



The Rifleman

The Journal of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

"STANDING ON GUARD SINCE 1860"

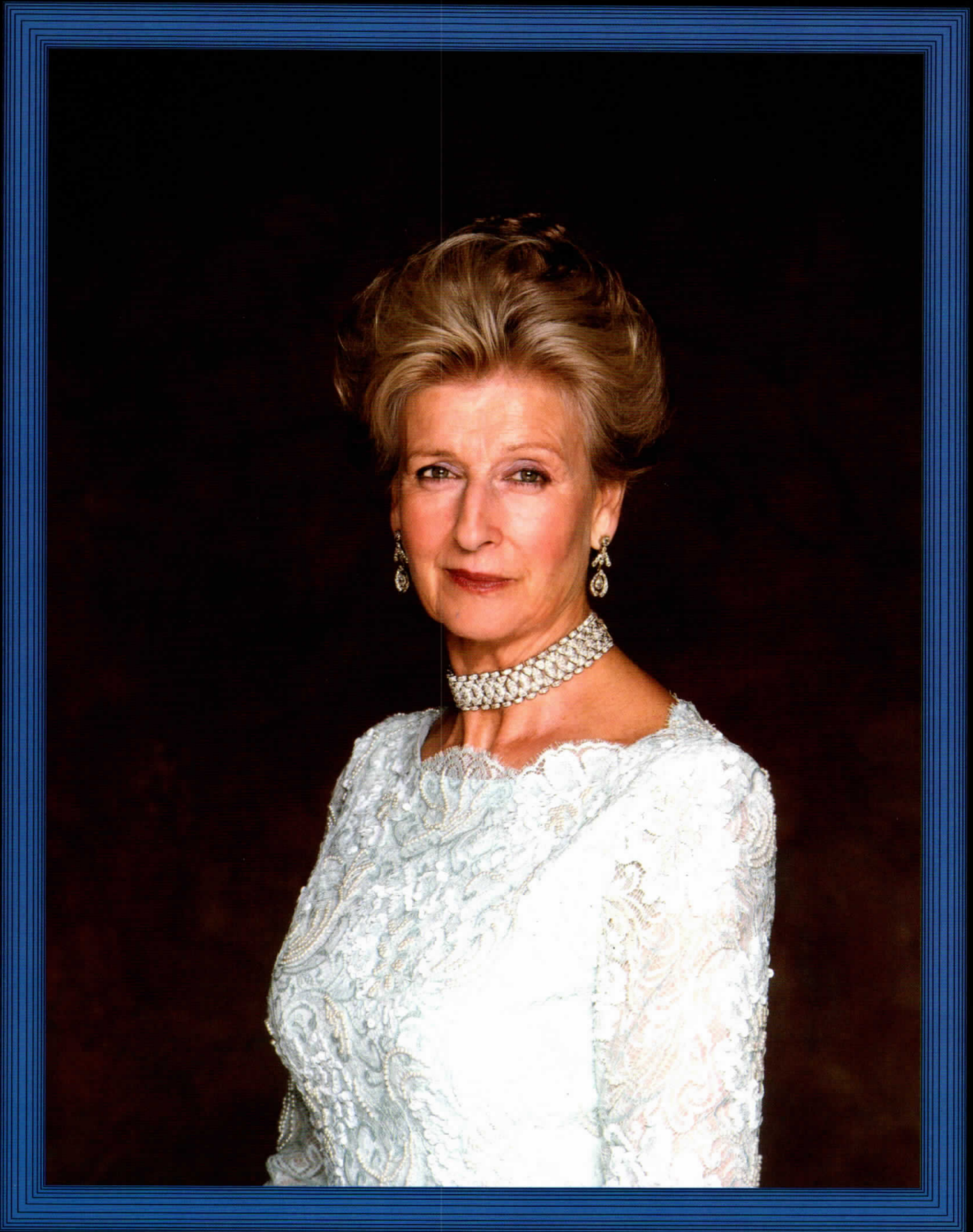
2008-2009

In action in Afghanistan



"The flames were rolling above the vehicle..." Cpl Stephen Thomas, MB, QOR of C

The Colonel-in-Chief



Photograph by Hugo Burnand

Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, KG, GCVO



The Rifleman



“STANDING ON GUARD SINCE 1860”



Buglers perform “Last Post” while skirmishers stand at attention at the Cross of Sacrifice at St. Paul’s Anglican Church on the occasion of the 2008 Remembrance Day Church parade. (see also pages 28 and 29)

In this issue of The Rifleman we are not only taking a look back, as is the tradition, we are also looking ahead to the year 2010 with great anticipation. Only a few months from now The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada will be in its 150th year of service. The Regiment will have been in the service of Canada since 26 April 1860, the year it was founded in Toronto as the Second Battalion Volunteer Militia Rifles of Canada. Historians amongst you will remember that it was designated the 2nd Bn The Queen’s Own Rifles of Toronto in 1863, becoming The 2nd Bn Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada in 1882.

As befits a regiment which can proudly proclaim its standing as “Canada’s oldest continuously-serving infantry regiment,” planning for the celebration of this significant birthday has been underway for many months. Announcements regarding special events will be made known through the pages of The Powder Horn during the months ahead. Most importantly, however, it has now been confirmed that our Colonel-in-Chief will be present. Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, the Honourable Lady Ogilvy KG, GCVO, will join members of the regimental family in events to be held in Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver between April 19 to 26. Her tentative schedule, as at January, 2009, is printed on Page 3, for your interest.

The year 2010 promises to be one which will focus much attention upon a regiment which has been “Standing on Guard Since 1860” and whose history is inextricably linked with that of this country – and has been since before Confederation.

Capt Charles D. McGregor
Editor, The Rifleman

IN PACE PARATUS

COVER PHOTOS

Front cover: With their G Wagon burning fiercely behind them following a violent IED explosion, crew members, including Cpl Stephen Thomas of The Queen’s Own Rifles, rush its volatile cargo of ammunition to a safe place to prevent a major explosion and resultant loss of civilian and military lives. Thomas was one of four crew members awarded a Medal of Bravery for their prompt actions in a perilous situation while serving in Afghanistan. (Story page 6.) **(Inset photo)** Cpl Piotr Burcew, MCpl Adrian Markowski, Capt Jason Demaine and (now) MCpl Stephen Thomas, join with Governor General Michaëlle Jean following presentation of their medals at Rideau Hall. **Inside Front Cover:** Her Royal

Highness Princess Alexandra, The Honourable Lady Ogilvy KG, GCVO, Colonel-in-Chief of The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada. **Inside Back Cover:** Following presentation of the insignia of Companion of the Order of Canada to the Honourable Barnett J. (Barney) Danson PC, CC by Governor General Michaëlle Jean last year, The Queen’s Own’s former Honorary Lieutenant Colonel gathered his family for a group photo. At his side is his wife, Isobel. (Story, photos page 4 and 5.) **Outside Back Cover:** The Bugle Band of the 1st Bn The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada at Edinburgh Castle in 1962. (Story, pages 32 and 33)

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“STANDING ON GUARD SINCE 1860”



The Sesquicentennial Committee and The Trust Fund of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada wish to sincerely thank our donors, whose gracious support enables us to reach our goals.

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Our current donor base stands at slightly over 300 and we are anxious to increase that number. There are over 1400 names on The Rifleman mailing list and we urge every one of you to consider becoming a donor. By doing so you will be helping to ensure that the 150th Anniversary celebrations are properly funded and that the work the Trust Fund does in aid of the regimental family can continue.

Please read the Regimental Trust Fund document enclosed with this issue of The Rifleman and remember that all donations of \$10 or more will receive an income tax receipt.

Tentative Agenda for the 2010 Visit of HRH Princess Alexandra

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Location or Comments
Monday	19-Apr	12.00 p.m.	Depart Heathrow for Vancouver*	Air Canada or BA
		3.20 p.m.	Arrive Vancouver	
		5.00 p.m.	Depart Vancouver	AC
		5.25 p.m.	Arrive in Victoria	AC
Tuesday	20-Apr		Quiet Dinner en suite.	Government House
		2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Reception for all ranks Canadian Scottish	Venue TBA
		7.30 p.m.	Reunion Dinner with the Vancouver Island Branch of the QOR Association.	Venue and Details to be advised. Members of the Can Scots to be invited.
Wednesday	21-Apr		Brief Remarks of 2-3 minutes by HRH during dinner	Appropriate draft remarks to be provided by QOR
		8.30 a.m.	Fly Victoria to Calgary	Air Canada direct
		10.53 a.m.	Arrive Calgary	Militia drivers and Bentleys from Calgary Bentley.
		11.30 a.m.	Private check in to Palliser Hotel	8th Floor, 133 9 Ave S.W.
		2.00 p.m. - 4.00p.m.	One Calgary Association Function with tea and walkabout with all in attendance.	Venue and Details to be advised
Thursday	22-Apr	7.00 p.m.	Reunion Dinner with the Calgary Branch of the QOR Association	Venue and Details to be advised
			Brief Remarks of 2-3 minutes by HRH during dinner	Appropriate draft remarks to be provided by QOR
			Quiet Day	Visit Banff
			Dinner en suite at Palliser Hotel	
Friday	23-Apr	10.55 a.m.	Depart Calgary for Toronto	AC or BA
		4.45 p.m.	Arrive Toronto	
		7.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.	Drinks Reception.	Venue TBA
Saturday	24-Apr	9.00 p.m.	Dinner en suite	Hotel TBA
		2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Rededication of the QOR Museum	Casa Loma
		2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Tea and opportunity to mingle and talk with all ranks in attendance.	Casa Loma
		2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Photos with Officers, NCOs and Band and Bugles	Casa Loma
		7.30 p.m.	Reunion Dinner with the Toronto Branch of the QOR Association	Venue and Details to be advised
Sunday	25-Apr		Brief Remarks of 2-3 minutes by HRH during dinner	Appropriate draft remarks to be provided by QOR
		10.30 a.m.	Church Parade & Laying of Wreaths	St Paul's Church
		12.30 p.m.	Prior to unit arriving in MPA, HRH will have a snack of fruit while the Bn returns to MPA.	Moss Park Armoury
		1.00 p.m.	Visit with serving soldiers and their families as they have their tea and sandwich lunch.	Moss Park Armoury
Monday	26-Apr	3.00 p.m.	Possible shopping.	TBA
		10.00 a.m.	Depart Toronto for UK	Air Canada or BA
		9.20 p.m.	Arrive Heathrow	

* The composition of the UK party will include: HRH, Lady-in-waiting, Private Secretary, Dresser and two British police. While in Canada there will likely be the addition of one member of the RCMP and an QOR Aide-de-Camp. The UK police are responsible for their own expenses.

LCol Barney Danson PC, CC honoured by Canada's Governor General



Governor General Michaëlle Jean presents LCol Barney Danson PC, CC with his Companion of the Order of Canada insignia.

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, presented the insignia of Companion of the Order of Canada to the Honourable Barnett J. (Barney) Danson PC CC on October 2, 2008. He was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada on May 3, 2007.

Lieutenant Colonel Danson PC, CC, a former Rifleman with The Queen's Own who eventually became the regiment's Honorary Lieutenant Colonel, was seriously wounded in Normandy in August, 1944 as the regiment fought its way toward Falaise. He lost the sight of one eye as a result.

In an address to those present, who included his wife Isobel and a number of members of LCol Danson's family, the Governor General praised him for the work he has done on behalf of Canadians for over 50 years. The Governor General touched upon his World War Two service, his work with industry associations as a member of parliament and minister of National Defence in

the Trudeau cabinet, as well as his continuing support of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and other philanthropic entities. She described these as wonderful examples of leadership and giving back to his community and Canada. She also noted that it was "so nice" to see nine of the Dansons' ten grandchildren in attendance to witness this special presentation. (The tenth was in Chicago caring for their newly arrived great grandchild). LCol Danson responded that he was also very pleased to have his grandchildren present to see that that "medals get awarded for things other than armed conflict." He said he was very proud to have served with The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada during the Second War and that "service to country and community are important."

LCol Danson praised the fine work being done by volunteer members of his regiment currently serving Canada in Afghanistan and thanked the Commanding Officer, LCol Robert Zeidler CD, for the presence of Regimental Skirmishers under the com-

mand of Sergeant Bryan Burns. He also said with a chuckle how "fondly" he recalls his duties as a young, pre-war rifleman during the Royal Visit in 1939, when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited and he was a member of the honour guard at Toronto's Union Station upon their arrival.

His book, "Not Bad for a Sergeant" which he presented to the Governor General at the reception, was published in 2002 and, in addition to his service in The Queen's Own Rifles, also includes details of his life during the time when his family struggled during the Depression of the 30s, to his election as an MP and eventual appointment as Canada's Defence Minister. He told Mme Jean that "When you decide to retire (which, he said, he hoped would not

be for a long time) maybe Her Excellency would find time for a good read".

Finally, he thanked former Prime Minister John Turner, Keith Davey, Allistair Gillespie, Judd Buchanan and Donald McDonald for being present as good friends and federal cabinet colleagues.

Barney Danson has led a life of distinguished service to Canada. An advocate of veterans' issues, he spearheaded the establishment of the new Canadian War Museum as well the creation of Katimavik, a young people's program he regards as "One of the major accomplishments of my life."

He has also applied his energy to helping visually impaired persons through his active involvement with the CNIB and the Sir Arthur Pearson Association of War Blind Scholarship Fund as well as the CNIB's library for the blind and visually impaired.



Governor General
Michaëlle Jean shows the
autographed copy of Barney
Danson's book, "Not Bad
For A Sergeant."

Photographs taken by Sgt Serge
Gouin, Rideau Hall



Queen's Own Rifles Pioneer Sergeant Bryan Burns with LCol Barney Danson PC, CC and Governor General Michaëlle Jean following the former Honorary Lieutenant Colonel's investiture as a Companion of the Order of Canada.

Bravery in the aftermath of an Improvised Explosive Device near Kandahar

Lt Frank Monozlai, 32 Canadian Brigade Group

“When the bomb exploded,” says Captain Jason Demaine, “we both thought we were dead.” Part of a battle-worn convoy not far from Kandahar, Capt Demaine’s G-Wagon was attacked by a suicide bomber as he led his small Psyops det through Op Medusa. Flames rushed through the driver’s door and filled the compartment while the back windows blew out. That released the pressure that otherwise probably would have killed them. It was October 2, 2006.

Nearly two years later, on a cool September day far away from southern Afghanistan, an audience gathers at Rideau Hall to honour the heroism that followed that blast.

Master-Corporal Stephen Thomas of The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada and Master-Corporal Adrian Markowski of the 48th Highlanders of Canada are there as well. Part of the Force Protection of that fateful convoy, the two Toronto soldiers are also being recognized for their speedy response to the attack. Working as a team, these four – Demaine is from the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa and his driver, Corporal Piotr Burcew, is from Le Régiment de Maisonneuve – emptied the burning vehicle of its volatile cargo. If their ample load of ammo had exploded, the gathering crowd of unprotected onlookers would have borne the brunt of the blast.

“There are lots of heroes in this city that nobody hears about,” points out MCpl Thomas. “Most of the full-time staff here [at Moss Park] have served overseas. Sergeant Jamieson Murray received a CEF-COM Commendation for his service in Afghanistan, while MCpl Shane Silva ... managed to save someone’s life on the 401.” Modesty, however, will only get you so far.

Thomas and Markowski were part of a section from 32 Brigade doing Force Protection. This suicide attack at the beginning of their tour in October was but the first of five IED attacks they’d face during their six months in theatre. A tightly knit group, they all live in Mississauga and remain friends.

On the day of the attack, Thomas and Markowski were driving one of three Force Protection RG-31s that were shepherding a convoy from a Forward Operating Base back to Kandahar Air Field. They were in

the second vehicle (known as “the bully”) which protects the flanks of the convoy by moving between any perceived threats and the cargo as required. They had been warned by an intelligence report to stay on the lookout for a Toyota Corolla. The attack came from a motorcycle. It initially had pulled to the side of the road, like any other vehicle. But when he sighted a thin-skinned vehicle, the bomber had his target.

Within moments of Thomas noticing that something was up, everything exploded right in front of them. Demaine’s truck was set ablaze and knocked to the right side of the road. “Are we alive?” asked Thomas. Markowski was there. Their armoured windshield had stopped shards of shrapnel that would have taken off his head, Thomas realized, and then his mind switched to the task. He began applying the drills he’d learned.



MCpl Steve Thomas wears Medal of Bravery and Afghanistan Star

Warning his friend to prepare to see death, Thomas ran forward and pulled open the doors to the blazing G-Wagon. Demaine and his driver were still padding down the flames that covered their clothes. Their first concern was to get out to prepare for the follow-on attack that often targets the disabled vehicle. Then Demaine realized the risk of the fire to his cargo. In addition to mission-essential cargo, the truck was carrying three M72 rockets, about ten boxes of C6 ammo, and several grenades. A crowd was gathering quickly, and small children

are especially adept at getting around the Afghan police and Canadians trying to maintain a cordon. It was obvious they had to work fast.

They first tried putting out the fire that was now engulfing the vehicle. Only one of four extinguishers they found actually worked. Killing the fire was impossible.

Demaine, Burcew, Thomas and Markowski began emptying the still-burning G-Wagon. Thomas pulled things out of a side door, handing them off to the other three, who moved the munitions about 200 metres away. On the second relay, someone else took over when Thomas’s helmet began to smoke. “The flames were rolling above the vehicle, says Thomas, “which my firefighting buddies say indicates a really intense fire.”

The four kept working until most of the ammo was gone. They left the grenades behind, because they knew they couldn’t pierce the sides of the G-wagon. Less than a minute later, they cooked off in what remained of the truck.

Proving their training, the team responded instinctively to chaos. The initial blast from the Taliban bomber had wounded a number of civilians, including a child who lost part of his scalp and an old man who needed to be cleared from the blast area. A mortally wounded donkey wailed continuously until someone put it out of its misery.

All of this happened in what was then the hottest part of the world; the 60-degree heat that day surpassed the Sahara desert. All along the soldiers were laden with helmet, body armour, tac vest, weapons and more. Thomas says “some people dropped 40-50 pounds in six months on tour, all on account of the heat.” While the training in Wainwright firmed up their drills, the weather in Afghanistan can only be experienced.

“You learn to think outside the box, rather than just be a corporal who follows and thinks about himself,” argues Thomas. “You learn to think about others and the mission ... I try to enforce on all the kids that I teach today not to think about themselves.” Our success, he says, can be heard in the cheers of the Afghan children who chant “Canada! Canada!” to our convoys as they pass.

Queen's Own soldiers nearing end of Afghanistan deployment



Capt R.K. Burt, Sgt Bill Paton, MCpl Jay McGibbon and MCpl Rick Kurelo, back from patrol, pose for a group photo

Canada's battlegroup in Afghanistan handed over command of their operations to a new group of Canadian soldiers last fall, including 22 members of The Queen's Own Rifles. The Royal Canadian Regiment (RCR), principally out of Petawawa, Ont., and Gagetown, N.B., replaced Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during a ceremony held on September 20, 2008.

LCol. Dave Corbould said he and his fellow Patricias saw increasing progress in their section of Afghanistan during their seven-month mission. He said the insurgents have acted in a "cowardly" manner by employing "shoot and scoot" tactics. But he noted that more and more Afghans have been cooperating with the Afghan army and police.

"That's where the progress has really been made -- their interaction with the local nationals and their credibility with the local nationals in order to be a real force in providing security," he said. Corbould said insurgents have not succeeded in undermining confidence in the Afghan security forces.

"They're trying to create an image with the local nationals that the Afghan national security forces can't provide security. But on a day-to-day basis, we get an increasing number of reports from nationals on likely insurgent locations and where IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) are being planted," he said.

The commander of The RCR, Lieut-Col. Roger Barrett, says his soldiers are determined to keep making progress. "Our resolve is absolutely undiminished," he said. "There is nothing with respect to Taliban propaganda that will force us to act in a different manner. Every time we go up against the Taliban, they will lose. Full stop."

The handover marks the sixth rotation of troops through Kandahar since Canada deployed troops to the country in 2002. The change in command by the Canadians coincided with the United Nations International Day of Peace, which was also marked at a festive ceremony in Kandahar on September 20.

Taliban leaders in Afghanistan claimed they would observe "Peace Day" and NATO has also ordered its troops to halt offensive military operations. Afghanistan's leaders said the Afghan army would also observe the occasion.

In Kandahar, foreign and local dignitaries gathered for a ceremony that included theatrical and musical performances. The new governor of Kandahar province thanked Canada for helping to train Afghan security forces.

He also said he hoped Canadian troops would stay in the country for a long time. Ottawa has said Canada's current mission in the country will end in 2011.

