



Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Feb 10, 2015

Wednesday Lunches

The 15 Field Officers Mess is the only Mess left still holding weekly lunches and these lunches can only survive if sufficient numbers attend regularly. Attendance numbers went down the last few weeks of the year and we need your support to keep the lunches going so, if you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. We serve a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal, or a better deal, anywhere.

The Mess is back to 'winter' dress so dress for Wednesday lunches is suit/blazer/sports jacket and tie. Dress for ladies is the equivalent. Your guests are always welcome.

From the Journal of Capt Fred G Coxen RFA - 1914

Feb 6th: We bombarded the Germans front line trenches from BRICKFIELD to RAILWAY TRIANGLE. The fire was so effective; the Guards advanced and captured the trenches without losing a man. The Artillery there, were afterwards highly praised in a letter for the splendid work; special inference was given to the way communications were kept by telephone. Undoubtedly which was for our Battery, for at one time I was receiving and sending orders for the firing of three batteries, besides our own, [with] all their lines being broken by shell-fire. The Battery received orders to move to relieve 55 Battery RFA next day.

Feb 7th: I proceeded with the Captain to CROIX BARBETTE, to take over the wires and communications of 56th Bty. Arriving there about midday, one of the telephonists took me along the observing wire to the trenches. It was rather quiet, save for occasional bullets; - the chap with me was rather merry. He advised me to crawl on hands and knees across a point of ground just in rear of the trenches, as we would get sniped. I followed a little way, but on seeing an RE fellow walking about unconcerned, I thought, if it's safe enough for you, it is for me. I walked across much to the other fellow's disgust. He got wild when I insisted upon him helping me to mend a broken wire and prop it up on some trees. He was very angry and crawled back, but it was quite unnecessary, [for] I walked back and nothing came near me. We went along some reserve trenches - a few light shell we[re] bursting a little beyond - I traced a wire into a redoubt and dodged inside as one whizzed over. There was an Infantry telephonist inside, he said, 'Just in time mate, three of ours were put out just outside a few minutes ago.' He was working away quite unconcerned. I had a chat for a few minutes and started back, I think much to the relief of the chap with me. On the way back, the enemy were shelling RICHEBOURG Church with 'coal-boxes'. I stood on the road and watched about 20 go over, but they failed to reach it. I went into the village at night and had a few drinks of rotten trench beer, came back to

the 56th Bty and slept in a loft of the farm, and had the best night's unbroken sleep that I had had since we were at rest, seven weeks before.

Feb 8th: Had a day on my own strolling about, waiting for the Battery to come – they arrived about 6 pm. As we could not bring the guns into action until after dusk, on account of aeroplane observation, 56 Battery went out of position and moved towards RICHEBOURG. We took up the position of their guns, also the farm, and it was about the most comfortable billet we had ever had, as regards accommodation, for the building had escaped shell fire, which was strange, considering the village at the back had been ‘ through it’ as had those on the left and right.

World War 2 - November 1939

John Thompson Strategic analyst quotes from his book “Spirit Over Steel”

Feb 8th: The Finns in the path of the Soviet steam-roller are almost out of men and ammunition, and are being pushed back almost everywhere. The Germans establish the Lodz Ghetto, using the most neglected areas of the city (of 31,721 apartments, only 725 have running water) and the first 160,000 Jews are wedged into the area.

Feb 9th: Manstein is given XXXIII Korps as many fellow officers want him out of the influential position of Chief of Staff to Von Rundstedt's Army Group A.

Feb 10th: The Finnish 9th Division wipes out a brace of Soviet ski battalions and fends off the 23rd Division's attempt to relieve the trapped 54th Division.

Feb 11th: The Soviet 123rd Division breaks through the Mannerheim line. The USSR and Germany sign additional trade agreements.

Feb 12th: The counterattack by Finnish 5th Division fails to dent the 123rd Division's lodgment.

Feb 14th: Even as the Mannerheim line fails, Britain announces it will let volunteers go to Finland. Also, all British ships in the North Sea must be armed.

Feb 15th: The Finns start to fall back from the Mannerheim line to new defensive positions.

Feb 16th: “Pikes, Cutlasses and Away!” The ancient order to board an enemy ship is given once more as Royal Navy sailors from HMS Cossack scramble onto the German vessel Altmark inside Norwegian waters. The German ship was carrying 399 Allied seamen captured last year by the Graf Spee.

