

## Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News April 23, 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. Fundraising efforts have started, watch this newsletter for events and campaigns.

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!!

### New Bomber Command Honour

Application form for the Bomber Command Bar is available at:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/collections/cmdp/bomber>

### Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan ordered to return danger pay

The original story came out a few days ago. Since then, the Minister has stepped in and directed that any overpayment will not be 'clawed back'. However, the amount of danger pay is being adjusted.

### Ice landing: Still capable after 30 years

**Apr. 12, 2013**

by Captain Josée Bilodeau and Captain Steve Dieter

*For the members of 436 Transport Squadron, located at 8 Wing Trenton, Ont., landing a CC-130J Hercules is part of the daily routine. However, no one had landed a Herc on an ice runway in 30 years.*



*A Hercules aircraft lands on the ice runway on Feb. 28, 2013, during Exercise Guerrier nordique.  
Credit: Cpl Alex Roy.*

**Worth the wait**

Gathered on the shores of Squaw Lake, Que., a group of curious onlookers waits impatiently for the CC-130J Hercules aircraft from 436 Squadron to arrive. The crowd is buzzing.

“Is the plane going to land?” Innu children ask their parents. “Will it be cancelled because of the temperature?” wonder some of the reporters who are on the scene.

It’s February 28, 2013, and the RCAF and the Canadian Army are doing something that hasn’t been done in Canada for 30 years: a Hercules will attempt to land on a runway that has been constructed entirely from ice. Despite the big snowflakes drifting to the ground, sappers from 5 Combat Engineering Regiment (5 CER), located at Canadian Forces Base Valcartier, Que., and firefighters from 3 Wing Bagotville, Que., are confident that the Hercules will land ... and take off again. At 2:40 p.m., the four turboprops of the massive military transport plane reverberate in the distance. A sudden hush falls over the crowd, as if everyone were holding their breath. A few moments later, the group finally catches sight of the Hercules.

“It’s far too high,” noted one of the spectators. “The aircraft passed over our heads,” said LCol Louis Lapointe, commander of the Immediate Response Unit (IRU) from 5 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (5 CMBG), Valcartier. “It did a site reconnaissance and then vanished. [We] could feel the disappointment of those who had come here hoping to witness an event that, to say the least, doesn’t happen often on Côte-Nord.”

Then, as if by magic, the aircraft reappears. The faces of the children, who are trembling with excitement, suddenly light up. Lights on, wings in landing position, the CC-130J Hercules slowly approaches the runway and, this time, the 60 tonne mammoth touches down on the ice runway built on Squaw Lake by Canadian combat engineers. The crowd applauds!

### **Major logistical operation**

The successful landing took place during the Canadian Army’s *Exercice Guerrier nordique*, held from February 19 to March 9, 2013, near Schefferville and Sept-Îles, Que.

“This type of training is essential,” said Captain Jean-Gabriel Fortin, a combat engineer who was in charge of onsite tasks. “It helps develop certain regimental skills that have been lost over time but are needed to carry out northern operations. Should we ever have to resupply our troops in northern Quebec or northern people in need, we have the capability.”

The last time a Hercules landed on an ice runway was in the High Arctic, north of Canadian Forces Station Alert, on March 24, 1983. The runway was built so the Air Force could support the Canadian Expedition to Study the Alpha Ridge (CESAR). Captain Ian Wright and Flight Lieutenant James Tabern, a British officer working on exchange with the RCAF, were in the cockpit for the historic 2013 landing.

“The uniform, overcast sky — combined with a snow-covered lake and the recently graded ice strip — created a monochromatic picture,” explained Capt Wright. “This made the standard

landing zone markings even more important, as they provided us with situational awareness of the landing touchdown zone and runway remaining.

“We could have landed far heavier with the 6,000-plus feet [1,829 metres] of runway that had been prepared, but the 112,000 pounds [50.8 tonnes] that we actually had made for a great compromise, given that this was the first ice landing in over 30 years.”

“Landing a tactical transport plane on an ice landing strip is a major logistical operation,” said Major Sébastien Picard, deputy director of the exercise. “It involves a number of steps that calls for rigorous planning and a lot of preparation. A range of factors is also taken into account, such as the size of the site, the wind direction and the water currents [in the lake].”

### **Initial site preparations**

Like Operation CESAR, the successful build and landing was a team effort. In December 2012, teams of specialists deployed approximately eight kilometres northwest of the airport in Schefferville, Que. Their first objective? To identify the ideal site for conducting air resupply operations and develop the operational concept of Exercise *Guerrier nordique* 2013. Combat engineers and geomatics technicians from Valcartier carried out an environmental study onsite, along with members of 1 Engineering Support Unit, based in Moncton, N.B. The team then surveyed the site and marked the runway.

