



Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Feb 24, 2015

Wednesday Lunches

The 15 Field Officers Mess is the only Mess left still holding weekly lunches and these lunches can only survive if sufficient numbers attend regularly. Attendance numbers went down the last few weeks of the year and we need your support to keep the lunches going so, if you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. We serve a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal, or a better deal, anywhere.

The Mess is back to 'winter' dress so dress for Wednesday lunches is suit/blazer/sports jacket and tie. Dress for ladies is the equivalent. Your guests are always welcome.

From the Journal of Capt Fred G Coxen RFA - 1914

Feb 18th: We were recalled from action to go to rest. [We] marched via BETHUNE to rest billets near LILLIERS. I was fortunate in securing a billet in a house, the old lady [in the house] gave me a bed. It was rather crude and hard, but still a great change. I was greatly elated in hearing that I should be going on leave during this period of rest.

Feb 19th – Mar 2nd: Our period of rest, - we were well employed in overhauling, etc. I was to go on leave on March 3rd, and was bitterly disappointed when the order came in that all leaves were stopped from March 1st.

World War 2 - November 1939

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

Feb 22nd: The Soviets begin landing on islands once more in the Gulf of Finland.

Feb 23rd: The Soviets issue their terms of surrender to Finland, claiming all of the Karelian Isthmus and Lake Ladoga region.

Feb 24th: OKH issues new orders for the attack on France; based on an advance through the Ardennes – but there is still division between the traditional generals and the Panzer enthusiasts.

Feb 26th: After a series of failed counterattacks, the Finns decide to fall back to their third line of defence.

Feb 29th: It is said that the one of the characteristics of the Finns is an extraordinary stubbornness, so it is a rare day when they decide to give up: The Finns decide they will yield to the Soviets.”

Germany Receives Upgraded Leopard 2 Tanks in Deal with Canada

DAVID PUGLIESE, OTTAWA CITIZEN _February 17, 2015



Afghanistan A Leopard 2A6M Main Battle Tank from The Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) and part of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, provides over-watch during recent operations in the volatile Panjwa'i and Zhari Districts of Kandahar Province.

The sheer size and firepower of the Leopard 2A6M Main Battle Tank makes it a formidable force and a huge deterrent to enemy insurgents. In close cooperation with Afghan National Security Forces, 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle

Group provided security by conducting counter-insurgency operations throughout Panjwa'i District located south-west of Kandahar City. The Battle Group conducted partnered operations with the 2nd Kandak of the 1st Brigade, 205 Corps of the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police and the Panjwa'i District Governor in order to advance governance, reconstruction and security in the area.

The German Army is starting to receive modernized Leopard 2 tanks as part of an earlier deal with Canada. The first Leopard 2A7 Main Battle Tank was delivered in December, with others soon to follow. The upgrades were done by the original manufacturer Krauss-Maffei Wegmann. The 20 tanks were from the Dutch, upgraded for the German Army.

In 2007, Canada received 20 Leopard 2 A6M tanks under a government-to-government agreement from Germany for use in support of operations in Afghanistan. Commanders in the field requested the tanks for both direct fire support and for dealing with insurgent fortifications/thick walls. "In order to return the same quantity of tanks to Germany, Canada procured 20 A6 tanks from the Netherlands, and paid for the work to convert these tanks into a serviceable condition," Department of National Defence spokeswoman Ashley Lemire told **Defence Watch**. "And under a German modernization initiative, Germany paid for the work to upgrade these 20 tanks provided by Canada, to the A7 variant."

