

# 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



SAILORS HELPING SAILORS  
**80**  
YEARS  
1942 - 2022

ROYAL CANADIAN NAVAL  
**BENEVOLENT FUND**

# CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	1
A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	2
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	3
COMMITTEES	4
STAFF	5
FOCUS IN 2021-2022	6
Strategies and principles	6
YEAR IN REVIEW	7
Governance	7
Programs	7
Funding	10
Finance	11
Communications	14
Remembrance	14
Partners	14
Administration Transformed	15
WHAT'S NEXT? PLANS FOR 2022-23	16

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Every day, individuals in our Navy family across Canada depend on military-serving charities to help them through tough times, improve their lives, and remember their service to their country. Over the past 80 years, the Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund (RCNBF) has made a tangible difference in the lives of the people who need us most, distributing more than 42 million dollars and helping 22,000 veterans, serving sailors and their family members.

Thank you to Navy Public Affairs, Royal Canadian Navy for providing imagery.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am very proud of what we've accomplished together under the Strategy for Renewal and look forward in the years ahead to building upon the momentum we have established. Just as important to our continuing success are the things we've learned along the way. Of particular significance is the richer understanding we've developed of what it will take to achieve the Strategy's outcomes over the 20 months remaining in our planning horizon.

The Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund is reinventing itself and developing a compelling narrative in terms of who it serves, the programs it offers, and the community impact it can demonstrate. Achieving the latter will not merely be a matter of making minor adjustments or improvements to existing programs. Rather, a fundamentally new approach to programming will be required - one that aligns with the Fund's renewed mission, is focused on achieving demonstrable community impact, and improves the Fund's visibility and presence within the naval family and beyond.

We have made commendable progress in adopting governance best practices. Notwithstanding, there remains much work to do in positioning the board of directors to exercise stewardship over the public good entrusted to it. The Fund's mission and vision must be clearly integrated across the organization for all to arrive at a shared understanding of purpose and to promote visibility and understanding of results and outcomes. To date we have encouraged a learning culture across the organization and will continue to share knowledge and upgrade our skills as we advance this very comprehensive change initiative.

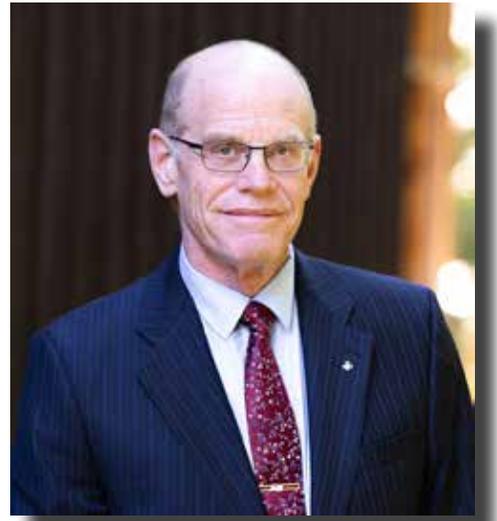
Very importantly, as we move forward, the board will continue to ensure its decisions are research-driven and evidence-based, informed through member participation, arrived at by consensus, shared openly and transparently, and always focused on the naval family we serve.

Of course, all that has been accomplished this past year would not have been possible without the selfless dedication of our Champion, the board of directors, our members, our staff, and several external advisors.

I am very much looking forward to the coming year as we continue along our charted path of renewal.

Yours, aye!

Tom Riefesel, President



**Tom Riefesel, MMM, CD**  
*President*

## A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is truly remarkable how much can change in a short time. It has been exactly one year since the Fund formally embarked on the Strategy for Renewal 2021-24. At the time, we had no idea how much this initiative would transform the Fund, not to mention the possible effects the COVID-19 pandemic might have on the Fund's plans, our clients, or how we did business. Governance, administrative, and financial situations coalesced with societal trends and the shifts that mark the nonprofit world to provide an impetus for change. Consequently, the Fund adapted and pivoted to meet the challenges. I would say that it achieved its objectives and then some.

