

## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Jan 5, 2021

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future 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](mailto:bob.mugford@gmail.com) to let me know you didn't get your copy.

**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>. 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 - Lunches suspended until further notice. Everyone stay safe!!**

**The 2021 BC Military Gala is CANCELLED. The Sheraton Wall Ctr is booked for Apr 23, 2022**

**Upcoming events – Mark your calendars** (see Poster section at end for details)

**Jan 06** Wednesday 'Zoom' Lunch meeting  
**Jan 13** Wednesday 'Zoom' Lunch meeting  
**Jan 20** Wednesday 'Zoom' Lunch meeting  
**Jan 27** Wednesday 'Zoom' Lunch meeting

## DND Gears Up to Defend Cost of New Warships in the New Year

Defence experts estimate lifetime cost of frigates will exceed \$213 billion over 4 decades.

*Murray Brewster · CBC News · Dec 23, 2020*



*An artist's rendering of Canada's planned new frigates, a design based on the British Type 26 frigate.  
(BAE Systems)*

No matter which way they are going to be sliced, the numbers will be jaw-dropping. The Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) is set, early in 2021, to deliver an assessment of the

Royal Canadian Navy's long-anticipated frigate replacement program, a review that will give the

public perhaps the clearest view yet of the kind of investment taxpayers will be asked to make in the future fleet. A respected former senior defence official, writing in the military magazine *Esprit de Corps* this fall, took a stab at running the numbers and they are eye-watering, especially in a post-pandemic world. Alan Williams estimated that when construction and lifetime operating and maintenance expenses are included the new fleet of 15 warships could cost between \$213 billion and \$219 billion. Circulating within the defence community for weeks, his scathing assessment has apparently caught the attention of the House of Commons government operations and estimates committee, which has requested a copy of the research. Between Williams' biting criticism, the budget officer's anticipated take and a planned auditor general review of the national shipbuilding program, the ground is set in 2021 for a major political battle over defence spending, the likes of which haven't been seen in almost a decade.



*The US Air Force F-35A stealth fighter is one of three competitors in the bid to replace Canada's CF-18s.*

*(Murray Brewster/CBC News)*

The last time that kind of watchdog firepower was assembled, the former Conservative government's plan to buy the F-35 was blown back to the drawing board, where the fighter jet replacement program remained for years. Back then, the fight was all over

numbers and transparency and whether former prime minister Stephen Harper's government was levelling with taxpayers, and just as importantly, whether bureaucrats had done enough homework to justify their choice of the stealth fighter. Williams frames most of his criticism of the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) project that aims to replace the navy's frontline frigates with 15 state-of-the-art vessels around value for money, arguing that the public should know the long-term implications of the decisions being made. "Taxpayers are entitled to know how much the CSC will cost to purchase and maintain," Williams wrote in his review.

*The ships will replace the Halifax-class frigates and the retired Iroquois-class destroyers.*

*(CBC)*



The political minefield in which the frigate replacement program is about to sail is not lost on the military leader, said Christian Leuprecht, a defence expert at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., and the Royal Military College of

Canada. "The navy watched the F-35 debacle closely," Leuprecht said. "They are determined to do everything they possibly can to avoid a repeat that could scuttle the effort altogether. So, my sense is the navy will do whatever it takes to make sure these ships are actually built."



*The French Navy FREMM Class frigate Aquitaine rests at berth in Halifax on Saturday, April 20, 2013. The Paris-based naval contractor DCNS wants Canada to consider the frigates for the Canadian Surface Combatant program. (Andrew Vaughan/The Canadian Press)*

Debating the cost of most military hardware is sort of like trying to wrestle with Jell-O, and the navy program,

inarguably the biggest single defence purchase in its history, is no exception. When it started out, the former Conservative government estimated it would take \$26 billion to build the new fleet, but their public estimate (much like the F-35 program) did not include the lifetime operating costs, much to the consternation of the auditor general, the budget officer and the Liberal opposition of the day. Following the 2015 election, the Liberals produced an updated projection raising the build cost to between \$56 billion and \$60 billion, but they also excluded lifetime operating figures. An internal federal government estimate, obtained by The Canadian Press in early 2016, pegged the construction and full-life cost at \$104 billion. Williams, in his assessment, argued that is way too low, and noted how the Conservatives got themselves in political trouble ignoring the lifetime aspects in the F-35 debate. "Anyone with a reasonable understanding of defence capital acquisition and support would know that long-term [operations and support] costs are typically two to three times the purchase price and as such, these government figures made no sense," Williams wrote.

