



**Vancouver Artillery
Association News**



RUSI News
Vancouver

Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Oct 22, 2013

Wednesday Lunches

Lunches are back in full swing, although it will be much better once the kitchen project is completed. Still no start date, but I understand all approvals have been given and financials are now in order.

If you haven't been to one of our 5 course, buffet style, 'homecooked' lunches, they happen (almost) every Wednesday from 1130-1400hrs in the 15 Field Officers Mess, Bessborough Armoury, 2025 West 11th Ave, Vancouver. Cost is \$15pp.

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

St Barbara's Day Dinner

A quick 'heads up' to all. The St Barbara's Day Dinner will be held on Dec 7th. Mark your calendars. Invitations will be in the mail soon.

BC Lions Half-time Show - 2013 Salute to Veterans

The RCL BC/Yukon Command is presenting the half-time show at the BC Lions Home Game on November 1st. Pipe & Drum Bands, Colour Parties, Veterans, Canadian Forces, Cadets, First Responders, and Members of Veterans Organizations will be marching. Free tickets are available to all the half-time show participants.

Friday, November 1st BC Place
6:30 PM arrival - 8:00 PM performance

Brocton WWI model battlefield excavation completed

A fragile, detailed replica of a Belgian town devastated during World War I is briefly re-emerging from beneath the earth at Cannock Chase in Staffordshire. Buried by almost a century of undergrowth, the crumbling streets, shops, homes and churches of Messines look exactly as they did in the aftermath of the Battle of Messines Ridge in June 1917 - with one notable exception. These buildings and walls are no more than a few inches high. Miniature, meticulously-crafted hedgerow contours line the recently shelled streets and houses; all serving as a lasting image of a battleground which saw 50,000 men killed.



Archaeologists are painstakingly unearthing the 40-square-metre site this month

Painstakingly built by German prisoners of war under supervision from New Zealand troops, it was intended as both a training aid for frontline soldiers heading to Passchendaele and a lasting tribute to fallen colleagues. Now the Messines Terrain in Brocton is now offering archaeologists a rare glimpse into part of Staffordshire's history. Incredibly, 90 years on, the site has been only partly damaged by the tree roots, scrub and wildlife which cover this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. But although the entire 40-square-metre site is now being returned to its original state - by a team of volunteer archaeologists - it will soon be carefully covered over again. In the brief window when the excavated site is revealed in full, Staffordshire County Council will be using laser-scanning technology to re-create the site as a 3D interactive model that can be explored online.



A glove gives an indication of scale to the miniature replica trenches

"It is perfect in every way; every nook and cranny of this Belgian town was recreated by the soldiers who returned from the war. Every cobble, every bombed building and everything from the basements to the rooftops - it really is amazing." At the time it was built, the Terrain allowed battalions - many of which were based in camps on Cannock Chase - to study Messines in great detail and gave them greater freedom to plot future manoeuvres. Ms Nichol said: "There were quite a few arguments between the Australian and New Zealand troops over who was responsible for victory in that battle." The terrain represents the area of Messines captured by the New Zealand troops, she said. "The returning New Zealand soldiers were sent to Cannock Chase and were living here for months. It was then that they helped build this phenomenal structure," she added.

"The level of detail is amazing; you can see the trenches, even the contours of hedges and trees. Streets are built from separate stones to the pavements; it is a complete, detailed town, not just a general indication of the town's features." Stephen Dean, Staffordshire County Council's archaeologist, said the authority's involvement will allow the scaled-down town to be explored by future generations. "Cannock Chase has always been an important place for the modern military," he said. "During World War I, half-a-million soldiers lived on this site; it was effectively a miniature town.

"The site tells the story of Cannock Chase's involvement in the war and although it will only be exposed for a matter of days, we will use that time to completely scan the entire area.

Excavation on the site is expected to be completed by the end of September and it will be covered over again the following month.

9,000 Fallen Soldiers Etched into the Sand on Normandy Beach

Commemorates Peace Day on September 25, 2013

British artists Jamie Wardley and Andy Moss, accompanied by numerous volunteers, took to the beaches of Normandy on the third weekend of Sept with rakes and stencils in hand to etch 9,000 silhouettes representing fallen people into the sand. Titled The Fallen 9000, the piece is meant as a stark visual reminder of the German and allied soldiers, and local civilians, who died



during the D-Day beach landings at Arromanches on June 6th, 1944 during WWII. The original team consisted of 60 volunteers, but as word spread nearly 500 additional local residents arrived to help with the temporary installation that lasted only a few hours before being washed away by the tide.

