



The Powder Horn

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Issue 1

People and Places

TORONTO'S LOSS.....VICTORIA'S GAIN.....Major-General H.C.(Herb) Pitts, Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the Queen's Own Rifles, has moved to Victoria, B.C. after a ten year stay in Toronto. He will be sorely missed by the Regiment and such organizations as the Korean Veterans' Association, the Fort York Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Association, and the Corps of Commissionaires in which he was a dedicated and active member. His many friends and associates wish him and his wife Marianne good health and happiness in their new environment.

"THE ANGLICAN" SALUTES A PROUD VETERAN....In the November 1997 issue of "The Anglican", the official publication of the Anglican Church in Canada, a photograph of Colonel Charles O. Dalton appears in recognition of the Remembrance Day Parade services at St.Paul's Church in Toronto. One of the many veterans who took part in the Parade, Colonel Dalton has attended every Remembrance Day service at St.Paul's Church since 1926, except during the war years.

HIGH PRAISE INDEED.....Commander W.A.B.Douglas, President of the Canadian Battle of Normandy Foundation, attended a number of D-Day commemorative services in Normandy during June 1997. According to him, the most memorable ceremonies were those of the Queen's Own Rifles at Bernieres-sur-Mer. He was particularly impressed with the ceremony marking the dedication of the "Maison Queen's Own Rifles", probably one of the most significant buildings in the Regiment's long and illustrious history.

STAINED GLASS WINDOW COMES TO TORONTO.....The Regiment is grateful to John E.Creswell of Calgary for his efforts in recovering the stained glass window which was presented by the Regiment to the Currie Barracks Protestant Chapel during the Regiment's service in that city. The window depicting St.Paul is now stored in Moss Park Armoury until its final disposition is agreed upon. It is likely that the window will be installed in St.Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto, the Regiment's Church.

People and Places

TORONTO ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT SUFFERS SERIOUS INJURY. Brian Budden, former Regimental Sergeant Major of the Toronto Battalion, and now President of the Toronto Branch of the Queen's Own Rifles Association, was seriously injured at his work place a few weeks ago which necessitated the amputation of his left leg just below the knee. All members of the Regimental family wish Brian a speedy recovery.

NEW CHAIRMAN – TORONTO POLICE SERVICES BOARD. Norm Gardner, a former member of the Queen's Own Rifles in Toronto, was elected to chair the Toronto Police Services Board at its meeting on 28 January 1998.

Norm Gardner joined the Queen's Own Rifles as a rifleman in 1958. After one year's service he transferred to 2 Provost Company where he attained the rank of Sergeant. On commissioning, he returned to the Queen's Own Rifles serving as a junior officer in various appointments. One of his proudest moments came in 1964 when he won the Eastern Canada Black Belt Judo championship. Lieutenant Gardner went on the Supplementary Reserve List in 1967 to pursue a political career. He served as an Alderman and Controller in North York and sat on the Metropolitan Toronto Council. It is noted that he served on the Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission longer than anyone else has ever done. The Regiment adds its congratulations to Norm Gardner on his appointment and wishes him every success in his new responsibilities.

CLOSURE OF CURRIE BARRACKS. Former members of the Regiment who served with the Regimental Depot, and the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Regiment will be saddened to learn that CFB Calgary officially closed down in August 1997. According to a number of newspaper articles sent to Regimental Headquarters by Captain Ralph Ridley, the future of Currie Barracks and Harvey Barracks (Sarcee) remains uncertain. Canada Lands Company (CLC), the real estate arm of the federal government says that of all the property it holds across the country, CFB Calgary rates in the top five in terms of property value. CFB Downsview in North York, Ontario rates first.

A Community Planning Advisory Committee of 17 people has been formed to prepare an action plan to Calgary City Council this spring. With the exception of the Museum of the Regiments, the Centennial Arena, and the nearby curling club, the entire area will likely be re-zoned for residential development.

COMMANDING OFFICER DESIGNEATE. At its meeting on 10 December 1997, the Regimental Senate confirmed the appointment of Major Bruce G.McEachern as the Commanding Officer Designate with the Change-of-Command scheduled to take place on a date between late September and mid-October 1998 on the retirement of the incumbent Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel A.R.Welsh.

People and Places

COLONEL PAUL HUGHES UNDERTAKES PORTRAIT RESTORATION. The Officers' Mess in Moss Park Armoury is the repository of most of the Regiment's collection of silver and artefacts accumulated over its 138 year history. In addition to this treasure trove of Regimental memorabilia, the walls of the Mess are adorned by portraits, in oil, of the Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, the first sixteen Commanding Officers dating from 1860 to 1937, and Field Marshal the Right Honourable F.S. Earl Roberts.

