

## **Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Mar 27, 2018**

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>

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

Mar 28	NOABC Speaker lunch – Michael Armstrong, Chief Pilot, Fraser River Port Auth
Apr 07	Uniform fitting – 25pdr Detachment BCR St Julien Dinner
Apr 08	Vimy Day Parade
Apr 18	Seely Luncheon – Swartz Bay VAA Day at the Armoury. AGM
May 26	VAA Artillery Day Gun Camp

## **World War 2 – 1943**

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

**Mar 28<sup>th</sup>:** Von Armin takes stock of his southern defenders at Wadi Akarit, and the situation does not look good; the Mareth Line Battle has savaged 164<sup>th</sup> Light, and badly mauled 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Panzer; 90<sup>th</sup> Light is in fairly good shape as are the Italians – from a material perspective only.

**Mar 29<sup>th</sup>:** The last Axis units from the Mareth Line reach Wadi Akarit. A Norwegian Commando, Jan Baalsrud, is the sole survivor of his team of four after their sabotage mission runs afoul of a German e-boat. Jan's escape turns into an epic of survival that takes nine of his toes (gangrene) and some eight months before he returns to the UK; where he receives Norway's St Olav's Medal with Oak Leaves.

**Mar 31<sup>st</sup>:** The Soviets take Anastasyevsk, in the Kuban. US Troops occupy positions around Morobe in New Guinea.

## April 1943: Cruelty and Courage

**General:** The shift starts to occur in the Battle of the Atlantic – 15 out of 240 deployed U-boats are lost, but so are 64 merchant ships of 335,000 tons in total. The RAF dumps about 10,000 tons of bombs on Germany and the USAAF adds another 1,000. Allied airpower in the Med is preoccupied with interdicting supplies to Tunisia.

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** German troops hold Patton away from El Guettar.

## Found Mortar Spurs Larger Blair Rifle Range Military Search

*An update to previous story*

Brent Richter / North Shore News March 21, 2018



*A three-inch mortar found at the Blair Rifle Range last month.  
photo supplied, Department of Defence*

there last month. The military sent contractors to survey the site last month as part of its Unexploded Explosive Ordinance program set up to ensure nothing deadly was left behind at any former training sites, as the lands off Mount Seymour Parkway were until 1968. In late February they found a three-inch mortar about a foot underground. “Oh, we absolutely are going to be doing more work there. The goal of this was to confirm one way or the other, whether we had mortars and/or grenades,” said Nick Monteiro, project director within DND’s directorate of contaminated sites. “That increases the risk profile of this site a little bit.” For security reasons, they won’t say exactly where the mortar was other than that it was about 50 metres from the nearest trail near the northernmost “butt stop” – a berm of raised earth at the end of the range used to stop rounds.

Explosives disposal experts from Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt arrived three days later. “They picked that item up. They looked at it to determine whether it was safe to move, and they determined that it was. They’ve transported that to CFB Chilliwack for eventual disposal,” Monteiro said. There was some initial question whether the mortar would have been an inert

training round, or one loaded with “something a little bit more dangerous.” After planting a charge on it and detonating it at, the disposal team confirmed the mortar was the real deal loaded with explosives. Crews also found a number of two-inch mortars (smoke rounds) left near the original firing positions. Finding the mortar was somewhat unexpected, Monteiro said, especially as there had never been any other reported finds there in the last 50 years. There are anecdotes about them being used there but there is nothing in any of the official records. The matter of grenades possibly being left behind is also a possibility, Monteiro said. “That’s been a bone of contention over the years because at one point, there was a request to have permission to train with grenades and it was denied. It was never approved, at least in the documentation,” he said. “We haven’t been able to corroborate that. The survey hasn’t been able to corroborate that. We do know of the two areas that were purported to be possible pits where they put grenades that didn’t go off, but again, we haven’t been able to identify anything at this stage.”



*A Department of National Defence Map shows the approximate layout of the Blair Rifle Range.*

After 1968, the land was handed over to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the province. The province and the CMHC reached a deal in early 2018 to allow recreational use on the site with trail maintenance being taken on by the North Shore Mountain Bike Association. On April 4, National Defence will be holding two information sessions to update the community on the story so far and future plans. The sessions run from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. at the Parkgate Community Centre. In the meantime, Monteiro said people can continue to enjoy the trails as they would normally. “We still stick with our premise that the current use of that site is not causing any additional health and safety impacts to any of the users. We are identifying items that are under the ground and as long as nobody is digging there, there isn’t an



issue.” That said, Monteiro is advising amateur bomb detectors to stay home. “We don’t want people going out there and saying ‘Let’s see what we can find. That’s not a good idea.’”

