



## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News May 29, 2018

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at [bob.mugford@gmail.com](mailto:bob.mugford@gmail.com) to let me know you didn't get a copy.

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: [www.vancouvergunners.ca](http://www.vancouvergunners.ca) and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html> . Both groups are also on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=vancouver%20artillery%20association> and <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rusi%20vancouver>

**Wednesday Lunches** - We serve a great 5 course buffet meal for only \$20. Hope to see you all there. Guests are always welcome, and we encourage members to bring their significant others. Dress - Jacket and tie, equivalent for Ladies. **Note: NO lunches on June 20 and 27. Mrs Lum is on vacation.**

**Upcoming events – Mark your calendars** See attached posters for details.

June 02	15 Fd Regt Cadet Corps Annual Review and Dinner 39 CER Change of Command
June 03	Walk for Veterans
June 20	<b>No lunch</b>
June 27	<b>No lunch</b>

### World War 2 – 1943

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

**May 30<sup>th</sup>:** Attu is secure; the Japanese have lost 2,350 killed and 28 wounded POWs, the Americans have lost 600 dead and 1200 wounded in what may really have been an unnecessary campaign – except that Attu and Kiska are American territory and belong to Alaska. De Gaulle arrives in Algiers for a kiss and make up session with General Giraud: The gulf between Free French and those who stayed and served Vichy is a deep one, but the liberation of France requires it be bridged.

**May 31<sup>st</sup>:** Allied air raids and cruiser bombardments start to make life a living hell for the garrison on the Italian-held island of Pantelleria.

**June 1943: Where did all the U-Boats Go?** *It was now a very skillful war. Nothing was left to chance: Gone forever were the makeshift days when untrained and under armed escorts put to sea with a handful of depth-charges and a couple of Lewis guns and, hoping for the best, ran straight into slaughter. Science was now king in the Atlantic: Science and skilled men to make use of it.* -Nicholas Monsarrat, “The Cruel Sea”; a semi-autobiographical novel of his days on corvettes.

**General:** A bad month for the U-Boats, 17 are lost and the Allies only lose 28 ships – moreover, the British naval codes are changed, and the Germans are now unable to decipher them. The RAF drops 15,000 tons of bombs, mostly on the Ruhr, and the US drops 2,500 tons on German ports.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>:** 500,000 US coal miners go on strike as a complex series of wage negotiations break down.

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>:** DeGaulle and Giraud agree on the composition of a Committee of National Liberation. The French Resistance and SOE pull off a major act of sabotage at the Michelin tire works at Clermont-Ferrand.

**June 4<sup>th</sup>:** A week of intensive bombardments begins to soften up the Italian island of Pantelleria -- which lies athwart the planned route for the invasion of Sicily.

## **Artillery Day – May 26, 2018**



*Bob Mugford, Darren Kostinuk, Leon Jensen and Doug Loney at Wallace Field on Artillery Day 2018.*

The Vancouver Artillery Association deployed the 25 Pounder and Field Artillery Tractor to Wallace Field in Jericho Beach Park for Artillery Day. It was a great day showing off the equipment to local Vancouverites. A wedding party came by in the afternoon and used the FAT as a prop! We've been promised photos of the wedding shoot. Bernie Rowe attended in the morning and missed getting in the photo. Also missing is Peter Moogk, who took the picture.

## **Canada's First VC Recipient**

Alexander Dunn at The Charge of the Light Brigade: Balaclava, 1854

*Bob Gordon May 18, 2018*

The Victoria Cross was introduced on January 29, 1856 by Queen Victoria to recognize acts of valour during the Crimean War. A total of 96 Canadians have been awarded this illustrious

medal since its inception, however none since the Second World War. The original warrant states, the VC is “awarded to those officers and men who have served us in the presence of the enemy and shall have then performed some single act of valour or devotion to their country.” Only rare, non-combat actions “under circumstances of extreme danger” were eligible. On its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the award was limited to acts in the face of the enemy. Despite being the pinnacle of the Royal award hierarchy, it is a deceptively unassuming dark brown Maltese cross, cast from cannon captured at Sevastopol, not struck. The face displays the Royal Crown surmounted by a lion guardant. Below the crown is a scroll bearing the inscription: FOR VALOUR. The crimson ribbon is 36 millimetres wide.