The "Peace Day" effort appears to have had some success, with no reports of violence in much of the country. "It's crazy, but apparently the Taliban sent out an email saying they were going to abide by it if we were, and we definitely are," U.S. coalition spokesman Joel Peavey told The Associated Press. "It's a great day to show Afghans exactly what peace is like and how their everyday life would be if they just booted out the bad guys."

But there was at least one report of an attack by Taliban militants. They ambushed a security company guarding a road construction crew in Ghazni province. The attack killed two guards, said a provincial official.

About 4,500 people have been killed in insurgent-related attacks in Afghanistan this year. Most of those killed were militants, but hundreds of civilians have also died. Almost 100 Canadians had died in the country since 2002.

The UN launched the International Day of Peace in the early 1980s and made September 21 its permanent date in 2002.

(Courtesy CTV News.)



MCpl Adam de Bartok finds some new friends in Kandahar.





WO Scott Moody, MCpl Jay McGibbon and Sgt Bill Paton ready to go on patrol.



Left to Right - Maj Peter St Denis, MWO Mark Shannon, WO Scott Moody, Cpl Lee Harrison and WO Inasio Kim chillin' after the day's work is done.



Sgt Bill Paton and MCpl Jay McGibbon show the regimental flag.



Cpl Adam Winnicki with the 1 Troop banner.

Troops leaving shortly for Afghanistan held a family day at CFB Petawawa last summer and took time to have some photos taken. Rear row (L. To R.) Sgt June Parris, Cpl Paolo Villa, Sgt Bill Paton, Cpl Paul Benincasa, MCpl Jay McGibbon, RSM Shaun Kelly. Front Row (L. To R.) Major Allan Champion, Hon LCol Dick Cowling and MCpl Adam de Bartok.



Tim Hortons in Kandahar -- An Insider's View

Jennifer Jones

(Jennifer Jones spent six months working at the Kandahar Tim Hortons. Here's how her stint in war-torn Afghanistan gave her a greater appreciation for our soldiers – and our country.)

My alarm goes off just before 5 a.m. I pull on my bathrobe, pad down the hallway and open the plywood door to a gravel road and a line of large rounded tents surrounded by concrete highway dividers. The sun is already up, and hundreds of birds have congregated in the few trees to bid the morning welcome with their cheerful chatter. It is almost cool, but the promise of 50-degree heat hangs in the air.

I walk over sand and gravel to the shower trailer. This early in the morning I have the place to myself, which doesn't happen often. The trailer is ripe with the smells of chlorine and disinfectant, and I hurry back to my tent where I'm living for six months and change into my uniform. I put on sand-coloured pants and a shirt, my name tag and a desert camouflage hat. As I arrive at work, there's already a lineup, so I hustle in the side door. My coworkers are bustling about, making coffee and stocking cups. I grab a hairnet, put it on under my cap and take my place as the doors open.

Not an average job

This is no ordinary Tim Hortons. I work on the Kandahar military base in Afghanistan. The store is roughly in the middle of the base. In the centre is a large sand-and-gravel field where the Americans play football and the Brits play cricket. There's a ball hockey rink right outside our store where we watch the Canadian troops play enthusiastic games of hockey in the sweltering heat. Other food outlets and stores line two sides of the boardwalk in the sand.

The store is actually a trailer and in the mornings, with six people behind the counter, it's a busy place. We rush about in a practiced ballet of coffee and doughnuts, calling out orders and dodging the bakers as they come to fill up the showcase. Sometimes I marvel that we don't crash into one another.

The usual

We can often tell what someone will order just by looking at the uniform. The Canadian troops usually just want a double-double, known as a NATO Standard over here. Sometimes we tempt them into an apple fritter. The Americans prefer honey dips with a regular coffee, whereas the Brits can't turn down a Boston cream or a Canadian maple. They're also partial to French vanilla cappuccinos. When the cappuccino machine is temporarily out of service, we almost have a mutiny on our hands.

"No French vanilla?" a group of four British soldiers gasp and moan. "What are we supposed to do?" "What will you do when you go home?" I ask. "You'll have to start a franchise in Sussex." "Oh, we'll just order the French vanilla online then." They grin and buy two cans of the mix to tide them over.

I enjoy seeing our regulars as well as the new faces that arrive all the time "Good mornin', m'love! And how're you today?" one of the older soldiers from Newfoundland lilt. His face is tanned and his blue eyes sparkle as he smiles. I return the smile and say, "Just great! And you?"

"Oh, livin' the dream," he laughs and orders his morning coffee. I know he'll be back three or four more times before the day's end.

The Tim Hortons caps we wear are perhaps the most in demand. "Can I have six double-doubles and a hat?" "How much for your hat, darlin'?" We hear these questions all day long. Conversation is mostly casual and lighthearted.

"Make my coffee better than his," one soldier jokes, pointing to his friend. "Give him the old stuff." "Are you still here? I thought you'd be home by now! When do they let you out?"

'We're prone to rocket attacks'

Of course, we're the only Tim Hortons where the majority of customers come in fully armed. But by now I'm used to the sight of a soldier with a rifle in one hand and a coffee in the other. We're also prone to rocket attacks on the base, and when the alarm sounds, we have to get all the customers out of the store and sit in the back until the all clear sounds. There's a heavy thud, a feeling of

impact and then the eerie wail of an old air-raided siren. That's the signal to get to a bunker, or to the back of the store, if I'm working.

The first time I experienced this I wasn't really scared, but it gave a note of seriousness to my job that hadn't been there before. We sat on the floor and waited until the all-clear alarm went off like a British police siren. Some days are harder

Because of the hot weather, we make a lot of iced cappuccinos, and I often dance a little when I make them. I sway back and forth, moving my hips to the sound of the mixer. I tell the customers it tastes better that way. It never fails to get a smile.

There are days when it's hard to be upbeat, though. We've had six ramp ceremonies since I've been here. A ramp ceremony is when we send soldiers home in the very way we don't want to – in a coffin. It's a very formal event, with the troops marching out in formation. Those of us with the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency are put in our own ranks. We march behind our troops and take our place on the tarmac in front of the plane that will fly the bodies home. Other than the sound of marching feet, all is silent.

A brief service is usually conducted by the padre, a military minister. We pray, then the troops salute the caskets draped in Canadian flags, which are carried high on the shoulders of other soldiers. A bagpiper follows behind. I don't think I'll ever hear the sound of bagpipes again without remembering these ceremonies. Sometimes I cry, a little – for lives lost, and for families I've never met.

When we get back to work the mood is sombre; soldiers come in with grief on their faces. They give their order quietly, avoiding eye contact. I can sense that tears are close for them. It can be hard to speak in those moments. Yet most of the soldiers appreciate our smiles and jokes. When we celebrate life, it helps us all deal with death a little easier.

I applied for this job in August 2006. I was wrapping up a contract job with an arts festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., processing donations and sending out membership packages. I was looking for

something different to do with my life; something that would feel like I was helping out a larger cause. I didn't think I would get this job.

I'm 35, and although I'm not married and don't have children, I assumed I'd be bypassed in favour of younger adventurers. But I found a range of ages and experiences when I was accepted into the two-week training course. One of my coworkers, Chantal, 24, from Timmins, Ont., signed up because her husband is a soldier here and she wanted to support him and their friends who are serving in this mission.

We work long hours, and there are no days off. By the end of a shift, I'm tired as I walk back to my tent. My little room is home, for now, and though it's only the size of small car garage, it's comfortable. I have a bedsheet for a door and a curving tent wall above my head. When it rains hard, as it sometimes does, the tent often leaks.

Missing home

I miss simple things, like having a bathroom in the same building as my bedroom and walls that go all the way up to the ceiling. I miss picking berries and making pies and jam. I have a friend who recently died of cancer, and I wish I could have visited her, or at least called her more easily and frequently. I have even missed winter. But at night in Kandahar, I look up and see the same familiar constellations that hang over the sky in my hometown of Thunder Bay, Ont., and I know I'll be back there before long.

I rest easy knowing that my home is where roadside bombings and landmines are unheard of. I have a huge appreciation for Canada – I always did – but this experience is magnifying it.

Making a difference

This job has given me more patience and shown that I can live through difficult circumstances with a smile on my face. I came here with very little understanding

of the military culture, and I will leave knowing that our soldiers are proud to serve us this far from home; they want to make the world better for their own families and their country.

For the soldiers, being able to feel normal by ordering "the usual" helps make their tour more bearable. Just the other day, a soldier told me, "If it weren't for this place, I'd have gone crazy by now." So when a young soldier comes in and gives me a thankful grin because he can finally get an iced cappuccino after six weeks out in the desert, I feel that, even by just serving a coffee, I can make a difference.

(Editor's note: This material arrived as an email from LCol Howard Flood, former DCO of The Queen's Own Rifles and CO of the Royal Regiment of Canada, now living and working in Europe.)

Wedding of Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Dick Cowling CD and Veronica Higgins



Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Richard (Dick) Cowling CD and Veronica Higgins were married last fall, with Justice of the Peace, Queen's Own Capt Tom Foulds officiating. Several Queen's Own officers formed a Sword Arch for the happy couple when they joined their guests following the ceremony.

“Last Post”

It has been said that old soldiers sleep more peacefully because they have earned that right, so we hope that the following Members of the Branch sleep well as they were all proud soldiers and we bid them farewell:

- John Connelly** January 04, 2008, Parksville, BC
- Lloyd Cornett** January 21, 2008, Tsawassen, BC
- Weldon Angus Welsh** January 23, 2008, Innerkip, ON
- Norman Bastin** May 17, 2008, Edberg, AB
- Donald Black** April 04, 2008, Dawson Creek, BC
- Douglas M. Rogers** April 04, 2008, Victoria, BC
- Raymond Charron** September 07, 2008, Saanichton, BC
- Kenneth Tucker** September 21, 2008, Stoney Plain, AB

QOR of C Association, Vancouver Island Branch



Back Row: Jim Schultz-Museum; Bob Drinkwater-Secretary; Ira MacDonald-Past President; Herb Pitts-2010 Chairman; Kevin Wash-Entertainment. **Middle Row:** Art Saretzky-Up Island rep; Bill Brayshaw-President; Dave Stones-Museum; Russ-Kierstead-Branch Photographer. **Front Row:** Jim Carroll-Treasurer/Membership; Peter Kolbe-Kit Shop; Gord Kitsch-Branch Custodian; Ron Kinnersley-Kit Shop. **Missing:** Ed Titus-Vice President

For a complete schedule of Branch Functions and current news please take a moment to have a look at our Branch Website that has been expertly put together and maintained by our Branch Webmaster Mike Cuvelier. The address is: www.qor.com/association/vancouverisland.html.



At Dalton Armoury, lead bugler Tim Vickers practices for the Drum and Bugle Band of the 2881 Scarborough Rifles Cadet Corps.



Officer's Mess PMC Capt Tom Foulds CD presides over an early-morning Officers/Sergeants breakfast prior to welcoming guests to the New Year's Day Levee



Two former RSMs man the egg nog in the Sergeant's Mess at the New Year's Day Levee. RSM/CWO Scott Patterson at left and Capt John Wilmot CD.

Keeping our history alive – and keeping busy

John Shapter - President of Maritimes – Newfoundland – Labrador Branch



Jim Sheppard, our Maritime-Newfoundland-Labrador Association Kit Shop representative recently purchased a small house in his home town of Recontre East in Newfoundland and has been busy renovating it as a Museum to display his extensive collection of military memorabilia, mostly from The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and the Engineers.

He has been a avid collector for many years and has finally found a suitable home to effectively display his items.

One room dedicated as The Rifles Room displays various uniforms, mess kits, photos, prints and other QOR memorabilia. Some of his items may already be seen on our web site.

Another room will be strictly Engineers with memorabilia as early as 1866, along with CEF, Canadian Forestry, Railway, Canadian Engineers, RCE, CE, and CME items. Other areas will be common to Corps.

This retired Rifleman believes in preserving our history and is working hard to ensure it is kept going. He maintains that as our members continue to dwindle, so we must strive to keep our history alive.

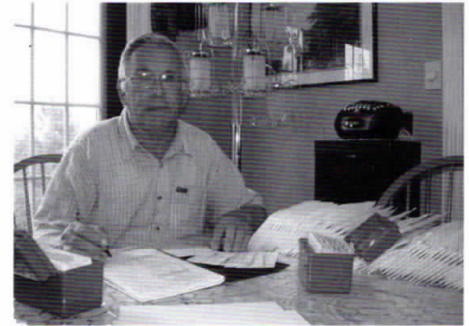
A while ago I had the pleasure of spending a night in Clarenville with my friends, John and Mary Metcalfe. I also visited friends of John and Mary and in conversation with them I learned about the early days of the Association and the large efforts of our Past President, John Metcalfe, in getting this branch of the Association up and running. Here is what I learned.

John would spend hours on the phone. From the people he spoke with he would get other contacts. As time went on he had a stack of exercise books full of random names and information. There had to be a more efficient way of keeping account of names, addresses, phone numbers and who was contacted. More importantly, if there was interest in his idea of an Association? Would they join? The exercise books were OK, but inefficient in finding addresses and phone numbers when on the phone to other contacts who were also interested in knowing so-and-so's address, etc... John began an index card file system. The boxes grew to two and today are affectionately known as his ABlue Laptops.

It was suggested that he get a computer to help make his life easier. It is undemanding when you know how to use one. He knew that getting started would take more of his precious little time. It would mean going back to school. That can only happen if things are shifted, as most nights were used attending to activities of some other organization. John could see that down the road things would be more efficient if he could learn to use the machine.

The computer and the Internet gave John access to Canada411. He found a list of names with email addresses on the QOR site. He was on a roll. This is a less expensive way to communicate with people. Sending and receiving "letters" in the matter of moments opened up a whole new world. The time zone is not an issue as with the phone. Yet, Mary will tell you he still spends hours calling people all across Canada sometimes waking them up.

The reunion is what it was all about. It was



John Metcalfe, Past President of Maritimes – Newfoundland – Labrador Branch

The reunion is what it was all about. It was not just for John. He wanted this for everyone else. At every reunion we have guests from away, some from as far away as British Columbia. There is one thing that keeps John going at what he does that is the joy these reunions bring to so many. It was like a step back in time, meeting old friends and sharing stories. It also involves making new friends and this opens a whole new list of possibilities.

I did not know John until we met at the first Reunion. We hit it off right away, we have become good friends and through him I have met many more excellent friends. We get together frequently for a coffee, share stories, have a laugh and enjoy a joke or two.

John is the member-getter of our branch Association. He works hard to make it a success. All of you who have met him know him as a "go-getter", never a quitter. He gives fully of himself to our Association. He gives a lot of himself to many of the organizations in his home town of Clarenville, Newfoundland.

To the Past President, John Metcalfe, I say thank you for your hard work. Thank you for the assistance you gave me as your Vice President. I am sure that all members will agree that you are a credit to the Association and our hope is that you have much good health and remain with us for many, many years to come.

Thank you John.

Toronto Branch shipped gift parcels to QOR troops in Kandahar

Bob Dunk, President

It's hard to believe that 2008 is gone and, at the time of writing, we are less than 16 months away from our 150th Birthday in 2010. I'll start this report by giving you a recap of 2008 and an update on events planned for 2009.

In February, we held a fundraising card evening and in spite of a major snowstorm, we had over 100 players attend making it a very successful event. Once again, the event was strongly supported by Dave Lavery and the very generous employees of Toronto Hydro.

Our AGM was held in April and the results of the elections can be viewed on the website. In the very near future, we'll be making much better use of the website to advertise upcoming events, especially the 2010 Reunion in Toronto.

In May, Ron Jewell and a fine group of riflemen in southwestern Ontario got together at their annual luncheon in London and officially formed the Southwestern Ontario Chapter of Toronto Branch. Ron and his Chapter meet for lunch the first Thursday of May and October to celebrate their years in the Regiment. If you find yourself in southwestern Ontario, be sure to get in touch with Ron to see if they have any social events scheduled during your visit.

Also in May, Don Dalziel officially organized the members of the Black Net in the Capital Region to become the Ottawa Chapter. There is always a get-together for the Regimental birthday in April so please give Don a call for more information.

In June we held our 4th annual golf tournament at Heather Glen. Despite strong competition from a number of teams of serving

rifleman, a team from Toronto Hydro once again walked away with top honours. For all you golfers out there, why not form a team and enter this year to defend the Regiment's honour?

Our D-Day Ceremony was held at Moss Park on June 6th at 1100hrs. Each year there are fewer D-Day veterans able to come out and participate. It is a short but very moving ceremony and if you are in Toronto on June 6th, please try and attend.

The Queen's Own was once again well represented at the Korean Veterans Memorial service on July 27th in Brampton as well as during the Warrior's Day parade in August at the CNE.

Another evening of cards was held as a fundraiser in October and once again, Toronto Hydro employees made the difference. Much of the money raised during these fundraising events goes to support serving riflemen on overseas postings.

This year, the Regiment had 21 riflemen serving in Afghanistan at Christmas. The Association pooled resources with the Trust Fund and we were able to send a gift parcel over to each soldier. This year the packages contained an Outside the Wire shirt which provides not only comfort but flash protection as the garment is also fire retardant. We also provided a hanging shaving kit and Peter Simundson was able to include toiletries supplied by the Great Canadian Superstore in Mississauga. Toronto Branch Association members and their wives and friends provided home baked goods and these were packaged up so each rifleman received a large container of assorted goodies. Buzz Currie contacted Terra Cotta Cookies in Georgetown who generously

provided a very large donation of Christmas cookies packaged in Christmas boxes. And finally, Jack Astor's restaurant in Scarborough provided a variety of fresh baked goods that were included in the parcels as well.

The packages were extremely well received and appreciated by all ranks in Afghanistan.

Planned events for 2009 include:

- **April 25th** – Toronto Branch AGM
- **May 7th** – Southwestern Ontario Chapter luncheon, London
- **May 10th** – Family BBQ to welcome our returned rifleman. Highland Creek Legion.
- **June 6th** – D-Day Remembrance Ceremony, Moss Park
- **June 9th** – 4th Annual Golf Tournament, Heather Glen
- **July 27th** – KVA Memorial, Brampton
- **August** – Warrior's Day Parade, CNE
- **October 1st** – Southwestern Ontario Chapter luncheon, London
- **October** – 2010 fundraising event
- **November 8th** – Remembrance Day Church Parade

With less than 16 months to go before the big weekend in 2010, preparations are well underway for the reunion weekend. Make sure you mark the 23rd to 25th of April, 2010 in your calendar. Pricing for rooms and events can't be finalized until April of this year so keep an eye on the website. Significant discounts will be available to National Association members so make sure that your 2009 dues are paid before the AGM!

Toronto Branch has a lot planned for the 150th Birthday Weekend

The Toronto Branch of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association has designated the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel in Toronto as 150th Anniversary HQ in 2010. A number of exciting events are planned, says Association President Bob Dunk, including:

Friday, April 23rd: "Meet & Greet" in the Frontenac Ballroom; displays of Regimental memorabilia from 1860 to 2010; photographs, trophies and equipment from all three Battalions; hear the

Regimental Band and Bugles on stage.

Saturday, April 24th: Tour the Regimental Museum at Casa Loma; Gala reception in the Frontenac Ballroom; Regimental Dinner with HRH Princess Alexandra in attendance in the Metro Ballroom; Dance to the music of The Regimental Dance Band in the Metro Ballroom; Or a live band and DJ in the Frontenac Ballroom.

Sunday, April 25th: Regimental Church Parade at St. Paul's Anglican (Your oppor-

tunity to once again march with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in front of St. Paul's and participate on parade in the Ceremony of Remembrance).

Dunk says that, "We will be taking reservations, selling tickets and publishing prices later this spring; probably May as we can't finalize hotel prices until 12 months before the event. We'll post them on the website at qor.com as well as in Regimental publications."

Calgary Branch has ambitious plans to celebrate the 150th Birthday

Jack Glenn

As currently scheduled, Calgary Branch will celebrate the Regiment's 150th Anniversary on 21 April, coincident with our Colonel-in-Chief HRH Princess Alexandra's visit to Calgary. We have planned a number of events for what will be a busy day for HRH and branch members.

HRH will arrive in Calgary, by air, from Victoria on the morning of 21 April. After lunch, she will be escorted to the Officer's Mess at the former Currie Barracks where she will re-dedicate a cairn that commemorates the designation of the base sports field as Rifle's Field, in recognition of the Regiment's 14 years of service at Currie Barracks, the Regimental Home station

from 1954 to 1968. The cairn, which was erected at the north end of Rifle's Field in 1968, will be refurbished and relocated within the footprint of the Officer's Mess, which is a Provincial Historic Site. This will be a public event and we will be encouraging Branch members, the general public, the media and perhaps other dignitaries to attend.

