

## Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News March 18, 2014

### Wednesday Lunches

Renovations to the kitchen are proceeding slowly. We have received confirmation that the floor in the Officers Mess is being done. The old carpet will be removed and the existing hardwood floor will be reconditioned. The floors are scheduled to be done 20-27 Mar 2014. This means that there will be **no lunch next week (March 26<sup>th</sup>)** Lunches will resume on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

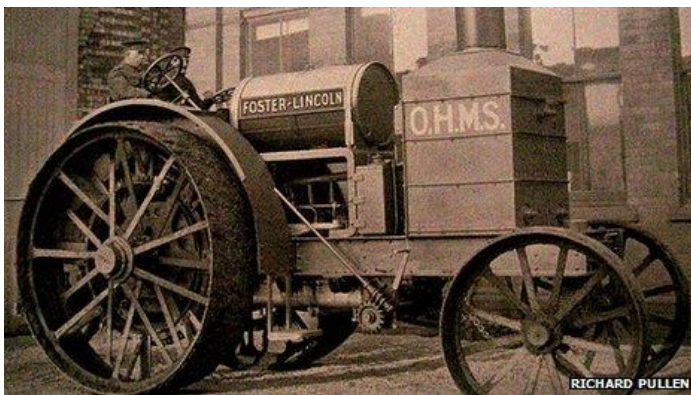
Guests and visitors are always welcome at lunch. People these days, especially civilians, don't think about dress much and, if not pre-warned, will show up in very casual dress so, to avoid embarrassment, please make them aware of the dress requirements (suit/blazer and tie, equivalent for ladies) before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

### World War One: The Tank's Secret Lincoln Origins

*By Greig Watson BBC News*

"The panic started, everyone from 1st and 3rd Companies jumped out of the trench and ran the fastest race of his life, pursued by the merciless tank machine-gun fire which cut down many men as if it were a rabbit-shoot." So remembered German soldier Wilhelm Speck, of the 84th Reserve Regiment. Some ran. Some stood and fought. But no-one forgot their first meeting with a tank. A weapon without precedent, which went on to dominate the battlefields of the 20th Century. And it was designed by two men, in little more than two months, working out of a small hotel room in Lincoln.

"By 1915, the British army knew it had an immense problem," said David Willey, curator at the Bovington Tank Museum. "Instead of a war of movement, the battlefield had become one of defensive trenches protected by thickets of barbed wire and machine guns. "So how to get through that? How do you break in to the German trenches? "To their credit, senior officers recognised technology might offer an answer. This brought a lot of crackpot ideas out of the



woodwork but also some with more potential." Armoured cars had been around for years, but with standard road wheels they were almost as helpless as cavalry when faced with ditches and dugouts. Vast ironclad war machines were the stuff of science fiction. It needed a harder head to find a solution.

*Fosters had already made giant artillery-towing tractors for the army*

Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, had listened to the swirl of bold ideas and nagged cabinet colleagues for action. In February 1915, the Admiralty Landships Committee began to examine ideas. But where to test them out? The choice seems, at first, rather odd. William Foster and Co Ltd, in Lincoln, specialised in threshing machines. But historian Richard Pullen explains the logic. "Foster's had worked with powerful - and tracked - machines for farms," he says. "This translated into making tractors to tow big artillery guns in the early days of the war. "So, the army knew they had experience, knew they could deliver and Lincoln was a nice, quiet spot away from prying eyes." The work needed more than technical experience, it needed two very particular men - William Tritton and Lieutenant Walter Wilson. "Tritton was a brilliant engineer," says Mr Pullen. "And he was a brilliant leader. He got things done. "He turned Foster's around with new ideas and new markets. "Couple him with Walter Wilson, who was also a good engineer but a genius with things like gearboxes, and they made a brilliant partnership."

On 22 July 1915, a commission was placed to design a machine that could cross a trench 4ft (1.2m) wide. To get away from the noise and distraction of Foster's factory, a suite was taken at the White Hart Hotel, in Lincoln. "They locked themselves in the room and would scribble designs on envelopes and cigarette packets," says Mr Pullen. "Anything they liked went to the factory for testing, anything they didn't went on the fire." They knew they had to work fast. "Everyone was worried the Germans would come up with a similar machine first," he explains. "It could change the course of the war. "It was also viewed as a way to save the lives of men on the front by breaking the deadlock. Every day longer it took meant more British soldiers died." A first design, little more than an armoured box on US tractor tracks, known as Little



Willie, was tested on 19 September. It failed.