The first Canadian to be awarded a Victoria Cross was Alexander Roberts Dunn, while serving with the British Army’s 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars at the Battle of Balaclava. Dunn was born in York (renamed Toronto one year later) in 1833, the son of John Henry Dunn, the Receiver-General of Upper Canada, and studied at Upper Canada College and at Harrow School, London. He purchased a commission in the Hussars in 1852. The citation in the London Gazette enumerated his heroics: “For having, in the Light Cavalry Charge on the 25 October, 1854, saved the life of Sergeant Bentley, 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars by cutting down two or three Russian Hussars, who were attacking from the rear, and afterwards cutting down a

Russian Hussar, who was attacking Private Levett, 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars.” Dunn sold his commission in 1856, but after less than a year on civvy street managing his father’s estate north of York, he returned to the military organizing the 100<sup>th</sup> (Prince of Wales’ Royal Canadian) Regiment of Foot, a British unit raised in Canada in response to the 1857 Indian Mutiny. He went on to serve as its Major. In 1864, Dunn transferred to the 33<sup>rd</sup> (Duke of Wellington’s) Regiment of Foot and was promoted to the rank of Colonel, becoming the first Canadian to command a British regiment and the youngest colonel, at the time, in the British Army. Four years later, Dunn and his Regiment were sent to the Horn of Africa to take part in the Expedition to Abyssinia, more commonly known as Ethiopia. He was killed amid unusual circumstances while on a hunting expedition shortly after arriving in the country, on January 25, 1868. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has been caring for Dunn’s burial site in Senafe since 1982.

## **Montreal WW II Hero Honoured as Dutch Town's Saviour**

On the evening of April 14, 1945, Canadian soldier Léo Major single-handedly liberated the Dutch town of Zwolle from the Nazis, in a story that's almost too incredible to be true.

*Laura Marchand, Marilla Steuter-Martin · CBC News May 21, 2018*

On the evening of April 14, 1945, Canadian soldier Léo Major single-handedly liberated the Dutch town of Zwolle from the Nazis, in a story that's almost too incredible to be true. The late Major is the only Canadian ever to receive a Distinguished Conduct Medal in two separate wars – for service in the Second World War and Korea – but his heroic actions didn't inspire any

parades or effigies back home. Major's own son, Daniel-Aimé Major, didn't have a clue what his father had done until an official from the Netherlands arrived on the family's doorstep 30 years later, bearing words of gratitude. Daniel-Aimé was nine at the time, and remembered his mother asking his father why he never mentioned the incident. His father replied that Major didn't think anyone would believe him, and left it at that. "It's almost nonsense," Daniel-Aimé said with a laugh, when asked about his father's feats of bravery recently on CBC Montreal's *Daybreak*. "He said, 'I was crazy, and everything turned out good!'"



*Many people described Léo Major as a modest hero, someone who accomplished great things and kept them to himself.*

*(Léo Major: Le Fantôme Borgne/Radio-Canada)*

By the time he got to Zwolle, Major was already scarred by war. He only

had one good eye following a close call with a phosphorous grenade, and he sported an eye patch for the rest of the war, refusing to be taken out of the fight and sent home. As his son tells it, when officials told him that his part in the war was over, he replied: "No, it's not over. I'm a sniper. I only need one eye." On that fateful day in April 1945, Major, a private at the time, volunteered to sneak into the town under the cover of darkness and reconnoiter, accompanied by his friend in the forces, Cpl Willy Arsenault. Arsenault was killed early on in the mission, and in his grief and rage, Major decided to do something unthinkable. He took his comrade's firearms and munitions and charged the city, alone. His exploits are in a new documentary that aired last month on Radio-Canada. Zwolle, located about 100 km east of Amsterdam, was then a town of 50,000, but it didn't take Major long to locate a German soldier and disarm him. He spoke to the soldier in French, employing a risky gambit that ultimately paid off. Major managed to convince the German soldier that the town was surrounded by Canadian troops, and that if the Germans left right away, they would be spared. He let the Nazi soldier go to relay the message and gave him back his gun as a sign of good faith.

