



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News April 7, 2015

Wednesday Lunches

The 15 Field Officers Mess holds weekly lunches, serving 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.

The dress for Wednesday lunches is suit/blazer/sports jacket and tie. Dress for ladies is the equivalent. Your guests are always welcome but don't forget to tell them about dress requirements BEFORE they come.

Parking around the Armoury is always a problem. Only the day staff are allowed to park in the vehicle compound and, with all the business establishments in the area, it is difficult to find a spot on 11th Ave. There are usually spaces available along Arbutus but that is metered parking. There are always spots along 12th Ave, which is free, but you have walk a block and have to be gone by 1500hrs or you will be ticketed. Last year, the compound was extended and the gate widened to accommodate the new cargo and gun tractor vehicles which are much larger than the vehicles they replaced and have difficulty getting out of the compound. In future, any vehicles parked in the zone between the driveway and stop sign or overhanging the driveway on the east side will be ticketed and towed. Note to that the West Broadway area has proved to be a gold mine for Parking Enforcement teams and they frequently patrol the Armoury area. If you are illegally parked or your meter has expired, there is a good chance you will get a ticket.

2015 Vancouver Vimy Day Commemoration

The annual Vancouver Vimy Day Commemoration will be held **this Sunday**, April 12, 2015 at the Commonwealth War Graves Section of Mountain View Cemetery commencing at 11:00 am.

Vimy Day is recognized by the Royal Canadian Army Cadets as its day of recognition. As a result close to 300 Army cadets from various units in the Metro Vancouver area will parade at the ceremony on April 12th together with the all-cadet Vancouver Flag Party and the 2381 BCR Cadet Corps brass band. A number of groups will lay wreaths, including RUSI Vancouver and local Regimental Associations. RUSI and Van Arty Assoc members are encouraged to attend. Regimental blazers and headdress, with medals.

Vehicle entry to the cemetery is on the west side of Fraser Street at 39th Avenue. Parking is available. Guests are advised to arrive not later than 10:30 am.

From the Journal of Capt Fred G Coxen RFA - 1915

April 5th – 23rd: Remained in this position (CROIX BARBETTE) firing on enemy's trenches and guns, [but] aeroplanes [were] very active and often stop us [from] firing. Very little night doings. Our observation station in the brewery was [a] veritable trap, for it was continually shelled. In spite of this [we] stuck it for four days, until one shell hit direct on the little cellar, wounding Grogan and Smith, (the two telephonists on duty). Lt Richie had a marvelous escape, [but] poor Grogan died afterwards, and Smith was so shook up, he was sent away. We now used the remnants of a house, which we called the green house, for the observation post. It was shelled often, but we had no further casualties and nothing out of the ordinary happening; just the usual give and take. The batteries in rear were shelled occasionally, but nothing came within harming distance of our guns. Can hear sounds of continual heavy fighting far away to our left towards YPRES and on our right by LA BASSEE; some pretty hard scrapping was in progress on the French front.

World War 2 - November 1940

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

April 8th: The British destroyer Glowworm encounters the German heavy cruiser Hipper and two destroyers off Trondheim and rams the cruiser after being heavily battered in an unequal gunfight. The German commander writes the Red Cross, advising them of the gallantry of the "British destroyer and her commander (who is not among the 31 survivors of her 149 man crew). This eventually results in the posthumous award of a Victoria Cross to LCdr Gerard B. Roope. A German transport off Norway is sunk by a British submarine. Meanwhile, the Anglo-French Norwegian invasion force de "delays its embarkation in Scotland because of the reports of German naval activity.

April 9th: Denmark is invaded and capitulates after 12 hours of fighting. The German airborne/amphibious surprise in Norway is nearly as total, but their heavy cruiser Blucher is sunk off Oslo by Norwegian shore batteries and Karlsruhe is sunk by a British submarine; Scharnhorst and Gneisenau encounter HMS Renown and both sides depart with some damage. The Royal Navy also loses a destroyer as the Germans land in Oslo, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Trondheim and Narvik.