*Secrecy surrounded the project with early models reportedly being painted with Cyrillic letters to back up disinformation they were snow ploughs for Russia*

A 5ft (1.5m) bank could not be overcome and as it crossed a trench, the tracks sagged from their rollers and came off.

Officials from London, who only dared whisper about the project, were dumbfounded to find workers had invited their families, complete with picnics, to the tests. When challenged," said Mr Pullen, "Tritton growled that to treat the whole thing as a big secret would attract more attention." Tritton had spotted the problem early and new tracks were being designed from scratch. Bigger, tougher and built to cling to their frames. Fitted with the new system, Little Willie could cross the 4ft gap. But, the challenge had changed. The army now faced trenches 8ft (2.4m) wide. However, Wilson had also been looking ahead and had the answer ready. Instead of being tucked at the bottom of the machine, the tracks would go all the way round its 25ft 5in (7.75 m) length. They

would also be carried on forward-sloping "prows" projecting beyond the crew compartment, giving it a huge reach.

The famous "wonky box" lozenge shape was born. Various known as Centipede, Mother and Big Willie, it would weigh 28 tonnes. "It was a design ahead of its time," said Mr Pullen. "It pushed technology to the limit and beyond. "The engine they had to use was not really powerful enough - steering, command and tactics were in their infancy. But, the need was desperate" In line with the break-neck speed of the project, the design was approved at the end of September, a prototype was ready in December. After encouraging tests of the prototype on



the edge of the city of Burton Park, Lincoln, the machine was taken to the Marquis of Salisbury's golf course, in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, to be run across a mock battlefield for an audience of senior politicians and soldiers. The newly codenamed Tank (a deliberately vague term inspired by its boxy shape) bellowed into life and crashed over ditches, crossed a bog and crushed wire barriers. Its creators waited for the official verdict.

Elveden Hall, Suffolk, a shooting estate of 15 sq miles, was used to train the first tanks crews for combat and Dollis Hill, Brent, London was the Experimental Depot for Tanks, developing new designs and tactics including amphibious version (above)

One officer called it a "slug" and pronounced it too heavy for French bridges. Lord Kitchener, the Minister of War, felt it was "a toy" and "without serious military value". General Butler, representing Commander in Chief Douglas Haig and the most important opinion in the audience, leant over to a colleague and said: "How soon can we have them?" Mr Willey said: "The direct military impact of the tank can be debated but its effect on the Germans was immense, it caused bewilderment, terror and concern in equal measure. "It was also a huge boost to the civilians at home. After facing the Zeppelins, at last Britain had a wonder weapon. Tanks were taken on tours and treated almost like film stars. "And the example of the tank gives the lie to the myth that World War One generals were backward and dullards. "Here they looked for a new weapon, approved its use, then trained up the men to use it, all within a year."

## **Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal**



Are there any Korean War Veterans out there? If you served in Korean War, you may be eligible for the Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal. This commemorative medal is an expression of appreciation from the Korean government to Canadian service men and women who served in the Korean War. The Ambassador for Peace Medal began to be presented to veterans as a special memento for those of who returned to

South Korea through the 'Revisit Program'. The honour has since expanded to veterans who cannot travel long journey to Korea.

### **Criteria:**

1. To be eligible, the veterans must have served during the Korean War from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953. It is also available for the veterans who have participated in UN peacekeeping operations until the end of 1955.
2. The commemorative medals may be awarded posthumously. However, please understand that the highest priority for presenting the medal is given to veterans who are currently surviving in Canada. The next of kin, such as the spouse or descendants may apply for the medal on behalf of a deceased veteran.
3. In order to apply for this commemorative medal, veterans or their family members have to complete the application form. Application form is available on the Embassy Website: <http://can-ottawa.mofa.go.kr/english/am/can-ottawa/main/index.jsp> Veterans need to provide a copy of the Veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty along with their application form for verification purpose.
4. Please send your completed application form to the Defence Attaché Office, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Ottawa (150 Boteler Street, Ottawa, ON. K1N 5A6). If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact the Defence Attaché Office at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea at TEL 613-244-5027, FAX 613-244-5034 or email at [defenceaide@koreanembassy.ca](mailto:defenceaide@koreanembassy.ca)