## **Leo Gradwell DSC RNVR**

He led three merchant ships from the disaster of Convoy PQ 17 into Arkhangelsk.

*Simon Peters September 21, 2017*



Leo Gradwell DSC was a British barrister, a magistrate and a Second World War Royal Navy volunteer, who in July 1942, against orders, led his own RN-adapted trawler HMS Ayrshire and three

merchant ships from the disaster of Convoy PQ17 into Arkhangelsk, Soviet Union. At the outbreak of the Second World War, Gradwell was commissioned into the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve as a Lieutenant. He was given command of the anti-submarine warfare adapted 575 long tons (584 t) Middlesbrough-built trawler MS Ayrshire, renamed HMS Ayrshire (FY 225), with a crew of volunteer fishermen.

He was attached as part of the defensive net around Convoy PQ17 and on receiving the third order to scatter, on 4 July 1942, Gradwell concluded that as he was heading north to the Arctic ice shelf, he might as well take some merchant ships with him. Leading his convoy of Ayrshire and three merchant vessels – the Panamanian-registered Troubador, the Ironclad, and the American-registered Silver Sword – he proceeded north using only a sextant and the Times World Geographic Pocket Book, as his vessel lacked charts for this part of the Atlantic. On reaching the Arctic ice pack, the convoy found itself stuck fast, so the ships stopped engines and banked their fires. Gradwell arranged a defence, formulated around the fact that the Troubador was carrying a cargo of bunkering coal and drums of white paint: the crews painted all the vessels white, covered decks with white linen, and arranged the Sherman tanks on the merchant vessels decks into a defensive ring, with loaded main guns. After a period of waiting, and having evaded the reconnoitring Luftwaffe aircraft, finding themselves unstuck they proceeded to the Matochkin Strait in Novaya Zemlya. They were found there by a flotilla of corvettes that escorted the four-ship convoy, plus two other merchant vessels, to the Russian port of Archangel, arriving on 25 July.

He was Appointed Distinguished Service Cross on 15 September 1942, and later went on to command the ASW adapted whaler HMS Thirlmere (FY 206).

## **The Slouch Hat**

The slouch hat is an object strongly associated with Australian identity.



The Army refers to the slouch hat by its official designation; Hat khaki fur felt (KFF) - to everyone else it is a 'Slouch Hat'. The word 'slouch' refers to the sloping brim. The brim is made from rabbit-fur felt or wool felt and is always worn with a puggaree. History has it that the origins of the Slouch Hat

began with the Victorian Mounted Rifles; a hat of similar design had been worn in South Africa by the Cape Mounted Rifles for many years before 1885. The design of the Victorian Mounted Rifle hat originated from headgear of native police in Burma where Lieutenant-Colonel Tom Price had recognised its value.

The Victorian hat was an ordinary bush felt hat turned up on the right side. The intention of turning up the right side of the hat was to ensure it would not be caught during the drill movement of "shoulder arms" from "order arms". By 1890, State military commandants had agreed that all Australian forces, except the artillery corps, should wear a looped-up hat of uniform pattern that was turned up on the right side in Victoria and Tasmania, and on the left side in all other States to allow for different drill movements. The Slouch Hat became standard issue headgear in 1903 and its brim position was mostly standardised. The slouch hat became a famous symbol of the Australian fighting man during World War One and continued to be worn throughout World War Two. Its use since that time has made it a national symbol.

General Bridges, the first commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Imperial Force, was found wearing his slouch hat back to front when he was fatally wounded at Gallipoli. As a mark of respect and remembrance for Bridges, when the slouch hat is worn at Royal Military College - Duntroon, it has become traditional to wear the chinstrap buckle on the right side of the face and the brim down. This tradition commenced at the Royal Military College in 1932. However, when the slouch hat is worn ceremonially, for example on ANZAC Day, it is worn in accordance with the wider Army custom - brim up and chinstrap buckle on the left-hand side. Today, Army members wear the slouch hat with the brim down to provide additional protection from the sun when not performing ceremonial duties.

