



## Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News July 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.

**Mrs Lum has announced that she will be taking a vacation in August. Last lunch Aug 7<sup>th</sup> and resume on Sept 4<sup>th</sup>. NO LUNCHES on Aug 14, 21 or 28<sup>th</sup>.**

Summer Dress is in effect. Just to clarify, this does not mean shorts, sandals and tee shirts. Summer dress for civilian clothing means you take off your jacket and tie so you can be more comfortable on hot days. On cool days, many of us keep jackets and ties on to keep standards up.

The basic renovation plan submitted for the kitchen has been approved. DND will pay for changes to the building envelope and that leaves us with a cost of around \$20,000. We have collected approximately \$12,000 to date so we will have to get another round of fund raising going to bring in the balance. It is probably too much to hope that the work would be carried out while Mrs Lum is on holiday.

### Remembering the Alamo: My Year in Afghanistan – Chapter 8

*By Colonel Peter Williams Publication date: 17 July 2013*

*Col Williams is currently deployed on Operation ATTENTION as commander of the KMTC Training Advisory Group. He is the senior serving Canadian gunner officer in the Afghan training program at this time.*

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN - Since I last wrote, and continuing on the “change” theme in my last article, this month has seen the arrival of our new Canadian Task Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Milner (late the Royal Canadian Dragoons), who previously commanded our troops in Kandahar in 2010-11. His predecessor, Maj. Gen. Ferron, returned to Canada to resume command of the 1st Canadian Division in Kingston.

We also took time to award Afghanistan General Campaign Stars and bars for our soldiers, to recognize their service in this mission, and we were fortunate once again to have as the Guest of Honour, His Excellency Glenn Davidson, Canada’s Ambassador to Afghanistan.

Not to be outdone on the ceremonial front, our Afghan National Army (ANA) colleagues at the Kabul Military Training Centre (KMTC) are currently hosting the Kabul region ANA sports competition. With a range of sports from cricket to bodybuilding to tae kwon do, the opening ceremonies were quite a colourful event, reminiscent of the Olympics. KMTC normally comes away with a lot of hardware from these events and we wish them well this year.

As for the Regimental Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Bob Thompson and myself, our year-long tour here is drawing to a close, and at the time of writing what is the last of these articles, we are preparing to hand over our duties to those who will follow us and continue the mission of advising and assisting our Afghan colleagues at KMTC. This has been an amazing year, and the opportunity to work with so many countries has been unlike any other I've had in all my years of service. Since our arrival last year, the ANA at KMTC have made great strides on the training front in particular, and our successors will be able to focus on higher level planning and logistics. And perhaps even continue to tell the story of the KMTC advisors.

With the Muslim holy month of Ramazan on the horizon and then eventually winter coming, KMTC will have to prepare in advance to make sure all is in place to make these events go smoothly with little impact to its training mission. The fact that Commander, KMTC recently wanted to discuss with us the future of water and electricity at KMTC gives me confidence that the ANA leadership here is beginning to appreciate the value of longer-term planning.

We've also been fortunate enough to meet Afghan soldiers, both men and women, from across this land. I had intended to meet one from every province, but it never worked out. Still, I did meet soldiers from the following provinces in Afghanistan, and it is provinces with which the Afghan soldiers most identify with when you ask them, "Where are you from?":

- Jawzjan;
- Takhar;
- Badakhshan;
- Baghlan;
- Nuristan;
- Kunar;
- Kabul;
- Paktia (not to be confused with Paktika);
- Paktika (not to be confused with Paktia);
- Kapisa;
- Laghman;
- Dai Kundi;
- Parwan;
- Nangarhar;
- Konduz;
- Herat;
- Baghdis;
- Ghowr;
- Panshir;
- Khost; and
- Samangan.

