Vancouver Artillery Association News

RUSI Vancouver News

# Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Aug 19, 2014

## Wednesday Lunches

The Mess dress requirements for Wednesday lunches is Business Casual. Business casual can best be described as our 'summer dress'. Minimum requirement is an open neck button up shirt with dress pants or slacks (no blue jeans, pls), Ladies is the equivalent. Of course we never discourage the wearing of jackets and ties. Guests are always welcome.

## Manning the Guns of Ferguson Point

On 27 August 1939, in preparation of war, the Ferguson Point Gun Position in Stanley Park was officially occupied by personnel of 31 Battery from the 15th Coast Brigade of Artillery, the predecessor of today's 15th Field Artillery Regiment. To celebrate this event, the 15th Field Artillery Regimental Society is holding a Sunset ceremony at Ferguson Point, followed by a dinner at the Teahouse, on September 26, 2014. See article and Invitation at the end of newsletter.

## BC Firms Fear F-35 Jet Procurement Plan Grounded for Good

*BC companies have been producing F-35 parts destined for other countries' militaries. Ottawa has yet to buy any jets despite being part of a multi-country consortium that ordered them*

*By Tyler Orton Aug 11, 2014*

It's been four years since BC aerospace companies began signing contracts with Lockheed Martin (NYSE:LMT) to produce parts for the American defence company's F-35 jet. Although Canada was included among a consortium of 11 countries that ordered 3,100 of the high-tech planes, Ottawa has yet to pull the trigger on buying the aircraft. The federal government originally estimated the cost of 65 new jets to be $9 billion but put its order on hold in 2012 when Canada's auditor general revealed costs were actually $25 billion. Larry Glenesk, vice-president of business development for Avcorp Industries Inc. (TSX: AVP), said the lack of decision from Ottawa is limiting the potential of BC's aerospace industry. "We should be at [production] rates that are more than double the rates that we're currently at," Glenesk said from Avcorp's office in Delta.

"And we have the capacity, the know-how, the people, everything prepped [and] ready to get at the rates that are planned for the program. And the Canadian government decision is one element of that."

The aerospace company has produced 20 sets of outboard wings for the F-35 program out of a confirmed order of 340 from the U.S. military. It has the potential to produce another 260. Glenesk said the initial $50 million contract with Lockheed could be worth more than $500 million as more contracts are secured down the road, but he's concerned that if a decision is delayed beyond 2014, it could turn into a federal election issue next year. That could delay a Canadian order until 2016, which would send Lockheed Martin and subcontractors looking to other companies to produce parts. Asco Aerospace Canada signed a $25 million contract to manufacture titanium bulkheads in the F-35 wing along with three smaller parts at its Delta facility. "As the F-35 ramps up in production, there's a lot of opportunity to grow our work," Asco Canada vice-president Kevin Russell said. "But that is basically in a holding pattern right now because of the Canadian government's lack of decision." He added that Asco Canada would need to know by the end of 2014 whether the federal government plans to buy the aircraft. Otherwise, Asco is "at a huge disadvantage in the selection process because [Lockheed Martin] will favour countries where the governments have made a commitment over Canada right now in terms of procurement decisions."

Stephen O'Bryan, vice-president of international strategy and business development for Lockheed Martin, said the list of BC firms involved in the F-35 program – either through direct contracts or spinoffs – has grown to at least 15. "The uncertainty behind it is that government-to-government agreements say that all F-35 work has to go to companies [in] countries that are procuring the airplane," he said. "We'll certainly honour the contracts we have, but we'll have to honour those government-to-government agreements." O'Bryan, who is in BC to attend the Abbotsford Airshow, added that Lockheed plans to ramp up production from about 30 F-35s a year to 200 annually, and he hopes the BC firms are able to remain working with Lockheed. Glenesk and Russell both said BC is in a unique position geographically that would allow its aerospace industry to grow even bigger under the right circumstances – such as Ottawa's procurement of F-35s.

Proximity to Boeing's (NYSE:BA) facilities in Washington state means the companies can deliver parts south of the border within hours. Meanwhile, Vancouver's role as a gateway to Asia gives West Coast firms a competitive advantage when it comes to producing parts destined for major Japanese aerospace companies.

