

Aithisg Bhliadnha | Annual Report 2016/17

Comunn Baile Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh | Nova Scotia Highland Village Society



Baile nan
Gàidheal
Highland Village
MADE OF STORIES



Iona, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia - April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017



Our Vision, Mission & Proclamation

Comunn Baile Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh | Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society was incorporated on November 3, 1959, under the Societies Act of the Province of Nova Scotia, with the purpose of constructing and operating a replica pioneer village at Iona, as well as preserving and promoting Nova Scotia's Highland Scottish Gaelic culture. In 1962, the Society held the first Highland Village Day Concert to raise money for the construction and operation of the Village. Over the subsequent four decades, the site took shape. In June of 2000, *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village* become a part of the Nova Scotia Museum Family. The Society continues to operate the Village on behalf of the Province. The operation consists of a 43-acre museum and cultural complex including the Highland Village Living History Museum and Gaelic Folklife Centre, Roots Cape Breton Genealogy & Family History Centre, Highland Village Gift Shop, and an outdoor entertainment/theatre facility. The Society is a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency.

New Vision & Mission Statements - Adopted April 2017:

Our **vision** is to be the leading Gaelic folklife centre, recognized in Nova Scotia, nationally and internationally as an essential institution for continuing development and representation of a vital and sustainable Gaelic community.

Our **mission** is to grow as a Gaelic folklife centre that bilingually nurtures, communicates and celebrates the heritage and cultural identity of Nova Scotia's Gaelic community.

The following **proclamation** was signed between the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism & Culture** and the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society Iona, Cape Breton Island on the occasion of an event to celebrate Highland Village as a new member of the Nova Scotia Museum family:

Whereas, Nova Scotians believe the history, culture, language and traditions of the Scots-Gaelic people are a valuable and living part of the Nova Scotian story; and, these people have contributed greatly to the formation of our Nova Scotian identity; and,

*Whereas, after due consultation, the people of Cape Breton and its heritage community have indicated their desire to see Cape Breton Island heritage further represented in the Dept. of Tourism & Culture** provincial museum system; and,*

Whereas, the Board of Governors of the Nova Scotia Museum has recommended that Nova Scotia Highland Village become a part of the Nova Scotia Museum family and the Province of Nova Scotia has accepted this recommendation;

Therefore, we, the undersigned, duly pledge to continue to work toward the creation of an understanding of the story of the Scots-Gaelic people through our museum. We promise to continue to preserve and present the Gaelic language and culture for the benefit of all Nova Scotians and visitors. We agree to strive to inspire the people of our province to Know, value, and maintain this important part of Nova Scotia's past, present and future: the culture, traditions, and language of the Scottish Gaels.

Signed this day at Iona, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia - June 17th, 2000.

** Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village, formerly Highland Village Museum/An Clachan Gàidhealach, is a part of of the Nova Scotia Museum family, operated in partnership with the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. The new name/ branding was adopted in early 2015.*

*** Now the Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage.*



NSHVS Board of Trustees 2016/17*

M.A. (Murdock) MacPherson, Creignish - President (2014)
 Catherine Ann Fuller, Baddeck - Vice President (2013)
 Betty Lord, Howie Centre - Treasurer (2013)
 Paul Wukitsch, Shunacadie - Secretary (2011)
 Daniel Chiasson, Baddeck (2016)
 John Hugh Edwards, Ross Ferry (2014)
 Charlene Ellis, Little Narrows (2011)
 Angie Farrell, Christmas Island (2013)
 Dr. Michael Linkletter, Antigonish (2014)
 Quentin MacDonald, Washabuck (2015)
 Pam MacGillivray, Shunacadie (2011)
 Vince MacLean, Northside East Bay (2015)
 Hector (Frankie) MacNeil, Iona (2011)
 Melissa Nicholson, Baddeck (2014)
 Meaghan O'Handley, Grand Narrows (2014)

Board Committees:

Executive Committee	M.A. MacPherson (Chair), Catherine Ann Fuller, Betty Lord & Paul Wukitsch
Finance Committee	Betty Lord (Chair), Pam MacGillivray & Vince MacLean
Planning Committee	John Hugh Edwards (Chair), Dan Chiasson, Pam MacGillivray & Meaghan O'Handley
Fundraising Committee	M.A. MacPherson (Chair), Betty Lord & Vince MacLean
Engagement Committee	Quentin MacDonald (Chair), Charlene Ellis & Meaghan O'Handley
<i>Stòras na h-Òigridh</i> /Treasurers of Youth Committee	Margie Beaton, Pam MacGillivray, David MacLean, Jill MacLean, Susan MacLean, Vince MacLean, Lisa MacNeil & Meaghan O'Handley
Nominating Committee	Betty Lord (Chair), Dan Chiasson & Quentin MacDonald

NSHVS Staff 2016/17*

Director	Rodney Chaisson
Manager of Interpretation	Jim Watson
Mgr. of Collections/Genealogy	Pauline MacLean
Manager of Operations	Neil J. MacNeil
Learning & Media Specialist	Katherine MacLeod
Administrative Assistant	Janet MacNeil
Animation Staff	Colleen Beaton, Pauline Campbell, Marie Chehy, Catherine Gillis, Jamie Kennedy (Blacksmith), Emily MacDonald, Hoss MacKenzie, Aileen MacLean, Beth MacNeil, Kaye Anne MacNeil, Sandy MacNeil (Farm), Sharon MacNeil, Matthew Moore, Vicki Quimby (Textile Consultant) Colin Watson & Phyllis Williams
Visitor Centre Clerks	Sadie MacDonald, & Marlene MacDougall
Maintenance	Tim MacNeil, Paul MacLean, Jim Bryden, Brendan Higgins
Groundskeeper	David MacKenzie
Custodian	Patricia Gaudley
<i>Luchd- Céilidh/Na Cleasaichean</i>	Amber Buchanan, Mary Jane Lamond, Carmen MacArthur, Joanne MacIntyre, Stacey MacLean, & Shay MacMullin
Students 2016	Caitlin Bennett, Victoria Byers, Paige Jamieson, Courtney MacDonald, Linden MacMillan, Dryden MacNeil, Samara MacNeil
Digital Interns (Jan-Mar)	Colleen MacDougall & Avery Varnes
Marketing & Sales Coord.	Max MacDonald
Fundraising Consultant	Linda Crocket
Volunteer Programmers:	
HV Day Producers	Quentin MacDonald & Mary Emma MacNeil

*Board as of July 2017 AGM. Staff April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.



