



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Aug 18, 2015

Newsletter on line. This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

Wednesday Lunches

The 15 Field Officers Mess holds weekly lunches, serving 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.

Note: A contractor will be coming in to remove asbestos tiles from the bar area. This may mean that lunches might be cancelled for one Wednesday. We don't have an exact date for the start of this project yet, so watch for notices from us. In preparation for this project the bar was cleared of all stock and basic equipment and we were informed it couldn't be used until the project is completed. We can't legally sell any wine, spirits or beer but patrons may bring their own wine and pay a corkage charge to the Mess. For those of you who don't bring wine we will have a bar set up to sell lunch tickets and a small selection of pop and juices with glasses (it is an "Officers Mess") and ice. Since the Mess is not taking responsibility for lunches, I will have to make up the minimum payment for lunches to our caterer if we get less than 25 diners, so please come and support our efforts.

World War 2 - 1940

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

Aug 12th: Luftwaffe raids on England concentrate on four fighter bases near Portsmouth and the Ventor Radar Station on the Isle of Wight; they lose 31 aircraft to 22 RAF fighters during these attacks. The British send a mission into Ethiopia to start raising guerrilla forces. -- "*That's Major Ivanov to you, not Comrade Battalion Commander*"-- Formal military ranks are restored to the Soviet Army and Commissars are stripped of much of the power to interfere with operational decisions – this is the application of another of the hard lessons learned in the Winter War with Finland.

Aug 13th: Eagle Day, the start of the Luftwaffe's push to win air supremacy over southern England begins in earnest; but 45 planes from 1,500 Luftwaffe sorties are downed in exchange for 13 RAF fighters (and six RAF pilots will return to fly again, some will do a second sortie today). In one episode, the sole badly damaged surviving Ju-88 (flown by Joachim Helbig) from a formation of nine finds itself escorted across the Channel to France by a Spitfire.

Aug 14th: Sir Henry Tizard heads over to the US with details on jet engines, new explosives, gun-turret designs and the cavity magnetron (which is so useful for advanced radar

applications). The Luftwaffe faces some weather problems today and only sends over 500 sorties, losing 19 aircraft to 8 RAF losses.

Aug 15th: The Luftwaffe finds that British fighter defences are in depth as they fly 1,800 sorties— taking heavy losses in a raid from Norway, and the day’s score is 34 RAF losses to 75 downed Luftwaffe aircraft. Goering thinks the Luftwaffe is doing splendidly and makes two policy changes – no more attacks on radar stations (the Germans underestimate their effectiveness) and fighters must fly close escort to the bomber crews. In Somalia, the British defences at the Tug Aran Gap are tasked with holding back the Italians as long as possible. Captain Eric Charles Twelves Wilson, attached to the Somaliland Camel Corps, has been doing his duty despite several wounds, malaria, and the deaths of most of his Somali machine gunners – for four days they have beaten back Italian assaults and withstood direct artillery fire. Their defence fails at 5:00 PM and Captain Wilson is presumed dead when awarded the Victoria Cross. However, he is alive, though badly wounded, and well-treated by the Italians. He returns to duty in 1941 and serves through the war in the Long Range Desert Group and the King’s African Rifles.

Aug 16th: Today sees 1,715 Luftwaffe sorties vs. 776 by the RAF -- 45 German and 21 British aircraft don’t come home (and, of course, more British fighters are hit on the ground – but pilots and not planes are the more urgent resource for the RAF). RAF bombers hit Italian factories in Turin and Milan. In Somalia, the British evacuate 5,700 personnel to Aden -- they have lost 260 casualties in the Italian invasion, while Mussolini lost 2,050. A RAF Coastal Command bomber claims the first U-boat (U.51) sunk by depth charges from an aircraft.

Aug 17th: Greece starts to mobilize after their cruiser Helle is sunk by an Italian submarine. The RAF starts to comb out other branches for more fighter pilots. Hitler declares a total blockade of the British Isles and states that neutral shipping will also be sunk. Three RN battleships bombard Bardia and Fort Capuzzo in Libya.