The term 'puggaree' originates from the Hindu word, 'Pagri,' meaning a turban or thin scarf of muslin. Intended for insulation, the puggaree was a traditional Indian head-wrap, adapted by the British for headwear worn in hot, sunny regions. During World War One (1914-1918) a plain khaki cloth band was worn and this practice continued until compulsory training was suspended in 1929. Following the introduction of Voluntary Training in 1930, new puggarees were issued to the Commonwealth Military Force with different coloured folds denoting Arm or Service. During World War Two, a flat type of band was issued. Troops who were on active service in the Middle East at the time introduced a folded puggaree as a distinguishing mark of active service. Later, the Army reverted to various types of plain bands, green dyed puggarees for example, for jungle warfare. However, the official puggaree at the conclusion of World War Two was still the flat band. The current puggaree has seven pleats, one for each state and one for the Australian Territories. It is made from light khaki coloured cotton and is worn on the slouch hat with a unit colour patch sewn on the right side. While the majority of the Australian Army wear the light khaki coloured puggaree, there are slight variations for members of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, and the Corps of Staff Cadets.



Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, wear jungle green puggaree. The dark green puggaree was introduced during the Battalion's service in Malaya over the period 1959-61. Unable to get puggarees from Australia for an official parade; the task of producing them was given to the Battalion tailor, Mr. Mohavved Beseek. Mr Beseek used 'bush shirts' (common issue British field uniform at the time) to make the puggarees as he was unable to obtain the khaki material locally or from Australia. It is thought that the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel W. Morrow decided that the green puggaree would be the puggaree worn by the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, in Malaya. After the battalion's return to Australia, the dark green puggaree was adopted for permanent use. Because the dark green puggaree is so distinctive, the battalion does not wear a colour patch.

Royal Military College staff cadets wear a distinctive puggaree of olive drab colour. The puggaree has eight pleats, with seven representing each state and one for the Australian Territories. The eighth pleat signifies the graduation of the first international cadet through the Royal Military College who hailed from New Zealand. Slouch hats worn by members of the Armoured Corps are adorned with Emu plumes, a tradition that originated with the Queensland Mounted Infantry during the great shearers' strike in Queensland in 1891. During this time, the Queensland Mounted Infantry were called out, as soldiers to aid the Civil Power. As time permitted, the soldiers would participate in a sporting activity where they would ride their

horses alongside the emus, plucked the breast feathers, and placed the feathers on their hat. The Gympie Squadron was the first to wear the feathers, a fashion soon followed by the regiment. The Queensland government permitted the Regiment to adopt the plume as part of its uniform in recognition of its service. In 1915 then Minister for Defence Sir G F Pearce granted all units of the Australian Light Horse permission to wear the plume, which they refer to as 'Kangaroo feathers'. Emu tufts of approved design and dimensions are now worn by all members of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps as an item of dress. All Royal Australian Armoured Corps personnel were given authority to wear Emu plumes in the slouch hat, brim up or down in 1996, this was extended to all personnel serving in the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Regiment in 2000.

## **Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates**

Here's the latest updates:

Yakima, Working Group in Ottawa <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2018.html>

Band at the Highland Homecoming <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2016.html>

Military Ball <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2012.html>

St Barbara's Day <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2006.html>

St Barbara's Day <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2005.html>

St Barbara's Day <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2004.html>

St Barbara's Day <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2002.html>

Gun training <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1986.html>

The 1976 Yearbook was refreshed <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1975.html>

Ted Edmonds photos – Royal Tour 1939 <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1939.html>

Ted Edmonds photos – Macauley Point training ex <http://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1938.html>

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

## **Who Is It**



**Last Week:** This a British 12-pounder, Mark I that was sold to the Japanese in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. When they invaded the Aleutians, the Japanese mounted this gun on Kiska and it was subsequently captured by the US-Canadian forces and brought back to the interior of BC by the 24<sup>th</sup>



Field Regt. It was eventually mounted in front of the HQ building at Vernon Army Cadet Camp, where this photo was taken.

**This Week:** Few can deny the beauty of some of the aeroplanes that defended our Empire in days of yore. Who can forget the graceful lines of the Handley-Page Heyford, or the streamlined Fairey Swordfish. Of course, foreigners tried to compete, but could not keep up to the high standards of our ships. The Amiot 143 was elegant, if a bit flash, and the Stipa-Caproni did have flair, admittedly. However, both were outdone by this lovely flying machine. Nonetheless, this aircraft is not too well-known, outside of designer circles. This is because it did not serve in the home stations, being put into service in various outposts of British civilization, such as the aerodrome in Lower Dhobi-wallah. Given that the natives were only armed with sharpened cucumbers, it was quite effective.