The first order of business was to transform our office using the most modern technology and business systems, achieving full remote working capability, and digitizing our entire information system. The Fund has replaced outdated computers, outsourced key functions such as bookkeeping, tech support, and communications to professionals, and applied artificial intelligence (AI) in a new donor platform. We have a revitalized website and are pushing out our social media platforms. The organization is on firm ground and positioned to scale with minimal human resources.

Our small staff worked closely with the board and committees to support their deliberations, follow up on their decisions, and make inroads into policy development. The beginnings of a fundraising effort yielded our first sponsorship and the campaign to celebrate "80 Years of Sailors Helping Sailors."

These are exciting times for the Fund, and I wish to thank the board members, committee chairs, and the many volunteers and supporters who helped me along a steep learning curve over the past year and seem ready to step up again this year.

Gay Hamilton, Executive Director



**Gay Hamilton**  
*Executive Director*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT

Tom Riefesel, MMM, CD, Senior Manager  
Security Operations, Canada Border Services  
Agency

### SECRETARY

Randy Maze, retired

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Serge Bertrand, retired

### TREASURER

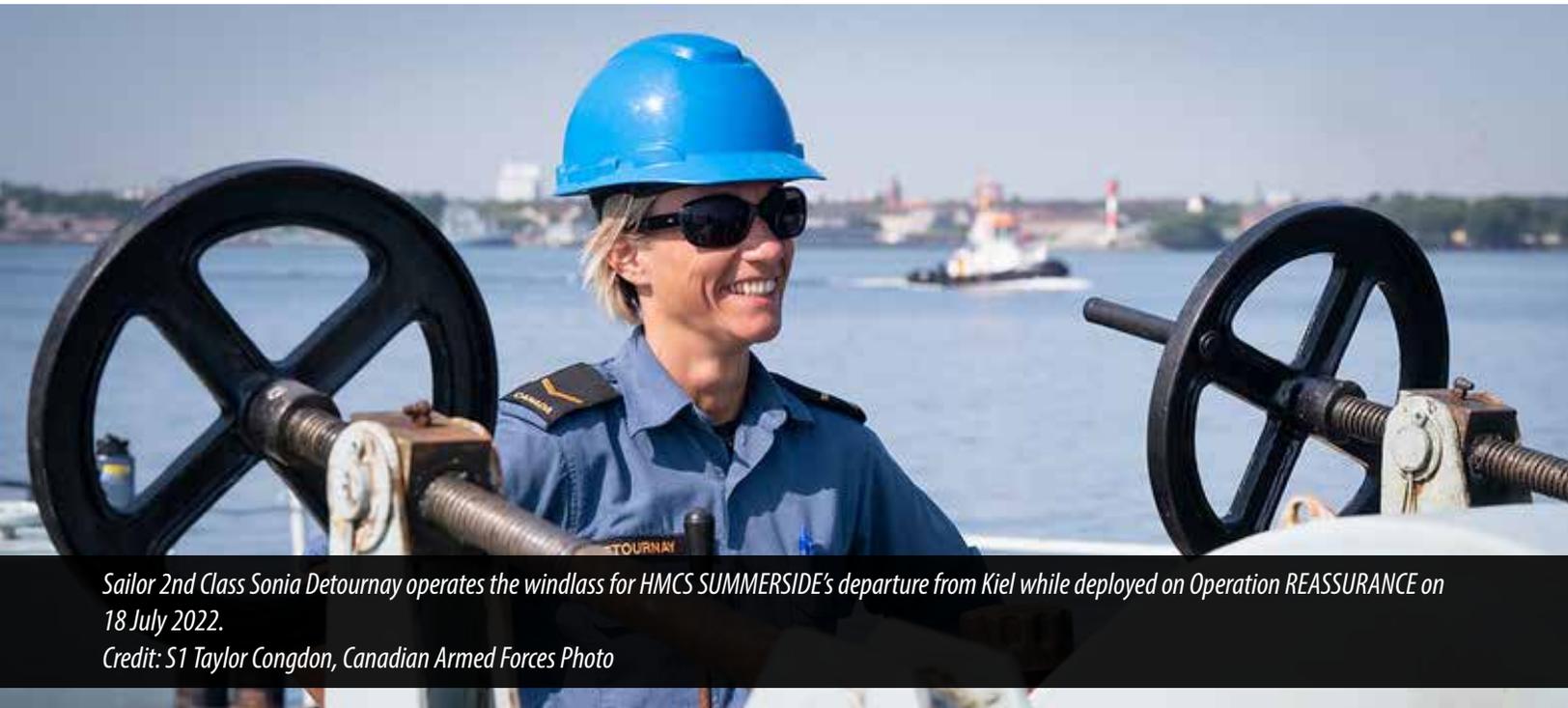
Linus Pilypaitis, Wealth Manager, Nesbitt Burns

