

REMEMBRANCE SOUVENIR

Volume 11 (2023)



A Salute to Canada's Fallen

Un salut aux militaires canadiens tombés au combat

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Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale



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581 Gore Rd, Kingston, ON K7L 0C3
 Telephone: 1-877-724-1219 • Fax: 613-283-2576
 Email: info@worassociation.ca • www.worassociation.ca

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CONTENTS / CONTENU

A Message from the Chairman/ Un message du président.....3

Construction of the National Wall of Remembrance Memorial to the Fallen Has Commenced/ Construction du Mémorial aux Canadiens tombés au combat de l'Association de la Muraille Commémorative Nationale a débuté.....4

We Will Remember Them: Operation Husky 2023.....6

Remembering Grandfather.....8

Currie Hall at 100: A Memorial and History of the Canadian Corps in WWI.....11

Canada's First War Dead - the New Brunswick Connection.....14

The Tragic Loss of HMCS Margaree.....16

The Heroism of Eddie Laporte.....18

Not For the Faint of Heart: Canada's Spy School in the Second World War.....22

The Crossroads of Peace and War.....24

Tribute to WW2 Veteran Peggy Lee, Chinese Canadian Ambulance Corp.....28

Courage et sacrifices au pays du Soleil levant : L'expérience des prisonniers de guerre canadiens.....31

Remembering the Fallen Paratroopers at Wegner Point.....36



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A Message from the Chairman / Un message du président



I hope this message finds you all well and safe in these trying times. I can report that the NWORA is in good condition as we continue to make great progress with our memorial project. Volume 11 of Remembrance / Souvenir, which you are reading, was recently completed by our Editor, Dr. Colin Magee, CD.

Our meetings with the City of Kingston staff continue with very positive results. The city has approved our preferred area of the Kingston waterfront just east of the Martello Murney Tower. There has been some unavoidable slippage in our timetable due to sourcing and scheduling sub-contractors, but by the time you read this, we will have finalized the archeological survey of the ground, completed a sod-turning ceremony, and hopefully commenced preparing the foundation for our memorial on King Street. We are very optimistic that 2024 will bring a successful conclusion to our primary mission.

Our Community Memorials Programme Committee continues to provide funding to organizations across Canada to renovate and build memorials in their communities. Our Education Outreach Programme is going full steam helping to educate students in those same communities about the sacrifices of their ancestors.

My sincere thanks to all NWORA Board members for their continued support in working countless hours bringing this project to fruition.

J'espère que ce message vous trouvera tous en bonne santé et saufs en ces temps difficiles. Je peux signaler que l'AMCN est en bon état alors que nous continuons à faire de grands progrès avec notre projet de mémorial. Le volume 11 de Remembrance / Souvenir, que vous êtes en train de lire, a été récemment complété par notre éditeur, le Dr Colin Magee, CD.

Nos rencontres avec le personnel de la ville de Kingston se poursuivent avec des résultats très positifs. La ville a approuvé notre site préféré du secteur riverain de Kingston juste à l'est de la tour Martello Murney. Il y a eu des glissements inévitables dans notre calendrier en raison de la recherche et de la planification des sous-traitants, mais au moment où vous lirez ceci, nous aurons finalisé l'étude archéologique du sol, terminé une cérémonie de la première pelletée de terre et, espérons-le, commencé à préparer la fondation pour notre mémorial sur la rue King. Nous sommes très optimistes que 2024 apportera une conclusion positive à notre mission principale.

Notre comité du Programme de monuments commémoratifs communautaires continue de contribuer des fonds à des organismes partout au Canada pour rénover et construire des monuments commémoratifs dans leurs collectivités. Notre Programme de sensibilisation à l'éducation fonctionne à plein régime pour aider à éduquer les étudiants de ces mêmes communautés sur les sacrifices de leurs ancêtres.

Mes sincères remerciements à tous les membres du Conseil de l'AMCN pour leur soutien continu; ils ont travaillé d'innombrables heures pour que ce projet se concrétise.

Sincerely, / Sincèrement,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary W. Coulter".

Gary Coulter
Inspector RCMP/CSIS (ret'd)

Construction of the National Wall of Remembrance Memorial to the Fallen Has Commenced



After over a decade of planning and fundraising, the National Wall of Remembrance Memorial Project has finally commenced with an archaeological assessment completed in May 2023, and an official Sod Turning event marking the beginning of construction in August 2023. The City of Kingston has graciously provided a prime and very historic setting in Sir John A. Macdonald Park between King Street and the Lake Ontario waterfront, just beside the historic Martello Murney Tower. This extremely prestigious and militarily significant historical location will ensure the memorial is easily seen and accessible to both Kingstonians and visitors. It is planned that the official opening of the Memorial take place before Remembrance Day 2024 at a date to be confirmed.



Mike Hill Photo

Due to the historical background of this site, an archaeological assessment was required. It took 4 days to complete this assessment, which ended on Wednesday 10 May 2023. This work was conducted by Past Recovery Archaeology Services Inc., located in Perth, Ontario. Jeff Earl was the coordinator for this project. Andy Snetsinger was the site supervisor; 8 other Past Recovery employees also worked on this assessment.

En raison du contexte historique de ce site, une évaluation archéologique s'imposait. Il a fallu 4 jours pour terminer cette évaluation, qui s'est terminée le mercredi 10 mai 2023. Ce travail a été réalisé par Past Recovery Archaeology Services Inc., situé à Perth, en Ontario. Jeff Earl était le coordinateur de ce projet. Andy Snetsinger était le superviseur du site; 8 autres employés de Past Recovery ont également travaillé sur cette évaluation.



Mike Hill Photo

From left to right: Jenna Neilson (Student Architect); Jennifer Demitro (Project Architect); Cathy Sharpe (VP Operations, iMedia Northside Inc); Jonathan Clarke (Shareholder, iMedia Northside Inc); Conny Glenn (District Councillor, Sydenham, City of Kingston); Bryan Paterson (Mayor, City of Kingston); Gary Coulter (Chair, NWORA); Mark Gerretsen (Member of Parliament, Kingston & the Islands); Ted Hau (Member of Provincial Parliament, Kingston and the Islands); Louis Cyr (NWORA Secretary/Treasurer); Bruce Ewing (NWORA Vice Chair); Debra St-Gelais (a NWORA Director); Don Kerstens (General Contractor for Project build).

