

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News – 12 Mar 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>

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

Commemoration Cyprus 2024

80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland Battlefield Tour

- Mar 13** No Zoom Meeting – host will be at lunch in Mess. **Lunch Sold Out**
- Mar 20** Zoom Lunch Meeting – 1200hrs
RUSI(NS) - Distinguished Speaker RAdm Carosielli, Cyber Force
- Mar 21** Left Coast Lancers Moreuil Wood Lunch
- Mar 27** Zoom Lunch Meeting – 1200hrs
- Mar 30** Air Force Officers' Association RCAF Birthday Mess Dinner
- Apr 03** Zoom Lunch Meeting – 1200hrs
- Apr 06** The Vancouver Vimy Day 2024 Remembrance Service
- Apr 20** The 2024 BC Military Gala

RUSI(NS) - Distinguished Speaker RAdm Carosielli, Cyber Force

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia extends an invitation to a presentation Wednesday, 20 March, by Rear-Admiral Luciano Carosielli, Chief of Staff Assistant Deputy Minister (Information Management). RAdm Carosielli will speak about the Canadian Armed Forces Cyber Force and digital/information management. The event will start at 1 pm Atlantic/Halifax time, Wednesday, 20 March, then be followed by Q&A and finish by 3 pm Atlantic time.

Registration is required. There is no fee to attend this event. To register, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com by close-of-business Sunday, 17 March. As the subject line for your registration email, put: RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker 20 March 2024

Registration. In addition to your name, please provide your organization (unit, agency/directorate, association or company). Participation is limited and later registrants may have to be put on a waiting list. If after registering your availability changes and you are no longer able to attend, please advise RUSI(NS) as soon as possible so your spot can be re-assigned.

The event will be done by Zoom. Instructions will be emailed to registrants by end Monday, 18 March. If you have not received them by end-of-day 18 March, please check your spam folder and, if necessary, email RUSI(NS).

RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice. Email RUSI(NS) if there is a question about an event occurring.

CAH Darlington, Commander, Royal Canadian Navy (retired)
Vice-President, RUSI(NS) Web: <https://rusi-ns.ca>

15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA Open House - April 20, 2024 **2025 W 11th Ave, Vancouver, BC, Canada, British Columbia V6J2C7**

On April 20, 2024, 15th Field Regiment, RCA will be hosting an open house at Bessborough Armoury! Armoury will be open to the public from 0900.

Air Force Officers' Association RCAF Birthday Mess Dinner **Saturday, 30 Mar 24**

Please see attached (**poster Section**) the Notice for the AFOA's annual RCAF Birthday Mess Dinner, to be held on Saturday, 30 Mar 24, at the Point Grey Golf and Country Club. April the First this year is a special Birthday Anniversary for the RCAF, which was officially formed on 1 April, 1924. We have a special speaker, AFOA Member Chris Weicht, who has written a new book for the RCAF Centennial, covering the RCAF defence of the B. C. coast and Alaska during World War II. The book is "The Defenders", and copies will be available at the dinner.

As usual, "the more the merrier" at these events, so please bring along your friends, especially other RCAF veterans. We are starting to have a problem with our attendance at events, as our active membership advances in age and declines in numbers and mobility, so it is often the friends, relatives and guests who make the difference between a successful event and one with insufficient numbers. As you will have noted, we had to cancel our Valentine's Lunch this year because we only had half the number of people sign up that attended last year. For those of you who have a dietary problem with their prime rib of beef, we have asked the club to come up with an alternate main course, probably steelhead salmon, but we need to know your preference in advance for the cook.

Jerry Vernon,
Secretary, Air Force Officers' Association

South Alberta Light Horse to ‘Realign’ With Larger Reserve Force

- command set to move out of Medicine Hat.

Eli J Ridder & Kevin Kyle Chat News Today, Medicine Hat Mar 7, 2024



The Medicine Hat-based Southern Alberta Light Horse Regiment will lose its name and independence as it begins a process of realignment with larger reserve operations in the province, a high-ranking commander told CHAT News on Wednesday. The SALH group has operated as an independent reserve regiment

for over a century, but Col. Christopher Hunt said the process has begun to unify it with the King’s Own Calgary Regiment, confirming earlier reporting by CHAT News. “There’s still a lot of details to be worked out, but tonight was about starting the conversation with those soldiers so that we can have an open conversation about how we bring these elements together,” Hunt told CHAT News after meeting with the regiment late on Wednesday.

While the Medicine Hat regiment is no stranger to amalgamation over the course of its history, this would mark the first time the command is moved out of Medicine Hat. “In the end, there’s still going to be two regiments that will continue forward. There will be a regiment in southern Alberta and there’ll be a regiment in Edmonton,” Hunt said. “They will both continue the traditions of the King’s Own [Calgary Regiment] and the [South Alberta] Light Horse.” Hunt said the process will take place over the course of a year. SALH is currently headquartered in Medicine Hat, a regiment independent from Alberta’s larger cities, a source of pride for current and former regiment soldiers, according to two sources who spoke with CHAT News on the condition of anonymity. The regiment also operates a museum out of its central station at Patterson Armoury. That museum will continue its normal operations for the time being, curator Wes Krause told CHAT News.

