

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Dec 1, 2020

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at bob.mugford@gmail.com to let me know you didn't get your copy.

Newsletter on line. This newsletter and previous editions are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: www.vancouvergunners.ca and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>. Both groups are also on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=vancouver%20artillery%20association> and <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rusi%20vancouver>

Wednesday Lunches - Lunches suspended until further notice. Everyone stay safe!!

Upcoming events – Mark your calendars (see Poster section at end for details)

The 2021 BC Military Gala is **CANCELLED. The Sheraton Wall Ctr is booked for Apr 23, 2022**

- Dec 02** ‘Wednesday Lunch’ Zoom meeting
- Dec 04** St Barbara’s Day Virtual Dinner
- Dec 09** RUSI(NS) - Distinguished Speaker 9 December 2020
‘Wednesday Lunch’ Zoom meeting
- Dec 11** RCA Band Concert

RUSI(NS) - Distinguished Speaker 9 December 2020

Canadian Coast Guard Fleet Renewal

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia extends an invitation to hear a video-conference presentation Wednesday, 9 December 2020 by Derek Moss, Canadian Coast Guard, titled “Canadian Coast Guard Fleet Renewal.” In 2019, the federal government announced the construction of 24 new ships for the Canadian Coast Guard, in addition to the ships already built or under construction as well as future builds yet to be formally announced. This brief will provide an overview of the different ships being designed and built as part of the National Shipbuilding Strategy as well as their mission as it relates to the Coast Guard’s mandate. Capt(N) (ret'd) Moss' bio is attached (See poster section).

The talk will start at 1 pm Halifax time, Wednesday, 9 December, then be followed by Q&A and finish by 3 pm Halifax time.

Registration is required. There is no fee to attend this event. To register, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com by close of business Sunday, 6 December. As the subject line for your registration email, put: RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker 9 December 2020 Registration. In addition to your name please also provide your organization. The event will be done by Zoom. Instructions will be emailed to registrants by end Monday, 7 December.

RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice. Email RUSI(NS) if there is a question about an event occurring.

CAH Darlington
Commander, Royal Canadian Navy (retired)
Vice-President, RUSI(NS)

PBO Reports on Cost of JSS Project Vs Buying Asterix and Obelix

Marcello Sukhdeo, November 18, 2020



Image: Seaspan.

On November 17, 2020, The Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer released a report on the estimated

construction costs of the Joint Support Ship program and costs of contracting converted commercial vessels MV Asterix and the Obelix to provide military support. The report, *The Joint Support Ship Program, and the MV Asterix: A Fiscal Analysis*, is in response to a request from the House of Commons Government Operations and Estimates Committee (OGGO). This report compares the two projects by incorporating additional project cost elements.

According to the Abstract: “Our independent point estimate of the construction cost is \$2.4 billion, with an additional estimated \$0.6 billion to account for budgetary contingency, producing a total of \$3.0 billion. Accounting for the non-construction costs stated by the Department of National Defence, we estimate the total project cost of the JSS to be \$4.1 billion, inclusive of provincial sales tax.” So, the total estimated project cost of JSS is \$4.1 billion according to The Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Regarding contracting the services of Asterix and Obelix, it states: “The total potential net cost of the government’s contracting of the MV Asterix is \$733 million, inclusive of provincial sales tax. We project that a five-year provision of service contract of the Obelix would cost the government \$801 million, inclusive of any applicable taxes.”

Since the project costs of the JSS cannot be directly compared to the costs associated with the provision of service contract of the Asterix or any potential similar contract for the Obelix, PBO opted for a comparison of the JSS project to the cost of the purchase options for the Asterix and Obelix. According to their calculations, the Asterix and Obelix could be obtained by the Government of Canada for a total of approximately \$1.4 billion, as compared to their estimated \$4.1 billion cost for the JSS project cost. In response to this conclusion, a statement from the Department of National Defence states, “that there are a number of key factors that were not taken into account as they are outside the scope of the report.” DND points out that the PBO “did not consider the capabilities of MV Asterix and MV Obelix as commercial vessels converted for military purposes versus those of the built-for-purpose Joint Support Ship.” “MV Asterix, and the proposed MV Obelix, do not have the same capabilities as the future Joint Support Ships. The Joint Support Ships were designed to be able to deploy into harm’s way, a key element of the military design.”