De gauche à droite : Jenna Neilson (étagérien en architecture); Jennifer Demitro (architecte du projet); Cathy Sharpe (VP Opérations, iMedia Northside Inc); Jonathan Clarke (actionnaire d'iMedia Northside Inc); Conny Glenn (conseillère de district – Sydenham, Ville de Kingston); Bryan Paterson (maire, Ville de Kingston); Gary Coulter (président, Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale); Mark Gerretsen (député fédéral, Kingston et les Îles); Ted Hau (député provincial, Kingston et les Îles); Louis Cyr (secrétaire/trésorier AMCN); Bruce Ewing (vice-président AMCN); Debra St-Gelais (directrice AMCN); Don Kerstens (entrepreneur général pour la construction du projet).

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Construction du Mémorial aux Canadiens tombés au combat de l'Association de la Muraille Commémorative Nationale a débuté

Après plus d'une décennie de planification et de collecte de fonds, le projet de mémorial de l'Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale a débuté avec une évaluation archéologique achevée en mai 2023, et un événement officiel en août 2023 marquant le début de la construction. La ville de Kingston a gracieusement fourni un lieu privilégié et très historique dans le parc Sir John A. Macdonald entre la rue King et le bord de l'eau du lac Ontario, juste à côté de l'historique tour Martello Murney. Cet emplacement historique extrêmement prestigieux et important sur le plan militaire garantira que le mémorial est facilement visible et accessible à la population de Kingston et aux visiteurs. Il est prévu que l'ouverture officielle du Mémorial ait lieu avant le jour du Souvenir 2024, à une date à confirmer.



14 August 2023 - NWCRA Memorial Sod-Turning Ceremony - Before the Dig! From left to right: Conny Glenn (District Councillor - Sydenham, City of Kingston); Bryan Paterson (Mayor, City of Kingston); Gary Coulter (Chair, National Wall of Remembrance Association); Mark Genetsen (Member of Parliament, Kingston and the Islands); and Ted Hsu (Member of Provincial Parliament, Kingston and the Islands).

14 août 2023 - Cérémonie d'inauguration du Mémorial de l'AMCN - Avant le creusage! De gauche à droite : Conny Glenn (Conseillère de district - Sydenham, Ville de Kingston); Bryan Paterson (maire, Ville de Kingston); Gary Coulter (président, Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale); Mark Genetsen (député fédéral, Kingston et les Îles); et Ted Hsu (député provincial, Kingston et les Îles).



Future site of the National Wall of Remembrance Association Memorial to the Fallen in Kingston, Ontario. It will be located on the Kingston waterfront, next to the Martello Murney Tower at Sir John A. Macdonald Park, on a small patch of land between King Street and the parking lot.

Futur site du Mémorial aux canadiens tombés au combat de l'Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale à Kingston, Ontario. Il sera situé au bord de l'eau, près de la tour Martello Murney au parc Sir John A. Macdonald, sur un petit lopin de terre entre la rue King et le stationnement.

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We Will Remember Them Operation Husky 2023

By Patricia Dumais

Article first published on WestmountMag.ca and edited for Remembrance/Souvenir

Canada's participation in Operation Husky, the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943 during World War II, was one of the great exploits in the annals of Canadian military history. Sadly, unlike the Battle of Vimy Ridge or the Normandy invasion, it remains unknown to most Canadians, having received little coverage.

On July 10, 1943, more than 25,000 Canadian soldiers of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade landed at the beach in Pachino, Southeast Sicily, marking the beginning of the two-month-long Sicilian campaign, code name "Operation Husky."

The July-August 1943 campaign was arduous, fought through hot, dusty country devoid of shade and plagued with malaria. The Canadian soldiers were well trained but inexperienced. The Germans would exact a toll of over 2,310 casualties, including over 560 dead, 84 captured and 17 missing in Sicily. But the "Red Patch Devils," as the Canadians were known, would take a far greater toll on their adversaries and push them back. After conquering the Germans on the island, the allied armies would move to the Italian mainland.

My father, Ludger Dumais, participated in Operation Husky as a First Canadian Infantry Division gunner. Like most veterans, he

rarely spoke about the war but mentioned his time in Sicily. I did not press him for more information, as I knew that the war had affected him.

First organised in 2013 by Westmont businessman Steve Gregory, the Operation Husky Project was designed to commemorate those Canadians who sacrificed their lives in Sicily. This would be accomplished with a 19-day march along the path taken by the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the planting of hundreds of markers indicating where individual soldiers had fallen. He would work with local town and government officials, historians, and the military to get them on board in organizing special commemorative ceremonies. Not forgetting the civilian victims, ceremonies would also take place in cemeteries. The whole project would be a privately funded volunteer-led effort. Learning that my father was a campaign veteran, Steve invited me to join as a "marcher."

Operation Husky 2013 was a success, as was Operation Husky 2018 (5 years later). Operation Husky 2023 would mark the 75th anniversary which I was able to join.

I looked forward to walking in my father's footsteps and began training early. The Operation Husky 2023 walk known as the Walk

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IVAN CORBETT, M.Sc., P. ENG.
PRESIDENT



My father, Ludger Dumais, while in Italy. Courtesy of author.

for Remembrance and Peace (or WRAP), is 325 km long, from the beaches of Pachino to Adrano at the foot of Mount Etna, passing through 22 towns and lasting 20 days. We were to walk an average of 15 km a day, six days a week, with up to 35 km on some days.

The march started on July 10 after a first ceremony at the beach where the Canadians landed. A typical day began with a walk, followed by a ceremony before noon, usually at a local cemetery, to honour civilian victims. The afternoon was downtime being too hot, with most towns completely shuttered save for the bars and gelaterias. We would take some time off, have a siesta, or do some chores. After one of Chef Bruce's delicious suppers, we were out again, marching into a local town where more ceremonies were held. By late evening, we were back at our lodging, preparing for the next day.

As we marched through the towns, led by our bagpiper, the townsfolk would gather on balconies and doorsteps, waving us by. We had a good supply of Canadian flags and pins that we distributed freely – these were particularly popular with the children.

Arriving at the town square or war memorial, we were greeted by the sindaco (mayor) and other dignitaries, the police and military, and a host of local organizations. After the speeches, we laid wreaths honouring the fallen, Canadians and Italians alike. I believe the Sicilians appreciated this – it was not just about us, it was about them too.

