

PPCLI REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION
IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTION

“PURPOSE RENEWED”
SUSTAINING THE ASSOCIATION BEYOND 2015

Reference: Constitution and Bylaws, PPCLI Association

INTRODUCTION

1. The PPCLI Association has had a recent discussion on sustaining its capacity to remain effective as a key component of the Regimental family. It has in the past successfully undertaken countless initiatives in its pursuit of the Association objects, but is facing serious long-term viability issues as an organization.
2. The strength of the Association is its members, and its ability to undertake activities, gather resources and achieve good works is entirely dependent on this human capital. Thus, its declining membership levels are a strategic concern to Regimental leaders, both in the Association and in the serving component. This implementation strategy expresses how the Association intends to renew itself so that it is well positioned to thrive beyond the period of the 100th Anniversary of the Regiment, being celebrated in 2014-2015. It also reflects many of the concerns brought to the Association by the “Advance 2003 Report” which, through the efforts of the Calgary Branch, conducted a survey of issues in 2003/2004.

AIM

3. The aim of this implementation plan is to commit the Association to a series of actions to sustain itself through the 100th Anniversary in 2014-2015 and beyond.

BACKGROUND – THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

4. The state of health of the Association can be measured in the simple terms of its membership numbers, which are at about 850 in 2004 but are in decline, or at best are stable.
5. An analysis of declining numbers does not of course tell the entire tale. When viewed against the total pool of potential members, which equals all living ex-Patricia’s plus each year’s releases, and all of these two groups spouses and adult children, the Association has not enjoyed success in attracting the newly available potential members. The reasons

for this underperformance is difficult to accurately state. Partly it is that service in the Regiment in the eras of Canadian foreign policy after Korea has been less of a “national” experience, and sometimes less intense than service was during the major wars of the last century. When the intensity of the experience of service is lessened, or dissipated over longer periods of service, the rush to continue the bonds after service is completed, may not be as compelling. Even for the “conventional” war veteran, the Association has had a challenge to remain relevant to some. If the purpose and activities of the Association lose their relevancy for any ex-Patricia, he or she will not continue being a member. There are many Patricias in Canada who have ceased to be members because they find no relevance in Branch activities any longer.

6. The nature of the challenge facing the Association therefore is not only to ensure that the Association does everything it can to attract members, but also does everything it can to retain the members it has. That challenge has another dimension which is one of time – often decisions about not joining or about leaving the Association may be taken by an individual but these decisions can be changed after some time. It is important *over time to maintain contact* and to continue to demonstrate relevance to both those who have not yet joined and to those who may have dropped off the rolls – otherwise opportunity can be missed.

7. The nature of the environment, that is the environment where the newly retired or released soldier joins other older soldiers and their families in civil Canadian society, is different than the military society that trained and employed him. The reality of the military culture is also different today than it was in 1945 or 1953, but *only in degree*. The continuing schism and opportunity is as described by Cammy Ware in writing in 1971:

The concept of service to one’s country and the responsibilities and duties that this may entail is frequently lacking in much of our social fabric today. I can assure you, however, that this is not a part of our Regiment. All ranks continue to serve in the spirit of our Founder and those who served so gallantly in the years since and in complete dedication to our Colonel-in-Chief. . .

The newly retired or released soldier needs to find in the Association relevant purpose and goals, in short a continuation of the honourable service that he or she has just completed, and this choice must be clear in a civil society teeming with volunteer choices – from the full range of fraternal orders to the plethora of charities.

8. This discussion is not esoteric. The Regiment is a family, and has defined that family widely and inclusively. It includes all current and past members or affiliated members of the serving component, their spouses and partners and families. This family is meant to flourish with a lifelong bond of support amongst themselves as well as for others. Through this support, currently serving members draw strength and those who have left active service or their association with it, maintain their sense of service and their proximity to the values of the Regiment.

STRATEGY OUTLINE

9. The Association strategy “Purpose Renewed” attacks the Association challenge of sustainment by first grappling with the clear purpose of the Association and then pursuing the following three major thrusts:

- ?? One – Attracting through Purpose.
- ?? Two – Connecting with Potential and Current Members.
- ?? Three – Sustaining the Organization.

