

The Dragoon



Royal Canadian Dragoons.

The National Voice of the Old Comrades



EDITORIAL

Greetings and welcome to **The Dragoon**. A new name, some changes to the format, but basically the same old Newsletter – keeping people in touch. I have been fortunate this year to have been well

supported by the readership and there is, I hope, a lot to interest in this edition.

Prior to his promotion and appointment as Chief of the Defence Staff, **General Hillier** was interviewed by Ms Christina MacLean, Editor of "Frontline" magazine. The interview was printed as an article in a recent edition of that publication and Chris has kindly allowed her article to be reprinted here. For those of us who were wondering why the Regiment needs three recce squadrons, General Rick offers a clear look into the Army of the future and, more importantly, the reasons why.

Near the other end of the historical perspective is **Jim Judd's** view of the Regiment as the 5th Horseman. Motivated by the photo entitled "The Four Horsemen" in last years Newsletter, Jim phoned me soon after the 2004 Newsletter hit the streets and shortly afterward arrived in person on my doorstep with his marvelous photo album which he kindly left with me. Jim's photos of his cavalry recruit class offer a nice counterpoint to General Hillier's view of the future.

In between these two points are **Walt Conrad's** celebration of the 40th anniversary of his squadron's tour in Cyprus, **Dave Sproule** keeps his memory working and there is an intriguing article on the "rebuilding" of a recce capability in the 1950's. In addition, the messages from the Regimental leadership, the Mail Run, the Chapter reports and the "official" pages are all here.

It has been a lot of fun putting this edition together, even though things did, as usual, get a little scrambly around the deadline time. I worked hard, as the photo shows, but I understand that the old editor was putting his time to better use.



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THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

MGen Clive J Addy, OMM, OStJ, CD

It is a fine day to be a Dragoon and an absolutely astounding year to be the Colonel of your Regiment!

Again this year, I received a most special Christmas card wishing all Dragoons well from His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, our Colonel in Chief. I ask that you help me pass on his best wishes to all. I will also wish him and Camilla all the best from all Dragoons in respect of their upcoming wedding.

2005 is beginning like a rocket. We have our first ever Chief of Defence Staff. Congratulations General Rick on attaining the highest rank a Canadian soldier can and doing it with such Dragoon style and concern for the soldier.

We have a wonderful new way to keep everyone in the family informed, together and motivated. To you Norm, Terry and both Major Jim's we thank you for tackling so expertly this new Web Site. All members of the Regiment will now benefit from your expertise and hard work.

The government has declared 2005 the Year of the Veteran and I have selected, with my committee, to send **Wilmer Fice** to Holland to represent us in May. Wilmer joined the army on 6 Feb 41. He drove a Staghound armoured car in Regimental HQ in Italy and Holland and was honorably discharged on 1 Sep 45. He has remained a Life member of our association since it was formed. We also sent **Ed Gray** to Italy last Fall in the same capacity and were indeed superbly represented. Throughout the year, however, I was again reminded, through the some 30 letters of condolence that I addressed on your behalf to members and spouses of the regiment, just how many of Canada's precious volunteer Dragoons and family we have lost these last twelve months. I thanked their families for sharing them with us.

The Regiment has sent another recce squadron to Afghanistan and B Squadron now has the opportunity, skill and challenge to maintain our long-standing and flawless reputation of excellence overseas. God Bless all! I have also received many compliments on the performance of the Regiment back in Canada where LCol Lowell Thomas and RSM Denis Levesque continue to challenge our soldiers with sound training and with first class events that bring us all together. Last year's Leliefontein was much appreciated by all who attended and it was no small measure of this appreciation that Ottawa saw, in scarlets on parade, our proud Dragoon Honour Guard for the change of Army Commanders.

I wish to thank publicly in this issue both **Sterling Mercer** and **Roy Lynk** who did so well over the last several years getting your views into the discussions of the Guild. They served magnificently. I welcome **Luc Rousseau** home as a member of the Guild. We hope that we serve you, the Association, well. I know that your President, **Chris Sproule**, thinks we could do better and keeps me focused, a challenge at all times. I thank him for his wonderful support.

In closing, I wish to encourage all to attend the Reunion in Kingston this summer. The Chapter, and particularly **Tom Horgan**, have done yeoman service to make this 60th anniversary year of the Regiment's service in Holland particularly pertinent. I hope to see you there. Finally, might I encourage you, one and all, to contribute to the Bursary Fund and the Guild. To all, my personal thanks and, as Colonel of The Regiment, I salute you for the stellar tradition of service and selfless devotion to Canada that you represent. How proud I am.



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THE COMMANDING OFFICER

LCol LE Thomas, CD



Greetings, it is with great pleasure that I write these remarks to what is an important part of our Regimental Family, the Association. I hope this letter finds you well after this past holiday season. I can assure you that the Regiment is in as good as shape as ever and is ready for a busy upcoming season after a well-deserved break.

This past year has been an exceptionally busy one. The Regiment has deployed on two different operations concurrently, as well as preparing for a third. February 2004 saw the return of Recce Sqn, now D Sqn, from Afghanistan. Shortly following, in April, the remainder of the Regiment, returned from Bosnia.

June saw the Regiment gearing up for the Cav Cup competition. Due to their longstanding recce experience, D Sqn swept the competition with their patrols placing first, second and third overall. However, at the next Cav Cup the competition will be much more fierce since the other Squadrons are quickly learning the art of reconnaissance.

August saw B Sqn commence their workup training for Roto 3 to Afghanistan. They have recently completed their deployment into theatre and are now all safely in Kabul. Their long months of hard training completed, they are now set to carry out the task for which they have trained. We wish them the best of luck for a successful mission and a safe journey in the coming months.

November gave us an opportunity to celebrate Leliefontein with the entire Regiment in Petawawa. As well, several members of the Regimental family took part in the festivities including some members of "Dog" Squadron, who were also celebrating the 50th anniversary of their participation in Korea. It was a busy but also very fun week for the Regiment. Unfortunately it will be the last time for the next few years that we will be able to celebrate Leliefontein with the entire Regiment together in one place.

A and D Sqns have just finished a winter exercise this February. They participated in Exercise POLAR BEAR, a Brigade Exercise, which took place in the small northern town of Ramore, located at the now abandoned CFS Ramore near Timmins, Ontario.

The pace for the Regiment will not be slowing down in the near future. The task of providing a recce squadron to support Roto 4 to Afghanistan has fallen upon us with D Sqn once again looking forward to prepare to return.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and wish you the best in all your endeavors in the coming year.

Audax et Celer

THE REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR

CWO Levesque, CD

It's yet another fine day to be a Dragoon. This will be the first time the RSM has been provided an opportunity to put his comments in the Association Newsletter, and I take the opportunity with great pride. As I look at last years Association Newsletter, I see so many familiar faces from the past. It's with great pleasure I read these articles, and with fond memories I cherish the time I had with the people I see in these editions. So many faces and so many stories.

The Regiment has been and will continue to be busy for the foreseeable future. I won't list all the activities that we were involved with both past and future, but I will tell you that we are tired, but yet focused on our new tasks. What I will do is attempt to make you understand what the soldiers are doing and the impact it has taken.

The Regt is fine and soldiering has not changed from what you remember, however with all the tasks it takes to send a SQN overseas the Regt is fully committed. Soldiers are hungry for tours as this will give them a focus. A meaning of Duty for their Country, and as we all know additional money. Those not on deployments, are providing support to the deployment such as Theatre Specific Training and the running of Observer Controllers, Role Players, a Validation EX, and a Mock Camp Julian support. This doesn't include the Armour School tasks, the posting season, and Army level tasks. All this to say training is at premium for those deploying and support is an essential job for the rest. Keeping in mind that B SQN is deployed and D SQN is going out the door.

The Army's focus has shifted from the cold war battles, with a division advancing and a rear area that was secure. This is in contrast to the battles we face, where there are no boundaries, and a three-block war is the focus, (War Fighting, Peace Keeping, and Supporting NGOs and the Local Populus) in an area devastated by war. These are things we may have done at some point, but now the complications of doing it better are harder, even possibly under fire. The enemy is anywhere, and or everywhere. The question is. Are they active at the moment we arrive, or not? I have allot of respect for the soldiers of today. He or she must be multi tasked oriented for the success of a mission more so than I was as a Trooper. The theatre specific training includes terrorist activities such as suicide bombers. The stress of this alone put on a soldier every time he leaves his safe zone is real.

We have had our fair share of new policies that give our soldiers more power to care for themselves and their families. These are frustrating, however we at all levels must make sure that all our soldiers are prepared mentally and physically to deploy. In a nutshell. This may be a small price to pay for a good soldier to take the time to be with his family uninterrupted. Once that time is up I fully expect that the soldier is mine for employment to go anywhere, at any time, and for any duration.

My sole purpose for this message is to up date you on our soldiers and what they are thinking and doing. The Regt was to be at rest this past year, as you can see in the CO's message this has not been nor will it be the case. We will continue to push hard and make you proud of our accomplishments. This Regt has been relied upon to focus in many directions to fulfill multi tasks for our Commanders and we continue to do a great job in fulfilling these tasks. There will be a break at one point, and we will take it when the jobs are done. So when you see an RCD Trooper take the time to tell him he is carrying on the traditions set forth by many before him. They are proud of our heritage you have given them and they strive to make you proud.





THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

Christopher Sproule

I want to use my annual chance to address you all to commend you for activities over the past year, to say thank you to some individuals, and to highlight the relationship of our Association to the RCD Guild.

I have been heartened during 2004 by the efforts of so many Association members to make efforts to keep in touch with each other and offer a helping hand, and an open ear (notwithstanding the hearing impairment of most members).

I have also witnessed several successful gatherings such as the Central Chapter BBQ in Harrow and the Alberta Chapter Mini Reunion in Calgary. I plan to get to other Chapters' events in 2005 and hope to see as many of you as are able to attend at the reunion in Kingston 17 to 19 June. If you haven't registered yet, NOW is the time to do so.

Some public thank you's are in order. So on your behalf I wish to thank the Colonel of the Regiment, General Addy, for his efforts in getting many of our Italian campaign veterans off to the celebrations in Italy in October and for starting the ball rolling for the Holland veterans. General Addy was aided by Norm Wood so I thank them both. Thanks to the CO, LCol Thomas, and the Regiment for supporting us whenever asked during the past year. We all owe a thank you to Sterling Mercer and his chapter-greatly assisted by Muggsie Boland, the CO's secretary, for shipping the Springbok to us all. Thanks to Norm Ashton for leading the efforts to establish a new RCD family website. Thanks to Terry Seeley for extending in his duties as national Secretary Treasurer until we had found the perfect replacement in John Moyer. Thanks to Bann Price for publishing and mailing this edition of the Dragoon. Thanks also to Tom Horgan and his Reunion 2005 committee who have been beavering away for over a year now.

Most of all I want to thank the workers in the Chapters. In particular, I need to mention those who have or are about to pass on their duties. Thanks to Fred Berge for picking up the torch in BC from John Pierce. Good luck in bringing your disparate squadron together. Many thanks to Sterling Mercer who is turning over Chair of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chapter to Roger Munger and Steve Clarke who is being replaced by Chuck Hills. Thanks to Biff Watson who is allowing Jim Roberts to lead the Kingston chapter. Frank Gabriel has assumed leadership of the Central (Cpl W.A. Knisley) Chapter from Brian Hook and I want to thank them both. I am aware that most of these people have been assisted by Chapter members and families pressed into service so please pass on our thank you to them.

Lastly I am grateful for the generosity of Life Members and others who continue to contribute to the Life Membership Investment Fund. The interest from these donations has allowed us to augment the annual dues and not reduce our level of activities. Please keep those cheques coming!

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Many of you who have served in the RCD in the past 25 years are aware of the Guild but most of you are not. The Guild is a private, non-profit corporation with charitable status established by letters patent under the Canada Corporations Act in 1980 with the expressed **primary objective "to protect, preserve and further the traditions and heritage of The Royal Canadian Dragoons."** The Guild owns capital, including investments, artifacts and funds donated by members and associates, as well as monies generated through fundraising activities and investments.

The vision of The Guild is expressed as follows: ***One strongly united Regimental family of former and serving Dragoons, encompassing the Unit, the Association Chapters, all past and present members, families and friends, dedicated to upholding a proud tradition of outstanding service to the country by honouring our heritage as Canada's senior armoured regiment.***

So what? Well, the Association fits under the Guild umbrella and we can take advantage of that fact, both to strengthen our ties with the Regiment and to benefit Association activities. For example, the bursary fund was an Association idea which is largely supported by Association members and friends. By making it a Guild project, donations became tax deductible. In 2005 the Board of Directors of the Association will continue to examine the best ways to coordinate our activities within the Guild. I invite you all to check out the Guild website when you are visiting the Association site.

