

# Abbotsford Genealogical Society Constitution

1. **Name:**

The name is, “Abbotsford Genealogical Society”, hereinafter called the “Society”.

2. **Purpose:**

- a. To bring together in a friendly atmosphere, people interested in genealogical research and family history.
  - b. To promote, foster, and encourage genealogical / family history research.
  - c. To assist members in learning the principles, methods, and effective techniques of genealogical research.
  - d. To collect, preserve, display, and share information found in transcripts, manuscripts, charts, maps, photographs, books, microfilm, microfiche and other related material, which may lead to a greater individual and collective understanding of genealogy.
  - e. To promote and coordinate public-oriented genealogical seminars and displays; print and distribute bulletins and other material in order to further genealogical appreciation.
  - f. To raise funds, accept grants, donations, gifts, legacies, and bequests for any of the foregoing objectives with the understanding that the Society shall be operated without the purpose of monetary gain for its members.
  - g. To support other community groups, societies, and organizations in the furtherance of the objectives of the Society or provision of benefit to the Society. Support may be financial, promotional, or provision of volunteer time. (Added Sept 2008)
3. The purposes of the Society shall be carried out without purpose of gain for its members and profits or accretions to the Society shall be used for promoting its purposes. This provision is alterable.

4. **Dissolution of the Society:**

If, at any future date, the Society should be dissolved, it is clearly understood that whatever properties remain after satisfaction of debts and liabilities, shall not be distributed amongst the members but shall be transferred or given to another Canadian organization having similar genealogical objectives. This determination shall be made by a majority of the members attending the meeting called by the officer officiating at the dissolution of the Society. This provision is unalterable.

(Amended April 2001)

## Bylaws

1. **Membership:**

Membership in the Society may be granted to those persons and organizations in sympathy with its Purpose and Objectives.

2. **Officers:**

The Executive Officers of the Society shall be the:

- i. President
- ii. Past President
- iii. First Vice-President
- iv. Second Vice-President
- v. Treasurer
- vi. Recording Secretary
- vii. Corresponding Secretary
- viii. Technical Support Coordinator

3. **Parliamentary Authority:**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority on all matters not covered in the Constitution or Bylaws of the Society.

4. **Election of Officers:**

- a. All officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting in January and shall assume office at the close of that meeting.
- b. Under normal circumstances, a Society member shall not fill the same executive position for more than two years. This will allow all members who wish to do so, to have the opportunity to serve on the executive. Filling an unexpired term shall be regarded as "a term of office" if it covers a period of at least six consecutive regular meetings.
- c. A member of the Executive shall vacate their position in the event of missing two general meetings and two Executive meetings at any time in the Administrative year. This provision may be waived by a vote of the Executive Board.
- d. A member of the Executive may be removed by a vote at a general membership meeting. The required vote shall be two thirds of those present and voting.
- e. A vacancy occurring during the Administrative year shall be filled by the Executive and be confirmed by a vote at the next General Membership meeting.
- f. No votes by proxy will be allowed.

5. **Borrowing Powers:**

No member in the name of the Society may borrow funds or pledge any assets of the Society as collateral to raise funds.

6. **Duties of Officers:**

The duties of the Officers are defined in the policies of the Society.

