

# Planning for 2016

## Highland Traditions

Precisely when the military highland tradition started in Canada can be debated over warm haggis and single malt scotch, but some 250 years ago, disbanded Highland soldiery settled in what is now the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. Today, some of Canada's oldest militia regiments exist because of their Highland traditions and spirit. Examples of active units include: *The Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders* (since 1812); *The Black Watch of Canada* (since 1862); *The Lorne Scots* (since 1866); *The Cape Breton Highlanders*, *The Nova Scotia Highlanders* and *The 48th Highlanders* (since 1871); and *The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders* (since 1903). *The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (The Duke of Edinburgh's Own)* has been active since 1856 as Ottawa's Own Regiment.

There are no Regular Force Highland Units in Canada today, they are all in the Reserve Force, 16 units in total. When you see these soldiers in kilts and sporrans, wearing scarlet uniforms, and accompanied by pipes and drums, you might think these uniforms and instruments would be paid for by the Crown or Government of Canada, however, other than a very small maintenance grant, it is up to members, friends, neighbours, and other generous countrymen to provide the funds to outfit them – helping to maintain the spirit of service and sacrifice that is the Highland identity.

The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (The Duke of Edinburgh's Own) is part of 33 Canadian Brigade Group, 4th Canadian Division. Headquartered in Ottawa's Cartier Square Drill Hall since 1881, the unit shares the City of Ottawa's motto "ADVANCE".

Its Regimental Battle Honours include South Africa (1899-1900), 16 from the First World War (including Vimy), 20 from the Second World War (including being the only Ottawa Regiment to participate in the D-Day Landings at Normandy) and, more recently, Afghanistan. Camerons have also served with honour in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia and numerous United Nations postings around the world.

The Camerons consists of a Regimental Headquarters, two Infantry Companies, a small support element, and the Pipes & Drums. No doubt almost all who visit Ottawa or watch Remembrance Day Ceremonies from the National War Memorial will have seen and heard the Pipes & Drums. It has also performed internationally in Scotland, the U.S. and the Bahamas. During the Second World War, the band accompanied the Regiment to Iceland, the UK, and on to continental Europe, eventually taking part in the Victory Parade at Utrecht, The Netherlands, in 1945.



The Camerons have an extended family that includes an association for all ranks, both serving and retired, and a foundation. A registered charitable organization that supports all ranks, both serving and retired of the Regimental Family, the Foundation raises funds to support those traditional highland items of clothing, kit and activities not paid for by the Crown. It also provides specific help to those in the family in need, and awards two annual educational bursaries to deserving members. In 2011 the Foundation published the regimental history "Capital Soldiers" with its introduction by HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who has been the Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief since 1967.

The Highland spirit and a desire to give back to those who serve our country led to my involvement with The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa Foundation. In 2014, based on the needs of the Regiment, the Foundation provided some \$55,000 for the refurbishment of some 50 scarlet uniforms, most over 30 years old. However, its work is not done.

Over the next few years, a number of celebrations will mark key events in Canadian history, and the Cameron's hope to participate in them. To make that happen, the Foundation is seeking to raise \$125,000 by the end of 2016 to provide the necessary Highland uniforms and accessories and fund annual operational expenses of a ceremonial guard, 150 strong, with Colour Party and Pipes & Drums in full ceremonial dress. None of this is provided by the Government of Canada. The Regiment and the Foundation cannot do it alone. We need your financial assistance to keep the Highland tradition and spirit alive. **FLD**

Doug Palmer is a member of The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa Foundation. For information about The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (The Duke of Edinburgh's Own), its extended Regimental Family, or how to donate, visit: <http://camerons.ca/foundation/>

