



**Vancouver Artillery  
Association News**



**RUSI News  
Vancouver**

## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News April 26, 2016

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: [www.vancouvergunners.ca](http://www.vancouvergunners.ca) and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

**Wednesday Lunches** The 15 Field Officers Mess serves a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. Jacket and tie required, equivalent for ladies. We are now pushing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed lunch each month as the Van Arty Association lunch and encouraging members to attend. Come meet some old friends and help with the Yearbook project.

## Concert – Band of the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment

### **International Military Band Concert**

**Date:** Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 **Time:** 2:30pm

**Location:** Chandos Pattison Auditorium, [10238 168 Street](#), Surrey

**Tickets:** Family \$45, Adults \$20, Seniors \$15, Children \$10.

Available online at: <https://www.picatic.com/imbc> **More information at end of newsletter**

## World War 2 - 1940

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

**Apr 27<sup>th</sup>:** The Germans enter Athens and fly the Swastika atop the Acropolis; meanwhile the Allied evacuation is hampered by the loss of a destroyer and two crowded transports with much loss of life. Paulus visits Rommel in Libya and orders a halt to further attacks, even as Afrika Korps reconnaissance units take Halfaya Pass. HMS Ark Royal carries 23 Hurricanes to Malta.

**Apr 28<sup>th</sup>:** The Allied evacuation of Greece continues under heavy attack.

**Apr 29<sup>th</sup>:** The last of 50,000 Allied troops leave Greece, all the others are in German hands – as are all of Yugoslavia and Greece. As a group of New Zealanders start to fall back to the beach for evacuation, they come under fire from German machineguns and assault guns. Uttering "F—k that, who's coming with me?" Sergeant Jack Hinton knocks out an assault "gun, two MG posts, a mortar and a field gun before being incapacitated by wounds and taken prisoner. He is awarded the Victoria Cross, receiving word of the award while in hospital for a beating received from German guards during an escape attempt.

**Apr 30<sup>th</sup>:** Paulus relents and Rommel is allowed to mount a heavy formal assault on Tobruk, but it doesn't work as the city's defences are too formidable."

## **May 1941: The Axis and Britain Still Fight on Europe's Periphery.**

*It takes three years to build a ship; it takes three centuries to build a tradition.* -Admiral Andrew Cunningham's reaction to heavy naval losses while evacuating troops from Crete.

**General:** The Allies lose 139 ships this month, 14 of them alone to U.107 – a record catch for a sub on a single patrol. Luftwaffe bombing badly hits Liverpool (sinking 15 ships) and the last large raid on London damages the Houses of Parliament. Bomber command can now send 350 bombers per raid and drops over 2,800 tons of bombs on Germany but loses 79 aircraft while doing so. The first SOE agents are parachuted into occupied Europe.

**May 1<sup>st</sup>:** Iraqi troops attack a British outpost in southwestern Iraq. The Australians continue to fend off German attacks at Tobruk. Leutnant Erich Rudorffer receives the Knights Cross for his 10 aerial victories over British and French aircraft. By war's end he will have the Swords and Oak Leaves appended to his Cross, and have 222 victories to his credit. In one display of incredible skill, he downed 13 Soviet aircraft in one sortie in November 1943, but has also been shot down himself some 16 times. He will be among the first officers to join the new West German Luftwaffe in 1955.

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>:** The Iraqis besiege the RAF station at Habbaniyah, while anti-British rioting appears (and is crushed) at Basra.

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>:** The Italians are in strongly entrenched ground on the road between Asmara and Addis Ababa, and the British are advancing on them from both directions.