April 10th: The Narvik campaign begins as five RN destroyers encounter ten German ones, each side loses two but the German force is trapped; Lutzow is damaged by an RN submarine and four German transports are sunk and Konigsberg is sunk by RN dive bombers. The Norwegian Royal Family has escaped Oslo – barely, while Quisling is already installed as the leader of a puppet government. The Victoria Cross will be awarded to 180 men during the Second World War; the first award goes to Captain Bernard Warburton-Lee of the Royal Navy for his actions this day. He leads the flotilla of five destroyers that pounces on the Germans in Narvik out of thick snowstorm at dawn. He had pummeled a force of five German destroyers and then was intercepted by five more as his force withdrew, but Warburton-Lee upholds the

Royal Navy's best tradition of fighting like hell whenever caught at a disadvantage. During the course of the action, he is mortally wounded on his bridge.

April 11th: Most of their arsenals (and cities) are in German hands, but the Norwegians have a new Commander in Chief for their army, General Ruge.

April 12th: Attacks by Fleet Air Arm fail to reach Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Hipper.

April 13th: The RN shows up at Narvik again with HMS Warspite and nine destroyers, to sink a U-boat and eight German destroyers that were battered by Warburton-Lee's flotilla.

April 14th: The Norwegians attempt to delay the Germans moving north out of Oslo, while small parties of British troops land at Namsos.

RCAF Chinooks to Be Outfitted With Missile Defence System

David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen March 25, 2015



Canada's new CH-147F Chinook medium- to heavy-lift helicopter makes its way from the nation's capital, up the Ottawa valley to its new home at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, On, on June 27, 2013. Canada and the RCAF have purchased 15 of these Boeing helicopters.

PHOTO: Cpl Darcy Lefebvre FA2013-0005-17

The RCAF's new Chinook helicopters will be outfitted with a missile protection system built by Northrop Grumman

Corporation. As part of the advanced aircraft survivability equipment suite, the latest generation directional infrared countermeasures (DIRCM) system protects the Chinook and its crew by automatically detecting a missile launch, determining if it is a threat and activating a high-intensity, laser-based countermeasure system to track and defeat the missile, the U.S. firm stated in a news release.

Northrop Grumman's various infrared countermeasure systems are now installed or scheduled for installation on more than 1,000 military aircraft around the world to protect 55 different types of large fixed-wing transports and rotary-wing platforms from infrared missile attacks, the firm noted. No details were provided on the value of the contract or when the systems would be delivered.

The Battle for Veterans' Votes

With a federal election later this year, a full-scale battle is underway to win the hearts and minds of Canada's veterans and convince the public the country's former soldiers are well taken care of. David Pugliese Ottawa Citizen 3 Feb 2015

In one corner are the Conservatives, with what they hope is the support of those they view as the more traditional — and, some argue, more docile — veterans. The government's message is that the country's veterans are being fairly treated. In the other corner are some outspoken advocacy groups, made up mainly of modern-day veterans. They aren't shy about publicly highlighting what they see as the government's failure to provide for former soldiers. Representatives from those latter groups — Veterans of Canada, Veteranvoice.info and Canadian Veterans Advocacy — found themselves frozen out in November from a Veterans Affairs Canada stakeholders' advisory panel to which they had previously contributed. The stakeholders' panel, chaired by the deputy minister of Veterans Affairs, helps provide direction and feedback to the government on changes that could affect former military personnel.



The federal government is now shunning outspoken veterans advocates, like Sean Bruyey, who used to be part of a Veterans Affairs panel providing advice. Darren Brown/Ottawa Citizen

The minister at the time was Julian Fantino. In January, new Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole contacted Mike Blais, founder of Canadian Veterans Advocacy, with a message: Blais should change the structure of his group, known for organizing protests and vigorously challenging the Conservatives, to be more like the Royal Canadian Legion. O'Toole said he wanted to deal with organizations that have general meetings and a more official structure, "not just a Facebook page." The Citizen confirmed the contents of O'Toole's message. "What he really wants is for us to shut up and toe the line," said Blais. "The message from the Conservatives is that they don't want to deal with anyone who is criticizing them, especially in an election year," said Sean Bruyey, an Ottawa veteran who has in the past represented Veterans of Canada at the advisory panel. As word of the advisory panel cold shoulder hit the Internet, O'Toole went on Twitter, stating that "no one is cut off." He also said he has reached out to different organizations and diverse veterans' voices and will continue to do so. In an email to the Citizen, O'Toole's spokeswoman, Kayleigh Kanoza, said the minister's contact with Canadian Veterans Advocacy indicates the organization is still considered one of the "stakeholders" on the veterans file.

