

PRESIDENT OF THE GUILD OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS
ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020

INTRODUCTION

This is my third annual report. To say that this past year was a challenging one is an understatement. All of us have been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic in one way or another. The Regiment was forced into a new routine largely working from home. The major exercise Maple Resolve in Wainwright was cancelled. The presentation of the Guidon has been delayed and the change of command was a very abbreviated affair with only ten people in attendance for the scroll signing ceremony, although we did manage to record the ceremony and post it on Facebook for all to see. The RCD Association Reunion was cancelled and hopefully will be held next summer. The trip to Leeuwarden by a group of retired Dragoons was cancelled although the Dutch have asked us to come in 2022. All this to say the world is changing and it will cause the Guild to adjust the way we do business.

The Guild and the RCD Association work closely together to ensure that our retired members have a voice in what the Guild delivers to the Regimental family. The Association is well represented on the board of directors.

The Guild delivers the Guild Charitable Program (GCP) for the benefit of the Regimental Family. We select our programs and projects with care, but only the Regimental Family can assess how well we are doing in the delivery of the GCP. I have received feedback on our performance from the representative of the Regimental Family Assistance Group and the CO of the Regiment. Their comments were positive in terms of how responsive we have been to family needs and with the wide array of projects and visible improvements they have seen related to Guild activities. We are on the right track in terms program content and delivery and planned additions to our program will further improve our value to the Regimental Family. From my perspective as President of the Board I have been impressed by the hard work and dedication of Board members and individuals supporting the Board.

GUILD OBJECTS - A REMINDER

As a point of reference for all, the Guild Objects are repeated here as a reminder of why the Guild exists:

Object 1 – to promote, protect, preserve and further the traditions and heritage of the Royal Canadian Dragoons as part of the Canadian Armed Forces:

- a. by displaying Regimental artifacts to members of the RCD and the public;
- b. by collecting and preserving artifacts relevant to the history of the Regiment, and funding the operations of the Regiment's archives;
- c. by holding or participating in ceremonies and educational activities to mark important events in the history of the Regiment;
- d. by fostering liaisons with civilian authorities at all levels in order to establish, maintain and operate museums, exhibitions or demonstrations of items of regimental historical significance, memorabilia, artifacts or property;

e. by collecting, disseminating and publishing information concerning the Regiment, of interest and relevance to members of the Regimental Family and the public at large.

Object 2 – To promote the well-being, morale and quality of life of the Regimental Family by funding, supporting and undertaking projects that assist cadets and current and former soldiers and their families, including:

- a. Executing projects that assist the families of injured soldiers and activities to support the families of deployed soldiers;
- b. Making materials and resources available that connect and support soldiers of the Regiment and their families;
- c. Maintaining and managing the memorials and places of remembrance dedicated to Dragoons;
- d. Providing support and financial assistance for the Regiment’s current and former soldiers, and their families to pursue post-secondary education.

Object 3 – to promote public awareness of the Regiment including:

- a. communicating the activities of the RCD to the public at large;
- b. strengthening the links between the RCD and the communities that surround and support it.

CHANGES TO BOARD PERSONNEL

We had several Board members who completed their tenure on the Board – Rob Marois, Jeramie Leamon, Brynn Bennet, Ryan Morin and Tony Legare. We thank them all for their dedication and service to the Guild and the Regimental family. We welcomed a new Second Vice President Enno Kerckhoff to the board and welcomed six new Directors: Sean Curley, Dean Tremblay, Kevin Lee, Stefan Larouche, Mark Aube and David Burnie. We established a new position on the Board, a Chief Financial Officer and we recruited David Burnie from Ryan Lamontagne Inc. David is the son of current Guild Director Tom Burnie.

GUILD BUDGET AND INVESTMENT REPORT

We acknowledge the material effects of the coronavirus may be difficult to measure and predict and will likely vary across the Guild's business lines. It remains too early to measure the long-term impact the coronavirus will have on the Guild's ability to generate revenue and conduct its operations; however, we will continually consider the strategic risks when assessing the threat.

The effects of the coronavirus outbreak will likely impact, to a material degree our balance sheet and cash flows for several quarters into the future; to this end, we are planning ahead. If the disease continues to slow or disrupt the Guild’s revenue stream, it may put a strain on its cash holdings or force it to dip into liquidity reserves and long term investments.

