



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Dec 13, 2016

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

Wednesday Lunches **Holiday Stand down** - The Unit will stand down from Dec 12 - Jan 6. Last lunch was Dec 7 and the first lunch of 2017 will be Jan 11.

Upcoming events – Mark your calendars Details to follow in future editions

Jan 1 **New Year's Levée** Mess opens at 1100hrs

Feb 4 **Regimental reunion dinner** - details TBA **Note change of date**

This will be the last full newsletter until the New Year. I will put out an abbreviated newsletter mainly to keep the World War 2 entries up to date and to publish important news and event updates. Next full newsletter will go out on Jan 3, 2017.

World War 2 - 1941

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

Dec 7th: This is a day with a complicated chronology:

1730 GMT: Japanese troops begin landing in Malaya at Kota Bharu, and in Singora and Patani in Thailand.

1755 GMT: Japanese aircraft begin the attack on the US Fleet in Pearl Harbor.

2130 GMT: The Japanese deliver their diplomatic message in Washington, advising the US that relations are broken off.

2359 GMT: The Japanese open an offensive on Hong Kong.

Dec 8th:

0030 GMT: The British and US ambassadors in Tokyo receive declarations of war from the Japanese government.

0130 GMT: The Japanese attack Luzon in the Philippines.

There are also air attacks on Wake Island, Guam and Midway, while Shanghai will come under complete Japanese control. All of these attacks achieve operational and tactical surprise; particularly in Pearl Harbor. The Japanese capture an intact airfield (with large fuel stocks) at Kota Bharu; destroy 100 aircraft at Clark Field near Manila; and – for the loss of 29 aircraft and a mini-sub – sink the US battleships Arizona, Utah, Oklahoma (to be salvaged but then scrapped later), California, Nevada and West Virginia. These last three will be salvaged and see

action later in the war. Two other battleships are damaged, and three cruisers and three destroyers are sunk – 188 aircraft are also destroyed.

The US declares war on Japan and declarations of war fly thick and fast, as most of the Allied nations declare war on Japan and add a number of minor Axis European allies (like Slovakia and Croatia) while they are at it. The Japanese establish air superiority in Malaya and secure their three landing beaches in Malaya and Thailand. The badly outnumbered British in Hong Kong start falling back to the Gin Drinkers Line. The Japanese raid Wake again and land on a small island off the northern coast of Luzon. The Soviets open up another counter-offensive near Leningrad. Rommel starts to fall back from Tobruk to set up a new defence line at Gazala. An experiment with ‘Gas Vans’ as a technique for mass murder of Jews and other inmates begins at Chemlo Concentration Camp – the victims are crammed into an air-tight van on a truck bed and exhaust is fed into the compartment.

Dec 9th: Elets, near Moscow is liberated, as is Tikhvin near Leningrad. However, the Soviets are a long way from re-opening a land route to Leningrad and starvation is already severe (50,000 civilians are dead in the city so far). Bangkok is occupied by the Japanese. Squadron Leader Arthur SK Scarf has been ordered to lead a daylight strike with his Blenheim Squadron on the Japanese lodgment at Singora; but Japanese domination of the air over Malaysia is complete. Scarf’s bomber is the only one to go on the mission after his squadron is destroyed on the ground, and his lone bomber is repeatedly attacked. He completes his raid and manages to land his aircraft safely despite much damage and horrific injuries, dying in hospital two hours later. He is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Dec 10th: A day of disaster for the Allies: HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse are sunk off Malaya by Japanese aircraft and now the only working battleships in the entire Pacific Ocean carry Rising Sun ensigns; Tarawa and Makin are occupied by Japanese troops; Cavite and Clark Field are thumped by Japanese aircraft again and there are more landings on Northern Luzon; Guam is captured from its 300 US defenders. The first British counterattack in Malaya finds the Japanese already occupy their start line and is thrown back while the Gin Drinker Line near Hong Kong is breached at one end.

Dec 11th: 11th Indian Division is forced out of its holding positions at Jitra in Malaya. Rommel’s troops have regrouped at Gazala with the badly damaged Afrika Korps in reserve behind positions manned by the two battered Italian Corps. The Japanese make their first attempt to land on Wake Island, but the US Marine garrison sinks two destroyers (Hayate and Kisaragi, the first ships lost by the Japanese navy during the war), savage a third destroyer and damage two cruisers. There is a first time for everything and today Adolph Hitler finally declares war on a country before he attacks it – declaring war on the United States.