## **Our Timber Tommies**

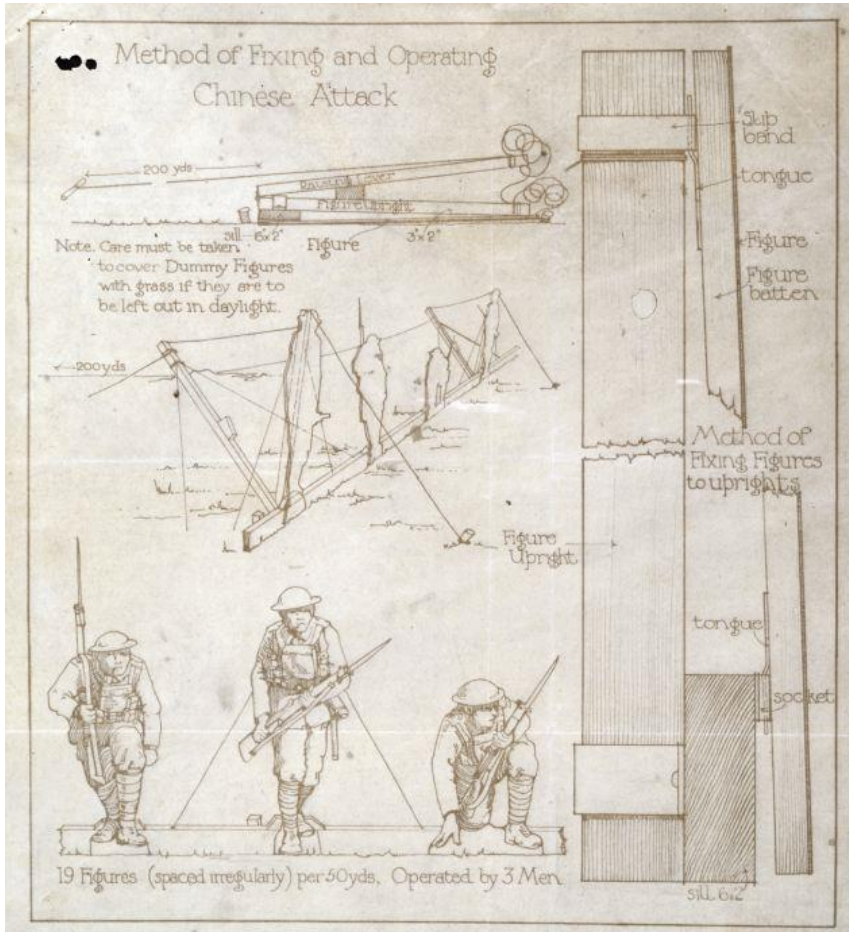
*WWI diaries tell how dummy troops fooled the Germans. Newly published diaries reveal wooden cut-outs made for front line that were designed to trick opposition into moving defences or opening fire. Up to 250 dummies per corps flipped up using ropes and levers*

By [DAVID WILKES](#) PUBLISHED: 13 March 2014 |

As shells rained down on No Man's Land and poisonous gas swirled into the trenches, a company of British soldiers stood firm. They were the timber Tommies of the First World War and they proved a vital tool in the battle to keep the Germans guessing. The wooden cut-outs made to resemble live soldiers on the move were positioned above the trenches to trick the enemy into concentrating their defences in one area, or provoking them to open fire while an attack was launched from another direction.

Their importance is revealed in diaries from the front line which have been published online by the National Archives for the first time today to mark the centenary of the war. The papers also show how warfare changed dramatically during the 1914-18 conflict to include new technologies such as tanks and gas attacks. The effectiveness of the dummies was proclaimed in a letter marked 'secret', sent by a Captain L B Kenny to Army top brass in February 1918. He wrote: 'Last year a certain amount of success was obtained by the use of dummy attacks, either independently or on the flank of an actual attack.'

Included with the letter was a sketch entitled ‘Method of fixing and operating Chinese attack’, thought to be a reference to deception methods originally developed in ancient China.