The pride and history associated with the SALH regiment would be lost if the changes move ahead, the veteran sources said. “It’s like if I were to tell you tomorrow to change your last name, you are no longer related to your family,” one former reservist said. “The guys that are bringing this in display complete ineptitude,” he added ahead of the Wednesday meeting. There was a previous attempt at eliminating the South Alberta Regiment in the 1950s, as described by Krause in a CHAT TV feature series. That idea was shot down by Medicine Hat mayor Harry Veiner at the time. The then South Alberta Regiment and the 15th Light Horse group were later amalgamated to create the current SALH. There was not any public consultation ahead of the amalgamation being revealed Wednesday, an approach two sources told CHAT News was unprofessional.

Ukraine Needs More Troops Fighting Russia

Hardened professionals from Colombia are helping.

Illia Novikov And Manuel Rueda AP February 9, 2024

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Melodic Colombian Spanish fills a hospital treating soldiers wounded fighting Russian forces in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine’s ranks are depleted by two years of war. As it battles the Russian war machine, Ukraine is welcoming hardened fighters from one of the world’s longest-running conflicts. Professional soldiers from Colombia bolster the ranks of volunteers from around the world who have answered Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s call for foreign fighters to join his nation’s war with Russia. 32-year-old from the city of Medellin was trying to save a colleague wounded in three days of heavy fighting with Russian forces. Russian drones attacked the group and shrapnel from a grenade dropped by one pierced his jawbone. “I thought I was going to die,” said the man, who goes by the call sign Checho. The fighters insisted on being identified by their military call signs because they feared for their safety and that of their families. “We got up and decided to run away from the position to save our lives,” Checho said. “There was nowhere to hide.” Colombia’s military has been fighting drug-trafficking cartels and rebel groups for decades,



A wounded professional soldier from Medellín, Colombia who goes by the call sign of Checho, 32, smiles as he holds gifts from Ukrainian children in a hospital in Ukraine Wednesday, Dec 20, 2023. Checho joined the Ukrainian armed forces to help fight Russia. After two years of war, Ukraine is looking for ways to replenish its depleted ranks. The Colombian professional soldiers are a welcome addition. (AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)

Colombian veterans who joined the Ukrainian armed forces to help fight Russia pose for a photo near their Humvee on the front line near Lyman, Donetsk region, Ukraine, Monday, Jan 29, 2024.

(AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)



With a military of 250,000, Colombia has Latin America’s second-largest army, after Brazil’s.

More than 10,000 retire each year. And hundreds are heading to fight in Ukraine, where many make four times as much as experienced non-commissioned officers earn in Colombia, or even more. “Colombia has a large army with highly trained personnel, but the pay isn’t great when you compare it to other militaries,” said Andrés Macías of Bogota’s Externado University, who studies Colombian work for military contractors around the world. “Colombia has a large army with highly trained personnel, but the pay isn’t great when you compare it to other militaries,”

said Andrés Macías of Bogota's Externado University, who studies Colombian work for military contractors around the world. Retired Colombian soldiers began to head overseas in the early 2000s to work for U.S. military contractors protecting infrastructure including oil wells in Iraq. Retired members of Colombia's military have also been hired as trainers in the United Arab Emirates and joined in Yemen's battle against Iran-backed Houthi rebels.



Wounded Colombian veterans who joined Ukrainian armed forces to help the country fight Russia receive treatment in a hospital in Ukraine, Wednesday, Dec 20, 2023. (AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)

Colombia's role as a recruiting ground for the global security industry also has its murkier, mercenary corners: Two Colombians were killed and 18 were arrested after they were accused of taking part in the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse. At the military hospital normally treating wounded Ukrainian soldiers, a group of about 50 Colombian fighters spend most of their time staring at their phone screens — calling home, browsing the internet and listening to music in between meals and medical procedures, most for light injuries. As the two-year mark in the war approaches, Ukraine's forces are in a stalemate with Russia's. Ukraine is now expanding its system allowing people from around the world to join the army, said Oleksandr Shahuri, an officer of the Department of Coordination of Foreigners in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Wounded Colombian veterans, who joined the Ukrainian armed forces to help fight Russia, look at their phones in a hospital in Ukraine, Wednesday, Dec 20, 2023. (AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)