Tapadh leibh-se gu mòr

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society acknowledges the partnership and support of all three levels of government towards the operation of *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village:

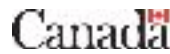
Province of Nova Scotia

Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village is a part of the Nova Scotia Museum Family of Provincial Museums (Dept. of Communities, Culture & Heritage) operated in partnership by the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. The Society is grateful for the support, both financial and in-kind, provided by the department. The Society acknowledges the support from other Nova Scotia Government departments & agencies including: Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal, Internal Services; Gaelic Affairs (CCH); and Labour and Advanced Education.



Government of Canada

The Society appreciates the support of the Government of Canada through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Department of Canadian Heritage, and Service Canada.



Municipality of Victoria County

The Society thanks the Municipality of Victoria County for its support through the Recreation & Tourism Dept. and Paul MacNeil, Councillor District 1.



Partnerships

The Society is a signature partner in the Celtic Heart of North America Marketing Cooperative. The Society is also a hosting partner for the *An Drochaid Eadarainn* web portal.



CB Centre for Craft & Design; Cape Breton University; Celtic Colours Festival Society; Celtic Heart of North America; Colaisde na Gàidhlig | The Gaelic College; Central Cape Breton Community Ventures; Comhairle na Gàidhlig | Gaelic Council of NS; Community Foundation of NS; Dalhousie University's Computer Science Community Outreach; Destination Cape Breton; Eskasoni Cultural Journeys; Féis an Eilein; Fortress of Louisbourg; Glenora Distillery; Inverness County; Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | Office of Gaelic Affairs; Iona Heights Inn | Jill's Chocolates; Musique Royale; NSCAD University; St.FX University (Angus L. Macdonald Library); Sgoil Mhic-Fhraing a' Chaolais | Rankin School of the Narrows; the Municipality of Victoria County & the Northside East Bay Volunteer Fire Department.

Memberships & Affiliations

The Society is a member of Association of NS Museums (ANSM), Canadian Museums Assoc. (CMA), Heritage Cape Breton Connection, Council of NS Archives (CNSA), Genealogical Assoc. of NS (GANS), Cape Breton Genealogical & Historical Association, Interpretation Canada, Assoc. of Living History, Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM), Tourism Industry Assoc. of NS (TIANS), Baddeck & Area Business Tourism Assoc. (BABTA), Sydney & Area Chamber of Commerce, Strait Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Cape Breton Partnership. The Society is also affiliated with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM USA), Museums Association (UK), Gaelic Society of Inverness (Scotland), Canadian Payroll Association (CPA), and Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP - Cape Breton Branch).

President's Report

- M.A. MacPherson

It is my pleasure to report to the Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society on the activities of the board for 2016-17. We have been fortunate to have a very committed board that has spent much time thinking about the present and future of the Village. This year, the 15-member Board has five retiring trustees; Paul Wukitsch, Pam MacGillivray, Charlene Ellis, Hector MacNeil and Michael Linkletter. We want to note their contributions and extend them a "Thank You" on behalf of the Highland Village for their years of dedicated service.

All other board members have renewed their commitment for 2017-18. Based on a studied consideration by the board throughout this year, it has been decided that the board complement for 2017-18 will be 13 trustees, a decision that is consistent with our operating guidelines. Therefore, at this meeting we will be filling only three board positions.

It has been a busy year for the Highland Village board and for its committees. The AGM will be our seventh formal board meeting this year in addition to numerous committee engagements.

Last year at the AGM, we talked about the future needs of the Village and the possibilities for site improvements. Since that time a detailed plan for site development was prepared, costed and presented to both the provincial and federal governments, with the unanimous support of the Board of Trustees. In April, we received confirmation from both levels of government that they will endorse and fund the plan. Victoria County has been on-board as an early supporter since the inception of the idea, and has committed \$20,000 a year for five years. We have already received the first three years of that commitment.

In preparation for this project, a Fundraising Cabinet was formed to assist the Highland Village's Site Improvement Project. This cabinet of advisors is led by Denis Ryan, a Halifax-based musician and businessman, and includes author and broadcaster Linden MacIntyre, Sydney businessman George Unsworth, physician and former provincial health minister Dr. Ron Stewart, and the former president of St. Francis Xavier University Dr. Sean Riley. As President of the Highland Village Board, I am also a member of the Fundraising Cabinet. With the commitments from government in place, the cabinet has had several meetings and is now preparing a plan to generate the local portion of the required funds.

The board committees have worked diligently throughout 2016-17.

The Executive Committee continued to provide support to the Board and Rodney, the site Director. The planning and execution of the fundraising related to the Site Development Project has been a major topic of discussion this year.

The Finance Committee continued to oversee the annual expenditures and budget preparation for the Village. We are on solid financial footings with operating revenues exceeding \$1,000,000 for the first time in 2016-17.

The Planning Committee recognized the requirement to adapt to the evolving needs and overall direction of the Highland Village. Consequently, it reviewed the Village's operating guidelines and recommended changes to the Society's vision and mission statements and organizational objectives. Those recommendations have been accepted by the Board.

The Engagement Committee examined the Village's model for membership and recommended revisions that appropriately recognize the

work of our volunteers and more precisely define the role and criteria for membership of the society and honorary memberships.

The Fundraising Committee has not met, as the work of that committee has been assumed by the Fundraising Cabinet.

The Nominating Committee worked with board members to confirm their commitments for 2017-18, identified persons with an interest in joining the board of directors, and nominated three new members to the Annual General Meeting.

The Stòras na h-Òigridh/Treasures of Youth Committee continued to work with Jill's Chocolates to generate funds to support Gaelic youth through youth scholarships that support Gaelic language, music and dance. The 2016 scholarships were awarded to Drea Sheppard and Olivier Broussard. Our 2017 winners will be announced publicly on Highland Village Day.

