

# William Watson Lodge Society Business Plan Update

We are now into the second full year of the 2013-2016 Business Plan. Following is an update on the major projects.

- 1 **Communication Plan and Materials:** Development of a comprehensive, well organized Awareness and Communication Plan and associated materials that will tell the story of William Watson Lodge to the people for which it is intended, the public and those who might wish to contribute to the enhancement and usefulness of this great facility.

**Project Update:** *In progress. The WWLS has developed material and attended public awareness meetings to enhance the visibility of the William Watson Lodge. The June 2014 AGM and Open House were well attended. Members of the Board have been requested to attend various events such as the Media Release of Alberta Park Inclusion Plan. The Annual Publication (Newsletter) continues to attract donations and bequests. **Estimated Completion:** Ongoing*

- 2 **Cover Structure Over Fire Pit:** Erection of a roof cover over the public campfire area, so clients can enjoy a get together by the fire during all kinds of weather.

**Project Update:** *Completed. After design research, approval steps, and the delays caused by the June 2013 floods the final phase of construction was completed in the summer of 2014. The WWLS also funded the replacement of the benches around the fire pit. We thank Gwen Ross-Cieslak for her tenacity and persistence in seeing this project through to completion.*

- 3 **Marsh Viewpoint Enhancement:** Development of a Marsh Viewpoint Trail to provide opportunities for all to view the marshland near the Lodge.

**Project Update:** *This project has been removed from the Business Plan due to design complications and limitations. Funds will be allocated to other projects such as Comfort Camping.*

- 4 **Lake Viewpoint Trail Connector:** Development of a connector trail that will give improved access to the beautiful viewpoints overlooking the Lower Kananaskis Lake.

**Project Update:** *On hold until further notice.*

- 5 **Wireless Internet Accessibility:** Investigating the possibility of providing internet capability for the cabins at the Lodge and, if permitted, the installation of the necessary equipment.

**Project Update:** *Project on hold. Alberta Parks is projecting a possible cell tower for the Kananaskis valley within the next few years. This would then also accommodate wireless access for guests of the William Watson Lodge. The installation of a cell tower would make the intent of this WWLS initiative redundant. **Estimated Completion:** Unknown – dependent on larger Parks initiative.*

- 6 **Comfort Camping:** Provision of an accessible “comfort camping” site in the campground that can serve as a model for accessible camping across the province.

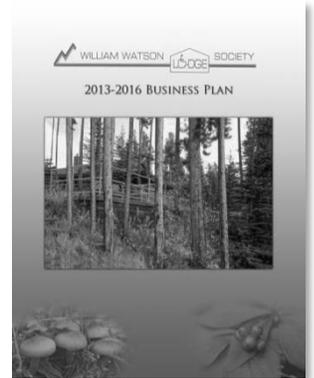
**Project Update:** *Productive meetings and progress with McKay Hlavacek Architects Ltd. to produce several design options that address the criteria outlined by the WWLS Board, are accessible for guests, and meet Parks requirements. Design plans/approvals are being finalized. It is anticipated that two full completed cabins will be delivered and installed on two existing campsites by the summer of 2015. **Estimated Completion:** Summer 2015*

- 7 **Additional Lower Cost Items:** Provision of additional items that will be helpful to the Lodge in fulfilling its role. These items would include an additional defibrillator, digital information system, night security camera for the Lodge entrance, etc.

**Project Update:** *A Night Security system has been installed at the main lodge entrance. The WWLS funded six Interpretive Programs held at the Lodge in 2013-2014. The WWLS has also made minor purchases for the Lodge and its guests. **Estimated Completion:** Ongoing*

**New Item: Replacement of the Side-by-Side Bicycle:** The orange side-by-side tandem bicycle presently at the WWL is nearing the end of its life. Plans are underway to research and purchase a new and improved version for the guests of the Lodge

For a full copy of the WWLS 2013-2016 Business Plan, please visit the WWLS website - [www.williamwatsonlodgesociety.com](http://www.williamwatsonlodgesociety.com) or email the Society at [wwlodgesociety@shaw.ca](mailto:wwlodgesociety@shaw.ca).



## 2015 WWLS Annual General Meeting & Fire Circle Gazebo Dedication

The 2015 Annual General Meeting of the William Watson Lodge Society will take place **Saturday, June 20, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.**

A dedication ceremony for the Fire Circle Gazebo will take place after the AGM. Refreshments will also be served. Please join us.



WWLS Members enjoying the sunshine and refreshments on the Lodge deck following the 2014 AGM

## Leaving a Legacy

Over the past year, a number of bequests and donations were made to the William Watson Lodge Society, including those from the Estates of Krista Hobbs, Nicole Dawn Hunchuk, and the Shannon and John Dean Endowment Fund. We sincerely thank all contributors.