7. **Membership:**

- a. Any person in sympathy with the Purpose and Objectives of the Society and willing to accept the Bylaws and pay dues as provided, may become a member of the Society.
- b. Each individual member and each family member is entitled to one vote at general meetings and the right to hold office in the Society.
- c. Other organizations may acquire membership in the Society through the payment of annual dues. Such membership shall carry all benefits, rights and responsibilities of membership, save and except it shall not carry the right to vote nor entitle the members or officers of the member organization to hold office in the Society.
- d. Sponsoring members should ensure that prospective members are able to attend and participate in regular meetings and accept a portion of the workload of the Society as well as accept the benefits of membership.
- e. Prospective members are encouraged to attend one regular meeting prior to applying for membership, observe the proceedings and discuss membership with the Membership Committee.
- f. Each new member, in accordance with the Purpose and Objectives of the Society, is expected to be active in the Society, to stand for executive from time to time or be willing to take part in Society activities. Copies of the Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, regular meeting Minutes and the Society Membership List will be available for membership perusal in the Society library. Members who wish, may take a copy of the Constitution, Bylaws, Policies and regular meeting Minutes for their personal use. The Society Membership list is to be used only for reasons congruent with the Purpose and Objectives of the Society.
- g. On acceptance into the Society, the new member is required to pay all dues remaining in the Society administrative year, directly to the Membership Committee.
- h. Honorary Membership in the Society may be granted to a person the Society wishes to honour for services rendered. The Executive shall consider any proposal to grant Honorary Membership and shall bring forward their recommendation to grant Honorary Membership to the members of the Society. Such granting of Honorary Membership shall be by a two-thirds vote of the members at any general meeting.

All honorary memberships shall be subject to an annual review each January by the Executive. Any recommendation of the Executive to extend an honorary membership shall be considered and voted on at the next General Meeting. Honorary membership will not exceed five percent of the number of regular members. Honorary members shall pay no dues and have no voting privileges. (March 2008)

i. Life membership in the Society may be granted to a person the Society wishes to honour for exceptional services rendered over a period of at least five years. The Executive shall consider any proposal to grant Life membership and shall bring forward their recommendation to grant Life Membership to the members of the Society. Such granting of Life Membership shall be by a two-thirds vote of the members at any general meeting. Life membership will not exceed five percent of the number of regular members. Life members shall pay no dues and have full voting privileges. (March 2008)

8. **Dues:**

a. The rate of annual dues for membership shall be approved at a regular general meeting on the recommendation of the Executive.

b. Dues are payable in total at the January meeting and must be paid by the end of the March meeting.

c. Members in arrears for three months will be dropped from membership in the Society, unless a suitable reason is provided such as illness.

9. **Meetings:**

a. The Executive shall meet monthly on the second Tuesday at a location to be determined and communicated to members of the Executive prior to the meeting.

b. Regular monthly meetings shall be held between January and November each year, except that meetings in the months of July and August are optional according to a vote of the Executive. The Annual Meeting shall be the regular meeting in January.

c. Special meetings may be called by the President or on application of one quarter of the members in good standing. Notice of at least one week must be given to the membership prior to such meeting.

d. Ten per cent of the membership of the Society in good standing shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a general meeting.

e. Quorum at an Executive meeting shall comprise one half of filled positions.

f. There shall be no proxy voting at either general or executive meetings.

- g. Matters arising between Executive meetings may be discussed and voted on electronically by members of the Executive and decisions communicated electronically to the President. All such matters must be ratified at the next meeting of the Executive or the general membership.

10. **Records of the Society:**

- a. Copies of all Minutes, for both executive and general membership meetings, including all financial statements and other proceedings of the Society shall be maintained in the room set aside for the Society in the Clearbrook Public Library and may be examined by any member of the Society during regular library hours.

11. **Amendments:**

- a. The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Society by a two thirds vote, a quorum being present.
- b. Procedure for amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws: All motions will be presented to the President in writing, seconded, read to the membership, posted in the Society library, and voted upon at the next regular meeting.
- c. Policies of the Society may be amended by a majority vote of the Executive.

12. **Appointments:**

At the regular February Meeting, the incoming President shall make the following appointments:

- a. Welcome Committee
- b. Cemetery Committee
- c. Membership Committee – a minimum of two members
- d. Telephone/E-mail Committee
- e. Librarian
- f. Library Duty Coordinator
- g. Community Events Coordinator
- h. Newsletter Editor
- i. Co-coordinator of the bi-annual Roots Around the World Seminar
- j. Sunshine Committee
- k. At the regular meeting in November, previous to the January Annual Meeting, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three members, including and chaired by the Immediate Past President.

## Policies

### 1) Definitions:

*Immediate Past President* is defined as the last individual to hold the position of president and complete their term of office. In the event the Immediate Past President is unable to fulfil their responsibilities, the next preceding past president may be confirmed to the position by vote of the Executive.

