



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Nov 10, 2015

Newsletter on line. This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

Wednesday Lunches

The 15 Field Officers Mess holds weekly lunches, serving a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch.

St Barbara's Day Special Guest Night

The deadline for RSVPs for this event is fast approaching. If you plan to attend, please let us know ASAP. See invitation at end of this newsletter.

World War 2 - 1940

John Thompson Strategic analyst quotes from his book "Spirit Over Steel"

Nov 11th: Italy makes a belated contribution to the Battle of Britain – CR-42 biplane fighters escort some SM-79 bombers on a short hop across the Channel (and lose six aircraft to no losses for the RAF). Meanwhile, the Royal Navy sends 21 Biplane Swordfish torpedo bombers into a daring night attack on the Italian fleet in Taranto – three Battleships are hit, including the brand new Littorio. Two Swordfish fail to return to HMS Illustrious. Dachau conducts a mass execution of 55 Polish academics.”

Nov 12th: Hitler issues Directive 18 for the planned attack on the Soviet Union. Plans are also drawn up for an invasion of Greece and Gibraltar (via Spain).

Nov 13th: The Japanese secure a deal for 1,500,000 tons of oil annually from the Dutch East Indies.

Nov 14th: A bad night for Coventry as 449 Luftwaffe bombers inflict heavy damage – contrary to the myth, the British only knew about the attack a few hours before it began, and had virtually no air defence assets that could be moved into place ahead of time. The Greeks start to transfer troops in from the Metaxas Line on the Bulgarian frontier to join in a new counter-offensive against the Italians.

Nov 15th: The official beginning of the Warsaw Ghetto, the hundreds of thousands of Jews in the tiny neighbourhood are forbidden to leave the enclave and the wall goes up. US PBYs begin

flying anti-submarine patrols from Bermuda. 3,400 British personnel embark for Greece from Egypt. Only five of 14 fighters launched from HMS Argus to reinforce Malta make it.

Nov 17th: Despite their sterling work in the previous months, Air Marshall Dowding is shuffled off to a desk job and Air Marshal Park is to be soon replaced by Leigh Mallory.

Vladimir Putin, Justin Trudeau, and Canada's Arctic Problem

All of Moscow's effort and attention, combined with Canada's neglect, has effectively turned the Arctic Ocean into Putin's Lake. *Scott Gilmore McLeans November 4, 2015*



(JONATHAN HAYWARD/CP)

Justin Trudeau recently promised to push back “the bully that is Vladimir Putin.” Supporters may enthusiastically imagine the tall boxer staring down the short black belt. Unfortunately, the more accurate picture would have Trudeau sitting on a battered snowmobile, craning his neck to see Putin standing far above him on the bridge of a nuclear-powered icebreaker.

Canada has an Arctic problem: our northern marches are increasingly important to us and others, but no Canadian government has ever made even the minimum investments necessary to safeguard it. The Arctic region is thought to contain 13 per cent of the world's undiscovered oil and a third of its undiscovered natural gas. Within our territory there are vast deposits of nickel, iron and diamonds. By some estimates, Canada's share of the resource capital could exceed \$20 trillion, more than 10 times our GDP.

The geopolitical value of the Arctic is equally substantial. Shrinking ice caps have opened new shipping lanes. The Northwest Passage shaves four days off the trip from Europe to Asia. Russia's “Northern Sea route” reduces transit time by two weeks and already sees more than a million tons of cargo annually, most of it oil. Our politicians are quick to agree the Arctic is critically important. The former prime minister would say so on his annual summer pilgrimages. He echoed Paul Martin, who managed three trips there during his short tenure. Jean Chrétien even brought Jacques Chirac to Pangnirtung. There, the French president stood in front of the old blubber station and made the cryptic observation that the empty views had made the Inuit “very elegant.” Maybe, but the emptiness has also left them extremely vulnerable. The suicide rate is seven times the Canadian average. The murder rate is 10 times higher. And only 30 per cent of Inuit children live in households that are able to provide them with sufficient food. We have almost no Northern infrastructure. There are a small handful of airports, no deep-water ports, precious few telecom links, limited health care facilities and a few short roads. Canadian Arctic search and rescue helicopters are based in British Columbia and the

Maritimes. Our few icebreakers are decades-old, frail, and cannot even operate in the winter. Prime ministerial visits aside, Canada's North remains utterly neglected by Canada's South.

