



## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Aug 20, 2019

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at [bob.mugford@gmail.com](mailto:bob.mugford@gmail.com) to let me know you didn't get a copy.

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: [www.vancouvergunners.ca](http://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** - We need your support to keep the lunches going. Hope all you regular attendees can keep coming. The Mess serves a great 5 course buffet meal for only \$20. Hope to see you all there. Guests are always welcome, and we encourage members to bring their significant others and friends. Dress - Jacket and tie, equivalent for Ladies. For serving personnel, uniform of the day is always acceptable at lunch.

**NOTE:** There will not be a lunch on Sept 11. Mrs Lum will be out of town.

**Upcoming events – Mark your calendars** See attached posters for details.

**Sept 11** **NO LUNCH** - mark your calendars! Mrs Lum away.

**Sept 20** 15<sup>th</sup> Fd Regt and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders whiskey tasting

**Sept 28** RUSI Vancouver Inaugural Annual Dinner

## World War 2 – 1944

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

**Aug 21<sup>st</sup>:** The start of the Dumbarton Oaks conference in Washington on maintaining global security after the war; here is where the UN took shape. The Germans are in retreat in northeastern France (though grudgingly so on the routes into the Pas de Calais region) and the Allies go over to the pursuit; US VI Corps liberates Aix-en-Provence. The Tonan Maru is sunk for the second time by US submarines (being first sunk in very shallow water on October 1942); this time the arrangement is permanent.

**Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>.** Led by their powerful new tanks, the Soviets capture Jassy and lunge towards Kishinev, covering 80 km in two days. Japan conscripts all women between 12 and 40 for war work. A major RN carrier attack on the Tirpitz is again defeated by heavy smoke screens and thick air defences.

**Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>:** King Michael of Romania dismisses Prime Minister Antonescu (who is then promptly arrested and will be executed later) and accepts Soviet terms for Armistice; meanwhile 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ukrainian Fronts pocket 12 divisions of Germany's 6<sup>th</sup> Army while Romanian troops along the frontlines desert to the Soviets in huge numbers. In France, Free French troops reach Marseilles and Toulon, most of Paris is in the hands of the Resistance, and the Allied Armies in Normandy are thrashing their way east. In New Guinea, the fighting at Numfoor is over.

**Aug 24<sup>th</sup>:** Fighting flares up again in Paris as LeClerc's 4<sup>th</sup> French Armoured Division reaches the outskirts of the city while Arles, Cannes and Grenoble are liberated. The RN stages an outing with a trio of capital ships to hit Japanese bases in Sumatra. The Royal Navy task force off Norway takes another unsuccessful swipe at Tirpitz in her well-protected lair. The Moldavian city of Kishinev is liberated as German defences on the Romanian frontiers collapse.

**Aug 25<sup>th</sup>:** The City of Light is liberated (with much thanks to its German garrison commander General Choltitz, who refused to implement demolition orders or to bitterly fight to the end inside the city). Avignon is also liberated; American troops prepare to assault Brest (with support from HMS Warspite); and British and Canadian troops close up to the Seine after some stiff fighting against German rearguards -- the Germans let Paris go more easily than they will give up the Channel Ports. Vichy is enthusiastically liberated by the Resistance, despite bombastic declarations of defiance from die-hard collaborators. Romania declares war on Germany -- effectively cutting the last German troops there from their supplies. The Allies launch a new offensive (UK V Corps, the Polish Corps and I Canadian Corps) on Italy's Adriatic coast catching the German defences on the Metauro River off guard. Pvt Harold A Garman is a medic in the 5<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division. During a crossing of the Seine River, an assault boat full of wounded men was being brought back when a machine gun opened up on it in midstream. Most of the wounded bailed out, except for one litter case who was unable and two men who couldn't swim. Disregarding the fire of the machine gun, Garman plunged into the river and dragged the boat and the three wounded men to safety. His selfless devotion earns him a Medal of Honor.

**Aug 26<sup>th</sup>:** British V Corps crosses the Metauro in Italy. The Soviets reach the Danube near Galati. Soviet offensive operations in the vicinity of Warsaw resume while the German counter-attacks in the city have turned the holdings of the Polish Home Army into three pockets. Bulgaria announces that it has withdrawn from the war and will disarm German troops there. De Gaulle parades in Paris, ignoring light to moderate sniper fire while Allied troops cross the Seine and start rumbling into northeast France.

