

National President's Report, NAC

Fellow members:

It has been a busy six months since the last AGM. There are successes to recognize and a number of identified challenges to tackle as we move forward. During this time the Board has conducted a review of our Governance. Led by Director Michael Hoare, our Constitution, By-Laws and Guidance Manual were examined with the goal of bringing all into alignment (no internal inconsistencies) and to make sure we are positioned to effectively handle challenges as they arise. This will be an on-going task as need evolves as we move forward.

Naval Affairs, as an initiative within NAC, is now up and running under the guidance of Director Ian Parker (with thanks to all the advance work by Dan Sing). This will be fully covered in Ian's report. We now have staff working on this and a work plan in place to take us through the next steps. Linked to Naval Affairs, as we move forward with our goal of educating the Canadian public on our need for a capable Navy, is the whole topic of Communications. To this end we have started a review of all our communication elements. We are maintaining course and speed with NAC News, thanks to the efforts of Director Rod Hughes, and we are involved in giving a detailed look at our website, Starshell, and how we communicate with and support our branches. This, as well, is an evolving task and will see changes unfold over the next year. Of note here is the special thanks we owe NAC-O as it is their efforts with the BOA Gala that provide the needed funding for this.

Membership decline, both nationally and at the branch level is both a challenge and an opportunity and one we will spend time and effort on over the next year. Directors Ed Williams and Bill Thomas have chaired the membership committee over the last year and have a number of initiatives and improvements underway. Special thanks to Branches for nominating members to this group and for their informed contributions. Association memberships, throughout our modern world, are having issues as demographics change and people look to align themselves with Associations they deem relevant to their needs and interests. This topic will occupy much of our time and focus over the next year. This is also an opportunity to define ourselves as we look to establish relevance and re-build our membership.

Coordinating all this is our National Office managed by Executive Director David Soule. David maintains a calm hand on the wheel as we move forward and indeed, makes much of what we do possible. Many thanks David.

I want to personally thank our departing Board members for their support to the board and to the NAC membership. Some of these individuals have been involved with the NOAC and NAC for many years, so thank you to Ron Skelton, Dennis Baird, Charles O'Leary, Rowland Marshall, and Ed Williams.

Thanks also to all other who continue to contribute, Mike Morres and Derek Greer for guiding and managing our Endowment Fund. and as well, the efforts of our Awards Committee under the chairmanship of Ray Zuliani and members Derek Greer and Michael Hoare. We welcome as well, Mark Phillips to this committee.

So, where to next?

We know we face challenges in attracting new members, and that our current membership numbers are in decline. Yet, we are moving forward with new initiatives like naval affairs. We will also look at best practices to attract younger members while retaining many of our current members; indeed we need to ensure that NAC is relevant to our current members and as well, those we wish to attract.

Yours Aye

Bill