Donations. Coupled with historically lower general and corporate donations, the coronavirus has also impacted donation revenue by impairing the Guild's ability to conduct its traditional major fundraising activities. It is very likely that a portion of the Guild's legacy donors have weighed the impact of the coronavirus against their own financial arrangements and have temporarily paused their planned donation activities. Cash donations from all sources are recorded at \$57,100 compared to \$122,000 for fiscal year 2019. The source of donations is broken down as follows:

- Y007 (payroll donations from serving Dragoons) - \$17,488
- United Way Donations with the Guild as the designated Charity – \$324
- Canada Donates (donations made through the Guild Website) - \$7962
- General donations (cash or cheques made directly to the secretary treasurer) - \$24,855
- Bursary Directed donations - \$1500
- Friends of the Regiment event - \$5,000

Budget. As at 30 September 2020, the Guild expended across all business lines \$117,000, versus the budgeted \$145,500. The areas where the Guild has significantly under expended versus the budget includes travel, fundraising and support to parades; all of which can be reasonably explained by the effects of the coronavirus vis a vis operations. Given the fiscal challenges inflicted by the coronavirus, the Guild's ability to deliver its core programs to the Regimental Family was not abated and did not materially deviate from plan. The ultimate impact the coronavirus will have on the Guild's business operations may not be realized immediately and may ultimately be modest. However, we continue to work on thoughtfully developed fiscal plans that will minimize any such impact and place the Guild in a position to recover to its historic fiscal norms and beyond.

Report on Investments. In September 2017, the Guild shifted its long-term investments to Manulife Securities with a mandate to provide moderate growth with some emphasis on capital preservation. From 17 September 2017 to 30 September 2020 the value of the Guild's long-term investments has increased by \$214,000 to a total value of \$1,510,000, which represents since inception, an annualized rate of return of 6.27%. The current asset allocation remains conservative with 62% invested cash and equivalents and 38% invested in equities. The Guild will continue to evaluate its long-term investment strategy concurrent to achieving its strategic objectives.