**Aug 27<sup>th</sup>:** Fuel priority shifts from the American armies (even as Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army liberates Chateau Thierry) to the British and Canadian armies as the race to snap up the Channel Ports begins. The liberation of Marseilles is finally completed when its garrison of 37,700 surrenders but the port facilities have been wrecked. Bordeaux is liberated -- with its port facilities and historic landmarks intact when the Free French seize the city -- with some help from a German

soldier who deliberately helped blow up his own demolition stores. RAF Lancasters make a heavily escorted daylight raid on the Hamburg-Meerbeck oil plant. The Soviets seize the Romanian towns of Focani and Galati, and then orient themselves towards the capital. US Army Nurse Reba Tobiason becomes the first (and apparently only) female US POW taken by the Germans; she will be exchanged in February 1945. Major Roger Landes (aka 'Aristide') is an SOE officer who was critical in the liberation of Bordeaux. He first parachuted into France in November 1942 to help establish and lead the Resistance in the Gironde region. He is one of the authors of the plan that prevented the sabotage of the city and insurgents under his command captured some 10,000 German personnel. He is later enrolled in the Legion d'honneur.

## **French Submarine Found After Going Missing Over 50 Years Ago**

*George Winston Jul 31, 2019*



*Minerver*

*Granit29 CC BY-SA 3.0*

Over fifty years ago, the French submarine La Minerve disappeared with 52 crew members onboard. After all this time, they finally found it again. In January of 1968, La Minerve was on a military exercise when it disappeared. Relatives of the crew members pressured the authorities to make another search for the sub this year using modern technology. The search crew reviewed the weather and tide data from the time of the accident. The French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission studied seismic data from the time of the wreck to help reduce the search area. The French Navy's Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service also provided scientific direction to aid the search. They also used equipment to map the tides and currents in the Mediterranean and created models from the information.

According to a senior French naval officer, the sub was discovered by a boat named Seabed Constructor. It is operated by a US company named Ocean Infinity. It found the submarine at a depth of 2,370 meters. It was located 27 miles from Toulon, the site of a French naval base. The Seabed Constructor relied on the initial mapping of the seabed by the L' Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer. The French defence minister, Florence Parly, stated that the discovery was "a success, a relief and a technical feat." She went on to state that it was her hope that the discovery would allow people to mourn and called for a commemorative ceremony at sea for the families of the sailors who went down with the ship. The French navy has stated that the wreckage will be left where it is to serve as the sailors' final resting place.

La Minerve was a 980-ton diesel electric submarine. It disappeared in the Gulf of Lion which is a large bay between the coasts of Spain and France in the Mediterranean Sea. It took just four minutes for La Minerve to sink. The cause of the wreck has never been determined. The families of the crew are hopeful that they can learn what caused it to sink now that it has been found. The son of the ship's commander, André Fauve, said that many people encouraged him in insisting that the search be carried out but inwardly they were doubtful the sub would ever be found. La Minerve reportedly broke into three pieces as she sank. Seabed Constructor used underwater drones to find the wreck site on Sunday. The first three letters of the ship's name were clearly visible on one of the pieces found. Some believe that La Minerve experienced problems with her rudder before she sank. It was involved in a military exercise with an airplane when it disappeared. No alarm was raised until the sub did not return the next day. About 20 vessels and aircraft attempted to find the sub after it disappeared. Among the vessels used by the search team was the diving vessel that Jacques Cousteau used.

Last year, the Seabed Constructor found the San Juan, an Argentinian submarine which had sunk off the coast of Argentina. The San Juan had gone missing in November of 2017 with 44 crew members on board. The Seabed Constructor found her under 3,000 feet of water about 323 nautical miles east of Comodoro Rivadavia in the Atlantic Ocean. It locates these wrecks using remote drones and onboard sensors which allow it to map the ocean floor and identify items lying at the bottom of the sea. The 377-foot long ship is known as a "multi-purpose offshore vessel. The autonomous underwater vehicles on the Seabed Constructor are known as HUGIN robotic submarines. They move information to scan the seabed anywhere from 16 to 19,685 feet deep. The HUGIN robots each have side-scan sonar, HD camera and a synthetic aperture sonar. They continuously send data to the ship on the surface where computer software analyzes the data and finds objects of interest in near real time.

