



Mess and RUSI Vancouver Members News 25 Oct, 2011

Wednesday Lunches and Speakers.

Speakers this week, presented by NOABC, will be **RAdm Bennett**, the current **Chief of Reserves and Cadets** (she is the senior Reserve Officer in Canada). RAdm Bennett will talk about the Canadian Forces Transformation and the impact on reserves.

The RUSI Vancouver evening speakers program, also this week, will feature LCol Harjit Sajjan, the new CO of the British Columbia Regiment. He will talk about Canada in Afghanistan in the WO & Sgts Mess at the Beatty Street Drill Hall. His presentation will start at 1800hrs. This is the second in a series of eight monthly Military History Evenings presentations on Canadian military history from the beginning of World War Two to Afghanistan, sponsored by RUSI Vancouver. Topics will cover army, navy and air actions in which Canadian forces have been engaged.

If you plan to attend, Cam Cathcart would appreciate an RSVP to: cccathcart@shaw.ca

We are working on getting Eric Mold, one of our members, to give us a talk on Canada's Nuclear Strike force. Many people are not aware that we had a nuclear strike force, let alone how powerful a force it was. I think many of you will find it interesting. We will book him into the Nov 30th post lunch speakers slot. Details to follow.

Military Ball - 2012

The Vancouver Garrison Officers' Society has announced that the 2012 Military Ball is confirmed for **24 March 2012** at the Vancouver Hyatt Regency. The Chair of the Ball, LCol Barrett, declares that the ticket prices shall not increase for 2011, and as an added incentive, the price for 'early birds', who purchase their tickets by cheque or money order prior to **31 December 2011** will be at a discounted price of \$100.00 each. Cheques or money orders should be forwarded to our mailing address at 2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver, V6J 2C7. Hotel reservation details to be released before the end of the year. The website (www.militaryball.ca) is now up and running with current information available. We have not yet negotiated the Mil Ball room rate with the hotel so you could reserve now but the hotel won't have any special rate program set up. When the special rate comes available, it will be posted on the website with a link to the hotel reservation area. Keep your eye on the website. Mark your calendars and get a group of friends together for another evening of good food, good company, and dancing until midnight."

DNA solves mystery of unknown Scots soldier

ALISON CAMPSIE 20 Oct 2011

Private Alexander Johnston

HE lay in a single shallow grave on the fringes of a battlefield in northern France for 90 years, his two regimental collar badges among the little remains of the unknown Scots soldier.

No-one had talked much about former Coatbridge man Alexander Johnston over time, the name only rarely coming up in conversation when old photo books were opened up and shared by his family. All that was certain is that he went to fight in the First World War, and never came home.



However, unbeknown to his descendants, exhaustive work had been going on to piece together the story of the soldier since his body was found in 2008 by construction workers close to where the Battle of the Canal du Nord was fought in late 1918. The regimental collar badges found by his remains narrowed down the identity of the fallen soldier to two possible soldiers, with Private Johnston's name finally confirmed using DNA technology following a two-year search. As a result, his remaining family in Scotland and Canada are to gather in France on Tuesday, when Private Johnston will finally be laid to rest in the Le Cantimpre Canadian War cemetery with an official reception planned for his relatives.

For his great, great nephew Willie Johnston, of Airdre, North Lanarkshire, the landmark moment in his family's history presents a range of emotions. Mr Johnston, 64, said: "There has been an absolutely phenomenal amount of effort put in about my great, great uncle and it has been very humbling.

"Obviously I didn't know Alexander Johnston, he died before I was born, but I have got a bit emotional as it is quite sad when you think about what happened to him. I am looking forward to going to France, but there is a fair bit of trepidation about it too."

Alexander Johnston was born in Coatbridge in 1885 and like his sister, Jessie, and father, William, who is thought to have worked as a butcher and a joiner in the Old Monkland area, left Lanarkshire to make a new life in Canada.

He arrived in Hamilton, Ontario, when he was in his late 20s and in the new year of 1918 joined the 78th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Nine months later, at the age of 33, Private Johnston was killed during the Battle of the Canal du Nord just weeks before the end of the war. His remains were discovered less than half-a-mile from the battleground, at Raillencourt Saint-Olle.

