



**Vancouver Artillery
Association News**



RUSI News
Vancouver

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News June 27, 2017

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at bob.mugford@gmail.com to let me know you didn't get a copy.

Newsletter on line. This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: www.vancouvergunners.ca and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html> . Both groups are also on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=vancouver%20artillery%20association> and <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rusi%20vancouver>

Wednesday Lunches - We serve a great 5 course buffet meal for only \$20. Hope to see you all there. Attendance has been down recently. Most of our regular attendees, who are retired, are slowly fading away and the next generation seems, by and large, to be too busy to attend. Guests are always welcome and we encourage members to bring their significant others. Dress - Jacket and tie, equivalent for Ladies

Big Changes Coming (someday soon) Renovations in the Officers Mess were supposed to start at the beginning of June and are expected to take all summer (if not longer). During renovations, lunches will be held in the WO & Sgts Mess.

Upcoming events – Mark your calendars See attached posters for details.

- July 01** - Canada Day -the Regiment will fire a 21 Gun Salute at noon at Hallelujah Point, Stanley Park. BBQ lunch at the Armoury.
- July 19** - Yorke Island project update presentation
- July 23** - Point Atkinson Tour
- July 27** - 4th Annual Korean War Veterans Day Ceremony
- Sept 09** - WO & Sgts Mess Dinner

World War 2 - 1942

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

June 28th: 90th Light Division captures Mersa Matruh (capturing more fuel and food) and thousands of British and Axis vehicles mix in a giant stream of vehicles racing for El Alamein. The Home Fleet releases the battleships HMS Duke of York and USS Washington with the carrier HMS Victorious to help cover PQ-17. Army Group South starts to drive on Voronezh from Kursk as the main German summer offensive gets underway.

June 29th: Aghast and acutely embarrassed, the American military attaché in Cairo learns that the Germans have apparently been listening to his daily radio reports to Washington about the doings of the 8th Army. Rommel has lost an invaluable source of information.

June 30th: PQ-17 is given a close cover group of two US and two RN cruisers; the Germans spot PQ-13 but decide to leave it be for now. Moscow orders the Black Sea Fleet to evacuate the remaining garrison in Sevastopol – an order now much easier given than executed given that the Germans are around much of the harbour.

July 1942: US Bombers First Sortie from England.

As for the tanker, I wish all those now brave enough to boast openly of their black market hauls on shore could have been forced to see the instantaneous sheet of flame that shot up far higher than the level of the attacking machines, swallowed in turn by a huge bellyful of belching black smoke, completely obscuring its subsequent fate. A funeral pyre. -Description of the death of the fuel tanker SS Aldersdale, by a torpedo from a U-Boat during a German bomber attack on Convoy PQ-17, July 1942.

General: U-boats sink 96 ships out of Allied losses of 128 of 618,100 tons (losing 11 submarines), but convoy protection increases in the Caribbean and Radio-Direction Finding gear starts being fitted to escorts at sea. South American rubber production scales up to replace lost production from Asia. The RAF is joined over France by US bombers, and 6,400 tons of bombs are dropped on ports and the Ruhr.

July 1st: 90th Light loses the race to Alam el Onsol to 4th Armoured Brigade and British resistance gels around Ruweisat Ridge despite the best efforts of an exhausted 15th and 21st Panzer: Fighting will continue for several days, but will leave the British in control of their defensive positions at El Alamein. 10 U-boats start to close in on PQ-17.

July 2nd: PQ-17 and PQ-13 pass each other, as Tirpitz, Hipper and six destroyers sally out to see if they can intercept the convoy. Churchill withstands a non-confidence vote by 476 votes to 25. The evacuation of Sevastopol comes to an end as it is too hazardous for more ships to enter the harbour.

July 3rd: Lutzow and three destroyers run aground off Norway as they sortie out to join Tirpitz and Hipper for a planned attack on PQ-17. The 2nd New Zealand Division savages the Italian Armoured Ariete Division at Alam Nayil.

July 4th: Admiral Sir Dudley Pound orders PQ-17 to scatter as Home Fleet units will not be allowed to come unescorted within reach of German airpower and duel with Tirpitz. Six US A-20s join the RAF in a raid on a Dutch airfield, and US airpower based in England drops its first bombs in the European Theatre of War. Sevastopol comes under German control; they have killed an uncounted number of Soviets and taken 90,000 prisoners while suffering 24,000 casualties of their own.

