



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News June 5, 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 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 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.** Lunches resume on July

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

June 20 **No lunch**

June 27 **No lunch**

July 01 1200hrs, Canada Day Salute, Hallelujah Point, Stanley Park

World War 2 – 1943

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

June 7th: Talks resume in the American coal strike and most miners return to work.

June 8th: There is a massive explosion in Hiroshima – an accidental blast in a magazine aboard the battleship Mutsu, which sinks it.

June 9th: The Eastern Front has been ominously quiet for a while, but a minor Soviet attack occurs in the Mius River sector.

June 10th: British and American Chiefs of Staff work out their Pointblank Directive outlining the next year in the strategic bombing campaign, but Air Marshal Harris seems too bloody-minded for the US while he thinks their ideas on precision day bombing are wildly optimistic

until long range escorts are available. USS Trigger damages the Japanese carrier Hiyo with a torpedo.

June 11th: As the Allied assault force closes in on the tiny island of Pantelleria, its 11,000 Italian defenders -- who have received 5,000 tons of bombs in the last week -- welcome the opportunity to surrender and white flags greet the landing.

June 12th: King George VI arrives in North Africa to visit his troops there and on Malta. The tiny island of Lampedusa also surrenders to the Allies and the nearby islands of Linosa and Lampione get ready to follow the same course as soon as someone shows up to accept their surrender. The Japanese Naval pilots transferred to Rabaul launch a major air attack on Guadalcanal but take very heavy losses from the Marine and Army fighters there.

12th Canadian Field Regiment RCA D-Day After Action Report



HLCol Foster and Sgt (ret'd) Webb in front of dedication plaque.

Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Don Foster, Honorary LCol 15 Field Artillery Regiment, and Sergeant (ret'd) Ralph Webb, who served with 15 Fd's 85 Battery in Ladner in the 60s, attended a Memorial Dedication of a 25 pounder at the Guelph Armoury on Saturday, May 26, 2018, in Guelph

Ontario. HLCol Foster's father was a signaller in the 43rd Battery, 12th Field, Ralph's father was the CO of 12th Field. Both fathers served with the 12th Canadian Field Regiment from D-Day to VE Day.

HLCol Foster and Sgt (ret'd) Webb pose with Sir Fred Heber, a veteran of 12 Fd Regt

The attached “**Fd Arty in the Assault**” by CO Lt Col R H Webb, reveals key details of the 12th Canadian Field Regiment's actions from June 6 till June 9, 1944. For more information about the 12th Canadian Field Regiment see link: <http://www.12thfieldrca.ca/>



MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
Lt Col R H Webb, CO, 12 Cdn Fd Regt
23 Jun 44
Fd Arty in the Assault

1. 12 Fd Regt, RCA, was loaded into six LCTs with additional marching parties mingled with the res inf coys of the assault bdes, -R Wpg Rif, 1C Scot R, and HQ 7 Cdn Inf Bde. The Channel crossing was rough – so rough that everyone was surprised to hear that the op was under way.
2. During the run-in Maj A G Goldie acted as Fwd Observer and directed the Regt's fire onto the WEST end of COUSEULLES, where he reported it to be effective, with rounds falling in the target area. 120 rpg were fired and the results in COUSEULLES were clearly visible to the gnrs after landing.
3. The four observing offrs and the recce parties had landed with their coys at approx H+15mins. Maj E Pickering, 2IC, Maj J. D Ross, OC 16 Bty, Capt G. M Wright and Lt Gothard were all wounded by MG or mortar fire shortly after reaching land.
4. Maj Goldie found the beach exits blown by the enemy and the low ground SOUTH of the dunes flooded and impassable. It appeared as if several hrs work were required before exits could be made ready. Meanwhile the guns served no useful purpose lying offshort. It was therefore decided to bring the craft in to the beach and to put the guns in action at once. The scheduled time for landing was H+75 mins; the actual time was very close—about 0900 hrs. The tide by this time had covered the obstacles so that the LCTs had to find their way through them. In some instances vehs were forced to wade off into deep water. But all guns were ashore and providing arty sp to the advancing inf in a short space of time. To the confusion of men and vehs on the beach was added the roar of the guns, firing from the water's edge, with RHQ behind them literally in the water. 12 Cdn Fd Regt was thus the first unit in the div to bring down arty fire from land. No guns were lost, but two vehs were drowned.
5. When the exits were opened the regt moved inland, one bty at a time so as to provide continuous sp, beyond the minefds to BANVILLE area, where it remained for the balance of D-day and the following night.
6. The next day, 7 Jun 44, as the inf of 7 Cdn Inf Bde advanced swiftly to the final objective, the Regt was again stepped up, giving continuous sp, to the area near BRAY allotted to it. The gun area as originally planned would have been well protected had 9 Cdn Inf Bde been able to capture its objective. But as it was, for three days 12 Cdn Fd Regt had no inf on their front between themselves and the enemy. Beginning on 8 Jun 44 enemy tks and inf approached the gun posns from the SOUTH and SE, usually about dusk, and were engaged by SA fire and even arty firing over open sights. All such attempts by the enemy were broken up, and losses

in dead and wounded inflicted on him. German PW remarked on the accuracy and effectiveness of the arty.