ASSOCIATION PURPOSE

10. At the reference, the Constitution of the Association lists its objects as: to foster and maintain spirit, to circulate information, and to perpetuate the close bonds of comradeship, mutual regard and esprit de corps through a host of activities. These objects are all, in and of themselves, excellent. However, it would be useful, perhaps critical, to have an overriding statement of purpose. The Constitution will be amended to reflect the following purpose:

“The purpose of the PPCLI Association is to perpetuate, in spirit and in deeds, the service to Canada of Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry.”

THRUST ONE – ATTRACTING THROUGH PURPOSE

11. National association and branch activities vary in scope and meaningfulness across the country and year-to-year. It can be taken as self-evident that if individual members do not find purpose, and hence relevance in their membership, they are unlikely over the course of time to maintain that membership. From a general point of view, relevance might be stated as:

- ?? On a social plane, sufficient opportunity to mix with comrades in a personal and informal setting
- ?? On a service plane, opportunity to remember individual and group service with appropriate memorial, participation in military ceremonial, historical work, and, perhaps most importantly, help to those that need it. This last opportunity has two dimensions, an internal dimension well exemplified by the recent Volunteer Patricia Programme, and an external one, only sparsely represented in the current Association work through the Korean Bursary program
- ?? On a professional plane, a consistent opportunity to stay abreast of general trends in defence matters and specifics about the state of the PPCLI serving component, its personalities and its activities

Much of what goes on in the Association today is keyed at meeting these opportunities. Regimental publications, the *Patrician*, ceremonial, reunions, branch meetings and so on are all aimed at satisfying these needs. It is perhaps a lack of consistency and the lack of a clear external focus for channeling effort, for perpetuating our values in “deeds”, that defines the challenge here. Components of this thrust are [Responsibilities for implementation are in brackets]:

1A – With Branch Presidents and under the view of Regional Vice Presidents, develop a minimum profile for Branch meetings in terms of regularity and purpose. This would include the designation of two Pan-National Meeting Weeks annually, as explained below. Outside of this, branches should be expected to meet at least twice, with a social or remembrance theme, on dates and times of their choosing. [Council]

1B – Designate annually in the operating plan, two Pan-National Meeting Weeks, fall and spring, co-coordinated across the country, which would permit the delivery from RHQ and the Association Executive of timely update packages (semi-annual DVDs) delivered in electronic-digital format including: Colonel-in-Chief’s voice message; Honourary Chairman’s message; National President’s message; upcoming Association events, activities of the battalions, current hot topics, personalities, etc. One Meeting would be in the September timeframe, and one Meeting would be in the March 17th week. [Executive Committee]

1C – Reinvigorate the Branch Visitation programme from RHQ. Each Branch should be expected to have one of the RM, RAdjt or RHQ CWO/MWO/WO visit annually. Additionally, each Branch should expect to have a visit from its affiliated Regional Rep or his designate at least once a year to brief on significant topics of interest. This could be anything from army equipment programmes, to Area training activities, to future plans for operational rotations, etc. This will happen with active co-ordination and annual forecasts of visits in the operational plan of the Regiment, as well as active communication with the Regional Reps. [Association Secretary]

1D – Create a new external focus for the Association effort in helping others to compliment the internal focus. This focus could be harmonized with the activities and operational commitments of the regular component. Thus the statement of objects for the Association needs an addition such as: **“Promote the tradition of service of the Regiment by supporting good works associated with the Regiment at home or abroad.”** As an example, units or individuals have in the past in places like Croatia or Cambodia sponsored an orphanage or supported a school, but when the unit/individual returns to Canada, that engagement has generally ceased. By this new object, where there was a clear longer term opportunity to continue the Regimental and the Canadian support for the good work, the Association could decide to take under transfer the obligations approximated by the original Regimental unit. Another example would be our Regimental support of our affiliated Cadet Corps, which is uneven, and which does not directly rope in the efforts of the Association or all of its individual branches. The pattern of Cadet affiliation and support could be adjusted to give each of, or most of, the

