



**Vancouver Artillery
Association News**



RUSI News
Vancouver

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Mar 8, 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 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. We are now pushing the 3rd Wed lunch each month as the Van Arty Association lunch and encouraging members to attend. Come meet some old friends and help with the Yearbook project.

RUSI Vancouver Strategic Studies Conference The annual signature event of RUSI Vancouver is to host the Strategic Studies Conference in Vancouver. With the theme of 'Global Flashpoints' the 2016 conference will be held in the Alice MacKay Conference Room at the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library on April 8 and 9. This year's theme promises a full range of expert discourse on topics that make today's headlines. The conference begins Friday evening April 8, with a panel discussion followed by a full day of presentations on Saturday April 9, ending with an address by the Hon Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National Defence. RUSI Vancouver encourages everyone with an interest in international affairs to attend the 2016 Strategic Studies Conference. Registration details can be found on the conference notice at the end of this newsletter. *Cam Cathcart, President, RUSI Vancouver.*

Whiskey Tasting Next Year- Friday – March 3rd 2017 1800 – 2300 hrs Mark you calendar!

World War 2 - 1940

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

Mar 9th: Mussolini is on hand to watch 12 of his divisions begin a sledgehammer style offensive against well-prepared and alert Greek defences in southern Albania.

Mar 10th: The British-African army that captured Mogadishu 13 days ago has traveled almost 1,000 km to the north before coming into contact with Italian troops at Dagabur in Ethiopia.

Mar 11th: The Lend Lease Act passes into law in the United States as Public Law 1776, but Congress has attached riders that do much to limit British trade and their post-war recovery. However, Lend Lease distributes \$51 Billion (in the currency of the 1940s) in goods and loans to 46 countries. The USSR, for example, will get 430,000 American trucks, 340,000 field phones and hundreds of yards of gold braid...

Mar 12th: Now that Lend Lease is enacted, Roosevelt submits a \$7 Billion Appropriations Bill.

Mar 13th: The Greeks are comfortably holding the Italians at bay in Albania. Hitler makes a fatal decision regarding the USSR by insisting on the strict application of Nazi ideology in occupied areas once the invasion begins – an act which will steel Soviet resistance and reignite Russian nationalism.

Mar 14th: Wingate and Haile Selassie are now active around Burye, while the humiliated Italians (who have lost units to the renewed Ethiopian guerrilla army) are busy trying to hire a local Chief Ras Hailu to head up counter-insurgency operations.

Australians and Canadians: A Proven Naval Team

February 9, 2016



A team of seven members of the RCN are contributing to counterterrorism and maritime security operations in the Middle East as part of OP ARTEMIS, Canada's contribution to Combined Task Force 150. The Canadian contingent is integrated into the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) CTF-150 command staff for a total of 26 personnel. The RCN

team is under the command of Captain (Navy) William Quinn, who is serving as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff to CTF-150. Naval Combat Information Operators, working as Battle Watch Assistants, Maritime Surface and Sub-Surface (MARS) Officers in the role of Battle Watch Captains, a Logistics Officer working in the logistics branch, and a MARS Officer contributing to planning and training, make up the rest of the RCN contingent. "The Battle Watch serves as the focal point of communications during a narcotics seizure. We are the interface between the Combined Maritime Force, the TF Commander, and the unit at sea that is seizing the illicit cargo. It can get a little busy." said a Royal Canadian Navy member acting as Battle Watch Assistant.

The Canadians' journey to Bahrain started in Watson's Bay in Sydney, Australia. There, they began preparations for integrating into the Australian command staff of CTF-150 marking the continuation of a successful Canadian-Australian partnership. Over a period of three weeks, the Canadian contingent underwent rigorous training exercises consisting of scenarios they might encounter during their deployment. During this training, they were mentored by a specialized team of RAN sailors who had served in previous CTF-150 rotations. CTF-150's mission is to promote maritime security in order to counter terrorist acts and related illegal activities, which terrorists use to fund or conceal their movements. The CTF-150 Area of Operations (AO) covers a vast swath of water including the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, most of the Indian Ocean,

and the Gulf of Oman. CTF 150 is one of three task forces that comprise the Combined Maritime Force, a multi-national partnership created to defeat terrorism, prevent piracy, and encourage regional cooperation in the greater Arabian Gulf region.