### DIRECTORS

- Robert Cl  roux, retired
- Spencer Fraser, Director, Business Development, Inoceca Group of Companies
- David Hudock, OMM, CD, National Director, PCL Construction
- Michelaine Lahaie, Chairperson of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP.
- CPO1 Line Laurendeau, MMM,CD, Director General Policy, Engagement and Research Chief Warrant Officer
- Paul O'Boyle, retired
- CPO1 Ginette S  guin, MMM, CD, Waterfront Management at Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Scott

### CHAMPION

VAdm (Ret'd) Mark Norman, Senior Fellow Canadian Global Affairs and Senior Defence Strategist,  
Samuel Associates



*Sailor 2nd Class Sonia Detournay operates the windlass for HMCS SUMMERSIDE's departure from Kiel while deployed on Operation REASSURANCE on 18 July 2022.*

*Credit: S1 Taylor Congdon, Canadian Armed Forces Photo*

## COMMITTEES

Many thanks to our volunteers for the countless hours spent supporting both the work of the board of directors and the staff.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Tom Riefesel, Chair
- Serge Bertrand
- Randy Maze
- Linas Pilypaitis

### FINANCE AND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

- Linas Pilypaitis, Chair
- Robert Cl  roux
- Spencer Fraser

### FUNDRAISING AND DONOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- Mark Norman, Chair
- Spencer Fraser
- Serge Bertrand
- Joan Imode
- Andrew Dionne
- Rocco Rossi

### PROGRAM PLANNING AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

- Michelaine Lahaie, Chair
- Annick Fortin
- Dave Hudock
- Ramona Burke
- Ginette Seguin
- Serge Bertrand
- Al Kennedy

### VADM MARK NORMAN LEADERSHIP AWARD COMMITTEE

- Paul O'Boyle, Chair
- Michel Vigneault
- Shannon Lewis Simpson
- Al Kennedy
- Claude Morissette
- Jeff Lacey
- Ramona Burke
- Sarah MacMillan
- Line Laurendeau

Special thanks to volunteers who jumped in and supported report and proposal writing, discussion paper development, survey development, and communications review.

- Serge Bertrand
- Sarah MacMillan
- Tim O'Leary
- Mark Blevis
- Shannon Lewis-Simpson
- Andrew Dionne

## STAFF

Many thanks to our staff for their dedication in pursuing the Strategy for Renewal agenda and ensuring the organization is positioned for even greater future success and impact.

