



## **Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Nov 24, 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.

**Last Lunch for 2015.** The Armoury will shut down completely for the winter break so our last lunch for this year is on Dec 9 and the first lunch of 2016 will be on Jan 6. The last lunch is traditionally a 'Ladies' lunch so we encourage attendees to bring spouses or significant others (but not both – that always gets messy). We are now starting to collect for Mrs Lum's annual 'Christmas Purse'. See me in the Mess to contribute.

**NOABC Speaker.** Change of venue. Please see notice at the end of newsletter.

**St Barbara's Day Special Guest Night** The deadline for RSVPs for this event is fast approaching. If you plan to attend, please let us know ASAP. **See invitation at end of this newsletter.**

**Commanding Officers Christmas Tea – December 13** The annual CO's Christmas Tea will be held on Sunday December 13, 2015. This is probably the most enjoyed event of the year. The cost, \$20pp, includes sherry, Mrs Lum's delicious hors d'oeuvres, as well as coffee and tea served by Regimental Ladies. The Regimental Band is sending one of its combos to entertain us as we mingle. The bar will be open for those of you who want more than sherry. Dress is suit and tie (or Regimental blazer and tie) for gentlemen and the equivalent for ladies. **See invitation at the end of the newsletter.**

### **New Year's Levée – 1 Jan 2016**

15 Fd Artillery Regiment is holding their annual Levée. The Messes will open for visitors at 1100hrs. A light lunch will be served starting around noon.

### **World War 2 - 1940**

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

**Nov 25<sup>th</sup>:** The plywood plane, the wooden wonder... the De Havilland Mosquito takes to the air for the first time. Like the Soviet Pe-2 or the Ju-88, the Mosquito will be a fast versatile aircraft equal to numerous roles.

**Nov 26<sup>th</sup>:** The Germans announce the establishment of the Warsaw Ghetto as a “health measure” – having extensively accused Jews of being disease reservoirs in their propaganda. The British mount carrier raids on Tripoli and Rhodes – the main Italian base in the Aegean.

**Nov 27<sup>th</sup>:** Admiral Somerville with a carrier, two battleships, seven cruisers and 14 destroyers, is attacked by Admiral Campioni with two battleships, seven heavy cruisers, and 16 destroyers, off Sardinia. The Italians decide to run-off at high speed shortly after fire is exchanged – to be fair to the Italian Navy’s reputation, Campioni (who died a heroic figure later in the war) was under strict orders not to engage unless he significantly outnumbered the enemy. The Iron Guard initiates several days of rioting in Romania.

**Nov 30<sup>th</sup>:** Greek troops enter Albania near Pogradec. Japan gives official recognition to the puppet Nanking government of Wang Ching-Wei.

**December 1940:** Two Italian Offensives Reversed The greatest of all the fires was directly in front of us. Flames seemed to whip hundreds of feet into the air. Pinkish-white smoke ballooned upward in a great cloud, and out of this cloud there gradually took shape - so faintly at first that we weren't sure we saw correctly - the gigantic dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. St. Paul's was surrounded by fire, but it came through. It stood there in its enormous proportions - growing slowly clearer and clearer, the way objects take shape at dawn. It was like a picture of some miraculous figure that appears before peace-hungry soldiers on a battlefield.

*-Story filed by Ernie Pyle, extracted from Ernie Pyle in England.*

**General:** Bad weather in the North Atlantic allows only one convoy to be attacked by U-Boats. Further south the submarines claim 37 of 82 lost Allied ships, and totally shipping losses amount to 357,300 tons. The Germans continue to bomb British cities, killing some 3,800 people this month.

## **Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan – Mandate Letter**

Nov 13, 2015 05:38 pm | David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen

**Defence Watch** will run the main portions of the ministerial mandate letters relating to defence and veterans in a three separate postings. Here is the letter sent to Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan. The letter was sent by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau:

As Minister of National Defence, your overarching goal will be to ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces are equipped and prepared, if called upon, to protect Canadian sovereignty, defend North America, provide disaster relief, conduct search and rescue, support United Nations peace operations, and contribute to the security of our allies and to allied and coalition operations abroad. It will be important that you ensure a close link between defence policy, foreign policy, and national security. I also ask you to work closely with your colleague, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, to ensure a seamless transition for Canadian Forces members to the programs and services of Veterans Affairs.

