



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News – 10 Dec 2024

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 your copy.

Newsletter online. 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

<u>Upcoming events – Mark your calendars</u> – see poster section for details.

80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland Battlefield Tour

Dec 15 CO's Christmas Tea – see poster section

Jan 01 New Years Levee in the Sgts & WOs Mess – 1100hrs -

St Barbara's Day Special Guest Night – 7 Dec 2024

Former HCol Ted Hawthorne BCR Regimental Secretary 8 Dec 2024

The annual St Barbara's Special Guest Dinner held at Bessborough Armoury was very well attended by serving members, friends and colleagues. Members of the BCR Regimental Family in attendance were Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) Jim Barrett and the Regimental Secretary, former Honorary Colonel Ted Hawthorne. Acknowledgements and presentations took place in the Officers' Mess at the Pre-Dinner Reception, followed by Welcoming Remarks on the drill square, an excellent dinner, "A Dessert Show", a Miniature Gun Drill Demonstration, the traditional Toasts and Regimental Marches played by the Band, the singing of "Screw Guns" and, to conclude, a service of Tea and Coffee. Guests were treated to an enjoyable evening of music with a standout performance by the 15th Field Band (Director of Music, Lieutenant Eric Wong). The evening's festivities continued in the Officers' Mess.

Many thanks to the PMC, Captain Luke Martin, and the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Grieve, for the great hospitality, camaraderie and a wonderful evening!

Ed – Among the presentations given by the CO was a surprise one to long time Officers' Mess Bartender, Steve Minnie, who received an engraved shell casing, a CO's coin and another that I can't remember. (not surprising considering my age). It was also his birthday that day and at the end of the dinner the band played Happey Birthday while attendees sang. Congratulations Steve. We all appreciate your long service to the Mess.

Air Force Officers' Association Christmas Lunch - Saturday, 21 Dec 24

Our usual venue, the Point Grey Golf and Country Club is now closed for renovations until mid-April of next year, so our Christmas Lunch and Mess Dinner will be held at the University Golf Club. Please advise the Secretary at jevernon@telus.net or (604) 420-6065 if you plan to attend, the number in your party, any special food requirements, etc. by no later than Saturday, 14 Dec 24.

See other details in the notice in the poster section

Jerry Vernon, Secretary, Air Force Officers' Association

War in Ukraine Would be a Tough Test of Sweden's Gripen

a jet made for a fight with Russia it's never seen. Sinéad Baker Business Insider Dec 5, 2024

Sweden, a new NATO member, has a jet that was designed for war with Russia. But it has never been used in that kind of combat. Giving Ukraine the jet would strengthen its air force and benefit NATO, warfare analysts said. Sweden's Gripen, a fighter jet built for a war with Russia, is considered a good fit for Ukraine, but the aircraft hasn't been tested the way it could be in this war. The conflict in Ukraine has been a test bed for weapons on both sides, from Russia's new hypersonic missiles to older systems such as the American Patriots, showing their users how they perform in high-end combat. Some systems have underperformed, while others have far exceeded expectations in this tough operating environment. Not only could giving the jets to Ukraine — which Stockholm has indicated is possible — strengthen its air force, but it could also give NATO insight into how a key capability performs in a real-world combat scenario, specifically one for which it was made.



A Gripen aircraft performing at an air show in India. AP Photo/Aijaz Rahi



A JAS-39 Gripen at a military base near Prague in 2005. REUTERS/Petr Josek PJ/AA

Sweden initially refused to put its jet on the table for Ukraine, but it has slowly become more open to the idea. The defense ministry said in September that it was acquiring Gripen parts, and in late November, it was reported that those parts were being transferred to Ukraine. It is, however, unclear whether Ukraine will receive the actual jets and when that would happen. Sweden's defense minister, Pål Jonson, said recently that his country had been advised to wait until Ukraine was further along in setting up its new American-made F-16 fleet. Concerns have been raised about unintentionally overloading Kyiv with new equipment. But at some point down



the road, there's the possibility Kyiv receives the Gripen, a rugged, capable fourth-generation fighter. Designed at the end of the Cold War, the jet is operated by about half a dozen countries. It was built to fight Russia's Sukhoi fighter aircraft, but it's never been in that kind of combat.