During a survey of Regimental property it was discovered that many of these irreplaceable and invaluable portraits were in urgent need of restoration due to deterioration from age, dust, and air pollution. After consultation with an art expert, it was learned that the cost of restoring each portrait to its original state would range from \$2,000 to \$3,000. Due to the limited financial resources of the Regimental Trust Fund it seemed that the restoration of these portraits would have to be postponed. However, on learning of the urgent need to restore the portraits, Colonel Paul F. Hughes, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, kindly offered to undertake the financing of the restoration project on an agreed schedule of work. So far, the restoration of the portraits of Lieutenant Colonel C. T. Gillmor, 2nd Commanding Officer (1866-1875), and Major General Robert Rennie, 10th Commanding Officer (1916-1920) have been completed. Restoration of portraits of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, Lieutenant Colonel W. S. Durie, 1st Commanding Officer (1860-1866), and Field Marshal Earl Roberts are to be completed in the next year through the generosity of Colonel Hughes.

A native of Toronto, Colonel Hughes was educated in Queen's University in Kingston and Oxford University in England. He holds a degree in Economics and Political Science and completed a program of Personnel Studies at Oxford. Following short engagements in the RCAF (Auxiliary) and RCN(R) he joined the 3rd Battalion of the Queen's Own Rifles as a rifleman in 1962. He was commissioned in 1963 and served with the Regiment for 15 years holding various appointments including that of Deputy Commanding Officer from 1975 to 1977. He was transferred to Calgary by his employer, Xerox Canada, where he worked for 28 years before retiring in 1991.

While in Calgary Colonel Hughes served with Southern Alberta Militia District until his appointment in 1979 as Commanding Officer of The Calgary Highlanders. From 1983 to 1987 Colonel Hughes was Commander of Southern Alberta Militia District. Subsequent to his serving in the Militia he became active in the Alberta Army Cadet League.

Colonel Hughes is now the Vice President for Mark Personnel Services, a company owned and founded by Mrs. Hughes.

Change of Address

All recipients of "The Rifleman" and "The Powder Horn" are reminded to inform Regimental Headquarters of any change in their address to eliminate unnecessary mailing costs.

News from Association Branches

TORONTO BRANCH. The Annual Association Rifle Shoot will be held on Saturday, 6 June 1998 (54th anniversary of D-Day) at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rifle Range. Those interested in participating are asked to contact Rob Grieve at (905) 839-3096 or Regimental Headquarters at (416) 362-3946 for details. There will be a short memorial service prior to the shoot conducted by the Regimental Padre.

There will also be a D-Day Parade at Moss Park Armoury on 6 June 1998 for those who are not participating in the Rifle Shoot. The Parade will take place at 7:00 o'clock in the morning with the form-up in front of the World War II Memorial Plaque with a reception to follow the ceremony. All Queen's Own Rifles veterans and serving members of the Battalion are encouraged to attend.

Warriors' Day Parade will be held on Saturday, 15 August 1998. Forming-up will take place at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the CNE Princes' Gate. A bus will leave the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #344 on the Lakeshore at 0:930 o'clock in the morning.

Brian Budden, Branch President, wishes to express his thanks to those members of the Regimental family who provided support and encouragement during the time of his unfortunate accident and recovery.

VICTORIA BRANCH. The Branch held its annual general meeting on 17 January 1998 with the election of the following officers: President – Ira MacDonald; Vice President – Fred Mercer; Treasurer – Bob Drinkwalter; Secretary – John Tolley; Entertainment – Harold Drinkwalter assisted by Gordon Hie and Kevin Walsh.

Several members of the Branch attended the QOR Band Reunion in Calgary on 4 July 1997 at Mewata Armoury. The Branch will celebrate the Regimental Birthday on 25 April 1998 in the Naden Wardroom.

CALGARY BRANCH. Ralph Ridley reports that 1997 was a particularly active year. The celebration of the 137th birthday of the Regiment was held on 26 April in the WOs/SGTs Mess of CFB Calgary. Over 100 members, wives and friends of the Association attended with some guests travelling long distances to join in the event. From Manitoba came Adrian Cyr, Russ Moore, Gordon and Anita Newell, and Ron and Betty Wilson, and Francis Vermette. Gillient and Charlene King came from Langley, B.C. and out-of-town Albertans were Roy and Lola Benjamin from Lacombe, Bill and Shirley Major from Edmonton, and Glenn and Judy Wallace from Medicine Hat. The guest speaker was Major Jim Taylor who entertained the group series of anecdotes and jokes. The Regimental Band of The King's Own Calgary Regiment provided the music.

