



# The Powder Horn

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## MILITIA AT THE CROSSROADS....ONCE AGAIN

A year after the end of the Second World War, Canada's Army Reserve Force was organized to provide six infantry divisions, four armoured brigades, selected corps and army troops for a field army of two corps, and a number of home defence units of coast and anti-aircraft artillery. This force represented a war-time establishment of nearly 190,000 all ranks limited to a peace-time strength of 30,000.

Recognizing the inappropriateness of such a military establishment in the post-war period and acknowledging the inability of the government to fund, staff and equip a force of this magnitude, a study was conducted to determine the role and structure of the Army Reserves (Militia) in the 1950's.

Between this study, dubbed the Kennedy Commission, in 1954 and the present day, there have been three major studies of the Militia in an effort to determine a meaningful role for the Militia and the requirements for funding, staffing and equipping it to ensure the viability of that role. With changing international circumstances, budgetary restrictions and shifting military commitments, few of the recommendations adopted as a result of these studies have stood the test of time.

Today the Militia is at the cross-

roads again. The 1994 Defence White Paper has assigned the Militia with the primary role of augmenting, sustaining and supporting the Regular Force. The Paper has proposed a reduction in the Primary Reserve from 29,000 to 23,000 all ranks with the Militia taking the main brunt of the reductions. Rumours of the disbandment of some units and the reduction of other units to company strength are rampant.

In an address to the Conference of Defence Associations on 27 January 1995, the Minister of National Defence announced the formation of a special Commission to examine the issue of Reserve restructuring. This Commission will begin its work on 1 April 1995 and will report its findings to the Minister by the end of October of this year.

It is vitally important for Canadians to express their concerns about Canada's defence policy and the nature of its defence forces to ensure that Canada maintains an ability to defend its sovereignty and is capable of meeting her collective security obligations to the UN, NATO and NORAD.

You are, therefore, encouraged to follow-up on the Honorary Colonel's request to become involved in the defence debate by taking part in the letter writing campaign of

which you were informed recently. Failure to do so may place the future of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in jeopardy.

## QUEEN'S OWN GUILD

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Guild is a re-birth of the Guild which functioned along with The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Chapter of the I.O.D.E. prior to the Second World War.

During the war, the then Commanding Officer decreed that there would be only one organization so the Guild disbanded leaving the I.O.D.E. Chapter formed by Lady Pellat and which survived for 83 years. Financial considerations became a burden to the members and it was decided to resign from the I.O.D.E. Order and continue for the sake of comradeship as the Guild.

The Guild provides assistance to the Regimental Padre, assists in the Regimental Christmas Party, supports organizations such as the Breakfast Club (which provides breakfast for needy children), the Snac Pac Program in Labrador, CARD (Riding for the Disabled), a Queen's Own widow in England, and two disabled girls in Austria.

The Guild is proud to be a branch of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

## THE SCHELDT REMEMBERED

In October of last year, LCol M. Glenn McIver was selected by the Regiment to represent The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in a delegation of 62 veterans and numerous government officials on a Pilgrimage of Remembrance to Holland and Belgium to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Scheldt.

His report of this pilgrimage follows.

"The delegation of which I was honoured to be a part was supported by the "Canada Remembers" band and a 100 man guard of honour. The Colour Party was commanded by WO S.C. Kelly of the Queen's Own Rifles.

It is a little bit different returning from a trip to commemorate the battle of the Scheldt and coming home from a trip to commemorate D-Day. Unless you are talking to a veteran very few know anything about the Scheldt.

The schedule was very busy with only one full day and one half day marked as a free day. We attended services at thirteen town or city memorials and at three cemeteries where Canadians are buried. The cemeteries were Schoonselhof in Antwerp, Bregen-Op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery and Adegem Canadian War Cemetery. The Memorials were at the following towns or cities-Antwerp, Steengen, Eede, Aardenberg, Retranchment, Sluis, Hoofdplaat, Oostburg, Knokke, Beaumont-Hamel, Sloedam, Woensdrecht and the Vimy Ridge Memorial.

We attended a number of receptions, luncheons and formal dinners and participated in

several parades. Everywhere we went we received a tremendous reception. We listened to many speeches from mayors and burgomasters expressing heartfelt thanks to all the Canadians who fought for their freedom and special remembrance for those that are now buried in Holland and Belgium because of that battle. We had to stop and think that most of the officials were not even born when the Scheldt was being liberated.