## **Senior Military Official Being Investigated Over Helicopter Crash**

1 British and 2 Canadian soldiers died in flaming wreckage in 2009 crash in Afghanistan

*By Brett Ruskin, CBC News Posted: Apr 12, 2016*

At least one senior Royal Canadian Air Force official is under investigation by the military police unit that probes major crimes for alleged negligence relating to a deadly helicopter crash six years ago in Afghanistan. CBC News has confirmed that the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service is looking into allegations of negligence related to an incident on July 6, 2009, when a CH-146 Griffon crashed with six people on board. All survived the impact, but three soldiers — including two Canadians, Master Cpl. Patrice Audet, 38, and Cpl. Martin Joannette, 25, and British Capt. Ben Babington-Browne, 27 — died after being unable to escape the flaming wreckage. "This investigation is ongoing and no further information can be provided at this time," a military police spokesperson said in an email. Initially the crash was blamed on "pilot technique" and sandy ground conditions. Those conclusions were based on a heavily redacted board of inquiry report released two years after the crash. CBC News has since obtained a less-redacted version, along with the flight safety investigation report. According to both reports, there are at least two underlying issues — the flight crew had too little training and the helicopter carried too much weight.

On July 6, 2009, the Griffon took off from a sandy area. The down force of the spinning blades created a "dust ball," which reduced the pilot's visibility. Dust ball training is mandatory for all

flight crews, who usually did exercises before and during their deployment to Afghanistan. However, "the vast majority of the [Canada Helicopter Force, Afghanistan] aircrew only received the theory portion of the dust ball training," the board of inquiry report said. Some pilots only got to watch the manoeuvre, not attempt it. In this specific case, prior to his deployment "the [pilot] only observed a demonstration of the landing technique rather than practised dust ball landings himself," the flight safety report said. "Additionally, the [pilot] did not observe or complete any dust ball takeoff techniques." Put simply, the pilot blamed for crashing the helicopter was allegedly sent to Afghanistan lacking the training to take off and land in sand.



*The crash involved a CH-146 Griffon helicopter.  
(Canadian Forces)*

The original weight limit for the Griffon helicopter in Afghanistan was between 10,300 and 10,700 pounds. But senior officials thought the weight cap would limit operations. The weight cap "would significantly impair the ability of the unit to fulfil the entire spectrum of operations in support of the Joint Task Force," the board of inquiry report heard from military commanders. So they changed the flight manual. "The modified operating limitations in Section 1 of the flight manual restricted the Griffon to between 11,750 and 11,900 lb.," the board of inquiry report said. Helicopter payload calculations are complex. If a helicopter is close to the ground, it needs less power. The air its rotor forces downward bounces off the ground and creates a type of cushion. To rise above that cushion and maintain altitude, more power is needed. A helicopter loaded to its maximum weight might be able to take off, but would have difficulty climbing above a certain height. These two height zones are called "in ground effect" or "out of ground effect." That height as well as the weight and power calculations change with air temperature and altitude above sea level. Investigators compared the Griffon's payload to all possible weight limits.

The board of inquiry report found it exceeded those limits "by between 1,020 lb. to 1,320 lb." The flight safety report found it may have been as much as 1,720 lb. overweight. "The Griffon flight [crew] was unknowingly flight testing the performance information found in the flight manual," the board of inquiry report found. "The crew attempted to conduct a takeoff not knowing that the aircraft had an insufficient margin to remain within engine limitations," the flight safety found. These report observations went largely unnoticed for years. But recently, a former RCAF flight instructor began raising concerns about the incident. "As a former helicopter pilot, I was stunned by what I read," said retired captain Anthony Snieder. Snieder said he began looking into the crash after noticing safety violations in Moose Jaw in 2012. He was stationed at 15 Wing Moose Jaw teaching air force pilots. He looked back at previous incidents and found issues with the Griffon crash.



*Retired Capt. Anthony Snieder (Facebook)*

"We have limitations for how to operate the aircraft, and they were intentionally violating aircraft limitations," he said. As a result of voicing his concerns, Snieder said, he was reassigned to an office position and publicly discredited. He filed a harassment claim with the military, but it was dismissed. At that time Snieder asked to be released from the military. Snieder has since applied to Federal Court for a judicial review of the dismissal of his harassment claim. Amid his court battle, Snieder contacted the military police. "If you do any act

that could likely cause the destruction of an aircraft, it's against the law and you go to jail for it," Snieder said.