So, dear Brylcreem Boys and Girls, what is this mighty flagship of our (former) Empire? What powerful engines sped it on its way, and where and when did it serve? Your musings may be sent either to the long-suffering editor, [bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:bob.mugford@outlook.com) or to the author, John Redmond ([johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)). Per Ardua ad Astra!

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

What dog can't bark? A hot dog.

### **Murphy's Other Laws**

Don't argue with a moron; he'll just beat you down with experience.

### **Quotable Quotes**

In fair weather prepare for foul. - *Thomas Fuller*



## VAA Gun Detachment Uniform Fitting



# Khaki Drill Uniform Fitting

**Saturday, 7 April 2018  
1300 Hours**

The Khaki Drill uniforms for the 25 Pounder re-enactment detachment have arrived!

Next step is a fitting session at the premises of  
International Movie Services

3428 262 St, Aldergrove, BC V4W 2X2

RSVP – [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)



## VAA Day and AGM – 18 April 2018



Vancouver Artillery Association  
presents

# Artillery Wednesday

Every Third Wednesday of the Month!

*(Subject to holiday interference)*

**Wednesday, 18 April 2018**

1030-1145 – Museum Open

1130-1300 – Lunch in the Mess for \$20.00

1300-1500 – Introducing the 1874 9-Pounder

1800 -1900 – Annual General meeting

1900 -2130 – Museum Open

2130 – Retire to the Mess!

*C'mon down and reacquaint yourself with the Association*



## Artillery Day 2018



# Artillery Day 2018



The  
**Vancouver Artillery Association**  
is hosting an  
**Artillery Demonstration**  
on  
**Saturday, 26 May 2018**

The intent of the Artillery Demonstration is to deploy artillery detachments in public areas throughout the Lower Mainland of British Columbia where artillery units have had a presence today and in the past.

Do you own artillery ordnance that could be part of this display?

Contact Leon Jensen OMM CD for additional details – [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

## BCR St Julien Dinner



*The Commanding Officer  
and Officers of  
The British Columbia Regiment (Duke of Connaught's Own)  
Request the Pleasure of Your Company at the Annual  
St. Julien Dinner  
to be held at The Drill Hall  
on Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018*

*Dress: Mess Kit / Black Tie*

*Timings: 1900 for 1930 Hours*

*Tariff: \$100 (Cheques Made Out to the "BCR Officers' Mess")*

*RSVP: With Enclosed Reply Card, or*

*Via email to the PMC, Maj Adam McLeod at: [adammcLeod@gmail.com](mailto:adammcLeod@gmail.com)*



The Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia  
Founded 1919

## MONTHLY LUNCH PROGRAM

Wednesday March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Officers Mess  
Bessborough Armoury  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC.

1130 am bar open  
1200 noon lunch  
1 pm speaker  
4 course hot lunch  
\$20 per person

Dress – Business attire, blazers tie etc

*Speaker*  
***Michael Armstrong***  
*Chief Pilot*  
*Fraser River Port Authority*

RSVP for lunch numbers please to [dreese@telus.net](mailto:dreese@telus.net) or phone or text  
778-227-8203 by 1600 hrs  
Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup> 2018





**SEELY LUNCHEON 2018**  
**THE CANADIAN CAVALRY BRIGADE**  
**The Battle of Moreuil Wood**  
**30 March 1918**

YOU AND YOUR GUESTS ARE MOST CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND  
THE 99<sup>TH</sup> COMMEMORATION  
OF THE BATTLE OF MOREUIL WOOD WITH THE SEELY LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF  
MAJOR GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN EDWARD BERNARD SEELY,  
1<sup>ST</sup> BARON MOTTISTONE CB, CMG, DSO, PC, TD, JP, DL.  
COMMANDER OF THE CANADIAN CAVALRY BRIGADE WHO EXECUTED THE CHARGE ON  
30 MARCH 1918.

