

# THE DRAGOON

THE NATIONAL VOICE OF THE OLD COMRADES

THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS ASSOCIATION

2015



# RECRUITS WANTED



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# THE DRAGOON

THE NATIONAL VOICE OF THE OLD COMRADES

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**General Rick Hillier (retired)**  
**OC, CMM, ONL, MSC, CD**  
Patron of the RCD Association

### BACKGROUND IMAGE

Back Him Up! Buy Victory Bonds [Canada], [ca. 1918]

Creator unknown

Archives of Ontario War Poster Collection

# From the President

## Bann Price

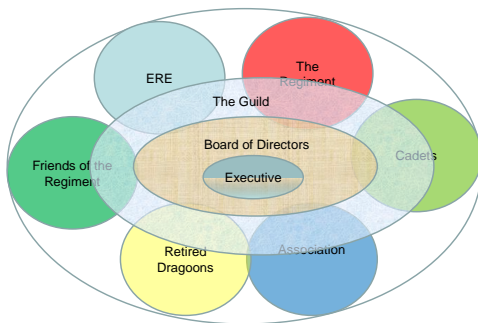
Greetings and welcome to the new Dragoon/Springbok, or Springbok/ Dragoon, depending upon which one you are reading first. This edition is the first of its kind and is intended to bring the Regimental Family together in one publication. So you can read about what the Regiment is doing and then catch up on what your old buddies are doing across the country, all without leaving the comfort of your armchair. This edition has taken a while to put together and some of the information in the Chapter reports is a little out of date – just one of the difficulties in putting the two publications together – but we are working toward a standard Leleifontein publishing date in the future and will align timings around that event.



The combined Dragoon/Springbok is not the only place where the Regimental Family has come closer together. Over the past year the Guild of the RCD

has undergone some major changes, the most important of which is the broadening of Regimental Family representation. The Guild, which now consists of some 80 members, includes 12 members of the Association, four of which also sit on the Guild Board of Directors. The 12 Association members of the Guild were chosen by the Association Board of Directors and the Chapter Chairs and are serving for a set period of time. The opportunity exists for anyone in the Association who is interested in becoming a member of this important Regimental function should talk to his or her Chapter Chair.

RCD REGIMENTAL FAMILY



For those members of the serving Regiment who may be reading The Dragoon for the first time, The Association exists for a number of reasons - we help to foster, maintain and promote the traditions, the wellbeing and the esprit de corps of the Regiment; we provide advice, assistance and guidance to the Colonel of the Regiment and we help to ensure the essential purposes of the Regiment are maintained and that the Regimental Family speaks with a common voice on matters of Regimental concern. Equally important, however, is the fact that we look after each other. Because of our regional organization, retired, former or still serving members of the Regiment can always get together with old friends without traveling long distances and help is usually just a phone call away.

The information for the “Gathering of Dragoons” in June of 2016 is in this edition, along with a registration form. Karl Kramell and Mike Vezina are working hard at bringing the “Gathering” together at one of the Regiment’s former garrisons in St Jean, Quebec and it should be a great time. So, get your travel plans in order and join us all next June.

So, enjoy this combined issue and let me know what you think.

Bann

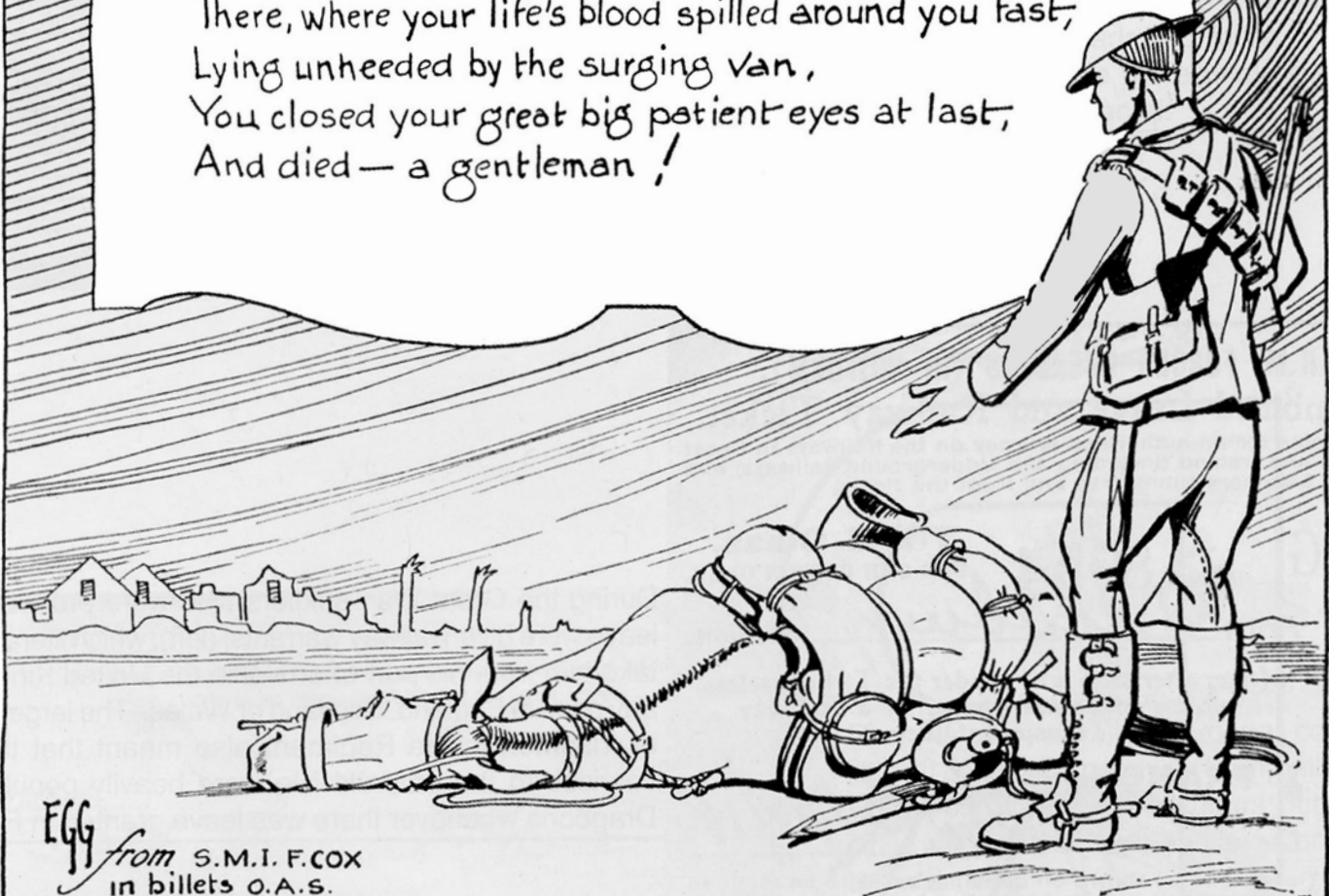


**N**o less real heroes than the men who died  
Are you, who helped the frenzied ranks to win.  
Galloping heroes - silently - side by side -  
Models of discipline.

You too had pals from whom you had to part -  
Pals rather young to fight - or else to old -  
And tho' the parting hurt your honest heart -  
You kept your grief untold.

Unflinchingly you faced the screaming shell  
And charged, and charged again - until the ground was gained.  
Then falling - mangled - suffered simply hell -  
And never once complained.

There, where your life's blood spilled around you fast,  
Lying unheeded by the surging van,  
You closed your great big patient eyes at last,  
And died - a gentleman!



EGG from S.M.I.F. COX  
in billets O.A.S.

# The Last Trumpet Call

2014

JQ Adams  
Alfie Barker  
\*Art Barratt  
Henny Buist  
Tom Capone  
Chris Cathcart  
Barbara Couvrette  
Bill Cuning  
Jeff Dorfman  
Walter Draeger  
John Duffney  
\*John Gibson  
Terry Gibson  
Jim Godden  
LCol Bob Gross  
Doug Guy  
Pat Hannan  
James Hodgson  
John Kelly

\*Axel Kuus  
Sheila Leclair  
\*Barbara Marshall  
Maj Danny McLeod  
\*Ki Morgan  
Moe Morrison  
Ken Mulligan  
Margaret Murray  
\*Douglas Oakes  
\*Larry Perron  
Ed Ross  
\*John Russell  
John (Red) Sturgess  
Edna Sutherland  
LCol Charles Thomas  
Mary Watson  
Thomas Whitehead  
\*General Ramsay Withers

2015  
(to 31 May 2015)

Sgt Kevin Aitchison  
\*John Beament  
\*MWO Tim Bennett  
\*Arthur Burke  
Chris Drummond  
\*Joe Egan  
CWO Ron Francis  
\*John Gibson  
\*William (Billie) Green

\*Edmund (Banjo) Johnson  
\*Earl Landry  
\*Howie Langan  
Lester Murphy  
\*Bruce Oakley  
\*Al O'Brien  
\*Jack Walker  
\*BGen SV Radley-Walters

"They shall grow not old, as we who are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them, not the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,  
We will remember them."



\* denotes a Member of the RCD Association



# ASSOCIATION

## Mail Bag

*Correspondence received by Tom Urbanowsky*

Hello Tom,

My father's (ret'd Major Cyrus Gaskin) copy of *The Dragoon* has just arrived at my mother's former address and I have picked it up. She died a few weeks ago. My father unfortunately has advanced dementia and no longer reads or processes language very well. I think it best if I request that his name be removed from the mailing list for this publication.

I recently spoke with an elderly friend of my mother who was also an RCD spouse and she referred to their years with the RCDs as the best years of her life. I believe my mother would have agreed. You never know the impact that something has on a person, but my mother was an only child from the small town of Sackville. To be taken into the RCD family meant a great deal to her and it is a testimony to that family that until her recent death at 93 she kept in contact with a few RCD wives from her era in the 50's and 60's.

I am fortunate to have my father's medals, sword, beret and books of photographs to remind me of my own life with the Regiment. A happier childhood I could not have had.