DND's Budget Overhaul of Reserves Buried Ahead of Federal Election

Murray Brewster, The Canadian Press February 4, 2015

OTTAWA -- The Department of National Defence appears set to miss a self-imposed deadline to rebalance the number of reserve soldiers in the military. It is a budget-driven exercise that experts say the Harper government is keen to avoid in the run-up to an election as Conservatives try to patch things up with disgruntled veterans. Internal documents say a review of how Canada's force of citizen soldiers is structured was supposed to be done by the end of

March 2014, with a new funding model to be in place by April 1 of this year. But National Defence spokesman Zoltan Csepregi said the review is still ongoing and it's too early to speculate what it will recommend. The vice-chief of defence staff is examining the "optimal number" of part-time and full-time reservists with an eye towards having a "predominantly part-time, strong and sustainable reserve force," Csepregi said in an email. Changes to both the number of full-time reservists and the amount of money allocated to the overall force, which is sprinkled in as many as 100 communities across the country, is a touchy political issue, said retired lieutenant-colonel John Selkirk of Reserves 2000, a coalition that advocates for the militia. "There is not a politician in the House that doesn't recognize that cutting out a local unit or closing down the local armoury is bad news politically and there would quite a backlash," Selkirk said. "So, if the government has a hint that DND wants to cut the reserves, it'll be told to stand down in an election year."

Restructuring the reserves, which were essential to filling out combat units during Canada's mission in Afghanistan, was one of the key areas identified by the Harper government when it began its post-war budget-cutting exercise. In fact, the internal directive that initiated the review, dated May 7, 2013, said implementing a new funding model at the beginning of the 2015-16 budget year was essential to the department's business planning, which is seeking ways to absorb and manage an annual cut of \$2.1 billion to the department's overall budget. Johanna Quinney, a spokeswoman for Defence Minister Rob Nicholson, said the government's intent has been to reduce back-office expenses and preserve front line capabilities, of which the reserves are a "vital" component. "The government is committed to ensuring that reserve units have both budgetary stability and are able to recruit to the levels required to contribute effectively to the defence of Canada," Quinney said. But Selkirk said he's worried the review exercise is simply fiscal and that meaningful reform could get lost in the race to the bottom line. "The intent has been, since the mid-1990s, to just cut," he said.

The militia is not just a relic of the vast citizen soldier armies of the last century, Selkirk added: properly reorganized and equipped, they could be a useful instrument to counter terrorist threats and provide security at home, he said. In another sign the topic makes both the government and the department nervous, officials produced as part of the review plan a carefully crafted, 10-page communications strategy to address the anticipated backlash. "It is relevant and necessary to communicate the ongoing changes, as they will affect a large population of the (Canadian Armed Forces), both primary reserve and regular force, future recruits and public perception," the undated document says. It also points to polling data that suggests Canadians are in favour of funding cuts to the defence budget, as long as it doesn't impact the military's ability to respond to domestic natural disasters. "While the issue of reserve employment can be considered to have a low profile in the public domain, major changes to policies governing the reserves will likely garner significant media attention," the document says. The communications strategy warns that the closure of depots, as a result of the fiscal review, "may affect public perception of the reserves," and warns questions may arise about why the government is cutting, yet still spending money on War of 1812 commemorations.

Canadian Army Loses 3 Excalibur Rounds

No idea how it lost three artillery shells worth \$500,000 on way out of Afghanistan

MURRAY BREWSTER, CANADIAN PRESS | February 8, 2015



The last Canadians involved in the NATO training mission in Afghanistan (CCTM-A) board an American Chinook helicopter, on March 12, 2014 as they leave the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. MCpl Patrick Blanchard, Canadian Forces Combat Camera

OTTAWA — The Canadian army somehow lost three highly-sophisticated, precision-guided artillery shells on its way out of Afghanistan in an embarrassing case that resulted in an almost two-year investigation. Known as Excalibur rounds, the 155-millimetre high-explosive ammunition could not be accounted for among the mission close-out paperwork as the military withdrew from Kandahar in late 2011. Newly released records, obtained by The Canadian Press under access to information legislation, show defence officials, at first, thought as many as five of the global positioning system-guided shells had gone missing when soldiers tore down their forward operating bases. But that number was reduced to three when it was realized someone had filed paperwork twice. The shells are not cheap. They come with a price tag of US \$177,224 per round, but are accurate to within 20 metres even when fired from up to 40 kilometres away.