Dec 12th: A Japanese detachment lands in Southern Luzon. The Special Air Service goes out again to raid Axis airfields in Libya, this time they are successful. While LCol David Stirling is justly remembered as the originator of the SAS, its leader for much of the war was the

legendary Robert Blair ‘Paddy’ Mayne, who today blows up the first of the 130 aircraft he will personally destroy during the war. A warrior’s warrior, this Irish lawyer and rugby star found his true calling in the Special Air Service and was one of the very first members of this unit. By the end of the war, he is a Lieutenant Colonel with four awards of the Distinguished Service Order (Britain’s second highest military medal). His record in combat also means that he is the first non-Frenchman to ever receive both the Croix de Guerre with a Silver Palm and become a member of the Légion d’honneur.

Dec 13th: The British fall back in Burma and evacuate Kowloon for Hong Kong Island. British troops close up to the Gazala line to chew on Rommel some more. The British also sink two Italian cruisers and two transports making supply runs to North Africa.

Positive News for Army Reserve Unit Recruiting



For the past few months, members of the Army staff have worked hard to support strengthening the Army Reserve. One such initiative, the expedited recruiting of reservists, to have applicants enrolled within weeks instead of months, was a joint effort between the CDS, Commander Military Personnel Command and the elemental commanders, including the Commander of the Army.

*BGen RRE (Rob Roy) MacKenzie OMM CD
Chief of Staff Army Reserve*

The Army has led the way in challenging existing processes and developing ways to reduce the lengthy and often bureaucratic time to get new recruits. I can say confidently that it is now possible where qualified candidates who apply for army reserve opportunities can be parading at an armoury in a matter of weeks.

Starting 1 December, the trial for the expedited recruiting commences with 5 Division leading the way. Recruiting, medical and security screening personnel have been synchronized so that many of the internal processes that held back motivated young Canadians have been improved. Candidates can now expect to be in uniform within a couple of administrative visits to the local armoury. This, in turn, will keep our young Canadians eager to start their military careers.

Our lessons learned will be shared so that early in the New Year many of the other Divisions will quickly adopt the approach that 5 Division is trialing.

Your dedication to duty, mentorship to your commanding officers and his or her soldiers, and your commitment to your unit compels me to ensure you are informed of this and all other initiatives of the Canadian Armed Forces that lay ahead for your units.

Army to Produce Wireless, Crew-Served Thermal Weapon Sights

Matt Cox December 8, 2016

Using a wireless link, gun-mounted thermal sights send a targeting reticle from the gun to a soldier head-worn display, allowing soldiers to hit targets without needing to physically “look” through the gun-sights themselves in a certain physical position. The US Army will soon begin to produce new high-tech, crew-served thermal weapons sights able to automatically adjust range, see through adverse weather, detect targets with a lightweight laser range finder and use a wireless targeting link between weapons and a soldier-worn helmet display, service officials said. Designed for the M2 .50-cal, M240 machine gun and Mk 19 grenade launcher, the system brings higher-resolution thermal imaging technology and increases field of view, developers explained. “This is the first time the soldier will have a system which combines a true day and night capability with a laser range finder to adjust for the ballistics of the various ammunition types for the crew served weapons,” an Army official told Scout Warrior.



The US Army will soon begin to produce wireless, crew-served thermal weapons sights that connect to a soldier's helmet display. Photo: US Army.

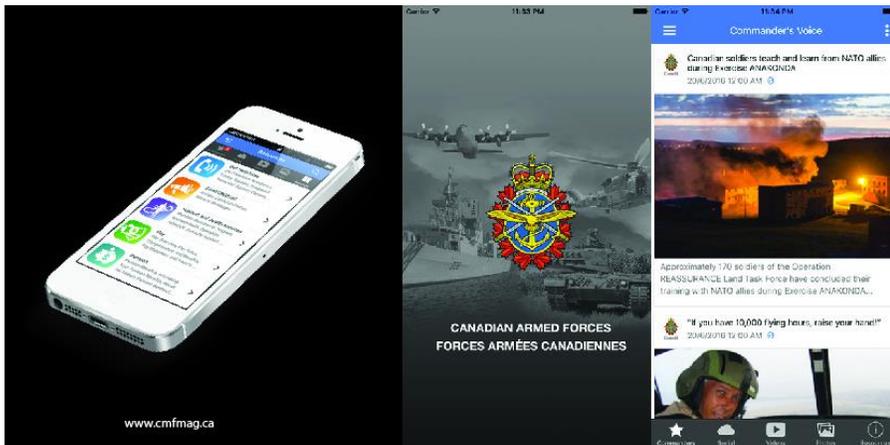
BAE Systems was recently awarded an Army contract to develop the technology, called