Margaret Murray



Major Cyrus Gaskin

*From David Sproule*



While attending the Leliefontein lunch, Tom Thomas showed me the attached photo. Tom Thomas was LCol A.L Brady's driver. The backstory is that the British General named Pieman was visiting and being a former tanker decided to climb up on LCol Brady's tank but slipped on the glacis and as he was about to hit his chin on the track pad, Tom Thomas grabbed his head and pulled his head up preventing the visiting General from injuring himself. MGen Pieman insisted that Tpr Thomas join them in the photo. Left to right: LCol Brady, Tpr. Tom Thomas, MGen Pieman and Brigadier Donald Cameron. Thomas lives on Saltspring Island and is a member of the BC Chapter.

# THE MILNER'S BBQ



When asked what she will remember most about the BBQs, held for 21 years at their home, Oakhaven, on the St Laurence River near Kingston, Ontario, Shirley immediately says “the people, all the lovely people – all of our friends coming to see us and to visit with each other. And with their families, all of the children and the dogs. It was lovely”. Clive seconds that thought, adding that “the social side of the military is a major part of the military career and becomes a way of life. The BBQ was a way for us to continue that social aspect of our lives”. Shirley says that the BBQ was never a chore to them, they wanted to do it. And for 21 years, The “Milner’s BBQ” was one of the high points on the summer calendar in eastern Ontario and black hatters traveling from other parts of the country always checked on the date to see if they could make the side trip to attend.

The black hat side of the BBQ grew out of the annual event which General Rad held at his home in Wilno. After 10 years, Rad decided it was time to pop smoke and Shirley and Clive took over the reins. The BBQing had actually started a couple of years before that when son Dean and a couple of subbies from the Regiment in Petawawa would come down for the weekend to help with the building of the deck and that work always ended with a BBQ. By the time the renovations were done,





there were a lot of people showing up for the event, and Clive had to start to organize some “amenities” to accommodate everyone. This is where Biff and Mary Watson and the Kingston Chapter of the Association started to get involved and there is just the suggestion that the organization of the Chapter and the support to the BBQ go hand in hand.

There were lots of people in the Chapter who stepped up to help. Tom and Brenda Horgan took part early in the piece, Dean and Katrin with friends Bill and Cathy Soros would be out early helping to set up tables and do what was necessary. Dave and Barb Henderson and Blake Skippen were always part of the team, as were Mike Nixon, Jim and Angie Roberts, Norm and Mildred Woods, Terry Cottrell, Badger Levesque and Chris Catry. Sons Mark and Jay were also out to help. The Regiment was also involved through the years with Mat MacDonald and Bill Brough, then the COs, providing “Regimental” assistance. When the BBQ was paired with the Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament, the armoured community then had a full weekend of celebrations.

Both Shirley and Clive have favourite moments. Clive remembers Tim Datchko being part of a crew which cut down 33 trees on the property so that there would be room for everyone as the event grew. There was the time when a Mountie, and his horse, were part of the gathering with the horse becoming a runaway at one point. Clive would always announce to the kids that there was a special chemical in the pool and that anyone who peed in the pool would turn the water pink. A favourite moment was also Rad’s last visit when he was spirited out of his retirement home in a wheelchair stolen from the home. But the real, lasting memory is, as Shirley says – “all the lovely people. They would come to one of the BBQs and then they would always come back”. Shirley and Clive will have many happy memories for the rest of their lives and those of us who attended the 21 years of the “Milner’s BBQ” will always look upon them as one of the high point of the year.



# REMEMBERING

By John Innes – RCD 1943-1945

I was born in Winnipeg over 90 years ago in August 1922. In my youth, I played all sports but especially hockey. I was working in a warehouse and decided to join the army. My two brothers and I joined in Winnipeg in August, 1942. I can remember the three of us purchasing a large bottle of wine to celebrate. (I never got so drunk in my life!)

I was sent to Portage La Prairie for my basic training, and I was asked if I played hockey. That was right up my alley and I spent the rest of the winter at it. It was then off to Camp Borden in Ontario, where I took advanced training as a trooper, learning gunnery and wireless (radio) operations. On completion of that training it was off to Debert NS to get ready for overseas.

We sailed on the Queen Mary from Halifax and I was detailed as an advanced guard aboard the ship. On arrival in England, we eventually were stationed in Greenwich England, and then went on to Aldershot for further training on tanks. Yet again, I was picked to play hockey for the Base and played in such communities as Purley, Brighton and White City.



At last I was ordered to ready boots and pack, although where we were going was still a mystery until we sailed past Gibraltar, so then figured out it was Italy. The port in Italy was a mess but we were quickly loaded onto boxcars and told that we would be going to a staging area in Avellino, it now being November 1943. How long we stayed there I do not recall, but did get a chance to see Pompey on a short leave.

I was taken by truck and dropped at the Base Camp for the RCD, where I was attached to D Squadron. At this point we started training on the recently arrived American-made Staghound armoured car, about which we had known nothing. It was 14 tons, mounted on four very large wheels with a 37 mm gun. I loaded the gun and operating the 19 set. The officer in the turret commanded the car and aimed the gun, and there was a driver in the hull. Our crew commander was Lt Carignan and Tpr Bill Blenkhorn was driver.

I can't recall how long it took to complete gunnery training but noted that the #19 High Frequency wireless set only worked about half the time.

My first action was in the Liri Valley and the objective was Pontecorvo. We were back-up for the PPCLI and



Hastings and Prince Edward (Hasty Ps) infantry regiments. I am not sure if the Strathcona's tanks were there. The Jerries artillery was very active; including the Moaning Minnie rockets fired six at a time. We were never sure where they would land because they would hit in six different spots. These were very scary, along with the inevitable German 88 guns.

I recall spending in my first action in the turret at night with a shell in my hand "at the ready". In the morning, I had to hold the mess tin with both hands, I was shaking so bad.

It took days to fight up the Liri Valley toward the Benevento- Campobasso area. Movement was very slow up the Valley to Pontecorvo. This area was called the Hitler Line. We waited until the road past Monte Casino was cleared with bulldozers after the abbey was bombed by US bombers. The Polish Army secured Monte Casino in the final assault. From the Valley we could not see the immense damage above us, as the hill was close but so high.

We headed north toward Avellino. That was on a highway to Rome and we advanced and then we rested, having learned of the American assault through Anzio and that they were heading up the coast road to Rome. We were then to push up the coast road to Rome and as jerry was retreating rapidly, we secured Avezzano 50 kms from Rome. Then we halted as the Americans were chosen to take Rome which they did on June 5, 1944. (The day before the Normandy landings).

We then turned north and east heading towards mountain passes, not knowing what to expect. Our Dingo scout cars were well ahead of us on this advance. I believe we reached the Adriatic coast north of Ortona. We made good time passing through Ancona, Urbino and San Marino. We were on the coast road close to Rimini when an allied fighter plane fired at us but missed, and we fired yellow smoke to warn him off.

As we moved again, we sensed a heavy smell and burning. We found two Sherman tanks and two old Brit tanks still on fire and guessed they may have been Polish. Entering the town of Rimini, we thought we had liberated it, but discovered the Poles already there.



At this point it was starting to rain hard and frequently. The Staghounds became almost immobile. In consequence, we actually left them behind, dismounted and became infantry reconnaissance troops for the winter. Squadrons leap-frogged each other as we advanced on foot.

At one point, I was placed on the second floor of a house overlooking a small creek and bridge. I did not even hear the 88mm incoming round that blew the roof off our building. We luckily had no casualties. We arrived at the bridge over the creek and discovered it was intact.

Some of our guys got across but were ordered back, clearing the bridge just before it blew up. We would have lost everyone on the other side if we had not got them back.

We spent the winter there, Jerry on one side and us on the other. It was an utterly miserable time, wet and very cold, constantly manning OPs. At Christmas we could hear the Germans singing carols and we enjoyed turkey dinner in Lugo. After that, we were



relieved by British troops, and I would venture a guess that we were within 100 kms of Venice when we actually stopped fighting in Italy.

We returned to our armoured cars, crossed Italy to the port of Leghorn and were transported by American ships to the French port of Marseille. It was a long road march to join up with the Canadians in Apeldoorn, Holland.

While on recce in Holland, our Staghound was hit with a Panzerfaust anti-tank missile, killing the driver. Flames burst through the turret, where the officer and I were half in and half out of the hatches. Any skin surface not covered was burned and the flames badly singed our eyebrows, eyelashes, moustaches and hands, sending me and the officer both wounded to the field hospital.

On return from the hospital some weeks later, I was back in action, and we ended the war in Germany.

Unlike many who stayed in the service, I had had enough. Back to Canada by boat and train, I was lucky enough to get my old warehouse job back in Winnipeg. In 1946 I applied to work for Trans Canada Airlines, later Air Canada and was accepted as a station attendant at Winnipeg. Eventually working my way up, I became station manager in Victoria BC. Besides my work and family, I was president of the Victoria Curling Club and eventually president of the BC Curling Association. In 1984 I was president of the Retired Pensioners Association. I have travelled a lot in retirement, particularly enjoying golf three times a week and curling twice a week.

I have had an eventful life and enjoyed my membership with the RCD and the Black Hats when we meet each year here in BC.



# THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER!

in the old brewery at Givenchy  
- June - 1915 -





Courtesy of the Department of National Defence, ZK-1946-17

# Things Aren't Always as They Appear to Be

by David Sproule

This is a story about Ferrets, the scout car variety. Back in the early '60s I spent quite a bit of time in these things. My nephew Chris Sproule called me one day to say that he was in the National War Museum and that there was a huge enlarged photo of me in a white UN Ferret in the Peacekeeping gallery at the NWM. Not only is there a photo but the actual Ferret is there too. Canada initially equipped the UNEF Recce Squadron with Ferrets but they were problematic in the desert. They were too heavy and too narrow and we left behind a couple of Canadians killed when their Ferret rolled. There was only one set of sand channels per vehicle and the hub seals were also a problem just like in Canada as they often leaked hypoid. By the time our squadron arrived in February '62, we were totally equipped with M38 Jeeps with balloon tires and they had their problems in the sand as well struggling to reach the heights of some of the sand dunes in our patrol area and the balloon tires and tough terrain was very hard on the front end.

