THE DRAGOON

2024





TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGES

2 Patron of the Association
4 President of the Association
6 Editor of *The Dragoon*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

8 Dragoons Remembered

CHAPTER UPDATES

9 Newfoundland & Labrador
10 Atlantic
12 Quebec
14 National Capital Region
16 Ottawa Valley
17 Kingston
21 Windsor, ON
22 Alberta
24 British Columbia

FEATURE ARTICLES

25 RCD on UNFICYP: Cyprus Remembered
29 Remembering Chris: A Dragoon Connection to the Silver Cross Mother
34 Family History & Collecting Converge: Toy Soldiers, A Tiny Book, A Grandson & The Dragoons
38 Family Tradition: The Van Straubenzee Family's RCD Connection
44 RV24: Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the RCD Association
48 Day on the Greens: Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament

BUSINESS

50 Business Arising: 2023 – 2024
53 The Last Trumpet Call: Farewell Friends

The Dragoon 2024

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Submissions to *The Dragoon* are always welcome and may be sent in electronic format (MS Word) to the Editor at rcdassoc.editor@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions is 1 May of each year. *The Dragoon* welcomes photos of all Regimental and Association activities, past and present. Where possible, photos should be the original or at least as high resolution as possible (300 dpi or higher, JPEG format). Do not embed photos in the article but send as separate attachments. Please include a detailed caption with each photo and the photographer's name. We regret that we cannot guarantee that all submitted articles or photos will be used.

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2Lt Alan K. Hamilton, A Sqn, RCD, stops to chat with some local children in Cyprus during a patrol in 1965. (Alan is now a member of the NCR Chapter of the RCD Association.)

The Ferret proved to be a versatile vehicle in the narrow streets and mountain passes of Cyprus. You can also see the Browning M1919 7.62x51mm LMG on top of the vehicle. Note the wire cutters on either side of the driver's hatch. (Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, reference 4235957)

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PATRON OF THE ASSOCIATION MESSAGE

Gen (ret'd) Rick Hillier,
OC, CMM, ONL, MSC, CD



Gen (ret'd) Rick Hillier

This is an auspicious year for the Dragoon Association. Think about it for a moment: our 50th anniversary. Fifty years of maintaining the comradeship, friendship and memories of a life, or part of a life, in service to Canada through our Regiment. Fifty years. An association that when it started included veterans from both World War II and the Korean War along with those who had served as part of our Regiment, wearing either the Springbok or a specific trade badge, on missions in the Sinai, other parts of the Middle East, Cyprus and Vietnam. All of them wanting to maintain those contacts and relationships with those with whom they served Canada. Now, most of that era's Dragoons are at that great Leaguer in the sky. Our Association today is a collection of Cold War, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Somalia, Afghanistan and other veterans. Our common characteristic is still that we all served as Dragoons and want to retain what we enjoyed so much during active duty. Our camaraderie.

That's what we'll do 14-16 June 2024, at the RCD 50th Anniversary Reunion in Kingston. Celebrate our service, enjoy the camaraderie of our battle buddies, find ways to continue to support serving Dragoons and their families and help support those who left the Regiment and perhaps encountered tough times. We will mark the proud history made by those who preceded us, commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day, prepare for the 80th anniversary of Leliefontein and the liberation of the Netherlands, celebrate the return of the Unknown Newfoundland Soldier







ABOVE LEFT: Pallbearers from The Royal Newfoundland Regiment carry the remains of an unknown Newfoundland soldier during the ramp ceremony in Lille, France on 25 May 2024. CAF photo, courtesy of eVeritas.

ABOVE RIGHT: The headstone of an unknown soldier of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, buried at Y Ravine Cemetery, Beaumont-Hamel. The inscription reads: "Newfoundland Soldier of the Great War Known Unto God." The remains were buried at the National War Memorial in St. John's on 1 July 2024. Photo by David Mercer, courtesy of the Memorial University Gazette.

MIDDLE LEFT: Artwork contributed by local school children was displayed during the laying in state of the unknown Newfoundland soldier. Photo by Cpl Charles Audet, Canadian Forces Combat Camera.

BOTTOM LEFT AND BELOW: Photos taken during the Dragoons Association's 50th anniversary reunion that took place from 14-16 June 2024 in Kingston, Ontario. For more on RV24, read the article on page 44.

(I had to ensure that was mentioned since so many of our Regiment hailed from that island where 'Once He Stood') and be proud of those who keep OUR Regiment proud and battle ready. We may also have a few drinks, tell (a lot of) lies and feel like we're 20 again. Through it all, we will remain … Dragoons!

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift







PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION MESSAGE

Capt (ret'd) Thomas Skelding, MMM, CD

The Regimental Association, that collection of 400 odd (well, different) former Dragoons and their spouses spread across the country, is alive and doing well. Organized in Chapters from NL to BC, the Association is a support group, if you will — a group supporting the Regiment in all its endeavours and, equally importantly, supporting each other and the Dragoon family, wherever needed.

Members of the Association have attended Regimental celebrations, they have attended funerals and memorials to fallen members of both the Regiment and the Association, they have attended RCD Cadet parades, and they have held their own celebrations and ceremonies to keep the history and traditions of the Regiment alive and well.

This year 2024 marks the 50th anniversary of our Association. Although our Association's roots can be traced back to 1919 when, just after the First World War, an Old Comrades Association was formed; this association continued well into the 1950s and 1960s. The Association as we know it today was founded 50 years ago in 1974 through the initiative of a small group of the 'Old Gang' from Montreal to whom we owe a vote of thanks. Over the years, the Association has grown into a national organization, with chapters located coast to coast and still growing. So, wherever you are, take a moment and raise a glass to our Association for achieving this milestone. In fact, I hope you attended the reunion in June 2024 and celebrated with your comrades.

2024 is also the 60th anniversary of the formation of UNFICYP. Recce Sqn RCD under the command of Maj John Beament and WOII Edward Carey were the first armoured squadron to deploy (Roto 0) to Cyprus from March to October 1964. Sadly, during that tour, Tpr Joseph Hector 'Fess' Campbell died in a Ferret scout car accident on 31 July 1964 and is buried in the Dhekelia Garrison British Military Cemetery. He would be the only RCD casualty in the five RCD deployments to Cyprus between 1964-1989.



Capt (ret'd) Thomas Skelding

TOP: Capt Tom Skelding and his accordion at the Kandahar International Airport in 2008.



During the past year we have had a change in leadership at two Chapters. Dave MacLaren has stepped up and assumed the position of Chair of the Atlantic Chapter from Lance Weibe and John Bouwmeister who had filled the void for the last two years; and Matt Robichaud replaced Bruce Prendergast as Chapter Chair of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chapter. We also stood up a new Chapter in Windsor, ON with Kathy Nayduk assuming the role as Chapter Chair.

With the selection of our next Colonel of the Regiment and Commanding Officer, it's time to say goodbye to the old. On behalf of all Association Members, a heartfelt thanks to MGen Dean and Katrin Milner and LCol Nick and Gemma Forsyth for their service to the Regiment and support to our Association. The RCD Association welcomes the new COR MGen Steve and Jennifer Cadden and CO LCol Chloeann Summerfield and her husband Colonel John Summerfield.

A huge thank you to Perry Wells, our journal editor, for another superb edition. So please read on and enjoy.

We as an Association hope you will join us at some point, regardless of rank, amount of time served, or even trade. We have many members and foster many relationships with our combat support and combat service support arms. We still have a ton of memories to share.

We may not have a bar, but we do serve friendship… It goes without saying that old Dragoons will have a good time wherever they get together.

It's another fine day to be a DRAGOON.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift



ABOVE LEFT PHOTO: Maj J.A. Beament supervising the filling in of Turkish Cypriot trenches on the Nicosia golf course, 20 August 1964. Photo courtesy Royal Canadian Dragoons.



ABOVE RIGHT PHOTO: RCD Recce Sqn soldiers conducting weapons training aboard HMCS *Bonaventure* en route to Cyprus, March 1964 (Roto 0). Photo by Peter Ward, Toronto Telegram.

INSET RIGHT PHOTO: Trooper Joseph Hector 'Fess' Campbell in service uniform. He died in a Ferret scout car accident on 31 July 1964 and is buried in the Dhekelia Garrison British Military Cemetery, Cyprus. He is buried with eight other Canadians who served with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and who died between 1964 and 1970.

BOTTOM PHOTO: Mixed Dining-In, RV 24, Kingston, 15 June 2024. Dragoons Association President Tom Skelding addressing the crowd during the 50th Anniversary Reunion in Kingston. Photo by George Wallace.





EDITOR OF THE DRAGOON MESSAGE

LCol (ret'd) Perry Wells, CD



LCol (ret'd) Perry Wells

ABOVE: 1 Troop, C Squadron, North Marg, Lahr, 1985. Garrie Lambert is seated in the front row, second from the right. In the second row are Bill Richards (fifth from the left) and Richard Stacey (third from the left).

Greetings from the Editor's desk. The Association and its members were busy over the last 12 months and hopefully this has been captured in the 2024 edition of *The Dragoon*.

In addition to opening Messages by the Patron of the RCD Association, Gen (ret'd) Rick Hillier, and the Association President, Capt (ret'd) Tom Skelding, each of the Chapters provided a summary of their many and varied activities over the past year. Also, note the standing up of a new Chapter in Windsor, Ontario.

As 2024 is the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the fact that the RCD were part of Roto 0, I chose to make this the theme of this edition of *The Dragoon* starting with the cover photograph and a Feature Article entitled *Cyprus Remembered* by Col (ret'd) Allan Methven. Next is an excellent article by MGen (ret'd) Jim Ferron who wrote about *A Dragoon Connection to the 2023 Silver Cross Mother*. Also featured is a very interesting article by BGen (ret'd) Darrell Dean looking at how *Toy Soldiers, a Tiny Book and a Grandson Connect to the Royal Canadian Dragoons*. Keeping with this historical theme, and under the guidance of BGen Dean, is a look back at *The Military Achievements of the van Straubenzee Family in The Royal Canadian Dragoons and the Canadian Army*. Rounding out the Feature Articles section is an article by Major (ret'd) Chris Catry discussing the background and history of the *Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament*, plus an excellent summary (with lots of photos) by CWO (ret'd) Denis (Badger) Levesque of the very successful RV 24 held in Kingston from 14 to 16 June 2024. Closing out this edition is a review of the business end of the Association.

I would like to acknowledge the passing of David Sproule on 27 April 2024. Dave was a great supporter of *The Dragoon* and, over the years, helped many an Editor with any number of great short stories and anecdotes to help fill the pages.

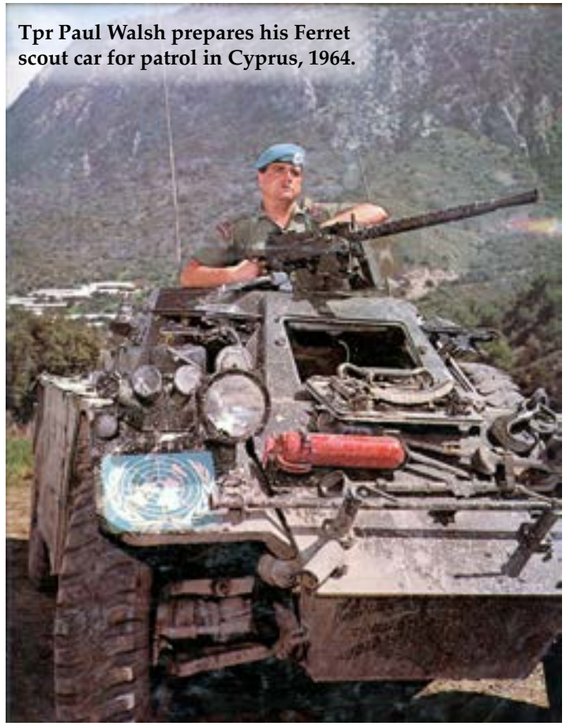
I chose the lead photo (*on page 6*) as a tribute to, and reminder of, WO Garrie Lambert who passed away on 1 September 2023 (front row, second from the right). Garrie was my first Troop WO when I joined the Regiment in 1985 and, like many "firsts" in life, you never forget your first Troop WO. You can also see lurking in the back row a very young Bill Richards (second row, fifth from the left) who had the dubious honour of being my tank driver. The stories Bill and I could tell about those days. Rest in Peace Garrie and thank you for the guidance and memories.