THE LAST TRUMPET CALL

May They Rest in Peace

Rita Allison - 24 August, 2004	Lawrence A Hascarl - 27 July, 2004
Jean Amy - 28 July, 2004	Rogers Hooper - 26 December 2004
Bev Blewett - 3 February, 2004	Helen Hook - 27 December, 2004
Clifford W Borman - 31 October, 2004	Ray Landry - 28 April, 2004
Vincent J Bouchard - 22 December, 2004	Charlie Levesque - 31 May, 2004
Paul O Boucher - 3 February, 2004	Richard Larivier - 28 March, 2004
George M Brown - 18 March, 2004	Jean Lockerbie - 12 May, 2004
Shirley Brown - 18 August, 2004	Alex B MacCharles - 29 October, 2004
"Bomber" Bateman - 23 April, 2004	Vern Matheson - 1 December, 2004
Collins Bruce - 14 March, 2004	Marianna Mears - 16 September, 2004
Robert J Cameron - 16 September, 2004	Laura Merner - 29 January, 2004
Louise Chapman - 11 November 2004	John Michael - 6 October, 2004
Reginald Coleman - 20 January, 2004	Margaret Morrison - 22 June, 2004
Marion Culp - 2 December, 2004	W Norris - 13 November, 2004
Frederick de la Courneuve - 15 April, 2004	Harold Ponting - 27 August, 2004
John F Egan - 25 May 2004	Bernyce Saunders - 18 February, 2004
Joan Fawcett - 12 May 2004	Norman A Shackleton - 27 January, 2004
Reginald E Garnier - 8 October, 2004	Tom Sirianni - 26 March, 2004
Laird Gordon - 13 October, 2004	Walter E Smart - July 2004
"Billie" Grieve - 11 September, 2004	Roydon J Stafford - 30 July, 2004
Nellie Hancock - 17 April, 2004	Vincent J Sullivan - 31 October, 2004
James O Harrison - 17 February, 2004	Dennis Wheeler - 17 April, 2004

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THE MAIL RUN

(Editor note: RSM Graham sent a treasure trove of photos and memorabilia which will end up being a valuable edition to the Archive. He has offered some identifications to photos in previous editions)

Best wishes to you as the new editor of the Newsletter. I look forward to every edition and its memory jogging articles. After WW2 I re-enlisted in January 1947 and was sent to the RCD at Borden to the same lines I'd been in in 1943 prior to going to England. **Gord Wollard**, a regular contributor, will remember A28 CAC



Training Centre. Except for two years with another Regiment was a Dragoon until October 1980.

I have been going through the old barrack box and enclose some items that may be of use to you or the Museum. The

items that I have enclosed have been identified as I remember as to individuals, locations and dates. A lot of old friends and acquaintances on the Last Trumpet Call page of every edition –may the rest in peace.

First, a Last Trumpet Call item – **Henry K Wiita** (16 May 2003). "Big Henry" was Chief Cook for the Regiment in Germany in the late 60's and early 70's.

2002 Edition. Page 14. C Sqn RCD with 27th Canadian Infantry Brigade, Hannover, Germany, 1953 Coronation Parade. The Crew Commanders in front are (L to R) **Sgt's Williams R, Sonier H, Geldart V, and Graham H.** Page 20. The top photo is not Borden as the Regiment moved to Petawawa in 1948. Second photo (also in 2003 edition, page 5) seated (L to R) **Gen Smith, RSM CW Smith, Gen Church Mann** –



standing (L to R) **SSM Deeming R, RQMS Croft J, SSM Haskett R and SSM Durault J.**

2004 Edition. Page 15. Top right photo, on the right, **Sgt Watson W.**



I must comment on the MGS (VS Stryker) vehicle in the 2004 edition, Page 18. I seem to recall this vehicle being rejected by the CF some years ago. I assume it is to support the Coyotes and keep hands in on the 105mm which is a good weapon. I was on the firing team trials in Meaford. I am surprised that "Manual Labour" the Mexican loader/operator has been "ejected" in favour of an autoloader. If it loads all weapons, clears misfires and machine gun

stoppages, allows ammo type selection it must be a real wonder system. I wonder who loads the autoloader with its 18 rounds frequently.



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I received the following note and picture from Pat Carwe, referring to the 2004 Newslettter article "Gen Polk Hisselt":

Bann,

Thought you would find these of interest. Its too bad you didn't have them before you wrote that excellent article.

I think there was a "Polk" in the Civil War who was probably related to "Hisselt".

Audax et Celer

Patrick

We had some further correspondence where Pat made a couple of other points. He pointed out, quite rightly, that the "Chain of Command" referred to in the article did not include Pat Grieve as Brigade

Commander but BGen WC (Bill) Leonard. He also remembered being accused of "puffing" the target fired upon by Gen Polk – an accusation too base to be considered, of course. However, like a good editor, I tracked down Scottie Alexander, BC of the Squadron at the time and asked if there was any truth to the accusation. Not the slightest bit hesitant about putting the record straight, Scottie said that under cover of darkness he, Tom Urbanowsky and Ken Maybe had put a couple of jerry cans of gasoline in the turret of the target tank. He said that it made a satisfying bang and a lovely fireball. Ed.



The Moment of Truth?
Gen Polk (Hisselt), me and Ken Maybe

Good morning, Bann

In the last Newsletter you noted, "I edit – you do the writing". Well, here's a little of the latter.

I recently read Jack Granestein's book "Who Killed the Canadian Military?". I personally enjoyed the book although I suspect it's not everybody's cup of tea. Notwithstanding, the content annoyed me! Or, more precisely, my recall of events Granestein describes got my political dander up. It seems we just give our politicians of all stripes carte blanche to do whatever the hell they can get away with regarding the CF. Well, I thought I should put a few words where my mouth was.

I wrote the attached book review to give a little publicity to the content of Granestein's book. Its not exactly the kind of Regimental anecdote or story found in our Newsletter; however, if you need some page fillers for the next edition, the attached copy is available at no talent fee!

I thought I might just send a copy along to our local MP. The current government will no doubt be touting the acquisition of Striker vehicles while keeping the navy on hold for new helicopters. Granestein has a comment in his book along the lines – "politicians plead that you can't have guns and butter at the same time; but a

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country that is as blessed as Canada should be able to afford both". His thesis probably is pretty reasonable to our Regimental associates serving in Afghanistan!

Good luck on your first edition
Sincerely,
Gard Robertson.

Unfortunately, Gard's book review was, as he mentioned, a little too much writing and I was unable to include it in this edition. Either he or I would be happy, however, to forward you a copy on request. Ed



Gen Pat also sent along the short article about a Dragoon on the Lymington. He writes:

Bann,
Jackie still lives in Lymington: Nanci (widow of Tony, Peter and Jackie's son, and also a Dragoon at one time) and her Mother live at Sun Peaks Ski Resort, near Kamloops. Thought this would be suitable for the Dragoon – believe Peter joined the Regiment from the RTR circa 1953 and became responsible for the life of our aging Centurions. A wonderful guy – I believe

you were at the Mess Dinner in the BFOM when Tony and Peter were together in 1971. (*I was!*) . PS It might be worth mentioning that Tony was a Captain (Armour); a Captain (Pilot) and a Lieutenant (N) with a watch keeping certificate by the mid 70's. Was he one of a kind? See you in Kingston, 2005. Pat.

ANOTHER DRAGON ON LYMINGTON RIVER

Major Peter Wilson

endeared himself to many at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, never more so than during his period as their immediate past-commodore. Refusing to stand on rank, he always found time to listen, with any problem quickly solved and invariably ending in his hearty laugh, and always keen to encourage the junior sailors, even if they did splosh their wet gear along the tiled corridors!

Afloat, Peter sailed a succession of boats named Dragoon, named after his Regiment. The first, a 28' Lightning, he built in the early fifties whilst stationed in Canada; his best known was Dragoon 8, a Nantucket Clipper. The onset of cancer forced the sale of this cherished vessel, but a period of remission led to the appearance of Dragoon 9, a 20 year old character gaff cutter built on a Tankard 24 hull, which was restored to pristine condition. Alas,

she was never put to sea in earnest – but two days before he died earlier this year (1996), A FEW COLLEAGUES COLLECTED Peter from Oakhaven Hospice and, inevitably accompanied by his hearty laughter, he was able to see the finished Dragoon whilst sitting in his wheelchair along the riverfront.

Now Dragoon 10 has been launched by his wife Jackie, in a touching ceremony at the Club last weekend. This version will act as the Club's multi-role support boat for all their activities: towing, rescuing, ferrying, and most importantly, for accompanying the youngsters during their training sessions.

Remarked Desmond Dewhurst before a large gathering at the launch: "There was a strong feeling from the membership that the name of this boat should remind us of a very well loved and admired member, rear commodore sailing, then commodore and trustee. We want this name to remind us of Peter in the years to come. This is the first time a Club boat has been named after a member's boat – so this is a very special occasion".

Peter's wife Jackie, a trifle overcome by the occasion, duly poured champagne over the bow, saying "Peter would be delighted and honoured to know that there will be another Dragoon on Lymington River, especially for the juniors".

INTO THE FUTURE

Experience is Shaping Army Transformation

General Rick Hillier

Appointed as Chief of the Land Staff (CLS) in May 2003, *(and since promoted and appointed CDS)* LGen Rick Hillier served in Afghanistan as Commander of the multinational International Security



Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2004. Combined with his previous experience in volatile countries, he is well positioned to tackle the prickly job of transferring the lessons learned while fighting rebel forces, to the Canadian Forces (CF) transformation process. A dynamic and well-respected leader, he has a clear idea of what the CF can become, and seems to be keen to get things in motion. He recently met with our editor, Chris MacLean, to discuss how his frontline experience has been influencing and guiding the new Army transformation and regeneration.

Reflecting on his time in Afghanistan has served to “crystallize” recent experiences from dangerous missions such as Afghanistan and Bosnia into an understanding of the new security dynamic prevalent today. For one thing, he says that “warfare today is undeniably and vastly different – not only structurally, but in the way soldiers were trained and prepared in past decades and centuries.”

For another, he believes that “as a part of the western advanced industrialized economically sound world, Canada has a responsibility to help bring stability to areas that are inherently unstable.” And if we can’t do that, “those areas will end up generating instability that will be delivered to us in various forms, whether that is direct attack or a different method, it will still affect us just as much.” LGen Hillier often cites the example of recent insecurity, instability and chaos affecting the price of oil.

“Doorstep defence, as a sole option, is not an option in this very wealthy country in which we live.” By that, he means that if you simply defend your perimeter, you will not be successful in defending your country in the long run. However, by bringing stability to unstable regions, you can effect long term security. “We are talking failed or failing states, usually with destitution and poverty as factors within that,” says Hillier, “and unless we help bring stability to those places and the centres of population within them, then we are not going to be successful in effecting stability around the world.”

How can we help make that happen? “You do that by projecting power into the centre of the population mass, otherwise known as complex terrain [cities]. Given our very enviable position in the world and our enviable lifestyle,” he continues, “what I believe we have to do, as a country, is to empower citizens of these failed states to

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regain control of their lives and their government in a stable environment."

3-Block War

"It all comes down to the three block war," explains LGen Hillier. "You are fighting in Block One, while simultaneously helping secure, stabilize and nation-build in Block Two, and all the while, you are also helping people through disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping in Block Three. The important part is that you are doing all three simultaneously using complex training in the centres of population."

The Army has done a lot of work on the transformation to date, but that effort has been focussed primarily on block one, the fighting force. According to the CLS, "we have not put sufficient intellectual energy, and resources, and work toward the other two blocks specifically, and then all three blocks together." This appears to be one of the LGen Hillier's main transformation priorities. He says the three-block war concept will "significantly alter how we structure, how we prepare, how we command, how we train, how we operate and how we sustain ourselves."

To illustrate this, he explains some of the ways in which the Army must alter its concept of how to command: "When you are doing just the fighting portion of command it is easy to show a friendly force as an arrow on a map moving to the middle of an enemy concentration painted in red. You can see it clearly taking place and it helps you get an understanding of the situation so that you can make accurate decisions that will help ensure success. But when you are in the middle of that centre of population, and you are living among friendly people, but you are also living among people who are trying to kill you and trying to ensure that you are not successful in bringing stability, it is much more difficult to portray that in a digitized command format that can help

you understand the situation and make those intelligent decisions.