## **The Men Who Made the Cemeteries**

*From the Historic Musings blog*

I am sure that for anyone who has visited the battlefields of the First World War, in particular those of the Western Front in France and Belgium, one of the most vivid memories will be the war cemeteries. These are looked after and maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and serve as a permanent and powerful reminder of the death and suffering that the



Great War brought. But I suspect that fewer visitors really think about how the cemeteries came about and how they were developed.

*A Corporal from a Graves Registration Unit with an exhumed body.*

*©Jeremy Gordon-Smith, via IWM*

The story starts soon after the start of the First World War and, in large part, is down to the

work of one man, Fabian Ware. He arrived in France in September 1914, too old to serve in the Army, instead he commanded a mobile Red Cross unit. He soon identified that there was no official process for documenting or marking the location of the graves of those who had been killed. To fill this void he and his mobile unit undertook the task. Ware's work was quickly given official recognition and the unit was transferred to the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission in 1915. As the work of grave registration became known to the public at home, the Commission began receiving letters and requests from relatives for photographs of graves, which it duly began to provide. As a result, in 1916, the Graves Registration Commission was renamed the Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries. Its remit was also extended beyond the Western Front and into other theatres of war including Greece, Egypt and Mesopotamia. As the war progressed Ware and others became concerned about the future of the graves after the war, which led to the formation of the Imperial War Graves Commission in 1917 (updated to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in the 1960s).

*A Graves Registration Unit in France or Belgium, probably after the end of the First World War*

©Jeremy Gordon-Smith, via the IWM



The work continued through to the end of the war and on into the 1920s with the recovery of bodies, concentration of some of the smaller cemeteries into larger ones and the building of large permanent memorials such as the ones at Thiepval on the Somme and the Menin Gate in Ypres. This work was crucial in helping the grieving process for those hundreds of thousands of families who had lost loved ones. Some years ago I came across a grave in Tyne Cot Cemetery in the Ypres Salient. Unlike so many in that cemetery, this one had a name on it, Private James Weir, 31st Battalion, Australian Infantry, AIF. It also had an intriguing epitaph 'The Lord Gave and The Lord Hath Taken Away'. So out of interest I decided to trace Private Weir and to see if I could find out more about him. In doing so I uncovered a tragic tale, but one that probably mirrored many thousands more.

Private Weir was killed on 27 September 1917, during the bloody Third Battle of Ypres, and was buried in a battlefield cemetery somewhere in the area of Polygon Wood. However, the grave appears to have been lost and even as late as the summer of 1921 the family, in Australia,

were writing to the authorities to find to where the grave was. Eventually the grave was located, the body exhumed and concentrated with many others in Tyne Cot Cemetery, and in October 1921 the family were sent photographs of the grave. Nonetheless it is hard in these days of instant communication and rapid travel to imagine the anguish his family went through for four years, not knowing where he was buried. This week I came across Lincolnshire resident and author Tim Atkinson who is writing a book about the men who stayed behind after the Armistice as part of the Graves Registration Units to search for and recover bodies on the battlefields. Entitled '[The Glorious Dead](#)' the marketing blurb for the book states the following:

*'The book promises to reveal what happened when the Great War ended and the guns fell silent, to tell the story of the battlefield clearances and creation of iconic war cemeteries and to explain why so many men who served – and survived – remained in Flanders amid the ruins of the war they'd fought. The story follows one of these men – Jack Patterson – as he busies himself doing the Empire's dirty work. Jack seems not to mind getting his hands dirty, digging graves, living among the death of devastation of the war he and others have just fought. But there's a secret keeping Jack in Flanders – a secret that only emerges when a visitor to the cemeteries comes searching.... for Jack's own grave!'*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries of the Western Front, and elsewhere in the world, are an iconic and important part of the Remembrance of all wars that have involved military and civilian personnel from across the Commonwealth since 1914. As we move through the Centenary commemorations of the First World War their power to connect us with that War does not seem to diminish, indeed in many respects they are even more powerful today than they ever have been.

