

“The Ag Society with all their involvement in island life is one of the most important groups that builds our community” 2018 Strategic Planning Survey Respondent.

## **Strategic Plan 2019-2021 Mayne Island Agricultural and Fall Fair Society**

### **Introduction**

#### **“Building Our Future ~ Honouring Our Past”**

In 2016 the Society’s Board committed to developing a strategic plan for the Agricultural Society to set out goals and plans to achieve identified goals over the next three years. Our original motivation was the recognition that in past years we had successfully provided good resources to the community such as maintenance of our historic hall, the creation of the Plumper Pass Museum and annual Fall Fair and used the Thrift Shop as a social enterprise to fund these activities. We realized that with changes in government policies and requirements and the aging of our facilities we would need a plan to carry the Society forward over the upcoming years. The immediate call to action was that our Thrift Shop was non-compliant with local building codes and was rapidly deteriorating. Our buildings are well over one hundred years old and in need of constant updating to meet present community needs. (See a brief overview of our history at the end of this document.)

Before embarking on any major upgrading and fund raising we needed to know how the community felt about the Society and how they envision its future. After all this is the community’s Society and the Board is simply its custodians.

Our first step was to engage the assistance of an experienced, professional facilitator. Kristine Webber began working with the Board in the fall of 2017. Kristine suggested that we begin with a survey of the community to determine their thoughts and desires. Through a number of workshop events the Board identified the questions they wished to ask the community.

The survey went out in February 2018. We had a tremendous response of 230 returned surveys out of a population of 530 permanent residents. Some part-time residents and visitors also responded. Taking the survey results we have consolidated a plan to guide us through the next few years.

Our hope is to use this plan to guide us:

- to update of our constitution
- to promote the society to the community and encourage more membership and volunteer participation
- to achieve charitable status for the society from CRA so it can launch a fund raising campaign to upgrade our facilities
- to promote stronger educational programs for the community and
- to put the Society on a sound footing for the future.

## **Mission**

The Mayne Island Agricultural Society promotes and celebrates the value of agriculture and horticulture on Mayne Island through education, events and programs. Drawing on deep historic Mayne Island roots, and using our unique facilities, the Society's actions strengthen connections to an agrarian past and help build a self-reliant, economically viable island community for the future.

## **Values/ Principles**

The Mayne Island Agriculture & Fall Fair Society strives to:

- Be accountable and transparent with its resources and processes;
- Be a welcoming, supportive volunteer run organization;
- Be a responsible steward of all its resources- fiscal, built and the community goodwill;
- Connect, inspire and promote right-sized agriculture on Mayne Island;
- Be a guardian of historic artifacts and unique community facilities for future Mayne Island generations.
- Be a social connector- having evolved from its origins as a social club, the Society continues to bring people together through celebratory events such as the annual Fall Fair

## **Society resources and support:**

- Financial- revenue streams include facility rental fees (\$12,000 per year), donations (\$1,200 per year), membership fees (\$350 per year), grants (\$7,500 in 2019) and the Society's social enterprise - the Thrift Shop (~\$29,000 per year). Operating expenses for a year run approximately \$35,000 per year. Contingency funds are reserved for major renovations such as new roofs, upgrade to water and sewage and replacement of the old oil burning furnace.
- Volunteer Power- the Society is truly volunteer run with labour provided by dedicated volunteers who act in all manner of capacities from working on the Board of Directors, coordinating the Thrift Store (15 volunteers - 1500 hours), organizing the Fall Fair (150 volunteers – 1500 hours) to delivering educational programs. Overall the Society counts on 130 members and 5,000 volunteer hours each year. (2019 figures)
- Community commitment - the Society's membership is one gauge of the community's support for the Society as is the extraordinary contributions of its many volunteers.

## PROGRAMS

The Mayne Island Agricultural Society and Fall Fair offers programming that builds awareness and skills as well as celebrates and promotes agriculture, horticulture and the history and culture of Mayne Island.

- The largest and best-known program of the Society is the Annual Fall Fair. Each year up to 1800 people attend the Fall Fair and Parade. Gardeners, local farmers, crafters and islanders compete for coveted ribbons and recognition for their entries.
- In addition the Society runs seasonal workshops, educational programs and events such as the popular Seedy Saturday. Through collaborations and partnerships with other community groups the Society extends its educational reach and contributes to the economic vitality of the Island e.g. Farmers' Market, Apple Festival/Apple Mapping Project and hosting joint programs with the Mayne Island Conservancy.

