



**Vancouver Artillery  
Association News**



**RUSI News  
Vancouver**

## **Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Mar 15, 2016**

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: [www.vancouvergunners.ca](http://www.vancouvergunners.ca) and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

**Wednesday Lunches** The 15 Field Officers Mess serves 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. Jacket and tie required, equivalent for ladies. We are now pushing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed lunch each month as the Van Arty Association lunch and encouraging members to attend. Come meet some old friends and help with the Yearbook project.

**RUSI Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference** With less than a month to go registrations are proceeding at a fast clip for the Strategic Studies Conference on April 8 and 9, so now is the time register without delay. With the theme of 'Global Flashpoints' the conference will be held in the Alice MacKay Conference Room at the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library. The conference promises a full range of expert presentations on topics that make today's headlines. A panel discussion will get the conference started on the evening of Friday April 8, followed by a full day of presentations on Saturday April 9. This is the annual signature event of RUSI Vancouver, with the generous support of numerous organizations. We encourage everyone with an interest in foreign affairs and defence policy to attend. Register now for the 2016 Strategic Studies Conference by going to the Eventbrite link on the notice page at the end of this newsletter. *Thank you, Cam Cathcart, President, RUSI Vancouver.*

### **World War 2 - 1940**

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

**Mar 15<sup>th</sup>:** 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Indian Divisions renew their attacks on the Italian's defensive positions at Keren in Eretria.

**Mar 16<sup>th</sup>:** Scharnhorst and Gneisenau bag 16 ships from a dispersed convoy; but two U-Boat aces are lost in another wild convoy battle this night as the gallant Otto Kretschmer is captured after U100 is sunk and Schepke goes down with U99. The battle for Keren in Eretria starts to go the British way while the RN lands small detachment at the Eritrean port of Berbera.

**Mar 17<sup>th</sup>:** Cunningham's advance from Mogadishu reaches Jijiga.

**Mar 19<sup>th</sup>:** HMS Malaysia is torpedoed by U106, and the wounded battleship limps off towards New York for repairs. Yugoslavia is told by Germany to decide which side they'll be on in five days – or else.

**Mar 20<sup>th</sup>:** Four Yugoslavian cabinet ministers resign when it seems Regent Paul favours signing on with the Axis. Hargeisa in Ethiopia is liberated by British forces.

**Mar 21<sup>st</sup>:** 11<sup>th</sup> African Division dislodges the Italians from Marda Pass in Ethiopia.

**Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Scharnhorst and Gneisenau are back in Brest after a seven week run in the North Atlantic, during which they evaded all pursuit and sank 22 ships of 115,600 tons displacement.

## **Yorke Island**

A quick introduction: I am Ross Keller, an amateur/hobbyist and historian who has fallen in love with a tiny island out on the west coast of BC that houses one of Canada's greatest little secrets: it was the site of one of WWII's coast defence batteries.

Yorke Island was the site of a fort tasked with protecting the inside passage to Vancouver via Johnstone strait. Located between Vancouver Island and the BC mainland just north of Kelsey Bay, it watched for incursion or invasion by vessels of enemy forces. The site was home to constant construction from 1938-1945 before being decommissioned in 1946. Starting with two 4.7inch guns covered with camo net it gradually expanded to: three .50cal emplacements, 2x40mm Bofors platforms, 1 6lb Hotchkiss Examination gun to fire stopping rounds, and 2x6inch guns with overhead cover and anti-shrapnel concrete armour. It was then surrounded by over 100,000 cubic feet of concrete bunkers and underground rooms with hundreds of yards of fencing up at the Fort. There was also an island wide perimeter of double row concertina style barbed wire and 3x800million candlepower searchlights just above sea level. The camp had 66 buildings including a concrete generator shed and a full gymnasium. It was a massive effort.

First manned by 85 Coast Battery, of the 15th (Vancouver) Coast Brigade in Vancouver, which arrived on August 29, 1939. The forces on the Island grew to include many branches of the Canadian Military. That included the "Gumboot Navy" of fishing vessels assigned to check each boat coming through the Straits, also Searchlight and Engineering groups to man the Fort infrastructure, then Airforce liaison, Infantry for perimeter guards and defence, and Signals for the radio to warn of any impending attack. There was an unbelievable amount of men tasked to serve on Yorke. As many as 300 plus servicemen could be found on the island towards the end of the war.

