

STRATEGIC MUSEUM PLAN: 2017-2022



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Our Planning Process

Development of a 5 year strategic plan was approved at the Museum Board meeting held on 26 May 2016 and Board member Jim Lutz agreed to lead the process.

Consultation

During the Fall of 2016, steps were undertaken to gather input for this planning process from museum visitors, museum volunteers and the broader Regimental community:

1. An evening workshop facilitated by an external consultant, was held for museum volunteers and board members at Casa Loma which had 15 participants. This exercise resulted in a large number of potential undertakings grouped in a series of suggested goals.
2. An email request for plan input and ideas was sent to 19 people identified as key members of the QOR community and 6 responses were received.
3. An in person survey was conducted by museum volunteers with 13 visitors during the November 2017 QOR Day at Casa Loma.
4. Participation in an online survey was promoted on the museum website and Facebook page. This survey was open to anyone who wanted to contribute and 59 submissions were received, again with a variety of ideas and input.

The information collected from above was then compiled into a draft plan by a team consisting of Mr. Jim Lutz (Museum Board member), Mr. Alex Meyers (Museum volunteer), and Maj (Ret) John Stephens (Curator) for presentation and approval to the Museum Board on June 1, 2017.

Implementation Plan

After approval of the strategic plan, an annual implementation plan with timings and responsibilities, will be created to guide specific tasks needed to execute the strategies.

Monitoring Progress

The Strategic Plan progress updates (using the implementation plan) will be added as a standing item on agendas for the **Board of Governors**.

Museum reports to meetings of the **Regimental Trust** and **Senate**, will also include updates on the Strategic Plan progress.

The **Board of Governors** will review both plans annually (prior to June Trust meeting) to revise timings and priorities in keeping with approved resources.

Current Context

A Regimental Museum had been formed by the Regimental Executive Committee in 1956 and was maintained by the Regimental Depot at Currie Barracks in Calgary, Alberta. However when the Regular Force battalions were rebadged and reduced to nil strength, the Regimental Depot was closed and the contents of the museum shipped to Toronto to the care of the remaining militia battalion. The museum was opened on the third floor of City of Toronto owned Casa Loma on 7 June 1970, with former Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel W.T. Barnard, ED, CD as Curator. In 1988 Barnard was succeeded by his assistant, Captain Peter Simundson, CD who served until 2012 when Major John Stephens, CD took over.

In 2014 the operation of Casa Loma was contracted by the City to the Liberty Entertainment Group (Liberty) for 20 years. Liberty has confirmed a home for the museum at Casa Loma for the duration of their contract.

The QOR museum is accessible to all Casa Loma visitors during regular opening hours which are currently 9:30 am to 5 pm every day except Christmas Day. Over three hundred and fifty thousand visitors are welcomed annually. In addition guests are sometimes provided access to our space during events hosted in the evening and during Casa Loma run evening programs during certain nights in the summer.

Since 2012 the museum has run its “QOR Day at Casa Loma” which brings a large number of both re-enactors and serving soldiers to animate our space, and provide a “then and now” experience for visitors.

In addition to its physical space, the museum maintains an extensive website with timelines, biographies, transcriptions, research and archival materials, and a blog. The site has received over 320,000 page visits since February 2012. The museum also operates active social media accounts on Facebook (3,555 “likes”), Twitter (763) and Instagram (283) accounts. This outreach accounts for a large percentage of current artefact acquisitions. For the past year we have also made our museum’s catalogue available online which includes artefact information that has been entered into our database and is updated regularly.

Led by the Curator and Assistant Curator, the operation of the museum is undertaken by an active team of volunteers who regularly meet on Thursday evenings. Much of their work is focused on detailed cataloguing of the collection, and documenting new acquisitions. Other work includes, scanning, transcription, responding to research inquiries, updating exhibits, planning new temporary exhibits, and making upgrades to storage spaces. A volunteer recognition night is held annually to thank the team for their efforts.

Mandate, Mission and Vision

Mandate

The Museum was established in 1956 under the authority of the Regimental Executive Committee with the following mandate:

“to encourage the study of Canadian military history and in particular the history of The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada, to rescue from oblivion the memories of its members, to obtain and preserve narratives in print, manuscript or otherwise of their travels, adventures, labours and observations, to secure and preserve objects illustrative of the civil, literary and military history of the Regiment, and to maintain a museum and a library.”¹

Mission²

Permanently housed within Casa Loma, which was built by former Commanding Officer Sir Henry Pellatt, the QOR Museum and Archives will preserve the records, photographs, and artefacts of the Regiment, and present the story of Canada’s oldest continuously serving infantry regiment, its association with Casa Loma, the City of Toronto, and to the public, in a modern and engaging manner.

Vision

The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada Museum and Archives will be a modern, historical, educational and rewarding experience to “all” who visit Casa Loma, and continue to be known by peers as the best example of a volunteer organized and managed “specialized” museum and archival collection.

Strategies³

The planning team identified five strategies to achieve the mandate, mission and vision:

1. Preserving the regiment’s history
2. Promoting the regiment’s history and current mission to the public
3. Serve the interests of a wider community through outreach and digital presence
4. Support and benefit from Casa Loma’s tourist business
5. Ensure the effective governance and management of the museum to accomplish the above.

