

VP Communications Report to Council 15 September 2012

Outreach

Bill Curtis did his usual competent job of coordinating the staffing of the MGS display at Folklorama in August. Unfortunately, not enough members volunteered and some volunteers were required to work more than one shift.

Generations

The September issue of *Generations* has gone to the printer and should be mailed any day.

The Membership list numbers 638. Of that, the electronic delivery list numbers 93, including other genealogical societies but not including electronic exchanges or comps. Total mailed number 494.

Publications

As our drive clean-up project has been approved by HGAC (refer to item below on Grants and Applications), we can work on locating any electronic files that still survive for our publications. Our plan is to produce publications in electronic form where possible. This will significantly cut down on copying and postage costs.

Publicity

Brochures and forms with the correct membership fees and other information have been created but old items are still being copied and used at MGS and in *Generations*. Corrected versions have been distributed again and I hope that the use of old versions of brochures and forms will not recur.

Web Site

Some of you will have noticed that our web site has been experiencing some problems. The reason for the 'deprecated code' messages is that the content management system (CMS) in which our site resides is no longer supported by our web hosting service. I had no warning that this was about to happen on August 24 so we were forced to take down our site until the required upgrades were accomplished.

The CMS had not been upgraded for several years and this had to be done for our site to run in the current web hosting server environment. As several iterations of the CMS have been released since our site was created, this process took a while and required a level of technical expertise (in php coding, for instance) that I did not have so I had to prevail on the kindness of a friend for help. The MGS web site is back – more or less. It is slow to load and we are not sure why and the graphics will not load. We think it may have something to do with the way the updated content management system works in our web hosting environment or there may be a coding error. The current situation is far from satisfactory and we are giving some thought to a long term remedy/remedies.

Grants and Applications

While the formal letters have not yet been mailed, I have received email confirmation from Pauline Bélanger, ED of the Manitoba Heritage Grants Program that our application for funding to clean up our shared drives has been approved for the full amount requested. The next step (following formal notification) is to secure the services of a qualified student to do the work.