The Russian Arctic is different. The north has always been an important part of their national identity, as has the military. It is not surprising then that eight of the 10 largest cities within the Arctic Circle are Russian (none are Canadian—our largest city is Inuvik, which is 0.01 per cent the size of Russia's largest northern city, Murmansk). Russia just completed its largest of 10 military bases in the Arctic; it will house more than 150 troops and includes a deep-water port and submarine facilities. By contrast, Canada has spent six years discussing the Nanisivik Naval Facility, the only movement being to downgrade the plans from a port to a refuelling depot. All of Moscow's effort and attention, combined with the world's largest fleet of icebreakers, has effectively turned the Arctic Ocean into Putin's lake. While Russia's relative stature has declined (its GDP is only marginally above Brazil and the military budget is on par with Saudi Arabia), in the Arctic it remains the sole superpower. Without challengers, Putin has felt free to expand their territorial and military ambitions right up to the North Pole, and possibly beyond. In some circles, the increasingly active Russian bear is setting off alarm bells, and a fear (as Stephen Harper put it) that when it comes to the Arctic, we must "use it or lose it."

But as Thomas Axworthy, a senior fellow at the Munk School, points out, the very dominance that makes Russia a potential northern threat, has also made Russia far more co-operative. Unlike in the Syrian or Ukrainian context, its undisputed position does not require a bellicose strategy. Up north, a rules-based international system works in Moscow's favour. As evidence of this, observers report Russia has been very constructive within the Arctic Council, the primary inter-governmental forum for northern matters (while Canada has been less engaged). This should provide Prime Minister Trudeau with a small measure of comfort. We are unlikely to see Russian icebreakers steaming defiantly past our ragtag force of part-time Canadian Rangers in the short term. But this does not mean that Ottawa can continue to delay billions worth of long-needed investments in everything from hospitals to military bases. Otherwise, Canada's Arctic problem is only going to get worse.

Road Testing the M4 Sherman

Gerry Stevens Wargamer, vol.3 no.1 August 1975

It's not often the "Wargamer" gets a chance to road test a truly vintage vehicle, however, when this 33 year old Sherman M 4 tank became available, the Editor's trusty road test team leapt at the chance, almost breaking their legs in the process. Which brings up the first problem when offered such a vehicle... how do you get inside? If the beast is standing still, it's not too difficult; place on foot on the suspension, grab the nearest piece of solid metal and haul yourself up. However, if there's any movement at all involved, don't try it... wait till the driver gets the thing stopped. If he can. Getting into a Sherman is an adventure in itself, somewhat akin to being dropped into a boiler. Up on top (away up on top) there's a steel lid which can be left open for parades or bolted down for inclement weather or competition.

The first thing that strikes you inside is the 30 caliber machine gun. It catches the unwary tester right on the shin, then the arm and finally the head (if you slide right down to the turret floor). Our guide told us that the machine gun was excellent for removing driving problems, such as traffic police (sorry, Gary), pedestrians and slow lights. The standard model Sherman comes with a variety of optional main armament, including 75mm, 76.2mm and 105mm guns. Any of these are perfectly adequate for dealing with slow drivers and camper trucks. On our way to the test track, we got the beast up to 35 mph, rather slow by today's standards, but we nevertheless left two Chevrolets, a Mercury and a Cadillac flat out. There is a slight lurch as the Sherman overtakes and passes a standard car, but as a passenger, one soon gets used to it. The soft suspension of the average American car cushions the impact, and is referred to by old-line tankers as "having the feel of the car".