*Family Membership* is defined as membership granted to two members of the same household sharing the same address.

### 2) Duties and Responsibilities of Officers and Committees

#### Officers:

- i. President - Presides over all meetings; supervises the work of other officers and committees, represents the Society, appoints committees.
- ii. Immediate Past President - Acts in an advisory capacity but has no executive vote. Supervising two volunteer members, oversees the Annual General Election. In the absence of both the president and the first vice-president, performs the duties of the president.
- iii. First Vice-President - In the absence of the President, performs the duties of the President, ensures the constitution, bylaws and policies of the Society accurately reflect current or approved future practice, ensures that the responsibilities of all vacant positions are fulfilled. Is responsible to organize periodic training sessions. Serves as a co-coordinator of the Roots Around the World bi-annual seminar.
- iv. Second Vice-President - Responsible for the provision and coordination of genealogical/family history seminars sponsored by the Society, monthly meeting educational programs, including guest and member speakers and small group discussions. In the absence of the president, the vice president and the immediate past president, performs the duties of the president; informs the Telephone Committee and arranges for e-mail to the membership of the program for the upcoming meeting; is responsible for external print publicity, notifying the press or other organizations of upcoming events.
- v. Recording Secretary - Responsible for preparation, posting and custody of minutes of meetings of the Society; informs the newsletter editor of matters arising from any meetings of the Society that should be reported in the newsletter; performs other such duties as required by the executive.

- vi. Corresponding Secretary - Picks up the Society mail from the PO Box and distributes to the appropriate officers in the Society; conducts the general correspondence of the Society; files incoming mail and outgoing copies under the appropriate file in the AGS library, informs the Telephone Committee and sends out email to members concerning any matters that members need to be made aware of prior to the general meeting, such as membership renewal, speakers etc.
  - vii. Treasurer - Receives all monies collected and arranges all payments due by the Society; properly accounts for the funds of the Society and keeps books as directed by the President; submits a brief verbal financial report to each regular monthly meeting and a written annual report to the membership; prepares an annual budget for approval by the executive, amends the budget according to the vote of the Executive Committee or the general membership as needs arise, prepares and submits the annual filing with the Provincial authorities in accordance with the provisions of the Society Act.
  - viii. Technical Support Coordinator - Maintains the Society's website, including posting a surnames interests list, the monthly featured "Ancestor of the Month", ensuring all meetings and training sessions are reported; maintains the Society's computer equipment, installing new programs and updates as required, ensuring all software used on the Society's computers is properly licensed.
- 3) **Committees:**
- a. Welcome Committee - Welcomes guests and prospective members at the door to our meeting room; introduces prospective members to the Membership Committee, Arranges to have coffee or other refreshments ready at the conclusion of the business part of the meeting.
  - b. Cemetery Committee - Catalogues and publishes listings of memorial inscriptions in all local cemeteries.
  - c. Membership Committee - Accepts applications for Society membership; collects membership dues: issues receipts; passes monies to the Treasurer; passes portions of the completed application form to the person or committee indicated; maintains a current computerized record of membership; forwards specific membership information to the Executive and/or committees as required or requested.
  - d. Telephone/E-mail Committee - Reminds new members of regular monthly meetings for a period of three months; telephones all members when necessary to advise of special meetings, seminars, or other events which may be held.
  - e. Librarian - Keeps accurate records in accordance with accepted library standards; recommends at regular meetings, data, in whatever form which should/may be purchased/acquired by the Society; purchases/acquires materials as authorized by the

Society Executive; maintains an accurate inventory of Society equipment; maintains in good order the library contents, both on loan to and owned by the Society; loans library contents to Society members; promotes and encourages public onsite use of the Society Library; offers library orientation to members as requested; has discretion on retaining donated books, CDs, fiche or other research materials; has discretion in disposition of excess or outdated holdings; makes use of an executive-agreed-upon “float” for Society Library miscellaneous disbursements and receipts; makes a monthly financial accounting to the treasurer, when required, for inclusion in the Treasurer’s records; advises Library Duty Coordinator re: volunteer attendant duties and necessary training.