The federal government selected the British Type 26 design in a proposal from Lockheed Martin Canada and BAE Systems in the fall of 2018. Their team, and the prime contractor, Irving Shipbuilding, are now tailoring the plans to specific Canadian needs. In other words, said defence expert Dave Perry, the budget planners now have solid information to work on. "When the budgeting was done before, it was done under what the ship could look like, now we know what the ship does look like," said Perry, vice-president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. The navy has packed a lot of combat capability into the warship design, he said, but "there is definitely a cost to that." That, according to Leuprecht, is where the debate could get really corrosive for the navy as sticker-shocked politicians — and maybe even the public — try to make sense of the numbers. "The greatest risk on cost-overruns isn't to the taxpayer, but to the navy," said Leuprecht, pointing to how the navy was forced to accept only six Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships, rather than the initially proposed eight, because of higher costs. "The frigates run the same risk. So, the navy has no interest in dragging this out or in escalating costs. They're fully aware of the possible consequences." The upcoming PBO study is expected to compare the cost of Canada's planned Type 26 frigates with the French and Italian FREMMs design, as well as the Royal Navy's Type 31 warship.





*Carla Qualtrough, then minister of public services and procurement, announces Lockheed Martin Canada as the designer of the new warships at Irving Shipbuilding's Halifax shipyard in February 2019. (Darren Calabrese/The Canadian Press)*

Williams argues a better comparison would be with the planned US navy future frigate program (FFG-X), which he said will deliver warships of equal quality in less time and at a better price. He noted that the average cost per

ship for the nine FFG-X ships is \$1.2 billion. In contrast, Williams said the average production cost for each of the 15 CSC ships is estimated at \$3.5 billion — "2.76 times more expensive," he wrote. He also blamed the estimated price tag on the method Canada chose to build the warships — the National Shipbuilding Strategy. Conceived by the former Conservative government, the plan divides federal shipbuilding between two — soon-to-be three — separate shipyards. "We can't go back and re-litigate history, and you have to accept some of the decisions that have been made, even if they weren't perfect," said Perry. "This project is enormous, and we have to make sure we're managing it as best as we can from this point forward," he said. "We also have to be cognizant of the fact we're a decade into this and there's all kinds of decisions that have been taken over the last 10 plus years — some may have been brilliant; some may have been less so, but those decisions were all taken." Leuprecht said he believes Canada would be in this position regardless, because unlike the US, the Canadian military can't afford to experiment and build different classes of warship to suit its purposes. "In the case of smaller navies, they don't have that luxury: this is all they got — for decades to come; so, they have to get it qualitatively right," said Leprecht. "That's part of the reason we often don't buy 'off the shelf.'"

*Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan said in a year-end interview that construction of the frigates will be spread out over a number of years, allowing for efficiencies to be built into the system. (Sean Kilpatrick/The Canadian Press)*



Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, in a year end interview, said the construction of the 15 warships is going to be spread out over a number of years, and that will allow for lessons to be learned and efficiencies to be built into the system. Both Britain and Australia will be building their versions of the Type 26 and Sajjan said he and his counterparts in those countries will meet regularly to discuss shipbuilding and how they can work together and learn from each other to save money. "We're looking at systems that are designed to meet the future threats," he said. "It's easy to build a ship right now with the current systems that are integrated, and just say 'let's get it done,' but that's not how the military works. We have got to think of the future."

## **Canadian Military to Receive New Pistols**

Bids to be requested in February. *David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen, Postmedia News Jan 2, 2021*



*The Second World War-era Browning Hi-Power pistols used by the Canadian military will soon be replaced as the federal government plans to request bids for a new handgun in February.*

*Photo by Rod MacIvor /The Ottawa Citizen*

The Second World War-era pistols used by the Canadian military will soon be replaced as the federal government plans to request bids for a new handgun in February. A contract is expected to be awarded by September with initial deliveries beginning in the summer of 2022, Department of National Defence spokesperson Jessica Lamirande said. The new handguns will replace the Second World War-era Browning Hi-Power pistols. The military was originally going to make an initial purchase of 9,000 pistols for the Canadian Army. But that number has increased to 16,500 as handguns will also be bought for the Royal Canadian Air Force and military police, Lamirande noted. The firearms will be modular, meaning they can be reconfigured for various roles. Attachments such as improved targeting systems can also be installed on the guns. “The procurement will also include options to support future requirements of additional modular pistols, but the precise number has not yet been confirmed as it will depend on requirements,” Lamirande explained. “The total procurement is expected to be up to 20,000 modular pistols.”