## Canadian Army to Focus on the "Networked" Soldier

DAVID PUGLIESE Published on: August 16, 2014

The networked soldier is key to the future of the Canadian Army, allowing for the robust situational awareness and communications capability needed to remain sharp in an ever-changing environment, writes *Samantha Bayard of Army Public Affairs.*

"What we mean by that is soldiers are part of a team and a force on the ground that are able to sense, to assimilate information, to receive direction, to be able to influence programs or emerging operations and to have the ability and the systems behind them to do that," explains Brigadier-General Christopher Thurrott, Chief of Staff Strategy (COS Strat). The command teams have access to data elements such as maps, imagery and statistics through satellites; the soldiers on the ground can recognize visual cues and other sensory data on the battlefield itself, our system has to be able to synthesize intelligence at various levels. "The Canadian soldier is really good at assessing our environment, we've had to determine how we take that knowledge and the instant ability of a soldier to assess a tactical situation and to transfer that knowledge into intelligence and transfer it along and throughout the chain of command."

The experiences of Canadian Armed Forces personnel in theatres of operation as varied as Haiti, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Rwanda have produced a soldier with unique qualities. "We have created, I think, a force comprised of individual soldiers who have proven to be robust and resilient. We have soldiers with intellectual agility and we are going to capitalize on that to react to the ever-changing future security environment." BGen Thurrott highlights the Army's strength in self-assessment, not only in terms of quantifying past successes but also in terms of analyzing current deficiencies and identifying key requirements for future capabilities. "With increased technology the environment that you are in becomes more complex. Twenty years ago not every soldier had radio receivers in their ears and now we see soldiers with multiple radios." Efforts are underway to test out new methods for systems supporting soldiers.

The Soldier System Effectiveness (SoSE) project is a research-and-development effort investigating the optimization of Soldier Systems. Defence Research and Development Canada-Toronto is a stakeholder in SoSE.

## CF Personnel Turn to the Outdoors to Deal with PTSD

DAVID PUGLIESE

Published on: August 16, 2014

Military veteran Christian McEachern had run the gamut of counselling for post-traumatic stress when, sitting on the bank of the Columbia River during a wilderness trip in B.C., he at last found a moment's peace. Sue Bailey of the Canadian Press continues with her article: "I was starting to quickly realize while I was back outdoors that I was still capable of doing all this stuff," he said in an interview. "I was gaining more confidence by the minute as we were out. I thought, this is awesome. We really need something like this for veterans to get them out. "Why does group therapy have to be in a clinical situation in a hospital or an OSI (operational stress injury) clinic?" That was nine years ago. McEachern, now 44, and has been out of the Canadian Forces since he was honourably discharged in 2001. He's still paying the psychological toll of intense stress from peacekeeping tours in the former Yugoslavia and Uganda. Chronic nightmares haunt his sleep.

But McEachern and a growing number of veterans are finding solace in back-to-nature programs, such as caring for horses, gardening and homestead farming. They're calling for more military support of therapies they say are a vital complement to more traditional prescription drug and counselling regimes. "You need to literally learn how to stop and smell the roses again and really find the positives of life," McEachern said from Black Diamond, Alta., near Calgary. "It's not easy to do when you're at the bottom of a depression hole. "But for me, the outdoors has given me positive release during the day. No matter how bad my night was, I can get up in the morning and look out and my horses are across the road." McEachern has just trained for a new career specializing in emergency care for horses. He'd like to raise awareness about programs such as Can Praxis, which uses equine therapy to break down communication blocks for vets and their families as they work with horses in Rocky Mountain House, Alta. "It's a little touchy-feely still, but I'd say about three-quarters of the Canadian army is onboard and they're sending their veterans" to the privately funded program, McEachern said. "It's not happening out west for whatever reason. The guys have been sort of denied access through the military chain of command."

