



Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Feb 11, 2014

Wednesday Lunches

Walked into the kitchen last week and the old stove was gone!! I thought it was one big piece of metal but I guess it could be taken apart. A lot of painting done. The contractor says we might have to close for a week at some point – hopefully we will get a couple of weeks warning at least.

Guests and visitors are always welcome. People these days, especially civilians, don't think about dress much and, if not pre-warned, will show up in very casual dress so, to avoid embarrassment, please make them aware of the dress requirements (suit/blazer and tie, equivalent for ladies) before they come.

Fund Raising and Whiskey Tasting

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

See poster at the end of the newsletter for more details

Time for Annual Dues

As of Jan 1st, dues are now payable for RUSI Vancouver (\$30), The Vancouver Artillery Association (\$75) and 15 Fd Officers Mess Associates (\$60).

Dues payments can be sent to the Treasurer of the applicable organization at Bessborough Armoury: 2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6J 2C7. **This includes RUSI Vancouver!** In the past, payment for RUSI dues has been sent directly to Keith Freer but Keith had a bit of a mishap and is in hospital. We are in the process of appointing an acting Treasurer until Keith's situation is resolved so please, send RUSI dues payments to the Armoury.

RUSI Vancouver Society AGM

RUSI Vancouver Society AGM will be held on Wednesday March 12, 2014 at 1330hrs at Bessborough Armoury.

A separate notice was sent out to registered members earlier today. If you are a member and **did not** get the earlier notice, please email me at bob.mugford@shaw.ca so I can correct my membership list.

Military Ball Renamed

The date for the 2014 Ball has been set for **May 10, 2014 at the Vancouver Hyatt Regency Hotel**. 39CBG is getting more involved in the running of the event and has renamed the Military Ball the 'BC Army Gala'. The Gala website is: <http://bcarmygala.ca/> and tickets can already be purchased on the EventBrite site at: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/bc-army-gala-tickets-8508578387>

More information can be found on the Gala's Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/britishcolumbiaarmygala>

Ottawa facing new war with veterans over claw-back compensation

Murray Brewster, The Canadian Press Published Thursday, January 23, 2014

OTTAWA -- Canada's veterans ombudsman and the Royal Canadian Legion are calling on the Harper government to say once and for all whether it will retroactively compensate ex-soldiers whose pensions and benefits were unfairly clawed back. Veterans Affairs Canada has been silent about whether it will follow National Defence and reimburse those whose earnings loss benefits, income supplements and war veterans allowance cheques were improperly docked. In May 2012, a Federal Court justice ruled that the federal government was wrong to claw back the military pensions of injured soldiers by the amount of disability payments they receive. Former defence minister Peter MacKay ended the deduction and federal lawyers negotiated an \$887-million retroactive settlement dating back to 1976, when the process first started. Former veterans minister Steven Blaney also ended the practice for programs in his department, but his successor has yet to open discussions about compensation for what was deducted prior to the decision.

Ottawa military lawyer Michel Drapeau has written to the new minister, Julian Fantino, on behalf of an ex-soldier whose benefit cheque was deducted and says he's prepared to launch legal action, perhaps even in the form of a class action. "We truly hope government will live up to its promises," Drapeau said in an interview Thursday. Fantino's response to Drapeau's Dec. 18 letter was non-committal.

Veterans ombudsman Guy Parent said he's been bombarded with calls and messages from ex-soldiers and wants to see the uncertainty ended. The mechanics of the legislation governing veterans and the resulting obligations of the government are slightly different when compared with the military disability pension case, the ombudsman noted. "Veterans need to get an answer," Parent said. "If they're not going to give retroactivity, then say it." His sentiment is echoed by the Royal Canadian Legion, which says the Harper government has poured millions of dollars into commemorative events, such as the War of 1812, while issues like the benefit back payment have lingered. "They need to make a decision on retroactivity," said Andrea Siew, the legion's director of services. "Veterans need to know. They have a right to know and then they can decide where they go from here. And they need to make a fair decision."

Joshua Zanin, a spokesman for Fantino, said the issue is still on the government's agenda, but noted that -- unlike in the case of National Defence -- the veterans department was not compelled by the courts to halt the clawback. "Our government voluntarily decided to cease the deductions as an additional action to recognize the sacrifices of Canada's veterans," Zanin said in an email. He referenced comments by the minister last fall when the government ordered a comprehensive review of the charter governing veterans benefits, casting the issue of back payments as something they're not obliged to pay. "Our government is committed to looking into the call of veterans for this additional benefit and will respond in a timely fashion," he said.