The guard of honour was made up of volunteers from Militia regiments across Canada and I was able to talk to WO Kelly on a number of occasions. Canada can be proud of the job the guard of honour did.

This memorial pilgrimage was extremely well organized and efficiently conducted by a very pleasant and knowledgeable staff from Veterans Affairs Canada. The group of veterans came from all across Canada and all services were represented. The veteran of the Merchant Marine who was with us was on one of the first ships to go up the Scheldt to Antwerp but on the way out his ship was torpedoed by a German submarine.

A big plus from the trip was the marvellous fellowship that developed among the veterans. What a wonderful group of gentlemen to represent Canada on this type of delegation. I had to keep looking carefully at the medals being worn. The decorations went from MMs and MCs right up to the Victoria Cross worn proudly by Smokey Smith.

I want to thank the Regiment and BGen D.A. Pryer, our Honorary

Colonel, for giving me the opportunity to be part of this delegation."

## INAUGURAL MEETING OF ASSOCIATION BRANCHES

Regimental history was made when the first meeting of representatives from QOR association Branches in Calgary, Chilliwack, Ottawa, Toronto and Victoria met with members of the Toronto Battalion and other Regimental dignitaries took place in Toronto on 5 Nov 1994 to discuss several issues of Regimental interest.

A tour of the Regimental Museum at Casa Loma, a briefing by LCol S.D. Branch on the state of the Battalion, a discussion of a proposed Association Constitution and briefings by Association representatives on their respective Branches highlighted the day's activities.

A number of commemorative projects to mark the 50th anniversary of VE Day were outlined in the hope that all members of Association Branches would provide financial support to see these projects completed as a memorial to those members of the Regiment who were killed during World War II.

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## WORLD WAR II HUMOUR FROM THE "BIG 2" BUGLE

*A virgin forest is a forest in which the hand of man has never set foot.*

## REFLECTIONS ON AN ERA - THE REGULAR COMPONENT

25 years ago.....1970.

The reasons for the disappearance of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada from the Regular Army's order of battle was set in motion in the House of Commons by the Honourable Leo Cadieux, the Minister of National Defence. His statement at that time announced the restructuring of the Canadian Armed Forces to coincide with the changes in Canada's defence posture.

As a consequence, the Minister regrettably announced that The Canadian Guards, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada would no longer form a part of the Regular Forces. He went on further to say that the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada was to be redesignated as 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry with the actual reorganization taking effect during the spring of 1970.

1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada was formed on 16 October 1953 by the redesignation of the 1st Canadian Rifles Battalion which was stationed in Valcartier.

On 24 April 1970, a day on which the Regiment was celebrating its 110th anniversary, the 1st Battalion of Canada's oldest Regular infantry regiment paraded at Work Point Barracks at Esquimalt, B.C. for the last time. The ceremonial parade and the feu de joie, under the command of LCol T.M.C. Marsaw, CD, was inspected by Colonel J.G.K. Strathy, O.B.E., E.D., C.D., Colonel of the Regiment. It was a ceremony that will long be remembered. Knowing that this was their last parade as members of the 1st Battalion, every officer, non-commissioned officer and rifleman was determined to make this the finest parade ever. The drill, the marching, the double past and the feu de joie were superb and executed flawlessly.

1st Battalion served, as part of NATO, in Germany from November 1960 to November 1963, in Cyprus from March to October 1965 and in Norway in February 1970. Its first commanding officer was LCol J.M. Delamere followed by LCols C.P. McPherson, C.H. Lithgow, H.C.F. Elliot, C.deL. Kirby, H.C. Pitts and T.M.C. Marsaw.

*Submitted by LCol J.G.B. Strathy, CD*

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### HIGH PRAISE, INDEED!!!

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Lord Brabourne, husband of Countess Mountbatten who is Colonel-in-Chief of The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, to Major-General H.C. Pitts, our Honorary Lieutenant Colonel.

"It was most kind of you to send me a copy of Battle Diary by Charles Cromwell Martin. I very much enjoyed reading it and Mr. Martin is obviously one of those splendid Company Sergeant-Majors who are always of such importance to any army.

The account in the book reminded me of the dreadful bombardments which we all suffered and which none of us, I am sure, will ever forget. It seems clear to me that we were fortunate, compared to the Canadians as they appeared to have borne the brunt of that tremendous bombardment. I remember with particular horror the very heavy shelling and the Moaning Minnies. Although the noise they made was particularly frightening, the one

great advantage about the Minnies was that you could hear them coming and could at least have a few seconds to find what cover there was. It all brought back very clear memories and the book is one of the best descriptions that I have ever read of that type of fighting. It is absolutely clear that we were surrounded by the best possible soldiers at that particular time.