Although it was, at times, unbearably hot, I enjoyed the walks through the Sicilian countryside. At first, the landscape seemed a bit desolate – arid, ochre-coloured hills punctuated by deep green vegetation here and there. In July, the grain crops have been harvested, and many fields lie fallow. But one would soon notice crops flourishing under

protective tarps – tomatoes, squash and other vegetables – and olive, citrus, almond, and pistachio groves.

Further inland, gentle hills gave way to dramatic gorges and mountains. Most towns are situated on hilltops and require some effort to reach. I could only think about what my father and his comrades had to endure, marching through this incredibly rough terrain with heavy packs on their backs and little water in the hottest months of the year, all while the Germans watched from the hilltops.

One of my most memorable moments was a visit to the Canadian Military Cemetery in Agira where most of the 560 Canadian war casualties were buried. The cemetery is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen, perched high on a hilltop with a superb view of turquoise Lake Pozzillo and soaring Mount Etna. Faces of Agira, a project of the D-Day Dodgers Foundation, had placed a photo of each soldier at their grave. I paused before each one, reading the soldier's name and looking at their photo – so many young men whose lives were cut short...

On July 29, the final commemorative ceremony was held at the cemetery, where a roll call took place in which those present were asked to take the place of a soul lost in the conflict, stand at the chosen headstone and respond on behalf of the fallen when his name was called out. It was particularly touching to see some graves visited by actual relatives of the fallen person. Denis Gravel of the Wendat tribe conducted a moving ceremony of gratitude on behalf of the aboriginal soldiers.

Operation Husky 2023 was a meaningful learning experience for me. I discovered Sicily, a fascinating and beautiful part of Italy, rich in history and culture and finally realized what my father and others had to face back in July 1943. It took incredible courage and resilience on their part to ensure our freedom. Some paid the ultimate price, and we must not overlook that.

Patricia Dumais is co-editor of WestmountMag.ca and a nature enthusiast. Having grown up near a wetland that was lost to urban development, she recognizes the importance and benefits of conserving urban green space.



Operation Husky 2023 Commemoration in Pachino. Courtesy of author.

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C.D. Hope in France 1915 - seated left. Provided by author

Remembering Grandfather

By LCol (retd) Paul William Hope

This article records the service of Corporal C.D. Hope of the 1st Canadian Field Ambulance, 1st Canadian Division. It is the story of one Canadian's journey through the Great War. His experience was not unique, and he did not consider himself different from most of the 345,000 who served in the 1st Canadian Corps in France and Belgium 1914 - 1918. I had the pleasure of knowing him and my recollections form the basis of this article augmented by his Service Record, and information recounted by my father William Clarence Hope, who had a remarkably close relationship with his father, Clarence David Hope (CD).

Clarence David Hope, known as "Clary," was born in 1892 in the busy seaport city of Halifax Nova Scotia. His was a typical Protestant working class Victorian Canadian family with nine children. Halifax was founded by the British because of its excellent natural harbour and retained a constant military presence; a port for the Royal Navy's North Atlantic Squadron, protected by a garrison of British infantry based in the fortress on Citadel Hill. In 1900 the resident battalion was the 100th Regiment of Foot, The Leinster Regiment, and Clary remembered the day they marched out of the Citadel bound for the South African War. He was said to have wanted to go with the Leinster's as a drummer boy, but his mother prevented that. Instead, he grew up in Halifax playing hockey and baseball, which suited his 57 athletic build and active mind. In 1912 the Red Socks scouted him for tryouts in Boston, but he was unable to go, as his recently

widowed mother and younger siblings depended on his income and presence. In August 1914 Clary Hope was 21, working in the Halifax Post Office. He enjoyed his work, was active in sports and the militia (his Service Record states one year in the 1st Field Artillery Regiment) and was generally content with life. When England declared war after Germany invaded Belgium, he wanted to do his part for King and Empire under Canada's Red Ensign. It was not a spur of moment decision to escape domestic routine, nor a naïve boyhood dream of military glory, but the calm reasoned decision of a responsible man. He genuinely believed that Germany was wrong and had to be stopped, so he went to do his duty as one of hundreds of thousands of other Canadians. While he could have claimed exemption from service as a household breadwinner he opted to enlist and send most of his pay home.

He never viewed himself as a hero, just a normal man doing what was right. This view did not change throughout his life and reflected his strong stoic character, genuine patriotism, and deep sense of duty and justice.

Clary's goal was to join the first Canadian unit going to France with the 1st Canadian Contingent, and not to remain in Canada on garrison duty. He visited every unit in Halifax to find that only one was destined for France, the 1st Canadian Field Ambulance of the 1st Canadian Division. He enlisted immediately on 24 August 1914, set off for Camp Valcartier in September where the 1st Division formed and trained, then sailed to England in October.

In 1914 the Canadian Army was tiny and unprepared for war, so in August the country started to build an army from scratch. While thousands of eager volunteers enlisted, it would take months to train them. For the 20,000 men of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division this process began in Valcartier and continued after their arrival in England. They were not deemed ready to go to France until February 1915. The basic fighting unit was the infantry battalion of 1000 men, of which there were 16 in the Division. The 1st Canadian Field Ambulance's 247 soldiers were tasked to provide basic battlefield first aid to these infantry battalions and evacuate their casualties as quickly as possible by stretcher or wagon to Dressing Stations and Field Hospitals. While each infantry battalion had 16 integral stretcher bearers for daily trench work, the Field Ambulance provided augmentation to help with the higher number of casualties expected in large attacks.

CD Hope began a diary during this period, but the daily pencil entries contain only a brief word on the weather then a few words on the activity of the day. They mentioned tea and lunches with hospitable English families and sight-seeing in London, especially the world-famous Alhambra music hall from which he kept his program. The diary stopped in spring 1915, probably because he was too busy and the novelty had worn off, or like many others, he thought he had nothing significant to say.

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CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.