“Once all the specific conditions had been met, we were probably the only fools in Quebec who prayed for the mercury to drop below zero until our exercise ended in March,” said Major Jean François Huot, commander of 5 CER. Climate determines the solidness and thickness of ice, making it a critical factor when building an ice runway. If Mother Nature fails to cooperate, landing such a huge aircraft can get dicey.

“The stable surface of an ice runway is similar to concrete,” said Capt Wright. “Up until you land, everything’s fine; there’s really no problem. But, any similarities to a ‘classical’ landing end there. “After the [transition from the descent to the landing, when the tires hit the runway surface], which must be precise and is tricky, you have to use the available length of the runway to gradually transfer the weight of the aircraft, supported in flight by the wings, onto the landing gear. A miscalculation at [this point] can lead to major problems.”

### **All in a day’s work**

As of mid-January, the personnel endured two major snowfalls. Temperatures plunged as low as 40°Celsius, and winds of 60 kilometres per hour pummelled approximately 40 engineers from 5 CER as they cleared, built and maintained an ice landing strip, with extremely cold water, in six-hour shifts.

“It took us two weeks to clear the site with heavy equipment and over three weeks to water the runway with pumps,” said Corporal Brian Buteau, a reservist from 35 CER in Québec, Que. In

the end, the ice airstrip measured approximately 1,524 metres long, 49 metres wide and 106 centimetres thick. The final step involved obtaining certification from the experts. Lance Gélinas from A4 CE (the construction engineering organization at 1 Canadian Air Division in Winnipeg, Man.) ensured that the project met all the safety and feasibility criteria. Using special equipment, including ground-penetrating radar (GPR), he conducted adhesion tests on the ice landing strip, ensured it had the required thickness and checked for anomalies such as air or water pockets. Once it was certified, the only remaining task was to mark the runway for “D-Day”.

“On behalf of the crew ... who were lucky enough to be chosen for this historic landing, I’d like to thank those who made it happen,” said Capt Wright, “specifically A4 CE, 5 CER, the heavy equipment operators from Schefferville, the firefighters and [landing zone] controllers and all the engineers who worked for months on this project.”

*This article is drawn from material by Captain Marsha Dorge, originally published in Airforce Magazine in 1984 and by Major Dave Noble, originally published in Sentinel Magazine in 1983.*

### **Merseyside family set to bury their World War I hero ancestor... 96 years after his death**

*by Catherine Jones, Liverpool Echo Apr 9 2013*

*Catherine Jones uncovers the amazing story of a soldier lost for 92 years in a foreign field*

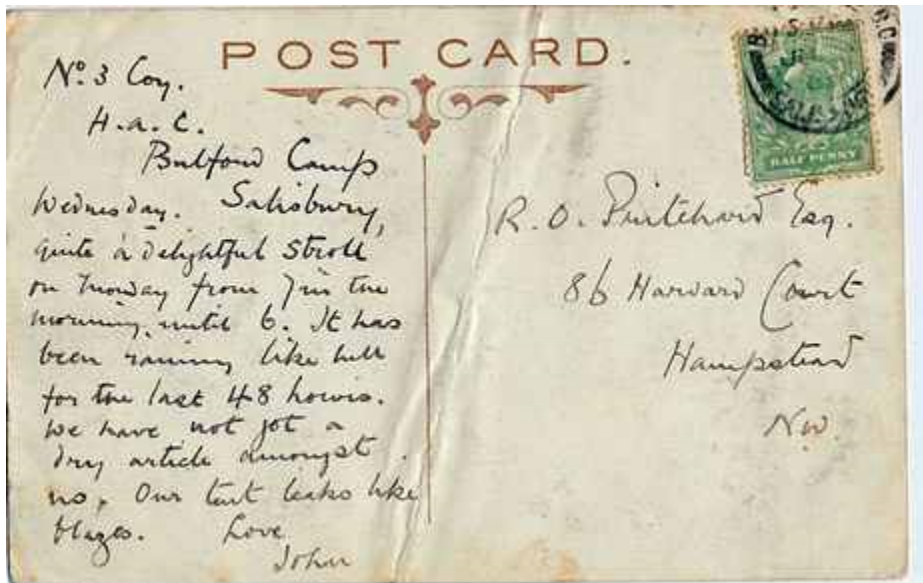


*Captain John Harold Pritchard in a trench during World War I*

WHEN Janet Shell sat down at her computer late one night last January to do a spot of family history research she typed in the name of a relative who had died in the trenches – and was shocked at the results.

“It was so amazing I had to call my husband and daughter and say ‘am I making things up?’” she laughs at the recollection. “My whole family history was on this forum and they were discussing it. And I was going, ‘I haven’t got half this information. Wow!’”

