

# The Rifleman

## 2016

*The Journal of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada*



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#### OUR MESSAGE

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada represents the vanguard of Canada's military. We are Canada's first and longest serving regiment taking an honoured place within Canadian history and representing a legacy of Canadian heroes serving with distinction since before confederation to within today's Canadian military. Torontonians have cause to celebrate and be proud of the citizen soldiers of the Queen's Own Rifles for their initiative and valour taken on behalf of Canada.

*In Pace Paratus - In Peace Prepared*



**STANDING ON GUARD  
SINCE 1860.**



## *Report by The Commanding Officer*



2015 was a tremendous year for the Regiment. Despite a robust tempo, we were able to commemorate several important milestones with the Regimental Family while maintaining a vigorous schedule of advance skills training, operational deployments and augmentation, as well as tactical training.

Honourary Colonel Larry Stevenson officially welcomed Honourary Lieutenant Colonel Lionel Goffart, QC to RHQ this year, with a fitting parade at Moss Park Armoury, and congratulated HLCol Brendan Caldwell on his appointment as Chair of Normandy Company. Lionel is no stranger to the Regiment: having most recently worked with the Regimental Trust Fund prior to his latest appointment; nor to the Riflemen, many of whom on parade remembered his generous support for our Guards' commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy with our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH Camilla, Duchesse of Cornwall.

Over the last year, we have reached out to our sister Regiments within the Rifle Brigade, to have a unified vision on our traditions, drill and ways, with a view to having the Rifles mount ceremonial guard at the National War Memorial, and eventually public duties across Canada. Working with Army G1 Heritage, we are moving towards having the Army supply the Regimental Band and Bugles, as well as a Guard, with full and accurate Rifle Regiment ceremonial dress.

Tactically the Regiment continues to lead the way as the go-to unit in 32 Canadian Brigade Group. The Rifles lead the Territorial Battle Group at EX STALWART GUARDIAN 15, working with 2 RCHA, 2 CER and 3 RCR, as well as detachments from CSOR and other enablers, to command and exercise a battle group in offensive and defensive phases of war. We were joined by US National Guard from the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Georgia, many of whom had been deployed to Afghanistan over the same duration as our Riflemen and soldiers from 2 CMBG.

Over the last year we worked closely with 3RCR, the Advanced Warfare Centre and 8 Wing Trenton. Going forward, we will be integrating our field tactical training with 'M' Coy (Para), 3 RCR, with a view to enhancing our training as well as augmenting 3 RCR on their major exercises and Allied readiness training to the US and Norway. We welcomed back Maj Frank Lamie, who was awarded the US Bronze Star in recognition of his work at the Joint Forces HQ in Bagdad, and continue to support several Riflemen currently deployed in various theatres. We currently have several Sr NCOs and Officers on the stand-by list for deployments and will continue to support their families when they get the call.

The Regiment continues to conduct or support courses like Reconnaissance Patrolman, Parachutist, Helicopter Insertion Instructor, Mountain Operations, as well graduate candidates on parachute packer/rigger courses. Our own Bugle Major, WO Emily Kenny was the CSM at the CF Music School in Borden, while many in the Band continue to support the CAF Ceremonial Guard in Ottawa.

We continue to work closely with The Regimental Association, and had a chance to visit the Newfoundland and Labrador Branch to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Battalion landing in Gander and Botwood for Defence of Canada duties. The Toronto Branch was ever present at both our Stand-Down and Stand-To, and provided great support during Family Day. We were able to reciprocate at the ever growing annual Regimental golf tournament last summer, and welcome all who are able to join us for 2016 when the event grows yet again, this

time at Station Creek Golf Course. The serving Battalion and Association are currently working together to provide a grand opportunity: two lucky winners will be joining the Battalion on a NEO (non-combatant evacuation) exercise on the back of a CC-130J Hercules, to observe a company group parachute insertion. The aircraft will conduct an austere airstrip landing while our Riflemen secured our fellow citizens and form a defensive perimeter. Our guests will accompany the landing force to breakout of the airhead and conduct an ERO (engines-running on/off) extraction. More details in July at the 19th hole!

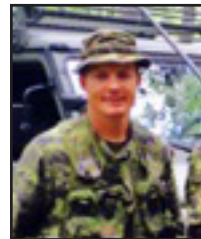
Looking ahead, the Regiment will be commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway in June, with The QOR of C leading the combined parade to remember our thirteen Riflemen who made the supreme sacrifice defending Canada.

In April of 2017, the Regiment will commemorate two milestones: the 100th Anniversary of Vimy Ridge, and the naming of a new road in the village of Anisy, France after one of our D-Day fallen. The Mayor and residence of Anisy have unanimously approved “Rue de Riflemen Clarke Lindsay Lawson” to ensure their next generation never forget what our Veterans sacrificed for their freedom. Lest We Forget.

### In Pace Paratus



S. Banerjee  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer  
The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada



P. Martin  
Chief Warrant Officer  
Regimental Sergeant Major  
The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada





## *REPORT BY THE HONORARY COLONEL*



This has been another amazing year for the Queen's Own Rifles. I was so proud to see the turnout and performance of the Regiment on Exercise Stalwart Guardian this summer in Petawawa. Our own CO, LCol Banerjee, commanded an impressive formation and the Regiment earned rave reviews from all quarters.

The Regiment is in great shape as we come into 2016. This is especially impressive given the financial constraints, recruiting and turnover pressure that most military units are facing. A February 2016 Globe & Mail article highlighted that the Military Reserves are currently running 19% under strength. This has been driven by high turnover and trouble with hitting recruiting quotas. Fortunately the Queen's Own have gone against this trend and are in a solid position. The future looks bright as our new Minister of National Defense, a former Reserve Regiment CO, clearly understands the challenges faced by all Reserve Regiments. The Reserves are particularly

important at a time of budget pressure as soldiers can be trained for a fraction of the cost of training, equipping and maintaining regular force soldiers.

This year we held our second annual Normandy Company Luncheon with General (Ret'd) Peter Schoomaker, former Commander of U.S. Special Forces and of the U.S. Army, as speaker (see separate article on the Luncheon). The Normandy Company is the Regiment's connection to the Toronto business community. Over time, Normandy Company will provide on-going funding for the Regiment and will establish a career support network for our Riflemen. I just returned from the True Patriot Love Expedition Antarctica, which successfully raised over \$2.2million for Canadian soldiers. Cpl Glen Villa and I were part of a 32 person expedition that successfully summited Mt. Vinson in January (see separate article). The Queen's Own was the only Regiment to have two representatives summit Mt. Vinson. The Queen's Own continues to support foreign deployment as Major Frank Lamie completed a tour in Iraq and was highly commended for his superb performance.

I want to congratulate John Fotheringham, John Stevens and the entire team of volunteers who continue to make tremendous improvements to the QOR Museum at Casa Loma in Toronto. I encourage you all to visit the wonderful exhibits in 2016. I also want to thank Col Paul Hughes for his continued outstanding leadership of the Trust Fund. His efforts have led to a much stronger financial future for the Regiment.

I also want to thank Hon LCol (Ret'd) Brendan Caldwell for his service and wish him continued success as he steps into the role of Chairman of Normandy Company. Hon LCol Lionel Goffart has comfortably stepped into the role and joined the Regiment on Stalwart Guardian in Petawawa. Thirdly, I want to thank LCol Ed Rayment who again has done a terrific job as Regimental Secretary.

This year we also saw courage up close from a young Queens Own soldier. Cpl Alex Dristas had his neck broken playing goalie in a hockey game. When my wife Pamela and I visited Alex in hospital shortly after his accident the doctors said it was unlikely that he would walk again. Alex did not accept this diagnosis and worked hard to prove the doctors wrong. His difficult journey was chronicled by the CBC in their documentary series “Keeping Canada Alive”. The outstanding news is that Cpl Dristas was walking as he came out to the Honourary LCol Change of Command parade. A true profile in courage.

Let me close this year’s letter by again strongly recommending that all soldiers continue their military studies by reading about historic battles. I just finished reading The Best Little Army in the World by Jack Granatstein. The QOR features prominently as Jack describes the battle in Northwest Europe from D-Day to VE Day.

Sincerely,

HCol Larry Stevenson

Honorary Colonel



## *Honourary Colonel Lawrence Stevenson and Cpl Glen Villa successfully Summit Mt Vinson*

The Honourary Colonel and Cpl Glen Villa successfully summited Mt. Vinson (16,050 feet) which is the top of the bottom of the world at 6:45 PM on January 17th! The QOR was the only Regiment to have 2 of its people summit. As the highest peak in Antarctica, Mt. Vinson is one of the famous “seven summits”. I have attached a photo at the summit of myself and Glen Villa. As you can see the flag is flapping in the 60-70 km/hr winds and the wind chill at the summit was minus 59 degrees C! Summit day was the climax of several gruelling days climbing from base camp at 7,000 feet to the summit over 16,000 feet. One of the guides who has climbed Mt Vinson 36 times claimed that this was his toughest climb ever because of the cold and high winds.