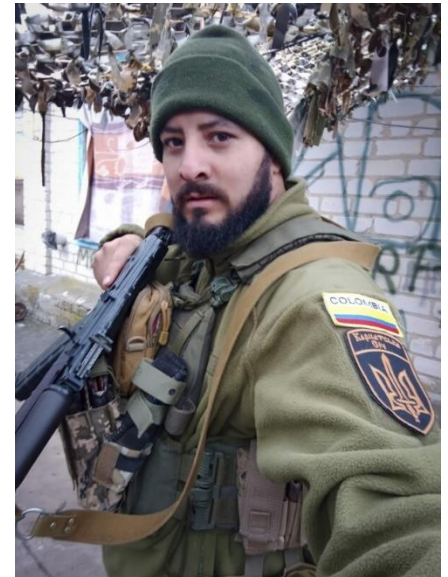
In early 2022, authorities said 20,000 people from 52 countries were in Ukraine. Now, in keeping with the secrecy surrounding any military numbers, authorities will not say how many are on the battlefield, but they do say fighters' profile has changed. The first waves of volunteers came mostly from post-Soviet or English-speaking countries. Speaking Russian or English made it easier for them to integrate into Ukraine's military, Shahuri said. Last year the military developed an infrastructure of Spanish-speaking recruiters, instructors and junior operational officers, he added. Hector Bernal, a retired ex-combat medic who runs a center for tactical medicine outside Bogota, says that in the last eight months he's trained more than 20 Colombians who went on to fight in Ukraine. "They're like the Latin American migrants who go to the U.S. in search of a better future," Bernal said. "These are not volunteers who want to

defend another country's flag. They are simply motivated by economic need.” While generals in Colombia get around \$6,000 a month in salaries and bonuses, the same as a government minister, the rank and file gets by on a much more modest income. Corporals in Colombia get a basic salary of around \$400 a month, while experienced drill sergeants can earn up to \$900. Colombia's monthly minimum wage is currently \$330. In Ukraine any member of the armed forces, regardless of citizenship, is entitled to a monthly salary of up to \$3,300, depending on their rank and type of service. They are also entitled to up to \$28,660 if they are injured, depending on the severity of the wounds. If they are killed in action, their families are due \$400,000 compensation.



Hector Bernal, a military instructor, poses for a photo in La Mesa, Colombia. (AP Photo/Ivan Valencia)

This 2023 photo provided by a 32-year-old professional soldier from Medellín, Colombia who goes by the call sign Checho, shows him in his combat gear in Donbas, eastern Ukraine. (Courtesy of Checho via AP)



Checho says principle drove him to travel to Kyiv last September. He estimates that in his unit alone, there were around 100 other fighters from Colombia who had made the same journey. “I know that there are not many of us, but we try to give the most we have in order to make things happen and to see a change as soon as possible,” he said. In Colombia, word about recruitment to the Ukrainian army spreads mostly through social media. Some of the volunteers who already fight in Ukraine share insights on the recruitment process on platforms such as TikTok or WhatsApp. But when something goes wrong, getting information about their loved ones is hard for relatives. Diego Espitia lost contact with his cousin Oscar Triana after Triana joined the Ukrainian army in August 2023. Six weeks later, the retired soldier from Bogota stopped posting updates on social media. With no Ukrainian embassy in Bogota, Triana's family reached out for information from the Ukrainian embassy in Peru and the Colombian consulate in Poland — the last country Triana passed through on his way into Ukraine. Neither responded. “We want the authorities in both countries to give us information about what happened, to respond to our emails. That is what we are demanding now,” Espitia said. The Associated Press tracked down a Colombian fighter who uses the call sign Oso Polar — Polar Bear — and says he was the last person to see Triana alive on October 8, 2023. He says Triana's unit was ambushed by Russian forces in the Kharkiv region, after which his fate was unknown.



*This 2023 photo provided by Oscar Triana's Colombian comrade who uses the call sign Oso Polar shows Triana, a retired soldier from Bogotá who joined the Ukrainian army in August 2023, at an undisclosed location in Ukraine.
(Oso Polar via AP)*

The Ukrainian military unit where Triana was serving confirmed to The Associated Press that Triana is officially missing but would not disclose any details surrounding the circumstances in which he disappeared. Espitia, his cousin, says he's not sure what motivated Triana to fight in Ukraine. But the 43-year-old had served in the Colombian army for more than 20 years and leaving it had been "mentally difficult," Espitia said. "It could've been for the money, or because he missed the adrenaline of being in combat. But he didn't open up very much about his reasons for going," Espitia said. After almost three weeks in the hospital, Checho has returned to Ukraine's front line. So have more than 50 other Colombian fighters who were treated in the same facility. "The situation here is hard," Checho told AP. "We are under constant bombardment, but we will keep fighting."

Vancouver Gunners Website Update

Lisbon, Portugal - Another country, another capital and another military museum. Originally a cannon foundry, the building was devastated in the 1755 earthquake and tsunami. Rebuilt as a military museum, the building has an amazing architecture with impressive details.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/museo-militar-lisbon-part-1>

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/museo-militar-lisbon-part-2>

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/museo-militar-lisbon-part-3>

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/museo-militar-lisbon-part-4>

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/museo-militar-lisbon-part-5>

Yorke Island Visitors - On Sept 5, 2022, Greg and Marilyn Pyke from Graham, Washington, USA, anchored along the South Cove of Yorke Island to check out a concrete structure they had seen an old photo of in the nautical guide, "*Exploring The South Coast of British Columbia*" by Don and Reanne Hemingway-Douglass. Check out the rest of their story on this page.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/yorke-2022-greg-and-marilyn-pyke.html>

