

PRESIDENT OF THE GUILD OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS
ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018

Introduction

I assumed the appointment of Colonel of the Regiment from Major General (Retired) Matt Macdonald on 4 April 2018. I accepted the appointment of President of the Guild as voted upon in the Board of Director's meeting that same date. As a part of the handover process it was clear to me that two major issues needed to be addressed right away. The first was our governance model. While much has been done over the past five years to ensure the Guild was in full compliance from a governance perspective with Canada Revenue Agency and Industry Canada Directives, there remained outstanding issues that put the Guild at risk. I committed at the Board of Director's meeting to take on these issues, work with the Guild Governance Committee and return to the Board in June with a recommended way forward; and to the Guild in November with an executable plan. The second issue was the need to better communicate with the beneficiaries of the Guild namely serving and retired members and their families. The first step is this annual report. It is my intent that moving forward the President will produce an annual report.

Budget versus Expenditures

As at 4 September 2018 The Guild had expended \$51 577.18, versus the planned \$94 710.00. Several budgeted items remain to be expended within the current fiscal year, specifically Leliefontein Memorial Education bursary and the Volunteerism and Community Service bursary, payments for work done on the Archives and Dragoon II. Areas where we have under expended include the Soldier Quality of Life Improvement fund disbursements, Association disbursements and acquiring items for the Scarlet Guard. Areas where we have over expended include the purchasing of accoutrements for new soldiers joining The Regiment (a good news story, to have more new Dragoons than expected), the purchase of new Regimental trophies, and ceremonial activities.

Report on Investments

Since shifting our investments from Investor's Group to Manulife Securities, our investments have been doing very well. As at 4 September 2018, the value of our investments has increased by \$91 613.15, a great rate of return. With the continued wise stewardship of the investments, The Guild will continue to move towards a long term sustainable financial strategy that enables us to achieve the intended Objects with less dependence on external donors.

Governance

In April 2018 the Governance Committee commenced a wholesale review of the Guild By-Laws, all correspondence with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and Industry Canada (IC), and the Guild and Board Minutes from the past five years. Our first conclusion was that the Guild was spending an inordinate amount of time dealing with governance issues at the expense of the Guild business. It was also clear that we had not responded to queries from both CRA and IC and that our status as a charitable not for profit organization was at risk. We contacted our Guild lawyer to confirm our priority of effort to fix the

shortcomings noted above. Our lawyer recommended addressing the Governance issues right away and in parallel address the CRA and IC issues.

The Governance Committee believed that the current structure of both the Board and the Guild were too large and unwieldy and the rate of turnover of members and Directors had made it almost impossible to do business. The Regimental Ops Tempo was significant and unlikely to change. We undertook to re-write By Law One with a view to taking the burden off the serving Regimental members by having a much smaller Board of Director's to better facilitate the Guild. operations. We discussed the recommended By Law changes with our Guild lawyer and received her endorsement. The proposed structure was briefed to the Board of Directors in June with a view to presenting the new structure to the entire Guild in November 2018 for approval. The proposed changes are captured in the revised By Law at Annex A.

At the same time the Governance Committee reviewed the Guild Objects and Activities. With the lawyer's advice, we produced an agreed document updating the Objects and Activities that is more aligned with reality. The lawyer is now staffing the document with CRA and IC. The updated Objects and Activities are included at Annex B.

A list of the current Board of Directors is attached at Annex C.

Archives and Dragoon II Update

Mr. David Muralt has taken over responsibility for the RCD Guild Archives project from Mr. Allan Halfper effective January 2018. Mr. Halper provided a brief update to the Board of Directors in June. He is currently undertaking a thorough review of the entire Digital Archives with a view to reducing duplication and providing proper filing metadata to facilitate access and searching of the archives.

The production of the new Regimental history (from 1983 to the recent withdrawal from Afghanistan) is underway. A critical aspect of recording Dragoon's activities during this period involved getting access to the war diaries from Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia and Afghanistan. The Regimental archive contains very few war diaries from this period. Fortunately, the DND Directorate of History and Heritage was able to provide over 140 RCD war diaries from this period. These have been digitized and are now part of the RCD archive. War diaries are always initially classified as SECRET documents. For the material in these diaries to be used in the history, the diaries must be examined carefully to ensure no information that should remain classified is passed to the author and included in the book. This process is currently underway, and we are on schedule for the publication of the new RCD history book in 2020.