Fearing his bluff would not stick, Major started to run through the streets of Zwolle firing his machine gun and setting off grenades. As if this wasn't enough, Major located the Gestapo headquarters and set the building on fire. He also took dozens of German prisoners, with the help of some local resistance fighters. "It's such a crazy story, it's almost surreal," said Daniel-Aimé. It's a story that his father never spoke of, until the messages of gratitude from the Dutch town began to pour in. The family discovered that there was, and still is, a street named for Major in Zwolle, and when he passed away several years ago, Dutch nationals made the trip

across the ocean to attend the service. "It was really strange for me to see that," Daniel-Aimé said on *Daybreak*. "There were citizens from the Netherlands, and there was a general from the Netherlands and the mayor [of Zwolle] was there too."

*Léo Major, left, is celebrated to this day in the Dutch town of Zwolle, for his heroic actions in liberating the town from the German occupation in the Second World War.*

*(Léo Major: Le Fantôme Borgne/Radio-Canada)*



The gestures to honour Major don't end there. In the documentary, Henk Jan Meijer, the mayor of Zwolle, said the liberation story is still taught in schools in the area. "For us as a city, it's very important that our children still remember that it's not easy to be free. That it's vulnerable. That you always have to think about that," he said. "The most important lessons are when veterans come into the school, and they tell their story." The mayor said that Major visited several times after the war, and became very popular with locals. "He was the first Canadian who walked through the streets of Zwolle," said Jan Meijer. "We honour Léo Major. He is a symbol of our freedom." He said there's even a monument to Major's fallen comrade, Willy Arsenault.



*Daniel-Aimé Major, left, with his father Léo Major, right, just before his death. (Submitted by Daniel-Aime Major).*

One place where Major's name was never quite forgotten is inside the Musée Régiment de la Chaudière in Lévis. The museum's director, Éric Marmen, referred to Major as the "Rambo of Quebec," saying that the story is so wild that it could almost be dismissed as an exaggerated version of events. "But then we realize that the information checks out," he said in the

documentary. A number of historians and archivists have researched the events that took place that April night, 73 years ago. The story of Léo Major is gaining recognition in Quebec, and abroad. At a recent football game in the Netherlands, fans unveiled a banner featuring Canadian soldier Léo Major, declaring him the "sole saviour of Zwolle." Dennis Akkermann, a member of the Zwolle football team's fan club, told CBC News that they often make banners in support of their team and their city. "The banner of Léo Major, of course, is also a part of that," he said. "We [wanted to] make a banner to honour him for what he has done for our city." Akkermann hopes that Major's family understands that "even the younger people in Zwolle are very grateful for what he was done for our city."

## **Reluctant Warriors, Canadian Conscripts and the Great War**

Special presentation by Colonel (retired) Patrick Dennis, OMM, CD - 16 May 2018



*Keith Maxwell, Patrick Dennis, Cam Cathcart and Ted Hawthorne*

The special presentation by Patrick Dennis, an adjunct associate at the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, took place after the customary fine luncheon prepared by Mrs. Lum in the 15<sup>th</sup> Field RCA Officers' Mess at Bessborough Armoury. Master of Ceremonies Cam Cathcart, President of RUSI Vancouver, commenced the proceedings with a brief introduction of Patrick Dennis, the author of RELUCTANT WARRIORS, Canadian Conscripts and the Great War and called upon Ted Hawthorne, the Honorary Colonel of The BC Regiment (DCO), to make a presentation to the special guest speaker.