The relative in question was her great-uncle John Harold Pritchard, who had died in battle in 1917 but whose body, like tens of thousands of others, was never recovered. -- Until recently that is. Now what began with three little words typed into an Internet search engine is set to end this month with a full military burial in France.



**Wirral-born Janet**, who grew up in Port Sunlight, and more than 30 of Acting Captain Pritchard's family, most of them with Merseyside connections, will attend the service at the cemetery at Ecoust St Mein on April 23. It will be the latest in a series of visits by Janet to the land around Arras where John Pritchard fought with the

**Honourable Artillery Company (HAC)** until his death on the last day of the Battle of Bullecourt, May 15, 1917. The 31-year-old fell beside the men he led (43 members of the HAC died on that one day) and his remains lay undiscovered for the next 92 years until they were found on land owned by French farmer Didier Guerle.

“His father had told him ‘never plough that field because there are hundreds of bodies under there’,” explains Janet, who first started researching her family history five years ago. “And he had honoured that.”

It was someone with a metal detector who finally made the discovery – turning up a boot while trying to dig up a World War I gas canister. A total of six bodies were finally retrieved. While there is no easy means of identifying most of the remains discovered almost 100 years on from the war, John Pritchard was wearing an identity bracelet. A pistol and a wallet were also unearthed at the site, and a search was launched by the MoD and War Graves Commission to locate any surviving relatives. It was this Janet stumbled upon during her internet foray 15 months ago. One of the first things she did was to pay a visit to the site where her great-uncle had been found.

“I was very humbled actually,” says the former Wirral Grammar School for Girls pupil, whose grandmother Daisy was John Pritchard's younger sister. “Everything we've done has got two sides to it. It has this exciting, amazing, thing because you don't know the person. “But then you have the reality of what happened to them and it's part of your family. It hits home and it becomes an emotional rollercoaster.

“My cousin Jennifer was with me and we just took a moment out and stood and didn't say anything really. And later on we had some flowers and put those on the spot. “Obviously it's a field with a couple of sticks to show where he was. But then you start to think about all the other people as well. You get slightly overwhelmed by the whole thing and how close the enemy actually was.”

John Harold Pritchard was born in London in March 1886 and at the age of 11 he became a pupil at the prestigious St Paul's Cathedral School.

Read more: Liverpool Echo <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/2013/04/09/merseyside-family-set-to-bury-their-world-war-i-hero-ancestor-96-years-after-his-death-100252-33139922/#ixzz2R7mGOo2p>

## **New Books available:**

### **Last Man Standing, The Life of Smokey Smith, VC, CM, OBC 1914-2005**

by Thomas Glen Lockhart



A Canadian platoon embarked under the cover of darkness in late October 1944 near Cesena Italy, assigned with a tank hunting mission. Their goal was to help Allied forces establish a bridgehead to build a critical bridge across the Savio River. Ongoing heavy fire from German tanks required an elite group of Canadian soldiers with tank killing experience to break the German advance; and in less than one hour, one man changed Canadian history forever.

Paperback - \$11.99      Hard cover - \$19.99

Available through Friesen Press

[bookstore-sales@friesenpress.com](mailto:bookstore-sales@friesenpress.com) or [gsoch@friesenpress.com](mailto:gsoch@friesenpress.com)

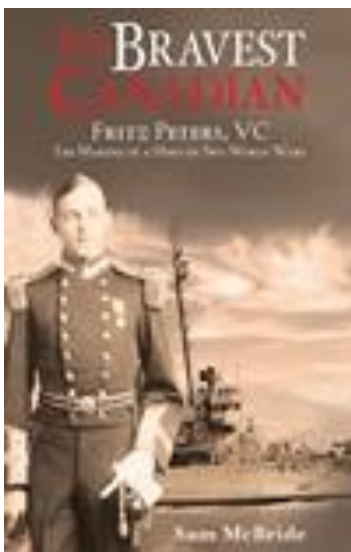
or by phone 1-888-378-6793 Ext 203. Geoff Soch is in Victoria but

can instantly arrange delivery by Canada Post etc. ( or by UPS courier if desired ).

### **The Bravest Canadian**

*Fritz Peters, VC The Making of a Hero of Two World Wars*

Sam McBride



A recently discovered treasure trove of letters from and about Fritz Peters, VC-one of the greatest Canadian war heroes-and his family gives new insight into his life experience, what he was thinking and what made him tick. Lovable and eccentric, his military accomplishments earned him three major honours for valour in both the First and Second World Wars. The story of Peters' life criss-crosses the globe, encompassing boyhood on both coasts of Canada, naval service at the romantic China station, tense battles with German U-boats in both wars, a mysterious career in the spy world and culminating with him as the leader of a modern-day Charge of the Light Brigade inside an Algerian port where he finds himself facing Vichy French guns lined up against him from every direction.

