



## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Sept 1, 2015

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

### **Wednesday Lunches**

The 15 Field Officers Mess holds weekly lunches, serving a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch.

**Note: The Bar is OPEN again!** A contractor will be coming in to remove asbestos tiles from the bar area. This now scheduled for mid to late October and will mean a shutdown of lunches for one to two weeks.

### **NOABC Speaker Program Wednesday September 30<sup>th</sup>**

**The RCMP National Shiprider Program** presented by Sgt James Jesmer, E Division NCO in charge Lower Mainland Shiprider Program. The Canada-US Shiprider program involves vessels jointly crewed by specially trained and designated Canadian and US law enforcement officers who are authorized to enforce the law on both sides of the international boundary line. Working together, armed Canadian and US law enforcement officers are able to transit back and forth across the border to help secure it from threats to national security, as well as prevent cross-border smuggling and trafficking.

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

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

**Aug 26<sup>th</sup>:** German raids hit Portsmouth and three RAF bases, losing 45 aircraft to 31 RAF fighters.

**Aug 27<sup>th</sup>:** RAF Coastal Command starts flying convoy protection operations out of Iceland with Fairey Battles.

**Aug 28<sup>th</sup>:** Night bombing of cities takes off as the second RAF raid on Berlin is matched by a German attack on Liverpool. Over England by day, the RAF is finding new Luftwaffe tactics to strip down their fighter strength are getting costly and they lose 20 fighters while the Luftwaffe loses 30 aircraft. The Armed Merchant Cruiser Dunvegan Castle is sunk by a U-Boat.

**Aug 29<sup>th</sup>:** A Luftwaffe fighter sweep takes 9 RAF fighters but lose 17 – they left their bombers back in France and looked for the Hurricanes and Spitfires with their Messerschmitts alone.

**Aug 30<sup>th</sup>:** RAF Fighter Bases Biggin Hill and Luton are badly hit in raids, with 36 Luftwaffe and 26 RAF aerial losses. Hitler announces he will decide about Operation Sealion on Sept 10<sup>th</sup>.

Germany intervenes in the Bulgarian and Hungarian attempt to bully Romania into ceding territory, and forces Romania to yield land without another war occurring.

**Aug 31<sup>st</sup>:** The RAF is very close to losing parity over southern England, losing 39 aircraft in the air (to 41 Luftwaffe losses), and almost all of its fighter bases in the south have been badly hit or knocked out.

### **September 1940: The Few Fend off Hitler.**

**General:** Kriegsmarine E-boat torpedo attack craft go into action off England, and Allied shipping losses reach 100 ships - 448,600 tons; 59 of which are sunk by U-Boats.

**Sept 1<sup>st</sup>:** The Italians capture Buna in Northeast Kenya; they have been modest in their advances largely because of logistical difficulties and the main focus of their forces in Western Somalia so far has been road-building. The Luftwaffe pace against RAF fighter bases slacks off as the bombers start going after factories. The Soviets expel Japanese Consul Sempo Sugihara from the formerly Polish city of Kovno – Sugihara had managed to allow over 3,400 Polish Jews to transit through the USSR and Japanese controlled territory in a quest for safety.

## **The US Army's Official Humvee Replacement**

*The US Army has just awarded a \$6.75 billion contract to Oshkosh Defense to build 17,000 Joint Light Tactical Vehicles for the Army and Marine Corps.*



Oshkosh Defense

The US Army and Marine Corps have made their final selection for the replacement to the aging Humvee. Meet the new Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, or JLTV, built by Oshkosh Defense. The decision caps off a three-year investigational phase, during which Oshkosh, Lockheed Martin, and AM General (maker of the long-serving Humvee) submitted 22 prototype vehicles each to be subjected to an intensive 14-month competitive test. The \$6.75 billion contract awarded to Oshkosh covers production of 17,000 new vehicles. The Army anticipates receiving its first units in 2018, with a procurement period that runs until 2040.