The newly-formed command team wasted no time getting into the mission. Coordinating a group of hardworking ships at sea from their location in Bahrain, CTF-150 staff identified and tracked vessels of interest within their AO. Halfway into the current deployment, the results speak for themselves. Over 334kg of heroin has been taken from the hands of narcotics smugglers at sea. The seizure and destruction of these drugs in the first two months of operations, under the current command, has deprived international terrorist organizations of an estimated \$43 000 000 USD of funding and directly contributed to the safe passage of merchant ships through the region. “We have enjoyed working shoulder to shoulder with our Royal Australian Navy counterparts over these last four months, from our training period in Australia to our ongoing operations controlled from our HQ in Bahrain. We look forward to continuing our mission to ensure maritime security and international stability in some of the world’s most important shipping lanes and busiest waterways.” stated Captain (N) William Quinn, Deputy Commander/Chief of Staff – Combined Task Force 150

Tank Recovered from Ship Torpedoed by U-Boat Off Russian Coast



A rusty but well-preserved World War Two tank was recovered in 2014 in the Barents Sea after having been discovered amongst the wreck of a US cargo ship. The ship was sunk by a German submarine in the last days of World War II. It spent nearly 70 years on the bottom of the sea before finally being recovered. The tank, an American M4A2(76)W Sherman, was being transported on the USS Thomas Donaldson when the ship was hit by a

German torpedo launched from the U-boat *U-968*. The cargo ship, which was travelling in the Arctic convoy JW65, sank close to the shores of Kildin Island on March 20th, 1945. The Thomas Donaldson was transporting 7679 tons of cargo when it was sunk, including tanks, 6000 tons of ammunition, and assorted other vehicles.



A German torpedo hit the engine room directly but, despite its haul of dangerous cargo, only 3 people died when the ship was hit – one officer and two crew members who were below deck at the time. With the engines destroyed and the threat of the flammable ammunition, the captain of the ship ordered all 8 officers, 34 crewmen, and 27 armed guards into life-boats, while he himself remained behind, the Mail Online reports. The ship was destroyed, but it was not sinking yet. The captain hoped to wait for a rescue ship to tow them back to port, but before that could happen the Thomas Donaldson sank stern-first into the sea only half a mile from the shores of Kilden Island, near the Russian city of Murmansk. On July 23, 2014 the cargo ship was discovered by divers at only 55 metres deep. The divers report that there are two other tanks on board the wreck which will be salvaged.

Focus on Veterans, Not Dumb Rules

February 26, 2016 - Chronicle Herald



Do right: keep senior couple together at Camp Hill

Appearing before the Senate veteran's affairs committee this week, veterans' ombudsman Guy Parent said veteran benefits have become too tangled up in complex and "byzantine" rules and too little focused on outcomes we want to achieve for our veterans. Unless that changes, he argued,

"we will continue to disadvantage many of our veterans and their families, as we have done for almost 100 years." It would be hard to think of a better example of what Mr Parent is saying than the sad case of Second World War veteran Harold Cameron and his wife Virginia. They met and married during the war and have been inseparable for 70 years. But those byzantine Veterans Affairs rules won't allow Mr Cameron to receive long-term care benefits unless he lives separately from his wife — something he and his family understandably find unacceptable.

Harold and Virginia Cameron are both in their nineties and both are in need of 24-hour long-term care. He has Alzheimer's and she is developing dementia. Mr Cameron qualifies for care at Camp Hill Veterans Hospital, but Veterans Affairs says his wife does not, because she isn't a veteran. The agency won't allow them to live at Camp Hill as a couple.

