



The Royal Canadian Dragoons  
Worthington Barracks  
Garrison Petawawa  
PO Box 9999 Station Main  
Petawawa, ON K8H 2X3

15 September 2021

Dear Dragoons,

After a summer of leave and reorganization, I am happy to report that The Regiment is hard at work, focused on our training year ahead. The new Worthington Barracks is taking shape around us as we work through the moving process. The extensive remaking of Regimental lines has seen the demolition of old and tired hangars but our wonderful new infrastructure will provide a home for generations of Dragoons to come. In the very near future, we will post a walkthrough video of the new building so that everyone can see what an absolute game-changer this location is. I am certain you will be impressed by the environment our soldiers will enjoy and the ways we're making it feel like home.

The Regiment has assumed the lead for the Immediate Response Unit (IRU) for 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Division, meaning we remain on a heightened state of readiness in case of domestic deployments until early next year. As we have seen in recent months and years, soldiers standing at the ready to assist is a welcome sight for uncertain times and I am even more confident in their abilities because these soldiers will be Dragoons.

We will be conducting a great deal of work-up training over the next few months to prepare for participation with 2 CMBG in Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE. The scope of our deployment to Wainwright is yet to be determined, but I am very keen to work on the cavalry tactics that are being developed from the bottom-up. The Regiment is being given an opportunity to shape our own employment and I intend to seize it as much as possible. Due to completing their initial training in a COVID environment, we have new Dragoons who have never been to the field, so we are taking the time to build a strong foundation of soldier skills and an aggressive, cavalry mindset at every opportunity.

Part of the return to work this Fall has meant returning with COVID still present in all our communities, impacting the necessary training we need to do in Petawawa and Gagetown. You'll continue to see Dragoons wearing their protective equipment, following local health regulations, and I have encouraged all Dragoons to get their vaccinations in order to protect those most vulnerable around us. Over the past 18 months, we have missed quite a lot in terms of our Regimental traditions and ceremonies. We have young soldiers and officers who have never attended a full Regimental parade or a mess dinner. While I look forward to returning to 'normalcy' in a post-pandemic world, we have no idea when that might be. In that mindset, I have directed that Leliefontein this year will go ahead with some protective limitations still in place.

We will hold small mess dinners for those officers and Sr NCMs serving in Petawawa/Gagetown and we will conduct a Leliefontein parade on Saturday, 6 November. While I would love to see everyone back here for our 'family reunion' style event, the current situation would not make that wise. We will broadcast the parade on Facebook and the events will be by invitation

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only so that we can control the numbers and ensure proper tracking of attendees. I genuinely want to hold the events we all miss and to greet friends we haven't seen in a long time. But when I need to choose between introducing new Dragoons to the traditions that make us special or inviting back old friends, inculcating our youth with the Regimental spirit must take priority. I am confident that we will get back to the traditional Leliefontein celebrations, but we are not there yet.

After one year in command of our Regiment, I am exceptionally proud of the work Dragoons continue to perform both in Canada and overseas. I have seen smiles behind masks and the joy of learning new skills in young soldiers. I have had the privilege of promoting officers and senior NCOs to new levels of responsibility. I have been witness to mentorship at all ranks and across all demographic lines, showing the strength we build in every Dragoon. The RSM and I have had opportunities to be around Dragoons at all stages of their careers, both in garrison and deployed. Every day, we have Dragoons working hard to build their own capabilities; all of the work they're doing is forging the future of our Regiment.

I thank you for your continued support of every soldier through your comments on Facebook and your thoughts as we prepare for a demanding training year. I wish the best to all of you and your families through the Fall.

Audax et Celer! / Bold and Swift!



Enno A. Kerckhoff, MSM, CD  
Lieutenant-Colonel  
58<sup>th</sup> Commanding Officer