

## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Jan 21, 2020

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at [bob.mugford@gmail.com](mailto:bob.mugford@gmail.com) to let me know you didn't get a copy.

**Newsletter on line.** This newsletter and previous editions are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: [www.vancouvergunners.ca](http://www.vancouvergunners.ca) and the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html> . Both groups are also on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=vancouver%20artillery%20association> and <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rusi%20vancouver>

**Wednesday Lunches -** We need your support to keep the lunches going. Hope all you regular attendees can keep coming. The Mess serves a great 5 course buffet meal for only \$20. Guests are always welcome, and we encourage members to bring their significant others and friends. Dress - Jacket and tie, equivalent for Ladies. For serving personnel, uniform of the day is always acceptable at lunch.

**Upcoming events – Mark your calendars** See attached posters for details.

- Jan 01** Dues for VAA, RUSI and 15 Fd Officers Mess Associates now payable
- Jan 29** Seaforth's Museum tour
- Jan 31** 15 Fd Centennial Reunion & birthday pty – meet & greet
- Feb 01** 15 Fd Centennial Reunion & birthday pty
- Feb 08** BCR Whiskey Tasting
- Mar 6** 78FH & 15 Fd Whiskey Tasting

### World War 2 – 1945

*John Thompson Strategic analyst - quotes from his book "Spirit Over Steel"*

**Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>:** TF38 sets course for a return to Ulithi: In the last three weeks, it has lost 201 aircraft (and 167 aircrew), in return for shooting down 615 Japanese aircraft and sinking 300,000 tons of shipping. Converging Soviet fronts threaten to turn all of East Prussia into a giant pocket. 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian Front (Konev) reaches the Oder and crosses it at Steinau. US 1<sup>st</sup> Army attacks on a broad front between Houffalize and St Vith, while British 2<sup>nd</sup> Army takes several towns in the

Roermond area. 2<sup>nd</sup> French Army begins offensive operations in the Vosges, concentrating on the Colmar Pocket. In Burma, British IV Corps takes Tilin in the southern advance towards the Irrawaddy.

**Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>:** US XIV Corps takes Bamban on Leyte. Slim's XXXIII Corps is doing a magnificent job in attracting Japanese attention around Mandalay, while his IV Corps continues to sneak up behind them. St Vith is back in US hands, while withdrawing German Armor takes heavy losses from Allied airpower. To the Germans, now much battered by Allied bombing, nightfighter pilots have become among their greatest heroes. One of them, Oberst Hans-Joachim Herrmann, has been flying bombers and nightfighters since the Spanish Civil War, and has flown over three hundred combat missions, before he became Inspector General of Night Fighters. For this he receives Oak Leaves and Swords to append to his Knight's Cross this day.

**Jan 24<sup>th</sup>:** 1<sup>st</sup> French Army reach the Ill River in Alsace and 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army reach the River Clerf. The first of five days of UK carrier raids on Japanese airfields and oilfields on Sumatra. Himmler is given a new job as commander of 'Army Group Vistula'. With the liberation of Calapan, Mindoro is almost freed. Elements of 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force have to depart their Sichuan Airfield due to a Japanese advance. Everybody's luck runs out sometime – the Japanese destroyer Shigure has been in nine battles from the Coral Sea in May 1942 to Surigao Strait in October 1944 and survived them all (sometimes with slight damage). Tonight, she is torpedoed by USS Blackfin and sinks with heavy loss of life.

*Essential Reading: Every library needs some impressive looking shelf filler and finding single copies from multi-volume editions of some history or another can be one of the small joys of the bibliophile with a lesser budget. In the late 1970s Time-Life books started to produce a mass of volumes on the Second World War – eventually coming out with 39 titles. These are pedestrian histories, and many of the authors for individual volumes are not that distinguished, but each one has some splendid and very unusual photographs and other illustrations. The volumes are durable, come without dust jackets, and can still be found in garage sales, second-hand stores, and so on. World War II Time-Life Books are always worth hunting down for a reasonable price.*