Last Secret of 1967 War: Israel's Doomsday Plan for Nuclear Display

By WILLIAM J. BROAD and DAVID E. SANGER/JUNE June 3, 2017



Israeli armored forces advanced against Egyptian troops at the start of the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. Credit Shabtai Tal/GPO, via Getty Images.

On the eve of the Arab-Israeli war, 50 years ago this week, Israeli officials raced to assemble an atomic device and developed a plan to detonate it atop a mountain in the Sinai Peninsula as a warning to Egyptian and other Arab forces, according to an interview with a key organizer

of the effort that will be published Monday. The secret contingency plan, called a “doomsday operation” by Itzhak Yaakov, the retired brigadier general who described it in the interview, would have been invoked if Israel feared it was going to lose the 1967 conflict. The demonstration blast, Israeli officials believed, would intimidate Egypt and surrounding Arab states — Syria, Iraq and Jordan — into backing off. Israel won the war so quickly that the atomic device was never moved to Sinai. But Mr Yaakov’s account, which sheds new light on a clash that shaped the contours of the modern Middle East conflict, reveals Israel’s early consideration of how it might use its nuclear arsenal to preserve itself. “It’s the last secret of the 1967 war,” said Avner Cohen, a leading scholar of Israel’s nuclear history who conducted many interviews with the retired general.

Mr Yaakov, who oversaw weapons development for the Israeli military, detailed the plan to Dr Cohen in 1999 and 2000, years before he died in 2013 at age 87. “Look, it was so natural,” said Mr Yaakov, according to a transcription of a taped interview. “You’ve got an enemy, and he says he’s going to throw you to the sea. You believe him. How can you stop him?” he asked. “You scare him. If you’ve got something you can scare him with, you scare him.” Israel has never acknowledged the existence of its nuclear arsenal, in an effort to preserve “nuclear ambiguity” and forestall periodic calls for a nuclear-free Middle East. In 2001, Mr Yaakov was arrested, at age 75, on charges that he had imperiled the country’s security by talking about the nuclear program to an Israeli reporter, Ronen Bergman, whose work was censored. At various moments, American officials, including former President Jimmy Carter long after he left office, have acknowledged the existence of the Israeli program, though they have never given details. A spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Washington said the Israeli government would not comment on Mr Yaakov’s role. If the Israeli leadership had detonated the atomic device, it would have been the first nuclear explosion used for military purposes since the United States’ attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 22 years earlier.

The plan had a precedent: The United States considered the same thing during the Manhattan Project, as the program's scientists hotly debated whether to set off a blast near Japan in an effort to scare Emperor Hirohito into a quick surrender. The military vetoed the idea, convinced that it would not be enough to end the war. According to Mr Yaakov, the Israeli plan was code-named Shimshon, or Samson, after the biblical hero of immense strength. Israel's nuclear deterrence strategy has long been called the "Samson option" because Samson brought down the roof of a Philistine temple, killing his enemies and himself. Mr Yaakov said he feared that if Israel, as a last resort, went ahead with the demonstration nuclear blast in Egyptian territory, it could have killed him and his commando team. Dr Cohen, a professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey in California and the author of "Israel and the Bomb" and "The Worst-Kept Secret," described the idea behind the atomic demonstration as giving "the prime minister an ultimate option if everything else failed." Dr Cohen, who was born in Israel and educated in part in the United States, has pushed the frontiers of public discourse on a fiercely hidden subject: how Israel became an unacknowledged nuclear power in the 1960s.

On Monday, the Nuclear Proliferation International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington — where Dr Cohen is a global fellow — is releasing on a special website a series of documents related to the atomic plan. The project maintains a digital archive of his work known as the Avner Cohen Collection. (President Trump's proposed budget calls for the elimination of all federal funding for the center, which Congress created as a living memorial to Wilson.) It has long been known that Israel, fearful for its existence, rushed to complete its first atomic device on the eve of the Arab-Israeli war. But the planned demonstration remained secret in a country where it is taboo to discuss even half-century-old nuclear plans, and where fears persist that Iran will eventually obtain a nuclear weapon, despite its deal with world powers. Shimon Peres, the former Israeli president and prime minister who died last year, hinted at the plan's existence in his memoirs. He referred to an unnamed proposal that "would have deterred the Arabs and prevented the war."