More important than our successful climb was the amazing funds that we raised for our soldiers. We were honoured to have eight wounded soldiers with us on our journey to the top of the bottom of the world. The expedition included 24 participants who collectively raised over \$1.2 million from some 1654 individual sponsors. Adding the generous corporate sponsors meant that the expedition raised over \$2.2 million.





## *HRH Princess Alexandra Bursary*



The Princess Alexandra Bursary was started in 2010 to assist members of the Regiment and Cadet Corps, former members of the Regiment and their families with the costs of post-secondary education. To date, there have been more than 20 bursary recipients attending colleges and universities from coast-to-coast.

The bursary recipients for 2015 were:

**Melissa Mills** of Grand Falls-Windsor, NL, is in the first year of her 4 year General Science Programme at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, Grenfell Campus. Melissa is the granddaughter of Wayne Thomas who served in the Regiment from 1963 to 1966.

**Azeez Baruwa** of Scarborough, ON, is taking Business Management at Ryerson University in Toronto. Azeez is currently serving in the Regiment and also was a member of the QOR Cadet Corps.

**Derek Stevenson** of Regina, SK, is in the first year of a five years Masters Programme for Music Performance at the University of Toronto. Derek is currently serving in the Regiment.

**Hannah Hryhoryshen** of Sidney, BC, is enrolled in a Creative Writing Programme at Camuson College in Victoria, BC. Hannah is the granddaughter of Gordon Hryhoryshen, a former member of the Regiment.

The deadline for applying to HRH Princess Alexandra Bursary has recently been extended to April 30th of each year. To apply for a bursary, all the necessary documentation can be found on the Regimental website at <http://www.qor.com/community/bursary.html> It is very important that all documents are completed and submitted before the April 30th deadline.

This bursary is funded strictly through donations. It assists young Canadians, all with a close relationship to the Regiment, achieve their post-secondary goals. All donations are tax deductible so why not consider contributing to a very worthy cause?



To make a donation, please visit the following website:

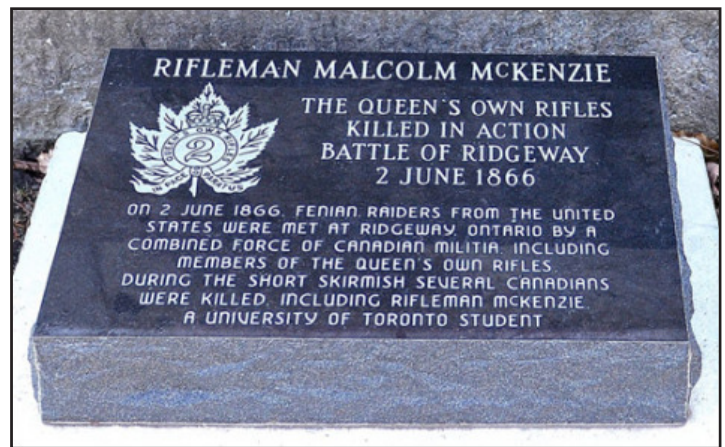
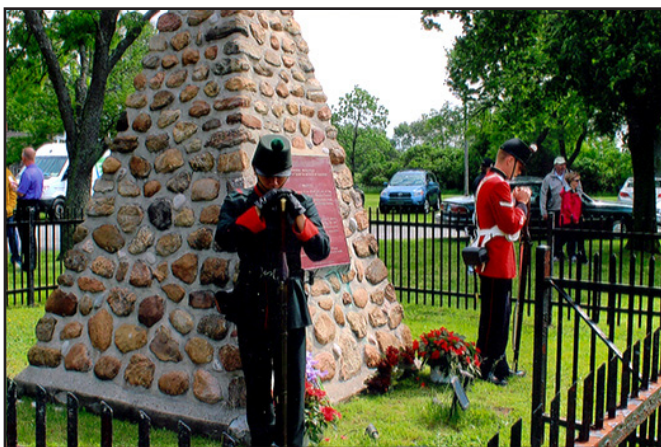
<https://www.torontofoundation.ca/fund/queens-own-rifles-princess-alexandra-bursary-fund>





June 2, 2016, the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway marks not only a significant milestone in the history of The Queen's Own Rifles, but in Canada's national and military history. Fought against Irish-American Fenian insurgents who invaded the previous day across the Niagara River from their staging area in Buffalo, the Battle of Ridgeway was the first combat seen by The QOR which had been formed six years earlier. Significantly Ridgeway is also the first modern battle fought in Canadian history: the first fought in the age of the telegraph, steam power and the rifled barrel. It was the first battle fought exclusively by Canadian troops and led in the field entirely by Canadian officers and the last battle fought against a foreign invader in the territory of Ontario. It was also the first time that chaplains accompanied Canadian troops into the field of battle and sadly, it is the battle in which Canada's first modern military casualties were sustained: nine QOR rifleman were killed in action that day, known today as the "Ridgeway Nine."

Over a thousand Fenian insurgents invaded at Fort Erie in the early morning of June 1 and proceeded to march toward the strategically vital Welland Canal, threatening to seize and destroy it in a bid to destabilize British rule in Ireland by holding Canada hostage. The QOR were deployed by steamship and railroad from Toronto to Port Colborne, armed and ready, within 18 hours. Joined by the 13th Battalion (today The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry) and two Haldimand County rifle companies, the hastily formed 850-man brigade was led into battle by the senior officer in the field that day: Lt. Colonel Alfred Booker, the C.O. of the 13th Battalion, a decision that did not sit well with the men of The QOR. Early in the morning of June 2 as approximately 800 Fenians were advancing toward the Welland Canal, the Canadians intercepted them at Limestone Ridge outside the village of Ridgeway.





The first to fall, not only in the battle that day, but the first of approximately 118,000 Canadians to give their lives in the service of Canada from the South African War (Boer War) to the recent deployments in Afghanistan, was Ensign Malcolm McEachren, a Toronto store clerk and Sunday school teacher. McEachren was leading the skirmishers of QOR No. 5 Company armed with Spencer Rifles when he was hit by a Fenian Minie ball while attempting to disassemble a rail fence to allow his men to advance without having to climb it and expose themselves to the enemy.

In the ensuing battle eight more QOR riflemen would be killed, including three Toronto University College students from No. 9 Company “University Rifles” that took the brunt of the Fenian counterattack when it came. Although the experienced Civil War veteran Fenians prevailed on the field at Ridgeway, they were so badly mauled by the volunteer Canadians that they abandoned their advance on the Welland Canal and fell back to Fort Erie and the next morning withdrew back into U.S. waters where they were detained by the U.S. Navy.

Some twenty-three volunteers were wounded at Ridgeway, some gravely resulting in amputation and several from The QOR and the 13th Battalion later died of wounds. Altogether 31 Canadians died in action or of wounds and disease in Ontario and Quebec while serving in the Fenian Raids on Canada 1866. (See [www.ridgewaybattle.ca/casualties](http://www.ridgewaybattle.ca/casualties)).

On Saturday, June 4, 2016 The QOR and The RHLI will return to the site of this historic battle on its 150th anniversary to inaugurate a new monument in memory of the Ridgeway Nine. The parade will leave Ridgeway at 1215hrs arriving at the cairn at 1300hrs for a memorial service. Family day and festival to follow.

Peter Vronsky, Ph.d.

Author of *Ridgeway: The American-Fenian Invasion and the 1866 Battle That Made Canada*  
[www.ridgewaybattle.ca](http://www.ridgewaybattle.ca)



## *Maritimes & Newfoundland Branch*

2015 was a memorable year for the Maritimes & Newfoundland Branch of the Association.



We began our year with the task of putting all our efforts into 75th Anniversary of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada being garrisoned in Nfld in 1940 at Botwood and Gander.

Our objective from the onset was to bring awareness, through this event, of the history of The Queen's Rifles in both towns in general and the province in particular. With the placement of stone markers, it ensured that The Queen's Own presences was recorded in history and reconnected us with the citizens of our province.



We had representation from The Queen's Own Rifles Battalion of Toronto lead by Lt Col Sandi Banerjee and his group that added to our event. Thank you for being here.

We worked with the supplier to ensure we had two identical markers in place prior to the event. We worked with other associations looking for support, we ran lotto's, sold tickets, sold advertising and did whatever it took to ensure we had a first class event at an affordable price for members.