**Jan 25<sup>th</sup>:** East Prussia is virtually cut-off and the evacuation begins with all of the Germany's remaining surface warships and transports called in to ferry civilians and wounded troops to safety. Konev's troops cross the Oder near Breslau. 37<sup>th</sup> US Division takes much of Clark Field on Luzon. Hitler orders Operation Nordwind in Alsace to cease offensive operations. Iwo Jima is bombed by heavy bombers and shelled by USS Indiana. PFC Jose F Valdez of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division is on outpost duty with five other men near Rosenkranz, France, when two companies of Germans supported by armor show up. He engages the enemy, and then covers the withdrawal of his patrol back into the lines amid very heavy fire. He is then struck with an extremely painful wound but calls down artillery and mortar fire on the advancing Germans, bringing fire within 50m of his own position. This breaks up their advance, whereupon he finally crawls back to his own line and expires from his wound. He is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

**Jan 26<sup>th</sup>:** US 3<sup>rd</sup> Army crosses the Clerf River. Rokossovsky's Front completes the isolation of East Prussia. There are more British landings off Southern Burma. Already a highly decorated infantryman, 2Lt Audie L Murphy is commanding a much-depleted company of infantry in the 3<sup>rd</sup> US Infantry Division near Holtzwihr France, when they are threatened with envelopment by German infantry supported by six tanks. Murphy orders his men to fall back but stays at his CP to direct artillery fire. When the enemy tanks are abreast of his position, he climbs up on a burning US tank destroyer and employs its .50 Caliber machinegun on the German infantry with considerable effect (despite a wound) until its ammunition runs out. Stripped of their infantry support by his actions, the German tanks fall back, and Murphy rejoins his company and leads them in a successful counterattack. He is awarded the Medal of Honor.

*Essential Reading: As Germany's fortunes fade, Hitler places more and more of his faith in new wonder-weapons to salvage the situation; but Germany's scientific establishment was facing a remarkable series of handicaps, starting with Hitler himself. Those who remained in Germany had to work around strange Nazi beliefs, Hitler's notions of science as a quick fix, and with compromised principles and humanity. John Cornwell's 'Hitler's Scientists: Science, War, and the Devil's Pact' recounts the story of what happened to one of Europe's leading scientific communities.*

**Jan 27<sup>th</sup>:** 32<sup>nd</sup> US Division lands at Lingayen Gulf to reinforce the Americans on Luzon. The latest advance by 3<sup>rd</sup> Army has just about erased the Ardennes Salient made by the Germans. Soviet troops enter the Auschwitz concentration camp complex, liberating about 7,500 prisoners who had been abandoned during the evacuation. Memel in Lithuania falls to the Soviets and Poznan is surrounded. Chinese troops from Burma and Yunnan Province complete the clearing of the Ledo Road. One of the main components of the Soviet offensive power in the last two years are entire divisions composed of nothing but heavy field guns and multiple rocket launchers. These deliver enormous firepower. Marshal Leonid Govorov is made a Hero of the Soviet Union for his work in commanding Soviet artillery divisions over the past two years and for his epic command of the defences of Leningrad in 1941-43.

**Jan 28<sup>th</sup>:** The Soviet juggernaut in Poland trundles into Leszno and Katowice, and noses into German Pomerania. With the recapture of virtually all the territory lost in December, the Battle of the Bulge is finally over.

*Essential Reading: Samuel W. Mitcham's account of the Battle of the Bulge from the German perspective is another of the valuable works coming out of Stackpole Books. 'Panzers in Winter: Hitler's Army and the Battle of the Bulge' has some conclusions that have been underplayed in conventional accounts of the campaign. For a start, the enterprise was doomed from the onset, particularly as the congested roadways in the Ardennes kept the Germans from reinforcing and refueling those spearheads that (often at significant cost) made progress. Contrary to many views, Eisenhower reacted very swiftly to the offensive.*

# Letter from HM the Queen on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 15 Fd Regiment RCA



**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

Brigadier-General J J Selbie,  
15th Field Artillery Regiment,  
The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery.

Please convey my warm thanks to All Ranks of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery for their loyal greetings, sent on the Centenary of the formation of 15th Field Artillery Regiment, which is being commemorated today.

As your Captain General, I was pleased to learn that the Anniversary will be marked with a gathering of serving and retired Members of the Regiment, family and friends at Bessborough Armoury.

