

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News – 11 Mar 2025

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>

Upcoming events – Mark your calendars – see poster section for details.

- Mar 12 Wed Zoom Meeting – 1200-1240
- Mar 19 Wed Zoom Meeting – 1200-1240
- Mar 26 Lunch in Mess followed by a presentation. **No Zoom meeting.**
- Mar 28 AFOA Annual RCAF Anniversary Mess Dinner- See poster section
- Apr 06 Vancouver Vimy Day Parade at Mountain View Cemetery

RUSI Van & 15 Fd Regt Soc Lunch and Presentation- 26 March 2025

"The Defence of North America – the Cold War and Beyond"

Join us for another great lunch and presentation on 26 March at Bessborough Armoury. Our presenter for this event is Major (Ret'd) Lynn Doucette, who has been recognized by Veterans Affairs and the Canadian Forces as a veteran with significant achievements. Her profile on the VAC website outlines her interesting 35-year career, serving in Canada, the United States and in the Middle East as an air defender and on AWACS as Battle Staff and Mission Crew. She deployed to Turkey in 1991 for the First Gulf War where she became the first female Canadian AWACS Mission Crew Commander.

See her profile on the VAC website here –

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/people-and-stories/they-proudly-served/lynn-doucette>



Lynn's presentation will speak to her experiences over a varied and successful career, giving a first-person account of how our air defence mission and personnel evolved over time but remained focussed on the core mission of defending Canada and North America round the clock. We look forward to her insight on defence relations with our allies, the difficulties associated with operating on the Middle East and what the future holds for NORAD and our other alliance arrangements.

Menu

Caesar salad

Garlic bread

House made meatballs in marinara sauce

Tuscan orzo

Steamed vegetable medley with garlic butter

Coffee

Carrot cake

Lunch starts at 1200hrs and the presentation will take place in the lecture room at 1315hrs.

Cost is \$35 per person. **Reservations and payment in advance are required.**

Those wishing to attend must RSVP to HCol Don Foster - dgfoster60@gmail.com

Prepayment for lunch tickets required by 24 March.

E-transfer may be made to: 15rca100th@gmail.com

If you cannot make an e-transfer, please make payment arrangements with HCol Don Foster.

There will be no cash or credit card option available at the door.

For further information, contact HCol Don Foster at (604)809-6242 or dgfoster60@gmail.com

Or - Colonel (Retired) Keith Maxwell at (604) 865-0612 or kdm Maxwell@gmail.com

Air Force Officers' Assoc RCAF Birthday Mess Dinner - 28 Mar 25

AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA Since 1920



NOTICE

ANNUAL RCAF ANNIVERSARY MESS DINNER
FRIDAY, 28 Mar 2025

1700 HOURS for 1800 HOURS

at

THE UNIVERSITY GOLF CLUB

LOCATED AT 5185 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, VANCOUVER
A MESS DINNER IN CELEBRATION OF THE 101st ANNIVERSARY

of the

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

and

THE 85th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

- *** Dress: Formal - Mess Kit, Tux or Dark Suit - miniature medals should be worn
Ladies - cocktail dress
- *** Cost: \$ 140 (includes red & white wine and sherry for the Toast)
- *** Reception: 1700 Hours (no host bar)
- *** Dinner: 1800 Hours - Arcadian Mixed Greens, Goat Cheese, Pecans, etc.
- 10 oz. Prime Rib Roast, Yorkshire Pudding,
- Mashed Potatoes and Vegetables
-New York Cheesecake, Coffee and Teas

*** Guest of Honour: Our speaker once again will be renowned author Ted Barris, who will speak on his latest book "The Battle of Britain - Canadian Airmen in Their Finest Hour"

Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing after he has spoken. The price of the book will be \$ 40.00(cash, cheques or e-transfers), but he will not be set up for electronic square for debit(??) or for credit cards. If you advise me in advance, it **may** be possible to have some of his other books there.

Please bring your spouse and guests to this event. Names are needed please for the seating plan. We must firm up our attendance for the club a week in advance so we will need to hear from you **no later than Noon on Friday, 21 Mar 25.**

Please advise the Secretary, Jerry Vernon, at jevernon@telus.net or phone him at (604) 420-6065. If your plans change later, also please advise us of this, for catering purposes. No shows are no-nos and may be charged!! **Also please advise the Secretary of any special dietary needs, as the caterer can provide an alternate to roast beef and/or the salad and dessert.**

Note that we will be starting the event at 5 PM for 6 PM again this year.

Jerry Vernon Secretary, Air Force Officers' Association

Wng O Battle of Moreuil Wood Lunch 27 March 2025

Sit

The LCL will convene a lunch on Thursday 27 March 2025 at 1130hrs at the Sidney North Sannich Yacht Club as per SOP.