"The vast majority of our command support work has previously all been focussed on block one, and now we have to take into account the complexities of blocks one, two and three – all done simultaneously."

Simultaneous performance of the three blocks is fundamental to this new vision. In preparing to execute a fighting operation "you must also deal with the other two blocks at the same time or the sustainment may be interrupted," he says. "You are dealing with police, you may be involved with crowd or riot control, you may have NGOs added to the equation, all these are going to be a factor."

Many of the lessons learned from the Afghanistan mission are not new, they seem to be a combination of lessons that CF members have learned in recent years during operations such as IFOR in Kosovo and SFOR Bosnia. But for LGen Hillier, and possibly many others, these experiences and lessons crystallized with the Afghanistan mission.

Multinational Strength

Multi-nationality is going to be fundamental to all future operations.

"Everything we do is going to be multinational," Hillier confirms. "Every single direct action against terrorists that we performed inside of ISAF involved a minimum of eight nations. At one point or another, Canadian soldiers and units in Afghanistan worked with each of the other 36 nations that were part of ISAF."

Adjusting how the Army trains in order to be able to operate more efficiently and effectively in these multinational roles, even at the very low tactical levels, is incredibly important to the Army transformation vision.

Multi-Agency

The CLS is very clear about Canada's role in Afghanistan. "We were supporting the Afghan government on the road that they were trying to lead the country – for increased stability and a better life for Afghans. That's a different role than what we normally train to, where we take the lead and execute completely." But ISAF was operating in an area with some 1500 non-government organizations (such as the United Nations, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, les medecins sans frontières, and some very small agencies, and was obliged to try to coordinate efforts. "What we did had a direct impact upon them, one way or the other, good or bad, and what they were doing certainly had an effect upon us, and we saw their work as being fundamentally essential to our end state." Military assistance is a temporary security window, he says, and those agencies are working to "help build the police force, build the economy, build the rule of law, build a justice system, to provide the ability to sustain that. So we saw their work as absolutely hand-in-glove with what we were trying to achieve, and therefore we had to make sure we support them to be successful too.

There were complications. Some agencies were harder to work with than others. Sometimes honourable intentions were complicated by discord with the Afghan government's direction.

Sometimes the problem was inefficiency, as in the construction of a hospital in one small community being funded by three different organizations while other communities had no funding.

Coordinating military forces with the international and civilian organizations is a challenge, but it's becoming a fact of life. According to LGen Hillier, it's one of the areas where Canada needs to better prepare CF members – through education

at the staff colleges, professional military institutes, and training sites preparing for the mission. He suggests that having the various groups working together during training ops can offer the best combination of capabilities. However, that can be difficult, as "some organizations simply don't want to have anything to do with us, we understand that, but at the same time they need to understand that we are going to co-exist in the same location and hopefully work towards the same ends whether they want to coordinate it or not," he says, matter-of-factly.

Basic Transformation

There are some clear priorities for the army regeneration and transformation. "What we will be going through over the next 18-24 months is putting the army, the land force component of the CF on an assembly-line process to produce the task forces, the headquarters, and all the enablers that we need to conduct operations, so that it will be come a systematic, routine way of doing business. We will know that each year we will produce this number of task forces, they'll have within them specific modules (sub-unit levels, infantry, etc.), and we will know months and years in advance, exactly what capabilities we are producing for foreign or domestic operations. We need it to be predictable.

"Our soldiers and their families will benefit from that predictability. It is fundamentally important to be able to schedule your life.

"The next 18-24 months, as we get into the process of generating units, bringing them to a certain level of readiness at the sub-unit level, then advancing to the Manoeuvre Training Centre (CMTCC) in Wainwright, and bringing them to complete readiness, we are also transforming at the same time by incorporating new technology and lessons

The Dragoon

learned to produce a task force that's ready to go into operation.

"It will be a modular system, so that we can build a task force based on the right mix of subunits and enablers to fit the exact mission, no matter where it is. Both CF leaders and the Government of Canada will know its full capability.

"I think that predictability is fundamentally important. From the regeneration phase we get the process in place, incorporate the new technology and start producing the task forces that are ready to go into operation with all the enablers and train so that they can be task-tailored to the exact kind of job – whether it's streets of Kabul or Africa or any other mission that our Government, representing Canadians, decides we need to play a part."

Feedback from within

Will soldiers embrace these departures from the traditional set up?

LGen Hillier believes that Canada's soldiers will recognize this as a structured realization of the ad hoc procedures that have been developing over the past few years. The restructuring is intended to formalize, enhance and strengthen training systems, incorporate technology and build successful units that can perform missions from within a well-qualified system. He is convinced that soldiers will embrace this new system and wonder what took so long. "What we are doing is putting flesh to the skeleton of the words that were in the Army Strategy," he explains. "We are going to build a force structure that can be an incredibly powerful tool... we are going to have people who are trained, educated, experienced, equipped and prepared as a team to go in and be successful at doing whatever needs to be done."

The restructuring is intended to be strategically relevant to Canada's needs for

the next 20-25 years. "But we also have to be tactically capable on the ground when we arrive," he says, "and that's why we are undergoing a series of changes and acquisitions to make sure that our direct fire capabilities in particular are the kind we can deploy no matter what scenario, that they can be effective across all blocks, and can give us the kind of direct fire we need – for a deterrent, for survival, and for fighting to win – no matter what circumstances we encounter."

It is expected to take a while to mature the complete process, but LGen believes that, as they depart the training centre at Wainwright after completing a battle group rotation or brigade exercise, soldiers will consider themselves better prepared than they have ever been.

"It is a change for our regimental families," he admits. "No longer will we be sending up one complete battalion of a regiment, because we can't continue to maintain that if it's five, 10, or 12 years, such as occurred in the Balkans. You are not going to have one regiment projecting a battalion out on an operation, complete, and then bringing it back in. It's going to be a change. You are going to have a piece of that organization go out, sometimes it will be the battalion headquarters, sometimes it will be one of the companies or squadrons, one of the sub-units or other bits and pieces of it, and that is a significant change."

Until now, the entire regiment made a cohesive unit; they all went off to war together, came back together, and prepared to do it all over again. The new system sounds more like a modern family, with members heading out on different missions before returning home.

"The challenge is that the regimental families and the system have to adapt themselves to be able to do that kind of thing. That's going to cause some stresses and strains, and we are well aware of that.

The Dragoon

I believe there is a powerful role for the regimental family here, but it's going to be different. We simply need to adapt to get the best of what the new security dynamic requires that we do, and the regimental family can ensure that we link with our tradition of excellence and that we continue to have that regimental family as a caring heart for our soldiers and their families too. But it is a change, this is not the way we have done it for the past 50, 60 or 100 years. The regiment allows its members to get through the very difficult times, but we are going to need the regiment to play a role which is slightly different than the one we've been playing all along. That's going to take a while."

Acquisitions

"Priority number one for me – crystallized after Afghanistan – is tactical airlift," states Hillier emphatically. That's not an unusual statement for an Army commander. Without tactical airlift, there is no bridge into that mission. "We know across the Canadian Forces that we have a challenge with our C-130 fleet, and we need to ensure that we have a tactical airlift capability that can maintain that lifeline to wherever we are going to be conducting operations on behalf of Canada."

Priority number two? "There is clearly an overwhelming requirement for heavy lift in-theatre. We have certain capabilities with the Griffin helicopter fleet we now have, but what we need truly is a heavy lift aviation capability to project power inside the theatre and move it around. For example, during this mission we used the German CH-53, which is a massive helicopter, but it's 30 or 40 years old now, and very hard to maintain. You cannot always depend on your allies or coalition partners to bring that capability – or for it to be available when you need it.

"There's no doubt that in these kinds of missions, you need to project power

around the theatre – be it soldiers or weapons systems or a whole variety of things and the way to do that is with aviation – and light helicopters don't meet the requirement. You need something to take a load, either a platoon of soldiers or sling a gun underneath it, and lift it some significant range, such as a couple of hundred miles to be able to deploy, and then you refuel and carry on further than that; but the lift and weight it can carry and cargo space is important. For conditions like Afghanistan, you need something that can do much more than what our Griffins can do. It really would be tremendously valuable to have that heavy helicopter lift ourselves with our deployments into those centres of population for sure. Something along the lines of those CH-53s is magnificent, but we need something that is obviously much newer. It gives you a capability and flexibility which really helps you set the conditions for success."

Priority number three: "Without question, the direct fire piece is a fundamental part of reducing the new level of risk on missions that we are deploying on now. We have to be prepared to face down, deter and deal with whomever we encounter when we arrive – from militia forces to terrorist groups or suicide bombers. The mobile gun system, a direct fire cannon on a wheeled armoured vehicle (the LAV chasis), was announced by the Minister just over a year ago and is a fundamental part of that need. The U.S. is developing that system, and we feel it meets our requirements exactly.

"We also need the Tube-launched Optically-tracked Wire-guided (TOW) missiles put on the LAV III (the main fleet for our medium weight army).

"And we need to take the ADATS (Air Defence Anti Tank System) that was prioritized for air defence, and convert it to a ground attack system that will reach out with precision and lethality to strike a

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target at distances up to or beyond 8km, because that is where the threat is now.

"If we have those three systems together, we've got a direct fire capability which is world class and will allow us to be effective in that three block war.

"Beyond that, the ISTAR piece, inclusive of the command and control piece, is fundamental to everything we do. All of our operations have to be focused on achieving a very real effect and must be conducted with knowledge. So we have to have the intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance assets linked to our command support system to allow everyone from the most junior soldier to the most senior commander to understand the same information and make smart decisions about what to do next and how to be most effective.

"In the slightly longer term, what we need is a long range indirect fire capability that has terminal guidance and fits in our medium weight fleet, and that is not yet on the market. We just don't see a system there right now that we would want. And we are talking extremely long range here, so if you have an area with low manoeuvrability you can cover that entire area. That requirement is a little further out simply because we don't see the kind of systems that we desperately need. We'll take some risk in the shorter term here as we wait to see what developments will lead us to on those indirect fire systems."

Command Capability

Because of Canada's many missions in the past decade, LGen Rick Hillier is confident that Canada is well suited to take command of multi-national missions like ISAF because the CF has "many experienced, knowledgeable and trained personnel who are practiced in multi-national operations and used to working with many other countries and disparate cultures, and languages, and ways of

doing business that you get when you mix in 37 different nations."

We even have experience working alongside countries that we were previously assisting. LGen Hillier recounts the tale of a fire at the Canadian Embassy in Afghanistan, when the ISAF fire department, consisting of Bosnians, responded to the emergency, they were escorted to the site by a Croatia Military Police platoon. "Every Canadian soldier will recognize that as a sign of success from a previous mission," he says with obvious pride.

"We've done this, we teach this, we train this and I think our Canadian characteristics allow us to do this well. We are very comfortable dealing with ambiguity, where things are not specifically black or white, we can deal with civilians and military together, we are experienced in dealing with multi-national, multi-factional, and multi-ethnic groups. Then you add the fact that, of those 37 nations, Canada's contribution to ISAF was the second largest (after Germany). Not only were we well suited to play a lead role in command of that mission, but I think it was our right almost to have command of that mission. Our contribution to Afghanistan has been huge, well seen by the Afghans themselves who look upon Canadian soldiers as saviours, well seen by the Afghan Government, who appreciate immensely what we as a country have done over there and I think it was appropriate that Canadians should be part of the command of ISAF this past year."

When asked if Canada should narrow its focus on choosing foreign initiatives, the CLS diplomatically defers to government decision-makers. But he does admit that after serving on numerous missions, he gets somewhat frustrated when "Canada's enormous contributions are not always focused geographically or functionally, and as a result, our

contributions do not always get the profile we deserve, and as a result of that, the credibility, and as a result of that, the opportunity to influence those missions 'the way we should.' He is optimistic, however, that a new understanding of that process is growing, and that Canada will begin to focus more and therefore get the profile and credibility to influence matters in accordance with Canadian values. "And I think we saw that occur in Afghanistan where we did have a significant focussing of the Canadian Forces' assets to give a high profile that resulted, obviously, in us getting an opportunity to have command of ISAF and I think that is a highly recommended way to get the best profile we can for that Canadian flag and, as a result, get a chance to recognize Canada's interest in that region and then work towards achieving those interests."