The heart of the Highland Village is the participation of volunteers who devote many hours in support of the Village and its mission. Without their help the Village would be less authentic, less personal and less interesting. To all the volunteers we express a great big "Thank You" and want you to know that your efforts are noted and much appreciated.

To the staff, the board again acknowledges your commitment and excellent work. The Highland Village has been blessed with effective leadership, dedicated employees and a sense of camaraderie and fun that is evident to everyone who visits the site. I always enjoy coming to the Highland Village and it is the staff who make it such a special place. Thank you.

This year the Highland Village is participating in a Museum Evaluation as part of its attempt to improve the visitor experience. The program

is managed by the Association of Nova Scotia Museums and is designed to encourage the development of professional best practices in Nova Scotia's museums by providing feedback on seven areas of museum operations – governance, management, facility, collection and access to information, interpretation, community and marketing and revenue generation. There will be a team from the Association of Nova Scotia Museums on site in July to conclude this process.

The Highland Village has recognized the contribution of two volunteers in 2016-17: Mary Emma MacNeil, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society Volunteer of the Year Award and Ailig Gillis, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Youth Volunteer Award.

It should also be noted that in November, Jim Watson, our Manager of Interpretation, was presented with the Best Contribution Award at the 2016 Scottish Gaelic Awards in Glasgow, Scotland. This recognizes Jim's many contributions to the preservation and renewal of Gaelic Nova Scotia language, culture and identity. Our Learning & Media Specialist Katherine MacLeod also received a Cape Breton Partnership/NextGen Vital Award, for her contributions to the operation.

The board is looking forward with enthusiasm to 2017-18. It is a year where there will be a great deal of focus on the Site Development Project where we will see \$3,600,00 in improvement to the facilities and infrastructure of the Highland Village.

Respectfully Submitted
M.A. MacPherson, President
The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society
June 20, 2017

Director's Report

- Rodney Chaisson

I am delighted to present this annual report on the operations of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society to its membership and stakeholders for the fiscal year April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

As we reflect on the 2016/2017 fiscal year, Baile nan Gàidheal remains focused on its vision of being a centre of excellence for the transmission and experiential presentation of Gaelic Nova Scotia culture and folklife. We strive to provide quality memorable visitor experiences based on the rich cultural legacies handed down to us by our ancestors. We are also committed to developing partnerships, capacity building and outreach in our Gaelic cultural community, the museum and cultural sector, the regional tourism industry, and the local Central Cape Breton community.

2016/17 Overview and Highlights

In 2016, the Highland Village operation progressed on several fronts, namely interpretation & programming, collections management, infrastructure improvements, as well as outreach & partnerships. Pair that progress with a very successful visitor season, and there is much to celebrate.

- Throughout the 2016 visitor season, the Highland Village continued to advance and evolve its interpretive programming, especially in terms of first person (role playing) animation. This innovative form of interpretation is much more effective for telling our story, and providing insight into our ancestors and the Gaelic way of life. First person also better enables visitors to

make emotional connections to our story, thus receiving a more rewarding experience.

- First person continues to be very well received by visitors who provide overwhelmingly positive feedback. Staff are seeing increased engagement with visitors. The Village has positioned itself as a best practices attraction for experiential interpretation and storytelling for a minority language-based culture.
- The presence and depth of language cultural content continues to grow through the work of *Na Cleasaichean*. This team of young, fluent Gaelic speakers gathers cultural content for inclusion in animation, mentors other animation staff to enhance their linguistic and cultural skills, and leads our cultural presentations including céilidhs and milling frolics.
- We continue to introduce new programming, such as storytelling tours, which were popular in 2016, in particular during Celtic Colours and with cruise ship passengers.
- In 2016, we undertook a major project to rearrange our two main artifact storage areas and rehouse many of the artifacts in them. With funding from Canadian Heritage and training through ReOrg, we were able to free up valuable storage space and properly store our artifacts. The collection is also better positioned for a future moved to a new storage space, as per our site development strategy.
- Highland Village is also making great strides with infrastructure improvements. Thanks to a new annual maintenance allowance from Building Services (NS Government), we have been able to expand our team and catch up on some deferred maintenance projects. Building Services also funded the reconstruction of our log cabin in 2016, which will be completed in the spring of 2017.

- Highland Village staff continue to develop and support new and existing partnerships such as Celtic Heart Marketing Cooperative, Association of NS Museums, CB Heritage Connection, Destination Cape Breton, Eskasoni Cultural Journeys, Iona Heights Inn, Celtic Colours, Gaelic College, Gaelic Leaders Group, Cape Breton Island Culture Leaders Group, Central Cape Breton Appreciation Dinner for the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, and others.
- In terms of visitation & earned income, it was a very successful season. Overall visitation & site usage was up by 12% or 2,211 people. 21,350 people came through the site during the 2016/17 fiscal year, the most since 2010/11, when 22,315 people visited. Key increases included: off the road (FIT) visitation up 21% or 2,356 people; school programs up 23% or 169 people; and cruise visits were up 15% or 697 people. All geographic sources saw increases, the most significant being: Cape Breton Island up 8% or 441 people; mainland NS up 18% or 260 people; Quebec up 41% or 156 people; Ontario up 28% or 380 people; and the USA (non-cruise) up 22% or 539 people. On the earned income side, overall gross earned income revenues were up 23% or \$49,939. The most significant increases included: admissions up 19% or \$16,678; retail sales up 34% or \$28,898; programming fees up 32% or \$2,239; and food service up 15% or \$3,641. A more focused marketing message, increased cruise visitors, and stronger regional tourism marketing were factors in our 2016 success.
- Volunteer engagement remains strong. Our volunteers contributed 2,497 hours in the 2016 calendar year, an increase of 7% over 2016. The vast majority of those volunteer hours were for special events, in particular the *Oidhche nam Bocan* | Night of the Spooks Halloween program. Our successful Chase the Ace fundraising drive which wrapped up in April of 2016, also contributed to this increase in volunteer engagement.