Canada spent \$100 million acquiring the 20 A6 tanks, Lemire added. According to various publications, including Defense Update, some of the features on the tanks include:

- An auxiliary power unit to help cool the turret and crew area and ensure operations with the main engine running.
- A new driver's hatch
- all-electric gun-control equipment
- modifications to fire fuse-programmable high-explosive ammunition (for use against bunkers)

Avro Lancaster KB882: Coming in From the Cold?

in Articles / Aviation Museum News / Warbird Restorations — by Editor — February 4, 2015



Avro Lancaster Mk.10P KB882 awaits her fate, while the city board decides which preservation proposal to accept. (Photo via Benoit de Mulder)

Last year, there was a brief stir concerning the plight of a rare combat veteran Avro Lancaster on outdoor display at Madawaska Municipal Airport in the Canadian city of Edmunston, New Brunswick. The city has owned Lancaster Mk.10P KB882 since her RCAF retirement in 1964. The Lancaster's condition has deteriorated significantly after decades sitting outdoors, and a time of reckoning has arrived. While a small band of dedicated volunteers has done their best to preserve and maintain the old bomber, they do not have the resources to ensure her long term survival without a massive infusion of cash and expertise to both get the aircraft indoors and carry out her restoration. The city which saved this precious artifact fifty years ago doesn't appear to have the funds either, and now must determine what is best for KB882's future, even if that means a painful decision to relinquish their ownership. It is believed that Edmunston city council now has four proposals before them concerning KB882's future. They will be releasing their decision within the next week or so, but given the facts already available, it seems very likely that KB882 will be moving to a new home in another city before too long.

KB882 (c/n 37183) was part of the first production batch of three hundred Lancaster Mk X's built in Canada by Victory Aircraft Ltd. at their factory in Malton, Ontario. She arrived in the United Kingdom on March 4th, 1945 initially as part of 32 Maintenance Unit before moving to 434 Squadron (RCAF). She then moved to 428 Squadron (RCAF) as part of the all-Canadian 6 Group in RAF Bomber Command. 428 Squadron were known as "Ghost Squadron" and flew from RAF Middleton St George in Durham during KB882's tenure. KB882 wore the squadron codes NA-R "R for Robert" She flew her first mission with Ghost Squadron on the night of March 12th/13th; a raid against Dortmund, Germany. Overall, she participated in twelve missions; eight of them under the command of Flight Lieutenant W.L. Ross and his crew. What was unusual about this crew was that it consisted entirely of officers, with F/L Ross being on his second tour. The targets varied from cities to industrial sites, with five of the attacks occurring during daylight. KB882 aborted only one mission, an attack against Bremen, due bad weather. Flight Lieutenant R.D. Hay, the pilot, dropped his bombs in the North Sea. KB882's last mission was on April 25th, 1945. She flew to the German island of Wangerooge, on the approaches to the port of Hamburg. 428 Squadron personnel knew the war in Europe was

almost over and they would soon be going home. They began flying back to Canada in early June, with KB882 departing on June 1st. F/L Ross made the flight with his crew and two passengers. They arrived in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia on June 10th after several stops along the way.

The war was not over for the members of 428 Squadron and KB882 however. The RCAF selected 428 Squadron along with seven others to become part of Tiger Force, Britain's planned bomber contingent which were to have joined the American bombing campaign against Japanese forces in the Pacific Theatre. After a month's leave in Canada, 428 Squadron personnel returned to Yarmouth to begin their working up for the anticipated Japanese campaign. Training started in mid-July and had hardly gotten into full swing when the war ended following the nuclear missions against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Most of 428 Squadron's personnel were demobilized and returned to civilian life. KB882 entered a period of storage at RCAF Station Fort MacLeod in Alberta. In 1950, the RCAF pulled KB882 from storage and returned her to flying condition. Fairey Aviation began modifying her into an Arctic Reconnaissance variant in July 1952, completing the work by December 1953. However, the aircraft did not immediately return to active service. Instead, KB882 went into reserve storage with No. 6 Repair Depot at RCAF Station Mountain View near Trenton, Ontario in January 1954, where she would remain for over two years. In June 1956, KB882 left storage and became a test-bed at the Central Experimental and Test Establishment (CEPE) at RCAF Station Rockcliffe, in Ottawa (the current home of the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. At Rockcliffe, KB882 took part in testing a night photography system. She was one of the very last Lancasters to retire from military service, standing down with the rest of the Canadian fleet in 1964. Soon after, Edmundson bought KB882 from the Canadian government for the princely sum of \$1,500, and she's been on display at Manawaska Municipal Airport ever since.

