



## Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News May 21, 2013

### Wednesday Lunches

Lunches in the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Officers Mess continue with Mrs Lum cooking at home and bringing the food in. The decision has been made to renovate the upstairs (Mess) kitchen at an estimated cost of \$30-35,000. A good start has been made on fundraising and efforts are continuing; watch this newsletter for events and campaigns.

Your guests are always welcome – just don't forget to tell them that jacket and tie are required for men, equivalent for women.

**Lunches will continue through the summer.**

Remember to drop your lunch ticket in the bowl when you pick up your soup/salad.

And finally, PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE VEHICLE COMPOUND!!

Next week is 'Navy Day' and members of NOABC will gather for lunch. A speaker is usually arranged for but one has not yet been announced.

### 2013 Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference

The third annual Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference was held on 26 - 27 April 2013 in the Presentation Room at Vancouver Community College in downtown Vancouver. The Conference was co-hosted by the Royal United Services Institute – Vancouver Society and the Simon Fraser University Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies. The aim of the Conference was to promote public education and information on strategic and international security matters and military history of importance to Canada. The general theme was the Middle East.

Presenters and Moderators for the Conference included –

Mr Robert Fisk, senior Middle East correspondent for the Independent newspaper of London, UK. He has been described by the New York Times as, "probably the most famous foreign correspondent in Britain."

Major General (retired) Edward Fitch, former Commander, Canadian Land Forces Western Area

Commodore Scott Bishop, Commander, Canadian Fleet, Pacific

Nelofer Pazira, Award-winning Afghan-Canadian director, actor, journalist and author. Co-Producer and Director of the film “Return to Kandahar”

Mike Molloy, Canadian Ambassador to Jordan 1996 – 2000 and Senior Fellow at the University of Ottawa Graduate School of Public and International Affairs

Colonel (retired) Patrick Dennis, Military Attaché to Israel 2001 – 2004 and Visiting Professor to Wilfrid Laurier University Department of Political Science

Mr Stewart Muir, former Deputy Managing Editor of the Vancouver Sun

The Conference began on Friday evening with the Keynote event. This was conducted as an interview with Robert Fisk on the subject, “Syria, Security and the Middle East”, moderated by the Simon Fraser University Dean of Arts and Social Sciences, Professor John Craig. Robert Fisk gave an engaging and provocative review of the Syrian war including his firsthand accounts reporting from the front lines from both sides of the conflict. He emphasized the need for a better understanding of the conflict through eye witness reporting, the suspect nature of national analysis of events and the misperceptions associated with the conflict. His criticism of Western governmental accounts and analysis was thought provoking in a number of ways.

An expert panel made up of General Fitch, Ambassador Molloy, Colonel Dennis, SFU Professor Andre Gerolymatos, the head of the Hellenic Studies Centre, and Kam Razavi from Global National News made a number of insightful observations and provoked more in depth discussion on a number of aspects of the conflict. Questions from the floor were particularly interesting and well thought out.

An informal reception at the BCR Drill Hall followed where attendees had a chance to meet the presenters and discuss the issues brought out during the Keynote event. It was the first chance many had to visit the historical Drill Hall.

On Saturday morning there were more thought provoking and interesting presentations, as follows -

Ambassador Mike Molloy on "Jerusalem and Refugees: Challenges to Peace"

This presentation brought out the many challenges to peace between Israel and the Palestinian people and called on Ambassador Molloy's extensive experience related to diplomatic efforts, refugee issues and the peace process in the area.

Colonel (retired) Pat Dennis on "Slackers, Shirkers & Malingerers and other great myths about Canadian Conscripts in the First World War"

Colonel Dennis gave a fresh look at this area of study, long neglected by Canadian historians. The role of conscripts in the last six months of the First World War was both important and controversial; his research in this area will be published in a book on the subject later this year.

Stewart Muir on "The Soldier and The Journalist: An untold World War II story of the press, public opinion, politics and war planning on the west coast of Canada"

Stewart Muir's articles on this subject were published in 2012 as a part of the Vancouver Sun's commemoration of 100 years of publishing in Vancouver. The research gives new insight into controversial aspects of the Sun's criticism of government plans for the defence of the west coast in 1942 - intrigue, deceit and misinformation were rampant.

Lunch was served in the BCR Drill Hall and attendees had another chance to visit the historical Drill hall.