Branches a focus of supporting Canadian youth. [Council in co-ordination with REC, Finance Committee, Bylaws Review Committee]

1E – Explore a method to provide a measure of advocacy from the Association to various levels of government. One suggested approach would be to establish an LO from Council to the Royal Canadian Legion’s Dominion Veterans Unity Committee, which effectively develops initiatives with government and its agencies. Whatever the method, the issues that are being pursued or needing advocacy should be identified and highlighted on the Association pages in the Regimental website. [Council]

1F – Expand the scope of undertakings with respect to the internal focus of service. There is every reason to believe that the Association could undertake a larger role, probably under the VPP, to look after our own family, to do things like create a Housing Trust to build Life Lease housing or other similar efforts, either alone or in cooperation with other service organizations. In each case of major undertaking, under the object of “assisting members”, the Association could indemnify themselves so as to not risk the financial health of the Association over the long term, could undertake these projects in phases and could make a significant difference for its members directly, and for the spirit of the Association itself. [Council and VPP Facilitator]

1G – Continue to emphasize, in a practical and local branch way, the importance of “assisting members”. This would mean a continued expansion of the VPP. One clear method would be the development of a series of electronically delivered Assistance Packages on topics such as Wills, Advance Medical Directives and Enduring Powers of Attorney; Advance Funeral Planning; Mobility Impaired Transportation; and Insurance and Investments. These packages would link the topic summary to already existing e-resources, and could also be printable for use at local meetings. A second area needing more emphasis is the response to the death of members. A checklist SOP for Branches should be developed for the follow-up, and this should include initial contact for moral support, assistance as necessary and wanted with funeral arrangements, help determining assistance needed for programme support, and, most importantly, continuing contact from the Branch.

THRUST TWO - CONNECTING WITH CURRENT AND POTENTIAL MEMBERS

12. Currently communications with the Association members are quite good. The Regimental website has very good coverage of a wide array of topics, with a few exemptions. The *Newsletter*, the *Patrician*, Branch meetings and other forms represent good methods of keeping members up to date.

13. Except for the website which is open to all who visit it, there is no methodology in place for keeping in contact with all those other ex-Patricia’s out there who have not yet made their mind up to join the Association, or who were in once but who have slipped

from the rolls. This group is arguably larger than the Association rolls itself, and could be a rich recruiting ground for the future.

14. Components of connecting are:

2A – Create through the Branches a master Branch-grouped email address listing/database for the Association that will allow rapid electronic passage of information and alerts. This list should reside on a server in RHQ but be accessible for amendment and addition by each Branch secretary. This implies getting Branches on side with their organizations providing the inputs in simple formats with easy methodologies. This would be the *Member List*. [Association Secretary and Branch Secretaries]

2B - Create through the Branches and rolled up to a national level, a broad companion database of all eligible but non-participating ex-members. This would be the *Eligible List*. Almost every Branch member knows of someone or more who could be a member but is not, for one reason or another. Using a prescribed but simple data reporting system, these people should be listed in Branch directories and these all rolled up into a national base. Of import is the correct name, mailing address and e-mail address if available for these people. The consolidated Branch lists would form the *Patricia Eligible List* nationally. Annually, an update e-mail or post card would be sent by the Communications POC to each of these non-member ex-Patricia's. This initiative should be brought in over one year, and actioned at the end of that year with the communication e-mail/ postcard going out on about 15 August, featuring the meeting dates for Branch fall Pan-National days, and contact numbers. In 2009, this list would all receive the detailed proposals for the 100th National Reunion, etc. [Association Secretary and Branch Secretaries]

2C – Continue to invest in the website. It should provide an interactive window for anyone visiting the site that knows the e-mail of other ex-Patricia's, so that the *Patricia Member List* can continue to be built dynamically. As well, the Association presence on the web site is muted – it is not sufficiently prominent. Some of the pages are underdeveloped or end in a loop with no useable material, and the publication list is incomplete in terms of minutes of meetings, the Constitution, etc. This may require some additional resources for the webmaster, but would certainly be worth the effort. [Association Secretary]