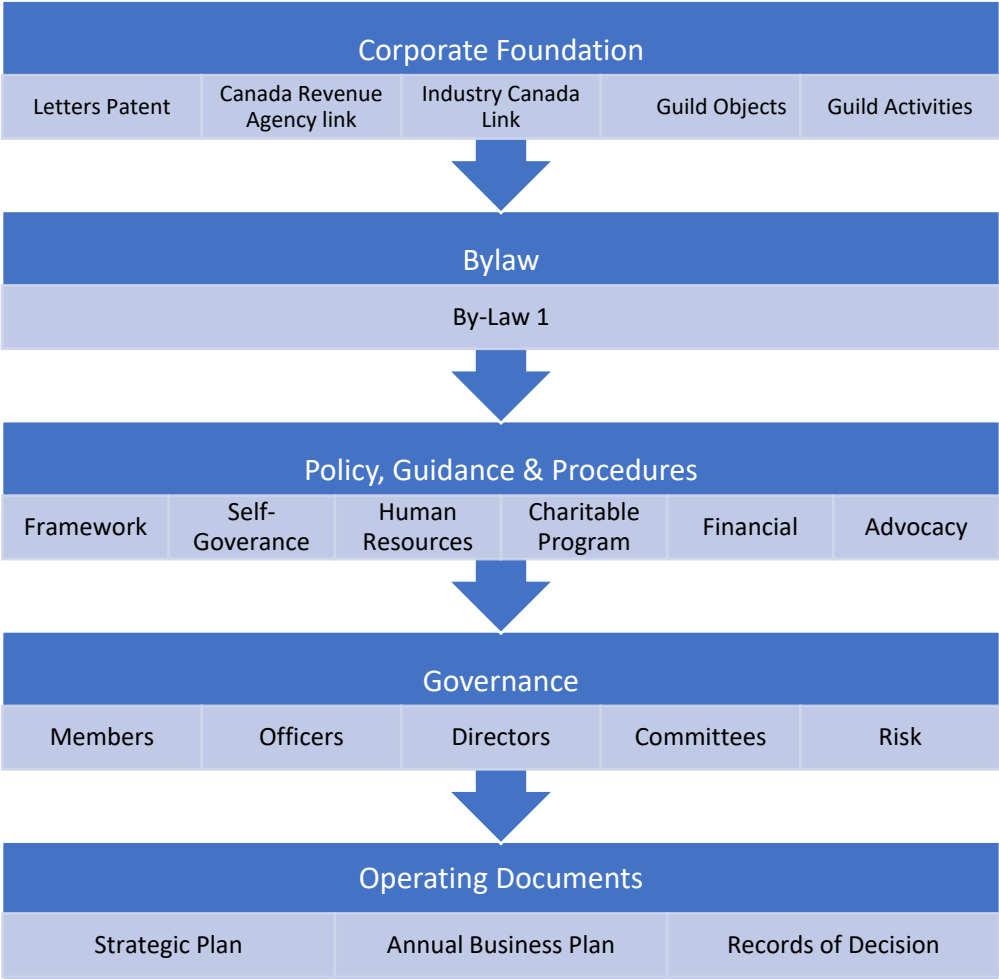
GOVERNANCE

With the recent spotlight on Canadian charities and their governance, the Guild believes in the importance of transparency in its governance and business operations. Moreover, the Board of Directors has a legal responsibility for the administration and management of the Guild – a federally incorporated registered charity.

Over the past several years the Guild has been developing its governance processes to ensure compliance with the law and to effectively manage its charitable programs and business operations. Development is an ongoing 'work in progress' to learn from experience, keep abreast of changing legal and regulatory requirements, and to advance the charitable needs of the Regimental Family. The Guild

is a “soliciting charity” and as such are required to have an annual independent financial review by a Public Accountant, and that is being done.

To show transparency, the figure below illustrates the Guild governance structure available on the Guild website through the “Guild Documents” link. The Corporate Foundation section leads from Guild formation in 1980 (Letters Patent) cascading through various sections to Operating Documents such as the Strategic Plan, Annual Business Plan and the Records of Decision from Board meetings and the Annual Members’ Meetings. Anyone can view any element of Guild information at any time.



STRATEGIC PLAN AND BUSINESS PLANNING

We are in the second year of Guild Strategic Plan 2019-2024 implementation and have just completed execution of our first comprehensive annual business plan. An initial review of the Strategic Plan has resulted in minor changes. A full strategic review will be conducted in the next four years. The Business Plan (BP) has proven effective in providing better transparency on what we do and where we spend our money. BP 2020-2021 has been approved with a budget for the next fiscal year of \$137,500.

THE GUILD PROGRAM

RCD ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM COLLECTION

We are moving the RCD collection from B-102 to the Base Museum with the intent to both enlarge and improve our display there. The intent is that the entire collection less what will be on rotating displays in the new Dragoon lines will be on display in the base museum. The Regimental archives are being transformed into an accessible and searchable archive database that will be available on the website later this year.

DRAGOON PARK

The Guild funded the establishment of Dragoon Park and is responsible for its upkeep. We are working with the Regiment for the placement of Regimental artifacts and vehicle monuments in the new Regimental lines whose construction is well underway.

RCD LIBRARY

The RCD library is in the process of being transferred to the CMR Library. The donation of the collection will be recognized with a plaque in the library.

HERITAGE VEHICLE TROOP

The first week of June 2020 our Staghound, completely refurbished by the RCAC Museum in Oshawa over the past year, returned to our Regimental lines. The whole project was completed by volunteers and the cost of the repairs was less than \$5K. The Heritage Vehicle troop now has both a running Ferret and Staghound in their small fleet. The Guild is in the process of seeking out a Dingo, a Fox, a Humber, a Greyhound, and a Daimler scout car. While we have located vehicles, we are still in negotiation with their owners. Heritage vehicles are expensive to both purchase and maintain and there is a limited supply available on the world marketplace.

SCARLET GUARD

The Guild purchased and maintains 100 soldier scarlet guard uniforms. This year an additional 20 Brass Helmets were purchased through a generous donation of a Friend of the Regiment, Colonel (retired Gene Lake). The annual cost to upkeep the scarlet uniforms is \$5000.

PRODUCTION OF THE SPRINGBOK/DRAGOON

The production of this year's Springbok/Dragoon was delayed because of the pandemic but it will be published in early fall 2020. The Guild underwrites the cost of production each year at a cost of approximately \$10K.