I should also point out that in the second row, third from the left is Richard Stacey who, as a Master Warrant Officer, was awarded the Star of Military Valour for "his gallantry, perseverance and selfless dedication … while under enemy fire from all sides" in Afghanistan on 4 August 2009 (**https://nationalpost.com/feature/the-canadian-soldier-who-did-the-work-of-three-to-fend-off-a-series-of-taliban-ambushes**). A true and unassuming Canadian hero if there ever was one.

Once again, I would like to thank Julie Simoneau at *Esprit de Corps* magazine for her keen eye and expertise putting this, her third edition of the *Springbok/Dragoon* together. Thank you.

When I took over as the Editor, one of my biggest concerns was will I be able to find sufficient (quality) content to fill the "Feature Articles" section each year. Much to my pleasant surprise this has proven (so far) to be a relatively simple task. And for this, I am indebted to everybody who contributed to this year's *Dragoon*. As always, people are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor, articles, anecdotes, or book reviews for inclusion in future editions. Submissions can be sent to me at the following email address (**rcdassoc.editor@gmail.com**).

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift



Tpr Paul Walsh prepares his Ferret scout car for patrol in Cyprus, 1964.



Denis Levesque in Cyprus, 1974.



RIGHT: Perry Wells and Dave Sproule in Ottawa, June 2023. Dave, who was a great supporter of *The Dragoon* and frequent contributor, passed away on 27 April 2024.





DRAGOONS REMEMBERED

LETTERS

To follow up on my article which appeared in the 2023 *Dragoon* entitled *RCD in Egypt – Things Are Not Always As They Appear,* I thought I would share the following two photos. The first one (*above left*), believe it or not, was taken almost 62 years ago. It is of my driver Stu Jarvis and me at the corner of the Gaza Strip (seen in the distance) and the Sinai/Israel boundary to the right. The red barrel behind us is the Granby Marker, which we used as a report line. The little white shack behind the marker is the first Brazilian Battalion "ice-cream stand" denoting the beginning of their sector on the strip. Rafah is about one kilometre to the left.

The second image (*above right*) is of Stu and me in July 2023 in Toronto.

Dave Sproule
Victoria, BC

Editor's Note: *Sadly, Dave passed away on 27 April 2024 in his 86th year.*

During the RCD Change of Command on 26 June 2024, I was honoured to present to RSM CWO Chris LeBlanc the sword of Colonel (ret'd) J.N. Murphy, CD (*right*). At the request of the family, Col Murphy's sword is to be hung with the swords of previous commanding officers. Col Murphy passed away on 20 April 2023 in Calgary, AB.



Col Murphy's career in the Canadian Army began as an Officer Cadet in April 1951. He was subsequently commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps in June 1953. Over the next 37 years, he would be posted to Chilliwack, Calgary, Camp Borden, Oakville, Winnipeg, Kingston, Iserlohn and Lahr in Germany, Trenton, St. Hubert, Rome, and Oslo. Col Murphy was the Acting CO when the Dragoons moved from Iserlohn to Lahr in September 1970, seeing the Regiment make the move and get established in its new home. He attended the Canadian Army Staff College in Kingston and the NATO Defense College in Rome. One highlight of many in his career was his diplomatic posting to Rome, where he served for three years as the Canadian Military Attaché to both Italy and Greece. He retired from his last posting as Base Commander at CFB Suffield as a full Colonel. Col Murphy would spend the years following his retirement living and volunteering in Calgary, AB.

CWO (ret'd) Gerry Olsen, CD
Edmonton, AB



CHAPTER UPDATE

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

By Tom Skelding

Greetings from the tropical island of Newfoundland. The eastern flank remains secure.

A quiet year with the usual get-togethers to celebrate Regimental events in a true Dragoon fashion. We even had a few Dragoons from away visiting throughout the year. There was Tony and Debbie Slack, Dean and Teresa Rodd, Bill Byrne, John Whittle and the elusive Kevin Trainor, old friends renewing past relationships – all part of the great Dragoon family.

On 7 November 2023, several members of the NL Chapter got together over lunch to recognize and toast the Regiment for its gallant participation in the action at Leliefontein on 7 November 1900. Six of us attended the Veterans' Appreciation Dinner at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 50, Conception Bay South in late November and, of course, we had the largest unit representation.

On 21 December 2023, we gathered along with members of the RCR Association NL Chapter at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch #1 in St. John's to jointly toast our Regiments. Naturally, we couldn't help but to ruffle the feathers of the RCR by giving them the official version of that historical occasion. As the Senior Regiment, we also obtained bragging rights by the number of Dragoons in attendance as compared to our RCR brothers. All in all, another great day.

The Dragoon presence is always evident at events across the province such as July 1st Memorial Day, Remembrance Day, and a variety of veteran-based functions. 1 July 2024 will be big this year with the re-internment of the unknown World War I Newfoundland soldier and Memorial Day Service at the National War Memorial in St. John's.

We wish all Dragoons a safe, healthy and successful 2024. If ya come from away, drop on over, we'll fire up a scoff, tell a few lies and find a nice Black Horse.

Until then … It's another fine day to be a Dragoon! "Long may your big jib draw."

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift

Regimental birthday celebration at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch #1, St. John's on 21 December 2023. Left to right: Tom Skelding, Larry Mercer, Joe White, Sean Stafford, Dave Lane and Lester Burt.





CHAPTER UPDATE

ATLANTIC REGION

By Dave MacLaren

Greetings from the Atlantic Region Chapter. From all our members, we wish you all good health and happiness, and all the best in the upcoming year.

Over the past year, it has been quite quiet. We have continued to hold our monthly luncheons at Mingler's Restaurant & Pub in Oromocto. These are held the "last Thursday" of the month and you can always count on lots of great chats and stories. As we do every year, we celebrated the Regimental birthday in December, again at Mingler's Pub. You can always depend on at least 25-30 members to show up at these gatherings. In December 2023, a large contingent attended the annual Black Hat Mess Dinner hosted by the Armoured School. And lastly, in April a few of us were able to participate in the C Sqn, RCD Leeuwarden parade held at Base Gagetown.

During the past year, we also witnessed a small handover of the Atlantic Chapter Chairman, "outgoing" Lance Wiebe to "incoming" David MacLaren. Lance will continue to support the Chapter in many ways, and a very big thanks from all members to Lance for all his hard work over the past two years as the "acting" chairman. John Bouwmeister will continue working his magic on social media (Facebook) and keeping the Chapter well informed via monthly emails.

Currently, as we move forward into the summer months, some members who can make the trip are looking forward to attending RV24 in Kingston. Ending the summer events will be the 6th Annual Bennett Memorial Golf Tournament in August at the Gage Golf & Curling Club. This will once again occur under the watchful eye of Kevin Trainor. On behalf of all golfers, we thank Kevin for all his enthusiasm and dedication putting this tournament together. This is always very well attended with close to 100 golfers from across Canada making the effort to support the weekend festivities.

Moving onto some sad news, over the past year we lost several Dragoons. The Chapter provided support as per any family requests.

LAST POST

- Garrie Lambert
- RV (Victor) Rice
- Emmanuel (Bud) Tobin
- Derle DeLeavey.
- Charlie Richer

Lastly, we look forward to all the upcoming events this year and the new stories they will bring. We are still actively recruiting new members and will continue to do so. Once again, all the best from all of us at the Atlantic Region Chapter.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift



The RCD Association Atlantic Region Chapter gets together for lunch every last Thursday of the month at Mingler's Restaurant & Pub in Oromocto, NB. All are welcome. Seen here is the December 2023 Regimental Birthday Luncheon.



5TH ANNUAL BENNETT MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

By Kevin Trainor

The 5th Annual Bennett Memorial Golf Tournament took place 4-5 August 2023 at the Gage Golf & Curling Club in Oromocto. Once again, a fantastic turnout with approximately 92 golfers participating! C Sqn dug deep and scraped together enough vehicles to conduct a dog and pony on Friday, 4 August despite the bulk of their equipment being deployed operationally. Well done and thank you!

There was a great mix of serving, retired and civilian participants, all with an outstanding attitude of comradeship and friendly competition. The weather on the Saturday was starting to throw a scare into the organization. However, I believe Tim and Busher had something to do with holding it off and allowing the tournament to be played. It was hot but there were intermittent showers to cool you off; it was an excellent day for golf!

The end state saw a team of youngsters – MacKenzie Grasse, Tyler Lyle, Carson Hickey and Brandon Carr – take home the trophy and plaque with a score of -14.

Many thanks once again to the Gage Golf & Curling Club for continuing to be an excellent host for this event. I must also thank C Sqn for their assistance, always willing to help out! Thanks also to the Guild for chipping in as usual this year. Some individuals to thank in particular are: Jamie Peorie, who was instrumental in assisting with the organization and deployment of the tournament and making it run smoothly. Thanks to Pat McLaughlan for providing a great hole in one prize via a family member in the travel industry. Thanks to Cpl Shane Maysill for assisting with the hole in one challenge and taking of pictures. A nice donation was made to the Canadian Cancer Society on behalf of the Bennett family after the hole in one challenge and CannaConnect donations were collected. Many thanks!

When the day was done, all spirits were high and a fantastic event was capped off by some refreshments and awards. See you next year!



Big thanks to CannaConnect for their generous donation to the Canadian Cancer Society.



CHAPTER UPDATE QUEBEC

By Karl Kramell

Bonjour à vous et salutations de la belle province. Greetings from all five of us that I'm aware of. We keep losing members but not gaining any.

Our Chapter is not very active as we are only five left and spread over a very large area. Due to our reduced numbers, we partner with the Royal Canadian Hussars Association for any social activities. One activity constant is our monthly breakfast every last Thursday of the month at Brasserie Manoir, 6810 Rue Saint-Jacques, Montreal. If you happen to be in Montreal, we encourage you to join us as all are welcome. As other activities are planned, I will send out the details separately.

I also included a story from the Royal Canadian Hussars newsletter of an honour they bestowed upon me (see page 13). This was a big surprise, and I was very honoured.

That's all the news for now. Have a safe and active summer and hope to see you at our next activity. De la belle province, nous vous souhaitons nos meilleurs souhaits cette année.

Au revoir et au prochain.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift



Honorary Colonel Marie-Claude Jarry and Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Day presented Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) Karl Kramell with his official honorary portrait before the Balaclava Dinner at the Royal Canadian Hussars Côte des Neiges Armoury in Montreal on 14 October 2023. Painted by celebrated regimental artist Gregg Legge, the portrait will be displayed in either the Hussars mess or armoury.

PRESENTATION TO HLCOL KRAMELL

Courtesy of the Royal Canadian Hussars Newsletter

Before the Balaclava Dinner at the Royal Canadian Hussars Cote des Neiges Armoury in Montreal on 14 October 2023, Honorary Colonel Marie-Claude Jarry and Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Day presented Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) Karl Kramell with his official honorary portrait.

This portrait is of Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Karl Kramell who served as the unit Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel from 2001 to 2009.

For those of you who don't know Karl, here is a little information about his background:

As a young boy shortly after the Second World War, he, his mother, and his siblings walked as refugees, hundreds of kilometers from Eastern Europe (East Prussia) to northern Germany near the Danish border, so that they could join their father and eventually emigrate to Canada. The family first settled in Montreal and then moved to Hemmingford, Quebec.