Lamirande noted that since a competition for the guns will soon be under way the DND cannot provide details on what the pistol purchase will cost taxpayers. But in a closed-door session in 2016 industry representatives were told by military and DND procurement officials that the purchase of 15,000 to 25,000 handguns would cost \$50 million, according to documents obtained by this newspaper. That price-tag included spare parts. The pistol program is considered by the Canadian Army as a priority as the number of working Browning Hi-Power handguns has significantly dwindled because of a lack of spare parts. The project had been stalled for years after small arms firms rejected in 2011 the federal government requirement that the new guns be built at Colt Canada in Kitchener, ON. In addition, the companies balked at the stipulation they had to turn over their proprietary firearms information to Colt, a firm that some saw as a competitor. The DND was told at the time by industry representatives that it didn’t make economic sense to have Colt manufacture the guns in Canada or to have parts shipped to Colt so the guns could be assembled in Canada.

The handgun replacement project has been seen as an example of a highly dysfunctional military procurement system. At one point the DND tried to prevent small arms companies from talking to journalists about the bungled procurement but the department’s decree was largely ignored. Under the federal government’s Munitions Supply Program sole source deals have been directed to Colt Canada to maintain a small arms expertise in the country. But Lamirande said in 2018 changes were made to improve the Munitions Supply Program. Under those changes, new business was no longer automatically given to members of the supply program. Instead, a thorough analysis is to be done to decide whether it is better to open a project up to competition



or sole source the deal to firms in the Munitions Supply Program. Industry sources, however, say that because international small arms companies were reluctant to even bid on the Canadian pistol project, the federal government had no choice but to drop the requirement for the guns to be manufactured by Colt in Kitchener.

## **German WW1 Cannon Unearthed in Canada**

*Harry Pettit, Senior Digital Technology and Science Reporter, Irish Sun 23 Dec 2020*



*A German artillery gun used during the first world war has been unearthed in Canada  
Credit: PEN News*

A LOST German artillery gun from the First World War has been uncovered by stunned Canadian builders, an estimated 4,000 miles from where it was last fired. A construction crew unearthed the Feldkanone 96 beneath the pitcher's mound of a former baseball field in Amherstburg, Ontario, on the planned site of a new school. Now bemused locals have discovered that the weapon was taken as a war trophy nearly 100 years ago, before being buried and forgotten decades later. Today the gun survives as one of the last of its kind. Mayor Aldo DiCarlo said: "It is unusual in the sense that many forgot it was there. "The artillery piece was a war trophy captured during the First World War by Canadian troops.

*The cannon was found an estimated 4,000 miles from where it was last fired  
Credit: PEN News*



*The weapon was taken as a war trophy nearly 100 years ago  
Credit: PEn News*



"It was one of a little over 1,100 similar trophies – howitzers, trench mortars and field guns – that were shipped back to Canada in 1922. "Of those 1,100 war trophies, most were given over to the smelter's furnace during the second world war to contribute to that war effort. "The second piece

the town received, a trench mortar, was smelted down in this fashion.” He continued: “It was originally displayed at the town's previous high school location as part of a cenotaph in 1922. “By 1971, the school had added an addition which required the land the cenotaph was built on, so the cenotaph was relocated to the town park. “When this was done, it was noted that the field gun was beyond repair, presumably from years of exposure to the elements, and it was decided that the weapon should be buried ceremoniously. “By the time the town moved the cenotaph once more, in or around 1988, the history of the buried gun had been forgotten by many. It remained behind when the cenotaph moved.” A baseball field was later established there and the slight elevation at the burial site was perfect for a pitcher’s mount.