- **Gay Hamilton**, Executive Director
- **Christine McPherson**, Office Administrator
- **Nancy Brady**, Office Manager
- **Leona Wall**, Bookkeeper

We appreciate the outstanding external team of professionals who handle a myriad of functions such as communications, technology, client management systems, and accounting:

- ideaConnect Marketing and Communications
- Cole Systems Inc
- Fundmetric
- Ottawa Bookkeeping Bureau



*Members of HMCS HARRY DEWOLF and 12 Wing Shearwater set up a dummy load while performing utility trials during Phase 4 Shipboard Helicopter Operating Limits off the coast of Nova Scotia on June 12, 2021.*

*Credit: S1 Justin Spinello, Canadian Armed Forces Photo*

## FOCUS IN 2021-2022

### *Strategies and principles*

Drawing upon the sense of shared purpose and belonging that binds the naval family across every generation of sailors, Strategy for Renewal 2021-2024 continues to honour the legacy of the Fund's founding charter: to promote the wellbeing of our naval family, including veteran and serving sailors and their families. For 80 years, the Fund has provided a vehicle for "sailors helping sailors", which is unique among Canada's military charitable organizations and a source of great pride for its members.

This report outlines the Fund's accomplishments in year-one of our Strategy. Four areas of strategic focus—our strategic directions—form the basis for transformative action. Our vision is our leadmark, guiding our overall intent. Our mission is the Fund's role in achieving that vision. Our four principles will inspire how we accomplish our work and influence how we operate across the whole organization. Together, the directions and principles will guide our future planning and decision-making and support the Fund in achieving its goals.

**Vision: Supporting our naval family as our own.**

**Mission: Promoting the well-being of the naval community to enrich the lives of sailors, veterans and their families.**

### Principles

**Engaged:** Reach out and engage proactively with all stakeholders

**Inclusive:** Welcome everyone from our broad and diverse community

**Progressive:** Foster learning and embrace promising ideas and leading practices

**Agile:** Be responsive to changing needs and opportunities

### Strategies

1. **An Inspired and Engaged Community of Support** - The Fund will harness the sense of community across the naval family and a broader group of stakeholders to motivate contributions in funding and in volunteer skills and time. Trusted and effective partnerships with current and potential partner organizations will allow the Fund to leverage greater capacity for maximum impact.
2. **Relevant and Valued Programs** - Planning and acting strategically, the Fund will deliver a range of activities and services to achieve its mission. Programs will be relevant to current needs and interests, measured for impact and adapted to changing requirements and conditions.
3. **Resilience and Capacity for Lasting Impact** - The Fund will create lasting impact by diversifying its funding sources and leveraging its partnerships with like-minded organizations. Responsible stewardship helps to ensure sustainability and attracts new sources of funding resulting in expanded capacity to achieve the Fund's aspirations for the naval family it serves.
4. **Strategic Leadership and Action** - The Board will make strategic choices as the organizational renewal unfolds. It will engage competent staff and a deep pool of talented volunteers to plan, manage and implement the changes envisioned to advance our mission. A modernized and realigned approach to governance and organization will ensure the Fund is well-positioned to achieve its full potential.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## Governance

The purpose of a nonprofit board of directors is to set strategy, govern the organization either by managing it or by conferring management on professional staff, and by protecting the assets and reputation of the corporation. That said, the way to best deliver such a mandate is often unclear, and boards and committees in the nonprofit sector sometimes encounter a lack of defined authority and a confusing model of checks and balances inherited from past practices.

To ensure compliance with federal regulation and institute the most recent leading practices in nonprofit governance, the RCNBF board set out to transition its largely working board towards a governance model and hire staff to manage operations. Based on the Situation Report that was completed in the previous year as well as the recently established Strategic Directions, the board focused on three major aspects of governance:

- an in-depth examination of programming from a perspective of impact and reach into the naval community
- an initial discussion about funding, taking the investment stream that has traditionally supported activities and expanding the conversation into the first phases of a fundraising arm for the organization
- the development of policies – updated such as in the case of the Investment Policy, and new policies around Conflict-of-Interest and a Code of Conduct, with more to come next year

While the higher order of governance was being explored, the Fund sought ways to establish operational standards and selected the highly regarded Nonprofit Standards Program established by Imagine Canada as a guide. In the space of a year, the Fund went from 22% compliance with the standards to 73% and expects to fully meet the standards by the end of 2022-23.