Time permitting HRH will be accompanied on a visit to one or more of the Colonel Belcher Veteran's Care Centre, the Military Museums or the Peacekeepers' commemorative wall in Garrison Woods.

The major event of the day will take place in the evening, when the Colonel-in-Chief

will be the guest of honour at a Buffet Dinner and Dance at No.264 (Kensington) Legion in Calgary, to which all Association members and their spouses or partners are invited. Music during dinner and for dancing will be provided by the King's Own Calgary Regimental Band. One of our major objectives will be to arrange the evening's activities so that as many members as possible will have the opportunity to meet and speak with HRH.

To add some genuine regimental flavour to the day, we hope to have a contingent of the reserve battalion's Drums and Bugles and Skirmishers taking part in all of the day's events.

"Oh to be in Calgary, now that spring (and the snow) is here"

Jack Glenn

One of worst snowstorms of the year couldn't keep 61 people from attending the Branch's Birthday Dinner at 264 Legion on 18 Apr. Though the Executive was gratified to have so many turn out, it was still somewhat of a disappointment since 71 had indicated they would be on hand.

Dinner was preceded by our AGM during which our new Executive Committee was approved, as reported in the last Powderhorn. The Executive recommended and the membership approved an increase in membership fees for 2009. Branch fees will increase to \$7.50 from \$5.00 - still a bargain. Those branch members who choose also to join the National Association will be charged \$15, which will include a levy of \$7.50 that the Branch Treasurer will forward to the National Association. Members were warned that they can also expect to pay more for the Xmas lunch and Birthday dinner in future since the current charge does not cover the cost of these events.

Our incoming President, Bob Titus, on behalf of the Branch membership, presented a plaque to John Cresswell, recognizing his many years of service as Branch president. I reported on the 08 March 2010 Planning Steering Committee and revamped National Association meetings,

which I attended on behalf of the Branch. Both Bob and I encouraged all members to become National Association members when the new Association is launched in 2009.

During the course of the evening we all joined in singing Happy Birthday to Jim Taylor, and Frank Mascaro. Despite the bad weather some members from out of town joined the party, including Abe Olfert from Raymond, AB, whose son, born to Abe and his wife while Abe was serving with 2Bn in Germany in 1960, had been declared the "Centennial baby".

Following the lead of the VI Branch, there was a photographer on hand to take photos of everyone in attendance. These have been transcribed onto both a CD and a DVD, which are being made available to all members who attended the celebrations.

Bob Aucoin and Willy Wilson have volunteered to take charge of an entertainment sub-committee and will be recruiting other members to help them out.]

A severe hailstorm that hit Calgary in early July wreaked havoc on John Friedt's flowers. That and John's trip to South Korea, which you can read about elsewhere in this

issue, resulted in the cancellation of John & Lyda's annual garden party. In the prairie tradition, we are all looking forward to next year. At a function held at the Palliser hotel In July, John Cresswell was presented with a certificate on behalf of the Minister of National Defence recognizing his many years of service to veterans' organizations. In addition to his service to our Association, John has been active in the Royal Canadian Legion, the Korean Veterans' Association, the PPCLI Association and the local Peacekeepers' Association as well as being a volunteer at the Colonel Belcher Care Centre and a key member of the "Friends of the Colonel Belcher" group that raises funds for enhancements at the Centre..

The Branch Executive has been meeting on a monthly basis this year with its major effort directed at coming up with a plan and budget for our 150th Birthday Celebrations in April of 2010 - which you can also read about elsewhere in the issue, and rewriting the Branch's By-Laws to be consistent with the new Association By-laws.

Vancouver Island Branch looking forward to welcoming HRH Princess Alexandra

Bob Drinkwater, Secretary

Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association
Vancouver Island Branch
2010 Regimental Birthday Agenda

October 2008

Herb Pitts is the Vancouver Island Branch Executive Committee Member responsible for the scheduling of events to be held in Victoria, BC set to celebrate the Regiment's 150th Birthday in 2010. As of this date the tentative agenda for the visit is:

1. April 19th, 2010

a. Arrival: HRH Princess Alexandra of Kent will arrive at Victoria International Airport and be met by representatives of the QOR and Cdn. Scottish. Cdn. Scottish has agreed to provide an honour guard, baggage control and a vehicle to transport HRH to Victoria. It is expected that she will stay at the Lieutenant Governor's Residence. Members of the Branch Executive will be present at the airport.

Dress would be Blazer with medals.

b. Meet & Greet for the evening of the 19th to be held at the Gorge Legion commencing at 1700 hrs. Food will be available at a cost yet to be determined; No-Host Bar. HRH is not expected to attend this function.

2. April 20th, 2010

a. Unveiling: We have received approval from Naden to place a cairn at Work Point Barracks which will be unveiled by HRH during the morning of April 20th. A second cairn/plaque will be unveiled by HRH at the University of Victoria later that same morning. We will try and have as many Branch Members as possible at both unveilings. Dress will be Blazer with medals. Jim Carroll to schedule the members who will attend; group transport will be provided.

b. Lunch: The Cdn. Scottish will host a luncheon for HRH. They may invite a

Member of our Executive to attend.

c. Dinner: Commencing at 1730hrs for 1800hrs; current venue selected is the Langford Legion. RCL # 91 which has a seating capacity of 250. We will need to allow approx 25 seats for HRH's attendants and invited guests. There will be a Regimental Bugler, Drummer and Skirmishers provided by Toronto, we have requested a dance ensemble from the Regimental Band be provided by Toronto as well. Dress will be Blazer with medals or other suitable semi-formal attire. It is anticipated that this venue may be too small to accommodate this event; discussions are continuing.

3. April 21st, 2010

a. Commencing at 0900hrs till 1200hrs there will be a farewell brunch held at the Gorge Legion for all Members and Guests. HRH is not expected to attend this function. Cost yet to be determined.

Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Vancouver Island Branch Report

Bob Drinkwater, Secretary

2008 was a very good year for the Vancouver Island Branch due to the continued strong membership support of more than 250 Riflemen. Many regularly attend our monthly luncheons the last Wednesday of each month at the Pro Patria Legion on Gorge Road in Victoria and our monthly coffee breaks held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the RCL Branch #10 Legion on Harewood Road in Nanaimo. Visitors from BC and other parts of Canada always welcome.

The October 18th 2008 Dinner and Dance was attended by 105 Members and their guests who all seemed pleased with the change this year to an Oktoberfest theme complete with traditional German food. It was nice to see so many former comrades gather together in celebration of friendships that have existed for more years than we care to count. For those Members that were not able to attend we hope to see you at the Regimental Birthday Dinner/Dance scheduled to be held at the Langford Legion on April 25th, 2009 which will be preceded by an informal Meet & Greet at the Gorge

Legion at 1700hrs the previous evening, April 24th.

Our Annual General Meeting scheduled for January 17th, 2009 at the Langford Legion at 1300hrs, marked the beginning of a truly National Association. Branch members can elect to participate in the National Association at the same time as they renew their Branch Membership for 2009 by paying a separate Membership fee of \$7.50. This fee is in addition to the Branch dues (which will remain at \$15.00 for 2009) and is completely voluntary. The Branch has agreed to collect the levy on behalf of the National Association and forward it with the names of those who have paid to the National Membership.

Benefits of belonging to the National Association can be summarized as:

1. Receive "The Rifleman" magazine which will have more Branch emphasis in future.
2. Receive a "preferred" price for National events.
3. Access to "limited edition" Regimental items.

4. Preferred pricing on tours and revisits to France, Germany and the UK.
5. Bursary support for education of deserving persons with Regimental connections.
6. Maintenance and support of a National Website as well as other benefits that are currently being explored.

The Vancouver Island Branch Executive has unanimously agreed to recommend that all Branch members join the National Association.

A lot of work has been done over the last few years to improve the Queen's Own exhibit at the Base Museum located in Esquimalt at CFB Naden. The exhibit contains many pictures and a large display of Regimental memorabilia that truly reflect the time the Regiment was such an important part of Victoria's history. Anyone who served in the Regiment as well as those now serving should take an opportunity to tour the exhibit with their families. It is an impressive exhibit that will bring back memories as well as educate the generations that followed the years depicted there.

55th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice is marked by QOR veterans

John Friedt



L to R: Joseph Morin, John Friedt, Joe Perry and James Eagle at the Republic of Korea national War Memorial and Museum in Seoul.

During the week of 7-16 July, 2008, ceremonies marking the 55th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice were held at several locations in the Republic of Korea (South Korea). I was one of four former members of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada selected to form part of the Canadian delegation to participate in these events, compliments of Veteran's Affairs Canada.. The other ex- Queen's Own members of the group were Joseph Morin, Joe Percy and James Eagle. My wife, Lyda,

was unable to make the journey with me but my son Mark came along as a caregiver which made the trip extra special

We assembled in Vancouver on 07 Jul and boarded our flight for Korea the next morning. When we got off the plane at Inchon, those of us who hadn't been back since the 1950s were amazed at the changes in the landscape: freeways, high-rise apartments and deluxe hotels to name a few. After a day to rest and get our bearings, we set off on a round of events that kept us more than occupied for the next five days. We visited former battlefields, a present day observation post and took part in memorial services at the Korean, Canadian, Commonwealth and United Nations War Memorials., I had the honour of laying wreaths at the Commonwealth Memorial in Gapyeong and the U.N. Memorial Cemetery in Busan.

Our last day, in Busan, was one I will never forget. After the wreath-laying ceremonies, forty young Korean children, beautifully dressed in traditional costumes,

sang and played musical instruments for us. They later had lunch with us and shook our hands when we departed. I am sure there were tears in more than one veteran's eyes. It made us realize that all the sacrifices were not in vain.

The four Queen's Own veterans who made the trip had not seen each other for over forty years, so it was a memorable reunion for us as well. We also managed to visit the gravesites of Lt. Vipond, Lt. Anderson, Sgt. Koch and Rfn Ferland, 2nd battalion members who passed away while on duty in South Korea.

We are all very grateful for having had the honour of taking part in the 55th Anniversary ceremonies.

Note: Veterans Affairs Canada's web site has a photo gallery with many pictures of Canadians at the Anniversary celebrations. Go to <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/> and click on 55th Anniversary of The Korean War Armistice.

Wreaths laid at Korean Veterans National Wall of Remembrance in Brampton



Veterans Affairs Minister Greg Thompson, LGen Charles Belzile and Republic of Korea Consul General Sung-Chul Kim at the ceremony.

On 27 July, 1953, major fighting between North Korean and Chinese communist forces and South Korean and allied forces stopped, after more than five million casualties. In July, 2008, veterans across Canada marked the 55th anniversary of an armistice that brought an end to four bloody years of the Korean War. It remains

the Canadian military's deadliest conflict since World War Two. Veterans Affairs Minister Greg Thompson spoke in Brampton, where wreaths were laid at the Korea Veterans National Wall of Remembrance.

"Today, we are marking the 55th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice. But we are also honouring our nation's truest heroes. The men and women who have always stepped forward when Canada has needed them. The men and women who have always answered the world's call. Because that is the Canadian way.

"When the United Nations came to Korea's aid with a multinational force, Canada responded in numbers far exceeding the world's expectations. From 1950 to 1953, more than 26,000 Canadian men and women served in Korea. They marched over the foreign hills of Korea, braved the

rough waters on Korea's shores, and flew through the dangerous skies of that distant country. 516 Canadians died there.

"It was a mission most of us cannot fully imagine: the great hardship they endured; the terrible human suffering they witnessed. And yet, in the end, they prevailed - - victorious in the face of tyranny and oppression.

"This is the proud Canadian tradition carried on from the men and women who came before them. And the tradition that lives on with our men and women still serving in troubled spots such as Afghanistan. We are still answering the world's call. And yet, these remarkable Canadians, the extraordinary Veterans before us today, will insist they only did their duty. They don't consider themselves heroes. But we know otherwise. And so do the people of the Republic of Korea."

Soldiers' cortege draws many to Highway of Heroes regardless of the weather

Charles McGregor



After leaving the Highway of Heroes, vehicles head down the Don Valley Parkway, which is closed to regular traffic until the cortege has passed. All of the bridges across the route are crowded with folks who wish to pay tribute to the soldiers en route to Toronto with their families.

(In September, 2007, the Ontario government unveiled "Highway of Heroes" signs along a stretch of Highway 401, formally dedicating the route to Canada's fallen soldiers. The 172-kilometre stretch, extending from Toronto to Trenton, is the route taken to transport the bodies of fallen soldiers to the coroner's office in Toronto once they return to Canada. Large crowds -- including veterans, emergency service personnel and parents with their children -- have routinely gathered on the highway's overpasses to wave flags in support of the troops. Despite inclement weather conditions, the tribute continues throughout the year, despite weather conditions. This is a report from the overpass at Brock St. in Whitby, at just one of the tributes paid to the soldiers and their families, who accompany them on their way to the Coroner's Office in Toronto.)

Jeff Hill, in his wheelchair, was just about the first one to pick a spot on Whitby's Brock Street overpass on Saturday evening, to be there when the troops killed recently in Afghanistan made their way to Toronto.

That was at 6:30 pm. At 8:30 pm, he and about 300 others were still waiting for the cars to pass underneath them, but they weren't thinking of leaving, even if the familiar cavalcade of vehicles was now well overdue on its trip from 8Wing/CFB Trenton with the bodies of the soldiers flown in from Kandahar.

"I'm stayin'," the Whitby resident said, the skies now black and a chill breeze picking up. "I came here to show my support for them and their families as well as our

Canadian troops and I'm going to do that no matter how long it takes."

Hill, who has been to ten of these gatherings -- "Ten too many," he said -- has a cousin in Afghanistan, serving with the Royal Canadian Regiment. "I'm from a military family and I'm very proud of him and all of those soldiers."



Twenty minutes later, at 9:45, police lights flashing in the distance on the busy highway alerted the watchers on the bridge and the grassy banks on each side of the 401 that the wait would soon be over. The customary ceremonial procession that's become known as the Repatriation Cavalcade was in sight.

Those on the overpass inched closer to the concrete railing, those with flags waved them briskly, others began to applaud as three Canadian military heroes made one of their last trips to anywhere.

Corporals Andrew Grenon, Windsor and Mike Seggie, Winnipeg and Private Chad Horn, Calgary, all members of the same platoon in the 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) based in

Shilo, MB, had died in a firefight with Taliban rebels in Afghanistan on September 3rd. Five others were injured in the same attack. Now the dead soldiers were headed to Toronto before burial services are held.

No one in the crowd stood taller than Don Henderson, wearing his medals for service in Korea, and his green beret with the highly-polished PPCLI cap badge glinting in the slowly failing sunlight.

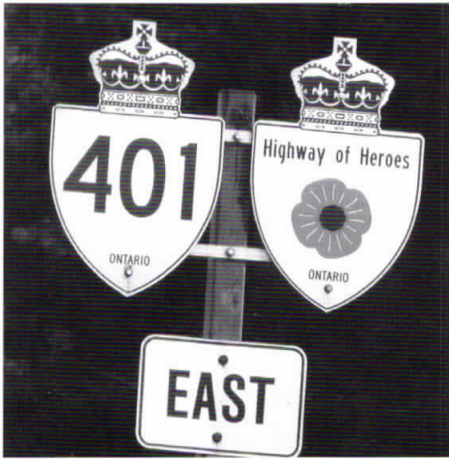
He remarked that of the 96 Canadian soldiers who have lost their lives in the Afghanistan war zone, more than one third of them are from his regiment. The actual total is 34, from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of one of Canada's most famous regiments.

"I'm here to support both the troops and their families," he said. He joined the Patricias in 1952 and was immediately posted to Korea while the fighting was still on, before the ceasefire in 1953.

Bob Grey and Catherine Ward from Whitby were there because a friend of theirs, "whom we've known since he was a little boy," said Catherine, is serving as a Combat Engineer in Kandahar. "He's a graduate of Anderson CI in Whitby who went right into the army after high school," she said, and "we're here to support him and all the others just like him."

Larry Fairman was there because of his father who served with the RCAF in Bomber Command in WWII and who was shot down and became a POW. "They wrote

(Cont'd from previous page)



about them called the 'Cradle Crew,'" he said. "They called my dad 'Pops' because he was the oldest. He was 25."

Dave Corbett drove down from Orillia, "just to be here," he said, leaning on his cane. "I'm a veteran and I think the guys and girls are doing a great job. I was in the air force for almost 30 years, in Ordnance Explosive Disposal then with OPP for 15 years. I was in their bomb disposal squad. I've wanted to get down so many times, but couldn't seem to manage it. Now I have."

Donna Jepma, said "I come when I can. Three of them this time hits home. It could be somebody of your own family," Her hus-

band George, who lived through the Nazi occupation of Holland, remembers Germans marching down their street and his father and brother and school teacher going into hiding. When the liberation came with the Canadians it was really, really something. They love the Canadians in Holland." (Many were Queen's Own and a good number of them lost their lives in the liberation of the Lowland country. They lie in graves there today, lovingly tended by the Dutch, many of them young children.)

Steve Jones, holding a huge flag on an eight foot pole, "said "I'm here showing my respect for the families." Asked if he had been to one of these before he replied, "Unfortunately, yes. At least half a dozen times. This is sad today." He said "They're doing a lot of wonderful things over there. You have to respect that. Even the families I have spoken to who have lost loved ones, they still support the mission and what they're doing."

Don White a member of the Royal Canadian Dragoons (RCD) who served in Italy and Holland in WWII was there with his wife Catherine, whose British grandfather had served in Afghanistan in the late 1800s with the King's Royal Rifle Corps. With them was Korean War veteran Danny (Dan the Man) Mann. Both soldiers wore their RCD black berets with polished badges, their

shiny service and campaign medals on their chests.

White said he was in armoured cars, and when the Italian campaign ended was sent to Holland to help in the liberation of Northwest Europe. "We're here to support the parents. They're really suffering now." Whitby Mental Health Centre nurse Tammy Hebruff said that she wanted to be there because "as a paramedic and a nurse I just wanted to support those troops overseas. They're doing a fantastic job and it's just unfortunate they're getting injured and some are being killed." She said that she's "looked into joining the paramedics out there and there's a very good chance I'll be going over."

Marc and Wendy Vandermeulen, of Whitby, were sitting on the south bank by the highway with their children, Damian, 5 and Ashlynn, 8. Wendy said, "They know why they're here. Ask Damian. He knows." The youngster's whispered answer was that, "We're here to wave the soldiers goodbye. They died to save us from the bad guys." Marc, whose parents lived in Friesland under Nazi rule during the last war, and whose father later fought in Indonesia, said that "We come here as often as we can, to support the families. Being here is the least we can do."

Opportunity to tour World War One and World War Two battle sites in Europe

There's still time to join "CELEBRATE THE 65th ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY" tour with The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association. Leaving from Toronto, it will be a tour of World War One and World War Two "Canadians at War" battle sites.

Cost per person is \$3268, including taxes, surcharges. Price based on double occupancy. Departs May 28, returns June 9, 2009.

Relive the triumphs and tragedies of Canadian soldiers during two world wars.

Visit Ypres, where buglers play "Last Post" at the Menin Gate, Passchendaele, where Canadians endured unspeakable hardships in the trenches, Beaumont Hamel, where the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was decimated at the Battle of the Somme, and, of course, Vimy Ridge, the scene of Canada's greatest First War victory. Continue on to tour Dieppe and Normandy's Juno Beach. Finish this memorable tour with a visit to Paris.

If you have any questions contact Brian Budden at brianbudden@rogers.com,

tel.905-567-4975, or David Lavery at dlaver@torontohydro.com, tel 905-831-7966.

Ellison Travel & Tours Ltd. redeems RBC rewards. For information contact Linda Klooster at Ellison Tours, 519-235-2000 or 1-800-265-7024 ext. 239 or email lin-dak@etravel.com.

For full information, including trip brochure and complete agenda go to web site and click on <http://www.etravel.com/queensownrifle.asp>

Two members of The Queen's Own rewarded for a job well done

LCol C. E. Rayment CD



Cpl Stephen Thomas places a wreath at the memorial in front of La Maison Queen's Own in Bernieres-sur-Mer

Having learned of the specific details of the exploits of our Queen's Own Rifles of Canada soldiers in Afghanistan I was particularly impressed by two members – Cpl Stephen Thomas and MCpl Jamieson Murray -- who were honoured for their bravery in the face of battle. (Cpl Thomas is now MCpl and MCpl Murray has since been promoted Sergeant). MCpl Thomas was awarded the Medal of Bravery and Sgt Murray the Commander's Citation for Bravery. Both have brought great honour to our Regiment.