Your thoughtfulness in writing as you did is much appreciated and I send my best wishes to you all for a most memorable and enjoyable year celebrating this significant milestone in the history of 15th Field Artillery Regiment The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery.

**ELIZABETH R.**

2nd February, 2020.

## **Marine Lance Corporal's Bored Selfie Got His Unit 'Killed'**

*Gina Harkins Military.com January 11, 2020*

A junior Marine got his artillery unit into a serious bind after snapping a photo during a massive force-on-force training exercise in California's Mojave Desert. Ten thousand troops recently descended on Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms for the biggest training event of its kind in decades. The Marines, sailors and NATO forces faced drone attacks, cyber breaches and other high-tech challenges during the free-play exercise. But one team was taken out by a different kind of threat, Lt Gen Lori Reynolds, the Marine Corps' deputy commandant of information, told reporters at the Pentagon. "A Marine in that exercise took a selfie of him being bored," she said. "It showed in that selfie it was an artillery unit. You could geo-locate him, and you could see what unit it was. "They were like, 'OK, you guys are dead.'" It's a tough lesson for a young Marine to learn, Reynolds said. "And I'm sure that lance corporal was not happy," she said. "But it's OK to learn those things in Twentynine Palms -- we don't want to learn those elsewhere."

Last week, the Army barred about 100 paratroopers with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division from deploying with cellphones and other personal electronic devices, CNN reported. The North Carolina-based soldiers were sent to the Middle East amid rising tensions with Iran after the US killed one of the country's prominent military leaders in an airstrike in Iraq. The Iranians have sophisticated cyber capabilities. Military leaders have for years been warning troops that their cellphones and other personal devices could give away their positions overseas. Now-retired Marine Commandant Gen Robert Neller said in 2017 he wanted to end leathernecks' technology addiction. Cellphones, he said, were creating vulnerabilities. "You're going to dig a hole, you're going to camouflage, you're going to turn off all your stuff," he said. "... Because if you can be seen, you can be attacked." In 2018, troops' fitness trackers were also found to have shared sensitive information location data from military bases around the world. Reynolds is leading some of the Marine Corps' biggest cultural shifts in decades as the service tries to prepare for sophisticated new threats in the information space that can take down networks, locate troops and remove battlespace awareness. Maj Gen William Mullen, head of the Marine Corps' Training and Education Command, said Marines must rethink the way they fight. "We saw this out there at Twentynine Palms in an electronic warfare-type environment," Mullen said. "You can't do the normal command and control we're used to from Iraq and Afghanistan ... where you pick up the radio, everything's clear and you can always check on things." Every time Marines do that, he said, they risk being targeted or jammed

## **US Soldiers Learn Arctic Survival from Canadian Neighbors**

Nearly 40 Oregon Army National Guard soldiers with 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, traveled to British Columbia, Canada, Jan. 24-28, 2019, to participate in the Westie Avalanche Exercise alongside the Royal Westminster Regiment (RWR), 39 Canadian Brigade Group (CBG). *Sgt 1<sup>st</sup> Class April Davis reports on the US Army's website. 11 February 2019*

Ex Westie Avalanche is an introduction to arctic warfare focusing on winter survivability, cold weather tent operations, and light infantry winter mobility. The purpose of the exercise is to build winter survival skills while cultivating relationships between the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization allies. "Through active participation in light infantry engagements we continue to build our ability to conduct our mission in any environmental situation alongside partner NATO nations," said Oregon Army National Guard Lt Col Kyle Akers, commander, 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn. Akers emphasized that 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn Soldiers must be effective and ready to serve in any condition or terrain. However, Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers don't often get a chance to train in adverse winter conditions, an environment Canadian Soldiers are familiar operating in. "It's one thing to be able to tactically operate, but it's another thing to be able to sustain yourself throughout prolonged operations in arctic conditions," said Canadian Army Reserve Maj Greg Chan, commander of Alpha Company and operations officer for the RWR. "We thought it would be a good exercise to invite elements of 2-162 up here and showcase some of the skills that we have and share our knowledge with you."



*Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt Eric Givens (right), with Delta Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and Canadian Army Reserve Cpl Avery Whitty-Kirker, with Royal Westminster Regiment, 39 Canadian Brigade Group, use knives to feather kindling sticks as part of a fire making class taught by the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Rangers Patrol Group during Exercise Westie Avalanche, Jan. 26, 2019, at EC Manning Park, British Columbia.*

*(Photo Credit: Sgt. 1st Class April Davis)*

Canadian LCol Chuck MacKinnon, commander of the RWR, emphasized the importance of understanding different interoperability perspectives. "The US is our partner and the reality is we both end up operating together in places around the world," said MacKinnon. "Our armies are now intermingling so much, and what I found overseas is that we approach the same problem with two different perspectives. Understanding what we both bring to the picture and how we think differently is a huge advantage." The Oregon and Canadian Soldiers gained real-world interoperability experience by fully integrating with their peers. Each Oregon Soldier was paired with a Canadian Soldier to encourage the exchange of knowledge and skills. "With Soldiers on both sides being integrated, they're more likely to learn those different perspectives in a very short period of time," said MacKinnon. "They both get to understand the different language we have, cultural references, acronyms, and terminology, having different equipment, understanding how the different command and rank structures work."

The Canadian and US Soldiers worked shoulder-to-shoulder and camped together in combined ten-man infantry squads, known as toboggan or tent groups. "They all integrated at every level and I think there was great sharing of information," said Chan. "They [US Soldiers] got to

experience some of what Canada has to offer, but also learned a lot of the critical Soldier skills to survive in a winter environment." Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt Eric Givens, training non-commissioned officer with Delta Company, 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn, said the Oregon and Canadian infantrymen worked really well together. "It was just as if we were Canadians," said Givens. "Being integrated into their daily operations felt like I was part of the Canadian Army." The Oregon Guard Soldiers spent the first day of training, Jan 25, at the Chilliwack Armoury becoming familiar with the Canadian Army's arctic tent/toboggan kits, and learning proper procedures for tent group operations. "They were open to informing and teaching us; giving us ample time to get hands-on experience with their equipment," said Givens. The Soldiers received classes on cold weather clothing and gear in which the objective is to stay comfortably COLD: Clean, Overheating (avoid it), Layered, and Dry. The forecast for the weekend predicted highs around 30 degrees Fahrenheit and lows dipping down below 20. The Soldiers packed their rucksacks and assault packs in preparation for their frozen adventure, only taking what they could manage to carry on their backs. "You pack to survive, but you also have to count out your weight per pound," said Givens. "You have to decide if you want to be uncomfortable while moving, carrying more weight, or uncomfortable while stationary and packing fewer layers and thermal barriers."

On Friday evening, the Canadian-US formations were bussed to EC Manning Provincial Park where they had to establish a hasty campsite. The Canadian Soldiers blazed a trail through the snow with snowshoes and toboggans as though they were walking on clouds. The Oregon Soldiers' boots sank deep through the soft snow as they were weighted down with heavy rucksacks. "We were all cold and tired, but we laughed and made jokes about it, and at that moment you wouldn't want to be anywhere else," said Givens. "As infantry Soldiers, there was camaraderie in sharing the misery of being cold together." Together, the US and Canadian Soldiers worked under the cover of darkness to stake down their tents in the snow and set-up camp. Relief from the cold finally came when the tents were up, the stoves and lanterns were lit, and the Soldiers could finally cram together in their sleeping bags. "Even though we wore different flags, I was cold, and they were cold too," said Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt Dionicio Vega, with Charlie Company, 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn. "Everyone was dying to get that stove lit and that was our most important task. Once it was lit, there was a level of comfort and peace that came over."

The Soldiers didn't stay "cozy" for too long. Tag, "you're it" ... as their buddy woke them up in the middle of the night for a turn at pulling fireguard, manning the stove and lantern. That "tag" from their buddy came again too soon the next morning as they were woken up early to begin the day's events. Over the course of the next two days, the units rotated through winter mobility training, including cross-country ski lessons and snowshoeing. Several Soldiers had experience downhill skiing and snowboarding, but many of them had never been cross-country skiing and were surprised to learn how strenuous it can be. "Cross-country skiing really slowed us down," said Vega. "I don't want to do that again, but I was a real fan of snowshoeing and I will probably buy my own and pick it up as a hobby back home." Most of the Oregon Soldiers had never been snowshoeing before this experience. Their introduction to it was a 12-kilometer march along a steep, narrow path that winded around frozen Lightning Lake. Canadian and American Soldiers

took turns hauling the toboggans up and down the peaks and valleys of the mountain path, shadowed by towering trees drooping with the burden of heavy snow. "We were simulating an infantry movement, as close as possible, but without weapons," said Givens. "The Canadians set the pace and we were hustling."

