



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Jan 5, 2016

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

Wednesday Lunches The 15 Field Officers Mess weekly lunches start again tomorrow. The Mess serves a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. Jacket and tie required, equivalent for ladies.

World War 2 - 1940

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

Jan 6th: Roosevelt's makes his celebrated Four Freedoms Speech to Congress. There is no freedom from fear for the 25,000 Italians in Tobruk as XIII Corps has just started to sink its teeth into them.

Jan 8th: The Greeks resume their offensive in Albania. RAF Wellingtons hit Naples and damage the battleship Giulio Cesare. Roosevelt gives the 1942 budget for the US – with a record setting \$17.5 billion in expenditures, of which 10.8 billion is for defense.

Jan 10th: Thailand invades French Indochina to take advantage of current circumstances and secure disputed border territories in Cambodia and Laos. The Thais have 50,000 troops, 150 combat aircraft of varying types, an ex-RN destroyer and nine Italian torpedo boats. They will be victorious on land, defeated at sea, and will – like the Vichy French – accede to a Japanese offer of resolution. The Lend-Lease bill is introduced to Congress – its prominent opponents will include Senator Wheeler, Senator Nye, Joe Kennedy Sr. and Charles Lindbergh. The Soviets and Germans ink a trade agreement to swap raw material for German machinery. The Greeks take Klisura in Albania after four Italian divisions fall back. X Fliegerkorps opens its offensive against Malta by damaging HMS Illustrious.

Jan 11th: Hitler orders the creation of the Afrika Korps and decides to limit the British in North Africa. British cruisers Gloucester and Southampton depart Malta for Gibraltar, but JU-87s damage HMS Gloucester and sink HMS Southampton.

After Afghanistan, Marines Seek Lighter, More Agile Artillery

Dec 22, 2015 | by Hope Hodge Seck

The Marine Corps is in the early stages of a complex revamp of its artillery doctrine that will enable the force to be lighter, faster and more lethal in order to respond to future conflicts and a new style of fighting. At the heart of this revamp is Expeditionary Force 21, the Corps' new concept of fighting that emphasizes smaller units functioning independently over distributed areas in Pacific littoral zones and other regions. Among the ideas the Corps is testing out is that of having artillery platoons provide direct support to Marine companies for ship-to-shore maneuvers and other expeditionary movements. Earlier this month, some 200 troops from 10th Marine Regiment out of Camp Lejeune, N.C. participated in an experiment that paired different weapons from their artillery arsenal with a company landing team to determine the feasibility of this approach in realistic fighting conditions.



Marines with Golf Battery, 2nd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, fire 120 mm high explosive mortar rounds from an Expeditionary Fire Support System at Fort Bragg, NC, March 9, 2015.
(U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. James R. Smith)

It's a departure from the Marines' traditional approach, which has larger artillery batteries supporting entire battalions of Marines.

"Artillery support in support of ground forces, our infantry, it provides bigger bang for the buck, the ability to reach out and touch the bad guys with large caliber indirect weapons systems," Capt Jay Dodge, artillery training school director for 10th Marine Regiment, told Military.com. Dodge said the idea of deploying gun platoons in support of smaller infantry elements was new territory for the Marines. "This is not how we fight. It's a change to our doctrine," he said. The eight-day experiment, which also involved personnel from Lejeune's 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, ran a company landing team through the same series of movements with a sequence of three artillery pieces: the M327 120mm mortar; the M777A2 155mm howitzer; and the Army's M119A3 105-mm cannon.

