



HONOURING
the past
SECURING
the present
& ADVANCING
the future

THE BLACK WATCH

(ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT) OF CANADA

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN CASE STATEMENT



The Black Watch of Canada is synonymous with unparalleled bravery and a legacy of defending the values we hold dear.

Former Prime Minister Right Honourable Justin Trudeau

For more than a century and a half, the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada has stood steadfastly as a bastion of Canadian military tradition, proudly embodying the values of courage, dedication, diversity and unity. The Regiment has epitomized Canadian military excellence, with a rich heritage that continues to inspire and shape the nation and its armed forces.

Today, the Black Watch is committed to upholding and building on its vibrant traditions, while adapting to modern military realities. It is dedicated to ensuring that it remains a vital component of Canada's defence strategy.

The Black Watch of Canada Foundation was established in 1996 as a charitable body serving the Regimental Family. To date, the Foundation has, indeed, been pivotal in helping sustain the values and traditions that define the Black Watch and to gather the resources required to maintain the Regiment's heritage, traditions and values.

The Foundation now finds itself in need of additional financial resources in order to enable the Regiment to continue to play its unique role and enhance its ongoing activities and contributions to the communities which it serves. This is the reason why it is embarking on a major appeal with a goal of raising \$3 million.

A Storied History of Bravery, Service and Sacrifice



Overseas Officers, the 1st Battalion The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada in 1944.



From Vimy Ridge to Afghanistan, the Black Watch has demonstrated time and time again that their commitment to duty knows no bounds.

Desmond Morton, historian and inaugural chair of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada

The earliest beginnings of the original Black Watch Regiment in Scotland date back to 1725. Established to restore order after the 1715 uprising of Highland clans, the Scottish Black Watch played a significant role in British military history, and it served to infuse its Canadian counterpart with a rich cultural and historical heritage.

The roots of the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada can be traced back to 1862, when the 5th Battalion, Volunteer Militia Rifles of Canada was formed as its forebear. It was authorized by the Canadian government in response to the increasing military threat being posed south of the border during the American Civil War.

Since then, the Black Watch's history has been a testament to bravery, service and sacrifice. Thousands of Canadians have served with the Regiment, distinguishing themselves through their dedication and discipline on some of the most significant and challenging battlegrounds in military history. In addition to helping assure Canadian border security, Black Watch soldiers were on the ground in South Africa during the Boer War in 1900. Amongst the many battles in which they were involved, they fought valiantly in the Battle of Vimy Ridge during World War I, at Normandy and in the follow-up to D-Day during World War II, and in defence of South Korea in the Korean War. Black Watch troops also served as peacekeepers in Cyprus during the 1960s, and as part of NATO forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s. More recently, they contributed to international efforts to combat terrorism around the world and rebuild the war-torn nation of Afghanistan, and they are participating in the training of troops in Latvia to serve in Ukraine. The heroism and valour demonstrated by these troops are deservedly commemorated and honoured to this day.





In parallel with these conflicts and peacekeeping missions, the Black Watch of Canada has continued to serve with distinction in domestic operations and disaster relief efforts, consistently demonstrating its dedication to humanitarian aid. The Regiment has been called upon time and again in moments of national crisis, from assisting in recovery efforts in Southern Ontario following Hurricane Hazel in 1954 to providing relief during the 1997 “Flood of the Century” in Manitoba. Black Watch soldiers were again deployed during one of Canada’s most devastating natural disasters, the Ice Storm of 1998, and later played a key role in supporting civilian authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic in Montreal. Most recently, the Regiment was mobilized in the summer of 2023 to help combat wildfires and mitigate their impact on affected communities in British Columbia. In the spring of 2024, it was once again called upon to respond to the effects of climate change by participating in search, rescue, and recovery efforts in the wake of the severe flooding that occurred in the Montreal area.



Beyond its military achievements, the Black Watch is renowned for its vibrant cultural heritage, to this day maintaining strong ties to its Scottish roots. These cultural connections have played a major role in fostering a spirit of camaraderie among its members. Furthermore, the Regiment has been deeply embedded in the fabric of the communities in which it operates with a tradition of actively preserving, promoting and sharing its values and legacy with the public.



The Black Watch of Canada’s history is, indeed, a rich tapestry woven with heroic deeds, cultural pride and unwavering dedication to the public-at-large. Through outright loyalty and patriotism, the Regiment has been and continues to be a most revered part of the nation’s heritage.



Upholding Its Traditions

The Black Watch's commitment extends beyond the battlefield, impacting lives through community service, mentorship and unwavering support for fellow Canadians.

General Jennie Carignan, Chief of Defence Staff

The Black Watch of Canada is committed to upholding its traditions by continuing to be an active and vital component of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. Today, the Regiment's activities are as diverse as they are impactful.

Part of the 34 Canadian Brigade Group and made up of citizen-soldiers who, as reservists, train regularly and can be called upon for national deployment, in support of civil authorities during natural disasters and international missions. The Black Watch remains dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of military readiness.

Members undergo rigorous training that includes infantry tactics, marksmanship, physical fitness and leadership development. This training ensures that they are prepared for both domestic and international deployment, including peacekeeping missions, disaster relief operations and support roles in global conflicts.