In particular, I will expect you to work with your colleagues and through established legislative, regulatory, and Cabinet processes to deliver on your top priorities:

- Work with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to end Canada’s combat mission in Iraq and Syria, refocusing Canada’s efforts in the region on the training of local forces and humanitarian support.
- Ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces have the equipment they need. This includes:
  - working with the Minister of Finance to maintain current National Defence spending levels, including current planned increases;
  - working with the Minister of Public Services and Procurement to launch an open and transparent competition to replace the CF-18 fighter aircraft, focusing on options that match Canada’s defence needs; and
  - working with the Minister of Public Services and Procurement to invest in strengthening the Navy, while meeting the commitments that were made as part of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy.
- Work with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to renew Canada’s commitment to United Nations peace operations. This includes:
  - making Canada’s specialized capabilities – from mobile medical teams, to engineering support, to aircraft that can carry supplies and personnel – available on a case-by-case basis;
  - working with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to help the United Nations respond more quickly to emerging and escalating conflicts and providing well-trained personnel to international initiatives that can be quickly deployed, such as mission commanders, staff officers, and headquarters units; and
  - leading an international effort to improve and expand the training of military and civilian personnel deployed on peace operations, while insisting that any peacekeepers involved in misconduct be held accountable by their own country and the United Nations.
- Maintain Canada’s strong commitments to the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
- Conduct an open and transparent review process to create a new defence strategy for Canada, replacing the now-outdated Canada First Defence Strategy.
- Renew Canada’s focus on surveillance and control of Canadian territory and approaches, particularly our Arctic regions, and increase the size of the Canadian Rangers.
- Work with senior leaders of the Canadian Armed Forces to establish and maintain a workplace free from harassment and discrimination.

- Work with the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence to reduce complexity, overhaul service delivery, and strengthen partnerships between National Defence and Veterans Affairs.
- Support the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in a review of existing measures to protect Canadians and our critical infrastructure from cyber-threats.
- Work with the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence to develop a suicide prevention strategy for Canadian Armed Forces personnel and veterans.

## **Pentagon Will Develop Thinking Machines to Defeat Future Enemies**

By Sandra I. Erwin



*Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work (left) speaks with New York Times editor Tom Shanker at the Reagan National Defense Forum*

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. — Ultra-smart computers and robots that crunch data at the speed of light will be key ingredients of the Pentagon’s strategy to deter and defeat future military adversaries.

“We already started to make investments,” said Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work. The specifics of how the Pentagon might use these advanced technologies and how they will be acquired will not be known for years, Work

said, but the Pentagon today is convinced that using computers to aid decision making is a “big idea.” Autonomous computers that can collaborate with human brains will be central to what the Defense Department calls its “offset strategy” to ensure technological dominance for the coming decades, Work said Nov. 7 during a talk at the Reagan National Defense Forum at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. He threw around catchphrases like “human machine collaboration” and “combat teaming” to describe this vision of the future.

Work for years has called on the Pentagon to make ambitious and bold investments to create technological “surprises” as the United States did during the Cold War, when defense planners figured out how to “offset” the Warsaw Pact’s much larger conventional forces with nuclear weapons. That advantage did not last, though, as the Soviet Union quickly moved to build its own nukes. The next wave of innovation came in the 1970s when Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and Undersecretary William Perry pushed a new offset strategy built around the use of digital microelectronics and information technology to counter conventional forces. The result was a wave of innovation in smart weapons, sensors and command-and-control networks. Work credits the second offset for propelling the United States into unchallenged superpower status. The third offset will be about machines that can learn and operate “literally at the speed of light,” he said. The tech industry already has created supercomputers that can beat human chess champions, and the Pentagon plans to ride that innovation wave into the next level of autonomy

and artificial intelligence technology.

The idea is that only “learning machines” can keep up with quickly morphing threats like cyber or electronic attacks, and react far more quickly than human brains ever could. Computers also would help military commanders figure out how to respond to incursions against U.S. assets in outer space or massive hypersonic missile strikes. “You need machines to help you solve problems right away,” Work said. “The way we’ll use machines is to help humans make better decisions faster.” This is a significant departure from the way defense and deterrence strategies were developed in the past, he explained. “This assumes that an adversary changes strategy all the time.” An illustration of how the Pentagon increasingly values advanced data analysis — as a capability that must go hand in hand with conventional mega weapons — is the F-35 joint strike fighter. “The F-35 a flying sensor-computer that sucks in an enormous amount of data, correlates it, analyzes it and displays it for the pilot on his helmet,” Work said. Legacy fighter jets like the F-16 might be as good or better than the F-35 at traditional aerial dog-fighting, but “we are absolutely confident that the F-35 will be a war winner, because it helps make better decisions.” Another tenet of the third offset strategy is to insert robots more aggressively into combat operations, Work said. “If 10 years from now, if the first person through a breach isn’t a frigging robot, then shame on us,” he declared. “Secretary [Ashton] Carter is absolutely certain we can do this.”