Col Jeffrey Holt, experimentation division director for the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab, said the use of an Army weapon demonstrated the willingness of the units involved to venture beyond convention to develop the best solution for future warfighting. "We're pushing hard on the envelope with 2nd Marine Division and specifically 10th Marine Regiment to find out what can be used," he said. "They had the courage to look past programs of record." The teams conducted a movement to contact, set up fire support positions, and executed a breach through a dense urban environment, simulated by Lejeune's Military Operations in Urban Terrain facility. "When you have tight confines, it's really challenging to maneuver some of these pieces on the battlefield," Holt explained. He said the lab found each of the guns had different strengths for company landing team support. The 120mm mortar, which can be transported inside an MV-22

Osprey with its all-terrain transport vehicle, was attractive with its lightness and ease of set-up, he said. However, the system isn't capable of direct fire. "If you're going to break a wall down, you need a direct-fire asset to do that," Holt said. The 155mm howitzer offers a reliable weapons system, a heavier one that requires a helicopter to insert it and a 7-ton truck to pull it. "You've got to figure out, 'how do I move that,'" he said. The 105mm gun presented an attractive alternative: a smaller, more maneuverable piece capable of direct fire that was very similar, mechanically, to the 155mm howitzer. Holt said the system was less accurate than the 155mm, but had improved with recent updates. "It definitely has us thinking," he said.

The Warfighting Lab is still assessing data collected from the experiment to determine conclusions and next steps. But for Dodge, the effort provided some immediate insights. He said the biggest challenge was streamlining communication and developing a protocol regarding who reported to whom in the chain of command. It also illuminated the importance of joint training between infantry and artillery elements, he said. During the wars Iraq and Afghanistan, he said, this kind of joint training had fallen by the wayside. "One ancillary benefit that came from this is we're doing our part to meld that relationship again between infantry and artillery," Dodge said. The Warfighting Lab is preparing a report for the commanders of the Marines' operating forces on the experiment, which will determine future steps to develop the concept. Meanwhile, Holt said, a range of other efforts to modernize the Corps' artillery elements are also underway.

The Marines recently announced that it would field GPS-guided rounds for the 120mm mortar system in 2018, allowing troops to reduce the number of rounds needed to destroy a target. The Marines are also working to develop a more complex role for its high-mobility artillery rocket system, or HI-MARS, including the development of advanced guided munitions that would be able to hit a moving target, or launch from a ship while it's underway. And as rockets become more accurate, Holt said, the Marine Corps is examining different uses for them, including the possibility of making certain rockets organic to a company-sized element. Marines will have a chance to test out some of these concepts at the Rim of the Pacific joint exercise this summer in Hawaii, Holt said.

WWI Submarine Washed Ashore in England in 1919

U-118, a WWI submarine washed ashore on the beach at Hastings, England

When the people of the town of Hastings awoke one morning to see one of the Kaiser's U-boats on their beach, it caused some shock. Thousands of visitors flocked to see the beached submarine. The Admiralty allowed the town clerk to charge a fee for people to climb on the deck. Two members of the coastguard were tasked with showing important visitors around inside the submarine. The visits were curtailed when both men became severely ill, they both died shortly after. It was a mystery what killed the men at the time and so all trips into the sub were stopped, it was later discovered that chlorine gas which had been escaping from the sub's batteries had caused severe abscesses on the lungs and brains of the unfortunate men.

SM U-118 was commissioned on 8 May 1918, following construction at the AG Vulcan Stettin shipyard in Hamburg. It was commanded by Herbert Stohwasser and joined the I Flotilla

operating in the eastern Atlantic. After about four months without any ships sunk, on 16 September 1918, SM U-118 scored its first hit on another naval vessel. With the ending of hostilities on 11 November 1918 came the subsequent surrender of the Imperial German Navy, including SM U-118 to France on 23 February 1919. Following the surrender, U-118 was to be transferred to France where it would be broken up for scrap. However, in the early hours of 15 April 1919, while it was being towed through the English Channel towards Scapa Flow, its dragging hawser broke off in a storm. The ship ran aground on the beach at Hastings in Sussex at approximately 12:45am, directly in front of the Queens Hotel.