The following are the citations upon which their awards were based.

Corporal Thomas, S.L.,
On 3 October 2006, Corporal Thomas' Combat Logistics Patrol was travelling west of Kanadahaar, Afghanistan, when it was attacked by a suicide bomber that disabled one of the vehicles, quickly engulfing it in flames. Corporal Thomas recognized that the uncontrolled detonation of the ammunition in the vehicle posed a deadly threat to the partrol and the gathering local Afghans. Despite the growing inferno and having to cross through the flames, he and three fellow soldiers repeatedly returned to vehicle to offload ammunition and mission essential cargo. Corporal Thomas' selfless

actions prevented a massive explosion and saved the lives of fellow soldiers and Afghan civilians.

MCpl Murray, Jamieson, Master Corporal Murray deployed with the Force Protection Platoon of the National Support Element, Task Force Afghanistan from August 2006 to March 2007. On several occasions throughout his tour, when enemy fighters ambushed his Combat Logistic Patrols, his leadership and composure under fire were instrumental in maintaining his troops' focus on the successful completion of their mission. Even when injured, he placed himself in harm's way to enforce fire orders, establish section and security and attend to wounded soldiers. Master Corporal Murray's dedication to duty and commitment to his fellow soldiers reflect the highest standards of professionalism and significantly enhanced support to the mission.

Afghanistan is a terrible place to live in, let alone fight in, and these two soldiers are a fine example of what we, as a country and as a regiment have produced.

Knowing how great their achievements were I wanted to provide a little extra to show how much their regimental family valued their contribution. From discussions with them it became apparent that both were very keen to see the beaches of Normandy and learn about what former members of the Queens Own Rifles of Canada did in both World Wars.

In order to fulfill their hopes of seeing the beaches of Normandy, I was anxious to provide them with the opportunity to join a tour arranged to celebrate the 64th Anniversary of D-Day. The budget for both of them, including a special awards dinner, travel, meals and accommodation was \$10,000. I personally pledged \$2,000 and set up a special sponsorship program to help make their dreams a reality.

Within 24 hours we reached our goal, with donations coming from various sources, including Capt ABT Hermant, Maj Adam Saunders, the Murray family, Lewis and Dale Jackson, the Barnard family, BCD Travel, the Livingston family and Dr Charles Godfrey. All sponsors joined these two young at a black tie dinner at the Royal Canadian Military Institute in May, prior to the tour and enjoyed the opportunity to meet and talk with two young heroes.

The dinner was an outstanding success with Global TV's Peter Kent as MC. The National Post interview the soldiers, resulting in an excellent article on the inside front cover of the newspaper which noted "that friends of the QOR regimental family reward members for outstanding service."

Both Sgt Murray and MCpl Thomas provided an exciting and dynamic overview of what actions they had been involved in as well as some of their personal experiences. For their presentation they received a standing ovation from their sponsors.



Cpl Stephen Thomas and MCpl Jamieson Murray are honoured by French participants in D-Day ceremonies.

Sacrifice Medal joins Canadian Victoria Cross as battle award



OTTAWA, Aug. 29, 2008 — Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, is pleased to announce that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the creation of the Sacrifice Medal. The medal will be awarded to military personnel, members of allied forces or Canadian civilians working under the authority of the Canadian Forces, who suffered wounds or death caused by hostile action, on or after October 7, 2001.

“Our soldiers deserve our utmost respect and deepest gratitude,” said the Governor General. “This medal recognizes the valued contribution of those who sacrificed their health or their lives while serving Canada.”

The introduction of the new medal follows that of the Canadian Victoria Cross, also announced last year. It replaces the original British Victoria Cross awarded to Canadians during several conflicts between

the creation of the award and the end of the Second World War. The new Victoria Cross is identical to the original award, only the motto on the obverse having been changed from “For Valour” to “Pro Valore”.

The original Victoria Cross was awarded to 81 members of Canada’s military forces (out of a total of 1,351 crosses and three bars awarded throughout the British Empire). Canada’s last surviving recipient of the Victoria Cross, Sergeant Ernest Alvia “Smokey” Smith, VC, CM, OBC, CD, died on August 3, 2005.

The Sacrifice Medal was created in the context of increased casualties in overseas operations to fulfill the desire of Canadians and the Government to provide formal recognition, through the award of an official medal emanating from the Crown, to those who are killed or wounded by hostile action. This honour replaces the Wound Stripe.

The Medal may be awarded to members of the Canadian Forces, members of an allied force working as an integral part of the Canadian Forces such as exchange personnel, civilian employees of the Government of Canada or Canadian citizens under contract with the Government of Canada, on the condition that they were deployed as part of a military mission under the authority of the Canadian Forces, that have, on or after October 7, 2001, died or been wounded under honourable circumstances as a direct result of a hostile or perceived hostile action on the condition that the wounds that were sustained required treatment by a physician and the treatment has been documented. Eligible cases include but are not limited to:

- death or wounds due to a terrorist attack, mine or bomb disposal duty, direct or indirect fire, rescue duty, collision of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel, on the condition that the occurrence is directly related to a hostile action;
- death or wounds as a direct result of friendly fire aimed at a hostile force or what is or was thought to be a hostile force;
- wounds that require not less than seven days of treatment in hospital, or an equivalent course of treatment, and that were caused by:
 - exposure to the elements as a consequence of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel being destroyed or disabled by a hostile action,
 - harsh treatment or neglect while a captive of a hostile force, or
 - use of nuclear, biological or chemical agents by a hostile force;
- death caused by:
 - exposure to the elements as a consequence of an aircraft, vehicle or vessel being destroyed or disabled by a hostile action,
 - harsh treatment or neglect while a captive of a hostile force, or
 - use of nuclear, biological or chemical agents by a hostile force; or
 - mental disorders that are, based on a review by a qualified mental health care practitioner, directly attributable to a hostile or perceived hostile action.

Commendation and well-deserved praise for Queen's Own Sgt Ted Howard CD

Queen’s Own Rifles Sgt Ted Howard CD was honoured with the award of a “Commander’s Commendation” for his service in Afghanistan during 2006-2007. The commendation, under the seal of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, reads as follows:

Awarded to Sergeant E.R. Howard. Sergeant Howard deployed with the Provincial Reconstruction Team as the Coordinator of the Civil Military Cooperation Projects Office during Operation ATHENA Rotation 2, August 2006 to February 2007. During a period of extreme operational tempo he skilfully

orchestrated the work of several Project Officers. Sergeant Howard’s projects received significant praise from the Canadian media and were identified to the President of Afghanistan as primary examples of the Task Force’s assistance to Afghan women. Sergeant Howard’s efforts have directly contributed to an improved quality of life for many Afghan communities and increased the local confidence in the mission. (Signed) J.C.M.Gauthier CMM, MSC, CD. Lieutenant-General Commander.

Sgt Howard was also presented with a

“President’s Gold Coin” by U.S. Army General John Craddock, NATO’s Supreme Commander, at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE.) Gen Craddock, who was guest speaker at an Empire Club luncheon in Toronto, made specific mention of Sgt Howard for his work in Afghanistan.



Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendations to two QOR Veterans.

Since serving in uniform, many of Canada's Veterans continue to provide outstanding service to their country, their communities and their fellow Veterans. To formally recognize the contributions of these outstanding Canadians, the Governor General authorized the creation

of the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation

The Commendation is awarded annually to individuals who have contributed in an exemplary manner to the care and well-being of Veterans or to the remembrance

of the contributions, sacrifices and achievements of Veterans.

Queen's Own Rifles of Canada veterans Bill (Boots) Bettridge of Brampton and John Cresswell of Calgary received these awards in 2008.

John Cresswell

Calgary, Alberta

Mr. Cresswell is a retired Sergeant-Major of the Canadian Army. Since retirement, Mr. Cresswell has been the consummate volunteer on behalf of Veterans. He belongs to several Veterans organizations and is a long-serving branch president of



the Calgary Queens Own Rifles of Canada Association. Mr. Cresswell is also a long-standing and active member of The Royal Canadian Legion, the Korea Veterans Association, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Association, and the local Peacekeeping Association. He doubles as Sergeant-at-Arms for many of these organizations, appearing at numerous events and ceremonies. Additionally, Mr. Cresswell is a volunteer at the

Carewest Colonel Belcher Veterans Care Centre in Calgary, and served as one of the key fundraising members of the "Friends of the Colonel Belcher" group, helping to raise \$2 million to provide enhancements to the centre. Mr. Cresswell and his spouse regularly visit the Veterans at Colonel Belcher and volunteer countless hours assisting and transporting the Veterans to and from the centre.

William (Boots) Bettridge

Brampton, Ontario

Mr. Bettridge is a Veteran of the Second World War. Mr. Bettridge has been a long-standing member of The Royal Canadian Legion, who has received the 50 year medal. Now a



lifetime member, he has been an excellent advocate for Veterans in the city of Brampton. Mr. Bettridge has used his voice to promote Veterans' issues and interests both within the Legion organization and the community. He helps to organize and encourages attendance at commemorative activities in and around Brampton inspiring young people and others in the community to develop a

greater bond with, and a better understanding of, Veterans. In honour of his tireless service, a four metre high wooden statue of Mr. Bettridge was commissioned and carved in his honour. It is displayed in Brampton's Gage Park.

Do you have a Queen's Own story to tell? Then we want to hear from you

In this issue of The Rifleman we provide excerpts of content which will appear in two new books being published to mark the 150th anniversary of The Queen's Own Rifles. "The Bands of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada - 1860-2010" is being readied for publication later this year. A second book, whose working title is "The Modern History of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada - 1950-2010" will be published in 2011 and will include details

of events organized to celebrate the Sesquicentennial.

We are still seeking help from former members of The Queen's Own - particularly those in the 1st and 2nd Battalions, as well as those who have served in foreign missions - to provide anecdotal material from their military lives which could be included in the history book. Current or former members of The Queen's Own, or

their family members, who would like to offer memoirs or anecdotal accounts of service in Canada, Germany, Korea or Cyprus or other foreign deployments are invited to do so. Send them by e-mail to Capt Charles D. McGregor at qor-pubs@sympatico.ca or by Canada Post to 1152 Ashcroft Court, Oshawa, ON, L1K 2N9. Questions? Send them by email to mcc@sympatico.ca or call 905 743 0259.

QOR veterans who were atomic blast victims still seek redress

Jim Huntley

In a previous issue of *The Rifleman*, Jack Glenn of Calgary outlined the efforts of the Canadian Atomic Veterans Association (CAVA) to seek redress from the federal government for members of The Queen's Own Rifles who were exposed to radiation in 1957.

A total of 40 members of the 1st Bn were sent to the U.S. Atomic Testing facility in the Nevada desert to participate in "Operation Plumbob," involving the explosion of atomic bombs. Over a two-month period the members of 7PI C Coy, with no protective clothing or proper shelter, were exposed to six atomic detonations at ranges from ten miles down to 1000 yards.

As the years passed it became apparent that an inordinately high number of those present in Nevada were dying of cancer. In early 2009, another CAVA member, Jim Huntley, who was in Nevada in 1957, reported that of those involved, 16 are known to be survivors, ten are "not found" and 14 are now deceased. Of the survivors, several are now suffering from various forms of cancer.

Late last year, Jack Glenn reported that "In early September, a few days before the federal election was called, Defence Minister McKay announced a one-time payment of \$24,000 to Canadian military veterans, including CAVA members, who were involved in nuclear weapons tests in the US and UK between 1946 and 1963. The award would be made ex-gratia, which in legal terminology means as a favour to the recipients, with no admission of liability on the part of the government.

Jim Huntley, who as a member of a 40-man contingent from 1st Battalion QOR of C was exposed to six atomic bomb tests in Nevada in 1956, speaks for the CAVA. He calls McKay's announcement a joke, noting that 18 members of the QOR of C contingent have died from cancer and another five suffer from the disease. After battling the government for years to obtain compensation, to no avail, the CAVA launched a lawsuit last year seeking \$150,000 for each member of the Association or, in the



U.S. Army photo shows members of The Queen's Own Rifles resting while on deployment in the Nevada desert during "Operation Plumbob." The operation involved the detonation of atomic bombs. A total of 40 Queen's Own were exposed to nuclear fallout without benefit of protective clothing or masks.

case of deceased members, their survivors. The Association's case is being handled by the Merchant Law Group, a Regina-based firm that successfully fought for compensation for Indian Residential School survivors. Huntley says the suit, which is going ahead despite the government's payment announcement, is being held up by inaction on the government's side but he expects it will get to court in the new year. Survivors, as at January, 2009, in addition to Jim Huntley, are: W.J. Agate, Cpl W. Barclay, R.S. Bill, 2Lt R.G. Bridgeman, A.C. Bunt, LCpl G.A. Clark, A.R. Clay, P.W.J. Couture, C.A. Flannigan, Cpl D.E. Fleming, A.L. Goddin, N.C. MacDonald, J.G. McComber (Chilman), I.B. Muise and L/Sgt K. R. Umpherville.

Now deceased are: Cpl R.N. Bennett, D.I. Bernicky, G.H. Duggan, A. Fortin, R.G. Hocking, B.W. Lloyd, C. Mackintosh, D.M. McConnell, Sgt P.D. Mitchell, LCpl J.E. Rimmer, J.A. Robichaud, Cpl J.E. Taylor, D.E. Ward, and R.H. Woiner.

The list of those "not found" is as follows: D.F.E. Anderson, A.B. Armstrong, S.T. Carpenter, P.W.J. Coulas, R.I. Gagne, C.M. Mercier, R.W. Miller, G.W. Pearson, LCpl J.F. Smith and R.C. Wilson.

If anyone knows the whereabouts or status of any of these former Queen's Own Riflemen, now listed by CAVA as "not found," please contact Jim Huntley at

huntley3@telus.net or Jack Glenn at qjack@shaw.ca. If you're not on the internet write to Capt C.D. McGregor, Editor, *The Rifleman*, 1152 Ashcroft Court, Oshawa, ON, L1K 2N9.

In early February, a class-action lawsuit on behalf of the Canadian "Atomic Veterans" was filed in Saskatchewan as the battle with the federal government for satisfactory compensation was rejoined. The government "made a series of false, reckless and materially misleading representations about the extent of exposure to radiation and the risks it posed to members of the Canadian Armed Forces," according to the state of claim filed in the Court of the Queen's Bench in Regina by lawyer Tony Merchant.

The lawsuit alleges the veterans were not told about the dangers of radioactivity, were not provided with protective equipment and were not decontaminated after participating in a series of nuclear blasts. The allegations have not yet been proven in court.

In comparison to the \$24,000 offered to Canadians by the federal government, the U.S. government granted \$75,000 to each of its veterans who were similarly exposed to radiation during nuclear testing.

Queen's Own Buffs Association attends Menin Gate ceremony in Ypres

Major Peter White, MM

Most years some of our Queen's Own Buffs Association branches make an annual pilgrimage to Ypres to parade at the Menin Gate. Last year it was decided to organise a trip for the Association as a whole and to stay overnight in Ypres for two nights.

The main body, nearly 200 members and their wives, partners and carers, in four coaches, and some comrades from the Middlesex Regiment Association, arrived in Ypres on Saturday, 21 June. The weekend began with a reception, hosted by the Association, to entertain many local guests. It proved to be a great evening and guests and hosts enjoyed it very much indeed. After the reception nearly all made their way to the main square, only some 75 yards from the hotel, to enjoy an evening meal and maybe the odd drink or two before turning in for a well deserved rest.

Early the following morning, the Band of 3rd Bn The Princess of Wales's Regiment arrived from UK to join us for the memorial service in St. George's Memorial Church, which was packed. To the tune 'Men of Kent' the standards were carried to the altar where they were received by Canon Ray Jones and the Rev. Norman Setchell, the Chaplain to Canterbury Branch. The service was highly charged with emotion and very thought-provoking, surrounded as we were by the many wall plaques and banners commemorating the great losses of that terrible war.

That afternoon, the band gave a concert in the main square, which proved to be very popular with the local residents and visitors. During the band concert it was planned to make a formal presentation to the Mayor of Ypres of a vase inscribed with the regimental badges and a suitable sentiment. However, initially, the Mayor could not be found but he eventually was run to earth having been on a bicycle trip. He turned up wearing a tee shirt and cycle shorts to be met by Colonel Champion "suited, booted and bemedalled." I do not think anything needed to be said about dress code; the message must have got through. The Mayor made a reciprocal presentation of a stained glass wall hang-

ing of Ypres and after spending a little time talking with band members and others he hopped onto his bike and pedalled away.

That evening the association members formed up on the Meenestraat for the 'main event' and just before 8 pm marched, behind the regimental band, into the Menin Gate for the evening ceremony. Over 120 association members took part in the parade which was impressive to say the very least. Heads held high, medals gleaming, in step and extremely smart, a memory that will remain with me for the rest of my life.

At one minute to eight the buglers sounded the Fall In, the parade was brought to attention and, as the Last Post was sounded by the Buglers of the Ypres Volunteer Fire Brigade, our six Standards were dipped in salute to those who had paid the supreme sacrifice, have no known grave and whose names are inscribed on the walls of the Gate.

Wreaths were then laid, during which a piper played a lament. The wreaths included the regimental wreaths for The Buffs and Queen's Own Buffs laid by John Field and Tug Wilson respectively, the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada laid by LCol Richard Talbot, for the Association by Colonel Champion, RHQ by Major John Rogerson, the Middlesex Regt by Colonel Cain and others. The exhortation was given by Colonel Peter Bishop OBE DL and after Reveille had been sounded the Rev Norman Setchell led the prayers. The band then accompanied the singing of 'Abide with Me' which incorporated 'Sunset' after which the National Anthems of Belgium and Great Britain were played.

The ceremony concluded with a General Salute' being given to pay our respects to the people of the City of Ypres, the Last Post Association and the Buglers, who continue to maintain this remarkable and unique ceremony and keep the 'Flame of Remembrance' alive.

The Association, once again led by the band playing the Regimental March, then marched out of the Gate for the last time,

to much applause. There was hardly a dry eye in the house! The Secretary of the Last Post Association, who had attended many hundreds of such ceremonies said afterwards that it was best parade he had witnessed.

On Monday morning the party made its way to Tyne Cot Cemetery where they were met by a Piper from the Passchendaele Pipe Band who played them into the cemetery. The weather was perfect and the cemetery itself a wonderful example of the care and hard work of the gardeners of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The sky was blue, the roses in full bloom and the sun reflecting from the stark white headstones produced a truly beautiful backdrop to the short Act of Remembrance that followed.

The Parade Marshall, Major John Barrell brought the parade to attention and wreaths were laid. The three Chaplains on parade, Revs. Norman Setchell, Tug Wilson and Bernard Foulger then led the parade in prayers. To conclude the beautiful and thought-provoking poem 'In Flanders Fields' written by former Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Rifleman, Major John McCrea, Royal Canadian Medical Corps, was read.

During the last verse two 11 year old boys, representing the youngest generation, each laid a wreath, a Buffs wreath and a Royal West Kent wreath on the memorial. Each of those present were given a small cross of remembrance to place on the grave of their choice. A sad and very moving individual act of remembrance. All too soon it was time to leave this tragic, but very beautiful and thought-provoking place.



The Dragon.

A Long and Proud History

At 11am on 1st March 1961, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) marched into history on amalgamation with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment to form the Queen's Own Buffs – The Royal Kent Regiment. So, for The Buffs who can trace their history back as far as 1st May 1572, 389 years of continuous service to the country, spanning to Elizabethan ages, came to an end.

On 31st December 1966, 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment was renamed as 2nd Battalion The Queen's Regiment. On 9th September 1992, as a result of 'Options for Change',

a new regiment was formed from the three regular battalions of The Queen's Regiment and the 5th and the 6/7th Territorial Queen's Battalions which amalgamated with The Royal Hampshire Regiment (37th and 67th) to become The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (PWRR). The new regiment retains its affiliation as an Allied Regiment of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, formed, an alliance between the Buffs and The Queen's Own in 1914.

The Dragon cap badge is still worn to this day by members of the Regimental Association of The Queen's Own Buffs

who served in the Buffs. Those who served with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt wear the cap badge of the White Horse of Kent. That Association is still strong with over 1,000 members in several branches meeting regularly in Kent and London.