The first three years of JLTV production will be low-rate, with an anticipated output of 17,000 vehicles. 5,500 of those vehicles will be earmarked for the Marine Corps, delivered between 2018 and 2022. The US Army plans to buy 49,099 production vehicles from fiscal year 2015 (FY 2015) through FY 2040, with 2,200 annually from FY 2020-36. JLTV design requirements called for a larger, more mechanically reliable, safer vehicle than the Humvee, which has been continually patched and modified to deal with the evolving challenges of global combat. The

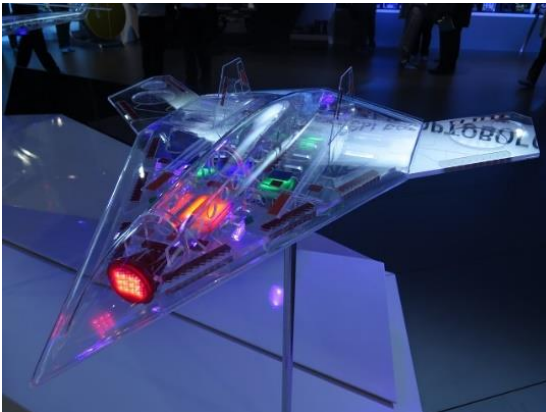
vehicles will come in two variations, four-passenger combat vehicles and two-seat combat support vehicles, with a maximum weight of 15,639 pounds to enable helicopter transportation, USNI reports.

## **Is Russia Developing an F-35-Hunting UAV?**

*James Drew Moscow Flightglobal.com*

Russia could be working on a low-observable, F-35-hunting unmanned air vehicle that uses deeply-integrated electronic warfare systems to stay hidden from radars. The tip-off comes from electronic systems producer KRET, which has a curious UAV model on display at the MAKS air show in Moscow. According to the company's first deputy chief executive officer Vladimir Mikheev, this aircraft model is more than just a sleek promotional display – it is an advanced military UAV being developed by the United Aircraft Corporation (UAC). Concern Radio-Electronic Technologies (KRET) is a subcontractor on the project, he says, providing the fundamental communications, radar, electronic warfare and self-protection systems, as well as the ground control station.

Speaking via a translator, Mikheev tells Flightglobal that the company is involved with two military UAV projects – one in development and one in the concept phase – but both ventures of UAC. He declines to name the project and does not say which UAC design bureau is in charge, but confirms some of its key capabilities. Mikheev says the UAV has been designed to detect stealth aircraft in the same vein as China's ambitious "Divine Eagle" project, which he claims is based on technology "borrowed" from Russia and the USA. Such aircraft aim to detect low-observable US combat aircraft using X-band and UHF radars, specifically the Lockheed Martin F-22 and F-35 and Northrop Grumman B-2. But airborne surveillance is just one of the UAV's capabilities.



*BillyPix*

Mikheev says KRET is providing a deeply-integrated electronic warfare system that not only provides a protective electromagnetic sphere around the aircraft to counter air-to-air missiles, but also cloaks it from radars. The unmanned aircraft closely resembles Northrop's carrier-based X-47B demonstrator, but adds two lift fans on each wing and vertical stabilisers. Mikheev says the

UAV's avionics, radar and electronic warfare systems are derived from those being produced for the Sukhoi Su-35 multirole fighter and the Kamov Ka-50 attack helicopter. KRET is also deeply involved in the Sukhoi T-50/PAK FA fighter project. In an article published on KRET's website on 2 August, Mikheev says Russia has been competing with the USA in the realm of electronic warfare "for our entire lives", and about five years ago the company decided it needed to bring in the next-era of electronic warfare systems. "Today we are talking about 15% to 20% annual growth in the direction of electronic warfare systems," he says. It remains to be seen whether this UAV project is just marketing or a mature development programme with

similar goals to China's Divine Eagle UAV. It would come as the stealthy F-35 enters serve as the West's primary "first-day-of-war" combat jet

## **Ships Deploy to the Arctic for Operation NANOOK**

Navy News *Rachel Lallouz, Staff Writer*

HMCS *Nanaimo* and *Saskatoon* left the shelter of Esquimalt Harbour last week to work in the ice-laden waters of the Arctic for six weeks. The two ships will make the 6,500-km journey to Tuktoyaktuk in the Northwest Territories, where they will conduct surveillance and presence activities in the area for this year's Operation NANOOK. Operation NANOOK is the Canadian Armed Forces' largest sovereignty operation in Canada's North, working alongside other government departments to establish a visible federal presence in our northern communities. This year's operation marks the first deployment north of the 60th parallel for a Pacific fleet ship since HMCS *Cedarwood* in 1949. "This particular Operation NANOOK is special," says Lieutenant-Commander Brad Henderson, Commanding Officer of HMCS *Saskatoon*. "In the past, ships participating in Operation NANOOK left from the East Coast, so this is the first time we are entering the Arctic from the west." This operation will help prepare the stage for more extensive operations to be conducted in the future by Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships. Training in the northern environment is anticipated to iron out logistical and operating challenges posed by remoteness and harsher environmental conditions in the North.