In 1958, he joined the army, and became a member of the Armoured Corps, serving successively with the 8th Canadian Hussars (Princess Louise's), the Royal Canadian Dragoons, and the 12e Régiment blindé du Canada. During his career, he was posted three time to serve as Regular Support Staff for the Royal Canadian Hussars, first as a Master Warrant Officer from 1976 to 1979, and then as a Captain, from 1980 to 1983, and again briefly, in 1985. He also served in Germany on three tours, Egypt, and coast to coast in Canada. During the October Crisis of 1970, as a sergeant, Karl led a section that guarded the Prime Minister's (Pierre Trudeau) Ottawa residence.

He is one of few soldiers that has made a successful and sustained transition from the Regular Force to the reserves. This transition started when he served with Force Mobile Command Headquarters in St Hubert between 1984 and 1994. While at the headquarters, he paraded voluntarily with the unit during his spare time and served principally as the Squadron Commander of "B" Squadron in St Hubert. In 1994, he transferred to the unit and served, first as Deputy



Honorary Colonel Marie-Claude Jarry and Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Day present Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) Karl Kramell with his official honorary portrait on 14 October 2023.

Commanding Officer, and then, from 1994 to 1997, as Commanding Officer.

After his retirement from the reserves, he continued to serve with the Regimental support organizations. In 2013, in recognition of his extensive volunteer work as president of the Royal Canadian Hussars Association and the Montreal Cavalry Institute, he was awarded the "Important Friend of the Regiment" medallion.

He is a resident of Hemmingford, where he is an active member of his community, notably serving three times as president of the Legion, also as the president of the protestant cemetery, and as a councillor and Mayor of the township of Hemmingford. As the town councillor responsible for public security, he was called upon to co-ordinate emergency services during the Ice Storm of 1998, notably with the assistance provided by an artillery battery from Shilo, Manitoba.

This portrait was prepared by artist Gregg Legge, the artist who prepared many of the drawings in the RCH History Book and was paid for by a group of former Commanding Officers.

As we thank all those who have served voluntarily in honorary positions, we thank Karl for having dedicated his time and efforts to fostering the well-being of the unit. Karl, you have been a very good friend of the Regiment for many years. We appreciate your continued help and support. To show our appreciation, we have commissioned this portrait, which, with your permission, we would like to display somewhere in this mess or in the armoury.



CHAPTER UPDATE

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

By Jim Atkins

Greetings from the nation's capital. The National Capital Region Chapter has a core group of about 25 who got together over the past year. With a few retirements from regular service this year in Ottawa, we welcomed some new members to the Chapter. We are certainly back up to the pre-COVID participation levels. The NCR Chapter traditionally gathers three times a year at Leliefontein, Regimental Birthday and Leeuwarden, plus take advantage of the other Corps and Regimental opportunities in the area to meet old friends.

Many of the Chapter members attended the annual RCAC barbeque organized by Steve Cadden at the Perth Legion on 29 July 2023. This is always a well-attended event and provided an opportunity to catch up with others from the Kingston and Upper Ottawa Valley Chapters as well as friends from other RCAC regiments. Throughout the year Chapter members attended the monthly Armoured Corps luncheon at the Army Officer's Mess in downtown Ottawa.

About 15 of us met at the Royal Oak pub in Nepean on 1 November 2023 to toast the anniversary of the action at Leliefontein. This was an excellent evening of food and cheer with a couple of new members present.

A little over a month later we had an excellent breakfast at the Orleans Legion on 16 December 2023 to celebrate the Regimental birthday. This was the second year we organized this breakfast at the Orleans Legion, which has become a favourite event. Everyone enjoyed the food, relaxed atmosphere and company of good friends. Going forward, this will continue to be an annual event on the Chapter's calendar. We were fortunate to have some special guests join us at the breakfast. Colonel of the Regiment Dean Milner and Katrine made the trip from Kingston. As well Ian Turner, accompanied by his wife and son, travelled from Montreal to attend. Ian Turner is the great-grand-nephew of Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Turner, VC, KCB, KCMG, DSO,CD. Mr. Turner took this opportunity to make a generous donation of $20,000 to the RCD Guild.

On a beautiful spring day, the usual crowd had lunch in the "Penalty Box" section of the Hometown Sports Grill on 19 April 2024 and toasted the anniversary of the Liberation of Leeuwarden. It was nice to see a couple of snowbirds back in Ottawa after spending the winter down south.

BELOW: The RCD supported the internment ceremony of LCol (ret'd) John Beswick at the Perth cemetery on 25 June 2023. LCol Beswick, aged 104 years, was one of our last remaining WWII vets.



As veterans, it is often our sad duty to honour fallen comrades. There was an unusually high number of Dragoons internments at the Beechwood National Military Cemetery last spring and summer. Chapter members were present for the ceremonies of fallen comrades Carl Cox, Karol Galas, Don Beattie, Greg Hugg, Don MacNeil and William Van Leeuwen. Participation of the Regiment was appreciated by all the families. Also, the RCD supported the internment ceremony of Lieutenant-Colonel John Beswick at the Perth cemetery on 25 June 2023. LCol Beswick, aged 104 years, was one of our last remaining WWII vets.

The Chapter encourages all local Dragoons to join us at our events, which are announced on the RCD Association Facebook page. We look forward to the next year.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift





ABOVE LEFT: Regimental birthday celebration at the Royal Canadian Legion in Orleans on 16 December 2023. Left to right: Wally Bryan, Ross Ermel, Dyrald Cross, Andrew Atherton, Angie Ermel, Connie Cross and Larry Zaporzan. In the background are Mike Ward and Bryan Forsyth.

ABOVE RIGHT: At the Regimental birthday breakfast in December, Colonel of the Regiment Dean Milner acknowledged the very generous donation of $20,000.00 to the RCD Guild by Ian Turner, the great grandnephew of Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Turner, VC, KCB, KCMG, DSO, CD.

BELOW: Leeuwarden 2024 get-together at the Hometown Sports Grill in Ottawa on 19 April 2024. Left to right: Jim Follwell, Jim Atkins, Peter Atkinson, Jim Ferron, Georges Rousseau, Bryan Forsyth, Tom Burnie, Perry Wells, Brian Senecal, Dyrald Cross and Chris Renahan.





CHAPTER UPDATE

OTTAWA VALLEY

By Matt Robichaud

On behalf of all members of the Ottawa Valley Chapter, we wish you and your family happiness, good health, and prosperity in the upcoming year.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the change over from Bruce Prendergast to myself. I have big shoes to fill. Bruce held the reins of the Ottawa Valley Chapter for approximately ten years, to include organizing a very successful RV 2022 in Pembroke during the final stages of COVID. Thanks to the pandemic, he and his team had to completely change the date and venue three times before nailing down the final details. This was in addition to maintaining a cattle farm, a busy campground and his own household.

Since I have taken over from Bruce, I have started monthly luncheons the last Thursday of every month at Kelseys Original Roadhouse in Petawawa. I have to say, it is going very well. We seem to get more members out each month. I am also working on getting our Chapter nominal roll up to date. This is proving to be harder than I thought it would be. We just have to keep trying.

For everyone reading this who lives in the Ottawa Valley, I would encourage you to come out and attend our luncheons. You won't regret it. Please do not keep holding grudges that would prevent you from breaking bread with old and new comrades. Come out and join your local Chapter. Your friends want to see you.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift

BELOW: Left to right: Shawn Mercer, Sterling Mercer and Chuck Hills.





ABOVE: The Ottawa Valley Chapter gets together for lunch every last Thursday of the month at Kelseys Original Roadhouse in Petawawa. All are welcome. Foreground to back: Matt Robichaud, RSM Chris LeBlanc, George Wallace and Bill Richards.

BELOW: A very young Cpl Bruce Prendergast on the Grafenwöhr ranges, Germany in 1973 or 1974.





CHAPTER UPDATE

KINGSTON

By Denis Levesque

As always, it is my pleasure to address you from the beautiful banks of Lake Ontario. The Kingston and Region Chapter of the Royal Canadian Dragoons Association is looking forward to welcoming everyone to the RCD Association's 50th Anniversary Reunion or RV24 here in Kingston in June 2024. The preparations are complete and ready to execute. I can't begin to explain our excitement and anticipation.

Since our last update, we had a few gatherings that I would like to highlight. The Chapter usually attends and assists with two Corps events the last week of July. The first is the CWO Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament at the Kingston Garrison Golf Club, followed by the Corps BBQ in Perth, Ontario. Plus, in March 2024, we chipped in and sent a team to the annual RCAC IRONSIDES Curling Bonspiel, which is held at the Gananoque Curling Club.

The Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament (HSMGT) on 28 July 2023 was a huge success with over 100 golfers from 11 different RCAC units and five provinces who descended on the Kingston Garrison Golf Course. Bill Soros and Chris Catry, with support from a small but dedicated team of volunteers, put together a top-notch event. The weather was perfect and by all accounts everyone had a great time. Hope to see even more folks out for the 29th annual HSMGT in July 2024.

The following day, 29 July 2023, was the Corps BBQ at the Royal Canadian Legion in Perth, Ontario. Once again, Steve Cadden did an excellent job organizing this very popular event on the summer social calendar. Due to all the restrictions on social gatherings the year before, this was the first chance to hold the BBQ in a few years. The turnout was much larger than expected and even the rain did not keep people away. Everything simply moved indoors, forcing a close-knit group to get even closer together and enjoy each other's company.

The Kingston and Region summer BBQ on 9 September 2023 was attended by over 50 Chapter members. For the last several years, the BBQ has been held at the beautiful Buck Haven residence and home of Dean and Katrin Milner. Buck Haven

RIGHT: Walt Natynczyk (far right) wishing the foursome of (from left to right) Clive Milner, Dave Henderson, Bill Coupland and JP Fortier luck before they set out for their day of golf at the HSMGT. In the end, luck was not on their side as they won the "most honest" team (last place) trophy. Photo by Chris Catry.





is nestled just off Highway 10 on a quiet bay on Buck Lake about 30 minutes north of Kingston. What a place to have a BBQ with Chapter members and some friends of our fine Regiment.

As we do most years, the Chapter stayed local to celebrate Remembrance Day and pay tribute to our fallen.

In December, the Kingston Chapters of the RCD and RCR Associations came together to celebrate our respective Regimental birthdays. This year the event was held on 15 December 2023 at the





Kingston Legion on Montreal Road, with the RCR Chapter hosting. Many past and present members of both Regiments, along with family and friends, gathered for an evening of camaraderie and socializing. We received updates on both Regiments followed by a toast to each. Of note, Colonel of the Regiment Dean Milner was our guest speaker, and

ABOVE LEFT: Bill Soros and Ross Ermel taking a break during the Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament (HSMGT) in Kingston on 28 July 2023. Photo by Chris Catry.

ABOVE RIGHT: Chris Catry, Tim Datchko, Dean Milner and Bill Soros at the annual RCAC IRONSIDES Curling Bonspiel at the Gananoque Curling Club on 22-23 March 2024.

BOTTOM LEFT: Shirley Milner and Viola Levesque hard at work to make sure the troops were well fed at the Kingston Chapter Summer BBQ.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Kingston Chapter BBQ cooks (left to right) Gavin Cross, Denis Levesque, Tom Newton and Brandon Kew.





he gave an update on the Regiment and current operations.

The Annual RCAC IRONSIDES Curling Bonspiel, which took place at the Gananoque Curling Club on 22-23 March 2024, was very well organized and by all accounts every one of the 12 teams from across the Corps had a fantastic time. The heightened pace of activity at the unit level meant overall participation was down from past years. The RCD and Kingston Chapter were represented by Dean Milner, Tim Datchko, Bill Soros, and Chris Catry (and spare Denis Levesque) who, despite channelling their best tank gunnery skills, scored just outside the medals.

The Kingston Chapter is alive and well. We're keeping busy but enjoying our retirement at the same time and look forward to yet another eventful year.

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BELOW: The annual Kingston Chapter September 2023 BBQ at the home of Dean and Katrin Milner on Buck Lake, north of Kingston.