Msn

Eat Lunch with other Left Coast Lancer friends.

General Outline

The usual drill: Assemble, pay at the bar, regtl photos, sit down lunch, toasts, no speeches.

Comd and Sigs

More details to follow with Orders.

France Shares Intel with Ukraine as Macron Floats Nuclear Umbrella

Rudy Ruitenberg

Defense News

Mar 6, 2025



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks with Dassault Aviation's CEO Eric Trappier (2nd L), in front of a model of the French multirole fighter aircraft Dassault Rafale at the Paris Air Show in 2023.

(Ludovic Marin/POOL/AFP via Getty Images)

PARIS — France’s defense minister said the country is sharing intelligence resources with Ukraine, after President Emmanuel Macron floated the idea of expanding the French nuclear deterrent to protect European allies. The moves here follow doubts about whether Europe can still count on the United States to help defend against Russian aggression. The US stopped sharing intel including satellite observations with Ukraine on Wednesday afternoon, which will have a major operational effect, Armed Forces Minister Sébastien Lecornu told France Inter radio on Thursday. Whether European intelligence can replace American intel “is an excellent question,” Lecornu said. France’s intelligence assets are sovereign, “It has taken longer to build up our strength in recent years, but the advantage is that we have done so effectively with our own capabilities,” Lecornu said. “So yes, we have intelligence resources, we are letting the Ukrainians benefit from them.” For the British, who are in a shared intelligence community with the US, “it’s more complicated,” the minister said.

France had 15 military satellites in space as of May 2023, compared with six for the United Kingdom and 246 for the US, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. France is scheduled to launch the third of its CSO military observation satellites later today, with the first commercial

flight of the Ariane 6 launcher from French Guiana. Lecornu spoke after a televised speech by Macron on Wednesday night, in which the president said he had “decided to open the strategic debate” on protecting European allies through the country’s nuclear deterrent, in response to a call by the future German chancellor, an apparent reference to Friedrich Merz. In any case, the nuclear deterrent would remain in French hands and would not be shared, Lecornu said. However, France’s vital interests are not necessarily limited to its borders, and there is a question of what the country can contribute to collective European security, according to the minister. Lecornu said the French nuclear arsenal is sufficient, and France has been investing “a lot of resources” to ensure its deterrence remains credible, and is working on new warheads, missiles, aircraft and submarines for the next 10 to 20 years.

France has around 300 nuclear warheads, with a nuclear doctrine that doesn’t exclude first use, specifically mentioning the possibility of a nuclear warning shot. The country has two delivery vectors: Rafale jets that can carry nuclear-tipped missiles, and its four nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines. Russia has become a threat to France and Europe “for years to come,” with plans to strengthen its armed forces with 300,000 additional soldiers, 3,000 tanks and 300 fighter jets, Macron said in his speech. “Who, in this context, can believe that today’s Russia will stop at Ukraine?” Europe must continue to help Ukraine resist Russia’s invasion so the country can negotiate a “solid peace for themselves and for us,” and peace cannot be led to Ukraine being abandoned or equate to a Russia-imposed capitulation, Macron said. He said solid guarantees for Ukraine might include the deployment of European forces, though not in a combat role. The change in American behavior over the past 10 days has caused “astonishment,” according to Lecornu, with Europe facing the return of the Russian threat while no longer being able to count on American reassurance. Lecornu said all shipments of US military aid for Ukraine from Poland have been suspended, and he has been asked by Macron to speed up French aid packages to compensate.

Europe must be ready in case the US is no longer at its side, Macron said. The president said budgetary choices and additional investment in defense have become “indispensable.” The French armed forces could reach a “suitable point of fitness” depending on the various missions expected for around €90 billion (\$97 billion) a year, according to Lecornu. That compares to France’s 2025 defense budget of €50.5 billion and a 2030 target of €68 billion. The French Navy has 15 frigates and “clearly” needs at least three more, and should the US disengage further, France would be forced to hold seas where currently the Americans ensure freedom of navigation, Lecornu said. The minister said the Air Force needs around 20 more Rafale jets to carry out simultaneous or lengthy operational missions, while the land forces require deep strike capacity as frontlines grow increasingly long. France also needs more electronic-warfare capabilities, based on the example of the war in Ukraine, Lecornu said. The one area where Europe needs to “wake up, and this is really urgent,” is space, which is becoming increasingly militarized, according to Lecornu. Regarding contracts to buy US military equipment, some European capitals may decide they can’t trust a system that is unpredictable, including on the use of weapons, according to Lecornu. He said that “the day the White House decides that American planes will no longer take off,” the Polish and German armed forces would be deprived of their fighter planes.

Military Now Accepting Recruits with Asthma, ADHD and Other Conditions

amid staffing shortage. Surgeon General says, 'any and all conditions are on the table'.