Some of the capabilities that were designed into the Joint Support Ships that are not available on MV Asterix include:

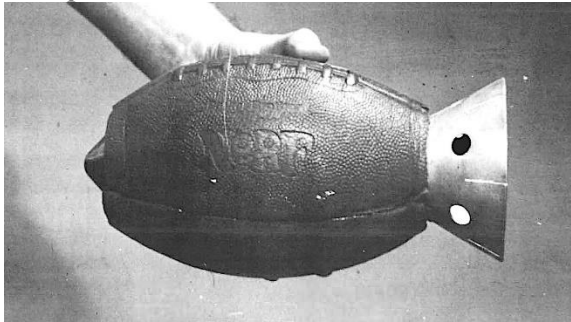
- a mine-avoidance degaussing system,
- systems to detect and protect against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats,
- a dual redundant propulsion system,
- damage control capabilities that meet military standards,
- a cyber-resilient command management system,
- self-defence capabilities, including a combat management system, naval remote weapon systems, and close-in weapon systems,
- a hangar and flight deck that can support the Cyclone aircraft, and
- certified, fitted magazines to transport specialized ammunitions, such as torpedoes.

According to DND, these additional features provide survivability that is critical to ensure the safety of sailors in high-risk areas. “Purpose-built warships like the Joint Support Ships provide the best available protection for our sailors with a military design that incorporates higher damage control standards and counter-measures against threats from torpedoes, mines, or missiles.” The statement from DND also points out that the figures in the PBO report do not include the money already spent on MV Asterix, or money that would be needed to be spent in the future. “The figures only consider the cost of purchasing two modified, used commercial ships, whereas the cost for the Joint Support Ships includes a number of expenses, such as the salary of project staff since the project’s inception, design costs to incorporate RCN operational requirements, engineering services, government supplied material, and initial spare parts.” The statement concludes by saying, “Our choice of the Joint Support Ships was made after years of industry consultation and analysis of possible options, including the conversion of used ships. The Joint Support Ships are the right ship for the Royal Canadian Navy, and will provide the best value for the military, Canada, and the Canadian economy.”

The US Army Tried to Turn Nerf Footballs into Hand Grenades

The goal of the "football device" was to give soldiers a way to take out tanks at close range in a package the Army hoped would be instinctual to use.

Joseph Trevithick The War Zone November 14, 2020



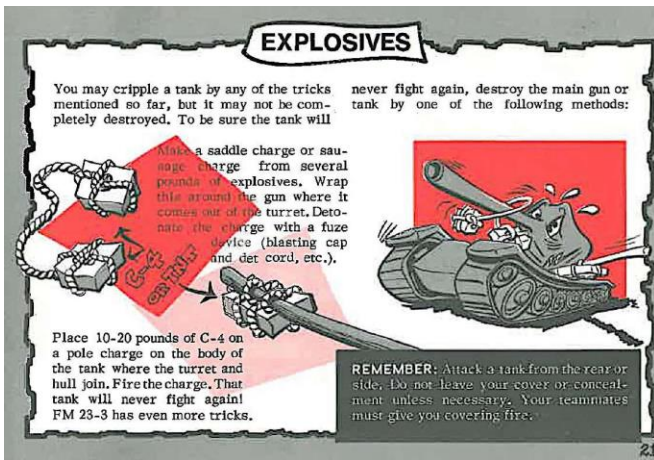
US ARMY

Few things are as quintessentially American as football and most people in this country have probably played it in some form at least once in their life. This was what the U.S. Army was banking on when it developed an anti-tank grenade using an explosive charge jammed into a hollowed-out Nerf football in the early 1970s. The Army's Land Warfare Laboratory (LWL) at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland concocted the "football device," something I wrote about briefly years ago now, as part of a broader effort to develop a hand-thrown anti-tank weapon of some kind that began in July 1973. The Army had originally established LWL in 1962 to develop, test, and evaluate any and all weapons or other technology that might be applicable to counter-insurgency campaigns, a type of warfare that was emerging around the world at the time. This included in various countries in Southeast Asia, such as South Vietnam and Thailand, where the United States was already becoming increasingly embroiled at that time.