Please Don't Thank Me for My Service

 *The New York Times* By MATT RICHTEL



Hunter Garth, 26, a veteran who fought in Afghanistan: "I pulled the trigger. You didn't. Don't take that away from me."

© Daniel Borris for The New York Times

HUNTER GARTH was in a gunfight for his life — and about to lose. He and seven other Marines were huddled in a mud hut, their only refuge after they walked into an ambush in Trek Nawa, a Taliban stronghold in Afghanistan. Down to his last 15 bullets, one buddy already terribly wounded, Mr. Garth pulled off his helmet, smoked a cheap Afghan cigarette, and “came to terms with what was happening.” “I’m going to die here with my best friends,” he recalled thinking. I didn’t know any of this — nor the remarkable story of his survival that day — when I met him two months ago in Colorado while reporting for an article about the marijuana industry, for which Mr. Garth

and his company provide security. But I did know he was a vet and so I did what seemed natural: I thanked him for his service. “No problem,” he said.

It wasn't true. There *was* a problem. I could see it from the way he looked down. And I could see it on the faces of some of the other vets who work with Mr. Garth when I thanked them too. What gives, I asked? Who doesn't want to be thanked for their military service? Many people, it turns out. Mike Freedman, a Green Beret, calls it the “thank you for your service phenomenon.” To some recent vets — by no stretch all of them — the thanks comes across as shallow, disconnected, a reflexive offering from people who, while meaning well, have no clue what soldiers did over there or what motivated them to go, and who would never have gone themselves nor sent their own sons and daughters. To these vets, thanking soldiers for their service symbolizes the ease of sending a volunteer army to wage war at great distance — physically, spiritually, economically. It raises questions of the meaning of patriotism, shared purpose and, pointedly, what you're supposed to say to those who put their lives on the line and are uncomfortable about being thanked for it.

Mr. Garth, 26, said that when he gets thanked it can feel self-serving for the thankers, suggesting that he did it for them, and that they somehow understand the sacrifice, night terrors, feelings of loss and bewilderment. Or don't think about it at all. “I pulled the trigger,” he said. “You didn't. Don't take that away from me.” The issue has been percolating for a few years, elucidated memorably in “Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk,” a 2012 National Book Award finalist about a group of soldiers being feted at halftime of a Dallas Cowboys game. The soldiers express dread over people rushing to offer thanks, pregnant with obligation and blood lust and “their voices throbbing like lovers.” The issue has also surfaced, at least tangentially, with Brian Williams's admission that he'd exaggerated about being in a Chinook helicopter hit by enemy fire. In explaining his failed memory, the NBC News anchor said: “This was a bungled attempt by me to thank one special veteran and by extension our brave military men and women veterans everywhere, those who have served while I did not.”

The idea of giving thanks while not participating themselves is one of the core vet quibbles, said Mr. Freedman, the Green Beret. The joke has become so prevalent, he said, that servicemen and women sometimes walk up to one another pretending to be “misty-eyed” and mockingly say “Thanks for your service.” Mr. Freedman, 33, feels like the thanks “alleviates some of the civilian guilt,” adding: “They have no skin in the game with these wars. There's no draft.” No real opinions either, he said. “At least with Vietnam, people spit on you and you knew they had an opinion.” “Thank you for your service,” he said, is almost the equivalent of “I haven't thought about any of this.” For most of us, I suspect, offering thanks reflects genuine appreciation — even if ill-defined. It was a dirty job and someone had to do it. If not these men and women, then us or our children.