What I hope I have done in this blog post, and what Tim Atkinson is attempting to do in his book, is to highlight the effort made to ensure the memory and sacrifice of those who died in the First World War was not forgotten. Initially this was through the efforts of Fabian Ware to institutionalise the burial and commemoration of the dead. Then later through the physically hard and traumatic work of men, like Tim's character Jack, to scour the battlefields searching for bodies, and hopefully help to close a chapter for many families such as those of Private James Weir. As we remember the dead and the wounded throughout the Centenary of the First World War, we should also take our hats off to the men who completed the grisly, but very important, task of making the cemeteries.

## **Changes to Your CAF Pension Administration**

In the summer of 2016, the administration of the Canadian Armed Forces Pension Plans for active members will be transferred to the Government of Canada Pension Centre at Public Services and Procurement Canada. Pension payments for retired CAF members and their survivors/child(ren) will continue to be supported by the Specialized Services Division at PSPC until the winter of 2016 at which time they will also be transferred to the Government of Canada Pension Centre at PSPC.

The Government of Canada Pension Centre will be staffed by employees transferred from the DND and PSPC who are experienced and knowledgeable about CAF pensions. This will ensure that a high level of quality service continues to be provided to CAF members, retirees and their families. The Centre is already the primary office responsible for pension plan administration for Federal Public Service employees as well as members of the RCMP.

The current DND pension administration system depends on outdated technology that is expensive to maintain, relies on manual processes, and limits the ability to provide modern services such as an online self-service.

This transition aligns to the common Government of Canada pension administration standards for the administration of all federal public pension plans.

Advisory groups provide an opportunity for early and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and serve as a sounding board for the development of Veterans Affairs Canada's policies, programs and services.

Advisory group members are selected in consultation with stakeholder groups and based on their interests and involvement within the Veteran community. Membership of these groups is still being finalized and will be made public once confirmed.

Veterans Affairs Canada will continue to listen to all interested and engaged stakeholders regardless of their involvement in any of these groups.

Stakeholder Summits are large, in-person events to discuss stakeholder priorities.

Representatives from nearly 30 stakeholder groups attended the last Stakeholder Summit on December 2, 2015.

More information about the transition is available on the DND Web site at:

<http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-pension/military-pension-renewal.page>