- f. Public Events Coordinator - Coordinates participation of the Society in community and promotional events, securing and organizing materials required and staffing events with trained volunteers.
- g. Library Duty Coordinator - Recruits and trains member-volunteer library attendants; ensures complete staffing of Society library by attendants during hours of operation; ensures replacements are available when required.
- h. Coordinators (two) of the Roots Around the World Seminar – Recommend date, identify and book location, establish a budget, determine program and arrange speakers, provide a summary of all workshop topics and bios of presenters for inclusion in a brochure, coordinate preparation and printing of the syllabus to the seminar, ensure prospective participants for the Market Place are invited, ensure the event is publicized in a timely manner, ensure proper management of registration, ensure name badges and registration packets are prepared prior to the seminar, ensure all equipment needs are identified and provided, recruit volunteers as required and oversee the smooth running of a successful seminar.
- i. Newsletter Editor - Responsible for all aspects of the Society Newsletter, both in printed form and on CD, with guidance as requested/required from the Executive Committee.
- j. Sunshine Committee - Receives information concerning illness of members or bereavement in their family, advises members of the Executive and other members as deemed so that they can be telephoned or visited.

4) **Dues:**

Annual membership dues are \$20.00 per member or \$30.00 for a family or organization membership decreasing to half for members joining after 30 June.

5) **Budget and Expenditures:**

- a. The outgoing Treasurer shall prepare a budget for approval at the last Executive meeting of the Administrative year.

- b. Adjustments and amendments to the annual budget may be approved by the Executive provided any resulting increase in budgeted expenditures does not exceed \$500. Adjustments in excess of \$500 must be approved by the membership at a regular meeting.

6) **Meetings:**

- a. Regular monthly meetings of the Abbotsford Genealogical Society are held in the Clearbrook Public Library on the third Tuesday of each month, from January to November (except July and August) from 6:30 PM until 9:00 PM unless otherwise agreed to by the Executive or required by extraneous circumstances. The December meeting is the annual Christmas party and is held elsewhere.

- b. The Order of Business at a General Meeting shall comprise:

- i. Call to Order by the President
- ii. Welcome and introduction of guests.
- iii. Acceptance of the minutes.
- iv. Treasurer's Report.
- v. Business arising out of the minutes.
- vi. Correspondence.
- vii. Committee Reports
- viii. New Business
- ix. Announcements
- x. Adjournment of business meeting (no later than 30 minutes after call to order)
- xi. BREAK
- xii. Program (speaker, group activities, etc.)

7) **Nominations and Elections:**

- i. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to present a list of qualified candidates at the Annual January meeting, who are willing to be elected to a particular position on the upcoming new executive.

- ii. This does not preclude members from being nominated “from the floor” at the annual meeting in January. Nominators should be certain that the person being nominated for office is a regular attendee and is willing to stand for office.
- iii. Where there is only one candidate for a position, after nominations have closed, that sole candidate may be declared elected by acclamation without the need for a ballot. Where there are two or more candidates for a position after nominations have closed, election will be by secret ballot.

8) **Library:**

- i. The Society maintains a Library Resource Room at the Clearbrook Public Library, access to which is available to all members during regular Library hours provided they show proof of membership.
- ii. The Society will provide personnel to be present in the Library Resource Room in accordance with a schedule to be mutually agreed to by the Clearbrook Public Library and the Society. The Library Coordinator will advise staff at the Clearbrook Public Library in the event it has not been possible to secure a volunteer for a scheduled time.
- iii. The general public may access our materials in the Library Resource Room at any scheduled time a Society volunteer is present.
- iv. Books owned by the society may be signed out by members in accordance with established AGS Library practice.
- v. Data CDs and microfiche are for reference use only within the Library Resource Room.
- vi. Data CDs may not be copied.
- vii. All programs installed on the Society’s computers shall be legal copies and shall be registered in the name of the Society.
- viii. No person other than the Technical Services Coordinator shall install programs or perform maintenance functions on the Society’s computer equipment.