Steve Critchley, co-founder of Can Praxis and a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces, said that 3rd Canadian Division, the land force command that spans western Canada, has not referred its members despite support elsewhere in the military. "I'm 100 per cent confident that individuals who are rather reluctant to look at these programs, if they were to spend some time on the ground they'd see for themselves the true value." National Defence did not answer requests for comment. Stephanie Westlund, author of the new book "Field Exercises: How Veterans are Healing Themselves Through Farming and Outdoor Activities," chronicles success stories across Canada and the US "If he's grooming his horse it's easier for him to talk about his military experiences than if he's in a room with other vets," she said of former soldiers like McEachern. "It gives them another focus." Veterans grappling with operational stress injuries tend to isolate themselves, Westlund said in an interview. "When they're able to find ways to spend time with other veterans again … there's something about nature and spending time outdoors together, whether you're doing farming, gardening or hiking. "It makes it easier for them to connect with one another." Those therapeutic benefits are getting more official attention, Westlund said. "I think there is starting to be a shift."

Chris Brown, a 28-year-old former U.S. marine, was honourably discharged after three combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2004 and 2008. "I was really irritable, really quick to anger," he said of his later struggles with post-traumatic stress. "I was on constant alert, in and out of states of depression." Today, Brown is the founder and director of Growing Veterans. The not-for-profit project gives vets a chance to socialize and learn new skills on a small farm in Whatcom County in northern Washington. Being outdoors and getting their hands in the soil offers reconnection and hope, he said. "I came from an environment that was really destructive, really traumatic. And now we're putting seeds in the ground. We're fostering life, we're sending it to market, sustaining other people's lives. "That shift has been really powerful for me."

# US looking to Reduce Weight of AFVs by 40%

*DAVID PUGLIESE Published on: August 17, 2014*

Leading experts in military combat-vehicle research, engineering and design gathered July 29-31 at the Aberdeen Proving Ground to discuss a single goal: reducing the weight of the US Army's tanks and infantry fighting vehicles by 40 percent in the coming decades.
More from an article by Dan Lafontaine, US Army Public Affairs. Representatives from the US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command as well as the Training and Doctrine Command kicked off the Combat Vehicle Lightweight Science and Technology Campaign Workshop, with presentations to about 75 attendees from across the federal government, academia and industry.

Col. Chris Cross, director of the Science and Technology Division at the Army Capabilities Integration Center, explained why it is imperative for researchers to lighten combat vehicles. "The problem is the ability to deploy rapidly to turn the tide, to transition very quickly into offensive operations in a very austere environment. The world is complicated and getting more complicated every day," Cross said. "In order to be more relevant to the nation, we have to be more rapidly deployable. "As events unfold, they are unfolding more quickly than in the past. If we don't have the ability as an Army to get there rapidly, with a significant-enough force to turn the tide of events, we may get there too late." RDECOM leaders stressed that achieving the Army's aggressive goals in weight reduction will require non-traditional approaches and new ideas from throughout the science and technology community.

Dr. Patrick Baker, director of the Army Research Laboratory's Weapons and Materials Research Directorate, said that a holistic approach will be necessary. Researchers must work on materials science, mechanisms, modeling and simulation, and manufacturing technology in parallel. "How can materials foster a significantly lighter class of combat platforms? We're going to have to do something different to get the advances that we need to make this happen," Baker said. "We won't do this alone. We're going to have to engage and participate with the outside community." Most previous efforts to lighten Army vehicles have focused on overcoming weaknesses in existing materials, but researchers are now developing revolutionary laboratory materials with potentially extraordinary properties, Baker said. As new materials come to fruition, the scientists and engineers must also incorporate manufacturing science to enable tailored properties. The Army has fielded stronger helmets and demonstrated lighter body armor by leveraging advanced manufacturing technology with laboratory research, Baker said. "It's not about fixing the materials of today. It's about what materials we will need tomorrow," Baker said. "We're putting out materials now in the lab scale that have unparalleled strength. We're looking at manufacturing processes and material science. How do we process these materials to be used? "We need to learn forward. I believe we have a cornerstone program at RDECOM."

Combat-vehicle weights have increased during the past 13 years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan because of new and increasing threats, said Dr. Jennifer Hitchcock, executive director for

research and technology integration at the Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center. Hitchcock discussed TARDEC's current weight-reduction efforts, including research in modular protection, lighter conventional components, adaptive protection, under armor volume and unmanned systems. Achieving the desired weight savings will require a strategy to integrate advanced materials into vehicle design, she said.