1. What is your name? Clarence David Hope
2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what County were you born? Halifax N.S. Can.
3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? Sophia Hope (Widow)
4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? 6 Fern St. Halifax N.S.
5. What is the date of your Birth? Oct 1 1892
6. What is your Trade or Calling? Civil Engineer
7. Are you married? No
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? Yes
9. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? Yes
10. Have you ever served in any Military Force? 12. A.D. 14r.
11. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? Yes
12. Are you willing to be attached to serve in the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force? Yes

C.D. Hope (Signature of Man)
C.D. Hope (Signature of Witness)

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, Clarence David Hope, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

Date 24th Sept 1914. C.D. Hope (Signature of Recruit)
C.D. Hope (Signature of Witness)

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, Clarence David Hope, do solemnly swear that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will do my duty bound honestly and faithfully against His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Peace, Crown and Regally, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

Date 24th Sept 1914. C.D. Hope (Signature of Recruit)
C.D. Hope (Signature of Witness)

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE.

The Recruit above named was questioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly sworn to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the Declaration and taken the oath before me, at Halifax this 24th day of Sept 1914.

H. R. Wright, Magistrate (Signature)

Attestation paper for Clarence Hope. Provided by author



1st Canadian Field Ambulance. Source: <https://cefrg.ca/blog/no-1-canadian-field-ambulance/>



Canadian Field Ambulance transfer point. Source: <https://www.royalcanmedicalsvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Horse-Drawn-Ambulance.jpg>

The first major action of the 1st Infantry Division was the 2nd Battle of Ypres in April 1915, where it performed well but suffered significant losses. The 1st Division was later joined by three others and a large support organization, which together formed the 100,000 strong 1st Canadian Corps. The Corps went on to fight in all major battles of the British Imperial Armies in France and Flanders until victory in November 1918. Corporal Hope was present at all major actions from 1915 to the end, having only two short periods of sickness and two short leaves in the UK.

In April 1917 he took part in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. He clearly recalled that the accomplishment gave the Corps a sense of a distinct identity. While he was a proud subject of the British Empire, after Vimy the 'Canada' shoulder title took on greater significance, symbolizing an increased consciousness of an independent national identity on the world stage, different from the quiet pre-1914 British colonial possession. Battlefield performance from Vimy on through the last '100 days' earned Canada the right to sign the Versailles Treaty as an independent nation. While acknowledging Vimy, CD Hope considered Hill 70 to be the Corp's toughest fight. In November 1918 Corporal Hope marched with the victorious Canadian Corps across the Rhine into Germany. In Spring 1919 he returned to Nova Scotia, but not to his home as it had been destroyed in the Halifax Explosion (his Mother being injured by flying glass).

At 26 years of age, Clary resumed work at the Post office, later married and raised a family, living in Halifax until his death in 1980,

age 88. He received his three war medals in 1921, sewed them onto a ribbon bar himself to take part in a parade in Halifax, and marched with thousands of veterans of the Canadian Corps. This was the only time he ever wore the medals. While he was intensely proud of his service in the 1st Division, he did not believe he was special and wanted to get back to living in peace. He did belong briefly to the Legion, but distained what he called "professional veterans," and was dismissive of fake patriots. He did however carry his Discharge Certificate in his wallet for years. While never again wearing the medals, for the rest of his life he proudly wore the small rectangular metal Red Patch pin of the 1st Division on the lapel of his Sunday suit. That pin is a most valued possession, especially as WC Hope, PW Hope, and IC Hope all subsequently served in the 1st Division. On occasional Saturday mornings CD would go to the local shopping mall and sit by the fountain with men who were comrades from the 1st Field Ambulance. As a child I remember Grampy taking my brother and I to get ice cream, then sitting among this happy laughing group. I was unaware of the significance at the time, but later realized just how important it all was.

When I asked about his experiences, he always told me funny stories, never anything sombre. My father however recalled CD saying the hardest task was going into "no man's land" after a major action to help clear the wounded. This involved physically demanding stretcher carries over broken ground to a point where the wounded could be transferred to ambulance wagons. Searching fought-over ground attempting to find wounded who may have gone unaided for hours or days was extremely grim. It exposed stretcher bearers to the most horrific sights imaginable: men torn, disfigured, or maimed,



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Stretcher-bearers evacuating casualties. Source: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1090&context=cmh>

but still alive. The injured silently faced a painful jolting stretcher journey, regardless of how careful the bearers tried to be. The bearers would also occasionally be faced with the deeply agonizing choice of remaining with a dying man so that he would not die alone, or to move on and try to find other living wounded. CD remained sensitive to this all his life and on his own deathbed quietly told his son to “take your Mother and Sister home” to spare them the last moments.

This experience changed him. Before the war he was Protestant, but the war altered that. He noticed that wherever the suffering and dying was the worst, one would always find a Catholic Priest. This contrasted with the initial official Protestant clergy policy restricting frontline service, which later changed. Corporal Hope also saw that Catholic soldiers seemed to take greater comfort in their faith when faced with imminent death. This stayed with him and resulted in his conversion to Catholicism, and later marriage to a Boston born Irish Catholic woman, Anne Edith Curran, my Grandmother. CD Hope’s Catholic faith remained strong throughout his life.

Another result of war was his increased fondness for animals, especially horses. He told my father that while dealing with injured men was his job, he found the plight and suffering of wounded and dying horses distressed him. He later volunteered to drive one of the unit’s horse-drawn ambulances. This may have been one of his ways of coping with the horror of it all. After the war he took summer vacations working on his brother’s farm in the Annapolis Valley, spending satisfying days driving a horse drawn bailer gathering in the hay.

After his death, the family was informed by the City Orphanage that Clarence David Hope had made yearly donations from his war pension, starting after the war until his death over 50 years later. This amounted to thousands of dollars, all given on condition of strict anonymity. My father remembered CD’s pleasure watching the boys

play baseball, little knowing that CD had provided the equipment. That enjoyment came from Clary sharing his boyhood love of the game, and his adult generosity, kindness, and humility. We were all amazed by the knowledge and it has provided a benchmark for our own behavior. While Clary would have quickly dismissed the idea that he was anything other than an ordinary man, I believe that his character, integrity, generosity, selfless courage, and sense of duty all embodied the very best of the 1914 generation of Canadians

In June 2022, the Department of Canadian Heritage officially announced financing the Canadian Anti Hate Network to produce 50-page guidebook for issue to all Canadian schools. The guidebook states that the Red Ensign (civil flag of Canada 1892-1965) is a “symbol of hate promotion.” This would have enraged CD Hope, because it is wrong, unjust, and a grievous insult to all who wore the ‘Canada’ shoulder badge serving under the Red Ensign. Failing to comment here on this unfounded notion would be a shameful betrayal of everything they fought for. Over 334,000 Canadians were killed or wounded in two world wars under the Red Ensign. They did NOT serve, as ‘cancel culture’ suggests, under a hate symbol. If this slanderous lie goes unchallenged, we will have indeed forsaken John McCrae’s famous injunction: “if ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders fields.”