Aug 18th: There are big Luftwaffe raids on fighter fields, yet the RAF still racks up a score of 71 to 27 losses, and the Germans decide to withdraw the Stuka dive-bomber from the campaign because of the high loss rate of these planes.

Dieppe: A Battle Doomed to Fail For All the Wrong Reasons

ARTHUR KELLY, SPECIAL TO NATIONAL POST | August 17, 2012

The Second World War has a day of infamy, ones signifying the end of fighting in Europe and Asia, and of course June 6, 1944, D-Day, the most recognized of all. For Canadians, there’s another meaningful date, Aug. 19, 1942, a day seemingly without end, for its tragic unfolding, remains a source of bewilderment and controversy. Even 70 years later, the true nature of the Dieppe Raid remains a mystery to most. “Difficult to visualize as a whole,” was the German assessment of the Allied plan of attack. Not so the casualties, graphically preserved on film and in photos. Mounds of dead stretched over 15 km of French coast from Puy to Pourville, a total exceeding 4,000, including 907 Canadians killed. Unrelentingly cruel, the raid confirmed the worst-held fears of one its most able participants: Captain Denis Whitaker of the Royal

Hamilton Light Infantry (RHLI) had been an eyewitness to failed leadership, conduct he could neither forgive nor forget. “The defeat cleared out all the dead weight,” he told me at his Oakville, Ont., home during a meeting in 1989. “It was the best thing that ever happened to the Regiment.” Whitaker, a platoon commander at Dieppe, is the most prominent of those few Canadians who penetrated inside the town. Like all the other soldiers landed at the beach, he immediately went to ground under machine gun and mortar fire, but he got up and led the charge inside the casino, assisting in its capture. By day’s end, he was the only RHLI officer to return to England unscathed, the others either dead, wounded or taken prisoner. The performance of some, in his opinion, was disgraceful: “They went to ground and didn’t get up.”



Two wounded Canadian soldiers lie on the pebble beach of Dieppe on August 19, 1942 as a tank and landing craft burn. Seventy years ago Canadian forces launched a raid on the German-occupied French coast around Dieppe at a cost of 913 men. Of the 4,963 Canadians who embarked for the operation only 2,210 returned to England, and many of these were wounded. Reuters

I was present at Whitaker’s home on July 11, 1982, when he, a retired brigadier-general then, discussed Dieppe with another RHLI veteran, one decorated for valour at the 1945 battle of the Goch-Calcar Road. “We would have done a lot better at Dieppe with you and the others,” he commented thoughtfully. “We would have at least got off the beach.” What a sore spot for this gifted soldier, one of Canada’s finest field commanders of the Second World War. A graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada, Whitaker led the RHLI after D-Day, successfully guiding it to war’s end. The Regiment more closely resembled a social club, however, when Whitaker joined it in 1936. “The officers had no real training,” he explained. “They simply played soldier on weekends. The CO, Colonel Bob Labatt, was a stockbroker.” Whitaker despised Labatt, holding him responsible for the Regiment’s lack of discipline and combat readiness. Morale was poor among the troops as well. He recalled an incident prior to Dieppe, when the regiment conducted an 11-mile march before passing a reviewing stand. Labatt was nowhere to be seen, until he arrived by car out of sight of the dignitaries, just in time to lead the soldiers onto the parade ground. “This kind of behaviour destroys morale,” said Whitaker. “It sets a terrible example.”

At Dieppe, Labatt dashed a few meters from the water’s edge to a sea wall and here he remained, declaring the position battalion headquarters. Others joined him such as Major Dick McLaren, one of the longest serving members of the regiment. At the most critical juncture of the battle, when the troops should have been directed off the beach, Labatt and McLaren fidgeted with a damaged radio set, desperately trying to contact Major General John Roberts onboard the command ship. “When I got to the wall,” recalled Whitaker, “I knelt down behind it to catch my breath and figure out what to do next. A German fired at me with a machine gun, the bullets passing underneath my stomach and in front of my head. I got out of there in a hurry and on to my objective. I shouted, ‘We can’t stay here because they’re going to mortar the hell out of this beach.’”