## Programs

The Fund continued to provide grants to individuals in financial need this past year. At the same time, the Programs Planning and Review Committee (PPRC) reflected on how the organization expresses its impact in terms of the number of persons helped, the amount of money disbursed, as well as the issues addressed by the granting program. In the Situation Report published in the previous fiscal year, a decline in the number of grants provided to veterans, serving members or their families was evident. It is unclear as to whether this was due to the multiplicity of services available for this category of giving or the lack of outreach on the Fund's part. At any rate, the situation was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the end, we have supported fewer individuals this year than in the past.

## Grants

The Fund considered 17 applications for assistance this past year. Cases were referred by our partners at Veterans Affairs Canada, the Royal Canadian Legion Branches and Dominion Command, Support Our Troops, and Canadian Morale and Welfare Services/SISIP.

- 14 applications from men and 3 from women
- 12 applications from veterans and 5 from family of veterans or serving members
- Applicants ranged in age from 34 to 98 years
- 4 applications were declined
- 1 withdrawal

RCNBF disbursed \$ 61,934.00, down 8% over the previous year.

Support was provided for essential home repairs (roof, well), dental work, appliances, medical devices (C-Pap and Bi-Pap machines), relocation to be near family, basic needs of rent, food, and clothing, and medical treatment.

### Loans

As part of a comprehensive analysis of programs, the Fund examined its business practices in managing loans. It was found that the rate of attrition in loan repayment was high as was the cost of managing client files. Further, volunteers and staff lacked training in case analysis and improvements were warranted in both data conservation and record keeping. With the further reflection that, as a charity, loans might not be the best way to fulfill the Fund’s organizational objectives or strategic directions, a decision was taken by the board of directors to forgive outstanding loans and discontinue the practice until the completion of a full program assessment. No new loans were contracted in the fiscal year.

In October 2021, \$271,930.00 in outstanding loans were converted to grants and 51 clients were released from their debt.

### Bursaries

In November 2021, the Program Planning and Review Committee met to adjudicate the 2021 bursary applications. The following students were selected, and each received \$2,000 in support of their educational endeavours:

**Sheriff Hassan**  
Kinesiology and Health Science  
York University

**Musie Tsegay**  
Engineering Sciences  
Western University

**Clair Forbes**  
Kinesiology  
Dalhousie University

**Michael Patchell**  
Applied Sciences, Electrical Engineering  
Queen’s University

**Lauryn O’Brien**  
Biology, Life Sciences  
University of Prince Edward Island

### VAdm Mark Norman Leadership Award

Annually, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) presents the RCNBF's VAdm Mark Norman Leadership Award to a sailor whose efforts best exemplify the Fund's vision and mission. In 2021 the recipient was **Master Sailor Dana Kimoto**.

*A presentation was made onboard HMCS REGINA. Front Row L-R CPO 1 Dave Steeves, Master Sailor Dana Kimoto, Cdr Annick Fortin (CO REG) VAdm Craig Baines(CRCN), and VAdm (Ret'd) Mark Norman on the tablet.*



### Support for Military Families Resource Centres

Once again, the RCNBF contributed \$2,000.00 to the Halifax and Region Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) OP Dasher Campaign, and \$2,000.00 to the Esquimalt MFRC activities. These contributions support activities that extend to over 50 individuals.



## Funding

The Fund determined that fundraising should be developed and play a major role in its new outlook – to ensure a viable future, to tell our story, and to reach out to new partners and supporters. By generating funds from diverse sources, the Fund will alleviate its dependency on its investments and ensure a more sustainable future.