Ashley Burke · CBC News · Feb 23, 2025



The Canadian Armed Forces are no longer requiring some applicants to take an aptitude test when they apply to join the military as part of a new trial. By early summer, the military said it will also start screening more people with pre-existing medical conditions.

(Jean-Francois Benoit/CBC)

As the Canadian Armed Forces continue to try and dig out of a deep recruitment hole, they're starting to give new recruits with medical conditions a shot at joining the military rather than automatically turning them away. MGen. Scott Malcolm, the military's surgeon general, says the forces will now consider applicants with "any and all conditions" for enrolment, including ADHD, anxiety and asthma. "With all medical conditions there's a spectrum," said Malcolm. "So those that are on the lower end to medium spectrum are unlikely to have any challenges getting in." Canada's military is short more than 13,600 members in its regular and reserve forces combined. Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Jennie Carignan said this week the focus is on restoring the regular force to 71,500 members, and reserve force to 30,000 members. To try and hit that target by 2029, the Canadian Armed Forces is making a series of changes, including modernizing its medical enrolment standard that's long faced criticism for being outdated and too strict. Malcolm broadly announced the changes at a news conference about recruitment on Feb. 19 but the details are sparse. For example, recruits in the past with ADHD were automatically disqualified because they needed to take daily medication, Malcolm said.

Staff work at a Canadian Armed Forces recruitment centre in Ottawa on Sept. 20, 2022.

The military is trying to reach its full authorized strength by 2029.

(Justin Tang/The Canadian Press)



CBC News spoke to a 19-year-old who applied last year to join one of the trades where the military says it needs more

people. The teen said he gave the military a note disclosing he had a genetic marker that was detected when he was a baby, but that it had never caused any health issues during his lifetime. But in a letter, the military rejected his application saying he did not meet the forces' medical requirements. "It's never been a problem ever," the applicant said about the genetic marker. "That was the disappointing thing — them saying we can't let you in because of this, even though I had never had any issues with it." CBC News agreed not to disclose the 19-year-old's identity because he felt it could hurt his chances if he reapplies to the forces. He shared documentation with CBC News to corroborate his account. The military said last year it was going to launch a pilot project to ease up on the medical requirements because those with low-risk employment limitations were being screened out. But that trial was delayed and instead the military launched this new screening process more broadly on Jan. 15 for all applicants.

Malcolm said in the past the military had two groups of applicants: "fit" or "unfit." Now a third category has been created called "fit to the task" where the military will decide if recruits with medical conditions could try out. Those selected will be able to take a nine-week introductory course to the military known as basic training. If they make it through that course, they can go on to more specialized training in the trade they've chosen but still have to meet the medical requirements of that specific trade. Defence and security expert Andrew Latham says the former medical screening process was "overly stringent" and "unrealistic" because it turned away people who were perfectly capable of many jobs.

Defence Minister Bill Blair says dropping an aptitude test is a good first step to improving military recruitment, but he noted there's more to do to improve the process and attract people to military service. He said under the old approach, health conditions that would disqualify people from becoming front-line fighters or fighter pilots were also applied to roles like a clerk working in the backroom of a warehouse. "It was utterly irrational — kind of a bureaucratic approach gone slightly mad," said Latham, who is a senior fellow at think tank the Institute for Peace and Diplomacy. "But now under pressure and to their great credit, the Department of National Defence has figured out that we can be a little bit more nuanced with this." Latham said he's waiting to see if the change boosts recruitment numbers, but says so far, he can't see a downside. "I think this is going to open a number of doors and windows to people who would really like to be members of the military but for irrelevant medical reasons are being excluded," he said. It's not the only recruiting challenge the military faces, but it's a big one, he said.

Govt Chooses Three Arctic Sites to Build Military ‘Operational Hubs’

— Not Bases_ *Jen Hodgson* *Western Standard News* 06 Mar 2025

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberals have designated Iqaluit, NU, Inuvik, NWT, and Yellowknife, NWT, as sites for Canada's first three Arctic military "support hubs." Notably, these hubs are not military bases, which Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre pledges to build if he wins the next election. Instead, they will exist to support military operations through "communications and transport infrastructure" and by providing "secure storage for supplies," said the Department of National Defence. Defence Minister Bill Blair made the announcement revealing the Canadian Arctic security strategy's "first Northern operational support hub

locations” for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) on Thursday in Iqaluit. “These will increase CAF’s presence and responsiveness across the Arctic and the North,” says a press release from the Government of Canada.



Ottawa chooses three Arctic sites to build military ‘operational hubs’ — not bases.