Presentations in the afternoon included -

Commodore Scott Bishop, Commander, Canadian Fleet, Pacific. Topic on "The Royal Canadian Navy in the Middle East"

The RCN has been continuously on active operations in the Middle East and adjacent waters for more than a decade. Commodore Bishop's presentation gave an overview of the importance of the navy to Canada's national security and its international role in cooperation with allies in ensuring freedom of the seas and the interdiction of those who would do harm to our security and national interests.

Robert Fisk made a special presentation on the Middle East Security Environment

This overview of the security situation in the Middle East again gave an opportunity to explore and ask questions about current events and the international security situation in this politically complex region. A good exchange of ideas with the audience gave attendees another chance to question Mr Fisk on his observations and writings.

Major-General (ret'd) Edward Fitch made the Conference Capstone presentation on "Canada's role in the Middle East" This provocative exploration of many aspects of Canada's role in the Middle East was preceded by General Fitch's observations on anti-Semitism and how it can be recognized.

Nelofer Pazira moderated a Panel Discussion on "The Middle East, Israel, Palestine, Iran – Is Diplomacy Dead?" Ms Pazira began this session with her observations as a refugee from Afghanistan and guided a wide-ranging discussion on the state of diplomacy in the Middle East.

Funding and sponsorship for the Conference were generously provided by -

Royal United Services Institute – Vancouver

Simon Fraser University/Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies and the SFU School of International Studies

The Department of National Defence – Defence Engagement Program

British Columbia Regiment (Duke of Connaught's Own) Association

Royal Westminster Regiment Association  
Seaforth Highlanders of Canada Association

The organizers and host organizations thank all of those who helped promote, sponsor, fund and assist in this successful event. It would not have been possible without their assistance.

The Proceedings of the Conference, giving a more thorough overview of the contents and conclusions of the presentations and discussions, will be made available on line by end-May. A link to that document will be provided once it is put on-line.

**Many thanks to Keith Maxwell and Cam Cathcart for all their hard work to organize this event.**

### **Extra cash for UK businesses taking on part-time soldiers**

*By Peter Dominiczak, Political Correspondent - 12 May 2013*

*Small businesses could be given hundreds of pounds when employees in the Territorial Army are sent on operations as part of plans to boost the country's reserve defence force. An example for Canada to follow?*



*In Mr Hammond's opinion, rising employment should be countered by a falling welfare budget*

*Photo: Andrew Crowley for the Telegraph*

Philip Hammond, the Defence Secretary, said that small companies will get financial incentives to encourage them to hire members of the reserves. Under the Coalition's defence review, the TA is expected to

increase from 19,000 fully trained members to 30,000 by 2018.

The proposals represent the most radical shake up of the Territorial Army in its 100-year history.

However, the boost to the reserves comes as the regular Army is being cut from approximately 100,000 soldiers to 82,000 by the end of the decade. Speaking on the BBC's Sunday Politics programme Mr Hammond said that the reserves "have been allowed to atrophy over the last couple of decades".

Firms are currently compensated for the costs of hiring someone new to replace a reservist going away on operations. However, Mr Hammond said that a further cash bonus will give small businesses more reasons to employ reservists. Whitehall sources said the exact figure has

not yet been decided, but indicated that it was like to be “hundreds of pounds”. “We are looking at the equation around financial incentives,” Mr Hammond said. “I would like to look at financial incentivisation for those employers for whom it matters. It would be direct financial incentivisation. It means cash - it means cash when their employees get called out on reserve service. “Now that does matter to small employers. If I talk to the large employers they're not interested in financial incentives. They do this because it's good for their business and because it's part of their corporate social responsibility.”

Mr Hammond is still wrangling with the Treasury over how significant the cuts will be to his department in the upcoming Spending Review. He wants money earmarked for the Department of Health and the Department for Education to be used to ease the impact of cuts on the Ministry of Defence. Poor economic growth and tax revenues mean the Government is still borrowing £120 billion a year, forcing ministers to extend the austerity programme into the next parliament. The Treasury is looking for cuts worth £11.5 billion from Whitehall departments whose budgets have not been protected. Spending on the NHS, schools and international aid has all been ring-fenced in the review. Spending on defence equipment will rise in 2015-16, but the remaining part of Mr Hammond's budget, which funds Armed Forces personnel, could be cut by up to 5 per cent.