The final service at St. George's Protestant Chapel prior to the closure of CFB Calgary took place on 15 June and was attended by many former riflemen. John Creswell and Clay Hodder accepted the QOR memorial plaque and the banner.

News from Association Branches

CALGARY BRANCH. (Continued)

The QOR Band Reunion was held during the period 4 to 6 July. The event coincided with the Calgary Stampede and included a dinner dance at the Mewata Armoury Wos/SGTs Mess and a Pancake Breakfast on the following day hosted by the Association.

A QOR Luncheon was held at The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #264 on 18 October, but unfortunately the attendance was below expectations.

Battalion News

Seven officers and men of the Queen's Own Rifles are currently serving with the 1st Royal Canadian Regiment (1 RCR) in Bosnia. They are Captain Cunningham, Captain Saunders, Corporal Suurd, and Riflemen Harrison, Ioanni, Morgan, and Simpson.

Four NCOs are now undergoing training at CFB Petawawa for the next rotation to Bosnia in June. They are Sergeant Paton, and Corporals Lawlor, Morton, and Vulakovich.

There are 35 recruits undergoing QL2 training under Major E.R.C. Simundson and the instructors of Gurkha Company. Successful recruits will then undergo their basic infantry training this summer at CFTA Meaford. They will be trained by QOR instructors until their graduation in June.

There are six new Officer Cadets attending their initial training at CFB Gagetown this summer.

The Battalion is in good shape with a strength of over 200. This year, the Battalion is the coordinating unit for the infantry portion of the summer concentration, dubbed Exercise Steadfast Warrior, to be held at CFB Petawawa during the period 21-30 August.

Brigade and unit staff, under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel A.R. Welsh, the unit Commanding Officer, are planning a demanding and exciting patrolling school for all infantry participants. The exercise will include a para-insertion for the Battalion's airborne soldiers, and plenty of airmobile operations with Canadian and United States Army helicopters.

From the Regimental Secretary's Desk

Readers of "The Powder Horn" are reminded of the need for all members to make a contribution, regardless of size, to the Regimental Trust Fund to assist in meeting the costs incurred in supporting those Regimental activities which are not a responsibility of DND. As an example, the mailing costs alone of distributing this issue of "The Powder Horn" is \$600.00 while the printing and mailing costs of "The Rifleman" were nearly \$9,000.00.

Error of Omission

It is regretted that the 1997 edition of "The Rifleman" inadvertently omitted Major Paul A. Hunter from the list of Regimental members who passed away in 1997.

In Memoriam

The Regiment is saddened by the passing of Captain Al Mercury, a former member of the Queen's Own Rifles in Toronto. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Regiment and will be missed by his family and his many friends and colleagues.

Regimental Museum

The Regimental Museum in Casa Loma, under the capable guidance of its curator Captain Peter A. Simundson, continues to expand the number of outstanding displays of Regimental artefacts. A visit to the Museum is a "must" when you next come to Toronto. You will be proud of what the Museum curator has accomplished in the past few years.

Titbits from Pitts

Regimental Headquarters has received a report from Major General H.C.Pitts confirming his and Marianne's safe arrival in Victoria. They moved into their newly acquired home on April 23rd and are now busily engaged in unpacking.

General Pitts lost no time in linking up with Victoria Branch of the Queen's Own Association as witnessed by his attendance at the Association Dinner in the Naden Wardroom on April 25th, presumably to celebrate the Regiment's 138th birthday.

On leaving Toronto, General Pitts took with him a silver drum for presentation to Victoria Branch on a long-term loan basis. He claims that after a day and a half of spit and polish the silver drum looks like "a million bucks". Toronto take note!!!

Korean Veterans Golf Tournament

The 10th Annual Harry Niven Memorial Golf Classic, under the patronage of Major General H.C.Pitts and sponsored by the Korean Veterans Uijongbu Club, will take place at the CFB Borden Circled Pine Golf Club on Friday, 29 May 1998, with tee-off time scheduled for 10:00 o'clock in the morning.

The tournament is opened to anyone who wishes to play. Interested golfers should contact George Mannion by telephone (519) 925-0010.