC Veteran Identification/Service Card

At this time, there is no indication of a timeline for VAC to advance a VAC sponsored Veterans recognition of service card to RCMP and CAF Veterans.

VAC Applications for Disability Pensions:

Wearing of uniform duty belt: Back strain and back problems – Doctors assessments of back problems for the constant wearing of the duty belts.

Application turnaround time frame: Hendricken stated that the turnaround time for final decisions on application approvals is 38 weeks due to the number of applications that are being processed.

She stated that VAC is considering a dedicated section with RCMP experience to review all RCMP and RCMP Veterans applications.

Death of VAC Pensions: If a veteran dies with over 48% disability pension the survivor would be awarded 100% of this pension.

Dan McBride, Manager RCMP ID Card Program

New process is in the works to develop a record of service card for all members who have left the RCMP having paid into the RCMP Pension Plan. Similar to the Canadian Armed Forces NDI card.
Consultation with RCMP Veterans Association to determine the look and feel of the new card.
Consultation with the RCMP Vet's to create necessary database and forms required to capture all necessary information for member record of service Card.
Further communications and information will be communicated through the RCMP and RCMP Veterans Association as information becomes available.

Katie Holtzhauer, Manager, Member Benefits Insurance Group

Survivors and Executors Guide

The final review of the document updates is being completed. The updated version will be provided to the Executive Officer within the next several weeks.

The document has been updated to include current benefit information.

Critical Incident and Fallen Members Guide

This document was developed in conjunction with the Corps Sergeant Major and the Warrant Group. It is used to assist those working families of fallen members. The Guide contains details on benefits and services available to the families of these members.

The National Compensation Services Pay Operations, Pension and Insurance teams provide personal assistance to these families to ease the completion of the benefits paperwork.

RCMP Veterans Association Benefits Committee

This is the joint working group between National Compensation Services and the Veterans Association. We meet several times a year to discuss items of mutual interest such as retirement ID cards. The meetings continue to be an excellent opportunity to collaborate and engage our groups in productive information sharing.

Insurance Administration Contract

The current contract for the administration of the RCMP Group Life and AD&D plans with Morneau Shepell expires in August 2019. The Member Benefits Insurance Group in the initial stages of the procurement process to put a new contract in place following the expiry of the current one. This process includes the development of the Request for Proposal documents that will be posted for interested companies to bid on.

9. Mr. Brian Sauv  -Guest speaker from the National Police Federation

Brian Sauv , co-Chair, National Police Federation (NPF), on leave of absence without pay, from the RCMP ("E" Division member and former Division Representative), gave a report on the formation of an Association to represent regular non-commissioned members at the bargaining table, in line with the Supreme Court

decision which decided that members had the right to form an Association, and Bill C-7 which has received Royal Assent which says there will be only one Association representing all members. Quebec has challenged this legislation, in an effort to form their own Association, and until this legal challenge is settled, a vote among members for certification of an Association cannot be counted and proceed.

Sauvé, who has a cooperate background, founded the NPF (distinct from the Canadian Police Federation which exists to serve municipal/provincial police in Canada), and is holding a recruiting drive at 929 worksites domestically and internationally which represents over 17,000 members. When Treasury Board granted the members a 1.2% raise, which was nowhere in line with where the Force had fallen in the police universe and was seen as a move to avoid having to pay a raise retroactively, when eventual bargaining with an Association takes place, it resulted in 11,000 electronic ballots from members signing up with the NPF to represent them.

There will be a vote for certification hopefully in late summer or early fall 2018, and Sauvé emphasized the NPF is 100% stand-alone, and will not be able to associate with other non-Police Associations, labour groups, such as iron workers, auto workers, and others seeking more members. At this time Treasury Board has not approved the NPF.

There will be two classes of members, active and retired members of the Force, but retired members will pay no dues, have no vote, but can take part in discussion of labour/welfare issues.