Yorke Island Excursion - The 85Vics are planning their annual weekend cleanup visit to Yorke Island in May 2024. Interested in joining them? Send me an email. president.vcrgunners@gmail.com

68 Battery 30'ish Year Campout Reunion - May 24 at 4 PM – May 26 at 12 PM - Harrison West - Camp Cove Campground. Anne Nikodem (former Bombardier Anne Edwards) and Terry Stratton (former Bombardier Terry Stratton) are organizing another 68 Battery camping reunion. Same as last year, its a a 10 vehicle allowance (50 person max) with the booking (additional fees for extra vehicles and day guests. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2024.html>

OP Take Post 2025 - Check out The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery website for the latest update on OP Take Post 2025 - an 80th Anniversary Liberation of Holland Commemorative Battlefield Tour from 2 to 11 May 2025. <https://rca-arc.org/the-rca-association/op-take-post/>

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.

Wednesday Lunch Zoom Meeting - **No meeting this Wednesday as host will be at lunch.**

Join us to check up on your old lunch buddies. Click on this link.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72758359360?pwd=XE0y7bIBCnvTYsIFcFIZ6g1e1pfzMP.1>

or use Meeting ID: 727 5835 9360 Passcode: pFPey6

Remember – Stay healthy and stay safe!

Who (or What) Is It?

Last Week: The **Vickers Medium Dragon** was a fully tracked British field artillery