NATO

LGen Hillier believes that Canada needs NATO. "We use it superbly, and need it still to help balance our relationships with the United States and the rest of Europe. We should be a driving factor in ensuring that NATO succeeds in transforming itself into a flexible and agile institution, able to conduct missions in this new security dynamic." He is impressed by the energy being put into that effort by current Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the former Dutch Foreign Minister, "but NATO will be what the 26 nations want it to be, and if they want it to be successful they will provide the forces and drive the transformation to success. Canada's contributions over this past year have already played a huge part in helping NATO be successful, but the other countries will also have to play their role. This is a challenge, it's not easy."

Simulation

"Simulation is more important than ever before because of one reason, we have

moved now from this traditional set piece battlefield into one that's entirely changed," states LGen Hillier. "We no longer have terrain wargame scenarios, we don't know what a brigade may look like when we put it together. It'll be multinational, that's the only thing we know for sure. Whether it will have one, two, or three task forces depends upon the mission itself, we don't know how large a piece of ground it will occupy, or what we'll have to do there, and the threat could be anything from a suicide bomber to a well-armed militia force. So now, instead of being able to lay out a structure based upon the ground, we've put all those threats together and select a structure based on very subjective judgement of those threats. For reconnaissance operations, we're now saying 'here are the kind of threats we have to deal with, it's going to be part of a center of population, and here's the kind of structure you're going to get.' And then we take that model and put it through all the simulation that we can against those threats to confirm how valid an action would be. So almost completely we've reversed the process of how we get into the structure and we kick out the door. The modeling and simulation part becomes absolutely essential to having the right kind of organization with the right kind of preparation in place to do the job when we need it done, more so than ever before."

Young, computer-literate soldiers are taking to this aspect with great ease. This isn't new to them and this is just part of their lifestyle. "They see the value of it instantly, they adapt to it instantly, and are ready to use it to the fullest degree," Hillier confirms. "In fact, they make folks like myself seem like dinosaurs."

Adaptation

Adaptation to these new technologies and other changes is perhaps hardest on those in those midway through their careers. This group, now advancing to the

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leadership and command roles across the land force, is coping with a huge change from the way things were handled in the past, to today's new vision.

"The young soldiers adapt quickly," he tells us, "it's those folks in the middle to later part of their careers who now see a significant change coming. But I will tell you, and this is from the heart, we watch Canadian soldiers, officers and NCO's in that melange of 37 nations, and Canadians stand out, without question – as being able to think, as being able to cast their horizons wide open and not be constrained by tradition or other baggage.

"They are adept at incorporating all the disparate parts of a team and getting them all focused on working towards achieving the effect that we want. They are able to do this in a professional manner which kept people on side with positive effect and reduced negative effect all at the same time. Whether it was a young NCO running a patrol on the streets of Kabul, or whether it was a senior colonel trying to orchestrate operations across the entire mission (working with staff, the UN, and various diplomatic communities), those Canadians stood out. We have an advantage in having these capable, smart, educated, imaginative, agile and experienced people in place to do it. No question about that whatsoever."

Every hour of every day, at the Wainright Training Centre, the CF is training to the three block war – all three blocks simultaneously. The Weapons Effect Simulation (WES) is an integral part of the training, and it has already begun. The WES allows Canada's military to train with real cause and effect. It allows you to see the effects of your actions so that you can adjust your training to get the effect that you want. The first site acceptance test in late October 2004, demonstrated this ability. The first tests ran the combat team through scenarios, and then checked system performance. It becomes obvious

that even one person can actually make a difference and every decision can have an effect on the outcome. When something goes wrong you can go back through with the observer controller and determine why it occurred, learn from it, and apply those lessons to the next training scenario.

The end product will be a task force that can roll through the program and come out ready to go on operations anywhere in the world "and they will be more prepared – both as a team and as individuals, from the commander right down to the most junior soldier, across the officers, the NCO's, and senior soldiers – more prepared than they've ever been before in the history of the Canadian forces to do what we ask them to," LGen Hillier says with confidence.

"The center of gravity for our commanders is the Manoeuvre Training Centre and clearly part of that is the weapons effects simulation. If you're very good at it you will see the effect because someone's beeper will be going off, and if you aren't very good at it your beeper will be going off, and then we will walk through why that occurred or why that occurred needlessly. It will change the way we train to reflect the realities of life, we have not had that opportunity in detail before, so this is a significant step for us.

"But it will be also more expensive. Simulation when you're yelling 'bang bang you're dead,' you issue somebody 100 rounds and that's it for like a week, a machine gun belt of ammo. And so they fire a few rounds and ration the rest to make that belt last as long as possible, but you're simulating the fact that you're carrying on shooting at somebody. Well, the weapons effect simulation system only works when you fire rounds. If you want to train realistically, it has a cost."

Budgetary constraints

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Speaking of cost, the CLS is blunt. "We have no choice, we have to. We owe it to Canadians, who entrust us with their sons and daughters, to ensure that they are as well prepared as humanly possible before being put into those dirty and dangerous places to do things on behalf of our country, and we cannot do less than that. So is there a cost, and we will enter into some difficult discussions about how we will be able to meet that cost, yes. But we cannot do less. That includes the use of things such as the WES and I believe it will mean that funding may have to shift from other programs. How much? Where? When? There will be lots of discussions, but we cannot fail, and I believe we won't fail to do everything possible to set our soldiers up for success when we ask them to do something that's extremely difficult and extremely risky and ask them to do it on our behalf. We've got to give them every leeway we possibly can, and that includes the training part, and that includes the simulation piece – and it has got to be done with common sense too, so we're not just [wasting] money," he adds candidly. "What we want to do, is do it right, do it intelligently, and do it with common sense to get the maximum effect on behalf of our soldiers, on behalf of Canada."

Wrap up: by LGen Rick Hillier

I'd like to summarize. Through the transformation process, we're going to become a land force that's visibly relevant to what Canada needs in order to help bring stability around the world to places that aren't stable and to be available for emergency response in Canada if it's needed here.

We're building a land force to be visibly relevant because it is important. We also want to build a force that can do the job that we ask it to do. When you arrive in a place like Afghanistan, all those folks who have been fighting all their lives immediately recognize you for what you are – either you are a professional military

force or a disorganized rabble. If you are the former, the difficulties that you encounter in conducting your mission are dramatically reduced because you are seen as being capable and this has a deterrent effect. People are less prone to challenge you because they realize that there will be some difficult things occur. On the other hand, if you're seen as a disorganized rabble, your job is much more difficult.

Our commitment is to be relevant to what Canadians want, and we are going to be capable on the ground and have what our soldiers need when a condition is set for them.

There's a connection here that Canadians have gotten away with ignoring for far too long. And that is the fact that these are not my soldiers, they are Canadian soldiers, and they are the sons and daughters of Canadians, the husbands and wives, mothers and fathers in fact, they're neighbors, they're friends or just someone they met down the street. Canadians have to start taking a direct interest in those soldiers who become their credentials around the world. We ask them to do a lot, we ask them to do it in very dangerous situations. And those young men and women, who are representing us while walking those dirty, dangerous streets, have to be certain that every single Canadian is walking with them.

Figuratively, that has not been occurring, the soldiers don't feel valued, don't feel they are being perceived as a national resource, a national treasure, and in my opinion, that's exactly what they are, and they've proven it time and again.

Canadians need to take ownership, these are your soldiers, they are tremendous credentials and the rest of the population of Canada needs to recognize that.



CYPRUS 1965

Walt Conrad



By the end of the 1965 summer concentration, B Squadron RCD had just finished its conversion training to become the RCD Recce Squadron, and was getting ready for a send-off celebration before going to Cyprus. What a send-off! The very last live-fire run had finished and we headed for home and leave. Unfortunately, a tracer bullet had lodged in a very dry stump and by midnight a fully-fledged forest fire was under way. All leaves were cancelled, units headed for Quebec and Ontario were CB'd for ten days to fight the fire and "Black Hats" became VERY unpopular.

Nevertheless, the advance party left on time, finally arriving in Cyprus only to find the Squadron responsibilities were split in two: one was escorting convoys of

civilian traffic through the Turkish enclave from Nicosia to Kyrenia and return (a chore that ultimately became boringly monotonous to all), the other assumed control of Lefka District on the western side of the island. From there the 950 strong Irish Group had been recalled by its government, apparently due to a dispute with the UN over pay. Hence, we assumed responsibility with a truncated HQ, two scout car troops and W Battery RCHA acting as infantry. Thin on the ground? You Bet!

Several situations arose, some minor, others not. Most negotiations, initially, concerned the olive harvest. Cypriot farmers knew to the millimeter where their property lines were, even in the complete absence of boundary markers, but most

arguments concerned branches of olive trees, which could be owned by several individuals or families and could involve both Greek and Turkish owners.

More seriously, one had to contend with a definite pro-Greek bias with elements within UN HQ. For example, copies of old air photos indicating original Turkish and Greek positions were "unavailable", despite surveillance flights taken over the years from RAF Base Akrotiri. As a result, squabbles were constant and occasionally serious, as each side accused the other of encroaching – with UNFICYP generally supporting the Greeks. One particularly ugly situation occurred early on. We learned that a Greek battalion was on the move to take out a key Turkish position defending a small enclave on the western coast of our District. As the Turks could not withdraw, and as tensions were running very high, it could have become bloody. Over our net, we learned that General Thimayya supported any Canadian intervention. As a result, I barged into the Greek O group just after midnight and told the colonel the fight was off and to recall his troops, who were already on their start line. Fortunately, after much shouting and cocking of weapons, the phone rang – with the General on the line. The Colonel was visibly infuriated (embarrassed?) but the attack was called off, much to our relief. Elsewhere, and later, a rather hilarious incident occurred with my standing on a



B Sqn Sgt's Mess, Cyprus 1965

knoll between the two antagonists in complete darkness, shining a flashlight on my blue beret, shouting "Ne tirez pas! No shooting!" It worked though.

Finally, by the end of October, the Squadron was reunited in Nicosia. The Irish Group CO had been very reluctant to take over Lefka, "...until all my forces are here" (they numbered about seven hundred compared to our total of one hundred and fifty). It was pointed out to him that he and his Group would be under our command should a crisis arise – and he quickly took over and we were able to leave. Troop reorganizations and changes in roles within the Canadian Zone occupied the Squadron for the next while, during which the excellent working relationship with the First Canadian Guards was established and continued throughout our tour.

While the convoy-escorting went on and on, the Squadron was active elsewhere. The "Battle of Henley's Hill" was an example in which Mike Kennedy's troop was only minutes away from firing on a Greek "encroachment", in support of a Canadian Guards company – fortunately cooler heads prevailed and the Greeks withdrew. Another task was



Memorial Service at the Gravesite of Tpr Campbell JH, 31 July 1966

The Dragoon



Presentation of Cyprus Medals by the Colonel of Regiment, BGen HA Phillips

escorting the rotation of the Turkish Battalion from Anatolia (my God, they were BIG!). More interesting was the evacuation of the Turkish Cypriots from their positions in Lefka. Their individual identification and eventual transport back to Turkey was complex and lengthy, but went well. Many of these "Cypriots" were in fact Turkish nationals, as were some of the Greek "Cypriots" (a Staff College classmate of mine encountered one of our former Turkish classmates masquerading as a Cypriot, much to the latter's embarrassment).

Christmas came. The local Greek Children's Hospital was flooded with UN gifts and support within which the Squadron's efforts would have been lost. Gene Ross discovered the (largely ignored) Turkish Children's Hospital and the Squadron gave rations, gifts and a three-piece orchestra. The children were totally bemused by Santa Claus, but loved the toys. The doctors and nurses were thrilled, particularly when a little girl, very withdrawn until then, got up and danced. There was a lot of throat-clearing and eye-wiping among us – no doubt due to the dust in the air!