*Wooden soldiers: A sketch shows how the British army devised a system of using dummies to fool the enemy*

The diagram describes how the dummies, in various action poses, were flipped up into position above the trenches using ropes and levers. Up to 250 dummies could be supplied to any corps, and Captain Kenny suggested there should be ‘19 figures (spaced irregularly) per 50 yards, operated by 3 men’. The diaries also tell how dummies had been used at the Battle of Loos in 1915, which also saw the first use of poison gas by the British. In a lecture on the battle Lieutenant Colonel Spencer Edmund Hollond explained: ‘We made several feint attacks, with dummy figures, cheering etc to induce the Bosche [Germans] to man his trenches and

then poured a heavy fire on them.’ He told how they used gas to create ‘a panic’ and then used smoke bombs ‘to spin out the time to 40 minutes as it was known that the Germans had oxygen cylinders which lasted 30 minutes only’. But he questioned the effectiveness of the gas, saying: ‘There is no doubt that the combination of smoke and gas had a great moral effect on the Germans... On the front of the 28th Brigade, the gas and smoke never went over the German trenches but came back over our own. These men, however, were back at duty in three days which does not speak very well for the deadliness of the gas.’

## **Self Healing Paint Could Halt Rust on Military Vehicles**

3/18/2014 From Office of Naval Research

ARLINGTON, Va. (NNS) -- A new additive could help military vehicles, including the Marine Corps variant of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV), heal like human skin and avoid costly maintenance as a result of corrosion, officials announced March 18. Developed by The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in partnership with the Office of Naval Research (ONR), polyfibroblast allows scratches forming in vehicle paint to scar and heal before the effects of corrosion ever reach the metal beneath.

"Corrosion costs the Department of the Navy billions of dollars each year," said Marine Capt. Frank Furman, who manages logistics research programs for ONR's Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare and Combating Terrorism Department. "This technology could cut maintenance costs, and, more importantly, it could increase the time vehicles are out in the field with our Marines." Polyfibroblast is a powder that can be added to commercial-off-the-shelf paint primers. It is made up of microscopic polymer spheres filled with an oily liquid. When scratched, resin from the broken capsules forms a waxy, water-repellant coating across the exposed steel that protects against corrosion. While many self-healing paints are designed solely for cosmetic purposes, polyfibroblast is being engineered specifically for tactical vehicles used in a variety of harsh environments.

"We don't care if it's pretty," said Dr Jason Benkoski, senior scientist at the university lab and lead researcher on the project. "We only care about preventing corrosion." From rainstorms to sunlight, tactical vehicles face constant corrosion threats from the elements. Corrosion costs the Department of the Navy about \$7 billion each year. About \$500 million of that is the result of corrosion to Marine Corps ground vehicles, according to the most recent Department of Defense reports. Vehicles transported and stored on ships also are subject to salt spray from the ocean, a leading cause of problems for military hardware. In one laboratory experiment, polyfibroblast showed it could prevent rusting for six weeks inside a chamber filled with salt fog. "We are still looking into how to make this additive even more effective, but initial results like that are encouraging," said Scott Rideout, deputy program manager, Light Tactical Vehicles, Program Executive Officer (PEO) Land Systems, which is overseeing continued development on polyfibroblast for potential use on the Marine Corps variant of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. "Carry that out of the lab and into the inventory, and that translates to improved readiness and big savings."

The research and development of polyfibroblast underscores the Marine Corps' commitment to be "modernized with equipment and logistics that expand expeditionary capability and preserve our ability to operate from the sea" as stated in the Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025. Development of polyfibroblast began in 2008 and continued through the succession of three ONR program managers, eventually culminating in promising field and lab tests and a transition to PEO Land Systems. "To go from nothing to deployment in five years would be quite extraordinary," Benkoski said. "This progress has a lot to do with ONR's close relationship with PEO Land Systems and both organizations' willingness to let me carry out the research in accordance with our shared vision."

ONR provides the science and technology necessary to maintain the Navy and Marine Corps' technological advantage. Through its affiliates, ONR is a leader in science and technology with engagement in 50 states, 70 countries, 1,035 institutions of higher learning and 914 industry partners. ONR employs approximately 1,400 people, comprising uniformed, civilian and contract personnel, with additional employees at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, DC.

## **Canadian Forces Sailing Association Vancouver**

If you are interested in learning how to sail, we welcome you to come and learn about our recreational sailing club. Membership is very reasonable and courses are much cheaper than you would pay at local sail training establishments, yet they are done in accordance with Sail Canada standards (formerly Canadian Yachting Association).