Sweden's Saab Gripen. Oleg V Belyakov -AirTeamImages

Tim Robinson, a military-aviation specialist at the UK's Royal Aeronautical Society, told Business Insider the aircraft was designed to fit into Sweden's vision of having a dispersed and mobile air force to counter Russia as a threat. "The idea of keeping on the move, rapid turnarounds, and being very, very hard to destroy," he said. He said NATO would be interested in seeing how the jet performs against Russia, especially given the aircraft has "quite a good electronic warfare system," which this fight has shown is necessary to defeat Russia. Air-to-air combat isn't common in Ukraine, but George Barros, a warfare expert at the Institute for the Study of War think tank, told BI that "there may be some tactical advantages that Sweden can learn from Gripen's performance against Russian planes." It could also benefit the larger NATO alliance. Sweden joined NATO in March of this year as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and the alliance celebrated the move as one that would help it in the event of a conflict with Russia. That's because of Sweden's geographical location and because its military was built around the Russia threat.

And there are benefits for the jet's manufacturers as well. Michael Bohnert, a warfare expert at the RAND Corporation, said Saab is in "global competition" with its rivals as countries seek fourth-generation fighters. That means Sweden — as well as France, which has offered Ukraine Mirage aircraft — "both have strong incentives to provide aircraft with high performance and support to Ukraine." Robinson said that having a jet proven in combat is "definitely a factor when selling military aircraft." The Gripen was used in Libya in 2011, but it was only for reconnaissance. The models that Ukraine would probably get are the older C and D models, but if those versions were to do well in Ukraine, it could still help the sale and reputation of newer models now being produced. Retired US Army Maj Gen Gordon "Skip" Davis, who served as NATO's deputy assistant secretary-general for its Defense Investment Division, told BI the Gripen performing well in Ukraine "would be a great boost for Saab and Swedish defense industry." "If it does well in Ukraine, then it would be the selling point," he said. "But I would also tend to think that it would do well simply because the Swedes themselves have been so focused on Russia as a potential threat and enemy for quite some time."

The main reason to send the jets to Ukraine, though, would be to boost its airpower. Barros said that "sending Ukraine more aircraft is a step in the right direction." War experts have said the Gripen is the jet best suited for Ukraine in the long term. Bohnert previously told BI that "Gripens are a way better fit for Ukraine" than F-16s, as they're "a little more purpose-built" for what Ukraine needs. "Sweden, being under that Russian threat, designed the Gripens to fight this way that F-16s weren't," he said. The aircraft was designed to work from civilian roads so that it can still function if runways and airbases are destroyed; Russia has targeted that infrastructure during the war. It also requires less maintenance than some aircraft, such as the F-16s, which is useful for a country actively at war.



A Ukrainian air force F-16 fighter jet in an undisclosed location in Ukraine. AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky

Robinson said that "it's almost perfect for Ukraine's needs in a way," but he noted that the jet has drawbacks, such as there not being as many in service as F-16s, meaning allies couldn't be as helpful with things like providing spares. Ukraine's future may rely more on support from Europe with former US President Donald Trump set to take office next year. He has been more critical of support for Ukraine. Peter Layton, a fellow at the Griffith Asia Institute who's a former Royal Australian Air Force officer, told BI that since the Gripen has some US made components, the Trump administration would probably have to agree to Sweden giving Ukraine Gripens if it tried to do so. For the time being, it remains uncertain whether Sweden will ultimately commit the jets.