Dieppe was well fortified and a horrific testing ground for green troops. “The place is in the shape of a saucer,” noted Whitaker, who died in 2001. “Christ, they were firing at us from behind as well as the front and both sides.” In the face of such murderous fire, Labatt and his officers had but one task before them, to press the attack forward. Failure to do so would result in the Regiment’s annihilation, as well as their own, which is exactly what happened. It was a necessary evil in the mind of Whitaker and others. “Once the society guys were gone,” Bob Wight of Toronto told me in 1989, “there was a second group of officers comprised of real leaders.” Wight, now deceased, was among the latter group, and the contrast between it and the first couldn’t have been greater. Even in their 70s and 80s when I knew them, these post-Dieppe veterans remained every inch the soldier, exuding courage, resoluteness and professionalism. My personal contact with McLaren, who along with Labatt, was taken prisoner at Dieppe, proved embarrassing and sad: Embarrassing to hear him admit he didn’t know what he was supposed to do on the raid; and sad to think of this otherwise decent man thrown into a situation for which he was completely unprepared.

What remains to be answered is if there was another element at play shaping events. The late Brigadier General Forbes West of Toronto thought so, identifying a political reason for the raid’s launch. “I feel that from the day planning began, it was intended to be a failure,” he revealed to me in his home 23 years ago. “Perhaps not as costly a failure, but a failure nevertheless. The British were being pressed by the Russians and Americans to open a second front, so we were put in with the firm intention of being destroyed. Men at the Chiefs of Staff level would consider 4,000 casualties a small price to pay for convincing the Russians and Americans an invasion would be a disaster.” Public expectations were high for 1942 with many certain that the Western allies would open a second front against the Germans in Western Europe while the Soviets continued to battle the Nazis in the east. As spring gave way to summer, and the prospect of action grew dimmer, protests erupted. A July 26 rally in Trafalgar Square drew 60,000, the voices ever more shrill on the issue. Varsity Stadium in Toronto hosted a crowd of 14,000 demanding a cross-Channel invasion to help the hard-pressed Russians. On Aug 2 The New York Times wrote that “the two words most deeply engraved on the minds of the Americans and British peoples at this moment are: Second Front.”

The British War Cabinet vehemently opposed such a move. Churchill himself preferred to secure Britain’s Mediterranean and Far East interests. Against a mounting backdrop of pressure, the Canadian 2nd Infantry Division under the command of Major General Roberts was presented a plan. “I don’t know who the hell dreamt it up,” remarked Whitaker, “but they didn’t know anything about fighting a war. It was terrible planning, just awful, absolutely ridiculous. They had company objectives that you wouldn’t give to a battalion.” Whitaker spoke knowingly of the “fog of war,” of not distinguishing what lay 20 feet away in a combat situation. A fog of a different sort descended over 5,000 Canadian soldiers on Aug. 18, 1942. Without prior warning they were hastily assembled, and then transported to the coast. Weapons were issued on-board ship, Sten guns in oily packaging. The raid, cancelled early in July, was now on again, but there had been no training for it since. One reassuring fact sustained the soldiers in the tension-filled hours prior to attack: The German defences would be pulverized by saturation bombardment making for a quick exit from the beaches. But the

bombardment never occurred, as the British had opted to maintain “tactical surprise” and not alert the Germans to the pending attack until it began when men hit the beaches. This change in plan was withheld from the soldiers. Unmolested, the Germans commenced machine gun and mortar fire before the landing craft reached shore, killing all but two members of the RHLI’s 17 Platoon before they had hit the beach. “The battle as far as we were concerned was really nothing but a massacre,” said West, a major in the Royal Regiment of Canada, destroyed at Puys, site of a flanking assault in support of the main thrust at Dieppe. “I remember going in with the second wave with the commanding officer. There was no sound of firing, so I said to him, ‘They must have got through the first line of defences.’ And he replied, ‘The hell they did, they’re all dead.’ When we landed there wasn’t anybody standing, everybody was just strewn on the beach.”