**Canadian Forces Sailing Association Vancouver, Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held as follows:**

**Date:** 6 April 2014

**Time:** 1300 hours (1:00pm) - expected meeting completion by 1500 hrs (3:00pm)

**Location:** HMCS Discovery - as you enter Stanley Park, continue past the Vancouver Rowing Club and Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, watch for the iron gate and Commissionaire shack at the entrance to HMCS Discovery.

**Parking:** proceed behind Bldg 3 (large building on the left) to the parking area to the rear of the building.

**Meeting place:** Officers Wardroom - enter the back of Bldg 3, proceed across the drill hall, through the hall way, up a short flight of steps, then watch for the doors to the stairway on your right, proceed to the top of the stairs to find the Wardroom.

**Dress:** As this is an Officers Mess and we are guests, let's show respect to our gracious hosts and please dress in presentable casual wear that would be acceptable in an office - no jeans, cut offs, tank tops, etc.

Come prepared to learn of new things, enjoy camaraderie, and to pay your dues. For accountability purposes and record-keeping, a cheque is preferable, made out to CFSA Vancouver.

Yearly membership will be \$50.00 for individuals and \$75.00 for families, with no distinction for various types of membership status. If you cannot attend the AGM but you would like to join our sailing club for the 2014 season, please mail your cheque to the following address:

CFSA Vancouver, 4050 West 4th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6R 1P6

Please direct any queries to the CFSA Commodore, LCol Bruce Kadonoff at [Bruce.Kadonoff@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Bruce.Kadonoff@forces.gc.ca)

## **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, including an order form for direct purchase of tickets, on the Gala website and Gala's Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/britishcolumbiaarmygala>  
**For special hotel rates**, go to: <http://bcarmygala.ca/hotel-accommodation/>

## **Who is it?**

### **Last Edition.**



The gizmo in last week's quiz is, as Vic so meticulously wrote, a Polsten Quad 20mm AA gun. This was very similar to the Oerlikon, but cheaper and of Polish derivation and Canadian manufacture. This photo is of one that is in the Canadian War Museum. For the full story, go to:

<http://www.anti-aircraft.co.uk/polstenquad.html>

**This Week's picture** This week we go back to a time of crew cuts and swell guys and gals. To the time just before rock 'n' roll and the 105mm howitzer, when we were still quite British,



as well we should be (unless you aren't in agreement, in which case forgive my imperialist tendencies). Anyway, back in the day when traditions were somewhat stronger than they are today. The date is sometime in 1954.

This finely-attired group of young (and one older) officers, Vic Stevenson amongst them (middle) are at a mess function, and enjoying a joke while the Ron Webster on the right fiddles with what looks like a "Hello Kitty" napkin. Some have seen service in WWII; others are

officer cadets, still wet behind the ears. This wetness would soon dry out should anyone light a fire in the stone hearth behind them. And, this brings us to the question: where is this place (and, do you know some of the other fellows surrounding Vic)? It's certainly not the current mess, is it? It can't be, as neither Steve the bartender nor Mrs. Lum is anywhere to be seen. However, come to think of it, Mrs. Lum is quite young, so couldn't be there. Steve is another matter.

Answers can be sent to the editor, or to the columnist, John Redmond ([john.d. redmond@telus.net](mailto:john.d.redmond@telus.net)). Thanks for your support of our history.

### **From the 'Punitary'**

There was a sign on the lawn at a drug re-hab center that said 'Keep off the Grass'.

### **Murphy's other Laws**

He who hesitates is last.