Let this account stand on record as the story of one normal decent Canadian citizen among many, who quietly did his duty for Canada, to free a small foreign country from a destructive invasion, and to preserve freedom and democracy.

Paul W Hope is a retired Army LCol. The son and brother of former Canadian Army professional soldiers, he served in the Infantry and Intelligence Corps. He has operational tours with the UN in Cyprus, KFOR Kosovo with 1PPCLI, Somalia with the Canadian Airborne Regiment, and twice with ISAF in Afghanistan.

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Currie Hall at 100: A Memorial and History of the Canadian Corps in WWI

Based on talk by Dr John Scott Cowan on 15 Nov 2022, in Currie Hall

Edited by Dr Colin Magee | Photos courtesy of Bruce Ewing

Currie Hall is part of the Currie Building at the Royal Military College (RMC) of Canada in Kingston, Ontario. The Currie Building was decorated and dedicated as a memorial to the achievements of the Canadian Corps that served in France and Belgium, ultimately under the command of native-born Canadian, General Sir Authur William Currie.

Needing of refurbishment after a century of use, the generosity of graduates from the classes of 1959, 1961, and 1972 who raised nearly \$500,000 made this decorative painting project possible. Lost but recently found, the original painting plan was used to restore Currie Hall and other key parts of Currie Building to its original appearance. Amongst other things, the badges of all the units that served in the Corp are painted on the walls of the Hall.

There were several speakers at the event celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Hall which took place on 15 November 2022. We have selected the speech presented by RMC Principal Emeritus, Dr John Cowan, to explain this iconic structure.

Currie Hall, which was opened on May 17th 1922, is many things: it is a memorial to the Canadian Corps, a depiction of the whole history of the Great War, and an explanation of how we come to have a country called Canada.

In the 47 years from Confederation to 1914, Canada was not a country, but rather an internally self-governing colony. Britain declared war for us in 1914. But we did get to decide on our level of participation. Our population at the time was about 7.5 million, and an extraordinary 680,000 went into uniform, about 625,000 of them into Canadian uniform. Half a million went to Europe. Over 60,000 died, and 172,000 were wounded or fell gravely ill.

This service and sacrifice helped to ensure Canada had a seat at the negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles, and seat in the League of Nations. This hall tells that story of Canada's growth to a nation and country.

The overall design of the interior was by Percy Erskine Nobbs, a Scottish-born professor of architecture at McGill who had served in the Canadian Army during the Great War. This article provides a guided tour of the hall, highlighting some of its important yet often overlooked features.

In the centre of the bottom face of the front beam are the initials AC, for Gen Sir Arthur Currie, the first Canadian to command an army-sized formation in the field - the Canadian Corps which eventually became as large as some British armies. In the scrollwork at the ends of the same beam are the initials of the two Englishmen who commanded the Canadians before Currie - Edwin Alderson,

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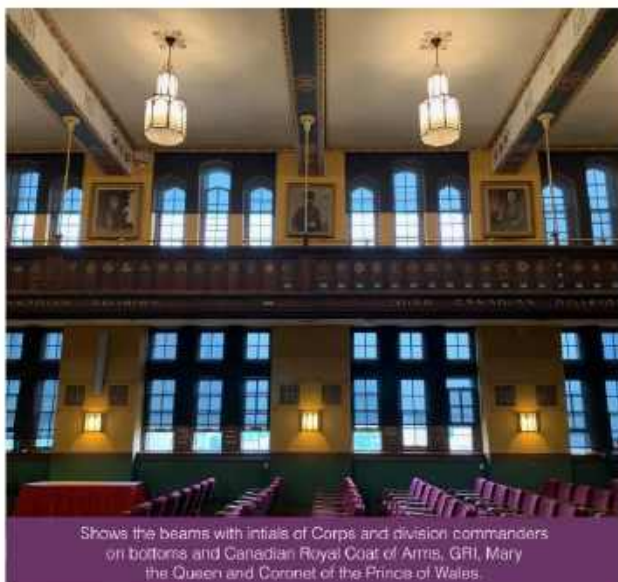
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and Julian Byng, who later became the Governor General of Canada. All the other initials on the bottoms of the beams, with one exception, are of division commanders of the Corps.

On the faces of the beams are royal symbols, the Canadian Royal Coat of arms, GRI for George Rex Imperator meaning George, King and Emperor of India; MR for Mary Regina or Mary the Queen; and the coronet of the Prince of Wales with the 3 ostrich feathers, who frequently visited the Canadian Corps during the war.

There are other initials on the underside of the beam an interesting one is "M", for Lt-Gen Sir Archibald Cameron Macdonell, RMC #151 who was commandant at RMC and built this hall. He had succeeded Curry to command the 1st Division when Curry got the Corps in June 1917. Interestingly, Macdonell's horse, Casey, came back to Canada with him, and is buried on the grounds of the College, near the Commandant's Residence.

The initials of the division commanders all line up with their portraits in the gallery, and with the badges and battle patches of the units of formation they commanded, arrayed on the face of the gallery, so that is Macdonell's portrait, and, on this section of the face of the gallery are the badges and battle patches of the 1st Division. The 132 oak panels on the whole façade of the gallery were painted by Major Duncan Forbes, a friend of Macdonell.

Next along is another "M", in this case for Maj-Gen Malcolm Smith Mercer, the first commander of the 3rd division. A Toronto lawyer, Mercer was injured during a forward visit at Sanctuary Wood in in the Ypres Salient on June 2, 1916, and died the next day, behind German lines. The next initials are "FL", for Maj-Gen Sir Frederick Loomis, who commanded the 3rd division during the heavy fighting of the last two months of the war.