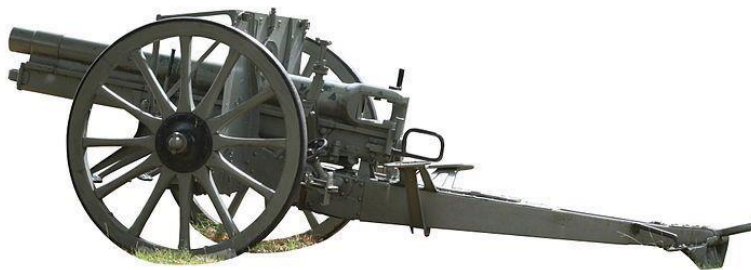


*Today the gun survives as one of the last of its kind*  
Credit: PEN News

*The Feldkanone 96 was a light artillery gun used by German forces during World War I*  
Credit: Alamy



The gun was still there when construction crews returned last week. Mayor DiCarlo said the precise history of the gun was still being traced, but he thinks it could have been seized during the 1918 allied victory in Cambrai, 3,935 miles away. He said: “We are still seeking information on the weapon's capture, presumably at one of the major Canadian engagements, such as the second battle of Cambrai. “What is interesting about this piece is that it's breech block is intact. “Often, if an enemy was going to capture a weapon the crew would attempt to sabotage it to prevent it being used against them later. “It appears, however, that when this weapon was taken, it likely happened too quickly for that to occur.”



*The weapon was smaller and lighter than British and French counterparts*  
Credit: Wikimedia commons