The Mayne Island Museum Collection is another direct delivery program run out of the old Gaol (The Plumper Pass Museum). It features documents, artifacts and photographs and was recently recognized with the Award of Merit, Excellence in Collections by the BC Museum Association for the John Aitken glass plate negative digitization project, which preserved more than 300 historical images of 19th and early 20th century Mayne Island. Then, made them available online as high-resolution images. The old Deacon Barn, located adjacent to the Museum provides an appropriate site for displaying antique farming equipment and complements the collection inside the Gaol. The Museum Program demonstrates the intersectionality of the Society's programs and facilities.

- A joint project funded by the BC Museum Society to build relationships with and recognition of the Tsartlip First Nation (Saltwater Peoples) whose territorial lands include Mayne Island was completed in September 2019. We plan to continue communications and joint projects with these people. The Tsartlip peoples hold reserve lands on Helen's Point.

### Strategic Goal

- To offer a suite of highly sought after programs in various formats (workshops, events and projects) that educates, informs, celebrates and promotes right-sized agriculture and horticulture on Mayne Island ('right sized' reflects the particular needs of the community);
- Through education and awareness activities, support and build capacity for island agriculture from backyard growers and the school garden to small commercial farmers;
- To archive, care for and make accessible to the public historical artifacts entrusted to the Society;
- To partner with other organizations to enrich the lives of Mayne Islanders through education and celebration.
- Continue the Indigenous partnership interpretation project with the Saanich Nation which began in 2019.

## Challenges

The Society has been operating without a strategic plan for many years, as such programming has evolved and some decisions about which programs to offer have likely been made opportunistically rather than strategically. This may result in the Society’s resources (funds as well as volunteers) becoming stretched too thin and potentially create a mismatch between activities and the Society’s mission. Using the mission as a lens the Society can optimize programming for maximum benefit conserving limited resources and capacity.

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
<p>Increase community engagement through sought after programming</p>	<p>Strike a programs committee to develop an annual program plan/roster; evaluate choices based on alignment with mission, capacity, annual themes or focus, funding potential and community interest [reference strategic planning survey for ideas]; look at what is currently working and what can change</p> <p>Identify attendance targets; leverage programs to attract volunteers, members and donors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- engaged programs committee established with terms of reference</li> <li>- annual program roster in place with clear program choice rationale</li> <li>- Offer at least one direct delivery program per season</li> </ul>	<p>Program Committee</p> <p>On going</p> <p>Seedy Saturday/ Seed Library Selena Flood</p> <p>Museum Committee Jennifer Iredale Margaret Smith, Colleen Ming</p>

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
Enhance communication about programs and mission	<p>Alongside the program plan identify communication goals;</p> <p>Use programs as a platform to share the mission/ work of the Society;</p> <p>Create a buzz around the AGM to build more support and community awareness</p>	<p>- good program reach and attendance</p> <p>- more members / public at AGM</p>	<p>On going posts to Face Book, Mayne News and MayneLiner articles</p> <p>Unaddressed ad mail via CPC</p> <p>Higher visibility at community events  Chamber of Commerce  CRD sponsored events  Farmers' market</p> <p>Coordination with other MI groups such as the Conservancy, the Community Centre, the Lions Club...</p>
Evaluate program success	Put mechanisms in place to evaluate programs/ get feedback from participants and determine ways to (where appropriate) integrate that feedback	- strong program evaluation results and positive participant feedback	

Museum	Increase interest and use of the museum	Provide more programs and displays highlighting MI history	
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## FACILITIES

The Mayne Island Agricultural Society and Fall Fair is the caretaker of several historical facilities that broadly benefit the Mayne Island community and enable the Society to achieve its mission. These facilities include: the Agricultural Hall, Gaol/Museum, Fair Grounds (home to the Band Shell and Farmers’ Market) and the Thrift Store.

- The Agricultural Hall is a much-loved gathering place for the many events that mark Island life including among them weddings, concerts, art shows, and theatre. The Ag. Hall is also an important meeting place for various community groups, including the: Islands Trust, Ladies Fitness, Cribbage Night, the Quilt Guild, Mayne Island Artists, movie nights and the Lions’ Club.
- From May to October - the Fair Grounds are the site of the Farmers’ Market, outdoor concerts and events such as May Day, the Apple Festival and the Community Apple Squeeze- all contributing to the cultural and economic vibrancy of Mayne Island.
- The Thrift Shop Building - Home to the Society’s Social Enterprise, the Thrift Shop generates revenue which benefits the community through the work of the Society while also providing a venue for a thriving second hand economy and social meeting place for Islanders.
- The Museum - located in the old historic Gaol, is open during the summer months, and by request throughout the year [see programs above for more].

