



West Vancouver Historical Society Strategic Plan 2019-2022 Progress Report for 2019-2020 as of May 2020

Progress Report for 2019-2020 on WVHS Strategic Plan

In 2019, the West Vancouver Historical Society developed a three-year strategic business plan which focusses on 6 key areas to fulfill its mission and ensure a sustainable organization. Below is a summary of accomplishments in 2019-2020 aligned with the plan and opportunities to consider for 2020-2021.

Six Point Plan

1. Offer diverse event programs to increase member and community engagement
2. Publish and promote West Vancouver historical information
3. Support preservation of historical materials
4. Support and advocacy for Point Atkinson Light station
5. Increase awareness of WVHS initiatives and increase WVHS influence through representation on municipal and local committees
6. Maintain WVHS sustainability with a strong board, membership and financial resources

1. Offer diverse programs to increase member and community engagement

- Three Speaker Series and four Local Voices meetings were held over the last year. Feedback and topic suggestions were solicited from members and attendees. Local Voices was produced in partnership with the WV Memorial Library to increase participation of a broader audience and use their meeting space. Elwin Xie, a volunteer spent many hours taping the Local Voices meetings and putting them into files for viewing. These events and speaker presentations are now available for viewing on the WVHS YouTube Channel and accessible through the WVHS Website, significantly increasing public access to the presentations.
- Speaker Series:
 1. Michael Kluckner – “The life and adventures of Julia Henshaw”, an early resident of Caulfeild.
 2. Mary-Ann Booth – “A Renewed West Vancouver: Liveable, Vibrant, & Inclusive”.
 3. Steve Nicholls – “Community heritage and the history and innovations in planning in West Vancouver and why it is different from other communities”.
- Local Voices:
 1. “Wild West Van” - speakers: Dave and Gerry Brewer, founders of North Shore Rescue, Lisa Brasso, Blue Dot advocate for a healthy environment and Dr. Jennifer McQueen, who makes science accessible to youth.
 2. “On the Water” - speakers: Cathy Tocher & Bob Aylesworth — The Voyage of the Orenda, Norah Corbet — Building a Sailboat at Hollyburn Sailing Club, and Pauline Le Bel — A Community sets out to Save Howe Sound.
 3. “Learning Curves” - Speakers: Chepximiya Siyam/ Chief Janice George, a Salish weaver - learnings from her grandmother and restoration of the craft of weaving to the Squamish people. Geoff Jopson, former Superintendent of Schools - changes to our local education system and to our community. Maya Seethram, graduate of the Environmental Science Academy - classroom studies, lab work at the Pacific Science Enterprise Centre, and mentoring elementary school students.

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4. "Shooting the North Shore" - North Shore based photographers Mike Wakefield and Ralph Bower shared the stories behind some of their fascinating images.
- Annual Barbeque social event held September 2019 for members and friends to engage
 - The WVHS Newsletter – *West Vancouver Memories* – was published in May, Sept, Nov 2019 and March 2020 with copies mailed to over 160 recipients. West Vancouver history and upcoming events were highlighted.

Areas of Opportunity for 2020-2021

- WVHS sought out volunteers for Membership, Newsletter Editor and other roles that support the organization. Some progress was made in soliciting volunteers. WVHS needs to better define project and volunteer roles, responsibilities and time commitment, and seek out volunteers for specific roles.
- Engagement of Youth in school and other projects that engage students in learning WV history remains an opportunity.
- Facilitate projects, including the oral history project, to capture, preserve and promote historical stories.

2. Publication and promotion of historical information

- Books: In 2019 "*Dreamers and Designers, the Shaping of West Vancouver*" was published by WVHS in collaboration with Harbour Publishing. The book *Dreamers and Designers* traces the history of West Vancouver and examines how its approach to land use has shaped the region. Approximately 500 copies were held and sold locally by WVHS with a profit of ~\$10,000 for WVHS. Harbour Publishing was responsible for all other sales. In 2020, WVHS has agreed to contribute support to publication of a book written by Rod Day, tentatively titled "*Politics, Planning and Personalities in West Vancouver, 1912 to the Present*" based on his personal experience in community service over 30 years. This will be the fourth book supported by WVHS.
- A list of WV history books was published in the May 2019 West Vancouver Memories Newsletter and a number of local authors were presenters at WVHS and Local Voices events.
- A new poster display at John Lawson Park kiosk was designed and installed by WVHS to inform the public about early resident John Lawson and his contribution to the community. This is the start of a series of poster displays in the community that will be supported by WVHS.
- As part of its mandate to provide and maintain interpretive information on the importance of Point Atkinson as a coastal defence station during the Second World War, the West Vancouver Historical Society (WVHS) has installed a three-panel historical display inside the former Powerhouse. The display depicts the role of the military presence at the light station during World War Two. The first public viewing took place during the guided tours on February 23, 2020, during B.C. Heritage Week.

Areas of Opportunity for 2020-2021

- Continue development of more poster displays for installation in the community to highlight historical significance.

- Implement and complete West Vancouver Stories project for which WVHS received funding to collect, process and publish oral history stories.

3. Support Preservation of Historical Materials

- WVHS provided a grant of \$1000 to the WV Archives to complete the project
- WVHS provided a grant of \$2500 toward production of the Powerhouse display panel at Point Atkinson that depicts the importance of Point Atkinson as a coastal defence station during the Second World War.
- Grant applications are accepted and reviewed annually from organizations including the WV Art Museum, WV Memorial Library and the WV Archives for special projects that preserve and promote WV history.