Colonel Hawthorne presented his Honorary Colonel Regimental Coin to Patrick Dennis and thanked him on behalf of the Regiment for his excellent work and, in particular, for his participation and support of the Regiment in Strategic Studies Conferences previously held in Vancouver. Keith Maxwell gave the formal introduction of his former RCAF colleague and Patrick Dennis delivered his special presentation to the enthusiastic and appreciative audience. Congratulations Patrick and thank you for your excellent contribution to Canadian military history!

## Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

Here's the latest updates:

Here's the latest additions to the website. Have you got any photos or stories to share?

Artillery Day 2018, the Band at the Military Gala, news from Macauley Point, Cloverdale Rodeo, <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2018.html>

Starting Gun 1982 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1982.html>

Salute 1976 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1976.html>

Ferguson Point 1966 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1966.html>

BC Hussars 1939 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1939.html>

Camp Sarcee 1935 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1935.html>

Camp Sarcee 1933 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1933.html>

Camp Hughes page 1932 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/camp-hughes-1932.html>

Camp Sarcee 1923 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1923.html>

A new Index Page with Change of RSM and Change of Command listings  
<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/index1.html>

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! Contact Leon Jensen at [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

## Who Is It

**Last Week:** The MacAdam Shield-Shovel, also known as the Hughes Shovel, was an item of Canadian infantry equipment during the First World War. It was designed by Sam Hughes the Canadian minister for the Department of Militia and Defence in 1913, combining function as a spade/shovel and as a shield, and patented by Ena MacAdam, Hughes' personal secretary, who had first suggested the idea of a shield shovel to Hughes after she witnessed Swiss soldiers making field entrenchments during field exercises. In 1914, 25,000 shield-shovels were ordered and shipped to Europe for use by the 1st Canadian Division. Preliminary tests, however, revealed that the



shovel's blade was incapable of stopping even small caliber bullets. Its value as a digging tool was also questioned as soldiers commented against the shovel's weight, its inability to be easily carried, and the fact that the blade was poor for shoveling loose soil as it contained a large sight-hole. An executive order was eventually issued for the shovels to be reduced to scrap. Despite being condemned by the military, a small following of Canadian snipers continued to use the shovel. Aware of the tool's limitations, they preferred to use them in a collective series for added protection.

**This Week:** Visitors to our extensive, world-renowned museum, may notice an exhibit of a Canadian folding bicycle. Inspired, possibly, by the successful use of bicycle-borne soldiers to outflank our Imperial cousins in the ill-fated (for our side) Malaya Campaign of 1941/42, these bicycles were, once carried ashore by our plucky lads on D-Day, immediately donated to any passing Frenchman or woman, or child, or, in two cases, dogs. Such was the great generosity shown by our soldiers to our French brethren. Until well into the 1980s, pipe-smoking peasants could be seen cycling the lanes of Normandy, baguettes affixed to handlebars, all because of Canadian wartime planning.

Well, the subject of the photo in this week's quiz wasn't quite the hit of our folding velocipede but did cause quite a stir when introduced. Although not Canadian, the weapon mounted on this behemoth of the battlefield should be familiar to those of a certain generation, especially to



those who now frequent hearing aid clinics.

So, weaponry experts, what is this mighty vehicle, and who built it, and, why? Did its very existence cause the commanders of the Soviet Army sleepless nights, or were they in stitches? Any information you might have, provided it is now declassified, can be shared with the editor,

[bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:bob.mugford@outlook.com) or the author, John Redmond ([johnd.redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)). By the way, we are looking for a photo of the Canadian Armoured Bicycle, but can't find one, not even on this new, passing fad, the GoogleNet. Can you help?

### **From the 'Punitary'**

What underwear do clouds wear? Thunderwear!

### **Murphy's Other Laws**

After all is said and done, a hell of a lot more is said than done.