"We're looking at technologies, materials, and the design and integration of components into a vehicle," Hitchcock said. "For weight savings, what percentage can we get from specific material applications? Beyond those weights, what do we need to invest in terms of materials, processes and manufacturing to get that material applied onto a system?"

Cross stressed that although developing significantly lighter weight ground vehicles is challenging, he believes it is possible. Science and technology leaders must make decisions so the right investments can be made now to enable future capabilities, he said.

"What does the Army, in terms of the science and technology community, need to do that others won't? Building lightweight strong armors is a core competency that the Army must lead the world in," Cross said. "That's what we owe the nation. We need to know what that plan is so the senior leaders of the Army can make the decisions and investments today. What is the path forward? How are we going to attack this problem? I know we can solve this problem.

"We owe it to our Soldiers. I don't want my son commanding an inadequate force when we put him in the fight in 15 or 20 years. We take it personally when preparing the Army for the future. That means investing now in the capabilities we need so that in 2040, Soldiers have the agility, the capability and the assets they need to be successful when the nation calls."

## The Tainted History of Canada's Ross Rifle Lives On

*DAVID PUGLIESE Published on: August 17, 2014*

When soldiers in the throes of battle discard their rifles and pluck a different weapon from the hands of dead allies, there's clearly a serious problem, writes John Ward of the Canadian Press news service. So it was with the Ross rifle, the weapon that Canadian soldiers took with them to the start of the First World War a century ago.

It was the brainchild of Sir Charles Ross, a wealthy Scottish-born engineer and inventor who offered it to the Canadian government as a military firearm well before the war began. To Sir Sam Hughes, Canada's minister of militia — defence minister in modern parlance — at the time, the Canadian-built Ross was highly accurate and the perfect tool for his soldiers, whom he saw as frontier marksmen. But troops, some of whom sneered at the rifle as "the Canadian club," soon discovered the Ross was not suited to dirty, rough-and-tumble trench warfare. They preferred the robust Lee-Enfield carried by their British comrades, picking them up from the battlefield when they could. The .303-calibre, straight-pull Ross was longer than the Lee-Enfield, a problem in the cramped confines of the trenches. It was heavier, too, and in a day when infantrymen were over-burdened, any extra weight was unwelcome. When fired with its bayonet attached, it tended to shed the bayonet. The Ross was also susceptible to jamming from dust and dirt and was very finicky about the quality of ammunition. The carefully machined cartridges made by the Dominion Arsenal worked fine, but not so the mass-produced British ammunition, which could vary in size beyond the Ross's fine tolerances. Further, it was

easy to reassemble the Ross bolt incorrectly. Even when misassembled, the bolt would fit in the rifle and even chamber and fire a cartridge, only to slam back into the rifleman's face — unheard of for most bolt-action rifles.

"The harsh test of trench warfare served to emphasize the new rifle's imperfections," wrote G. W. L. Nicholson, of the Canadian army historical section. Ian McCollum, an Arizona-based firearms expert who runs the Forgotten Weapons website, has posted a YouTube video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaSui–UqDX8 showing how the bolt can be compromised and what happens afterwards. He's had 47,000 hits on the clip. "I prefer the Ross," he said in an interview. "I don't know that I'd prefer it if I were in a sloggy, muddy trench, but I find the Ross sights are definitely better. I like the Ross action better. It's smoother and faster."
He said the Ross is a good rifle to fire, "provided it doesn't throw the bolt into your head."
"It was designed around Canadian production cartridges, which were quite good," McCollum said. "They decided to stick to the tighter Canadian chamber because it gave them a slightly higher muzzle velocity, which in retrospect was kind of a dumb idea."

The Canadian authorities tried hard to convince the troops that the Ross was a good rifle, but in the spring of 1915, more than 3,000 men discarded the Ross in favour of the Lee-Enfield, despite threats of punishment. After the gas attack at Ypres that April, an unidentified Canadian officer wrote: "It is nothing short of murder to send out men against the enemy with such a weapon." An official history says of that battle: "Rifle bolts jammed. Boot heels and entrenching tool handles opened some of them." The Ross was a highly accurate weapon later prized by snipers and sportsmen. But as a weapon of war in the trenches, it left much to be desired. "Everything jammed in those circumstances, eventually," McCollum said. "It's just the Ross did it more often than most of the other guns." Although Hughes defended the rifle vigorously, the 1st Canadian Divisions got rid of their Rosses in 1915. The following year, the British military overrode Hughes's objections and the rest of the Canadians adopted the Lee-Enfield. "As it was built, it was not the best choice for the Canadian military," McCollum said. "Once they adopted it, it's hard to blame anyone for not wanting to throw them all away and buy a whole new set of rifles."