Family of Weapons Sights – Crew Served (FWS-CS), in a deal worth up to \$384 million. Using a wireless link, gun-mounted thermal sights send a targeting reticle from the gun to a soldier head-worn display, allowing soldiers to hit targets without needing to physically “look” through the gun-sights themselves in a certain physical position -- such as crouching, lying down or standing exposed in a vehicle-mounted gun-turret, the Army official explained. A wireless helmet mounted display is designed to provide a more natural firing position as well as allow soldiers to remain more protected, a BAE systems statement said. Crew-served weapons, such as the .50-cal machine gun, are often used to “blanket” enemy areas so that troops can maneuver while under attack or deliver suppressive fire. A wireless link allowing soldiers to remain in a standing position or different configuration than what is otherwise needed to look through the sights naturally lowers the risk of exposing soldiers to enemy fire.

BAE Systems' FWS-CS system is also engineered to improve targeting speed and precision. It uses a 12-micron sensor technology to provide soldiers with greater clarity and range, developers said. "FWS-CS also, for the first time, incorporates a high-resolution day camera and laser range finder into the weapon sight, allowing the user to engage targets with a range correct reticle," John Koltookian, technical director at BAE Systems, told Scout Warrior. With an initial development order of \$10.5 million, work will be performed at the company's facilities in Hudson, New Hampshire and Austin, Texas. This crew-served weapons technology is engineered to function alongside a similar Army program called Family of Weapons Sights – Individual (FWS-I); in similar fashion to the FWS-CS, this system uses a wireless link to connect thermal sights on an M4 rifle with an individual soldier's night-vision goggles display. A key advantage of this technology is, by design, to allow soldiers to target and attack enemies without having to "shoulder" the weapon and bring it up to their face. FWS-I is already in Low-Rate-Initial Production and slated to be operational by 2018, service officials said.

Canadian Armed Forces Launches Mobile App

An aid for military personnel and their families



To better communicate with its members and their families, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has launched the CAF Mobile App. The app is expected to provide access to a variety of tools and services to the Defence community while also providing the latest useful, unclassified information about Defence

directly from the Chief of the Defence Staff and his command team. Developed at the request of the CDS Gen. Jonathan Vance, the app has resources on compensation and benefits, relocation, education, and training, legal, morale and welfare, OUTCAN and information on Veterans Affairs.

“Want to check for housing at 3 Canadian Division Support Base Edmonton? There is a section for that. Need the latest numbers for family support? It has that, too. Want to see the latest Canadian Forces General (CANFORGEN) message?” according to the CAF website. The app also allows users to stay current on social media posts from Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The CAF Mobile App is free on both iOS, Android and Blackberry.

True Patriot Love Scotiabank Expedition

Best of Canada- Call for Soldier Team Applications -

The True Patriot Love Foundation is thrilled to announce the next adventure in our expedition series - True Patriot Love Scotiabank

Expedition: BEST OF CANADA. In honour of Canada 150, we have chosen to celebrate the varied landscape of our great nation by exploring three remote locations. Taking place in the Summer of 2017, BEST OF CANADA will challenge ill and injured soldiers and Canadian business leaders to take on some of the most unique adventures from coast to coast. Whether its rafting in Central BC, canoeing in the Northwest Territories or kayaking the shores of Newfoundland, each expedition provides its own set of challenges. The expedition will raise critical funds and awareness for the brave men and women of our Canadian Armed Forces, Veterans and their families to ensure that each individual who has served our country is able to receive necessary support as they transition following their service.

We are actively seeking Canadian Veterans from across the country who have sustained an injury or illness as a result of their military service to apply for this adventure. This expedition offers soldier participants on opportunity to receive guidance and assistance during their transition to civilian life.

Please click Here:-

< <http://go.truepatriotlove.com/e/73492/-Application-Form-Fillable-pdf/6px8b7/257209998> > to download the Soldier Team Application. The deadline for applications is **December 19, 2016**.

For more information about joining the 2017 civilian team, please contact Kristina Schreiber, Director of Expeditions and Events at kschreiber@truepatriotlove.com <<mailto:kschreiber@truepatriotlove.com>>.