INTO THEIR SECOND CENTURY – AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS 1983-2018

The next edition of our Regimental history was published in April of 2020. **“Into Their Second Century – an Illustrated History of The Royal Canadian Dragoons 1983-2018” by Michael McNorgan and Allan Halfper** is now available through the RCD Kit shop in Petawawa for the price of \$35 a copy. An initial distribution has been completed to serving Regimental members, ERE and RCD Association members. This was a huge undertaking that began in 2012. We produced 2000 copies of the book at a cost of

approximately \$100K and hope to sell the bulk of the copies over the next two years. In the future an E-Book version will be produced but not until the current stock of hard copy books has been depleted.

BURSARY UPDATE

At Leliefontein 2019 \$10,000 in education bursaries were awarded to the following individuals: \$5000 to Madalyn Richards, \$3000 to Cameron Mitchell and \$2000 to Shaily Turner. A \$1000 Volunteer and Community Service Award was awarded to Alexis Sapera.

QUALITY OF LIFE UPDATE

FAMILY SUPPORT - When needed the Guild has provided financial assistance to Regimental family members in need when public funds were not available in a timely fashion. \$1328 dollars were dispersed last year, which includes funerals.

NEW SOLDIER ACCOUTREMENTS – Last year the Guild provided accoutrements to 46 new soldiers and four new officers. Total cost was \$4,029.

DEPLOYMENT BEARS – The Guild has maintained four Deployment Bears to support the upcoming deployment and retains \$160 worth of gift certificates for the purchase of additional bears if required.

RECUPERATION KITS – The Guild has maintained eight complete recuperation kits to supply to wounded soldiers as required.

GUILD CEREMONIAL TROOP - The Guild has supported several Regimental funerals with our funeral kits and lance bearers, and we are in the process of establishing a Guild Ceremonial Troop and increasing the number of funeral kits available for just this purpose. This is being done in conjunction with the RCD Association.

SOLDIER QOL IMPROVEMENT FUND DISBURSEMENTS – The QOL committee hosted an Easter dinner and provided a gift bag for living in soldiers who were unable to leave the base due to the pandemic. The Guild also provided \$1000 to the Cancer Society in NB through the Bennett Memorial Golf Tournament, \$500 to the Robbie Dean Centre in Renfrew county and \$500 to the Padres fund at CFB Petawawa.

INJURED AND SPECIAL NEEDS FUND - The Guild recognizes the added costs incurred by Regimental Family members who support injured and Special Needs individuals. This project is currently under development and identifies deserving Regimental Families that need financial support to offset the costs not covered by public programs.

RCD CADET CORPS UPDATE

The Guild continues to support three affiliated cadet corps in the Ottawa region. Due to the pandemic support was limited this year. Exercises were the key activity supported.

LEEUWARDEN 2020/2022

I mentioned in my introduction that the RCD Association had organized a trip of fifty retired Dragoons to go to Leeuwarden to participate in the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands in April 2020. This group was to represent the Regiment and was sponsored in part by the Guild. The Dragoons going paid for their own airfare and accommodations and the Guild purchased the appropriate gifts and presentations that were going to be made on behalf of the Regiment (flags, coins plaques and miniature Staghounds). The trip was to include visits to all the key towns that the Dragoons liberated, and it culminated in a civic ceremony and parade in Leeuwarden itself. Because of the pandemic all international flights were cancelled and ultimately the Dutch had to cancel the planned events. They have reached out to us and have asked us to plan to come in 2022 and it is our intent if the pandemic situation is resolved sufficiently to allow travel, that we will plan to execute our original itinerary in 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Our first step is to communicate better to our internal Regimental family audience and then to expand to the communities we live in and then to the broader Canadian audience. In the near future we will be conducting a survey with all members of the Regimental family to solicit your input on the Guild Charitable Program. This is all with a view to increasing our fund-raising potential to better support our Guild Charitable Program.

GUILD PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS

1. New Guidon presentation
2. Support the Regimental family while a large portion of the Regiment is deployed to Latvia
3. Marketing and branding the Guild and the Guild Charitable Program
4. Fund raising and recognition of our donors
5. Survey our beneficiaries to see how we can do better

CONCLUSION

The Guild can only do what it does with the generous support of the Regimental Family and the Friends of the Regiment. We are working to better market what the Guild does to all Canadians and to ensure that our brand is recognizable and respected by all. It is an honour to serve as the President of the Guild. Through your support we can ensure the Regimental family continues to thrive and serve our great nation. It is another fine day to be a Dragoon.

Peter Atkinson

Brigadier-General (retired)

President of the Guild of The Royal Canadian Dragoons

01 November 2020