In 1970, LWL was renamed the Land Warfare Laboratory, a switch that kept its acronym intact, and it began exploring systems that be might useful to a broader set of conflict types. One of these efforts was the anti-tank grenade project, a requirement driven by concerns about the utility of existing infantry anti-armor capabilities, especially in an urban environment, such as the ones the US military expected to be a primary setting for any major conflict against the Soviets in Europe. "Current standard US Army antitank weapons have been designed to provide maximum practical stand-off range," a 1974 final test report on the football grenade, as well as the other types LWL evaluated, explained. The primary infantry anti-tank weapons in Army service at the time were the BGM-71 TOW and FGM-77 Dragon anti-tank guided missiles and variants of the M72 Light Anti-Tank Weapon (LAW), a shoulder-fired rocket launcher. The issue with these weapons, as LWL's report noted, was that firing them would often reveal the location of the shooter. The Dragon was a particularly notorious offender in this regard, putting the person that fired it immediately at risk and making it difficult for them to quickly re-engage if the first shot missed. In addition, the missiles, as well as the M72s, could not be employed safely from within confined spaces, such as from the inside of a building.

On top of that, to protect those firing them from getting caught in the blast, these missiles and rockets had to travel certain minimum distances before arming themselves. In a cramped urban setting with fighting that could be in very close quarters, this would also have limited the ability of troops to employ these weapons. At the time, the Army trained troops to engage heavily armored vehicles under these conditions using a variety of improvised means, including ponchos

filled with oil and gasoline and explosive charges packed into empty ammunition cans. They were to, whenever possible, exploit the lack of situational awareness that armored vehicles crews have when they are "buttoned-up" inside with all their hatches closed.



A low-quality scan of a page from a comic book-style Army manual from 1972 describing improved explosive means for damaging tanks in close quarters.

US Army Via Foia

This is very much how the service had done things since World War II. Steven Spielberg's famous 1998 film about that war, *Saving Private Ryan*, notably includes the use of improvised "sticky

bombs," consisting of socks full of explosives dipped in thick oil, against Nazi tanks in its climactic final battle. "A hand-thrown short-range device appeared to overcome the deficiencies of standard weapons in an urban environment," LWL's 1974 report said. "A hand deployed device which will give the infantryman in urban warfare the capability to disable a 'buttoned-up' tank is desired." LWL decided to focus on hand-thrown weapons containing a shaped charge, a warhead design commonly used in anti-tank missiles and rockets. A shaped charge, also known as a hollow charge, features a large open cavity inside between the main explosive charge and the front of the projectile. An inverted cone-shaped metal liner, typically made copper, is inserted into the explosive charge. When the charge goes off, it expands outward, turning the liner into a high-speed metal dart of sorts that then punches through the target.

This is a technology that dates back to the late 19th century and is still in use today. It works, but its effect is greatly diminished if the full force of the resulting projectile isn't directed at the target at an optimal distance or angle. Countries around the world have added a wide array of spaced armor, slats and nets, and even small bricks of explosives to the side of armored vehicles to prevent shaped charge weapons from detonating as intended. LWL then determined that the optimal methods of attack for a hand-thrown anti-tank grenade using a shaped charge at close range were dropping it out of a window on top of the vehicle, lobbing it on top of the vehicle from cover, or otherwise trying to hit the top of the vehicle from the furthest distance away possible. Typically, the top of the turret or the rear hull of a tank or another heavily armored vehicle is where its armor is the weakest. Furthermore, killing crew members inside or severely damaging or destroying the engine compartment could be enough to achieve a mission kill. It's interesting to note that when LWL started its work on developing a weapon that would meet these requirements and be usable in one or more of those scenarios, many other countries, including America's European allies and the Soviet Union, had already fielded anti-tank grenades decades earlier. By the 1970s, some nations, especially the Soviets and their allies, were still using them.

