



Mess and RUSI Vancouver Members News Jan 18, 2011

Wednesday Lunches

Lunches are off to a good start in spite of the weather. Attendance was down last week because of the snow, although we stayed 'in the black', mainly because there was minimal snow in the city compared to outlying areas. A few of us living in the Fraser Valley were snowed in and didn't go anywhere until later Thursday. Several of my neighbours didn't go to work that day as we had a good 12" of snow which didn't get ploughed until Thursday morning.

NOABC still has not announced a speaker for Jan 26th but the RUSI Van speaker for Feb 9th will be Peter Duffey:

Peter Duffey was born in 1925 in Boston, England. Introduced to aviation by his father, a pre-war amateur autogyro pilot, he began work with Hawker Aircraft, joined the Air Training Corps, and then the Royal Air Force in 1942. He was sent to Canada for flying training, getting his wings in 1944. He served in Coastal and Transport Commands and after the war became a charter pilot in with Portsmouth Aviation, moved to Scottish Airlines then transferred to British South American Airways in 1948. BSAA was absorbed in 1949 by BOAC, which in turn became British Airways.

Peter flew most of BOAC's post-war airliners, including the world's first jetliner, the Comet 1. He also flew the Comet 4, and then the Boeing 707 for ten years. His airline career ended with 5 years as a Concorde captain. He was one of the nucleus group of seven captains that were trained by the test pilots, and who commenced supersonic airline flight in 1976. His last 15 years of airline service were spent as a training captain, on Comet, 707, and Concorde.

He moved to Canada in 1981, becoming a citizen in 1984, where he flew corporate jets, light aircraft, and floatplanes.

Other activities have included sailing, gliding, golfing, fishing, environmental concerns, pilot association work, and 15 years as a columnist for an aviation magazine.

Peter has written a book 'Comets and Concorde' first published by Paldwr Press in 1999, which is a personal history of post war aviation.

Deadline for 'The Quadrant'

Just a reminder from Capt Geoff Popovits, the Assistance Adjutant of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, that the deadline for articles the upcoming Quadrant is Monday, 31 January 2011. Please remember that all pictures accompanying articles must not be embedded within the article. The ideal length of article is about one page or approx 600-900 words.

This is also the same deadline for the photo contest (\$200 prize). So far they have 1 entry, so if you have an aspiring photographer out there, have them submit. Any photos received after the deadline will be automatically be entered for the next issue. All photos must be accompanied by a title and caption to include who took it as well a brief description.

Any articles that are received, but not published, will be carried over to the next issue. For more details go to www.artillery.net

Burns Dinner 2011

The 15 Fd Regimental Society put on another very successful Burns dinner at the BCIT Aerospace Centre last Saturday.

Approximately 100 attendees enjoyed a great dinner and the entertainment provided by the Regimental Band, the Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada and a Scottish dancing group called the Clarion Dancers.

Proceed from the dinner go to assist members of the Regimental family with

bursaries, and educational assistance etc. This was the third annual dinner and the Society hopes to hold another in 2012.



Dues - 2011

Dues for 15Fd Officers Mess Associates and RUSI Vancouver members are now payable. Please note that both organizations, after many years, raised the dues amounts in 2009. Officers Mess Members pay \$60.00 per year and RUSI members pay \$25.00 per year.

Mess Dues:

Make cheques payable to: 15 RCA Officers Mess and send to:
15 Fd Artillery Regiment RCA Officers Mess
2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6J 2C7
Attn: Associate Members Rep

RUSI Vancouver Dues:

Make cheques payable to RUSI Van and send to:
LCol Keith W Freer MMM CD
524-666 Leg-in-Boot Square, Vancouver BC V5Z 4B3

RUSI Vancouver AGM

The Royal United Services Institute - Vancouver
will hold its

Annual General Meeting

*in the Lt Col Perry lecture Room
at Bessborough Armoury
on*

Wednesday, March 9th 2011
at 1330 hours.