Thank you also for enclosing the extract from the official history of the Q.O.R. which I have also read with particular interest. It is quite clear to me now from this extract that it must have been units of the Q.O.R. which were alongside the 5th Battalion, Coldstream Guards, which I was serving in. The two villages which we were dug-in during that period were Marcelot and Carpiquet and it was particularly in the latter village where we came into close contact with our Canadian colleagues."

## GURKHAS RE-ORGANIZE

Word has been received from the Brigade of Gurkhas Liaison Officer in London that on 1 July 1994 four Rifle Regiments of the Brigade of Gurkhas were disbanded and a new large Regiment titled the Royal Gurkha Rifles was formed.

2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles and 6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles were amalgamated to form 1 Royal Gurkha Rifles and is currently stationed in Hong Kong.

7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles was renumbered 2 Royal Gurkha Rifles and is stationed in Brunei while the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles was renumbered as 3 Royal Gurkha Rifles and is stationed in England.

2 and 3 Royal Gurkha Rifles will amalgamate in 1996 and remain in Brunei while 1 Royal Gurkha Rifles will move to England on withdrawal from Hong Kong.

In addition to its alliance with the Queen's Own Rifles, the Brigade of Gurkhas has alliances with The Royal Australian Regiment, The Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment and The Royal Brunei Armed Forces.

## DUNDURN REUNION

As part of Canada Remembers program and of the Province of Saskatchewan's 90th Birthday celebrations, Canadian Forces Detachment in Dundurn will be holding a homecoming during August 1995.

To mark these events, a Book of Camp Dundurn history is being produced. Focus of the book is

intended to be on the personal aspects of service life in Dundurn. Personal reports should include personal anecdotes stressing living conditions, memorable incidents, etc. All input - the good, the bad and the ugly - will be welcomed.

Articles should be directed to Captain R.A. Herold, CFAD Dundurn, Dundurn, Saskatchewan, SOK 1KO. Interested parties may also call (306) 492-2135, Local 240 for further information.

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## NEWS FROM CHILLIWACK

Bob Foster reports that 1994 was an especially good year for riflemen residing in British Columbia having claim to the bragging rights to the Vancouver Canucks and the Lions who did exceptionally well in their respective sports. He asked that riflemen in Ontario "eat their hearts out" or words to that effect.

The 134th birthday celebrations were held in the premises of the Vedder Legion Branch 280 at which Wayne Dehnke, John Saunders and Doug Williams were honoured as special guests. Also present from Agazzi was Lou Wiseman who looked remarkably fit.

Members of the Chilliwack Branch were saddened to hear of the deaths of George Stolzenberg and Norm Whiston who were MWOs with the 2nd Battalion.

Other people in the news were Ralph Ferris who was ill at the time of writing but who is expected to return to tip-top shape by the end of February. Keith and Barb McCarthy are spending the winter in Yuma.

During the summer, Bob and Greta travelled to Whitehorse during

which time they visited Duke Connelley, a former MWO with the 2nd Battalion. Duke, who had just finished a two year stint as an alderman, provided the Fosters with the use of his cottage from where the Fosters toured parts of Alaska.

All members of our Regimental family are wished a good and prosperous year from the Chilliwack Branch of the Queen's Own Association.

## WORLD WAR II HUMOUR FROM THE "BIG 2" BUGLE

*"Armstrong, my neighbour, must be a very wealthy man. He saves \$500.00 a day".*

*"Five hundred a day!!! How can he do it?"*

*"He goes to work every day on the subway. There's a big sign, \$500.00 if you spit. So Armstrong doesn't spit."*

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*Rfn Jones: "I had an uncle with a wooden leg."*

*Rfn Smith: "So what, my mother's got a cedar chest."*

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*Rfn Jones: "Is that right you were once an actor?"*

*Rfn Smith: "Yeah, I had my leg in a cast."*

## **Q.O.R. NEWS**

Following a very busy summer schedule the Regiment has returned to its usual routine combining challenge and accomplishment. Despite assorted rumours, budget cuts and the disbandment of the Airborne Regiment, the Queen's Own Rifles are marching on at 140 paces a minute!!!! Indeed, as these lines are being written Moss Park Armoury is alive to the sound of the Regiment getting ready for a winter warfare exercise. Tent groups, lanterns, stoves, shovels and assorted equipment are being tested and stored in the sleds. 60th Company is making full use of the airborne training towers in preparation for their task. And to top it all, a recruit training course is sweating its way around the second floor balcony and up and down the stairs, at the whim of their training NCOs. We are in good shape, indeed!!!!