To read more of the story and view more pictures, go to: <http://thefallen9000.info/>

95 Years of Weapons Technology Celebrated at Dahlgren Naval Base

Story Number: NNS131017-14 Date: 10/17/2013 By John J. Joyce, NSWC Dahlgren Division Corporate Communications

DAHLGREN, Va. (NNS) -- Navy scientists and engineers, famous for building the future fleet, looked back at their history while celebrating the 95th Anniversary of Dahlgren Naval base on Diversity Day Oct. 16. Naval weapons technology artefacts, including the first gun tested at Dahlgren 95 years ago, bring history to life. The World War I era seven-inch 45 caliber tractor mounted artillery gun on display seemed to relish its role in igniting the command's history, as Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) Commander Capt Michael Smith spoke to personnel gathered on the parade field. "The game-changing technology developed here is truly amazing," said Smith. "From the first shot fired over the Potomac River Test Range in 1918, to today's testing and development of the electromagnetic railgun and everything in

between, we have used our scientific and engineering expertise to impact our nation's defense at home and abroad."



Volunteers from groups such as the National Society of Black Engineers and the Hispanic Association interacted with government civilians, contractors and military members as diverse jazz, rhythm and blues, and African-Puerto Rican (Bomba) bands played music in support of the event's theme: "Reflecting the Past... Building the Future." Many of the NSWCCD scientists and engineers in attendance routinely take their technical expertise to sea aboard ships and into war

zones to ensure US warfighters can fight, win and come home safely.

Today's leaders in pulsed power and directed energy were also among those who listened intently while Smith and the command's new technical director, Dennis McLaughlin, recounted the history of the base now known as Naval Support Facility Dahlgren. "Throughout the decades, the Dahlgren Naval Laboratory has been a leader in naval weapons technology," said Smith. "Looking back on the many achievements of the past helps us to plan for the scientific and engineering advancements that will propel the Navy into the future." Smith and McLaughlin reflected on the impact of Dahlgren's diversity on the command's rich technological history.

"I have seen first-hand the benefits of hiring disabled veterans," said McLaughlin, who led the Navy's Disabled Veteran Outreach efforts and later served as director of the Naval Sea Systems Command Wounded Warrior Program. "I salute the Dahlgren Division human resource office and Equal Employment Opportunity office for your success in hiring wounded warriors and making sure they are assured of their value to the division and the greater Navy mission." "We are indebted to men and women who came here from universities and labs all across the country bringing their diverse ideas and their fervor for advancing science, technology engineering and mathematics as well as operational support skills," said Smith. "We are also grateful to the many members of the local community who invested their futures in supporting the Navy at NSWC Dahlgren. Their diversity of thought coupled with their diversity of cultures and backgrounds have been key to our mission success."

Throughout its history, Dahlgren scientists and engineers provided the Navy's core technical capability for the integration of sensors, weapons, and their associated weapon and combat systems into surface ships and vehicles. "What makes the warfare center here at Dahlgren particularly effective is our co-location with our sister commands," said Smith later in the day at another 95th Anniversary Celebration sponsored by the Dahlgren Heritage Foundation at the University of Mary Washington-Dahlgren Campus. "By working together in partnership, we

support the full spectrum of Navy defensive combat systems needs to counter the threats from ballistic missiles, to aircraft, to cruise missiles as well as providing strike capabilities and Naval Surface Fire Support," he said.

NSWC Dahlgren works closely with Aegis Ballistic Missile and Naval Air and Missile Defense Commands to provide everything from initial requirements to delivered products. For example, the command's scientists and engineers train Sailors from the Aegis Training and Readiness Center on how to use those products. "Analysis of what is going on in the world is part of what another sister command here at Dahlgren does," explained Smith. "The Joint Warfare Analysis Center ensures optimal employment of our systems and leads to new requirements and new systems as the world changes. Through our collaborative efforts, we are providing innovative enhancements, analysis and designs that are making a difference to ensure optimal support for our warfighters and the Fleet."

The NSWCDD commander emphasized that it takes a diverse, multi-talented workforce to meet the needs of today's warfighters and provide innovation solutions for the demands facing our future Fleet. The command's ability to bring together the best and brightest professionals from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and cultures is critical to address today's challenges and ensure our readiness for the Navy's future mission needs across the globe.