Initially there were attempts to displace the stricken vessel; three tractors tried to refloat the submarine and a French destroyer attempted to break the ship apart using its cannons. These attempts however were unsuccessful and the proximity of the submarine to the public beach and Queens Hotel dissuaded further use of explosive forces. Eventually, between October and December 1919, U-118 was broken up

and the pieces removed and sold for scrap.

N Korea - Purges Missiles and Nukes

November 2, 2015 John McLaughlin, Former Acting Director, CIA

Amid all the uncertainties about North Korea's unpredictable young leader, Kim Jong Un, one thing is clear: he has an unrelenting focus on security – his own personal security and the authoritarian regime's security from external pressure. For personal security and to consolidate his hold on power, Kim – in power for nearly four years -- has carried out what appear to be the most extensive and violent purges in the country's history. For regime security, Kim has pushed the country's nuclear and missile programs to new levels, aiming for systems intended to deter anyone tempted to use military force against the North and to make the country's retaliatory and attack capabilities more secure. As always, however, the regime's stability is an open question, and some of Kim's actions may be laying the groundwork for dangerous miscalculation that could jeopardize Kim's leadership and regional security.

Purging of officialdom has a long and rich history in North Korea, but Kim has taken it to new levels. The South Korean intelligence service says that Kim has executed at least 70 officials in his nearly four years in power. Accurate counts of such atrocities are difficult in a dictatorship as isolated and opaque as North Korea, but this appears well in excess of anything done by Kim's father, Kim Jong Il (1941-2011) or his grandfather Kim Il Sung (1912-1994), the country's founder. Kim's highest profile executions are of his uncle Jang Song Thaek in 2013 and his Defense Minister, Hyon Yong Chol, this spring. The uncle's execution was particularly shocking because he was widely viewed as the mentor in charge of grooming his inexperienced

nephew. Reports circulated that Jang drew Kim's ire by cultivating an independent power base. The Defense Minister's demise was said to be for the simple offense of napping in a meeting chaired by Kim. In addition to killings, Kim has replaced 55 percent of the Supreme People's Assembly, the biggest housecleaning on record there. This devotion to purges is probably the result of Kim inheriting his position so young—only 29 years old—and without the lengthy grooming period Kim Il Sung had arranged for Kim's father, who came to power at the age of 53. While it may tighten his grip in the short term, it has at least two potentially devastating consequences. First, officials will be even more reluctant to give Kim straight advice if they fear it will displease him. This increases the possibility of military or political miscalculations that can take the country into dangerous confrontations. Second, it could encourage more defections by those in a position to be outside the country officially or who can escape.

Whatever problems Kim has had consolidating power have not slowed Pyongyang's drive for enhanced military capabilities. The North has been pursuing nuclear weapons for decades and is now a nuclear power. It carried out three nuclear tests between 2006 and 2013 – one under young Kim – and South Korea's intelligence service says another is in preparation. Estimates vary on how much weapons grade nuclear material the North has; most say the North has about 10 - 16 bombs and can have about 10 more within five years. Pyongyang claims it now knows how to mount a bomb on one of its missiles and last month the head of the U.S. Northern Command publicly agreed. The North is devoting at least as much effort to its missile force. It has long had a stock of well-tested short and medium range missiles, and its designs have been used by Iran among others. Since the mid-1990s, it has been trying to acquire an (ICBM) that could reach the United States, and it now appears very close. By virtue of having launched a satellite in 2012, the North showed it could finally field an ICBM-like rocket – it had repeatedly failed prior to 2012 – but questions persist about its ability to carry out a sustained flight with guidance systems capable of hitting targets with accuracy. Clearly, though, the North has not given up. Commercial satellite imagery this summer showed new construction at the site Pyongyang uses for its long-range rocket work, raising expectations that another satellite launch or long-range missile test is in the offing. Moreover, at its military parade on October 10, the North revealed a new ICBM model, presumably untested, that appears designed for longer-range.

