



**Vancouver Artillery
Association News**



RUSI News
Vancouver

Van Arty Assoc and RUSI Van Members News Sept 16, 2014

Wednesday Lunches

The Mess dress requirements for Wednesday lunches is Business Casual. Business casual can best be described as our 'summer dress'. Minimum requirement is an open neck button up shirt with dress pants or slacks (no blue jeans, pls), Ladies is the equivalent. Of course we never discourage the wearing of jackets and ties. Guests are always welcome.

Manning the Guns of Ferguson Point

On 27 August 1939, in preparation of war, the Ferguson Point Gun Position in Stanley Park was officially occupied by personnel of 31 Battery from the 15th Coast Brigade of Artillery, the predecessor of today's 15th Field Artillery Regiment. To celebrate this event, the 15th Field Artillery Regimental Society is holding a Sunset ceremony at Ferguson Point, followed by a dinner at the Teahouse, on September 26, 2014. **LAST Call!! Replies must be received by Sept 20th. This dinner is open to all and attendees are encouraged to bring guests. See Invitation at the end of newsletter.**

From the Journal of Capt Fred G Coxen RFA - Sept 1914

(Good news – I found the source document)

Sept 12, 1914: Advanced to MONT NOTRE DAME and came into action with French Artillery on hill overlooking River VESLE. From [our spot we could see] wounded coming down, [so] things were warm in front. Everywhere are signs of the Germans flight, dead men and horses discarded equipment, overturned motors etc. Everywhere the houses have been looted and the inhabitants seem overjoyed to see us, for they have suffered bitterly at the hands of the enemy.

The Battle of the Marne claimed 250,000 French casualties, 12,733 British, and a similar number of German casualties – killed, wounded or missing.

Sept 13, 1914: (Battle of the Aisne) [We] marched at dawn [in the] pouring rain, no food, or time to get any. Took up position near PAISSY, from there [we marched] to CHIVY VALLEY to meet a German counter attack. Our infantry suffered heavily, many wounded being near me. The battery dropped into action, and we found an observing point on a high hill, directly in front. In running our wire, old George and I were very lucky to escape the bullets, for we were in full view of the enemy – they all but got us once, a bullet coming between our noses as we were deciding the best way to run our wire. We laid down, for they were shelling very heavy all around. This was in the afternoon and the sun was very warm. I couldn't move, I must have been tired for I actually went to sleep, [until] a Staff-Officer later was talking near by [sic] he must have thought I got bowled over. We made our observing station under the shelter of a small rock, which

undoubtedly saved us from getting completely wiped out of existence. We fired heavy all day, and in the night the Battery moved a little to the right. I remained on the hill on guard, and posted double sentries with order to shoot anybody, who approached without giving prompt reply to challenge. Towards dawn I lost two sentries and had very uncomfortable time searching for them, for the enemy was again very active.

Sept 14, 1914: [There was] heavy fighting all day. Our little rock proved a haven of refuge, all day we were heavily shelled by ‘coal-boxes’ (*any shell explosion causing a cloud of black smoke*). Major Johnson was killed near by [sic] and Major Madocks slightly wounded. Some chaps dodged under our rock for shelter and gave us some tobacco; we were smokeless and foodless, my feast being that day a half biscuit, left from emergency ration. Sept 15th [Today was the] same as yesterday. The 113th and 46th Batteries on our left were heavily shelled [and had] many casualties, we were more fortunate. [There was] very hard fighting all day – was by this time [I] quite used to the thunder like clap of the coal-boxes, and other a sundry missiles the Germans were flinging about wholesale. Their artillery was superior, we had no heavy guns to compare to them, nor anything like their number – and we suffered greatly, for sometimes it was like Hell let loose.

Sept 16, 1914: Heavy scrapping [all day]. In the afternoon we took up another position on top of MOUNT GOURTONE, which commanded a good view of the enemies [sic] lines. I galloped hard from our little rock and was sickened to see the dead horses lying around. As soon as the guns left the old position the enemy peppered it with shell[s], for we had been spotted by aeroplane. We took up position at night, [it] was raining hard [and I] was wet through, but had got used to that now. [I] slept under a gun limber [and] would have given anything for something hot to drink, and a good fire.

Despite Tough Talk, Canadian Forces are Badly Under-Funded

By Michael Den Tandt, Postmedia News September 2, 2014

Is Russian president Vladimir Putin a bad, bad man? We think probably he is. Do the butchers of the Islamic State, now running amok in Iraq and Syria, pose a clear and present danger to Western civilization? It seems so. Therefore it’s good, we can agree, that this country’s prime minister and foreign minister, Stephen Harper and John Baird, can get their Winston Churchill on now and then. Harper and Baird’s denunciations of Putin’s reckless invasion of Ukraine, a sovereign country that had not fired so much as a rubber band towards Russia, have been refreshingly blunt.