I found out about this amazing place thanks to a hobby of visiting abandoned houses and settlements on the coast. I happened upon a place that had buildings moved from Yorke Island after the end of WWII. Next I learned that many of these camp buildings were sold to folks all up and down the coast from Malcolm Island, Port Neville, Sayward and Kelsey Bay, Hardwicke Island, and as far away as Campbell River. Soon after this discovery I learned that one of the former gunners who served on Yorke, John Rorison, had come back for a visit. I asked him to come over again to the island to tell me about the place . . . and then I was off and running. Cleaning trails, sweeping, cleaning up after visitors, and helping to hunt up items tossed around the island (all with a great amount of help from many family, friends and other great folks) is the least of what I have done. More importantly, I have been able to meet or speak to veterans

who served on the Island who have told me their stories and experiences: as gunners on the Coast to their times in Europe and then building their lives when they came home. I was honoured to become friends with these men and continue to keep in contact with them or their families to this day.

Which brings me to the reason I am reaching out today. I have struggled to search for and track down all research avenues available. Anyone who has had an experience doing this type of research has the challenge of knowing deep down that there is always more out there. Chasing down War Diaries, microfiches, paper documents, photos, war artist sketches, veterans who may still be alive or families of those who have passed, networking. A recent breakthrough for continuing to research Yorke Island came in regards to a gunner who died on Yorke Island, Wallace Brunt. This was thanks to the posting of documents referring to him being posted in the Vancouver Artillery Association Newsletter documents that I was aware of but unable to access myself. Using the information in them I was able to find the remainder of his surviving family to connect them with their patriarch's history. Gunner Brunt died in the waters of Yorke Island as part of the construction effort when he was pulled under by a tow line of a sinking vessel. This particular incident and its repercussions to his family have been a constant drive of mine to make sure that his death while serving continues to be honoured today. Happily, I can now say that other branches of the Brunt family are very happy to be able to once again connect with these long lost family members. Wallace's grandchildren themselves were unaware of their grandfather's service, how he had passed, or the size of their extended family.

In keeping with this effort, I would like to request that anyone reading this get in contact if they have any information available in regards to Yorke Island. Photos, documents, or any anecdotal stories you may have would be greatly appreciated. Should you know the whereabouts or way of contacting of any surviving men who served on the Island who are still with us: it would be great to get in contact with them. I would be happy to offer a 'quid pro quo" type of exchange with everything I have been allowed to share. I may also be able to work out Skype video tours of the island any time I am visiting the Fort for anyone who is interested but is unable to physically come out to the Island. For anyone who would like to visit the Island itself, I will happily arrange to take you over to the island for a day-trip or extended camp out. There are few things better on the island than watching the orcas pass by in the evening in between passing cruise ships.

In closing, I should also ask all readers to keep any researcher you may know in the back of your mind. Please never assume any of us have already seen a particular photo or document. Reach out or give us a call to ask about any item you may have found or person you have met. By taking that couple of minutes you may just be the big break we have been working towards for years. Feel free to touch base for a trip or with any historical information/documents by giving me a phone call at (250)203-0586 (I have free long distance to call you back any time) or via email: [treetraveler@hotmail.com](mailto:treetraveler@hotmail.com)

Thank you in advance:

Ross Keller

## **Could Drones Replace Canada's Fighter Jets?**

The Globe and Mail Mar. 10, 2016



Challenging the orthodoxy isn't typically encouraged in large organizations, so when it happens, a minor celebration is in order. General Jonathan Vance, the country's top soldier, is reimagining the future of the Royal Canadian Air Force – and that may include fewer fighter planes, but more drones. The Chief of the Defence Staff deserves plaudits for stepping outside the usual sandbox as he prepares a wide-ranging defence policy review. At a Senate committee this week, he suggested it will look at the possibility of a significant shift toward unmanned aerial vehicles, specifically long-range drones capable of carrying weapons. They could provide a versatile option for everything from surveillance, to search-and-rescue operations, to full-fledged military campaigns in places like Iraq and Syria. Acquiring them could reduce or even eliminate the need for an expensive program to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fighters. At the very least it implies the possibility of a smaller-scale one. The Canadian Forces already own a few small drones and have been thinking about acquiring more for some years; UAVs are de rigueur. It can be argued Gen. Vance is simply hewing to a newer military dogma.