Remember the Alamo!  
**That's all folks.**

## **Veteran remembers 60 years ago**

*A Korean War veteran visited the country he helped liberate six decades ago*

BY SYLVIA MCLAREN, THE TIMES JUNE 27, 2013



*This young Korean man kept saying "thank you for saving my country" repeatedly to Korean War veteran Warren Byrnell. He politely removed his hat and shook Byrnell's hand over and over. Byrnell presented him with a Canadian pin and a City of Pitt Meadows pin and then he gave Byrnell a pin from his church.*

*Photograph by: Karen Light, TIMES*

A man wearing a dark green blazer with medals proudly pinned on his lapels wiped away tears when he recounted the story of a Canadian veteran who wanted his ashes to be buried next to his brother who had died during the Korean War. Warren Byrnell can't recall the name of the vet, or the brother's name, but last year the count at the Canadian memorial in Korea went from 378 - which it had been since the 1950s - to 379.

"There were 378 up until a year ago until one of the veterans of Korean War requested that his ashes be buried next to his brother," he said, apologizing for the rare show of emotion. Byrnell, who recently returned from a week-long tour of South Korea with his daughter Karen Light, was overwhelmed. He learned about the memorial count going up to 379 veterans at the time, but it didn't resonate with him until this trip, he said.

On the first day of the tour the veterans were taken to Observation Post Dora and Observation Post Sangseung. "We were advised not to make any hand gestures, because the North Koreans could see us with binoculars," recalled Byrnell. He told of how they travelled to Busan on the KTX (the "bullet train") where the United Nations memorial is, and how all the Commonwealth veterans laid a wreath at the Canadian memorial. The following day the veterans travelled to Gapyeong for a service at the Commonwealth Memorial. They then passed through that site to reach the Canadian Memorial, which was built to recognize the Canadians who stopped an invasion April 21 to 24, 1951.

"At the end of that ceremony Karen and I presented a letter to the mayor from Pitt Meadows Mayor Deb Walters in recognition of Gapyeong being our sister city," explained Byrnell. "We ended that day at the Canadian Embassy for a reception, which was very nice," he added. The next day Byrnell and the others travelled to the National Cemetery in Seoul. They had an Ash Ceremony, which is when people take a pinch of ash and put it into a tiny fire pit in recognition of all the people who had lost their lives. Times have changed a lot since the first time Byrnell was in South Korea. This was the third time Byrnell has gone. In 1952, during the war, there was one bridge over the Han River which flows through Seoul. In November 1985 there were 13 bridges and in April 2013 they were working on the 31st bridge.

"The South Koreans have advanced more in 60 years than we have in 125 years," Byrnell said. "In 1985, they were 13th in the world economically and in 2013 they moved up to seventh and are a member of the G8," he said. "To personally witness the advancement of South Korea has made and the reception they had for the commonwealth made me feel extremely honoured," Byrnell said. None of his comrades from the Korean War were there, but there was a trio of men who he has met since being a part of the Korean War Veterans Association: Frank Smith, from Coquitlam, Doug Finney, from Ontario, and Marvin Johnston, from Chilliwack. "There weren't any of the people that I served with," he said. The Korean War began June 25, 1950. By the time the Korea Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27, 1953, more than 26,000 Canadians had served in Korea and 516 Canadians had lost their lives in service. Canada, plus 20 other countries, went to the aid of South Korea and turned back the scourge of communism. About 7,000 Canadians continued to serve in the tense theatre of operations between the signing of the Armistice and the end of 1955, with some Canadian troops remaining until 1957.

In 2013, the Government of Canada will mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice with events in both Korea and Canada on the newly established Korean War Veterans Day on July 27, in honour of all Canadians who served in the Korean War, and those who served on duties in Korea following the signing of the Military Armistice Agreement that ended the war, on July 27, 1953.

Senator Yonah Martin conceived and authored Bill S-213, which passed both the Senate and House of Commons unanimously, to make July 27 Korean War Veterans Day.