7. During the engagement at BUTOT EN BESSIN on 8 Jun 44, the regt lost three FOOs with the R Wpg Rif...(Capt A E Dobbs was killed, Capt F W Kraus was severely wounded, and Capt S A Gillies was wounded. Maj Goldie was captured by the enemy but escaped when our tks approached, and returned to his regt. A counterattack by 1 C Scot R, supported by arty fire, regained the ground lost in that battle.)
8. When it became apparent on 9 Jun 44 that 9 Cdn Inf Bde would not now proceed to its objective, the regt was withdrawn to the SECQUEVILLE area behind 7 Cdn Inf Bde. Here three posns were prepared (two being alternatives). All were dug in and wire was laid to all. Btys moved from one to another to deceive the enemy. The fact that the regt suffered no cas from counter-bty fire may be taken as proof of the effectiveness of the scheme.
9. Lt Col Webb expressed satisfaction with the performance of the 105 mm SP gun. A single round gives a greater “crump” than a 25-pdr. The eqpt itself offers better protection to the gnrs, and there is no need to dig in as deep as with tractor-drawn eqpts. One disadvantage, which has not been found troublesome, is that for large switches, the whole eqpt must be started up and slewed, a slower process than with the normal gun.
10. It had not been expected that four complete regts would still be firing the 105 mm. Eqpt cas were anticipated to be so hy that by now (23 Jun) it had been thought that at least one 25-pr regt would exist. But such had not been the case. 12 Cdn Fd Regt has had no gun cas, and there is no immediate prospect of any regt reverting to 25-prs.

To see this report in its original format, go to:

http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/uploads/2/5/3/2/25322670/webb_co_12th_field_juno_beach_report_june_23_1944.pdf

The Myth Surrounding Canadian Leopard Tanks in Afghanistan

David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen_ May 27, 2018

As stories go it's a pretty good one. The Canadian Army was up against a tough enemy – the Taliban – in Afghanistan. Commanders called for Leopard tanks to join the battle but those armored vehicles had been mothballed and made into monuments. So the ever resourceful Canadian Army crews jumped in the Leopard tanks mounted on concrete pads outside bases as monuments and drove them off those platforms, making sure they were shipped to their comrades in Afghanistan. This myth has been around since 2007 and has once again resurfaced in a new book by retired MGen David Fraser about Operation Medusa. Fraser also repeated the story in a recent CBC interview with Anna-Maria Tremonti, noting that he knew of at least one Leopard tank pulled off its concrete pad and brought back to serviceability and then shipped to Afghanistan. In the 2008 book *Kandahar Tour* by Lee Windsor, David Charters and Brent Wilson the story gets even better. The tanks were driven off the concrete pads and then sent to Afghanistan, according to those authors. A similar claim is made at the museum devoted to

telling the story of the “Essex Regiment (Tank).” On its website the museum claims multiple numbers of Canadian Leopard tanks were taken from monuments (“A mad scramble to retrieve tanks from monuments and prepare them for war,” it claims). Again, a great story.



Panjwa'i District, Afghanistan. 15 October 2010 - A Leopard 2A6M Main Battle Tank from The Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) and part of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, provides over-watch during recent operations in the volatile Panjwa'i and Zhari Districts of Kandahar Province.

Cpl Shilo Adamson, Canadian Forces Combat Camera) / Canadian Armed Forces

But the Canadian Army says it never happened. The Army points out that Leopard tanks, positioned on the concrete pads as monuments, had

already been demilitarized so no one was driving them anywhere. So, what did happen? Leopard tanks had indeed been slated for disposal or sale after Gen. Rick Hillier decided they had no use on the modern battlefield. But by the time the request came in from commanders in Afghanistan for Leopards, there were still enough functioning tanks in the inventory – not yet decommissioned – that no one needed to pull any tanks off concrete pads, let alone drive them off, says the Army. “While some tanks were in the process of being decommissioned and used as monuments, the tanks sent to Southern Afghanistan were fully operational,” Army spokesman LCol Andre Salloum said in a statement to Defence Watch. (It’s even stranger that the claim about driving tanks off concrete pads was included in *Kandahar Tour* since that book was vetted by then Canadian Forces BGen Ian Poulter and the research partly funded by the Canadian military). Later in the Afghan war, more modern Leopard 2 tanks were also sent to Afghanistan.