Mr Johnston said: "Whether another shell came along and created another crater and the soil was thrown on top of him, we will never really know. I think he was pretty much found where he fell." Mr Johnston was contacted after a researcher for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission tracked him down following a manual search of the births, marriages and deaths notices in The Herald archive.

The forensic anthropologist working on the case of the fallen soldier had discounted the other potential match given the height of Private Johnston, which had been documented when he signed up for the army.

Mr Johnston received a telephone call asking him to give a DNA sample to help with the search, but it was a specimen from another great, great nephew of Private Johnston, Donald Gregory, of Ottawa, Canada, that provided that all-important match. “I didn’t do the DNA match in the end as apparently the DNA that comes through the male side seems to decay rather rapidly and it wouldn’t be a great deal of use. The DNA that comes through the female side is rather more persistent and that is where Donald Gregory, who is the same relation to Alexander Johnston as me but on his mother’s side, comes in to the story.” Mr Johnston said that one of the main aspects of his unfolding family history was the new connection forged with Mr Gregory, who himself holds a host of information about the Johnston family members who made Canada their home.

“It seems that we have got more family in Canada that we do now in Scotland. I am always working out where they all fit in and it has been very nice getting to know people who you knew existed, but never knew before,” Mr Johnston said.

BC Lions Annual ‘Salute the Veterans’ Game

“Salute to Veterans & Welcome Home Troops”

BC Lions versus Montreal Alouettes

BC Place, Vancouver

GENERAL INFORMATION

Event	“Salute to Veterans & Welcome Home troops” Half Time Show BC Lions
Host/Producer	BC/Yukon Command The Royal Canadian Legion
Date/Time	Saturday, November 5th, 2011 Kick Off 7:00 PM

Free Parking	4:00 PM to 11:15 PM RCMP Detachment Gravel Parking Lot 4949B Heather Street, Burnaby
Free Bus Shuttle	4:30 PM to 7:00 PM from RCMP to Stadium 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM from Stadium to RCMP
Free Tickets	For Bands/Marchers/Volunteers
Ticket Special	\$32.00 plus tax Special for Family and Friends of Bands/Marchers Entrance at BC Place Gates Keith Hawkins 604.930.5451
Hotel Special	\$72.00 plus tax Reservation Code # 5435 The Royal Canadian Legion Special Rate Accent Inns Vancouver Airport Richmond 10551 St. Edwards Drive, Richmond Reservation 1.800.663.0298
BC Ferries	Awaiting decision on special rates

Entrances

4:00 PM to 6:30 PM

East Air Lock ~ Bands/Marchers/Volunteers

West Air Lock ~ Military Jeeps

Waiting Area

Section 39 Left after East Lock Entry

“Salute to Veterans & Welcome Home Troops”

Saturday, November 5th, 2011

BC Place, Vancouver

With Glowing Hearts ***A Concert of Celebration and Remembrance***

With less than a month left before the curtain rises, the box office managers at our venues tell us tickets for the *Band of the Fifteenth Field Artillery Regiment* third annual ***With Glowing Hearts, A Concert of Celebration and Remembrance*** are selling fast. There are still some left, but you had better not wait too long to get a good seat. All seating is assigned and many of the best seats are already sold. Call the concert hall closest to you today to ensure you get a great seat! This year's concert will be a musical revue featuring the music of George Gershwin, Eric Coates, Stephen Foster and more. The band will take you on a musical journey that begins in the movie theatre in the 1920s before the arrival of talkies when the orchestra painted a musical commentary for the action on the screen, to the disco to dance to a hot funk band followed by a stop at the ballet theatre as Bacchus, the god of wine, enters with his entourage. Pianist ***Gary Tse*** will dazzle with his rendition of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue and local crooner ***Phil Moriarity*** will join our own ***Cary McCaffery*** for our musical tribute to the troops. Don't miss a thoroughly entertaining evening or afternoon with these talented Canadian Forces musicians! You're guaranteed to leave the concert hall smiling ear to ear!

Tickets are **only \$20** and available by phone from the box office or online. If you are a member of a group of ten or more, see below for special discount offer. Proceeds aid charities that assist military personnel and their families.

Showtimes

Friday November 4, 730pm @ the Gateway Theatre, Richmond

Box Office: (604) 270-1812

www.gatewaytheatre.com

Saturday, November 5, 200pm @ Kay Meek Centre, West Vancouver

Box Office: (604) 913-3634

www.kaymeekcentre.com

Sunday, November 6, 200pm @ ACT Centre for the Performing Arts, Maple Ridge

Box Office: (604) 476-2787

www.theactmapleridge.org

Special group rates for ten or more ~ buy ten, get one free!