Please know that your donations are appreciated and will go toward projects that will enhance the experience of guests and visitors of the Lodge while leaving a wonderful legacy of your loved ones.

For those who have been touched the peace and beauty of the William Watson Lodge and/or the Rocky Mountains, it is often an easy transition to want to leave a lasting impression in return.

Planned charitable donations need not be complicated. In many cases, a simple line in your Will is sufficient. As a charitable organization, the William Watson Lodge Society can also issue charitable donation receipts.

For additional information on planned charitable giving, you could speak with your family, lawyer, accountant, financial planner, insurance agenda, or even the WWLS.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Billy Talbot Golf Tourney Honors Beloved Son

Another example of the extraordinary love and remembrance for a family member who had many special times at the WWL is that for son and brother – Billy Talbot.

Billy was a special boy who enjoyed many trips to WWL with his family, friends and caregivers. The first of many was when he was 13 years old.

Billy's Mom, Donna Talbot, recounts the memories and the impact of the beautiful mountain scenery for Billy and her family. The last time they visited was when Billy was 22 years old, the year before he passed away in 2013.

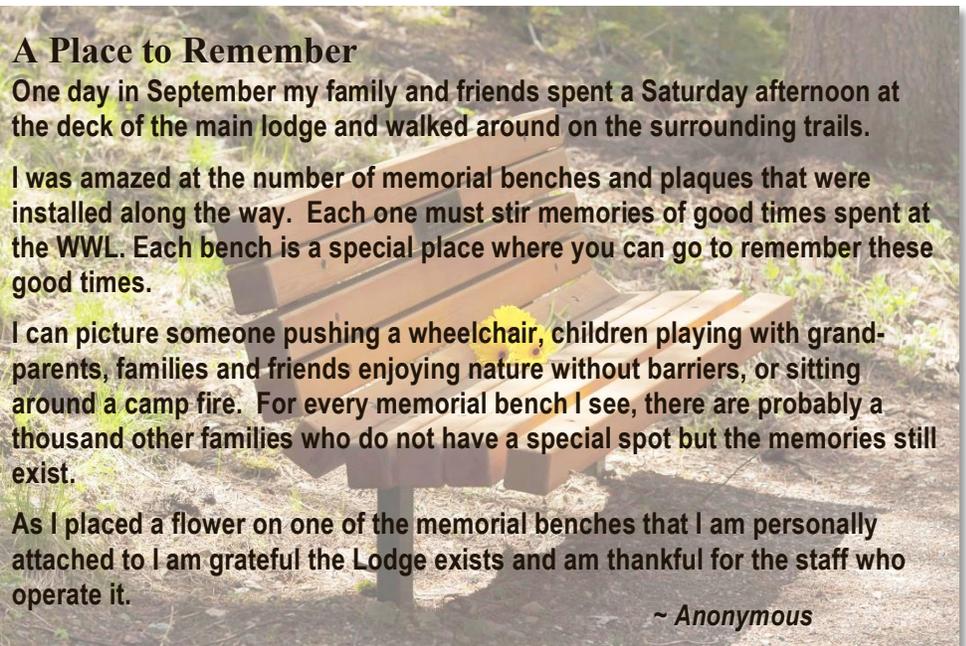


Our parents, Erika and Fred Moggert, loved their visits to this special place. The Lodge was a welcome respite from city life. For them, it was an opportunity to experience the wilderness they loved. They were able to share their love and enjoyment of the Lodge with friends and family. These visits created a legacy of memories that are fondly remembered to this day.

Our mother, Erika, felt so strongly about this place and all that it had to offer, that a memorial bench and plaque were installed down by the lake. Thereby ensuring that friends and family would continue to visit and create more memories.

Our father, Fred, continued to visit the Lodge after Erika's death. Often alone, sometimes with family, but always with flowers. Fred made a habit of visiting Erika's bench. He would check in with the desk staff before going down to the lake. There at the bench he would leave the bouquet he had brought with him.

As the years passed, Fred became friends with many of the staff. He enjoyed their company and began leaving flowers for them as well. It brought our father, Fred, pleasure and happiness to leave these flowers for as many years as he did. We know that Fred is fondly remembered and missed by his friends at the Lodge.



Donna has worked tirelessly over the past two years to create a loving legacy in memory of her son. She developed the Billy Talbot Memorial Golf Tournament. On September 3, 2014, the second annual tournament was held at the Blue Devil Golf & Country Club. While the day brought unseasonably cool and wet weather, the 22 hardy golfers warmed the day with their love and compassion for Billy and his family.

Farhood Rahnama from the WWLS Board participated in this year's tournament, wowing his fellow golfers with his trademark swing.

The William Watson Lodge Society has been the grateful recipients of the proceeds from the tournament for the past two years.