### **Quotable Quotes**

Courage is fear holding on a minute longer. - *George S. Patton*

## NOABC Speaker lunch – May 30



The Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia  
Founded 1919

### MONTHLY LUNCH PROGRAM

Wednesday May 30th 2018

Officers Mess  
Bessborough Armoury  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC.

1130 am bar open  
1200 noon lunch  
1 pm speaker  
4 course hot lunch  
\$20 per person

Dress – Business attire, blazers tie etc

*Speaker*  
*Dr Joost Schokkenbroek*  
*Director*  
*Vancouver Maritime Museum*

RSVP for lunch numbers please to [dreese@telus.net](mailto:dreese@telus.net) or phone or text  
778-227-8203 by 1600 hrs  
Sunday May 27th 2018



*The Commanding Officer, Officers and Cadets*

*Of*

*2472 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment*

*Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps*

*Cordially invite you to the*

*65<sup>th</sup> Annual Ceremonial Review*

*Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2018*

*ACR Dress: DEU/ Business attire*

*Mess Dinner Dress: Mess kit/Business attire*

***Parade Timings: 1430 for 1500 Hours      Mess Dinner: 1730 for 1800***

*Mess dinner tariff: \$60.00*



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*Please book your free tickets for the review, and purchase mess dinner places, at  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/65th-annual-ceremonial-review-and-3rd-annual-mess-dinner-tickets-45007287007>*

## Change of Command – 39 CER



*39 Combat Engineer Regiment  
invites you and your guest to a ceremony where  
Colonel D.R.A. Awalt, CD  
Commander 39 Canadian Brigade Group  
will mark the*

### *Change of Command*

*between*

*Lieutenant Colonel Cameron McLean, CD, PChem,*

*and*

*Lieutenant Colonel James Julien, CD*

*And*

### *Change of Appointment*

*between*

*Chief Warrant Officer Terrance Haley, CD*

*and*

*Master Warrant Officer Charles Rochlow, CD*

*At 13:00, 2 June 2018, to be held at*

*Lieutenant Colonel James Pemberton Fell Armoury, North Vancouver, BC*

*All guests are invited to a short reception following the ceremony*

*The LCol J.P. Fell Armoury is located at 1513 Forbes Ave, North Vancouver, BC.*

*Dress: DEU 1A, business attire for civilians*

*RSVP to Captain Grant Greaves by 15 May 2018 at (604) 858 1011 ext 1403 or via  
e-mail at [grant.greaves@forces.gc.ca](mailto:grant.greaves@forces.gc.ca)*

*Please be seated by 12:45*

*The DDay dinner is being held later that evening. For tickets please email*

*[DDayDinner2018@gmail.com](mailto:DDayDinner2018@gmail.com)*

## **First Annual Walk for Veterans – June 3**



# **First Annual CANADIAN WALK FOR VETERANS**

**June 3rd 2018**

**Victoria  
Vancouver  
Edmonton  
Ottawa  
Kingston  
Fredericton  
Halifax  
St. John's**

When you walk in the Canadian Walk For Veterans you lend your voice to a collective declaration by Canadians across this country who pay tribute to the men and women who have served in Canada's military and sacrificed to provide us all with a safe and secure homeland. This is an opportunity to get to know veterans in a fun, informal way and walk shoulder to shoulder with those that stand on guard for thee. We are all pioneers on this inaugural Canadian Walk For Veterans and we unite to create a legacy of justice, fairness, and equity for Canada's military veterans for generations to come.

Donations raised will go toward funding the Equitas class action lawsuit and advocacy that significantly influences the policies, benefits, and actions that shape a veteran's destiny. Our long-term goal for the Canadian Walk for Veterans is to make it an annual event that takes place in every major city across the country and to raise the financing necessary to create a new veterans organization that will build trust and inspire the veteran community to come together and speak with one voice.

Please invite your family, friends, and co-workers and all military and veterans. Register at:

<http://www.equitasociety.ca/walk-for-veterans/>

**3 June 2018 0845hrs**

**Lafarge Park, Coquitlam**

**Check in at Wingrove Way near the Amphitheatre**