Personnel at the Army laboratory identified multiple foreign types that informed its work, primarily so-called "potato masher" grenade designs with stick-like handles for throwing. Anti-

tank versions of these grenades almost universally had some kind of retarding device, such as cloth strips or even a small parachute, which would help stabilize the grenade. The idea is that these features would help the grenades fall near vertically on top of a vehicle to maximize the effect of their shaped charge warheads. Rather than timed fuzes found on typical hand grenades, these hand-thrown weapons often had impact fuzes that would only go off when they struck something. When thrown, the cone at the base of the handle would drop off, extending two cloth strips in the process to stabilize the grenade. Not surprisingly, LWL crafted two of its own potato masher grenade designs, including one with a magnet at the front to help it stick to the target before going off. It also built two experimental dart-shaped designs, one with fins and another with a cowling of some kind, both designed to stabilize them after they were thrown. Sadly, there do not appear to be any pictures readily available of either of these apparent anti-tank lawn darts. The basic idea sounds similar in some respects to the British World War II-era No. 68 anti-tank grenade. It also sounds broadly reminiscent of the U.S. Civil War-era Ketchum hand grenade, a Union weapon that featured an egg-shaped explosive body with a wooden tail fin and that has its own visual similarities to a modern vortex football.



*A deactivated No. 68 anti-tank grenade.
Arundel Militaria*



*A Ketchum hand grenade...
Wilson's Creek National Battlefield*

And then there was the football device. "Since a regulation size football weighs 14 ounces, it was considered feasible to make a shaped charge grenade within this weight limitation," according to LWL's 1974 report. "In addition, most US troops are familiar with throwing footballs." LWL made at least one experimental model using a hollowed-out Nerf football with a metallic container and a conical fin at one end that held the shaped charge inserted in the middle, but it's not clear if this was a functional prototype. Parker Brothers had launched its brand of now-iconic foam balls in 1969, but there is no indication that they were in any way directly involved in the project. Nerf has since gone on to become a cultural institution better known for its foam dart-shooting guns. In a way, this idea makes perfect sense. Footballs are intended to be thrown across relatively long distances in a manner that stabilizes them in flight making them more accurate. The Army says that it expects an average soldier to be able to throw a standard fragmentation grenade out to a distance of 35 meters, or just under 115 feet, while standing. NFL quarterbacks routinely demonstrate their ability to throw footballs much further than that. It was not necessarily out of the realm of reason to believe average soldiers, while not professional football players, would still be able to get more range and accuracy out of a football-shaped grenade.

It's not the first time the Army had used this kind of logic, either. During World War II, the service, together with the Office of Strategic Services, the predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency, had experimented with fragmentation grenades that were the exact same size and weight as regulation baseballs for similar reasons. Those grenades designated the T-13 and nicknamed the "Beano," never entered service owing to their use of a dangerously sensitive impact fuze that killed two people and injured 44 others in the course of testing. They did, however, inform the design of the spherical hand grenades that the Army subsequently adopted to replace its French-derived World War I-era Mk 2 "pineapple" grenades. To this day, the service uses a similar design with a slightly more ovular shape as its standard fragmentation grenade. It's not clear how many football grenades LWL made in total and what the ultimate configuration might have been, but the design never came close to being field operationally. As perfect as the idea probably sounded in the heads of the engineers who came up with it, it's probably just as obvious to anyone who has ever seen a football bounce after hitting something as to why it didn't work. It proved to be virtually impossible to ensure the grenade's shaped charge detonated at the correct moment to reliably penetrate any armor. The weight distribution of the Army's "device," unlike a regulation football, which is uniformly hollow inside, made it unstable in flight.

Here is how LWL's 1974 report explained the results of the tests:

Test on the football shape indicated it also had a low tendency of nose-on impact. In addition, both the spring wire and soft aluminum placed on the nose to cause the "football" to rotate upon impact, so the nose would be perpendicular to the tank surface, did not work as envisioned. The "football" would bounce away before the nose rotated any significant amount. In addition, the "football" never attained a stable trajectory. This was apparently caused by the mass of the grenade type "football" being near the longitudinal axis while a real football has all its weight in the "skin." The football shape was not considered practical for further development.