Contact Bill @ (604) 618-3607 or email tickets@militarymusic.ca

St Barbara's Day Dinner -2011



***THE COMMANDING OFFICER
AND OFFICERS***

OF

***15TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT
THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF CANADIAN ARTILLERY***

REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY

AT THEIR ANNUAL

***ST BARBARA'S DAY
SPECIAL GUEST NIGHT***

TO BE HELD AT THE

***BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY
2025 WEST 11TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, BC***

ON

SATURDAY, THE THIRD OF DECEMBER, 2011

AT

SIX O'CLOCK FOR SEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

RSVP BY 18 NOVEMBER 2011 W/ PAYMENT:
CAPTAIN W BOSSENCE
WILLIAM.BOSSENCE@FORCES.GC.CA
OR 604-666-4372

2025 WEST 11TH AVENUE
VANCOUVER, BC
V6J 2C7

TARIFF: \$ 75.00 CAD OR USD
PAYABLE TO " 15 RCA OFFICERS' MESS "
DRESS: MESS KIT OR BLACK TIE, WITH
DECORATIONS

Regimental Band – St Cecilia Dinner – 2011

CAPTAIN JIM TEMPEST, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
AND THE MUSICIANS OF THE
BAND OF THE FIFTEENTH FIELD ARTILLERY
REGIMENT, RCA
INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR
ST. CECILIA'S DAY DINNER



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 2011
BESSBOROUGH ARMOURIES
2025 W 11TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER

COCKTAILS, DINNER & DANCE
FESTIVITIES TO BEGIN AT 6 PM



PLEASE RVSP WITH PAYMENT BY NOVEMBER 5TH

TARIFF \$65 - CHEQUES TO BCMILITARYMUSIC SOCIETY

Mail: c/o Meg Ludwig

2732 Keremeos Court

Vancouver, BC

V5T 1N6

Email: megiludwig@gmail.com or phone (604) 222 – 8586

Burns Dinner 2012

BURNS SUPPER 2012 will be held Saturday **January 28, 2012** at the BCIT Aerospace centre in Richmond.

Tickets will be on sale soon. If you order (and pay) before December 15, 2011 you will receive the early bird price.

If you attended last year please bring another couple with you.

The goal is to raise funds to assist our military families...will **you** stand with them?

Featured Performers

The Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada
The Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA

The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir.

Grant Smith
604-271-5530

FrontLine: An excellent magazine on Canadian military affairs.

The latest edition is **ONLINE & READY TO VIEW!**



Start Reading Now!

Issue #5 :

[Interview with Julian Fantino](#), AMND, by Chris MacLean
A steep learning curve for Defence Procurement.

[NSPS: A Question of Strategy Choices](#), by Ken Hansen
A look at the three contender shipyards.

Transformation 2011
by [LGen \(ret\) Andrew Leslie](#)
Compelling findings of DND-CF trends over the last six years.

by [Dr. Douglas Bland](#)
Meaningful reform requires a resolute, tenacious defence minister.

by [Col \(ret\) Brian MacDonald](#)
The evolution of the 5Fs is critical to finding efficiencies.

From the 'Punitary'

A fellow received a mouse for his birthday and he loved it so much that he never parted with it. He took this mouse everywhere, to work, to parties, to the opera... One day, a good friend of his died and so he went to pay his respects. Naturally, he took the mouse, which was perched on his shoulder. On his way home, he suddenly realized that the mouse was gone! He retraced all his moves for the day and realized that the last place he had seen the mouse was at the funeral. He raced back across town, but it was too late. The mouse must have jumped off his shoulder while he was sitting in the hearse. He spoke to the funeral directors, but they couldn't find it: it had completely vanished. The man was filled with grief as he remembered an old adage his mother had told him time and time again as a kid:

Never lock a gift mouse in the hearse.

Murphy's Rules of Combat Operations.

Keith Freer, after reading last week's rule, reminded me of the old adage we used to hear at Staff College all the time:

The next battle will be fought on an uphill slope, at night, in the rain and at the junction of three maps.

This week: If the Platoon Sergeant can see you, so can the enemy.