## **David Ayer to do Movie About the Battle of El-Alamein**

NEWS George Winston Aug 16, 2019



*David Ayer - Sony Pictures*

According to reports, David Ayer is in discussions to direct "El-Alamein." The movie is based on the true story of the World War II battles between German Field Marshal

Erwin Rommel and Bernard Montgomery, the leader of Britain's Eighth Army in the desert of North Africa. If chosen, this will be the second feature film Ayer has made about tank warfare. In 2014, he directed "Fury," which starred Brad Pitt. He also wrote the screenplay for the

movie “U-571” which tells a story about US servicemen entering a sinking German submarine in order to steal an Enigma cipher machine. “El-Alamein” is expected to focus on the battle which was the turning point on the African front of WWII. During this battle, Allied forces prevented the Germans and Italians from seizing control of the Suez Canal and from conquering Egypt. Ayer is already busy developing a drama about private military contractors for Showtime. He is also directing Shia Labeouf in “The Tax Collector” and looking into making a sequel to his 2017 film “Bright” which was released on Netflix in 2017. Ayer is also known for having directed “Suicide Squad” for Warner Brothers.



Bernard Law Montgomery

The “El-Alamein” script was written by David Self with the most recent draft coming courtesy of James Coyne. Lorenzo di Bonaventura and Mark Varhadian are producing along with Thomas Augsberger. It is planned to begin production in early 2020. There were actually two battles between the Axis and the British in El-Alamein, Egypt (located about 150 miles from Cairo). The first ended in a stalemate. The second was a decisive win for the Brits. With the Italians in North Africa having been defeated by the British, the Nazis looked to Rommel to seize the Suez Canal. In January of 1942, he drove his forces east. They made it as far as El-Alamein when the British blocked the way and prevented the Nazis from taking over Africa. This is known as the First Battle of El-Alamein. Rommel was hindered by a lack of support. Hitler did not regard success in Africa to be of utmost importance. As a result, supplies ran low for the Nazi armored division. Rommel also had no air support for his tanks. Crucially, Rommel became ill during the lead up to the second El-Alamein battle and had to leave command of the troops in the hands of a subordinate officer while he returned to Germany to recover.

Montgomery began his attack on the Germans while Rommel was away. Beginning with an artillery attack on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, one month after Rommel had returned to Germany. After the artillery bombardment, two infantry divisions attacked to open routes through the elaborate minefield the Germans had set up for their defense. Two days later, Rommel returned to the battle to find that the British had been held for the time being. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Montgomery launched the second phase of his attack. Infantry troops cleared away the mines, removing the barriers blocking the armored troops. Rommel’s fuel was almost gone, and his troops were depleted. He determined that they could not win the battle and sent a coded message to Hitler to inform him of the situation. Hitler ordered Rommel to stand his ground, but the troops had already begun evacuating before the order was received. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of November, Hitler finally ordered Rommel to withdraw. The Battle of El-Alamein is known for changing the direction of WWII. It is the only land battle won by the British without the direct support of the Americans. It ended the long struggle to control the Western Desert in northern Africa. It also directly led the French to begin assisting in the North African theater.

## How Secret X-37 Space Plane Confuses Enemies

Former US Air Force Secretary explains. *Oriana Pawlyk Military.com 23 Jul 2019*



*The X-37B Orbital Test Vehicle mission 3 (OTV-3), the Air Force's unmanned, reusable space plane, landed at Vandenberg Air Force Base on Oct. 17, 2014. Boeing Co. photo*

The US Air Force's former top civilian recently gave a glimpse into the mission of an experimental space plane that has puzzled space geeks, enthusiasts, experts and even some officials because of its clandestine use.

Speaking about space situational awareness and deterrence at the Aspen Security Forum last week, Heather Wilson -- who was the service's 24<sup>th</sup> secretary -- brought up the X-37B spacecraft. "It looks like a small version of the [NASA space] shuttle, but it's unmanned," she said Friday during a panel. Wilson left her position in May to become president of the University of Texas at El Paso.