Members who are excused attendance are counted towards the quorum so, if you cannot make the meeting, please inform me by email as soon as possible.

Malcontents and Mutinies Part 1

by Len Haffenden

Len is a member of the Naval Officers Association of BC (among others) and this story first appeared in their newsletter a few months ago.

MUTINY !, the very word is charged with meaning. Images of flogging, shooting, hanging, and mob violence come to mind.

I have the habit, along with many of you I suppose, of watching the TV show Jeopardy. A recent clue led very strongly to The Caine Mutiny as the answer, a good book, and a fine film with Humphrey Bogart playing the lead role of Captain Queeg. But so conditioned were the three contestants, that, like Pavlovian dogs, at the mention of the word 'mutiny', they stopped thinking, and all three wrote down Mutiny on the Bounty, so no one got it right, except me, as I had noticed a reference to the US Navy in the clue.

Before we leave the Bounty and Captain William Bligh, I'm sure you will agree that for any ship's captain, one mutiny is one too many, yet in his long career Bligh managed to have three: the well known Bounty incident in April, 1789; a second one as a part of the Nore Mutiny in 1797, and the third while Governor of New South Wales in 1808. There, his army officers mutinied against him, and put him under arrest. Bligh was, after two years, once again exonerated. Known later as the Rum Rebellion, it was more about Bligh trying to enforce the law in the young colony, and some corrupt officers making fraudulent land claims and distributing illegal spirits.

Mutinies are not restricted to life aboard ship, although that is often the case; there have been some dramatic mutinies on land involving soldiers and civilians. Think of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, which started with a few malcontent Sepoys and became widespread and bloody, involving men, women and children, no quarter given, and fearful revenge exacted later.

Much of the blame for the early stages can be laid at the feet of 'nationalist' agitators, who spread rumours that the new Enfield cartridges had animal fat on them: pig fat to defile Moslem Sepoys, and beef fat to offend the Hindus.

Actually, it was a synthetic grease, but this was no time for inconvenient facts. Thank goodness the Sikh and Gurkha regiments remained loyal, and the armies at Bombay and Madras did not rise up, or Britain would have lost India almost a century sooner than they did.

Let us consider some other mutinies, The Royal Navy at the Nore and Spithead in 1797, a Russian one, on the battleship Potemkin in 1905, a modern Indian one, in 1946, and some good old Canadian ones. Mind you, Canadians are much too nice to use the 'M' word, and Ottawa and the Press Corps referred to them as 'incidents', and on one occasion, an 'episode'.

Generally, sailors are a long-suffering lot, and it takes a great deal to push them over the edge. Shipboard mutinies tend to have common factors - poor food, bad living conditions, and excessively harsh discipline.

In 1797 there had not been a pay rise since 1658, that's 149 years! Decades of inflation had eroded the buying power of seamen's wages. The Spithead fleet mutiny was more of a "down tools, sit-down strike" rather than an uprising, lasting from 16 April to 15 May. Spithead was an anchorage near Portsmouth for sixteen ships of the Channel Fleet. There was no violence, no threats or killing, and as loyal tars, the crews let it be known to their captains that they were ready in a moment to fight the French. (the French Revolution was well under way, and many RN ships were on blockade duty.) As no single ringleader could be identified, the mutiny ended peacefully, no punishments, and improved pay and conditions were promised by Admiral Lord Howe.

At the Nore, however, there was violence, starting on the 12 May. (the Nore was a strung-out Thames estuary anchorage.) A ringleader was identified, Richard Parker, an ex-naval officer, actually, who led an uprising on several ships. He took over his own, H.M.S. Sandwich,

blocked the passage of merchant ships heading for London, and made demands far beyond those of Spithead. Parker called for Parliament and the King to make peace with France. He had sympathies with French revolutionaries, and tried to turn over three ships to them. The mutiny gradually collapsed, and Parker and many others were tried for treason and hanged, he from the yardarm of his own ship.