We only had four Ferrets in the squadron and their role was identified as being that of a "flying" escort between Rafah and UNEF HQ in Gaza. Much like a police motorcycle escort. Certainly the Ferrets would make the ever present Mercedes taxis get out of the way and fast. I don't think we ever mounted a flying escort nor do I recall seeing a Ferret within the boundaries of our patrol area ever. Well almost never and that gets me the point of this story.

We had many visitors to our squadron during our year-long tour including entertainers, politicians and the CDS. We also had Captain Brian O'Reagan, an official photographer with the Canadian Army Photo and Film Unit based in Ottawa. Captain O'Reagan went ashore on D Day taking many famous images of Canadians in action



on that momentous day. He wanted to get some “gung-ho” shots and one of those involved driving one of our Ferrets out into the desert and so I was selected to be the Crew Commander, Cpl. Breuer the Operator and L/Cpl Foster the driver. Believe me three in a Ferret is a tight squeeze. We all wore our best pressed shirts and parade UN Blue hats with the metal frames inside. We headed out and were to RV at the “hanging tree” so called because one of the previous squadrons found someone hanging from one of the branches. It was an Acacia tree and the only vegetation in our sector one could call a tree but its location was a good 3 kilometers from the International Frontier with Israel where we normally patrolled. It was however deemed to be the perfect location for the photoshoot.

Brian took a series of images and as is seen in the photo below I am gazing through the binos at a distant sand dune with Cpl Breuer leaning on the Bren gun looking intently in the same direction. The photo ran in several newspapers across the country and a copy I was given from the Ottawa Journal (October 18, 1962) appeared in among the classified ads an indication of the interest in Canadians on UN duty in 1962. The image has appeared in a couple of military history books and wow there it is in life-size in the War Museum an iconic image of Canadian peacekeeping. The photo below shows our Ferret with a Bren gun whereas the actual Ferret in the Image has a GPMG. Our squadron was the last unit in the Canadian Forces to use the Bren. The Strathconas who replaced us, used the GPMG. The photo is of course entirely posed and Captain O'Reagan got his shot and went home to Canada. The RCD had two squadrons that served with UNEF, 1959-60 and 1962-63 and seeing the photo in a position of prominence I realized that it was a fitting image of the Peacekeeping role that so many of us served in. It is seen by thousands of visitors to the National War Museum and so it achieves a purpose acknowledging an important role in our history whether it was posed image or not.



Dave Sproule in front of the Peacekeeping photo in the National War Museum



Graduation Photo.

# IN RETROSPECT

By Thomas Urbanowsky

The year 1954, Korean conflict ebbing away, and the Cold War emerging. Canada's Troops are very visible on the streets of Toronto, particularly in the lower Young Street-Jarvis and Church Street district, must be the ambiance of the architecture.

As young 17 year olds, the excitement of seeing all this, the Troops, Newsreel's, etc., surely added to the picture of wanderlust and glory, Edward Shutt and I decided to join The Canadian Army.

The recruiting office downtown Toronto, accepted our applications and in due course the Officer in Charge,

while processing the documentation said, Mr Shutt, you are shy by 3 month of your 17th Birthday, and if you were, both of you require your Parents "Permission " as both of you are not yet 18 years of age.

What to do, Ed said he would wait as his Mother would surly take a fit and do him harm, I on the other hand rushed home and pleaded with my Mother to do the "Right-Thing". My Mother was most thoughtful, but in the morning "The Letter of Consent" was in my hand and off to the Recruitment Centre. Accepted. Off to No.6 Personnel Depot, Sunnybrook, Toronto. In no time at all the recruitment process was over, just under 2 weeks, and the "Swearing-in-Ceremony" on the 3rd



of March 1954, completed, the Officer in charge said “Congratulations” you are now off to your Regiment for further training.

The following morning I bid my Family Good-By, dressed in my very best attire of “The-50’s”, pointy black shoes, white socks, black Zuit-Suit strides with 17” cuffs, 33” knee, and 6” wide waist band, and the Pride of TO, The Toronto Maple Leafs Blue and White leather jacket. Standing in the Union Station, downtown Toronto with a small suitcase, full of excitement, I boarded my train to join my Regiment, The Royal Canadian Dragoons.

Whilst in transit, the train conductor asked for my ticket, “Oh I see you are going to Petawawa” Petawawa? What is Petawawa? “Well he replied” it is a small community with a military Base, you have to transfer in Carlton Place, as this train goes to Ottawa.

Upon arrival in Carlton Place, and a layover of 4 hours, I noticed that my attire was not entirely conducive to the climate conditions of this region, it was cold with snow everywhere, and well, it was March. My final leg of the journey to Petawawa was in essence “An-Experience” The train, post 2nd WW, cold and dark, and frozen with ice and snow, made one wonder just where was Petawawa located. At 11:30 PM, I found out. Stepping out of the train all one could see was banks of snow, and absolutely freezing, dashing inside the small station, only to be met by its keeper telling me that he was locking up, but the waiting room will be open until 1 AM, and yes, there will be someone here to pick you up, they usually do show up.

Sitting in that small wooden waiting room, shivering, the idea of “Excitement” somehow escaped me at the moment, but alas, the door opened and a soldier came inside dressed in a Sheepskin Jacket, Shirling Boots and a Black Beret. “You - Urbanowsky?” yes, “Lets Go”, “It’s Frigging Freezing outside”. Imagine that. A % ton truck outside with no tarp, windows frozen over, and my hand froze to the door handle. I could not believe how cold it was, certainly NOT Toronto weather.

The duty driver deposited me after a short drive through mountains of snow to an H-Hut, took me inside, pointed out a double-bunk bed, 2 sheets, 2 blankets, pillow, pillow case, sign- here, L/Cpl Scott will see you

in the morning, 6 AM. Good-Night. I froze to death that night.

At 6 AM there was much activity, men all over the place, someone, an elderly man looked at me and said you better get up, breakfast in 30 minutes. After a short ablution and following the group to the Mess Hall, you cannot imagine what it’s like to be dressed in a Zuit-Suit with pointy black shoes walking at 30 degrees below zero with mountains of snow to obtain your breakfast.

The initial week within The Regiment, or more precisely, the hub of all activity was the H-Hut, then the Mess Hall and on one occasion a “Quick-March” single file to the Sqn Orderly Room by our Lord and Master, from Dawn to Dusk, LCpl Scott.

The assembly of “Recruits” just took under two weeks, our Troop, at the onset consisted of 5 British WWII Vets who immigrated to Canada to join-up, 5 Canadian WWII Vets, 1 Korean Vet and the remainder of us, mostly from Ontario and Eastern Provinces were young men. It soon became quite apparent as to the “Pecking-Order” within the Troop after the initial issue of “Kit” from the Regimental QM Stores on Day 1, and on “Orders” from our NCO, “Sort-it-Out” and “Put-it-On”, inspection at 0900 hrs tomorrow morning. Day 2, standing by our beds was a sight to behold. The Brit contingent, Battle Dress pressed, Boots spit and polished, with Putties rolled at % interval, web belt on at the waist and at the correct tightness with Battle Dress Tunic “Bloused” and the rest of the webbing laid out on “Hospital-Style” bed. The Canadian Vets were somewhat of a “Lesser-Standard”, and then there were the remainder.

On this, the initial inspection of “I”, by one of our Troop NCO’s was to say the least, “Classic”. His statement to me was “Well you Rosy-Red-Apple” Battle Dress, tags still attached, Tunic and Trousers still Baggy, not pressed, and “Oh-My” look at your Putties, yes, Sherman Tank volutesprings, and Boots, no we don’t tie little Bow-Ties with our laces, and “Where-Did-You-Get- That-Beret?” You Do Not Wear the Beret, until you “Graduate”, OFF with IT. And so commenced the rigors of recruit training within The Regiment, you were a “Marked-Man”.

The Brits soon departed our Troop to an advanced-

training Troop, while we remained to soldier on to full graduation within the Depot Sqn of The Regiment, under full guidance of Sgt Brown and Lt. Hamilton, and a full complement of Jr. and Snr. NCO's of The Regiment, ably led by The Commanding Officer LCol E.A.C. Amy and The RSM WO I, Charlie Smith.

Post Graduation, the Troop went on to Driver (W) training, followed by postings to all the Sqn's within the Regiment. At this time-juncture, the RCD had "D" Sqn in Korea, some personnel in Hanover Germany, and there abound strong rumors that "A" Sqn was slated to go to Germany to join NATO with the BAOR in Werl Germany in 1955. Every young trooper was salivating to be posted to A Sqn, no such luck, I got B Sqn.

At mid-summer point, two Squadrons were off to Niagara-on-the-Lake Ont for training and "Exercise" and a small group of us were sent to Camp Gagetown NB to participate in an "Exercise" and act as an enemy force, with Sherman Tanks borrowed from the 8CH in

Sussex NB. As the fall period arrived, there was much activity in individual and trades course training and the eventual preparations for the Leliefontein activities, and just to add some spice to life, Hurricane Hazel hit the SW region of Ontario. The Regiment was put on stand-by, as "Aid-to-the-Civil-Power," men and equipment set at the ready on the Parade Square waiting for the word to move-off, luckily at week's end we were stood down.

November, the month of The Leliefontein Celebrations, my first, as with all things it was an exciting time and hard work for its preparations. The month of December, things were winding down, one last Regimental Parade followed by the Men's Christmas Dinner. It was an event, all of the junior ranks within the Regiment received "A-Gift", 1 Flat Metal case of 50 cigarettes, Export A, Players or Buckingham and 2 Beers at Dinner. Following the Commanding Officers address and a "Merry Christmas", with a 2 week leave pass, it was off to Toronto to visit with my Family and friends.... See you in 1955.