Russia Resists Deploying 'Highly Trained' N Koreans in Combat

Brendan Cole Senior News Reporter Newsweek Nov 28, 2024

North Korean soldiers deployed to Kursk to fight with Moscow's forces against Ukraine are well trained but are not being sent into combat, according to a Russian military blogger. Moscow is tight-lipped about the presence of troops sent by Pyongyang to help with its operation to oust Ukrainian troops in the Russian region where they staged an incursion on August 6. *Newsweek* has contacted the Russian Defense Ministry by email for comment. While Russia's state media outlets report officially approved details about the war against Ukraine, Russian Telegram channels give franker accounts of what is happening on the front line, often giving measured criticism of command decisions and territorial losses.



North Korean soldiers stand on parade at Mansu Hill in Pyongyang, July 7, 2021.
Kim Won Jin/Getty Images

In a video posted Wednesday, the Telegram channel Romanov Light described a visit to the front in Kursk where the poster said that "everybody is talking about the (North) Koreans" there. "They're there, I saw them with my own eyes," Romanov said, describing them as "highly trained and motivated" and able to work with any weapons. "If you give them something, they already know how to use it and that includes heavy weaponry," he said in an excerpt posted by X account War is Translated, but he added that "they are not used in combat directly." Ukraine has said that more than 11,000 North Korean troops had been deployed to Kursk where Kyiv faces a fierce fight to hang onto territory it gained in its surprise incursion. There are reports that North Korean personnel had already been among those injured in hostilities. On November 8, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said North Korean troops had been killed on the battlefield. A Ukrainian official cited by the UK newspaper *Financial Times* on Tuesday said that a general sent by Pyongyang and several officers were killed in a Storm Shadow missile strike on a Russian command center.

However, Romanov said that North Koreans were being kept from the front line. "All this talk about contact with Koreans by the enemy is nonsense, they are there but they are not taking part in combat," he added. When South Korea first reported that the North had sent troops, a deployment later confirmed by the US there were question marks about their effectiveness, due to their lack of experience and Russian language skills. Lee Woong-Gil, a former North Korean soldier who defected to the south in 2007, told The Associated Press in October that the troops sent by Pyongyang will "consider it an honor to be selected," adding that "most of them won't likely come back home alive."

The Search for Range - How the US Army is Rethinking Howitzers

Shaun McDougall Defense and Security Monitor Sept 10, 2024

The US Army's search for a longer-range howitzer remains in motion. The service initially planned to integrate a long-range cannon with the M109 Paladin self-propelled howitzer but scrapped the effort due to performance issues in testing. The project was known as Extended Range Cannon Artillery. Following the termination of the ERCA program, the Army's FY25 budget request launched an effort to find a new howitzer to eventually replace the Paladin. This program is designed to address threats anticipated in 2040 and beyond. The service started with a study of existing howitzers on the market to determine whether any of those systems can offer increased range over the Paladin.



US Army National Guard M109A7 Paladin selfpropelled howitzer. (US Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt Matthew A Foster)

An industry day was held in April 2024, attended by representatives from American Rheinmetall, AM General, BAE Systems, Elbit, Hanwha, and Krauss-Maffei Wegmann. The Army released an RFI in August 2024, with a competitive evaluation scheduled for FY25. This evaluation may result in a production contract award if any of the systems meet the Army's requirements. The service anticipates beginning domestic production of a system within two years of a contract award, and it could start fielding new howitzers as soon as 2030. The contractors that attended the industry event build a mix of wheeled and tracked options that could be considered by the Army. Rheinmetall and KMW jointly produce the tracked PzH-2000; KMW also has the wheeled RCH 155; AM General makes the Brutus system that can be equipped on a truck; incumbent BAE Systems has tested the Paladin with a Rheinmetall L52 cannon, and the company also manufactures the wheeled Archer howitzer; Eblit makes the wheeled M454; and Hanwha produces the tracked K9 Thunder.