Tim O'Brien, a Vietnam vet and the author of the acclaimed book “The Things They Carried,” told me that his war's vets who believed in the mission like to be thanked. Others, himself included, find that “something in the stomach tumbles” from expressions of appreciation that

are so disconnected from the “evil, nasty stuff you do in war.” The more so, he said, “when your war turns out to have feet of clay” — whether fighting peasants in Vietnam or in the name of eradicating weapons of mass destruction that never materialized. But doesn’t their sacrifice merit thanks? “Patriotic gloss,” responded Mr. O’Brien, an unofficial poet laureate of war who essentially elevates the issue to the philosophical; to him, we’re thanking without having the courage to ask whether the mission is even right. It’s hard to assess how widespread such ideas are among the men and women of today’s generation. So, rather than try to sum up what invariably are many views on the subject, I’ll relate more of Mr. Garth’s story.

He grew up in Florida, son of a Vietnam vet, grandson of a decorated World War II vet, himself a bit of a class clown who drank his way out of college and wound up working the docks. The Marines offered a chance to make something of himself and, despite his parents’ pleadings otherwise, to fight. It wasn’t what he romanticized. First training and waiting. Then the reality that he might die, along with his friends — 17 of them did, in action, by accident or by suicide. And, he now asks, for what? His ideas about the need to prove himself slipped away, along with any patriotic fervor. He hates it when people dismiss the Taliban as imbeciles when he saw them as cunning warriors. To Mr. Garth, the war became solely about survival among brothers in arms. Like that day in September 2011 when Mr. Garth was surrounded in the hut. A last-ditch call for help over the radio prompted a small group of fellow Marines to run three miles to save the day, one of them carrying 170 pounds of gear, including a 22-pound machine gun and 50 pounds of ammo. THE thanks Mr. Garth gets today remind him of both the bad times and the good, all of which carry more meaning than he has now in civilian life. Hardest is the gratitude from parents of fallen comrades. “That’s the most painful thank you,” he said. “It’s not for me, and I’m not your son.” He struggled to explain his irritation. “It’s not your fault,” he said of those thanking him. “But it’s not my fault either.”

So what to say to a vet? Maybe promise to vote next time, Mr. Freedman said, or offer a scholarship or job (as, he said, some places have stepped up and done). Stand up for what’s right, suggested Mr. O’Brien. Give \$100 to a vet, Ben Fountain, author of the “Billy Lynn” book, half-joked, saying it would at least show some sacrifice on the thankers’ part. Mr. Garth appreciates thanks from someone who makes an effort to invest in the relationship and experience. Or a fellow vet who gets it. Several weeks ago, he visited one of his soul mates from the mud hut firefight, which they refer to as the Battle of the Unmarked Compound. They drank Jameson whiskey in gulps. “We cried in each other’s arms until we both could tell each other we loved each other,” Mr. Garth said. “We each said, thank you for what you’ve done for me.”

Gunners and Politics

It appears that there is a political movement afoot within the Gunner community. Almost 1% of the ridings across Canada have a former or currently serving Artillery member seeking the candidacy. Okay, 1% of the 338 ridings only comes out to a bit more than three but that’s three more than the last election!

[Andrew Leslie](#), the former Commander of the Army, retired as a Lieutenant-general and is the candidate for the Liberal Party of Canada in Orleans, a suburb of Ottawa. Andrew has become a key figure in the Liberal party where he has been appointed as the foreign affairs advisor to Justin Trudeau. He has recently penned an [Op-Ed piece](#) with the former Commanding officer of the British Columbia Regiment regarding veteran care. He often travels on party business assisting ridings across the country. He has both a [website](#) and a [Facebook](#) page set up for those that may be interested in his campaign.



[Dean Drysdale](#), a former Commanding Officer of 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA in Vancouver is the candidate for the Conservative Party of Canada in the riding of Cloverdale – Langley City. After command, Dean was transferred to the CIOR, which is the NATO association of Reserve Officers before returning to 39 Brigade as one of the Regional Liaison Officers working for Joint Task Force Pacific and Emergency Management BC. Dean also divides his remaining time as a Professor at the University of the Fraser Valley and runs his own consulting firm in the area of corporate finance, raising capital for a variety of high-growth businesses. Dean also has a [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.