## **What's the future for Canada's military procurement?**

### ***Conservatives scrapped the associate minister of defence post in Monday's shuffle***

*By James Cudmore, CBC News Posted: Jul 18, 2013*



Former Defence Minister Peter MacKay speaks with the crew of a new Chinook helicopter during an event on June 27 in Ottawa. He was moved to the justice portfolio in Monday's cabinet shuffle and Prime Minister Stephen Harper also eliminated the associate minister of defence position. *(Adrian Wyl/Canadian Press)*

Two years after it first appointed a minister to solve the problem of an often-messy system of military procurement, the Conservative government blanked the post during the cabinet shuffle Monday, believing it's now close to a permanent solution to one of its most vexing problems.

With tens of billions of dollars' worth of military procurement projects either underway or being contemplated, CBC News has learned the government has now settled on two possible outcomes, but neither, at this point, apparently require the service of an associate minister of national defence. Government sources have suggested there's not much that can be read into the elimination of the post, and the new defence minister indicated he's not too fussed about it. At

his first public appearance in his new role Thursday, Rob Nicholson said reform to procurement was underway, but he admitted he knew little about it.

"There's a process in place, and we'll proceed on that basis," he said. After winning his majority government in 2011, Prime Minister Stephen Harper brought back the associate minister post—which had existed in previous governments—appointing Julian Fantino to the job. Fantino was soon followed by Bernard Valcourt, and then in February by Kerry-Lynne Findlay, making three ministers in just two short years. The post was positioned beneath then Defence Minister Peter MacKay but allegedly came with a direct line to the prime minister. Alan Williams, the military's former associate deputy minister (material), responsible for procurement, says the portfolio was unnecessary. "I think they found out that the addition of a minister didn't really help the process and perhaps even harmed it," he said. Williams said the addition of another minister in the procurement chain could only have burdened the system with bureaucracy. There's another perspective on the associate minister's utility: that the office was only ever really a political buffer for an embattled Peter MacKay. Before the 2011 general election, MacKay was regularly under fire over what was termed the "F-35 fiasco." Once Fantino was appointed associate defence minister, he took all questions on the file, leaving MacKay to sit silently in his place on the front bench in the House of Commons.

It's unclear how much heavy lifting the associate minister's small staff was able to accomplish, but insiders say the associate minister's role as an honest broker helped it mediate differences between the two key procurement ministers: defence and public works.

There has been an historic, and perhaps necessary, tension between those two departments. Defence's role in procurement is to set the requirement for what it needs. Public Works is responsible for buying an item that does that job. It's also responsible for ensuring procurement rules are followed, and that the procurements are run, as often as possible, as fair and open competitions. In most cases, the system works well. But when the programs become large and complex, such as with new helicopters, fighter jets, search planes or ships, tensions can sometimes rise along with the price tag. Tensions between the two departments escalated, for example, into a serious spat over the purchase of new fixed-wing search planes.

The Fixed-wing Search and Rescue (FWSAR) program was launched in 2002, and funded to the tune of about \$1.3 billion. The first of about 15 planes was to be delivered by 2006. But more than six years later, the government has been unable to even get a bid out to tender. Last year, after a long delay, the program to buy new planes started moving again, under the strict control of a special secretariat inside the Department of Public Works. It's believed the contract for that plane could now be let sometime this fall. The secretariat model, featuring interdepartmental teams of bureaucrats and independent third-party experts, was first used in the government's celebrated National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy to provide the coast guard and navy with tens of billions of dollars of new ships. It's now also been applied to the government's search for a new fighter jet, following the controversy over the sole-source plan to buy the F-35.