LWL testing also showed that none of the anti-tank grenades it developed, including the football type, could be practically employed at distances over 10 meters, or just under 33 feet. One has to imagine that it could not have been easy to ensure that the football grenade would come down on a target, at all, and, even if it had worked as intended, it seems unlikely that drilling it into the side of a tank or other heavy armored vehicle would have produced the desired result. The 1974 final report's one-sentence conclusion on the entire project, which cost the Army a paltry \$12,167, is curt. "The lightweight (1 1/2-lb.) 'potato masher' grenade with parachute showed some promise that it could be developed into a useful antitank weapon if a 10 meter average range could be tolerated." The Army shuttered LWL entirely the same month the report came out, amid post-Vietnam War drawdowns, and ultimately decided not to pursue any of the designs, or an anti-tank grenade of any kind. It, along with the U.S. Marine Corps, also passed on the curious spherical-shaped Rifleman's Assault Weapon (RAW), a rocket-propelled weapon intended to be fired from a standard M16 rifle. That weapon had come from the Brunswick Corporation, a major manufacturing company that had gotten its start making bowling balls and pool tables. The service ultimately fielded high-explosive dual-purpose rounds, which have some anti-armor capability, for its 40mm grenade launchers. Versions of the M72, as well as its successor in Army service, the M136, have since been developed with features allowing them to be safely fired from enclosed spaces.

In contrast, the Soviets continued to field anti-tank grenades, as well as export them. Insurgents were still using 1950s-era RKG-3s, a potato masher anti-tank grenade with a small parachute in the handle, against American forces in Iraq to significant effect in the 2000s, especially against lightly armored Humvees and even early Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. In 2009, the U.S. Department of the Treasury sanctioned one Iraqi militant group, Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi, specifically citing its use of the RKG-3, among other things. It's not clear what happened to any examples of the football device that LWL built, but anyone who's ever played with a Nerf ball knows that they're not exactly designed to stand the test of time. The author knows of only one picture to exist of a prototype, which is seen in this story, but there is always the hope that more are hiding, yet to be discovered, in an archive or attic somewhere. The idea of a literal football grenade has appeared in popular culture at least once, 25 years after the LWL's real-life project ended, in the 1999 film *Three Kings*, a sort of action heist movie with the aftermath of the first Gulf War as a backdrop. Spike Jonze's character uses electrical tape to tie C4 explosive charges and detonators to brightly colored Nerf-like footballs out of boredom and Ice Cube's character eventually uses one to blow up a helicopter toward the end of the film. All in all, the football grenade may not have worked out, but it certainly one of, if not the most distinctly American weapons to ever be developed on any level.

The US Army is Considering Changing the Size of Its Infantry Squads

Haley Britzky Nov 6, 2020

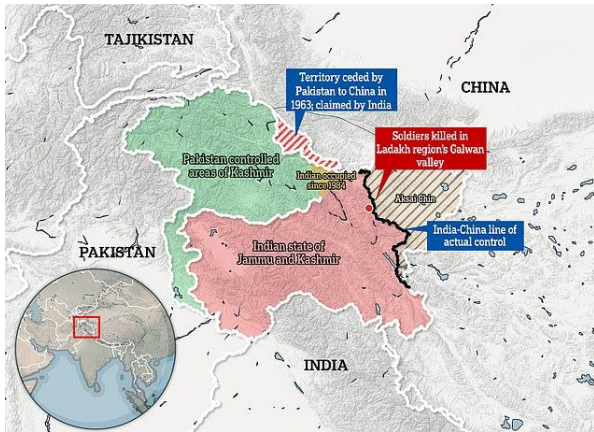
The US Army is looking into potentially making a change to the size of its infantry units. Brig Gen David Hodne, commandant of the US Army Infantry School, confirmed in a statement that the service is "conducting a study ... but this might not result in a change to the current 9-soldier rifle squad." The news of the study was first reported by Army Times. The Army has studied the size of the rifle squad "through the decades," and that this study is "overdue," Hodne said in his statement. The study is meant to help Army officials evaluate the ideal size of a squad when employing "next-generation" capabilities that the Army has been driving towards, like the Integrated Visual Augmentation System (IVAS) or the Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) systems currently in development. "This study intends to determine the optimal size of the Infantry Squad considering the integration of new and next-generation capabilities (NGSW, IVAS, etc)," Hodne said. "However, even if experimentation indicates an 11 Soldier Squad is optimal, this might not result in adjusting the size of the Squad given several factors (force structure constraints, personnel costs, and even vehicle design limitations)."