[Leon Jensen](#), another former Commanding Officer (in addition to being a former Regimental Sergeant Major) of 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA is a latecomer to the political race and has just submitted his paperwork as a Nomination Contestant in the riding of Langley-Aldergrove. He has spent the last three years in Ottawa working on a Bachelor of Arts program in Conflict Studies at Saint Paul University after returning from a year-long residence down under in Australia. Prior to the escape to the southern hemisphere, he was the Director of the Regional Liaison Officers, a program that he helped found during his time spent as a Colonel (WSE) and the Project Director of the Land Force Reserve Restructure project. His [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page can also be found on line.



While politics is a subject that is not often spoken about in the Officers' Mess, the addition of these three fine Artillery officers certainly adds some personal interest in the campaign. We can certainly wish them the very best in their endeavours and look forward to watching their progress as the campaign heats up. Anyone wishing to show support can contact them through their websites or by doing that new age thing of "liking" them on their Facebook sites. I'm sure that the discussion in the Officers' Mess will certainly include their latest SITREPs, it can only be hoped that it will not include any discussion that becomes too heated. Good Luck to all!

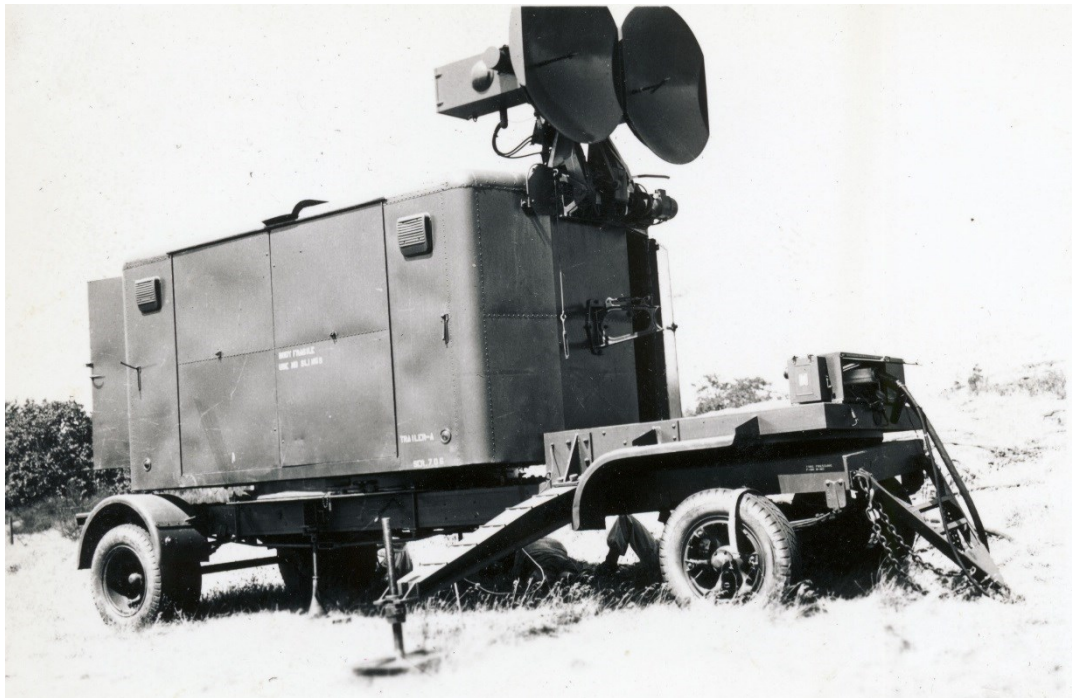
Who is it?

Last Week: No joy on this picture. Guess there is no one left from that era.



The photo is part of a series taken at the Jericho hanger that was used by 102nd Coast Regiment, showing the dismantling and moving of the duplex 6pdr that they had in that hanger for training purposes. It was apparently loaded on a barge, and taken God knows where, but, possibly to Victoria. The date is probably 1954, when the Regiment was amalgamated with the 43rd HAA (which then became 43rd MAA).