ON THAT AUSPICIOUS DAY,  
THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS,  
LORD STRATHCONA'S HORSE (ROYAL CANADIANS) AND  
THE FORT GARRY HORSE SUPPORTED BY  
THE ROYAL CANADIAN HORSE ARTILLERY  
CONDUCTED THE LAST GREAT CAVALRY CHARGE OF WORLD WAR ONE

**The Seely Luncheon will commence at 1100hrs and conclude at approximately**

**1400hrs to meet ferry schedules**

**18 April 2018**

AT

SIDNEY NORTH SAANICH YACHT CLUB  
SWARTZ BAY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Dress**

REGIMENTAL BLAZER AND TIE

**Tariff - \$35.00**

OUR INTENTION IS CAMARADERIE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION.

RSVP

DAVID SCANDRETT - [SCAND@SHAW.CA](mailto:SCAND@SHAW.CA)



## VANCOUVER VIMY DAY COMMITTEE

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March 13, 2018

Greetings,

You or your delegate are cordially invited to attend and to place a wreath on behalf of your organization at the Vimy Day Commemoration at Mountain View Cemetery in Vancouver on Sunday, April 8, 2018.

Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Judith Guichon, will attend.

Please confirm your attendance and order a wreath not later than **March 23, 2018**.

A wreath can be ordered from the Vancouver Poppy Fund at [vancouverpoppyfund@telus.net](mailto:vancouverpoppyfund@telus.net) that will include a ribbon on which your organization name is printed. Wreaths will be delivered in advance to Mountain View Cemetery.

Send the name and title of the individuals who are designated to place the wreath to [lhccathcart@gmail.com](mailto:lhccathcart@gmail.com) not later than **April 3, 2017**. The order of wreath placement will be sent to you on April 5, 2018.

On April 8 we ask that you arrive by 10:10 a.m., park, directed to the ceremony area, shown your wreath and be seated by 10:30 a.m., to await the Army cadet parade and the arrival of the Lieutenant Governor.

Entry to the cemetery is 5455 Fraser Street, opposite 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue. If you require more information contact Cameron Cathcart @ [lhccathcart@gmail.com](mailto:lhccathcart@gmail.com) or at 604 682 5453.

We look forward to your attendance at the Vimy Day Commemoration and Army cadet parade at Mountain View Cemetery on Sunday, April 8, 2018.

Thank you.

The Vancouver Vimy Day Committee



**The Naval Officers' Association of British Columbia  
Founded 1919**

*The President and Directors of  
The Naval Officers' Association of  
British Columbia*

*request the pleasure of your company and guest(s)  
at dinner.*

*We shall commemorate the 73rd anniversary of  
The Battle of the Atlantic  
on*

*Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup> 2018*

*1830 for 1930*

*HMCS DISCOVERY*

*Guest of Honor*

*Commodore J.D.Zwick, OMM, CD*

*Commander*

*Canadian Fleet Pacific and  
Commander Naval Training System*

*Cost: \$85.00 per person  
Mess Dress or Black Tie  
(Ladies Equivalent)  
Decorations (Miniatures)*

*RSVP on or before Thursday April 19th 2018*

*by using the attached reservation form.*



NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

RESERVATION FOR THE BATTLE OF ATLANTIC MESS DINNER

Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> 2018 at HMCS DISCOVERY, 1200 Stanley Park Drive (1830 for 1930 hrs)

Rank/Rank(Ret'd)/Mr./Mrs./Ms.: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation (i.e. military unit, civic organization): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ and E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Members/Guests:

Accompanied By:

Rank/Rank(Ret'd)/Mr./Mrs./ Ms.	First Name	Last Name	Meal Selectio n *	Rank/Rank(Ret'd) / Mr./Mrs./Ms.	First Name	Last Name	Meal Selectio n *

\*Menu: Canadian Angus Prime Rib Eye of Beef OR Santa Fe Chicken Breast OR Wild Mushroom Stuffed Canneloni  
Vegetarian, wild mushrooms, avocado, tomato, onion and feta cheese with chili lime cream sauce.

CHOOSE ONE PER GUEST

1. Roast Beef    2. Chicken    3. Canneloni Vegetarian

- Meal tariff - \$85.00. Cheque Money Order (Bank Draft) or etransfer accepted. Many regrets but we cannot accept credit cards.
- Please make your Cheque, Bank Draft or Money Order payable to the Naval Officers' Association of BC.
  - Etransfers to dreese@telus.net code word is Horatio Nelson
- Please e-mail and/or deliver this form by regular mail and your cheque to the address below:

David Reece  
783 North Dollarton Highway  
North Vancouver, BC.  
V7G1N5  
604-929-1702 (landline)

- If you mail this form and cheque and are unsure that it will arrive by Thursday, April 19th 2018, please