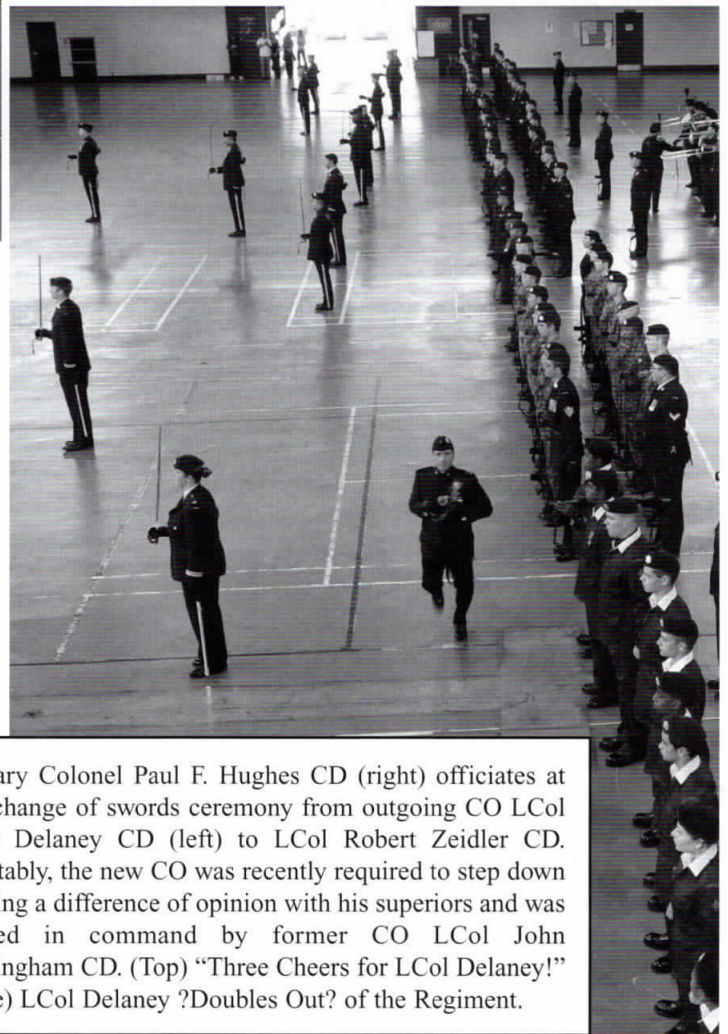
The Dragon is the central feature of the Cap Badge worn by the two regular battalions and one Territorial Army battalion of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment who carry on many of our traditions. The PWRR, following on from tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, are the most highly decorated regiment in the British Army.



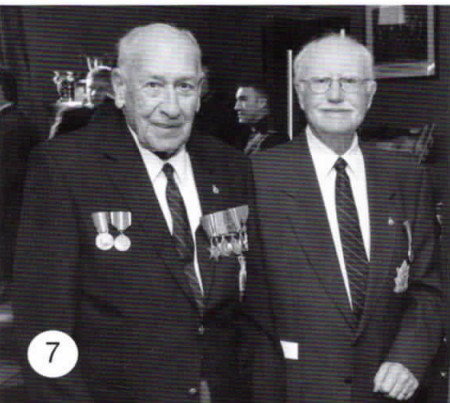

On Remembrance Day, 2008, the 90th Anniversary of the end of World War One, Major Peter White MM of the Queen's Own Buffs represents the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in the special "Turning of the Page" ceremony in The Warriors (Buffs) Chapel within Canterbury Cathedral.

Memorial wreath placed beside the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada drum which is displayed in the Chapel, along with the Regimental "Book of Life."

Change of Commanding Officer Ceremonies at Moss Park Armoury



Honorary Colonel Paul F. Hughes CD (right) officiates at the exchange of swords ceremony from outgoing CO LCol Martin Delaney CD (left) to LCol Robert Zeidler CD. Regrettably, the new CO was recently required to step down following a difference of opinion with his superiors and was replaced in command by former CO LCol John Fotheringham CD. (Top) "Three Cheers for LCol Delaney!" (Above) LCol Delaney "Doubles Out" of the Regiment.

Pioneers (1) and Skirmishers (2) take posts. Inspecting Officer Colonel Gerry Mann CD chats with (3) MCpl Olga Semenovych (4) WO Cecil Parris CD and (5) Scarborough Rifles Cadet Russell Cabbab (6) Hon Col Paul Hughes with former RSM/Bugle Major Syd Byatt. (7) D-Day veteran Fred Barnard with ex-Bugle Band drummer Harry Thornton.

Regimental Church Parade marks Remembrance Day 2008



Bugle Major Fred Haire CD leads the Regimental Band and Bugles



Honorary LCol Dick Cowling CD and Sgt Jamieson Murray lay a wreath



DCO Major Allan Champion CD and the Book of Remembrance Party in St. Paul's Church.

Visit the QOR webpage at www.qor.com



Top left

Toronto Branch QOR Association representatives RSM/CWO Brian Budden CD (left) and Dave Lavery (right), with British WW2 veteran Sidney Freeman lay a wreath during the Scarborough Remembrance Day service.

Top right

Hon LCol Dick Cowling CD takes the salute as Queen's Own Rifles CO LCol Rob Zeidler CD leads the Regiment past the saluting stand.

Centre left

RSM/CWO Brian Budden CD leads the Toronto Branch QOR Association members.

Centre right

RSM Harry Fox MBE with family friend Sheila McRae, was a visitor to the Sergeant's Mess.

Bottom

Bufs Company, based at Dalton Armoury, provided a Vigil Party for the Scarborough Cenotaph on November 11. (L. To R.) WO Paul Martin, CSM Bufs Coy; MCpl Michael Coelho; Cpl Cho Hom Wong; Rfn Graham Humphrey; Cpl In-Kee Kim; MCpl Henry Biggs; Maj Allan Champin CD, Deputy Commanding Officer.

Heritage Day Parade in Highland Creek precedes Afghanistan deployment



Mayor David Miller inspects the troops who were preparing for deployment to Afghanistan



Pre-deployment group shot



Applause from the spectators.



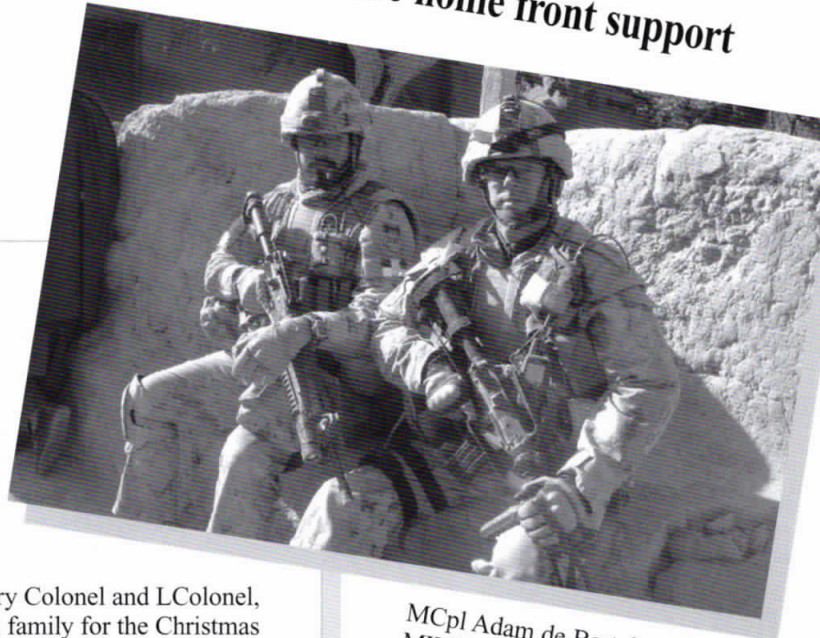
"BOOM" One gun salute!

A gathering of padres attends Remembrance Day Service at St. Paul's



(Far left) Captain Tim Nelligan CD, a former member of The Queen's Own Rifles, now a member of The Royal Canadian Army Chaplain Corps, invited a number of his colleagues to attend the annual Remembrance Day Church Parade in November. At right is the Pastor of St. Paul's Anglican Church, the Reverend Barry Parker

Queen's Own troops in Afghanistan appreciate the home front support



MCpl Adam de Bartok and
MWO Mark Shannon CD

From: Shannon MWO MT@Deployed@PRT
Sent: Wednesday, 10, December, 2008 12:30 PM
To: Zeidler LCol RA@QOR of C@Toronto;
Kelly SCM@32 CBG HQ G4@Toronto
cc: Parris Sgt JM@QOR of C@Toronto

Subject: Merry Christmas

>

To CO & RSM:

>

Just wanted to email and thank both of you, the Honorary Colonel and LColonel, the Regiment, the Association and all of the Regimental family for the Christmas gifts and good wishes. Thanks also to the Officers, Sgts, Jr Ranks Messes and of course our honorary Rifleman Sgt Parris! There are many soldiers here from other units who I don't think feel that their Regiments back in Canada remember them, especially at this time of the year - not so for The Queens Own!

I would also like to thank Maj Champion for having the QOR slip-ons made for us back in the summer. Like all of the other Queens Own I may only have 1 of them but it is the only one I wear and when I look around at the other QOR it is also the only one they wear. We are proud of who we are and where we come from and that slip-on is one of the first things our peers see and it gives us acceptance where others do not get it.

Things here are what you would expect in a country at war - some days are good for us and unfortunately some days are good for the bad guys. However, I am glad I am here - where else should an infantry guy be when your country is at war? Unfortunately I do not see enough of our guys because we are spread pretty thin across the country but when I do see them their spirits are high and they are setting the bar high for the rest of their peers.

I have attached a couple of pictures of me and MCpl DeBartok from Remembrance Day in the FOB (Forward Operations Base) and another day OTW (Outside the Wire). For me the time is flying and before I know it I'll be home in Toronto resting up for the next adventure/war.

Have a Merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year.

>

RSM - A round on me at the Sgt's Mess. I'm sure Joe can keep a chit for a few months.

>

From: Mark Shannon, Master Warrant Officer, Arghandab/Shah Wali Kot CIMIC Team Leader

Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team

1st Battalion Bugles made history at the 1962 Edinburgh Military Tattoo



Bugle Major Roy Bruce CD



Buglers Ferd Mercer CD and Bob Timms CD

(The following is excerpted from the new book "The Bands of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada – 1860-2010," being written for publication this fall to mark the 150th birthday of the regiment.)

The band which eventually became the Bugle Band of the 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada was formed in 1951 at Val Cartier, QC in 1951, following the creation of The Canadian Rifles of the 27th Infantry Brigade Group. The 1st Canadian Rifles was formed of companies from each of five regiments – The Queen's Own, Victoria Rifles, Regina Rifles, Winnipeg Rifles and the Hamilton Light Infantry. In October, 1951 the battalion came under command of LCol J.M. Delamere, MBE, CD and left for Germany the following month. Two years following its formation, The Canadian Rifles became the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, of the Canadian regular army, based in Calgary. Major C.P. McPherson CD was placed in command on a temporary basis until promoted Lieutenant Colonel and named Commanding Officer.

In May, 1955 Sgt. Roy Bruce was named Bugle Major of the 1st Battalion and tasked with forming a bugle band. He began by recruiting former members of the

Canadian Rifles Bugle Band. He did a masterful job with these soldiers, who were riflemen first and musicians second, but who carried out their responsibilities in both areas with spirit and enthusiasm. In 1959, the 1st Battalion was posted to

Germany, where it remained for four years, with the bugle band filling a busy schedule of appearances at a wide variety of events in Europe. The highlight of the four-year-tour, however, was an invitation in 1962 to appear in the Military Tattoo held during the annual Edinburgh Festival, becoming the first Canadian Bugle Band to be so honoured. The invitation was tendered on behalf of the festival organizers by LCol Sir Vivian Dunn, KCVO, MBE, FRSA whose name was not unknown to the musicians in the 1st Battalion's band.

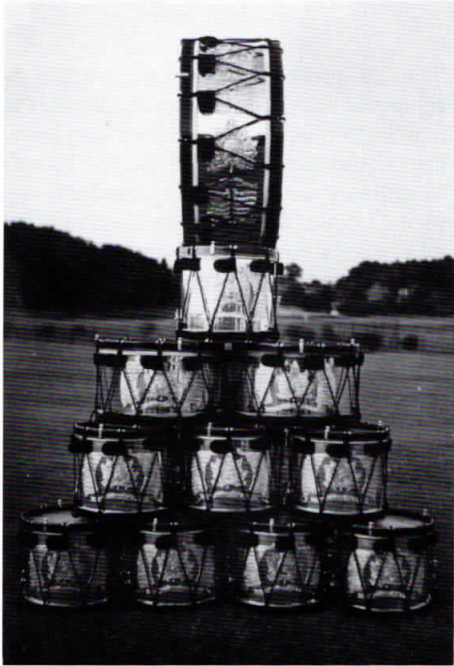
Lieutenant Colonel Sir Vivian Dunn, KCVO OBE FRSA, Director of Music, Portsmouth Division, Royal Marines 1931-53 and Principal Director of Music, Royal Marines, from 1953 to 1968. He was the first military musician to be knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Sergeant Fred Mercer, a Newfoundlander who enlisted in the Canadian Army in 1958 and was shipped to Calgary where he joined the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own,

well-remembers the Edinburgh trip. Joining the band as a drummer, he later switched to soprano trumpet and was a member of the band which travelled to Edinburgh to participate in the tattoo. The invitation, he said, "was hard to believe. As far as we knew no Canadian band had ever been invited to take part so this was an outstanding honour. We were determined to put on a terrific show."

In early preparation for the trip to Britain, Mercer said, "We were sent the dimensions of the area where we were to perform and we set up those parameters on our parade square and practised for about two months." Sir Vivian came to Germany to inspect the band and to review their performance of the music they were to play as well as to inspect the band in their full dress uniforms, Mercer recalled. "In addition to the opening fanfare, we had four minutes and 30 seconds to do our presentation. We knew what we were supposed to do and Dunn was there to see how we did it and how we looked. He checked over the uniforms very carefully. He later told us he thought we had done very well and was looking forward to seeing us in Scotland."

Mercer said that, "We spent six weeks total in Edinburgh – three weeks of rehearsals



and then three weeks for the Military Tattoo which is always a major attraction of the Festival.

There were 44 people in the band and we were accommodated at a nearby British Army barracks. What we didn't know, until we got there, was that it was a women's army camp. When we arrived, first day, we got our kitchen kit and our sheets and that and the first thing we did was head over to the mess hall to see if we could get something to eat. I was the first one in the door and I said 'Whoa, guys. Back up, Back up. It's full of women.' Lunch was over but those who were still there called to us.

(Above) Ceremonial Silverware drums presented to the 1st Bn Queen's Own Rifles Bugle Band in 1962 in Germany. (Right) Led by Bugle Major Roy Bruce CD, the 1st Bn Queen's Own Rifles Bugle Band parades in downtown Calgary during the late 1950s.

'Come on in, come on in, this is where you eat' Some of them had already finished and had gone upstairs to their quarters but they went up and got them and they all sat down with us. I was single at the time and we were there for six weeks! There was us and the bands from the Black Watch, Sikh Infantry and Sikh Lancers mounted display unit – and 640 women – all in the one camp. Needless to say this posed a number of challenges."

For their tattoo performance, the band practiced every morning, had afternoons off and then went to the castle for the show at night Mercer said that "It was quite an experience to parade in that historic old castle. There's a thousand years of history there and to be the first band on parade very night, to open the show, was an unbelievable thrill. That excitement never wore off for any of us. Every night we seemed to get an extra level of applause and we thought that was as much because we were Canadians as it was for the 140 paces to the minute that we marched when we did our performances."

Mercer said that, "We always got a big kick out of being first in the show and being introduced each evening by the master of ceremonies saying: 'The Edinburgh Military Tattoo of 1962 opens with the drums and bugles of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.' We did the fanfare then,

later in the program we did our show." The official program identified the bugle band's appearance as "A Display of Drumming and Bugling by the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, from Germany."

The selections for the performance were an eclectic geographic mix: "Connecticut March" (U.S.), "Blaydon Races", (Northumberland, England) "Buffs" (Tribute to the Queen's Own's allied British Army regiment, the Royal East Kent), "Huntsman's Chorus" (Germany), "Men of Harlech" (Wales) and "Waltzing Matilda" (Australia.).

"We marched off at 140 then waited to appear with the massed bands at the close of the show. There was no Canadian music in our drums and bugles presentation because "The Maple Leaf Forever" was included in the grand finale, along with other music like 'Annie Laurie', 'Green Grow the Rushes-O' and a real Scottish piece called 'Willie's Gan Tae Melville Castle,' wherever that might be."

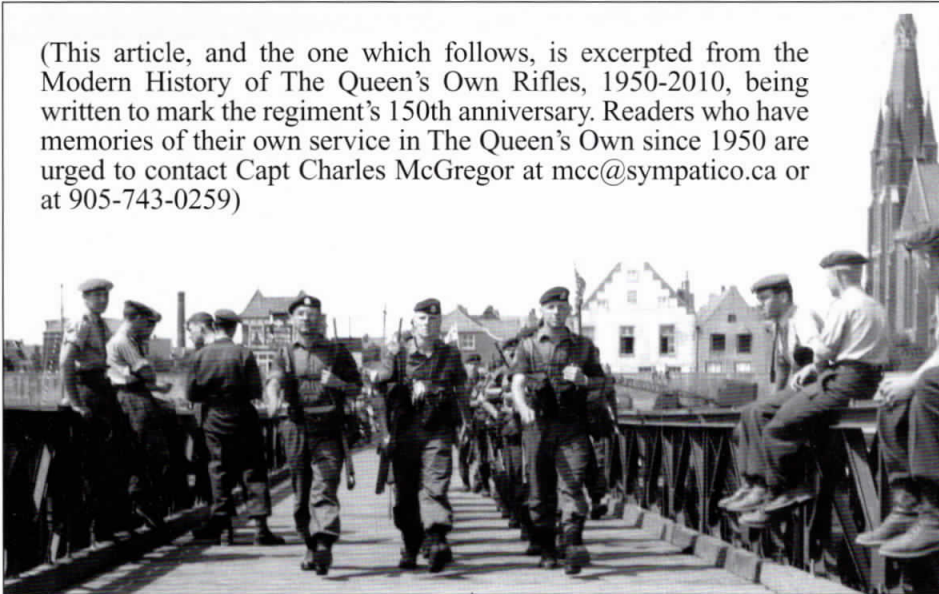
He said that, "It was almost 50 years ago now, but I've never forgotten the thrill I felt from making regimental history by being in the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Rifles Bugle Band performing on one of the most famous and historic stages anywhere in the world."



Memories of the Annual Nijmegen March – 50 years later

Jack Glenn, 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

(This article, and the one which follows, is excerpted from the Modern History of The Queen's Own Rifles, 1950-2010, being written to mark the regiment's 150th anniversary. Readers who have memories of their own service in The Queen's Own since 1950 are urged to contact Capt Charles McGregor at mcc@sympatico.ca or at 905-743-0259)



Major Steve Andrunyk (left) leads his team in a bridge crossing during the 1959 Nijmegen March

In 1959, 2nd Battalion was stationed at Fort Macleod on the outskirts of Deilinghofen, east of Iserlohn in West Germany, where it was part of the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group (4CIBG), Canada's army contribution to NATO. The previous year, the battalion had sent a platoon, led by Charlie Belzile, to Holland to take part in the Nijmegen Marches. For the 1959 event, it was decided that the battalion would enter a company strength team.

The Nijmegen marches are held during the third week of July each year in and around the city of Nijmegen, Holland. Sponsored by the Royal Netherlands League for Physical Culture, the marches are conducted in the interest of promoting physical fitness. With the exception of the WWI & WWII years, the marches have been an annual event since 1909. Different classes of marchers participate, either as individuals or as part of a team. The military class, in which our Riflemen were entered, saw entries from most of the armies represented in NATO. Teams in this class were required to march 25 miles each day for four consecutive days, with each team member carrying a rifle and about 22 lbs of equipment.

The summer of 1959 in Europe was one of the hottest and driest on record. Temperatures ranged from the high-20s to mid-30s C for much of July and there was

no rain. Flows in the Ruhr River system were so low and water levels in the Mohne Zee, the reservoir behind the Mohne Talsperre (Dam) in the 4CIBG area, were so depleted that the German authorities decided to drain the reservoir completely so they could find and detonate the many unexploded bombs that had rested on its bottom since the bombing raid on the dam by the RAF Dambuster squadron in the summer of 1943. Because the forests were tinder dry, forest fires were a frequent occurrence in the area around Fort Macleod and in other parts of Germany. On the positive side, the hot dry weather during the grape growing season favoured the production of high quality wines and 1959 was considered a vintage year for German and French wines.

The 103 dedicated members who represented the battalion at Nijmegen were brought together in the early summer as a company under the command of Major Steve Andrunyk. They were all volunteers, drawn from the four rifle companies and support company. The contingent was divided into five marching teams, led by Steve Andrunyk, Charlie Belzile, who, since he had learned how to jump through the administrative hoops in 1958, also doubled as 2i/c, Ted Ball, Bill Fowler and Jack Glenn.

