



Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Feb 17, 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 9th – 17th: One day whilst in front, the Leicester's found the bodies of two young girls in a nude condition, underneath some straw, just in front of the trenches. They had evidently been violated and murdered some long time before, for the bodies were decomposing – just two more innocent victims and proof of the way the blaggards fight. During this time it was very quiet; we did little firing. It was the nicest position we had ever been in. It was a change, except for Collins having a couple of squeaks while repairing the line. Nothing worth recording happened, for nothing in the nature of a shell came near us, and we did very little night firing – we called it rest.

World War 2 - November 1939

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

Feb 17th: Manstein sees Hitler with a plan for an Ardennes invasion, and Hitler is greatly impressed with it. In Finland, all of the Mannerheim line is now in Soviet hands.

Feb 19th: Soviet tank attacks puncture the Finn's next defence line.

Feb 21st: Work begins on the construction of a concentration camp at Auschwitz."

Canadian Forces Set to Train Near Site of Boko Haram Attacks

Federal officials say no plan to fight Islamic militants. CBC News Posted: Feb 11, 2015

Canadian Special Forces are set to take part in a multi-country military training exercise in a part of Western Africa that continues to see attacks by the Islamic militant group Boko Haram. Canada's Department of National Defence says the soldiers will not fight Boko Haram, but it's not clear what would happen should they encounter the militants during training exercises, which start Monday in Diffa, Niger. A slate of Western nations are set to participate in a series

of "U.S.-sponsored, African-led" military training exercises known as Flintlock. This year's exercises will be based in Chad and Niger.



A US Special Forces soldier trains Senegalese troops in combat techniques in Mali, during a 2010 joint training exercise with units from several African armies. This year's joint training exercises, called Flintlock, will bring together 1,200 troops from Western and African nations in Chad and Niger, where the militant group Boko Haram has been making incursions. (Alfred de Montesquiou/Associated Press)

Daniel LeBouthillier, a spokesman for DND, said in an email that Canadian troops are "not fighting Boko Haram in the town of Diffa," but rather participating in the Flintlock exercise. LeBouthillier did not immediately respond to questions about what Canada's troops would do if they encounter Boko Haram forces in the course of the exercise in Diffa. Diffa, a region near Niger's border with Nigeria and Chad, has been the site of recent attacks by the militant group and is now under a 15-day state of emergency. Reuters is reporting that two female bombers blew themselves up Wednesday in Diffa, citing two security sources.



Diffa is located near Niger's borders with Nigeria and Chad. (Google Maps)

More than 1,200 personnel will be involved in the Flintlock exercise, with participants from Burkina Faso, Denmark, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Mauritania, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Senegal, Spain, the U.K., Mali, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania and the United States. Canadian Forces personnel are also involved in training Iraqi and Kurdish forces battling Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) fighters in Iraq. The military has said the Canadian Special Forces have returned fire with ISIS on three occasions, forcing the government to address opposition questions over "mission creep."

RCAF Commander to Retire in Military Shake Up

CP Staff

OTTAWA – A number of changes are in the works for military brass, including the retirement of the head of the air force and the promotion of the first woman to run the personnel branch. The country's top military commander, Gen Tom Lawson, has announced a series of



promotions and new postings, many of which take effect throughout the coming months.

The biggest change is the departure of Lt Gen Ivan Blondin, a veteran fighter pilot who became head of the air force just over two years ago and was one of the biggest champions of the controversial F-35 program. He will be replaced by Maj Gen Mike Hood, who will get a promotion to lieutenant-general later in the year. Hood's position, as director of the military's nerve centre at Strategic Joint Staff, will be filled by Maj Gen Charles Lamarre, who led the task force that closed down Canada's mission in Kandahar.

It was also announced that Maj Gen Christine Whitecross will take over as chief of military personnel, replacing Lt Gen David Millar, who led efforts within National Defence to manage the suicide crisis among soldiers in 2013-14. Whitecross has broken a number of barriers within the military, being the first female commanding officer of construction engineering unit and she was also the first female commander of the country's Joint Task Force North. "I've never been comfortable with the phrase 'first female'," Whitecross told a internal National Defence publication last fall. "And I never engaged in women's issues until I became a (commanding officer) and had the opportunity to mentor. I realized that you can really make a difference by opening doors for people, which is so satisfying." Also, the military surgeon-general, Brig Gen Jean-Robert Bernier, will retire and be replaced by Col Colin MacKay.