The last one along that wall is Maj-Gen Louis J. Lipsett, a well-liked British officer who was in Canada prior to the outbreak of the war, and at Valcartier camp during the initial training of the first Canadian contingent and commanded the 3rd division from the death of Mercer, until September 1918, when he was given command of the British 4th division. When Lipsett left Currie didn't necessarily think he was losing a division commander,

because, by mid 1918, the British often put extra British divisions under Currie's command, and the 4th British division was one commonly used for this, so Currie was very comfortable with Lipsett commanding that division. Lipsett was killed on Oct 14, 1918, while doing a forward recon.

The initial on the other side of the back beam, another "M", is the one which is not of a division commander, but rather it is of Maj-Gen Sir Edward "Dinky" Morrison, who commanded the Corps artillery from December 1916 until the end of the war. The nickname was due to his short stature. Despite his long career as a gunner, Morrison was also one of two journalists commemorated here, as he was a long-time editor of the Ottawa Citizen.

There is no portrait of Morrison in the gallery. Instead, in that corner, there are two paintings, one of Currie, and the other is of J.E.B. "Jack" Seely, 1st Baron Mottistone, on horseback, who commanded the Canadian Cavalry Brigade for most of the war.

The next initial, "W", is for Maj-Gen Sir David Watson, who commanded the 4th Canadian Division from its stand-up till the end of the war. He was the other journalist and was editor and managing director of the Quebec Chronicle.

Next after Watson is Lt-Gen Sir Richard Turner, who commanded the 2nd Division for the first two years of the war. He had been a fine junior officer, winning a VC in South Africa, but was not effective in senior command, and in 1916 was sidelined to the UK to command Canadians there.

After Turner, the 2nd Division was commanded by Maj-Gen Sir Henry Burstall, RMC #246, who is the portrait closest to the front. Another gunner, who had commanded the Corps artillery before Morrison, then commanded the 2nd Division till the end of the war. In 1919, it was Burstall who made the motion at a meeting of the RMC Club that ex-cadets raise the money to build the arch. The motion passed, and today the arch remains a key step in the life of RMC cadets as they enter as officer cadets and exit through the arch as commissioned officers. Under the gallery are 19 crests, painted by Prof Ramsay Traquair and his students from McGill. They are effectively a walking tour mapping the Canadian war experience.





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The first is Quebec, from which the first three brigades departed for Britain by ship on October 1, 1914, after 2 months training at Valcartier. The second is Devonport, the naval station in Plymouth Sound, where they landed. There were concerns about submarines in the channel, or they would have gone to Southampton.

The next is Salisbury, for Salisbury plain, where the Canadian Division was miserably housed under canvas for the winter on 1914-15. After that is the port of St. Nazaire, where the Canadians landed in France in late January and February of 1915, followed by Armentieres, where the three brigades were paired up with units of two British divisions, for a period of contact training in the line, before they took over a sector.

The next is the crest of Belgium, for all the years of fighting in Belgium, and the next is Ypres, for Second Ypres and Third Ypres. In the corner is Bethune. It is near Festubert, but after Festubert ended on May 25th, 1915, on June 1, 1915 the Canadians went into reserve billets at Bethune and where, on June 13th, they were allowed to turn in the hated Ross rifle and draw the Lee Enfield.

Next, along the back, is Bailleul, where the Canadian HQ was, on the Somme, for nearly 18 months. The next, in the centre at the back, is Amiens, and it is there for two reasons, being the battles on the Somme in 1916, but, more importantly, for the Battle of Amiens that began on August 8th, 1918, and is the beginning of the "100 days", the last 96 days of the war, when the Canadians just couldn't lose.

The 8th of August 1918 showed just how much technological change there had been in less than four years. Unlike the static trench warfare of the middle war period, the first day the Canadians took 8 miles, and the second day 3 miles. They used tanks, with some being dedicated to moving ammunition and water up the battlefield. The artillery also had to move up to five times a day to keep pace. They used coordination with aircraft. It was the first really effective use of the Canadian Independent Force, Roger Brutinel's force, because of a convenient road that paralleled the right edge of the battlefield. Ludendorff called Aug 8th 1918 "the black day of the German Army." The next crest is Lens. It is there for Vimy, in April 1917, but also for Hill 70, August 15-25th 1917, which was the first major engagement



Painting by Emily Warren, titled 'Canada's Tribute.'

of the Canadian Corps under Currie's command, and a watershed moment in tactics, technology, and how the Canadians began to differentiate themselves from a typical British Corps.

The crest with the three birds is Passchendaele, and after that are Arras, then Cambrai, for the whole Arras-Cambrai Road, the brilliant crossing of the Canal du Nord, the breaking of the Drocourt-Queant Line and Hindenburg Line. Next is Valenciennes, in the midst of the "pursuit", plus the action at Mt Huoy, with the perfect fireplan. By this point, the Corps is different from any British Corps. It is huge, at 156,000. The divisions have not been triangulated, and each division has twice the infantry of a British division.

A Canadian division has 3,000 engineering troops, vs 650 for a British division. Canadian divisions have one automatic weapon for every 13 men, vs 1 for every 61 in a British division, and 100 more trucks, compared to a British corps. During



the pursuit, the Canadians were different, having experimented extensively with open warfare doctrine.

The next crest is Mons, where the last shot of the war occurred, and, ironically, where the first shot had occurred in 1914 for the British. The last three crests are post-Armistice, representing going home or some R & R. They are the Port of Boulogne, City of Paris, and City of London.

At the back of the hall are two paintings by Emily Warren, entitled "Canada's Tribute". They were inspired when Warren, a famous painter of architectural subjects, saw a Canadian unit laying up their colours on the Wolfe Monument in Westminster Abbey, so as to avoid taking them into the trenches of the Western Front. At the direction of the War Office, the paintings contain images of 52 sets of colours, 77 commanders, and a variety of other dignitaries. After a colourful and controversial history, (you can ask me about it at the reception) the paintings arrived here in 1947, and about 20 years ago it was finally resolved that RMC owns them.

This hall can be a backdrop for a whole course on the Great War and is a sacred place. We are very lucky to have it restored.

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W.O. II James Edgerton Doan

Cpl. David Alexander Rennie

The crew of Delta 673 - W.O Doan and Cpl Rennie. Courtesy of Jim Coughle

CANADA'S FIRST WAR DEAD - THE NEW BRUNSWICK CONNECTION

BY HAROLD E. WRIGHT

Remembering and respecting our women and men who died on military service is as Canadian as hockey. Community museums, Church halls, Regimental and Squadron Associations, and Legion Branches have placed memorials and battlefield plaques across Canada and around the world for more than 200 years.