Before the ERCA's termination, the Army had launched an effort to examine options for wheeled 155mm howitzers to replace some of its towed M777 howitzer. That effort didn't progress beyond an initial shoot-off. At the time, the service said it wanted to field a mobile howitzer that can more easily keep up with highly mobile Stryker formations and that provides more survivability than existing towed systems in near-peer conflicts. A shoot-off took place in September 2021 involving systems from BAE Systems Archer, Elbit ATMOS/Iron Sabre, Nexter CAESAR, AM General Brutus, and Yugo/Global Ordnance NORA. At the AUSA conference, General Dynamics presented a Stryker equipped with a 155mm cannon as a potential option, and South Korea's Hanwha and Japan's Mitsubishi were seen as potential contenders as well. The Army has requested \$8 million in FY25 to fund initial next generation howitzer studies. The service will also continue investing in developing new munitions intended for the original ERCA that could help increase the range of the next-generation howitzer, as well as existing systems.

A recently completed tactical fires study will help inform the direction of Army howitzer development. In early 2024, Army officials said the study called for more autonomous artillery systems with greater range and mobility, while shying away from towed artillery. Speaking at the AUSA Global Force conference, US Army Futures Command head Gen James Rainey said, "the future is not bright for towed artillery." Future systems must be mobile to reposition quickly on the battlefield and away from potential enemy fire. Rainey also expressed interest in capabilities like an autonomous robotic cannon. The statements paint a bleak future for towed artillery but opens the door to potential procurement of new self-propelled howitzers. Despite the position on towed artillery, BAE Systems was tasked with building new M777 lightweight towed howitzer structures for the Army to replace systems donated to Ukraine, according to a January 2024 announcement from the company. The deal was valued at up to \$50 million.

How NATO Make Believe Artillerists Get Comfy with a Real World Foe

Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo Defense News Nov 27, 2024



French artillerymen attempt to keep warm next to one of their Caesar howitzers during a Nov 20, 2024, NATO exercise in Finland. (Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo/staff) ROVANIEMI, Finland — As artillery units from several NATO countries confronted a fictitious enemy here last week, one adversary was very real: cold weather. It's an age-old reality for countries featuring extreme locales, including the European alliance nations of Norway, Finland, and Sweden plus member countries Canada and the United States across the Atlantic. For the Finns, the challenge of operating in Arctic conditions is woven into military doctrine, which teaches that inexperience with weather can be a greater threat to soldiers' lives than lackluster fighting skills. Nested in Finland's dense coniferous forests of pine trees, north of the Arctic Circle, NATO artillery units convened here in mid-November to learn not only how to survive but how to thrive in this type of environment. "At times, the cold and Arctic-like conditions found here can be more threatening to soldiers than combat situations," Lieutenant Olli Taskinen, member of the Jaeger Brigade, a unit of the Finnish Army in charge of developing Arctic warfare tactics, told Defense News on Nov 19. During their stay here, in the context of Exercise Lightning Strike 24 focused on joint long-range fire capabilities, British, French, Swedish, and American artillerymen tested themselves in a setting a majority of them have not typically been exposed to.

The knowledge passed down by the Finns ranged from basic skills, such as putting newspaper under soldiers' socks and boots to take off the moisture, to more complex elements, such as driving multi-ton armored vehicles on slippery roads and keeping howitzers running in temperatures capable of reaching -30 degrees Celsius (-22 Fahrenheit). For example, Taskinen noted that some weapons have a tendency to jam more in the cold, which can be fatal in the face of an enemy attack. "In the weather we see here, often we opt to keep our guns frozen by leaving them outside tents – if you take it inside, all the snow and ice gets inside of them and then if you go outside, it freezes [again] completely... Keep it completely outside or inside the tent, no inbetween," Taskinen said. For bigger pieces of equipment such as the K9 155mm self-propelled howitzers, a Finnish engineer said that there is a question of timing – knowing when to pre-start the engine to have it ready for action when needed.