Back Row: Mark Hutchings, Pierre Royer, Brian Morton, James Ostler, Pam Catry, Chris Catry, Michelle Ostler, Brandon Kew, Joan Puddister, Tom Newton, Angela Newton, Jim Akins, Franca Atkins, Bill Brough, Debbie Slack, Michael Brough, Dave Henderson, Barbra Henderson, Tony Slack, Mario Desrocher and Diane Boisvert.

Middle Row: Kay Longmuir, Clive Milner, Nancy Follwell, Jim Follwell, Marie-France Thornton, Kirk Thornton, Marnie Brough, Dave Muralt, Andrea Muralt, Nancy Sproule, Chris Sproule, Dean Milner, Gavin Cross, Denis Levesque and Mario Desroche.

Front Row: Stacey Leblanc, Chris Leblanc, Katrin Milner, Shirley Milner, Brenda Horgan, Angie Roberts, Gitta Morton, Angie Roberts, Nicolas Forsyth, Gemma Forsyth and Terry Cottrell.

The children in front are Declan, Cohen and Mason Forsyth. Missing are Viola Levesque and Liam Forsyth.



DRAGOONS RANGE DAY IN TAMPA

By Denis Levesque

Hello Dragoons from the Snowbirds of the sunny south (Tampa Florida area). We are a small group of Dragoons and friends of Dragoons that get together from time to time. This time we locked on target and had about 15 people who were interested in a day of shooting. We invited many Dragoons and friends of Dragoons that were in the Tampa area: Bill & Veletia Richards, Peter & Dianna Atkinson, Denis & Viola Levesque, Frank Gallagher, Paul Petrie, Rick & Bonnie Jones, Gary & Darla Reed, Wade & Carolyn Carter, and John & Wendy Fink. Most were able to join us in this great adventure, but unfortunately a few were busy with other commitments.

The venue selected was Shooters World in Tampa, which is like the Costco of weapon stores. You can view, touch or shoot virtually any type of legal firearm that you can imagine.

The process was simple: register, sign a waiver, rent the weapon(s) of your choice, select the targets you wish to use and, finally, rent aural protectors. We then gathered for the range safety briefing which lasted all of one minute. And since there were no questions, our range safety officer told us to have fun and promptly disappeared. I must admit, unlike our army days, you would be surprised how much you can enjoy shooting when no one is yelling at you with a bullhorn. Thanks to failing eyesight, some of us may have lost that targeting talent, while others did surprisingly well. No names, no pack drill.

Viola and Darla became proficient with the Sig Sauer P226 and P320. This may get expensive because they actually enjoyed themselves more than was expected.

We were all a bit surprised at the amount of enthusiasm and fun we had and hope to do it again someday. We spoke about how much we loved small arms range work and how we missed tank ranges. The small arms ammo was cheap, and we each put three or four hundred rounds down range. After a couple of hours, we called it a huge success and headed out to Tom's Tavern for a late lunch.

I would like to thank Frank Gallager and Paul Petrie for putting the icing on the cake with their specialized weapons, expertise and assistance with range safety.







TOP PHOTO: Range Day at Shooters World in Tampa – the "Costco" of weapon stores. Left to right: Paul Petrie, Wade Carter, Denis Levesque, Frank Gallagher, Viola Levesque, Rick Jones, Darla Reed, Peter Atkinson, John Fink and Gary Reed.

MIDDLE PHOTO: Just another fine day on the ranges.

BOTTOM PHOTO: Frank Gallagher. Check out the spent casings on the floor.



CHAPTER UPDATE

WINDSOR, ON

By Kathy Nayduk

Hello fellow Dragoons,

This year, the Windsor-Essex County Association has become its own Chapter. We aim to meet monthly for lunch or breakfast with the members. Details go out each month on the Chapter's Facebook page.

Sadly, we recently lost two Chapter members: Dale Harvie and Dave Walker. They are both greatly missed.

The city of Windsor is currently refurbishing the Boer War Memorial. We have been in meetings with different military and veterans' associations to discuss the rededication of the Memorial and how the Windsor Chapter can participate. We hope to have a ceremony and a reception sometime in November or December 2024, depending on how long it takes to complete the restoration.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift

BELOW: The City of Windsor Boer War Memorial, which is to undergo restoration in 2024. Left to right: Phil Badour, Kathy Nayduk, Gordon Rossignol, Dave Winterburn, Dave Walker and Ken Pichie.





ABOVE: Brain Mulcaster, Phil Badour, Kathy Nayduk, Tom Skelding, and Ken Pichie enjoying a meal together at a local Windsor restaurant. Watch the Chapter's Facebook page for the details of when and where each month.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Ken Pichie, Phil Badour, Kathy Nayduk, Dave Winterburn, Dave Walker and Konrad Rosenkranz-Galindo. Notice the RCR and RCD crests on the Memorial.





CHAPTER UPDATE
ALBERTA

By Gerry Olsen

Once again, I find myself reporting on a relatively quiet year for the Dragoons of Alberta and Saskatchewan. No major events were held, although not for a lack of trying. There were a few of us who did manage to get together late last summer to bid WO Harold Willis a fond farewell and attend his Depart With Dignity. Some former Dragoons travelled a fair distance to be in attendance, which included Jim Albert, Chris Courbetis, Mark Pennie and Richard Krueger. Still serving MWO Robbie Tryhorn made an appearance as well, coming in from his position as RSM of the Saskatchewan Dragoons. A great time was had by all, and I was able to present Harold with a DWD gift, a table lamp made from a Cougar 76mm casing. Harold and Sheila will be staying in the Wainwright area.

MWO Doug McIlvenna has retired and taken up residence with his wife Mel in Red Deer. He has good company there, as Craig McCarthur and Rusty Potier are also in that area.

We recently welcomed Mike Hogan as a new member of the Alberta Chapter of the RCD Association. Mike and Sabine live in the Edmonton area. Mike is currently organizing a mess dinner-type of affair for the veterans in the Kipnes Centre for Veterans in Edmonton, the first of its kind, but I can see it becoming a regular event.

For those who weren't aware, Rob and Carol McCrae retired a couple years back and have taken up farming in Saskatchewan. One of their products is honey from their own hives and I can attest that it is most definitely the best honey you will ever eat. Carol will ship it if you ask her. Mike and Heather Grover have taken up residence in Moose Jaw so if you are passing through on your way west, feel free to reach out to visit them.

Once again Steve Januszewski is hosting a Black Hatter camping weekend during the August 2024 long weekend on his farm just outside Fort Saskatchewan, AB and all are welcome. If you live in the west, Steve hosts this event every year so plan on attending in the years to come.

The Blackhatter Wing Nights at The Bears Den Pub in Fort Saskatchewan, just east of Edmonton, is now known as "The Alex Graf Wing Nite." We lost Sgt (ret'd) Alex Graf to illness last summer, which came as a complete surprise to everyone. While Alex never served as a Dragoon, he was always a key player when the unit deployed to Germany. Alex spoke fluent German and French and was a major asset who never failed to join us and help out. It was Alex who started the Blackhatter Wing Night when he retired from the CAF, in an effort to keep us armoured types closely connected. His loss was sorely felt, and he is missed by all who knew him.



The Alex Graf Wing Nights are now held Wednesday nights at 1800 hours at The Bears Den Pub. All are welcome regardless of affiliation. You will find folks like Chris "Ziggy" Siefried, Don Head, Ray Labreque and Rudy Borkovic in attendance, to name just a few. Always a good time.

We sadly have to pass on that Sgt Mike Jackson passed away on 22 May 2024 after a short aggressive battle with cancer. His sense of humour was epic and his willingness to teach young NCOs legendary. He will be missed.

ABOVE LEFT: WO Harold Willis being presented with a Depart With Dignity (DWD) gift by Gerry Olsen on 30 June 2023 at Buffalo Park Hall in Wainwright.

RIGHT: Some of the crew who attended Harold Willis' DWD. Left to right: MCpl Corey Willis (RCD) (Harold's son), Jim Albert, Gerry Olsen, Rob Tryhorn, Chris Courbetis and Harold Willis.



ABOVE: Alex Graf was a large part of the veteran community, and his wing night tradition will be kept alive on Wednesdays at The Bears Den in Fort Saskatchewan.

If any of our Regimental Association folks would like to have an event of any kind, please reach out to me and I will set something up. Some of you are behind on your annual membership dues which can be easily corrected via online registration and e-transfer of dues to either National Admin or through me. Always ready to help if you need it. I sincerely hope we can get together here in the west in the coming year. It would be great to see you all.

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift





CHAPTER UPDATE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

By Bob Black

Greetings from the Left Coast, or Wet Coast depending on your perspective. The activities of the BC Chapter have largely been focused on the Victoria area due to geography, critical mass, and the cost of travelling in BC (ferries).

We had three gatherings this year. In September 2023 we were honoured with a visit by the Colonel of the Regiment, Dean Milner, and the President of the Association, Tom Skelding (*bottom left*). We gathered for lunch at a local Victoria bistro and were pleased to welcome several Chapter members who had made the trip from the mainland for the occasion: Jonas Jonsson, Darrell Dean and Jack Hamer. We also welcomed Jeff Barr to his first Chapter event.

In November 2023, we celebrated Leliefontein with our other Blackhat comrades — The Left Coast Lancers. Besides the usual Victoria-area stalwarts of Paul Crober, Bob and Cathy Black, Gary Del Villano, Gene Lake and Dave Sproule, we welcomed Jack and Jean Dangerfield from Kelowna; Chuck Ewart, and Darrell and Heather Dean from the Lower Mainland; Paul Philcox and Derek Long from Up-Island; and a special visitor, Stewart Berge, son of Fred Berge. The weather cooperated and we were able to get a very nice picture on the North Saanich waterfront.

Similarly, we gathered again in March to celebrate Moreuil Wood with our Strathcona colleagues and other Blackhatters (*bottom right*). A very similar group to the November gathering but we welcomed Bob Meating from Calgary and John Olafson who has been under the weather. Again, the weather cooperated, and we had a very nice gathering.

We did have one sad event. In October 2023, Robert Riendeau passed away in Victoria. Bob Black, Gene Lake, Darrell Dean and Derek Long joined the family to give Robert a heartfelt Dragoon send-off. Derek did a six-hour round trip drive from Cumberland to participate and his attendance was most welcome. This was the first time we had the occasion to use the RCD funeral kit and the flag stand added a nice military tone to the funeral.

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RCD ON UNFICYP
CYPRUS REMEMBERED

By Col (ret'd) Allan Methven

Editor's Note: *This article originally appeared in the September–October 2023 edition of the Royal Canadian Military Institute (RCMI) Newsletter.*

In late fall of 1964, the newly minted Officer Commanding B Squadron (Tank) of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, then part of 3 Canadian Infantry Brigade Group in Gagetown, NB, was ordered to winterize and store his Centurion tanks, draw Ferret scout cars and retrain as an Armoured Reconnaissance Squadron in preparation for rotation to Cyprus along with 1st Battalion of the Canadian Guards in late August 1965. I had at that time completed one year of Regimental service as a Tank Troop Leader post



RMC graduation and just returned from qualifying on the twelve-week course as a Tank Gunnery Instructor at the Armoured Corps School, then located in Camp Borden. Initially I was selected to fill the Liaison Officer position in the new Squadron HQ, but actually deployed as a Troop Leader when one of the latter failed to pass the final medical immediately prior to deployment.

The Squadron Commander was given his choice of Regimental personnel. The new Squadron was quickly formed and began training, six-day weeks until its embarkation leave. The training undertaken was both rigorous and thorough. Every Officer and Trooper qualified to drive and maintain and fight the Ferret scout car itself and the 30-calibre machine guns mounted on their vehicles. In addition, the officers and crewmen, all until recently tank personnel, learned and practiced reconnaissance tactics. One notable happening was that during the final live-fire battle runs in late August, tracer bullets ignited grasses which quickly spread to the dry foliage. The entire Brigade was recalled from its block annual leave to fight the resulting forest fire. I do remember being refused service at non-Dragoon canteens operating throughout the training/fire area and the wives of Dragoons being subjected to the ire of their peers from other units in the Oromocto shopping centre as a result.

