



**Vancouver Artillery
Association News**



**RUSI News
Vancouver**

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News May 17, 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>

Wednesday Lunches The 15 Field Officers Mess serves a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. Jacket and tie required, equivalent for ladies. We are now pushing the 3rd Wed lunch each month as the Van Arty Association lunch and encouraging members to attend. Come meet some old friends and help with the Yearbook project.

NOABC Speaker Lunch – 25 May 2015: CPO1 Harry Fong, Logistics Chief, HMCS Discovery, The Topic is “**The History of HMCS Discovery**”

NEWS FLASH – RUSI Vancouver to host a **Defence Policy Review** meeting at the Langley Events Centre on Saturday 11 June 2016 from 0900 to 1600. More details next week. You can also go to FaceBook at: <https://www.facebook.com/DPR.Langley/>

Concert – Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment

International Military Band Concert

Date: Monday, May 23rd, 2016 **Time:** 2:30pm

Location: Chandos Pattison Auditorium, [10238 168 Street](#), Surrey

Tickets: Family \$45, Adults \$20, Seniors \$15, Children \$10.

Available online at: <https://www.picatic.com/imbc> **More information at end of newsletter**

World War 2 - 1941

John Thompson Strategic analyst quotes from his book “Spirit Over Steel”

May 18th: Petty Officer Alfred Edward Stepton is the director layer aboard the light cruiser HMS Coventry when it goes to the aid of a hospital ship that is being attacked by German aircraft in the Aegean. Some of the aircraft switch their attention to the cruiser and strafe it. PO Stepton is shot but despite great pain remains at his station passing information to the ship's guns for the rest of the engagement. He dies of his wounds the next day and is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

May 19th: A British relieving force reaches the Habbaniyah Airfield as the RAF raids airfields in Syria again. The battleship Bismarck and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen depart Gdania for a commerce raid in the North Atlantic. The Duke of Aosta surrenders 18,000 troops at Amba

Alagi, the British have broken the back of the Italians in East Africa (they've lost 230,000 "casualties and POWs, so far), but 80,000 Italian troops remain under arms here and there. Sergeant Nigel Gray Leaky of the 1st Battalion, 6th Kings African Rifles, throws an Italian armoured counter-attack into disarray at Colito in Abyssinia by leaping onto the lead tank, prying open the hatch and shooting the crew. As he tries to repeat his feat, he is fatally wounded. Sgt Leaky is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

May 20th: Swedish intelligence officers, accidentally-and-not-on-purpose, inform the British that the Bismarck and her consort are exiting the Baltic. A US merchant ship, the Robin Moor, is sunk by a U-boat in the Atlantic off South Africa, an act that sparks an angry reaction from Roosevelt. 7th Flieger Division drops in around four airfields in Crete with 600 combat aircraft are in support and 5th Mountain division is awaiting transport from the Greek mainland. Opposing them are 32,000 badly equipped British/Australian "Australian/New Zealand troops and 10,000 worse equipped Greeks. Herman Goring refers to something called the 'Final Solution' in a document pertaining to French and Belgian Jews. In Crete, the German Fallschirmjäger have landed in a hornet's nest, and nowhere are the Allies resisting more ferociously than at Maleme Airfield. Worse still, two anti-aircraft guns atop Hill 107 dominate the airfield and keep badly needed reinforcements and supplies from being flown in – and almost all of the officers of the German regiment have fallen. Command of the next assault as dusk approaches is passed to Major Heinrich Neumann – the regimental medical officer. The doctor, already decorated for his acts in combat in 1940, leads a final assault up the hill, directing the fighting until night falls. Both sides do not sleep, awaiting the resumption of the assault at dawn but the sun comes up to find the New Zealanders have been withdrawn (due to mistaken orders) and the airfield is now open to use. Very few German medical personnel ever received the Knights "Cross but Doctor Neumann receives it for his infantry assault on Crete.

May 21st: Prince of Wales and Hood sortie out to intercept the Bismarck after reconnaissance aircraft spot her off Bergen; Repulse and Victorious are released to Home Fleet. 48 more Hurricanes arrive in Malta, to help make good the 64 losses sustained by the RAF there since January. The German Fallschirmjäger attempt to consolidate their hold on Crete's Maleme Airfield against a series of determined counter-attacks by the New Zealanders. Elements of a German mountain troop regiment are intercepted by the Royal Navy crossing from the Greek mainland to Crete in fishing boats, 60 men survive.