Most noteworthy this year has been the North's testing of technology that shows progress toward a Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM). They have a ways to go on this but appear to have passed some important milestones. Acquiring this capability would give the North Koreans greater stealth in deploying their missile force and would make it harder for the U.S. and others to locate and guard against their nuclear forces. It would also give them the capability to launch nuclear and conventional missiles at adversaries from off shore rather than relying on complicated ICBM technology. Beyond the inherent capabilities of such technologies, we have to worry about the North selling them. Always desperate for cash, North Korea has been selling its missile technology for decades; Iran's primary medium range missile, the Shahab-3, is essentially a copy of the North Korean No Dong. And the North was caught red-handed helping Syria with the design of the nuclear reactor that Israel destroyed at Al-Kibar Syria in 2007.

North Korea has proven astonishingly durable in the face of crushing poverty and brutally repressive governments. But anyone watching this highly secretive country over time has to be aware that it could surprise us with a sudden societal collapse. If and when that happened, South Korea, other countries in the region, and the U.S., would have to contend with humanitarian problems – massive refugee flows – and worrisome political/military problems, such as the location and condition of North Korea's nuclear material and weapons. And the cost of rebuilding North Korea would vastly outstrip the cost of other unification programs, such as the integration of Germany's East and West in the 1990s, which cost \$100 billion annually for a number of years. So while North Korea in the present represents a great and unpredictable danger, in the future it promises to become one of the world's great burdens.

Captain Blackadder – A Gallant Scottish Gunner Officer

22 AUGUST 2015

Blackadder goes Forth was the final series of the Blackadder BBC TV comedy program. “The series placed the recurring characters of Blackadder, Baldrick and George in a trench in Flanders during World War I, and followed their various doomed attempts to escape from the trenches to avoid certain death under the misguided command of General Melchett.” The six programs in this series were a satirical comedy set in the trenches of the Western Front. The characters were grotesque and funny, but the series ended with the poignant death of most of them in a hail of bullets in 1917, in slow motion with a final scene cutting into a shot of a field of poppies.



Major R J Blackadder MC

This was the “Oh What Lovely War” version of the First World War, with a heavy handed moral slant, but it is also glorious comic satire. And being funny is one of the core values of the British Army. Not the official Core Values of the British Army, which are Courage, Discipline, Respect for others, Integrity, Loyalty and Selfless Commitment. All worthy ideals but they do not round out the character of the British Army. There are at least three other unofficial core values – “Sense of Humour”; “BS Baffles Brains” and above all “Don’t get Caught” all come to mind.

There is a grain of truth in each episode of Blackadder Goes Forth. Starting with the existence of a Captain Blackadder in the Royal Field Artillery, as reported by the Radio Times in 2014. The Imperial War Museum has a copy of his diary. This is listed as providing details of his service in 151 Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery. However, Peter Hart and Nigel Steel, both senior staff members of the IWM, record his unit as the 152 Battery – so I am not sure which is right. Both of these batteries were raised in Scotland, equipped with four 8” Howitzers and deployed to France in August 1916. Blackadder took part in the major battles from the 1916 battle of the Somme to the end of the war and his observations are a primary source for these battles. During this time, he rose from lieutenant to major and was decorated for gallantry for organizing the withdrawal of his guns, ammunition and stores under heavy fire. The real Blackadder, with his accounting background, looks a little more like Tim McInnerny’s Captain Darling. However,

the extracts from his diary from summer 1917 in the 3rd battle of Ypres make it clear that he was far from a pen pusher with a paper-clip fetish.