CBC News has learned the government is now considering making the secretariat model permanent for all large purchases. This would effectively strip decision-making out of the hands of departmental bureaucrats and their ministers, and instead vest it in the hands of contracted third-party experts. Ministers would still be responsible for the procurement, but outsiders would, in effect, decide which contract or purchase provided the best gear and at the best price. It would aid in removing politics from procurement and insulate ministers from allegations of regional pork-barrelling. The secretariat model is the favourite of senior staff inside the Public Works department, where it's viewed as being easy to achieve because it requires only incremental change and not massive restructuring. It could also be implemented without legislative change. But that's not true for the other option on the table: creating a brand new procurement agency to manage all major purchases for the Defence department. This last option is preferred by military officials, who believe it would give them the best chance to ensure all new military equipment is selected with their preferences in mind. Officers' clubs in Ottawa are often filled with stories of good procurements going bad only after the bureaucrats at Public Works became involved, of political meddling that sometimes led to bad decision-making, and bad equipment built in a politically important region being foisted on soldiers. Military types believe the best solution is to have an agency whose raison d'être is providing the defence equipment to the Defence department — not managing contracts. It's this option that is closest to what Alan Williams prefers: a single point of accountability. "They still have to solve the problem, namely allowing the prime minister to point to one person and say, 'You are that person accountable for defence procurement,'" he said. "Right now, the prime minister does not know who to blame or who to laud, with regard to defence procurement." Williams suggests that model also would eliminate the duplication of the same effort in two separate departments.

## Canada Day Parade

Among the participants in Vancouver's Canada Day Parade were two jeeps containing Chinese-Canadian veterans, all members of Unit #280 of Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada.



*Frank Wong  
(front passenger seat)*

*Leonard Wong (behind Frank)*

*Monty Lee  
(behind driver)*

*Photo by  
Christine Cathcart*



*George Chow  
(front passenger seat)*

*Edmund Wu  
(behind George)*

*Alfred Woo  
(behind driver)*

*Photo by  
Christine Cathcart*

All except Edmund and Alfred are WW 2 veterans. Al Woo and George Chow are former 15Fd members. Edmund served in the Hong Kong Regiment before coming to Canada.

## "Who Is That?"



"This week's photo comes from the collection of our dearly-missed colleague, Vic Stevenson. It is currently in the 'to be accessioned' file, so any info would be appreciated, as always (answers to John Redmond, [johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)).

The original is a beautiful 120 slide, from the 1950s, and is part of a sequence of shots showing firing practice with a 3.7 inch AA gun. So, we assume it is once again of officers from 43 H/MAA. However, because they are dressed in 'bush', with only rank slip-ons, there is no firm evidence of this. So, once again, do you know these fine gentlemen? Do you think you can pin down the

year? Is one of them you? Let us know, and thanks for all those who have been participating in

this exercise. Your museum is indebted to you for your participation and support (folding support, such as that found in wallets, is also much appreciated)."

Thanks to all who sent back emails for last week's photo. We found out that the photo was taken between 52 and 55. In the picture, from L-R, is Lt Col Graham Blyth (CO), Col Tom Ingledow, Hon Col (holding the trophy for Best Battery of the year he donated to the Regt) and Maj David Ames, all of the 43<sup>rd</sup> MAA.

We are trying to track down the whereabouts of the trophy now. We know that when the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amalgamated in 59, the trophy was converted to the Best Bombardier of the year for 15<sup>th</sup> Field. It was presented for several years and kept in the Jnr Ranks Trophy case. Apparently, it disappeared from there in the mid-60s.

## **MLB Tribute for Heroes**

This year, Major League Baseball honoured military heroes at the annual All-Star Game. Thousands of incredible nominees were narrowed down to three for each team. **Nicholas Kerr** of Victoria, British Columbia, a Medal of Bravery nominee for saving a civilian's life after a car accident, won the vote to be the Toronto Blue Jays hero. As a member of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, he served in Afghanistan and also won several Canadian Forces National Sports awards. He has now transferred to the Canadian Scottish and, if you watched the All-star game you would have seen him being presented with a Canadian Flag by one of the Blue Jays' players.

## **From the 'Punitentary'**

The mechanic spends too much time using the griping tool in his shop. It is his only vice.

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

The effectiveness of a soldier in desert combat is inversely proportional to how heavy his equipment is.

## **Quotable Quotes**

There is nobody so irritating as somebody with less intelligence and more sense than we have  
- *Don Herold*