The next month was a gruelling round of route marches, each progressively longer

than its predecessor, as we worked to achieve a standard that would allow us to march 25 miles a day on four successive days. And each day, with the sun beating mercilessly on us from a cloudless sky, seemed hotter than the last. Each marcher was issued a basin and a supply of gentian violet (potassium permanganate) which he was expected to use to soak his feet for at least 30 minutes at the end of each day's march. The daily soaking was meant to toughen our feet to the point that they could withstand a day of marching on hot pavement without raising blisters. Over the course of that summer we marched on every road in the district at least once. In addition to the weekends, our daily drudgery was punctuated by at least two memorable events. On one occasion we were detailed to help German forestry officials fight a fire in the forest of the Lenne Gebirge south of Fort Macleod. This particular fire threatened the city of Altena.

After a night on the next day on the fire lines beating out fires and digging fire-guards, the company was treated to tubs of sausage and black bread and good German beer for its efforts. And in early July, just as we were reaching our peak, we were chosen to represent 4CIBG at the International Day Ceremonies at the home of the 13th U.S. Armoured Cavalry Division at Bad Hersfeld. On this occasion we were accompanied by Ed Bogan and the Battalion Bugles, who led us in the



Major Charlie Belzile accepts the Tug-of-War trophy.

parade, and the battalion Tug-of-War team, coached by Charlie Belzile and including Cpls. O'Conner and Andrews and eight other oversized strongmen. The Tug-of-War team, competing against teams from most of the nations in the NATO lineup, won the day and came away with the trophy, which was presented to a beaming Charlie Belzile by U.S. General Eddelman.

Finally, on 20 July, we were off to Nijmegen for our four day trial. Our rations and quarters for the week were provided by the local detachment of the Royal Netherlands Army. Our daily routine was up early for breakfast - usually bread, chocolate and cheese, transported by truck to the Start point, march for six or seven hours, depending on the traffic, with brief morning and afternoon rest breaks and a half hour for lunch, transport from the Finish line back to our quarters, dinner, then free time until lights out. Most of us were too tired to spend much time enjoying Nijmegen's night life and bedtime came early, but, as always, there were those who were able to frolic the night away and still be on the job in the morning.

The Start point/ Finish line was at the same place each day, but each day's march route took a different direction out of the city and through the countryside. Although the terrain around Nijmegen is relatively flat, the march was conducted over paved roads, which are very hard on the feet, especially when the temperature is 30-something degrees C. Still, we made it through the four days with no casualties and there were enough light moments along the way to counter the tedium of putting one foot in front of the other for hours on end. We were frequently joined by civilian marchers of various nationalities, especially young ladies who enjoyed bantering with the boys and liked to have their pictures taken marching with the troops.

On the final day, the participating military units finished the march by parading past a group of assembled dignitaries on a saluting base set up at the Finish line. So we could look our best, we stopped outside the city a few kilometers short of the Finish line, where we changed into tropical worsted and forage caps (marquee tents were provided for the purpose), dusted off our boots and formed up as a company in column of route for the last leg of the march. At that point we were joined by

the our Bugles and Marion Fleminks, a young Dutch girl carrying the Netherlands flag who marched the final five kilometers at the front of the column with our Cpl Hill carrying the Canadian Ensign. I can't remember how we avoided marching into the rear of other units - maybe we led the parade - but the Bugles led us past the saluting base at 140.

Our battalion CO, LCol. Rod McKay, our MO, Pat O'Niell, and the families of many of our marchers were amongst the crowd that cheered us across the Finish line.

When I agreed to do this article, one of my intentions was to be able to include the names of as many marchers as possible. Unfortunately, memories - my own and those of the people I consulted - have faded over the years. Those who I have been able to recall or to identify from photos (with the help of some Calgary Branch members) include two sergeants: George Stetina and Punchy Haskins, and the following Jr. NCOs and Riflemen: George Bignell, Elmer Blanchard, Elphick, Hill, Hudson, Labutte, Lyons, Matthews, McIntyre, Beattie, Bob Jobe, Taylor, Pat O'Brien and Howie Gagnon

As a footnote to this account, Charlie Belzile sent me the following

Each year for the last six or seven years, I have participated (in my Legion Grand President hat), in the official send-off of the current CF team(s) of about 200 plus, which takes place at the Canadian War Museum. Included in that ceremony, is my presentation to a Legionnaire of a wreath to be laid at Vimy (a side trip, courtesy of the RCL for the whole group)... as well as a chance to talk to the teams about the "Blister Festival" they are about to embark on. One member of the Legion (retired from the CF) also does the March and carries the Legion Flag, along with the other pennants carried by the other units, including naval and air units, regular and reserves. It has grown since our days!!! Last year's team included Col(ret'd) Dick Cowling, Honourary LCol of The QOR of C. A continuance of QOR history? As an aside that ceremony is the only time that I get to wear my Nijmegen medal!... so I can brag to all those youngsters



Col Dick Cowling needs a few good men and women!

The Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of The Queen's Own Rifles, Colonel Dick Cowling CD, participated in the 2008 Nijmegen March. He's going to do it again in 2010 and he's looking for company.

Comforted by the knowledge that blisters heal quickly and leave no lingering problems but that the memories will last forever -- I am now ready to recruit members for a team to compete in the 2010 Nijmegen March to mark the 150th birthday of The Queen's Own. I feel that it is very important for the Regiment during its sesquicentennial year to have a presence in this very prestigious, longstanding -- and damned tough -- event. It will be a unique, one-of-a-kind opportunity for any young man or woman now wearing the Queen's Own capbadge to celebrate the history of Canada's oldest and finest regiment in a way not open to all. Quite frankly, to qualify to participate might well be the toughest part. It will take a combination of high levels of physical and mental fitness, as well as keen team spiritedness. If any of you reading this think you have what it takes to "make the team" I want to hear from you.

Training needs to begin very soon if we are to carry on the traditions of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in the 2010 Nijmegen March. More information will be distributed to riflemen soon through the chain of command. Make plans now and watch for the details on how to join.

D-Day Recollections – “The Longest Day”

Rfn Jim Wilkins, B Company Queen's Own Rifles of Canada



In late 1942 the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, of which The Queen's Own was a major component, was selected to take part in the allied invasion of Normandy and began a period of intensive commando-type assault training. During all of 1943 and into the spring of '44, we spent a lot of time at sea on various types of landing

craft – from what we called mother ships (where we were comfortably housed in mess decks with hammocks to sleep in, all the way down to small LCA (Landing Craft, Assault). Boats that could take just 30 men and their gear. This training was mostly done off the south coast of England except for one period when we went up to Scotland to Loch Fyne on the Duke of Argyll's estate at Inverary. Here we spent four weeks of more assault training mostly in wet weather. We were never dry.

Meanwhile, Adolph Hitler had ordered Field Marshall Erwin Rommel -- "The Desert Fox" of the North African campaign -- to erect an Atlantic Wall on the Normandy coast. He did a bang-up job, building huge steel reinforced concrete bunkers, pillboxes, laying barbed wire and mines, establishing artillery positions, machinegun nests and mortar pits. He also had deadly beach obstacles built such as steel girders and old railway track raised in a pyramid and hung with mines that would easily blow up an assault craft. Rommel moved new units into position, including first rate Panzer divisions and SS troops whose morale and fighting determination had become legendary. They also had superior weapons such as Panther and Tiger tanks and deadly 88mm anti-tank guns. All of this went to guarantee us a hostile reception. When Rommel addressed his generals he stated, unforgettably, that "When they come -- and they will come -- it will be the longest day."

In May of 1944 we went into security camps surrounded with barbed wire and guards to keep us in and as we moved from camp to camp toward Southampton it became known as the sausage machine. We studied aerial photos of the beaches taken by low flying Spitfires but they still did not tell us where we were going. Then came a pay parade and we finally knew – we had been paid in brand new French francs. Eventually we arrived in Southampton and boarded our mother ship, "SS Monowai" on the morning of June 4th and steamed off to rendezvous with the other ships in the English Channel. We played cards, crown & anchor or shot craps to while away the time.

Nobody seemed nervous or anxious. Tomorrow we would land in France but weather was so bad in the channel that the operation was postponed 24 hours until the 6th of June. Apparently the Navy was operating in a kind of tide timeframe and if there were any more delays the operation would have to be postponed for as long as a month. Finally General Eisenhower gave the go-ahead and we steamed out of Southampton, around the Isle of Wight and out into the channel, headed south for Normandy. Some 7000 ships of all shapes and sizes, including those from the RCN. We went into our hammocks early because we were told it would be a very early reveille. It was – we were called around 3:30am and two men from every section were sent to the galley to get our breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon, coffee, bread and jam. It was to be my last meal for four days.

At about 4:30 we were ordered to go on deck where sailor guides took us to our appointed stations. Our landing craft were at deck level and we could just climb in. The first section was #1 of B Company on the port side. They sat facing in. The next group was on the starboard side consisting of odds and sods – our platoon sergeant Freddy Harris, the company sergeant major, Bill Wallace, and company staff such as runners, stretcher bearers and combat engineers who were to somehow breach the 9 ft wall in front of us, blow up pillboxes and gun positions. Next, came my section, #2 of B Company. We climbed in and sat on a low bench running down the centre facing forward. I was at the very back.

It was not a good position for us – last group in – first group out. The waves were pretty high and as we were lowered into the water the seas met us with a vengeance.

The crew had a rough time unhooking the winch lines but eventually off we went to rendezvous with the rest of the LCAs and we started to move toward the beach five miles away. The first wave of the assault consisted of two companies from each of The Queens Own Rifles, Winnipeg Rifles and Regina Rifles and one from the Highland Light Infantry -- a total of 1350 men in 45 boats.

At about 1500 yards we can see the wall in back of the beach. It looks to be maybe 8 feet high. We are told to stand up. Beside us was a ship that fires rockets., where the forward deck is cleared and pointing up are maybe a dozen tubes at a 45 degree angle. All of a sudden they fire a salvo – great clouds of smoke and flame engulf the boat. Minutes later they fire again. You could follow the rockets by eye as they curved upward. We watched one salvo go high over the beach just as a Spitfire came along. He flew right into it and blew up. That pilot never had a chance and was probably the first casualty on Juno Beach. Overhead we could hear the roar of large shells from battleships, cruisers and destroyers. Beside us is a boat with pom pom guns shooting away at church steeples and other high buildings which had observers who were spotting for the German ground troops.

Soon we are only 500 yards from the beach and are ordered to get down, then the boat stops and begins to toss in the waves, the ramp goes down and without hesitation my section leader, Cpl. John Gibson, jumps out well over his waist in water. He only makes a few yards and is killed. We have landed dead on into a pillbox with a machine gun blazing away at us. We didn't hesitate and jumped into the water one after the other – I was last of the first row. Where was everybody? My section are only half there – some were just floating in their Mae Wests.

My bren gun team of Tommy Dalrymple and Kenny Scott are just in front of me when something hit my left magazine pouch and stops me up short for a moment.

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My Bren gun team of Tommy Dalrymple and Kenny Scott are just in front of me when something hit my left magazine pouch and stops me up short for a moment. A round had gone right through two magazines, entered my left side and came out my back. Kenny keeps yelling "Come on, come on." "I'm coming, I'm coming," I yell back. We are now up to our knees in water and you can hear a kind of buzzing sound all around as well as the sound of the machine gun itself. All of a sudden something slapped the side of my right leg and then a round caught me dead centre up high on my right leg, causing a compound fracture, later learned. By this time I was flat on my face in the water -- I've lost my rifle, my helmet is gone and Kenny is still yelling at me to come on. He is also shot in the upper leg but has no broken bones. I

yell back, "I can't, my leg is broken -- get the hell out of here." Away he goes and catches up to Tommy. Poor Tom, I've got ten of his Bren gun magazines and they're pulling me under. I soon get rid of them and flop over onto my back and start to float to shore where I meet five other riflemen all in very bad shape. The man beside me is dead within minutes. All the while we are looking up at the machine gun firing just over our heads at the rest of our platoon and company and then our platoon sergeant, my friend Freddy Harris who had given up a commission to be with us, was killed right in front of me.

I decided that this is not a good place to be and managed to slip off my pack and webbing and start to crawl backward on my back at an angle away from the gun towards the wall about 150 ft away. I finally made it and lay my back against it. In front of me I can see bodies washing back and forth in the surf. Soon, one of my friends, Willis Gambrel, a walking wounded, showed up and we each had one of my cigarettes which surprisingly were fairly dry. Then he left to find a first aid centre. A medic came along and put a bandage on my leg. I had forgotten all about the hole in my side. Then two British beach party soldiers came along carrying a 5-gallon pot of tea. "Cup of tea Canada?" "Yes sir" -- and they gave me tea in a tin mug. It was hot and appeared mixed about 50/50 with rum. It was really good.

In the meantime A Company had gotten ashore with their share of casualties and started to take out the various gun emplacements and so did the rest of B Company. Presently there were four or five others with me. Then at last a Sherman tank from the First Hussars showed up, but they had come in too late to help us. All of a sudden he stopped just a few feet past us, turned toward the wall, ambles up to within ten feet and commenced to fire over the wall.

At the end of the gun barrels are recoil deflectors which cause the muzzle blast to come out sideways -- down where we were lying. The man beside me had a bandage around his head and eyes and he screamed every time they fired. Finally after much arm waving at the crew commander he finally got the message that we didn't appreciate his presence.

I had already got a shot of morphine from a medic and dozed a little. Soon the tide was almost at my boots and at long last two

British stretcher-bearers came to evacuate us from the beach. They carried me in water up to their ankles. The one at my head lost his grip and said to his pal "Put him down for a second." Just then a good wave came in right over me and on the way out picked up my broken leg and threw it at a right angles to the stretcher. I said "Would you mind putting my leg back on the stretcher?" "Sorry Canada", one said and grabbed my boot and put my leg back. I got back at him when they lifted me over the wall to some fellows on the top at almost 45-degree angle, when all the water in the stretcher came gushing out right into his face. I was put with a group of other wounded and eventually a doctor came along and asked where I was hit. My leg is broken I said and with that he took a look and said "You'll be okay son. And I was."

Two German soldiers we'd captured picked me up and carried me to a concrete air raid shelter -- probably for the German defence troops -- and placed me on a low bunk. Very quickly the bunks were full and people were put on the floor. A German boy was on the floor right beside me and he was in bad shape. Just before it got dark a German mortar came over and landed just outside the door, blew it off and filled the bunker with dirt, smoke and chunks of gravel. Eventually a medic came in and gave the German boy a shot of morphine. I said "I'll take one of those if you don't mind." "Okay" he said and as darkness fell on June 6th. I was soon asleep.

By this time all that was left of my platoon of 35 men was one lance sergeant, one wounded lance corporal and six riflemen. All the rest were dead or wounded. Field Marshall Erwin Rommel had been right -- it had been and will always be "The Longest Day."

Altogether The Queen's Own Rifles lost 143 men killed or wounded that day. By August when the Normandy battle was over the regiment had 640 casualties including 209 killed. By May of 1945 the regiment sustained over 1000 wounded and 462 riflemen were dead.

Lest we forget



“Mountain Ops” team prepares for its 2010 climb of Mount Logan



Action on the “highline” makes for an exciting trip.

Photos taken during the alpine training conducted during the Advanced Mountain Operations course in the rugged peaks near Whistler, BC. The Queen’s Own sent

four candidates -- Capt Adam Harmes CD, MCpl Dimitri Frounze, MCpl Chris Abate and Cpl Henry Biggs -- who all successfully passed the course. Their aim

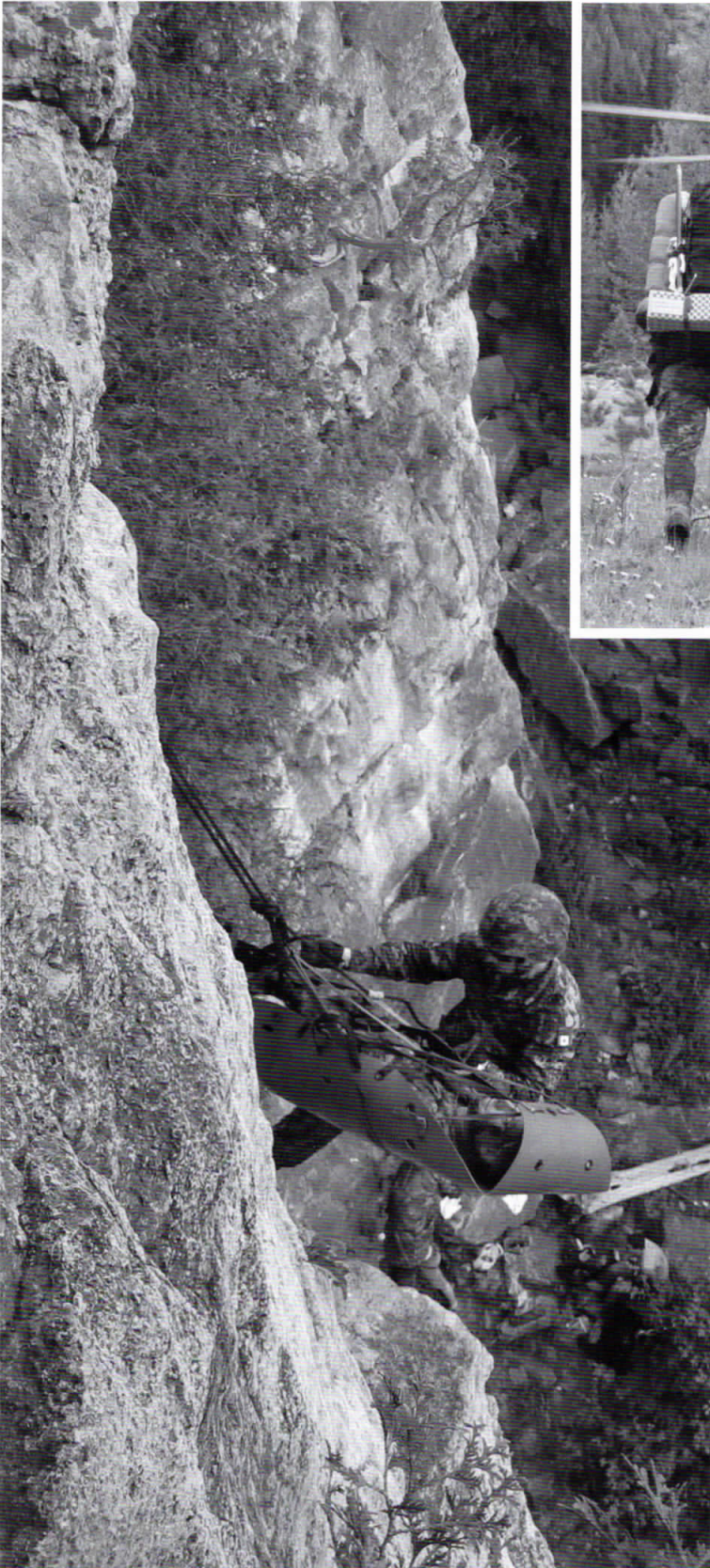
is to climb Mt. Logan in the Yukon in 2019 as a tribute to 150 years of regimental history as The Queen’s Own celebrates its sesquicentennial.



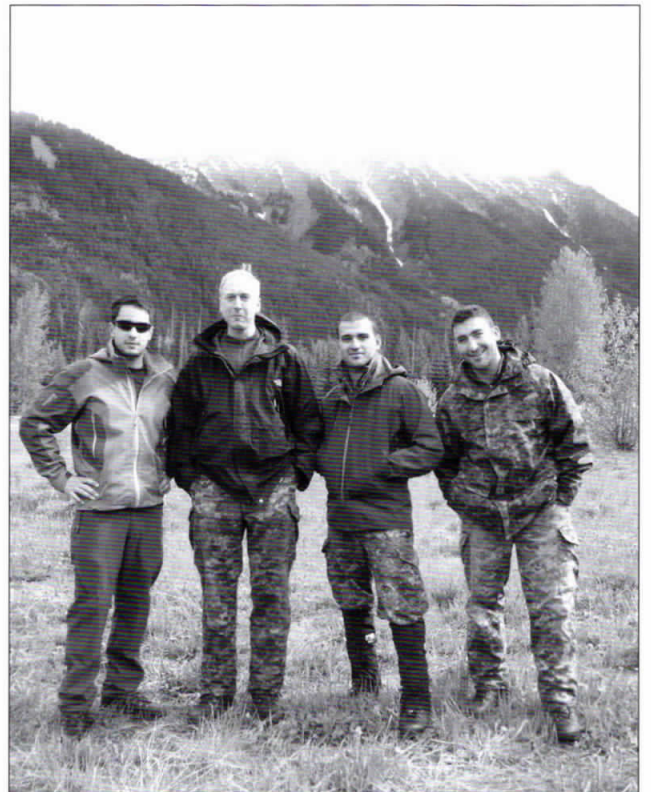
Cpl Henry Biggs feeding a bird while waiting for the helicopter to arrive



Alpine helicopter prepares for landing



Advanced Mountain Operations candidates, carrying well-stuffed rucks, prepare to board the helo en route to the training site.