RSM Smith has a "chat" with the troops in 1954



# OLD COMRADES' REUNION

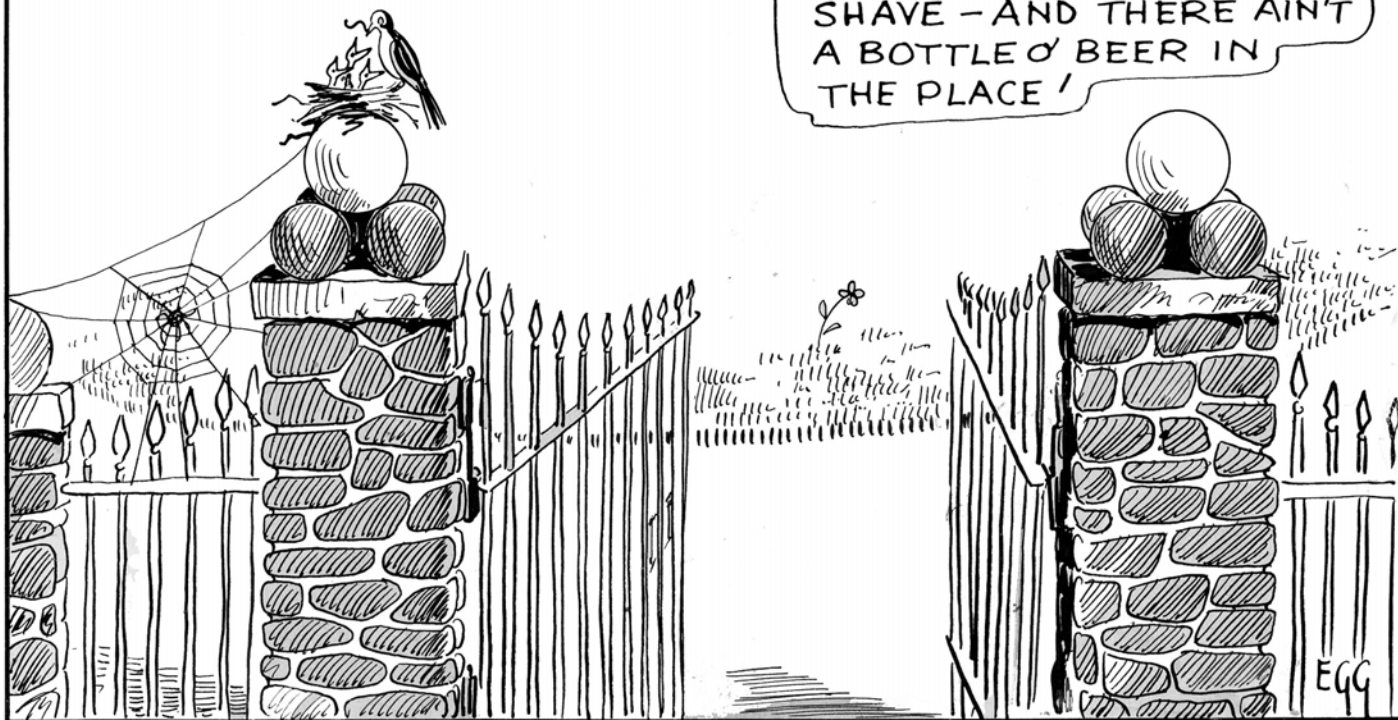
in the wide open spaces  
of Toronto  
July-1929



REMEMBER ME? I'M  
JUST IN FOR A COUPLE OF  
HOURS FROM CLEVELAND  
—WHERE THE HECK'S  
ALL THE R.C.D.'s



SURE, I REMEMBER YA!  
I USED TO BE IN "B"  
SQUADRON—I'M IN THE  
R.C.R.'s NOW—I'M NOBBY  
ELLIS—GEE! THIS IS A HECK  
OF A WAY TO RECEIVE A  
VISITOR—THEY'RE ALL AT  
CAMP EXCEPT FOUR OF US  
—THE OTHER THREE ARE  
OUT—I'M JUST GOING TO  
SHAVE—AND THERE AIN'T  
A BOTTLE O' BEER IN  
THE PLACE!



# INTO THE TRENCHES

## *The RCD in 1915*



It is 1915, the second year of the Great War, and the Regiment is at Pond Farm Camp, on Salisbury Plain in England, experiencing a truly miserable winter. The camp was aptly named as it started to rain the day after the Dragoons arrival and did so 89 out of the next 123 days. Conditions were bad for the men of the Regiment but worse for the horses as the cold and soggy conditions soaked horse blankets, made grooming impossible and caused serious conditions such as cracked heels, which would not respond to treatment. Training was difficult as the horses had to be brought around slowly and much of the equipment brought from Canada had to be replaced as it was found to be much inferior to the British kit. There was good news, however, as the War Office decided to form a mounted brigade from the Canadian cavalry and the Regiment, along with the Lord Strathcona's Horse, the 2nd King Edward's Horse and a formation from the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, formed the Canadian Cavalry Brigade under the command of Colonel JEB Seely, a South African

veteran. Seely's introductory visit to his brigade found the Dragoons in their familiar drenched condition. Seely started his visit in a motor-car but it could not handle the muddy conditions so he borrowed a horse. After a time the horse also could go no farther so he dismounted and walked the rest of the way. In his own words "Even in Flanders I had not seen such a sea of mud. I found the Royal Canadian Dragoons and the Lord Strathcona's Horse quite undismayed by the miserable conditions in which they were living".

The mud was a portend of things to come. The 1st Canadian Division moved from England to France in early February, leaving its Cavalry Brigade behind, and joined the British 2nd Army, under General Smith-Dorrien, who had commanded the Flying Column in South Africa during the Boer War and who knew and appreciated the Canadian soldier. His confidence in Canadians was well justified as 1st Division entered the Ypres Salient and were involved in the first ever





gas attack. Initially used by the Germans against a French formation immediately to the Division's left, the chlorine gas cloud caused the French to break in a panic and a serious gap was opened in the line. Local counter attacks by the Canadians contained the German advance but heavy shelling and another gas attack led to three days of bitter encounters against superior numbers, heavily supported by artillery and machine guns. The Canadian's held but at a high cost – during the 10 day period over 6000 men of the Division were killed, wounded or gassed.

Infantry replacements were now needed and the Canadian Cavalry Brigade was asked if it would be willing to go to France dismounted. Seely canvassed his Commanding Officers who volunteered their units but legend has it that the Dragoons got the opportunity to volunteer individually – and all did, even though the War Diary just notes the “unofficial” notification to proceed to France. The transition to foot soldiers was rapid as infantry packs were issued, along with the Lee Enfield rather than the Ross rifle and a couple of days of route marching constituted the preparation. The Brigade, now known as “Seely's Detachment” to maintain their cavalry organizations, left the mud of Salisbury Plain in early May, on their way to the mud of the trenches of France.

An intense two week period of training in the Boulogne area preceded the Regiment's first experience in the front lines and that experience was sobering indeed. Moving up through the trench system to the front during the battles just east of Festubert, all of the horrors of trench warfare were on display. The snap of bullets overhead,

the shelling and the sights of war in the front lines made for an uneasy initiation. As one account from a Dragoon described, “The trench was about three feet deep and wound across a swamp and every step squelched as one stepped on one of the bodies that floored the trench. The walls were part sandbags and part more bodies – some stiff with rigor mortis and others far gone with decay....over our heads was a continuous crackle of bullets”. The Regiment lost three men that first night. Lt Roy Nordheimer remembered “C Squadron occupied a redoubt captured from the Germans, with the parapet facing the enemy, built on corpses of men killed the day before. While leading my troop up the communication trench to the piecemeal front line, one of my corporals stuck his head over the parapet for a view of the area and immediately crumpled up and became a corpse, the victim of a sniper's bullet”.

Festubert was a frightful baptism of fire but it was followed three weeks later by Givenchy, an equally bloody battle. In both battles the Dragoons and the Cavalry Brigade acquitted themselves with honour and in spite of high casualties their morale was high. Following Givenchy and for the next few months they continued to serve as infantry in 1st Division on relatively quiet fronts but the fall and winter brought their old friend cold and mud to the trenches. Christmas 1915 was spent in reserve and celebrated “in as near the conventional manner as possible”. Relief was in sight, however, as 2nd Canadian Division moved to France and the Canadian Corps was formed and by January of 1916 the Regiment and the Cavalry Brigade resumed their proper role as cavalry. The change was welcome and the trenches, including “Dragoon Alley”, “Nelles Walk”, “King Edward Terrace” and the “Seely Redoubt” gradually passed from the vocabulary.





The Atlantic Chapter closed out 2013 with the last two days in December with a dump of 30cm of heavy snow, just right to kick off The New Year.

The year 2014 commenced with a Chapter Luncheon with the Armour School Commandant, RSM and members of the Chapter, closely followed by our regular end month Black Hat Luncheon with over 20 members attending. In February, the School's invitation to our members for their "Mixed-Dining-In" at the Fredericton Delta Hotel was very well conducted, alas, only a few of our members choose to attend. The month of March, saw many of our members hiding South-of-the-Border due to the "Madness-of-March" and lots of snow. Not a pleasant month, as we lost two of our members to "Higher-Sunray" John Russell on the 19th and Art Barrett on the 29 . April was no better, as the RCD Leeuwarden Day celebrations fell by the way side on all fronts, accompanied by a Spring storm dumping over 6cm of snow-ice, and again on the day of our Black Hat Lu cheon another 5cm, and only two days later, 26 of April, we lost Axel (John) Kuus, another stalwart of the Corps departed. Beginning of May many of our senior members attended The Armour School Snr NCO Black Hat Mess Dinner conducted at CFB Gagetown

NB, an excellent turn out and enjoyed by all those who attended.

June brought on several activities, starting with The Chapter BBQ on Saturday the 7th, which gathered good friends, good food and music to end the night. And as a REMINDER, we have booked all venues for our upcoming, the 34\* Annual BBQ and Dance for Saturday the 13th of June. 2015, please Plan for it.

As that function finished, a good dozen chapter members were off to RV 14 in St.Catharins Ont., to fully enjoy the festivities and friends from all across Canada.

No sooner we were back, we attended the Change of Appointment Parade of the Armour School RSM's, from CWO Walter Laughlin, (LdSH RC), to CWO Kevin Mathers, (RCD). And shortly thereafter the Base Commanders C-of-C Parade, from our chapter member LCol JJ.Malejczuk to Col J.E.Goodman. And again in the month of July we lost another old friend to Higher Command, John Kelly, passed away on Sunday the 20th, in PEL Thus far this year we lost four great soldiers ....May They Rest In Peace.