These days, modern conflicts are rarely waged between fighter jocks in supersonic jets engaging in aerial dogfights. Nor are high-cost fighter aircraft necessarily what's needed for handling a lot of what Canada's air force does, things like northern sovereignty patrols and maritime reconnaissance. The fighter program is comparatively small. There is growing evidence that the next generation of combat aircraft will be unmanned, for reasons of technology and cost. Sophisticated drones aren't cheap – they can run in the tens of millions – but they are a bargain when compared to, for example, the controversial F-35 strike fighter. That plane has been plagued with technical hiccups and rampaging cost overruns, and the previous Conservative government rightly shelved plans to acquire it. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau ran on a promise to find cheaper alternatives. In the end, cabinet may opt to splash out for one last fighter fleet. The good news is it won't be because the senior defence leadership is entirely wedded to old ideas.

## **Canadian Military Unable to Account for All Lost Weapons**

'Are they really lost or have they somehow fallen into the wrong hands?'

*By Brigitte Bureau and Giacomo Panico, CBC News Mar 08, 2016*

Canada's military is unable to track whether weapons recorded in public accounts as "lost" are actually missing, or were removed from inventory for some other reason. Public accounts records released in December 2015 tracked financial losses for individual departments, but don't detail how or why certain items — in the case of the Defence Department, a range of weapons and related equipment — disappeared. So while the records show a total financial loss of 1,128 weapons and weapon accessories between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015, DND is unable to



differentiate between items that are actually missing, and those that were damaged beyond repair in training exercises, for example.



*During the fiscal year 2014-2015, the DND reported 1,128 weapons were removed from service.*

*(PC/Kacper Pempel / Reuters)*

The revelation came after Radio-Canada submitted an access to information request asking for a breakdown of the types of weapons that were lost. One month after the request was made, DND replied that it needed more time to tabulate the data, since it does not maintain a central registry of its lost weapons. A DND spokesperson explained by email that while individual units within the military collect specific data on lost weapons, there's no master list to track those numbers nationally. That absence of information is cause for concern, according to lawyer and retired Canadian Forces colonel Michel Drapeau.

*Michel Drapeau, a retired Canadian Forces colonel, says the absence of a central registry is alarming.*

*(ICI Radio-Canada)*



"I am shocked by it. If a unit happens to have a higher share of what you would expect for a unit to lose, and if you have no national control over it, maybe a unit, or two or three could account for 50 per cent of the losses. That should drive, at the national level, to say, 'Just a second, there is something going on here,'" said Drapeau. Among the weapons listed as financial losses last year are one rifle, one handgun, 29 bayonets and one missile launcher — which DND was able to confirm was destroyed when a military aircraft crashed. But the reasons other weapons were recorded as losses are not known at the national level, something Drapeau says needs to change. "It's important that we know exactly at any given moment, who has these weapons ... and if they are lost, are they really lost or have they somehow fallen into the wrong hands? We need to know." The DND spokesperson said the department treats the security of its resources very seriously, and any theft or loss of any public asset is investigated by the chain of command, ministry officials or military police.

## **Wanted: Top guns for dogfights with Canada's CF-18 fighter pilots**

*David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen | March 12, 2016*

Canada's top guns are in need of some top guns to fight against. And they'll get such adversaries by the end of the year. The Canadian government plans to award by December a contract, estimated to be worth as much as \$1.5 billion, to a fleet of fighter jets to go toe-to-toe with the military's CF-18s. A private company will be selected to act as the training partner for

Canada's fighter pilots, as well as provide other aircraft to act as the enemy for the Canadian army and navy. The project, known as the Contracted Airborne Training Services or CATS, will run over an initial 10-year period, followed by the option to continue for another five years.

The Canadian-based Discovery Air Defence has been providing such services for the Canadian military since 2005. It has also expanded its operations internationally and was recently hired to do the same thing for Germany's armed forces. But the Canadian government wants to open the competition up potentially to other firms. Pierre-Alain Bujold, a spokesman for Public Services and Procurement Cda, said the bids for CATS went in Feb. 16. "The evaluation, which includes aircraft inspection, is expected to take up to five months," he explained. "The contract is expected to be awarded by the end of 2016." Two firms have publicly acknowledged they have submitted bids: Discovery Air Defence of Montreal, and CAE, also from Quebec, which has allied itself with Draken, a U.S. firm. Garry Venman, vice-president of business development and government relations at Discovery Air Defence, said the company pioneered the concept in Canada of such airborne services and is now considered an industry leader throughout the world. "We've flown more than 55,000 hours in support of the Canadian and German militaries," he said. "We've got the experience of doing it for the last 11 years." Discovery Air Defence traces its lineage to 2001, when it was founded by three former CF-18 pilots.