May 22nd: King George V, Repulse and Victorious also sortie to catch the Bismarck and will cover the Iceland-Faroes Gap while Prince of Wales and Hood cover the Greenland-Iceland Gap. Freyberg, the commander of the Allied Forces on Crete, realizes that the balance of power is rapidly swinging the German way as Mountain troops keep arriving in Maleme and complete German air superiority takes its toll, so he orders a withdrawal to the south of the Island. The Royal Navy is getting mauled by German aircraft off Crete too, Warspite and two cruisers are hit and a destroyer is lost. Admiral Andrew Cunningham, CinC of the RN in the Mediterranean accepts these losses to evacuate the troops from Crete – "It takes three years to build a ship, it takes three hundred years to build a tradition."

May 23rd: Earl Mountbatten's destroyer squadron bombarded Maleme Airfield at night, and in the day the Luftwaffe caught up with them, sinking his own HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir; while the cruisers Gloucester and Fiji are also sunk. Meanwhile, among the first evacuees from Crete is the Greek Monarch. Bismarck and Prinz "Eugen are sighted in the Denmark Straits (between Iceland and Greenland) by the Cruisers Norfolk and Suffolk.

May 24th: Hood and her consort Prince of Wales engage the Bismarck but Hood is swiftly destroyed by a magazine explosion that leaves only three survivors from her crew of 1416. Bismarck has sustained some damage too and Admiral Lutjens decides to head for Brest – as Rodney, Ramilles, Renown and Ark Royal are also dispatched to hunt her down. General Gazzera has seven weak divisions in southern Ethiopia and two British African divisions are closing on his positions near Soddu.

Legal Truce Over Veterans Benefits on Shaky Ground, Lawyer Warns MPs

Veterans Affairs Minister Kent Hehr has been non-committal on pensions for injured soldiers, group argues. *CBC News May 11, 2016*

A long-running lawsuit launched by veterans against the federal government was taken off the docket until after the federal election, if not for good, in June 2015. The two sides were in a Vancouver court and agreed to hit pause on the case until May 2016 to see what the impact is of the reforms the government has made to benefits. Should the changes be to the satisfaction of the veterans who launched the suit in 2012, the case will be over, said the veterans' lawyer Don Sorochan. A group of veterans had filed the class-action lawsuit to argue that modern-day soldiers were being discriminated against compared with those who fought in the world wars and in Korea.

Now the legal truce between the federal government and wounded and injured soldiers over the New Veterans Charter is in danger of falling apart, according to a letter sent to Liberal MPs by a lawyer representing the veterans. The peace agreement of sorts reached by the previous Harper government and the six Afghan war veterans who initiated a class action law suit over pensions and other benefits is set to expire on May 15, 2016. The agreement, formally called an "abeyance agreement," put litigation on hold while the two sides tried to reach an out-of-court settlement. That agreement continued after the election of the Liberal government last October. But according to the letter obtained by CBC News, justice department lawyers are threatening to return the case to court if the veterans do not drop their litigation entirely and accept an undisclosed settlement proposed by the federal government.

US to Switch on European Missile Shield Despite Russian Alarm

Robin Emmott BUCHAREST — Reuters May 11, 2016



The United States' European missile defence shield went live on May 12, almost a decade after Washington proposed protecting NATO from Iranian rockets and despite Russian warnings that the West is threatening the peace in central Europe. Amid high Russia-West tension, US and NATO officials will declare operational the

shield at a remote air base in Deveselu, Romania, after years of planning, billions of dollars in investment and failed attempts to assuage Russian concerns that the shield could be used against Moscow. “We now have the capability to protect NATO in Europe,” said Robert Bell, a NATO-based envoy of US Defense Secretary Ash Carter. “The Iranians are increasing their capabilities and we have to be ahead of that. The system is not aimed against Russia,” he told reporters, adding that the system will soon be handed over to NATO command.

The United States will also start construction on a second site in Poland on Friday that is due to be ready in 2018, giving NATO a permanent, round-the-clock shield in addition to radars and ships already in the Mediterranean. Russia is incensed at such a show of force by its Cold War rival in formerly communist-ruled eastern Europe where it once held sway. Moscow says the US-led alliance is trying to encircle it close to the strategically important Black Sea, home to a Russian naval fleet and where NATO is also considering increasing patrols. The readying of the shield also comes as NATO prepares a new deterrent in Poland and the Baltics, following Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea. In response, Russia is reinforcing its western and southern flanks with three new divisions. Despite US assurances, the Kremlin says the missile shield’s real aim is to neutralise Moscow’s nuclear arsenal long enough for the United States to make a first strike on Russia in the event of war. The shield relies on radars to detect a ballistic missile launch into space. Tracking sensors then measure the rocket’s trajectory and intercept and destroy it in space, before it re-enters the earth’s atmosphere. The interceptors can be fired from ships or ground sites.