Both the country's overseas command and military police conducted extensive investigations, but never located the ammunition and defence officials requested last summer that the over \$513,000 loss be written off the government's books. The request was approved, the documents show. What happened to the ammunition remains as much a mystery as when they were first discovered missing. "Although theft is a possibility, given physical size and weight of the ammunition and the tight ammunition security measures that were in place in theatre, theft is highly unlikely," said a July 18, 2014 briefing to the country's joint operations commander. The round weighs 48 kilograms and has metal fins that guide it to the target, making it awkward to handle (*actually they only deploy in the air*).

Even still, the loss has international repercussions because the U.S. technology is governed by International Traffic in Arms Regulation (ITAR) and the awkward situation had to be reported to National Defence's Controlled Technology Access and Transfer (CTAT) office. The strict control office regulations required that it be notified within 48 hours of a piece of technology going missing, but the army delayed reporting it for over 15 months, saying that given "the exiting protocols in place to fire an Excalibur round, it was a belief that this was a paperwork error only." A spokeswoman for Defence Minister Rob Nicholson said thorough investigations are conducted whenever there is a loss of public property in order to ensure there are no future

incidents. "The security and protection of all its assets is a top priority for National Defence," she said in an email Sunday. NDP defence critic Jack Harris described the loss of the ammunition as a "gross embarrassment," but was also disturbed by the delaying in reporting. "It's embarrassing to have this happen with such expensive and controversial shells that need to be protected, but I think it's also potentially damaging to our relationship with the Americans," he said. Someone at National Defence needs to account for the lapse, he said.

Investigators pored over five years of artillery supply and gun logs, but were never able to reconcile the three missing shells. The possibility the ammunition could have been "lent but not properly accounted" to U.S. forces operating in the same area during 2009 was considered. The documents show the master warrant officer in charge of the supply depot at Kandahar Airfield when he was approached by Americans who indicated they were getting set up in a new position, had spoken with Canadian commanders "and it was all right to give them three of those projectiles." He refused the request, but wrote later, in an affidavit, that he learned from U.S. troops that they had received shells through their own supply chain.

Each Year, Veterans Affairs Makes Me Prove I Lost My Legs

Posted: 02/05/2015 **Paul Franklin** *Father, Veteran, Activist, Motivational Speaker*



In regards to Rick Mercer's rant from the other day, I was contacted by Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole for a request for a telephone conversation about my file. Here's my response:

Minister Erin O'Toole,
I have had many issues in my nine years as a wounded soldier and as a vet. After returning in 2006, the Department of Defence (DND) did amazing things and worked tirelessly on the issue and where VAC (Veterans' Affairs) failed to deliver

they stepped up. Upon my retirement "my file" of course went to VAC and to quote a great writer "and this is where my trouble began." The legion wrote a piece about my struggles in the beginning called the "The Quiet Fight." I personally prefer that method but alas even that method is being taken from me. It would seem that if I fight for myself things may change for me, but not sadly for the 700,000 others.

I have had my wheelchair taken away from me twice. First while in hospital due to lack of payment when DOD and VAC were in argument about who pays. The second was just last year when upon getting a new chair it was felt by VAC that I didn't get the appropriate paperwork -- which was a doctor's note saying "Due to transformatinal amputations, Paul Franklin needs a new wheelchair." During the recent Manulife lawsuit, I was approved for a pension but was not to

receive it until a doctor confirmed my limb loss. This is something that has to be done every year presumably until age 65. My ex and I have separated and I obviously pay child support and help her out. Every year, VAC challenges that fact with an incredibly disturbing letter that implies that I am a dead beat, that asks if my child still lives, and what I do for them. In response, my ex has to write a horrible letter stating what I do. She suffers horribly from secondary PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), a condition not widely recognized in 2006 and very misunderstood even today. This is but a glimpse into what is laughingly called "my file" too which in reality is actually "my life."

As to my friend Rick and his rant the other day, I let him tell my story not for my benefit, but for all vets and their families that fight through this horror every day of their lives. I fear that a conversation with me about "my file" may solve "my concerns" but not the concerns of the 700,000 others. Until we are treated by all parties with the respect, dignity, honour, and compassion we deserve, then I can't in good conscience take a phone call regarding my issues.

Paul Franklin, MCpl (ret) -Amputee Coalition of Canada -Soldier On -Hero's Hockey Challenge

Harper Dishonours Soldiers, Says Justin Trudeau

David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen February 5, 2015



Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau asks a question during Question Period in the House of Commons in Ottawa on Monday, Jan. 26, 2015. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Adrian Wyld

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau hits back at Stephen Harper's latest assertions. Joan Bryden of the Canadian Press writes this:

Stephen Harper dishonours soldiers who've died to preserve Canada's democracy when he asserts that Justin Trudeau distrusts and dislikes the military, the Liberal leader

charged Thursday. Trudeau said the prime minister's assertion is an insult, not just to him but to the 18 armed forces vets who are running for the Liberals in the next election and to all Canadians who believe in freedom of speech. Trudeau was responding to remarks Harper made Sunday in an interview with a London, On, radio station.