This year, Individual Combat Skills training has taken place so smoothly that we have hardly noticed and we did so to a very high standard. Worth noting is the fact that our C7 rifles have now been equipped with the new C79 optical sight.

The forthcoming winter Exercise "Blockbuster II" will take place at CFTA Meaford during the weekend of 24-26 February 1995. It has been timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the original Blockbuster operation, the push into Germany in February/March of 1945. The exercise will start with a drop by 60th Coy, following which the Queen's Own Rifles will complete various ground tasks. On Sunday morning, a plaque honouring Aubrey Cossens, V.C., will be unveiled in the presence of Queen's Own veterans and other dignitaries.

Last but not least, we should keep in mind that several members of our

Regiment are serving overseas in the former Yugoslavia. Sgt D. O'Halloran is posted to the Royal Canadian Dragoons while Cpl P. Smardenkas and Cpl W. Gin are posted to 1 Royal Canadian Regiment. Should anyone want to drop them a line this can be done through the Battalion Orderly Room.

## **REGIMENTAL TRUST FUND**

LCol John G.B. Strathy, President of the Trust Fund, and the twelve Trustees who are elected annually, wish to express their sincere appreciation to those donors who gave so generously to the Trust Fund in 1994. Nearly \$62,000 was raised to support a couple of special projects and to meet annual recurring costs to which the Trust Fund is obligated.

A special fund raising drive was initiated by LCol Strathy early in the year to support the trip by serving Militia members of the Regiment to participate in the D-Day Plus 50 ceremonies in Normandy. The response to this appeal was heartening in that over \$25,000 was raised primarily from foundations and the corporate sector through LCol Strathy's personal efforts on behalf of the Regiment.

In addition, bequests and "in memoriam" donations amounted to \$13,000; contributions to Operation "Memorials" under CQMS Jack Martin's direction totalled \$2,400; donations to special projects associated with D-Day Plus 50 amounted to \$5,000 and donations for general purposes were \$16,000.

Major expenditures in 1994 included \$5,000 for Battalion activities which fell outside DND responsibility; \$3,725 for the maintenance of the Regimental Museum at Casa Loma; \$3,500 for insurance premiums on Regimental property; \$14,400 for publication

and distribution of "The Rifleman" and "The Powder Horn"; and \$3,800 for operation of Regimental Headquarters.

Funds raised for specific projects like the D-Day Plus 50 trip and Operation "Memorials" were handed over to the principals of these projects.

Members of our Regimental family are reminded that the Trust Fund needs a minimum of \$25,000 annually to meet recurring costs of those activities which the Trustees feel are essential for the well-being of the Regiment.

The Trustees are confident that you will meet the Trust Fund's financial needs as you have done so enthusiastically and generously in the past.

In Pace Paratus.

## **ASSOCIATION DUES**

Association dues for 1995 remain at \$10.00.

If you have not sent in your dues, please do so now.

Dues should be mailed to: Arthur M. Gay, Association Secretary, Regimental Headquarters, 130 Queen St.E., Toronto, ON. M5A 1R9

## **MEMORIAL FUND**

Jack Martin is pleased to report that donations to the Memorial Fund reached \$8,213.90 on 20 February 1995.

If you have not contributed to this worthwhile project, please send in your donations so that the cost of manufacturing and installing the memorial plaques can be met before the VE Day Remembrance ceremonies in May.

REGIMENTAL PHOTO ALBUM



1. Shooting the Breeze at the Association Annual Rifle Shoot at CFB Borden - J.P. Moore, Gary Roncetti, Sid Byatt, Jim Wilkins and Jack Martin.

2. Doug Williams and John Saunders at the 134th Birthday Party of the Chilliwack Branch.

3. WO S.C. Kelly and LCol M.G. McIver at the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Scheldt in Holland.

4. Sgt R.P. Arendz, LCol S.D. Brand and WO F.A. Haine at the Borden Rangers.

5. Hon Col D.A. Pryan and Hon LCol H.C. Pitts put the squeeze on the Regimental Secretary S.F. Andrunyk.