



**Vancouver Artillery  
Association News**



**RUSI News  
Vancouver**

## Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Mar 3, 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

**Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>** : Marched from rest billets towards RICHEBOURG, [and] billeted at night near LA FOSSEE. [The weather was] very wet and cold. George and I, by our good French, managed to get quite a good feed of eggs in a farmhouse nearby.

**Mar 4<sup>th</sup>**: Marched at 3 am, and came into action about 400 yds on the right of RICHEBOURG Church. We were informed that we were to bombard NEUVE CHAPELLE – a village on our left front, which had been in the hands of the Germans since October. We took a fresh position and were engaged in gun-pit digging and fortifying it as much as possible.

**Mar 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>** : Preparing for the big bombardment, Batteries were everywhere. Under almost every tree there was a gun, and our giant 15” Howitzer was to make her debut, as well as quite a few of our new 9.2” Hows. We laid out double lines to our observing station, as well as lines to various parts of the trenches. [Supply] dumped a large amount of ammunition [so that] every preparation was made to give the Germans the biggest shock they had yet received at our hands.

### World War 2 - November 1939

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

**Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>**: The Soviets begin launching attacks on the Finnish city of Viipuri.

**Mar 5<sup>th</sup>**: The Finns send a delegation to Moscow for peace talks.

**Mar 6<sup>th</sup>** : In the last 100 days, Finland's master sniper Simo Häyhä has earned the nickname Belaya Smert [White Death] from the Soviet invaders of his country – he has killed over 700 of them, mostly with a bolt action rifle with iron sights. Today his soldiering comes to an end, but his toughest fight begins – it takes him years to overcome the bullet that strikes him in the face. While the Finns have a high medal for courage (the Mannerheim Cross) the fighting on the Kollaa Front where Häyhä served was so intense that a special medal was struck for the heroes

of that sector. This crack shot received the fourth of the Kollaa Cross medals and was the first enlisted man to be so honoured.

## **Col Rodgers scores a Bullseye.**



Col Bill Rodgers, who is Hon Col of the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment and President of the Regimental Society, receives his 84mm mortar casing from the CO, LCol Purcell. Col Rodgers scored a direct hit on the target in Yakima after some sound advice from the CO!

## **March Forth for Soldiers**

March 4th is a day designated for all soldiers and veterans to reach out to former comrades they might have lost touch with. A simple email, phone call or even a text can mean a difference to a friend in a dark place. On March 4th, reach out.

## **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands**

*Government looking for WW2 Vets to join a Gov of Canada Delegation to the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands in May 2015*

OTTAWA, Feb. 17, 2015 /CNW/ - The Honourable Erin O'Toole, Minister of Veterans Affairs, today announced plans for an official Government of Canada delegation to travel to the Netherlands in 2015, to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands. The

delegation will be comprised of Veterans who served on land, in the air and at sea during the Second World War campaign.

In addition, the Government of Canada is offering financial assistance for any Veteran of the campaign wishing to travel to the Netherlands to attend Government of Canada commemorative events taking place from May 3–9, 2015.

To learn more, please visit: <http://www.newswire.ca/en/story/1488661/government-of-canada-to-commemorate-70th-anniversary-of-the-liberation-of-the-netherlands-in-2015>

## **How to Fix the Problems at Veterans Affairs Canada**

DAVID PUGLIESE, OTTAWA CITIZEN Published on: February 24, 2015



*Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole speaks with the media following caucus meetings on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Wednesday January 28, 2015. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Adrian Wylde*

Veteran and **Defence Watch** reader **Scott Shannon** has come up with what he believes would be a fix to the issues affecting Veterans Affairs Canada.

“Many of the problems were created by the language used in the New Veterans Charter and the vagueness of the legislation permits the development of restrictive policies and procedures that

hinder the ability of the veteran to receive necessary services,” he writes. “A new framework with laws that limit the ability of bureaucrats to make restrictive policies is needed to fix the problem at VAC.”

Shannon submitted the points below to Veterans Minister Erin O’Toole:

1. Anyone injured due to military service and medically released gets pension of \$75,000 (taxable and CPP deductions but not EI). This amount applies to all equally regardless of rank or years of service. Pension adjusted annually for cost of living. Applies to both Regular Force and Reserve Force members. No pension claw-backs for any reason. Pension is for lifetime of veteran and is transferable to spouse upon death of member until death of spouse. After taxes, the veteran would have approximately \$45K to meet financial needs.
2. Eliminate PIA and EIA. If veteran qualifies for the sacrifice medal, lump sum payment of \$200,000 for pain and suffering. Applies equally to all those injured by enemy action regardless of rank or level of injury.