Wilson called the X-37B "fascinating" because it "can do an orbit that looks like an egg and, when it's close to the Earth, it's close enough to the atmosphere to turn where it is." "Which means our adversaries don't know -- and that happens on the far side of the Earth from our adversaries -- where it's going to come up next. And we know that that drives them nuts. And I'm really glad about that," she added. Also known as the Orbital Test Vehicle (OTV), the X-37B was spotted earlier this month, when an astronomer in the Netherlands captured photos of the robotic space plane in low Earth orbit. But Wilson's comments on its movement may shed light on "a previously secret orbit-related capability," said Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer and astrophysicist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. "It is true that the X-37B flies lower than just about every other active satellite and low enough that atmospheric drag is definitely significant," added Brian Weeden, director of program planning and technical adviser for national and international space security for the Secure World Foundation, in an email. "So [Wilson's] statement about using that increased drag, plus its unusual shape, to alter its orbit is plausible." McDowell said the aircraft's movement likely throws an adversary off, even if just for a short time. "The dip into the atmosphere causes a change in the timing of when it next comes overhead. So [trackers'] predictions are off, and [they] have to search for it all over again," he told Military.com.

Weeden argued this may become predictable. "The alteration would only be in the timing of when the X-37B came overhead a particular spot -- it would either arrive a bit sooner or a bit

later," he said. Sometimes, that's good enough to throw space sleuths, especially adversaries already looking for the craft, off track, McDowell said. "Even a timing change makes more work for [adversaries] than just being able to use the existing orbital prediction," he explained. But how long can the X-37B continue to bypass spotters in this way? Weeden said it's not just Russia and China that are racing to advance their radars and telescopes, but many in the global commercial space industry. He added this disclosure on how the X-37B potentially operates may cause concerns, even among partners and allies. "I think it creates more misconceptions about what the mission of the X-37B is and could lead to more international concerns that it's some type of weapons platform," Weeden said. "I think that works against US interests because it will create more diplomatic problems for the US when it tries to point out Russian and Chinese 'unusual behavior in space' and push for discussions on space norms of behavior." In short, "it gives Russia and China one more talking point about how the US is the one 'weaponizing' space, even if that's not true," he said.

The X-37B took off for its fifth mission on Sept 7, 2017. While its payloads and most of its activities are classified, the Air Force said at the time that the mission would carry "the Air Force Research Laboratory Advanced Structurally Embedded Thermal Spreader (ASETS-II) payload to test experimental electronics and oscillating heat pipe technologies in the long-duration space environment." According to the service, the Orbital Test Vehicle performs "risk reduction, experimentation and concept of operations development for reusable space vehicle technologies," as well as "long-duration space technology experimentation and testing." Under the purview of the Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office (ARCO), the OTV can autonomously re-enter the atmosphere and eventually land horizontally on a flight line. The program hit a milestone on March 25, 2017, after the X-37B spent 675 days in orbit, surpassing its previous record of 674 days. While the ARCO is responsible for the X-37B's experimental operations, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Space Experimentation Squadron at Schriever Air Force Base in Colorado helps carry out its mission control. Wilson's publicized remarks make the discussions surrounding X-37 more interesting, McDowell said. "But ... the payloads are probably the main secret," he said.

## **Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates**

The passing of Lieutenant-Colonel Dean Drysdale due to ALS was the focus last week.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/dean-drysdale.html>

End of Mission. Stand Easy.

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

## **VIA Rail Discount for Veterans**

VIA is offering a 40% off the best available fares in Sleeper Plus class onboard the Canadian (Toronto-Vancouver train) —for qualifying members of the Canadian Armed Forces, National Defence civilian personnel, veterans, and their immediate families. The offer ends on September 23, 2019. For details see:- <https://www.viarail.ca/en/canadian-forces>

## Who (or What) Is It?

### Last Week:



### *The wreck today at Kiska Island.*

We think this is the wreck of the Borneo Maru which was abandoned at Gertrude Cove, Kiska Island, in November 1942. Another ship, the Nozama Maru was beached at Trout Lagoon in Sept 1942.