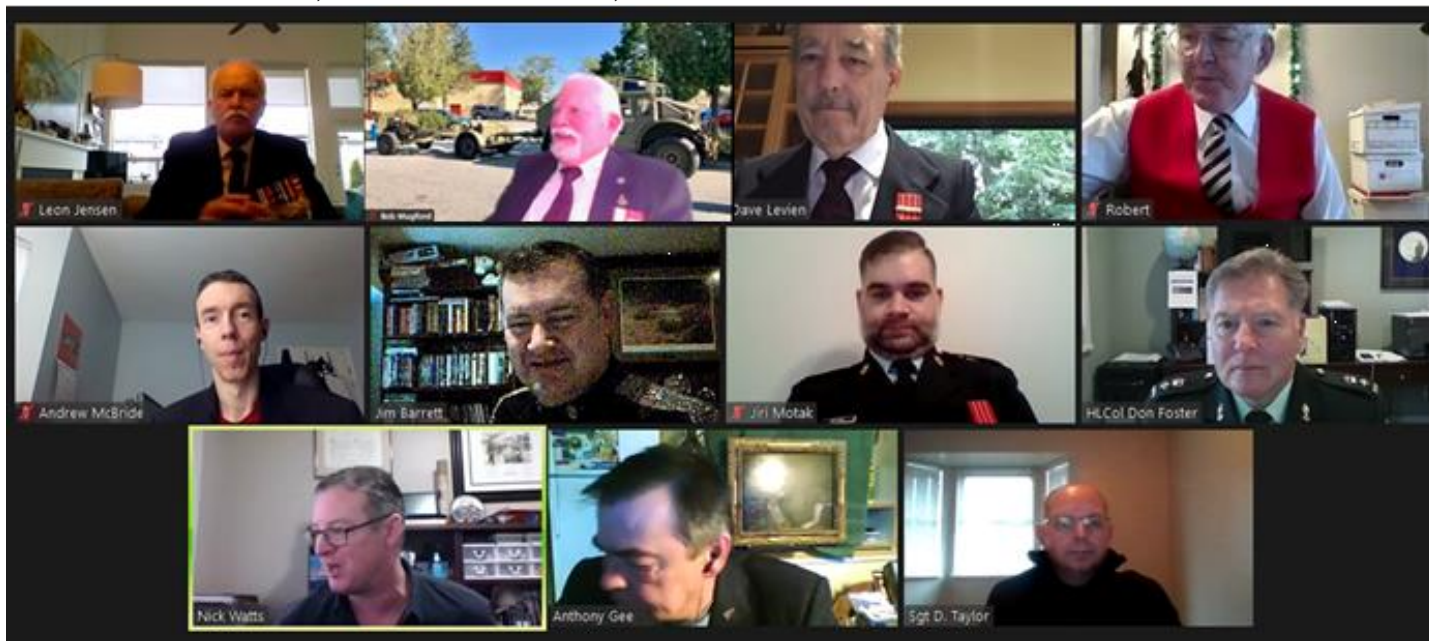


Now, with a number of military history organisations offering to help, it seems likely that the FK 96 will be restored and preserved. Mayor DiCarlo said: “Just this past Friday, the town council gave direction to officially explore options for the gun. “We’re big on preserving our over 200 years of history, so I expect preservation or restoration. “Either way, I think it’s safe to say that we will find a new prominent place to display the gun, regardless of the condition.” At the Battle of Cambrai, a combined force of troops from Britain, Canada and New Zealand attempted to drive the Germans out of the city of Cambrai – an important railway and supply hub. But the settlement was surrounded by man-made canals, and it fell to the Canadian Corps under Lieutenant General Arthur Currie to get the allied troops across. On September 27, 1918, Currie’s men, flanked by British forces, assaulted a dry portion of the Canal du Nord, securing a foothold. They then held off heavy German counter attacks for several days, liberating the city as part of the Hundred Days Offensive, which would ultimately end the war.

## New Years Levee 2021

We held the annual New Years Breakfast and Levee on Zoom this year. At its peak the event, which went from 0900 to 1300hrs, had 12 attendees from the lower mainland as well as Pender and Vancouver Islands and even Manitoba. We had some very enjoyable conversations and reminiscences. Wasn’t as good as a face to face meeting but better than nothing.

Here is a screen shot, taken around noon, that shows most of the attendees.



## Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

**Goodbye 2020! Welcome 2021! Let’s hope this year works out better than last year!  
Here’s the updates to our website over the last couple of weeks.**

**Yearbook Photos** – We’ve got a few more photos from previous events without any dates. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/yearbook-photos> Can you help us identify the when, who and where? Email [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com) with your answers.



**9.2-inch Coast Defence Gun in Canadian Service** - Doug Knight has provided a thorough insight into the 9.2-inch coast defence gun. Check out the online book here <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/references.html>

**WOs and Sgts Mess Dinner 2004** – More pictures added. Who was that young sergeant? <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/annual-dinner-2004.html>

**Field Artillery Tractor with 25 pounder gun and limber-** Great photos of a model kit! <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/field-artillery-tractor-with-25-pounder-gun-and-limber>

**Nominal roll updates** – new additions to the nominal roll include  
Gunner John Garvey Perdue <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/december-29th-2020>  
Florence Josephine Scrope Shrapnel  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/nominal-roll-updates4957096>  
Sergeant Ralston Alexander Johnston DCM  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/honours-and-awards8008223>  
Sergeant Francis James Hully  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/honours-and-awards2441521>

**New Westminster 24 Pounders** - The two 24 Pounder guns in front of New Westminster's City Hall are in rather sad shape. Here's the latest photos.  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/new-westminster-guns>

**Yorke Island** – Update here  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/yorke-island3072272>

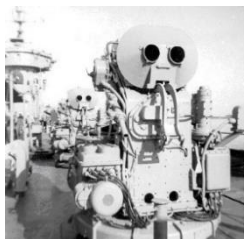
**Ubique150 Video Contest** – Have you got a team?  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/ubique-150-video-contest>

**VAA Virtual Lunch every Wednesday at Noon PDT - <https://zoom.us/j/710845848> - Drop in for 10 minutes or stay for an hour.**

Remember – Stay healthy and stay safe!

## **Who (or What) Is It?**

**Last Week:** This is a Mk 102 automatic rocket launcher on a Landing Ship Medium (Rocket).



Only a few hundred Mk 102 two-tube automatic 5-inch rocket launchers were made, and they were used exclusively on the 501 class of vessels. Some of these vessels remained in service as late as the Vietnam war to provide devastating fire support from rivers. The Mk 102 is basically a 40mm Bofors carriage stripped down and heavily modified for firing rockets. Here is a video showing the Mk 102 launcher in action during testing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp0faB9fKDI>

**This Week:** Some of our readers will remember the colourful days of yore when shoulder and sleeve flashes of many types and colours were proudly worn on crisply starched battledress. These were a source of unit pride, and your author well remembers his first experience with this when, as a cadet in the Duke of Edinburgh's Corps, he first wore the igloo patch of that long-forgotten group of stalwart northern youth. It harkened back to Exercise Muskoxx, which used a similar symbol. This week's photo might be mistaken for a similarly based unit, but that would be a mistake. Although it shows a polar bear, one must not assume that such were invented by Canadian DNA-altering boffins. Apparently, the things do not observe national boundaries, and it is even rumoured that some are in the employ of Ivan Ivanovich. That is possibly the reason one chased my father into the nearest building he could find one fine, but cold morning in Fort Churchill. As it was the base hospital, he chose well.