The road to the new position is a mere apology for a road and as we are taking down the first gun at night the road surface collapses and the gun sinks to its cradle. It has lain there for three days now and we have not been able to shift it — two caterpillars failed to move it. Now we have had heavy rain so it is very doubtful if we will get the guns to their new place at all. The result of three nights' work is to get one gun into a hole and another off to a workshop. Tonight I am to get the gun out of the ditch and another to the workshop if possible. The Hun shelled the battery all afternoon, broke another limber and badly damaged the road again. About midnight he again shelled and set off more ammunition but all the men got clear. I got the gun out of the ditch with two engines and into the new position. It was difficult to get the gun away to the workshop owing to the road being cut up but we succeeded without mishap about 3 am”



*8" Howitzer towed by a Holts Tractor.
These are the "Caterpillars" mentioned by Blackadder
IWM Q 4322*

29 July (1917) At night, about 11 pm, the old Hun began to strafe us and all around. The guns got it first of all so I ordered all to clear out. Then he worked up towards the fighting post, a concrete erection left by the Hun. Several of the gunners had come up here for shelter some very badly shaken. The shells were falling very near now, the concussion putting out the lights several times, then, all of a sudden, a tremendous crash and all darkness and smoke almost suffocating us — a direct hit on the post! We lit the candles again, but could hardly see for the smoke.

After ascertaining all were untouched I tried to get out, the shelling having moved to the guns again, but found the entrance blocked with debris. All wires had been broken too so we were out of touch with the guns and headquarters. We soon worked a passage out and set to work to get into communication. Meantime some of the ammunition on No. 3 gun had been set on fire and the limber and stores were burning merrily: I got this gunner to come with me to put the fire out, this we did without mishap and returned to the concrete post. About 2 a.m. the shelling stopped and at dawn we reckoned up the damage done. Casualties, nil, material destroyed, very little. The fighting post was only slightly damaged and will stand many more hits thanks to the excellent work of the Hun.”

Once again, it is 'Der Tag' and again we are nibbling at the Bosche line. Our Battery is busy closing up the Hun guns and during the day in addition to carrying out our program during the attack, we received many calls from aeroplanes who saw Hun guns active. The Hun strafed the Battery area just before zero hour and broke all the communications to the guns, but we got these put right just in time. He did little damage though he hit No 2 gun pit twice. During the day too, he endeavoured to neutralise the Batteries about our area with shrapnel and high velocity guns, but we got off with no damage.

Who is it?

Last Week:



This is a picture of the 1971 Captain Qual (Arty) course at CFB Petawawa. I was a little disappointed at the response. I heard from a few local Gunners but nothing from our comrades to the east. Maybe everyone was too busy over the holidays. Names to date:

			Chris Casey		Craig Robertson	Garry Woloski	Steve Burrige	Gary Pinkerton
Mike Bennett								
Robert Bland			Lloyd Baumgarten			John Yu	Bob Mugford	
			Brent Linton	Lou Branum	Maj Schroeder?	Hugh Mundel		Sgt Lewis

This Week: John seems to be taken an extended break so I will take advantage to that to slip in another picture from my files. This picture was taken in the fall of 1963. We still haven't figured out why this group had been assembled although there was a note on one – 'military police training?' – but no one remembers any such training. Comments, IDs, information or for a copy you can zoom in on, email bob.mugford@outlook.com



From the 'Punitary'

How did the two strings do in the race? They tied!

Murphy's other Laws

When in doubt, mumble. When in trouble, delegate. When in charge, ponder.

Quotable Quotes

Let him who would enjoy a good future waste none of his present. - *Roger Babson*

Taste of Singapore Curry Lunch



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

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



Date: Thursday, January 28, 2016

Time: 11:45 am - 1:30 pm
(Bar opens at 11:45 am)
(Lunch starts at 12:25 pm)

Location: Officers' Mess - The BC Regiment
620 Beatty Street, Vancouver, BC

Dress: Business Attire (jacket & tie, ladies similar)

Price: \$30/person (\$5 discount for those
who confirm attendance by January 18, 2016)

RSVP: For more information or to register, please e-mail
Charlotte Yen at corporate@hplaw.ca
(Please advise of any dietary needs with your RSVP)

Payment by cheque or cash will be accepted at the door
Cheques are payable to: The BC Regiment (DCO) Association
No cancellations after January 18, 2016

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, February 25, 2016