The exercise will also play a key role in establishing a federal presence in Canada's northern communities, which LCdr Jeff Hopkins, Commanding Officer of HMCS *Nanaimo*, says is integral to supporting Canada's Northern Strategy. Crew aboard HMCS *Nanaimo* will operate a towed side-scan sonar system that will capture high definition images below the water. The device is used efficiently to create an image of large areas of the sea floor. Once in the Arctic, HMCS *Saskatoon* will help recover hydrophone arrays left by scientists off Banks Island. The ship will use a Bottom Object Inspection Vehicle (BOIV) to recover the arrays, which has cameras and a robotic arm capable of manipulating objects under water. LCdr Henderson's ship will bring three divers from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) to operate the BOIV that will also be used to conduct surveillance of underwater topography.

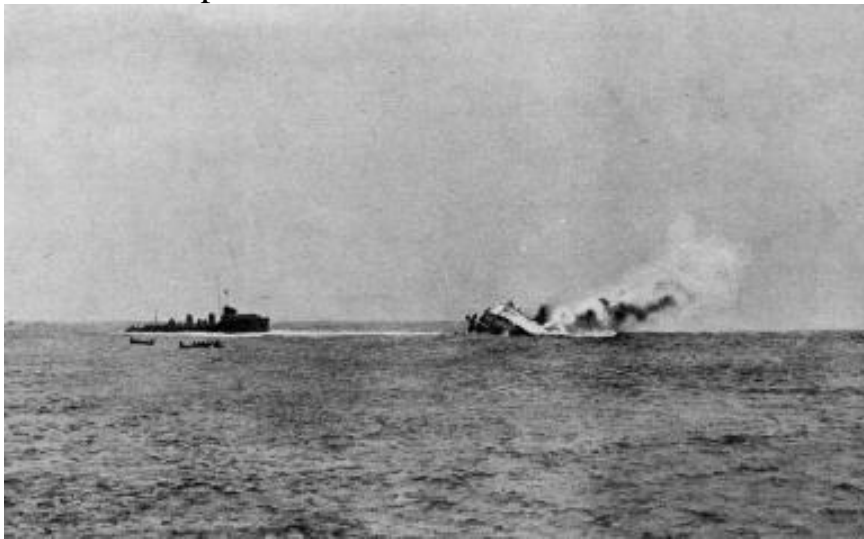
To prepare for the operation, the commanders of both ships are familiarizing themselves with the environmental conditions of the Arctic. But they aren't too worried – August up north is similar to winter in Victoria, with temperatures ranging from five to 10 degrees Celsius. "There will be the least amount of ice when we're up there," says LCdr Henderson. "The ice will lock up on the shoreline in October. But we're still making sure we understand ice, how to operate in it, how to navigate through it, and the limitations that it can bring." In terms of supplying the ship with goods and fuel, LCdr Henderson says there's isn't a big difference fueling the ship and stocking it with food and provisions than any other deployment; and, with the moderate weather conditions, all gear needed for the crew falls under the standard scale of issue. "The one thing we do is try to take on more rations than we normally would to ensure we won't have to rely on northern supply chains," says LCdr Hopkins. Other factors each commander is keeping in mind include the distance from ship to shore in Tuktoyaktuk. Extensive shallows mean the closest the ships will get to port is approximately 18.5 km, making for long lines of

transit. “The novelty of the Arctic is huge, and getting to operate that far north is rare. As the first ships from the West Coast heading up in roughly 60 years, we’re looking forward to the challenge,” says LCdr Hopkins.

## **Battle of Heligoland Bight**

*Kennedy Hickman Military History Expert*

The Battle of Heligoland Bight, which occurred less than a month after the beginning of the conflict, was the first naval battle of World War I and resulted from a British raid on the German coast. The principle forces for the raid were Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt's Harwich Force (two light cruisers and 31 destroyers) and Commodore Roger Keyes' group of 8 submarines. These were to be supported by Cruiser Force K (5 antiquated cruisers), as well as Commodore William Goodenough's First Light Cruiser Squadron (6 light cruisers) and Vice Admiral David Beatty's First Battlecruiser Squadron (5 battlecruisers). Early on the morning, Tyrwhitt encountered the first German torpedo boats to the west of Heligoland. Anticipating a British attack, the Germans quickly sortied two light cruisers, SMS *Frauenlob* and SMS *Stettin*, and then deployed four additional light cruisers under Rear Admiral Leberecht Maass. Outgunned, Tyrwhitt's flagship, the light cruiser HMS *Arethusa*, was heavily damaged and called for help.