There was little time to rest their aching muscles as the winter survival lessons continued on through the evening. Instructors from the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Rangers Patrol Group (4<sup>th</sup> CRPG) taught the Soldiers how to make a fire in winter conditions, tips for survival food, and how to construct snow shelters. The 4<sup>th</sup> CRPG assists the Canadian Armed Forces with national security and public safety missions in sparsely populated, coastal and isolated areas of Western Canada. "The instructors training us in these techniques are some of the best in the world," said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt John Rohrer, intelligence staff officer for 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn, who volunteered to lead the US Soldiers for this mission. "It was some of the highest quality training, learning how to survive in arctic conditions from winter survival experts who work for the Canadian government in the far north." Part of the exercise included establishing a tactical bivouac in austere conditions. As the sun went down over the camp on Saturday night, January 26, the Soldiers were instructed to forego their tents and build their own survival shelters where they would be sleeping in the snow for the night. The sharp winter night air stung their lungs as they feverishly dug through the snow to make arctic beds. "We were already in our tents warming up and finally getting a chance to eat, so we weren't too excited to get back out in the cold," said Vega. "But as soon as we got out there, all of us started working together on one task and we knocked out the first snow cave in 45 minutes. We immediately started working on another one." Vega said making snow shelters alongside the Canadian Soldiers ended up being his favorite part of the entire exercise because it was unique. "Many of us were doing this for the first time and we only had 40 minutes of training on it," said Vega. "We asked for the Rangers' expertise and the Canadian sergeants' experience and it felt good to know that we were doing it right."

Clouds of steam hung in the air above their heads with every breath and every word spoken on that frigid, sleepless night. The goal was to build the Soldiers' confidence, to recognize that they can endure extremely cold weather conditions. "From a tactical perspective, it's always good to enhance Soldiers' skills and situational awareness in an unfamiliar environment," said Rohrer. "You're forced to learn a new skillset, such as awareness for how to manage and regulate your body heat. The more times you do that, the better you get at the mechanism of adapting and the learning curve won't be as steep the next time." Givens, with ten years of service and two deployments (Iraq and Afghanistan), said he has a newfound confidence that he can operate in any conditions and any climate after this training. "I feel like I can confidently challenge different weather and elevations now, and maybe even go backpacking in extremely cold weather at Mt Hood or Mt Bachelor," he said. The training was also a chance to develop and/or refine standard operating procedures (SOP) for winter operations. Soldiers representing every company in the 2-162<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Bn participated in the exercise with the objective to take their new knowledge and experience back to their units and train others. "Unknowingly, the Canadians taught us to trust our own equipment," said Givens. "We never had the chance to use our [Extreme Cold Weather System] equipment to its full capability and this was the perfect opportunity to test it. So, I plan to develop a cold weather SOP with everything I've learned for the Soldiers in my unit."



Working and living together in austere cold weather conditions, the US and Canadian Soldiers discovered they have more commonalities than differences with their Pacific Northwest neighbors. Many of them made new friends that they plan to stay in touch with. "The two militaries are pretty similar, at the end of the day we are just guys, doing the same job," said Canadian Army Reserve Cpl Riley Turner, with A Company, RWR. "Being around staff sergeants and seeing different leadership styles was a good learning experience. We worked well together, and I made new friends [pointing towards Vega]." Vega agreed saying, "We are the same, there's really no difference. Two armies can come together. We may be different armies wearing different flags, but we all came together at end of the night joking about the same things and we overcame some stereotypes. So, I feel more Canadian and hopefully, Corporal Turner feels a little more American." The Oregon Soldiers said they want to continue this relationship with their Canadian partners and are looking forward to more opportunities to train with them again in the future. A sentiment the leadership in both the 2-162 and RWR also share. "This unique opportunity and relationship will help posture our units for future engagements with our different platoons and companies across the formation," said Akers. "We are committed to building readiness and an enduring, mutually beneficial partnership with the RWR and 39 CBG." "It's a great opportunity for members of the RWR to work with a partner nation and just be better infantry Soldiers and better prepared for future deployments," said Chan. "The more interoperability training that we can do always benefits our troops. It helps them become familiar beforehand, so the first time we're working together is not when we're deployed overseas."