We had an opportunity to produce a commemorative coin marking this event. We had not only the Town Councils and Legions in Botwood and Gander working with us but also the support of a number of other Legions throughout the province contributing to the publication of a magazine marking numerous events from the past and present.



We also had WO Renay Groves and her crew with the 'Bringing The Poppy Home' traveling memorial. Thank you for being here.

Also in attendance was Ex- Serviceman Darren Bennett and his partner, Colleen Patey and their Nfld Dog Badger who travels the Island in the Canadian Heroes Vehicle #9.

As a special addition to the event, we had our keynote speaker, General R. J. Hillier, [Retired] who did a very fitting presentation to all in attendance. It should be noted that 3 years prior to our event, General Hillier marked his calendar and assured us that he would protect our date, which he did and we are truly thankful and appreciative of this.

We had any number of individuals and dignitaries speaking and doing presentations we thank each and every one of you.

As a committee of three, John, Ben & Wayne, we were pleasantly pleased that things went like clockwork and to see that our Association was represented by members and guests from all across Canada. We were proud to host each and everyone in the true Newfoundland & Labrador tradition.

We also had our Branch AGM and the highlight of which, other than presenting a healthy financial picture was the Election of an executive for the coming year. John Metcalfe stepped down after 8 years at the helm and rather than see the Association fold, it was agreed that Wayne and Ben would assume the operating role.

A goal for the coming year is to make a concerted effort to bring membership on board and attempt to renew their interest in keeping Rifleman in contact with Rifleman. We want to communicate with each of you and to keep you up to date on anything that may be of interest to you.



You can find many pictures of all our 2015 event at <http://www.photos.qor-east.com>



## *National Association Report for April 2016 Rifleman*

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In 2016, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association will celebrate its centenary. The inaugural meeting was held at Casa Loma in Toronto on Tuesday, October 10th, 2016. Casa Loma was the home of Sir Henry Pellatt who also chaired the meeting.

It is recorded in the original minutes that Sir Henry stated it had been brought to his notice "that many of the Q.O.R. who have been taken prisoner are at times much in need of comforts and many necessaries. He decided to call this meeting to see what steps could be taken to meet this trying situation".

The original 17 members at this meeting went on to appoint a five man committee to work with the Regiment "for the purpose of caring for the prisoners of war of the Regiment in Germany" as well as "the lending of comforts to men of the Regiment in France and England". The Regiment in turn appointed a "Committee for Cooperation" of serving members to coordinate and support the activities with the Association.

At a subsequent meeting of "The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Ex-Members Association", the objects of the Association were described as "First, to consolidate and foster a strong sentiment amongst the Ex-Members of the Regiment" and "Second, to undertake as the first and immediate work of the Association, the care of the Queen's Own prisoners of war in Germany".

A letter was sent out by the newly formed Association on November 16th, 2016, inviting ex-members of the Regiment to join the Association. Even in this electronic age, the Association is still plagued by an age old problem. As they said in 1916, "Members can also give valuable assistance by sending in names and addresses of Ex-Members of the Queen's Own Rifles wherever they may reside within the Dominion, or other parts of the world, as it is very difficult to reach those who have moved from their last recorded address". It is interesting to note that even in 1916, it was important to tell the ex-members that "We need your active co-operation to make this Association successful".

From this beginning 100 years ago, the Association has continued to serve the Regiment in times of both peace and war. Projects as diverse as providing a 'cot' during the 1920's at both Sick Children's Hospital and Toronto General Hospital for the exclusive use members of the Regimental family in need, the formation of a special Association committee to fund the building of the Cross of Sacrifice at St. Paul's to recently providing care packages to rifleman serving in Afghanistan and various UN postings around the world. The Association also administers HRH Princess Alexandra's bursary, which awards scholarships to assist with the post-secondary education costs of serving members of the Regiment, QOR cadets, as well as the children and grandchildren of ex-members.

Today, there are four Association branches; Newfoundland & Maritimes, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver Island. The driving force behind each branch, as it was in 1916, is ex-members of the Regiment. Membership has been expanded in recent years to include family and friends of ex-members as well as friends of the Regiment. Important dates in our Regiment's history are commemorated across Canada at events planned and coordinated by the various Association branches. Recently, these events have included the Regiment's sesquicentennial celebrations in 2010 and the wonderful reunion and marker dedications in Newfoundland in 2015. We look forward to the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway to be commemorated in Ridgeway on June 4th, 2016, as well as a planned trip to Europe in April, 2017 for the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

If you are not a member of the Association, what's stopping you from joining? There is no obligation placed on your time and you can become as active as you wish. At the very least, it may put you back in touch with comrades that you have not seen in many years. Joining the Association also gives us a means to contact you regarding important Association and Regimental activities.

To find out how to join the Association, please visit their websites for additional information.

Newfoundland & Maritimes Branch: [www.qor-east.com](http://www.qor-east.com)

Toronto Branch: [www.qortorontoassociation.com](http://www.qortorontoassociation.com)

Calgary Branch: [www.qorcalgary.com](http://www.qorcalgary.com) • Vancouver Island Branch: [www.qorvi.com](http://www.qorvi.com)



## ***QOR of C Regimental Trust Fund Chairman's Annual Executive Summary for 2015***

This summary of the Regimental Trust Fund (RTF) operation in 2015 is designed to detail the highlights of important calendar year 2015 RTF activities.

**The Endowment Fund.** The Endowment Fund (EF) and The Calgary Foundation received a total of \$37,534.00 in 2015 from a small number of very generous donors. This brings the total in the EF to \$212,018.23. When you consider the EF was only established in 2012 this is truly remarkable. If you combine this with the Calgary Foundation (CF) it gives a grand total of \$712K in investments. As an aside, I believe the short term target for the EF should be \$500K which, when combined with the CF, would result in a combined total of \$1 million, the interest from which will allow the smooth provision of funds to meet the needs of the regiment and the regimental family in perpetuity. This will allow us in the future to be less reliant on a declining donor base, the vagaries of uncertain fund raising and will make the budgeting process more accurate as the available funds will be easier and more accurate to forecast on an annual basis. I would hope that the trustees here today approve of this target.

### **The General Fund.**

The General Fund (GF) is almost the polar opposite to the EF. Here we have a larger number of donors who, on average, donate smaller amounts. For example, in 2015 we had 84 donors who on average donated \$664.64 each. In addition, an important aspect of the GF is that the number of donors and their total donations to the GF continues to decline with the reduction in numbers of former 1st and 2nd Battalion personnel through death while the survivors, for the most part, are on fixed incomes. However, in its favour, the GF does get a larger number of people involved with the regiment which otherwise would not happen. This is a good thing.

### **Disbursements.**

The major recipients of funds from the RTF are listed with the approximate amounts of the monies contributed in 2015:

- CO ~ \$28,117.62 including RSOs and coin of remembrance being the major expenses
- RHQ ~ \$3,451.22
- Museum ~ \$20,763.20
- Monuments & Memorials ~ \$40,513.43
- Rifleman ~\$1,486.66

Donations to the General Fund (GF) continue to shrink in both absolute number and dollars donated. The issue facing us is whether the Endowment Fund (EF) can be built up to the point where it can replace shrinkage in the General Fund. In my view it is the challenge on the part of all members, past and present, to help build up the EF to a level where it can produce a revenue stream to support all regimental functions on an ongoing basis without having to rely on vagaries of annual fundraisers. Finally, I am open to any and all suggestions from anyone present on how this might be accomplished.

Respectfully submitted,  
PF Hughes



Proud to be  
**your allies.**

**BMO**



BMO Capital Markets

Supporting the Queen's Own Rifles  
of Canada Trust Fund and the  
Canadian Forces.

## *CWO Brian Budden recognized by Minister of Veterans Affairs*

Mr. Budden is a Canadian Armed Forces Veteran. He is past president of the Toronto Branch of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association, currently serving as the 1st Vice-President and Health & Welfare Chairman. Following his first tour of Normandy and northwest Europe in 1974, Mr. Budden began organizing tours to Normandy, Belgium and the Netherlands for First and Second World War Veterans. He arranged for the Westlake Brothers Souvenir Association in Normandy, France, to visit and participate in commemorative activities in Toronto.

Mr. Budden is also involved in a wide range of other Veteran-related activities, including assisting Veterans with benefit entitlements and driving them to ceremonies. He helps to prepare those being interviewed by the History Channel or Memory Project. He regularly visits residents at Sunnybrook Hospital and other long-term care facilities. As a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Mr. Budden participates in 'The Living History' at Branch 258, which helps to initiate new Canadian citizens, and he is actively involved in the annual Poppy Fund drive.

Mr. Budden serves as one of the Parade Marshalls at the Annual Warrior's Day Parade at the Canadian National Exhibition. As an amputee himself, he has been very supportive to other amputees at St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital and, on occasion, to those injured in Afghanistan. Mr. Budden is a recipient of the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals.