In his excellent article 'Lost in the Wild', Dave O'Malley of Vintage Wings Canada states that Warrant Officer Ted Doan, the pilot, and Corporal David Rennie, the navigator, were the first Canadians to die during the Second World War when their Northrup Delta 673 crashed in the forests of New Brunswick four days after Canada declared war on 10 September. They were flying to their station at Sydney, NS when the Delta was lost.

The RCAF, assisted by the private aircraft of KC Irving's Irving Oil, spent several weeks searching for the crew of Delta 673. Squadron Leader V.A. Margetts logged more than 80 hours overflying Shediac, Campbellton, Dalhousie, the Gaspé, and Edmundston. Irving's pilot Jimmy Wade eventually thought that Doan had flown over the Bay of Chaleur and was lost at sea.

For eighteen years the Doan and Rennie families had no closure, then

in 1958 a helicopter pilot of J.D. Irving Limited, was overflying their timber stands at Juniper, NB when he saw the glint of metal amongst the trees. Although an extensive search of the crash site did not find the remains of the crew, Delta 673 had been found. Most of the aircraft was removed and is now in storage at the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa. They were the first two members of the Royal Canadian Air Force to die during the Second World War.

In 2019 on the anniversary of the crash, the Turnbull (NB) Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical society, and J.D. Irving Limited, unveiled a crash site plaque and a monument stone to Ted Doan and David Rennie. Irving, who owns the crash site land, has set it aside in perpetuity as a preserved and protected landscape. When they were preparing the site for the memorial stone, a few more pieces of the aircraft were found, but still no evidence of the remains of the crew was found.

While preparing for the 2019 commemoration of the 1939 crash of the Northrup Delta 673 and the loss of the crew who we thought were the first Canadian casualties of the Second World War (SWW) a conflict of them being the first Canadians to die during the war came to the fore. The story uncovered is almost stranger than fiction and shows a unique connection to New Brunswick.



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Doan and Rennie died at 1:10 pm (Atlantic Time) on 14 September 1939, four days after war was declared. While they were the first of many Canadians to die in SWW, they were not the first. Between the 10th and 14th of September seven Canadian servicemen died, five of whom were members of the Canadian Army, it is within this context that the loss of the crew of Delta 673 is framed.

The first Canadian to die on service was 38 years old Corporal Charles Brown Wynn, of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders. He was struck by a train on 09 September at 9 pm and died early the next morning at the Truro hospital. He was not on duty when he was hit by the train. Charles is buried in the Truro Cemetery at Truro, NS, where his two brothers who died during the First World War, Private Harry Ernest Wynn was killed in action on 4 October 1917 and Private John Wynn, who died in Truro on 26 July 1916, also lay.

The second serviceman to die was Private Victor Tremblay of the Royal 22nd Regiment. He was stationed at Quebec City and had joined the Regiment on 05 September 1939. Private Tremblay fell onto the parade square while on duty and hit his head, later dying at the Quebec Military Hospital of a fractured skull at 1:10 pm (Atlantic Time). He is buried at the Quebec City (Notre Dame de Belmont) Cemetery.

The third and fourth casualties died at the same time. Private Aurele Joseph Cheverie and Lance Corporal Emery Earl Rogers were with the New Brunswick Rangers. They were on duty at Calhoun, NB guarding a rail bridge. It appears that they were struck by a train at 6 am (Atlantic Time). Private Cheverie is buried at the Moncton Shediac Road Catholic Cemetery. Lance Corporal Rogers is buried at the Moncton (Elmwood) Cemetery. These men died on 14 September, about seven hours before Doan and Rennie and seventeen hours before Bajus.

The fifth and sixth casualties were Doan and Rennie, in Delta 673. The seventh to die was Bombardier Norman Stanley Bajus of the 58th Field Battery, RCA at Point Grew, BC. He was an 18-year old student when he enlisted, Norman was on duty when he was accidentally shot by Gunner Cartwright, on 14 September at 11 pm (Atlantic Time), just

ten hours after the crew of the Delta 673 went missing. Bombardier Bajus is buried at the Vancouver (Mountain View) Cemetery.

An interesting quirk is that five of these seven men died in the Maritime Provinces, with four in New Brunswick on the same day. Another died in Quebec at 1:10 pm, the same time as Doan and Rennie. However, New Brunswick's unusual connection to war dead does not stop here. Canada's first casualty in the Boer War was Private Montrose Clinton Chappell of the Royal Canadian Regiment. Born in Baie Verte, NB in 1878, he became ill with tonsillitis and died in a hospital on 13 December 1899. He is buried in the West End Cemetery at Kimberley, South Africa. Of the thirteen cenotaphs built in Canada after this war, the first was built in New Brunswick in 1900. The Riverview Memorial Park in Saint John is dedicated to the 700 plus NB men and women who served and the fourteen who died during this war.

Canada's first dead in the First World War was Captain Ernest Rae Jones of Saint John, NB. Captain Jones was born in Saint John in 1877. After serving with the NB militia, he moved to the UK where he served with the 1st Bn., The Cheshire Regiment. He was killed in action on 14 August 1914 and buried with German Military Honours. He rests in the Wiheries Communal Cemetery in Belgium. His brother Major F. Caverhill Jones, a Boer War Veteran, died in service in 1917.

New Brunswick has a sombre connection to the first war dead of three overseas wars. All are commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Canadian Virtual War Memorial and undoubtedly local community cenotaphs or plaques. These seven men have a unique connection to each other, to New Brunswick and to Canada.

Harold Wright is an author on local heritage. His work has received recognition at international, national and provincial levels. An active member of the Turnbull (NB) Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical Society, The Memory Project, and the Friends of the NB Military History Museum.



Memorial Stone marking the crash site. Source: Turnbull (NB) Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical Society



The Tragic Loss of HMCS Margaree

By Commander James Brun

His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Margaree began life in the Royal Navy as a D-class destroyer named HMS Diana. Following the first operational loss of a Canadian warship, HMCS Fraser in June of 1940, Diana was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and renamed Margaree. HMCS Fraser met a tragic end off the coast of France, cut in half during a collision with the British cruiser HMS Calcutta as both ships were returning to England. 47 Canadian, and 19 Royal Navy (RN) sailors perished in the loss. Following their convalescence in England, many of Fraser's survivors embarked in Margaree, forming most of her complement, a mere two months after surviving that horrific accident. In one of the many tragic twists of fate during the Battle of the Atlantic, Margaree was sunk just two days into her first escort patrol. Similar to her predecessor the Fraser, Margaree was sliced in two during a collision with an allied ship.