**This Week:** From their appearance: hands in pockets, lack of puttees, casual stance, mass-produced forage cap, we can assume that these are what British and Canadian soldiers of the War of 1812 called “Doodles”, our southern neighbours. I believe the other contemporary slang for them was “Cousin Jonathans”. That being established, we wonder if this is the set of some late 1940s or early 1950s science fiction movie; the type where the crew of the rocket to the moon (or Venus, Mars, etc.) more resembles that of a B-17 on a mission over the Ruhr Valley? There was always a non-commissioned member, wearing a ball cap (probably a ball-turret



gunner, too), who was from the Bronx, and was quite impressed by the women of Venus, Mars, etc. (Wow! Get a load o’ them gams!). In the very earliest films, even the rockets more resembled V-2s than what eventually did get into space.

However, we are assured that this is actually a photo from the Second World War, and a theatre of operations not really known to our Canadian lads and lasses. Where, then, is this exotic locale? And, what are those Dalek-like

structures? We will give you a hint: they are related to a great and very happy event in Canada’s history. Can you sing “Ca-na-da!”? So, detectives of the past, are you up to this challenge? If so, please let the editor, Bob Mugford ([bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:bob.mugford@outlook.com)) know your thoughts, or his humble author, John Redmond ([johnd.redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)).

### From the ‘Punitary’

Why did the bee get married? Because he found his honey.

### Murphy’s Other Laws

A man who can smile when things go wrong has thought of someone he can blame it on.

### Quotable Quotes

A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down. - *Arnold H Glasow*





*The President  
and the Directors  
of*

# Royal United Services Institute Vancouver Society

*request the pleasure of the company of you and your guests*

*at our*

## **Inaugural Annual Dinner**

*Celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day  
and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our 'Royal' Designation*

*to be held at*

*BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC*

*on*

*Saturday, the Twenty-Eighth of September 2019*

*at*

*six thirty for seven o'clock in the evening*

**RSVP by 18 September 2019**  
to [RSVP@rusivancouver.ca](mailto:RSVP@rusivancouver.ca)

Send payment to:  
Treasurer, RUSI Vancouver  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6J 3C7

**Dress:** Business Formal (Mess Dress Optional)

**Tariff:** \$50 per person  
Make cheques payable to: RUSI Vancouver

*Menu: Chicken Cordon Bleu or Vegetarian – please indicate choice on RSVP*

**15<sup>th</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY RCA**  
**&**  
**THE 78<sup>th</sup> FRASER HIGHLANDERS**  
**IRISH WHISKEY TASTING AND FUND RAISER**

**ARE YOU A PROUD GUNNER? A PROUD HIGHLANDER WHO SUPPORTS OUR HOME AT THE BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY? AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER WHO WANTS TO STAND TALL AND SHOW THEIR SUPPORT TO THE AIMS OF THE REGIMENT DURING ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR IN 2020?**

**WAIT NO LONGER!**

**All profits raised by the 15th Field Regimental Society and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders Fort Fraser Garrison will go towards supporting the 15 Field Centennial Projects next year in 2020.**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders invite you, and any like-minded guests of your acquaintance, to attend an Irish Whiskey fund raising and whisky tasting event. There will be food, draw prizes, and music.

For the Full 'Whiskey Fleet', Tickets are **\$55.00** per person by Credit Card, Cheque, or by exact change, otherwise your \$60 in bills will be gratefully accepted towards our good cause. Bernard Rowe, who will be relieving you of your burden of carrying cash, will meet you at the front door and will be most appreciative. For those who are driving, or prefer the options from the No-Host bar, you pay a meager **\$25.00**. **Only 50 tickets will be sold for the full whisky fleet! Bring guests!**

Dress is business casual. Kilts and highland dress, of course, are most welcome.

**DATE:** Friday – September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**TIME:** 1800 hrs – 2300 hrs

**LOCATION:** 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Ave Van, BC V6J 2C7

**DO NOT MISS OUT!**

**TO RESERVE YOUR TICKET CONTACT:** Major James Barrett  
Cell: (604) 916-1766  
E-Mail: [barrettjd007@gmail.com](mailto:barrettjd007@gmail.com)

Tax receipts will be issued for all donations upon request.