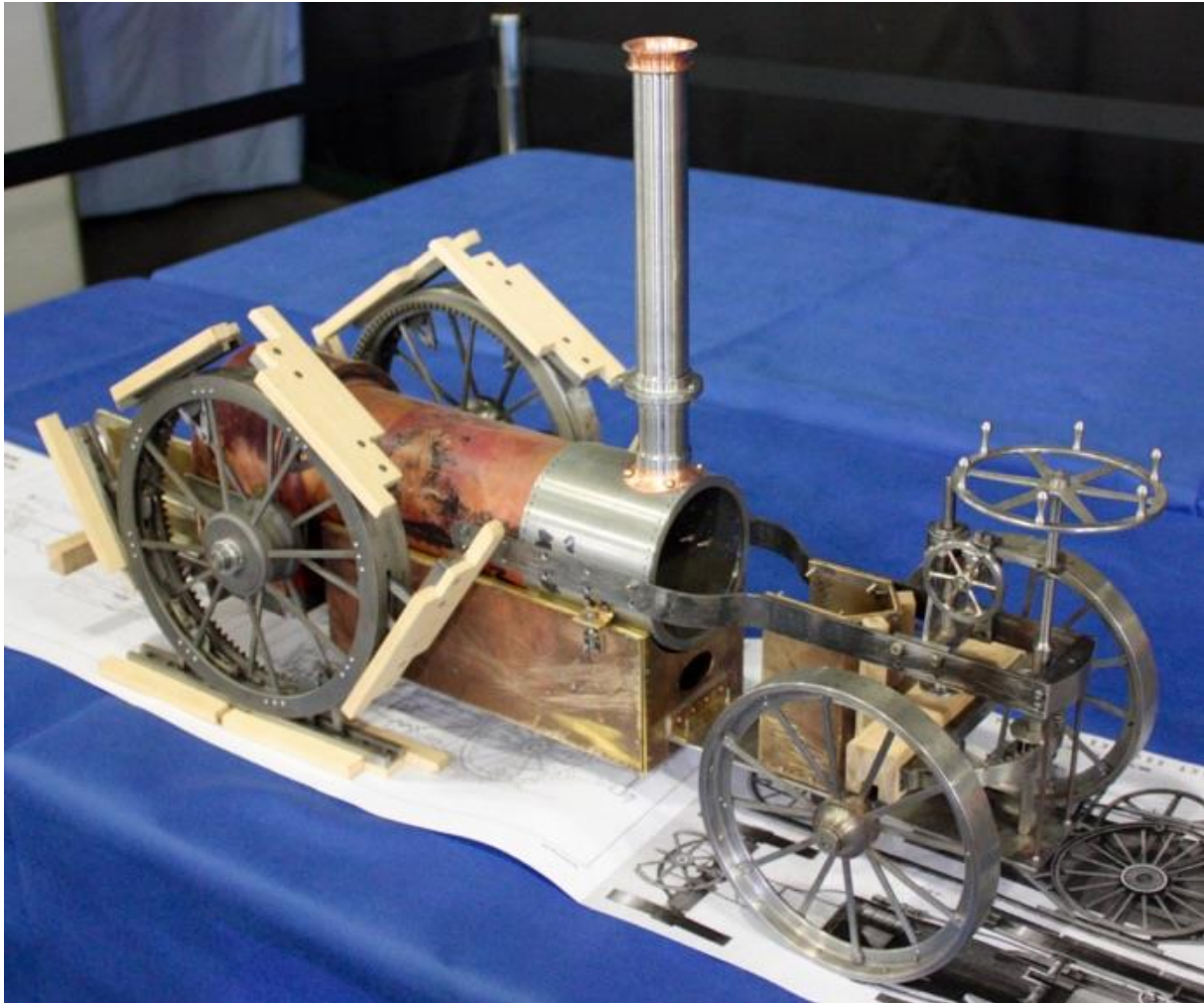


tractor made by Vickers (later Vickers-Armstrong), produced in various versions from 1922 to 1937. The Medium Dragon towed a wide range of artillery, from 18-pounder field guns to BL 60-pounder heavy field guns. It was developed from the carrier version of a 'Tropical Tank' designed by Lt Col Philip Johnson, using components from the running gear of the Vickers Medium Mark I tank. The Mark I–III versions were purchased and used in quantity

by the British Army at the start of its mechanisation of the artillery during the inter-war period. The Mark IV version of the Medium Dragon was effectively a complete re-design, using the running gear from the Vickers 6-ton tank, neither of which were adopted by the British Army. The Army finally decided in 1935 to purchase only wheeled artillery tractors, and no more were sold in the UK, but the Medium Dragon Mark IV sold well in export versions up to 1937. From c. 1929 Vickers-Armstrong also made the Light Dragon tractor for towing light artillery, with a similar name but of a completely different design based on the Vickers Light Tank Mk II. A version was trialed at the Royal Canadian School of Artillery, but nobody seems to know what happened to it.

This Week: Our search for unusual things military and naval has been made easier recently by the acquisition of this new Interwebber device of Sir Timothy Berners-Lee. Apparently, others have had it for a while, but, as we must go through a process of approval from the Commanding Officer, DND's Department of Heritage and History, the Office of Reconciliation, the Environmental Review Board, the Treasury Board, and some guy in Ontario who knew one of the previous ministers of national defence, it has taken us a bit longer. Nonetheless, our messenger boys are thrilled to have access to the machine, even though telephonic conversations must be halted whilst the modem connects through our wire. Now, equipped with Netscape and Ask Jeeves, we are able to "surf", as the young people say, and have come up with some real corkers. One of these is pictured below. We are not sure if it is a photograph of the real vehicle, or a model, as we aren't too sure any are left, nor certain that colour photography was all that

common when it was originally built. However, it is clear, something our shots of Soviet items never are (or did they build them fuzzy?).



This magnificent engine could be the answer to our current artillery tractor issue. The vehicles we presently use are actually not that new anymore, and, although they are green, were not originally designed for military applications, being “militarized” (which apparently includes more than the paint scheme). If we are to stick with towed artillery, we need something powerful, fast, and capable also carrying the ammunition and detachment necessary. Can this be such a tractor? It would certainly be a head-turner, and possibly get other NATO members off our backs when it comes to spending. If you know, or have any clue at all, let our editor know, Bob Mugford (bob.mugford@gmail.com), or the author, John Redmond (johnd.redmond@telus.net).
Chug along! 528

From the ‘Punitary’

Did you hear about the founder of the flea circus? He started it from scratch.

Murphy’s Other Laws

The complexity of a weapon is inversely proportional to the IQ of the weapon’s operator.

Quotable Quotes

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. *Will Rogers*

Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

No meeting this week - the host will be at the lunch in the Mess

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.**

NOTE change in sign on address and password

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**

Invite some friends! We have room for 100! See you on Wednesdays at noon. Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.

Attendance at this meeting is falling off. If you haven't been on for a while, we miss you so come back and join us.

Left Coast Lancers Moreuil Wood Lunch



Left Coast Lancers HQ

Warning Order

Situation

The Battle of Moreuil Wood Luncheon is booked for 21 March 2024, 1130-1400 at the Sidney North Sannich Yacht Club.

This lunch is also the Spring Gathering of ALL members of the LCL. We are inclusive and do not wish to offend the sensitivities of other fine regiments such as Garry's, Hussars and Dragoons various. We could go with St Georges Day on 23 April, Saint George is the Patron Saint of the RCAC and he is all about chivalry, charity and courage. We are supposed to give flowers out that day. Very popular amongst the more dashing Hussars so I am told. I will leave the Dragoons out of this for the moment as they are in Petawawa and would possibly be snow bound handing out pine cones and black flies.

The weather here is damp and on the Island we have survived plunging tempters in the minus 5 area which caused the earth to briefly cease rotation on it's axis, but we have Endured as is the wont of all Left Coast Lancers who are loath to having their golf and fishing activities interfered with.



Global events continue and we of the LCL are on standby to conduct additional lunches if ordered by the HRH King Charles III or members of the LCL.

Command and Signals

Please ack, menu and pricing to follow. Estimate \$40.00 per person.
If you know of others in the area please pass on.