Hodne added that initial results of the study show that reducing the size of the squad to less than nine soldiers "is not a good idea" and reductions "will not be recommended." The Army isn't the first service to consider something like this. As Army Times points out, the Marine Corps has also slightly increased the size of its infantry squads in recent years. The Army's study is being carried out by the Soldier Lethality Cross Functional Team, of which Hodne is the director, and the Maneuver Capabilities Development and Integration Directorate at Fort Benning.

China Used Secret Microwave Pulse Weapon

Weapon cooks Indian soldiers alive and force them into retreat in Himalayan border battle.

Tim Stickings Mailonline 17 November 2020



The disputed border area between India and China where at least 20 soldiers were killed in a high-altitude brawl earlier this year.

Chinese troops used 'microwave' weapons to force Indian soldiers to retreat by making them violently sick during a Himalayan stand-off, a professor has claimed. The electromagnetic weapons which cook the human tissue of enemy troops 'turned the mountain tops into a microwave oven' and made

the Indian soldiers vomit, international studies expert Jin Canrong told his students in Beijing. The microwave weapons heat water molecules in the same way as the kitchen appliance, targeting water under the skin and causing increasing amounts of pain to the target from ranges of up to 0.6 miles away. Jin hailed the Chinese forces for 'beautifully' executing the move which cleared out Indian troops without violating a ban on gunfire along the disputed border. It is the first known use of microwave weapons on a battlefield. According to The Times, the weapons were said to have been deployed in late August, weeks after a deadly brawl involving rocks and clubs which killed at least 20 Indian soldiers and brought the two nuclear-armed powers closer to war than they have been in 53 years on one of the world's highest-altitude battlefields.

Pictures which circulated earlier this year appeared to show Indian troops battered and bound with rope near the disputed Himalayan border, where China is said to have used a microwave-style weapon to disperse hostile soldiers in August



China's so-called Poly WB-1, a type of 'microwave' weapon, which was first put on display at an air show in 2014

The US equivalent, the Active Denial System, was once deployed to Afghanistan but was withdrawn apparently without ever being used against human targets



Jin told his students that within 15 minutes of the weapons being deployed, 'those occupying the hilltops all began to vomit'. 'They couldn't stand up, so they fled. This was how we retook the ground,' he explained. China's forces decided to use the weapons because the altitude was too high to fight against a team of Tibetan mountaineering specialists, Jin said. Gunfire is banned under an old agreement, although there were warning shots in September in an exchange of fire which both sides blamed on each other. While the US has also developed microwave-style weapons, China's alleged use of them may be the first against enemy troops anywhere in the world. Also envisioned for use in crowd control, the weapon works by heating the water under the skin to painful temperatures which force people out of the area. The sensation was once described in a medical journal as equivalent to touching a hot lightbulb. Overexposure to radiation can also cause headaches, nausea and vomiting. China's so-called Poly WB-1 was first put on display at an air show in 2014 and was thought to be supplied to Chinese naval forces. The tools are known as 'microwave' weapons because they have a similar effect to the type of oven, although technically the radiation is in the form of millimetre waves rather than microwaves. There is some suspicion that similar weapons were used against US diplomatic personnel who mysteriously fell ill in China and Cuba in a series of incidents beginning in 2016. America's equivalent 'heat ray', the Active Denial System, was unveiled in 2007 and deployed to Afghanistan but apparently never used against hostile troops. The Pentagon touted it as 'the first non-lethal, directed-energy, counter-personnel system with an extended range greater than currently fielded non-lethal weapons'. Fears of a political backlash were thought to have contributed to its withdrawal from Afghanistan, although the US government said it complied with international law.

An Indian army convoy drives on a highway bordering China in June in the wake of the deadly face-off on the long-disputed frontier



Indian army soldiers sit in a military vehicle following the violence in June, the worst fighting on the border with China for 53 years



News of the weapon's alleged use in the Himalayas comes as China and India discuss ways to de-escalate tensions on the rugged mountain frontier. The nuclear-armed neighbours have deployed tens of thousands of troops since tensions erupted into the deadly medieval-style clash in June. India said 20 of its soldiers were killed in the night-time brawl which is thought to have involved up to 900 soldiers, while China acknowledged casualties but did not give figures. Post-

mortems showed that the 'primary reason for death is drowning and it looks like they fell from a height into the water because of head injuries,' one Indian official said.