In addition, here is the background of the debate leading up to the original decision for the removal of Leopard tanks from the Canadian Army inventory. In October 2003 LGen Rick Hillier told journalists that Canada was taking its Leopard tanks out of service and instead was going to purchase the US Stryker Mobile Gun System, a wheeled vehicle. Hillier told reporters that the army’s Leopards had served their purpose and, despite undergoing a \$145-million upgrade, were now of limited use. The vehicle of the future was instead the Mobile Gun System, which Hillier, an armoured officer, dubbed state-of-the art and a “war-winner.” “A mobile gun system is the right vehicle for Canada’s army and will provide an excellent capability on Canadian Forces operations,” Hillier said. “We are losing a millstone that has hamstrung our thinking for years,” he added, referring to the Leopard. The general dismissed concerns from some opposition politicians who warned the decision would put the lives of

Canadian military personnel at risk and placed the country on par with Luxembourg and Iceland, two nations at the time which also saw no need for heavier armoured vehicles.

Those in the armoured corps were not happy with the MGS purchase, but they stayed loyal to the service and said nothing publicly. Studies done by the Canadian Forces in the late 1990s had already called into question replacing the Leopard tank with a lighter armoured vehicle, similar to the MGS. The outcome of one of those war game simulations warned that using such a vehicle would not only cost Canadian lives but would be “morally and ethically wrong.” A few officers, however, stepped forward to question the purchases in internal memos and professional publications. But it was a 2003 comment by a retired general that set off the most extensive and dogged defence of the MGS from the Canadian Army leadership. Responding to a Canadian Forces report that showed US tanks played a key role in the Iraq war, then retired BGen Jim Hanson ridiculed the MGS purchase in an Ottawa Citizen article that I wrote. “The Americans drove their tanks into downtown Baghdad where RPGs bounced off their armour,” said Hanson. “Buying the Stryker — that’s insanity.” He also argued that Canada’s Leopards could be upgraded at a lower cost than the MGS price tag and still provide the army with armour protection and firepower for years to come. Hillier, who was Army commander at the time, responded a short time later with a 1,000-word rebuttal in the Ottawa Citizen. He called Hanson’s comments “a distortion” and characterized critics of the MGS as “armchair strategists” who “preferred it the old way.”

Warfare had changed, according to Hillier. No longer was the Canadian Forces facing the Russians, LGen Hillier wrote. Instead, it was up against “snakes,” a reference to terrorists and insurgents. “Tanks are a perfect example of extremely expensive systems that sit in Canada because they are inappropriate to the operations we conduct daily around the world,” LGen Hillier wrote. “The MGS, in conjunction with other combat systems, will give us a much greater capability on operations such as those being conducted in Kabul, and still give us options for high-intensity combat.” The general also directly linked the purchase of the MGS to the future transformation of Canada’s Army. “This transformational process to counter the Snakes that are prevalent around the world is unsettling to some,” he wrote. “They would appear to prefer that we stop the process of change irrespective of the dramatically different threat.” That, argued the general, would be illogical. A short time later, the Canadian Army under LGen Andrew Leslie asked that the MGS project be killed. And in Afghanistan it turned out that indeed Leopards were needed to kill the “snakes” so tanks were sent.

New Artwork To Pay Tribute To Women's Role in WW1

The Coffin Jump by Katrina Palmer will be unveiled next month in Yorkshire Sculpture Park to celebrate the all-female First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (*FANY*)

Jenny Waldman 23 May 2018 The Independent Online

Everyone who lived through the First World War had a unique story to tell. Some of these stories have reached us clear as day – in poems and diaries, interviews and memoirs, photographs and even films. But many remarkable tales of courage and bravery have been lost

to history – especially when it comes to the role in the war played by women. With that in mind, 14-18 NOW, the UK’s national arts programme marking the First World War centenary, and Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) invited artist Katrina Palmer to create a major new work at YSP. Set to be unveiled on 16 June, *The Coffin Jump* pays overdue tribute to a pioneering group whose hidden but heroic wartime service represents the quintessence of women’s changing roles during the war, and tells a fascinating story. The all-female First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) was founded in 1907 to provide urgent medical assistance to soldiers on the battlefields. When the First World War broke out in 1914, the British Army turned down the FANY’s offer of support on account of their gender, so the women instead volunteered alongside Belgian soldiers.