*Sinking of SMS Mainz at the Battle of Heligoland Bight. Public Domain*

1240hrs and his First Battlecruiser Squadron sank Maass' flagship, the light cruiser SMS *Cöln*, and light cruiser SMS *Ariadne*. British, realizing it was only a matter of time before German battlecruisers emerged from their base at Wilhelmshaven, withdrew west victorious.

In the day's fighting, the Royal Navy had sunk three German light cruisers and one destroyer, while damaging three other light cruisers. The battle cost the Germans 712 killed, 149 wounded, and 336 captured. For the British, the cost was 35 killed and 55 wounded. While the battle did not involve either side's battleships, it did have a significant impact on the conflict. Struck by the loss of ships, Kaiser Wilhelm ordered the navy to "hold itself back and avoid actions which can lead to greater losses." He also stipulated that his permission was required before the fleet could sortie, effectively confining it to port. These actions largely prevented the

High Seas Fleet from conducting offensive operations during World War I and ensured that the British retained the initiative for the length of the conflict

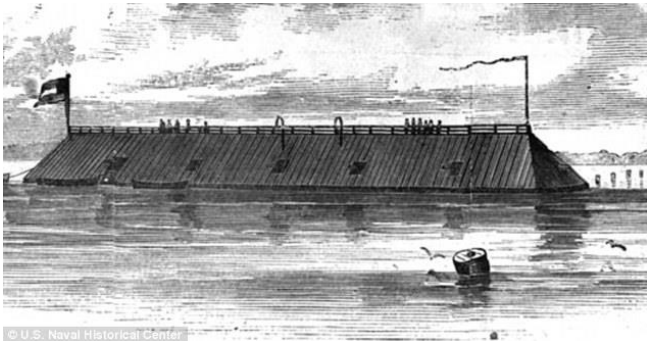
## **Divers Raise Wreckage of Confederate Warship CSS Georgia**

Vessel, scuttled by its own crew 150 years ago, being raised in 5-ton chunks.

By ASSOCIATED PRESS 16 August 2015

After 150 years at the bottom of the Savannah River, the armored skeleton of the Confederate warship CSS Georgia is being raised to the surface one 5-ton chunk at a time. Navy divers who began working in late June to recover cannons, unexploded shells and other artifacts from the riverbed finally started midweek on their last major task — retrieving an estimated 250,000 pounds of the Civil War ironclad's armored siding. The CSS Georgia was scuttled by its own crew to prevent Gen. William T. Sherman from capturing the massive gunship when his Union troops took Savannah in December 1864. Still classified as a captured enemy vessel by the Navy, the remains of the Confederate ironclad are being salvaged as part of a \$703 million deepening of the Savannah harbor for cargo ships.

'The historical significance is evident in everything we do,' Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jason Potts, the Navy's on-scene commander, said Wednesday as his crew prepared to start raising the first of three giant slabs of armor. The CSS Georgia was a crude example of the first armored warships designed during the Civil War to stand up to cannon and artillery fire. Its 1,200-ton frame was built using three layers of timber topped with 24-foot strips of railroad iron. Having sections of the Georgia's armor for study should reveal more about how the Confederacy compensated for the South's lack of an industrial base when it came to building ships and other war machines. 'A lot of these ironclads are built by house carpenters, they're not built by shipwrights,' said Jeff Seymour, historian and curator for the National Civil War Naval Museum in Columbus. 'So what are the construction techniques? They vary from ship-to-ship.'



*Navy divers are working in conjunction with archeologists, conservationists, Naval History and Heritage Command and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a project to salvage and preserve CSS Georgia*

The Georgia proved so bulky its own engines were too weak to propel it against the Savannah River's currents. The Confederates anchored the

ironclad off Old Fort Jackson as a floating gun battery. It was sunk without ever firing a shot in combat. After months of preparation work by underwater archaeologists, Navy divers from the Virginia Beach-based Mobile Diving Salvage Unit 2 arrived in late June. Their first task was to raise 132 unexploded shells — both cannonballs and rifled shells shaped like large bullets — found scattered across the wreckage site. Using a crane mounted on a barge, they also pulled up four cannons weighing 1,000 to 10,000 pounds apiece. Other artifacts soon emerged from 40 feet or more of water: a flywheel, a pump and sections of the steamship's boiler. Perhaps most

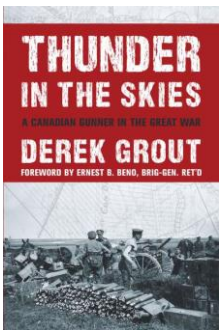
impressive, the Georgia's propeller was recovered intact and still attached to the long shaft that turned it.