How much a retroactive settlement would cost the government is unclear, and Siew said it would depend on how broad the terms might be. For example, it could become expensive and complicated if the war veterans allowance is included. That monthly payment -- to soldiers and their surviving spouses -- dates back to the Second World War. "How far do they go back? Do they pay estates? Those are some of the challenges," Siew said. Both the ombudsman and the legion are also united when it comes to a class-action lawsuit launched by members of the RCMP over clawbacks to their disability benefits. They say Mounties shouldn't have to fight for benefits when a precedent has already been established by the Federal Court in the case of the military.

It's time to undertake a study of what all veterans -- military and RCMP, past and present -- are owed, Drapeau said. "Veterans are veterans, and if we owe them, it doesn't matter if have to go back to 1940. A debt is debt is a debt, and a promise is a promise is a promise."

The CF Still Can't Buy Decent Combat Boots

By Ben Makuch 10 Dec 13

While Stephen Harper and his government are known for appearing in front of "Support Our Troops" signs and inflating Canada's historical military record (like commercials celebrating beating up on America hundreds of years ago), it appears DND still can't buy a decent pair of much needed combat boots for frontline Canadian soldiers. In a move aimed at replacing the old pair one soldier aptly described as "clunkers," the Canadian Forces began distributing new spiffy "Arid Region Combat Boots" in mid-2012. They cost the Canadian government a cool \$3.1 million for 20,000 pairs of what ended up being partly defective boots. Recent reports by David Pugliese of Postmedia are even suggesting the boots suffered discoloration problems, and literally fell apart at the seams. The government returned 10,300 pairs of boots to the contractor for inspection and correction then continued reissuing the boots in May. This isn't a new issue: Canadian troops have hated the old one-type fits all army issued combat boot, for at least as many years as they've been fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan.

"No one likes the (new) boots. Everyone just rolls their eyes every time a high ranking member attempts to justify the quality of them," says one Afghan vet still in the Forces who wished to remain anonymous because he wasn't authorized to speak with the media. "A clunker may work for the logistician, but may not be ideal for someone hunting insurgents." While quality footwear may not seem to be high on most people's "list of things to be upset about," in the

military it's a different story. "Boots are a big f***g deal," the soldier tells me. "The best soldiers, often athletes, hunt out superior footwear," he says pointing out that the long marches, weapon shooting, and general life risking, naturally requires a decent pair of kicks. According to him, most guys in his platoon (and most Afghan vets) usually end up buying their own boots with their own money, because they don't trust the terrible Canadian ones. The soldier also says the average fighter buys hundreds of dollars in extra equipment (including crucial stuff like better tactical-vests for carrying ammo) before tours, because the government issued gear is designed to suit the needs of the Canadian Forces as a whole and not those of a combat unit. "There is nothing more frustrating than some dinosaur asking why you're not wearing the boots the Queen provided," he said referring to older members of the CF who didn't believe in using gear not issued by the crown.

In the US, American soldiers have the option to pick from a broad list of pre-approved footwear to find the right shoe. Technically, the new Canadian boot system will eventually allow soldiers to pick from three new boot types from the same company, once the latest models are fully cleared. But when that will actually happen is unclear. Meanwhile, another Canadian Army Captain I spoke to says that might be a step in the right direction: "Footwear, especially when worn under tough physically conditions, is very personalized," the captain says. "Some boots are better for some people. The concept of having a selection of three models is a huge step forward." The captain adds that although he isn't a "military fashionista," style points for a better looking boot could pay dividends to a soldier's confidence in the field. Yet the issue with the new boots, fancy or not, goes deeper and sits at the core of Canada's treatment of soldiers. For example, Canada purchased tactical vests, used to store ammo, with four ammo pouches, that were perfect for peacekeeping tours in safer zones. But when it came to the running and gunning of Afghanistan, soldiers needed 10-12 magazines a patrol. So troops bought their own tac-vests, lest they run out of ammo fighting a Talib, until Canada belatedly bought new ones. "There is a process to take a soldier's opinion into consideration," one soldier says. "It is bullshit and takes too long. I think seven years after the initial release of our famous tactical vest they came up with a patchwork solution post combat mission for the guys doing mentorship for the Afghan National Army."