Beyond forests, Finland is also famous for being a land of lakes, with a total of 188,000 spread out throughout its territory, a challenge alongside the cold that required participants to adapt their tactic sets to survive, British Lt Col Pete Winton, of the multinational field artillery brigade assembled for the exercise, said. Out here, communication between the different artillery units at all times is fundamental, Brigadier Rob Alston, chief of joint fires and influence at NATO's Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, said, explaining why the drill involved utilizing multiple means of transmitting data. "[We do this] so that if our preferred option is not working, we are able to utilize a second or third option so that communications can always get through," he said during an interview. While the Finnish Army may have mastered the woods, this does not make it immune to problems in freezing conditions. Four of the eight K9s deployed for the exercise had broken heaters, a K9 operator, who wished to remain anonymous for security reasons, told Defense News. That meant it was as cold inside the vehicle as outside, with temperatures falling well under the freezing point on that day. Another challenge faced by participants included the long distances to cross here in Lapland. Taskinen explained that whereas many countries are accustomed to having military infrastructure located close to each other, in this region, often your destination is hundreds of kilometers away.

Vancouver Gunners Website Update

Saint Barbara Day's Dinner

The Officers' Mess held another successful Saint Barbara's Day dinner. The band provided a stellar performance, the food was great and more than \$2,000.00 were raised for the Regimental Society. https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/saint-barbara-2024.html

Vancouver Volunteer Reserve

Before 15th Field Artillery Regimented existed, there was the 15th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery, before that there was the Boorman's Battery and before that there was the Vancouver Volunteer Reserve. Check out the nice uniforms.

https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/vancouver-volunteer-artillery

End of the year donations

Have you made plans for your end of the year charitable donations? You could buy a drone or a controller for the <u>Regimental Drone Club</u>. You could donate to the <u>Master Gunners Residence project</u> on Yorke Island. You could donate to the <u>Regimental Museum</u> to support our reenactors and other historical projects.

OP Take Post

Ernie Kovacs, Leon Jensen and their partners have signed up with OP Take Post, a Battlefield Tour of the Netherlands in May 2025. So far there are about 60 serving and 20 retired Gunners on the tour with seats still available. Care to join us?

https://rca-arc.org/the-rca-association/op-take-post/

Photos

Have you got any photos of past regimental activities? Send them to <u>president.vergunners@gmail.com</u> and we'll post them to the website.

Who (or What) Is It?



Last Week: The British field marshal is Kaiser Wilhelm II. He was also honorary colonel of several regiments, and had the Order of the Garter, etc. Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances, he lost all that. In his defence, he detested Hitler. By the way, have you seen his uniform collection on Mark Felton's YouTube channel?

This Week: We return to the limitless blue sky this week, something not seen in much of Canada this time of year, but it is coming, and maybe a bit too much, but we will see. Aeroplanes have undergone many changes over the years, seeing the greatest changes in the first few decades of their existence. It is hard to believe, but the young pilots of the Great War who hurled themselves about in crates of linen, wood, and wire were all born before there was such a thing as powered flight. Just as remarkable is the fact that those young men, in only three and a half decades, would

live, we hope, to see such aircraft as the "Missile with a Man in It", the fabled Starfighter, which still looks futuristic (at least to my aged eyes). Indeed, some of those Knights of the Air could easily have lived long enough to see men land on the moon.

Well, the pace of change is not as visible now, with Cold War aircraft still in frontline service everywhere, not just with our cash-strapped RCAF. Pedants will argue that avionics and all that nerdy stuff is incredibly different now compared to even a decade ago, but it's what's outside that matters to those who like curves.



And that brings us to our curvy centrefold of the week. She's sleek, and modern-looking. But, is she really that young, or has avionic Botox been at work here? You can let us know your feelings about this elegant, winged machine (but not about our sense of humour, please). Tell us what it/she is/was by contacting the svelte editor, Bob Mugford (bob.mugford@gmail.com), or the curvaceous (in the wrong way) author, John Redmond (johnd.redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitentary'

What is the difference between electricity and lightning? You don't have to pay for lightning.