Both sides blamed each other for provoking the conflict, while the US took India's side by offering 'deepest condolences' to the soldiers killed. The two sides are now discussing a staggered disengagement from the border area where temperatures have dropped to -18C, Indian officials said. 'We have a firm plan for disengagement on the table, it is being internally discussed on both sides,' said one of the officials. Under the plan that was shared during a meeting of top commanders last Friday, both sides will pull back from the contested Pangong Tso lake area and establish a buffer zone. Chinese soldiers will dismantle defence structures on several hilly spurs overlooking the lake and pull back, officials briefed on the discussions said. India, which has occupied heights on the lake's south bank, will also withdraw. Both sides will cease patrolling certain sections. The two countries fought a full-scale war in 1962 and both continue to lay claim to thousands of square miles of territory.

Ed note:- this device looks very much like the LRAD or Long Range Acoustic Device the US was experimenting with. It uses sound waves which produce similar effects noted for this microwave weapon



Microwave weapons are touted by China as 'non-lethal, energy-directed weapons' that cause an 'instant burning sensation and make the targets run away'. Also described as 'heat rays', they work by heating water molecules under the skin, causing a burning feeling which stops when the target leaves the area. The sensation was once described in a medical journal as equivalent to touching a hot lightbulb. The tools are known as 'microwave' weapons because they have a similar effect to the kitchen appliances, although technically the radiation is in the form of millimetre waves rather than microwaves. China's so-called Poly WB-1 was first put on display at an air show in 2014 and was thought to be supplied to Chinese naval forces. The US government, which developed its own version called the Active Denial System, says it could be used for 'crowd control, crowd dispersal, convoy and patrol protection, checkpoint security, perimeter security' and other objectives. The weapon was unveiled in 2007 and deployed to Afghanistan but apparently never used against hostile troops.

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

St Barbara's Day Dinner – Invitations are starting to arrive for our virtual dinner! Covid-19 has its downfalls but it does present opportunities to still join with friends and families across Canada. Your President will be joining with 2nd Field Artillery Regiment for a St Barbara's event prior to our dinner. Hope to see you on the 4th and I'll tell you how they do things in Montreal. 1800 for 1900 hrs, Friday 4 December. Dress – Formal. You bring your own meal, wine and port. RSVP president.vcrgunners@gmail.com and I'll provide you with a Zoom login. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/virtual-st-barbaras-day-guest-night>

Sergeant Arne Knudsen Videos. The final chapters are now online. Hear Arne talk about his adventures in Italy with the 7th Anti-Tank Regiment. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/arne-knudsen.html>

Military Medal recipient. During the Second World War, Battery Sergeant Major Sidney James Boyte, MM of the 58th Battery, 15th (Vancouver) Coast Regiment, RCA NPAM wore the Military Medal and bar. These were awarded for his service with the 72nd Battalion in the First World War. Find out the details on our Military medal page. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/military-medal.html>

Military Medal recipient. Sergeant Herbert George Blazier, MM enlisted with the Vancouver Volunteer Reserves and was awarded the Military Medal while serving with the 22nd Battery. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/military-medal.html>

Remembrance Day events. The Commanding Officer recited In Flanders Fields during the Surrey commemorative event. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/remembrance-day-2020.html>

VAA Virtual Lunch every Wednesday at Noon PDT - <https://zoom.us/j/710845848> - Drop in for 10 minutes or stay for an hour.

Remember – Stay healthy and stay safe!

Who (or What) Is It?

Last Week: Correction:- In last week's answer, I incorrectly identified the troops as the Free Arab Legion. They were, as stated in the photo caption, the 13th Waffen Mountain Division of the SS "Handschar" (1st Croatian), a mountain infantry division of the Waffen-SS, an armed branch of the German Nazi Party that served alongside but was never formally part of the Wehrmacht during World War II.



A Centurion operated by the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars in Busan, hit a Cromwell tank at a range of 3,000 yards to record the first combat kill of another tank on 15 November 1951. The 8th KRIH had

lost the Cromwell earlier in the war when it had been captured by the North Koreans.