Ben Dunkelman, heir to the Tip Top Tailors fortune, guards a kibbutz during his first trip to British-occupied Palestine in 1931. He would return later as a hero of Israel's War of Independence.

# The man who saved Nazareth

*Mitch Potter* unwraps the little-known story of how a well-heeled Toronto warrior rejected orders in 1948 and shielded the childhood home of Jesus

The oldest Canadians among us may still know his name. And something of the astonishing campaigns lived seven decades ago by the unlikelyst of soldiers, a gentle giant of a man called Ben Dunkelman.

They may know about his exploits as an infantry leader with Toronto's Queen's Own Rifles in the Second World War — a grinding, 330-day slog of ground battles from D-Day in Normandy all the way to the shores of the Baltic, shrinking Hitler's world.

They may know that before the Queen's Own embraced him, Dunkelman had already been shunned by the Royal Canadian Navy simply because he was Jewish.

They may even know Dunkelman could have avoided the fighting altogether thanks to his father, David, whose Tip Top Tailors empire was inundated with orders for military uniforms at the onset of war. The

family firm needed him. He volunteered to fight anyway.

Others will know of Dunkelman's second war — how the battle-hardened Toronto soldier smuggled himself on a fake passport into besieged Jerusalem in 1948, ultimately playing a critical military role in the founding of Israel. Zionism was the lifelong passion of his mother, Rose, and she lived to see her son help deliver statehood.

There remains, however, one epic but little-known part of the Dunkelman story that may well be his greatest glory: how he found the courage to say no, 67 years ago, to orders from his Israeli superiors at the very height of the 1948 war, effectively saving the entire Arab city of Nazareth



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

from unlawful expulsion.

Nazareth is today the largest Arab city within Israel proper because Dunkelman, as commander of Israel's 7th Brigade, refused verbal orders to uproot a civilian population, whose surrender he secured on the promise that they could stay.

Jewish fighters, victorious after entering the biblical town of Nazareth in July 1948. Dunkelman refused an order to expel the town's Arab population.

# 'Reluctant soldier' seldom spoke of Nazareth after war

NAZARETH from IN1

Dunkelman, who died in 1997, seldom told of his warrior past, save for his 1976 memoir, *Dual Allegiance*. Excerpted in the pages of the Toronto Star upon its release, the book made no mention of the Nazareth episode.

But Dunkelman's ghostwriter, the now-deceased Israeli journalist Perez Kidron, later produced a previously unpublished page that Dunkelman edited out of his manuscript, in which the Toronto native describes how he was "shocked and horrified" at the order to depopulate Nazareth, telling his commanding officer, Haim Laskov, "I would do nothing of the sort."

Dunkelman was relieved of command in Nazareth a day after refusing the order. But he ceded control only after extracting his replacements' "word of honour" that no harm would befall the population. "It seems that my disobedience did have some effect," Dunkelman writes in Kidron's lost page.

"It seems to have given the high command time for second thoughts, which led

them to the conclusion that it would indeed be wrong to expel. There was never any more talk of the evacuation plan, and the city's Arab citizens have lived there ever since."

Kidron leaked the story to the New York Times — along with an explosive account of how Dunkelman's brother-in-arms Yitzhak Rabin carried out similar orders, dislodging the Arab civilians from the towns of Lod and Ramle within days of the Canadian soldier's stand in Nazareth. The Times ran with the juicier Rabin exposé in October 1979, ignoring the Dunkelman story altogether.

Dunkelman ultimately took the reasons for omitting the Nazareth story to his grave. But in interviews with his widow, Yael, the Star was able both to confirm Dunkelman's stand in Nazareth and to get a better sense of his motivations.

"Ben was a loving person. He was a humanitarian — that was the essence of it," Yael, now 89, told the Star at her home in midtown Toronto. "The idea of forcing civilians from their homes was never some-

thing he would ever be able to do."

Dunkelman's son Jonathan, a Toronto artist and one of six Dunkelman siblings, was unaware of the Nazareth story.

"He never talked about it — ever. Or anything else to do with the wars. He was just such a very gentle, soft-spoken man," said Jonathan. "I think the term 'reluctant soldier' fits best. We knew he had been through terrible battles. But he was able somehow to lock it away."

Douglas Gibson, who edited Dunkelman's memoir for Macmillan of Canada, told the Star: "I don't think I ever knew the Nazareth story. Or if I did, it's lost in the mists of time, I'm afraid."

"But I will say, that fits precisely with his moral character, and it just shows again that Ben's entire story is huge, even if it is largely hidden today."

"What he did was bring his hard-earned Canadian military professionalism to help organize a chaotic fighting force and help set down the rules of engagement. And that included saying, 'No, we will not expel civilians.'"

"My lasting memory is of a big, gentle, soft-spoken man. I remember how amazed I was when I read the first draft. I wanted confirmation, so I asked Ben, 'Is there anyone in Israel who could write a foreword?' He answered so softly, 'Would Rabin do?' ... I almost fell out of my chair."

## Reshaping Israel's narrative

For all that he achieved during a decade at war on two continents, Dunkelman's stand against the depopulation of civilians of Nazareth is arguably his greater glory.

He won no medals for refusing to molest civilians, nor any credit from his Israeli superiors. The story of saving Nazareth remains something of a footnote, if that, in most chapters dedicated to the larger Dunkelman story.

Transpose that morality to the modern era and imagine how the U.S. military interrogations at Abu Ghraib might have played out with a Dunkelman in command.

But that rare courage raises other questions. If Dunkelman received verbal orders to expel a city, what orders were other

**"What he did was bring his hard-earned Canadian military professionalism to help organize a chaotic fighting force and help set down the rules of engagement. And that included saying, 'No, we will not expel civilians.'"**

**DOUGLAS GIBSON**  
EDITOR OF  
DUNKELMAN'S  
MEMOIR

Israel commanders under during the 1948 war? One of Israel's early foundational narratives — the notion that the Arabs of Palestine became refugees of their own volition, fleeing, rather than being forced out, cracks under the saga of Dunkelman in Nazareth.

Small wonder, then, that Dunkelman left the story out of his 1976 memoir.

A later generation of Israeli historians emerged in the 1990s, willing for the first time to chip away at the early narratives. And they continue to do so. As recently as June, veteran Israeli activist Uri Avnery — a soldier in 1948, a dedicated peacenik ever since — invoked the memory of Dunkelman in an article emphasizing the rarity of such a stand, as seen through the lens of 1948.

Only a few years earlier, Avnery noted, the world saw "the mass expulsion of Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states, which was accepted as natural." There was no shortage of atrocities in 1948. On both sides.

But not in Nazareth.



Dunkelman, photographed upon his arrival as a volunteer fighter during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.



Yael was 22, a corporal in the fledgling Israeli army when she first met Dunkelman. Weeks later, they wedded. Here, the couple are surrounded by fellow officers.



The story of saving Nazareth is now a footnote in Dunkelman's biography.



Israeli-born Yael Dunkelman (née Lifshitz) at age 19, three years before she would meet and marry Ben. They moved to Canada after Israel's War of Independence and raised a family here.

*Mitch Potter is a foreign affairs writer with the Toronto Star, tasked with making sense of an evermore complicated world through a blend of analysis, features and frontline reports, including datelines from 33 countries since 2000. Potter was assigned to The Star's Jerusalem Bureau in 2002 before cross-posting to London and, most recently, Washington, where he covered the first six of the Obama years. Among his notable assignments, Potter led The Star's coverage of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where his reportage earned a 2006 National Newspaper Award.*

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# An extraordinary life of service: Dunkelman's early years

► **1913:** Ben was to be the manor born, heir to Tip Top Tailors. Home was an English mansion on the sprawling, 40-hectare Sunnybrook Farm, where Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre stands today. Dunkelman described the sumptuous estate as “a dreamland, a children’s paradise.” Summers were spent swimming and sailing on Lake Simcoe at the family’s Balfour retreat.

► **1920s:** For all his father’s business acumen, Ben’s mother, Rose, was formidable in her own right as one of Canada’s pre-eminent early Zionists. Nicknamed “Madame Czarina” by friends and foes alike, Rose turned the Sunnybrook home into a transit station and hospitality centre for visiting leaders of the movement for Jewish colonization in Palestine. Among Ben’s earliest memories were stories about the “mysterious Land of Israel” from the likes of Chaim Weizmann, Louis Lipsky and Stephen Wise.