Kanoza did not say why the three groups were excluded from the stakeholders' panel in November, nor whether they would be asked back. O'Toole was not available for an interview.

But after some veterans and opposition MPs started questioning why Veterans Affairs seemed to be freezing out groups who didn't agree with Conservative policy, O'Toole on Jan. 27 left Blais a message on the Canadian Veterans Advocacy Facebook page suggesting the group meet with his officials. The political stakes are high for the Conservatives, who at one time enjoyed largely unqualified support from veterans. But changes to veterans' benefits, in addition to the closures of nine of 32 Veterans Affairs district offices across the country, shook that support. The emergence of the advocacy groups — particularly Blais's organization — has fuelled the discontent. In the past, government officials have privately said they like dealing with the Legion as they feel it represents veterans' interests. It also has a well-defined membership and holds official meetings.

The newer advocacy veterans groups counter that the Legion represents mainly elderly, retired military personnel who fought during the Second World War and in Korea. Many of the advocacy veterans groups have less formal organization and varying participation; and unlike the Legion, they don't charge membership fees. None of the groups has offices; instead they are run out of the homes of their volunteers. At one point, Veteranvoice.info was sending its newsletter free to 100,000 registered subscribers until it couldn't afford to continue. Veterans of Canada has more than 8,000 registered veteran members. Canadian Veterans Advocacy doesn't count its supporters and doesn't actively canvass for members. Still, such groups are organized, technologically savvy, and can communicate quickly with fellow veterans and the public about government policy.

In 2010, Blais organized protests against the Conservative government in 15 cities, drawing several thousand veterans angry about delays in receiving services and inadequate benefits. The organizing efforts were done via the Internet and phone and sent shock waves through government, which had never faced such widespread discontent in the veterans' community. Other smaller rallies since have also been organized using social media. Based on consultations with veterans by phone, email and Facebook, CVA has published a list of goals it is pursuing, including bringing changes to the New Veterans Charter and improving benefits for veterans' widows. The registered non-profit group has also set up an online repository of difficult-to-find government information outlining specific programs and benefits for which veterans can apply. Veteranvoice.info, formed in 2005 and run by four volunteer directors, has also set up a well-used online system that provides former military personnel details and tips about accessing benefits.

Veterans of Canada has also established an executive committee. It runs an online forum for veterans only, has connections with businesses that offer discounts for former soldiers, and provides analysis of government policies. Its founder, Don Leonardo, has also registered as a lobbyist for veterans' issues. But Tom Eagles, dominion president of the Royal Canadian Legion, describes such organizations as "splinter groups," adding he doesn't pay much attention to them. "I'm not too sure about their membership," he said. "Yes, they have a webpage, (but) does a webpage make you a veterans' organization?" Eagles pointed out that the Legion has 300,000 members. Of those, 100,000 are veterans. Most are Second World War or Korean War

veterans. The rest are sons and daughters of veterans or members of the public. (The Legion doesn't know how many are Afghan or Gulf war veterans. But one-third of its members are 75 or older. Another 50 per cent are aged between 54 and 69.)