They are determined not to live apart. Their loving loyalty to one another is something any family can understand. The injustice of making them suffer for an inflexible interpretation of a poorly-conceived rule is obvious as well. Is this really the outcome the Government of Canada wants to achieve for frail, elderly married veterans — to destroy the love and support they can derive from the last few years of their marriages?

In our Opinions section today, former New Democrat MP Peter Stoffer calls upon Veterans Affairs Minister Kent Hehr and Nova Scotia Health Minister Leo Glavine to do the right thing and to arrange for Mrs Cameron to be admitted with her husband to Camp Hill. We support

that call wholeheartedly. The ministers should use their authority to provide the compassionate outcome Harold and Virginia Cameron deserve. As Mr Stoffer points out, the two governments have agreed in the past to allow non-veterans to use available Camp Hill beds and are doing so today. And the Veterans Act clearly gives the minister that authority. It says his duties and functions “extend and apply to” not only the care and treatment of Canadian Forces and Merchant Marine personnel, but also “of any other person designated by the Governor in Council.” It also gives the minister authority over “the care of dependants or survivors.” So Mr Hehr either has the authority, or can obtain it from cabinet, to have Mrs Cameron designated for care at Camp Hill. Keeping the Camerons together is also in the spirit of the mandate letter Mr Hehr received from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

“Your overarching goal,” it proclaims, “will be to ensure that our government lives up to our sacred obligation to veterans and their families.” “I expect you to ensure that veterans receive the respect, support, care, and economic opportunities they deserve.” Harold and Virginia Cameron deserve to receive care at Camp Hill as the devoted couple they are. As Mr Stoffer says, it is the right thing to do.

3 Type XXI boats in the Elbe II in Hamburg

These boats were missing until 1985 when the boats were discovered through research by Jak P Mallmann-Showell, Wolfgang Hirschfeld and Walter Cloots in the mostly demolished Elbe II U-boat bunker in Hamburg. The Elbe II bunker is located on the southern bank of the Elbe river at the Vulkanhafen. This area is within the Freeport of Hamburg and to access it you should have to present your passport.



The bow of U-3004 inside the Elbe II bunker. - Photo by Carl

The boats lying there are U-2505, U-3004 and U-3506. They are lying on the surface at low tide but are not accessible to the casual observer and are stationed on a private property. The author believes the bunker has been filled with gravel now to prevent injuries as the area is considered dangerous. The

boats have been partially scrapped (two are missing conning towers and engine sections) sometime after the war. U-3506 is lying trapped under the heavy roof and is the most intact boat.

Hatch 5 of U-3506 inside the Elbe II bunker.

- Photo by Carl

The bunker has been filled with gravel as far as the author could see and the boats are buried under it, no longer accessible to anyone.



Want To Buy a Second Hand Fighter Jet? Head to Albania

David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen March 6, 2016



A Romanian MiG-21 taxis off the runway after a training sortie at Campia Turzii, Romania, March 17, 2015. Romanian and 480th Fighter Squadron Airmen trained together with more than 100 personnel from US Air Force bases in Germany to establish a forward base and conduct operations from it. (US Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Armando A. Schwier-Morales).

The 40 obsolete Soviet and Chinese-made aircraft up for sale once roared over what was Europe's most exclusive airspace. The Albanian pilots were members of an exalted military elite that had its own food-tasters and was tasked by Communist Albania's paranoid regime with deterring countless enemies who never did come to this country on the Adriatic Sea. Now a NATO member, Albania is auctioning off the rusting jets to pay for modernizing its military and to save space in its air bases. The Socialist government says it has received strong interest from aviation collectors and museums abroad – so much that it pushed back the initial auction date and is considering raising the starting bids, first set at 1.1 million to 1.9 million leks (\$8,600-14,800). “It was a surprise for us,” Defense Minister Mimi Kodheli told The Associated Press, noting “a rush” of interest from prospective bidders in the United States, Germany, France, Italy and other countries.