## **Who is it?**

**Last Week:** Several people guessed Rhodesia but these Sikhs formed the Army Depot Police,

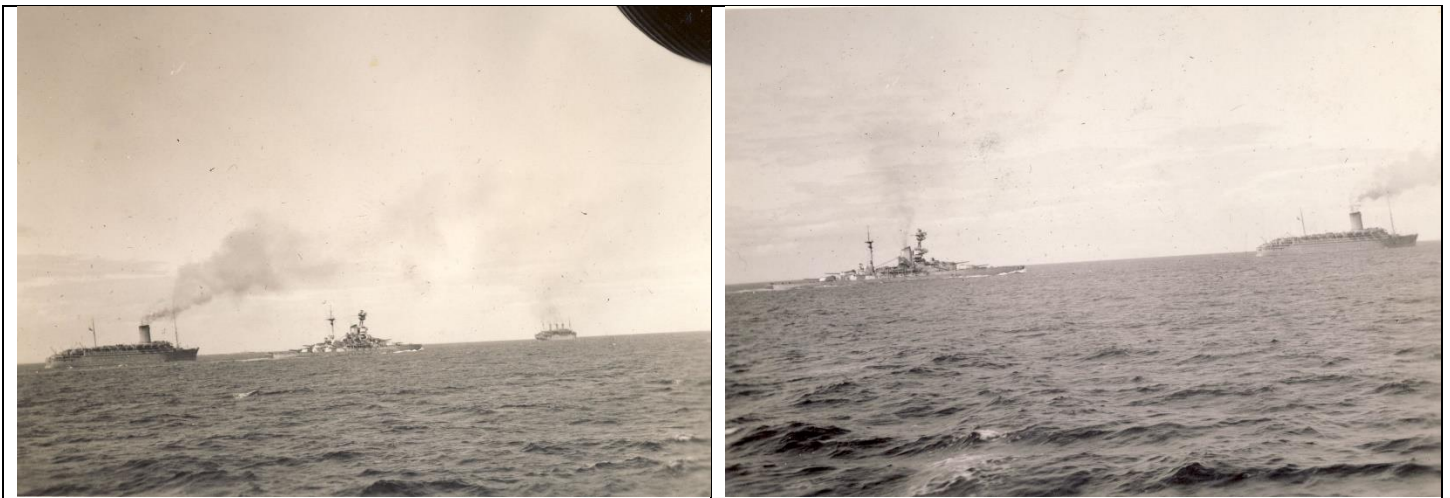


guarding the magazine at Stonecutter's Island in Hong Kong. They were formed after some unfortunate incidents involving Chinese HK soldiers, who do (did) smoke and drink. The unit was disbanded in 1995 in anticipation of the handover of Hong Kong to the PRC, where everyone smokes, and lots drink. The Army Depot Police were considered a unit of the

British Army (Overseas). The inspecting party members are from the HK Military Service Corps, the Regular HK unit.

**This Week:** This week we take a nautical theme, but with an artillery connection. A man who had a connection with the RCA for many years was Brigadier Peter Tees. He served pre-war, and later commanded 43 HAA. In addition, his son, also Peter, won the DFC in Korea while an AOP pilot. One of the latter's great feats was "bombing" my dad's regiment, 1 RCHA, with rolls of toilet paper as they left the lines in April of 1953. The CO, Col. Leslie, was not amused.

In any case, back to the dad. He served in some capacity with 2 Div in the UK early on (he also had an MM from service in the Great War). His photo album, and his medals are now with our museum, courtesy of our friend Dale Murray of 5 FD. In the album, much of which consists of social shots, are these two photos, showing ships in his convoy to the UK. He hasn't written a date or a caption, but I assume it's when 2 Div shipped out.



So, for our naval chaps, can you help us identify the ships in the photos? I'm assuming the warship isn't the Bismarck, otherwise we wouldn't have the photo, so it must be one of ours, possibly HMS Indecisive. The single-stacked liner looks familiar, but, as I am not a nautical lad (although I am a Maritimer, so I know which is the pointy end), I will not chance a guess. Can you? Answers, and stories can be sent to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond ([johnd\\_redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd_redmond@telus.net)). All assistance is greatly appreciated. As always, you can email the editor for a picture you can zoom in on: [Bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:Bob.mugford@outlook.com)

### **From the 'Punitary'**

Why did the chicken go to the séance? To get to the other side.

### **Murphy's other Laws**

An expert is that person who is most surprised by the latest evidence to the contrary.

### **Quotable Quotes**

We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology. *Carl Sagan*



## Upcoming Events - Band of the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment

### ***The 26th International Military Band Concert***

**Date:** Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016    **Time:** 2:30pm

**Location:** Chandos Pattison Auditorium, [10238 168 Street](#), Surrey

***Tickets Available Now***

***\$20 Adult, \$15 Senior, \$10 Child***

***Special Family Pack (2 Adult & 2 Child) \$45***

**26th ANNUAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
MILITARY BAND  
CONCERT**

**Chandos Pattison Auditorium**  
10238 168 Street, Surrey

**Monday, May 23, 2016**  
**2:30 pm**

Tickets  
\$20 Adults; \$15 Seniors; \$10 Students  
[www.tapestrymusic.com/tickets](http://www.tapestrymusic.com/tickets)  
or [www.picatic.com/imbc](http://www.picatic.com/imbc)