In 1916, the British Army belatedly acknowledged the value of the FANY’s work, at last enlisting their assistance. Along with providing first aid, the FANY ran medical convoys and drove ambulances everywhere from Amiens to Brussels, serving with distinction and winning multiple military medals. The FANY performed an

invaluable role during the war – and continues to play one during today’s national emergencies. Between March and June 2017, for example, the unit provided more than 1,800 hours of vital assistance in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester. I was first told about the FANY by philanthropist Sir David Verey, one of 14-18 NOW’s great supporters. Sir David has a direct family connection to the FANY through his cousin, Celia Washington, whose grandmother, Pat Beauchamp, served in the unit during the war. Pat began her war work in France in January 1915 and served until May 1917, when the equipment lorry she was driving was hit by a train. Pat lost a leg – but returned to service a year later wearing an artificial limb. She told her story in *Fanny Goes to War*, a remarkable memoir published in 1919. Celia has kept Pat’s collection of wartime diaries and letters, a unique treasure trove that sheds new light on the organisation. The roles played by women on the home front, from the buses to the munitions factories, are well known – but the story of women on the front line has been told much less often.

Inspired by what we heard, 14-18 NOW and YSP invited a number of artists to consider creating a work inspired by the FANY. We were captivated by the proposal we received from Katrina Palmer, and invited her to develop it further. As part of her research, Katrina met Celia and went through her FANY archive, and was also invited by the FANY to study their own records. This extensive research has helped inform *The Coffin Jump*, providing a tangible link

between the wartime battlefields and today's society. One thing that has come out of Katrina's research is the modesty of those who served. They didn't think there was anything special about what they did – but when we look at it now, especially in the context of the male-dominated society of the time, it looks very special indeed.

Installed in YSP's deer park, The Coffin Jump consists of a fence installed above a trench. From time to time, a horse and rider canters through the landscape and jumps the fence. Combining sculpture, soundtrack and live performance, the work is inscribed with such phrases as 'Nothing special happened' – words taken from Celia's diary that emphasise the FANY's commonplace heroism. The Coffin Jump is part of the final season of 14-18 NOW. Over the last five years, my colleagues and I have worked with more than 200 artists to present more than 70 new art projects across the UK – all inspired by this century-old conflict. Through such projects as the iconic Poppies sculptures, by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper, and Jeremy Deller's We're here because we're here Somme tribute, which saw more than 1,400 volunteers in First World War uniform appear unexpectedly all over the UK, we have aimed to pioneer new ways of marking national moments through the arts. From Gillian Wearing's statue of suffragist campaigner Millicent Fawcett, recently unveiled in Parliament Square, to PROCESSIONS on 10 June, a nationwide celebration of the first British women winning the vote 100 years ago, the changing role of women in society is a theme of this year's programme. In such a historic year, it is appropriate that The Coffin Jump will remain installed at YSP after the end of the First World War centenary, serving as a powerful permanent memorial to this group of unsung heroes.

Why Few Canadians are Familiar with Sam Sharpe's Great War Legacy

Erin O'Toole Contributed to The Globe and Mail Published November 7, 2014 Updated May 12, 2018

The foyer of the House of Commons contains a testament to the Great War and what it meant to the members of Parliament who steered our young nation through it: a stunning statue of George Baker, the honourable member for Brome who died in the Battle of Ypres, in 1916. Sadly, that is where our collective memory stops, as Baker's colleague in the Union Government, Samuel Sharpe, who also saw battle and who also died as a result of it, is all but ignored. This stark omission tells us much about our struggle to come to terms with mental injuries from military service that are still taking their toll on the Canadian Forces. I first heard of Lieutenant-Colonel Sharpe many years ago, but it wasn't until I was elected to Parliament for the modern successor to his riding, Ontario North, that I learned the full story. First elected in 1908, after a career as a lawyer and solicitor for the Town of Uxbridge (just east of Toronto), Sharpe had joined the 34th Militia Regiment. When war broke out, he used his influence as an MP to lobby Sir Sam Hughes, the controversial Minister of the Militia, to raise a new battalion from Ontario County, which is now largely part of Durham Region. Hughes agreed and the 116th Battalion was stood up in November, 1915, with Sharpe having recruited much of it personally. He went on to serve with distinction at Vimy Ridge, in April 1917, while also maintaining his seat in Parliament. From Vimy, the 116th went on to more combat at Avion and later Passchendaele.