Endurance

David Scandrett

Left Coast Lancers Ops O and Maître de

tango14@outlook.com

778-245-2800

Air Force Officers' Association RCAF Birthday Mess Dinner



AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Since 1920

NOTICE

ANNUAL RCAF ANNIVERSARY MESS DINNER

SATURDAY, 30 Mar 2024,

1700 HOURS for 1800 HOURS

AT

THE POINT GREY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

LOCATED AT 3350 SW MARINE DRIVE, VANCOUVER

**A MESS DINNER IN CELEBRATION OF THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE**

AND

THE 84th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

- *** Dress: Formal - Mess Kit, Tux or Dark Suit - miniature medals should be worn
Ladies - cocktail dress
- *** Cost: \$ 140.00 (includes wine and port)
- *** Reception: 1700 Hours (no host bar)
- *** Dinner: 1800 Hours - 10 oz Prime of Beef with heirloom carrots, fingerling
potatoes, gremolata, cipollini onion & red wine jus
Caesar Salad and Dessert, Coffee and Teas
- *** Guest of Honour: Our speaker will be AFOA Member Chris Weicht, who will speak on his
latest book "The Defenders", which is the story of the RCAF role in the
defence of the B. C. coast and Alaska in World War II.

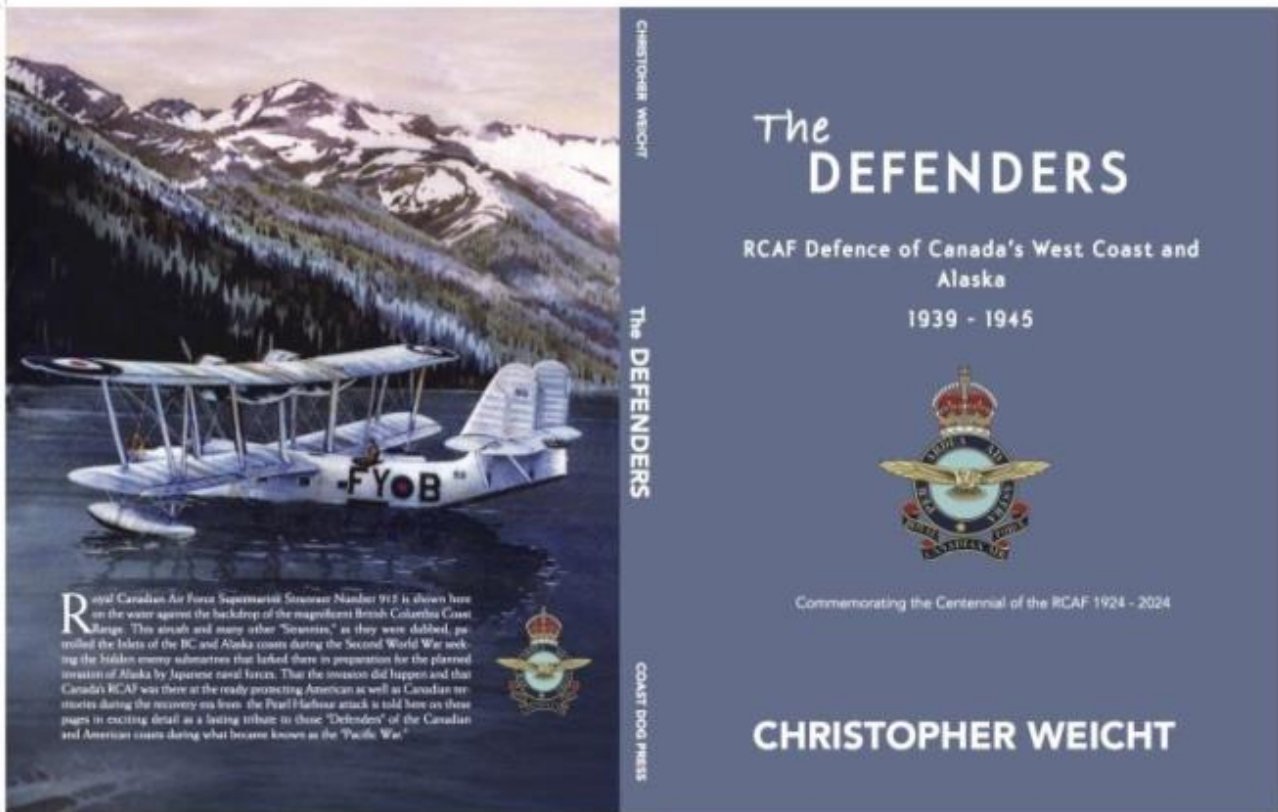
Chris' latest book is a companion book to his first book "Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Boat Stations". Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing after he has spoken. The cover price of "The Defenders" is \$ 45.00 or \$ 65 if ordered from Chris by mail,

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, 22 Mar 24. 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!!

Also please advise the Secretary of any special dietary needs, as we will be asking the caterer if they can provide an alternate to roast beef.

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



ABOUT AVIATION HISTORIAN CHRISTOPHER WEICHT

Chris Weicht, the son of a Royal Air Force officer and former London Journalist, was born in London, England, in 1935.