The Russian ambassador to Denmark warned a year ago that Danish warships would become targets for Russian nuclear missiles if Denmark joined the shield project by installing radars on its vessels. Denmark is upgrading at least one frigate to house a ballistic missile sensor. Turkey is already hosting a US radar and the Netherlands has equipped ships with radars. The United States also has four ships in Spain as part of the defences, while all NATO nations are contributing funding. “Ballistic missile defence sites could pose threats to the stability and strategic assets of the Russian Federation,” Russia’s ambassador to NATO, Alexander Grushko, told Reuters last month. US officials dismiss the Russian view as “strategic paranoia” and blame Moscow for breaking off talks with NATO in 2013 that were aimed at explaining how the shield would operate. The United States says Russia was seeking a treaty limiting the capability and range of ballistic missile interceptors. “No government could agree to that,” US adviser Bell said. Russian officials are concerned about technology that the United States says it does not have, including a missile defence interceptor capable of speeds of 10 km (6.2 miles) per second that could destroy Russian missiles.

First agreed by the US government 2007 and then cancelled and relaunched by the newly-elected US President Barack Obama in 2009, the missile defence shield’s stated aim is to protect North America and Europe from so-called rogue states such as Iran and North Korea. That is part of a US strategy that includes missile interceptors in California and Alaska. Ballistic missiles, which differ from cruise missiles because they leave the earth’s atmosphere, can travel distances of up 3,000 km (1,875 miles). Despite a historic deal between world

powers and Tehran to limit Iran's nuclear programme, the West believes Iran's Revolutionary Guards continue to develop ballistic missile technology, carrying out two tests late last year. "They are looking for greater distance and accuracy," said Douglas Barrie, an aerospace defence specialist at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). "They can still miss by hundreds of metres, but that doesn't rule out firing against a city or a very large airfield."

Discharge Rule for Disabled Soldiers Must Stay in Place, General Says

Gloria Galloway Ottawa — The Globe and Mail May 10, 2016



The head of the Canadian Forces says he understands it is "gut-wrenching" for some disabled soldiers to be discharged as a result of their injuries, but the military will maintain its rule that all members must be physically and mentally able to deploy anywhere, at any time. Many military men and women who served in Afghanistan have been forced to return to civilian life because their wounds left them unable to meet

a number of fundamental military tasks or to deploy on short notice to any geographical location. It is known as the universality of service rule, and some former soldiers say it caused them more anguish than their actual injuries, and some with mental problems say they suffered in silence out of fear they would be discharged if they came forward. But General Jonathan Vance, the Chief of the Defence Staff, said there are many reasons why the standard cannot be dropped, even for those who were permanently injured in the line of duty yet are capable of performing a job in Canada. "We are a small armed forces; everybody's got to be able to pitch in all the way," Gen Vance said in a telephone interview on Tuesday with The Globe and Mail.

Veterans Affairs Minister Kent Hehr held a two-day meeting with representatives of veterans associations in Ottawa this week that included a question-and-answer session that was open to the public. Brian McKenna, a former warrant officer from New Westminster, BC, asked if there was any way that the universality of service rule could be changed to accommodate people like him who did not want their military careers to end. "As someone who has been removed from the military – against my own will, essentially – that was actually the hardest day of my career," said Mr McKenna, a veteran of multiple deployments who was discharged as a result of a long-standing neck injury, posttraumatic stress disorder and a gastrointestinal issue he picked up in Afghanistan. "Is there any way that we can review the strictness of the rule of universality of service?" he asked. "Is there not a way we can be retaining more of these people in the Forces, in either civilian jobs that are within [the Defence Department] or in some other way that we get to serve Canada?" Mr Hehr did not answer the question directly. When it was posed to him again later during a news conference, he said he is working with Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan to ensure that disabled soldiers get the help they need to stay in the military and, when that is not possible, to make an easier transition to civilian life.