Blais counters that O'Toole's insistence that modern veterans groups be like the Legion, with offices and meetings, shows a lack of understanding about today's veterans. The new generation of former soldiers communicates via Facebook and other social media outlets. They don't pay membership dues. They are generally not "joiners," Blais said. "Look, we aren't like the Legion and never will be," said Blais, a former soldier who suffered a noncombat injury. "We are an advocacy group working to make things better for injured veterans. We aren't a social club where we sit around drinking beer in the Legion hall." Don Leonardo of Veterans of Canada says the government is making a mistake by holding up the Legion as an example for other groups to emulate. The Legion has sat on the sidelines for years as veterans benefits have been cut and Veterans Affairs offices closed, he argues. But Leonardo, whose group was also shut out of the veteran's stakeholder panel in November, says he is willing to give the new minister the benefit of the doubt, noting O'Toole has a very short window to come up with improvements for veterans' benefits. (O'Toole himself served in the military.)

Gulf War veteran Bruyey is less diplomatic. He says the Legion's dominion command has become a government mouthpiece. He finds it ironic the Legion is now trying to convince the government to make changes to the controversial New Veterans Charter, since the organization initially backed it. The charter has prompted anger among modern-day veterans because it provides fewer benefits than those offered to military personnel from previous wars. "The Legion was the government's No. 1 supporter of the charter even as it was being warned that it would provide new veterans with less benefits," said Bruyey, whose activities as a veterans advocate have angered Veterans Affairs and prompted department officials to closely monitor his activities. (In one instance, the federal privacy commissioner found that Veterans Affairs officials broke the law by their mishandling of his medical and psychological files. The Conservative government apologized to Bruyey in 2010 for the way he was treated.) In addition, the Legion refused to support the creation of a veterans' ombudsman, claiming it would just add more bureaucracy, Bruyey says. But the office has since been heralded as an important voice for righting wrongs against veterans. Some modern-day veterans have complained they are not welcome at the Legion because they didn't fight in so-called traditional wars. Eagles said his organization doesn't take orders from government and has been steadfast in its advocacy for veterans — but it does that advocacy quietly. "We don't stand on Parliament Hill and hoot and holler," he explained. "I think you have to be on the inside." Eagles acknowledged that the Legion, along with some other veterans groups and political parties, supported the New Veterans Charter. But it did so with the idea the document could be changed, which is what the Legion is now working on, he added. Eagles also admitted that in isolated incidents, some Afghan veterans have not been welcomed at some Legion halls, but at others they are full members. In addition, the Legion is trying to attract more modern veterans, he noted. Eagles acknowledges that the protests and social media campaigns of the other

veterans' organizations have put the issue of the treatment of former soldiers back on both the public and political agenda.

But the Conservatives have more than just the veterans' advocacy groups to contend with. Modern veterans have not been shy on speaking out publicly. Wounded Afghan veterans booted from the military with few benefits have taken their cases directly to the news media. Protests have sprung up in a number of cities over the government's decision to shut down the nine Veterans Affairs offices. Others have taken the legal route. In 2007, a class-action lawsuit was launched on behalf of injured soldier Dennis Manuge and 4,500 veterans, alleging the government had illegally clawed back their benefits. The veterans won the legal battle and the government will have to pay up to \$800 million. In 2012, a group of disabled Afghan veterans filed a lawsuit against the government, arguing the New Veterans Charter is unconstitutional. The lawsuit further stoked the flames of discontent when government lawyers argued that Canada does not have a "social contract" to take care of its veterans. (For decades, veterans had assumed that Canada had the legal and social responsibility to take care of its former soldiers.) Former veterans ombudsman Pat Stogran said the widespread discontent among veterans makes it difficult for the Conservatives to portray the issue as one caused by a few dissidents. "It's not just a small group of veterans' advocates," said Stogran, a retired colonel and Afghan veteran. "There is real anger out there but the Conservatives seem to think they can solve the issue with their public relations spin. It's not going to work."

Obituary - LGen Bill Leach CMM, CD

LEACH, Bill. The former Commander of the Cdn Army passed suddenly April 1st, 2015 at the age of 72. Widower of Mary Louise. Proud father of Kimberley (John Affleck), Marc (Céline Perrier) and Shelley. Devoted grandfather of Jamie and Jenna. Dear Brother of Karen. Predeceased by his parents Bill and Bea.