In a corner of the Rinasia air base outside the capital of Tirana, 11 decrepit MiG-17 and MiG-19 jets are parked in neat rows, guarded by two military officers. Their silver-grey paint with the distinctive red, black and red roundels is fading, their tires are flat, the guns are rust-flecked and some of their glass canopies are broken. Former jet mechanic Vasil Jongari, 55, seemed almost ashamed to show the planes to visiting journalists. “There is nostalgia always,” he said, running his fingers over the 32 millimeter gun on a MiG-19. “But they cannot be kept only based on desire. They need money, and money we don't have.” Ilirjan Kola, 61, who flew Albanian air force MiG-15 to MiG-19 jets from 1976 until 1991, said the planes were always so expensive to operate. “MiGs were so costly,” he told The Associated Press. “A twin-engine MiG-19 consumed 52 liters of fuel a minute. With a normal flight of 30-40 minutes, imagine the expense ... Better that they had sold them before.” Albania's air force was founded in 1951 and received MiGs from the Soviet Union until 1962. After Communist leader Enver Hoxha broke with the Russians, the country continued to be supplied with planes and spares from Communist China – until 1977, when Albania also severed ties with the Chinese.

In this photo taken on Monday, Feb. 15, 2016 old MiG fighter jets are stand at the Rinasia air base, near Tirana. The Albanian pilots were members of an exalted military elite that had its own food-tasters and was tasked by Communist Albania's paranoid regime with deterring countless enemies who never did come to this country on the Adriatic Sea.

(AP Photo/Gent Shkullaku)



About 160 Albanian pilots graduated from a military academy in southwestern Vlora, and used to clock up about 80 flying hours a year. Only five still serve – and now they all fly helicopters. “We were privileged at the time, with specially chosen food, shelter, health care and vacations,” Kola said. He said the food came from a dedicated farm near the air base, which a doctor tasted for them on a daily basis. “(It wasn’t) different from what they did with the food destined for Hoxha himself,” Kola said. At the collapse of the Communist regime in 1990, the air force had 200 jets and 40 helicopters, as well as four IL14 transport planes, once used for top regime officials, which were sold for scrap five years ago. Seven MiGs were destroyed and their parts were stolen in 1997, when military bases across the country were looted during an uprising over failed pyramid investment schemes that cost many Albanians their life savings. Some jet continued to be flown after order was restored, but a deadly accident at this air base in 2004 prompted a rethink. A farewell flight was held in 2005, Jongari said.

Albania joined NATO in 2009, and now its military aviation fleet consists of Western-made helicopters – four French Cougars, three German EC145s and 13 Italian AB205, AB206 and A109 models. The aircraft up for auction at a yet-undefined date include five types of military jets – Yak-18, MiG-15, MiG-17, MiG-19, and MiG-21 – as well as four Mi-4 transport helicopters. Most date from the 1950s. “We can use the money to modernize our armed forces,” said Kodheli, the defense minister. The Albanian army has already got rid of its antique Eastern Bloc-era transport vehicles, tanks and armored personal carriers, as well as infantry AK-47 assault rifles and ammunition, most of which was sold for scrap. Kodheli said the auction will serve as a market test. If it’s successful, Albania has more than 100 other aircraft left to be sold some day.

Who is it?



Last Week: This car is a Steyr 50, a small car released in 1936 by the Austrian automobile manufacturer Steyr. The car had a water-cooled four-cylinder boxer engine driving the rear wheels through a four-speed transmission. To save room and weight a dynastarter (starter and charger combined) was used, which doubled as the axle of the radiator fan. It was regarded as the "Austrian Peoples' Car" and was affectionately referred to as the Steyr "Baby". The little Steyr offered better seating and luggage space than Porsche's Volkswagen with shorter overall length, a large sheet metal sliding roof and was available with hydraulic brakes (instead of the early Volkswagens' cable-operated ones). When the war began, the factory started producing ‘militarized’ versions of the different models they produced.