- Engagement through social media, especially Facebook, grew throughout 2016/17. As of March 31, 2017, we have 4,304 likes on Facebook (up 28% from last year), 2,188 followers on Twitter (up 34%), and 976 followers on Instagram (up 27%).

Moving forward, the Village faces two key issues that speak to the long term sustainability of the operation: infrastructure, and human resources. The board has finalized a site development strategy and is currently working to access funding to bring it to fruition. When implemented, the strategy will see improved physical capacity to meet our operational needs. In the year ahead, we will also continue our efforts to develop a human resource strategy to address our short and long term staffing challenges, in particular succession planning and maintenance of key cultural and heritage skills.

Organizational Objectives

Interpretation & Programming - *To tell the story of Gaelic Nova Scotia through experiential and interactive programs.*

Interpretation and programming is the area of the Highland Village operation that has seen the most significant growth in the past several years and will continue to be where we place much emphasis as we move forward. Progress has included: increased presence of Gaelic language and culture throughout the site, improved representations of Gaelic folklife, introduction of first-person/role playing in animation, increased activities and demonstrations throughout the site, introduction of hands-on activities for all ages, increased emphasis on making the site more engaging for children, and introduction of new orientation video.

While we have made considerable progress with interpretation and programming, there is still much work to do: continued growth of first person capacity through research, training and character

building, enhanced hands-on opportunities for all age groups, improved farm interpretation, incorporation of natural history themes, and value added experiences.

The expectations of a museum visitor have changed significantly over the past two decades. Today's visitor is seeking encounters that allow for meaningful social interactions, which they use to create memorable experiences, while connecting emotionally to the information being presented to them. Continuing research, including visitor feedback and best practices, will play an important role in ensuring that our programs and interpretation remain relevant and engaging for visitors.

Gaelic Community Capacity Building & Outreach - *To be a leader in advancing Nova Scotia's Gaelic heritage and identity on behalf of its cultural community.*

The Village is a recognized leader for Gaelic language and cultural development in Nova Scotia. Since joining the Nova Scotia Museum in 2000, we have led, or been part of, a number of initiatives to help advance Gaelic in our province: Gaelic Development Strategy, *Gàidhlig aig Bhaile* | Gaelic in the Community - TIP immersion methodology, *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* | My Mother's Tongue website, *Céilidh air Cheap Breatunn* | Cape Breton Céilidh virtual museum website/exhibit, Gaelic image project, lobbying for the establishment of an Office of Gaelic Affairs, *Ach An Cuan* MOU between Nova Scotia and the Highland Council in Scotland, Gaelic community boundary signs, *Stòras nan Gaidheal*, *Stòras a' Bhaile*, *An Drochaid Eadarainn* website, and most recently the Gaelic Leaders Group. We are currently working with the Office of Gaelic Affairs to commission the preparation of an economic and social impact study for Gaelic Nova Scotia.

We are recognized within Nova Scotia, and internationally in Scotland and Ireland, for our Gaelic community outreach and develop-

ment work. Jim Watson, our Manager of Interpretation, has presented papers at international conferences. This past fall, he was awarded the "Best Contribution" at the Gaelic Awards in Glasgow, Scotland, recognizing his many years of leadership.

We will continue to initiate and participate in activities that advance the capacity of the Nova Scotia Gaelic community.

Research - *To sponsor and conduct high quality research that supports intangible and tangible representations in animations, programs and outreach.*

In order to ensure authenticity in programming and material presentation of the site, as well as staying abreast of best practices in interpretation, we have undertaken a number of research initiatives including: development of our strategic plan, interpretive research report for the black house/Life in Scotland era of the site, on-going research to authenticate material presentation for other eras on site, a plan for revitalization of the farm program, and on-going research to support Gaelic language and cultural content on site and in programming. In addition, we also continue to publish *An Rubha*, the Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine. *An Rubha* contains articles related to Gaelic language, Gaelic arts and material culture.

There is still much research to do. We continue to conduct research activities that support interpretation, including first person character development as well as the material culture presentation that supports our interpretive story. We have undertaken background research regarding natural history themes that may be explored on site, including the Gael and their relationship to the land, as well as the significance of the Bras d'Or Lakes. We will also continue to research current trends and best practices in museology, especially as they pertain to visitor engagement and experiences.

A Part of the Nova Scotia Museum - *To be an exemplary member of the Nova Scotia Museum family of museums.*

Highland Village staff have been involved in, and continue to be active on, working groups and initiatives within the Nova Scotia Museum including: M8 collective of large locally managed sites, Interpretation Working Group, Education Sub-Committee, Collections Management Working Group, as well as other NSM initiatives.

Nova Scotia Museum sites are being evaluated in 2017 under the Museum Evaluation Program administered by the Association of Nova Scotia Museums. Over the winter we were busy preparing for this program, including the assembling of documentation for a May 5 submission deadline and the July 12 on-site evaluation. This is an important program for achieving museum standards and demonstrating accountability.

Community Partnerships and Outreach - *To engage with our communities by leading and supporting cultural, social and economic development initiatives.*

We are involved in many other groups to advance initiatives in our local community, in the wider Gaelic cultural community, and in the provincial tourism and heritage sectors. Our most significant partnerships at this point include: the Celtic Heart marketing partnership, M8 collective, Gaelic Leadership Group, Cape Breton Island Culture Sector Leadership Group, *An Drochaid Eadarainn* working group (St. FX, NSCAD, Office of Gaelic Affairs, and Victoria County), and the Central CB Appreciation Dinner for the Cape Breton Cancer Centre (with the Iona Legion and Paul MacNeil, District 1, Municipality of Victoria County). Staff also participate in committees with the Association of NS Museums, Heritage CB Connection, *Comhairle na Gàidhlig*, and Destination CB. Our director currently serves as the President of the Association of NS Museums.

Another partnership that has been growing over the past few years, is that with our Mi'kmaw neighbours. We have been working with Eskasoni Cultural Journeys for almost a decade. This past year, we began working with a new initiative in We'koqma'q - the Skye River Trails. There a growing interest in Indigenous cultural experiences.