Defence chiefs have said that could force yet more military redundancies. To avert such job losses, Mr Hammond is arguing that some of the protected departments' cash should be transferred to his department. He said the need to increase the size of the reserves was one way to combat the cuts. “Our budget has been reduced and we had to decide how we were going to absorb that budget reduction,” Mr Hammond added. “What we decided to do, with military advice, was to reduce the numbers in the regular army, to increase the reserves and to ensure that we provided the equipment that the reserves needed. The alternative would have been to maintain numbers that were unsustainable, that the taxpayer wasn't willing to fund, and under-equip them as has been done in the past.”

Mr Hammond said that employers will also be given “more certainty” about when members of staff could get called up to take part in operations. Under the proposals - to be set out in a White Paper before Parliament breaks for the summer - the Territorial Army is due to be renamed the Army Reserves to reflect a greater role. He rejected suggestions by Tory MP Colonel Bob Stewart that the shake-up was an effort to “get an army on the cheap” and that someone at the Ministry of Defence was “smoking a lot of dope” to believe that 30,000 reserve troops would be able to deploy. Mr Hammond said: “We'll get the reserves up to 30,000. The reserves had been much higher than 30,000 in the past. They've been allowed to atrophy over the last couple of decades since the end of the Cold War.”

## **Home Owner Grant - Veterans Supplement**

### **What is the Veterans Supplement**

As announced in November 2011, a new home owner grant supplement program is available to qualifying low-income veterans beginning in the 2012 tax year. The veterans supplement is in addition to the regular home owner grant.

The veterans supplement provides qualifying low-income veterans with the same relief from property taxes as a homeowner who qualifies for the additional home owner grant. You cannot apply for the veterans supplement if you have applied and been approved for the additional home owner grant.

For more information on the regular and additional home owner grant, please see Bulletin HOG 001, Home Owner Grant Program.

The veteran must sign and apply for the home owner grant to be considered for the veterans supplement. This means, if you do not apply and sign the home owner grant application (another owner applies and signs), you are not eligible for the veterans supplement.

### **Who Qualifies for the Veterans Supplement**

You may qualify for the veterans supplement if you (the veteran) have applied and been approved for the regular home owner grant. In addition to the regular grant qualifications, you must also meet the following qualifications at the time you apply for the veterans supplement:

- you are under 65 years of age,
- you are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and ordinarily reside in British Columbia,
- you are the registered owner or eligible occupant of the home on which the supplement is being claimed,
- you occupy the home as your principal residence,
- you occupy the home as your principal residence,
- you have a low income (please see the section below, What is Low-Income), and
- you are a former officer or non-commissioned member of the Canadian Forces who has been honourably discharged from service.


If you are a spouse or relative (child, grandchild, father, mother or sibling) of a deceased owner or deceased eligible occupant who qualifies as a low-income veteran, you may be eligible for this supplement in the year the veteran died as long as you resided with the veteran at the time of death.

An eligible occupant is an occupant under a multiple home owner grant application. Multiple home owner grants may be claimed by owners of eligible apartments, housing units, land cooperatives or multi-dwelling lease parcels on behalf of eligible occupants. The property and the eligible occupant must qualify to be eligible for the supplement.

For more information about multiple home owner grants, please see the website at:


## **BCR Lunch**

# **Curry Lunch – a Mystery Country**



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

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



**Date:** Thursday, May 30, 2013

**Time:** 11:45 am - 1:30 pm  
(bar opens at 11:45am)  
(welcome at 12:15pm)  
(lunch starts at 12:20pm)

**Location:** Officers' Mess - The BC Regiment  
620 Beatty Street, Vancouver, BC

**Dress:** Business Attire (jacket & tie, ladies similar)

**Price:** \$30/person (\$5 discount for those that confirm attendance by May 24, 2013)

**RSVP:** For more information or to register, please contact Bill Diamond at [Bill@DukeaBear.com](mailto:Bill@DukeaBear.com) or 604.618.3607 (Please advise of any dietary needs with your RSVP)

Payment by cheque or cash will be accepted at the door  
Cheques are payable to: The BC Regiment (DCO) Association  
No cancellations after May 24, 2013

**NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, September 26, 2013**

**NOTE: No lunches over the summer - this is the last lunch until September.**

### **From the 'Punitentary'**

I told my doctor that I could sew stitches better than him, so he said "suture self".

### **Murphy's Rules of Combat Operations.**

When you need to use the bathroom - the enemy is watching your position

### **Quotable Quotes**

Democracy is the art and science of running the circus from the monkey cage.

- *Henry Louis Mencken*