Image courtesy Radio-Canada

The announcement is part of Canada’s 2024 *Our North, Strong and Free* initiative, described by the feds as a “renewed vision for defence.” The program includes spending \$2.67 billion over 20 years to establish “a network” of these Northern operational support hubs. Each hub will have its own airstrips, logistics facilities, and equipment with an aim to function as a “dispersed network of logistical stations.” The Liberals’ *Our North, Strong and Free* plan also includes \$8.1 billion in new defence spending over five years and \$73 billion over 20 years “on an accrual basis to bolster the defence of Canada.” The outgoing Trudeau Liberals’ 20-year plan is focused on extending CAF’s operational reach, increasing military presence in the Arctic and “will enable CAF to better assert Canadian sovereignty and support greater year-round presence.” The NATO target for defence spending is 2% of GDP, which was supposed to be in effect already, though Canada falls cringingly short, and has been reprimanded by other leaders, most prominently President Donald Trump, for failing to meet them. “This initiative represents a new way of approaching defence and sustainment in the Arctic and the North and will help keep Canadians safe and secure in the face of dramatic changes in our physical and security environment,” states the press release. Blair said the plan provides critical infrastructure for the CAF to “enhance its presence and responsiveness across the Arctic and the North.” “It marks significant progress in the Northern Operational Support Hub initiative and advances our commitment to working hand-in-hand with federal partners, the provinces and territories, indigenous peoples, and Northern communities to enhance the Canadian Armed Forces’ footprint in the Canadian Arctic,” he said.

WWII Bomb Disposal Op in Paris Causes Hours of Travel Chaos

and Eurostar line closure. *Samuel Petrequin & John Leicester Associated Press Mar 7, 2025*

PARIS (AP) — The disposal of what Paris police called an “excessively dangerous” unexploded World War II bomb caused hours of transportation chaos Friday on rail and road networks in the French capital, including the suspension of high-speed train links with London and Brussels. Having moved the bomb into a hole, disposal experts managed to unscrew and then destroy its fuse, “like you see in the movies,” said Christophe Pezron, who heads the Paris police laboratory

that includes bomb disposal services. He said that the half-ton British-made bomb could have caused major damage had it exploded after workers inadvertently dug it up with an earthmover. But the police operation that made the bomb safe before it was then taken away triggered major disruption for hundreds of thousands of rail travelers and motorists. The bomb was dug up near train tracks north of Paris, forcing a shutdown of the rail network serving Gare du Nord, France's busiest station. A portion of the A1 highway — a major road artery into northern Paris — and sections of the capital's always-busy beltway were also closed while police disposal officers worked. "We're delighted and relieved that all this has come to an end," Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot was able to finally declare Friday afternoon — 12 hours after the bomb-disposal police were first called — as roads reopened and rail services were progressively being restored. The minister said that almost 500 trains had been canceled, impacting around 600,000 people at Gare du Nord that serves not only Paris' northern suburbs and northern France, but also international destinations in the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. "All of the northern part of our country was paralyzed," Tabarot said.



This photo shows a huge, unexploded World War II-era bomb that caused transportation chaos in Paris, that included the suspension of high-speed rail links with London and Brussels and the closure of a vital road artery in the French capital Friday, March 7, 2025 in Saint-Denis, outside Paris.

(Prefecture de Police via AP)

Eurostar, the operator of high-speed trains through the Channel Tunnel that joins England with the European continent, said that normal traffic would resume Saturday between Paris and Brussels and Paris and London, after Friday's full day of cancellations. Hundreds of commuter, regional and high-speed train services between Paris and its suburbs and towns and cities in northern France were also canceled. Gabrielle Cotton, a tourist from the US state of Missouri, was traveling by train from Amsterdam, Netherlands, to Paris, but got no further than Brussels. "I heard the girl next to me — her parents called her and said that there was a World War II bomb found in the train station," she said. "They told us we had to get off in Brussels." Retired Parisian Michel Garrot also found himself stranded with his wife in the Belgian capital. "There's no solution. We're going to call the hotel and stay one more day. And change our train ticket," he said. At Eurostar's hub in London, St. Pancras International station, passengers scrambled for alternatives. Fridays are invariably busy with thousands of weekend travelers. Paris-bound passengers were advised to try taking trains to Lille in northern France, or fly. Bride-to-be Charlotte Liddell had a bachelorette party — her own —

to get to in Paris and wanted to join friends already in the French capital. “It’s the hen do without the hen!” she said. “We’re very upset, but it’s so out of our control.”

Eurostar said that it “sincerely apologizes for the disruption and understands the inconvenience this may cause.” Workers laboring overnight on a bridge-replacement project spotted the rust-eaten, dirt-covered bomb before dawn Friday, after it was found by an earth-moving machine at a depth of about two meters (six feet), between train tracks to the north of Gare du Nord, national rail operator SNCF said. Bomb disposal services arrived within the hour and set up a 200-meter security perimeter, later extended to 500 meters. Pezron, the police lab director, said that the bomb could have exploded had it been struck accidentally with workers’ tools or shaken too vigorously. Morning rush-hour travelers arriving at Gare du Nord to catch trains were greeted by bright-red signs warning of disruptions, lines of passengers seeking information and ticket exchanges, and barriers blocking access to the Eurostar terminal. The Gare du Nord habitually hosts 700,000 travelers per day, making it the busiest rail hub in both France and Europe, the SNCF says.