PROCUREMENT FIGHTS, SPENDING CUTS AHEAD

Kenney will be in charge of a department beset with problems.

David Pugliese and Jason Fekete. 10 Feb 2015 Ottawa Citizen

Jason Kenney becomes the new minister of National Defence, taking over from Rob Nicholson, who becomes the new Foreign Affairs minister. Kenney is the third defence minister in the last 19 months. He leaves the post of minister of Employment and Social Development (formerly Human Resources and Skills Development Canada). But he continues to serve as minister for Multiculturalism, a position he has held since summer 2013. Kenney has been, and remains, a key point man for the Conservative party on outreach to immigrant communities and new Canadians, and is important to the party's hopes of winning swing ridings. Kenney walks into a

department beset with problems ranging from a broken procurement system to a navy with a dwindling number of ships to put to sea. With a federal election scheduled for the fall, it remains to be seen if he can introduce any significant fixes to the problems that have been building over years. The department and Canadian Forces are dealing with cuts and tighter budgets than they are used to. DND bureaucrats and the generals will be looking to Kenney to squeeze more money from the Finance department. In an attempt to generate some good news, Kenney could be provided with one high-profile announcement during his tenure: the Conservative government is expected to give the green light to the purchase of new search-and-rescue planes. That project that has been stalled for years. Kenny faces a major problem with



Canada's navy. It will soon be without vessels capable of resupplying its warships at sea. He will have to approve some kind of interim capability — perhaps the leasing of commercial vessels — to do that job. Kenny will also be overseeing Canada's contribution to the war in Iraq. The mission is expected to be renewed in April.

MP Jason Kenney has been appointed the Minister of National Defence. Adrian Wyld/ The Canadian Press

The 46-year-old Kenney is fluently bilingual. He was born in Ontario and raised in Saskatchewan, where he graduated from Notre Dame College. Prior to entering federal politics in 1997, Kenney served as president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. He was elected MP for Calgary Southeast in 1997 for the Reform Party and has been re-elected five times, most recently with 76 per cent of the vote. Kenney moves to Defence after having served as minister of Employment and Social Development since July 2013, where he was responsible for reforming the controversial temporary foreign worker (TFW) program, after Canadians complained they were losing their jobs to TFWs. While new to the Defence portfolio, Kenney — as one of Stephen Harper's most senior and trusted cabinet ministers — is certainly no stranger to many of the department's important files. He continues to chair the cabinet committee on Operations, and sits on the cabinet committees for Foreign Affairs and Security, and Priorities and Planning. Kenney is well versed on the military mission in Iraq, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and the government's procurement problems.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's cabinet shuffle on Monday, though it involved only three members, is a major shakeup for his government. Rob Nicholson, after barely a year and a half at National Defence, is off to Foreign Affairs, replacing the suddenly departed John Baird. Pierre Poilievre will take over at Employment, thus freeing up Jason Kenney for Defence. Mr Nicholson is a dependable if uninspiring choice, a parliamentarian with much experience at senior levels of government and no disasters under his watch. He'll steer a steady course at Foreign Affairs, at least until the election due later this year. Mr Poilievre, on the other hand, has never before held such a major cabinet post, and takes over at Employment at a time when

job losses are very much a front page issue for Canadians — an assignment for which his chief qualification would appear to be his unswerving loyalty to the prime minister.

It's Mr Kenney's appointment that makes this shuffle intriguing. The Calgary MP has proven to be one of the best managers Mr Harper has in his government. Time and again, Mr Kenney has been given difficult files and handled them competently. Since 2007, as Minister of Multiculturalism (a portfolio he stills holds), he has served as the government's ambassador to Canada's varied ethnic communities, with much success. He tackled Citizenship and Immigration next, to generally favourable reviews, dealing with issues as diverse and complicated as American war resisters claiming asylum in Canada to clearing up the backlog of unprocessed applications. At Employment, he stickhandled the Canada Job Grant past the provinces; if his reforms to the troubled Temporary Foreign Workers program have not been an unalloyed triumph, he has at least got it off the front pages.