At the time of the 1967 war, the world's main nuclear powers were observing an accord known as the Partial Test Ban Treaty. To curb radiation hazards, it prohibited all test detonations of nuclear arms except for those conducted underground. That Israel considered an open explosion was a measure of its desperation. "The goal," Mr Yaakov says on the transcribed tape, "was to create a new situation on the ground, a situation which would force the great powers to intervene, or a situation which would force the Egyptians to stop and say, 'Wait a minute, we didn't prepare for that.' The objective was to change the picture." Dr Cohen said he struck up a relationship with Mr Yaakov after he published "Israel and the Bomb" in 1998. He interviewed him for hours in the summer and fall of 1999 and in early 2000, always in Hebrew and mainly in Midtown Manhattan, where the former general lived. As Mr Yaakov recounted the story, in May 1967, as tensions rose with Egypt over its decision to close the Straits of Tiran between the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea, he was half a world away, visiting the RAND Corporation in California. He was suddenly summoned back to Israel. With it clear that war was imminent, Mr Yaakov said, he initiated, drafted and promoted a plan aimed at detonating a nuclear device in

the sparsely populated Eastern Sinai Desert in a display of force. The site chosen for the proposed explosion was a mountaintop about 12 miles from an Egyptian military complex at Abu Ageila, a critical crossroads where, on June 5, Ariel Sharon commanded Israeli troops in a battle against the Egyptians. (Mr Sharon later became prime minister, and died in 2014.) The plan, if activated by order of the prime minister and military chief of staff, was to send a small paratrooper force to divert the Egyptian Army in the desert area so that a team could lay preparations for the atomic blast. Two large helicopters were to land, deliver the nuclear device and then create a command post in a mountain creek or canyon. If the order came to detonate, the blinding flash and mushroom cloud would have been seen throughout the Sinai and Negev Deserts, and perhaps as far away as Cairo.

It is impossible to know what the extent of any casualties might have been. That would have depended on such unknowns as the size of the weapon, the population density of the region and the direction of the wind on the day of the detonation. Mr Yaakov described a helicopter reconnaissance flight he made with Israel Dostrovsky, the first director general of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, the civilian arm of the bomb program. The helicopter had to turn back after the pilots learned that Egyptian jets were taking off, perhaps to intercept them. “We got very close,” Mr Yaakov recalled. “We saw the mountain, and we saw that there is a place to hide there, in some canyon.” On the eve of the war, Mr Yaakov said, he was filled with the same doubts that had gnawed at the American scientists during the Manhattan Project. Would the bomb explode? Would he survive the blast? He never got to find out. Israel defeated three Arab armies, gained territory four times its original size and became the region’s foremost military power using conventional arms. Nonetheless, Mr Yaakov continued to lobby for an atomic demonstration to make clear the country’s new status as a nuclear power. But the idea went nowhere. “I still think to this day that we should have done it,” he told Dr Cohen.

During a visit to Israel, a year after telling his story to Dr Cohen in New York, where he had worked as a venture capitalist after having played a key role in the founding of Israel’s technology industry, Mr Yaakov was arrested on charges of “high espionage” that carried a maximum penalty of life behind bars. The exact charges were a mystery, and he was put on a secret trial. “We see this as a very sad story of a person who dedicates his life to the security of Israel and ends up caught in a huge story that gets blown out of proportion and jeopardizes his reputation, his career, his legacy, everything,” Jack Chen, one of his lawyers, told *The New York Times* at the time. It turned out that the charges centered on his conversations with the Israeli reporter, whose account of the 1967 plan was censored by the military. Mr Yaakov was found guilty of handing over secret information without authorization, the lesser of the charges against him. He was given a two-year suspended sentence. The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, in its obituary of Mr Yaakov, said he had never fully recovered from his legal ordeal and, during his final days, bitterly discussed its details with fellow retired officers. Dr Cohen said he and Mr Yaakov continued to get together long after the interviews and the secret trial — for instance, in a restaurant in Tel Aviv around 2009. He said he had promised Mr Yaakov he would find the right time and the right place to make his story public. Now, he said, on the 50th anniversary of the war — with Mr Yaakov and so many other witnesses long dead — it seemed like the right time.