The Squadron deployed courtesy of the RCAF in mid-September, moving into quarters in suburban Nicosia vacated that morning by the Squadron rotating home. The original Recce Squadron, also from the Dragoons, had on their arrival a year previously requisitioned a number of bungalows, which they quickly surrounded with barbed wire to become their garrison. The Infantry Battalion was headquartered and lodged on the Nicosia Airport grounds while its soldiers occupied and manned observation posts separating Greek and Turkish areas, the Green Line, throughout the Canadian Zone that was centred on the capital, Nicosia.

Operationally, the Squadron followed a five-week cycle: convoy escort, night control of the Nicosia to Kyrenia road through the Troodos Mountains, short range patrols (within one hour of HQ as this troop was also designated the armoured contribution to the UN Commander's Quick Reaction Force), long range patrols (anywhere on the island), and an administrative week used for training, short leave, etc.



ABOVE: A group of Dragoons take a break with their Ferret scout car in the spring of 1964 in Cyprus. Photo by Peter Ward, Toronto Telegram, York University Digital Archives.

RIGHT: Royal Canadian Dragoons review the map prior to a patrol in Cyprus in May 1964. Photo by Peter Ward, Toronto Telegram, York University Digital Archive.

More specifically, convoy escort. A troop of Ferrets would arrive at the designated collection point on the outskirts of Nicosia and be joined by a section of ten motorcycles from the Finnish contingent tasked to support it. A convoy would have been formed up by Australian UN Police and the Armoured Troop Leader physically signed for it, accepting control of 'so many' cars, trucks, buses, men, women, and children. The scout cars were scattered throughout the convoy with one travelling a few hundred metres ahead as an advance scout. The motorcyclists with the latter's Section Commander travelling beside the Armoured Troop Leader's Ferret were also scattered the length of the convoy.

On the Troop Leader's order, the column moved off along the tarmac road leading out of the Greek area into the Turkish area stretching into and through the mountains to enter another Greek Cypriot area which encompassed Kyrenia and the northern coastal region at that time. Theoretically, the road was to be used by this UN convoy only and all other vehicles were banned for the period of the two return convoys each day of the week. From time to time, a Turkish vehicle would attempt to harass by cutting into the convoy, often to be forced off the road by one of the motorcyclists who would ride up beside the offending vehicle and strike the driver's window with a clenched fist before cutting the vehicle off.

As prearranged points along the route were "cleared" by the scout car bringing up the rear of the convoy, this would be reported by radio transmission to the Squadron HQ in Nicosia with whom the Troop Leader remained in constant contact. Once the convoy was handed over to a waiting contingent of UN Police in suburban Kyrenia, the Reconnaissance Troop would go to the little walled harbour of that centre and relax for an hour outside a favourite café before returning to the release point to replicate the pattern returning another convoy to Nicosia. This pattern was repeated morning and afternoon, each day of the week.





"Control" of the Nicosia-Kyrenia road at night was accomplished by the Troop Leader locating his scout car beside a lone Turkish policeman posted at a central point on the route while his troop divided into two three-car patrols. I recall a policeman sitting beside a very basic pail punctured by many holes, a "brazier" which by midnight would be a mass of glowing embers. Throughout, my vehicle maintained radio contact with each of the three-car patrols moving between my post and the beginning and end points on the route, as well as our Squadron HQ in Nicosia. Whenever my driver took his shift on the radio, I sat with the policeman while he taught me some Turkish words and phrases.

ABOVE AND LEFT: Royal Canadian Dragoons on patrol in Cyprus in March 1964. Photo by Peter Ward, Toronto Telegram, York University Digital Archive.



Since our tour lasted from September 1965 to March 1966, nights were cold and sitting in the open by the brazier offered at least a modicum of the only heat available. I remember my Christmas Eve 1965 was spent there and then I voluntarily took the convoy escort troop for Christmas Day, replacing the assigned Troop Leader and permitting him to spend the day in the British Sovereign Base Area on the island's south coast sharing dinner with his British girlfriend's family. I remember between convoys that day we returned to our camp to participate in the traditional "Men's Christmas Dinner," during which the enlisted members are served by the officers. Somehow, that year the event took on special significance as we were all deployed/separated from our families.

ABOVE: Two Dragoons holding pieces of shrapnel in their fingers in Cyprus. Photo by Peter Ward, Toronto Telegram, York University Digital Archive.

RIGHT: Lt Hirschfeld and Tpr Perry are shown here passing through Check Point One in Kyrenia with a convoy of Greek Cypriot civilian vehicles. In the immediate rear are two outriders from the Finish contingent.

The two weeks tasked with patrolling would typically find us reconnoitering Turkish or Greek positions/areas and visiting villages inconveniently located in the opposite nationality's zones. Typically, this was accomplished by deploying the Troop immediately outside the village while the Troop Leader met with the village head(s) over coffee ("ugh", as thick as syrup), usually through an interpreter confirming the existing situation, problems, etc.

I believe the above pattern was maintained throughout the time an Armoured Reconnaissance Squadron was deployed as part of the Canadian contingent.

One other memorable tasking for my Troop was escorting the cortege carrying the body of the Indian major-general who died during his command tour of the UN Force from the HQ to a waiting Indian Air Force aircraft that repatriated his remains to India. Another was the first time I experienced being in the linguistic minority walking during my free time along Ledra Street, known as "murder mile" in downtown Nicosia, and thinking that his must be the experience of immigrants to Canada — that is, not understanding a word being spoken around me.

Col (ret'd) Allan Methven served some 17 years post RMC graduation as a Regular Force Armoured Corps Officer both in Regimental (RCD) and staff positions in Canada, Cyprus, NATO Germany, and the USA before electing early retirement. He later commanded the GGHG and 31 Brigade as a Reserve Officer.





REMEMBERING CHRIS

A DRAGOON CONNECTION TO THE SILVER CROSS MOTHER

By Maj-Gen (ret'd) Jim Ferron

On 4 July 1996, 23-year-old Sapper Christopher Holopina, a member of 23 Field Squadron, 2 Canadian Engineer Regiment, was killed while on duty as part of Operation ALLIANCE during the first Canadian deployment to the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In 2023, Mrs. Gloria Hooper – Chris' mother – was selected as the 2023 National Silver Cross Mother.

ABOVE: Twenty-seven years after losing her son in a tragic accident in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Gloria Hooper, Sapper Chris Holopina's mother, was chosen as the Silver Cross Mother. She's seen here at the Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa in 2023.



So, where is the Dragoon connection?

In December 1995, the advance party of 2 Canadian Multinational Brigade (2 CAMNB) was on the ground looking for garrison locations for its future deployed elements to include Bde HQ supported by a Military Police Platoon, an advanced surgical centre, an armoured reconnaissance squadron, an infantry company, an engineer squadron and a National Support Element. With a small security force, the Brigade COS LCol Jim Ferron (Dragoon) met up with Maj Jeff Barr (Dragoon), who was already on the ground as a member of the departing UN force, to look for potential garrison sites. These were eventually secured in the war-torn villages of Ćoralići, Zgon and Velika Kladuša.

To track the Dragoon connection to the Silver Cross Mother, one must first have a look at the site in the village of Zgon, which garrisoned the RCD Reconnaissance Squadron, led by the OC Major Lowell Thomas and the SSM MWO Denis Levesque, a company from 2 RCR and 2 CER's 23 Fd Sqn, Chris Holopina's home.

As any Dragoon will tell you, the camaraderie between Troopers and Sappers is very close on operations as each depends upon the other for their livelihood and day-to-day security. This was the case with Chris Holopina, whereby his death weighed heavily on all Dragoons in theatre, in particular given that Chris was six days from redeploying home after his third operational tour, the previous two being Cyprus in 1992/93 and



Croatia in 1993/94. As the personal log maintained by then Major Perry Wells (Dragoon) at HQ 2 CAMNB indicated, Chris was involved in a vehicle accident while on their way to help rescue a group of British soldiers stranded in a mine field. Chris was part of the 23 Fd Sqn "Hot Team" tasked with responding to EOD incidents. Chris' vehicle left the road to avoid a vehicle traffic accident and careened down a ravine, rolling over and killing Chris and wounding several other crew



TOP LEFT: Mrs. Gloria Hooper, the 2023 National Silver Cross Mother, and her son Sapper Christopher Holopina. / TOP RIGHT: Economy of Force Missions. / RIGHT: Support to Engineering.



Route Reconnaissance in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1996.



Vital Point Security.



Traffic Control.



VIP Escorts.



Support to Bridging Operations.



EOD Operations.



Garrison security, Camp Zgon.



Vehicle maintenance.





members. Chris was the first Canadian to give his life in Bosnia during the IFOR mission and the only casualty during this, the first IFOR tour.

Bde HQ worked hard to secure the accident site, deploying additional engineer and medical assets while initiating the requisite MP investigation and coordinating the extraction of Chris' remains. The latter was largely managed by the Brigade's G4 team while the remainder of the HQ staff, including LCol Jim Ferron and fellow Dragoons Major Perry Wells and Captain Ray Ruckpaul, worked hard to coordinate overall security and extraction events. It should be noted that then Colonel Rick Hillier was the brigade's Deputy Commander who supported the Brigade Commander in providing the guidance and leadership required by all during this very challenging mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.



ABOVE LEFT: Conflict resolution.

ABOVE RIGHT: HQ 2 CAMNB, Ćoralići.

BOTTOM LEFT: "Just Another Fine Day to be a Dragoon."

BOTTOM RIGHT: Brigade Military Skills Competition.

The impact of Chris' death weighed heavily on all to include the Brigade Commander, BGen Bruce Jeffries (8CH). So when Chris' mother, Mrs. Gloria Hooper, was selected to be the 2023 National Silver Cross Mother, General Jeffries relived the memories of that day in 1996 while sharing in the pride that Gloria felt in honour of her son Christopher.

On the day of Mrs. Hooper's appointment, General Jeffries, with the support of the Canadian Legion, the Engineer Branch and this Dragoon, put in place a plan to host a luncheon at the Chateau Laurier in honour of Gloria and her son Chris.





In addition to Gloria, the following attended the event: Ms. Ashley Holopina, Gloria's daughter; MGen (ret'd) Bruce Jeffries (8 CH); MGen Martin Gross-Jean (Chief Military Engineer); MGen (ret'd) Jim Ferron (RCD); and CWO Darrel Jones (CME Branch CWO).

General Jeffries had maintained a photo log of our time in theatre, and he took the initiative to create a wonderful scrapbook of the mission to include images of all involved, but highlighting the exploits of 23 Fd Sqn and, by extension, Gloria's son Chris. You can only imagine the reaction of a woman who lives in a small French town of St. Claude, Manitoba and was born and raised on a family farm in Shell Valley, Manitoba as we all reviewed the photos. Clearly tears of pride and remembrance flowed, and not just from Gloria. Eventually Bruce had the scrapbook professionally produced and sent a copy to Gloria as a tribute to her son Chris.

"Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."

While this missive is largely about the Dragoons' connection with the National Silver Cross Mother, I would be remiss not to reflect upon the RCD Recce Sqn's in-theatre tasks – through a series of images – taken in Bosnia-Herzegovina from January to July 1996.

In closing, the IFOR mission was a success, marred only by the tragic loss of Sapper Christopher Holopina. However, Chris' memory lives on through the hearts and minds of all Dragoons who shared the battle space of Bosnia-Herzegovina with him in 1996. Our connection with Chris remains strong through his mother, the National Silver Cross Mother, who continues to represent mothers across Canada who have lost a child to military service. Gloria said to me and to those that were listening: "Chris always said, if I die, I want to be in a soldier's uniform."

ABOVE: Brigade Military Skills Competition. The winners proudly display their medals.