# Atlantic

## Chapter





Doaktown Legion, NB. Denis Arsenault, Monty MacMillan, Don Murrin, Ed (Banjo) Johnson Ray Ward.

As for October, the Armour School invited our members to attend the Worthington Challenge Competition, ( a newer version of The Canada Cup), with participants from 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Division/CADTC, and the 3 Infantry Division (US) Army, 3 BCT. The final day of the completion saw the 120mm Main Battle Tank shoot-out between the Armour School using the Leopard A24Cdn and the 3BCT (US) M1A1 Abrams Tanks. A superb competition, with the Armour School winning the shoot-out. However, the overall winner of the Competition went to the 2nd Division Units based in Valcartier Quebec. A great week for all of the participating Units. And “Congratulations” to the Royal Canadian Armour Corps School Staff for putting on and organizing such an event.

On the 17th of October, the 5th Cdn Div Sp Group, WO/ Sgts Mess held their annual Fall Invitation to all of the Veterans Groups, Legions and Associations within the Atlantic Region to attend their “Happy-Hour” to show the Troops appreciation to the “Old-Guard”, a well turned out event on all “Fronts”. As always there is the down side of events, we lost WO (Ret’d) John Duffney, (son of the late CWO John Duffney) who passed away in an Ontario community.

As for November, we celebrated The 114th Action of Leliefontain on Friday the 7th, followed by the November 11th Ceremonies here in Oromocto and surrounding areas with majority of our members representing The Regiment within their respective communities.

The month of December brought about numerous activities to the chapter members to “Officially” close out the Year 2014. Commencing with C Sqn RCD Mens Christmas Dinner on the 3rd, and closely followed by The RCACSchool Dinner on the 11th, all with great attendance and much success by all those who participated.

Celebrating the 131st Birthday of The Regiment was the last function of the year, very well attended and enjoyed by all The cake cutting ceremony was conducted by the “Eldest-Dragon” Maj (Ret’d) Rick Lathem, and the representing the serving Dragoon, C Sqn , Mike Rochefort.

As December closed out, so did a 26 year career of one of our past members son, Capt Wayne Yeomans (Isobel/Colby), has taken his release and joined the Public Service-Intelligence Section/NDHQ Ottawa, we wish him all the very best. With this in mind, and some turmoil that surround us, we thought we would “Secure” our area and post some OP’s, and thus C Sqn RCD moved into position of observation.



The Good Looking Ones, Helen Flemming, grand daughter Carla and friend Linda Kenny.



The Scarier Ones, J.J Gallant and Murray Davis.





May 9m, 2014. Armour School Sr.NCO's with The "OLD - GUARD" front and centre.



Tom Urbanowsky, MGen Dean Milner and Father MGen (Ret'd) Clive Milner.



Mike Rochefort and Rick Lathem

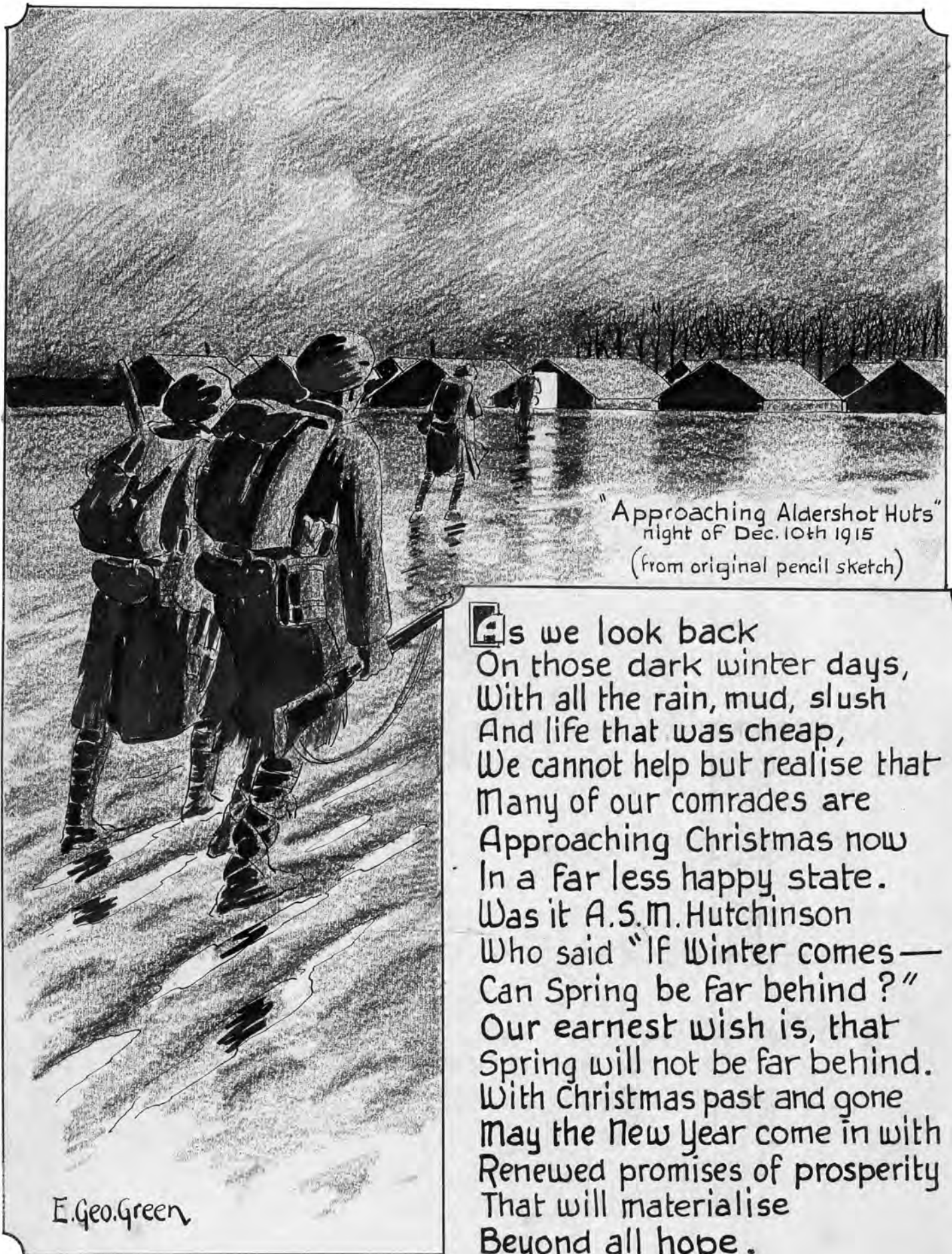


Curt Gormly, Ralph McAvity and Joe Cloake.



(Left Side, Front) Dan Berrigan, Charlie Richer (rest hidden).





"Approaching Aldershot Huts"  
night of Dec. 10th 1915  
(from original pencil sketch)

**A**s we look back  
On those dark winter days,  
With all the rain, mud, slush  
And life that was cheap,  
We cannot help but realise that  
Many of our comrades are  
Approaching Christmas now  
In a far less happy state.  
Was it A.S.M. Hutchinson  
Who said "If Winter comes —  
Can Spring be far behind?"  
Our earnest wish is, that  
Spring will not be far behind.  
With Christmas past and gone  
May the New Year come in with  
Renewed promises of prosperity  
That will materialise  
Beyond all hope.

E. Geo. Green



As normal, late again. The rush is on for submission to the editor by yesterday. Bonjour a tous, greetings from La Belle Province.

As you notice there are two of us that contributed to this issue, Michel was responsible for formatting the registration form and SITREP for our 2016 Gathering of the Dragoons which will be held here in Quebec at the Old Fort (CMR) in Saint Jean just 30 minute drive from Montreal.

Michel and I have been quite occupied in arranging and organizing our next Gathering of Dragoons in 2016. The SITREP attached and Registration form is self explanatory. We encourage everyone to register sooner than later. We hope to have 100 or so to join us for the gathering. The more the better.

I believe this is the first time that we are having this activity in Quebec since quite a while. As mentioned in the SITREP it is the original home of our regiment when they were still riding horses.

The format of our gathering will be the same as in previous years. Hotel and all our activity rooms in the

Old Mess have been booked, meals and menu defined with cost, down payment made and bank account opened. Entertainment and outings/trips have not been confirmed at this time. This will be an ongoing activity and we will keep everyone informed through your Chapter Chairman as we progress.

Everyone can be assured that we are doing our best to make this a successful, interesting and memorable gathering. Only you our membership will make this a success by joining us that weekend. We also hope to have a large contingency from the regiment and all outside employed RCD's in the region.

Just a side note, Friday, 24 June, 2016 is Saint Jean Baptist holiday here in Quebec. All major stores and malls will be closed and also the Liquor store (SAQ).

As normal, our Chapter is quite low keyed, as we are just a few spread over a large territory. We do keep in contact by phone or the internet with the few that have it. Our chapter is getting smaller as we lost contact with two of our members, Neville Melville and Stuart Strople. Both phone numbers are not in service any more. If anyone has any information on them I would

# Quebec

## Chapter



appreciate it. Nelson and Barbara Couvrette did not answer their phone, I presume they are on vacation and traveling some where.

We still join the Royal Canadian Hussars Association for their monthly breakfast every last Thursday of the month at Pub PJ at 6910 Rue St. Jacques in Montreal. Everyone is welcome for this comradely get together. Before writing this I talked to Justin Kisielius by phone for the latest news. He is doing quite well considering his wife (Ruth) is in Palliative care in a home. Justin visits Ruth everyday and stays with her most of the day. Our thoughts are with you Justin and hope to see you at the Gathering next year.

Norm Lloyd is still full of energy despite being on a waiting list for knee replacement. We hope Norm it happens soon and wish you the best. Norm is still very much occupied with his local Legion in Waterloo by entertaining the members with his keyboard and playing in a local band. Norm and Velma entertained our Veterans at the St. Anne Veteran Hospital for many years. Norm mentioned to me that there is a RCD veteran (Eric Newman) living in Williamstown, ON not far from my place. I'll make a point of visiting him in the near future.