Sniper Record Latest Example of Deadly Canadian Marksmanship

'A hell of a shot': Joint Task Force 2 member hit ISIS militant at a distance of 3,540 metres, military confirms *Tom Parry, CBC News Posted: Jun 22, 2017*



A Canadian 3RCR Battlegroup sniper walks up a hill to his position during a mission near Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2003. (Stephen Thorne/Canadian Press)

A Canadian sniper working alongside Iraqi forces in their fight against ISIS successfully struck a member of the militant group from a distance of 3,540 metres, Canada's military confirmed Thursday. The sniper is a member of the elite Joint Task Force 2 special forces unit, but citing operation security the military provided no details about how or when the incident took place. The Globe and Mail first reported the sniper record Thursday and quoted unnamed military sources who said the kill shot disrupted an ISIS attack on Iraqi security forces. The shot surpasses the previous record held by a British soldier, who in 2009 shot a Taliban fighter in Afghanistan from a distance of 2,475 metres.

Jody Mitic, a former Canadian sniper who now serves as an Ottawa city councillor, said he had heard rumours of the Canadian's record-breaking feat and describes it as "a hell of a shot." Mitic said to hit a target at that distance, the sniper team, likely a shooter and spotter, would have to take every possible factor into account, from the temperature of the weapon and ammunition to the curvature of the Earth. "The shooter and the spotter know exactly what they're doing," Mitic said. But "at the end of the day, long-range shooting, it's your best guess." "There's so much that goes into this, but at the same time, when you're in that environment, operating in that way, a lot of these things become second nature," Mitic said in an interview with CBC News. Mitic, who was badly injured by a land mine in Afghanistan in 2007, expects the sniper team would have been working in the area for a while and would have known the conditions and terrain extremely well. He said teams like this have long been a vital part of Canada's military operations. "We're called 'force multipliers,'" Mitic said. "If you have a well-trained, well-equipped group of snipers in an area, that frees up about a hundred other troops to go and do other things."



Cpl. Francis Pegahmagabow, a sniper in the First World War, recorded 378 kills and is Canada's most decorated First Nations soldier. (Marius Barbeau/Canadian Museum of History)

Canadians have held the record for longest kill shot before. Former corporal Rob Furlong shot a Taliban fighter in Afghanistan in 2002 from a distance of 2,430 metres. He broke the record set just a few days earlier by another Canadian, former master corporal Aaron Perry, who shot an insurgent from a distance of 2,286 metres. The history of snipers in the Canadian military goes back much further. Cpl Francis Pegahmagabow, an Ojibwa member of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion, was the deadliest sniper of the First

World War, with a record of 378 kills. He still stands as one of Canada's most decorated First Nations soldiers. Mark Zuehlke, who has written a dozen books on Canada's military history, said Canadian snipers showed deadly effectiveness in both world wars. "The best snipers were usually country boys who knew how to hunt," Zuehlke said. "They knew how to handle a gun and handle a gun well."

The Canadian mission in Iraq has been the subject of much debate over whether Canada's troops are involved in a combat mission. That debate was reignited recently when the Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Jonathan Vance revealed Canadian troops were operating inside Mosul. In a statement confirming the sniper's successful shot, the Canadian Forces insisted its mission in Iraq is still to merely "advise and assist" Iraqi forces. "This takes the form of advice in planning for their operations and assistance to defeat Daesh [ISIS] through the use of coalition resources," the statement said.