Two Unknown Soldiers from the WW1 Battle of Presena Found

Oct 9th 2013, by L.S.



Office for Archaeological Finds, Trento

THE BLACK stain on the ice was instantly recognisable. The technician checking a tarpaulin stretched over a section of the Presena Glacier in the Italian Alps—an experimental attempt to slow the melting—quickly called in a rescue party. The block of ice was airlifted to the nearby city of Vicenza. Inside were two soldiers who had fallen at the Battle of Presena in May 1918 and were buried in a crevasse.

Their uniforms and their location indicated that they could well have been *Kaiserschützen*, specialised mountain troops who fought on behalf of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to defend these mountains from their Italian equivalent, the *Alpini*, in the White War, a spectacular but little-known episode of the 1914-1918 war. At the time (they were surpassed by fighting in the Himalayas in the 1990s) the battles were the highest in the world. The two armies were not each other's most

fearsome enemy. Temperatures could fall as low as -30° C, and the cold, storms and avalanches killed as many if not more than died in the fighting.

Instead of trenches, the alpinists cut galleries in the ice, tunnelling outwards from natural crevasses. Both sides used cable cars to transport artillery up to the peaks (the Austrians also had a plentiful supply of Russian prisoners brought from the eastern front, whom they used as pack mules), and the pounding they gave each other's positions profoundly altered the landscape. In an attempt to dislodge the Italians from the highest peak of all—San Matteo, at 3,678m—the Austrians succeeded in lowering its summit by six metres.

The retreating ice reveals those scars, along with the men who died there—and from other ages too. Ötzi, the 5000-year-old “ice man” who died, or was murdered, was found not far away in 1991. The mountains are also giving up diaries, a poem—an ode to a louse, “friend of my long days”—and even an unsent love letter, addressed to Maria. The lice themselves have been preserved, as have the soldiers' straw overshoes, made for them by Russian prisoners and, touchingly, not much more sophisticated than Ötzi's.

Ötzi was in rather better shape than some of his later counterparts. He died at the edge of a glacier, so his body was frozen, but not crushed. The pair plucked last year from the Presena Glacier had been fused by the glacier's power. Forensic scientists worked long to separate them and garner clues. They were probably around 17 or 18 years old. One had a bullet hole in his cranium and a single piece of shrapnel inside. The other had a spoon tucked into his puttees, or leg wrappings—a common practice among soldiers who travelled from trench to trench, and who wanted to preserve at least a little sense of a personal world.

Few of the soldiers can be identified: Extracting DNA is not the problem, but without contextual information in the form of metal name tags sewn, in the Austrians' case, onto their tunics, or some precise historical record of events, it is not enough.

The two soldiers were buried in unmarked graves, at a funeral in the village of Peio, in the beautiful, pine-fringed cemetery of the 15th century San Rocco church. Peio is now in the autonomous province of Trentino which, along with neighbouring South Tyrol, where Ötzi died, became Italian in 1919. But it was once the highest village in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and as such, deeply symbolic. The Emperor decreed that it should not be evacuated, as many other mountain villages close to the front line were, so the people of Peio stayed and witnessed the remodelling of their ancestral landscape.

Italian-speaking Trentino and German-speaking South Tyrol have different histories, but they share a frontier mentality, belonging to both and neither of the countries that flank them. One of the oddities of the White War was that men who fought on opposite sides had often climbed together in friendship before the war. The acts of friendship continued after the declaration of hostilities, too—gifts were exchanged in an icebound No Man's Land on Christmas Day, for instance.

Franco Nicolis, the archaeologist leading the excavations in Trentino, often wonders how those young soldiers made sense of the war. They spoke the same language as their enemy, and fought for the mountains they shared.

Today, in a restaurant in Peio called *Il Cantuccio*, the Emperor Franz Joseph and his wife Sissi gaze down from their portraits on the wall. But nationalism gains no foothold here. Annemarie Wieser, the local representative of the Black Cross—the Austrian organisation charged with preserving the memory of those who fell in the Great War—occasionally visits the San Rocco cemetery unannounced, to check that the soldiers' graves are properly tended. They are always there, she reports.

The couple responsible for replacing the flowers and pulling out the weeds are Maurizio Vicenzi and his wife Antonella. Mr Vicenzi, a mountain guide who has directed the rescue of many a soldier's remains, and who runs Peio's bijoux war museum, is only too well aware that they could have been his relatives. He also knows there are more to come. The glaciers haven't given up all their secrets yet.