Human Resources and Governance - *To develop and support the human resources necessary to advance the mission and vision.*

Highland Village is very fortunate to have a skilled and dedicated staff. To ensure that staff are able to meet our operational needs, including interpretation (linguistic and heritage skills, content knowledge and interpretive methodologies), legislative compliance and organizational capacity, the Highland Village continues to invest in relevant training and professional development opportunities. In addition to training, the Highland Village also has a solid human resource management framework.

In spite of the above, human resources is one of the most significant challenges facing the Highland Village. At the end of the 2016 calendar year, the majority of our staff is 55 years and over (44% of our staff at 60 years of age or older). Recent hires have introduced some younger staff members, including some with deep linguistic and cultural skills. However over the next few years, we are going to lose critical knowledge and skills as key people retire.

Our 2009-2014 strategic plan identified the development of a human resource strategy as a priority. While we have been able to address our short term staffing challenges, we still require a strategy to address some of our long term ones. The development of a human resources strategy commenced in 2016 and will continue through 2017.

Provincial Infrastructure - *To develop and maintain the physical infrastructure: including grounds, buildings, farm, artifacts, and equipment in accordance with accepted standards.*

The management of our current physical infrastructure continues to adhere to accepted standards. Staff have participated in training on national standards for maintenance of heritage buildings. We have also put in place a new maintenance planning tool and have a digital 3D rendering of the site. Staff have a productive working relationship with Nova Scotia Museum and the Building Services division of the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) personnel regarding building maintenance issues at the Village. In each of the past two years, the Village has received a maintenance stipend from Building Services to complete major maintenance projects. In addition to the maintenance stipend, TIR has also commissioned the replacement of our log cabin in time for the 2017 season.

The Highland Village also has a clear vision for the physical site. The vision has been articulated in a strategy that has been approved by the NSHVS Board of Trustees and endorsed by Nova Scotia Museum Staff. The \$3.6 million strategy addresses the physical and operational needs of the site including visitor services, interpretation enhancements, operational support, aesthetics, administration, and stewardship.

In 2016, we also participated in the Re-Org Atlantic program, which resulted in the reorganization of our two main storage areas and the rehousing of many artifacts in storage. The project saw the acquisition of over \$14,000 in storage supplies to more properly store artifacts and free up almost 50% invaluable storage space.

Marketing and Building Awareness - *To effectively market Baile nan Gàidheal as a destination for experiencing Gaelic folklife and as an international centre for Gaelic culture and heritage.*

Several years ago, Icon prepared a branding strategy for the Highland Village to support this objective. This report was followed by a marketing assessment from the promotions unit of the Nova Scotia Museum. The vast majority of the recommendations of those two reports have been implemented. In 2015, working with Vibe Creative Group in Sydney, the final recommendation was realized with the adoption of a new logo and new name. Highland Village Museum/*An Clachan Gàidhealach* became *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village with the tag line “Made of Stories.” The new brand emphasized the Village as a Gaelic place, and one rooted in storytelling. Over the past two years, the logo has been introduced to print collateral, website and social media channels, gift shop merchandise and some signage.

The Highland Village is also one of the founding and signature partners in the “Celtic Heart of North America” marketing cooperative, the goal of which is to promote and enhance Cape Breton Island’s Gaelic cultural tourism product. Celtic Heart is entering its 8th year of operation.

In 2013, we refocused our marketing strategy and tactics with the goal of re-introducing Cape Bretoners to the Highland Village and capturing visitors to Cape Breton while they are travelling the Island. This strategy has met with success, especially in 2016. Off the road (FIT) visits were up 32% in 2016 over 2013. *See the visitation and earned income section for more on our statistics for 2016.*

Funding - *To secure long-term funding to support these objectives.*

Over the past two years, the Highland Village has accessed new funding through Building Services (NS Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal) to support maintenance projects on site. The maintenance allowance has averaged \$30,000 per annum. We expect this to continue as an annual contribution.

In 2016/17, \$10,000 was received from the Department of Canadian Heritage (MAP) for the \$14,000 Re-Org project; \$3,155 through Destination Cape Breton for festival & events; \$26,582 in student funding from federal and provincial governments; \$17,003 from NS Communities, Culture and Heritage for a digital internship program; and \$2,950 from Gaelic Affairs for an immersion program. We have also received \$40,000 of the \$100,000 committed by Victoria County to our site development strategy.

As the above demonstrates, we continue to make progress on the journey towards achieving our vision.

Visitation & Participation

As noted in the introduction of this report, site usage increased by 12% in fiscal 2016/17 over the previous fiscal. This increase was primarily the result of increases in off the road (FIT) traffic (21%), cruise ship visitors (15%), and school tours (23%). The increase exceeded decreases in rentals (-9%) and other sources (-49%).

Mode	2016/17	2015/16	Difference	%'age
FIT	13,507	11,151	2,356	21%
Schools	893	724	169	23%
Cruise	5,267	4,570	697	15%
Rentals	719	787	-68	-9%
Other	964	1,907	-943	-49%
Total	21,350	19,139	2,211	12%

Acknowledgements

- ▶ **Best wishes** - We send our hearts out to HV staffers Seumas Watson and Catherine Gillis who are currently on leave and receiving treatments for health issues.
- ▶ **Tapadh leibh-se gu mór** - The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of many individuals, organisations and governments for their unwavering support of the Highland Village and its work. *Acknowledgements of our funding and project partners can be found on page 4 of this report.*
- ▶ **Retiring Board Members** - A special thank you to retiring members of our Board of Trustees - Charlene Ellis, Dr. Michael Linkletter, Pam MacGillivray, Hector “Frankie” MacNeil, and Paul Wukitsch. We thank each of them for their support, work on the board, and enthusiasm for the Highland Village.
- ▶ **Farm Program Partners** - Dell Corbett, Grand Mira (“Mira Jean” Clydesdale horse); Kelly and Jim Booth, Gillis Point (Highland cattle); and Trueman and Laurinda Matheson, St. Andrews (Soay sheep).
- ▶ **Donations** - Sheila Adams, Victoria, BC; Frances Langille, Truro; Robert Latimer, Truro; John James MacEachern, Sydney; Ann MacIntosh, River Denys; David & Marion Newlands, Dartmouth, NS; River & Lakeside Pastoral Charge; Jim St.Clair, Mull River (in memory of Gerry MacNeil); Barry Shears, Halifax (in memory of Margaret Shears); and Doris Tinney, Compton, NH.