FAMILY HISTORY & COLLECTING CONVERGE

TOY SOLDIERS, A TINY BOOK, A GRANDSON & THE DRAGOONS

Text by Darrell Dean
Photos by Darrell Dean & Jeff Duncan

Editor's Note: *This article originally appeared in issue 114 of UK-based magazine* Toy Soldier Collector & Historical Figures *in 2023 (***www.toysoldiercollector.com***).*

Darrell Dean shares the story *of how toy soldiers brought three collectors together and uncovered the story of a loved one's World War II service.*

The world really is a small place that has been made even smaller by advancements in visual, verbal and written communications, all rapidly improving almost daily since the emergence of the Internet. If you have a hobby, for instance, you can patrol the world on a 24/7 basis to find must-haves.

ABOVE: A photo of proud Royal Canadian Dragoon Jimmy Bell taken after he returned home to Canada in 1945 is surrounded by medals that he was awarded. They include the 1939-45 Star, 1939-45 Italy Star, 1939-45 France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Bar, and 1939-45 War Medal.





Well, my hobby started back in the late 1940s after the end of World War II. I received toy soldiers for Christmas and the itch never stopped. I was hooked on collecting for life.

A few years after my retirement from the Canadian Army, I travelled from my home in British Columbia to the 2017 Texas Toy Soldier Show in San Antonio. While attending the US Memorial Day weekend event, I met my friend Stuart A. Hessney, who was then editor of *Toy Soldier & Model Figure* magazine before later going on to pick up the reins of *Toy Soldier Collector & Historical Figures*. He's a fellow collector from Upstate New York who has a great love of Canada and is a long-time member of the Ontario Model Soldier Society (OMSS).

ABOVE LEFT: A sharp eye will spot the miniature book Beginnings with a springbok on the cover among Stuart A. Hessney's tiny sets of toy soldiers.

ABOVE RIGHT: Royal Canadian Dragoons trooper by Tradition of London Ltd.

RIGHT: Heather Dean created the miniature book Beginnings about the history of the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

That is how the Dragoon connection became established. A chance meeting in Texas led to our firm friendship, the gift of a miniature book and fellow collectors communicating, with one of them being the grandson of a veteran of the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

BEGINNINGS BOOK

My wife Heather developed a miniature book business catering to people whose hobby is doll houses before the advent of the Internet. After all, every home of any size should have a library. One of the books that Heather created is titled *Beginnings* and it is a miniature history of the RCD in which I served.

I gave a copy of the book to Stuart, who placed it in his display of doll house-size sets of toy soldiers by various makers. One day while he and his Canadian pal and fellow OMSS member Jeff Duncan were exchanging some photographs of their collections, Jeff spotted *Beginnings*.



"Where did you get the little red book with the springbok on the cover?" Jeff wondered.

Stuart explained the book's subject and origin to Jeff. The connection





ABOVE LEFT: A map traces Jimmy Bell's travels during his World War II service and is accompanied by notes about various medals he received. / ABOVE RIGHT: Trooper Jimmy Bell is shown second from the left in this photo of RCD despatch riders taken during World War II.

BOTTOM LEFT: Trooper Jimmy Bell of the RCD back home in Glen Williams, Ontario, in late 1945. / BOTTOM RIGHT: A figure of a Royal Canadian Dragoon trooper stands watch over the writer's display of various of 54mm British lancers produced by Britains.

was made. As their communications were expanded, Jeff's family history and ties to the RCD unfolded.

GRANDFATHER IN RCD

Jeff's grandfather, James Clifford Bell, served in the RCD throughout World War II. He shipped out to England in 1940 at the ripe old age of 28 and stayed with the Regiment through the invasion of Sicily and then Italy. Enemy resistance during the Allied advance up the boot of Italy cost the Regiment dearly in lives lost and wounded.

Following a short rest and refit, the Regiment proceeded north through France and joined the action in North-West Europe. The waterlogged slogging and fighting in the Netherlands were also costly in terms of casualties suffered by the Regiment.

The liberated Dutch people were most appreciative. The RCD is still celebrated today in towns and cities where the Canadian regiment played a role in liberating them from German occupation.

Jimmy served a total of five years and three months in action with the Dragoons. Sadly, he passed away in 1968. Jeff has retraced his grandfather's wartime service by visiting battlefields in Europe.







LEFT: Jeff Duncan visits the Cassino War Cemetery in Italy while retracing his grandfather's service in the RCD during World War II. The Battle of Monte Cassino, fought against German forces between January and May 1944, saw some of the fiercest fighting of the Italian campaign as Allied forces advanced on Rome.

BOTTOM: British cavalry from the old Britains Set 44: '2nd Dragoon Guards (Queen's Bays)' stands in for troopers of the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

After learning the story, Stuart reached out to us in hope of getting a copy of the book for Jeff, which Heather and I gladly sent.

A DRAGOON'S REFLECTIONS

I am more than 80 years of age. As I look back over my life's experiences, I never stop being amazed at how small the world really is and how we are interconnected through our interests, hobbies and families.

What I have also discovered through this experience is that an organization like a regiment may shrink due to fatalities in action, wounding, a lifestyle change, or retirement, yet despite these events, the members of the regiment are replaced with new volunteers, and it is regenerated.

Likewise, the regimental association also grows as the retirees move to that organization to continue to maintain those family memberships. Thus, the extended family of the service person also become association members like Jeff has. Consequently, the circle of regimental spirit is renewed and both serving and retiree organizations continue to grow our regimental family!

I discovered that Jimmy Bell has unfortunately passed away, but I found his grandson Jeff thanks to *Beginnings* through a mutual hobbyist friend in the USA who is also a friend of Canada and now of our Regiment.

Retired Canadian Brigadier General Darrell Dean was a member of the Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment) for seven years prior to joining the Canadian Army regular force. He served for 36 years in the armoured corps. He is a graduate of the Canadian Army Staff College and the National Defence College. Darrell served with the initial United Nations Peacekeeping Force in the Gaza Strip and did three tours in Germany with the NATO forces. He retired from his last overseas posting as the commander, Defence Liaison Staff, in London. Darrell was recently appointed as the honorary president of the Ontario Model Soldier Society. In addition to collecting military miniatures, he holds a fifth-degree black belt in the sport of judo. He and his wife, Heather, are retired and reside in British Columbia, Canada.





FAMILY TRADITION

THE VAN STRAUBENZEE FAMILY'S RCD CONNECTION

Editor's Note: Inputs from Michael van Straubenzee, brother of Lt Charles Casimir van Straubenzee, greatly enhanced the content and accuracy of the story and he deserves our thanks for his patience and willingness to assist.

If you visit the Cavalry and Guards Club at 127 Piccadilly in London and proceed to take the stairs located behind the Hall Porter's cubicle, you will notice an impressive display of framed medals on the walls. One of the more prominent of those on display contains medals awarded to the van Straubenzee family. What is significant is that most of these medals were earned in the service of the Canadian Army and include soldiering with the 100th (Prince of Wales Royal Canadians) Regiment of Foot at Batoche, the Three Rivers Regiment (now 12e RBC) in Italy and, of note for the readers of *The Dragoon*, two members of the family served with the Royal Canadian Dragoons (RCD), one as Commanding Officer during the First World War. The family's service for Canada stretches from Batoche to the Boer War to World War I then World War II and, finally, peacekeeping in the Sinai in the 1950s.

What is also interesting is that the van Straubenzee name remains one of the best connected in the United Kingdom, with current family member Thomas van Straubenzee as a godparent for Princess Charlotte, one of the Prince of Wales' children. Prince Harry is rumoured to have been the best man at Charlie van Straubenzee's wedding while Charlie was Prince Harry's best man.

How did a family of English landed gentry end up providing generations of serving officers to various Canadian regiments you may ask? The aim of this article is to answer that question and provide some detail as to their military achievements, highlighting the family's service in the RCD.

ABOVE: A print of the 9–12 May 1885 Battle of Batoche during the North-West Rebellion, based on sketches by Sergeant Grundy and others, published by Grip Printing & Publishing Co, in Toronto. The three-day battle was fought at the ad hoc Provisional Government of Saskatchewan capital of Batoche. Among those fighting as part of General Frederick Middleton's forces was LCol Charles Turner van Straubenzee, with the 100th (Prince of Wales Royal Canadians) Regiment of Foot. Library and Archives Canada, MIKAN number: 2999644.





The van Straubenzee family motto is "The Brave Beget the Brave" and the family has certainly lived up to this motto. The story of the family engagement in Canada starts when LCol Bowen van Straubenzee was born at the family seat in Spennithorne, North Yorkshire in 1829. He subsequently joined the British Army and was eventually posted to Kingston, Ontario in 1856. Bowen was born the youngest son in the family therefore, under the terms of primogeniture in England,

ABOVE: Map Indicating the movement of the Royal Canadian Dragoons and 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, 9 April - 6 June 1900, during the Boer War. Map courtesy of the Canadian War Museum.

LEFT: Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Turner van Straubenzee CO RCD, 1917-1918.



LEFT: LCol Charles Turner van Straubenzee served in South Africa with 1st Troop of the Royal Canadian Dragoons. He fought in numerous battles during the Boer War. He distinguished himself again during the Great War, receiving four Mentions in Dispatches.

he would not inherit the family estate. Bowen, after an intervention by his mother to the Duke of Wellington, was granted a commission "without purchase." At the time, most commissions were purchased. The commission granted was in the infantry and Wellington presented the young van Straubenzee with an Infantry Sword, which is still held in the family. Thus, the opportunities presented by soldiering in the Empire beckoned and he found himself serving in Kingston in Canada.

Kingston obviously offered some alternatives to soldiering because only a year after arriving in Kingston he married Annie Macaulay Cartwright on 8 October 1857. Annie was the daughter of the prominent Kingston citizen Mr. John Soloman Cartwright. Bowen and Annie subsequently had seven children, three daughters and four boys: Arthur Hope, Bowen William Sutton, Casimir Cartwright and Charles Turner. Arthur, Bowen and Casimir all attended the Royal Military College (RMC), and Arthur and Casimir would eventually join the RMC faculty.

Bowen van Straubenzee served in the far distant corners of the expanding Empire as well as in China and Mauritius. Canada had been a self-governing Dominion since 1867 and, by 1875, Bowen van Straubenzee found himself back in Kingston, no longer in the British Army, and looking for employment. Although it is not clear why he returned to Kingston, one can surmise that perhaps his wife desired to return to where she grew up. Bowen eventually joined the fledgling Canadian Army Militia and became the Deputy Commander of Military District 3, which included Kingston and surrounding areas. His duties involved visiting various Militia units and assessing their readiness. His transition from the British Army to the Canadian Army was relatively seamless given the doctrinal and cultural synergy created and sustained by the Empire.

Van Straubenzee did a very good job as the Deputy Commander, such that he eventually became the Commander of Military Districts 3 & 4 in 1888. LCol van Straubenzee was a very capable soldier with a lot of operational experience and had a career that reflected Empire soldiering at the time. In 1848-49 he fought at Multan, on the Northwest Frontier, now in Pakistan, to quell the uprising against the East India Company. He received a Mention in Despatches (MiD) during this action. He also fought in 1860 in the North China Campaign following the Second Opium War. Again, he received a MiD. He returned to Canada and eventually would lead a column of Canadian infantry at the Battle of Batoche, 9-12 May 1885. His troops cleared the Town of Batoche, Saskatchewan on 12 May thus securing the end of the resistance. He died at the age of 69 on 8 October 1898, leaving his sons to carry on the military tradition of service in the Canadian Army.



RIGHT: The impressive display of van Straubenzee family medals on display at the Cavalry and Guards Club at 127 Piccadilly in London, England.

The first van Straubenzee to serve with the RCD was that of Bowen's son, LCol Charles Turner van Straubenzee. He was born in 1876 and graduated from Ridley College. He married Canadian Essy May Case on 5 June 1907 and had a son, Casimir Bowen van Straubenzee, who would go on to serve in the Three Rivers Regiment (TRR) in World War II. Before his father Bowen's death, Charles Turner van Straubenzee served in the 4th Hussars, Canadian Militia before serving in South Africa with 1st Troop, RCD. He arrived in South Africa on 21 March 1900 and fought in, and received clasps for, battles at Johannesburg, Belfast, Diamond Hill, Orange Colony and Cape Colony. However, things were about to get even more serious as the First World War loomed on the horizon.