The Fund Development and Donor Relations Committee (FDDRC) set the fundraising initiative in motion by establishing the purpose and ambition of a new fund development function with short- and long-term goals. For example, the Fund will ultimately aim to pay for operational expenses from investment earnings and dedicate the proceeds of fundraising to programming. The committee's discussions carefully connected fundraising to strategic efforts and considered feasibility, cost, human talent, diversity in methods (recurring donations, sponsorship, campaigns, government), and relevance to the organization. The RCNBF is grateful for the financial participation of the following supporters:

### Fundmetric

The FDDRC recommended that the Fund invest in resources and tools to enable modern fundraising. As part of that strategy, the Fund connected with Fundmetric, a Nova Scotia-based company, to set up an AI-based platform designed to build bridges between our existing systems, help us enhance our database, and centralize data for better access to information and increased visibility. Fundmetric provided their integration work in-kind and built client relationship management (CRM) and donor platforms, which are now fully functional on our website.

### Landshark Group

The Fund made its first inroads into corporate sponsorship by partnering with the Landshark Group. The company provides industrial environmental services. Its newest truck is painted to mimic the “dazzle” paint scheme of an RCN navy ship and bears the RCNBF logo. Landshark donated \$8,100 - the proceeds from the operation of the vehicle on Remembrance Day 2021 – during a visit to their office by our Treasurer.



### The Navy Bike Ride 2021

Once again, cyclists geared up to ride in the fifth season of the Navy Bike Ride (NBR). This year, the Harry DeWolf Challenge created a special connection for the Fund. VAdm Harry DeWolf was a founding member of the RCNBF and presided over the board of directors for a decade. To cement the connection even further, our own CPO1 Ginette Séguin joined the crew as Coxswain as HMCS Harry DeWolf deployed on her inaugural sail through Canada's Arctic and North American waters. The 30,000 km she travelled to circumnavigate

the Northwest Passage was the basis for this year's NRB ambition to log 30,000 rides over the course of the summer.

The NBR event contributed \$35,843.50 to the RCNBF in a September 2021 presentation.

### Government of Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada provided a grant of \$80,000 under the Veterans Organizations Emergency Support Fund in early 2021.

This one-time grant was put to work in transforming the Fund's management framework to allow for digital-record-keeping and access, more robust tech support and back-up, and communications in a remote environment. The grant contributed to stable and continuous operations as different levels of COVID restrictions came into force. A secondary consequence of the was the achievement of full remote capability which created a state of readiness and capability in the event of a future crisis. The grant also supported renewal efforts in hiring professional staffing to steward change, support committees as they explored the diversification of funding, and improved programming to better meet the needs of today's veterans and their families, as well as the ability to maintain its record of support for more traditional veteran groups.



### Legacy bequest

The Marcelle and Douglas Hurst estate made a generous bequest of \$100,000. The amount will be invested, and the proceeds used for an annual Marcelle and Douglas Hurst Education Fund scholarship (under development).

### Facebook auction

Capt(N) Rob Watt, a skilled leather worker in his spare time, created a fantastic and unique Navy Diving Wallet. He auctioned it on Facebook and generously donated the proceeds of \$500 to the RCNBF.



### Finance

The Finance and Investment Committee reviewed and updated the Investment Policy and monitored quarterly investment reports from Exponent, the RCNBF's investment counseling firm. As well as quarterly financial management reports from our bookkeepers at Bookkeeping Bureau of Ottawa. Following, is a report on our assets and liabilities as well as a statement of operations.

## *Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund*

### *Statement of Financial Position*

March 31, 2022, with comparative information for 2021	2022	2021
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 758,331	\$ 217,332
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	—	24,931
Current portion of non-interest bearing loans receivable	—	104,332
Other receivables	11,226	1,414
	<u>769,557</u>	<u>\$ 348,009</u>
Non-interest bearing loans receivable	—	214,553
Long-term investments	3,980,250	3,798,927
Equipment	3,523	—
	<u>\$4,753,330</u>	<u>\$4,361,489</u>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 21,068	\$ 8,148
Accrued employee termination benefits	—	33,453
Deferred revenue related to government grant	—	76,489
	<u>\$ 21,068</u>	<u>\$ 118,090</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	4,632,262	4,243,399
Marcelle Fontaine Hurst and the Douglas Charles Hurst Educational Fund	100,000	—
	<u>\$ 4,732,262</u>	<u>\$ 4,243,399</u>
	<u>\$ 4,753,330</u>	<u>\$ 4,361,489</u>