### Strategic Goal

**To maintain and over time and with adequate resources, improve and update, these facilities to meet the needs of the Society and Mayne Island Community now and into the future.**

## Challenge

The buildings are old and in need of repair and modernization. A number of suggestions for improvements were provided by the community in the 2018 Strategic Planning Survey including: accessibility projects, improving the kitchen facilities in the Ag. Hall, and replacing the Thrift Store building. As a volunteer-run organization with limited resources, prioritizing and making realistic improvements over time is necessary.

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/by when
<p>Develop an Overall Facilities Plan-</p> <p>By developing a plan we will be better able to maintain the existing facilities, identify priority projects and share our vision for how we want to improve the facilities; This will enable the Society to better engage and mobilize Mayne Islanders to realize these facilities improvements.</p>	<p>Identify/inventory the various facilities Outline annual scheduled maintenance and costs for each</p> <p>Using community, board and member input, identify short and long-term priority improvement projects for the various facilities.</p> <p>Once priorities have been determined co-develop a feasibility study and fundraising plan.</p> <p>As part of the facilities review, conduct a survey of user groups (evaluation/needs)</p> <p>Work with the Board/finance committee to identify capital projects, timelines and potential sources of funding</p>	<p>Creation of an overall Facilities Plan for Board Review by Brian</p> <p>2019 Note: this date should be early enough to incorporate maintenance into annual budget and may need to include scenarios for if you do or do not achieve charitable status]</p>	<p>Annex Committee Brian Haller et. Al</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update yearly</li> </ul> <p>List of issues and budget compiled by Facilities Manager</p> <p>Priority projects: Pave front half of patio for wheel chair access to the Hall. Completed summer 2019</p> <p>Acquire property next to Thrift Shop Raise funds from grants and community by April 2021. Capital Acquisitions Committee Survey community to see how they wish to see the new property developed. Renovate the acquired trailer for use by the Museum and the Thrift Shop. 2022. Remove or restore old Thrift Shop Plan and reorganise grounds between the Museum and trailer for park-like community use as per survey results.</p>

			Expand Fall Fair use. Furnace replacement within 5 years
			Museum upgrade 2022 – 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Indigenous Peoples Project - 2019

## PEOPLE- VOLUNTEERS & MEMBERS

The Society is governed, managed, and operates with volunteers\*. In 2018-2019, 200 volunteers contributed 5000+ hours to governance, operating the Thrift Store, managing the Agricultural Hall, and coordinating programming including events, workshops, the Museum Program and annual Fall Fair. The Fall Fair is an enormous feat, and island treasure, and important community agricultural event; 150 volunteers make the Fall Fair possible through setting up displays to judging the entries, from managing the traffic for the Parade to organizing the events. The Society is a membership-driven organization (120 members in 2019) and through membership Islanders demonstrate support for the Society and have a voice in its operation through the election of the Board of Directors each year at the AGM. A healthy membership roster is desirable for multiple reasons from being a reservoir of volunteer talent and potential donors' pool to sources of inspiration for programs/ projects and is an important signal to external funders that the community values and supports the work of the Society. Strategic Goal - to increase the number and engagement of volunteers and members. Volunteering for the Society is seen as a valuable, rewarding community service, with volunteers welcomed and celebrated. Volunteers and members are engaged and report high levels of satisfaction from their experiences with the Society.

\*The exception is two paid part-time employees who clean the Hall and grounds and manages rental bookings and the occasional Board approved honoraria for speakers and volunteers.)

### Strategic Goal

**To increase the number and engagement of volunteers and members. Volunteering for the Society is seen as a valuable, rewarding community service, with volunteers welcomed and celebrated. Volunteers and members are engaged and report high levels of satisfaction from their experiences with the Society.**

### Challenge

The 2018 Strategic Planning Survey pointed out several areas where public awareness, engagement and recognition of volunteers and membership could be improved. For example, some respondents reported the Society can be perceived to be a "closed shop", not welcoming to new volunteers thus volunteer opportunities and recognition could be improved. In addition, although the Society's facilities are well used by the community and by visitors, users often do not become members and membership program awareness is low.

