

*This Narrative is focused on the Guild of The Royal Canadian Dragoons as a non-profit charitable organization. It helps us develop, maintain and deliver products that describe/promote the Guild and speaks to how we support the Regimental Family – it is considered a start point for further detailed and focused content such as messaging, activities, information sharing and fundraising. This document also helps describe the Guild and the Regimental Family to the public.*

*Throughout this document, the term "Regimental Family" means the Regiment of The Royal Canadian Dragoons, "the Regiment", serving, former and retired Dragoons and their families; Dragoons include any member of the Canadian Armed Forces of any rank and from any military occupation/classification serving or who have served with the Regiment, employees and contractors of the Government of Canada who have worked with and for the Regiment, and those individuals and organizations who have made a significant contribution to the Regimental Family, plus the cadet corps affiliated with the Regiment."*

## **THE GUILD OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS NARRATIVE**

Established in 1980 by government letters patent, the Guild has developed over time to support both the unit outside its operational mandate and the Regimental Family by improving the quality of life of family members and protecting our history and heritage. We enable this by promoting awareness to the public and our serving and retired Dragoons (including their families) through robust communications.

The strength of the Guild is in the Regimental Family; existing entirely of volunteers from across the Regimental Family including those specialist trades and personnel required for the smooth operation of the organization as required by government non-profit regulations as defined by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Funding is generated by donations from Regimental Family members and like-minded enterprises. The Honourary Colonel of the Regiment serves as the President of the Guild and is entrusted with the responsibility of guiding the activities of the Guild to support the Regimental Family. He/she is supported by Directors and specialists representing interests across the organization.

The competition for resources and funding is challenging in today's economic environment. Therefore to provide some focus the Guild, a not-for-profit corporation, was formed to support members of the Regimental Family and protect our heritage and promote awareness both within the family and publicly.

### **Guild Objectives and Impact**

Quality of Life. Ensure that the support necessary for promoting the well-being, morale and quality of life of the Regimental Family is available.

Support to our soldiers (active and retired) and their families is the Guild's number one priority, both at home and when deployed.

This line of support includes support to: The Regiment by providing conditions to maintain and improve garrison life; soldiers when deployed; support to families when soldiers are separated from their loved ones; a hospitalization support program; and other support to ensure the entire Regimental Family stays safe and healthy. Another critical aspect of this effort is support to the families of our fallen Dragoons. Additionally, The Guild provides education bursaries for higher education and stands by to assist families when special circumstances create conditions where families require additional support beyond what the Government of Canada provides.

History and Heritage. Promote, protect and preserve history, heritage and traditions of The Royal Canadian Dragoons as part of the Canadian Armed Forces.

It is incumbent upon the Guild to ensure the traditions and comprehensive history of the Regiment are upheld to the highest professional standard, and promoted within the Regiment and to the Canadian public. Dragoons have an excellent history as Canada's senior Armour Regiment and are known for its professional soldiers who relentlessly pursue mission success in the finest of Canadian traditions.

The Guild captures our historical accomplishments through key projects such as: maintaining Dragoon Park with our historical vehicle collection; maintaining historical scarlet uniforms for a ceremonial guard; preserving and replacing the Regimental Guidon; locating and securing other items of historical value such as the Regiment's Victoria Crosses; as well as cataloguing our property and archives to industry standards. The Guild also preserves key correspondence and publications for historical reference.

Awareness and Communications. Create and maintain a level of public awareness that generates interest in The Regiment while promoting Regimental Family unity through robust and effective information sharing.

The Guild manages and supports the exchange of information into the public domain and across the Regimental Family through correspondence, a robust online and social media presence, and through various publications. It also participates in mounting displays, events and community relation activities to raise public awareness of The Regiment.

A common myth is that the Guild is for the old guard (retired members) but this organization is committed to supporting the whole Regimental Family – active and retired members as well as their families. The Regimental Family is well represented across the country through chapters of the RCD Association and this presence is reflected in the Guild, thereby promoting a more inclusive organization. This collective effort promotes a series of interconnected mechanisms and platforms to enable wider universal awareness and promote our history and heritage.

Finally, an emerging line of effort is supporting the future by contributing to youth leadership development and education. This is conducted by sponsoring, supporting and assisting three Royal Canadian Dragoons' Cadet Corps as well as maintaining and awarding a Leliefontein Bursary Scholarship Fund.