One other incident bears repeating. One of our Ferrets, commanded by a new Corporal, reported a submarine off the north shore near Kyrenia, heading west toward Lefka. We checked to ensure his report was feasible – it was – and it was passed to UN HQ. Needless to say, it was treated with laughter and total disbelief. That night, all hell broke loose as the Turks were reinforced by the submarine (which led to the evacuation

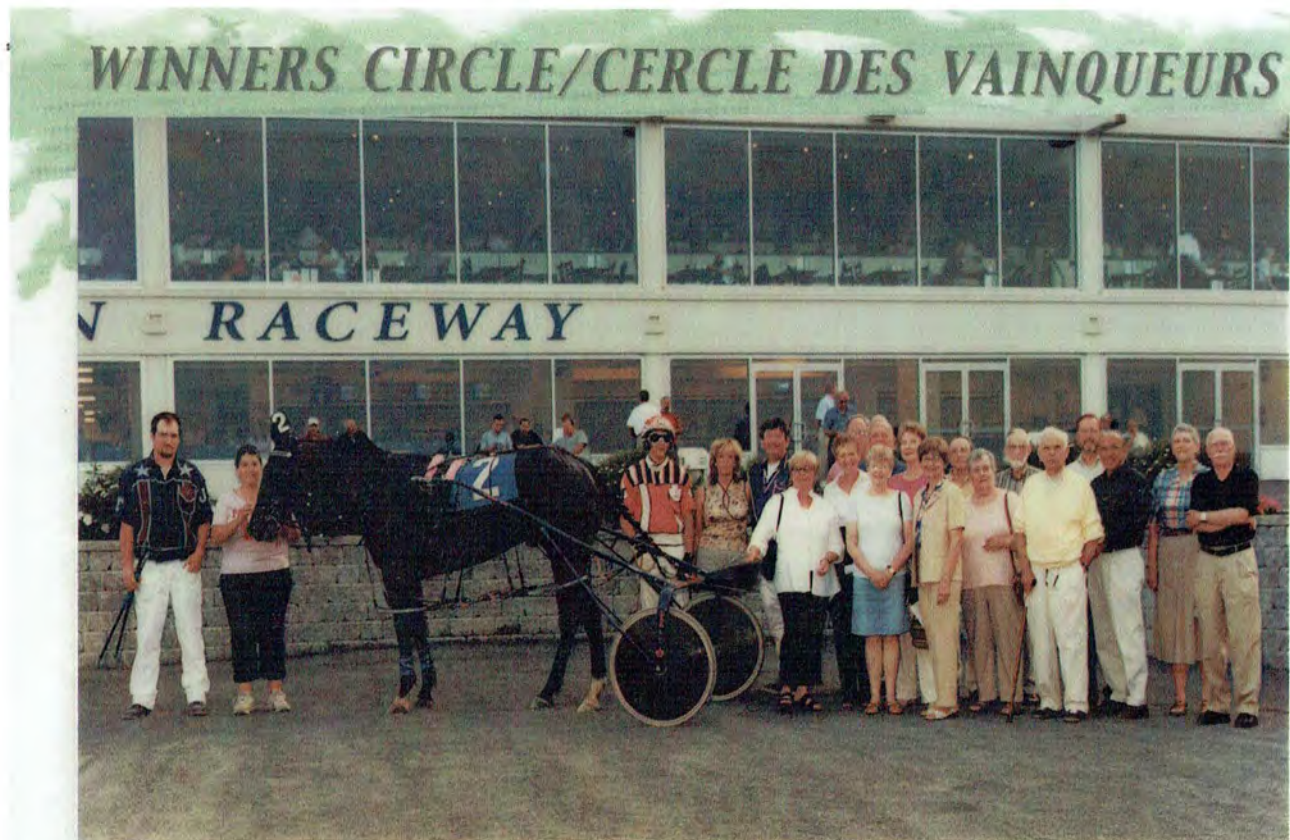
mentioned earlier). Un HQ never questions another report of ours. The point being made here is that the Canadian soldier, when the chips are down, can be relied upon to report situation clearly and accurately, and respond to unusual situations. It was a real pleasure and a source of pride to command a group of occasionally zany characters who were utterly professional when they needed to be.





Fort Phillips






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The Colonel of the Regiment lead members of the NCR Chapter astray at the races.



You wanna go?

Congratulations
for a job well
done!



John Gardham and Friend

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The Kingston Ladies



The Ottawa Discussion Group
Chuck Gruchy, Bill Smith, John Gardham and
Dave Wilkinson



Clive Milner and yet another mountain!



Gen Clive and an old friend



Brian Forsyth, Bob Meating and Terry Seely

THE PHOTO GALLERY



The Barsauskas and the Appletons



Change of Command



The Winner!



A fine vintage!



Leleifontein Dinner, Alberta Chapter

The Dragoon
THE PHOTO GALLERY



Reunion 04, Atlantic Chapter - Everyone eyeing the last bottle



Lt Rowena Pedan



Karl, well dressed, and friends of
the Quebec Chapter



Knisley Chapter Honours at Cpl Knisley's grave



Moe D'Amour and Gus Brown

REBUILDING RECCE

C Allen Smith

The ability to convert from recce to armour and back again is a skill which the Regiment has developed over a number of years. Following WW2 the RCD converted to armour with the Sherman tank but the brigade recce capability was rebuilt in the



The original team and mascot, Wolf

early 50's using a bit of a round-about process. C Allan Smith was instrumental in the rebuilding of that function.

Al Smith was commissioned as a Lieutenant with the 17th Duke of York Royal Canadian Hussars (7th Recce Regiment) but during the period of recruitment for and the formation of 27 Brigade, he transferred to the Victoria Rifles of Canada so that he could be a part of the deployment. While with the Rifles, he served as the Assistant Adjutant and Intelligence Officer of the Battalion in Germany and it was at about this time, in late 1952, that he was called to 27 Brigade Headquarters, in its garrison in Hannover, to talk to the Brigade Commander about building a recce component in the Brigade. Brigadier "Rocky" Rockingham had read Smith's record of training with the 17th and the Rifles and asked him to form a recce element for the brigade. Al, of course, agreed.

Smith began the process immediately and, as a first step, was transferred from the Rifles to **Major Gordon Pratt's** C Squadron, Royal Canadian Dragoons, stationed in Hohne Camp. C Squadron was a lean tank squadron and finding people to man the troop was a real problem but the selection and training of personnel began almost immediately. One of the most important selections was **Sergeant HS (Harry) Graham** as Troop Sergeant and Smith and Graham set about finding the rest of the members of the troop. Equipment on which to train, however, rapidly became the real priority. The British Army, also in Hohne Camp, provided (one way or another) most of the vehicles from their surplus and the troop started to take shape, albeit as a bit of a ragtag group. The first three scout cars were eventually joined by a Staghound armoured car and finally a compliment of 6 scout cars (a mixture of Lynx and Foxhounds), two 6 wheel supply trucks a three-quarter ton Dodge and a jeep (unofficial, liberated from the Dutch Army) completed the troop. The training was hard and dangerous and it was during one of these field exercises that Cpl Dickson, from Cape Breton, became the troop's first and only casualty when his Foxhound rolled over and Dickson was killed.

By 1953 the 1st Recce Troop of 27th Brigade was stood up - its strength was 1 Officer, 4 Sergeants, 3 Corporals, 2 Lance



The Fox and Tp Sgt Harry Graham

The Dragoon



The Lynx with Graham and Cpl Pearce

Corporals and 12 Troopers and vehicle strength was 12 cars, including a mixture of Lynx, Foxhounds. Training had included the usual - weapons, map using and radio exercises but driving the Lynx was particularly tricky as the driver had to sit at an angle to the wheel. The troop took to the field in Soltau for fire and movement exercises but it was hard and dangerous work and it was during one of these field exercises that Cpl Dickson, from Cape Breton, became the troop's first and only casualty when his Foxhound rolled over and Dickson was killed.

In August and September of that year the Troop participated in the Senelager Concentration but two days after the end of the training the word

through - the recce troop was to be disbanded, all of the vehicles and equipment turned back into Ordnance and the personnel back into C Squadron for the Squadron's return to Canada. But, as far as Al Smith was concerned, it wasn't really over. He returned to Petawawa with the Squadron and he did it AGAIN. In no time at all Al had the RCD Recce Troop, this time in Ferret Scout Cars, proudly flying its own pennant on parade with each member of the troop sporting a red scarf, much to the disgust of the RSM, WO1 Charlie Smith.

Both Al Smith and Harry Graham are unreservedly proud of their part in rebuilding a recce component in the Regiment and in this era of recce taking precedent it is good to look back and see how it was done.



Loading up on the Recce Train



Side by side at the washrack



AN ACCIDENTAL COLLECTOR

David Sproule

Last summer, when my wife returned from Ottawa having had to deal with sorting through her late Mother's effects she stated desperately, "We've got too much stuff, we've just got to edit all of this stuff." I got the message, so I chucked out some old magazines that I had neatly piled in the basement. That was relatively painless but I got to thinking about all of the stuff that I have collected unintentionally. I really am not a collector, that is to say, I have no over-riding passion that consumes my time and sucks the money out of my wallet. Like collecting guns, stamps, coins or model trains. I am an accidental collector and I know that I am not alone for many of you who have spent a career or even a few years in the army, like it or not, are also accidental collectors



Now I have written before about the contents of my old MK 5 kitbag and most of those items will never be used again and I guess could easily follow the route of the old magazines. I

will never again wear combat clothing or long underwear (hopefully) and I never wore that combat scarf that I was issued at the Regiment. I also have a shoe box with a few old shoulder flashes, lanyards and buttons from sundry regiments but it is hardly a collection. My accidental collection resides on a bookshelf next to my desk and now totals about sixteen. A modest collection, but more beer mugs

than I will ever need or use. Yes it seems that every time I was posted I would acquire another glass-bottomed pewter beer mug suitably inscribed. My military career in beer mugs – some resume huh. Now, not all of these momentos were presented on "taking my leave" – for there are ceramic ones from some Oktoberfest party at the mess in Yellowknife, two glass ones from some festive military event. Recently when I retired from SkyTrain here in Vancouver, I was presented with two more pewter steins, so the practice is not confined to the Canadian Forces.

Now I must admit that I have a couple of favourites; the recce squadron mug bought through squadron funds in Egypt for all ranks that served with UNEF in 62-63. Although now I find that it leaves a brassy after-taste in my mouth. There is the one my sister-in-law gave to me that belonged to my Brother who served in the Queen's York Rangers and of course the one that same Brother gave to me when I was commissioned away back when. There are many more remembering pleasant years among friends along life's way from Meaford Tank Range, the Combat Arms School, Training Command HQ etc etc.

Now all of these containers were graciously received and dutifully emptied and of course are significant to me. Sorry dear but my beer mugs will not go the way of the magazines. Besides what do recycled pewter beer mugs get made into – beer mugs I bet. Someday one of our daughters is going to have to deal with all of this stuff and maybe that is one way of getting some kind of payback for the sleepless nights they caused us when they were 16. Oh well maybe some auctioneer will get big bucks for some old military guy's outstanding collection of pewter mugs for out there, there is bound to be a serious collector of all of this sentimental junk that collects along the way. In the meantime my mugs look good on my bookshelf and I guess if I was an obsessive sort of person, I could use each of them on

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a rotating schedule. I get too thirsty to ever let that happen.

As my wife and I have had to do, I can see our daughters sorting through all of our stuff and wondering why we kept what we did. Just wait until they locate another accidental collection, the box of plaques that were also presented but lacking the wall space, never displayed.

TECHNICAL COMPETANCE

David Sproule

Like most adults my age my technical competence started with learning to ride a bike. This came sometime after WW2 when I was about 7 or 8 and that was pretty much it until my Mother taught me how to drive and I was in grade 12 at that time. I would have liked to learn when I was 16 but at that same age, my brother stripped the gears on our old '40 Ford sedan so my parents were pretty skeptical about anyone under the age of 20 driving a car.

That was about it until COTC phase training at the RCAC School when we were gradually introduced to the rifle, SMG and pistol but then we learned how to tune and net a #19 wireless set. Can you believe we actually called it a wireless set. Now most readers will remember this fine old piece of gear and maybe not with fondness. It was a complicated to tune and net and even more so to stay on frequency. How could I ever forget (obviously) the "G" pattern we used to tune and net – Whiskey Bravo, Whisky Bravo, Whisky Bravo, hear tuning and netting call, net now. Get the old zero beat lock it on with those little screws. You know what I'm talking about. Our Pentium 4 computer is a "piece of cake" to operate after that. Our competence continued to grow as we learned how to double clutch driving the Sherman. Like a tennis player delivering a back hand, I had to use both

hands to negotiate the gear shift from gear to gear. And so it goes.