*History / Military / Canada / Biography* Paperback: 6 x 9 192 pages - \$24.95

978-1-926991-10-8

Features: b&w photos, maps, letters, footnotes, index, excerpt from The Victor comic series featuring Peters

Available through: Granville Island Publishing

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## **NOABC Battle of Atlantic Dinner**



The Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia

Founded 1919

*The President and Directors of*

***the Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia***

*request the pleasure of the company of*

*you and your guest(s)*

*at the*

***Battle of the Atlantic Dinner***

*Guest Speaker: Dr James Boutilier*

*on*

***Saturday, May 4, 2013***

*1830 for 1930hours*

*Wardroom, HMCS Discovery*

*Cost: \$75.00 per person  
RSVP per reservation form  
by 26 April 2013*

*Black Tie or Mess Dress  
(Optional Business Suit)  
(Ladies Equivalent)*

*An RSVP form is available on the NOABC website at: <http://www.noabc.com/Home/events-3>*

# 2013 Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference

***This Weekend!!! LAST CALL!***

## 2013 Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference

Vancouver Community College  
Downtown Campus  
(Dunsmuir St & Hamilton St)



Robert Fisk



Major-General (ret'd) Ed Fitch

### Contact the Organizers -

RUSI-Vancouver -  
Col (ret'd) Keith Maxwell, OMM, CD  
kdmaxwell@gmail.com  
604 865 0612 or 604 740 8124  
SNF Centre for Hellenic Studies/SFU -  
Ms Colleen Pescott  
cdpescott@sfu.ca  
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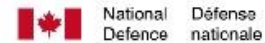
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### Sponsoring Societies/Associations -

British Columbia Regiment (DCO)  
Royal Westminster Regiment  
Seaforth Highlanders of Canada  
Department of National Defence  
- Defence Engagement Program

### Friday April 26, 2013

6:30 PM Doors Open  
7:00 PM **Keynote Event** - Round Table Discussion -  
"Syria, Security and the Middle East"



#### Featuring

Robert Fisk, Middle East correspondent for "The Independent" of London, UK  
With Major-General (retired) Ed Fitch, former Commander, Canadian Land  
Forces Western Area

**Moderator** - Dr John Craig, Dean of Arts, Simon Fraser University

### Saturday April 27, 2013

8:30 AM Doors Open with Opening Remarks at 8:50 AM  
9:00 AM **Mike Molloy** - Former Canadian Ambassador to Jordan  
*Jerusalem and Refugees: Challenges to Peace*  
9:45 AM **Colonel (retired) Pat Dennis** - Wilfrid Laurier University  
*Slackers, Shirkers & Malingerers and other great myths about Canadian  
Conscripts in the First World War*  
10:30 AM Coffee break  
10:45 AM **Stewart Muir** - Former Deputy Editor, Vancouver Sun  
*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*  
11:30 AM Lunch in the BCR Beatty Street Drill Hall, 620 Beatty St (Displays and Museum open)  
12:40 PM **Canadian Forces Perspective** - Commodore Scott Bishop - Commander, Canadian  
Fleet, Pacific  
*The Royal Canadian Navy in the Middle East*  
1:25 PM **Special Presentation** - **Robert Fisk** - Middle East Correspondent for "The  
Independent" of London, UK  
*The Middle East Security Environment*  
2:10 PM **Capstone Presentation** - **Major-General (ret'd) Edward Fitch** - former Commander,  
Canadian Land Forces Western Area  
*Canada's role in the Middle East*  
2:55 PM **Panel Discussion** - *The Middle East, Israel, Palestine, Iran - Is Diplomacy Dead?*  
**Moderator** - Nelofer Pazira, Award-winning Afghan-Canadian director, actor,  
journalist and author. Co-Producer and Director of the film "Return to Kandahar"  
**Featuring** - Robert Fisk and a panel of our Conference Presenters  
3:50 PM Closing remarks by the Conference Organizers

Venue - Presentation Room 420 at Vancouver Community College  
Enter VCC through the Dunsmuir St and Hamilton St entrance

Registration - (including coffee and lunch): \$35 regular, \$20 students and junior ranks  
Register online visit - <http://2013vancouverstrategicstudiesconference.eventbrite.com/>

Note - Special rates for the Conference at the nearby Victorian Hotel - <http://www.victorianhotel.ca/>



# Curry Lunch – Singapore



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

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



- Date:** Thursday, April 25, 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 April 19, 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 April 19, 2013

**NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, May 30, 2013**

## **From the 'Punitentary'**

If you are amongst the cream of dairy Inspectors, nothing cheesy get pasteurize.

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

It is better to be lucky than good on the battlefield.

## **Quotable Quotes**

The man is a success who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children. (*Proverbs 15:1*)