This was the second time that the 2-162 Infantry Bn and RWR have partnered-up for a bi-lateral training engagement. In April 2018, the two units jointly planned and executed a multi-day infantry exercise known as "Cougar Rage" at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. "These training opportunities have turned out to be very beneficial lessons for both organizations, as well as the troops participating. You can't put a price on its value," said Canadian Army Reserve Maj Pavel Dudek plans officer for 39 CBG. "We want to continue this relationship with our Oregon National Guard partners and expand on it. We hope it will be enduring in nature."

## **CAF Personnel to Deploy to Newfoundland**

*Paige LeClair Jan 19, 2020*

Two hundred Canadian Armed Forces members have been called to Newfoundland and Labrador to offer support to residents following the record-breaking snowstorm over the weekend. "That could surge up to anywhere between 250 to 300 by tomorrow," said Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, from the federal cabinet retreat in Winnipeg. In an email from the Media Liaisons Office, Andrée-Anne Poulin, public relations officer said, "Last night, the CAF has commenced planning and begun activating forces. This initial planning work is essential to a coordinated federal response. It ensures that the CAF deploy with the right assets to the right locations. While this process takes a little time, it is critical to ensure we are in a position to provide the most effective support possible." The deployment of personnel on Operation LENTUS 20-01, will rely heavily on Reserve Force personnel who reside in the communities hit the hardest. Elements of Joint Task Force Atlantic's Immediate Response Unit, based out of

Gagetown New Brunswick and Royal Canadian Air Force assets throughout Canada will also offer support to this situation. Along with the troops, Sajjan said two helicopters, one of which is a CH-149 Cormorant, along with other aircraft have been called in.



*Montclair Street, Mount Pearl, NL, after the storm.*

*Photo credit: Benneth Morgan*

The expected tasks for the CAF members will include assisting with snow removal, providing required transportation, and checking on residents. “As we work closely with federal and provincial levels of government, we are taking steps to pre-position military aircraft,

equipment, and personnel so that work can begin in the affected communities as soon as possible,” said Poulin in an email. St John’s said its state of emergency would remain in place Monday, with the exception of private snow removal contractors, gas stations, and pharmacies for emergency medication needs. It is uncertain how long Canadian Armed Forces personnel will be deployed on Op LENTUS. “There is progress, I want to take the opportunity to thank the incredible volunteers and the incredible first responders who are on the ground,” says Seamus O’Regan, minister of natural resources, and Member of Parliament for St John’s South – Mount Pearl area.

## **Canadian Soldiers Tested Future Technologies of Military Equipment**

Over three weeks in August and September of 2019, Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) scientists and Canadian Armed Forces volunteers, came together at 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division Support Base Valcartier for the Future Soldiers Technologies Trial 2019. (Source Canadian Army) 16 January 2020

In three field experiments, they evaluated laser aiming device (LAD) and laser rangefinder (LRF) capabilities, as well as measures of soldiers’ mental workload. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Royal 22e Régiment – colloquially known in English as “The Van Doos” – took the lead in supporting this year’s trials and providing participants. “We spent many months coordinating this event because we believe it is imperative that we evaluate first-hand the capabilities offered by the systems currently available,” said DRDC defence scientist Mike Tombu, who was overall coordinator for the trial. “This was not about testing products or evaluating shooters. We wanted to gather input from those individuals who will be using our research to gauge the value

of LAD capabilities, including LRFs and visible lasers, the impact of weapon weight on shooting performance, and the cognitive workload of advanced navigational systems.”