Work cautioned that the third offset is not purely a technology game, but also will require unconventional concepts for how forces operate and organize. Having a “vibrant” mix of military, civilian and contractor innovators also will be essential, he added. Carter has been insistent that the Pentagon recruit start-ups and commercial tech firms in Silicon Valley that are on the cutting edge of big data and robotics applications. “It’s going to take some time” to bring this to fruition, Work said. “There will be a period of experimentation.” Human-machine collaboration will not only be used to fight major wars but also low-intensity conflicts. Today’s counterterrorism campaign, for instance, is a network of computers, drones and special operations teams that work with massive amounts of data. In the future, Work said, “You don’t go after an automated solution. You go after big data analytics.”

In the face of Islamic State militants who flood the Internet with millions of social-media posts, for instance, advanced machines would be able to crunch the data, and suggest “how we might be able to go after them.” Defense officials are laying the groundwork of the third offset strategy, with the expectation that future administrations will continue the effort, which could take decades. “We want to have the intellectual underpinning to set us on this path,” said Work. During the remainder of the current administration, the plan is to conduct demonstrations and experiments. “The transition from administration to administration over a long period of time is based on a commitment that this works, that it gives us an advantage.” For the foreseeable future, “We’ll do more demonstrations than procurements. We won’t be able to buy capabilities as fast as we’d like. We want to make sure we keep pace with potential competitors’ capabilities.”

## **ALL AT SEA or... Road (?) Testing the Bren Gun Carrier**

by Gerry Stevens [Wargamer Vol.3 No.2 October 1975]

First, some formalities: Carrier, full-track, Bren.  
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company of Canada  
Number built: Nearly 34,000

For those unfamiliar with the shape and purpose of the 'Bren Gun Carrier' (as it was familiarly known) this diabolical device was a light, full-tracked reconnaissance vehicle, capable of carrying 3 Bren LMGs, ready for action. The engine sat in the middle of the back end. All around it were light steel sides, cunningly riveted together. At a distance, one might imagine a small, open-topped, turretless tank. Closer, one is reminded of a vicious bathtub. On first approaching the Bren Carrier, one is struck by the stark simplicity of its lines... straight, flat sides which will never go out of style because they never were in style in the first place; plus the spindly appearance of the bogie wheels, which look as though they were adapted from clothes line pulleys.

On climbing into the Bren Carrier, one is struck by the sharpness of its line, usually across the shins. This pain soon passes though, when one's concentration passes to getting the feet down into the space under that silly looking steering wheel (Steering wheel? On a full-tracked vehicle?) and into the space provided for feet. Eventually, however, the tester is seated behind the wheel, ready for the next adventure. Visibility from the driving position, co-driver position and every other position in the Bren Carrier is excellent. A full 360 degrees in all directions, plus up, and often down, but more about this later.

The paint job is Canadian Army Brown, the best-selling colour of the years 1940-1945. In the case of the Carrier, it appears everywhere, with such notable exceptions as the instruments (black and white), radio mast mounting (black) and tail lights (red). Even the seats, set out in a tough, even child-proof canvas, have been painted brown. High-lighting this colour scheme are what might be called "accent flashes", those little areas where the paint has been scraped away by busily working hands and feet.

Starting the engine is simplicity itself. Flick the off-on switch, (no key, of course) pull out the choke knob (brown) and pull up on the floor-mounted, direct-action starting lever. Immediately, Henry Ford's popular V8-60 springs to life in its little un-insulated steel box that is located directly behind the driver. While this might seem noisy, compared with the Sherman M-4 the Bren Carrier is quietness itself; at least quiet enough for the passenger's howls to be heard.

The foot controls are conventional. After engaging first gear in a long and grinding conversation, the clutch was let out, possibly a bit quickly and we were away, I thought. However, letting out the clutch on the carrier brought strange and instant reaction. The nose of the vehicle rose high into the air, the tail squatted down, and we lurched forward. The nose

dropped, the tail rose, and we lurched forward more. The nose arose, the tail dropped and we lurched forward more even more. The nose dropped, the tail rose (thank God, a little less) and we move forward more quickly. Eventually, the Carrier settled down to an even and sedate pace on the paved area, at least long enough for my passenger to be heard muttering “Jesus Christ!” This might have been a prayer. However, progress is not by first gear alone. So the shift was made, in true automobile fashion. The clutch was pushed in, the nose dropped, the tail rose. The shift lever was moved to second. The nose arose, the tail dropped. Hoping to catch the little Mother on the down-stroke, I let the clutch out hurriedly. In mid-down-stroke, the nose rose, then pitched forward again. My passenger screamed, and grabbed the two little handles place at the front of the co-driver compartment for just such occasions. Shifting into third was contemplated, then rejected as foolhardy, particularly since neither brakes not steering had been experienced.