Of course, we tend to take all of this stuff for granted but it was fun wasn't it. There were of course other technical challenges – gunnery, learning to drive a Ferret but the one I will always remember was learning to set up the old 16mm Bell and Howell projector. Now that was a piece of kit. Setting out the speakers in the front of the class, placing the spool of film on the projector, threading the film and making sure to get the loops just right and then locking the film in place. Now often the film slipped with frame after frame jumping through out of sequence and sometimes (most times) the sound was garbled depending on the age of the film. They were noisy too and one had to strain to listen to the film over the sound of the projector. But when we were in Egypt that is what we had and that old Bell and Howell was good for watching old reels of "Hockey Night in Canada" or "Don Messer's Jubilee." The scariest part of those old machines was rewinding the film. Did you ever rewind a film backwards or maybe it was inside-out. Damn but things got complicated then. I wonder where all of those old projectors are and what about all of those old films most of which must be archival footage by now.

Hey! Do you want a beer while I load this DVD into the player?

David Sproule
Vancouver, BC
Feb 1/05



THE FIFTH HORSEMAN

Mr Jim Judd



CAVALRY TRAINING, St Jean sur Richelieu, 1938. Tim Hanley out front, with, from right to left, Jim Judd, Bruce McKay, Joe Doherty, Keswick, Gardiner, James Lauchlan, Bob Ritchie and Eddie Kassab.

Following publication of the Newsletter in 2004, Jim called me regarding the 4 Horsemen photo on page 23 and a few days later showed up on my doorstep with his marvelous photo album. Jim certainly is the 5th Horseman. He and his brother Lee joined the Regiment in 1938 and graduated as Cavalrymen in A Squadron. They served with the Regiment in St Jean, Petawawa and Borden from 1938 to 1940 and literally were witnesses at the birth of the Armoured Corps.

Jim is an active member of the National Capital Chapter of the Association and is the father of the current Director of CSIS and a former DND Deputy Minister.



AT THE TROUGH

Eldier, Watier, Vic Jewkes, Hotcha Hone and Smith watering the horses after a training period.

MUSTER PARADE, 1938. From left to right, Haskett, Smith, Alley Oop, Thompson, Baillie and White.



EN GARDE. Larry Hanson and Bill Baillie practice a little real sword drill. 1938.



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ROYAL ESCORT, OTTAWA, 1939

Tommy Shea and Bill Jewkes
get ready for the Royal Escort.



NEW YEARS 1939. 1st Troop, A Squadron
in their barracks in St Jean. Jim Judd is
seated front left, just in front of Flash
Haskett.



ATLANTIC CHAPTER

Leroy MacAdams

Well, another year, 2004 is in the history books. Time goes fast when one is having fun and also when one is older. We send our best wishes to all Dragoons, also



In a lying contest, no-one beats Ambrose! those that wish they were. May you all enjoy health and happiness in 2005.

It should not be news that we had another quiet year in 2004, a usual. The only time you see anyone down here in a rush is 30 minutes prior to the liquor store closing.

We did hold our annual BBQ in June and in October we held our reunion. Both were well attended and all had fun telling stories (mostly lies). We were pleased to



Rick finally said something funny!

have **Sterling** and **Sandra Mercer**, **Biff Watson** and **Jim Roberts** attend. Our next BBQ is June 2005, please come out and join us. Our next reunion is October 2006. We also had our Regimental Birthday luncheon on 21 December with a good turnout. There were toasts to the Regiment and some good old Downhomer fun.

2004 was a sad year for our members as we lost **Jean Amy**, **Shirley Brown**, **Orval Harrison**, **Jim Stafford**, **Vice Sullivan** and **Maty Matheson**. We send our condolences. We will always remember them.

Thanks to retired Dragoons from coast to coast for their kind donations we will be able to once again publish our newsletter in the timeframe of September,



Guess who had to pay for the drinks?

October 2005. Should any members have a short story to tell, please send them to our secretary by the end of April each year. I know that there are lots of stories out there. Please keep them between 60-120 typed words as our newsletter budget is small and publication is very expensive.

Well, as I said, news down this way is scarce, but no news is good news. Have a happy 2005. Our Chairman has gone south for the winter, hopefully the deep south, a one way ticket would be nice.

Good shooting, God Bless
The Downhomer Gang
Leroy MacAdams

QUEBEC CHAPTER

Karl Krammel

(Der Buergermeister von Hemmingford)

Bonjour a tous. Greetings from "la belle province" We wish everyone the very best for 2005, good health and a successful reunion in Kingston this June. We are trying to muster as many as possible to attend this fine function. Once again our chapter has enjoyed a quiet but so so successful year. We had no activities as a large group but some of us did manage to get together during the year. Our membership is holding steady, not very large, 14 at last count, two moved with unknown address, two unpaid for 2004 but we still hope that they will stay on. And three potential new members, two are being administered at the moment.

I welcome two new members. **George Wolley** and **Michel Vezina**, both from the West Island. I meet George several times over breakfast and at the RCH New Years Levee. George served with the Regiment 1944-1946 but his military career takes him over a span from 1940-1970. George was a member of the association some 25 years ago, welcome back George. Michel served during the fifties and we also meet over breakfast last month (January). Michel is a very energetic individual, full of pep, semi-retired, but still involved in corporate promotional items such as, caps, polo's, T-shirts and sweat shirts and



Michel Vezina and Karl

everything in regards to golf tournaments. Michel would be a good contact for our regimental kit shop. I am still working on recruiting **George Maybee**. I believe this is a good year to capture him. (The year of the Rooster)



George Wolley and Karl

We are sorry to see **Terry Seely** depart as Secretary/Treasurer. It was just amazing to see Terry work so hard behind the scene and kept the books so straight. Terry was very devoted to the cause and did a wonderful job and we congratulate you for it. We welcome **John Moyer** as Terry's new replacement. Knowing John and having worked with him over the years, I know John will do an excellent job. We would also like to thank **Norm Ashton** for all his energy, devotion and patience in producing our annual NewsLetter. Well done Norm, a well deserved rest. Welcome Bann Price as the new editor, we wish you luck and thank you for taking the responsibility. We are looking forward to work with you.

We did not have any organized activities as a group because we are well spread out over a large area. I try to keep contact with everyone by phone. I lost contact with **Mrs. Goldie Pynn** and **Yves Damphousse**. If anyone has a contact number or address please let me know. I called **Louis and Alice Albers** last week (our two most seniors) they both are healthy and in good spirit. In fact when I called they were just stepping out to go to their local church for a Pancake Supper.

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They both plan on coming to the reunion this year, motel already booked. **Nelson and Barbara Couvrette** are quite happy in the Laurentiens in their what they call (our 'mountain place) They both had an excellent time in Petawawa last year at the parade and where impressed with the reception they received. **Mrs. Suzanne Gauthier** in Sherbrooke is doing well and is healthy but will not be able to attend the reunion because of the long drive. **Jean Imbault** also from Sherbrooke is doing well and in very good spirit. Jean still has very good memories from the regiment and talks fondly from his time with the regiment. **Tom and Johanne Murchison** are hibernating in Montebello for the winter. Tom being an ardent Trapshooter is off to Pennsylvania/Ohio for the summer to follow various shooting meets. Tom travels all over the continent to participate at these meets. **Mrs. DG Robertson** is healthy and doing well and sounded in good spirit on the phone. Just past week I ran into **Victor Rugenius** downtown Hemmingford, he had a sad expression on him. After inquiring if there is a problem, he just stated that he got back from Florida and is here for the remainder of the winter. Not long from now Victor, spring will be here. Stuart and Beverly Strole are doing well. Stuart is now fully retired and concentrating on drawing and painting, his favourite past time. **Neville Melville** that I meet for the first time at the RCH New Years Levee is healthy and doing just fine. Neville is also a member of the Black Watch Association here in Montreal and frequent visitor to his local Legion Branch. I was unable to make contact with **David and Nathalie Bowring**. Jean and Rousseau.....

Justin Kisielius, quite the character. Always in good spirit and full of fond memories from his time with the Regiment. Justin forwarded me some anecdotes from the good times with the regiment. Read and enjoy. I quote Justin; "During the 50's after Korea, posted back to Petawawa, I was given a number of extra-curricular

tasks, one of which I enjoyed the best. I was made OC of the happy little recreation workshop, where we built furniture, fishing boats and learned photography. There was this little darkroom where we developed film and printed our photos. I was the Regimental Photographer and our membership was great. We used to spend half the night printing the days do's. (Justin will be sending me some goodies for the next Newsletter) Daytime of course was for running C Squadron, as it seemed we were always in the throws of changing command. But it was a "fun" squadron and I must say we accomplished our mission with alacrity, levity and joy. We won most of our sports meets, our shoots were always notably accurate since I was also the regimental gunnery officer, and our exercises on Gust Plain very "picnici". I have a million stories of the "Glory" days even though I've mostly forgotten the names, though not the spirit of the souls of my fellows and troopers. I must say I felt we liked one another. Here is something written by the squadron barb, a bid of insight in the goings on at the time (I wish I could remember his full name, maybe he will contact me as I have saved a lot of his stuff and want to put a name to it)

When you're sitting in your office
Down in 4 PD
Away from tanks and tankers
And the things you used to see

Will you miss the little darkroom?
Where you whiled the hours away
Every night that you were able
Until the skies turned grey.

How you handled matters URGENT
As second in command
Throughout the days of Gagetown
And elsewhere in this land.

Will you think of days at Gust Point?
Where the chilly breezes blew
Now you have no troop to organize
As you often had to do?

How you took command of Charlie
In those crazy mixed up days
When postings were in order
Through the new Third Armour craze

When you're reclining in your armchair
Perhaps as PSO
Wont you wish for Petawawa
Where things don't move so slow.

Where you have to guard your language
From the ears of some sweet CWAC
When the camping days are here again
We'll bet that you'll come back.

So we'll keep you're Centurian Ready
And our Map Case free from dust-in
For there's always rations waiting
For a Captain name of Justin

Justin Kisielius
Dragoon 1949-65

We thank **Tom Horgan** on keeping us posted on the reunion. The Sitrep's are just great. It's a large responsibility and big task that you have. We thank you for doing this for us. We wish your organization a very successful reunion and are looking forward to this fine event. That's just about it from "La Belle Province" We wish everyone all the very best and are looking forward to meet everyone in Kingston.
Au Revoir et a la prochain.



OTTAWA VALLEY CHAPTER Sterling Mercer

Greetings from the Ottawa Valley. It seems the year has passed very fast. Our Chapter took a well-deserved rest after the 03 Reunion. We had a pot-luck on Nov 03 and some of our members attended a smaller Men's Christmas Dinner as the regiment was deployed. Jan to May was quiet, some of our members attended the Rad Walters picnic in May and as always our resident cook **George Leal** made his famous chili for the event. A few of the



Passing the Torch

troops went to the **Henry Sampson Golf** day in Smith Falls and others went to the Kingston BBQ at **Gen Milner's** Ranch.

We held a small luncheon for **L/Col Dean Milner** and **Katrin** and wished them the best in their new endeavors. All the festivities associated with the Change of Command were great.

We welcomed **L/Col Lowell Thomas** and **Verene** at a corn roast in the Mercers' garage out of the rain, and at the same time we welcomed home **Chuck Hills** and **Fran** as they have settled here in the valley, also **Roger Munger** and **Birgith** who returned from the Middle East and retired. We had quite a gathering.

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Now.....for the "Change of Command"....Ever since I returned to the Valley in 1990, **Steve Clarke** has been secretary of the Chapter and **Mick McMullen** has been the Treasurer. They have done an outstanding job. I want to thank them for all the support they have given me over the years and especially during the 03 Reunion. They will be

you could have heard a pin drop when the Gideon was marched in and out. Perhaps others will join us next year. The other events were in the Atlantic Chapter. I attended a Black hat Dinner and the Atlantic Chapter Leleifontein dinner and dance. I want to thank **Busher Bennett**, **Leroy** and the Chapter for their kind hospitality.



At the Milner's farewell

replaced by Chuck Hills as Secretary/Treasurer. Roger Munger will be the new Chapter Chairman and I will remain on as Vice Chair in place of **Jim Mackenzie**. Jim has done all the jobs at least once and was the national treasurer under Past President, **Tom Parr**. I thank all the Chapter for their support over the years and thanks to Roger and Chuck for stepping up and providing the Chapter with some fresh leadership. We are fortunate to have them here.

A couple of other events, I would like to mention. One was the Men's Christmas Dinner in Dec.04. Ten of our Chapter members came out for the dinner and it was a very enjoyable event. The young soldiers made us proud and

I have enjoyed my time as Chapter Chairman. It was fun.
Keep in touch and sleep warm
Sterling



I need a good insurance policy

N C R CHAPTER

Bill Smith

The summer activities of the Chapter were primarily concerned with several of our members attending the Kingston Chapter's BBQ at **MGen Clive Milner's** Oakhaven



The Past and the Future

spread. Those who attended reported that they had a super time as they renewed old acquaintances and retold many of their choice Dragoon adventures. A new event was the gathering for dinner and racing at the **Rideau-Carleton Raceway** last spring. It was a novel experience for many and everyone enjoyed the buffet and the racing. It will be again on our social calendar of events for 2005.

