

Mess and RUSI Vancouver Members News Jan 4, 2011

Wednesday Lunches

Our 2011 Wednesday lunch season starts tomorrow (Jan 5th) and we hope to see you all back with good appetites. We are the only Mess in the area that still has regular lunches but this can only carry on if our members continue to support it by attending regularly as well as bringing potential members and other guests with them on a regular basis.

The post lunch speaker programs will also start up again soon. RUSI Van has no speaker booked for this month but we should have something ready for February. NOABC has indicated that they intend to have a speaker on the last Wednesday of the month but have not announced any details yet. Both groups have noticed a drop off in attendance at the talks in the last year, to the point where a couple of the presentations had less than a dozen spectators, which gets a little embarrassing for the organizers. We urge you all to make an effort to attend these events or there is a danger that the programs will be discontinued.

Duty comes before Christmas fun

Controlling avalanches all in a day's work with military

THE TIMES DECEMBER 28, 2010

Canadian Forces' gunner Tanya Murray unloads a C1 Howitzer that will be used to control avalanches that threaten the Trans-Canada Highway and Canadian Pacific Railway in Glacier National Park, B.C.

Photograph by: Capt. Quentin Wyne/Canadian Forces

Abbotsford's Tanya Murray decided to spend her holiday season out of town this year. But instead of relaxing on a sunny Acapulco beach, gunner Murray of the 15th Field Regiment (Royal Canadian Artillery) is braving colder temperatures and more snow than she would have encountered back

home. Murray is on call 24 hours a day until early February during Operation Palaci, the Canadian Military's annual support to Parks Canada's avalanche control program at Rogers Pass.



("Like anyone, I enjoy being with family and friends during the holidays and I already miss my partner Michael, and my children Santana, Sierra, and Marshall," said Murray. "I know they will miss me too. But, they understand that what I am doing here is very important and will enable many other Canadians to enjoy their holidays." "That's what serving in the military is about, and we all accept that.")

She was deployed on Dec. 7 to the Selkirk Mountains that tower above Rogers Pass in Glacier National Park, and has been on duty everyday since. Using three C1 Howitzers fired from 18 gun platforms, Operation Palaci is the largest mobile avalanche control operation in the world. It helps allow upwards of 4,000 motorists and 40 trains to safely use the pass each day.

Murray is one of four members who fire the 105-mm shells high into the snow packs in an effort to reduce accumulations and the threat of avalanche. But there are challenges, and most of them are weather related. According to Parks Canada, avalanches kill an average of 11 Canadians a year and can be unpredictable despite over a century's worth of research.

"My job can change at any time as conditions arise," said Murray, who was named Regiment's 'Gunner of the Year' in 2010.

"I have to be able to work at a number of different positions on the gun, whether it be elevating the barrel, preparing and loading ammunition, or dealing with some of its accessories.

"The detachment commander will change us around from time to time to take advantage of our strengths, and to address any weaknesses. We all get the opportunity and the training to become skilled in each area."

This is Murray's first operational deployment since joining the 15th Field Regiment in May 2008. She is a member of the Regiment's B Troop, and an officer with the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps Columbia, both of which are located in Aldergrove.

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The latest weapon - AA-12 Fully Automatic Shotgun (Summary)

Designed for military use, the Auto Assault-12 fully automatic shotgun (AA-12) can spit out 300 rounds per minute, and has a range of projectiles, including the Frag-12, which is more of a miniature missile than a bullet: it has a range of up to 175 meters (575 feet).

First developed in 1972 by Maxwell Atchisson, the Atchisson Assault Shotgun utilizes the "Constant-Recoil" principle, a recoil attenuation/mitigation system that was first invented and patented in the late 1970's by legendary small arms designer L. James Sullivan developed for the Ultimax 100 LMG (Light Machine Gun).

In 1987, Max Atchisson sold the rights of Atchisson Assault Shotgun to Jerry Baber of Military Police Systems, Inc. The company in turn developed the successor simply known as Auto Assault-12, which was redesigned over a period of 18 years with 188 changes and **improvements** to the original blueprint.

Manufactured from "corrosion resistant, high impact, heat-treated stainless steels and high-impact plastics," the Auto Assault-12 (AA-12) can survive below zero temperatures, can be fired upside down or dunked in salt water. Due to the abundant use of stainless steel and the designed clearance for fouling, the manufacturer has claimed that the weapon requires zero cleaning or lubrication. The designer states that cleaning is required after 10,000 rounds.

Rounds are fed from an 8-round box magazine, 20-round drum mag, or 32-round drum mag. The AA-12 Automatic Shotgun also features a quick-change barrel system. Barrel lengths are from 13" to 18".