Jean Imbeault getting on in age but still very young in mind is quite busy doing Line Dancing with a large dancing group in Sherbrooke. Something he enjoys doing very much and keeps him busy. We hope Jean that you could join us for the Gathering next year and give us a few lessons after our dinner. Victor Rugenius still keeps busy at his farm, flying the RCD Camp Flag at his home and keeps busy entertaining his Grandchildren. If you drive through Hemmingford passing Parc Safari you can't miss his home. Besides that, if you happen to see the Legion in Hemmingford I live right across the street. You are welcome to stop for a few ales.

Mrs. Suzanne Gauthier has moved into a lovely senior residence in Sherbrooke. She enjoys the place, company and activities very much and participates in just about all their activities just to stay busy. Her children visit her quite often to make sure that she is comfortable and has all her needs. Luc Rousseau still occupied with the reserve and, still not successful in recruiting Yves Damphousse into our Chapter but still working on it.

That's all for now, we wish you a good summer with family and friends and a warm winter. Hope to see many of you next year at the Gathering of Dragoons at Fort St. Jean, QC.

Au Revoir.



Karl Kramell and Michel Vezina working hard at Gathering 2016

## Memories of the OLD COMRADES



RCD Reunion - 4 Nov 1955 Petawawa Ontario  
JP Goutier and Danny Wilkin



Good Morning, from beautiful Kingston on the banks of Lake Ontario. The Kingston and Region Chapter is alive and well, our chapter boasts 50 members with many more friends and serving members in the region. It's always nice to see Dragoons at gathering regardless of event or location.

This year the Kingston and Region Chapter of the Royal Canadian Dragoons Association has hosted or attended many events. Leeuwarden held by the serving members, was conducted, at the CFB Kingston Officer's, we gathered approximately 20 persons with COL Cotton raising his glass as a toast to Leeuwarden. Of course our Regimental flag is flown in Leeuwarden and the Regiment each year to commemorate the freedom of the city during the Second World War. The next event was the retirement and Change of Command for MGen James Ferron, James was the Commander of the 1st Canadian Division Headquarters in Kingston after 35 years of loyal and dedicated service, James retired here in Kingston with Mary by his side, you could see the tear in his eye, even though his words were directed to everyone in the crowd that impacted on his career and life within the Army. Well done James you did your country well and we salute you my friend. His replacement MGen Dean Milner, can't think of a better

man. Congrats Dean and Katrin Milner. The Semi Annual Corps Luncheon at the CFB Kingston WO's and SGT's Mess hosted by Maj Chris Catry. Chris is a huge supporter of the Corps and member of our Chapter. The guest speaker was MGen Dean Milner, he gave us an update on the Army as a whole and where the Corps is going in the future. Well done Chris and Dean. Next we ran down to Smith Falls for the annual Henry Sampson Golf Tournament, this event is spearheaded by Don Craig. Annually about 140 retired and serving members, including friends of the Corps, showed up to get a round of golf, a splendid dinner, all in the memory of Henry Sampson. Of course with a few drinks down range, lots of golf stories, it's a great time for all. 'The Last Corps BBQ in Kingston, hosted by Clive and Shirley Milner, at Oak Haven 26 Jul. This turned out to be one of the best attended functions of the year. This was the Kingston and Region Chapter BBQ, however Clive decided many years ago, the BBQ would have a better focus if it was open Corps wide. Clive and Shirley hosted this BBQ for 21 years and were very excited as the cars and people rolled in to bid farewell. Shirley as usual, ran around ensuring everyone was enjoying themselves, she displays such an inner energy that motivates any group. Shirley has organized many events at all levels throughout her life time, regardless

# Kingston

## Chapter



if there was 10 or 500 people, her efforts are the same. Clive spoke as Clive always speaks, from the heart with a view to acknowledge all in attendance, including the person that travelled the farthest to the oldest person in the crowd. Clive includes everyone. Many people from coast to coast decided that this year, Oak Haven was the place to be on that sunny day. Everyone left feeling grateful for the Milner's efforts and their perseverance to keep the Corps events alive and well. The event was well attended by approximately 150 fun seekers including the COL Commandant of the Armoured Corps BGen Dean, The Director of Armour, The Corps RSM CWO Laughlin and the President of the Corps Association. Clive and Shirley were the first recipients of a beautiful crystal trophy, as a prestigious award for contributing their own time and effort in bettering the Spirit of the Corps through this event. Although Clive and Shirley knew it would be their last Corps BBQ after all those years, those who attended, surely understood that the event must continue.

November, Leliefontien is our Chapter's favorite time for many of our members come out of their hiding places to enjoy each other's companionship. This year our guest speaker was MGen (Retired) Clive Milner. Clive always has everyone's attention, his intent is clear, his focus is valid, his heart is open and he supports our Chapter and Regiment to the fullest. Many people came to join us in celebration of Leliefontien. We ate, we drank of the fruit and we toasted our Regiment. It's always a great day to be a Dragoon and to share some stories with our friends.

Although we have had many great times in the Kingston Region, we did have a significant loss. A great friend of the Chapter, a wife to Fred (Biff) Watson, a mother to many, a proud grandmother to many, a sister, and a great friend to many of us all across Canada. This year we have lost Mary Watson to a medical event that took her from us. There are no words that can explain the sorrow felt in our hearts. Everyone that knew Mary Watson, will attest she was a diamond of a lady and such a sweet kind woman. Mary shall be missed, as she touched our hearts in many ways. Mary Rest in Peace, you have done your part in this life and we shall miss you lovingly.

December came upon us quickly this year and it was time to share our Regimental Birthday with the Royal Canadian Regiment, both Regiments were formed 21 Dec 1883. This year the Kingston and Region Chapter



of the Royal Canadian Dragoons hosted the event. The RCR guest speaker was COL Rob Walker the Commander of the Canadian Army Command and Staff College in Kingston, he gave a detailed talk of the Training and Significant events of the Regiment over the past year, he then past the torch over to MGen Walter Holmes to explain the Regimental Ortona Toast. This toast is a tradition for the RCR dating back through the wars and even today they still mimic the actions of those before us. The dark rum with other secret ingredients was a taste to be savoured and many went for a second round. The RCD guest speaker was MGen Dean Milner the Commander of the Headquarters 1st Canadian Division. Dean gave us an update on the Dragoons, highlighting many significant events the Regiment has done over the year, he also tied in on how the two Regiments fought hard together in many champagnes, solidifying our friendships over the years. Again we ate, we drank and we told stories of two Regiments that have been friends for more than a century. We celebrated this friendship with our Regiments by cutting a cake with both our Regiments names on it including the Regimental Flags imprinted in icing. Well that concluded a year of the Kingston and Region Chapter. You should join us sometime!

Denis Levesque Chapter Chair



GREETINGS FROM THE OTTAWA VALLEY CHAPTER on behalf of all members we wish you and your family happiness, good health and prosperity in the upcoming year.

Over the past year it has been business as usual. The Association members have attended the Leeuwarden and Leliefontein parades. We have conducted several meetings and our annual Oktoberfest, accomplished both with great success.

Thanks to the CO and RSM's open invitation to all our members to attend any of the event & activities conducted by the Regiment. It is great to be in so close a proximity to the Regiment, thus allowing us to participate in all their events.

On behalf of the CO, RSM and the Executive of the RCD Association we encourage you to remain in contact with the Regiment and join the association. There are numerous chapters across Canada and our committee members would be more than willing to assist you in linking up wherever you may go.

Therefore, please allow me to take this opportunity once again this year to introduce you to the RCD

Ottawa Valley Association Executive. The Chairman, Bruce Prendergast, Vice, Sterling Mercer, Secretary/Treasurer Fred Heisler, and Entertainment Chairman Roger Munger.

Our Oktoberfest on the 21 Sep 14, was a huge success. The Entertainment Chairman, Roger Munger did an outstanding job once again.

We hosted 36 people including the CO, RSM and their lovely wives.

This was our 10th annual Oktoberfest (how time flies) and Birgith Munger, treated the members to a fantastic German meal. The menu was selected from a prestigious German restaurant where she was the chef for several years.

Gordie Meighan, once again provided the German music for the evening, getting everyone into the spirit. Well done to all. As you can see by the photo's everyone enjoyed the evening.

Before I leave this subject, I would like to thank the CO and RSM for once again taking the time to attend in light of their hectic schedule and allowing us to utilize the Regimental facilities. Without their continued

# Ottawa Valley

## Chapter



support activities like this may not be possible. During the evening, many “war stories” were told bringing back many good memories from our time in Germany.

The Leliefontein parade in November was once again a memorable one. The snow started just as the troops were getting on parade and continued throughout the parade. Everyone was covered in the white stuff by the end, but the parade carried on. MGen D.J. Milner led the “Old Guard” on the march past and we got a rousing cheer as we gave the eyes right to the Colonel of the Regiment.

The Soldiers Christmas Dinner is always a highlight for the Association members, we are extremely proud of our serving Dragoons and appreciate every opportunity to interact with them. This year’s dinner was conducted in the normal traditional manner. Unfortunately I was unable to attend but by all reports the moral within the Regiment is very high. Thanks to everyone who shared their stories of current Regimental activities with us.

I enjoyed enjoy reading and seeing photo’s from the other chapters and their members. The Dragoon and Springbok are two excellent publication and all those involved, especially the editors should be commended for their outstanding work.

John Moyer was handing over the reins as the RCD National Chapter’s Treasurer however has agreed to stay on. Therefore, I would like to extend to him, on behalf of the Ottawa valley Chapter our sincere thanks John for all your hard work and dedication.

I would be remised if we did thank Muggsie for her continuous support; she has been the continuity over the past years. Well done to all.

In closing, the support of the Regiment over the past year has been outstanding, both LCol Steve Graham and CWO (RSM) Shawn Mercer have gratefully open the doors to all Regimental activities and welcomed all members of the association with open arms.

Tanks.