Referring to the Liberals' decision last fall to oppose Canada's participation in airstrikes against Islamic extremists in Iraq, Harper said: "I do think Mr. Trudeau's comments around the time of

the debate indicate a deep distrust and, frankly, dislike of the Canadian military that I think runs very deep in some elements of that party and with him.” At that time, the Conservatives accused Trudeau of showing disrespect for the military after he quipped that Canada should be involved in providing humanitarian aid to Iraq “rather than trying to whip out our CF-18s and show them how big they are.” In the text of a speech delivered Thursday to party faithful in Calgary, Trudeau began with a lengthy tribute to Harjit Singh Sajjan, a celebrated military vet and star Liberal candidate in Vancouver. Sajjan served in Bosnia and three tours in Afghanistan, becoming the first turbaned Sikh to command a Canadian Army Regiment. “He is a genuine Canadian hero and when Stephen Harper attacks my deep personal respect for our forces, he insults not just Harj, not just the 17 other Canadian Forces veterans who have chosen to follow me as Liberal candidates in the next election,” Trudeau said. “But (he) insults every Canadian who believes that we should have the freedom to disagree with each other politically and not be called a lesser Canadian for it.” Trudeau added: “Let’s honour those who have fought and died for our democracy by keeping it healthy. We can debate each other’s policies but not each other’s patriotism.”

The speech was devoted primarily to Trudeau’s contention that Harper has mismanaged the economy — a recurring theme for the Liberal leader in recent weeks as the collapse in oil prices sucks billions from the federal treasury and stifles economic growth. Harper, who hails from Calgary, has not been a champion of Alberta, Trudeau maintained. Indeed, he argued that Harper’s refusal to mollify American environmental concerns and tackle climate change has made it impossible to build the pipelines Alberta needs to get its oil sands crude to tide water. A Liberal government would “get serious about climate change” and work with allies like the United States to ensure Alberta’s resources get to market and get a fair price, he promised. Trudeau has not spelled out his own plans for the economy but he offered a few vague hints in Thursday’s speech, promising to fix the Canada Pension Plan “so that it can provide an adequate pension” and to give “tax relief to middle-class Canadians who really need it, like those who have trouble keeping up with the cost of living.” “The Conservatives aren’t doing this. We will.”

Time for Annual Dues

As of Jan 1st, dues are payable for the following organizations:

Royal United Services Institute – Vancouver. Dues this year are \$35 and cheques should be made to RUSI Van.

The **Vancouver Artillery Association** dues are \$75. Make cheques payable to Van Arty Assoc.

15 Fd Officers Mess Associate dues are \$60. Make cheques payable to 15RCA Officers Mess.

Dues payments can be sent to the Treasurer of the applicable organization at Bessborough Armoury: 2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6J 2C7.

Who is it? **Last Week:** Got some good replies on this quiz as it come from the more recent past of the Regiment. This young gunner is Judy Riddle, who was a member of the



Regiment from around 1978-82, and the picture was taken in the gun park of the Ft Lewis Museum, probably in 1979. She is standing in front of a 155mm model 1917 Field Howitzer with pneumatic tires, part of the US Army's field artillery of World War I. In the background is an early version of the 105mm, the 105mm M1 gun/howitzer, the C1 version of our current gun. In the M1 (or C1) version, cracks started to develop at the muzzle end of the barrel as they aged and the gun barrels were replaced (and the recoil

system beefed up). The only visible difference between the two models was the muzzle swell added to the barrel to strengthen it. Today, the C3 version of the gun has a much longer barrel (2.3m or L22 vs 4m or L33) and a muzzle brake.

This Week: The Canadian soldier has always been noted for his or her pristine appearance, both on the parade square and in the field. "Spit and polish" does not begin to do justice to how our warriors take care in their appearance, although the former has been banned due to health and safety concerns, whilst the latter is banned due to environmental worries.



This week's photo is of fairly recent vintage, and shows a group of well-turned out soldiers who would make the Potsdam Grenadiers green with envy for their military haberdasherial appearance. We know that some of you are young enough to have served with these lads and lass, and might even be one of them. Let us know who you are and who your comrades are by contacting the editor, or the author, John Redmond

(johnd._redmond@telus.net). The person with the most complete answer might get a can of spray starch as a prize (maybe). For a larger picture email bob.mugford@shaw.ca

From the 'Punitary'

Why did the chicken cross the tennis court? It heard that the referee was calling fowls.