At the June 2018 Board of Directors meeting, Mike McNorgan and Allan Halfper (co-authors for the book) briefed the Board on their work to date and the Board confirmed its commitment to the production of a colour, large format, heavily illustrated, hard cover book and an E-Book. The Guild is to confirm the number of copies by January 2020. A minimum order of 1000 books and an E-Book is confirmed at a cost of \$60,000 plus \$3000 for the E-Book. The Colonel of The Regiment met with Mike McNorgan again on 31 August and work on the manuscript has been progressing extremely well. He has largely finished his research and the first draft of the manuscript is planned to be ready for review by end September 2018. There remains much work to be done with photographs, illustrations and layout, but the whole project is on track.

Ceremonial Uniform Update

The goal remains to field a 100 soldier Guard in ceremonial scarlet uniforms. It is the Guild's intent to fund and maintain enough uniforms to make this possible. The Regimental Orderly Warrant Officer is responsible to maintain the inventory and will identify the prioritised needs to make this happen.

Guild Property Update

The Regiment conducted a Non-Public Fund Distribution Account verification as a part of the Change of Command handover report in June 2018. The Regimental Orderly Warrant Officer working with the Archives Curator is in the process of developing a full picture of Guild holdings in both Petawawa and other locations where Guild property is on display. A report will be made available at the next Board of Directors meeting in November 2018, with a view to ensuring the proper accounting of Guild property and Non-Public property.

Bursary Update

Last year the Guild presented \$5,000 in Leliefontein Memorial Education bursary awards to the following recipients: Alex Jones (\$2,500), Kelsea Vessey (\$1,500) and Lena Power (\$1,000).

Thirteen applications for this year's awards have been received and are presently under review. It is intended to present \$10,000 in bursaries this Leliefontein, in awards of \$4000, \$3000, \$2000 and \$1000.

Historical Vehicle Update

The Regiment currently holds two serviceable historical vehicles, a Ferret and a Staghound. The Guild will continue to fund the maintenance and upkeep of these vehicles. It is the intent of the Guild that we continue to search for and acquire vehicles on which The Regiment has served throughout our history.

Quality of Life Update

Support to wounded and deceased soldiers and their families. The Guild completed a refurbishment of ten recuperation kits in preparation for the possibility of soldiers being injured on operational and training deployments.

New soldier accoutrements. This past year the Guild provided 91 new soldiers joining The Regiment with their first issue of Regimental accoutrements.

Deployment bears. Sixty- seven deployment bears have been provided to the children of soldiers deploying on expeditionary operations in the last year.

Soldier Quality of Life Improvement fund disbursements. Disbursements have been provided to the RCAC Association, Padre's Christmas Hamper Fund, Robbie Dean Family Counseling Centre and Victim Services Toronto.

Communications Update

The Guild maintains a Regimental web site and Facebook site, to communicate and inform the Regimental family. Annually the Regiment and the Association produce the joint Springbok/Dragon journal, to capture events of the previous year.

Guild Plans for the Next Twelve Months

Ratify new By Law One and Restructure of the Guild

Obtain CRA endorsement and a Continuance based on new structure

Continue to work on preparing Dragoon II for publication in January 2020

Plan for Leeuwarden 2020, the 75th anniversary of the liberation

RCD Monuments. The Guild will finalise the list of Dragoon monuments and prioritise the work to appropriately upkeep and maintain them.

Continue to respond to the needs of our ill, injured, wounded and their families, where other organisations cannot.

Continue to search for and acquire RCD historical vehicles while maintaining the current Staghound and Ferret.

Peter Atkinson

Brigadier-General (retired)

Colonel of The Regiment

President of the Guild of the Royal Canadian Dragoons

Annex A – New By-Law One

Annex B – New Guild Objects and Statement of Activities

Annex C – Current Board of Directors