► **1931-32:** The first withering hard work of Dunkelman’s life, as he traded luxury in Toronto for a year toiling in the orange groves of the fledgling Jewish settlement of Tel Asher, 50 kilometres north of Tel Aviv. “In Canada I had everything I could ask for — servants, cars, horses, spending money,” he would write. “Now here I was working long hours in the blazing sun, subsisting on less meat in a whole week than in a single one of mother’s meals.”

► **1939:** As war descended, Tip Top Tailors ramped up to produce as many as 35,000 uniforms a week for the swelling ranks of Canadian volunteers. But not for Ben, whose initial attempt to enlist in the Royal Canadian Navy was rebuffed. “The navy obviously considered that a Jew was not suitable company in the wardrobe,” Dunkelman wrote. “It infuriated me that such habits of mind prevailed in a country supposedly at war against Hitler.”



Ben Dunkelman's father, David, founder of the Tip Top Tailors clothing empire.



Ben's mother, Rose, a major figure in Canada's Zionist movement.

swift, sharp aim. Those skills would serve him well in two wars.

► **1945:** Promoted to the rank of major by war's end, Dunkelman was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. He was singled out for his innovative technique in concentrated mortar barrages, and for heroism in single-handedly taking out two German machine-gun posts in the battle of



Maj. Ben Dunkelman, left, in 1944, with an unknown Canadian soldier. He enlisted as a private with the Queen's Own Rifles, rising to the rank of major.



TORONTO STAR ARCHIVES

After his soldier years, Dunkelman returned to help run the family business.

Balberger Wald. He was offered command of the Queen's Own upon his return to Canada. Though he wore the regiment's ring for the rest of his life, he declined, returning instead to the family firm.

► **1948:** Dunkelman led recruitment in Canada, mobilizing Jewish volunteers to join the Haganah, a pre-Israel paramilitary organization. He was the first to arrive in the region,



Dunkelman's 7th Brigade claims a key stronghold at Safa for Israel during the northern campaign in the 1948 War of Independence.

making his way to besieged Jerusalem. He rose quickly through the ranks with the blessing of David Ben-Gurion (who in May that year became Israel's first prime minister), helping break the siege and later commanding an army division to capture the upper western Galilee. “Ben's Bridge,” on the Lebanese border, stands to this day in his honour.

Mitch Potter

## Five ways Dunkelman came to Israel's rescue

Palestinians may welcome the seasoned Toronto military commander's role in saving the city of Nazareth. But Ben Dunkelman was otherwise a purely Israeli partisan, and a tremendously effective one, delivering crucial victories to the Jewish cause at several key moments during the 1948 war:

### 1. Breaking the siege of Jerusalem

Outnumbered, outmanned, outgunned, the Holy City was slowly starving when Dunkelman arrived as one of the war's first foreign volunteers in April 1948. Dunkelman agitated for a breakout, ultimately helping blaze a new route through no man's land to reconnect Jerusalem to desperately needed supplies from the coastal plain.

### 2. Mortars

Dunkelman's military specialty involved the rapid release of concentrated mortar fire. But early Israeli mortars — homemade bombs fashioned from sewer pipes — were deemed too dangerous to deploy. Deputed by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to make sense of the mess, Dunkelman quickly established that the improvised devices were indeed safer than they looked. Training and deployment followed quickly.

### 3. Rank, insignia, discipline, logistics

The improvisational Haganah militia and its elite fighting force, the Palmach, were both bereft of rank or identifying insignia. Dunkelman realized quickly that rapid codification, with rank, insignia, chain of command and organized supply lines to keep an army on the move, was critical to Israel's fate. Dunkelman enlisted Yitzhak Rabin, then a brigade commander, to win buy-in for reorganization.

### 4. Saving Nazareth

No sooner had Dunkelman established chain of command than he proceeded to break it, audaciously refusing an order to unlawfully depopulate the Arab civilians of Nazareth. Finding the courage to say no offered Israel's fledgling army a vital moral benchmark at the very moment of its birth.

### 5. Securing the Galilee

Named to lead Israel's 7th Brigade in the final phase of the 1948 war, Dunkelman pushed methodically — and almost bloodlessly — through the Galilee with a series of night-time flanking movements, eventually ending at the Litani River in Lebanon. He quite literally shaped borders, delivering territory Israel might not otherwise hold today.

Mitch Potter



TORONTO STAR GRAPHIC



## 'He engulfed me' — Ben and Yael's love story

The battle-scarred Canadian commander was rude. The big-eyed Israeli didn't notice. It was war. It was Israel. Rude came with the territory.

But moments after the terse handover of top-secret orders, Ben Dunkelman thought twice about the beguiling young army clerk he had so contemptuously dismissed.

He made inquiries. She was single. He was smitten. They courted and married, in a whirlwind romance that unfolded even as the Toronto volunteer led his army through a series of conquests that helped shape Israel's borders.

Sixty-seven years and six children later, Ben is gone. But the native Israeli, the love of his life, is still very much with us, living in Toronto, memories intact. The speed of her tears as she casts back to their courtship in the middle of the war of 1948 is a powerful testament to the life they shared.

“He engulfed me — I don't know how else to say it,” said Yael Dunkelman. “Not at first. The fact that he was rude made no impression on me — that was normal. It was the way he apologized the next time he saw me that made the impression. He was so big and charming. It all happened so fast.”

She was 22, he was 35. They wedded in the lull between battles. And planned, for a time at least, to stay in Israel. But fate took them instead to Canada, where Dunkelman was needed to help run the family firm, Tip Top Tailors.

“There was no kissing before marriage. You didn't hold hands. It was a very different time,” Yael recalled. “But I knew Ben had experienced terrible things in war. The first night of our honeymoon, he was up pacing. I thought maybe I had done something wrong. But all he said was, ‘I'm thinking about all the men who are gone, who will never have a chance to be this happy.’”

After a lifetime in Canada, Israel no longer draws Yael as strongly as it once did. The headline politics, the growing social gaps, the hold of religion on government. She gave her life instead to art, persuading Ben to take the plunge on a gallery.

“One of the things about living this long is

you find your friends are gone,” she said. “Ben and I did everything together, everything. Our work, our lives outside work... But I do miss the smell of the earth in Israel. I will never forget it.”

Mitch Potter



MELISSA RENWICK/TORONTO STAR

Yael Dunkelman, 89, in Toronto. Her husband, Ben, died in 1997.



Yael with Ben on her first trip to Toronto to meet his family, in 1949.

## Ben Dunkelman

The tribute to Ben Dunkelman in the Toronto Star brought back some happy memories. In the early 50's, when I was teenage rifleman in Support Company, we ran carrier (Universal carriers, usually called bren-gun carriers) exercises at a farm Ben had near the old Malton Airport.

Enroute to the farm we would have O.P.P. escorts, one car to lead and another bringing up the rear.

On one occasion a carrier broke down. Since it was a Ford unit not a Dodge, the first immediate action was "Check the fuel pump" Sure as hell that was the problem and we had no spare. Our platoon sergeant, courtesy of the only Uber type service available to us in those days, an O.P.P. cruiser, was despatched to the closest Ford dealer to get a new fuel pump.

In the interim, it was time for some R & R ( in this case, rest and refreshment) for those of us left at the roadside. I was instructed by CSM J. P. Moore (A renowned WWII carrier driver) to break out the supplies stowed in the grenade box in the driver's compartment. We had no grenades and riflemen never waste space.

A jolly time was had by all who were over 21. The rest of us became Canada's first designated drivers!

One weekend, as I drove a carrier across a frozen stream, the ice broke and I was instantly up to my neck in cold water and a few dead fish.

After being rescued by J.P., I was wrapped in a blanket and my battledress was hung by a campfire while we went to eat. When I went back to retrieve my gear, my pants were on fire! I cut the bottoms off and carried on. I could be the inventor of Clam Diggers (Sans royalties!) Our adventures at the Dunkelman farm gradually came to an end over the next few years as our aging carriers broke down and were finally classified N/S - Non-serviceable. But it was fun while it lasted and the I will never forget the outstanding hospitality extended to all of us by the Dunkelman family.

In addition to being a heroic soldier for both Canada and Israel, Ben Dunkelman was a warm and decent human being. God rest his soul!

Maj.(Ret.) Harry J. Rollo, CD, ADC



Ben Dunkelman returned to Toronto with more than memories of his contribution to Israel's War of Independence: he also brought home his Israeli-born bride, Yael. They're seen here in 1949, on their first Toronto trip to meet his family.