4. Support and advocacy for Point Atkinson Light station by WVHS and PALS

- In honour of Heritage Week, the public was invited on Feb 23, 2020 to guided tours of Point Atkinson Light Station and to learn more about the history of Point Atkinson.
- As part of its mandate to provide and maintain interpretive information on the importance of Point Atkinson as a coastal defence station during the Second World War, WVHS has installed a three-panel historical display inside the former Powerhouse. The display depicts the role of the military presence at the light station during World War Two. The first public viewing took place during guided tours February 23, 2020, during B.C. Heritage Week.
- Following advocacy efforts led by Elaine Graham and supported by WVHS, Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced that it will partially rebuild the wharf at Point Atkinson which is in disrepair following a major storm in December 2018. It will be repaired to make it safe for a specific load and to ensure that its profile and configuration stays the same from a heritage integrity perspective.
- Elaine Graham with the support of WVHS continues to lead the advocacy efforts to DW Vancouver Council, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and other relevant organizations regarding the preservation of Point Atkinson Light station and the need for development of a business plan before the lease expires in 2026. This is an ongoing effort.

5. Increase Awareness of WVHS initiatives and increase WVHS influence through representation on committees

- Awareness
 - Developed a communications plan aligned with the events that integrates messaging across the website, newsletter, emails and other vehicles to increase profile.
 - Identified key audiences to target; reviewed communications/ mailing list.
 - Published *West Vancouver Memories Newsletter* four (4)/year.
 - New website has been regularly updated with new content – events, news, projects, profiles, newsletters, YouTube WVHS Channel links and more. Visitors to the site have at times reached 180 visitor sessions per month but this varies by season and upcoming programming. 75% of visitors are using a desktop with 20% accessing the site by mobile. Aside from the home page information, visitor interests this past year have mainly focussed on Publications, WV Timeline, Events, article on the United Church 100-year history, Membership and About WVHS.

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- The WVHS YouTube channel was set up and Local Voices presentations as well as some WVHS Speaker Series presentations are available and also accessible through links on the WVHS Website.
- The North Shore Cultural Mapping project at the Polygon Gallery in North Vancouver now includes WVHS on this map.
- Influence through representation on Committees related to history, heritage, arts and culture
 - WVHS nominated and provided letters of endorsement/support for WVHS members appointment to relevant committees. Laura Anderson was appointed to the WV Heritage Advisory Committee and Tom Wardell is a member of the WV Arts & Culture Committee.
 - WVHS was invited to attend the Arts and Culture committee presentation April 7, 2020.
 - A request to Mayor and Council, for the appointment of a Council representative to WVHS Board was declined due to the considerable workload of Council members and District priorities.
 - Proactive communication to Mayor and Council on historical/heritage issues is conducted as required. The *West Vancouver Memories* Newsletter is distributed to Council.
 - WVHS gratefully acknowledges support from the District of West Vancouver and the West Vancouver Community Foundation for support to its programming.

Areas of Opportunity for 2020-2021

- Leverage WVHS 40th Anniversary and partner with other organizations (District of WV, WV Memorial Library, WV Archives etc) to set up displays and promote WV history and the role of WVHS.
- Identify Board members who have key contacts in various historical/heritage organizations to act as liaison to build awareness, share ideas and join together on initiatives of common interest.
- WVHS participation at Community Day, Heritage Week and other community events as appropriate
- Partner with other organizations that have a strong historical component; Determine opportunity for joint initiatives and advocacy.

6. Maintain WVHS sustainability with a strong board, increased membership and financial resources

- The WVHS Strategic Business Plan is reviewed annually.
- The WVHS Strategic Business Plan was published and made available at the 2019 AGM and a copy is posted on the WVHS Website under About Us/Governance section. This allows members to be informed on the priorities and to encourage participation / commitment to the plan.
- WVHS is a “working board”. Board members have committed to taking on active board roles.
- Maintained an accurate members list and follow-up on renewals.

Areas of Opportunity for 2020-2021

- Board Renewal, Succession Planning and Orientation
 - Board commitment and skills are aligned to the Strategic Business Plan. Establish a structure to support the Plan and Board working committees – eg. Communications, Grants, Events, Book etc. as needed

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- Board roles, responsibilities and time commitment defined to allow for clarity of roles, ease of transition and to recruit new Board members
 - Develop an orientation for new Board Members
 - Develop a skills matrix of current Board members to understand wealth of knowledge and expertise on the Board
 - Use skills matrix as appropriate to identify any gaps that would need to be filled as people leave the Board and recruit for those specific needs/gaps
 - Board members to advise the Chair with sufficient time in advance of the AGM if they plan to step down to allow for planning Board succession and recruitment of candidates
 - Use Board and members' network to identify potential candidates
 - Tap into networks of other volunteers/committees in WV (Heritage Committee, WV Memorial Library, WV Foundation etc.)
 - Identify if any youth are interested
- Increase # of members and diversity of members
 - Reach out to local organizations and potential partners to communicate WVHS programs and initiatives and invite participation
 - Encourage members to bring a friend or potential member to an event
 - Continue outreach and communications activities
 - Maintain financial resources to continue grants to community organizations and fund WVHS activities
 - Determine and plan for future revenue sources to support programs and grants. (eg. Revenue from books, other sources)
 - Apply for grants from organizations including government to enable WVHS to support historical initiatives or assist other organizations to apply for such grants.
 - Partner with other organizations for sponsorship of initiatives and to leverage WVHS resources

Going Forward in 2020-2021, Year 2 of the Strategic Business Plan

In summary, great progress was made on the strategic business plan 6-point plan. In addition to continuing the work done in 2019-2020, many more opportunities remain in 2020-2021, particularly on initiatives that will help maintain WVHS sustainability with a strong board, increased membership and financial resources.