Bombs left over from the battles fought in France and its skies in both world wars are regularly unearthed, even more than a century later, although it’s rare that they cause such widespread disruption in people-packed Paris. “It’s the fourth one we’ve found in this area since 2019,” Pezron said. In World War II, Allied forces’ bombing raids flattened towns and cities in the Normandy region northwest of Paris, but didn’t wreak destruction on the same scale on the French capital. Still, factories, train lines and other targets in and around Paris were bombed repeatedly, killing more than 3,600 people and wounding thousands more, according to city archives. The Interior Ministry says that since World War II’s end in 1945, disposal teams have defused 700,000 air-dropped bombs and made safe nearly 50 million mines, shells and other explosive devices.

A Russian Spy Ship Caught Fire Off Syria’s Coast

The Russian spy ship, the Kildin, was packed with intelligence-gathering equipment

John Leicester Independent 08 Feb 2025

The man is insistent: Our ship is in difficulty, so keep your distance, he instructs another vessel over the radio. “Warship on your course,” he says. “I am drifting. I’m not under command.” The broadcast, according to military officials, came from a Russian spy ship, the Kildin, as the vessel packed with intelligence-gathering equipment drifted temporarily out of control off the Syrian coast on Jan. 23, with flames and black fumes rising from its smokestack. The Associated Press obtained audio of the broadcast, as well as video and photos showing the blaze that three military officials said were collected by a ship from a NATO nation operating nearby. The officials, also from a NATO country, spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity to discuss the fire and radio transmission that Russian authorities haven’t publicly reported. The audio provides an unusual peek inside Russia’s fleet of spy ships that NATO nations are watching closely because of concerns that Moscow might sabotage underwater cables and pipelines amid tensions over the war in Ukraine. Even though the Kildin was in trouble, the secretive ship didn’t respond to an offer of help from the NATO vessel, the officials said.



Russia Spy Ship

NATO

The UK last month tracked another Russian vessel that it identified as a spy ship in the English Channel. The Defense Ministry said the Yantar “was caught loitering over critical undersea infrastructure” and that a Royal Navy submarine surfaced close to the ship “to warn it had been

secretly monitoring its every move.” The 55-year-old Kildin gathers intelligence on NATO activities in the Mediterranean and had been operating near naval exercises by alliance member Turkey before the fire, according to the officials who spoke to the AP. They said the blaze burned for at least four hours and that the Kildin’s crew removed the covers from lifeboats though they never put them to sea. The Kildin also hoisted two black balls from its masts — a maritime signal that the ship can no longer steer, the officials said. They said the crew eventually regained control and that the Kildin is still stationed and gathering intelligence off the Syrian port of Tartus, accompanied by a frigate and a supply vessel. It is not clear what caused the blaze.

Military officials say this photo taken from a nearby vessel shows smoke rising from a fire aboard the Russian spy ship



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he wasn’t aware of a fire aboard the Kildin and didn’t say what the ship was doing at the time. He dismissed suggestions that it reflected poorly on Russian naval readiness. “Assessing the state of the fleet based on the breakdown of one particular ship or one particular malfunction is not professional,” Peskov said. Retired Vice Adm Michel Olhagaray, a former head of France’s center for higher military studies, said that even though the Kildin regained steering, the fire highlights the logistical difficulties for Russia of maintaining naval forces in the Mediterranean, far from its bases in the Arctic and the Baltic Sea. Moscow also is no longer able to use its Black Sea Fleet for Mediterranean patrols because during the Ukraine war Turkey isn’t allowing warships to pass through the Bosphorus, which links the Black and Mediterranean seas. “The maintenance of this Russian fleet, particularly in the Mediterranean, is extraordinarily complex,” Olhagaray said. The audio gathered by the NATO ship is a 75-second radio exchange between the Kildin and a Togo-flagged cargo ship, Milla Moon, the officials said.

The AP also obtained a second recording of conversations among crew members aboard the NATO ship. In that, they can be heard identifying the exchange they've just monitored as being between the Kildin and a Togolese vessel. Military officials provided both recordings to the AP, which was not able to independently authenticate them. Ship tracking websites that use the data vessels emit on their identity, position, speed and course show the Milla Moon lifted anchor off Tartus and started cruising northward along Syria's coast on Jan 23. That was the day of the Kildin fire, also in waters off Tartus, the military officials said. They said the Kildin at first identified itself to the Milla Moon as another ship, the Sky, and then asked to switch channels to continue the conversation. After the switch, the man with accented English is then heard identifying his vessel as a warship. "Motor vessel Milla Moon, this is warship on your course," the voice can be heard saying on the clip. "Please hear me." He asks the Milla Moon to steer clear.