The War Diary of C31 L/Sgt CD Phelan, A Battery, RCHA 1939 - 1945

Chapter 3. First Leave in England

22 Dec 1939. The station at Fleet was the scene of a hilarious party as we waited for the London train, which was an hour late. We climbed into the First-Class coaches even though our tickets were half-price Third Class. We piled out at Waterloo Station and booked rooms at the Union Jack Club across the street. Then Gord Lang and I went by the Underground to Piccadilly Circus to have a meal. At Piccadilly, the blackout struck us most forcibly. The only lights were hooded dim headlights of a few cars and small "OPEN" signs in the blacked-out windows of stores and bars. We spotted an "OPEN" sign in a café window and barged into a luxurious lobby and on into an elaborate dining room. It was filled with ladies in fine evening gowns, dignified old gents in tails, and numerous officers of high rank. After one good look, we did a smart about face and barged right out again. We found a less elaborate restaurant where we promptly devoured a large steak smothered in onions. Then we turned in.

23 Dec. Gord and I set out to see the town. We visited Piccadilly, Trafalgar Square, and Leicester Square. We signed the Visitors' Book at Canada House, and changed the remainder of our Canadian money into English currency at the Bank of Canada. That evening we moved to the Victoria League Club on Mallet Street. It was much pleasanter than the Union Jack Club.

24 Dec. After Mass, I started out towards Bow to locate my London pen pal, Clifford Bird, to whom I'd been writing for two years but of course had never met. En route I took in one of London's most interesting sights, Petticoat Lane. It is a sight that once seen is never forgotten. Here a person can buy anything from a pin to an automobile. I then caught a bus and continued on my way. Soon I reached Bow Church, a fine old church. It stands in the center of the street and the traffic flows around it. By dint of numerous inquiries I finally located "Homeleigh". I knocked at the door. Mrs Bird opened it and said: "You must be Charlie Phelan", and embraced me – much to my embarrassment. She took me in and introduced me to the rest of

the family. They were a grand bunch of people and when they invited me to stay with them I jumped at the chance.

25 Dec. Christmas morning, about 0900 hrs Mrs Bird woke us up with a cup of tea in bed. After breakfast I went to Mass, then Clifford and I went for a stroll in a nearby park. We got back to the house around 1400 hrs and enjoyed a wonderful Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings including a flaming plum pudding. After supper the whole family joined in parlor games and cards. Then Mr Bird entered dressed as “Father Christmas” – Santa Claus to me. He distributed presents to the family and to my great pleasure, I received cigarettes, hankies, handknitted socks, and gloves. Without their generous hospitality, it would have been a pretty dull Christmas for me – my first away from home.

26 Dec. Cliff and I visited some nearby air raid shelters. Those we saw were under the pavement of a nearby park. Small tunnels led down to a spacious well-lighted shelter with rows of benches. Gas curtains hung at the entrances for instant use. In the garden behind the Bird home was their personal shelter – a small cave-like affair of corrugated iron dug into the ground and banked with earth. Two bunk beds took up most of the room. Other safeguards which were in every home were buckets of water and sand bags for extinguishing fire bombs, and of course gas masks for every person. I was loath to leave but finally did that evening. Mrs Bird assured me that their home was to be mine as long as I was in England. I was one homesick boy about then. I returned to the Victoria League Club and teamed up with a few others to visit a number of cafes and pubs.

27 Dec. The misty fog finally lifted, and we got our first sight of the barrage balloons. The sky over London was dotted with silver balloons anchored to cable trucks located in parks and other open spaces. As I walked past one of the trucks the crew began to haul the balloon down. The winch ran at high speed for nine minutes before the balloon reached the ground. It was a large non-rigid balloon of silvery silk. Suspended from it were a number of steel cables which would shear the wing off a plane as though it were cheese. I then visited Westminster Abbey. The simple tomb of the Unknown Soldier was very impressive. It is covered with a beautiful piece of black marble with the Epitaph emblazoned in letters of gold:

“Under this stone lies the body of an unknown soldier, who was killed in the war of 1914-1918. He has been brought to this spot, hallowed by the bones of the great, and he has been laid to rest amongst the Kings as a tribute to him, who typified the spirit of all those who died so that all peoples might live in peace and security”.

I then went to see the famous Scotland Yard. The huge iron gates were open, so – quite innocently – I strolled right in. I had no sooner started than two Bobbies fell into step behind me and sedately escorted me to the far gate. Almost directly across was 10 Downing street, the official residence of the Prime Minister. Continuing on my stroll, I passed the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben, London Bridge, then Buckingham Palace. Directly in front of the Palace was the Queen Victoria Memorial, made of stately white marble. The Memorial is surmounted by a winged figure depicting victory.