Once again one of our major activities in the fall was the Chapter's Leliefontein gathering celebrating the 104th anniversary of the **Action at Leliefontein**. Dragoons and friends as usual assembled in the Army Mess in the Observation Post at noon on the 5th of November. The gathering, organized by the Executive Committee of the Chapter, was much appreciated. **Bann Price, Bill Smith, Bob Hart** and **Chuck Gruchy** provided raffle prizes. We again would like to thank **Gord O'Connor, Wade Cuthbertson** and **Gary Hollink** for their much-appreciated financial support and our Committee for their efforts and the **Army Mess** for providing a nice lunch.

Over the year the Chapter gained seven members and unfortunately lost one

of our long-time comrades. Passing away last fall was **Laird Gordon** a longtime Dragoon. The Chapter welcomed back **LCol Dean Milner**, and **Chris Renahan** from the Regiment and **Lillian Matthewman** on relocation from Toronto to Ottawa. New members to the Association and the NCR Chapter are **LCol Stephen Cadden, Bryan Forsyth, Captain Peter Winfield**, and **Scott McClelland**.

For the forth-consecutive year a nice gathering of Dragoons did assemble to celebrate the 121st anniversary of the Regiment on the 17th of December in the Army Mess. The **Army Mess** again provided a hearty curry lunch, and the Chapter supported the group with a donation to offset our refreshment and bar staff costs. Again, thanks to the many Dragoons who attended including **Jim Martin** who again attended, and it was also nice to see **Sandy Whitton** and his wife along with **Ki Morgan** in attendance. **General Ramsey Withers** spoke to gathering on this occasion and proposed the toast to health and prosperity the Regiment. We will plan to celebrate this event next year on the 16th or the 23rd of December 2005.



Jim Judd and Rick Shaftoe



KINGSTON CHAPTER

Biff Watson

They say all good things must come to an end. Sadly, that's true. With a heavy heart and an abundance of pride, I write this final installation for our Newsletter.

After nearly 8 years, my run has reached its conclusion. Over the time I've enjoyed something most people will never get the opportunity to do—to express my views, thoughts and opinions through such an excellent medium. In that time, I've had the pleasure of working with the greatest people the Armoured Corps has to offer. I've had the pleasure of traveling around this country, and visiting our Chapters from East to West [sorry, I missed BC]. If you've never experienced

visiting other Chapter's, you've missed out on a great deal of fun!

Being an Association Chairman forced me to pay particular attention to the finer details of the business. It forced me to be creative, clever and thoughtful

when it came to providing the best service possible to The Regiment, The Association, The Chapter and indeed, every individual member of all organizations.

I'll always have the memories, I'll always welcome the e-mails and I'll always be a strong advocate of the RCD Association.

As I sign off on this column, I would be remiss if I didn't say thank you, the members of The Kingston and Region

Chapter and their Ladies, who put us on the map through your awesome support to our Reunions and our activities. Without you, we would not keep coming back time and time again to bring the best we can possibly provide for everyone. Without you, and your chants of support, I may have packed it in a long time ago. My eternal gratefulness goes to Tom Horgan, who with his awesome financial skills kept us afloat from the beginning, and will stay on board to guide the incoming Chairman through any uncharted waters he may encounter. And without you all, there is no RCD Association! Never forget that.

In March, 2005, I will turn the reins over to a very capable Dragoon. Captain **Jim Roberts** has graciously agreed to steer our Chapter for the next foreseeable years. I am sure you will continue give him the support you have given me, and I will continue to support him, and the Association in whatever capacity I am asked serve.

Thank you all.

Audax et Celer [Bold and Swift]

Respectfully:
Fred [Biff] Watson



REUNION 2005 REPORT

Tom Horgan

The time for Reunion 2005 (June 17 & 18) is quickly approaching. If you have not registered by the time you receive this edition of the Newsletter **QUICKLY** book the Ambassador Hotel (if required) and complete and send the Reunion Registration Form.

CRITICAL DATES

May 17, 2005. Only rooms booked in the Ambassador Hotel prior to May 17, 2005 will qualify for the **Dragoon reduced room rates**.

June 9, 2005. We must have your **dinner reservations by June 9, 2005**. We have to submit our final numbers for Saturday night dinner by 1800 hrs June 9, 2005.

Cancellations will be accepted and fully refunded **until June 9, 2005**.

Theme for Reunion 2005

The theme for Reunion 2005 will be "The 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland". Our special guest on Saturday evening will be Dr. H.H. Westenberg, The Vice Consul for The Netherlands. Dr. Westenberg, who will have just returned from the 60th Anniversary Celebrations in Holland, will address the Dragoons.

The dinner entrée will be Roast Prime Rib of Beef. The Catering Staff at the Ambassador Hotel has advised that the could substitute a vegetarian meal for the Prime Rib and can also take care of any guests with any other dietary concerns, for example: lactose intolerant, gluten free, diabetic, etc. Please forward your requests to me prior to 9 June, 2005

This is an opportunity for the Dragoon Family to gather to honour those who put themselves in harms way for Country and Regiment. We look forward to seeing everyone in Kingston.



The Reunion Committee getting on with it.

SOUTH CENTRAL ONTARIO (WA KNISLEY, DCM) CHAPTER

Brian Hook

Hello to all from the South Central Ontario Chapter! First I would like to congratulate Bann Price on his new appointment as editor of our Association newsletter. I know he will produce a first class product.

2004 was an extremely busy year for our Chapter. Of note is that we have added to our Chapter name by honouring Cpl Knisley. We thought this was most appropriate as the Memorial to his service is located in Cayuga, ON, and the Chapter was instrumental in having this Memorial Monument restored several years ago.

We are in the final stages of having the Cockburn gravesite restored. This has been quite an effort, led by Ed Gray in conjunction with DVA and the Government of Ontario. We hope to have a picture of the restored site in the next Association newsletter. This past year we conducted our second Leliefontein service at the gravesite. 25 Dragoons turned out on a rainy day for the event. The Commanding Officer of the Governor General's Horse Guards was also in attendance (Cockburn started his career in the Body Guard) and the GGHG's also kindly provided a trumpeter to play Last Post and Reveille.

The Chapter held two picnics in 2004. The first was in the Windsor area, sponsored by members our Chapter in that area. The turnout was excellent, with over 50 Dragoons and their "significant others" in attendance. This event will be held every second year. Our second picnic was in Acton. Again it was an overwhelming success with over 75 Dragoons in attendance. The Regiment most kindly found two "volunteer" troopers to attend in Scarlets, and Ron Pankew provided the mounted Dragoon, in Scarlets on loan from the Regiment. Frank Spielvogel and

the Acton Branch No. 197, RCL, were our hosts for this picnic. The Acton Citizens' Band provided great music for the event. We will be returning to Acton this year on 16 July and invite all Dragoons who are in the area to attend.

We again helped sponsor the Black Hat Day at CFB Borden. CWO Angus Gosse, Capt Terry Shaw and a host of other Dragoons helped put on this event that was attended by members of all RCAC Regiments. It is a fun day for all. This year's event is scheduled for 6 May and we encourage attendance.

The Chapter again participated in the annual Warriors' Day Parade at the CNE. We had approximately 20 marchers and several Dragoons in the crowd. Thanks again to the GGHG who provided their band (we march with the GGHG Association as two contingents behind the band).

Finally, we have taken on a new project, that of the restoration of a Boer War Memorial in Windsor. This Memorial is dedicated to the service of The RCD and The RCR and has fallen into disrepair. It is our hope to have this Memorial completely restored and rededicated in 2007.

As you can see, we are active and busy here in South Central Ontario. Our membership (Regular and Associate) is over 230 and we are still trying to find new members. Frank Gabriel has taken over as Chapter Chairman and Nola Brown as returned as our Secretary. I have taken the posts of Vice Chairman and Treasurer for this year.

We hope to see many of you at the Association Reunion in Kingston, and perhaps at one of our Chapter events.

ALBERTA CHAPTER

Reg Munden

After a year in the planning and lots of hard work by our committee members the final result was overwhelming. Folks, I am talking about our second reunion held here in Calgary September 3, 4 and 5. Joining in the celebrations were folks from Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and our own Chapter members from Calgary, Edmonton, Stony Plain, St Paul, Nanton,



Medicine Hat and Pincher Creek. From Ontario came our National Association President **Chris Sproule**, along with his lovely wife **Nancy**, also **Fred (Biff) Watson** and his lovely wife **Mary**. Biff was still Chairman of the Kingston Chapter. **Ike Issacs** and **Ed Cheney** also attended from Ontario. Our own member **Alf Ford** along with his wife **Lorna** flew in from Winnipeg. Arriving from British Columbia to join in our festivities were **JQ and Joyce Adams**, **Simon Cornect**, **Jack and Trudy Demorest**, **Dick Kitcher** and **Bob Weskett**. From the letters, emails and telephone calls that we have received we now know that a great time was had by all in attendance.

Other successful functions this past year have been our Family BBQ,

Leleifontein Remembrance Day Church Parade and Luncheon and to finish off the year we celebrated our Regiment's 121st birthday with a dinner and a dance.

On June 22nd we lost one of our strong Chapter supporters when she lost the battle against that enemy cancer. **Margaret Morrison** was the wife of **Doug (Moe)** and mother to **Steven, Tracy and Lee**. Again we send to them our thoughts and prayers. After a year of trying to contact **George Hooper** who resided in England we received word that he had passed away December 26, 2003. George was a member of the Alberta Chapter and our condolences go out to all his family.

Norm Burleau is a patient in the UofA Hospital in Edmonton after suffering a stroke. To **Norm, Diana** and family our hope is for an early recovery. Hurry and get back to St Paul.

Jim Cheeseman, not yet a Chapter member but a former Dragoon, is now recovering from a stroke. He is now home from the hospital. To him, **Margret** and family we wish for the very best fro a strong recovery.

Chapter Functions for 2005

Saturday, August 20th – Family BBQ

Sunday, November 6th –

Leliefontein&Remembrance Day Service and Luncheon

Saturday, November 19th – Leleifontein Dinner and Dance

Sunday, December 11th – 122nd Regimental birthday Dinner and Dance

Bold and Swift
Reg Munden



BC CHAPTER

Fred Berge

Greetings from the BC Chapter

Changes have taken place in laid back BC. Earlier this year I replaced **John Pierce** as the Chairman of the BC Chapter. I wish to thank John and Lillian for their many years of dedication and service to the Chapter. I also had the great pleasure of attending the Battle at Leliefontein 104th Anniversary Weekend Celebrations. The CO, **LCol LE Thomas**, **CWO JD Levesque** and the men and women of the Regiment put on a great parade.

We now have a new structure for the BC Chapter with the loss of the Interior Sub-Chapter. **Pat Carew**, **Jack Dangerfield**, **Jack Demorest**, and **Robert Weskett** have decided that they would rather join with the Alberta Chapter. This leaves the **Vancouver Island and Lower mainland Sub -Chapters**. **Gary Del Villano** will shepherd the Island and I will continue with the Lower Mainland.

We regret the loss of "**Bomber**" **Bateman** this year and extend our condolences to **Jean** and family. **Theresa Werring** is having a battle with cancer and **Lloyd Vickers** has been slowed down somewhat with his ongoing battle with diabetes. **Ernie Babcock** is bound to his Seschelt area but is still feisty as ever. **Dick Kitcher** is busy travelling as is **Alan Smith**. One of these days I will be able to pin them down. **Margret** and **Fracais Milledge** continue to spend their time between Kingston and North Vancouver. Our only Regular Force member, **John Barr** tells me that he has one more year in BC with the BCR. **Dave Sproule** has two bits of news that will be of interest to association members. **Paul Philcox** former RCD and now in an ERE position as a BCR will be posted as a Liaison Officer to the HQ in Afghanistan. **Daryl Dean** has been confirmed as the

Honourary-Colonel of the British Columbia Regiment (DCO)

Speaking of former Dragoons, **Bob Slaney**, who lives in Kelowna (Westbank) suffered a stroke which seriously impaired his speech. His wife tells me that he is making a good recovery and with therapy is expected to achieve his voice again. I think I overheard someone say "Imagine an RSM who can't speak"

Ernie Babcock ran an expression past me that I had not heard before. He said that there were officers that he would "Follow up a gun barrel". He told me that following his Jr NCo's course he was immediately appointed a L/Cpl and because his name started with a "B" he drew he drew his first duty as Guard Commander. While lowering the Flag on his first night he heard a voice behind him ask "where can I speak to someone with a little authority?" Without turning Ernie replied "you can speak to me as I have about as little authority as anyone." Of course when he turned around he was fact to face with Tommy Finan. Ernie thought his career was over. The very next evening he was confronted by not only **Tommy Finan** but with him was **John Thompson**. They sternly reminded him that he was improperly dressed as he had been promoted to Cpl. Years later, when Ernie was fighting to get his pension benefits he appealed to both Tommy Finan and John Thompson for assistance. Their letters were instrumental in Ernie getting his settlement. This is what he meant by "Following up a gun barrel." Both, **LCol Finan**, **CO** and **CWO John Thomson**, **RSM** were tough but fair.