- ▶ **Stòras na h-Òigridh/ Treasures of Youth Donations** -Jill's Chocolates, Iona; Joseph Chorbar, Clifton, NJ; MacLean Surveys, Millville, NS.
- ▶ **Artefacts & Archival Donations** - Jerry Chaisson, Pictou; Patsy MacMullan, Sydney; Mary MacLeod, Iona; Rev. Raymond Purchase, per Shirley Bonnell, George's River; George Chant, West Bay, for the Marble Mountain Church; Charles Gautier, Brome-Lake, Qc; Janet MacIntosh, Chelsea, Qc; Margaret Gillis, Hammonds Plains; Sheila Adams, Victoria, BC; Bernie MacInnis, Grand Mira; Marjorie MacKinnon, Albert Bridge
- ▶ **Congratulations** - To Marie Chehy, HV Animator, and Vicki Quimby, Animator/Textile Consultant, on their 30 years and 25 years (respectively) service to the Highland Village; to HV Animator Matthew Moore on his new career in the newsroom at CJFX Radio in Antigonish; to HV blacksmith Jamie Kennedy on the birth of his son, Seumas; to HV Board member Meaghan O'Handley and her husband Ian MacNeil on the birth of their first son Theron; to Sadie MacDonald on the birth of her first granddaughter Sadie; to HV volunteer Marguerite MacNeil on her marriage to Adrian Merriam & to David Brian MacKenzie on the birth of his granddaughter, Mya.
- ▶ Sympathies to the families and friends of the Highland Village or supporters of Gaelic in Nova Scotia over the past year including: Charlie MacNeil (husband of HV animator Kaye Anne MacNeil; Ada MacLean (mother of HV staff members Aileen & Paul MacLean); Wilfred Asaph (father to HV Board member Catherine Ann Fuller); Michael MacNeil (father of HV Past President Bruce MacNeil); Gaelic tradition bearers Angus Currie (*Aonghas mac*

Dhùghaill 'ic Aonghais 'ic Mhìcheil Lachlainn) from North Side East Bay; and Martin Boston, long time station master of the Orangedale Station

Wrap Up

The Highland Village has great strengths in its programming, its people, its site, and its relationships and partnerships. We have made much progress towards our vision as a result of our strengths. In the years to come our goal is to maintain and grow our successes by taking advantage of the opportunities that are in front of us to enhance and expand our offerings and experiences, better connect our story, and the wisdom and richness of that story, to contemporary life, and build new mutually beneficial partnerships.

While there is a lot of work ahead of us, our path to 2020 is paved with many exciting possibilities. Building upon the legacy handed down to us by our ancestors, Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village will achieve its goal to be the premier venue for experiential presentation and transmission of Nova Scotia Gaelic language, culture & folklife.

In closing, I wish to thank the board and staff of the Highland Village for all of their contributions to the successes of the Society. We certainly could not have made the progress we have without their dedication and commitment.

Respectfully submitted by
Rodney Chaisson Director
June 20, 2017



Clockwise from top left: HV Manager of Interpretation Jim Watson received the Best Contribution Award at the 2016 Scottish Gaelic Awards in Glasgow, Scotland; Victoria Byers and Pauline MacLean rehousing a hooked rug from the collection for the ReOrg project; Learning & Media Specialist Katherine MacLeod received a Cape Breton Partnership/NextGen Vital Award; Donna and Tom Poulette present Highland Village with two beaded eagle feathers in memory of our colleagues Debi and Gerry MacNeil; and the recipients of the 2016 Stòras na h-Òigridh/Treasures of Youth Scholarships were Olivier Broussard of Port Hakwesbury and Drea Sheppard of Sydney.

Financial Report

- Betty Lord, Treasurer

I am pleased to provide this overview of the finances of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society for the year ended March 31, 2017. The complete statements and review engagement report, as prepared by our audit firm Grant Thornton, are available on our website, or by request.

Balance Sheet		<i>(Year ended March 31)</i>	
Assets	2017	2016	
Cash	\$ 27,180	\$	21,961
Receivables	\$ 4,668	\$	4,607
Inventory	\$ 22,623	\$	19,114
Prepays	\$ 1,286	\$	4,987
Vehicle	\$ 17,710	\$	23,613
Restricted Cash	\$ 314,695	\$	310,104
Total Assets	\$ 388,162	\$	384,386
Liabilities & Surplus			
Payables & Accruals	\$ 15,192	\$	79,410
Deferred Revenue	\$ 47,085	\$	23,185
Surplus	\$ 325,885	\$	281,791
Net assets	\$ 388,162	\$	384,386

Balance Sheet

- ▶ The Society was in a good cash flow position at year end with assets of \$388,162 including: (a) \$27,180 in cash assets; (b) \$4,668 in receivables (HST); (c) \$22,623 in gift shop inventory; (d) \$1,286 in prepaid expenses for the 2017/18 fiscal year; (e) \$17,710 for net book value of truck purchased in July 2015; and (f) \$314,695 in restricted cash - *see statement of changes in net assets*.
- ▶ Liabilities of \$62,277 included payables and accruals (\$15,192) and deferred revenues (\$47,085). Deferred revenues included grants received for projects that will take place in 2017/18.
- ▶ The Society's net assets at March 31, 2016 were \$388,162 - *see statement of changes in net assets*.

Statement of Revenue & Expenditures (next page)

- ▶ Due to accounting rules, the Society reported a surplus of \$25,939 at year end. Part of this surplus included \$8,327 in net profit from our final Chase the Ace draw in April 2016. The board has designated those profits for the site development program. With transfers to reserve accounts, the operational surplus at year end was \$5,841 (accumulated \$10,338) - *see statement of changes in net assets*.
- ▶ Funding from the Nova Scotia Museum was unchanged for the fiscal \$738,296. Our annual maintenance allowance from the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal increased slightly to \$30,674 (+\$2,767).