I decided to test the brakes. You guessed. Down came the nose, up went the tail. My passenger yelled and gripped the handles. Startled, my foot came off the brakes. Up came the nose, down went the tail. Eventually the carrier slowed down, having shown me that it would not be readily tamed. Steering was next. First, of course, you should understand how the Universal Carrier, Bren, is steered. When the steering wheel is turned a little bit, the entire front bogie assembly moves in the proper direction, thereby bending the road tracks, and the Carrier turns. Turn the steering wheel even more, and the track on the inside slows sown, and the outside track races ahead to push the vehicle around the corner. It sounds very simple, but in actual fact, the whole ugly mess accompanied by pitching back and forth. And since the affair is not very smooth, there’s a lot of swaying sideways as well.

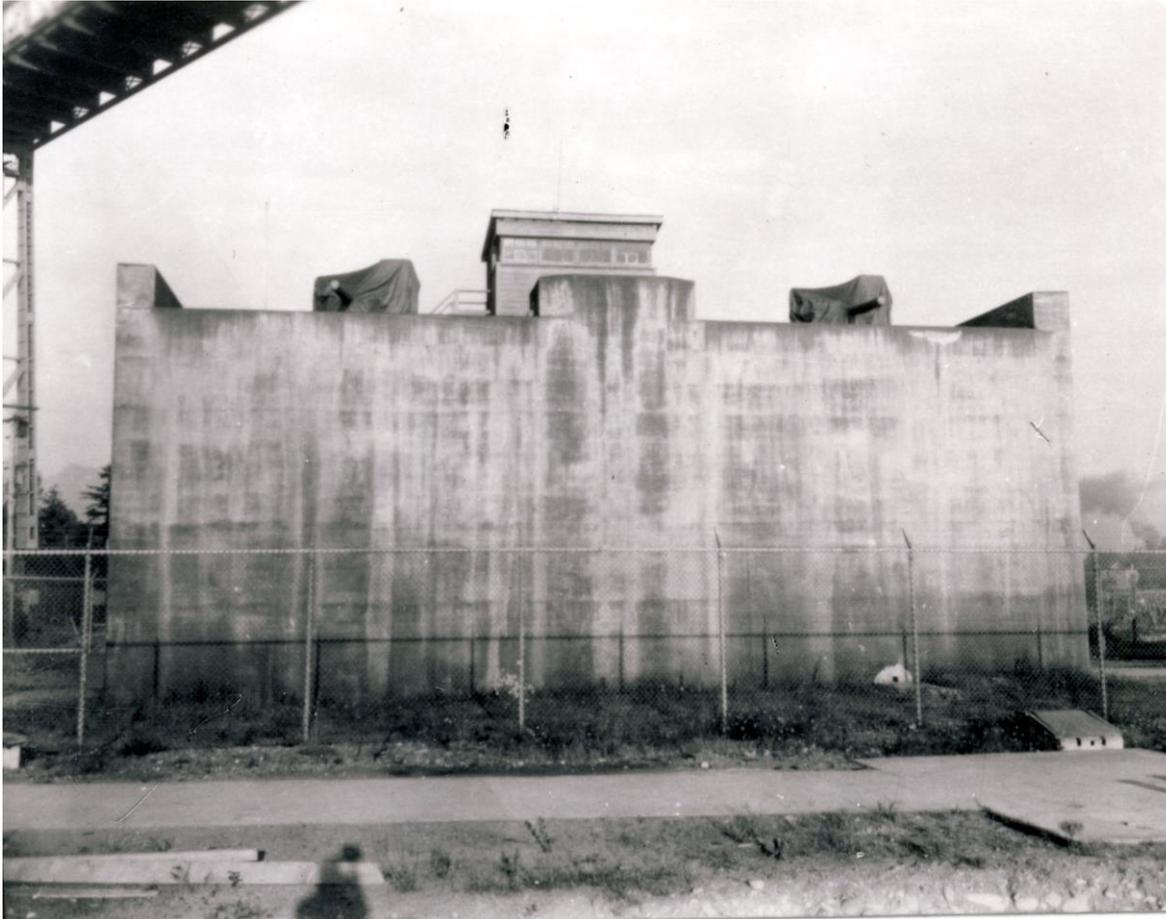
Eventually, having gotten the starting, stopping and turning worked out, it was time to visit the true test track, a nameless assault course at a nameless Canadian Army base. It was a short visit. The first ditch, taken at some 10 miles per hour, stood the little carrier up on its nose. The first bump sent its nose skyward like a mad brown rocket. The next ditch skinned my passenger’s nose. The next skinned my nose. To avoid a trench the steering wheel was spun(?) to the right, and the carrier spun in a circle and still went into the ditch, where it stalled. The silence that followed was broken by my erstwhile passenger being violently sick. The test was over. And the tester’s opinion? The Universal Carrier is a handy, fast, easy-to-drive vehicle which is excellent for carrying heavy radios, ammution and other loads. But is should never be approached by soldiers.