Championing the Ross helped bring down Hughes, who resigned in November 1916.
"Hughes quite rightly defended the rifle by saying that the real problem was the quality of British ammunition, but this missed the larger point," said Mark Humphries, who holds the Dunkley Chair in War and the Canadian Experience at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont. "The Lee-Enfield was a more rugged, reliable military weapon for use in the field while the Ross was a better sporting rifle. But Hughes was not asking Canadian soldiers to go hunting, he was asking them to fight for their lives and in this respect the Lee-Enfield gave them a better chance at survival." The salvaged Ross rifles were shipped home. Some were sold to hunters. Others were sent to Britain at the start of the Second World War, when any rifle was prized. Some are still around, hanging on mantles, sitting in collections, or taken out every now and then when hunting season opens. As for the Lee-Enfield, Canadian soldiers carried it through two more wars.

## Who is it?

**Last Week:** Well, we didn't get too far with this one. A couple of us thought we recognised the magazine holder but were proved wrong. We did manage to pin down the time frame. A quick check through online sources revealed that the 'Bunny' was May 1963 Playmate, Sharon Cintron. The magazine appears to be in good shape so must be quite new. In the early 60s, the Regt went on firing exercises on the May long weekend and in early summer so this picture must have been taken in mid-63. So can any of you that were in the Regt in those days put names to faces??

**This Week:** This month is the centenary of the Great War, one that now, sadly, has no survivors, and is only a vague memory to those few alive now who were children at the time. One of my mother's friends, currently 99, remembers seeing an effigy of the Kaiser being burned on Armistice Day, 1918 in Edmonton. She could well be the last to remember that jolly event.

As mentioned in another quiz, 15th Field Regiment (RCA) did not exist at that time of World War One, being formed in 1920. However, there is a connection, as 68 Bty of the current Regiment perpetuates 68 Bty of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Having said that, it is obvious from this week's photo that 68 Bty did not serve in the muddy trenches of Flanders. Also, the enemy was not the Dastardly Hun, but someone of greater evil and longevity. Other differences to units on the Western Front also existed, and that is our Great War Photo Quiz for this week. Can you tell us, dear reader and keen historian, what else is unusual about 68 Battery, using this ancient photo and your academic skills? Answers can be sent to either the editor, or the author, John Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net).

### From the 'Punitentary'

What is a mouse's favourite game? Hide and Squeak.

### Murphy's other Laws

If you want to kill a great idea – get a committee working on it.

### Quotable Quotes

It is error alone which needs the support of the Government. Truth can stand by itself.
*Thomas Jefferson.*

# Manning the Guns of Ferguson Point

Colonel
R Grant Smith OStJ, CD
Honorary Colonel
and Director of the
15th Field Artillery Regimental Society

Requests the Pleasure of the Company of
You and Your Guest

at a dinner celebrating

## The Guns of Ferguson Point

FEATURING

A Sunset Ceremony by
The Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA

and

A Salute Fired by the Guns of the
15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA

to be held on

## September 26, 2014

at the

Tea House at Ferguson Point
Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC

Dress:
Mess Kit, Formal or
Business Dress
Sunset Ceremony: 1830hrs
Dinner: 1930hrs
Tariff: $100pp

RSVP with payment to:
Mr Bernard Rowe
15 Fd Regimental Society
2025 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

Cheques Payable to: 15th Field Regimental Society

# The Guns of Ferguson Point

*Major[r] Peter Moogk CD, PhD  Museum Curator  15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA*

The Stanley Park Battery was the first of Vancouver's Second World War coastal batteries. Although the peninsula had been reserved for the defence of the First Narrows and Burrard Inlet in the nineteenth century, this federally-owned land had been leased to the city for a nominal sum since 1887. Most people knew it only as a public park. In 1914 the point of land near Siwash Rock had been occupied by a temporary gun battery when an attack by Germany's East Asia naval squadron was considered likely. In the Second World War the Japanese navy was regarded as the greatest threat. A concrete, two-gun battery emplacement with supporting structures on Ferguson Point was planned in February 1938, after Parliament approved the establishment of permanent coast defences in early 1937. Vancouver's role as Canada's principal Pacific Coast port and as the transcontinental railway's terminus justified this extra protection from hostile warships.