West was shot through the leg and taken prisoner. During his time in captivity he reflected on the raid’s evolution: “I came to the conclusion that the attack was meant to be a disaster. First you have a frontal assault, which is not very good practice. It’s to be supported with heavy bombing; capital ships and paratroopers, and then each of these are taken away leaving just infantry to attack a fortress with rifle and bayonets. I’m absolutely certain it was intended to be a failure.” Having been selected for a suicide mission once before in 1940, it’s easy to imagine the Canadians being chosen again two years later. Major General Churchill Mann, deputy military force commander at Dieppe, later revealed the true intent of a British plan involving Canadian forces: “On May 26, 1940,” he wrote, “the war cabinet considered that a sacrifice of a good part of the Canadians might bring the United States into the war as an ally. We at HQ1 Canadian Headquarters commenced arrangements to embark about half the divisions, using passenger-ship lifeboats to land over open beaches without any support at all at Gravelines. Fortunately wiser counsels prevailed and this operation was cancelled.”

As the guns fell silent at Dieppe, so too did public calls for a second front. The shift in attitude was total, seemingly on cue, like this Hamilton Spectator editorial: “This raid should sober the judgment of amateur strategists and silence the irresponsible clamor for a second front. That action will no doubt be taken when our military leaders deem the hour to be ripe for it. Meanwhile, the direction of the war should be wholly entrusted to their care.” The brutality of Aug. 19, 1942 is contrasted by the kindness bestowed upon the raid since, namely its designation as “a rehearsal” for D-Day. The lessons supposedly learned from the disastrous attack are easily refuted, yet are routinely used as justification for the raid. On this subject West was particularly succinct: “Since the time of the Roman legions, it’s been known that there is no possibility of dislodging a well-entrenched enemy without superior fire power. I don’t know of any lessons we learned at Dieppe.” Cannon fodder is a term typically associated with the trench warfare of 1914-18, not the conflict of 1939-45. That’s what the Canadians were, however. Why were Canadians selected for such a dubious honour? Whitaker identified the reason, poor leadership in the first contingents to Britain. The lack of initiative on the beaches of Dieppe was just as evident at the command centre, a problem well understood by the venerable Forbes West: “You have a Major General like Roberts surrounded by Mountbatten, Montgomery and God knows who else, and they say, ‘You don’t mind if we don’t bomb the town do you?’ It would take a man with a tremendous amount of guts to respond, ‘No, if we don’t have any

bombardment I personally will not command.’ Roberts didn’t have it in him to say, ‘Look Montgomery, you don’t know sheep s–t from dates and we won’t go.’”

Sniper Targeting Pods Hitting the Mark

August 12/15: Japan acquired one Lockheed Martin Sniper targeting pod last year for trials on a Japanese Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) F-2 fighter. The Japanese defense ministry reportedly allocated \$49.1 million to test the targeting pod as part of a potential upgrade package for the JASDF’s F-2 fleet. Jordan signed a contract for more Sniper pods in June, with the pod’s integration on the F-2 marking the eighth aircraft platform that the pod has operated from.