3. Decision if disability is related to military service determined prior to medical release through the use of existing medical records managed by the CAF.
4. If medically released for non-service injury – member qualifies for SISIP for life.
5. VAC responsible for ALL medical coverage (including modifications to homes/vehicles) for those released for service related injury for life.
6. Injured veterans can still work, if they can find employment, without penalty.
7. Abolish the VRAB.
8. Abolish the Table of Disabilities.
9. If there are objections to the decision made by the CAF that the injury is service related, the case goes directly to judicial review.
10. All judicial reviews actioned by the Pension Advocates.
11. Relocate VAC HQ from PEI to Ottawa.
12. Centralize all administrative processes in Ottawa instead of having them spread out across the country.
13. Make prior military service an essential job qualification for 40% of the VAC workforce.
14. VAC establishes a low, fixed rate mortgage program (for entire 25 year term of mortgage) to enable home ownership by veterans.
15. Retain VIP programs.
16. Retain mental health programs.
17. Expand home visit program by case managers.

**Benefits of this:**

1. Stable and known funding for injured veterans. Veteran would have ability to qualify for mortgages and other types of bank financing.
2. Eliminate need for adjudicators and internal VAC appeal processes.
3. Eliminate waiting periods.
4. Eliminate red tape and all application processes.
5. Allow VAC employees to focus on delivery of care and services to veterans.
6. Save the department money.
7. Promotes principles of equity and equality that are central to purpose of government institutions and public policy.

8. As a function of public policy, this approach would serve the public interest of veterans and all Canadians.
9. Having 40% of the VAC workforce with prior military service would increase the knowledge base of the department and promote the idea that VAC exists to take care of the needs of veterans.
10. Eliminate the need for costly second, third or fourth medical opinions from civilian medical doctors who do not necessarily understand the challenges of military service.

## **DND Worried about Spy Drones in Arctic**

*Russia beefing up presence* Murray Brewster, *The Canadian Press* February 10, 2015



*Ice floes float in Baffin Bay between Canada and Greenland above the Arctic Circle on July 10, 2008.*  
(Jonathan Hayward / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

OTTAWA -- The country's chief of defence intelligence has taken an in-depth look at how Russia, or even China, could use drones to spy in Canada's Arctic in a wide-ranging report that was quietly flagged to some of the country's closest allies. The heavily censored classified analysis was obtained by The Canadian Press under access to information legislation. The release comes as Russia moves troops into a northern base near the Finnish border as part of an extensive military buildup in the region. The analysis, which was flagged to the so-called "Five Eyes" community of the US, Britain, Australia and New Zealand, is significant because Canada lags behind many of its allies in terms of acquiring drones for surveillance.

Keeping watch over the North is becoming more important to western governments since Vladimir Putin's government announced recently it is activating two motorized rifle brigades and possibly a marine brigade in the North, as well as establishing a major northern command headquarters. "Russia and China do not currently possess land-based UAVs capable of conducting (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) against the Canadian Arctic," said the April 12, 2013 assessment, written by the directorate of scientific and technical intelligence. "This limitation could change should UAVs gain aerial refueling capabilities." The intelligence assessment notes the proliferation of cheap, commercial drone technology, and goes on to say both Russian and Chinese forces could launch drones from ice floes, submarines or long-range bombers. Russia has been known to place small research stations on floating sheets of ice as small as 700 metres in length. The Harper government's program to acquire drones has been mired in the defence bureaucracy. A few years ago, defence contractors Northrop Grumman pitched the idea of Canada acquiring high-altitude Global Hawk drones, which could fly above rough weather, but the plan fizzled with no result.

The country's military operations commander, in a recent interview, said the defence of Canada is the "No. 1 mission," and Arctic security is a preoccupation. "The Canadian Armed Forces is always in the Arctic," said Lt Gen Jonathan Vance, who pointed to an increasing frequency of exercises and the presence of Canadian Ranger, an aboriginal reserve force that patrols the region. "There are very few times in the year when we're not conducting some sort of operation -- or training event." The air force's CP-140 Aurora surveillance planes are also active there, he said. Vance, echoing comments of other top commanders, said he "finds it unlikely that we'll be fighting a land battle in the Arctic any time soon," given the severe weather.

An armed clash may be remote, but US defence planners are worried about a sneak attack from the Far North. The threat is one of the reasons the Harper government is considering participation in the ballistic missile defence program. But not all threats are the Cold War-era submarine-launched cruise missiles, and the report noted that drones will have to be monitored carefully as they increase in sophistication. Other NATO countries are watching Russia's northern sabre rattling with concern. Norway, for example, is planning to hold its largest military exercise since the Cold War next month. NATO's top commander, Gen. Philip Breedlove, in an interview last fall with The Canadian Press, said there have been discussions with Ottawa about the Russian build up. But he indicated he's waiting to see if Putin's government follows through with all of its plans.

## **Privatizing Medical Services for Veterans**

*Will it be successful?*

*David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen February 21, 2015*

Recently I had an article about the Conservative government cutting another 44 jobs at Veterans Affairs and contracting out the work. The work done by the federal employees will now be taken over by a private insurance company, Medavie Blue Cross. The employees will be transferred to other jobs in the department. The Union of Veterans Affairs Employees has raised concerns the quality of service to be provided to veterans will suffer.