The Town Planning Commission, however, did not approve of the use of Ferguson Point for the battery, calling it "a favourite beauty spot in the park." *The Vancouver Sun* joined the opposition and stated that the gun battery could become "a permanent blot on the scenic beauty of the area." However, the Parks Board had consented to the new construction, the land really was federal government property and the battery was deemed "essential" for strategic reasons, construction work there began in mid-February, 1938. Vancouver's fixed, coastal defences were to be manned by the 15th Coast Brigade of Artillery, a local militia Regiment. In anticipation of war, the Brigade's 31 Battery occupied the site on 27 August, 1939. The Fire Commander's Orders of October 1942 stated that the Stanley Park Battery was to guard "English Bay and the First Narrows entrance to Burrard Inlet", and also to act as a detaining battery for ships awaiting inspection and clearance before entering the Port of Vancouver. Like the smaller Battery on the north side of the First Narrows, the Stanley Park Battery was authorized to fire on ships that refused to submit to inspection and which sailed on into the port without stopping. An examination vessel [X-Vic] was stationed two kilometres west of Ferguson Point to inspect incoming ships. After Point Atkinson's signal station had identified arriving vessels, they proceeded to the X-Vic to be cleared for entry into the port. Large ships flew recognition signals that identified them as friendly.

The Stanley Park Battery originally consisted of two breech-loading, 6-inch calibre guns on circular, pedestal mounts. The gun emplacements were placed in from the edge of the cliff. Ammunition was stored in an underground magazine behind the guns. A concrete, three-storey, battery observation post [BOP] directed their fire. A soldiers' camp occupied the present Third Beach parking lot. All the buildings and emplacements were camouflaged; even an evergreen tree was painted on the BOP's front. Personnel in the BOP directed the guns and co-ordinated the two 5-foot diameter, searchlights, placed close to the water. They illuminated English Bay at night. These searchlights were maintained and operated by 3 Battery, 1st Searchlight Regiment RCA.

With the destruction of most of Japan's major warships in 1942-43, the prospect of a seaborne attack on Vancouver diminished. Japanese submarines still torpedoed ships and shelled sites along the West Coast. Vancouver's defences were gradually reduced to maintenance status in 1944. Stanley Park's guns and most of the wooden buildings were removed in September 1945. The Vancouver District's army commander, however, continued to occupy the former officers' mess as his home. The Vancouver Parks Board demanded Ferguson Point's complete restoration to parkland. In April 1948 the board won this battle and the gun emplacements were levelled and buried. The BOP was finally demolished in the 60s. The searchlight position at Siwash Rock became the base for a viewing platform. On Ferguson Point, only the old officers' mess survives as a part of today's *Teahouse in Stanley Park.*

# BATTLEFIELD TOUR OPPORTUNITY
# 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
# MANNING OF THE GUNS AT YORKE ISLAND
# 12-14 SEPTEMBER 2014

Here is your opportunity to join the Officers & Gunners of 15 FD RCA as they return to commemorate the manning of the guns at Yorke Island in August 1939. Departure of the tour will be from the Bessborough Armoury at 6 PM on Friday, 12 September 2014, with transportation to Yorke Island on the morning of the 13th to attend a dedication ceremony at the gun position, BBQ lunch, tour of the island, and a reception in the evening at the Village of Sayward Royal Canadian Legion. After an overnight stay at Sayward, the tour will return by ferry to the armoury on the afternoon of 14 September 2014.

There will be options for those who wish to stay overnight with the troops on Yorke Island, with the remainder being quartered in Cabins at a nearby resort.

Space still available. Email bob.mugford@shaw.ca for a tour application form and detail