Oh – except for our military, which, according to reporting by the Canadian Press’s Murray Brewster, is about to have another \$2.7-billion lopped off its annual budget. Awkward. Postmedia’s Matthew Fisher reports that Ottawa is under pressure from North Atlantic Treaty Organization members to spend more, not less, as Harper heads to Wales for a NATO summit. Might someone at this confab publicly suggest that, when it comes to smiting evil, Canada is mostly bluster? This is in no way intended as a slight against the Canadian Forces, whose

members have displayed such skill, courage and simple good humour, in so many foreign engagements. No one who travels with the CF, or watches them work, can fail to appreciate their worth. The same very high standards, I observed recently, are exemplified by the Canadian Coast Guard. Thank goodness for them. But the simple truth is that Canada's military is badly under-resourced, given the range of emerging global threats, and the United States' continuing withdrawal from its long-standing role as global policeman. Setting aside a sharp increase in defence spending between 2002 and 2010, the pattern has been for Ottawa to use the CF as a kind of piggy bank. When money is tight, it can safely be lopped out of the defence budget, because a) soldiers, sailors and airmen and women can't complain too bitterly and b) the defence of North America is essentially an American responsibility. Right?

The Jean Chretien-Paul Martin Liberals famously balanced the federal budget on the backs of the CF during its so-called "decade of darkness," in the 1990s. Those cuts were so severe that on some bases, according to soldiers I have spoken to, every second light bulb was unscrewed to save power. The Airborne Regiment was disbanded in the wake of the Somalia affair. Major procurements were cancelled, delayed or botched. In 2005, ringing in the dawn of a new era, Harper promised to undo all that. And until roughly 2010, with Canada at war in Afghanistan, his government delivered. But it appears the Tories are doing again what the Liberals did 20 years ago, even though the geopolitical context is demonstrably more perilous today than it was then. Canada spends roughly one per cent of GDP on its military – putting us 22nd second among 27 NATO countries, ahead of Hungary, Latvia, Spain, Lithuania and Luxembourg. The Slovak Republic, Belgium, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Italy and the Netherlands all spend a greater share of GDP on their militaries than does Canada. Even though, as the prime minister is fond of reminding us, this country leads the Group of Seven industrialized nations in terms of fiscal performance. It doesn't square.

Last week on Baffin Island, I watched Harper deliver his toughest-sounding denunciation yet of both Putin and the Islamic State. Speaking to a small audience of soldiers, sailors and airmen and women, including Inuit Rangers tasked with providing Canada's first line of defence in the north, Harper declared that "in Europe, we see the imperial ambitions of Vladimir Putin, who seems determined that, for Russia's neighbours, there shall be no peace." And this: "... because Russia is also Canada's Arctic neighbour, we must not be complacent here at home. In our time, the Royal Canadian Air Force has again been called to respond to increased Russian activity in the Arctic." Bracing stuff. But how to justify the gap between the talk and the walk? The 5,000 Rangers, it is now promised, will receive their long-awaited new bolt-action rifle next year. Beyond that, there is precious little good news to report. As I have written previously, new ships are half a dozen years from delivery, at best. The fighter-jet replacement program has been on ice since late 2012, when the government's sole-source F-35 purchase went supernova. There is still no competition under way to replace the CF-18s.

This state of affairs is not, to be fair, entirely the Harper government's fault. The Tories' defence spending is dictated by what they perceive to be Canadians' wishes. There is no tradition in Canada of popular support for the kind of outlay – close to \$40-billion annually, compared with

the current \$19-billion – that would bring us into line with the NATO standard of two per cent of GDP. But at what point does the government assume its responsibility to lead and shape popular support, rather than simply put a finger to the wind and move with the current? If the threats are as grave as Harper and Baird say, leadership is called for. They can't have it both ways forever.

Allied Capture of German Naval Code Books in WWI

In the early hours of 26 August, the German light cruiser SMS *Magdeburg* ran aground at Odensholm lighthouse off Estonia whilst participating in a sweep against Russian patrols in the Gulf of Finland. The destroyer SMS *V26* had to abandon her attempts to free *Magdeburg* when the Russian armoured cruiser *Pallada* and the protected cruiser *Bogatyr* appeared. The Germans tried to scuttle *Magdeburg*, but were only partially successful. One of her four copies of the *Signalbuch der Kasierlichen Marine* (SKM), the German navy codebook, was burnt and two thrown overboard. However, the Russians recovered the latter two from the sea and the fourth from the captain's safe. They later scrapped *Magdeburg* where she lay. The Russians retained two of the codebooks for themselves and offered the third to the British, provided that a British ship collected it. This did not happen immediately, but the Admiralty received the codebook on 13 October.

Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, later wrote that Britain 'received from our loyal allies these sea-stained priceless documents.' Christopher Andrew and Robert Massie both note that the copy of the SKM in the UK National Archives is not sea-stained. The Russians kept the two copies retrieved from the sea and gave the British the one from the captain's safe. As well as the SKM codebook, the British obtained a set of the German squared charts of the North Sea and Heligoland Bight that used to identify the location of German and enemy forces. Arthur Marder writes that Churchill and *The Naval Staff of the Admiralty*, a Naval Staff Monograph, both state that they were provided by the Russians. However, he goes on to say that Lieutenant WF Clarke RNVR, who worked in codebreaking, says in an unpublished paper called 'Jutland' that they were from the safe fished up by the trawler. It took some time until the British could read German naval signals sent using the SKM. Weather reports were encoded only by it, but other ones were re-ciphered. By early November, Fleet Paymaster Charles Rotter, a Naval Intelligence Department German expert, had realised that the re-ciphering was a simple substitution table. The key was changed periodically, but later ones were broken more quickly.

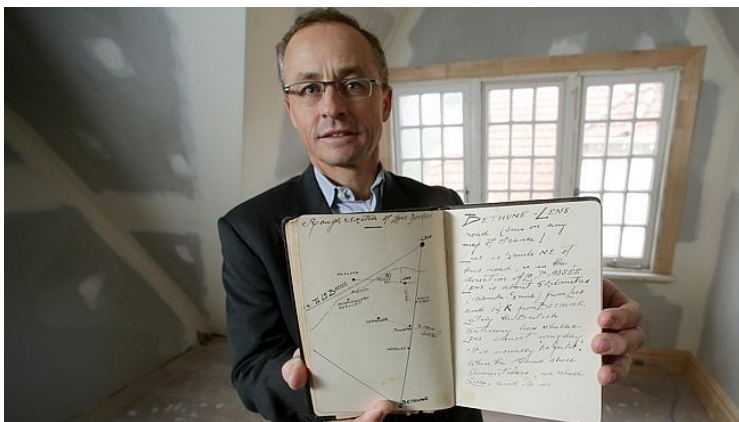
The SKM was the second German naval codebook obtained by the British. The SS *Hobart*, a German merchant ship, had been boarded by Australians off Melbourne on 11 August. They seized a copy of the *Handelsverkehrsbuch* (HV), which was used principally for communications between warships and merchantmen, but was also used by naval shore bases and later by U-boats and Zeppelins. The Australians did not initially realise the importance of their prize and it then took time to send it to Britain, so the Admiralty did not receive it until late October. The British obtained the third German naval codebook, the *Verkehrsbuch* (VB), when a trawler caught a lead-lined chest on 30 November. It had been thrown overboard by a German destroyer sunk on 17

October. The VB was used for cable communications with naval attachés and warships abroad and by admirals at sea.

The ability to read German codes would become very significant later in the war, but it took time for the Admiralty to get its decryption operation, known as Room 40 after its original office, working well. At first, the civilian cryptographers did not always understand naval matters and some naval staff officers looked down on them. The Admiralty was also excessively secretive with the decrypts, meaning that it did not always make the best use of the intelligence. Paul Halpern comments that ‘Room 40 would not reach its peak of efficiency and become a true intelligence centre until much later in the war.

WWI Officer’s Diary Found Under Floorboards During Renovations

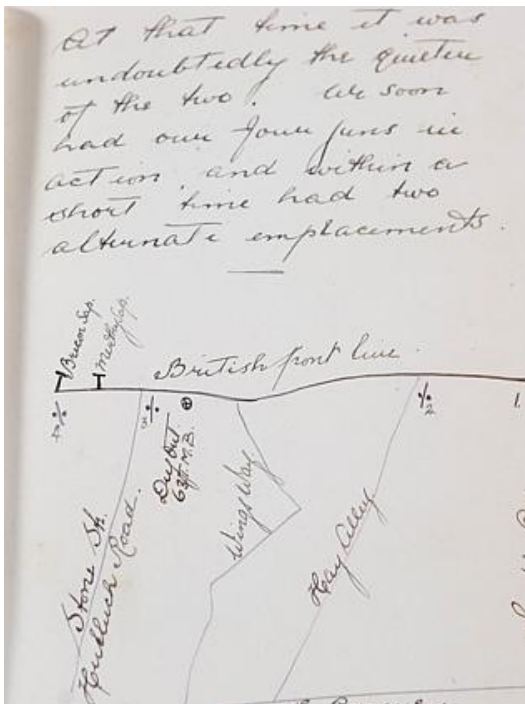
Elizabeth Fortescue *The Daily Telegraph* September 04, 2014



Glen Butler's builder found a World War I diary under the floorboards.