This Week: The rainy weather we are having this year is perfect for isolating from all that is going on outside our little cave and getting down to some serious scanning. Amongst the various rare books in our collection, such as “The Adventures of Fat Freddy’s Cat”, and “A Swinger’s Guide to Squamish”, is one that I received as a spotted youth, “Plucky Soldiers of the World”, or something like that; the cover is missing, having been found irresistible by generations of mice.



I had great fun scanning these now out of copyright images. Many show our brave warriors of the Empire, whilst others show colourful chaps who had yet to receive the benefits of British culture, such as various eastern European princely realms, most now extinct. However, this one might not fit those broad classifications. At first glance, they seem to be Cossacks, who, surprisingly, still get into the news from time to time, often as enforcers of all things Russian. However, in spite of their fetching attire, they are not that. Who they are is up to you to find out. We will give you one hint. A very popular film of the 1960s was “Doctor Zhivago”, in which these two lads could easily have acted as extras. However, they are briefly alluded to in another blockbuster of that decade, released a bit earlier, and starring Peter O’Toole.

So, if you can use all this spare time you have to guess the answer, send it to our editor, Bob Mugford (bob.mugford@gmail.com), or the author, John Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net). Thank you in advance.

From the ‘Punitary’

What do you call a thieving alligator? A Crocodile

Murphy’s Other Laws

You're never too old to learn something stupid.

Quotable Quotes

Winter forms our character and brings out our best. *Tom Allen*

RCA Band Concert



The Royal
Canadian
Artillery
Band

Presents

*A Christmas
Celebration*

Join us for our virtual concert
December 11th at 5 PM MST
[facebook.com/rcaband](https://www.facebook.com/rcaband)

Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

No need to worry about COVID-19 when you go digital. Pop into our video lunch **at noon** on Wednesdays and say hi. All you need is a laptop, tablet or smartphone. These sessions are being hosted by the Vancouver Artillery Association and are **open to all** – especially those who attended our Wednesday lunches.

Join us to check up on your old lunch buddies.

<https://zoom.us/j/710845848>

Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, chat, and webinars across mobile,



desktop, and room systems. Zoom Rooms is the original software-based conference room solution used around the world in board, conference, huddle, and training rooms, as well as executive offices and classrooms. Founded in 2011, Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless environment to get more done. Zoom is a publicly traded company headquartered in San Jose, CA.

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting now](#)

Use the link above on your computer Zoom program or dial in on your phone 778 907 2071 Meeting ID: 710 845 848

Invite 2 friends! We have room for 100! See you on Wednesdays at noon. Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.

RUSI(NS) - Distinguished Speaker 9 December 2020

Canadian Coast Guard Fleet Renewal

Biography

Derek Moss

Senior Director Fleet

Canadian Coast Guard

Derek Moss is the Senior Director Fleet for the Canadian Coast Guard Central Region, headquartered in Montreal, Quebec. In this capacity, he is privileged to lead a highly effective and motivated team that oversees the Coast Guard's vessel and aircraft fleet operations in the Great Lakes, St Lawrence River, northern gulf of St Lawrence, Hudson Bay, and Arctic waters. Before joining Central Region, Derek served in National Headquarters in Ottawa as the Senior Director Operational Support, responsible for policy on fleet readiness and requirements, icebreaking program, Aids to Navigation and Waterways, and Marine Communications and Traffic Services. Previously in the Coast Guard, Derek was the Director, Incident Management and subsequently the Director, Maritime Security and Intelligence. In addition to his regular work, Derek involves himself in Arctic and Northern projects as well as Maritime Security issues. Prior to joining the Coast Guard, Derek served in the Royal Canadian Navy. He was Commanding Officer of the Halifax-class frigate HMCS REGINA, Commandant of the Naval Officer Training Centre (VENTURE) in Esquimalt, Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force North in Yellowknife, and Chief of Staff Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic in Halifax.



Derek is a graduate from the University of Ottawa and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Communications). He is also a graduate of the Command and Staff Course at Canadian Forces College Toronto, where he completed a Master of Defence Studies, and the National War College in Washington, DC, where he received a Master of Science in National Security Strategy. Derek attended the National Defense University in Washington for a year as an International Fellow. He holds a Master Mariner certificate issued by Transport Canada.