'We don't just simply want to bring it all back to the surface,' Potts said. 'We want to bring it back intact. So we go to the maximum effort to make sure we don't rip these things apart on the way up.' The three large sections of the Georgia's armored casemate, however, proved too heavy to raise without cutting them down into smaller pieces. They're being separated into about 20 total chunks, each measuring about 4 feet by 24 feet and weighing roughly 5 tons. After a century and a half, Potts said, most of the ship's wooden hull has rotted away. But the railroad iron remains essentially glued together by mud and silt from the riverbed. The crew uses a crane-held tool with a long, flat blade to slide between the iron strips and pry apart chunks of the armor.

A web of slings is then attached to the slab of armor to ensure its weight is evenly distributed as the crane lifts it from the river. With river currents typically limiting divers to less than three hours underwater each day, Potts estimates it will take his team nearly a month to raise all of the armored siding. That's at a rate of roughly one 5-ton chunk per day. All artifacts from the CSS Georgia are being sent to the Conservation Research Laboratory at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, for cataloging and preservation. The Navy hasn't said where those artifacts will ultimately reside.

## **THUNDER IN THE SKIES: A Canadian Gunner in the Great War**

*An extraordinary, newly discovered account from an ordinary Canadian on the ground in the crucial battles of the First World War. As featured in the Jul 21<sup>st</sup> newsletter.*



What was it like to be a field gunner in the Great War? Drawing on the unpublished letters and diary of field gunner Lt Bert Sargent and his fellow soldiers, *Thunder in the Skies* takes the reader from enlistment in late 1914, through training camp, to the Somme, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, the Hundred Days Offensive, and home again with peace.

**Now available at:** [www.amazon.ca](http://www.amazon.ca) and iTunes.

## **Who is it?**



**Last Week:** This photo dates from around 1937, and is most likely taken at Sarcee.

As part of the artillery mechanization programme in 1936, four half-track gun tractors were ordered. Standard 2-ton truck chassis were ordered from Ford of Canada, and sent to James Cunningham, Son & Co. of Rochester, New York, to be converted to half-tracks.

On their return to Canada, they were fitted with ammunition and storage boxes from 18-pounder limbers, and sent to C Battery in Winnipeg for trials. At the end

of the trials, the vehicles had averaged 4,378 miles (7.045 km). Because of the exceptionally dry season, the trials were unable to test the half-tracks in prairie “gumbo” mud. The vehicles were subsequently sent to infantry units for further trials, ending their connection with the Artillery. There is a half-track, limber and 18pdr in the Canadian War Museum. View a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJO9n3T3s7w>

**This Week:** Around the world, one finds remnants of coastal and other defences. Until ten years ago, machine gun pillboxes, once manned by men of the Middlesex Regiment, were clearly visible at the base of the old Star Ferry dock in Central, Hong Kong, something unlikely in a city known for rapid development. Similarly, one can still stumble upon long-forgotten gun emplacements all around the coast of the United Kingdom, relics of not only the last great



war, but of almost every conflict going back to the Roman period. However, urban development, stone-robbing, and nature itself have erased much of that which was once built to defend our British and Canadian liberties. Vancouver is no exception to this trend, with much of that constructed during World War Two gone, and nothing visible from the Great War, unlike the situation in our provincial capital.

One large object that is no more is that in this week’s photo. Here it is seen in its post-war decline, empty and no longer in use, but still sporting a rather quirky, but fading camouflage pattern. Your task, dear readers, is to identify the object, its location, and tell us whatever became of it. One thing we know for certain: it isn’t there anymore. However, your editor, and the author, John Redmond ([johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)) are still here, so send us your ideas. There are bonus points for identifying the auto.

### **From the ‘Punitary’**

What's the definition of a will? (Come on, it's a dead giveaway!)

### **Murphy’s other Laws**

The man who can smile when things go wrong has thought of someone he can blame it on.

### **Quotable Quotes**

The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. - *Winston Churchill*





*Honorary Colonel William Rodgers,  
Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Allan De Genova,  
and the  
15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regimental Society  
request the pleasure of your company for a  
**'Special Guest Night'**  
in honour of  
**Saint Barbara's Day**  
to be held at  
**BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY**  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver  
on Saturday, the Fifth of December, 2015  
at six o'clock for seven o'clock in the evening.*

*RSVP by 25 November 2015 with  
payment:  
OCdt R. T. Jones  
[Richard.Jones6@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Richard.Jones6@forces.gc.ca)  
Tariff: \$ 105  
(\$95 if received by 1 October 2015)*

*Payable to "15 Fd Regt'l Society"  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7*

*Dress: Mess Kit or Black Tie, with  
decorations*