Served as Chief of the Land Staff, from 1997 to 2000. Colonel Commandant to the Logistics Branch of the Canadian Armed Forces in 2011 to present. Also a recipient of the Canadian Order of Military Merit (Commander) and the United States Legion of Merit (Commander). Involved in a wide variety of volunteer activities. Served as Honorary Colonel of the Ottawa Service Battalion and as Chair of the Defence and Security Committee of the Royal Canadian Legion. He was also involved with the Military Families Fund and Support Our Troops initiatives and held board positions with the University of Ottawa, the Royal Ottawa Hospital and the Institute for Mental Health Research. He is the current Chair of the Board of the Canadian Museum of History and the Canadian War Museum.

Friends are invited to gather at the Le Breton Gallery of the Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Place, Ottawa on Friday April 10th after 10 am, where a Memorial Service will be held at 11 am followed by a reception. A Private Family Interment Ceremony with Military Honours will be held at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces. In Lieu of flowers, donations to the Military Families Fund in memory of Bill would be appreciated.

Who is it?

Last Week: Mack NM6, Truck, Cargo, 6 Ton, 6x6, towing a trailer (probably a CP) of 43MAA Regt. Jim Mancor with hands on hips. They also had some NM8 Gun Tractors, for towing the AA guns, which had a second pintle hook under an arched front bumper and a brake lever for the gun on the dashboard. Two of the NM8s were re-issued to 15 Fd in the mid-60s when 85 Bty was issued 2-155 How towed guns and became 85 Med Bty.



This Week: The Cold War is over, or so it seemed until recent events in Ukraine. However, it remains firmly in place in the nation's psych, with newscasters still referring to central Asian republics as "the former Soviet republic of XXXX". One Cold War bonus for Canada was the deployment of the West German army, the Bundeswehr, to our country for training in wide-open spaces, something lacking in West Germany (especially hard-felt after an earlier attempt to acquire more real estate).



This week's photo comes from an exercise with German troops at Shilo in the late 1970s or early 1980s. The vehicle certainly isn't one of ours, and is marked with a dark (probably red) star on the side. The soldiers have that healthy, innocent look that Canadians are often blessed with, not the cramped, harried and worried one of Europeans. The fact that they are carrying Canadian weapons and wearing "combats" also helps identify them. However, we'd like to know more about this photo and the

exercise at which it was taken. Is one of those paragons of Canuckhood you? When was this, and, most particularly, what is that AFV and what is its history? Is it now in the backyard of a well-known veteran of the regiment? Can I rent it for the weekend?

Ideas, information and stories can be sent to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond (johnd_redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitary'