28 Dec. All good things must come to an end, and late that night I returned to Leipzig Camp, more or less prepared to settle down to our intensive training schedule.

Chapter 4. Inspections and Training – Spring of '40

24 Jan 1940. The RCHA and 2nd Cdn Fd Regt were inspected by His Majesty King George VI. We were marched about two miles to Thistledown Racetrack and formed up in front of a reviewing stand. We stood around for half an hour, and as we were not wearing greatcoats, it was not too comfortable. The couple inches of snow made things quite chilly. The parade was called to attention as the Royal party arrived. As His Majesty, accompanied by Maj Gen A McNaughton, approached, the Royal Standard was broken out and trumpeters sounded the Royal Salute. After being greeted by Brig Stewart, the King, in the uniform of a Field Marshall, inspected the troops. He was cheered by the Artillery as he left to inspect the Cdn Dental Corps.

25 – 31 Jan. Intensive training got underway. I was put on an MT course and began to learn about trucks, cars, and motorbikes. Towards the end of January, the worst snowstorm England had seen in 60 years swept the county, almost completely disrupting communications and stranding trains and buses. After a week, the rain began to fall again and most of the difficulty was melted away.

2 Feb. Two men from each troop left for parts unknown with all their kit. This started a flock of rumors; we were going to Kingston-on-Thames, to Salisbury Plains, to Borden, and even to Egypt or southern France. Speculations stopped on 7 February when it was announced that the third contingent of Canadian troops had arrived. Our buddies had been sent to Camp Borden to prepare barracks for 3 Med Regt.

Mid-Feb. Fleet, the nearest town, had a population of about 6000. The YMCA had set up a popular place in the center of town. There was a canteen, as well as reading and writing rooms, and games rooms. Occasionally dances or concerts were held at the Y. Other than the theatre, service clubs, cafes and pubs, there was nothing in Fleet. Aldershot, the next closest town, was strictly a military town.

22 Feb. Late that night, the guard began to wake up the fire picquet. There was a fire in the Battery office. We hurriedly dressed and rushed to the office, where the guard was struggling with an extension ladder. After struggling with it for five minutes by the light of a couple flashlights, someone discovered that it was securely tied at the top and bottom rungs. After searching for a knife, the ropes were cut and the ladder hauled up against the tall chimney from which the sparks were flying. Maj Panet arrived on the scene on a motorbike and called for fire extinguishers. After another search, it was found we had no extinguishers. The next bright suggestion was to dump a pailful of sand down the chimney. This was done and the fire was well and truly smothered, and we went back to our interrupted sleep.

23 Feb. We were visited by the British Minister of War, Mr Oliver Stanley. We put on exhibitions of anti-gas squads, Lewis gunners, signallers, and gun crews. I was on one of the 18/25 pdrs. In the center of the parade square was a lone 25pdr such as we are supposed to be equipped with in the future.

24 Feb – 22 Apr. Night and day schemes soon began to occupy a lot of our not very valuable time. Occasionally the YMCA tea-car would meet us and the free tea was most welcome. Schemes or no schemes, we still managed to get a few nights off to get to Basingstoke, Reading, and Farnham. As Germany's campaign in Norway got under way, the rumors began to fly again. The barrack-room strategists had us going to France, Norway, Finland, and all points between.

23 Apr. Mr Norman Rogers, the Canadian Minister of War, inspected the troops and camp. As he had just been elected a short time ago, he probably thought we were a pretty decent bunch. The soldiers' vote in the Dominion elections was an interesting experience. I and all the other voters appeared before the Adjutant, filled out a large envelope with our name and address, marked the candidate's name on the ballot, sealed it in a small envelope and dropped it into the ballot box. Thus, I exercised my franchise for the first time.