According to him, the specialists in DND who decide on the purchases for soldiers, aren't soldiers with experience but professional desk-jockeys who throw money at problems, not solutions: "Some individuals in DND have never had a real job outside of the military and seem to think the stuff that pays the bills and wins wars is monopoly money." Canada's military procurement has been kindly described as "like a Monty Python movie," because the government has a tendency to spend big, without any results. And the proof is in the graveyard of faulty projects: DND has been trying to buy a replacement for Sea-King helicopters for the better part of Harper's tenure as PM, while a protracted effort to buy the defective F-35 has been blasted as a vast piss-away of billions in taxpayer dollars. When it comes to actually buying the things soldiers need, Harper's DND has missed the mark. Sadly, the Mickey Mouse procurement and shitty gear is considered status quo for Canada's finest: "In order to recruit and retain the best, I would argue that it is in the military's interest to start thinking more about

morale, opinion, and personal wellbeing of its soldiers.” In other words, before Mr. Harper next considers sending troops to Haiti, Libya, or Afghanistan he should probably think about sorting out DND so they can buy them a decent pair of boots.

After all, as the soldier put it: “If we can risk our lives why can't we be given the responsibility to choose appropriate footwear?”

Significant Gaps Found In Canadian Military Health Care

Jan 13, 2014 10:01 pm | David Pugliese Lee Berthiaume of Postmedia

OTTAWA — Canadian military families may be described as the “strength behind the uniform,” but Defence Department auditors have found significant “gaps” in their ability to access child and health care in the same way as civilian families. One doesn’t have to look long to find military parents venting their frustration online about the difficulties in finding daycare for their children, from long waiting lists to the absence of emergency services when a parent gets called away to work. While many non-military parents can relate, the situation for military families is exacerbated by frequent moves and temporary deployments.

“The frequency of relocations and separations imposed by the military lifestyle can create disadvantages for military families as compared to non-military families,” Defence Department auditors found in a report. “Therefore, there is a need to address the disadvantages imposed upon them by operational requirements.” The same holds true for access to health care (including mental-health services and assistance for families with special needs), spousal career support and education.

The auditors’ report was written a year ago but was only recently posted online, and echoes issues identified by Canada’s military ombudsman, who surveyed 370 military families and visited 10 bases before publishing a damning report in November highlighting many of the same problems.

We need a less ambitious, more focused defence strategy

By DAVID PERRY | Published: Monday, 02/03/2014



Defence files: Defence Minister Rob Nicholson and Justice Minister Peter MacKay, pictured in July at the Cabinet shuffle at Rideau Hall. David Perry says the Department of National Defence has avoided making tough choices and the government no longer can.

Photograph courtesy of the PMO

In 2008, the Harper government announced an ambitious, long-term plan for modernizing and expanding the Canadian military—the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS). From the moment it was released, there was speculation that the

plan was unaffordable given the assigned budget. Within months of its release the global economic crises and resulting government stimulus spending made that budget untenable. Faced with a mounting deficit and a defence department consuming 20 per cent of discretionary spending, the Harper government did what any other Canadian administration would have done: cut defence spending. While the recession made less money for the military inevitable, the impact was not. In 2010, the military once again launched a transformation process it hoped could make the organization more efficient, thereby diverting the budget knife away from operational capabilities, while also making the CFDS more affordable. The plan to do so, the Report on Transformation 2011, proposed sweeping changes to the entire defence organization, to preserve the military's 'teeth' and focus cuts on the 'tail.' The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces opted not to implement the report's recommendations, despite direction from the Prime Minister's Office to do so. Consequently, just as the report predicted would happen without a plan: the budget cuts degraded frontline forces.

As a new CDA Institute study, *Doing Less with Less*, describes, since 2010 defence spending has been cut by \$2.1-billion and two budget freezes are siphoning off an additional \$600 million in Operations and Maintenance money. As a result, operational readiness has been cut by a fifth forcing the air force to ground aircraft, the navy to tie up ships and the army to park trucks. To mitigate this pressure and once again try to make CFDS affordable, DND launched a new effort, Defence Renewal, in the fall of 2013. While its proposals to make defence more efficient are commendable, it is a significantly less ambitious project than the Transformation initiated three years earlier and will not be completed until 2019. As a result, it is unlikely to restore readiness funding in the short term, and improbable to think it will make the CFDS affordable. Changing National Defence from within is not easy; the last time it occurred was in 2005. The successful part of that transformation effort to improve operational effectiveness, required three factors: the war in Afghanistan driving change; coordinated support of the senior military; and civilian and political leadership at NDHQ. Subsequent efforts to transform have lacked the necessary forcing function, cohesion and continuity of war driven leadership. Budget cuts might have forced change, but were divorced from reorganization.