The 2015 Billy Talbot Golf Tournament will be held in about the June timeframe.



# Mobility Cup 2014 – An Unforgettable Experience at William Watson Lodge

By Sara Cooper, Co-Chair, Mobility Cup 2014



What do sailboats, mountains, and wheelchairs have in common? The 2014 Mobility Cup – that's what! Mobility Cup is Canada's international regatta for disabled sailing. To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> year of operations, the Disabled Sailing Association of Alberta (DSAA) hosted the unforgettable Mobility Cup 2014 event at William Watson Lodge on Lower Kananaskis Lake September 6-14, 2014.

Mobility Cup is hosted by a different Canadian sailing club every year and sees disabled sailors, along with coaches, volunteers and friends, come together for a week-long competition and celebration.

Project Iceland, as the 2014 event was affectionately referred to, had for itself a number of goals:

1. To reduce time spent on daily transportation,
2. To improve comradery and interaction between the silver (junior) and gold (senior) racing fleets,
3. To showcase the Alberta scenery by establishing a sailing outpost in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, and
4. To make Mobility Cup 2014 an event to remember

In early 2012, with the support of Ross Watson at William Watson Lodge, a world class venue for Mobility Cup 2014 was secured. Sailors would be housed onsite in the accessible cabins, a caterer would prepare and serve all meals in the main lodge, and sailing would take place a short wheelchair or golf cart ride down the hill on Lower Kananaskis Lake.

Fast forward to September 2014. During the set up weekend, September 5-7, the weather was beautiful. The sun was shining and the temperature peaked at 25° C. The temporary dock was in place, volunteers were unloading the boats from the CN containers, other volunteers were delivering bedding and care packages to cabins, and sailors were arriving in awe after the scenic drive. Mobility Cup 2014 was off to a fantastic start.



Boat Setup - Towing Boats from Canyon Launch to William Watson Lodge

Photo Courtesy of [www.MobilityCup.com](http://www.MobilityCup.com)

Sailors and participants from outside Alberta were sharing their initial comments such as, "This is breathtaking", "I cannot believe how accessible this place is – not only the cabins, but the main lodge, the walking trails, the playground, and even the fire circle", "What a sight – A beautiful dock, crisp clear water, blue sky, and the Rocky Mountains – I cannot take enough pictures".

With such a great start to the event, sailors were excited to wake on Monday morning for the official practice race. However, the weather had begun to change. Many toques, gloves, mitts, and winter boots boarded boats were needed that morning for the morning practice race. Everyone was happy and excited to be on the water, sailing on Lower Kananaskis Lake in the middle of the Canadian Rockies. With the dropping temperatures in the afternoon silver fleets practice race was cancelled.



Silver Fleet Racers

Photo Courtesy of [www.WinterTreePhotography.com](http://www.WinterTreePhotography.com)

Canmore's Mayor John Borrowman supported Mobility Cup 2014 by welcoming the athletes to the Area and helping to officially open the event.

The next two days gave truth to Mobility Cup 2014's code name. Project Iceland was in full swing with unseasonable snow, snow, and more snow. Much effort went into to shovelling the snow off the pathway, ramps, dock, and out of the boats. By the afternoons, the boats were ready to sail, however the winds were light, the water cold, and the bonfire nice and toasty. Sailing was cancelled on both Tuesday and Wednesday.



Boats at Dock Preparing for Racing

Photo Courtesy of [www.MobilityCup.com](http://www.MobilityCup.com)

At last, Thursday arrived with bright blue skies AND wind. Sailing was on! Sailors donned their winter boots, thermal underwear, mitts, toques, gloves, down jackets, and set off to sail. The shifty, gusty wind made for fun, exciting, challenging races. The gold fleet managed to complete 3 races amongst the spectacular scenery of snow covered mountains. The afternoon silver fleet races were also a success with a touch of added excitement as a grizzly bear cheered them on from the far shore.

Friday morning saw slightly warmer temperatures, with rain predicted for the afternoon. The silver fleet quickly set sail to fit in a few races, with a quick cross over planned for the afternoon gold fleet races. Our race officers were looking to maximize sailing time and make up for the two snow days. Sad were we when the wind shifted, a



Thursday, Sept 11, 2015 Silver Fleet Racing

Photo Courtesy of [www.WinterTreePhotography.com](http://www.WinterTreePhotography.com)

big black cloud rolled in, and the afternoon rain arrived in the form of snow. The silver fleet sailed the last race of Mobility Cup 2014 in the beauty of falling white snow.

With such an interesting week of weather and the limited sailing time, one might think the regatta was a bust. However, nothing could be further from the truth. William Watson Lodge was the perfect setting for a snowy regatta. On snow days, after a hearty breakfast catered by Chef Wade Paterson of Boreal Cuisine, everyone gathered in the main lodge for seminars. Mobility Cup's Principal Race Officer Peter VanMuyden, Judge Warren Nethercote, and Alberta Sailing Coach Ian Elliott ran a number of seminars in rules, tactics, and optimal boat tuning.