In 1939, Chris along with tens of thousands of children was evacuated to the supposedly safe haven of Coventry, where a short time later his boarding house suffered a direct hit from a Luftwaffe bomber and 5 of the 12 children were killed. Firemen found Chris the next day in the rubble.

Subsequently, Chris's father was able to enroll him in a Boarding School at Monmouth, Wales, for sons of Military Officers. Chris in the future would become the Weicht family's third generation Air Force Officer.

In 1948, on return of his father's RAF tour of duty in South East Asia, the family immigrated to Vancouver, B.C.

In 1949 Chris joined the Royal Canadian Air Cadets at New Westminster where he rose through the ranks to Warrant Officer. In 1952 he was presented with his wings on completion of a flight scholarship. In 1953 he enlisted in the RCAF at the Jericho Beach Air Station and served at RCAF Stations at Comox and Penhold, Alberta.

Chris would later join Pacific Western Airlines serving on the DEW line contract in the North West Territories, where he gained considerable experience in aviation flying Junkers W34 and Curtiss C-46E aircraft under the tutelage of Chief Pilot Sheldon Luck and American 'Flying Tigers' Contract Pilot Bert Sechrist.

A vision problem caused Chris to leave aviation in 1960, but he used this time to continue his education and was hired in a management position by an oil company. Chris was advised to apply in the USA for an FAA Commercial Pilot Licence which was successful and, on obtaining a US Immigration 'Green Card' and registering for the Vietnam Draft, he was hired as a pilot on U.S. Forest Service Operations.

At one point Chris flew a Vickers Viscount during a North American tour of Stevie Wonder and his troupe.

In 1967, on re-instatement of his Canadian Commercial Pilot licence, he was hired as Chief Pilot on a contract with the British Columbia Forest Service at Dawson Creek, B.C. Chris would later serve with several aviation companies in Canada and in 1977, became Corporate Pilot for International Operations with entrepreneur Peter Pocklington flying an Israeli Westwind II jet aircraft.

With the economic slowdown of the early 1980's the Corporate aviation department closed and he was subsequently offered the position of Chief Pilot and Operations Manager for a British Columbia First Nations Airline which grew from a single aircraft to over ten including two Douglas DC-3's.

At the same time, he returned to an RCAF Reserve Officer position as Commanding Officer of 861 Air Cadet Squadron at Abbotsford, B.C. During this time Chris founded and funded a scholarship program for young men and women for flight training outside of Air Cadets and, during its ten years of existence, graduated 65 young people as pilots, many of whom are now employed in both military and civil aviation.

Chris joined Airlift Canada in 1988 as Chief Pilot on VIP operations throughout North America flying Notables and Royal Personages largely on government business. He also became an RCAF Reservist attached to Land Forces Western Region, Chilliwack Vancouver Detachment (VAN DET) at Jericho Beach where he was appointed Special Projects Officer under Colonel F P. Crober and directed to Ottawa to research and write the story of the Jericho Beach Air Station. This resulted in the publication of his first book "Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Boat Stations."

Chris has researched, written and published 11 books on the history of both military and civil aviation of British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon and southeast Alaska, and he has given over 250 presentations on the subject in the area of interest. He was also the guest speaker in Ottawa at Library and Archives Canada at the 80th anniversary of the founding of the RCAF in 1924 that was sponsored by the Office of RCAF History and Heritage and the Canadian Aviation Historical Society.

In 2017 Chris was inducted into The British Columbia Aviation Hall of Fame "for over 50 years of Exceptional Service in Aviation" to the Province.

See images on next page....



The Vancouver Vimy Day 2024 Remembrance Service



The Vancouver Vimy Day Committee invites you to attend our remembrance service to be held on 6 April 2024. 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 vancouverpoppyfund@telus.net to place your order no later than 25 March 2024.

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.

The 2024 BC Military Gala - 20 April 2024



The Annual BC Military Gala is sponsored by the Commander of 39 Canadian Brigade Group and will be on **20 April 2024**. The Ball is open to all current and former members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their guests, both Regular and Reserve. In addition, the BC Military Ball welcomes the attendance of Officers and Senior NCM's from foreign armed forces, the diplomatic corps, the

police services and civilian ladies and gentlemen.

The Military Ball originated in 1946 as a victory celebration to mark the end of World War II and has continued, uninterrupted, since. It began as a brainchild of the officers of the Vancouver Garrison to relive the euphoria of the time and to celebrate the return to families and friends. Much had changed during the six year period that Canada had been to war and many returning military personnel had not seen their spouses and children during that time. Some discovered, much to their amazement, that their daughters, who were ten years old in September 1939, didn't resemble the young ladies who answered the door in 1945. The experience was profound, so much so that it was decided to include the daughters in the Military Ball as debutantes, not for the purpose of introducing them society as in the 19th century Victorian custom but actually to introduce them to their fathers. The presentation of debutantes ended with the 2006 Ball.