PM Steven Harper and Danny Lynch at the National War Museum



Gord Meighan presented a saddle to RSM Shawn Mercer which will be proudly displayed in the Holland Room



MGen D.J. Milner leading the “Old Guard” on parade



2014 saw a continuation of our regular series of events, starting with our Liberation of Leeuwarden celebration on April 11th. This year, the new Ambassador, His Excellency Cees Kole, was unable to attend, but the Embassy of The Kingdom of the Netherlands was more than adequately represented by the new Defence Attaché, Colonel Christa Oppers-Beumer. Continuity was provided by Ms Wendy Sewell from the Embassy. We have been pleased to welcome Wendy to our Leeuwarden luncheons for at least the last five years now. Among others attending were Bob Hart, Charles Gruchy, Bill Smith, Brian Senecal, Jim Atkins, Walt Conrad, Ross Carruthers, Bann Price, Rob Kearney, Chris Renahan, Tom Burnie, Alan Bolster, LCol Steve Graham (CO-designate) and MGen Jim Ferron.

In June, the chapter was well represented at the RV 2014 held in St Catherines. Those attending included Terry and Rita Seeley, Bann and Libby Price, George and Shirley Martin, and Ross and Jackie Carruthers. This event has been amply covered in the Summer 2014 edition of The Springbok, so suffice it to say that it was a most enjoyable event for all attending.

In July, we were represented at the final Armoured

Corps gathering at the Milners at Oak Haven by Walt and Sue Conrad and others.

We moved our Leliefontein celebration a bit forward this year to 31 October so as not to conflict with the events in Petawawa. We had a good turn-out for this event. We were particularly pleased that among those attending was Colonel Georges Rousseau, the Colonel of the Regiment.

The final event of the year was our gathering at the Army Officers' Mess on 19 December to mark the 131st birthday of the Regiment. Unlike last year, the weather cooperated, and so we were able to gather and enjoy the roast beef sandwich for lunch. The stalwarts present included Bob Hart, Bill Smith, Terry Seeley, Scott MacLelland, Bann Price, Ross Carruthers, Alan Bolster, Chris Chance, Jon Jennekens, and Peter Atkinson. Bernie Ciarroni, the national President of The Royal Canadian Armoured Corps Association, also put in an appearance.

Unfortunately, the year ended on a sombre note when we learned of the passing on 24 December of General Ramsey Withers. General Withers was a former Signals

# National Capital

## Chapter



Officer of the Regiment and a former Chief of the Defence Staff. He always maintained his ties to the Regiment, and he was a member of our Chapter.

Our membership as we head into 2015 is in the area of eighty-five. We are always looking for new members, do if you know of any Dragoons moving into the area or retiring nearby, please let us know. They'll be more than welcome.



## **FIGHTING THE HUN FROM SADDLE AND TRENCH**

By Sergeant William R. Jones  
No. 59 of The Royal Canadian Dragoons

The RCD in The Great War

### **Fighting the Hun from Saddle and Trench**

by William Ross Jones

*Available at the RCD Kitshop*

## *Memories of the* **OLD COMRADES**



Major Meisner Bore Sighting - CAT 1979 Germany



Greetings to all Dragoons from the BC Chapter. A little bit about the weather, those of you in the East you had a lousy winter and for those of us in the West it has been fantastically mild. Enough said. A quiet year for the chapter; because we are all getting older it seems that medical issues is our number one priority. Ernie Babcock is pretty much tied to his house in the Sechelt and only gets out to make medical appointments. Mia Vickers has had some serious heart problems but she is on the mend and I hope we will be able to see her at the next luncheon. Dave Stewart has some serious medical problems, which I hope will become rectified in the near future. I even went through some medical difficulties. This all goes to say this getting old is not for sissies.

The Chapter is holding at 24 members and there were no new members this year. As is normal our only gathering is the Leliefontein luncheon and this year it was held on 06 November 14 at the Saanich yacht club on Vancouver Island. We had a good turnout this year, 29 in all. The senior officer present, LGen(R) Mike Caines of 12 RBC fame is always welcome to the Leliefontein luncheon. It was pleasure to see Yvon and Laurie Savoie at the luncheon. I hope we will see more of them in the future. From Nanaimo John and Lillian

Pierce and son Jim; John is the founding chairman of the BC chapter Association. Another special threesome is Frank and Margaret Milledge and son John Kohler from Vancouver. I say special because to the best of my knowledge they have not missed any of the Leliefontein luncheons. Georges and Diana Bordet, Whitman Swanberg, Pat Chartres, and Jack Gallup rounded out our special guests. Of course I would be remiss not to give special mention to Dave Letson, the Strathcona coordinator who also attends every Leliefontein luncheon. From the chapter it was great to see Paul Philcox, Paul Crober, Tom Thomas, Peter Jarvis and the ever smiling Richard Kitcher. Lloyd Vickers was my co-driver and I hope I didn't frighten him too much. Dave Sproule in from Vancouver for the last time, as next year he will come from Victoria. My thanks to Gary Dell Villano for setting up and organizing this luncheon and Steve Griffin for providing ferry transport.

Gene and Claudette Lake almost made it to the luncheon because they were at the yacht club and had to go back home for medical reasons. Hope to see you next year. Alan Donovan was not able to make it this year but I'm always hopeful he will come out in the future. John Innes was not able to make it as was the case for Ian Ham. Generals Dean and Dangerfield and John Olafson

# British Columbia

## Chapter



sent their regrets. Dave Stewart had to cancel at the last moment due to medical problems. Dave Scandrett also sent his regrets. Regrettably, Malcolm Brown has passed away.



Bann Price, the Association president, has advised me that the Regiment is now coming back to normal in the regimental training cycle. He also mentioned that the current Colonel of the Regiment, Georges Rousseau is replacing Darrell Dean as the Col. Commandant of the RC AC and Matt McDonald is replacing Georges as the Col. Of the Regiment. It was gratifying to hear that General Walter Natynczuck "Uncle Walt" has been appointed deputy minister Veterans Affairs Canada. Hopefully he will bring some stability to that department.

Maj. Gen. (R) Cam Ross brought us up to date and what is happening in the RCAC. Specifically, he outlined the competition between 2 Division, 3 Division, 4 Division, 5 Division, and the US 3BCT. I had a difficult time wrapping myself around the references to the divisions. The competition revolved around: direct fire gunnery; driving and maintenance; observation skills; and march and shoot. The overall competition was very close with the top score going to 2 Division with the RCACS placing first in the 120 MM competition.

The BC Chapter is not alone in the Armoured Corps in mourning the loss of General Radley-Walters. For those of us who knew and served with General Rad he set the example and inspired us to be better tankers. He has earned the right to simply fade away.

## Memories of the OLD COMRADES



Life in Barracks never changes...

# GUILD DONORS 2015

Guild activities depend upon donors from all parts of the Regimental family and friends both individuals and corporations. Unfortunately, space in this magazine does not permit us to thank all who gave, so we have published the names of those who donated \$100 or more. Many others have generously given and we certainly thank all donors.

## \$100 - \$499 - Friends of the Regiment

Abbott, T	Donald, R	Maclean, JM	Sagocak, B
Adams, DJ	Doucet, JE	Malejczuk, JJ	Saunders, E
Allen, J	Duncan, C	Malloff, MJ	Scheffelmanier, WT
Andrechek, J	Dunn, MK	Maraj, SV	Schroeder, WM
Andrews, JL	Ermel, R	Marion, KC	Shaw, R
Auld, F	Farnell, M	Marois, PA	Sherriff, TG
Bagayao, W	Flemming, B	Marois, RV	Shewan, BG
Bagnall, RK	Follwell, J	Mathers, K	Shurdha, B
Bailey, M	Gagnon, M	Maurice, AT	Smith, K
Barr, G	Gaudette, J	McCarty, MGC	Smith, CE
Barr, JM	Girard, JM	McCluskey, MP	Szydlo, D
Beckett, BS	Graham, A	McKenzie, A	Tan, P-A
Beharrysingh, D	Graham, S	McNeil, JA	Thomas, A
Bennett, BAC	Guest, G	Mercer, SA	Thomas, LE
Benoit, R	Harwood, KR	Mercier, D	Tremblay, R
Berge, F	Hatfield, SG	Miller, C	Turner, PA
Bigney, R	Hawley, W	Milner, DJ	VanRyswyk, TW
Blais, S	Head, DW	Monaghan, C	Vienneau, JD
Boire, MSWG	Hillier, CR	Morin, RMR	Watt, F
Bramhill, RJ	Holton, R	Muise, AC	Wells, PJ
Bride, RAW	Hutt, C	Muralt, D	White, CRJ
Brimner, AM	Isenor, M	Murphy, JP	Williams, RC
Brown, C	Kapchinsky, R	Murphy, JW	Wionzek, MJR
Brown, JM	Keith, CR	Nette, G	Wong, KW
Brown, RJ	Kewley, A	Newton, TS	Wood, V
Brush, JM	Knowles, S	Nickerson, JNJ	Zeisig, J
Burchart, J	Kuehne, M	Nixon, MA	Zinck, D
Cadden, SM	Lacasse, RD	Noort, BL	
Cameron, J	Laing, W	Ostler, JR	
Cartmell, M	Lai-Serverini, J	Ouellette, NGE	Goodwood Farms
Catry, C	Larocque, J	Peitzsche, TJ	
Chadwick, HC	Larson, NP	Pineau, S	Guthrie Woods
Christianson, DR	Laurin-Sanscartier, S	Popov, M	Products Ltd
Clark, I	Lauzon, MLP	Poppe, A	
Clarridge, K	Layden, R	Power, BR	United Way
Cotton, RT	Leamon, JG	Ready, RJL	Kingston
Cross, D	Leblanc, D	Renahan, C	
Curley, S	Lesage, M	Richards, WA	
Cushing, K	Lillington, C	Richardson, S	
Cyr, AM	Lofgren, WA	Ring, J	
D'Andrea, C	Long, J	Ritchie, JL	
Dewinter, RA	Lynk, DA	Robichau, PA	
Dolan, J	Macdonald, WR	Robinson, KDG	



## **\$500 - \$1,499 - Regimental Family**

Assaly, D  
Atherton, A  
Bell, J  
Bonefant-Deguisse, JP  
Boon, R  
Brennan-Rousseau, M

Carew, P  
Cowan, S  
Davenport, C  
Frank, MA  
Hindo, P  
Kerckhoff, EA

Manzer, A  
Rikhtegar, K  
Schoenermarck, JCH  
Snape, A  
Tremblay, DD

Marcotte Disposal Inc  
  
United Way  
Renfrew County

## **\$1,500 - \$9,999 - Patrons of the Old Guard**

Averbrook, T  
Batten, D  
Beamish, RA  
Brown, C  
Caiazzo, F  
Morrison, B  
Riganelli, P  
Saulnier, R  
Tenki, P

Dibco Underground Ltd  
  
Diefenbunker Canada's Cold War Museum  
  
Fer-Pal Construction Ltd  
  
Honey Construction Ltd  
  
Mondo Sports and Shooting Adventures Ltd

1067005 Ontario Ltd

## **\$10,000 and above - Commanding Officer's Circle**

Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment Ltd



# SECRETARY/TREASURER'S SITREP 2015

I will begin this SITREP by offering an extraordinary THANK YOU to all those who have volunteered various pieces of information concerning addresses, membership dues, deaths and other significant events. Without your reports, it would be exceptionally difficult to maintain contact with our comrades. Maintaining addresses is probably the most difficult aspect of my work and any assistance you provide is truly appreciated.