Gen Vance agreed that the process of humanely discharging disabled soldiers needs improvement. The military, he said, is working diligently with Veterans Affairs Canada on “this whole issue of closing the gaps and seams as one transitions from healthy activity service to transition out to retirement. I think we could do a better job at that.” But “it’s unlikely that we’ll change the universality of service policy,” Gen Vance said. “It is gut-wrenching for them to have to leave. But one of the reasons they joined as a soldier in the first place is because they were joining a high-performance organization that gets things done for the country.” Even in domestic deployments, it would be impractical to go through the ranks to figure out which members of the military were capable of actively taking part, the general explained. And if the Canadian Forces allowed its disabled members to stay on in a less strenuous capacity, people who want to join the military but are incapable of meeting the universality of service standards would argue that they should not be prevented from enlisting. “What would happen,” Gen Vance asked, “if we were now required to accept people in as brand-new recruits who were also incapable of doing a full range of military tasks?” In addition, he said, a career in the Canadian Forces would not be satisfying for someone who is constrained by their disability. “You are going to be limited,” he said. “And that’s not fair to them and to those who are relying on them to do the job.”

Veterans Affairs Launches Online Engagement Tool for Canadians

Minister Hehr concludes Stakeholder Summit and announces broad consultations and Veteran satisfaction survey. Veterans Affairs Canada News Release May 11, 2016

OTTAWA - The Honourable Kent Hehr, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, concluded a two-day Stakeholder Summit in Ottawa with a live town hall event on Facebook and an announcement of ongoing consultations with Canadians and Veterans from coast-to-coast-to-coast. Minister Hehr launched a "Have Your Say" online engagement tool to further involve Veterans, stakeholders and Canadians in a constructive dialogue on Veterans' issues and priorities. The Minister will also travel across the country in the coming weeks to meet with Veterans and continue to engage stakeholders. In addition, Minister Hehr announced the reinstatement of the Veteran satisfaction survey which was discontinued in 2010. The return of the survey will provide Veterans with a direct line to offer feedback, and will supply Veterans Affairs Canada with evidence-based data to improve front-line services.

The Department of National Defence has donated the last CC-130 Hercules E Legacy still in service to the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. The aircraft made its last flight this morning, flying from 424 Transport and Rescue Squadron, Trenton (Ontario) to land at the Museum in Ottawa. This two-hour flight concluded more than fifty years of loyal service. The Hercules will become part of the Museum’s permanent exhibition. This donation commemorates the significant role of the aircraft – a true workhorse of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Canadians will soon be able to admire firsthand this flagship of the Canadian Air Force. Rugged and versatile, the Hercules has participated in numerous search and rescue operations, and helped provide disaster relief.

Quotes

“As we mark the final flight of the last remaining CC-130 E Hercules Legacy in service, we are reminded of the Canadian Armed Forces’ diligent efforts in responding to and preventing Search and Rescue emergencies. Today, let’s take a moment to honour this reliable flying giant that has served us well for more than five decades.” *Harjit S. Sajjan, Defence Minister*

“As a former Commanding Officer of 429 Transport Squadron in Trenton, it’s an honour to be here today to mark an important milestone in our military history: the last flight of the CC-130E fleet. I encourage all Canadians to take a moment to pay a visit to this loyal workhorse, and reflect on the importance it had for Royal Canadian Air Force, Canada and Canadians.”

Karen McCrimmon, Member of Parliament for Kanata-Carleton

“The CC-130 Hercules is the mainstay of the RCAF’s tactical air mobility fleet. Since we acquired our first B-model Hercules in October 1960, this rugged transport aircraft has provided stellar service in times of peace and conflict. The Hercules is so integral to our mission success that we recently acquired the latest version, the J-model Hercules. Along with our legacy H models, the J-model is providing unparalleled service to Canada and Canadians. “I am delighted that Hercules No. 130307 – the last of our E-model Hercules – has found a permanent home with the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa, where it will showcase the RCAF’s air mobility role for years to come.”

Lieutenant-General Michael Hood, commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force

“The Canada Aviation and Space Museum prides itself in charting not only Canada's rich aviation heritage but also the important milestones in the history and technology of flight. We appreciate the Department of National Defence's understanding of the usefulness of the aircraft beyond its active life span in the Royal Canadian Air Force and gratefully accept the guardianship of this significant aircraft for future generations.”

Alex Benay, President and CEO of Canada Science and Technology Museums Corporation

Who is it?