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
Improve Volunteer Engagement	<p>Develop a volunteer engagement plan that includes strategies for recruitment, training, and recognition</p> <p>Conduct an annual volunteer engagement survey</p> <p>Host at least one volunteer Appreciation event annually</p> <p>Recognize volunteer achievements at the AGM</p> <p>Have clear consistently applied volunteer policies</p>	<p>- Volunteer Plan is developed</p> <p>- Number of Volunteers /satisfaction of volunteers improves</p> <p>- Feedback from volunteer engagement survey is implemented</p> <p>- Volunteer Policies are consolidated</p>	<p>Leslie? Trish, Carol 2020</p> <p>Rummage Sale - members only first half hour - yearly</p>
Increase Membership and Engagement of Current Members	<p>Develop a membership development strategy; identify benefits to membership that will be valued by the community</p>	<p>- increase in membership numbers</p> <p>- increased member engagement</p>	<p>On going</p>
Evaluate program success	<p>Put mechanisms in place to evaluate programs/ get feedback from participants and determine ways to (where appropriate) integrate that feedback</p>	<p>- communication tool is developed/ used and volunteers and members find it valuable</p>	<p>On-line survey</p> <p>Social media</p>

## **FINANCES & FINANCIAL STABILITY**

### **Strategic Goal**

Easy to understand, timely and accurate financial information helps the Society understand its current financial situation, plan for the future and assists the Board in meeting its legal fiduciary responsibilities.

**The Society is financially stable with budgets, fundraising plans and financial accounting that is timely, accurate, transparent, and comparable across time.**

**Annual operating budgets and capital plans projects are in place to guide annual operations and allow for maintenance and /or expansion of current facilities.**

### **Challenge**

A lack of financial policies and procedures coupled with many years of well-meaning but inconsistent voluntary bookkeeping practices have provided the Board and membership with less than dependable, accurate, and dynamic records of income and expenses. Income and expenses have been recognized when received or invoiced. Annual budgets have not always been available. Financial policies including, spending parameters have not been established. The Society has operated on a cash accounting basis until the 2017-218 fiscal year. In 2019, the Finance Committee has worked to move the Society to an accrual accounting system.

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
Demonstrate transparent financial planning	Develop Annual Operating Budget and Fundraising Plan	Budget and Fundraising Plans are approved by the Board prior to the fiscal year end	Finance committee in collaboration with Board and various Committees; developed prior to yearend
	Capital plans are in place for Agricultural Hall upgrades and Thrift Store replacement	Capital Plans are in place and approved	Finance/ Facilities committees June 2020
Demonstrate financial transparency and accountability	Financial Statements and Budget comparisons are prepared quarterly	-professional accountant engaged to assist proper development of an accounting system -approved financial statements presented monthly/quarterly with budget comparisons Implementation of Quick Books On-line Accounting	Treasurer with Finance Committee Patterson Henn Accounting Done and on-going
	Review engagement of annual financial statements are prepared and presented to membership at AGM	-financial audit presented at AGM	Treasurer / finance committee Jon Hoff and Patterson Henn - Sheila Henn - 2019 AGM
Enhance understanding of the Board's role in finances and legal fiscal responsibilities	Financial policies are in place (and reviewed annually) to guide the Board and Society volunteers Board development around understanding financial statements, legal responsibilities, budgeting, etc	-financial policies developed -annual review of policies conducted -education plans in place to develop board capacity with regards to fiscal planning and management	Finance Committee: Jon Hoff, Sean Skiffington

## GOVERNANCE

The Mayne Island Agricultural Society and Fall Fair is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Four Executive Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) are elected annually at the AGM. An Executive Committee comprising the Executive Officers and a Board of Directors of at least six members manage the affairs of the Society. Meetings are held monthly and are open to all members of the Society.

### Strategic Goal:

**To increase Board capacity and increase awareness and understanding of their role as governors of the Society. To develop written procedures that meet the needs of the Society now and into the future. To develop a shared understanding and an annual review of the responsibilities of the Board. To recognize and celebrate the work of the Executive and other volunteers.**

### Challenges

Volunteers have maintained the Society for over 50 years. Knowledge of “how things work” has been held primarily through oral tradition and responses to critical issues as they arise. Because volunteer turnover has been low, there has been little incentive for written documentation. Things are done as they have been done in the past. Because the Society has identified a desire to engage new volunteers / members and implement longer term plans (including capital plans) having good guiding documentation will be increasingly important.