RIPPING up floorboards in old houses usually yields nothing more historic than rot and rats. But the State Library of NSW is the richer for what Glen Butler found while renovating his Manly home.

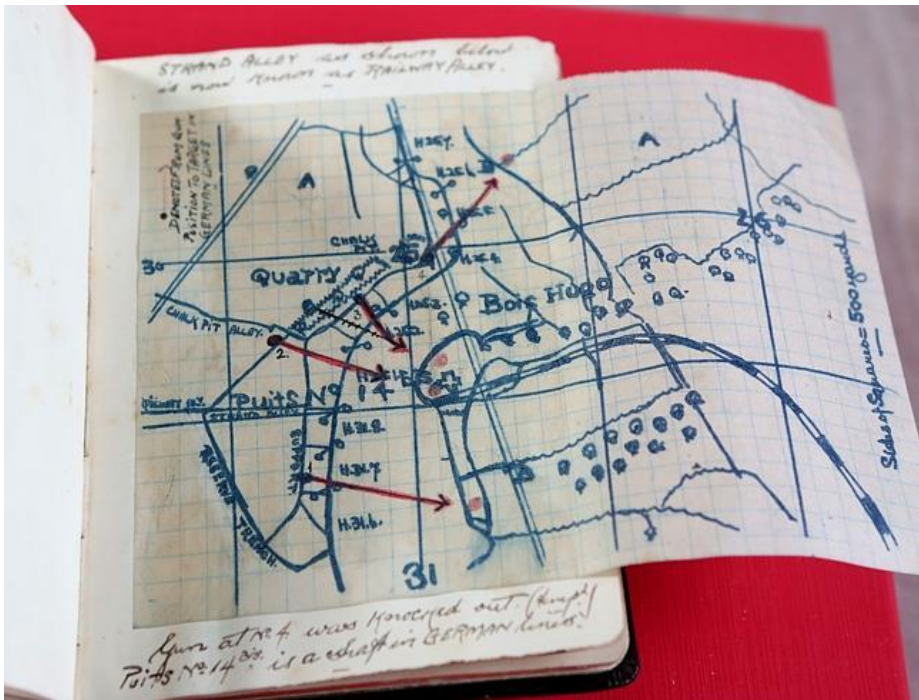
It was a WWI diary penned by Sydney-born military officer Geoffrey Gaden while fighting the Germans in the trenches of France in 1916. The almost pristine diary was secreted under the floorboards of an upstairs bedroom and evidently forgotten before Mr Butler bought the house about three years ago. Library curator Elise Edmonds — whose exhibition of Australian war diaries to commemorate the centenary of WWI recently opened — was ecstatic when she learned about the diary. “It’s the kind of phone call you might dream about as a curator,” Ms Edmonds said. “I was speechless to hear it.”



Diary extract

Geoffrey Gaden

Geoffrey Gaden's next of kin — retired farmer Michael Gaden, of Bordertown, SA — had long cherished the story of his father's distinguished service but had no idea about the diary. According to the inscription, Geoffrey sent the diary from France to his father Charles William Gaden in Sydney. Michael Gaden thinks that when Charles died in 1923, the diary went to Geoffrey's brother Alex "Ronald" Gaden whose wife owned the Manly house. "We imagine Ronald put it there (under the floor)," Michael Gaden said. He has agreed to give the diary to the State Library. Ms Edmonds could not find any Australian war service records for Geoffrey Gaden and on a hunch searched the British records.



Map found inside the diary

Geoffrey Gaden, aged 15, had been sent to England for medical reasons and joined the British army when war broke out. He served in both world wars, won a chest full of medals from England and Russia - including the Military Cross and the Cross of St Anne - and rose to the rank of major. He was part of the Gaden legal dynasty and his great uncle was three

times NSW premier Sir George Dibbs. Geoffrey's nephew is the renowned Sydney actor John Gaden.

In a long military career, Geoffrey Gaden was stationed in Iraq, Iran, Iceland, Barbados, and India, where Michael was born. In WWII Geoffrey was evacuated from Dunkirk. "We have quite touching details of his writing to my mother an hour or two after being back in England," Michael Gaden said. "He lost a hell of a lot of his men as prisoners of war in Dunkirk."