After the capture of Meiron



*Westlake Brothers Association of France Proudly Visits  
The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada August 2015*



Christophe Collett chief organiser along with Gal Vance and Cecile Scheffen at the annual CNE Warriors Day Parade



CWO Brian Budden and Brenda Butt with the Chief of Defence Staff General Jon Vance at the CNE Warriors Day Parade



Inès Alaoui  
Adélaïde Caillet  
Xavière Frémont  
Laura Lambert  
Romane Vallée  
Lisa Cailly  
Camille Letourneur  
Mathilde Dubosq  
Pauline Le Breton  
Anna Le Bihan  
Ingrid Dano  
Manon Duprey

Séverine Jeanne  
Hélène Crenn  
Elise Smalzerz  
Cécile Scheffen  
Charlotte Girard  
Annette Smalzerz  
Anabelle Groult  
Marine Rabelle  
Solveig Casado  
Léa Fafin  
Marie Châtel  
Valentin Collet

Benjamin Collet  
David Delafontaine  
Guillaume Blottière  
Charles Vallet  
Gwalior Thépaut  
Hadrien Yannou  
Mathieu Lebrun  
Romain Breton  
Luc Caulet  
Claudine Caulet  
Sylvaine Maache  
Christophe Collet

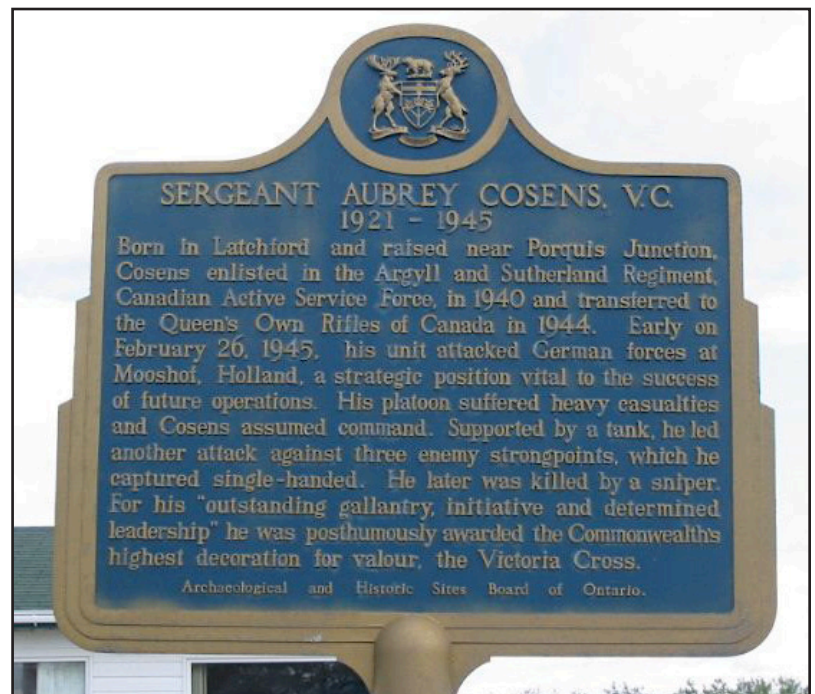
Benoît Sévenier  
Christine Caillet  
Jean-Yves Caillet  
Nicole Marchetti  
Claude Marchetti  
Romain Blottière  
Clarisse Chevalier



*A visit to Mooshof  
the site of the winning of the Victoria Cross by SGT Aubrey Cosens VC in 2015*



Front Row (L to R) Josef Mott - Owner of the Farmhouse in Mooshof • Brian Budden  
Back Row (L to R) Mark Ross • Peter Berkhout • Robert Catsburg





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## *A new monument is unveiled at The Park*

Saturday, August 8, 2015 saw a new monument unveiled at the *Gander Heritage Memorial Park*. This stone marker was unveiled to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in Newfoundland during World War 2 on Saturday, August 10, 1940. They arrived by ship into the Port of Botwood on that same day, some stayed in Botwood and the remainder moved on to Gander by train. Their mission was the defense of Newfoundland by providing security for both strategic airfields at Botwood and Gander.

This commemorative event was organized by The Maritimes Newfoundland Branch of the QORC. A similar stone marker was unveiled in Botwood the next day Sunday, August 9. I understand that the QORC got much needed help from 91 Construction Engineering Flight of 9 Wing Gander with both stone markers. 9 Wing Gander also provided the public address system and the music for the singing of "O Canada" and "God Save the Queen" for Friday's ceremonies in Gander.

The ceremonies started with the parade of veterans led by the QORC including a drummer and bugler. Dignitaries who spoke represented the Veterans, the Royal Canadian Legion, the QORC, 9 Wing Gander and the Town of Gander. Once the speeches were completed the official unveiling of the commemorative stone marker took place. After the unveiling the bugler and drummer played Last Post followed by 2 minutes of silence and then the bugler and drummer played Reveille. The parade was dismissed after a wreath was laid to remember fallen comrades. Veterans in attendance came from as far away as Victoria BC for this weekend's events and many lingered after the ceremonies to have their photos taken posing with the "Winged Victory". "Sgt. Gander", the QORC's "commemorative stone marker", the "Airmen's Memorial Wall" and the "Poppy Memorial Monument" on display at The Park for the afternoon (see below).

Photos of the day (courtesy of Gerard McCarthy)



Parade of Veterans

Today we are gathered to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada having been garrisoned in Newfoundland on August 10th, 1940.

The Regiment's first assignment was the Defense of Newfoundland. The Queen's Own Rifles battalion on arrival in Botwood, was split between Botwood and Gander.

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada is Canada's oldest serving Regiment having formed in Toronto in 1860 making the Regiment Canada's oldest continuously serving Infantry unit. Two of its Regular Arm Battalions were stationed in Victoria, BC during the Cold War, the 2nd Battalion returned from Korea in 1955 and departed to Germany in 1957. The 1st Battalion returned from Nato duty in Germany in 1963 and were at Work Point Barracks, Victoria, BC until re-designated Third Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in 1970.

The Queen's Own Rifles have a long and proud record of service to Canada, fighting its first engagement in 1866 near Ridgeway, Ontario against Fenian Raiders from the United States. The deaths of 9 soldiers at that time heralded sacrifices in campaigns throughout the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The QOR served in the North West Rebellion, Boer War, First and Second World War, Korea, Nato duty, Cyprus and other Peacekeeping Operations including Afghanistan.

Every year there are untold numbers of Veterans and their children and grandchildren touring the country to visit wartime sites to review and research history of how they and their forefathers lived during these times.

These Stone Markers being unveiled today symbolizes the dedication and sacrifices of soldiers of the Regiment in War and Peace. It also reflects the affection, admiration and appreciation of all Rifleman of The Queen's Own for their service to the Regiment and to Canada.



The Veterans





Commemorative Stone Marker before the unveiling  
 Queen's Own Rifles of Canada ~ 2nd Battalion  
 "In Pace Paratus - In Peace Prepared"



Rev. Wes Oake leading the parade in prayer  
 WW2 Veteran, retired United Church minister and  
 Honourary Patron of The Park



The official unveiling party with honour guards



Commemorative Stone Marker  
 The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada ~ 2nd Battalion  
 "In Pace Paratus - In Peace Prepared"

IN COMMEMORATION OF  
 THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
 THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES OF CANADA  
 GARRISONED IN NEWFOUNDLAND  
 AT GANDER AND BOTWOOD IN 1940



Last Post, 2 minutes of silence and Reveille



Commemorative Stone Marker and Wreath



# The Poppy Memorial Monument



Before, during and after the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada ceremonies at The Park the Poppy Memorial Monument to remember the Canadian Forces members who lost their lives in Afghanistan was on display along with the Book of Condolences. The Book of Condolences has a page for every Canadian killed in Afghanistan. I had a chance to talk to all 4 Canadian Forces members who traveled with the monument to Gander for this occasion. They drove from Kingston ON to be in Gander for the QORC's ceremonies on Friday, went to Botwood on Saturday for the ceremonies there and started their long drive back to Kingston today Monday. Photos of the day (courtesy of Gerard McCarthy)



The Poppy Memorial Monument

ed, friday,  
saturday, and  
monday was  
mentioned..  
does not  
sound right, r  
there dates?



The Book of Condolences  
A page for every Canadian killed in Afghanistan



You will notice that the 2 handles are different, the intact one on the right represents a Canadian soldier before going to Afghanistan and the broken one on the left represents the soldier who came home alive but maimed in some way or suffering from PTSD



Presented to: Poppy Memorial Outreach Program  
From: 1 Combat Engineer Regiment  
CHIMO



# Veteran's Cemetery God's Acre



Front Row: John Shavchok • Herb Pitts • Ed Titus • Peter Kolbe • Joe Rozon • Harry Barnes

Second Row: Chink Widenmaier • Tom Martin • Gord Hryhoryshen • Rene Tailefer • Bob Scrafton • John Brunelle • Ron Cullen

Back Row: Dale Ratzlaff • Stan McMillan

The QOR VIB Branch took part in the Remembrance celebration. May 21, 2015. Veteran's Cemetery God's Acre is one of 3 graveyards in Canada set aside for Veterans and, by permission, their spouses.