Vancouver Gunners Website Update

1951 recruiting update

Recruiting continues to be a concern

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/recruiting-1951>

Concert for the Padre

The Band performed at Christ Church Cathedral with the BC Regiment Pipes and Drums with proceeds going to support the Dean's pastoral work with the men and women of the military.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/concert-for-the-padre3968344>

Celebration of Life – Brigadier General William (Bill) Thomas Wickett CD

Additional photos taken by the BCR Regimental Association from the celebration of life for BGen William T Wickett CD have been added.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/funeral-bgen-wickett.html>

Photos

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

Who (or What) Is It?

Last Week: This is **Mulazzin al Thani Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah Aulaqi, MC**, of the Trucial States Scouts (now part of Oman). The **Trucial Oman Scouts**, also known as the **Trucial Oman Levies** prior to 1956, was a predecessor paramilitary force that operated in the Trucial States under British control from 1951 to 1971, after which they were renamed to the **Union Defence Force** with the formation of the United Arab Emirates in 1971. In 1976, the force was restructured and is now known as the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. The Trucial Oman Scouts were a highly respected and impartial gendarmerie and were regarded as well trained, well paid, and efficient. A story about him appeared in *Soldier Magazine* in the 1960s, no doubt telling the story of how he won the MC. Unfortunately, that's all we know about him.



This Week: As we have mentioned in previous columns, we live in an era of increasing sameness and longevity as regards aeroplanes. One has only to look at the shape of Boeing's Model 367-80, the ship that led to the legendary 707, to see that visually, there is little difference to today's passenger jets. Yes, it had four, not two engines, and they were skinny turbojets, not fat turbofans, and it was all metal, etc., etc. But, unless you are a complete pedant and never invited back to dinner parties, you will see the similarities. In terms of longevity, in the early years craft seemed to change daily, often because few knew what they were doing. None of the aircraft that entered the Great War were in front line, or any line service by the end, a mere four years later, and the same can almost be said of those in the next great conflagration. In contrast, today's RCAF CF-18 pilots are certainly older than the fighters they fly. And when we look at the Russian Tu-95 and USAF B-52, the crews could easily be the grandchildren of the people who first flew those beasts.



But, it was not always so. Who can forget the aerodynamic elegance of French inter-war bombers, which quickly became garden sheds, or the innovative Blackburn Roc, which should have been a garden shed. The RAF, the USAAF, and the Luftwaffe all entered the war (one of them several years late) with similar propeller driven aircraft, but ended it with jets that went

twice as fast. The latter service, that of the evil Nazis, even had a rocket-propelled one, the Messerschmitt Me-163 Komet (Nazis couldn't spell), which could not only climb vertically at speed, but also dissolve the pilot if there was a fuel leak.

Well, this week's quiz candidate isn't that machine, but one that certainly looks similar. What was it? Did it ever fly? Did it puree its pilots? If you know, let us in on the answer. Send your musings to the editor, Bob Mugford (bob.mugford@gmail.com), or the author, John Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitary'

What would be the result of getting the ability to fly? It would be so uplifting.

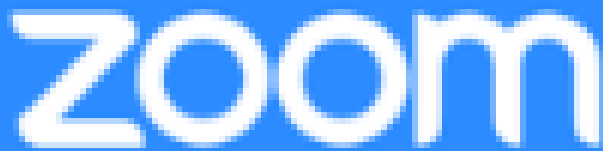
Murphy's Other Laws

Airstrikes always overshoot the target; artillery always falls short.

Quotable Quotes

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it. *Will Rogers*

Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

The Zoom logo is displayed in white lowercase letters on a solid blue rectangular background.

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=XE0y7bIBCNvTYsIFcFIZ6g1e1pfzMP.1>

or use Meeting ID 727 5835 9360 **and the secret passcode is pFPey6**
Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.

