

MACLEAN ESTATE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

Forty years and still strong! Over that period of time, people from all ages, backgrounds and nationalities have come to Crieff Hills to enjoy the wonderful facilities with which we are blessed. Crieff Hills Community is the national retreat and conference centre of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The centre is located south of Guelph Ontario on 250 acres of beautiful rolling hills, forest and fields in the rural community of Puslinch Township.

Our Mission statement says, “Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre provides an eco-friendly place apart for spiritual renewal and leadership development. This Christian community welcomes individuals, families, congregations, businesses, schools and agencies to enjoy God’s creation”. Our Mission statement helps to set goals for the future and together the staff and board work hard to live it out.

Through the excellent management of Crieff Hills and the dedication of the staff, Crieff Hills is known for its hospitality, programs, partnerships, facilities, organization and, of course, the wonderful food. The current activities at Crieff are well established and form the core of the conference centre. We will continue to provide the aspects of Crieff that we are known for and proudly serve our community of faith.

As we move forward, the board and staff will be looking at new forms of outreach as well as establishing relationships throughout the church and in the communities in which we reside. We are encouraged by being a place of choice for many but we also know we need to expand to other areas of life as a Christian witness within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We are pleased to report that we are looking ahead from a stable financial footing. In 2008, we began borrowing external and internal funds as well as launching the “BUILDING a place apart” campaign. On December 31, 2015, we paid back all outside loans as well as replaced all internal funds, and have more cash in the operating bank account than we did January 1, 2008! During this seven year period we also replaced the shingles on conference centre buildings and have \$36,000 cash in the Accessibility Fund as we prepare to do a project on the Conference Hall.

Other reasons why we are able to move forward is based on the collaboration of the staff and board along with the support of program partners and the groups that are hosted in the facilities at Crieff. Each year there is an annual retreat day that brings together the Crieff Hills staff and board for discussion and planning for the future. At a recent retreat a “brain storming” time took place to consider all those things we do well. There were many accomplishments identified. We also understand that as the world changes, there are new areas of ministry. Crieff Hills is in a position to adapt and embrace these new directions. Any “Reinvention” of Crieff Hills will be done carefully, always considering who we are within The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Christian community.

The passage John 21:6 is the account of casting the nets to the other side of the boat. Many interpretations of that passage indicate that sometimes the old ideas work well but there are times to reach out and try something new. We do not throw out one to try another but rather continue to be the best we can be in all areas.

The ideas we have are many and varied. Some examples are:

- Partnerships: They could be through educational institutions, businesses, senior groups, environmental groups and others.
- Short term “in house” groups that would stay at Crieff for a longer period of time such as a week or more and would have a designated area on the site. Some ideas are a wellness centre, caregiver respite space, music focus group, students and/or staff from educational institutions, environmental and naturalist groups.

We are grateful for the tremendous support we have received from many churches, community groups and individuals over the years. This has allowed us to build new buildings, maintain other buildings, administer

programs and serve our church and the outside community. We ask for your continued support as we continue our mission and vision at Crieff Hills. We will always remember our past, continue with our excellent reputation in the present and look forward to a future that is challenging, exciting and fulfilling. We will continue to “cast our nets” and try the other side of the boat as we seek to respond to the vision of Col. Maclean, the donor of the property in 1950, “as a model and example to other communities”.

The purpose of our report for the 2016 General Assembly is three fold:

1. God’s blessings continue to be with us at Crieff Hills and his beauty and presence abound.
2. All is well at Crieff Hills and we are very pleased with the work of Lawrence Pentelow and the excellent staff.
3. We look forward to a future that will be exciting innovative and challenging at times.

David Phillips
Convener

Lawrence Pentelow
Managing Director