Murphy's other Laws

Any military project will take twice as long as planned , cost twice as much, and produce only half as much as what is wanted.

Quotable Quotes

He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear. - *Julius Caesar*

FEBRUARY 2015 Mainland BC Military Family CONNECTION

Download your FEBRUARY 2015 Mainland BC Military Family CONNECTION, to stay up to date on our programming, news and events by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.familyforce.ca/sites/MainlandBC/EN/Documents/02Feb15News.pdf>

or by visiting our website at www.bcmfrc.com

Whiskey Tasting

15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA

&

The 78th Fraser's Highlanders

Fund Raiser and Scotch Tasting Night

The 15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA and the 78th Fraser's Highlanders welcome you to attend our annual Fund Raising and Whiskey Tasting event at the historic Bessborough Armoury. There will be food, draw prizes, and music.

Tickets are \$55.00 per person for those sampling a selection of six excellent Whiskeys selected by the Officers of the Mess, or \$25.00 if you are only having beer, wine, or soft drinks from our No-Host Bar.

Only 50 tickets will be sold for the full whisky fleet!

Dress is business casual. kilts, and highland dress, of course, are welcome.

DATE: Friday - March 6th, 2015

TIME: 1800 hrs – 2300 hrs

LOCATION: 15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA
2025 West 11th Ave Van, BC V6J 2C7

DO NOT MISS OUT!

TO RESERVE YOUR TICKET CONTACT:

Major James Barrett

Cell: (604) 916-1766 E-Mail: barrettjd007@gmail.com

All profits will go to support the activities of the 15th Field Regimental Society and the 78th Fraser Highlanders Fort Fraser Garrison. Tax receipts will be issued for all donations.

2015 BC Army Gala



Support BC Military Families at the 2015 BC Army Gala!

**Join us in supporting our modern-day troops and their families,
while still celebrating those of days past.**

The 2015 BC Army Gala not only pays tribute to the sacrifices of our military past, but also the current enlisted men and women and their families.

Along with live music, dancers and Steve Darling as MC the BC Army Gala will feature a wonderful night out celebrating a good cause. What better way to support The Mainland BC Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) than to come out to the 2015 BC Army Gala!

MFRC has implemented the Military Family Support Program (MFSP) and operates this program through Military Family Resource Centres at all Canadian bases, wings and stations, as well as at some foreign locations. The programs cover a wide breadth of areas from personal health to family issues and crisis intervention.

Tickets are available for purchase at \$140 each, and are selling quickly. The BC Army Gala team looks forward to seeing you at the Hyatt Regency on March 28th.

Event Count-Down: **46 Days** until the 2015 BC Army Gala!


Visit the link below to purchase your tickets today:

<http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2015-bc-army-gala-tickets-13545802861?aff=efbevent>

Thank you for your continued interest and we look forward to seeing you at The BC Army Gala 2015!

To learn more about the MFRC, visit their website by clicking [here](#).

The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir
with
The Richmond Singers



Directed by
Jonathan Quick &
Natasha Neufeld



*My Funny
Valentine*

February 14, 2015 - 7:30pm

Bethany Baptist Church
22680 Westminster Hwy
Richmond, BC

Tickets: Adult \$27 | Senior \$24
Student \$10 (with ID) | Children (under 12 free)

Order By Phone (604) 878-1190

Buy Online www.vwmc.ca or

Buy from any Welsh Men's Choir or Richmond Singers Choir member or at the door

Thailand Curry Lunch



*Hosted by:
The British Columbia
Regiment
Officers' Mess*



*Coordinated by:
The BC Regiment
(DCO) Association*

- Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015
- Time:** 11:45 am - 1:30 pm
(bar opens at 11:45am)
(lunch starts at 12:25pm)
- Location:** Officers' Mess - The BC Regiment
620 Beatty Street, Vancouver, BC
- Dress:** Business Attire (jacket & tie, ladies similar)
- Price:** \$30/person (\$5 discount for those that confirm attendance by February 20, 2015)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please contact Bill Diamond at Bill@DukeaBear.com or 604.618.3607 (Please advise of any dietary needs with your RSVP)

Payment by cheque or cash will be accepted at the door
Cheques are payable to: The BC Regiment (DCO) Association
No cancellations after February 20, 2015

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, March 26, 2015