The civilian and political leadership (and even elements of the military) did not support the Report on Transformation 2011, and so far leading the transformation or renewal team has led directly to retirement from the military. Simply put, National Defence seems unable to change. It now seems apparent that a real transformation requires a new defence strategy, and thankfully the 2013 Speech from the Throne promised just that. The renewed CFDS must clearly articulate an adjustment of the defence strategy to a new fiscal reality, and reconcile the defence plan with a new budget. To reverse the across-the-board cuts to readiness it will need to outline a clear strategic vision that prioritizes the required military capabilities and directs a rebalancing between the personnel, equipment, infrastructure and the readiness pillars of the defence organization, unencumbered by previous constraints on staffing, basing or acquisition. The current situation resulted from National Defence avoiding tough choices, as a result the government no longer can.

*David Perry is the senior defence analyst with the Conference of Defence Associations Institute. He is the author of *Doing Less with Less: Canadian Defence Transformation and Renewal* now available at cdainstitute.ca. news@hilltimes.com The Hill Times*

POPE TO RECEIVE QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Vatican City, 5 February 2014 (VIS) – On 3 April Pope Francis will receive in audience Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This was made public by Buckingham Palace and confirmed yesterday afternoon by the Holy See Press Office. Queen Elizabeth II, accompanied by Prince Philip of Edinburgh, will be in Rome upon invitation by the president of the Republic of Italy, Giorgio Napolitano. The Queen and Prince Philip will lunch in private with President Napolitano, and will then be received in audience by the Pope. It will be the first encounter between Pope Francis and the Queen, as at the Holy Mass at the beginning of his pontificate the United Kingdom was represented by Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester. President Napolitano's invitation was first presented last year, but neither the Queen nor Prince Philip were able to accept for reasons of ill health. Since then, Pope emeritus Benedict XVI resigned from the papacy and Pope Francis was elected. The Italian Head of State renewed his invitation earlier this year and Queen Elizabeth decided to take the opportunity to meet with the new Pontiff. The same occurred on her last visit to Rome, in 2000, when she was received by Blessed John Paul II. The Queen met with Benedict XVI during his apostolic visit to the United Kingdom in September 2010.

Almost 500 years ago Pope Leo X gave King Henry VIII the title "Defensor Fidei" - Defender of the Faith, for Henry's defense of Catholic doctrine against Martin Luther's protestant claims. It is interesting that the British monarch, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, still bears that title. It has been one of the subsidiary titles of the English and later British monarchs since it was granted on October 11, 1521, by Pope Leo X to King Henry VIII of England. The title was conferred in recognition of Henry's book *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum (Defence of the Seven Sacraments)*, which defended the sacramental nature of marriage and the supremacy of the Pope. This was also known as the "Henrician Affirmation" and was seen as an important opposition to the early stages of the Protestant Reformation, especially the ideas of Martin Luther. Following Henry's decision to break with Rome in 1530 and establish himself as head of the Church of England, the title was revoked by Pope Paul III (since Henry's act was regarded as an attack on "the Faith") and Henry was excommunicated. However, in 1544, the Parliament of England conferred the title "*Defender of the Faith*" on King Henry VIII and his successors, now the defenders of the Anglican faith, of which they (except the Catholic Mary I) remain the Supreme Governors (formally above the Archbishop of Canterbury as Primate).

Who is it?



Last Edition. This accident happened in the mid-70s. A packet of vehicles was sent back to Vancouver, from exercises in the Vernon area, via the Hope-Princeton hwy. This vehicle was tail end Charlie. It was loaded with unit stores, including a rowboat, and towing a gun. The packet had a rest stop at the summit of Whipsaw Hill and the packet Commander, Ian Newby, realized he was missing a vehicle. He started searching back down the road a soon found some marks heading over the side. The truck had rolled several times down over 100 feet. It was sitting upside down at the edge of a creek and

the gun was upside down in the creek. He scrambled down, turned off the ignition and got the driver and passenger (I think there were two but no one is sure) out. They suffered some injuries but nothing very serious. The vehicle and all the stores were written off. The most amazing thing was that the weapons techs surveyed the gun and declared it fit for service. We think that, because the pintle hook rotates, the gun was dragged down the slope as the truck rolled, staying upright until it reached the bottom and then just made a leisurely flop into the creek.