Last Week: This gun is a full sized fibreglass replica (the figures are fibreglass too) of a 6in



Coast Artillery gun, located on Sentosa Island at Fort Siloso, Singapore. The connection to Vancouver is that the identical guns were emplaced at Point Grey (UBC), Stanley Park and Yorke Island (and also on Vancouver Island). We'd love to have one for the UBC emplacement, one position of which has been partially restored. The guns of Singapore were manned by the Hong Kong and Singapore Regiment RA. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of the guns at Singapore could be swung around to fire inland. The problem was they had mostly Armour piercing rounds and only a small amount of HE, so their action against the advancing Japanese forces was ineffective.

This Week: This week, even though it isn't Valentine's Day, we are taking romantic turn. This photo of a Field Artillery Tractor (FAT), almost identical to the one that proudly takes up valuable space on the parade floor of 15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA that could otherwise be used for the CO's Bentley limousine, comes from the album of the late Brigadier Peter Tees, MM, who was once CO of one of the regiment's predecessors, 1st Anti-Aircraft Regiment RCA. It is one of a small series of shots showing a wedding in England, where Brig Tees was stationed with 2nd Div, early on in the war, around 1942. The decoration of the FAT is typical of that done for such events, although rather untypical of that particular vehicle. In lieu of tin cans being dragged behind, it is towing a trailer (or, "limber" to some of you). However, this trailer is not the same as the one proudly towed by our FAT (when it is working, which, sad to say, isn't very often, due to its advanced age).



So, arty-enthusiasts, and everyone else, can you first identify the exact model of FAT (easy-peasy for most), and, harder, can you identify the trailer? Moreover, why is it so unusual for this particular tractor to be towing that particular trailer?

Your prize awaits you in the museum, so send your answers to the

editor, or to the author, John Redmond ([johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)). Monetary donations to the museum in lieu of guesses are always accepted. As always, you can email the editor for a picture you can zoom in on: Bob.mugford@outlook.com

From the 'Punitentary'

What did the Tin Man say when a steamroller ran over him? "Curses! Foil again!"

Murphy's other Laws

Trust everybody, but cut the cards.

Quotable Quotes

Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot; but make it hot by striking. - *William B Sprague*

Upcoming Events - Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment

The 26th International Military Band Concert

Date: Monday, May 23rd, 2016 **Time:** 2:30pm

Location: Chandos Pattison Auditorium, [10238 168 Street](#), Surrey

Tickets Available Now

\$20 Adult, \$15 Senior, \$10 Child

Special Family Pack (2 Adult & 2 Child) \$45

**26th ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL
MILITARY BAND
CONCERT**

Chandos Pattison Auditorium
10238 168 Street, Surrey

Monday, May 23, 2016
2:30 pm

Tickets
\$20 Adults; \$15 Seniors; \$10 Students
www.tapestrymusic.com/tickets
or www.picatic.com/imbc

HOSTED BY
Band of the 15th Field Regiment, RCA

WITH
Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth
Highlanders Regiment of Canada
NADEN Band of the Royal Canadian Navy
56th US Army I-Corps Band
US Navy Band Northwest
US Air Force Band of the Golden West

In 1990, musicians from the Fifteenth Field Artillery Regiment, the US Army 56th I Corps and Her Majesty's Grenadier Guards bands took to the stage in Olympia, Washington for an exciting concert of music that celebrated the common bond the three countries shared in the first International Military Band Concert.

For the next 25 years, the International Military Band Concert continued and soon became one of the most highly anticipated musical events held in the Olympia's Washington Centre for the Performing Arts. The list of participants grew to include bands from the US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps, Washington National Guard, the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Pipes and Drums of the Canadian Scottish Regiment and each year, the hall was filled.

On Victoria Day 2016, the 26th International Military Band Concert will be presented in Vancouver. This year's list of participating bands is equally impressive and includes, for the very first time, the US Air Force Band of the Golden West from Travis, California.

Join musicians from six military bands at the Chandos Pattison Auditorium on May 23rd at 2:30pm for a fantastic afternoon of music celebrating our common British Heritage and the continuing bond Canada and her allies enjoy!

It is with great pleasure that the [British Columbia Military Music Society](#) announces all net proceeds from the 2016 International Military Band Concert will be donated to elementary band programs in Metro Vancouver.

Please help us fill the Chandos Pattison Auditorium on Victoria Day so we can help the boys and girls just beginning their musical adventure. Join us for what is guaranteed to be a fantastic performance. And tell your friends!



[On Line Store](#)



Taste of Malaysia Curry Lunch



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



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

Date: Thursday, May 26, 2016

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 May 16, 2016)

RSVP: For more information or to register, please e-mail
Charlotte Yen at corporate@hplaw.ca
(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 May 16, 2016

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, September 29, 2016