Previously veterans were granted their treatment benefit claims after consultation with their doctors and a department case worker. Those benefits can include psychology, physiotherapy and massage therapy, among other services. The veterans will now deal with their doctors and the private insurance company. NDP MP Peter Stoffer says there are serious issues with the contracting out of treatment authorization services for CF veterans to a private sector insurance company. "A private insurance company should not be responsible for authorizing the treatment of benefits and services for veterans," Stoffer said in a statement. "We have already seen situations of veterans having their benefits cut off for no reason and having to fight to get them reinstated." Veterans Affairs says there will be no issues.

Veterans Affairs spokeswoman Janice Summerby noted in an email that, "the government places the highest priority on making sure veterans and their families have the support and services they need, when they need it. This endeavor will streamline the process and cut down on red tape." "This is a critical part of the new vision we are imparting into the department as part of the veteran-centric approach to service," Summerby added. Veterans Affairs Canada's

performance reports show that since 2009 over 900 jobs out of 4,000 have been cut. The reports also show that many of the jobs have come out of the sections that administer pensions and awards or who are involved in veterans' health and rehabilitation. But Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Conservative MPs have insisted the cuts are for the better. "We have taken resources out of backroom administration from bureaucracy. We have put it into services," Harper said during question period in early December.

There are more benefits and more money than ever before for veterans, Harper maintains. "That is called good administration, good government, and it is good service for the veterans of this country," he added. And some Conservative government MPs dismiss suggestions veterans are unhappy. "I talk to veterans individually and they say they're treated wonderfully," Calgary-Centre MP Joan Crockatt told journalists in December. "I invite you to ask them."

## **Mainland BC Military Family CONNECTION - MARCH 2015**

Download your Mainland BC Military Family CONNECTION, to stay up to date on our programming, news and events by clicking on the following link

<http://www.familyforce.ca/sites/MainlandBC/EN/Documents/03Mar15News.pdf>

or by visiting our website at [www.bcmfrc.com](http://www.bcmfrc.com)

### **Who is it?**

**2Weeks ago** We showed the Twin 6pdr turret of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment being moved out of Jericho. We still are not sure where it went, but this picture of the officers of the Regiment, taken in 1949, shows the gun in place behind them. The gun was set up inside the big hanger doors facing the harbour.



## Last Week:



This is an Anti-Aircraft Artillery Radar unit used by the 43<sup>rd</sup> MAA in the mid-50s. We believe it is a No 4, Mk 7 unit.

**This Week:** Our photo this week, from a 120 negative donated to us in 1982, is of a very nice, and fairly noisy piece of ordnance. Now, we at the museum know this gun, but are offering it up to you in order that you can test your little grey cells and tell us about it. More importantly,



did you serve on this gun? If you did, we'd love to hear from you about your experiences. In fact, we'd like to hear from anyone who has a story to tell that can help us to preserve the history of the Canadian Army, be it an amusing one regarding cross-dressing COs (we hasten to add that we know of none, so far), or how a kindly RSM assisted you when you were a fresh-faced youth, if some of us ever were.

These stories, which might seem trivial to you, can help future generations of our country understand how you served the nation, and how you and your contemporaries lived. If you were not in the artillery, but still have a story (it's possible, I think), contact the author,

John Redmond ([johnd\\_redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd_redmond@telus.net)), who can put you in touch with a museum interested in what you did.

## From the 'Punitary'

Eating oysters can help you increase your mussel tone.

## Murphy's other Laws

<sup>x</sup>  
It's always darkest just before the lights go out.

## Quotable Quotes

The most dangerous phase in the language (*civvy side anyway*) is 'We've always done it this way'. *Grace Hopper*



## Whiskey Tasting – *This Friday*

**15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA**

**&**

**The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders**

**Fund Raiser and Scotch Tasting Night**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA and the 78<sup>th</sup> 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

**15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA**

**LOCATION:** 2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:barrettjd007@gmail.com)

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

## 2015 BC Army Gala



### **The Countdown is on!**

**With less than a month away, now is the time to purchase your BC Army Gala tickets!**

The BC Army Gala is an event unlike any other in Vancouver, with live music, dancers and Steve Darling as MC; the BC Army Gala promises to be a spectacular night out.

Join us in supporting The Mainland BC Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC). Only improving on previous years, we are thrilled to welcome a wonderful group of entertainers to see you through what has become a lasting tradition in Vancouver.

The Hyatt Regency is offering the attendees of the BC Army Gala a discounted room rate of \$149 per night. If you are interested in taking advantage, you can contact them one of two ways:

Call: 1-800-233-1234 and mention "VGO BC Army Gala"

Or follow this link

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/armygala2015>

Tickets are available for purchase at \$140 each, and are selling quickly. With over 50% of tickets sold, we are on track for another sell-out event this year! The BC Army Gala team looks forward to seeing you at the Hyatt Regency on March 28th.

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Event Count-Down: **25 Days** until the 2015 BC Army Gala!

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Visit the link below to purchase your tickets today:

<http://bcarmygala.ca/buy-tickets/>

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](mailto: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](http://WWW.CELTICFESTVANCOUVER.COM)**

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