AFOA Annual RCAF Anniversary Mess Dinner



AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Since 1920

NOTICE

ANNUAL RCAF ANNIVERSARY MESS DINNER

FRIDAY, 28 Mar 2025

1700 HOURS for 1800 HOURS

AT

THE UNIVERSITY GOLF CLUB

LOCATED AT 5185 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, VANCOUVER

A MESS DINNER IN CELEBRATION OF THE 101st ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

AND

THE 85th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

- *** Dress: Formal - Mess Kit, Tux or Dark Suit - miniature medals should be worn
Ladies - cocktail dress
- *** Cost: \$ 140 (includes red & white wine and sherry for the Toast)
- *** Reception: 1700 Hours (no host bar)
- *** Dinner: 1800 Hours - Arcadian Mixed Greens, Goat Cheese, Pecans, etc.
10 oz. Prime Rib Roast, Yorkshire Pudding, Mashed
Potatoes and Vegetables
New York Cheesecake, Coffee and Teas
- *** Guest of Honour: Our speaker once again will be renowned author Ted Barris, who will speak on his latest book "The Battle of Britain - Canadian Airmen in Their Finest Hour"

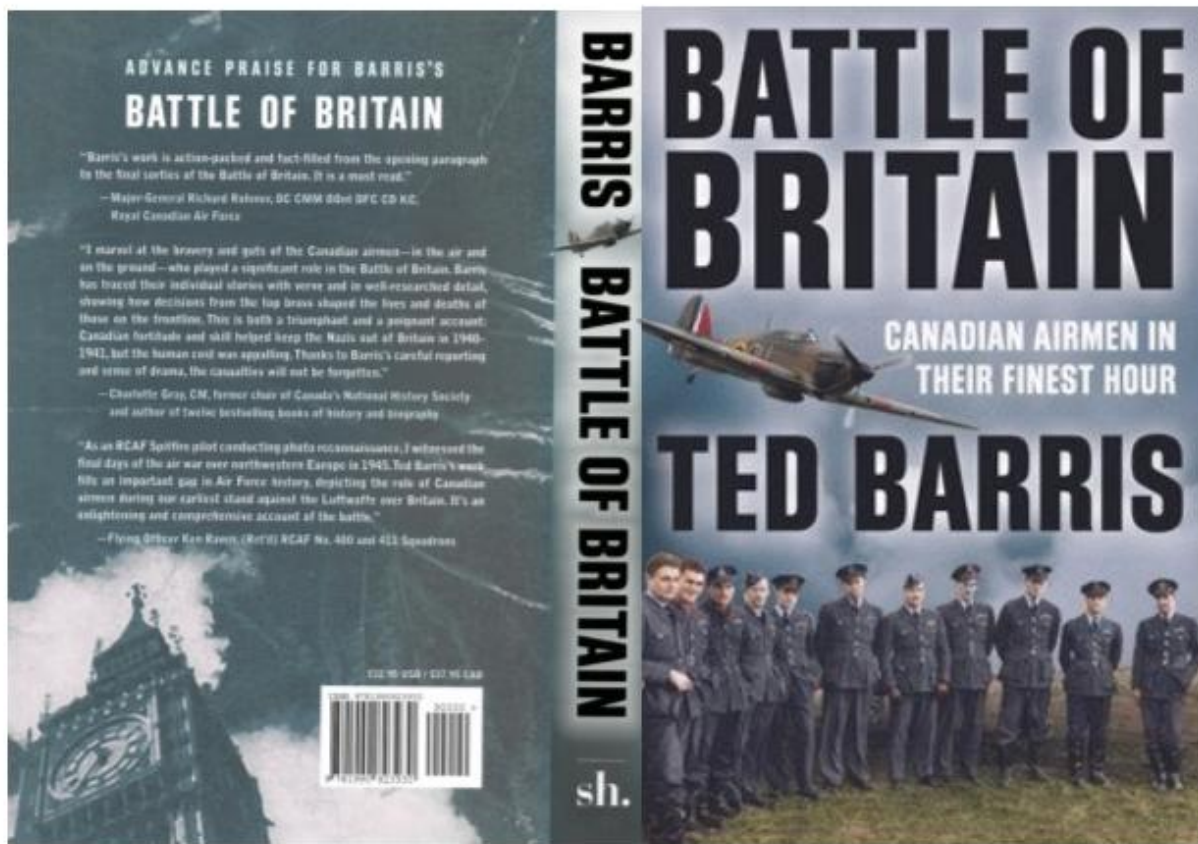
Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing after he has spoken. The price of the book will be \$ 40.00(cash, cheques or e-transfers), but he will not be set up for electronic square for debit(?) or for credit cards. If you advise me in advance, it **may** be possible to have some of his other books there.

Please bring your spouse and guests to this event. Names are needed please for the seating plan.

We must firm up our attendance for the club a week in advance so we will need to hear from you **no later than Noon on Friday, 21 Mar 25**. Please advise the Secretary, Jerry Vernon, at jevemon@telus.net or phone him at (604) 420-6065. If your plans change later, also please advise us of this, for catering purposes. No shows are no-nos and may be charged!!

Also please advise the Secretary of any special dietary needs, as the caterer can provide an alternate to roast beef and/or the salad and dessert.

Note that we will be starting the event at 5 PM for 6 PM again this year.