*Canadian soldier lases a target to determine its range in advance of engaging it with a stand-alone grenade launcher.*

*(Picture source Jocelyn Tessier Canadian Army)*

Valcartier, Quebec — Scientific advances need real-world testing to demonstrate their worth, particularly when defence and security issues are at stake. Grenade launchers clearly have an advantage over tossing. However,

the more distant the target, the less accurate the hit – whether propelled by an arm or a launching instrument. Laser rangefinders (LRFs) emit laser beams at the push of a button, which travel at the speed of light to then bounce off distant objects. The LRF’s high-speed internal clock measures the total time it takes from departure to return and calculates the distance travelled. This trial examined the impact of an LRF on the performance of grenadiers. As Mr. Tombu explained: “We asked the questions: Does the addition of a LAD with an LRF capability improve grenadier accuracy? Does the LRF benefit depend on whether the grenade launcher is configured in a stand-alone or underslung configuration?” To find out, the soldiers used a Colt Canada 40 mm Eagle grenade launcher in three different scenarios: a stand-alone configuration with leaf sight only; a stand-alone configuration with a leaf sight as well as a rifle-mounted LRF; and in an underslung configuration that included an LRF-enabled LAD. “Grenades have a relatively small kill radius, so accurate ranging is important,” said Mr Tombu. “This experiment evaluated grenadier performance with and without an LRF capability. If the addition of an LRF makes a difference, then determining where best to incorporate it becomes the next question – in the LAD, in the grenade launcher sight, or as a stand-alone capability.”

## **Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates**

Here’s the latest activities from the website of the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA:

Important things first! [Have you ordered your tickets for the Birthday Party?](#) There will not be a 100th Birthday Party next year! <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/centennial-page.html>

Adventures of Chief Warrant Officer Rob Wishnicki as Brigade Sergeant Major 2011  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/cwo-wishnicki.html>

WO Tennant’s adventure in Afghanistan in 2009 continues  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/afghanistan-2009.html>

Regimental Band newsworthy events 2006 <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/2006.html>  
Unit members in Cyprus 1992 <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/unficyp.html>

RSM McVicar awarded the Bronze Star  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1946---11th-res-aa-regt-rca.html>  
Salute for the Governor-General  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1946---15th-coast-regt-rca.html>

11<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Regiment lives fires on Spanish Banks  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1944---11th-aa-regt-rca-rf.html>

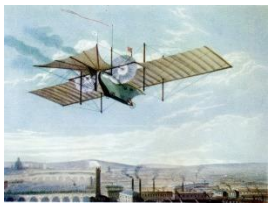
New CO for 15<sup>th</sup> (Vancouver) Coast Regiment  
<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1942---15th-vcr-coast-bde-rca-af.html>

Christmas calls from overseas 1942 <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/1942.html>

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

## Who (or What) Is It?

**Last Week:** I know this looks like a flight of fantasy, but it is the Henson Aerial Steam Carriage of 1843. The aerial steam carriage, also named Ariel, was a flying machine patented in 1842 that was supposed to carry passengers into the air. The Ariel was to be a monoplane with a wingspan of 150 feet (46 m), weigh 3,000 lb (1,400 kg) and was to be powered by a specially designed lightweight steam powered engine producing 50 hp (37 kW). The wing area was to be 4,500 sq ft (420 m<sup>2</sup>)., with the tail another 1500, yielding a very low wing loading. The undercarriage was a 3-wheel design. The inventors hoped that the Ariel would achieve a speed of 50 mph and carry 10–12 passengers up to 1,000 miles (1,600 km). The plan was to launch it from an inclined ramp. It was, in practice, incapable of flight since it had insufficient power from its heavy steam engine to fly. A more successful model was built in 1848 which was able to fly for small distances within a hangar. The aerial steam carriage was significant because it was a transition from glider experimentation to powered flight experimentation.