¹ The museum’s interest also includes the six First World War Canadian Expeditionary Force battalions perpetuated by The Queen’s Own Rifles.

² The Mission and Vision were approved by the Museum Board of Governors.

³ Strategies were developed by the Strategic Plan Team.

Strategic Directions

The actions items listed are to be prioritized and scheduled in the Implementation Plan.

#	Description
A. Protection and Preservation of the Collection	
Create plans, procedures and process, and undertake actions to ensure to effectively protect and preserve the museum's valuable museum and archival collection.	
A1	Secure the funds to purchase a museum quality display case for the McEachren tunic.
A2	Purchase and install a museum quality display case for the McEachren tunic.
A3	Create a plan to continue to digitize books and other items in archival collection and make available online (either in catalogue or website) as reference for researcher and to protect items from over-handling
A4	Ensure that the necessary materials and supplies (such as archival boxes, mylar clothing bags, photographic envelopes, acid free folders, etc.) are available to support the preservation of the collection
B. Effectively Interpret, Educate, and Incorporate Technology	
Implement steps to expand educational resources and opportunities, enhance interpretation methods, and incorporate technology where possible to support both.	
	<i>Interpret</i>
B1	Ensure interpretation reflects current historical thinking
B2	Where appropriate, put artefacts in front of enlarged photos of the item in use to provide better context
B3	Upgrade current exhibits and interpretive panels
B4	Work with Casa Loma when it is time to update audio guides
B5	Improve exhibit artefact labels to provide more information
B6	Identify and implement more ways to incorporate personal stories in our exhibits, website, and other aspects of the museum
	<i>Educate</i>
B7	Create an historical "card deck" as education tool for new members of the regiment
B8	Create a colouring/activities book for kids about the regiment
B9	Create a "living library" of past and present QOR members who are available to share their stories with visitors, students and others either at the museum or in schools
B10	Create "education kits" of artefacts or reproductions which can used for hands-on experiences

B11	Develop a variety of presentation programs for museum tours
	<i>Incorporate Technology</i>
B12	Undertake a video project of veterans interviews for use in exhibits and on the museum's YouTube channel
B13	Complete the digitization of our collections 16mm films, load to YouTube and our website, and integrate into our exhibits
B14	Create and install interactive touch screen displays with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timelines of significant events in QOR History 2. Map of world showing QOR deployments 3. Biographies of QOR members

C. Capacity and Opportunities for Outreach

Create capacity to provide, and identify opportunities for, museum outreach beyond the museum at Casa Loma, and to bring traveling or temporary exhibits to the museum.

C1	Create an outreach team to have presence at cultural and historical events in Toronto
C2	Complete pop-up banners and exhibit materials on various periods of QOR history for use by the outreach team and for pop-up or temporary exhibits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · North West Field Force · South African War · WWII · Cold War/Regular Force · Afghanistan · Airborne tasking <i>(Have already created Ridgeway and WWI banners)</i>
C3	Seek opportunities for QOR exhibits outside the Museum such as local library branches, corporation lobbies, schools, civic buildings, etc.
C4	Consider at least one additional "event" each year to draw visitors to the museum.
C5	Create and run "QOR Cemetery Tours": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Necropolis ● St James ● Mount Pleasant
C6	Using PastPerfect Online, our website, and other social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) share stories, information and digital images of our collection to the world.

D. Awareness of the Regiment, the Museum, and the Collections

Working with others as necessary, undertake steps to increase awareness of the regiment, the museum, and the museum's collections.

D1	Work with Casa Loma and the City of Toronto to create awareness of our presence in Casa Loma
D2	Work with Casa Loma to increase presence on the Casa Loma website and ensure presence in other promotional materials
D3	Work with Casa Loma to provide discounts for CF-One cardholders
D4	Cross-promote with historical celebrations that are related to the regiment
<p>E. Ensure Effective Governance and Management</p> <p>Review and implement an effective governance model, supported by updated, best practice policies and standards, to best accomplish our vision and mission.</p>	
E1	Determine appropriate standards for museum operations and develop standard operating procedures (ex. CF, CMOG, etc.)
E2	Update/revise museum terms of reference and collections policies
E3	Analyze the benefits and concerns with becoming a formal CF Museum and make a recommendation to the Trust/Senate
E4	Create a board committee to explore additional funding avenues which might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Grant opportunities · Fundraising events · Donation jar · Funding from Casa Loma · Museum store · Museum tax from regiment · Untapped donors
E5	Study and make recommendations regarding the move to PastPerfect's web based product (when released)
E6	Complete cataloging of all the existing collection, and institute processes to ensure that all new acquisitions are catalogued within 90 days from receipt.
E7	Recommend and implement a plan to resolve backlog of cataloging data to be inputted into the PastPerfect database.
E8	Create a template to ensure more detailed upfront planning for new or changed exhibits
E9	Expand the Museum Board of Governors from 5 to 7 members and increase diversity
E10	Create Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the museum to ensure consistent operations and facilitate future volunteer transition.