Maj Charles Turner van Straubenzee enlisted for service with the RCD in the First World War on 16 September 1914 and was immediately posted to France. He eventually was given command of the Canadian Corps Cavalry Regiment from June 1916 until he was appointed to command the RCD in July 1917 and promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in April 1918. He had a sterling but short career in command and was awarded three (probably four) MiDs. To be awarded the MiD on at least three occasions is no small achievement and the MiD is prominently displayed on his medals at the Cavalry and Guards Club in London.

The actual number of MiDs awarded to Charles is complicated, but a website states that this officer was awarded four MiDs and quoted four *London Gazette* (LG) entries: LG 29623 dated 15 June 1916; LG 18 October 1916; LG 29890 dated 2 January 1917; and LG 30706 dated 28 May 1918. Unfortunately, van Straubenzee was killed by sporadic artillery fire on 9 October 1918 whilst returning to mount his horse after issuing final directions to his squadrons. LCol van Straubenzee had fought in most of the major battles on the Western Front including the Somme, Passchendaele, Amiens, Cambrai, Festubert, St Quentin, Bois de Moreuil and Le Cateau. He is buried in Premont British Cemetery, Premont, Picardie, France, Plot IV. A. 13. He was a truly brave man, an excellent cavalryman and a model Dragoon.

LCol Charles Turner van Straubenzee had a son named Casimir Bowen van Straubenzee who was born in Toronto on 29 February 1908. He attended Prep at Upper Canada College and then attended Trinity College School. Casimir married Gwen-



ABOVE: Lieutenant Charles Casimir van Straubenzee on patrol in the Sinai as part of 56 Recce Sqn.



ABOVE RIGHT: Lt van Straubenzee was killed on 10 May 1957, aged 25, when his Ferret scout car rolled as he was leading his troops back to base camp. He is buried in the Moascar War Cemetery in Egypt.

dolyn Gertrude Geoghegan in 1930 and they had one son, Lt Charles Casimir van Straubenzee, but more of him later.

LCol Casimir Bowen van Straubenzee served in the Canadian Army during the Second World War. He initially obtained his Commission in the Governor General's Horse Guards (GGHG) and went overseas in 1941 as a Captain. Subsequently, he was promoted to Major and posted to the 12th Canadian Army Tank Battalion (Three Rivers Regiment). In March 1942 he was given command of C Squadron and participated in the Dieppe Raid, but fate intervened and he, luckily, was not disembarked. He did contribute an after-action report on the use of tanks on amphibious operations, which existed to inform the later planning for D-Day.

Later, in February 1943, he was given command of B Sqn, TRR. He was subsequently wounded in Sicily in July 1943 near the town of Grammichele when the Squadron ran into elements of the Hermann Goering Division. Casimir was also a Squadron Leader at the Battle of Termoli on the West Coast of Italy and a promotion to LCol followed when he was returned to England in 1944, where he served until returning to Canada in 1945.

LCol Casimir Bowen van Straubenzee left the Army after the war but rejoined in 1954 as a Major working in Western Command for Major-General Chris Vokes. He was responsible for the Rangers in British Columbia and Northwest Territories until eventually retiring to Enderby, British Columbia in the Okanagan in 1958. Charles had a son, Charles Casimir van Straubenzee, who was born in Toronto in 1931 and who served in the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

Charles Casimir van Straubenzee attended Trinity College School. He joined the Canadian Army in Vancouver on 19 September 1952 and was commissioned into the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (LdSH(RC)). In 1956 he was



Memorial Service for Lt Charles Casimir van Straubenzee on 1 March 2007 at the Moascar War Cemetery, Egypt being conducted by Padre Maud Parsons-Horst and attended by (left to right) Michael van Straubenzee (brother), Anthony Alexander van Straubenzee (Charles' son), Mary van Straubenzee (sister-in-law), Anthony Allen van Straubenzee (brother) and LCol Richard Ryder-Burbidge (RCD).

subsequently sent on a peacekeeping tour with 56 Reconnaissance Squadron in the Sinai.

56 Recce Sqn was a composite unit formed from the RCD and LdSH(RC) and named after the year it was formed. The task was to monitor the ceasefire following the failed French and United Kingdom intervention against the Egyptian nationalisation of the Suez Canal. Unfortunately, tragedy struck when Lt C.C. van Straubenzee's Ferret scout car rolled over as he was leading his Troop back to base following a patrol. The UN Medal and Peacekeeping Medal on display in the Cavalry and Guards Club shows his Regiment as the RCD. This was a true tragedy given his young age, but the sacrifice was fully in keeping with the outstanding service and devotion to duty, while serving in the Canadian Army, of generations of the van Straubenzee family. He is buried in the Moascar War Cemetery near Ismailia, Egypt, Plot 16 Row A Grave 18. (***Editor's Note:*** *For more details about 56 Recce Sqn and Lt C.C. van Straubenzee's death, see page 32 of the 2023 edition of* The Dragoon.)

So ends the story (so far) of the contribution of this famous family to the Canadian Army through the decades. As the history of the nation evolved so did the family's service as they began to directly



Ten members of the van Straubenzee family plus Col Andrew Lussier (RCD) and Emma Brown (mezzo soprano who sang) gathered at the Premont British Cemetery in France on 9 October 2018 to remember RCD CO LCol Charles Turner van Straubenzee 100 years later (second headstone from the right).

join the Canadian Army, participating in many of the battles over the years that helped forge Canada as a nation. This was facilitated by there being a common military doctrine and a shared military culture in place as a result of the Empire. The regimental system lives on as a salient testament to the benefits from having shared values, military culture, training and doctrine. The value of promoting training, exchange postings and cultural relationships between Allied Regiments remains of great benefit, especially for a small army.

BELOW: The deployment of 56 Recce Sqn to the Sinai during the 1956 Suez Crisis marked the onset of modern peacekeeping with the first mission known as the United Nations Emergency Force (or UNEF) .





RV24

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RCD ASSOCIATION

By Denis Levesque

Yup, that's right, you missed it! I know many had hoped to attend this year's reunion, but for one reason or another weren't able to. It was with great pleasure that the Kingston and Region Chapter of the Royal Canadian Dragoons Association hosted the biennial reunion in beautiful Kingston, Ontario. There were many members and non-members alike that travelled from across this great nation to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the RCD Association from 14-16 June 2024. Some of these awesome folks encountered people they had never met before or reunited with old friends they hadn't seen for 20 to 30 years. It was an incredible event for all.

ABOVE: Richard Allinson, Jeff Monaghan, Bill Richards, Wally Bryan, Dave Chaloux, Randy Payne, Bruce Rose, Louis Lucier, Dean Rodd, Mike Smith, Dan Haverson, Wayne Rathwell, Brad Forbes, Gavin Cross and Mike Mulholland pause for a group photo during the Saturday night formal dinner.





Dane Sonstenes, Bill Richards, Randy Payne and Chuck Hills enjoyed a round of golf at the Kingston Garrison Golf Club the Friday morning prior to the reunion.

Many activities were planned: an informal golf tournament Friday morning, the Meet & Greet on Friday evening, the Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) Saturday morning, a chance to visit Kingston in the afternoon, the formal dinner Saturday night, and then Sunday was saying goodbye.

The golf tournament was exciting to say the least! It was a small group of 22 members that may have not golfed together in years but took the opportunity to reconnect with their friends on the golf course — meet, mingle and have fun golfing – and that intent was easily met. "Where did that ball GO?" was heard more than once. Clive Milner had the shot but his ability to see the ball leave the tee was questionable. Bill Richards, Randy Payne, Chuck Hills and Dane Sonstenes were believed to be the aces of the course but that was contested by the Chris Catry, Bill Soros, Cathy Soros and Pat Lafleur team. I'm going to go with the latter — Cathy is a good golfer! The team I thought was in contention was Georges Rousseau, Bryan Forsyth, Don Craig and Jack Dangerfield. We even had a last-minute hack-and-slash team from the Regiment consisting of Riley Trembath, Ryan McGuire, Joseph Beauchamp and Robert Villard join the tournament. If you're looking for some cheap golf balls, may I suggest the many wooded areas and ponds at the Kingston Garrison Golf Club.

The Meet & Greet was sponsored by the Guild of the Royal Canadian Dragoons and saw people mingling from far and wide, recounting stories from when they'd last met, tank stories of Germany, or what it was like to be a Dragoon both past and present. The were over 150 people in attendance and some had to turn down their hearing aids while others turned them up to listen more attentively. Hugs, kisses and tears were the focus of the evening as memories flowed from one person to another, with questions of "What you are doing now?", "Where have you been?", or "Where is our old pal?". It was amazing to watch everyone running from friend to friend. At one point, I tried to catch everyone's attention for the free weekend room draw, so you can imagine how that went. After several failed attempts, a loud



LEFT: Kingston Chapter volunteers (left to right) Tom and Angie Newton, and Debbie and Tony Slack were kept busy Friday afternoon and early evening welcoming attendees and signing them in.

BELOW: Despite the early hour, the RCD Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) went very well on Saturday morning.

screech did the job. Congratulations goes to John and Mandeep Fleet!

The Association AGM on Saturday morning went well. The Association President, Tom Skelding, gave us a host of briefings to include his trip to Leeuwarden in April 2023 with five soldiers from the Regiment and the Colonel of the Regiment, MGen (ret'd) Dean Milner. What a trip! The detail was so great, I wrote that off on my bucket list. However, many have already signed up for the 2025 encore visit to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands by the RCD. (*For more information on the 80th anniversary trip, see the inside front cover.*) The Commanding Officer, LCol Nick Forsyth, briefed on the current and future operations of the Regiment. We were amazed by what has happened and what will be happening with our soldiers. His briefing made us extremely proud of the work and challenges they face. Concurrent with the AGM, many of the spouses also engaged in their own gathering. Some of the ladies were in search of old friends and others made new ones. Nice to see them enjoying their time while the AGM was in full swing. We had to steal some of their food because ours was gone quickly. Of course they gave it willingly. Such great support as always.

Nothing formal was planned for Saturday afternoon, which gave folks an opportunity to visit the Limestone City. Many went to tour the Kingston Penitentiary, take a helicopter flight over the city, visit the numerous historical sites, or just have a casual meal or coffee with old friends for the afternoon.

The evening's formal dinner was awesome, with over 160 people in attendance. The Cartier Ballroom in the Quality Inn and Conference Centre Kingston was beautifully decorated with Regimental Colours: red chair covers, blue napkins and yellow light center pieces. We knew the room would be a hit and the first person to let us know was Shirley Milner. When she walked in and took one look, she said, "It's absolutely beautiful!" That, my friends, meant we had the Shirley stamp of approval.

Each Chapter was responsible to bring a gift to the reunion for the raffle. It was wonderful to have such thoughtful gifts — amazing! Thank you for your generous support.



RIGHT: Left to right: Jean Dangerfield, Simone Wallace, George Wallace and Jack Dangerfield. A big thank you to George for taking many of the photographs throughout the reunion weekend.

BELOW: Over 160 people attended the formal dinner Saturday night in the beautifully decorated Cartier Ballroom at the Quality Inn and Conference Centre Kingston.

The night was perfect. The speech from Association Patron Rick Hillier outlined how important the Association is, as well as his work with many charitable organizations. Rick closed with a request of everyone to donate cash to send a soldier to Leeuwarden in 2025. Thanks to Kevin Lee's idea and the efforts of several RSMs, over $3,000 was raised in a matter of minutes! Colonel of the Regiment Dean Milner highlighted how the Regiment is doing, and the importance of the Association to the Regiment and vice versa, and then closed with the Toast to the Regiment. With great enthusiasm, Walt Natynczyk presented the Toast to the Ladies. The President of the Association, Tom Skelding, spoke about the importance of our Reunion Weekends, and then reminded us of the Association members that we have lost over the past two years since our last Reunion, before closing with the Toast to Our Fallen Comrades.