Lucky for us – while we were in seminars in the main lodge, the staff at William Watson Lodge was hard at work shovelling the paths and keeping everything accessible and safe for wheelchairs, walkers, and canes. The clear paths made for quick easy access to the covered outdoor fire pit. Additional thanks go to:

- The William Watson Lodge Society for installing the covered roof structure over the fire pit prior to Mobility Cup– without it we would have had significantly fewer evening fire circles.
- Special Thanks to MLA Ron Casey and Honorary Mobility Cup Chair MLA Kent Hehr who helped close out Mobility Cup 2014 with athlete addresses and kudos to the organizing committee for a successful Mobility Cup 2014.
- Ross Watson for helping to make Mobility Cup 2014 happen at the Lodge. Without the support of Ross Watson and all those at William Watson Lodge, Mobility Cup 2014 would have been but a project idea; Project Iceland Frozen in Time.

Here's hoping for another Mobility Cup at William Watson Lodge in the years to come.

~ Sara Cooper, Co-Chair, Mobility Cup 2014



## Inclusion at its Core

The Community Recreational Initiatives Society (CRIS) is a unique non-profit and charitable organization that uses adaptive equipment, enabling people of all abilities and disabilities to interact with the great outdoors.

Most importantly CRIS creates memories and experiences that everyone can enjoy. Participants have fun, play outside, and challenge themselves to accomplish things that we may never have thought possible.

CRIS Adaptive Adventures is in the process of planning one of these amazing travel opportunities for August that will be based out of the William Watson Lodge facility.

The event will take place around the period of August 17-24, 2015 and

promises to provide an experience to interact with the outdoors through kayaking, cycling, hiking and a variety of other activities.

Funding assistance may be available for eligible participants.

For further information about the event, see <http://adaptiveadventures.ca>.



## Help Us Build a William Watson Lodge North

*Update from the Alberta Abilities Lodges Society by Ross Wein*

Since we registered our Alberta Abilities Lodges Society (AALS) in 2006, our projects have included:

1. Building an inventory of adapted outdoor equipment,
2. Holding outdoor events alone and in cooperation with partners,
3. Establishing a Disabled Travel Fund endowment, and
4. Working toward another accessible wilderness lodge.

Number 4 has become a reality! We are announcing that AALS has purchased a 480 acre property to be developed into a family-oriented disability and senior friendly lodge in north-central Alberta.

As with William Watson Lodge, the over-riding goal of Coyote Lake Lodge is to make opportunities for more seniors and persons with a disability to enjoy nature all through the year. William Watson Lodge staff and William Watson Lodge Society Board and members deserve much credit for providing an operations model, guidance, and many other forms of support!



*Main Building*

The 3/4 of a square mile of hills and valleys is half forested and a wildlife haven since it provides a stream and forest corridor from Coyote Lake to the North Saskatchewan River. Elk and deer tracks are everywhere.



*True to the area name, a pair of Coyotes meander through the nature corridor*

Part of the land has gardens and hay meadows which will support gardens/sports/trail therapies. There is a main lodge with a commercial kitchen, a dining room for 50 persons, a library, and meeting rooms.

Four two-family cabins and a recreation centre are close by. A service centre with a steel-clad shed, double garage, and several other equipment storage buildings complete the building complex.

Renovations will be needed to meet current building codes and international accessibility standards. We will not host guests for several months but we will welcome individual, family, professionals, clubs, and business groups as volunteers to renovate the buildings, to build trails, and to cultivate the gardens.

## An Alberta Provincial Grant Well Received



Christmas came early in 2014 for the William Watson Lodge Society.

Four organizations in the Bow Valley area were chosen to be recipients of the Community Initiatives Program (CIP). The CIP reinvests provincial revenues back into projects that benefit local communities. The William Watson Lodge Society received a grant of \$100,000 on July 3, 2014. This grant will help fund numerous ongoing projects such as enhancements to the trails at William Watson Lodge and to build a comfort camping unit in the campsite area.

Ron Casey, MLA for Banff-Cochrane presented the grant to WWLS Board Members Wayne Pelletier, Farhood Rahnama and Lodge Employee and Representative Gwen Ross-Cieslak.

We hope you will continue to support William Watson Lodge and we hope that you will see the Coyote Lake facility worthy of investment as well. Ask to be included in our email list, tell your friends about our project, and donate to our charitable society if you can. Every dollar supports the development of this new opportunity for seniors and persons with a disability – just like the 35 years of service provided by William Watson Lodge.



*Interior of one of the family cabins*

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