Geoffrey was discharged in 1944, worked for the military in New York, returned to Sydney in 1949 and was living in Pymble when he died in 1967.

DARPA Issues Grant for Stealth Military Motorcycles

Brittany Hillen Apr 18, 2014



The latest DARPA grant has gone to Logos Technologies, which will use it to develop an almost completely silent 'stealth motorcycle' for military use. There isn't much information on the bike at this time, but when it comes to fruition, it would be used by elite teams of soldiers. The motorcycle will be a hybrid-electric creation, which will help with the near-silent goal for the bike, and not surprisingly, it will be designed to have both an extended range and a lightweight rugged body.

The idea behind the motorcycle is that elite teams that need to traverse rough terrain for long distances can do so without drawing attention to themselves, in terms of both vehicle size and noise level. Logos hasn't provided an estimated development time frame for the motorcycle. Said Logos Technologies' Manager of Advanced Concepts, Wade Pulliam, "Quieted, all-wheel-drive capability at extended range in a lightweight, rugged, single-track vehicle could support the successful operations of US expeditionary and Special Forces in extreme terrain conditions and contested environments. With a growing need to operate small units far from logistical support, the military may increasingly rely on adaptable, efficient technologies like this hybrid-electric motorcycle."

Who is it? Last Week: Sgt Bill Amos with Cpl Tony Lawrence, Doug Loney, Graham Towell. We believe this was a District Recruit course circa 71-72. **Actually it was a District Jnr NCO course run at Bessbrough.** Tony had been in the Army in the UK. He wanted to join 15 Fd (We think because he had friends in the unit) but didn't have a gunner trade so had to be attached from 12 Coy, RCASC to work in the transport section. Towell was in the RC Pay Corps. Don't know who the guy behind Lawrence is but he is RC Ordinance Corps



This Week: This week's photo takes us back to a time when men were men, and real men not only smoked, they smoked cigars. In fact, this stogie aficionado is none other than a Captain of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, possibly a member of the elite "Lung and Throat Company". While it was well-known that more doctors smoked Camels than any other brand

(*Because they're mild!*), it was less well-known that cigars were even healthier.



So, who is this tobacco-loving officer? All we at the museum know is that he was photographed in the 1950s, and his photo is amongst a group of slides of the 43rd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. Did you serve with him? Did he advise you to smoke Camels, or did you stick with Buckingham's and Players?

Your opinions may be sent to the editor or to the author, John Redmond (johnd.redmond@telus.net). Happy smoking!

From the 'Punitary'

A woman has been taken into hospital after eating horse meat burgers. Her condition is said to be stable.

Murphy's other Laws

An expert is a person who avoids the small errors while sweeping on to the Grand Fallacy.

Quotable Quotes

Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it. – *Marian Anderson*

Manning the Guns of Ferguson Point



Colonel
R Grant Smith OstJ, CD
Honorary Colonel
and Director of the
15th Field Artillery Regimental Society



*Requests the Pleasure of the Company of
You and Your Guest
at a dinner celebrating*

The Guns of Ferguson Point

FEATURING

*A Sunset Ceremony by
The Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA*

and

*A Salute Fired by the Guns of the
15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA*

to be held on

September 26, 2014

at the

*Tea House at Ferguson Point
Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC*

Dress:

*Mess Kit, Formal or
Business Dress*

Sunset Ceremony: 1830hrs

Dinner: 1930hrs

Tariff: \$100pp

RSVP with payment to:

Mr Bernard Rowe

15 Fd Regimental Society

2025 West 11th Avenue

Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

Cheques Payable to: 15th Field Regimental Society

India

Curry Lunch



Hosted by:
*The British Columbia
Regiment
Officers' Mess*

Coordinated by:
*The BC Regiment
(DCO) Association*



- Date:** Thursday, September 25, 2014
- Time:** 11:45 am - 1:30 pm
(bar opens at 11:45am)
(lunch starts at 12:25pm)
- Location:** Officers' Mess - The BC Regiment
620 Beatty Street, Vancouver, BC
- Dress:** Business Attire (jacket & tie, ladies similar)
- Price:** \$30/person (\$5 discount for those that confirm attendance by September 18, 2014)
- RSVP:** For more information or to register, please contact Bill Diamond at Bill@DukeaBear.com or 604.618.3607 (Please advise of any dietary needs with your RSVP)

Payment by cheque or cash will be accepted at the door
Cheques are payable to: The BC Regiment (DCO) Association
No cancellations after September 18, 2014

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, October 30, 2014