Murphy's Other Laws

Every command which can be misunderstood, will be.

Quotable Quotes

Be quick to hear. Be slow to speak. And slower to answer. unknown

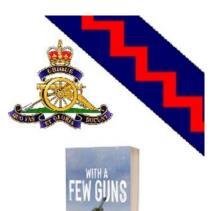
With A Few Guns Vol 2

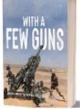


With A Few Guns Volume 2



Calling For Support! Donate Now!





Thank you for your support to Volume 1 of "With a few Guns" We are seeking to raise \$70,000 to cover expenses and get Volume 2 published and translated, while keeping the price affordable.

Volume 2 is being written with the backing of the RCA Association, and all donations will be eligible for a tax receipt. Any monies donated in excess of what is needed will remain with the RCAA for support to the causes as espoused by the RCAA.

To Donate:

Go to: https:/rca-arc.org/Donate

- Scroll down to: RCAA Donation "With a Few Guns"

Donate to support WAFG

Questions may be directed to: WithAFewGuns@gmail.com

Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

zoom

No need to worry about COVID-19 when you go digital. Pop into our video lunch at noon on Wednesdays and say hi. All you need is a laptop, tablet or smartphone. These sessions are being hosted by the Vancouver Artillery Association and are open to all – especially those who attended our Wednesday lunches.

Join us to check up on your old lunch buddies. Click on this link:-(this link will take you straight to the waiting room - no password

needed)

https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72758359360?pwd=XE0y7bIBCNvTYsIFcFlZ6g1e1pfzMP.1

or use Meeting ID 727 5835 9360 and the secret passcode is pFPey6

Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.

Commanding Officer's Tea- Dec 15





AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA Since 1920

NOTICE

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2024

1200 HOURS

AT

THE UNIVERSITY GOLF CLUB

LOCATED AT 5185 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, VANCOUVER

*** **Dress:** Slacks & blazer, or business suit

optional and equivalent for the ladies

*** Cost: \$ 75.00 per person

*** **Reception:** 1200 Hours (no-host cash bar)

*** Lunch: 1300 Hours(Three-Course Christmas

Lunch)

*** Entertainment: Harp player

NOTE: BRING YOUR SPOUSE, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS,

AS WELL AS ANY PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBERS

Lunch features:

Fresh Rolls and Butter

Mixed Greens, Arugula, Spicy Pecans, Sun-Dried Cranberries, Grape Tomatoes.

Goat Cheese, Crispy Beets and Sherry Vinaigrette

Roast Turkey Breast, Dark Meat, Sage Stuffing, Natural Gravy and Orange

Compote Served with Chef's Choice Winter Vegetables and Potatoes

Warm Cranberry Apple Strudel Served with Vanilla Bean Gelato

Coffee and Tea

Please advise if you will attend, and the number of guests you will bring. Advise the Secretary(Jerry Vernon) at jevernon@telus.net or (604) 420-6065 by no later than Saturday, 14 December. Also advise of any special dietary requirements.

If your plans change later, also please advise us of this, for catering purposes.

**For both security and accounting reasons, payment by cheque would be most appreciated by the Treasurer.

PLEASE COME AND ENJOY OUR CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES!!!

Thanks to those who attended the 2024 Dawn Patrol and made it a success.

We wish to again thank all of those Members who personally contributed items to the Dawn Patrol Raffle and/or who solicited items from various firms and organizations. A fully loaded prize table ensured good ticket sales this year and the attendance was the same as last year.

-2-

The Air Force Birthday Mess Dinner is the next social event....Friday, 28 Mar 25...and will feature author Ted Barris, speaking about his latest book "Battle of Britain Canadian Airmen in Their Finest Hour"

Due to the lack of response this year we have decided to skip the Valentine's Lunch for 2025.