The original AA-12 (top) is seen with the shorter CQB version, along with both magazines.

Both guns proved totally easy to control.



To view the complete article, go to the RUSI Van website at:
<http://www.rusivancouver.ca/Downloads/aa12%20rev.pdf>

The problem with Veteran Affairs Canada? No veterans...

Editorial

By MGen (r) RICHARD ROHMER OC, CD, QC

The trigger for this column is a Canadian senator! Yes, a senator.

He's a tiger when it comes to the military, particularly when it comes to the matter of how Canada's Veterans are being dealt with by Veterans Affairs Canada.

Of strong concern to Senator Kenny is the treatment of our military who have been/are being injured in Afghanistan. The treatment? Not good at all as the national print media have been digging out the facts in the past few weeks. The Senator is particularly concerned with the inequitable treatment of Reservists who are injured.

And so he should be. And so am I. Why? I was the first Chief of Reserves way back in 1978 to 1981. As an Air Force general, combat fighter pilot from the Second World War, I found myself responsible for advising the CDS, the Chief of the Defense Staff, on all matters relating to the militia, the naval reserves and the air reserves. Back in those days the Reserves were hardly given the time of day by the Regulars. I started the decade's long push to change that attitude.

The Reservists now fill close to one third of the Canadian force in Afghanistan. They suffer death and tough injuries shoulder to shoulder with their Regular colleagues. But when it comes to compensation awards for the injuries the Reservists suffer--some of these are lifetime debilitating in the extreme--guess what?

The grand Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) ministry all comfortable down there in their cloistered headquarters in Charlottetown, PEI, will only give the Reservist a measly 40% of the compensation awarded to Regulars! Only 40%. That demeaning treatment by Veterans Affairs is disgraceful.

There must be a fundamental reason for the attitudinal indifference of Veterans Affairs to the Regulars and in particular to the Reservists. The reason goes this way. In my experience with Veterans Affairs in organizing the huge cross-Canada and in Normandy celebrations for the 2004 60th Anniversary of D-Day 6 June 1944 (I was chair of the VAC sponsored organizing committee) there are no Veterans in Veterans Affairs! There may be the odd one in the 1,300 VAC employees at Charlottetown, but in the management group I never discovered a single one.

Never. Instead, VAC clearly has a many decades culture of the sequestered bureaucracy well away from the mainstream of government. It is a society unto itself with Veterans as clients but none inside the bureaucratic fort.

No wonder the Minister of Veterans Affairs (no military experience, nor does his woman deputy) recently admitted that VAC wasn't ready for the Veterans from Afghanistan.

Can I take the non-Veteran VAC point event further?

If I want to object/complain about a decision by VAC against me as a Veteran (I do), I can only take my complaint to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board. Where is the Board based?

Charlottetown, of course. How many Board members are appointed including the Chair?

Twenty-three. How many have military experience? Four! And all four are army.

Generally speaking, the problems at Veterans Affairs Canada have their roots in the organization (from top to bottom) being bureaucrats to the exclusion of Veterans.

The only way to change Veterans Affairs in favour of instead of against Veterans is to convert the place into a department filled with younger Veterans of all three services starting with the post of Deputy Minister--if the Prime Minister can't find a Veteran in his caucus to be minister.

Seaforth Highlanders Maxim MG

I plucked this picture from the Seaforth Highlanders newsletter as I thought our members might find it interesting.



Prior to World War I, the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders of Canada had on issue a Maxim machine gun mounted on a carriage, complete with armoured shield. It is shown here at the 1913 summer camp held at Sidney on Vancouver Island. They no longer have this old Maxim MG, of course, but they did find a wooden training model in the attic of their armoury and this is on display in their museum. It can be seen that this gun is very similar to the Vickers machine gun, which the Seaforth also used, and to the German Maxim MG08 machine gun.



BC Regiment Irish Pipes and Drums Annual Whisky Tasting Night

The BC Regiment (DCO) Irish Pipes & Drums welcome you to attend their annual Whisky Tasting event. There will be food, beverages, draw prizes, and of course pipe music.

This is the annual fundraiser for the Irish Pipe Band which greatly appreciates your support.

Tickets are \$40.00 per person or \$30.00 if you are only having beer, wine, or soft drinks.

Dress is business casual. Kilts, of course, are welcome.

DATE: Saturday March 5, 2011

TIME: 7:00 PM

LOCATION: BC Regiment Drill Hall
620 Beatty St. Vancouver, BC

CONTACT:

Sgt Rob Greenslade: (604) 294-2049 / e-mail: rgreenslade@telus.net

Sgt Pat Connell: (604) 802-2576 / e-mail: pdcbby@hotmail.com

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