MCpl Chris Abate, Capt Adam Harmes CD, Sgt Dimitri Frouze and MCpl Henry Biggs

The Queen's Own Rifles marks its 25th year of Airborne Tasking

WO Scott Moody CD



All photos taken by Major Sandi Banerjee CD

2008 was a benchmark year for The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. The Regiment deployed 22 riflemen to Afghanistan with Task Force 3-08 and also celebrated the 25th year of its Airborne tasking.

The initiation to parachute tasking for The Queen's Own can be traced to the formation of the Central Militia District Special Unit (CMASU) whose role was to be a reserve army unit with the potential of becoming an airborne unit. It was the idea of its first Commanding Officer, LCol Peter Fairclough, who previously served as an officer in the Special Air Service (SAS) during the British campaign in Malaysia.

(From 1963 to 1966, Britain successfully waged a secret war to keep the Federation of Malaya free from domination by Sukarno's Indonesia and by Chinese Communists. At the forefront of the campaign was the Special Air Service (Who Dares, Wins), an elite branch of the British army whose essence is secrecy and whose tools are bold initiative, surprise, and skill.)

LCol Fairclough's idea was based on the fact that both the UK and U.S. have airborne and Special Operations Forces (SOF) reserve units that were successful in supporting full-time counterparts.

The CMASU paraded at the Staff College in Toronto. Because it was a new unit it

had several problems, a major one being that it drew the best soldiers from many regiments, which often resulted in luke-warm or no support for it at higher levels. The solution was to have the CMASU reduced to company strength and have it bolster one of the weaker parading units in Toronto. It was felt at the time, justly or unjustly, that The Queen's Own filled that category. (Today, members of 32 Canadian Brigade Group (32CBG), we are one of the strongest reserve army units in the CF). The CMASU was designated as 60th Company, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and LCol Fairclough decided to reduce his rank to major to enable him to stay with his troops as he continued to fight for an airborne reserve unit.

The initial test for the QOR occurred when it was given the opportunity to send multiple members on a Basic Parachutist Course. In January 1982, nine Queen's Own soldiers attended Basic Para Course 8201, an unprecedented occurrence. Prior to this time, reservists only had the opportunity to take the course as a "reward." Course 8201 created an initial base of jumpers for a potential airborne tasking, and it also produced three QOR RSMs; Capt John Wilmot, CWO Scott Patterson and the current RSM, CWO Shaun Kelly, as well as our current CO, LCol Robert Zeidler.

(In addition to LCol Zeidler, subsequent jump-qualified Commanding Officers of

The Queen's Own Rifles are LCol Don Pryer, Bob Campbell, Steve Brand, Tony Welsh, John Fotheringham and Martin Delaney.)

On 23 January 1983, the QOR was granted the parachute tasking, with the intent to provide 3 Commando of the Canadian Airborne Regiment (Cdn AB Regt) with a platoon of reservist parachutists that could be mobilized in seven days to reinforce Cdn AB Regt. Shortly after the QOR being awarded this tasking, Le Regiment du Saguenay and The Loyal Edmonton Regiment were tasked to support 1 and 2 Commando respectively in the same manner and were to be effective starting 1 September 1984.

The QOR immediately started to work hard at meeting the requirements of this tasking by sending its soldiers on exercise with the Cdn AB Regt and on the Airborne Indoctrination Course (AIC). In August 1983, 24 QOR riflemen, led by Lt Tony Welsh, later OC Para and CO of the QOR, attended AIC. This was the first opportunity for them to prove themselves as paratroopers by earning their maroon berets.

The relationship between the QOR and 3CDO developed quickly after that. In 1985, the three reserve jump platoons were considered fully manned and trained by an operational assessment that was completed by the Cdn AB Regt. Due to the success of these three jump platoons, The Royal Westminster Regiment was awarded a 27-man jump platoon and the QOR and R du Sag received a second platoon, with the QOR also being tasked to man the company headquarters effective 1 December 1985. The intent was that the six platoons and Coy HQ could now form the fourth platoon in each commando, with the remaining platoon and company HQ forming the basis of a fourth commando.

With an expanded role, riflemen continued to take advantage of the chance to serve with the Cdn AB Regt through courses, exercises, six-month taskings and operational deployments. One rifleman and a former OC Para and QOR CO, LCol John Fotheringham, did six-month stints with 3 CDO. In 1992, when the Cdn AB Regt deployed to Somalia, they took with them six riflemen, making up the largest contribution from a reserve unit on the



During the same time period, riflemen were not only qualifying as paratroopers by taking Basic Para and AIC, they also started acquiring more experience in parachuting and other skill sets related to airborne operations. Riflemen had the opportunity to take courses through CABG or with the Cdn AB Regt such as DZ/LZ (Drop Zone/Landing Zone) controller, packer/rigger, basic mountain operations, and aerial delivery. They also were presented with the chance to participate in foreign exchanges and TALEXs (Tactical Airlift Exercises.) These opportunities allowed some of our riflemen to gain enough experience to start taking more advanced courses. The culmination of this was when, in 1989, Sgt Chris Thompson became the first Queen's Own NCO to qualify as a jumpmaster. In 1993, WO Donovan O'Halloran became the first QOR parachute instructor. These individual accomplishments during this time period helped set the foundation for the Queen's Own Rifles as a para unit.

In 1994, all the other Militia units lost their jump taskings, while, significantly, The Queen's Own did not. A year later, the face of Canadian Airborne changed when the Cdn AB Regt was disbanded. The QOR maintained its relationship with the Airborne Regiment to the end, having its paratroopers participate in the final jump and The Queen's Own's Regimental Band and Bugles play at the final parade, on 5 March, 1995.

(The Canadian Airborne Regiment traced its origin to two units formed during the Second World War, the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and the 1st Canadian Special Service Battalion, which was the administrative name for the Canadian-American First Special Service Force.) In June 1996, the QOR was tasked to provide 66 parachutists in support of the Canadian Parachute Centre in Trenton, Ontario. The QOR and CPC (now the Canadian Forces Land Advanced Warfare Centre otherwise known as CFLAWC) have established a relationship of mutual support. The QOR provides jumpers, jumpmasters, DZ controllers and aerial delivery-qualified riflemen to support 8 Wing & CFLAWC activities, as well as staff to teach on key courses such as Basic Para, Aerial Delivery, DZ Controller and Heli Ops. In return, CFLAWC provides us with facilities, equipment, parachutes and riggers.

The QOR supports two or three week-long and as many as seven weekend-long jump exercises each year. The week-long jump support tasks entail jumping once a day to train aircrews in airdropping paratroopers cargo. Weekend jump exercises maintain the currency of qualified aircrews in dropping paratroopers and cargo. Through creative thinking, the QOR Ops Cell will often use the LTAT (Local Tactical Airlift Training) airlift as the basis for an exercise tactical drop. Fortunately, the Regiment also receives separate airlift for specific para activity in the form of CC-130s from 8 Wing or Griffons from 400 Squadron.

The Queen's Own has in its ranks four Parachute Instructors, six Advanced Mountain Operations (AMO) Instructors, nine Jumpmasters, 14 Rappel Masters, 10-plugs, soldiers qualified in Aerial Delivery, DZ/LZ Control, and Heli Ops, three soldiers on their last phase of packer rigger, over 30 qualified as Basic Mountain Ops and over 100 riflemen qualified Basic Para, of whom 66 proudly wear the maroon beret bearing The Queen's Own Cap badge.

Currently at CFLAWC, the QOR has Pls MCpl Brian Ragos and Sgt Jason Chin-Leung teaching fulltime. While the other two Pls, WO O'Halloran and Sgt Bryan Burns, keep our jumpers current in Toronto, they also find the time to teach at CFLAWC on individual courses and support BTATs/LTATs with our JMs. We also have sent several instructors and support staff to teach or work on Patrol Pathfinder,

Heli Ops, Aerial Delivery and DZ/LZ over the years.

In 2001, with its AMO qualified riflemen, Sgts Bill Paton and Kevin Shaidle, the QOR created a mountain operations cell. Since then Sgt Paton has been able to teach on several AMO courses. Our AMO cell has been able to run several Basic Mountain Courses which have qualified not only riflemen but other reservists from LFCA. On a similar note, over the past eight years the QOR has also been tasked with running five rappel master courses for 32 CBG. This task was initiated by Regular Support Staff (RSS) Ops WO Perry Gresty of the PPCLI and has vastly expanded the capability of other 32 Brigade units to conduct rappel training.

Internally, the QOR maintains a high PT standard and conducts regular Basic Para PT Tests for those who wish to attend jump course, and EPLs for those wearing the maroon beret. The air cell also runs parachute skills training and an annual refresher for all jumpers. Para refreshers are also run for soldiers from other units who are para-qualified and receive casual parachuting permission for an exercise or LTAT jump.

Another major accomplishment for the QOR was in 2003 and 2004 when it was tasked to spearhead the first ever Airborne Reserve Company during the two-week long summer reserve concentration. This was a challenging task that started, in 2003, with a platoon-plus. of QOR jumpers and German Fallschirmjaeger (Pathfinders.) It was followed in 2004 by an airborne company of over 90 soldiers, with one platoon, HQ and Air Cell from the QOR, and another platoon of parachutists from the LFCA reserve brigades. Thanks to the hard work of the QOR RSS Ops WO, Ray Joseph of the RCR, and the support of 3RCR, all the jumpers from other units became current and participated in at least two descents, one of which was a tactical night jump.

The QOR attempts to maintain close ties with the worldwide airborne community by participating in parachuting events, small unit exchanges and exercises in various countries. We have had riflemen participate in Leapfest in Rhode Island among other major parachuting events. Several of our jumpers had the rare opportunity to participate in anniversary jumps into Normandy and Arnhem. Further to that, many of our riflemen have travelled to the UK and Germany to do small unit



(Fort Chaffee is a 100-square-mile rural installation used as a training base for U.S. National Guard and reserve forces. Built in 1941, this 72,000-acre military base was the training site for thousands of troops heading overseas during World War II. More than 50 years ago Elvis Presley was inducted into the U.S. Army and began basic training there.)

exchanges and participate in large scale exercises with the Parachute Regiment or Fallschirmjaeger Battalions.

In the late 80s and early 90s, the QOR participated in several small unit exchanges with various U.S., Special Forces and Long Range Surveillance units in the U.S. and Canada. In 2006 the QOR provided the airborne force element by jumping into Ft Chaffee, Arkansas for Ex River Warrior -- a 30,000 soldier exercise.

At an operational level the QOR has worked hard at maintaining a relationship with 3RCR Para Coy by sending soldiers on deployments with them. We sent airborne riflemen on Roto 3 and 8 to Bosnia as well as the first deployment -- Roto 0 -- to Afghanistan. Currently we have 22 soldiers on the current TF-308 with the 3RCR Battle Group. Many riflemen are holding key positions on this deployment. Due the fact that our soldiers are physically

fit, highly motivated, and proficient they will often chomp at the bit for the next challenge. Over the years we have sent many soldiers to the various Parachute Companies. Additionally, several of our members have also joined the Special Operations Forces directly from the QOR and several more riflemen have ended up in the SOF after serving in the various battalions.

From its inception in 1983, the QOR has embraced the reserve parachute task and never looked back. At times, the tasking was a challenge to fulfill, with fulltime jobs and other obligations as a primary reserve infantry unit. However, throughout the 25-year history, we have matured and developed into a self-sufficient and experienced para unit, and are very proud to be part of the Canadian Airborne Brotherhood.

Airborne!

(Editor's note: This article first appeared in The Maroon Beret, the semi-annual publication of the Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) and the Airborne Brotherhood.)

“Buffalo Nine” honoured on National Peacekeepers’ Day

On August 9, 2008, Calgary Northeast MP Art Hanger, representing federal Minister of Veterans Affairs Greg Thompson, accompanied by former Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada member Colonel Don Ethell of the Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping (CAVUNP), joined veterans, community leaders and members of the public in a ceremony honouring Canadians who have died in Peace Support Operations around the world. Similar ceremonies were held in Ottawa and other parts of Canada.

In late 1973 the Canadian Forces commenced another United Nations operation in the Middle East (UNEF II). Included in Canada’s commitment to the mission was the tasking of two Canadian Forces Buffalo aircraft and crews, whose home station was Trenton, Ontario. In the Middle East, the unit was stationed in Ismailia, Egypt, a small city next to the Suez Canal.

Upon arrival in Egypt, the Buffalo aircraft and their crews immediately commenced operations, flying on a basis of 150 hours monthly. The flying was very demanding, not only due to the ever-changing weather but the danger of flying in a war zone.

This latter aspect was brought home tragically when Buffalo aircraft number 115461, while on a routine United Nations flight to Damascus, Syria, from Beirut, Lebanon climbed eastward over the Lebanese highlands, and was shot down by the Syrian Armed Forces. Apparently the Buffalo was “painted” by Syrian radar, and subsequently destroyed by Syrian surface-to-air missiles.

The Syrians claim it was an accident in that the Buffalo had shown up on their radar as an Israeli enemy aircraft in an attack profile heading towards Damascus. The Buffalo crashed near the village of Diemas, Lebanon. Aircraft Captain Gary Foster of Calgary, and his crew and passengers totalling nine Peacekeepers were killed in the crash of the Buffalo aircraft.

In the 60 years of service on International Peacekeeping duties throughout the world, the incident of the 9th of August 1974 was the worst loss of Canadian Peacekeepers during any one incident.

“Peacekeeping is a Canadian tradition,” Thompson said. “It is only fitting that we would have a National Peacekeepers’ Day

to remember and honour the men and women who are responsible for our long and proud tradition of peacekeeping.”

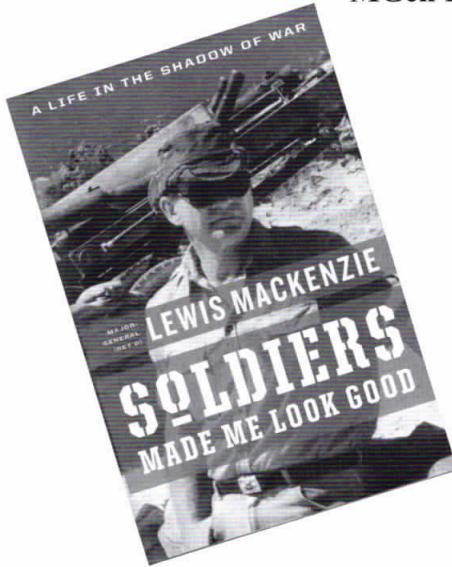
The Calgary Chapter of CAVUNP received funding of up to \$12,550 through Veterans Affairs Canada’s Community Engagement Partnership Fund to support the Calgary ceremony. This year, approximately 500 people gathered to pay tribute to the Canadians who have served in Peace Support Operations around the world.

“The annual recognition of all those Canadians who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving their country on Peace Support Operations is important to all Canadians,” said Colonel Ethell. “Today we honour the 204 Canadians including the ‘Buffalo Nine’ who have paid the ultimate sacrifice to Queen and country. May they rest in peace.”

More information on Canada’s role in peacekeeping and events marking National Peacekeepers’ Day can be found on the Veterans Affairs Canada Web site at www.vac-acc.gc.ca.

Soldiers Made Me Look Good

MGen Lewis MacKenzie CM, OOnt, MSC and Bar, CD



Major General Lewis MacKenzie's first book, "Peacekeeper - The Road to Sarajevo," became a national #1 bestseller in 1993. "A Soldier's Peace," a television documentary based on the book later won a

New York Film Festival award. "Soldiers Made Me Look Good" – "A Life in the Shadow of War" – traces his career from village life in Nova Scotia as a boy, through a military career during which he served in the 1st and 2nd battalions of The Queen's Own Rifles and commanded the 1st Bn PPCLI. He also participated in nine peace-keeping tours of duty in six different mission areas. During the civil war in Bosnia he captured the world's attention when he led a contingent of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), soldiers from over 30 countries in a successful mission to open the Sarajevo airport for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Now retired from the military and in demand as a writer and media commentator on military and public affairs, MGen MacKenzie has become noted for his outspoken and at times controversial viewpoints and has been subjected to more than

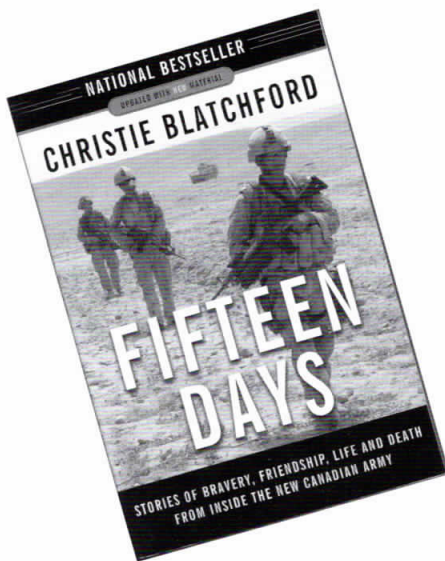
a little criticism for some of those opinions. In this book he does what all good commanders do – he gets right to the point in answering those critics, vigorously defending his ground.

With current members of The Queen's Own and the PPCLI now serving on a regular basis in Afghanistan, his views on Canada's role there, in just a few pages towards the end of the book, will be of particular interest to readers. "Canada can stand proud in having erased the memories of its past shortcomings in support of the (NATO) alliance," he writes, adding that, "There is no finer calling than being asked to help those, who through no fault of their own, are one hell of a lot worse off than you are The abused citizens of Afghanistan certainly qualify for that help."

(Published by Douglas & MacIntyre, 2008.)

"Fifteen Days"

Christie Blatchford, The Globe and Mail



On the front cover of Christie Blatchford's new book "Fifteen Days," the "blurb" across the bottom reads: "Stories of Bravery, Friendship, Life and Death from Inside the New Canadian Army." The book certainly provides all of that, but

what's also present in large measure are sensitive – and occasionally "lump in the throat" -- accounts of how the folks at home have come to grips with the loss in action of a son or daughter.

MGen Lew MacKenzie describes "Fifteen Days," this way: This is not a book about geopolitics. It's about soldiers and soldiering in the in the cauldron of combat, and equally, if not more, about the impact of those experiences on the families and friends left behind...Compelling, gut-wrenching and, unfortunately, real."

And real it is. The Globe and Mail columnist was "embedded" with the PPCLI on three different occasions in 2006, in a period covering ten months. She'd been caught in battle (where she saw her first dead soldier) and had been in theatre when several soldiers she'd met were killed, along with others she didn't know. The death of one of those – someone she only knew by her voice on the radio is the focus of a good

portion of this book. The voice was that of Capt Nichola Goddard, a FOO with IRCHA, hit by shrapnel as she occupied a turret seat in her LAV, directing it up a narrow road.

Blatchford carefully etches the details of the officer's death and the resultant pall which it created among her comrades. She also counters this with accounts of how her family, her husband and her friends responded to the loss. It's compelling reading. As is the rest of the book.

Blatchford, whose father served in Bomber Command with the RCAF in World War Two, is a highly-decorated member of the newspaper profession, if we can use that parallel. She's won numerous significant media awards, including one named for Canada's famous war correspondent, Ross Munro, presented by the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute

(Published by Anchor Press, 2008)

“Missing in Action.” The Search Continues...

LCol John Fotheringham CD



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

D DAY ASSAULT
Bernières-sur-Mer, Normandy
6 June 1944
by Captain Orville Fisher

As detailed in recent issues of *The Rifleman*, the search continues for the third Orville Fisher painting of the Queen's Own landing at Bernières-sur-Mer on D-Day. Captain Fisher, who passed away in 1999, witnessed the landings from offshore, and painted one for each QOR battalion. One now hangs in the Officers' Mess at Moss Park Armoury, one in the Regimental Museum at Casa Loma, and the third went missing in the early 1970s.

Please do not confuse our stolen painting with the various prints made over the years, both in black-and-white and colour. The missing piece of art is identical in size to the other two (i.e. approximately 6' wide by 4' high), and is a full-colour oil painting. It is signed by the artist in the lower right corner and is dated 1948.

This painting has been recorded as stolen with the Toronto Police Service, which

means that it can be seized when found or offered for auction, and its possessor charged with theft.