## **Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund**

### **Statement of Operations**

Year ended March 31, 2022, with comparative information for 2021	2022	2021
<b>Revenue</b>		
Investment income	\$ 815,731	\$ 962,571
Government grant revenue	76,489	3,511
Contributions	59,994	17,172
	<u>952,214</u>	<u>983,254</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Grants to former and serving members of the Naval Forces of Canada and their dependents	333,864	67,578
Salaries and employee benefits	119,778	85,555
Sub-contracts	36,864	—
Investment management fees	18,362	13,954
Amortization of capital assets	1,336	—
Office and general	6,623	—
Professional fees	10,763	—
Audit	13,846	8,500
Rental of premises	8,731	8,731
Communications	4,283	12,295
Interest and bank charges	3,149	—
Insurance	3,089	—
Office equipment and maintenance	2,311	968
Printing, stationery and postage	352	649
Miscellaneous	—	7,082
Contribution to Andrew McQueen Jack Educational	—	1,000
Strategic planning	—	3,511
	<u>563,351</u>	<u>209,823</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>563,351</b>	<b>209,823</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>\$ 388,863</b>	<b>\$ 773,431</b>

Note: Excerpt from the Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2022, audited by KPMG, and approved by the RCNBF Board of Directors on August 9, 2022. The full set of financial statements are provided to each member at the Annual General Meeting.

## Communications

In view of the comprehensive changes being integrated throughout the organization, the Fund committed to regular communications with members early on to promote understanding and buy-in. A series of 14 newsletters and reports were published over the course of the year. These covered every modification, explained the changing systems that the board was considering, and provided information about the legislation and best practices that affect the governance and management of a nonprofit.

The flipside of informing people is actively listening to them. The year began with the results of a survey on the Fund's strategy, which was overwhelmingly supported. At year-end, a second survey on membership arrangements revealed split opinions on the topic and sent the board back to the drawing board to reflect on how to adapt membership.

A Town Hall was organized to provide members with a "first six months update" on board and committee activities and an opportunity for exchange and questions. A high proportion of members participated in both surveys and the Town Hall, attesting to their interest in the issues and high degree of attachment to the organization.

***When major change occurs, those involved typically experience the transition in a myriad of ways and sometimes unexpected difficulties and unknown factors will surface. Information and communication are the greatest resources to mitigate these situations and build bridges to success.***

## Remembrance

In November, volunteers placed wreaths at the Cenotaphs in Halifax, Victoria, and the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The Fund was also present in May at the commemoration for the Battle of the Atlantic in Ottawa and Halifax.

## Partners

The RCNBF is proud of its continued partnerships with the following organizations in their providing financial assistance to support our mandate.



Veterans Affairs  
Canada

Anciens Combattants  
Canada



SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

Legion 



## **Administration Transformed**

It was clear at the outset of the fiscal year, that to achieve the ambitious goals of the Strategy for Renewal, substantial changes in the general operation of the Fund would be required. Ever conscious of the need to limit operational costs in favour of directing moneys to programs, the Fund invested in limited staffing, online software, new technology, and outsourced services.

### **Staffing**

Nancy Brady, concluded a decade of service to the RCNBF, leaving our employ in June 2021. The board and members gave voice to their appreciation for Nancy's efforts on behalf of the Fund over the years and wished her well in her future endeavours.

The board hired an experienced Executive Director – Gay Hamilton – in June. Leona Wall filled in as bookkeeper until arrangements could be made to outsource the accounting function. Christine McPherson joined the team as Office Administrator in July.