RCA Museum Acquires an Auster Mk V

The RCA Museum is now the owner of Auster VTJ398. For the past six years the RCA museum led by our Curator, Major Mark George has been tracking an Auster V Air OP aircraft identified as VTJ398. This aircraft was flown by Canadian Air Observation Post artillery officers in 665 Squadron, RCAF in 1945. Marc is satisfied that the owner in the UK has correctly identified the aircraft, although there are no identity plates remaining on it. The owner offered to sell it to us for \$4,000.00 Pounds Sterling (approx \$6,300.00 Cdn). Mark reported that including money granted by the Air OP Association while BGen (Ret'd) Bob Heitshu was President (\$3000.00) and the museum cash reserve, was enough to purchase the aircraft. The individual was going to sell it to another group in the UK, but Marc convinced him to allow us first right of refusal.



Capt Mike Henderson and Auster Mk V

To ensure that the purchase is achieved our Major (Ret'd) Mike Henderson, who flew with 665 Squadron has donated \$5000.00 toward the purchase and refurbishment of the aircraft. Mark is very pleased with the cooperation and interest shown by the Air OP Pilot's Association. I believe I can say to Mike on behalf of all our Air OP pilots how pleased we are with his philanthropy and willingness to secure an Auster V. Auster VTJ398 once it is refurbished

and displayed will long serve as a reminder of our WWII, Korean War and post-war Air OP gunners who flew in the Auster era. (See photo of Mike and his Auster attached).

As a footnote, Mark George had asked for assistance from the military senior leadership to make the purchase happen. He also consulted with BGen (Ret'd) Bob Heitshu who called up the former executive for input. All were unanimously supportive of the purchase. Only two other Austers are known to be on display, they are the Major Peter Tees memorial in Hamilton and one that was acquired by the Air Museum at Patricia Bay on Vancouver Island. An outstanding problem was to get the aircraft from the UK to Shilo. The RCAF stepped in to offset a considerable transportation bill. Since the Auster is not airworthy it was its last flight.

To see photos go to:- <http://www.artillery.net/beta/news/the-rca-museum-gets-a-auster-mkv-that-flew-in-operations/>

Who is it?

Last Week. This is a picture of the 15th from the early 50s. We several of the members id'd.



Back Row: 1. Ken Bonnett 2. Sgt. Galbraith 4. S/M Gus Clarke 5. RSM Peter Trapitt

Middle Row: 3. Bud Garrett 4. Tom Eckford 9. Gordie Platt 11. Major Ken Becket

Front Row: 1. Bob Keen 2. Pat Keen 3. Graham Blyth
4. Bill Jackson 7. Lt. Col. Theo DuMoulin 8. Major Ted Royce

This Week - Older readers, such as me, will remember the furore 25 or so years ago when turbans were to be introduced into the RCMP. Well, the RCA was years ahead of the Force, as this week's photo tells. The museum also holds film footage of RCA Sikh gunners firing guns



in the early 1950s. Historically, this is not surprising as Sikh guns and gunners were shown to be every bit as good as British and East India Company guns and gunners during the First and Second Sikh Wars of the 1940s. So, the tradition was easily transferred from India to Canada.

So, our questions to you, some of the answers to we already know (but are testing you), are: to what regiment do these stalwart Sikhs belong, and who is the 'gora' (person of European extraction)

with whom they are speaking? Also, can you name any of the gunners (no points for "Gnr. Singh", unless one of them really is named that)?

Answers to the equally stalwart editor, or to the author, John Redmond
[johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net) Thanks in advance, and "Sat Sri Akaal!".

John Donald Redmond, LC, BA, MEd.
Assistant Curator
15 Field Regiment, RCA, Museum and Archives

From the 'Punitary'

If you are among the cream of dairy inspectors, nothing cheesy gets pasteurize.

Murphy's Laws

To err is human; to really foul things up takes a computer.

Quotable Quotes

The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits. - *Albert Einstein*

BCR Lunch

Singapore Curry Lunch



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



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

- Date:** Thursday, October 31, 2013
- Time:** 11:45 am - 1:30 pm
(bar opens at 11:45am)
(presentation at 12:01pm)
(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 October 25, 2013)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please contact Bill Diamond at 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 October 25, 2013

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, November 28, 2013