24 Apr – 16 May. The regiment went to the firing ranges at Salisbury. The trucks and guns went by road and the men by train. We lived in tents, luckily with floor-boards, in Fargo Camp. We underwent a lot of training by regiment, battery, and troop, and did a lot of firing. For the first few days I was Number 6 on our gun crew. The first time a round went off I thought I'd got a split eardrum, but we soon got used to it. For one day, I was Number 3 and had the more or less doubtful pleasure of pulling the trigger and firing round after round within inches of my ear. I also went to the School of Artillery in Larkhill where we had excellent lectures on gun-laying and maintenance. We had time to visit Stonehenge to see the huge stones placed in a large circle. We also visited the nearby towns of Amesbury and Salisbury, with their many interesting buildings and the beautifully preserved Salisbury Cathedral. The last night of our camp we had an "Air Raid Warning Yellow", which was a warning of a possible air strike. We spent half the night dragging guns and trucks into the woods. After all our preparations, the only excitement was the distant flash of AA shells in the sky miles away. When we returned to Leipzig we were put on eight hours notice to move.

17 May. Nearly all of us were given seven days leave. I lost no time in leaving camp. I caught the last bus to Aldershot and connected with the last train to London. I arrived after midnight and turned in at the Union Jack Club.

18 – 23 May. The next day I headed for the newly opened Beaver Club. This was a leave centre just off Trafalgar Square for Canadian troops, and was staffed by Canadian ladies living in London. It had the best restaurant in town, and it had an entertainment bureau which arranged for free tickets to dances, concerts, and theatres, as well as sight-seeing tours. I had a tour of the Houses of Parliament, and a few of us obtained permission to climb the circular stairway to see the insides of Big Ben. At the top, we enjoyed a marvellous view of the city. Another tour I enjoyed was conducted by one of the famous "Beefeaters". He took us through the Tower of London and showed us a fine collection of old arms and armour. I took in a couple of good plays and saw the current movie hit "Gone with the Wind"

24 May. That afternoon the RCHA was recalled from leave and put on six hours notice. The notice was shortened to four hours, and on 27 May we were still standing by, ready to move at the drop of a hat.

28/29 May. In the early evening, we lined up on the square. At 2300 hrs the battery began to move off. We travelled all night on the back of our open trucks. As dawn was breaking we began to go through a series of small towns. We travelled at a good speed through some very pretty country all morning with only a short stop for a breakfast of tea and jam sandwiches. We reached Knusden Hall, near Rushden, late in the afternoon. A and B subs of C Troop* were quartered in an abandoned searchlight site, while the other two subs were billeted in nearby farmhouses.

30 May – 9 Jun. At this time, a new organization was being tried out. Each troop was attached to an infantry outfit to form a very mobile and hard-hitting unit. C Troop was attached to some of the RCRs. One day the order came down to “pack up”. Within an hour the troop was on the move, racing through several towns to a rendezvous with the RCR. There we were informed that it was just a practice and we returned to our billets. Then we got another “move” order, and after a few hours of travel we found ourselves back in Leipzig. We were issued with a lot of new stores. Soon we were told to stand-by again.

**(Editorial Note): C Tp was part of A Bty, as 1 Fd Regt at that time consisted of two batteries, each of three troops.*

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

The war diaries updates from 100 years ago continue on our What’s New page
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new>

We’ve tracked down a former member who’s flying high with Chinooks these days.
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2011.html>
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2014.html>

The Nominal Roll was updated with new entries in the S’s and T’s. Is your name there?
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/nominal-roll---s.html>
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/nominal-roll---t.html>

A Yakima live fire exercise in 2009. <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2009.html>

A group shot from 1972. <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1972.html>

Keep those stories and pictures coming! Contact Leon Jensen at LeonJ1@hotmail.com

Who Is It



Last Week: This picture was taken in 1972 and shows WO George Wood teaching the intricacies of a 105mm firing mechanism to a group of soldiers. There are 7 soldiers sitting around him so this is probably part of a gun detachment training session and the soldier with the upside-down Sgt’s Stripes is probably the acting Detachment Commander (No 1) of the moment.

This Week: Due to resistance by a rogue group of jihadi silverfish, who have blocked the door to our underground storage vault whilst feasting on ancient Part 2 Orders, we have had to find a photo for this week's quiz from elsewhere. This one comes from the Vancouver City Archives. The photo, which was taken locally during the Second World War, shows a very untidy gun position. I remember hearing of such from my late father, whose regiment, 1 RCHA, took over similarly messy locations from another unit during the Korean War. I won't mention which one



for fear of reprisal, but, at that time, they were composed of many non-regular soldiers, so to speak.