As a sidelight, William Bligh was captain of H.M.S. Director, a 64 gun ship-of-the-line doing blockade work in 1796, and he and his crew got along quite well. It was only when ordered to the Nore for a refit in May of 1797 that his ship got caught up in the general disaffection of the fleet. For the second time in his career he was removed involuntarily from command. This time it was not personal, and as the mutiny died down, he was one of the first Captains to regain his ship. While ashore "on holiday", so to speak, Bligh did useful work, acting as messenger between the Admiralty, the Nore, Yarmouth, and other ports carrying secret letters and reports. 1797 was not without further incident. In September, on the West Indies station, the 32 gun frigate H.M.S. Hermione was overcome, and the mutineers murdered Capt. Hugh Pigot and nine other officers and threw their bodies overboard. They turned the frigate over to the Spanish, although the RN got it back two years later.

In December, the crew of H.M. Sloop Marie Antoinette, 10 guns, mutinied, killed all the officers, and turned the vessel over to the French. There were three other single ship mutinies this year; one near Ireland, one near the Cape of Good Hope, and one off the coast of Spain, but details are scanty.

So much for 1797, a year of mutiny.

The Russian battleship Potemkin was the centre of an interesting mutiny, playing a small part in the more general revolution of 1905. Fairly new, launched in 1904, she was a 13,000 ton pre-dreadnought based at Odessa. She was a key vessel in the Black Sea fleet. Morale in the Russian navy was at a very low ebb in 1905, partly because of the recent defeats of their Pacific fleet and their Baltic fleet at the hands of a modern and aggressive Imperial Japanese Navy. Add to this very bad food and overly harsh discipline, mix well, and you have one mutiny, June, 1905.

Unfortunately, the actual events of this mutiny have been overshadowed by the spectacular black and white silent film version of 1925, Battleship Potemkin, directed by Sergei Eisenstein. This was a landmark film using several new techniques. There must be few among us who do not recall the effective use of montage in the massacre scenes on the Odessa steps. The film was banned in some countries and the censor's scissors were busy in others, in that running time varies between 65 to 80 minutes.

The actual facts are not glamorous. Having taken the ship and killed seven officers, including the Captain and XO, the mutineers seemed at a loss; there was no clear leadership. Two squadrons from the Black Sea fleet came out to 'take' the Potemkin, but in the event did not open fire, allowing her to sail through the middle. At this point two other ships left the line and joined up with Potemkin. This threesome then headed for the port of Constanta, Romania, although the two new converts soon changed their minds and went their own way. After 'giving' the ship to Romania, more than 600 of the crew 'disappeared into the woodwork' so to speak. Rumania was a weak country and their government was embarrassed by this 'white elephant' gift. After a decent interval the Potemkin was returned to Russia, where the Government promptly re-named the ship.

There is a final footnote, which is almost comic. One of the Russian sailors, Ivan Beshoff, heading out into the diaspora throughout Romania, eventually reached Dublin, Ireland, where he married, and soon after opened up a fish & chip shop. Conditions must have been favourable, for he died in 1987 at the age of 102 !

Watch for Part 2 next week.



BC Regiment Irish Pipes and Drums Annual Whisky Tasting Night

The annual fundraiser for the Irish Pipe Band

DATE: Saturday March 5, 2011

TIME: 7:00 PM

LOCATION: BC Regiment Drill Hall
620 Beatty Street

Dress: business casual.

Kilts, of course, are welcome

Tickets: \$40pp (\$30 if you don't sample the scotch)

Sgt Rob Greenslade: (604) 294-2049

e-mail: rgreenslade@telus.net

CONTACT: **Sgt Pat Connell:** (604) 802-2576

e-mail: pdc_bby@hotmail.com

There will be food, beverages, draw prizes, and of course pipe music.

<http://www.irishpipesanddrums.com/>