ABOUT AUTHOR TED BARRIS

Ted Barris is an accomplished author, journalist and broadcaster. As well as hosting stints on CBC Radio and TV Ontario, and regular contributions to the Globe and Mail and the National Post, Barris has authored 21 non-fiction books, including a dozen bestsellers on Canadians in the Great War, the Second World War, the Korean War and the War in Afghanistan. Since completing his Bachelor of Applied Arts at Ryerson in 1971, Barris has pursued a freelance career across Canada and the United States. His broadcast work has been heard and seen on CBC Radio & Television, the CTV Network, TV Ontario, ACCESS in Alberta, as well as on National Public Radio in the United States. His writing is regularly published in periodicals such as Legion magazine, esprit de corps and Zoomer. He also writes a weekly newspaper column - the Barris Beat - and recently retired as professor of journalism at Toronto's Centennial College. Among the awards Ted Barris has received: the international Billboard Radio Documentary Award, the Yorkton Film Festival's Golden Sheaf, as well as numerous ACTRA nominations. In 1993, he received the Canada 125 Medal "for service to Canada and community." In 2004, the Remembrance Service Association of Halifax recognized him with its Patriot Award. In 2006, the renowned 78th Fraser Highlanders (Canadian) Regiment presented its annual excellence award, the Bear Hackle Award. In 2011, the Ontario (116th) Regiment awarded him the Medallion of Excellence for his work in documenting military history. Also in 2011, he was recipient of the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation. In 2012, the Air Force Association of Canada selected Ted Barris to receive Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal. His book **The Great Escape: A Canadian Story** won the 2014 Libris Non-Fiction Book of the Year. In 2018, his book **Dam Busters: Canadian Airmen and the Secret Raid Against Nazi Germany**, was awarded the RCAF Association NORAD Trophy. His 19th book **Rush to Danger: Medics in the Line of Fire** was long listed for the 2020 RBC Charles Taylor Non-Fiction Prize. In 2022, at the time his book **Battle of the Atlantic: Gauntlet to Victory** was published, Ted Barris was recognized with Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Award. In December 2022, he was appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada.

\$32.95 USD / \$37.95 CAD

BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Canadian Airmen in Their Finest Hour

“Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.”

In the summer of 1940, Prime Minister Winston Churchill's words set the 113 days of the Battle of Britain apart as the greatest aerial battle in history. As the German Luftwaffe sought to destroy the Royal Air Force, gain air superiority, and invade the British Isles, Commonwealth fighter pilots scrambled from UK airfields day after day, flying Hurricane and Spitfire fighter aircraft to thwart Hitler's plan. They won, but paid dearly.

Among the 2,937 aircrew in this first test of Allied skill, resilience, and courage were more than one hundred pilots who flew with the “Canada” patch on their shoulder, while another two hundred ground crew kept their fighters in the air.

In his twenty-first book of non-fiction, Ted Barris has assembled unknown stories of these Canadian airmen, ground crew, engineers, aeronautical designers, and medical officers. Drawing on meticulous and in-depth research, and written in lively, engaging prose, *Battle of Britain: Canadian Airmen in Their Finest Hour* introduces the Canadians who helped secure victory in this Second World War life-and-death struggle by turning back the very real threat of Nazi invasion.




TED BARRIS has now published twenty-one works of non-fiction, mostly wartime histories. *The Great Escape: A Canadian Story* won the 2014 Libris Award as Best Non-Fiction Book in Canada. *Dam Busters: Canadian Airmen and the Secret Raid Against Nazi Germany* received the 2019 NORAD Trophy from the RCAF Association. And *Rush to Danger: Medics in the Line of Fire* was long-listed for the 2020 Charles Taylor Prize for Non-Fiction in Canada. His twentieth book, *Battle of the Atlantic: Gauntlet to Victory*, enjoyed weeks on national bestseller lists. In 2022, Barris was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada.

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Vancouver Vimy Day Parade - 6 April 2025



THE VANCOUVER VIMY DAY COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO ATTEND OUR REMEMBRANCE SERVICE TO BE HELD ON 6 APRIL 2025

The Vancouver Vimy Day Remembrance Service will be held at the main veteran's burial site located at Vancouver's Mountainview Cemetery located on the South-West area by the Commonwealth Cenotaph

**Arrive between 1020 – 1040 hrs – Parking available free on site.
Service starts at 1045 hrs**

Light refreshments for official attendees will be served following the service at the Mountainview Cemetery Hall of Remembrance where washrooms are also available.

If your organisation wishes to place an order for an official wreath, please contact the Vancouver Poppy Fund web page at www.vancouverpoppyfund.org and complete the form online no later than 21 March 2025.

**RVSP: LCol (Ret'd) James D Barrett, CD
Chair Vancouver Vimy Day Committee barrettjd007@gmail.com (604)916-1766**

**Mountainview Cemetery
5455 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5W 2Z3**

Entrances off Fraser Street & 41st Avenue & free parking on site.