10. Sponsorship (Bank of Montreal) – President Rivard to introduce BMO Representative as new sponsor to the RCMPVA. Ralph Mahar has been directly working with officials for sponsorship to the RCMPVA by BMO. Mahar introduced Mike Hassett, Regional V.P. BMO to address the members on the Canadian Defence Community Banking (CDCB) Program. **Mahar advised that very shortly, a message will be distributed to all RCMPVA members advising them of the program, and the benefits it offers.** Hassett stated that the BMO is the bank for the Defense Community, and that includes the RCMP and the RCMP VA. The partnership allows members and their families to participate in many benefits, including special pricing on both lending (such as lines of credits and mortgages) and investing, a no fee Master Card with added benefits, and free banking via our performance plan...depending on what the needs may be. Once the sponsorship relation is developed the BMO will advertise on our website and division newsletters.

Prior to gaining access to speak to individual divisions the BMO is initiating a \$80,000 contest in June 2018 to anyone switching or joining the BMO as a member. Hassett stated that he looks forward to further developments in working with the Association and will attend with his wife for the dinner and dance this evening.

11. Good of the Association:

Michel Pelletier, President, Ottawa Division:

a. Toys for the North - Pelletier gave an excellent briefing on the Toys for the North highlighting the briefing package that was forwarded to all members. Touching on the history of how Toys for the North developed and impact that it has been making has been a great experience. He complimented all the Divisions (Kingston, Toronto NL, Thunder Bay) as well as the Canadian Forces and O.P.P., that have assisted in helping getting all the toys wrapped and ensuring they are delivered at the designated destinations with representatives from the RCMP members as well assisting in handing out the toys. Kingston, Toronto, Newfoundland/Labrador Divisions stated that they are committed to help Ottawa Division with this years Toys to the North. Several other Divisions expressed interest and Pelletier encouraged them to contact him if they wished to pitch in.

b. RCMP National Memorial Cemetery (RNMC) – Beechwood:

Michel Pelletier, President, Ottawa Division stated that over the last nearly 135 years many RCMP members and their families have been buried at the Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa. Pelletier emphasized that there is no competition with other RCMP Cemeteries and in fact felt there should be more RCMP National Memorial Cemeteries in the West and East Coast of Canada.

Canada's *National Military Cemetery* for its Armed Forces and War Veterans is located at this site. In 2001 the RCMP Veteran's Association (RCMPVA) negotiated an agreement with Beechwood for a significant parcel of land near the National Military Cemetery to be set aside specifically for future RCMP graves. The site officially opened in 2004 and in 2006 the RCMP joined the partnership with RCMPVA and Beechwood Foundation in establishing the *RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood*.

The *RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood* is part of an RCMP framework that complements the *RCMP Regimental Cemetery* at Depot as well as other RCMP designated cemeteries in Dawson, Fort Saskatchewan, Fort MacLeod and Herschel Island. The *RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood* is open to serving, retired and former members, civilian members, public service employees, and their respective families.

Recognizing the significant importance of those buried there, the Government of Canada has designated Beechwood as Canada's National Cemetery.

Since 2004, the *RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood* has completed a number of phases as part of its evolution. The most recent significant event marking the completion of a 6th phase was the "Torch Relay/Memorial Flame" ceremony held in September 2017 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Confederation and to remember the contribution of our Fallen Members.

7th phase coincided with the RCMP's 150th Anniversary on 23 MAY 2023 that he attended. This phase included the technology necessary to share in the rich history of the Force and its contribution to building Canada. Many students from across Canada visit the Nation's Capital every year, especially at the end of the school year and tours are frequently organized at Beechwood cemetery. Many Canadians also include a visit to Beechwood, Canada's National Cemetery in their visits to Ottawa. This 7th phase will hopefully have a Historical Legacy Wall which will highlight the history of the Force, background on each Division from sea to sea to sea and the services that our members deliver to Canadians on a daily basis.

Every year, starting this year, on the RCMP's Anniversary 23 MAY, we will remember the sacrifice of our Fallen Members by holding a vigil at the RCMC with combined participation of Veterans & Serving Members. We wish to build momentum every year until 2023.