## **Our Regimental History**

The Regiment became the first Army unit of Canada's Permanent Force, created by a young Canadian nation on 21 December 1883. This date is the official creation of The Royal Canadian Dragoons as Canada's senior serving cavalry regiment, but the unit existed as "Volunteer Cavalry" before that time. Since its creation, the Regiment has been involved in every major conflict and many peace-support operations including: North-West Rebellion, the South African War, the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War and the War in Afghanistan as well as UN sponsored operations such as Cyprus and the former Yugoslavia, NATO operations in Bosnia, Kosovo and Latvia, plus a mission in Somalia. Additionally, the Regiment has been involved in major domestic disaster relief operations such as the Winnipeg floods and eastern Canada ice storm.

For service to Sovereign and Country, The Royal Canadian Dragoons have been awarded 26 battle honours, 19 of which are emblazoned on the Guidon. Annual celebrations include the regimental

birthday on 21 December, the Action at Leliefontein on 7 November 1900 where three Dragoons were awarded the Victoria Cross and one the Distinguished Conduct Medal, and the Liberation of Leeuwarden, Netherlands on 15 April 1945. The names of 293 Dragoons, casualties of wars and operations are commemorated in the Books of Remembrance.

An extensive history is found on the website and unit historical publications. Additionally, the Guild has subject matter experts available to support any queries.

### **Our Donation Audiences – Corporate, Public, Retired, Current Serving**

The Guild encourages and welcomes every donation to help support efforts across our mandate. Every donation counts no matter how small and we thank everyone who makes a contribution to the Guild. We are committed to ensuring that the impact of the Guild reaches beyond the sum of individual donations and gratefully appreciate the acknowledgement of everyday Canadians and individual corporations who see fit to align their financial contributions to make an impact on our Regimental Family.

As an organization, we strongly encourage every member to be a fundraiser and advocate during the course of their normal daily activities when appropriate. While every conversation will be tailored to the participants, our best-selling point is what we do. Having said this, the Guild has experts on fundraising/donation matters that are standing by to support all efforts.

### **How to give/contribute:**

The Guild has created a variety of donation mechanisms in keeping with best practices and regulations to ensure contributions directly support intended target efforts per our mandate. All of these methods are clearly described on our webpage but should be considered as a framework only.

Depending on the donor (Corporate, Public, Retired, Current Serving) different themes, approaches and methods can be adopted to best fit the wishes and requirements of both parties. Having said this, the Guild has experts on these matters that are standing by to support donation efforts.

### **Staying Connected is a key enabler:**

As stated earlier, communication is key to the successful operation of the Guild. It is highly encouraged for members to be engaged in order to know about support activities and reference material that can be found in many Regimental family sources as outlined here:

Our website at [www.Dragoons.ca](http://www.Dragoons.ca) – go there often – this site is paid for by the Guild to keep the entire Regimental Family up to date and interactive. It is the keystone mechanism for sharing information across the country and is a key reference for Guild activities as well as wider information sharing with the public.

We're active on social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Our goal is to help share your stories and pictures with all Dragoons as a part of capturing a more personal side of our history. This includes unit, association and Guild activities, historical exhibits/articles or simple stories of your experiences so we can promote shared awareness amongst the Regimental Family.

Join an Association Chapter – actively identify and include members of the Regimental Family (serving, retired, supporting trades) back “home” and encourage them to join the Family, whether in your geographic area or not. It’s a way we can look after each other, including knowing that we are here if there is someone in need support.

### **Supporting Documents and Products:**

This narrative is not intended to answer all the questions regarding the Guild. It is designed to create consistent development and delivery messaging themes for Guild representatives/advocates to ensure alignment across all audiences throughout the country and beyond. Having said this, each geographical and/or interest area will also be expected to customize delivery to the specific audience whenever required.

With this in mind, the Guild develops and maintains detailed supporting documents to aid in our messaging. The Guild is always looking to improve the details and content of our messaging through member feedback and input so develop the mechanisms for easy input by all members of the Regimental Family. Every engagement and discussion should be considered an opportunity for improvement of this narrative.

Specific separate documents that support this Narrative include:

**The Guild Board of Directors – structure and who’s who.**

**Association Chapters – overview and organization.**

**Guild frequently asked Questions & Answers.**

**Guild Constitution and Bylaws – a summary and talking points (can be in FAQ)**

**Guild Strategic Plan.**

**Guild Business Plan.**

**Guild donation methods and talking points.**

**Detailed project descriptions for Guild activities.**

**Communications Strategy, messages and talking points.**

**Website content and presentation points.**