Statement of Revenue & Expenditures	Budget 2016/17	Actual 2016/17	Actual 2015/16
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Statement of Revenue & Expenditures	Budget 2016/17	Actual 2016/17	Actual 2015/16
Revenue			
Nova Scotia Museum	\$ 738,296	\$ 738,296	\$ 738,296
Admission Fees	\$ 91,000	\$ 107,465	\$ 90,878
Chase the Ace (net)	\$ 0	\$ 8,327	\$ 46,030
Donations	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,962	\$ 2,047
Food Svs & fundraising	\$ 32,300	\$ 38,856	\$ 34,069
Gift Shop/Retail	\$ 86,000	\$ 115,040	\$ 86,142
NS TIR - Maintenance	\$ 32,000	\$ 30,674	\$ 27,907
Miscellaneous	\$ 5,100	\$ 2,806	\$ 4,521
Programming	\$ 7,500	\$ 9,364	\$ 7,125
Total revenue	\$ 994,196	\$ 1,053,790	\$ 1,037,015
Operating Expenditures			
Wages and benefits (net)	\$ 728,192	\$ 731,317	\$ 722,801
General administrative	\$ 131,600	\$ 133,698	\$ 127,689
Site and facilities	\$ 54,000	\$ 52,732	\$ 50,548
Interp. & programming	\$ 14,800	\$ 22,259	\$ 16,506
Retail Operations	\$ 58,200	\$ 70,026	\$ 58,605
Total expenditures	\$ 986,792	\$ 1,010,032	\$ 976,149
Depreciation	\$ (5,903)	\$ (5,903)	\$ (5,903)
Capital improvements	\$ (4,000)	\$ (13,701)	\$ (4,531)
Special projects, net	\$ (2,000)	\$ 1,785	\$ (166)
Net surplus/(deficit)	\$ (4,499)	\$ 25,939	\$ 50,266

- ▶ The Society received earned income (excluding Chase the Ace) of \$274,722 in 2016/17, up 23% or (\$49,939) over 2015/2016. Significant variances included: Admission Fees (+\$16,587), Retail Sales (+\$28,898), Food Service (+\$3,645), Donations (+\$915) & Programming Fees (+\$2,239). Gross profit on retail sales was \$45,014, up 64% or \$17,477 over last year.
- ▶ Earned income (excluding Chase the Ace) was \$50,822, (23%) higher than budget for the fiscal. Variances included: Admission Fees (+\$16,465), Retail Sales (+\$29,040), and Food Service (+\$5,767).
- ▶ Operational expenses to March 31, 2017 were up 4% or \$33,883 over last year, and 3% or \$23,240 over budget. Major increases included: increased purchase of supplies to offset increase in retail sales and food service; increased OHS supplies; purchase of maple trees; January board motion for purchase of animation and programming supplies, NS webcams, trailer, tables, kitchen supplies, and cost of living increase for employees.
- ▶ Wages and benefits of \$731,317 were net of \$43,585 in wage subsidies received: NS Dept. of Labour & Advanced Education, NS Dept. of Communities, Culture & Heritage, Dept. of Canadian Heritage, and Service Canada. Wages were up \$8,516 or 2% over last year and up 1% or \$3,125 over budget.
- ▶ Project funding included: (1) \$20,425 from the NS Dept. of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for reconstruction of the log cabin; (2) \$10,000 from Canadian Heritage for the Re-Org project (artifacts rehousing project); \$3,155 from the Festival & Events Program (DCBA/Victoria County); and \$2,950 from Gaelic Affairs for Gaelic projects.

Statement of Changes in Net Assets	Unrestricted fund	Restricted replacement reserve	Site development reserve	Unused sick days reserve	2017 Total	2016 Total
Opening Balance	\$ 4,497	\$ 190,987	\$ 66,030	\$ 20,277	\$ 281,791	\$ 233,907
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$ 25,939	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 25,939	\$ 50,266
Interest earned and contributions	\$ 0	\$ 1,280	\$ 21,103	\$ 66	\$ 22,449	\$ 21,953
Transfer to (from) reserve	\$ (20,098)	\$ 5,706	\$ 10,098	\$ 0	\$ (4,294)	\$ (24,335)
Balance, end of year	\$ 10,338	\$ 197,973	\$ 97,231	\$ 20,343	\$ 325,885	\$ 281,791

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

- ▶ As noted above, due to accounting rules, the Society reported a surplus of \$25,939 at year end. Part of this surplus included \$8,327 in net profit from our final Chase the Ace draw in April 2016. The board has designated those profits for the site development program. With transfers to reserve accounts, the operational surplus at year end was \$5,841 (accumulated \$10,338).
- ▶ Restricted reserve fund balances at March 31, 2017 included: Replacement reserve (\$197,973), Site Development (\$97,231), and Unused sick days (\$20,343). The Site Development reserve was established to support the site development plan and includes the gross profits from Chase the Ace as well as the first \$40,000 of an expected \$100,000 contribution from the Municipality of Victoria County. The unused sick days reserve was established to cover wage expenses for replacement staff up to the value of the accrued unused sick days for the staff person being replaced. As of March 31, 2017, the value of accrued unused sick days was \$107,718.

Other Notes

- ▶ The Highland Village truck purchased in 2015 for \$29,516, had a book value of \$17,710 at March 31, 2017. The truck is being depreciated annually by \$5,903 for five years.
- ▶ Pursuant to the Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is required to disclose individuals with compensation greater than \$100,000. There are no board members, officers, employees, contractors, or consultants with compensation greater than \$100,000.

Respectfully submitted,
 Finance Committee
 Betty Lord, Treasurer (Chair)
 June 20, 2017

Nominating Committee Report

- Betty Lord, Chair

The Nominating Committee of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is pleased to present its report to the membership of the Society. Serving on the committee this year have been Betty Lord, Dan Chiasson, and Quentin MacDonald.