The Cemetery dates back to 1868 when a turnip patch was purchased for \$250. To bury sailors and officers of the Royal Navy stationed in Victoria. The cemetery sits on 2.7 acres and contains the remains of 2500 military Veterans and their families from all branches of the Armed Forces. Negotiations with Veterans Affairs Canada, to enlarge and continue interments, are nearing completion, a move which many have been lobbying for over the past 5 years.

A local resident is devoted to the preservation and continued function of the cemetery. This is a promise she keeps for the ghosts and men and women buried there, surrounded by the greens and fairways of the Gorge Vale Golf Club.

Besides Canadian and British subjects, the cemetery holds the remains of a Japanese Naval Midshipman, who died on his ship during a visit in the 1920's. To this date, when Japanese Naval vessels are in port, a delegation pays a visit to the cemetery to honor his memory.

Each year, in May, a Candlelight Tribute takes place at the graveyard. Local Veterans, Cadets, Children's Choir, members of the Navy, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and Legion, take part in the Celebration of Life to honor fallen members. At this celebration, each gravesite has a lit candle placed on the head stone and is allowed to burn itself out.

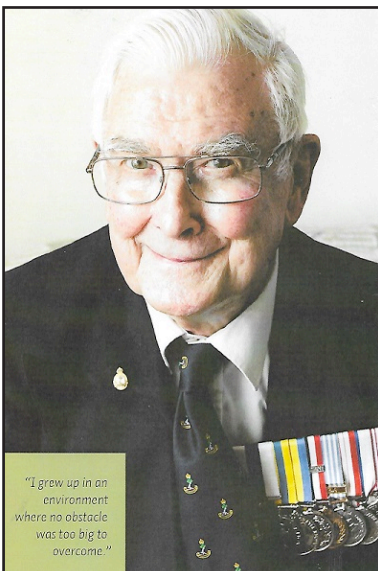
Veterans Cemetery God's acre has much history, tradition and stories worth keeping alive. When you walk through the graveyard, every tombstone has a history to it. If you add them all together, it's quite a tapestry.

## Major General Herb Pitts honoured by Royal Roads University



Major General Herb Pitts & wife Marianne surrounded by friends

*M General Herb Pitts* was recently honored by Royal Roads University as a graduate student during the September 2015 Alumni Awards Ceremony. Herb attended Royal Roads when it was opened to Army cadets as a Canadian Service College in September 1948. He went on from there to graduate from Royal Military College, Kingston, was Commissioned in June, 1952 and proceeded to Korea, serving with 1 & 3 Battalions Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry. Before the Ceasefire, he was on his way home to attend Mc Master University in Hamilton where he met his future wife Marianne.



On Completion of his university degree in May, 1954 he reported to 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in Calgary to commence a rewarding career with that Regiment. Serving in almost every officer position in the Regiment, his service with the Queen's Own culminated in command of the First Battalion 1967-1969 Subsequent to regimental service, Herb went on to command the Canadian Airborne Regiment from 1971 to 1973 as a Colonel. After this posting, he was promoted to B General then Major General, filling senior staff positions at the National Defence headquarters until retirement in 1978. In retirement, he was active in a great many community, youth, seniors, veterans and regimental activities. He farmed (cattle and maple syrup) in Eastern Ontario for ten years before becoming CEO of the Ontario Safety League. He remains active in most of these activities except for farming! He resides with Marianne in Victoria, B.C



## *Normandy Company*



On November 12th, the second annual Normandy Company luncheon was held in the Moss Park Officer's Mess, hosted by myself and Brendan Caldwell. Last year our inaugural luncheon featured the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Tom Lawson. This year we were honoured to have General (Ret'd) Peter Schoomaker as our guest speaker. General Schoomaker commanded the U.S. Army and was brought out of retirement by President Bush in 2003 to command the U.S. Army.

General Schoomaker shared his views concerning the current tumultuous state of the world. He spoke about the threat posed to our western way of life by ISIL and warned that this battle would last beyond this generation. The General also cautioned that the west is vulnerable to cyberattack and that we must protect our electricity grid, our financial system and all aspects of our national security and livelihood that are dependent on our connectedness. His warnings about ISIL and the threat of radical Islamic terrorists was unfortunately timely and prescient as the horrendous Paris attacks happened the very next day.

The Normandy Company has been established to provide a network of business friends of the Queen's Own Rifles. This year some 68 business leaders attended our luncheon and these friends of the Regiment will be joining us over the course of the year to watch our Riflemen train at Moss Park and on exercise. Our retired Hon LCol, Brendan Caldwell, serves as the Chairman of Normandy Company.





## *Museum Research on Earliest Sergeant Majors*


It is traditional that the outgoing Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada presents a gift to the Sergeants' Mess. The Mess very proudly displays photos of all our RSMs beginning from 1937 and I had always wondered about those who weren't on the wall. For my retirement in 2011 I was hoping to create and present a montage of all the RSMs for the first 77 years. This was much harder task than I ever imagined; neither the former RSMs I talked to nor Peter Simundson, who was curator of the museum at the time, could tell me who the first RSM (Sgt Major at the time) was nor who held that position in between then and 1937. As the current curator says; "The list of Regimental Sergeant Majors is not nearly as complete as that of Commanding Officers or even Bugle Majors...".

When I retired I presented another item to the Mess but I did begin volunteering at the museum on Thursday nights which at least got me in a position to start researching who the former Sergeant Majors were.


Major (Ret) John Stephens, the current curator, did a lot of work looking through the battalion nominal roles from the 1860s and was able to determine, just recently, that the first Sergeant Major listed on 21 December 1864 was Sergeant Major Robert Taylor; he was 29 years old at the time, Episcopalian and a merchant by trade, (and had a good set of mutton chops).













For an unknown reason, on March 15 1866 when the QOR were called up to active duty during the Fenian scare, Taylor was temporarily relegated to Drum Major under Sergeant Major JF Smith. Taylor is again listed in the nominal role as Sergeant Major on 7 June 1866, (5 days after the Battle of Ridgeway), while the regiment was still on active duty in Stratford Ontario awaiting further Fenian incursions. It is not known if either Sergeant Major was present during the Battle and there is no further information on Smith. There was a photo taken on 7 June and we were lucky enough to spot one soldier with Sergeant Major stripes, an officer's crossbelt, a sword and Sergeant's cane who couldn't be anyone else but Robert Taylor.

Through persistent detective work we now have a photo, (although fuzzy), of the first man to hold the rank of Sergeant Major of the regiment.



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada  
Sergeant Majors 1860-1910



			
-1866 Sgt Major J F Smith	1866-1867 Sgt Major R Taylor	1867-1876 Sgt Major J B Moloney	1877-1885 Sgt Major P Cunningham
			
1886-1889 Sgt Major J F Crean	1890 Sgt Major SC McKell	1891-1892 Sgt Major W Kennedy	1893-1895 Sgt Major H M George
			
1896-1897 Sgt Major J O Thorn	1898-1903 Sgt Major W A Porter	1904-1906 Sgt Major A W Bell	1908-1910 Regimental Sgt Major A E Brittain

The nominal roles provided quite a bit of information but it wasn't until recently that we discovered to our delight in our archives, an original Globe newspaper article from 1897 on the Sergeants' Mess. The article lists all the Sergeant Majors from 1882 to 1896 as well as some other good info about the Mess. We now have a mostly complete listing of all the Sergeant Majors up to 1910. By then it gets a little hazy because by 1910 the regiment consisted of 2 battalions with 2 Sergeant Majors listed and, for the first time, a Regimental Sergeant Major. Pictures have been collected from group shots and individual photos so the quality varies but as of 2016 we now have a mostly complete list of our first 12 Sergeant Majors and pictures of 11 of them up to the 50th anniversary of the formation of the regiment.

The first copy of this picture now hangs in the museum and fittingly, it is dedicated to the late Chief Warrant Officer (Regimental Sergeant Major) Scott F Patterson.

CWO (ret) Shaun CM Kelly  
2IC QOR Museum and Archives



## *Notable Canadians who have served in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada*



**ALEXANDER MUIR**, schoolteacher, office holder, poet, songwriter, and member of the Queen's Own Rifles was born on 5 April 1830 in Lesmahagow, Scotland. He was the son of John Muir, a schoolmaster, and Catherine McDiarmid. His family immigrated to Canada in 1833.

He received his early education from his father who taught in a log-cabin school in Scarborough Township which in those days was far from the thriving and busy city of Toronto. His family were strong in their Christian faith and regularly attended the local Presbyterian church where Alexander's strong baritone voice led the congregation in its singing every Sunday. Surprisingly he had little musical training beyond his choral activities in the family church. Like so many Scottish immigrants, the Muirs placed a high priority on education.