The firm has what is considered the world's largest fleet of operational fighter jets in private hands. The company is now looking to acquire U.S.-built F-16 fighters for more advanced training. "We're poised for significant growth," Venman said. "We're doing all the things the Canadian government says it wants Canadian companies to do — creating jobs and conducting business internationally." Mike Greenley, vice-president and general manager of CAE Canada, said his company is experienced in delivering training systems while Draken, based in Florida, can provide the aircraft. CAE and Draken are also proposing to conduct research and development for future ways to deliver such services, including involving simulation, Greenley said. The company hopes being selected for the Canadian contract will set the stage for winning other international competitions for such training services. "This collaboration with Draken is the spark of a global relationship," he said. CATS will provide aircraft to the Canadian Forces to simulate hostile threats for ground and naval forces as well as fighter pilots. The winning firm will also provide aircraft to tow targets and carry electronic warfare systems for various training scenarios, according to the information supplied by Public Services and Procurement Canada to industry.

The winning bidder is required not only to provide planes and pilots but also maintenance crews and engineering support. The Canadian government estimates that aircraft operated by the winning bidder will have to fly between 2,500 and 3,500 hours a year. The majority of services will be provided in Victoria; Cold Lake, Alta.; Bagotville, Que.; and Halifax. Other training flights could take place outside Canada, including in the U.S. and Mexico. Venman said the company's contract with the German military helps set the stage to offer other NATO nations similar services. Greenley said CAE has a global presence that will serve it well to support any

such deals it wins. Public Services and Procurement Canada confirmed to Postmedia that three bids have been received for CATS. However, because of its procurement rules, the federal department does not identify the names of bidders. At this point it is unclear which other firm entered the competition.

## Updated RCA Cap Badge

In June 2006 the Canadian Heraldic Authority and the Inspector of Canadian Forces Colours and Badges approved the adoption of an updated RCA Badge to replace the 1961 design. The updated badge was officially released, effective 26 May 2015; serving members have until 16 May 2016 to make the change. The small beret and both the large forage cap metal badges are to be replaced. With the lack of fidelity on the cloth cap badge no design changes have been made. Because the new RCA cap badges have been deemed “upgrades” and not “new” there will be no “free exchange” of cap badges at CF Supply Depots. The only source for the upgraded badges is the RCA Kitshop and Warehouse. All RegF and PRes 00368 personnel are required to be wearing the new updated RCA badge by NLT 26 May 2016 (Artillery Day).



The Officers burnt bronze cap badge on the left (Insignia Service Cap Offr, RCA) reflects pre 68 colour/finish and style retaining the

spinning wheel. The NCM cap badge, on the right (Insignia Service Cap NCM, RCA) reflects pre 68 anodized Aluminum finish and style with the addition of the spinning wheel.



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF CANADIAN ARTILLERY  
(BADGE ENSIGNED BY THE ROYAL CROWN)  
LE RÉGIMENT ROYAL DE L'ARTILLERIE CANADIENNE  
(INSIGNE SOMMÉ DE LA COURONNE ROYALE)

Canadian Heraldic Authority  
Autorité héraldique du Canada  
15 June/ juin 2006

Inspector of Canadian Forces  
Colours and Badges  
Inspecteur des drapeaux et insignes  
des Forces canadiennes

### *The New Badge*

*Why the change? Someone noticed that our badge was identical to the RA badge and the Cdn College of Heraldry pointed out that two separate entities, even though they are 'related', cannot have identical badges, so some subtle changes were made to create our new badge. You would have to compare the old and new badges side by side with a magnifying glass to see the difference but it was enough to keep the Heraldry happy.*



## Who is it?

**Last Week:** The car pictured two weeks ago has now been identified as an Alder 2.5L. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adler\\_2.5-litre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adler_2.5-litre)



This lovely gaggle of ladies is Cadre 47 Women's Troop, Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers), passing out parade, 1989. At least two of them are living in Vancouver, and the RHKR has an association here, as did (not sure now) the HKMSC (the regular HK army). It would be nice to get them to use the mess once in a while.