2D – Develop a master e-mail address and grouping system for *Member, Eligible List*, and Senate, allowing immediate electronic alerts for new material on the website, new information, and periodic updates for each group as may be necessary. If necessary, this can be an automatic subscription service. [Regimental Adjutant]

2E – Create an Honourary Chairman's Honour Circle. Upon the death of any Patricia on operations or duty, the spouse or partner would be automatically notified by letter from the Colonel of the Regiment that she or he has been made an Honourary Member of the

Association, with a suitable membership card, reflecting indefinite membership in the Association, included. Additionally, the Honour Circle member would receive a Christmas card each year from the Colonel of the Regiment and a short update letter on pertinent topics each year from RHQ on the Regimental Day. The Colonel of the Regiment would use his discretion in adding members such as the surviving spouses of past Colonels of the Regiment or the widows of prominent Regimental figures. RHQ would assign the administration of this programme to its Membership Team. [Honourary Chairman and Association Secretary]

2F – Open New Branches in Under-Served Areas. The West is well served with branches and this reflects the spread of retirees, the relative closeness to the Home Station and so on. The East and the Atlantic have some vibrancy as the spearhead of the Regiment in the national matrix, but there are clear holes in Toronto and Montreal, especially. Toronto always has a core of serving or ex-Patricia’s at the Canadian Forces College and LFCA HQ, and there are retirees there, but the last Branch failed largely because there was difficulty with a meeting place and the usual big urban problems of people getting around, as well as relevancy. Ways should be found, centered on using the CFC or LFCA facilities, of re-establishing the Toronto Branch. It is also probable that Montreal, the home of McGill and Mount St Hilaire, must have six potential Association members who could be encouraged to form a new Montreal branch. Both of these sites deserve a full review by a local representative. Consideration should also be given to the North, Regina and Brandon/Shilo for expansion. [Executive Committee]

2G – Make a formal arrangement with the PPCLI WOs and Snr NCOs Club and 4PPCLI/LER and its association to coordinate membership and information right through the 100th Anniversary. The Association aim should be to include these other closely allied clubs/associations as *virtual partners* to the Association, albeit recognizing their specialized membership and unique purposes. These partnerships should be fully developed, including mutually supportive web links, mailing lists and so on. [President and RM]

2H – Continue an active programme of connecting Association members with serving Patricias, with a renewed emphasis on reaching the junior ranks. This is to be done with the use of Association briefing teams, the inclusion of Association briefs to recruit classes at WATC, and establishing events where Association members can mix informally with serving soldiers. [Branch Presidents and RM]

THRUST THREE – SUSTAINING THE ORGANIZATION

15. Currently, the Association kindly provides a one-year gratis membership to all those Patricias leaving the Regiment after 3 years of service or more. This gets the majority of those released from the Regiment, provided that those released were paid up in their Voluntary Contributions, and misses only those serving in 4PPCLI. At the same time there is difficulty in ensuring that RHQ is aware of all releases so that secretarial action can be taken to ensure the retiree knows of this benefit and that local branches are informed that a member is being released to an address in their area. This has been, at

least in the past, because RHQ is not informed of final release data, and because there is not someone in the RHQ with direct responsibility for tracking releases. Outside of releasing members, the Association occasionally loses track of some other potential members, like widows, and as well there are other clubs that “compete” for potential members.

16. In order to measure success towards the 100th Anniversary, the Association needs to establish goals and methods to reach those. Without goals, it is hard to determine what else might need to be done. In trying to attract as many members as possible, it would be in our general interest to eliminate any obstacles, psychological or otherwise, to prospective members. The purpose is to have the Association embrace the widest possible group of people who have served in the Regiment either directly or through attachment, their spouses, partners and children.