Our question this week is again a multi-part one. First, we'd like to know what large unit wore this. Please limit your extensive research to the Second World War, as doing so will make your task slightly easier. Secondly, we'd like to know which unit not of the nationality of the main unit also wore this flash, and when and where. Send those answers to the editor, Bob Mugford ([bob.mugford@gmail.com](mailto:bob.mugford@gmail.com)), or the author, John Redmond ([johnd.redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)). We'd also like to recommend

the site wherein we found this image, that of the Imperial War Museum, which, being imperial, does not limit its collection to things British, but includes much from the rest of the world's greatest empire, including a lot of Canadian items. Go to: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/>

### **From the 'Punitentary'**

What is Scholarly debate? Feud for thought.

### **Murphy's Other Laws**

Efficiency is a highly developed form of laziness.

### **Quotable Quotes**

The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless. –  
*Jean-Jacques Rousseau*



# Dues 2021

As of Jan 1, memberships dues are payable for, Vancouver Artillery Association, the Royal United Services Institute - Vancouver Society and 15 Fd Regt Officers Mess Associate Members. Details below.

## VAA

Dues for the **Vancouver Artillery Association** are \$25, payable to the Vancouver Artillery Association.

VAA dues can be paid by etransfer (preferred method):- by sending payments to:- [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

Dues cheques can be mailed to:

Vancouver Artillery Association  
27048 35B Avenue, Langley BC V4W 0C3

## RUSI Vancouver

Dues for **RUSI Vancouver** are \$50 (\$25 for students), payable to RUSI Vancouver.

By eTransfer (preferred method):- [richmark@telus.net](mailto:richmark@telus.net)

By mail:-

Treasurer, RUSI Vancouver  
1998 Ogden Avenue, Vancouver BC V6J 1A2

## 15 Fd Officers' Mess

Dues for **15 Fd Officers' Mess Associate Members** are \$60, payable to 15 RCA Officers Mess. Send to:

Treasurer, 15 Fd Regt Officers Mess  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

## Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

No need to worry about COVID-19 when you go digital. Pop into our video lunch **at noon** on Wednesdays and say hi. All you need is a laptop, tablet or smartphone. These sessions are being hosted by the Vancouver Artillery Association and are **open to all – especially those who attended our Wednesday lunches.**

Join us to check up on your old lunch buddies.

<https://zoom.us/j/710845848>

**Password:- Ubique**



Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, chat, and webinars across mobile, desktop, and room systems. Zoom Rooms is the original software-based conference room solution used around the world in board, conference, huddle, and training rooms, as well as executive offices and classrooms. Founded in 2011, Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless environment to get more

done. Zoom is a publicly traded company headquartered in San Jose, CA.

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting now](#)

Use the link above on your computer Zoom program or dial in on your phone  
778 907 2071 Meeting ID: 710 845 848

Invite 2 friends! We have room for 100! See you on Wednesdays at noon. Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.

**Join us on the VAA Zoom site for a virtual New Years Day Levée!**

**– 1000hrs to 1300hrs. Bring your own Eggnog**



## UBIQUE 150 “Good Shooting” Video Contest



## UBIQUE 150 “Good Shooting” Video Contest

*In conjunction with the commemoration of 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of A & B Batteries, The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery is pleased to announce a video production contest.*

Prizes will be awarded to 3 winners: 1<sup>st</sup> place winner receives \$2,000; 2<sup>nd</sup> place winning entry receives \$1000; 3<sup>rd</sup> place prize is \$500.

### Important dates

Submissions accepted between	1 January – 30 April 2021
Judging starts	1 May 2021
Winners announced	26 May 2021

### Eligibility

Submissions are open to **teams** consisting of **current and/or retired members of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery**. Each team can submit more than one entry but only one prize will be awarded to any unit.

*If you missed it, the **Free webinar** recording and accompanying resources are available on our website.*

### *Learn about:*

- Part 1: Pre-Production (Planning for Your Shoot)
- Part 2: Production (Getting the Shot You Need)
- Part 3: Post-Production (Bringing Your Vision Together)

All details on the contest and the free Webinar are at

**[ubique150.org](http://ubique150.org)**