However, if anyone knows where this painting is we would prefer to have it quietly returned to the Regiment, and confidentiality and "no-questions-asked" is assured by contacting John Fotheringham at (416) 344-5191 or jfoth@interlog.com.

In memory of a member of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada 171632 Rifleman Percy Hughes, 83rd Battalion, CEF, Died of wounds 16 August 1916



A while ago our current RSM, MWO Shaun Kelly CD, had the excellent idea, on behalf of the Sergeant's Mess, of creating regimental coins for distribution to members of The Queen's Own as a means of recognizing and remembering those members of the Regiment who had given their lives in battle. More than 1700 were cast, with the Queen's Own crest on one face and the name, rank and serial number of a former member of the Regiment, who had been killed in action or died of wounds, on the reverse. The coins were distributed randomly, beginning with the Remembrance Day parade of that year and at various events which followed until they were all gone.

The regimental coin received by The Queen's Own's Honorary Colonel, Col Paul F. Hughes CD, is for Rfn Percy Hughes who died of wounds on 16 August 1916. Col Hughes researched the military records of Rfn Hughes and discovered that he is buried in Nunhead Cemetery, Southwark, London, England. During a visit to England the Honorary Colonel decided to visit the gravesite of Rfn Hughes. Here's his report:

"Percy was born on 19 November 1887 in Whitchurch Township, Ontario. His enrolment documents state his next of kin as Mary Hughes, mother, of 31 Golden Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. He was enrolled on 11 August, 1915 which would have

made him 27 years of age upon enrolment. His attestation papers state his occupation as a lather.

"Percy was enrolled in the 83rd Battalion, CEF, with his documents being signed by LCol Reginald Pellatt, the CO. Reginald should be no stranger to members of The Queen's Own as the son of Sir Henry Pellatt and post-WWI Commanding Officer of our regiment, 1925 – 1930.

"The 83rd Battalion was mobilized on 4 August 1915 and trained at Camp Niagara and Riverdale Barracks (Toronto) before embarking at Halifax on 28 April 1916 on SS Olympic. Its strength on leaving Canada was 35 officers and 1085 OR's, who followed the initial advance party draft of five officers and 250 OR's.

"Following its arrival in England the battalion trained at West Sandling, in Kent, along with other CEF battalions. (Reports note that this camp, near Folkestone, was one that troops thought of as awful when it was first put to use in 1915. Apparently the fields flooded and when most of the men arrived at the huts where they were to be barracked they were either not finished or leaked and the men had to go under canvas. It nearly caused a mass walkout, some said. It would seem, with no evidence to the contrary, that these problems had been alleviated by the time the Canadians arrived. It would certainly have been an improvement

over anything they were to face later in France and Flanders.)

"In any event, the 83rd was broken up to provide drafts to the 3rd Bn, 4th CMR and 5th CMR, with Percy being drafted to the 5th CMR on 6 June, 1916. He was to be seriously wounded less than two months later. His medical case sheet indicates he was wounded in the neck and back by small arms fire on 1 August, 1916 and treated at the 13th General Hospital in Boulogne. He was subsequently transferred to the King George Hospital in London on 11 August where he died of wounds five days later and was buried on 19 August in plot 52, 33723, Nunhead (All Saints) Cemetery.

"I visited Nunhead Cemetery on a rainy overcast day on 4 April, 2008 and found Percy's grave and headstone in a small war memorial area dedicated to those Canadians, New Zealanders and South Africans who died in London during the Great War. It contains a total of 35 graves, including a separated set of war graves for Australians.

"The plot is well maintained, which cannot be said for the rest of the cemetery, which was opened in 1840 and much of it is now badly overgrown. It was closed a number of years ago to burials and sadly many of the headstones, including in the chapel, have been vandalized.

"The cab driver who took me back to our hotel in St. James said that, as a boy, he and his mates played in Nunhead and had great fun turning over headstones!

"As for the 83rd Battalion CEF, it was officially disbanded on 4 June 1917, before war's end, its proud troops wearing the badge inscription '83- Queen's Own Rifles of Canada-Overseas Battalion' dispersed to fight and many to die in other units. The 83rd eventually became one of the six Canadian Expeditionary Force battalions perpetuated by The Queen's Own."

OBITUARIES OF QOR of C MEMBERS

Capt Stan C. Biggs, QC LMS



“Biggsie” died in Toronto on June 8, 2008, aged 94. He was the oldest surviving member of those Queen’s Own Rifles personnel who landed on D-Day. He was wounded in France after almost 3 months of continuous fighting and repatriated to England, where he found himself in the same hospital as Sgt Barney Danson, who had been wounded earlier. Capt Biggs, a lawyer, was soon pressed into service providing “Legal Services in Uniform” for the Canadian military. In 1946 he was appointed

a member of the defence team for “Lord Haw Haw” – William Joyce, charged with treason for broadcasting to the Allies on behalf of the Third Reich during WWII. Joyce was later hanged. Biggs practised law well into his 80s in Ontario, was named Queen’s Counsel in 1955 and awarded the prestigious Law Society Medal in 1995 “for distinguished service to the profession.” Predeceased by his wife, Barbara, founding director of the Toronto School of Art, he is survived by four children, five grandchildren, two brothers and one sister.

James P. (Jim) Bolton

The D-Day veteran died April 28, 2008, aged 85. Retired City of York firefighter. Survived by Margaret, his wife of 63 years, three children, four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Donald G. Doner

The D-Day veteran died on May 3, 2008. On D-Day he stopped a bullet in his chest when it hit a thick letter from his sister in his breast pocket. Its many folds absorbed most of the impact – and doubtless saved his life when the round deflected off a rib and ended up in his arm. He was also wounded repeatedly by shrapnel as he and his assault company comrades made their way across Juno Beach. Some shrapnel that entered his body would set off metal detectors at airports many years later. After his wounds were attended to he was assigned to guard German prisoners until he was taken aboard a ship and sent back to England and hospitalized before being returned to Canada. Rfn Doner’s fighting war had lasted exactly one day. For over 40 years Don and his late brother, Bob, owned and operated Doner Bros. Insurance Brokers in Alliston, Ontario. Survived by Josephine, his wife of 58 years, six daughters, four sisters and four grandchildren.

LCol Moore I. Jackson, CD CA



LCol Moore (Moose) Jackson CD died on June 1, 2008 in his 88th year. A World War Two veteran who served as Commanding Officer of The Queen’s Own Rifles from 1963-1965, he wrote in his memoirs that “My time in action was quite lengthy, some 11 months, serving through France, including Caen, Falaise Gap, Boulogne and Calais. Then through Belgium and Holland, including the Scheldt Estuary engagements

(probably the most horrible conditions imaginable) up to Nijmegen, where we spent December and January in conditions and scenery almost like Muskoka.” While The Queen’s Own was preparing for an attack in order to capture enemy positions on the approach to Calais, Lt Moore led a successful patrol from his company’s pioneer platoon behind enemy lines to disable land mines in their path. The ground had to be prodded to locate many of the mines, then they had to be lifted and de-armed, which required a steady hand and nerves of steel. When Lt Jackson and the Queen’s Own fought their way across the Rhine into Germany they liberated several prisoner of war and slave camps. “It is impossible to describe the conditions and the complete denigration of fellow humans!” he recalled. A successful businessman post war, he contributed enormously to the founding and continuing success of the Queen’s Own’s Regimental Trust Fund. He is survived by daughter Susan, son Peter, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Lt John Dunbar McLean ACSC

The D-Day veteran died suddenly in his 89th year on 14 November, 2008, in Oakville. He had joined The Queen’s Own in April, 1939 as a Rfn and was commissioned in August, 1940. Lt. McLean was in Maj. Charlie Dalton’s B Company on D-Day and was wounded in the Normandy landing. He recovered from his wounds and became 2 i/c of D Coy in September, 1944 and was named OC a month later. Lt McLean served with the Occupation Forces after D-Day and was S.O.S. in December, 1945. An artist, he had worked at Kodak Canada for 44 years before retirement. He was active as a lay reader and former church warden at St. Aidan’s Anglican Church, Oakville and was awarded the Order of Niagara, created for the laity of the Anglican Church of Canada, Diocese of Niagara. Predeceased by his brother, he is survived by his sister and wife, Maud Jocelyn, three children, ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

OBITUARIES OF QOR of C MEMBERS

MWO Peter Mitchell CD



Died June 2, 2008, in Ottawa, aged 80. After a 15-year battle with cancer. MWO Mitchell served with the Queen's Own, PPCLI and CF in Germany, Cyprus, Saskatoon, Calgary, Victoria and Ottawa, where he retired. In 1957 he was one of 40 soldiers from the 1st Battalion, QOR of C who had volunteered to undergo special and highly secret training with the U. S. Army at the U.S. Atomic Testing facility in Nevada They

participated in exercises involving the explosion of atomic bombs. with no protective clothing or shelter other than slit trenches They were exposed to six atomic detonations, at ranges of from 10 miles down to 1000 yards but were assured that they had not been exposed to harmful levels of radiation. It was later determined that that an alarming number of the veterans of the tests had either died from or were suffering from cancer. Survived by Claire, his wife of 30 years , son Rick and three grandchildren. Also by brother Allan and sister Joyce. He was predeceased by his first wife, Belle.

Douglas M. Rogers CD

Died April 4, 2008, aged 83. Joined the RegForce in March, 1941, aged 16. Served as Sergeant in 15th RCA in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany and volunteered for the Pacific Force after VE Day. Was "demobbed" but was commissioned and rejoined the army to serve for a further 15 years with the Loyal Edmontons and The Queen's Own. On his retirement from the military he and his family settled in Victoria where he served the provincial government for 15 years. He was instrumental in the acquisition of Pacific Rim National Park among numerous other properties in the province. He is survived by Patricia, his wife of 58 years, four children, 12 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, two sisters and a brother.

Roy Smith

Died in St. Catharines in February, 2008, aged 101. The keen curler was still active at St. Catharines Curling Club until a few months before his death. A teacher, his career was interrupted by World War II when he joined The Queen's Own in 1941. At 28 he was initially regarded as being too old for combat but he said that when many of the regiment's officers were killed or wounded on D-Day in 1944 he was promoted captain and sent overseas, serving until 1946. Predeceased by his wife Mona and son Graham, Smith had five grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren and nine great-great grandchildren.

LCol Glenn McIver CD



LCol M. Glenn McIver CD, a Queen's Own Rifles World War Two veteran who served in the campaign to liberate Northwest Europe, died on 16 March, 2008. He served in France, Belgium and Holland and was present in Holland when Sgt Aubrey Cosens was killed in the action which earned him the Victoria Cross. LCol McIver was wounded in the chest before VE Day, "and missed out on the celebrations," his daughter recalled. He command-

ed the Reserve Battalion in Toronto from 1958-1961. Born on September 20, 1916, he was dedicated teacher at Danforth Technical School in Toronto for 25 years He is survived by his wife, Jean, son Kenneth Glenn, daughter Noreen Ruth and a grandson and great-grand-daughter. A brother, Jack, was killed in action during WWII.

Sgt Charles Cadieux



The D-Day veteran, 91 died October 15, 2008. He enlisted in 1941 and served in artillery units until joining Major Ben Dunkelman's D company as platoon sergeant. Served in the battles in the Reichswald, Hochwald Forest and at Mooshof as Sgt. of 17 platoon, where Sgt. Aubrey Cosens won his VC. "These were among his greatest memories," his daughter Michelle McDermid said. In his book "Dual

Allegiance," Maj Dunkelman said that in two days of fighting at the Hochwald his company was reduced from 135 to 33 riflemen and one NCO. "Our dad was that one lucky NCO," she said. "At Christmas, 1945 when they arrived home from Europe, it was miserable and cold, and waiting for dignitaries to arrive for a parade of The Queen's Own Rifles, our Dad noticed that Major Dunkelman had no gloves and was obviously uncomfortable, so he left the line and gave his gloves to the Major. In his book Major Dunkelman described that act as his fondest memory of the second world war!" she said.

Sgt Raymond P. Charron CD

The World War Two veteran died September 7, 2008 in BC. Quebec-born Ray had a long and distinguished career in the Merchant Navy and the Royal 22nd Regt before rebadging to The Queen's Own Rifles. After retirement he was a staunch member of the Korean Veterans Association (KVA).

In Memoriam

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES HAVE PASSED AWAY

“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”

Jack Adams

Len Lockhart

Norm Bastin

Alex McGreal

Donald Black

LCol Glenn McIver

Pete Bergeron

Peter Mitchell

James Bolton

John D. McLean

Cecil Brooks

Bill Noseworthy

John Carson

William Reid

Ray Charron

Douglas M. Rogers

G.G. Cole

Larry (Lloyd) Schultz

John Connelly

Jim Smith

Lloyd Cornett

Roy Smith

David Cottrell

Ernie Stallan

Albert Crozier

Bob Stiers

Tommy Dalrymple

Ken Tucker

Donald Doner

William Upton

George Farley

Weldon Angus Welsh

Bill Houston

Harry Williams

Billie Hunt

Harry Lloy

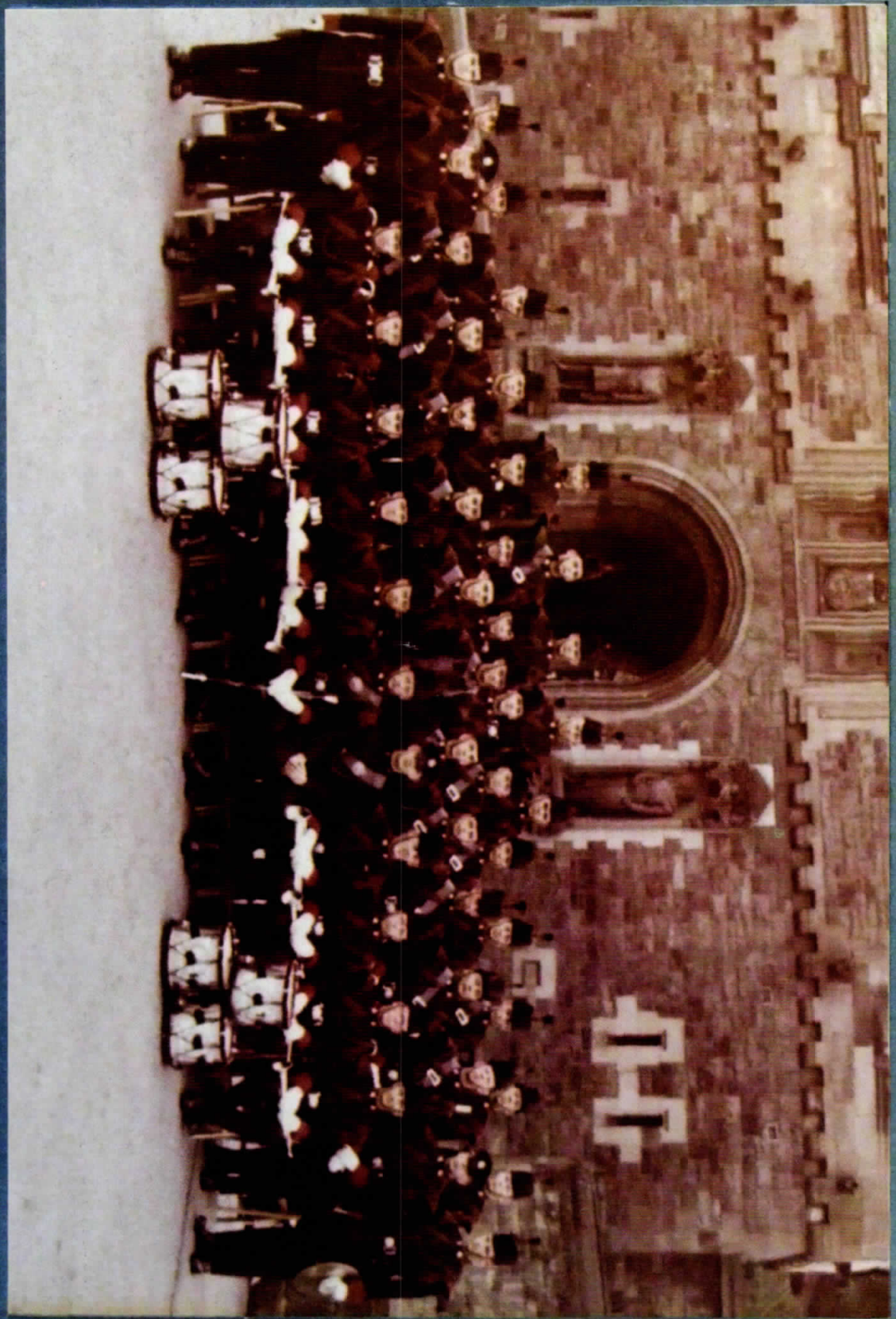
LCol Moore (Moose) Jackson





LCol Barnett (Barney) Danson PC, CC, and his wife Isobel, gathered for an extended family photo after a ceremony in which the World War Two veteran and former Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of The Queen's Own Rifles received his insignia as a Companion of the Order of Canada from Governor General, Michaëlle Jean.

EDINBURGH TATTOO, 1962





*Queen's Own Rifles
150th Birthday
Dinner and Reunion*



23rd to 25th April, 2010

**Westin Harbour Castle Hotel
Toronto, ON**

Friday, April 23rd

- “Meet & Greet” in the Frontenac Ballroom
- displays of Regimental memorabilia from 1860 to 2010
- photographs, trophies and equipment from all three Battalions
- hear the Regimental Band and Bugles on stage

Saturday, April 24th

- Tour the Regimental Museum at Casa Loma
- Gala reception in the Frontenac Ballroom
- Regimental Dinner with HRH Princess Alexandra in attendance in the Metro Ballroom
- Dance to the music of The Regimental Dance Band in the Metro Ballroom
- Or a live band and DJ in the Frontenac Ballroom

Sunday, April 25th

- Regimental Church Parade at St. Paul's
- Your opportunity to once again march with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in front of St. Paul's and participate on parade in the Ceremony of Remembrance

We will be taking reservations, selling tickets and publishing prices in due course, since we are unable to finalize hotel prices until 12 months before the event. Look for more information on the website at www.qor.com or in regimental publications.

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Trust Fund

In less than a year we celebrate our 150th Birthday!

It's hard to believe, but the time left to us to prepare for the celebrations which will mark The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada's 150th anniversary in 2010 is now down from years to mere months. On 1 January, 2010 our Sesquicentennial Year will begin and on 26 April, 2010 the Regiment will officially turn 150 years of age.

On page 3 of this issue of *The Rifleman* you will find a copy of the tentative schedule of our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH Princess Alexandra, who will be with us from Monday, 19 April until she returns home on Monday, 26 April. During her stay in Canada she will attend Queen's Own events in Toronto, Calgary and Victoria as detailed in the itinerary. In support of the 150th birthday our Regimental Associations are also planning special events to mark this most significant date in the history of Canada's oldest and finest continuously-serving Infantry Regiment.

Your Regimental Trust Fund has been called upon regularly in the run-up to the Sesquicentennial to make significant financial investments in the development and planning of many of these events, which makes our regular appeal for funds ever more urgent. We continue to face a variety of one-time-only expenses in our efforts to fulfill our pledge that the Sesquicentennial will be a memorable and exciting twelve-month celebration.

In honour of the anniversary, some of you have been sending cheques for \$150 and we greatly appreciate that. However, regardless of the amount, we thank all of those of you who have offered financial support. All contributions are greatly appreciated, large or small! **And keep in mind that there are income tax receipts for all donations of \$10.00 or more.**

We hope that past supporters will continue to help out and that new contributors can be encouraged to open their cheque books and join those who support your Regiment in this way. Join your fellow members of The Queen's Own's Regimental Family across Canada and abroad.

Currently, some two dozen members of the Unit are deployed in Afghanistan, serving alongside Regular Force personnel in what has become an increasingly dangerous posting. Some are there for their second or third tour. They follow in the footsteps of more than 20 others from The Queen's Own who have already served there, plus numerous others who have served in world hot spots from Bosnia to the Soudan in past years. They put themselves in harm's way because they're Queen's Own, a regiment which has been "Standing on Guard since 1860."

It's up to all of us to ensure that they are recognized for this and we can assure you that your contribution to the success of the 150th anniversary celebrations will help to guarantee this. We need your financial help. It's as simple as that. Participate without delay. It's easy. Just fill out the pledge form enclosed with this issue of *The Rifleman* and send it along to us -- with your cheque attached.

We also urge you to remember the Trust Fund in your Will ~ as a Bequest. This donation allows us to build capital to ensure the ongoing support of the Unit through your Trust Fund.

Adam Hermant, Trust Fund President
In Pace Paratus