In accordance with the By-Laws of the Society, dated June 18, 2015 (clauses 24 through 31), the Nominating Committee presents the following three individuals to the membership for election to serve on the Society's Board of Trustees: Jodi MacDonnell-Scott, Coxheath, Donnie MacNeil, Beaver Cove, and Michelle Smith, Skye Glen.

With this election, the composition of the Board of Trustees, including its officers, is as follows:

- ▶ Dan Chiasson, Baddeck (Exp 2019/22)
- ▶ John Hugh Edwards, Ross Ferry (Exp 2017/20)
- ▶ Angie Farrell, Christmas Island (Exp. 2016/19)
- ▶ Catherine Ann Fuller, Baddeck (Exp. 2016/19)
- ▶ Elizabeth (Betty) Lord, Howie Centre (Exp. 2016/19)
- ▶ Quentin MacDonald, Washabuck (Exp. 2018/21)
- ▶ Jodi MacDonnell-Scott, Coxheath (Exp. 2020/23)
- ▶ Vince MacLean, Northside East Bay (Exp. 2018/21)
- ▶ Donnie MacNeil, Beaver Cove (Exp. 2020/23)
- ▶ Murdock A. MacPherson, Creignish (Exp. 2017/20)
- ▶ Melissa Nicholson, Baddeck (Exp. 2017/20)
- ▶ Meaghan O'Handley, Grand Narrows (Exp. 2017/20)
- ▶ Michelle Smith, Skye Glen (Exp. 2020/23)

The officers of the Society will be as follows:

- ▶ President - Murdock A. MacPherson
- ▶ Vice President - Dan Chiasson
- ▶ Treasurer - Elizabeth (Betty) Lord
- ▶ Secretary - Quentin MacDonald

The committee thanks retiring board members Charlene Ellis, Dr. Michael Linkletter, Pam MacGillivray, Hector (Frankie) MacNeil, and Paul Wukitsch for their contributions to the work of the Board and support of the Society.

Respectfully submitted,

The Nominating Committee

Betty Lord (Chair), Dan Chiasson, and Quentin MacDonald

June 20, 2017.

Board of Trustee Bios

Dan Chiasson is a retired lawyer who has practiced in Baddeck for many years. Dan has served as the Society's pro-bono legal advisor for over 25 years. Dan is very involved in community organisations. He lives in Baddeck with his wife Nancy.

John Hugh Edwards was born and raised in Sydney Mines and has lived in Ross Ferry for the past thirty years, minus periods of exile in the United Kingdom and Ottawa. In 2002, John Hugh facilitated a province wide series of meetings on the future of Gaelic in Nova Scotia. A report on the consultation was released by the NS Department of Tourism and Culture in December 2002.

Angie Farrell is a fluent Gaelic speaker from Christmas Island and retired public school teacher.

Catherine Ann Fuller lives in Baddeck and is a community development specialist. Catherine Ann is an avid sailor and aspiring mandolin player and is very proud of her children!

Betty Lord, Howie Center, is a Gaelic singer and a student of Gaelic language and culture. She has organized numerous Gaelic cultural events including language workshops, lectures, concerts, as well as fundraising events. She is a founding member of *Feis a' Bhaile Bhig*, in Pictou County. Betty is retired from Sobeys.

Quentin MacDonald was born, raised & presently living in the neighbouring community of Washabuck. His father Ronald was a fluent native Gaelic speaker and his mother Joan is a traditional step-dancer who performed at the first Highland Village Day Concert. Quentin has been a volunteer at the Village since the mid-1980s and the Highland Village Day concert producer since 2000. He has a great interest in promoting the culture and history of our Scottish Gaelic ancestors.

Jodi MacDonnell-Scott

Vince MacLean is a former mayor for the City of Sydney, Leader of the Official Opposition for the Province of Nova Scotia, and Minister of various NS departments. Vince has sat on the boards of many important institutions and community organizations including the Sydney Airport Authority, Marine Atlantic, ACOA, Old

Sydney Society, Cape Breton Regional Economic Development Authority, Nova Scotia Cancer Society and others. Vince is son of the late well known fiddler Joe MacLean of Washabuck. Joe's collection of fiddle manuscripts is housed at the Highland Village. Vince lives in Northside East Bay with his wife Natalie.

Donnie MacNeil grew up in Big Beach and graduated from Rankin Memorial High School and Mount Allison University. Donnie spent 9 years working in BC. He and his family moved back to Cape Breton in 1999 to live in Beaver Cove and work with the Nova Scotia Community College as a Manager of Information Technology. Donnie is currently on one-year leave from NSCC and has been working as a project manager for the team that is developing the Rural High Speed Internet Strategy for the NS Provincial Department of Business. Donnie and his wife Theresa, have 2 daughters who are currently in university. Donnie a grandchild of the Allan J's (Angie) from Christmas Island, but is more commonly referred to as "Donnie Leona" (MacKinnon) after his father passed at an early age.

M.A. (Murdock Andrew) MacPherson is a retired educator and administrator who has worked in public, military and private school as well as St. Francis Xavier University. He currently instructs in the University of New Brunswick's Masters of Education program. He lives in Creignish with his wife Sandra. They have two adult children, and a brand new granddaughter.

Melissa Nicholson was born and raised in Big Baddeck. Growing up, history and culture was an important part of the lessons she learned at her grandfathers' knees. She has a BA in Celtic Culture from Cape Breton University, which featured a one year immersion at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. She is currently enrolled in the B.Ed. program at St. FX University and works as a guide at the Alexander Graham Bell Museum.

Meaghan O'Handley grew up in Boisdale. She teaches Gaelic and music at Rankin School of the Narrows. She has been involved with Gaelic language and culture for many years. She lives in Grand Narrows with her husband Ian MacNeil.

Michelle Smith came to Cape Breton 35 years ago to study Gaelic language and culture and ended up staying to live, farm and raise her family. In that time she has become noted for her knowledge about traditional agriculture and heritage seeds. She served as secretary on the board of Seeds of Diversity Canada for six years and continues to volunteer for a wide range of farming and community development projects. She has three grown children.



Comunn Baile Ghàidheal nan h-Albann Nuaidh
Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

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