**This Week:** As it is winter, we have a seasonal theme this week. Many of you living in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver and Quadra's Island (the original name) will miss the sight of snow. For those who need reminding, it is akin to rain, but prettier. Would that we had it here, but, sadly, it is for the rest of this great Dominion to enjoy (*this quiz was written before the January snowstorm*). People here long for a game of shinny, or the chance to put chains on their tires, to say nothing of shovelling the stuff. Gosh! That must be fun. But we digress. This week's frozen photo comes again from our 12<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment source, (the photo album of Lt Col RH Webb) but is a post-war photo, taken in the late 1940s at that bastion of the north, Fort Churchill, Manitoba. To be accurate, it is the old lower camp, which was mostly

abandoned by the mid-1950s when the new one was built higher up. The advantage of the newer site was that, although it was windier, snow drifts didn't build up to the point of burying the buildings. Many of the wartime huts were still standing in 1962 when your author moved there, and contained lots of interesting kit, including 1940s pin-ups. Sadly, we pure-of-mind cadets did not collect them, as they'd be worth a bundle now.



Well, these guardians of the North are not standing about idly; they are watching an igloo being constructed (and later collapsing, as it wasn't built by an Inuit). All are lightly kitted out, so the photo might have been taken in August (or any

other month, for that matter). But what are they standing upon and around? It's small, white, and not moving. It is also quite rare. Rumours are that it is still there, sunk in the muskeg, although the same rumour applies to a Citroen half-track that really was half submerged in the town site of Churchill in the early 1960s. It was supposed to date from a pre-war Arctic expedition.

So, dear reader, what is this vehicle? That's all you have to answer this week before you get frostbite. Send your answers, heated, to the editor, Bob Mugford ([bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:bob.mugford@outlook.com)), or the author, John "North of 58" Redmond ([johnd.redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)).  
Cheemo!

### **From the 'Punitary'**

Why are eggs not very much into jokes? Because they could crack up.

### **Murphy's Other Laws**

An expert will always state the obvious.

### **Quotable Quotes**

Failure is success if we learn from it. - *Malcolm Forbes*

## **Dues 2020**

As of Jan 1, memberships dues are payable for 15 Fd Regt Officers Mess Associate Members, Vancouver Artillery Association and the Royal United Services Institute - Vancouver Society. Details below.

Dues for the **Vancouver Artillery Association** are \$25, payable to the Vancouver Artillery Association. Dues cheques can be mailed to:

Treasurer, Vancouver Artillery Association  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

VAA dues can also be paid by etransfer by sending payments to:-  
[president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto:president.vcrgunners@gmail.com)

Dues for **RUSI Vancouver** are \$50 (\$25 for students), payable to RUSI Vancouver. Send to:

Treasurer, RUSI Vancouver  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7

Dues for **15 Fd Officers' Mess Associate Members** are \$60, payable to 15 RCA Officers Mess. Send to:

Treasurer, 15 Fd Regt Officers Mess  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7



## 15 Fd Centennial Reunion

# 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment's

Open Messes

Live Music and Dancing

# 100<sup>th</sup> Centennial Reunion

Tickets—\$30

Band Reunion Concert

Equipment Displays

Food Trucks (included in the ticket price)



Bessborough Armoury  
2025 West 11th Ave, Vancouver

|        |                            |
|--------|----------------------------|
| 31 Jan | Meet and Greet 1800 - 2300 |
| 1 Feb  | Open House 1300 – 1600 &   |
| 1 Feb  | Reunion Party 1800 – 2330  |

[\\* click here for Tickets at Eventbrite \\*](#)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/15th-field-artillery-regiment-centennial-celebration-tickets-81257570581>



# Regimental Whiskey Tasting

*Hosted by:*



*The British Columbia  
Regiment  
Officers' Mess &  
Sgts' & WOs' Mess*



**Date:** Saturday, February 8, 2020

**Time:** Bar Open from 6:30pm - Late.  
Whiskies presented 7:30-10pm.

**Location:** Upstairs Messes of the British Columbia Regiment  
620 Beatty Street, Vancouver, BC

**Dress:** Casual Dress/Kilt Encouraged (No Jeans Please)

**Price:** \$60/person (Includes 5x Full Measures of Whiskey)

**\*\*For those not partaking in the Whiskey Tasting, the option of a \$20/person donation to the Unit Fund is available.**

**RSVP:** Tickets are available by presale only  
on a first-come-first-served basis!

For more information or to purchase tickets, email:  
Maj Adam McLeod, at "adamcleod@gmail.com"

Payment via e-transfer, no cash sales at the door.  
No cancellations after January 24, 2019