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
<p>To clarify and align the work of the Society to more effectively achieve its mission</p> <p>To more easily communicate the work and goals of the Society</p>	<p>Activate the Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Strategic Plan is completed and approved</p> <p>The plan becomes a basis for the work of the Society and is reflected in the meeting structure and reporting and external communications</p>	<p>2020</p>

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
<p>To support the development of the Board</p> <p>To assist in recruiting &amp; retaining successful new Board members</p>	<p>Develop a Board Handbook to clarify and codify the roles and activities of the Board of Directors</p>	<p>Handbook is developed and includes: policies, educational materials, and annual calendar of key board responsibilities</p>	
	<p>Commit to ongoing Board Development</p>	<p>-onboarding process exists for new board members - board sets its own capacity building goals annually</p>	
	<p>Conduct an annual Board self-evaluation</p>	<p>- annual check in with board is conducted</p>	<p>2020</p>
<p>Become a federally registered charity to help the Society's long-term financial sustainability</p>	<p>Working with a lawyer specializing in charity law, develop strategy/application to receive federal charitable status</p> <p>Build the Board's capacity to meet the new responsibilities if charitable status is achieved</p>	<p>- engage M. Mason - new charitable objects/ constitution approved by membership</p> <p>- all requirements for charitable status identified and a plan to achieve them in place (or decision to pull back from process)</p>	<p>Sept 2018 – Jon Hoff</p> <p>Application submitted Feb. 2019</p> <p>Constitution and by-laws review Ready for adoption at SGM in June 2019</p> <p>Charitable status was granted by CRA in July 2019</p>

Annual Objectives	Actions	Measures of Success	Who/ by when
Develop a fund raising campaign to acquire property adjacent to the present Thrift Shop	Fund raising Committee Marketing Committee Communications Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- letter of intent for purchase of property</li> <li>-put together a fund raising committee</li> <li>Develop a web site for fund raising</li> <li>Plan Social Media announcements</li> <li>Apply for grants once Charitable Status is achieved</li> </ul>	<p>Signed in fall 2018 Purchase due April 2021 Capital Acquisitions Committee</p> <p>David Lindquist April 2019 Trish, Helen, Karen</p>

## History

[Karen Ramlo Past Secretary, President, Treasurer and Past President of the Executive and Fall Fair Volunteer]

The Mayne Island Agricultural Society and Fall Fair has been the hub on Mayne Island since its inception in 1962 under the B.C. Societies Act as a non-profit organization committed to the support of Agricultural and Horticultural activities. This year (2018) will see the Mayne Island Fall Fair present the 93rd Fall Fair on August 18th. The history of our facilities goes back much further. The Federal Government contracted for the building of the Plumper Pass Gaol in 1896. As miners heading to the Gold Rush in the Yukon had to buy their provisions in a Canadian location before proceeding north Miner's Bay on Mayne Island became a stop-over for these adventurers.

Operation of the Plumper Pass Gaol and Museum formally began at the Fall Fair in August of 1970. The property was owned by Dr. West, our local physician, who practiced from the Green Room at the back of the Agricultural Hall before there was a Medical Centre. Negotiations with the Society to purchase the Gaol were taking place when he died. Through his estate and an Order-in-Council of the B.C. Government the Gaol was given to the Society to hold and protect in December of 1974.

The Society continues to gather information and items to reflect the historical past of our Island. A Heritage Grant allowed the Society to replace the roof and put in proper footings for the Gaol, which had previously sat on a wall of rock slabs stacked to form the foundation for the building. The Deacon Barn, behind the Gaol, was taken down from Village Bay and rebuilt on site to house the larger pieces of our farming history.

In 1900 the construction of the Agricultural Hall began with the community of Mayne Island and support of volunteers from all the surrounding islands to build the social centre for all of the islands. Building supplies and equipment were all donated by those participating in the raising of the walls for the Hall, along with the man-hours to get the job done. Neighbouring islanders would row or sail over to Mayne for dances and camp here overnight or visit with friends before returning home. Many weddings, dances, fairs and other gatherings at the Hall took over the years under the watchful eye of the Maple Leaf Club. A stage was added many years after the initial construction by cutting a hole in the back wall of the Hall and adding on a stage!

As Maple Leaf members began to pass on the surviving three members decided to formally give the Hall to the Agricultural Group who had run the Fall Fair on site since 1923. There was a little hitch with the transfer of the property and it was discovered in 1972 that the transfer was not completed! Again, by Order-in-Council the Agricultural Society was given clear title to the Agricultural Hall and Grounds in the fall of 1974. The Thrift Shop building was moved to its present site from Bennett Bay sometime between 1972 and 1974. The intention of the Thrift Shop was to recycle and reuse clothing, household items, etc. with the resulting funds to be used within the Society and the Community. It continues this work to the present time.