This Week's picture We continue with our happy theme of "crashes". Fortunately, as far as



can be determined, there have been no fatalities or serious injuries to the Regiment in recent years, and we can only pray that such a situation continues. Nonetheless, as we saw last week, there have been some hair-raising accidents. This week's crash seems a bit more sedate than last week's, but must have been rather traumatic for the personnel involved. The photo was found in a pile of

miscellaneous prints from all periods of the Regiment's history, and no print has any information whatsoever. Nor have any of the photos been accessioned.

So, we know nothing of this event at all. It didn't happen too long ago, from the look of the vehicle (however, my knowledge of Canadian Army vehicles stops rather abruptly in 1970 when I left the services and the country for a while, so what do I know?). Do you remember this historic incident? Were you the driver? If so, are the Meatheads still looking for you? Answers can be sent to the editor, or to the columnist, John Redmond (john_d._redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitary'

When you are out camping, listening to a bear shuffle through your belongings can be an in tents experience.

Murphy's other Laws

The amount of work done varies inversely with the amount of time spent in the office.

Quotable Quotes

The human heart is like a ship on a stormy sea driven about by winds blowing from all four corners of heaven. - *Martin Luther King*.

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 a Fund Raising and Whiskey Tasting event at our 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, of course, are welcome.

DATE: Friday March 7th, 2014

TIME: 1800 hrs – 2300 hrs

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

TO RESERVE YOUR TICKET CONTACT:

LCol James Barrett

Cell: (604) 916-1766

E-Mail: barrettjd007@gmail.com

Reserve your tickets early to not miss out on a great night!

All profits will go to support the activities of the 15th Field Regimental Society. Tax receipts will be issued for all donations on request.



Churchill Society of British Columbia
Simon Fraser University -
Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies
Royal United Service Institute - Vancouver

PRESENTS THE ANNUAL BANQUET:

“The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914”

with guest speaker, Margaret MacMillan



Thursday, March 27

Please join us on Thursday, March 27 to welcome our guest speaker Margaret MacMillan, one of Canada’s top historians, who will address our Society on *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*.



Professor Margaret MacMillan is the Warden of St. Antony’s College and a Professor International History at the University of Oxford and a Professor of History at the University of Toronto. Her books include *Women of the Raj* (1988, 2007); *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (2002); *Nixon in China: Six Days that Changed the World* (2006, 2007); *The Uses and Abuses of History* (2008) and *Extraordinary Canadians: Stephen Leacock* (2009). Her most recent book, published in 2013, is *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*. Margaret is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and an Officer of the Order of Canada. She sits on the European Advisory Board of Princeton University Press.

Margaret MacMillan was born in Toronto. She is former Provost of Trinity College, Toronto (2002-2007) and formerly a professor of History at Ryerson University. Professor MacMillan received an Honours B.A. in History from Trinity College, Toronto. Margaret has honorary degrees from the University of King’s College, Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston Ontario and Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario.

- Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014
Location: Members’ Lounge, The Vancouver Club, 915 Hastings Street West, Vancouver, B.C.
Time: Reception and Cash Bar starts at 5:45 pm, Dinner in Ballroom at 7:00 pm
Cost: \$115 each for a Member of the Society, SFU or RUSI, \$130 each for a non-Member
(includes wine with dinner)

Please note the dress code is black tie or mess kit (business attire optional)

I look forward to seeing you March 27.

Ian E. Marshall, Secretary
Churchill Society of British Columbia

PATRON: THE LADY SOAMES, L.G., D.B.E.

Thailand Curry Lunch



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

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



- Date:** Thursday, February 27, 2014
- 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 21, 2014)
- 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 21, 2014

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, March 27, 2014



and

VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR

with

Soprano ~ Suzann Kingston

presented by

The Vancouver Welsh Society

Saturday, March 1, 2014 7:30 pm
Michael J Fox Theatre
7373 Macpherson Avenue, Burnaby

TICKETS:

Adults \$25

Seniors \$22

Students \$10 (with ID) Children under 12 no charge

Book on line:

vwmc.ca (no fees)

Call:

Orpheus Choir info line 604 515-5686

Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir at 604 878-1190

Vancouver Welsh Society Ticket line 604 742-1378

vwmc.ca

welshsociety.com

vancouverorpheus.org