Mr Kenney's move to National Defence is therefore revealing. He has served for years as the man Mr Harper would trust to go into a messy situation and fix it. Despite the attention and praise the Tories heap on the military, the Armed Forces are badly underfunded at a time when they are being asked to take on missions all over the world. Recruitment and retention are constant concerns. There is an enormous backlog of equipment that must be acquired or replaced, now — through a procurement process that is, to be charitable, broken. Instead of being an electoral strength and policy success story for the Conservatives, the military may now actually be a liability.

Mr Kenney is the right man to take on this challenge. He is a skilled enough operator to get military procurement back on track, or at least make a start. He is an effective enough politician to begin waving the flag for the Armed Forces again, helping to reverse some of the public relations damage the Tories' once-favourite cause has done to them of late. Most of all, he has the confidence of the Prime Minister, which he will need in the months ahead. Canada's Armed Forces are contributing to the fight against ISIS in Iraq, reinforcing NATO in Europe and working to overhaul their capacity at home. Altogether, it is an enormous challenge. If it is encouraging that Mr Kenny has been given the job, it is also a sign of how badly he's needed

Senior Bureaucrats with Agendas – the Real Culprits

By former military Ombudsman - Col (r) Pat Stogran - from an article originally published in Esprit de Corps magazine.



A recent pre-election cabinet shuffle saw PM Harper abandon yet another loyal colleague, this time beleaguered symbolic organ grinder for Veterans Affairs Canada, Julian Fantino. His former dancing monkey, Erin O'Toole, has had his sycophancy rewarded by handing him control of the organ crank. I

was asked numerous times to comment on the significance of the change, and I think the best response I could muster was also my briefest, where I shrugged my shoulders and grunted, “Meh!” While political pundits and fanatical party-faithful will be reveling in the implications this move will have on the games they play, I have no time for those shenanigans. At the end of the day, I care about the people who are being victimized by the government’s malfeasance and intransigence and I am afraid this will do little if anything to remedy the harm that is being inflicted still on our disabled and disadvantaged Veterans and their families.

I worked for two Ministers and tracked the ovations of at least two others and it is clear to me they are non-players. Prime Minister Harper calls the shots from the political side, and the senior executives hold the hammer on policy. Erin O’Toole has demonstrated that he is as clever, ambitious and disingenuous as any of his colleagues on the Hill, but let’s be clear about something, his ascendance to power was for no other reason than to make his boss look good. In my opinion, the only thing that Prime Minister Harper is interested in is his own re-election to office. The real culprits as I see it are the senior executives in the public service, an oligarchy with hidden agendas and an illegitimate power base. Sure, Mr O’Toole is a Veteran, but having been captain in the Airforce hardly qualifies to grip a rogue bureaucracy of thousands with a budget of billions. Even his predecessor, the arrogant, abrasive, and uncompromising former chief of three major police forces, was not able to crack that nut.

The mandarins running this oligarchy created the so-called New Veterans Charter that cheats Veterans and handed it to the short-lived government of Paul Martin’s Liberals as a fait accompli. When I called the Minister on it, the mandarins fed Blackburn the spin that 70% of Veterans were satisfied with the provisions of the Act. What they didn’t tell him, to his embarrassment, was that they chose the Vets to be surveyed and the most seriously disabled and disadvantaged either abstained or expressed dissatisfaction. They also instigated a so-called “Independent Assessment” to make a business case to downsize VAC and outsource the care of our Veterans to third parties in the private sector. The mandarins hired one Keith Coulter, a not-so-independent retired Deputy Minister who was hired with a sole source contract. Coulter’s mission was clear the first time I met with him, and so was that of the implementation team who visited me to seek my support long before Coulter completed his report. Despite the bad press the Conservatives surely would have preferred to avoid, the mandarins have continued their march to downsize the Department unabated.