Just months after those horrific battles, Sharpe was re-elected in absentia, the only MP returned to the House of Commons from the battlefields of Europe. The 116th fought admirably, with Sharpe being awarded the Distinguished Service Order for gallantry, but not without a severe cost. In particular, the death of Lieutenant Thomas Walton, an Uxbridge native and close friend, deeply affected the MP, who began to give way to melancholy. "It is awful to

contemplate the misery and suffering in this old world," he wrote to Walton's widow, "and were I to allow myself to ponder over what I have seen and what I have suffered thro(sic) the loss of the bravest and best in the world, I would soon become absolutely incapable of 'carrying on.'" In early 1918, Sharpe could no longer "carry on." He was hospitalized overseas and by May, his war was over – he returned to Canada and was treated for nervous shock at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. Within days, he succumbed to his grief, leaping from a hospital window on May 25. Personal accounts from the time suggest that he could

not bear the thought of returning to Uxbridge to face the families of the fallen.

Lt Col Sam Sharpe before he experienced front-line action in Belgium and France in 1917-18.



That so few Canadians know of Sam Sharpe is, I believe, attributable to his illness and sad demise. Today, Sharpe might have received treatment for his suffering. Last spring, Senator Romeo Dallaire and I co-hosted the first Sam Sharpe Memorial Breakfast, which brought together parliamentarians, media, the military, veterans and mental-health advocates to hear two veterans discuss their own struggles. Such a legacy is more meaningful than any statue or plaque. But we should also pledge to ensure that Sharpe's service and sacrifice are properly recognized within the hallowed halls of Parliament, with the hope that his battles, abroad and within, will be another way to commemorate the Great War and to ensure we never stop learning from it.

Erin O'Toole, the member of Parliament for Durham, wrote this piece with research assistance from Matthew Barrett, a PhD candidate at Queen's University.

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

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

39th (Reserve) Artillery Regiment RCA

<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1943---39th-reserve-fd-regt-rca-rf.html>

11th Reserve Anti-Aircraft 1944

<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1944---11th-aa-regt-rca-rf.html>

Wallace Trophy 1958 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1958.html>

Added St Barbara's Day Special Guest Nights to the index page

<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/index1.html>

Canadian Gunner e-newsletter ad

<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/canadian-gunner-e-newsletter>

Two additional RSMs added <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/cos-and-rsms.html>

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! Contact Leon Jensen at

president.vcrgunners@gmail.com

Who Is It

Last Week: The 150 TAPs mounted a M20 75mm recoilless rifle, a US-made light anti-armour



cannon. It was very light in comparison to a standard 75mm cannon but was still able to penetrate 100 mm of armour with its HEAT warhead. The recoil was counteracted by venting propellant gases out the rear of the weapon which eliminated the need for a mechanical recoil system or heavy mounts, enabling the weapon to be fired from the Vespa frame. The scooters would be parachute-dropped in pairs, accompanied by a two-man team. The gun was carried on one scooter, while the

ammunition was loaded on the other. Due to the lack of any kind of aiming devices the recoilless rifle was never designed to be fired from the scooter; the gun was mounted on a M1917 Browning machine gun tripod, which was also carried by the scooter, before being fired. However, in an emergency it could be fired while in the frame, and while the scooter was moving. Made by Ateliers de Construction de Motocycles et Automobiles (ACMA) at Fourchambault, France with a 146 cc single-cylinder two-stroke engine, the "Bazooka Vespa" was relatively cheap: Vespas cost roughly US\$500 at the time, and the M20s were plentiful. 600 of them were produced, between 1956 and 1959.

This Week: Not many are left in our mess who remember this fun game, “Pull the Gun”. It



was practised in the distant past and took place in the crags and canyons of our local north shore mountains. It pitted one battery against another in a game lasting most of the day, and sometimes into the night. Points were deducted for men killed, injured or missing, and the losers were posted to local militia infantry regiments for a few months. Stirring times, indeed!

So, how does this illustration relate to today? Well, there is something in the etching that is current to the history of the 15th Field Regiment, RCA. That is this week’s question. What is it that links this Victorian engraving to today’s unit? Here is a qualifier: it is not Major Mugford, although he is in the picture, as a very young, slightly perspiring, gunner. (Ed note – I’m not that old!!)

Send your well-researched answers to that afore-mentioned editor, bob.mugford@outlook.com or to the author, John Redmond (johnd.redmond@telus.net). And, while we are at it, let’s lobby DND to bring back this manly “Pull the Gun” game!

From the ‘Punitary’

What do you call a laughing motorcycle? A Yamahahaha.

Murphy’s Other Laws

Logic is a systematic method of coming to the wrong conclusion with confidence

Quotable Quotes

Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever. - *Napoleon Bonaparte*