As is our custom, this issue of The Dragoon includes several summaries of general interest, namely concerning Membership and finances. A special thank you is extended to those of you who have donated that little extra.

Please note that the Association is not a recognized charitable organization and cannot issue receipts for donations it receives. On the other hand, the Guild of the RCD can issue receipts for income tax purposes. Bursary donations (cheques must be made payable to The Guild of The RCD to qualify for a charitable donation receipt) that I receive will of course be forwarded to the Guild.

Again, my heartfelt thanks go to all those who have supported me in 2014/15.

John Moyer  
Secretary/Treasurer

## ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Life	- 216
Associate Life	- 34
Annual	- 223
Associate Annual	- 26
Honorary	- 18
	<hr/>
TOTAL	517



# ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE

## Executive Directors

### President

Mr JB Price  
2673 Pierce Road  
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bannprice4@gmail.com

### Vice President

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### Secretary/Treasurer

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Captain Kevin Lee  
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Mr Robert Riendeau  
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Mr Lance Wiebe  
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Lincoln, NB, E3B 9K3

Mr Geoff R. Hall  
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## Chapter Chairmen

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South Central Ontario  
Steve Mercer, CD  
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Quebec Chapter  
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Kingston Chapter  
Mr Denis Levesque  
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BC Chapter  
Mr RFJ Berge  
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Chilliwack, BC V2P 7Z2  
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# GATHERING OF DRAGOONS 2016



Over the years, many of you have requested that this event be held in Montreal. So the Quebec Chapter has volunteered to organise the event.

The Quebec Chapter is very small; Karl Kramell and myself are the two active members. Others are too old or live too far to join us. Of course this leaves much more work for Karl and myself.

After many rendez-vous and visits to different downtown hotels, we have found the offer too expensive for rooms, lunches dinner, parking, etc. So we went for a better solution and it came from RMC St-Jean. It seems that Montreal is always high season rates.

## **A short history of Fort St-Jean.**

In 1883, The Royal Canadian Dragoons established its Cavalry school in St-Jean Que. From 1906 to 1914 and 1920 to 1939. During the First World War, troops received their training in St-Jean before leaving for Europe.

## **Facilities**

The place is gorgeous with its beautiful facilities on the Richelieu river. It houses old barracks with the standards of today's needs. The Old Officers mess, with bar, ballroom, with oak paneling, chandeliers etc is a well kept gem. It also provides a beautiful canvas protected patio on the river to hold our meet and greet.

Further planning is a visit to the base museum and a boat cruise and brunch on the beautiful Richelieu river. A beautiful 2hrs and a half tour. TBC

## **Conclusion**

There is still much work to be done, but rest assured that all efforts are being done to celebrate this event with Dragoons panache.



Will keep you posted in The Dragoons/Springbok magazine as information becomes available, on your Association website and from your Chapters chair.

### **Address for Fort St-Jean**

Corporation du Fort St-Jean  
15 rue Jacques Cartier nord  
St-Jean sur Richelieu Que J3B8R8  
450-358-6500

### **Hotel accommodations**

June 24/25 2016  
Gouverneur Hotel St-Jean sur Richelieu  
725 Seminaire Nord Boul.  
St-Jean sur Richelieu Que J3B 8H1  
Toll free tel. 1-800-667-3815

Your 3 star hotel in the Montérégie ! Just 20 minutes from Montreal , and 5 minutes from CMR..113 comfortable rooms are available to help you enjoy your trip to the Montreal region.

Rooms reservation must be made directly with Auberge des Gouverneurs, not forgetting to mention RCD Association package.

Cut off date is May 24 2016 for reservations.

Double room occupancy is \$ 110.00 all taxes extra, breakfast included.

Please note all reservations must be made with a credit card.

Check in time is 16.00hrs

Check out time is 12.00





## GATHERING OF DRAGOONS 2016

### Registration form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
First Nick name Last

Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
First Nick name Last

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Province

\_\_\_\_\_   
Postal code Contact Phone Number Email

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ All activities \_\_\_\_\_ Meet & Greet only \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner only \_\_\_\_\_

#### Costs

Meet & Greet only: **\$15.00** each

Dinner **\$70.00** each

Tour: Details to follow

#### Notes

Room's reservations must be made directly with Auberge des Gouverneurs, (1-888-910-1111), in order take advantage of the reduced room rate, reservations must be made **no later then 24 May 2016.**

It is requested that all participants utilize Auberge des Gouverneurs room costs are contingent on overall participation at the hotel. Announcements and updates will be published in the Dragoon, Chapter newsletters and on [www.dragoons.ca](http://www.dragoons.ca). Special dietary requirements can be made with prior notice by advising Michel Vezina.

My cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Make cheque payable to; **RCD Quebec Chapter Association.**

Mail to; **Michel Vezina 107 Rene Emard St Ile Perrot Quebec J7V8V5**

Each person attending must sign below, to authorize the posting of your name(s) on the Gathering of Dragoons web site indicating your attendance. If you do not wish your name to be published, there is no signature required.

I authorise the RCD Association to post my name about the gathering;

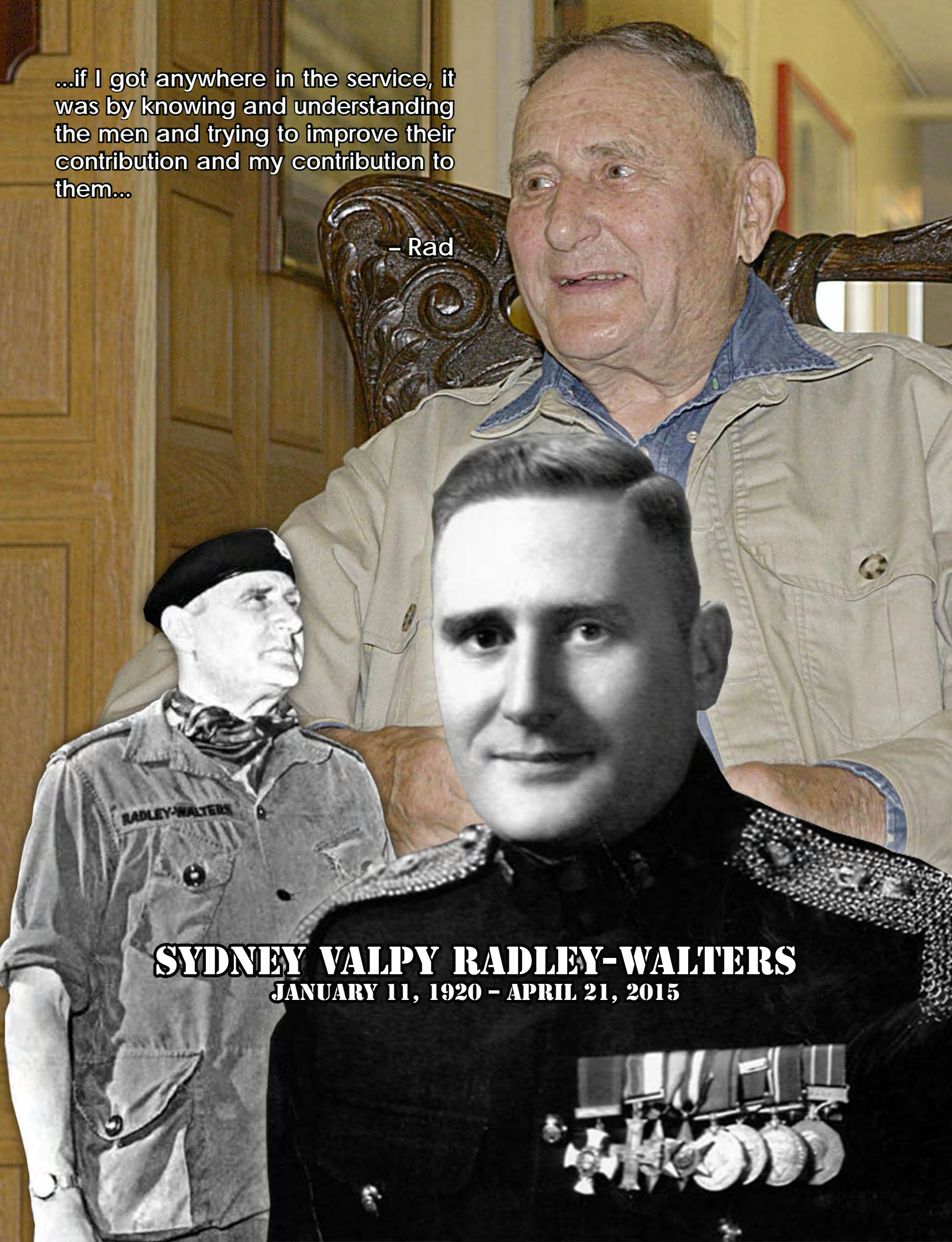
Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



...if I got anywhere in the service, it was by knowing and understanding the men and trying to improve their contribution and my contribution to them...

– Rad



**SYDNEY VALPY RADLEY-WALTERS**

**JANUARY 11, 1920 – APRIL 21, 2015**