That's all from the Wet Coast.



THE SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

John Moyer

GENERAL

In general, the Association's financial situation continues to improve and as noted in 2004, we generated an operating surplus. This bodes well for the future. Coming in under budget and adding to the investment principal each year will ensure this improvement continues. Unfortunately, interest on our GIC investments in, at this juncture, is still marginal. Therefore, the Board of Directors intends to re-examine our investment strategy and examine any options which might realize a higher yield.

If we are to generate a surplus that will allow us to consider supporting projects in the future, it is a basic requirement that the Association continue to increase its membership and add to its investment principal each year. In the meantime, any project proposed by the membership of a significant magnitude will have to be self-supporting

I encourage all members to critically review the material that follows as it pertains to items fundamental to the health of the Association. Should anyone have any questions or suggestions, don't hesitate to contact me at the coordinates given at the end of the report, or relay them to your Chapter executive for onward transmission or discussion at the next Board of Directors or Association General Meeting in Kingston this coming June.

Finally, as the new Secretary/Treasurer I would be remiss if I didn't extend a collective thanks to Terry Seeley for his outstanding service over the last years. My handover with him was detailed and as I venture into the files and databases he established, it is more than evident that he went 'above and beyond' the call. We owe him a debt of thanks. I can only hope that, given his instruction, I will be a worthy successor.

ASSOCIATION STATISTICS

Last Trumpet Call	46
New Members 2004	32
Active Membership	
Life Members	330
Associate Life Members	55
Regular Members	308
Associate Members	33
Honourary Members	6
TOTAL	732
Chapter Membership	
Atlantic	140
Quebec	20
Ottawa Valley	54
National Capital Region	105
Kingston	47
South Central Ontario	232
Alberta/Sask/Manitoba	96
British Columbia	25
External	13
TOTAL	732
Outstanding dues 2004	15

2004 BUDGET

The 2004 Budget that was approved by the Board of Directors forecasted expenditures of \$6,670.00. As actual expenditures totalled \$6,538.79, we came in under budget by \$131.21. This would have been higher had not two new items been added to the budget: Springbok postage (\$527.31) and the purchase of Condolence cards (\$352.76). The latter had been planned for purchase in the 2005 budget.

Revenues for 2004, including donations, 2004 annual dues and interest from investments totalled \$8,085.00. The good news, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1,546.21 (\$8,085.00 - \$6,538.79).

The Dragoon

2004 CASH FLOW REPORT

The Cash Flow Report, tabled below, reflects the Association's Revenue and Expenditures for fiscal year 2004.

REVENUE

Annual Dues 04 to 07	\$ 6,709.50	
Donations	\$545.00	
Investments Matured	\$8,000.00*	
Investment Interest	\$1,160.00	
TOTAL REVENUE		\$16,414.50

EXPENDITURES

Audit Fees	\$150.00	
Condolence Cards	\$ 352.76	
Banking	00.00	
Corporation License	\$ 30.00	
Expense President	\$103.71	
Expense Membership Dir	\$29.78	
Newsletter Production	\$4,562.00	
Office Expense	\$182.06	
Computer related (Newsletter)	\$163.07	
Guild Bursary Donation	\$50.00	
Springbok Postage	\$527.31	
To new GIC	\$10,000.00* (a result of investment maturity)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		16,150.69

NET WORTH & AUDIT REPORT

The table that follows reflects the Association's Net Worth as of 31 December 2004. The 2004 Auditor's Report, and the complete Financial Reports for 2003 and 2004, will be tabled at the General Meeting that will be held in Kingston in June 2005.

ASSETS

Bank Account Dec 31st 2004	\$7822.76	
Investments:		
GIC	\$5,000.00	
GIC	\$10,000.00	
GIC	\$10,000.00	
GIC	\$6,000.00	
GIC	\$12,000.00	
Total Investments		\$43,000.00

LIABILITIES

0.00

NET WORTH

\$50,882.66

Note: This figure includes annual dues paid in advance for 2005 to 2007.

If there are any questions about the Association's finances, I can be contacted by post, e-mail or phone, at the following coordinates,.

E-mail: jbmoyer@sympatico.ca

Telephone : (613) 634-0975

THE RCD ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ex Officio Officers

Colonel of the Regiment

MGen Clive J Addy
61 Drummond St E
Perth, Ont, K7H 1G5
caddy@sympatico.ca

Commanding Officer

LCol LE Thomas
The RCD
CFB Petawawa
Petawawa, Ont, K8H 2X3
Thomas.LT@forces.gc.ca

Regimental Sergeant Major

CWO JDJ Levesque
The RCD
CFB Petawawa
Petawawa, Ont, K8H 2X3
Levesque.JDJ@forces.gc.ca

Executive Officers

President

Mr CJN Sproule
987 Mayfair Cres
Kingston, Ont, K7M 5S5
cnsproule@king.igs.net

1st Vice President

(Position vacant)

2nd Vice President

Mr Gardner T Roberston
75 Kingsford Pl
Oakville, Ont, L6J 6E2
IERobertsn@AOL.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Mr JK Moyer
826 Bridle Path Cres
Kingston, Ont, K7P 1P7
jbmoyer@sympatico.ca

Officers

Membership Director

Mr WH Smith
22 Bowhill Ave
Ottawa, Ont, K2E 6S7
bills@sympatico.ca

Mr RC Barwise
140 Martinview Close NE
Calgary, Alta, T3J 2P2
rcbarwise@shaw.ca

Mr Raymond Cook
13 Laurentian St
Deep River, Ont, K0J 1P0

Mr CS Cowden
408-70 Queen St
Tillsonburg, Ont, N4G 5N5
carcowden@hotmail.com

Mr TE Urbanowski
1 Shepard Dr
Oromocto, NB, E2V 2M2

Chapter Chairmen

Atlantic Chapter

Mr Gordon Bennett
17 Erica Circle
Oromocto, NB, E2V 2M1
kaybush596@yahoo.ca

Quebec Chapter

Mr Karl Kramell
332 Route 202
Hemmingford, Que
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Nation Capitol Region

Mr JB Price
2673 Pierce Road
North Gower, Ont, K0A 2T0
mactavish.scotties@sympatico.ca

Ottawa Valley Chapter

Mr JER Munger
36 Meadowbrooke Dr
Pembroke, Ont, K8A 7C3

South Central Ontario

Mr F Gabriel
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Windsor, Ont, N8C 3C3
frankgabe@hotmail.com

Kingston Chapter

Capt James Roberts
20 Biscayne St
Kingston, Ont, K7K 7J9

Alberta Chapter

Mr R Munden
6 Sunlake Way
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regmunden@hotmail.com

BC Chapter

Mr RFJ Berge
8575 Primrose Place
Sardis, BC, V2R 4A3
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Communications (Non-Voting)

Website/EMail List

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48 Ianhall Road
Toronto, Ont, M3M 2B1
norm_ashton@rogers.com

Newsletter/The Dragoon

Mr JB Price
2673 Pierce Road
North Gower, Ont, K0A 2T0
mactavish.scotties@sympatico.ca

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ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS ASSOCIATION

REUNION 2005 - INFORMATION SHEET

The RCD Association, Reunion 2005 will be held at the Ambassador Hotel, Kingston, Ontario, **June 17-19, 2005.**

FRIDAY	June 17, 2005	SATURDAY	June 18, 2005
Registration	starting at 1300 hrs	Registration	0900 - 1900 hrs
Directors Meeting	1400 - 1600 hrs	General Meeting	1000 - 1200 hrs
Meet & Greet	1900 - 2300 hrs	Ladies Activity	1000 - ?
		Dinner & Dance	1900 - 0100 hrs
FEES:			
Friday & Saturday	All activities	\$65.00	per person
Friday (only)	Meet & Greet	\$15.00	per person
Saturday (only)	Dinner & Dance	\$55.00	per person

ACCOMMODATION: Ambassador Resort Hotel and Conference Centre, 1550 Princess Street, PO Box 787,

Kingston, ON K7L 4X6 Phone # 613-548-3605 or 1-800-267-7880 **Check in 1500 - Check out 1200**

Website: www.ambassadorhotel.com E-mail: contact@ambassadorhotel.com

The Ambassador Hotel is a 4 star hotel, which we will be getting for a 3 star price. Some of the features in the hotel are an indoor pool with a two story 100-foot slide, squash courts, racket ball courts, exercise room and a large ballroom with an elevated stage on the main floor. (No more moving tables after dinner to clear the dance floor). They also have a restaurant and a lounge on-site.

Check out their web site to see all of their features.

DIRECTIONS: (Total 3 Kms) From Highway #401; exit #613 (Sydenham Rd.) follow Sydenham Rd. **SOUTH** until the first set of lights. Turn left on Princess Street (highway #2). The Ambassador is located on the right just after the railway overpass. **The Bus and Rail Stations are within 2 Kms.**

DRAGON REUNION REDUCED ROOM RATES: Taxes extra (5% PST & 7% GST)

Traditional Room (standard 2 double beds) **\$105.00**, **Deluxe Room** (1 King Bed) **\$105.00**

Junior Executive Room (King bed with 2 person whirlpool) **\$155.00** &
Executive Room (King bed, with sofa bed & 4 person whirlpool) **\$175.00**

Room rates include free parking, complimentary morning paper, hair dryer & coffee maker in the room and more.

NOTES: Only reservations made directly with the ambassador, no later than **may 17, 2005** and requesting the **"Dragoon Reunion"** will qualify for the reduced rates listed above.

Post-dated cheques dated **no later than June 1, 2005** will be accepted. However, **TO QUALIFY FOR THE \$100.00 PRIZE** cheques must be dated **NLT April 1, 2005**. **Cancellations** will be accepted and fully refunded **until June 9, 2005**.

A new **"Reunion 2005"** page has been added to the RCD Association Web Site. It has a link to the Ambassador hotel Web Site, names of those attending the reunion, downloadable Registration Form, Sitreps, Maps and other updates.

Check it out at: <http://members.rogers.com/rcd-association/index.html>

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ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS ASSOCIATION

REUNION 2005 REGISTRATION FORM

November 20, 2004

PLEASE PRINT: First names and / or nicknames are required for pre - printed nametags.

NAME: _____
FIRST and / or NICK NAME LAST NAME

SPOUSE or
GUEST: _____
FIRST and / or NICK NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS: _____

CITY PROVINCE POSTAL CODE
TEL NO. _____

RESERVATIONS - AMBASSADOR _____ If No then at: _____
Yes / No

Note:

- a. **You must make your own room reservation** directly with the Ambassador
Hotel no later than
May 17, 2005 to qualify for the **reduced room rate**.
- b. The Reunion Committee **can not** accept registrations **after June 9, 2005**
- c. Your early booking will be appreciated by the Reunion Committee

NUMBER ATTENDING: Dinner & Dance _____ Meet & Greet _____

My cheque for \$ _____ is enclosed
Make cheques payable to **RCD Reunion, 2005**

MAIL TO: Tom Horgan, 821 Bexley Gate, Kingston, Ontario. K7M 8W7

Please circle the activity that your spouse / guest would like to participate in while you are attending the General Meeting Saturday morning: Please note that the City Tour & Boat Tour will cost between \$10.00 & \$15.00 per person attending.

FREE TIME, CITY TOUR (\$)(tour bus), BOAT TOUR (\$), SHOPPING, CITY CENTRE

Each of you must sign below, if you wish to authorize us to post your name (s) on our Reunion Web Site indicating that you will be attending the Reunion. If you do not sign we will not put your name on the Web Site.

Member

Spouse / Guest