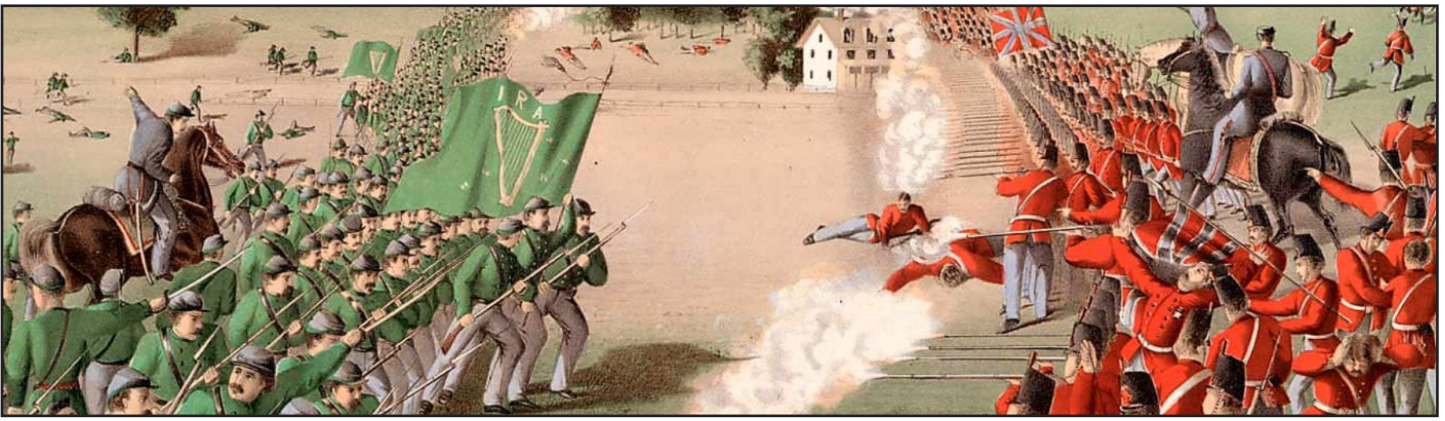
Alexander graduated from Queen's College, Kingston, with a Bachelor of Arts in 1851.

Right from birth he displayed not only an enthusiasm for outdoor sports and competitive games but a real strength and a quest for perfection. He would often be seen participating in track and field, lacrosse, curling, rowing, and he was even a great champion of horse shoe throwing.

In his later years he took on many executive responsibilities with a number of key athletic organizations. His keenness of sports also caused him to briefly pursue journalism which would lead him to the vaulted position of village clerk to the growing community of Newmarket from April 1875 to January 1876.

After graduating from Queen's College, Muir began his career as schoolteacher and principal in the small villages of Scarborough, Leslieville, Yorkville, Newmarket, Beaverton, and Parkdale, before moving to Toronto in 1880.

Eight years later he became the first principal of Toronto's Gladstone Avenue School, and he remained in this post until his death. Muir was progressive in his teaching methods and, unlike many of his contemporaries did not rely on harsh discipline by way of physical punishment. Through poetry, music, and athletics he instilled in his students a deep respect for Canada and its history.



Proud of his Scottish background, Muir showed an intense loyalty to the flag and to the empire. These sentiments can be seen in a wide variety of his institutional affiliations. From 1861 to 1867 he was a private in the 2nd Battalion of Rifles (Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto), and was involved in the battle of Ridgeway during the Fenian raids of 1866. His military interest resulted in his becoming president of the Army and Navy Veterans' Association in 1892 where he served as a strong supporter for the Militia Veterans of '66 . Attracted by political tensions of the day he became a key member of the Toronto Orange lodge, and a bold supporter of politician D'Alton McCarthy, a lawyer destined to become the intelligent firebrand and lightning rod of the Conservative Party of Ontario.

To all Canadians, Muir is best known as the author of "The maple leaf for ever," which was written in the fall of 1867 while he was recovering from his involvement in the battle of Ridgeway. At that time Muir was living in Leslieville. George Leslie, a friend and owner of a nursery business in the community named after him is said to have suggested to Muir while walking with him outside Muir's home that a maple leaf might form the basis for a last-minute entry in a patriotic song competition sponsored by Montreal's Caledonian Society.

Whether this or other accounts of the song's origins are correct, Muir completed the lyrics within hours and sent them that day. The song won second prize but at the urging of friends, Muir decided to have his song published. When a search for a suitable melody failed, he wrote his own tune. He spent thirty dollars to print 1,000 copies of the song but made only four dollars in house to house sales.

Sadly he had not thought of applying for a copyright. His song would be included in a lucrative song book published by Abraham and Company. He would not receive any royalties because of his error in not obtaining a copyright.

He had written four other patriotic songs between 1890 and 1900 but none enjoyed the widespread acceptance of "The maple leaf for ever." Indeed, it became so popular within the country's English-speaking population that it was often referred to as Canada's national song. Despite its great popularity in World War One amongst members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force its use, would diminish dramatically long before 1980, when "O Canada," by Calixa Lavallee and Adolphe-Basile Routhier was approved as the official national anthem for Canada.

LCol C. ED Rayment (Ret)  
Regimental Secretary  
The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada





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## 2483 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

### Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps

### Corps Sponsoring Committee



March 14, 2016

Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association (Vancouver Island Branch)  
3180 Pearks Rd  
Victoria BC V9C 2L8

Re: Donation - 2483 PPCLI Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps

Dear Friends at the Queen's Own Rifles,

I want to personally thank you and the entire Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association (Vancouver Island Branch) for the donation of \$500 that we received. This is truly outstanding and greatly appreciated by the Cadets. You are a great supporter of this Corps and we are very grateful for your help.

As you are aware, all donations go towards the continuation of our highly successful program with additional extra-curricular activities above and beyond what is provided by the Canadian Armed Forces. We are parading approximately 45 cadets weekly and continue to be involved with various activities including leadership, citizenship, first aid, military band, orienteering, field training exercises and the like. The financial assistance like yours enables us to continue to offer exciting programs for our youth. This type of contribution also enables the Corps Sponsoring Committee Executive to direct other monies and material towards other aspects of the cadet experience, hence providing a more rounded and enjoyable experience for our youth.

The 2483 PPCLI RCACC Sponsoring Committee is part of the Army Cadet League of Canada with its head office in Ottawa and branches in each province/territory. The BC Branch is classified as a charitable organization (#88783 5296 RR0001) and is registered under the Societies Act of BC (#S-0009676).

I look forward to seeing you and your membership soon at our Annual Ceremonial Review, which is scheduled for 2:00pm on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 at the Work Point Barracks Parade Square with a reception, silent auction & BBQ following the parade at the Gunroom. You are most invited—please mark the date on your calendar.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Tom Eccleston

Chairperson, Corps Sponsoring Committee, 2483 PPCLI Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps  
[teccleston@outlook.com](mailto:teccleston@outlook.com)

cc: Captain B. McAuleyl, Commanding Officer, 2483 PPCLI RCACC

cc: Robert Pfuetzenreuter, CSC Director Fundraising, 2483 PPCLI RCACC

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Tel: (250) 220-0658

[2483army@cadets.gc.ca](mailto:2483army@cadets.gc.ca)

## ***In Memoriam 2015-2016***

The following Members of The Queen's Own Rifles Of Canada who have passed away

### ***“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”***

CWO Scott Patterson

Col Paul Hughes son Brynley Hughes

QOR WWII Veteran Angus MacPherson

QOR WWII Veteran Sam Glass

William (Bill) Lesperance, CD - London Chapter

Walter Ratz

Captain Alfred Beeston

Hon Lt/Col Lionel Goffart wife Mrs. Mary Goffart

QOR WWII Veteran Robert Gumiel

Mr. Roy Whitsed

George Dobson

B/Sgt George Walford

Sgt. Ivan Hill

WWII Veteran William Haire

QOR WWII D-Day Veteran Joseph Wagar

QOR WWII D-Day Veteran Nils Lindenas

John Shannon

Peter von Zuben

George Hurst

QOR WWII D-Day Veteran Alex Greer

Chuck Addison

WO Peter Kolbe wife – Mrs. Loretta Kolbe

Doug Hendrie

Wayne Dicy

Ernie Brimblecombe

Murray Fletcher

WWII Veteran William “Lucky” Lochmanetz

Ian Shantz

Paul Raymond Newhall

Sgt (ret'd) Geoff Hatt

QOR WWII Veteran John Hearn



*They went with songs to the battle, they were young.  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,  
They fell with their faces to the foe.*

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We will remember them.*

*They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;  
They sleep beyond England's foam.*

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