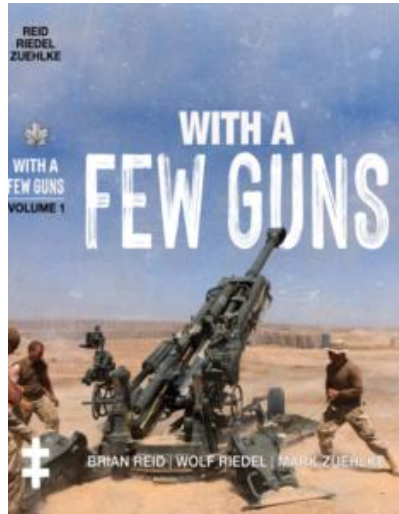
Entertainment ranges in style from light dinner music to a musical show featuring Regimental marches, the highland bagpipes and dancing into the wee hours. The history and traditions of the Military Gala exemplifies our allegiance to His Majesty and to Canada. We know you will enjoy the evening and leave with new friends and warm memories. See you at 6pm!

ORDER YOUR TICKETS:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2024-bc-military-gala-tickets-723109729667>

LOCATION : Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre, 1088 Burrard Street Vancouver, BC V6Z 2R9

With a Few Guns



With A Few Guns – The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery in Afghanistan Volume I 2002-2006

Authored by Col (Retd) Wolf Riedel and Mark Zuehlke,
building on the work of LCol (Retd) Brian Reid

This two-volume set captures the experiences of Canadian Gunners and the Regimental family during the Afghanistan era.

- Volume 1 – 2002-2006, publication date **4 December 2023!**
The translation “Avec quelques canons” is expected for autumn 2024.
- Volume 2 – 2007 to 2014, targeted publication date 2024/2025

[READ SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM VOLUME 1](#)

<https://rca-arc.org/excerpts-from-with-a-few-guns/>

We can't complete Volume 2 without your help. Be part of this significant undertaking – tell your story, submit your photos. Even the smallest detail touches someone!

Contact mrgnrsmith@gmail.com and make sure *our* story is recorded for generations to come!

“With A Few Guns” is dedicated to the greater family of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery—from those who served with distinction in the face of danger in Afghanistan, to those who trained and supported them to become mission-ready, and especially to those who kept the rest of the family together at home. In memory of “Reid B.A of the RCA” (1939-2023) and his dedicated service to the Guns, his sage advice and his literary prowess in recording parts of the Canadian Army’s rich history.

80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland Battlefield Tour



OP TAKE POST To Gunners and friends



**Fields of Fire Tours
and Merit Travel Canada**
presents

80th Anniversary of Victory Tour 2-11 May 2025 Gunners in the Liberation of the Netherlands



An American in the back of a tank of the 101st Airborne Division after the victory in 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

Commemoration Cyprus 2024



Commemoration Chypre 2024



Commemoration Cyprus 2024



Mission

...commémorer la contribution du Canada à la mission de l'ONU à Chypre à l'occasion du 50e anniversaire de la guerre de 1974.

...commemorate Canada's contribution to the UN mission in Cyprus on the 50th anniversary of the 1974 war.



WHAT - Cyprus 2024 Pilgrimage.

GOAL - to capture the history and stories from those who served in Cyprus with emphasis on the actions that took place during the 1974 war, **A FORGOTTEN WAR.**

WHEN - November 2024.

WHO - All Cyprus and Canadian Airborne Regiment Veterans and family members.

WHERE - Nicosia Cyprus, lodged at the Hilton Hotel.

COST - Pay as you go trip with individual costs in the \$5000 to 6000 range. Costs covered will include airfare, hotel with breakfast and expenses such as transportation.

TRAVEL - Will be arranged by professional travel agents, with pre and post tour travel options available.

PROGRAM - Seven days: three days of battlefield tours, three days of excursions, and one day of Remembrance.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND UPDATES ARE AVAILABLE BY JOINING THE CYPRUS 2024 FACEBOOK GROUP [Cyprus2024 | Facebook](#)

QUOI - Pèlerinage à Chypre 2024.

OBJECTIF - capturer l'histoire et les récits de ceux qui ont servi à Chypre en mettant l'accent sur les actions qui ont eu lieu là pendant la guerre de 1974, **UNE GUERRE OUBLIÉE.**

QUAND - Novembre 2024.

QUI - Tous les vétérans de Chypre, du Régiment aéroporté canadien et les membres de leurs familles.

OÙ - Nicosie Chypre, logés à l'hôtel Hilton.

COÛT - Voyage à la carte avec des coûts individuels inclus, environ \$5000 et 6000. Les coûts comprendront le billet d'avion, l'hôtel avec petit-déjeuner et les dépenses telles que le transport.

VOYAGE - Sera organisé par des agents de voyage professionnels, avec options de voyage avant et après la réunion.

PROGRAMME - Sept jours: trois jours de visites du champ de bataille, trois jours d'excursions et une journée du Souvenir.

PLUS D'INFORMATIONS ET MISES À JOUR SONT DISPONIBLES EN REJOIGNANT LE GROUPE FACEBOOK CYPRUS 2024 [Cyprus2024 | Facebook](#)