Ready in Red: Canadian Rangers Get Uniform Upgrade

New raincoat has a waterproof shell and resembles gear worn by search-and-rescue technicians
Philippe Morin, CBC News Dec 04, 2016



*This photo released by the Canadian Forces is the first look at the new Rangers' jackets and fleece.
(Canadian Forces)*

The Canadian Rangers are getting a new look. The first photo of the new uniforms released by the Canadian Forces shows a jacket with reflective stripes and pockets. It resembles the kind of waterproof shell worn by search-and-rescue technicians. Another new item is a fleece shirt. The rangers have famously worn hooded sweatshirts for years with patrols relying on rangers' own equipment. However, the Forces are signaling a move towards new red coats and pants with a CadPat camouflage design.

Canadian Ranger Sergeant Wade Istchenko goes on patrols out of Haines Junction. He's also the MLA for Kluane in Yukon. He says he's looking forward to seeing the new gear. "When we

first started the Ranger program, all we got was a red sweatshirt and a ballcap. And over the years we've slowly got combat pants, combat boots and more and more and more. And now the coats and the fleece are next in the list of things to get," he says. Istchenko says the Rangers still use a lot of their own gear, including larger items like vehicles in exchange for what's called an Equipment Usage Rate. "Part of being a Ranger is you have to have your own gear. Snowmobiles and boats, depending on the season. They pay you a rental for it, you get equipment rental usage for it and when it comes to clothing, most of the guys get pretty cold out there, we wear whatever we can get for real warm gear." Istchenko says he wears hunting gear while on patrol. He says in Yukon the tricky balance to stay warm, but also allow for sweating while working. "You're usually breaking trails out here, and that means you need to stop and get the chains out, cut a tree and clear some brush and keep on going," he says. Many Rangers wear home-made mitts and hats, often made by family.

Istchenko says the new gear looks useful, even if it's not meant for Yukon winters. "They'll be great for spring and fall. I think I'll still wear my warm winter coat when it's really cold out," he says. He expects Rangers will wear the gear for ceremonial functions, such as when they participate in parades. Rangers are members of the supplementary reserves and therefore a part of the Canadian Armed Forces. The Canadian Forces have not yet said when the new coats will be distributed in Yukon, NWT or Nunavut. The new equipment is part of the same push that saw Rangers' rifles replaced.

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

The Gunner Bears were presented to Matt Gul at our Wednesday luncheon in recognition of his kind donation to the Regimental Society. Check out the photos at <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new>.

I've also had some information provided by Warrant Officer (ret) Dag Gruban on the citation for Gunner Hansen MM during the Second World War. Dag also included a photo of Gunner Hansen's Medal Group. Check the out at

<http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1950---15th-fd-regt-rca.html>



Who is it?



Last Week: The photo is a scan from the book "First to Die", by Bryan Elson. It is about the first Canadians to die in the Great War, four mid-shipmen who died when HMS Good Hope sank at the Battle of Coronel on 1 November, 1914. The photo is of the midshipmen of the first class of the Royal Navy College of Canada. Circled are, front l-r - Malcolm Cann, Arthur Silver, 2nd row John Victor Hatheway, rear William Palmer.

This Week: As we rapidly approach the Yule season, I thought we'd celebrate that in this week's quiz. Our photo was taken by my late father whilst he was battery captain of "C" Bty, 1RCHA in Korea. The date is Christmas 1952, sunny and cold. A fine dinner has just been had by all, which included many cases of Asahi Beer.



The inclusion of alcoholic beverages in the repast might account for what is about to happen in the photo. As many of you know, women have for quite a while played the same combat roles as men. However, that was not the case in the Korean War. So, who is this blonde bombshell sitting in the seat of the famed 25pdr? I

will give you a hint. She was well-known in Canada in the 1950s, and her husband passed away at the end of last year, just before something he always used to do at that time of the year. Bonus points will be given if you can tell us what the lady did just after this shot was taken.

As always, you may send your responses to the editor, bob.mugford@outlook.com or the author, John Redmond [johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)

From the 'Punitary'

What happened to the silkworms who entered a race? They ended up in a tie.

Murphy's Other Laws

Nothing is ever so bad that it can't get worse.

Quotable Quotes

Diplomacy is the art of saying Nice Doggie! 'Till you can find a stick. – *Will Rogers*

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