In a recent address to Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control employees in Orlando, FL, USAF Aeronautical Systems Center Commander Lt Gen William R Looney praised Lockheed Martin’s Sniper XR Advanced Targeting Pod (ATP) following the system’s recent successful deployment in Iraq. Ten of the US Air Force Sniper pods were shipped to Lakenheath, UK, and installed aboard Air Force F-15E Strike Eagles. These Sniper pods have now flown in more than 450 missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Designed as an affordable precision targeting system in a single, lightweight pod, Sniper is fully compatible with the latest J-series munitions and precision-guided weaponry. The US Air Force selected Lockheed Martin in August 2001 to develop and build the Sniper XR pod for its Advanced Targeting Pod program. The targeting pod has been undergoing integration on a variety of aircraft

to include the F-15E, the F-16 Block 30/40/50, the A-10 and the F/A-18. The Sniper ATP program has achieved several major milestones, including the successful operational deployment and completion of Phase 1 Qualification Testing and Evaluation (QT&E) and Phase 1 Qualification Operational Testing and Evaluation (QOT&E) flight testing at Eglin AFB, FL; Nellis AFB, NV; and the Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Test Center in Tucson, AZ.

New and enhanced capabilities of the Sniper pods include a high-resolution, mid-wave third-generation Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), along with a dual-mode laser that includes a laser spot tracker and a laser marker, and a CCD-TV. The Sniper pod greatly improves an aircraft’s long-range target detection and identification via advanced image processing algorithms, combined with special image stabilization techniques. ATP program goals included a geopointing capability 10 times more accurate than the 1980s technology LANTIRN pods, with triple the recognition range and twice the resolution. The ATP can acquire targets at altitudes of up to 50,000 feet, for instance, versus the 25,000 feet typical of the last-generation LANTIRN pods. These superior detection ranges are vital to pilots, helping keep them out of range of threat air defenses during their defining moments. Likewise, the supersonic, low-observable design results in a substantial reduction in drag and weight.

Maintainability is also enhanced. The Sniper XR pod was designed as a highly modular system that is partitioned into 39 lightweight line replaceable units (LRU). Traditionally, this type of LRU was replaced in base maintenance facilities or back shop as shop replaceable units. Through aggressive and innovative design efforts, these ruggedized LRUs are all flightline

replaceable without the use of special tooling or support equipment. The Sniper XR's BIT diagnostics system provides the maintainer the capability to fault isolate to these smaller, lighter LRUs and return them directly to depot level repair. This modular, two-level maintenance design contributes to lower life cycle costs. *"We have been able to maintain eight pods fully mission capable throughout this whole deployment, and most of the time all 10," said General Looney. "They (pilots) are so in love with that capability, they don't want to go anywhere without a Sniper pod. There is no comparison between any other pod in the world and the capability that Sniper brings."*

Finally, early 2006 improvements include full integration with the new ROVER system that lets troops on the ground transmit coordinates or even draw on digital maps, and have the results appear on the pilot's map display as they talk. Sniper pods are now flown on the US Air Force F-15E and F-16 blocks 30/40/50, plus the A-10s incorporating the A-10C precision engagement upgrade program. In addition, Sniper is being integrated on the B-1 bomber.

Free Film Will Honour a Bomber Named Vera

Hamilton Spectator Aug 06, 2015

"Reunion of Giants" follows a 70-year-old Avro Lancaster bomber as it travels to the United Kingdom from the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton. It will be screened for free at select theatres on Remembrance Day.



LANCASTER BOMBER

The Canadian Press

Hamilton's Lancaster is the star of a new film that will be shown free at Cineplex Entertainment theatres across the country on Remembrance Day. The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum announced the deal this week saying details about participating theatres will be released in September. The film called "Reunion of the Giants" is about the bomber known as Vera's epic journey to the United Kingdom last year to take part in a series of air shows alongside the world's only other airworthy Lancaster. That one is owned by the Royal Air Force. Production of the film by Suddenly SeeMore Productions Inc. and Highway Entertainment is continuing.

A DVD release is planned for late November and negotiations are continuing that would see the film shown on television, a spokesperson for the museum said.

Who is it?