### **Modernizing systems**

The team has worked at achieving remote capability by:

- Digitizing every file
- Upgrading and networking the workstations
- Integrating Microsoft 365 (applications, cloud services, reliable security)
- Upgrading the online accounting software
- Eliminating fax and phone lines
- Minimizing printing
- Using electronic payment systems

Several important functions that are integral to management and achieving many of the goals associated with renewal have been outsourced, and the proponents handling these functions form our external team:

- Bookkeeping Bureau of Ottawa
- Ceridian PowerPay
- ideaConnect Marketing and Communications
- Cole Systems Inc.
- Fundmetric

## WHAT'S NEXT? PLANS FOR 2022-23

With so much work and so many objectives achieved over the past year, it is hard to imagine that there is still a lot of work ahead of us. Nevertheless, the goals remain ambitious and our team enthusiastic.

In 2023, the RCNBF will embark upon renewal activities of much greater scope, complexity, and duration than it has ever attempted before. Our main efforts will focus on program development, sustainable funding, and outreach to our naval family and Canadians in general.

These changes will be ground-breaking for the Fund, and we will need to build capacity in staffing as well as among our dedicated volunteers. New work streams, updated technology, and a robust communications strategy will help align the RCNBF with the new mission, vision, principles, and strategic directions outlined in Strategy for Renewal 2021-24. The operational efforts over the next year will not be merely a matter of making minor adjustments or improvements to our traditional undertakings. Rather, a fundamentally new approach will be required.

Ultimately, the RCNBF aims for a future where its principles of engagement, agility, progressiveness, and inclusivity are fully integrated into its working culture and practices. While we evaluate our programming and make decisions about future activities, an interim or bridging strategy will be in place to ensure that the RCNBF continues to deliver on its mission and remains present in the naval support space.

***The Fund is continuing on the same path as was established last year, and is in full implementation mode to ensure considered advancement in all areas.***

Operations will focus on assessing the needs of today's veterans, serving members, and their respective families. The Fund aims to integrate new, well-researched, and impactful programs that target those needs. In the meantime, a revised Bursary Program and the V/Adm Mark Norman Leadership Award will continue to support students and young sailors respectively. Traditional supports (distress relief) will be delivered in conjunction with partner organizations such as the Royal Canadian Legion, Veterans Affairs Canada, Support our Troops and SISIP. Through more effective actions, the RCNBF will demonstrate value and community impact to all stakeholders.

The RCNBF will strive for improved visibility within its client base and among Canadians in general, expanding its network of partners, building its social media presence, posting a new website, funding special projects that bring long-term relief, and remembering our fallen heroes. It will strengthen its resilience and capacity for lasting impact by diversifying funding. New approaches to funders and sponsors along with the "80-for-80 Campaign" and the Navy Bike Ride will allow us to better fund programming and attract new partners. Finally, the Fund will undertake the complex and long-overdue task of operating in both official languages throughout every aspects of the organization.

for the RCNBF. To succeed it must be backed by the full determination of the board, staff, and volunteers. The first modest steps are meant to build the foundation that will eventually extend far beyond the one-year timeline.

The advances made in adopting governance best practices in 2021 notwithstanding, there is also much work to do in positioning the organization to complete its transition from working to governing board, while fostering a learning culture across the organization, and accountability for its results and outcomes. The organization will employ decision support tools and processes for performance management, program evaluation and risk assessment.

Finally, as the President referenced in his opening message, the Board will continue to ensure its decisions are research-driven and evidence-based, informed through member participation, arrived at by consensus, shared openly and transparently, and always focused on the naval family we serve.



*A member onboard HMCS HALIFAX stands by on the quarter deck as the ship transits into Cork, Ireland during Operation REASSURANCE on 2 July 2022.  
Credit: Pte Connor Bennett Canadian Armed Forces photo*

[www.rcnbf.ca](http://www.rcnbf.ca)



*Members of the bridge team navigate HMCS MONTREAL during a replenishment at sea with SPS CANTABRIA in the Mediterranean Sea, during Operation REASSURANCE on June 09, 2022.*

*Credit: Corporal Braden Trudeau Canadian Armed Forces Imagery Technician*