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

The Dues Notices for 2025 were sent out several weeks ago, but because of the postal strike, please do not mail them now if you haven't done so already. For now, the 2025 dues can be paid by e-transfer to the Treasurer at johnhige@telus.net

Merry Christmas!!!



80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland Battlefield Tour



OP TAKE POST

To Gunners and friends



Fields of Fire Tours and Merit Travel Canada

nresents

80th Anniversary of Victory Tour 2-11 May 2025

Gunners in the Liberation of the Netherlands



- Attend the Canadian ceremony at Wageningen on Liberation Day.
- Visit important Canadian battlefields in the Netherlands
- Pay tribute to Canada's war dead of the Victory Campaign
- · Visit the Dutch Army Artillery Museum
- Visit monuments, museums, and Commonwealth War Cemeteries
- Led by experienced military historians and veterans.

For more information contact Merit Travel
TZajkovski@MeritTravel.com or BTrudeauSt.Onge@MeritTravel.com, or
call 866-341-1777 | Trina #6214 or Brianne #6902

80th Anniversary of Victory Tour

Day 1 – 2 May ... Depart Canada for Amsterdam.

Day 2 – 3 May ... We arrive in Amsterdam, meet our bus and then drive to our hotel. In the afternoon we will visit the Airborne Museum in Arnhem to examine this epic battle. We will check into our hotel for the next eight nights: Mercure Hotel Nijmegen

Day 3 – 4 May ... Today is the Dutch Remembrance Day and we will attend the Canadian memorial ceremony at Holten Canadian War Cemetery and the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery.

Day 4 – 5 May ... This is the big day for ceremonies: Liberation Day. We will join the crowds of people in Wageningen for the Canadian commemoration and parade. Some of our group will march in the parade.

Day 5 – 6 May... We will hit the battlefields today when we look at the largest Canadian directed operation of the war: Op Veritable. We will end the day with a visit to Groesbeek Cemetery and the nearby Liberation Museum

Day 6 -7 May ... Today we will visit the Dutch Artillery Museum in t'Harde. The day will wrap up with the Heroes March across the Oversteek Bridge in Nijmegen.

Day 7 – 8 May Today we will be back on the battlefields as we tour the sites of Operation Blockbuster, the Hochwald, and the capture of Xanten.

Day 8 – 9 May ... Our last day on the battlefield will see us visiting the crossing of the Rhine in Op Plunder and the battles for Emmerich. We will also see where the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion landed on Op Varsity.

Day 9 – 10 May ... Several options today, including a free day in the Nijmegen area, or a daytrip to Amsterdam by train or bus, where the resistance museum and the art galleries are highly recommended. Our last night in Nijmegen.

Day 10 –11 May ... We will depart early to get our flights back to Canada from Amsterdam airport. Anyone staying on in Europe can make easy connections from the airport.

Tour Price (Land Only)

CAD \$3700 – (per person, Double occupancy) (single supplement: \$1150 – limited availability)

Airfare can be added, see with travel agent and will vary according to point of departure.

\$600 per person non-refundable deposit required by the 1st of April 2024 Balance of payment required 29 January 2025

Price includes:

- all breakfasts and a bagged lunch daily
- *all travel by coach bus
- accommodation as shown in the itinerary
- opening reception and final dinner
- *services of historian/guides

Not Included:

- return airfare from Canada to Amsterdam
- travel insurance
- train trip to Amsterdam on free day
- * Lunch & dinner on 11 May
- items of a personal nature such as beverages

Note: limited single room availability – "first come, first served"

All terms and conditions available at www.foftours.com

For more information contact Merit Travel
TZajkovski@MeritTravel.com or BTrudeauSt.Onge@MeritTravel.com, or
call 866-341-1777 | Trina #6214 or Brianne #6902