HOSTED BY  
Band of the 15th Field Regiment, RCA

WITH  
Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth  
Highlanders Regiment of Canada  
NADEN Band of the Royal Canadian Navy  
56th US Army I-Corps Band  
US Navy Band Northwest  
US Air Force Band of the Golden West

*In 1990, musicians from the Fifteenth Field Artillery Regiment, the US Army 56th I Corps and Her Majesty's Grenadier Guards bands took to the stage in Olympia, Washington for an exciting concert of music that celebrated the common bond the three countries shared in the first International Military Band Concert.*

*For the next 25 years, the International Military Band Concert continued and soon became one of the most highly anticipated musical events held in the Olympia's Washington Centre for the Performing Arts. The list of participants grew to include bands from the US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps, Washington National Guard, the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Pipes and Drums of the Canadian Scottish Regiment and each year, the hall was filled.*

*On Victoria Day 2016, the 26th International Military Band Concert will be presented in Vancouver. This year's list of participating bands is equally impressive and includes, for the very first time, the US Air Force Band of the Golden West from Travis, California.*

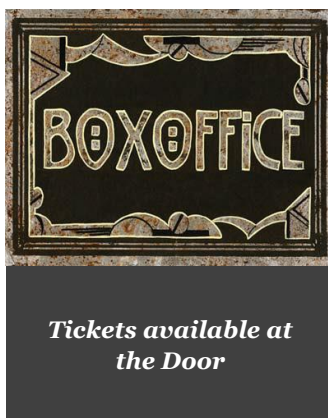
*Join musicians from six military bands at the Chandos Pattison Auditorium on May 23rd at 2:30pm for a fantastic afternoon of music celebrating our common British Heritage and the continuing bond Canada and her allies enjoy!*

*It is with great pleasure that the [British Columbia Military Music Society](#) announces all net proceeds from the 2016 International Military Band Concert will be donated to elementary band programs in Metro Vancouver.*

*Please help us fill the Chandos Pattison Auditorium on Victoria Day so we can help the boys and girls just beginning their musical adventure. Join us for what is guaranteed to be a fantastic performance. And tell your friends!*



[On Line Store](#)



# Taste of the Caribbean Curry Lunch



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

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



- Date:** Thursday, April 28, 2016
- 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 April 18, 2016)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please e-mail Charlotte Yen at [corporate@hplaw.ca](mailto:corporate@hplaw.ca)  
(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 18, 2016

***NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, May 28, 2016***

# RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

## Force 136



Learn more about a largely unknown part of Canadian history. During the last years of the Second World War, about 150 Chinese Canadians were secretly trained in guerrilla warfare and jungle survival tactics. Their mission? To get dropped behind Japanese lines and assist with sabotage and intelligence gathering. Although denied the right to be full citizens of Canada, these men volunteered for what many knew could be a dangerous, even a suicidal, operation.

### OPENS MAY 14, 2016

#### CHINESE CANADIAN MILITARY MUSEUM

CHINESE CULTURAL CENTRE MUSEUM, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR, 555 COLUMBIA STREET, VANCOUVER B.C.  
[WWW.CCMMS.CA](http://WWW.CCMMS.CA)

EXHIBITION DESIGNER:  CHINESE CANADIAN MILITARY MUSEUM

EXHIBITION SUPPORTER:  CITY OF VANCOUVER

EXHIBITION PARTNER:  大溫哥華中華文化中心  
Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver

*\*The Chinese Canadian Military Museum, located in Vancouver's Chinatown, is the only museum of its kind in Canada. Its goal is to collect, preserve, document, and celebrate the role of Chinese Canadians in the service of Canada's military and the impact this service had on Chinese Canadian history and civil rights. Besides operating a museum and organizing tours, the Museum is involved in several projects each year (exhibitions, forums, documentaries) that capture the stories of veterans and educate a new generation of Canadians about the sacrifice of these patriotic men and women. To learn more, visit their website at: [www.ccmms.ca](http://www.ccmms.ca)*