So, veterans of all things related to Saint Barbara, can you tell us

what this interesting photo represents? Is it an example of the type of equipment allocated to Reserve Army regiments during the big war, or is it something else? Send your ideas to the editor, bob.mugford@outlook.com or to the author, John Redmond johnd._redmond@telus.net .

From the 'Punitary'

Why did the chicken cross the Möbius strip? To get to the same side!

Murphy's Other Laws

If at first you don't succeed, try again. Then quit. No use being a damn fool about it.

Quotable Quotes

"Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe." *Albert Einstein*



Canada Day

**15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA
will be firing a 21 Gun Salute
in honour of our nation's Birthday
at 12:00 Noon at Hallelujah Point.**

The Vancouver Artillery Association will be there.

Drop by and say hi!

**Would you like to join us for a burger back at the
Armoury afterwards?**

***Send us an email or notify us on Facebook so we know
how many burgers to cook!***



Wednesday Lunches

Have you been down to Bessborough Armoury lately?

**When was the last time you were at the
15th Field Artillery Regiment Officers' Mess?**

**Did you know that the Mess continues to offer a fine lunch
every Wednesday at 12:00?**

**For \$20.00 you get a 5 course meal and the opportunity to reconnect
with your Gunner friends and other guests.**

Business attire expected.

The Regimental Museum opens at 10:00 every Wednesday.



CANADA 150 TOUR of POINT ATKINSON LIGHT STATION

Lighthouse Park Preservation Society and West Vancouver Historical Society invite you to join a free guided tour of the light station grounds. Learn about the link between the lighthouse and Canada's confederation. Climb the steps to the base of the lighthouse (the tower will not be open). Enter the Fog Alarm museum to learn about its inner workings and the role of the lighthouse keeper. Sit inside the Power House to view a short slide show on the presence of the military during WWII.

For more information about the tour and to register please email pointatkinsonpals@gmail.com

TOUR DATES

Sunday May 14

Sunday June 18

Sunday July 23

Sunday August 13

Sunday Sept. 3

TOUR TIMES

1:00 pm & 3:00 pm

Registration required
Limit 20 per tour



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA
FONDATIONS COMMUNAUTAIRES DU CANADA
all for community. ensemble pour tous.



CANADA 150

Canada

4th Annual Korean War Veterans Day Ceremony



SPECIAL INVITATION

The Korean War Commemorative Alliance
cordially invites you to

The 4th annual Korean War Veterans Day Ceremony

To mark the 64th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice

Thursday, July 27th, 2017

10:30am Wreath-laying Ceremony

**Location: "Ambassador of Peace" Korean War Memorial in
Burnaby's Central Park
(Boundary Road and East 46th Avenue)**

Light lunch provided by the Burnaby Firefighters following the ceremony

Kindly RSVP your attendance to reg-asst-martin@outlook.com

Office of the Honourable Senator Yonah Martin
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate
reg-asst-martin@outlook.com / 613-947-4078
<http://yonahmartin.sencanada.ca>

**The Regimental Sergeant-Major
Warrant Officers and Sergeants
of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment,
The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery**

*Cordially invite you
to their*

ANNUAL MESS DINNER

Saturday, 9th September 2017

Cocktails: 18:00 hrs Dinner: 19:00 hrs

To be held in the

Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

Bessborough Armoury

2025 West 11th Avenue

Vancouver, BC

RSVP required by 30st August 2017
to the Mess Treasurer, (*Sgt Cooley*)
2025 West 11th Ave,
Vancouver BC V6J 2C7
Email: james.cooley@forces.gc.ca
Telephone: 604-666-4331

Dress Mess Kit/Formal
Ticket price: \$60.00
Cheque payable to *15th Field
Warrant Officers' and
Sergeants' mess*. Pay at the
door or mail in payment



Leon Jensen OMM CD

President – Vancouver Artillery Association
Will be providing an update on the

Yorke Island Conservancy Project

A partnership between
BC Parks
and
The Vancouver Artillery Association
Bessborough Armoury
Wednesday 19 July 2017
13:00 hours

Join us for lunch at 12:00 - Visit the Regimental Museum at