Once inside and settled on the very long-wearing canvas seat (non-adjustable, incidentally), one notices the interior colour scheme. While it is rather severe and functional, one has to admit that grease on white is rather unique. This is accented by a few brown bits (such as the radio) and shiny silver (such as the gun breech). However, all thoughts about the decoration disappear when the driver fires up the engine. Aside from a terrific and thunderous roar, the Sherman is comparatively noisy. If the passenger is down in the hull machine gunner's seat, he is seated about one foot away from the driver, but not even Led Zeppelin, three sticks of dynamite and a fire siren could get through to the driver if he isn't looking at you. Besides, the driver already has his hands full. Out back of him is a huge Ford V-8 (though some Shermans have engines we didn't really believe) of some 500 lusty horsepower that sucks down a gallon of gas every 2000 feet and takes 50 gallons of oil at every change. One of the original crewmen opened the two large engine access doors of the beast's rear deck. What a mess! It looked like the inside of the Jaguar engine factory. Beside the driver is the gearbox, a he-man affair that stands knee-high to a tall giraffe. It's said that this little 5-speed affair gets hot enough to fry a pedestrian on, but we didn't have time to try it out. The gearbox transmits the power to front drive sprockets (the latest thing in sporty cars) and the whole package just guarantees that you're going to go wherever you want to go. We've even heard of some entrepreneurs who have been using this big beast for building demolition. They just turn the turret around (don't want to bend the cannon barrel, you know), engage the bottom gear and drive in the front door and out the back.

Steering the Sherman is a phrase that doesn't pass the lips easily. For one thing, you don't 'steer' the Sherman, you aim it. This is a vehicle that really does corner as though it were on tracks. It is. It's also the only vehicle we know of that turns a corner in little jumps. Now, that could be a bit extreme, but maybe you'll understand better when we explain about the steering. For one thing, there isn't a steering wheel. Instead, there are two levers, each one applying the brakes to that track when pulled back. So instead of the tracks turning, they actually slow down on one side, while the other side keeps going at full speed. Now, when that little manoeuvre is combined with two clutch pedals (one for each track) which can be combined to work off one foot, and with that big gearbox, which can feed "forward" into one track and "reverse" into the other, you begin to get an idea of the problems involved. The first time one of the test-crew

tried it, he made two complete revolutions, then took off through the fence and part way up the biggest tree in the province before our co-driver turned off the engine.

So, the Sherman M 4 isn't for every driver, but it certainly put the feeling of superiority back into anyone who has ever owned a small car and felt threatened by the large American machines. For the man who commutes to work, the Sherman is almost ideal. Instead of worrying about his shiny fenders and the guy tail-gating him, he just puts the gearbox into high and goes down the road, knowing that anyone who cuts in in front of him will suddenly find their "long, low, wide" look longer, lower and wider. True, even with all that horsepower, the Sherman will never win any drag races, but there's a certain satisfaction knowing that even though everyone else goes by you at one light, at the next one you can crawl right up to the front of the line again.

Of course, if things still get to you, there's the cannon. This little toy can take care of opposition in any direction, and a foot on the firing treadle quickly removes that stubborn roadblock. It will also remove a fair bit of change from your wallet, since each shot costs about \$37.00. For everyday driving, a leather bootie laces over the muzzle, to keep out rain, dirt and curious animals. By the way, the Sherman is excellent for car pools, since it can carry five in "comfort" inside and ignores "detour" signs. Unfortunately, the Sherman does have its drawbacks. It is a bit noisy (**WHAT ?**), It does smell a bit of grease and cordite, and it doesn't fit into every garage. The biggest drawback is the cost. At some \$45,000 new (*this article was written in 1975*), it's just simply out of reach of anyone - except the tax-payer.