The contempt of the mandarins towards Veterans was evident in a spate of embarrassing breaches of personal privacy and admonishment by the Privacy Commissioner. To counter this, senior execs hired another retired Deputy Minister, Alain Jolicoeur, on another sole source contract who — surprise, surprise — gave VAC a clean bill of health. Shortly thereafter the Toronto Star revealed that the Department had “quietly logged” 38 more privacy breaches of 101 across the federal government. While Fantino and his predecessors were out there doing a song and dance about how committed they are to Veterans, bureaucrats from the Department of Justice fronted up in the BC Supreme Court to fight the certification of a class action suit by wounded Veterans grieving the New Veterans Charter. The bureaucrats’ argument was, in its

essence, that the Federal Government has no legal or moral responsibility to provide care for Veterans beyond that of any other Canadian citizen. You can bet that the politicians would rather the public hadn't heard that. The presiding judge didn't want to hear anything of the sort, so he promptly referred the case to the Supreme Court of Canada. And just so that there was no misunderstanding, the bureaucrats appealed the decision re-affirming their blatant contradiction of the Minister's pledges of compassion for and sacred commitment to Veterans.

No, the politicians don't carry near the sway in government that the pundits like to think and government likes us to believe. Canadians must understand that the relationship between the part-time parliamentarians and the lifetime professional bureaucrats is a symbiotic one much akin to what we would expect between rival criminal gangs. Narcissistic politicians are interested in one thing, staying in power, while the megalomaniacal senior bureaucrats are consumed by the control they wield. The common ground they share is their greed. We have witnessed but a snippet of the kickbacks and patronage that parliamentarians enjoy and the gold plated salary and benefit packages of their bureaucratic counterparts. The Clerk of the Privy Council is quite happy to let their political masters enjoy the trappings of their prestigious appointments as long as it doesn't intrude with his or her fiefdom. The event that led to Brent Rathgeber's departure from the conservative caucus was the failure of his private member's bill seeking to publicize the pay and benefits of senior bureaucrats.

So when I am asked if the appointment of Erin O'Toole is a sign that "times, they are a changing", I hope you can understand my ambivalence. Until we rebuild our democratic institutions, playing politics is like cheering for professional wrestling. The outcome of the match has little to do with the skills and spirit the fighters display in the ring. I hope too that I have sparked your activism and you will join me in my quest to make the bureaucracy fully transparent and accountable to Canadians and make our political machinations more meaningful for all.

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 (which includes \$25 RCAA dues). 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: We had a good response on this. This picture was taken about the same time as the previous quiz photo – maybe even the same exercise, as the location is again Ft Lewis. Pictured L-R: Captain Frank (Blackie) Forbes (MO), Maj Bob Foulis (Padre), Capt Marg Henderson (who was a CIC officer with the 15 Fd Cadet Corps) and LCol Stu McDonald (CO 1978-81). The soldier in the US Army Jeep is partially obscured by the windshield so is hard to ID but he is an American soldier. A number of drivers and vehicles were loaned to the Regt by the hosting unit, 1/11 FA Bn. The picture was obviously taken during that period where the Ft Lewis Base Commander had decreed that everyone had to wear full kit, including webbing, when outdoors. Helmets had to be worn – with the chin strap done up.

This Week: This week's photo comes from an album of the late Vic Stevenson. It shows an example of a mobile anti-motor torpedo boat system, with a twin six-pounder gun turret, such as can still be seen at Fort Rodd Hill, mounted on a flatbed truck. Or, does it?



In actual fact, this photo from the early 1950s, is part of a series taken in and around the old hangers at Jericho, one of which once housed the 102nd Coast Regiment (not to be confused with 102 Coast Bty, which operated in Prince Rupert during the war). This regiment existed for only a few years, being formed in 1948 and amalgamated with 43rd HAA in 1954. It was of note in that it included several baptised Sikhs. So, it can be assumed that this turret,

which is minus its guns, has something to do with that long-forgotten unit. However, we aren't sure quite what is happening. The truck is a civilian one, so, is the turret being moved in or out? Where is this turret now? Is it the one at Fort Rodd Hill, or was it scrapped, or sold to Libya, where it still exists on the back of a Toyota pick-up. We'd like to know.

Send your assumptions, guesses, and knowledge to the editor or to the author, John Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net). If you have it in your backyard, would you like to donate it to our museum? Bonus points for identifying the truck.

From the 'Punitenary'

When does a female deer need money? When she doesn't have a buck.

Murphy's other Laws

Any system that relies on computer reliability is unreliable.

Quotable Quotes

Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world. - *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

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

15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA

LOCATION: 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: **39 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](#).

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