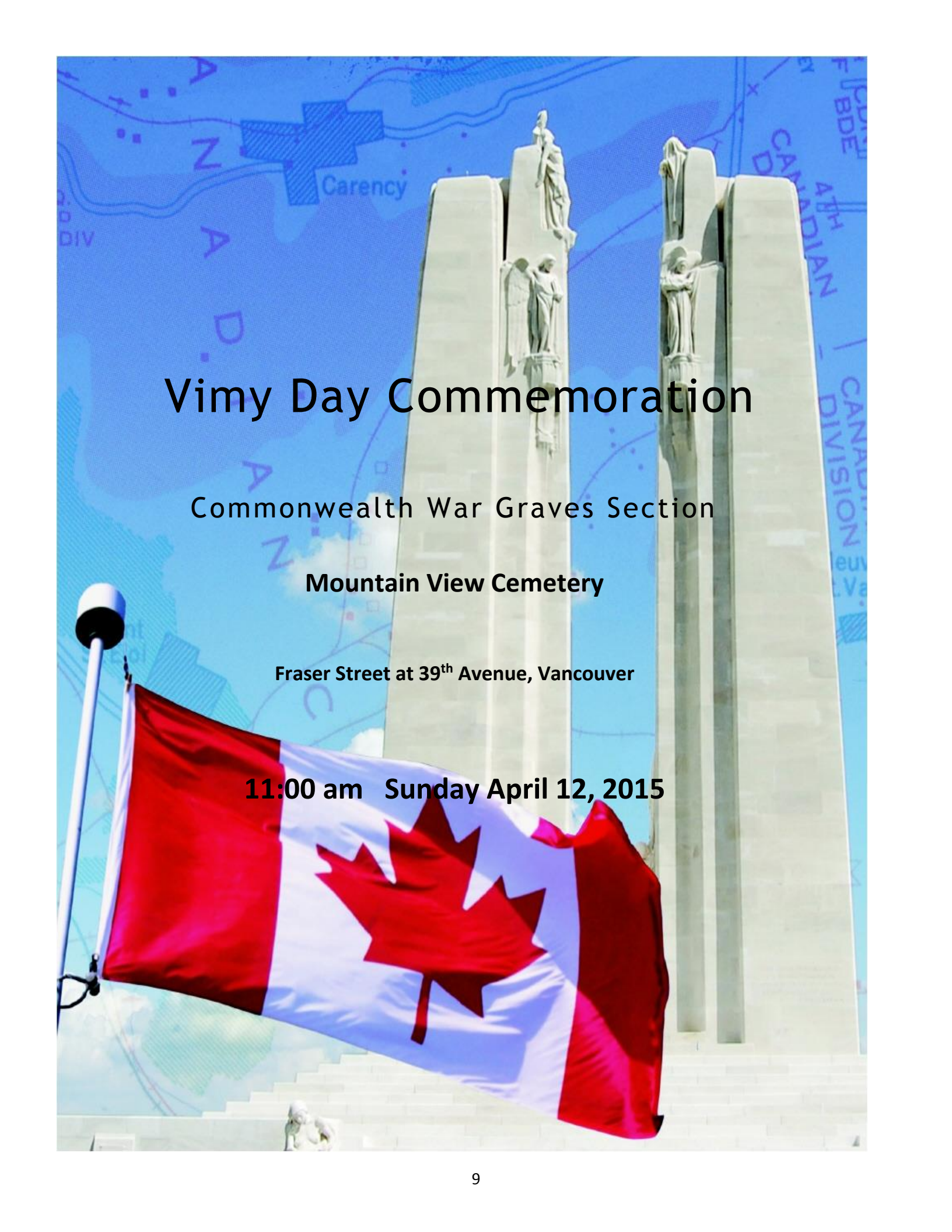
Why was the Easter egg frightened? Because it was a little chicken!

Murphy's other Laws

Anytime things seem to be going better, you have overlooked something.

Quotable Quotes

Money won't create success, the freedom to make it will. - *Nelson Mandela*



Vimy Day Commemoration

Commonwealth War Graves Section

Mountain View Cemetery

Fraser Street at 39th Avenue, Vancouver

11:00 am Sunday April 12, 2015

Fifth (BC) Artillery Regiment (RCA) Foundation
Presents the

**5TH (BC) Field Regiment
Royal Canadian Artillery Band**



Annual Spring Concert

**Conductor
CWO Frank Eigler**



**Alix Goolden Performance Hall,
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**Sunday April 19, 2015
2:30pm**

Donated proceeds will go to the Fifth (BC) Artillery Regiment (RCA) Foundation



Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir Concert

THE VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR

**with the
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7:30 pm, Saturday, April 11th, 2015

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Featuring:

The Shot of Scotch Vancouver Highland Dancers

Saturday, April 25th 2015, 6:00 PM

Location:

Riverside Palace Banquet Hall, 14431 Knox Way, Richmond, BC

Tickets \$60

**Dress: Formal, tartan encouraged
(wear your tartan kilt, tie, scarf or sash)**

For tickets and information contact Brent Jette: 604-308-1424



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- Full Registration (Friday meet and greet buffet + Saturday breakfast + Saturday banquet and dance)
- Friday Only (Meet and Greet and buffet): \$90
- Saturday Only (Banquet and Dance) \$110

Activities

- Day trips on Saturday (Comox Air Museum, Little Qualicum Cheeseworks, Cathedral Grove)
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- Photographer: affordable portrait sittings and a group photo

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Lorne/Jane Sundby
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St. Albert, AB T8N 5J8
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