We will be actively seeking major fundraising opportunities to complete the project. Finally, Pelletier stated that if you are planning a visit to Ottawa please take in Beechwood or call him and he will be happy to give you a tour of the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery – Beechwood.

c. Certificate of Appreciation: Mike Duffy, Director/Chief Advocate for the Association. Mike Duffy from Lethbridge Division has resigned for personal reasons regrettably as President Rivard stated. Rivard said that Duffy did an outstanding job in leading the Advocacy Program and working with Regional Advocates and external agencies in support of our Veterans. The certificate was given to President, Bob Byers, Lethbridge Division to present to Duffy at one of their upcoming regular general meetings.

d. Certificate of Appreciation: Al Rivard stated that after acting as Association Secretary from December 2009 to May 2018, Alex Geddes is resigning this position. Rivard stated that he will miss his presence on the

BOD as he was always communicating constantly, whether it was during the day or through the night, with all Divisions as well as the BOD on policy and priorities. Geddes was given the certificate and thanked President Rivard, BOD and stated he will no doubt miss everyone.

e. **Dave LeBlanc, Past President/Governor** stated that he is going to miss all the activity of serving the Association after 12 ½ years as a Director, Vice President, President and as Past President on the RCMPVA Board of Directors. LeBlanc stated that many accomplishments and change manage has occurred during this time frame and he is very proud of the service provided to all Association Members.

f. **What is a Veteran:** Sandy Glenn, President of Nova Scotia Division stated that we are not really being represented as true Veterans by the Federal Government. Glenn has written on this subject but at present it seems that the statement that the RCMP Veterans being recognized as Veterans by the Government of Canada is in name only. The Association has liaised with Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada and the Federal Government as well as other Veterans' Associations citing the fact that the RCMP is the oldest regiment in Canada. Glenn stated there are 3,000 hospital beds put aside for Veterans and the RCMP Veterans do not have access even though we are considered Veterans. This continues to be subject of debate.

g. **Change of Command Ceremony Depot:** Gary Davidson, President of Regina Division stated that the Change of Command Ceremony for Commissioner, Lucki will take place at Depot on the 6th September 2018. He stated that he would like to see Association Members attend and join in as part of the RCMP Veterans' Association Troop (s) for this ceremony. Rivard stated that the BOD is looking at holding their Strategic Planning Workshop, at Depot, during this time frame so that they can attend and take in the RCMP Memorial Service as well. If the BOD cannot be accommodated the Association will ensure that the President and one or more representatives from the BOD attend.

12. Closing Remarks:

President Rivard stated that he too is now passing the torch after two years as the Association President. Rivard thanked each BOD for their dedicated work. He is pleased that Peter Sorensen, Treasurer will continue on for another two years as he has been doing excellent work in assisting Divisions with their financial accounts, the Public Auditor and resolving issues in the completion of audits for 2015 and onto 2016 and streamlining the Auditor's ability to complete their audits in a more efficient and effective manner. Bob McKee in the communications and development of eCommerce with Gambit, Mike Duffy for outstanding work as the Chief Advocate, Steve Walker as Chair of the Operations Committee, James Brown on Finance and Audit, Mark Gaillard for his excellent work revising and updating the by-laws and stories on the history of the Force and RCMP Veterans, Benoit Garceau, as our past Executive Assistant now continuing his career as a young Cpl., in the Military Police, Chantal Renaud, Executive Assistant, Celine Gingras for Benefit Trust Fund administration and now acting as our Translator. Rivard stated that Dave LeBlanc, Past President has done an excellent job as our Veterans Affairs Canada Liaison and as Chair of the Nomination Committee. Rivard stated that he would never have been able to accomplish all our initiatives and strategic plans without this Board.

Rivard stated that he will be very active as Past President but at the moment he and his wife, Joanne, are moving to Moncton, N.B. on the 9th June and he plans to join in with the RCMPVA New Brunswick Division.

13. Adjournment at 15 :30 hrs



Alex Geddes, RCMPVA Secretary