China's 3,000 Acre Aircraft Carriers

They Could Change the Balance of Power in the Pacific. That's why the United States needs to act now. *By James Stavridis October 1, 2015*



The Great Wall, as President Richard Nixon so elegantly said on his first trip to Beijing in 1972, was indeed a "great wall." Nearly half a century later, a new Great Wall is under construction by China — what Adm. Harry Harris, the commander of U.S. military forces throughout the Pacific, has famously called a "Great Wall of Sand." That wall,

unfortunately, is not so great. Instead of stone, brick, and wood, this new wall consists of artificial islands strung out across the South China Sea — a region Beijing claims by virtue of historical right. China's claim is encompassed by what it terms the "nine-dash line," a radical demarcation of maritime sovereignty that takes an enormous bite out of the legitimate territorial claims of Vietnam, the Philippines, and other countries ringing the South China Sea. The crucial context of this behavior is that the South China Sea — Asia's "cauldron," as geostrategist Robert D. Kaplan calls it — is bubbling like the witches' kettle in

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The South China Sea matters not only because it is contested territory, but because it's hugely important to the smooth operation of the global economy. More than \$5 trillion of the world's annual trade passes through the South China Sea, all under the watchful eyes of the (oddly named) People's Liberation Army Navy.

China's aggressive behavior in building these artificial islands tracks with its disregard of other norms of international law. Some of these provocations include lack of clarity on the claim itself — a claim that international lawyers widely regard as preposterous; an air-defense identification zone over the East China Sea directed at the United States, Japan, and South Korea; the placement of a mobile oil platform in Vietnam's coastal waters; and the widely reported (and massive) cyber thefts of U.S. intellectual property, industrial secrets, and personal data. The specifics on the construction of these artificial islands are staggering. Thus far — and construction continues — China has created nearly 3,000 acres of land out of the ocean. Just consider that the highly touted and massive U.S. aircraft carriers (from which can launch a wing of more than 70 jets and helicopters) are only about 5 acres of flattop. Are these artificial islands similar to hundreds of unsinkable aircraft carriers in the South China Sea? Think that shifts the balance between the two competing militaries? You bet it does. Besides the obvious geopolitical and military issues, significant ecological damage is also underway, according to many scientists. One expert from the University of Miami, John McManus, called China's building of man-made islands "the most rapid rate of permanent loss of coral reef area in human history."

Add to this the internal tension under which President Xi Jinping's regime is operating: falling real estate prices, an aging population, misbalance of men (too many) and women (too few), terrible ecological damage requiring significant mitigation, and, above all, a sputtering economy that is stunting growth. When authoritarian regimes come under pressure, they tend to look outward to find ways to distract the population. Nationalism emerges. Such is the case in China today. Witness Xi's recent speech at the United Nations — full of barely concealed vitriol directed at the government of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The tension between Japan and China has been waxing and waning over the past several years. Now, it's increasing again. What is the best approach for the United States? This tense situation is out in the open, and Xi's late September visit to Washington did not fundamentally change anything.

First, despite provocations, the United States must maintain open communications with China and seek ways to reduce the chances of an inadvertent collision either between the United States and China (unlikely) or between China and one of its immediate neighbors (far more likely). The U.S. relationship with China encompasses economic issues, geopolitical cooperation from Afghanistan to Iran, and global environmental issues — the South China Sea dispute is only one element. Dialogue is crucial. And the agreements on military-to-military contact and cybersecurity that the two presidents discussed during Xi's visit are better than nothing.

Second, the United States needs to strengthen its relationship with existing allies and partners in the region and encourage them to work together better. This applies especially to Japan and

South Korea, which, for a host of historical reasons, have long had an uncomfortable relationship. The United States can help build better ties between the two neighbors by promoting military exchanges and exercises, enabling conversations at important events like the Shangri-La Dialogue, and encouraging Track II engagement through academic and research institutions. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, a massive multilateral trade agreement, is a big element: Building a network of even stronger trading ties can ensure that America's friends and allies cooperate with each other. And in particular, working closer with Vietnam makes good sense — and this should include lifting bans on weapons sales.

Third, the fundamental tenets of international law are against China's approach in the South China Sea. The United States should sternly emphasize this in international forums like the United Nations, the G-7, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The intellectual underpinnings of international legal judgments on the South China Sea are very clear: Nations cannot simply declare a "historical claim" and take over what other nations regard as international waters. The United States, as a global maritime power, should not miss any opportunity to object. And frankly, the United States should finally sign the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, the treaty that governs the world's oceans, to maintain the high ground in these conversations.