This Week: This week's photo, from our un-accessioned shots (not catalogued) is the latest in our on-going series "What's That Gizmo?". The gizmo shown might be thought of as an early attempt to get satellite TV. However, given that the only satellite prior to 1957 was the Moon, and that this photo dates possibly sometime prior to Sputnik being launched by Putin's grand



dad, that might not be right.

So, are you one of the technically-savvy gunners who served our great Dominion back in the days of big regiments and big budgets? If so, maybe you can identify this piece of kit. Did you manage to get Much Music and the Shopping Channel? Or maybe it was just something droning on,

and on, and on.

All answers, educated guesses, and even uneducated ones are treated with the greatest respect. So, send them in to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitary'

What is the worst big cat to play cards with? The cheetah.

Murphy's other Laws

Most situations get steadily worse.

Quotable Quotes

Old age has a great sense of calm and freedom. *Cato*

Whiskey Tasting

15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA

&

The 78th Fraser's Highlanders

Fund Raiser and Scotch Tasting Night

The 15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA and the 78th Fraser's Highlanders welcome you to attend our annual Fund Raising and Whiskey Tasting event at the historic Bessborough Armoury. There will be food, draw prizes, and music.

Tickets are \$55.00 per person for those sampling a selection of six excellent Whiskeys selected by the Officers of the Mess, or \$25.00 if you are only having beer, wine, or soft drinks from our No-Host Bar.

Only 50 tickets will be sold for the full whisky fleet!

Dress is business casual. kilts, and highland dress, of course, are welcome.

DATE: Friday - March 6th, 2015

TIME: 1800 hrs – 2300 hrs

15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA

LOCATION: 2025 West 11th Ave Van, BC V6J
2C7

DO NOT MISS OUT!

TO RESERVE YOUR TICKET CONTACT:

Major James Barrett

Cell: (604) 916-1766 E-Mail: barrettjd007@gmail.com

All profits will go to support the activities of the 15th Field Regimental Society and the 78th Fraser Highlanders Fort Fraser Garrison. Tax receipts will be issued for all donations.

2015 BC Army Gala



Support BC Military Families at the 2015 BC Army Gala!

**Join us in supporting our modern-day troops and their families,
while still celebrating those of days past.**

The 2015 BC Army Gala not only pays tribute to the sacrifices of our military past, but also the current enlisted men and women and their families.

Along with live music, dancers and Steve Darling as MC the BC Army Gala will feature a wonderful night out celebrating a good cause. What better way to support The Mainland BC Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) than to come out to the 2015 BC Army Gala!

MFRC has implemented the Military Family Support Program (MFSP) and operates this program through Military Family Resource Centres at all Canadian bases, wings and stations, as well as at some foreign locations. The programs cover a wide breadth of areas from personal health to family issues and crisis intervention.

Tickets are available for purchase at \$140 each, and are selling quickly. The BC Army Gala team looks forward to seeing you at the Hyatt Regency on March 28th.

Event Count-Down: **32 Days** until the 2015 BC Army Gala!

Visit the link below to purchase your tickets today:

<http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2015-bc-army-gala-tickets-13545802861?aff=efbevent>

Thank you for your continued interest and we look forward to seeing you at The BC Army Gala 2015!

To learn more about the MFRC, visit their website by clicking [here](#).

Thailand Curry Lunch



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



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

- Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015
- Time:** 11:45 am - 1:30 pm
(bar opens at 11:45am)
(lunch starts at 12:25pm)
- 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 February 20, 2015)
- 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 February 20, 2015

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, March 26, 2015

Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir Concert

CELTICFEST

PRESENTS



THE VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR



CANADA'S LARGEST MEN'S CHOIR

Friday, March 13th, 7:30pm
(Doors open 7:00pm)

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
690 Burrard St., Vancouver

With the De Danann School of Irish Dance

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM
WWW.CELTICFESTVANCOUVER.COM

\$27 adult advance | \$24 students & seniors advance
\$31 adult at the door | \$28 students & seniors at the door