This weekend event had been in the planning for two years. Special thanks to the Kingston Chapter planning team of Denis (Badger) Levesque who served as Event Chair; Tanker Tom Newton as Secretary/Treasurer; Bill Brough as Activities Coordinator; Tony Slack as Welcome Coordinator; Dave Muralt as Historical Presentation; and Gavin Cross as assistant to all!

I wanted to put more names in the text, but the pictures say it all. Hope to see everyone at our next reunion. It was announced that RV26 would take place in Collingwood, Ontario. Details to follow. Regardless of who you are or when you served, we are Family!

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift





DAY ON THE GREENS

HENRY SAMPSON MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

What was once a gathering of Armoured Corps friends for a round is now the longest running RCAC golf tournament in Ontario … and still remains a gathering of friends playing golf.

By Maj (ret'd) Chris Catry

For the past 28 years, in eastern Ontario on the last Friday of July, a curious thing occurs. Approximately 100 serving and formerly serving members of the RCAC and their families gather for a reunion, thinly disguised as a golf tournament, all in the name of a highly respected former RSM. Significant funds are raised for the Canadian Cancer Society, friendships are furthered, renewed and made, fun breaks out and, most importantly, Corps bonds are solidified as people come back year after year.

ABOVE: Participants of the 2023 Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament (HSMGT) gather on the greens of the Garrison Golf and Curling Club, CFB Kingston, 28 July 2023. Photo by Chris Catry.

It all started simply. In the mid 1990s, Bill Coupland and Bob Billings invited Dale Crook and "Jeep" Fortier, who had all served together in the RCAC, to meet and play a friendly round of golf for bragging rights. This Ottawa-Kingston group began meeting at courses such as the Garrison Golf & Curling Club at CFB Kingston, and the Upper Canada Village Course in Morrisburg. Eventually, additional foursomes were added to include Clive Milner and Ted Nurse from Kingston, Don Craig from Ottawa and Henry Sampson from Petawawa.

Soon enough, by the late 90s, good natured Regimental and city bragging rights got involved and Henry suggested perhaps moving the event to potentially attract those serving on Regimental duty in Petawawa. Names like Baldwin, Mercer and Butt started showing up on the score cards. They played in Cobden and later Smiths Falls, but the location was always secondary to the gathering itself. Though it was mentioned, no one really tracked who won what because, in the words of those who took part, "No one really cared what cap badge you wore or where you were from, since most of us had worn several, and we were all Army nomads. What mattered was that we were friends who shared a



CWO (ret'd) H.C. (Henry) Sampson, MMM, CD. The annual golf tournament is named in his memory.



common bond of service in the Corps." And so, it grew from one or two foursomes to several.

Sadly, Henry Sampson, who loved getting together with friends and "could hit the ball a mile," passed away from cancer in early 2000. Bill Coupland decided to name the gathering after him, made it a "best ball" tournament with all proceeds donated to the Canadian Cancer Society in Henry's name. It grew again! Each successive year, Corps folks came from further afield, and eventually other provinces and more and more Regiments were represented. No one cared how good they were, but the importance was to see other Black Hats and their spouses, kids, in-laws, grandkids, and so on. It gained irreversible momentum to the point where "shotgun starts" were needed as we filled the golf course.

Bill ran the tournament with Kirk Thornton as the head scorekeeper (because he knew how to use Excel) until 2006, handing the reins over to Don Craig. In 2016, after a successful run, Don and Kirk handed it over to Bill Soros who recruited Chris Catry to help him, and they've been crew commanding it ever since. COVID-19 itself could only cancel it one year. What began as a foursome or two in the 90s is now a tournament that has at least 24 foursomes, donated in excess of $25,000 to the Canadian Cancer Society, and seen representation from 11 different RCAC units and five provinces in 2023. It remains a fantastic reunion, still thinly disguised as a golf tourney, and often sees numerous non-golfers just attending the dinner in addition to the golfers.

"No one really cared what cap badge you wore or where you were from, since most of us had worn several, and we were all Army nomads. What mattered was that we were friends who shared a common bond of service in the Corps."

The year 2024 will mark the 29th annual Henry Sampson Memorial Golf Tournament, which has been hosted at Garrison Golf & Curling Club at CFB Kingston since 2022, bringing it back to where it all began. Those wishing to be on the tournament mailing list should send an email to **hsmgt411@gmail.com** to ensure they receive updates and registration information. As one stalwart put it, "It's not important how it started, it's just important we keep it going." So, if you find yourself in the area at the end of July, join us!

Editor's Note: *This article will also appear in the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) 2024 edition of* The Strathconian.

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LEFT: The foursome of Jay Milner, Shirley Milner, Jim Follwell and Bill Richards getting ready for their round of golf.

BELOW: Bill Soros (middle) presenting the 2023 first-place trophy to Dave Munroe, Kevin Kalk, Brad Young, and Derek Munroe from the Governor General's Horse Guards (GGHG).



BUSINESS ARISING 2023–2024

The RCD Association is dedicated to fostering, maintaining and promoting the traditions, well-being and esprit de corps of the Regiment. We are composed of retired and serving members of the Regiment and those who have served with and supported the RCD at home and abroad.

The aim of the Association is two-fold: firstly, a portal where past and present Dragoons and their families can reach out to each other to re-establish old friendships; and secondly, to keep current on Regimental activities.

Once a Dragoon, always a Dragoon!

Audax et Celer / Bold and Swift

Royal Canadian Dragoon Association Board of Directors

(as of 28 January 2024)

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- **President:** Thomas Skelding
- **1st Vice President:** Bill Richards
- **2nd Vice President:** Vacant
- **Secretary:** Vacant
- **Treasurer:** Marc Girard
- **Editor of the Newsletter:** Perry Wells

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- Lance Wiebe: New Brunswick

ABOVE: The Kingston and Region Chapter of the Royal Canadian Dragoons Association hosted the biennial reunion from 14-16 June 2024 in Kingston, Ontario. This event celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Association.

- Dan Sicotte: Quebec
- Louis Lucier: Ontario
- Sterling Mercer: Petawawa
- Randy Payne: Kingston
- Stephen Wright: Alberta

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- Kathy Nayduk: Windor, ON
- Gerry Olsen: Alberta
- Robert Black: British Columbia



RCD ASSOCIATION
ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP REPORT
(current as of 31 May 2024)

Chapter	Total
Outside Canada	4
British Columbia	29
Alberta	22
Windsor, Ontario	6
South Central Ontario	65
Upper Ottawa Valley	32
National Capital Region	61
Kingston	47
Quebec	7
Atlantic (NB, NS, PEI)	96
Newfoundland & Labrador	11
Grand Total	**380**

Everyone is encouraged to reach out to the Dragoons (either retired, serving, or friends of the Regiment) living in your area and urge them to join the Association. For more information, go to the Regimental website (www.dragoons.ca). You can also download the form at https://dragoons.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/The-Royal-Canadian-Dragoons-Association-Membership-App-2021v1.2.fillable.pdf.

RCD ASSOCIATION
Financial Report for the period 1 June 2022 to 30 May 2023

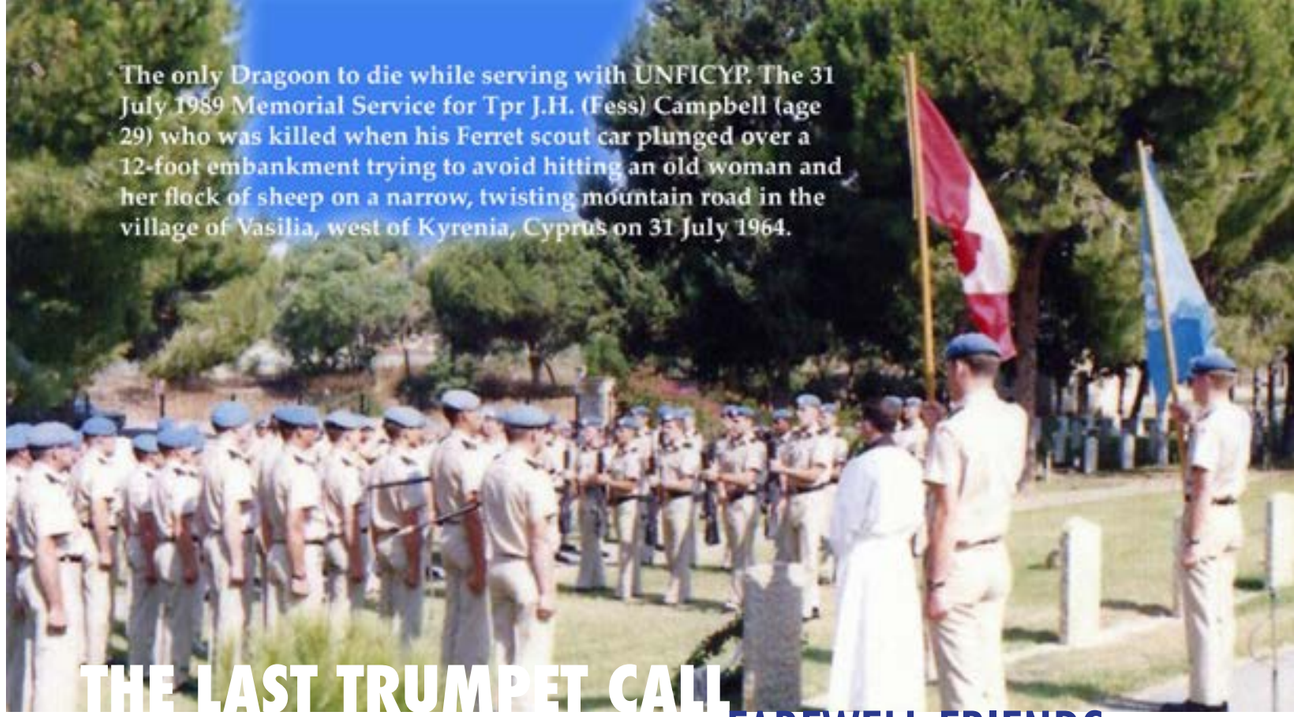
GIC #1: $20,000.00 invested for an 18-month term. Maturity date is 25 November 2024.

GIC #2: $15,000.00 invested for a 60-month term. Maturity date is 23 May 2028.

GIC #3: $10,000.00 invested for a 36-month term. Maturity date is 25 May 2026.

Current as of 10 June 2024

Bank Balance	1 June 2023			$42,333.84
Add				
	Membership Fees		$1,385.00	
		Sub-Total	$1,385.00	$1,385.00
Less				
	Expenses		$3,166.83	
		Sub-Total	$3,166.83	<$3,166.83>
Bank Balance	10 June 2024			$40,552.01
GIC Investments				$45,000.00
Net Worth				$85,552.01



THE LAST TRUMPET CALL
FAREWELL FRIENDS

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."

2023 (SINCE 1 JUNE 2023)

- Donald Arthur Beattie
- Greg Hug
- Donald White
- Daniel Plourde
- Brian Charles Bell
- Lawrence Wilfred Hyttenrauch
- Francis Haswell Milledge
- Derek Kevin Janes
- Joseph Albert DeCoste
- Donald George Emerson
- Garrie Wansworth Lambert
- Wolf Herbert 'Benny' Binzig
- Robert Anthony Willibrod Riendeau
- Clarence Roy Bridge
- George Douglas Ingram
- William Lloyd "Bill" Prouse
- Karmin McKay
- Victor Rice
- Emanual 'Buddy' Tobin
- John Hubert Felix Jennekens

2024 (AS OF 1 JUNE 2024)

- Malcolm Critchlow
- Charles Richer
- John Wayne Rathwell
- Mark Thomas Gahan
- Dale Robert Harvie
- David Sproule
- Glenn Adams
- David Murray Walker
- Mike Jackson



RIGHT: Garrie Lambert (with Bill Richards), June 2023.