Fourth, and finally, the United States should exercise its traditional rights of transit under international legal norms: its "freedom of navigation" operations. That means overflying Chinese territorial claims and sailing U.S. ships through China's claimed water space — the waters within 12 miles of these islands. The United States has a long tradition of countering unjustified historical claims by sailing and flying through international waters and airspace. Now is the time to exercise it in the South China Sea.

None of these strategic prescriptions by themselves will resolve the challenges of the South China Sea. Nor will simply moving U.S. military aircraft and vessels through claimed Chinese air and sea space suffice. Pushing back on Chinese claims in the South China Sea requires a broader strategy that treats this violation of international law in the larger context of both Chinese behavior and Sino-U.S. relations. Above all, it will require U.S. leadership alongside America's many partners and friends throughout East Asia. China's Great Wall was at least partially successful in keeping foreigners out. Its Great Wall of Sand will not be.

Who is it?

Last Week: The aircraft is a Stinson Valiant. General Harry Crerar, the Officer with the swagger stick, Commander of the First Canadian Army in Europe during World War II, maintained a Vigilant for his personal use throughout the war. The Polish Officer could be Gen Stanisław Sosabowski or Gen Władysław Anders, who look very similar. After some discussion, we decided it was Gen Anders. We believe the picture was taken in April 1945.



This Week: Remembrance Day is a day for all of us to reflect upon the efforts of those who have served their country, and put their lives on the line. Those who have marched before the colours deserve recognition, and this photo is a plea for such, for we don't have any information on it.



The occasion is more than likely a Remembrance Day salute down by Portside Park, on the harbour side of Vancouver. The date, guessed from the vehicles in the background, is the late 1990s or early 2000s. The veteran gunner (as indicated by his necktie) wears a full set of World War Two medals, with the stars

indicating service in Europe. As well, he might have a CD at the end, but we can't be sure as the photo is from a print, not the original negative (which usually gives greater clarity).

So, dear readers, can you help us identify this man who served his King and Country so well? If you also know the member of Vancouver's finest, please add that to your answer. As always, answers can be sent to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond ([john.d. redmond@telus.net](mailto:john.d.redmond@telus.net)). We shall remember them.

From the 'Punitary'

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? Frostbite.

Murphy's other Laws

Every solution breeds new problems.

Quotable Quotes

The individual activity of one man with a backbone will do more than a thousand men with a mere wishbone. *JH Boetcher*



*Honorary Colonel William Rodgers,
Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Allan De Genova,
and the*

*15th Field Artillery Regimental Society
request the pleasure of your company for a*

'Special Guest Night'

in honour of

Saint Barbara's Day

to be held at

BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY

2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver

on Saturday, the Fifth of December, 2015

at six o'clock for seven o'clock in the evening.

***RSVP by 25 November 2015 with
payment:
OCdt R. T. Jones
Richard.Jones6@forces.gc.ca
Tariff: \$ 105***

***Payable to "15 Fd Regt'l Society"
2025 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

Dress: Mess Kit or Black Tie***



The Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia
Founded 1919

*The President and Directors of
the Naval Officers' Association of
British Columbia
request the pleasure of the company of
you and your guest(s)
at the*

Surrender Day Luncheon

*Guest Speaker: Mr Christopher Gaze OBC, MSM,
Founder and artistic Director Vancouver's Bard on the Beach
on Thursday 19 November, 2015*

1100 for 1200

Royal Vancouver Yacht Club

3811 Point Grey Road, Vancouver

*Cost: \$50.00 per person
RSVP per reservation form
below by 7 November 2015*

*Blazer/Lounge Suit & tie
(Ladies Equivalent)*

NOABC
Surrender Day Luncheon 2015

_____ will attend the luncheon.

Guests: _____

_____ persons @ \$50.00 = _____

*Please indicate with (V) after
name(s) for Vegetarian Meal*

Please forward this form, with
payment, by 7 November to:

David Reece, Social Dir. NOABC
783 N. Dollarton Highway
North Vancouver, BC
V7G 1N5