## **Who is it?**



**Last Week:** Had a few replies on this one. Most had the same reaction as me – That’s Lt Col Gordy Platt looking at the camera. The rest look familiar but can’t remember any names. One person thought that the person on the right of the picture might be Col Alan McGavin. Col Platt commanded the Regt from 67-69 so this picture would have been taken at a St Barbs dinner in that period.

**This Week:** Our quiz this week is part of our famous series “What is that concrete thing?”, which in the past has popularly featured bollards, sidewalks and seawalls, all of a military provenance. So successful was that series (especially the one featuring the actual step in London that Guy Simonds slipped on in 1944), that we have decided to go one step further and



feature an actual structure this time. This imposing thing is actually known to your author, so your answers might be treated with ridicule if you don't do your research thoroughly and precisely. Wild guesses will not be accepted, but humorous ones might be. Look carefully at the photo, and a great hint

will soon be obvious.

Your intelligent research can be sent to either the editor, or the author, John Redmond ([johnd.\\_redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd._redmond@telus.net)). Thank you for your kind attention to military history.

### **From the 'Punitary'**

What do prisoners use to call each other? Cell phones.

### **Murphy's other Laws**

Any inanimate object, regardless of its position, configuration or purpose, may be expected to perform at any time in a totally unexpected manner for reasons that are either entirely obscure or else completely mysterious.

### **Quotable Quotes**

Politics is not the art of the possible. It consists in choosing between the disastrous and the unpalatable. - *John Kenneth Galbraith*

*The Commanding Officer,  
Lieutenant Colonel Brent Purcell,  
Requests the Pleasure of your Company*



*at the  
Annual Christmas Tea  
to be held on  
Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
in the  
15<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment Officers' Mess  
Commencing at two o'clock  
in the afternoon.*

Dress: Jacket & Tie  
Cost: \$ 20 per person at the door  
Please sign up at the Bar or  
RSVP to [dpgayton@gmail.com](mailto:dpgayton@gmail.com)



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

*15<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:Richard.Jones6@forces.gc.ca)  
Tariff: \$ 105***

***Payable to "15 Fd Regt'l Society"  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7  
Dress: Mess Kit or Black Tie***

## **NOABC Monthly Luncheon Wednesday November 25<sup>th</sup> 2015**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE - TEMPORARY CHANGE OF VENUE**

The Officers Mess at Bessborough Armouries is undergoing asbestos removal with work beginning mid-November. As the Mess is not available the final NOABC lunch of the year will take place at:

- **White Spot Restaurant (Private Room)**  
**1616 West Georgia Street (at Cardero)**  
**Vancouver, BC.**

- **Time: 1130 hrs for 1200 hrs**

Parking available.

Relaxed Dress: Business Casual (ties optional!)

Regular menu prices apply.

*(Regular lunches will resume at Bessborough as soon as the work is complete)*

**Guest speaker:** Sgt. Michael Reece (retd) West Yorkshire Police (UK)

**Topic:** "The GyroCopter Experience"

Michael is a trailblazer in terms of these aircraft. He is one of two pilots in Western Canada and the only instructor for the GyroCopter. He has years of experience in flying and has taught armed forces personnel in their use. He will provide an overview on the aircraft, its history including military development which includes naval as well as air forces. He will describe how the aircraft will make an impact on recreation and business applications here and elsewhere in the future. Michael will show a short video, will bring along models and offer a PowerPoint presentation.

Note: This is the final NOABC lunch presentation for 2015. The next is scheduled for late January 2016.

*David Reece, Social Director*

Naval Officers Assoc. of BC