This Week: We have featured mystery units in the past, and continue with such a theme this week, one which probably should have coincided with International Women’s Day. Well, every day is women’s day, right? Hmmm. Do I hear “Patronizing drivel!” from some quarters? Sorry! Anyway, here is an excellent photo of a stern-looking group of women warriors. The photo dates from a few years past, and a few miles distant, but the connection with us is stronger than some might imagine. There are those amongst our readers who have worn this uniform, and some who have even worn that cap badge. Many of us, yours included,

have handled that nifty little SMG. All of us would agree that there is no messing around with these Amazons. However, for some of us, this photo brings a tinge of sadness for a time gone, and a world that has changed. This can be said of any older photo, but for this one it is especially so.



Therefore, dear reader, can you identify this unit of stalwarts? I wonder if any of you can even identify any of these soldiers? No bonus points for identifying the SMG, but, should you want to give us its many names, and maybe a story of how it affected your life, that would be welcome. Send your reminiscences, answers, whatever, to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond (john.d._redmond@telus.net). Thanks in advance. As always, you can email the editor for a picture you can zoom in on Bob.mugford@outlook.com

From the 'Punitenary'

When life gives you melons, you're probably dyslexic

Murphy's other Laws

How long a minute is depends on which side of the barrage you're on.

Quotable Quotes

Science is facts; just as houses are made of stones, so is science made of facts; but a pile of stones is not a house and a collection of facts is not necessarily science. - *Henri Poincare*

CELTICFEST

PRESENTS

THE VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR



ONE OF CANADA'S LARGEST MEN'S CHOIRS

Friday, March 11th, 7:30pm (Doors open 7:00pm)

ST. ANDREW'S-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH

1012 Nelson Street, Vancouver, B.C.

(Corner of Burrard & Nelson, Vancouver)

**With Master Piper Tim Fanning, Ballyhooley,
and the De Danaan School of Irish Dance**

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM

Online at www.vwmc.ca

or by phone 604-878-1190

or from VWMC Members

\$30 general. \$40 premium seating.

\$27 Seniors and Students with ID.

BC Regiment Association

invites you to the



St. Patrick's Day Party

Where: BC Regiment Drill Hall
620 Beatty St, Vancouver

When: Sunday March 13, 2016

Time: 13:00hr – 17:00hr
(Meet & Greet 13:00hr,
Lunch 13:45hr)

Cost: \$20 RSVP by March 6

RSVP: Sandra Young 604-543-0368 or
sandymay@shaw.ca

Prize for St. Patrick's Day best dressed

Lunch: Irish Stew, Salad, Buns & Dessert

Door prize giveaways

Lucky Draw prize raffles: \$20 arm's length or 3 tickets for \$5
50/50

Come down for the St. Patrick's Day Parade 11:00-12:30hr Howe & Georgia Streets
and then come warm up with some hot stew, catch up with some friends and listen to
the BC Regiment Association Irish Pipes & Drums.

Mark Your Calendar

2016 RUSI VANCOUVER STRATEGIC STUDIES CONFERENCE

APRIL 8 & 9, 2016

Alice Mackay Room, Vancouver Public Library - 350 West Georgia,

Conference Theme – **GLOBAL FLASHPOINTS**

Featuring speakers and panels on the future of NATO, Middle East militarism, China and the West Pacific, the Arctic, and Canada and International Security.

Opening Remarks: The Hon. Judith Guichon, OBC,
Lieutenant Governor of BC

Keynote Speaker: Hon. Harjit Sajjan, PC, OMM, MSM, CD,
Minister of National Defence

Conference fee: \$45 Regular; \$30 Students. (*includes light refreshments and Saturday lunch*)

Register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2016-vancouver-strategic-studies-conference-tickets-21259706354>

Contacts: Keith Maxwell (kdmaxwell@gmail.com) or Cam Cathcart (lhccathcart@gmail.com)

The following support the 2016 Strategic Studies Conference:



Taste of Thailand Curry Lunch



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

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



Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016

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

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 that confirm
attendance by March 21, 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 March 21, 2016

NEXT PLANNED LUNCH: Thursday, April 28, 2016