Meeting the Need to Preserve the Past and Secure the Future

Every member of the Black Watch embodies a spirit of service that extends beyond military duty, fostering unity and hope. Backing the Regiment means ensuring that these brave men and women can continue to make a profound difference, both at home and abroad.

Lieutenant-General (ret'd) The Honorable Roméo Dallaire

As the country's oldest Highland Regiment, and among its most distinguished military units, the Black Watch has been unwaveringly devoted to service for some 160 years – both on the battlefield and at home. Today, in order to be able to continue to fulfill its vital role and meet the challenges of tomorrow, the Black Watch of Canada Foundation is seeking the collective support of the communities and nation served by the Regiment under the banner of a \$3 million major fundraising campaign. Through this initiative, the Foundation is aiming to acquire the resources needed to significantly enhance the Regiment's community impact, with the funds raised to be allocated strategically across several key areas, and ensure the Regiment's need to stay current with the evolving role of the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Black Watch of Canada Foundation exists to support our serving soldiers with a family atmosphere to encourage morale, perpetuate its history while looking forward to the future. The Foundation provides services that supplement those of the Department of National Defence. The Foundation supports the Regimental family and consequently must raise its own funding.





IN SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO SERVED

Supporting veterans is a cornerstone of the Black Watch's mission. With veterans now being soldiers who have served from past wars to today's defenders, these efforts are critical in addressing the physical and psychological challenges that many veterans face upon completing their service.

By directing Black Watch veterans to complementary support services that are adapted to their condition, including counseling, job placement and financial aid, they will be receiving much-needed assistance in transitioning to civilian life and dealing with various physical and mental health challenges. In addition, new programs could be developed to support the families of serving members with educational opportunities, family counseling, emergency financial assistance, and health and wellness programs, thereby helping to ensure the enhanced well-being of the entire Regimental family.

A STRONGER AND MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

The Black Watch strives to maintain close ties to the communities in which it operates. The Regiment regularly participates in public ceremonies, parades and remembrance events, thus helping to foster an inspiring sense of civic pride and community spirit. Educational outreach programs are also an important focus, with members of the Regiment and Black Watch Cadets visiting public institutions and community centres to share their experiences and promote values of discipline, honour and service.

A significant portion of the campaign funds raised will be devoted to expanding educational outreach programs, including school visits, public lectures and youth workshops. Such initiatives will reinforce the promotion of values like discipline, honour and service among young people and the community-at-large. The funds will also serve to support the Regiment's participation in public events, parades and remembrance ceremonies, which will foster community spirit while honouring the contributions of the Black Watch and its members.

The Cadet Corps have, indeed, transformed the lives of countless teenagers, providing them with the tools and support they need to succeed in various aspects of their lives with leadership skills, discipline and self-confidence, while instilling a sense of patriotism and pride in enabling Canadian traditions to thrive. A portion of the campaign contributions would be allocated to enhancing Black Watch Cadet Corps programs, providing increased leadership training, along with physical fitness and personal development opportunities for young people that will help shape the leaders of tomorrow.



HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION

The Black Watch of Canada is devoted, as well, to preserving and promoting its rich and distinct heritage. The Regiment's Pipe Band is a well-known symbol of its cultural legacy, often performing at various local, national and international events. The distinctive uniforms and instruments for the Pipe Band are always in need of renewal, at the Regiment's expense, along with Highland uniforms for the soldiers.

The Black Watch Museum, located at the Regiment's Armoury in Montreal, a National Historic Site, serves as a cultural and educational hub, showcasing one of the most extensive and accessible collection of archives, artifacts and exhibits that reflect and celebrate its glowing past. Funds will be allocated towards the maintenance and enhancement of the Museum, including temporary exhibitions, improving artifact conservation and creating interactive displays that better engage and educate visitors about the Black Watch's rich history. Funds will also be devoted to the maintenance of its many monuments and memorials in Canada and abroad, as well as to the Armoury itself to ensure that it remains a welcoming yet commemorative space for training, special events and community activities.

PERMANENCE AND POSITION FOR THE FUTURE

The Black Watch Foundation's existing investment fund serves as a cornerstone of its long-term stability. A \$3 million contribution to this fund will constitute a transformative investment, providing the Regiment with a more robust financial base and source of income to help ensure its future sustainability and growth. The income generated from the fund's investments will ultimately enhance the Regiment's continued capacity to serve its members, engage with the community, preserve its heritage and, help meet urgent priorities.



A Final Word from Black Watch Honorary Colonel, Bruce Bolton, and former Honorary Lieutenant Colonel and President of the Black Watch of Canada Foundation, H. Jonathan Birks



For over 160 years, the Black Watch of Canada has met the demands of protecting the freedoms we cherish, upholding the highest standards of service, through loyalty and patriotism, thus making a meaningful contribution to the strength of our communities. In today's world, the Regiment is facing a new set of challenges – challenges that require the collective support of those who value its legacy and future. The \$3 million fundraising campaign is an opportunity to give back to the Regiment that has given us so much. In contributing, donors will not only be supporting a most worthy cause; they will become part of a proud tradition that has shaped Canada's past and which will shape Canada's future.

Let's stand together with the Regiment by supporting our Foundation's fundraising campaign which will make all the difference in ensuring that the Black Watch of Canada will endure and flourish for generations to come.