**This Week:** We continue our theme of “What Unit is That?”, with this photo that speaks to events that occur in March. Those fortunate enough to live in Vancouver, where we are swamped with falling petals from all the blossoms, will know that this month hosts the Celtic Festival, whose jewel in the crown is the Saint Patrick’s Day Parade (this year on Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>). While not as big as the one in Montreal (and, I hear, those of some other smaller cities, such as New York and Dublin), it is fun, replete with pipers, dancers, and goofy people. It’s all good crack.



So, our photo is of lads from a famous regiment, some of them twirling with pretty lasses of another unit, or maybe just their sisters. Our questions this week are two: what is that famous regiment, and what is the chap blowing on, exactly (yes, it is a doodle sack, but exactly what type?). A slight hint: this regiment no longer exists, having been amalgamated about a dozen times since the photo was taken in 1964. Another hint: they were here in Vancouver that year. Your answers may be sent to the editor, Bob O’Mugford, or the author, John Redmond (that’s already an Irish name, so no “O” needed) [johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net) This contest is open to all, Irish and other (after all, St. Patrick wasn’t Irish, was he!). As always, you can email the editor for a picture you can zoom in on [Bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:Bob.mugford@outlook.com)

## From the ‘Punitentary’

Why are teddy bears never hungry? They are always stuffed!

## Murphy’s other Laws

Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don't.

## Quotable Quotes

Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there. - *Will Rogers*



# CELTICFEST

PRESENTS

## THE VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR



ONE OF CANADA'S LARGEST MEN'S CHOIRS

Friday, March 11th, 7:30pm (Doors open 7:00pm)

**ST. ANDREW'S-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH**

**1012 Nelson Street, Vancouver, B.C.**

(Corner of Burrard & Nelson, Vancouver)

**With Master Piper Tim Fanning, Ballyhooley,  
and the De Danaan School of Irish Dance**

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM

Online at [www.vwmc.ca](http://www.vwmc.ca)

or by phone 604-878-1190

or from VWMC Members

**\$30 general. \$40 premium seating.**

**\$27 Seniors and Students with ID.**

# BC Regiment Association

invites you to the



# St. Patrick's Day Party

**Where:** BC Regiment Drill Hall  
620 Beatty St, Vancouver

**When:** Sunday March 13, 2016

**Time:** 13:00hr – 17:00hr  
(Meet & Greet 13:00hr,  
Lunch 13:45hr)

**Cost:** \$20 RSVP by March 6

**RSVP:** Sandra Young 604-543-0368 or  
sandymay@shaw.ca

**Prize for St. Patrick's Day best dressed**

**Lunch:** Irish Stew, Salad, Buns & Dessert

**Door prize giveaways**

**Lucky Draw prize raffles:** \$20 arm's length or 3 tickets for \$5  
50/50

Come down for the St. Patrick's Day Parade 11:00-12:30hr Howe & Georgia Streets  
and then come warm up with some hot stew, catch up with some friends and listen to  
the BC Regiment Association Irish Pipes & Drums.



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# *Mark Your Calendar*

## **2016 RUSI VANCOUVER STRATEGIC STUDIES CONFERENCE**

**APRIL 8 & 9, 2016**

**Central Branch, Vancouver Public Library**

### *Conference Theme* – **GLOBAL FLASHPOINTS**

Featuring speakers and panels on the future of NATO, Middle East militarism, China and the West Pacific, the Arctic, and Canada and International Security.

**Opening Remarks: The Hon Judith Guichon OBC  
Lieutenant Governor of BC**

**Keynote Speaker: Hon Harjit Sajjan PC OMM MSM CD  
Minister of National Defence**

**Conference fee: \$45 Regular; \$30 Students.** (*includes light refreshments and Saturday lunch*)

*Register at:*

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2016-vancouver-strategic-studies-conference-tickets-21259706354>

**Contacts: Keith Maxwell ([kdm Maxwell@gmail.com](mailto:kdm Maxwell@gmail.com)) or Cam Cathcart ([lhccathcart@gmail.com](mailto:lhccathcart@gmail.com))**

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*The following support the 2016 Strategic Studies Conference:*



# Taste of Thailand Curry Lunch



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



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

- Date:** Thursday, March 31, 2016
- 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 March 21, 2016)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please e-mail Charlotte Yen at [corporate@hplaw.ca](mailto:corporate@hplaw.ca)  
(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 March 21, 2016

**NEXT PLANNED LUNCH:** *Thursday, April 28, 2016*