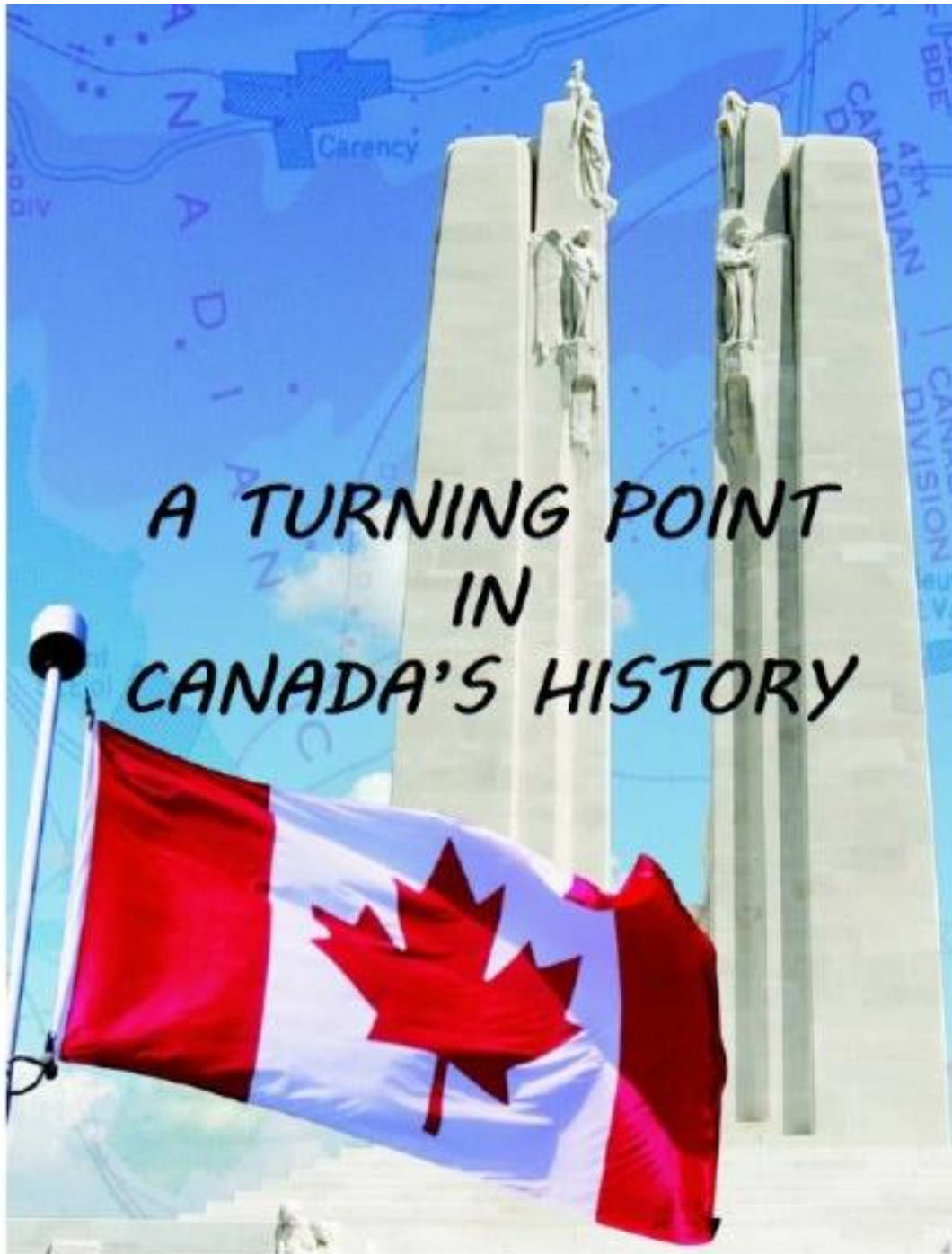
### **Quotable Quotes**

Too many decisions about changes are made by people untouched by the change process.

- Peter Block



## The Vancouver Vimy Day Commemoration



### **VIMY DAY COMMEMORATION**

**Victory Square, Vancouver**

**11:00 a.m. Sunday, April 6 2014**



*The  
British Columbia  
Army Gala  
2014*



*Celebrating*  
**A LEGACY OF SERVICE**  
*Dinner and Dance*

Come and enjoy a distinctive evening of fun, friendship and tradition. The BC Army Gala is open to anyone who has served, is a friend of the military or who wants to have an enjoyable evening with a unique group of people!

**DO NOT DELAY. LIMITED SEATING AVAILABLE!**

Venue: Hyatt Regency Vancouver  
Date: Saturday 10 May, 2014  
Time: 7 p.m. 'till late  
Dress: Mess Kit, Black Tie or equivalent



For all ticket information, including Early Bird Specials, please visit the BC Army Gala web site or phone (604) 225-2520 ext 2496.

[www.bcarmygala.ca](http://www.bcarmygala.ca)

# Ireland Curry Lunch



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

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



- Date:** Thursday, March 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 March 21, 2014)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please contact Bill Diamond at [Bill@DukeaBear.com](mailto: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 March 21, 2014

***NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, April 24, 2014***  
***\*\* A special presentation is planned for April \*\****