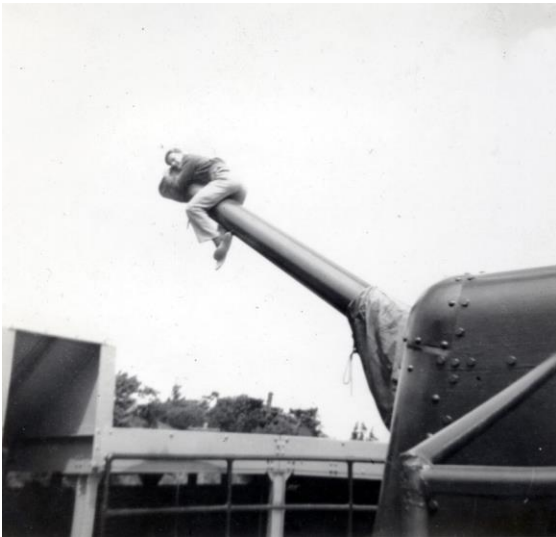
Last Week: Photo labelled – ‘Battery Observation Post, (Pandemonium Palace), Jul 50’. We think it was taken at Mary Hill. The piece of equipment shown is a Radar CDX No 2 MK 1



The NRCC Radio Branch was responsible for radar development in WW2. For coastal defense by the Army, a 200-MHz set with a transmitter was developed. Designated *CD*, it used a large, rotating

antenna atop a 70-foot wooden tower. Since the firing unit would be some distance away, a "displace corrector" automatically compensated for this separation. It was put into operation in January 1942. While the Army was basically satisfied with the *CD* systems, they did ask for an improvement to 10-cm operation. Since the Microwave Section was then well experienced in these systems, they easily provided a design. Before even a prototype was built, the Army gave an order to the REL for a number of sets designated *CDX*. Production started in February 1943, but only 19 sets were actually delivered with 5 of these going to the USSR,

This Week: We continue our theme of coastal defence with another shot from the extensive collection of our late museum founder, Vic Stevenson. It would seem that Vic at one time photographed everything and anything, all at a time when doing so was a bit expensive, especially for the young lad he was. A few of you older chaps might remember pre-digital days, when a roll of 36-exposure Kodachrome (now gone forever, and much lamented) would set you back a week's allowance. Not only that, but you had to wait for the images to be developed, which took quite a while when the nearest lab was in another province.



Well, this shot isn't Kodachrome, as the young Vic was a tad stretched for pocket money back in 1950 when it was taken. It shows something about which one could make many naughty jokes and double-entendres, but to which, respecting the dignity of this newsletter, one will not stoop.

Therefore, dear reader (and I hope there is more than one), can you identify the very large gun this chap is riding? Any guess as to its whereabouts? Was he a former member of the Flying Wallendas, or an eager participant in an experimental attempt to develop a method of inserting troops into combat more quickly and accurately than parachuting? We actually know, but rely on you to keep others amused. Your replies may be sent to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond (john.d._redmond@telus.net). All information is kept and added to our files, helping the future remember the past.

From the 'Punitary'

Why is a hen sitting on a fence like a coin? Because she has a head on one side and a tail on the other.

Murphy's other Laws

Never underestimate the power of human stupidity.

Quotable Quotes

The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get into the office. - *Robert Frost*

PNE 2015

HEROES' OPENING WEEKEND - SAT, AUG 22 & SUN, AUG 23 - 11am- Late

Promotion is to honor those who put their life on the line by actively responding to the front line emergencies occurring out in our communities. It includes **military & veterans** plus **one guest**. Proof of membership must be produced at the gates. Guest does not require ID.



*Honorary Colonel William Rodgers,
Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Allan De Genova,*

and the

15th Field Artillery Regimental Society

request the pleasure of your company for a

'Special Guest Night'

in honour of

Saint Barbara's Day

to be held at

BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY

2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver

on Saturday, the Fifth of December, 2015

at six o'clock for seven o'clock in the evening.

***RSVP by 25 November 2015 with
payment:
OCdt R. T. Jones
Richard.Jones6@forces.gc.ca
Tariff: \$ 105
(\$95 if received by 1 October 2015)***

***Payable to "15 Fd Regt'l Society"
2025 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7***

***Dress: Mess Kit or Black Tie, with
decorations***