

House of Gordon USA Communications Report 2011

This past year one of our top priorities was to find a way to cut our cost on publishing the annual, which in 2010 came to approximately \$6.50 each. This year I was able to source a printer who offered us much more for our money! We were able to print our annual in full color, instead of color cover only as in the past, for \$2.47 each which when the postage of \$1.48 each was added made the total cost \$3.95/annual bringing the cost to a much more reasonable amount of our operating budget. We do still need to consider cost cutting measures in this area as this still represents almost 40% of the national portion of the dues. A smaller sized booklet may be in order as well as the option for this to be delivered electronically to members who are willing to go for a greener option.

Our Facebook presence is growing and helping to create interest in our organization, most importantly among some of the younger generation, while giving us an opportunity to share photos, experiences, events, news and information. By generating some interest and good will among those in their twenties and thirties we are helping to ensure a sound future for the House. We currently have 513 members of our House of Gordon USA Facebook Group up from 319 last year which represents an increase in our presence on Facebook of 161% over last year!

I have recently moved our You Tube presence to its own House of Gordon USA Channel. Now you can find us at <http://www.youtube.com/HouseofGordonUSA> and all of the links on our website have been updated to reflect that change. I would encourage any of you who have videos from any of the highland games to upload them to YouTube or the Facebook site so that we can add them to our House of Gordon playlist on YouTube. You can also send them to me via the webmaster@houseofgordonusa.org email address. We currently have 50 videos in the playlist of the clan and of points of interest to the clan. I hope that some of you at today's AGM will have some video to submit. I can also take photos from a specific event and create a video montage to upload as I have done previously. So send along your photos for a GREAT AGM video montage for all of us that could not be with you today!

Our website is doing well averaging about 9000 visits each month. About 10% of our traffic is coming from Europe, most specifically the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and Ukraine. This indicates that our sister branches of the House are looking to us for information and ideas and we hope that our web presence will give them a boost in their growth as well as our own. One of the goals for the coming year is to move the genealogy information from the Virginia website to the national site on the houseofgordon.info domain and to make decisions on how to best utilize the clangordon.info and .net domains -- whether that be used for secure convener communications and meetings or to keep them tied to the main site as they are now.

We are also working on getting the membership data into a more convenient format that will allow better use of mail merge and online news dissemination so that our conveners can have the most current information to be able to contact their members. Updates on upcoming events

and member news are two of the areas that we feel can hugely benefit from getting better control of our membership data in a secure environment. This one tool will increase our communication ability exponentially as our conveners get more information on the members in their areas. We are hoping to get more information flowing from the membership to the board so that we can have more personal and interesting newsletters celebrating the successes of the clan and our members as well as pulling together as a family in times of need. Being able to keep each other in our thoughts and prayers during sickness, loss and distress is an integral part of being a clan.

Our biggest project in the coming year is the creation of a small Gordon book that can be sold at the clan tents giving general information on the House of Gordon our history and heritage to replace the more generic ones currently available at every vendor. We feel that we can better answer the questions most people have about the clan and can better personalize our story. Our timeline is to have this ready to roll out at Grandfather in 2012 at the AGM. This is communication at its best -- or at least that is the goal.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Todd
Communications Chair