17. The thrust components are as follows:

3A – Reduce the classes of membership to two: Ordinary as currently defined but expanded to include the current definition of Associate (as the obligations and privileges of membership in the two categories is identical, there is no reason to differentiate), and Honourary. Add vocabulary that would include ex-spouses of Patricias as eligible for membership. Including spouses, ex-spouses and widows in organizing and sustaining branch activities pays huge dividends in the vitality and success of branches. [Bylaw Review Committee and Branch Presidents]

3B – Allow members to buy Life Memberships at any Branch as Ordinary Members, based on 12 years of Membership dues extant at the year of purchase. Life Ordinary Members should have a specially noted Membership card. [Membership Committee]

3C – Establish a target of **2,014** members for the end of the National Reunion in 2014. This would include Association Appointments, plus Ordinary and Honourary Members. An intermediate target of **1000** should be set for the Association 60th Anniversary in 2007, when a general membership drive should be inaugurated towards **1500** for 2009 and the 95th Anniversary, and **1700** for 2012, the start of the last gasp run up to the 100th. While these targets are not scientific, they represent only a fraction (about ¼) of potential membership – and hence are useful in themselves as measures of success in growing the overall numbers. [Executive Committee and Membership Committee]

3D – Develop and implement 100th Anniversary membership programmes. This could include *ideas* such as:

- ?? A National Sign-up Contest. In 2007 or 2009, or both years, the member that gets the most number of new members in a Branch would receive the cheer of his fellows and one free year’s Association dues. The winner nationally would get free membership until the end of the 100th Anniversary year.
- ?? The 100 Club. Pay \$100.00 anytime before end-of-year 2009 and it will be held in trust for you by the Association and applied directly against your attendance costs for the 100th Anniversary National Reunion. If you are unable to attend the

Draft 2 of Instructions for “Purpose Renewed”

Reunion, you would still receive the Memory Package that will be developed (the forecast “Images of 100 Years” DVD, the Special Edition of the Patrician, a First Day Cover – these examples are of course subject to finalization) and a tax receipt for the remainder of the \$100, less the deemed value of the Memory package.

The Association retains any interest made on the initial sum.

- ?? The Centennial Club. Make a five-year commitment to the Association in 2009 and save 20%. That is, pay for four years full membership in 2009 at the 2009 annual Branch cost and your membership will be valid right through to the end of 2014. [Executive Committee and Membership Committee]

3E – Make a formal proposal to NDHQ release section, in writing from the Senior Serving Patricia, to gain the cooperation of the release section to notify, either by message/e-mail or in response to direct queries by phone from RHQ, of the intended place of release of members who have served with the PPCLI. If NDHQ will not do it just for the PPCLI, then a proposal should be made to the other regimental associations and corps clubs for a common approach to NDHQ. [Regimental Adjutant]

3F – Refocus the two RHQ members (R Adj and the Regt Clerk) already tracking membership issues as the Membership Team, who would track from all units and sources of information the release of personnel eligible to be members and to provide the potential member and the local branch the appropriate information. This information needs to be designed to encourage local contact from the Branch and to let the potential member know he or she is wanted. [RM]

3G – Continue to provide a gratis Association membership to all releasing members of 3 years service or more, to allow time for the new member to see the benefit of Association membership, but eliminate the requirement for the person releasing to have had to be up to date in the Voluntary Contributions. There may be little point in excluding those potential Association members from this benefit who perhaps just did not see the advantage of being a Voluntary Contributor. As well, when a married member dies whose wife is not a member, he or she should also be advised that the remainder of the paid up membership year will be honoured in his/her name, and further that the survivor will be given a one-year gratis membership in their own name for the next full membership year. [Bylaw Review Committee and Association Secretary]

CONCLUSION

18. This instructions’ concentration on renewed purpose and its three thrusts represent the basis for meeting the challenge of a diminishing Association roll and a lack of motivating power or focus in the objects of the Association. This plan has been discussed within the Association leadership and will be harmonized with ongoing 100th Anniversary planning. Importantly, there are several parts of the instruction that should be repeatedly reviewed and funded by Council, including:

- a. The orderly amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws;

Draft 2 of Instructions for “Purpose Renewed”

- b. The identification of externally focused projects,
- c. The expansion of activities and scope under the VPP,
- d. The Association presence on the PPCLI website, and
- e. The progress of other communications initiatives.

19. Ensuring that the Association remains relevant to its members’ needs and attractive to possible members is the fundamental underpinning of continued success for this key component of Regimental life. That success requires constant commitment and renewal.

R. Raidt
President
PPCLI Association

24th of June 2006
Kingston, Ontario Canada