HMS Diana was laid down in 1931 by Palmers Shipbuilding and Iron Company in Hebburn-on-Tyne, and commissioned into His Majesty's service in 1932. She displaced 1375 tonnes, was 100 metres long, and could make good an enviable 31 knots. Her complement of 180 men and officers crewed four 7-inch guns, one 3-inch gun, two 2-pound guns, in addition to the fitted machine guns, torpedoes, and embarked depth charges. On 6 September, 1940, HMS Diana was renamed HMCS Margaree, and commissioned into the RCN.

Margaree's arrival into the RCN's fleet was timely. By the fall of 1940, the Nazis had swept through much of Western Europe and threatened an invasion of Great Britain. Allied convoys, laden with vital supplies and provisions, were routinely attacked by Axis surface raiders and U-boats in the Atlantic. German submarines, operating from newly acquired bases in France, employed extremely effective wolf-pack tactics, localizing, attacking, and destroying Allied supply convoys. U-boats, arranged in patrol lines, carefully searched the Atlantic for prey. When a merchant convoy was detected by an Axis submarine,

it would report the convoy's position to headquarters, who would subsequently direct nearby U-boats to converge on the convoy like a pack of wolves, attacking together with overwhelming success.

Allied success in the Atlantic was measured by the "safe and timely arrival of the convoy at its destination." Paramount to success was avoiding the enemy. This was achieved through several mechanisms including the RN's Home Fleet, Naval Control of Shipping, and convoy escorts, like Margaree. When German surface raiders broke into the North Sea, the RN's Home Fleet, British warships which operated from the United Kingdom's territorial waters, pursued them, limiting their risk to convoys. To avoid Nazi warships and U-boats that were successful in evading the Home Fleet into the Atlantic, the Allies utilised an organisation known as Naval Control of Shipping to analyse intelligence and direct convoys away from awaiting enemy forces, or suspected enemy positions. Despite these significant efforts, convoys would still fall under attack. On these occasions, a convoy's naval escorts were its last line of defence. To protect a shipping convoy, an escort would occupy a position between the merchant vessels and the enemy threat to afford the convoy opportunity to evade and escape attack. Escorts would harass an enemy wolf-pack, and if able, pursue and destroy the enemy U-boats.

It was under these circumstances that HMCS Margaree entered Canadian service. Upon transfer to the Canadian fleet, she immediately underwent refit at the Albert Docks in London, in the midst of heavy air attacks, before transiting to Londonderry. On October 20th, Margaree slipped her berth and proceeded to sea on her first patrol which would take her across the Atlantic as the sole escort for OL 8, a fast convoy of five merchant ships, transiting at a brisk 14.5 knots. MV Port Fairy was ahead of MV Jamaica Planter in the convoy's port column, while the other three merchant ships were arranged abreast to starboard, 1200 yards between each column. Their first day underway was uneventful.



"HMS Diana, prior to its transfer to the RCN. Imperial War Museum archive PL 22639."

The following night, OL 8 was 400 miles west of Ireland when a squall closed in, severely hampering visibility. Margaree was patrolling at between one to one and a half miles ahead of the convoy, and in the heavy weather, her lookouts lost sight of the merchant ships they were escorting. Margaree's first lieutenant, Lieutenant P.F.X. Russell, was on watch. Russell reduced speed to allow the ship to gradually fall back within visual range of the merchant ships. This 'fall-back' manoeuvre was carefully explained to his relief when the watch turned over at midnight.

Just after 0100, Port Fairy's chief officer sighted Margaree close off his starboard bow. Port Fairy stopped her engines around the same time Margaree altered sharply to port, cutting across Port Fairy's bow. Desperate to avoid collision, the officer of the watch in the merchant freighter ordered his engines full astern to check the ship's forward momentum, and sounded three short blasts on the ship's whistle, to alert the destroyer, as well as Jamaica Planter astern, of its movements. It was too late. Port Fairy's bow sliced through Margaree just aft of her bridge cutting the destroyer in half.

Lieutenant William Landymore, who had survived Fraser's sinking, rushed from his cabin to the deck to see the bridge "smashed all to hell. Most of the crew had been asleep in their mess decks in the forward part of the ship, which now drifted clear of the after part. It quickly capsized and sank in under a minute's time. Every man in the forward half of the ship, and on the bridge, was killed - including the captain.

The force of the impact spun Margaree's severed stern around so that, for a moment, she was held alongside Port Fairy. Seizing the opportunity for escape, some of Margaree's engineers from the engine room, as well as off-duty officers, managed to scramble to the safety of Port Fairy's decks. Tragically, other men fell between the two ships and were lost. A small group of survivors remained aboard

Margaree, setting her embarked depth charges to 'safe' to prevent their ignition as they sank with the destroyer. During this time, the after part of the ship drifted away from Port Fairy. The small group of these brave sailors who remained in Margaree escaped from the wreck onto a Carley float and were recovered from the churning seas.

Once all survivors were recovered, Port Fairy fired 26 rounds from her 4-inch gun into Margaree, attempting to sink the crippled destroyer, which was now a hazard to navigation. The attempt was unsuccessful. After sunrise, a small party of Canadian survivors returned to their ship to scuttle it but found fires burning near the after magazine and were unable to board her. Port Fairy fired 10 more rounds into Margaree, and then rejoined the convoy with the destroyer still afloat. The next day, HMS Laconia scoured the location of the collision, but the remnants of Margaree were gone.

As there were no survivors from Margaree's bridge, a subsequent Board of Inquiry was unable to determine what caused the collision and sinking. We will never know if Margaree's bridge watch saw Port Fairy, or not. We will never know whether the destroyer's hard turn to port was an error, a misunderstood order, or an equipment malfunction. What is certain, however, is that the actions of those aboard Port Fairy following the collision saved the lives of Canadian sailors.

HMCS Margaree sank with 142 souls, 86 of whom survived the sinking of HMCS Fraser. The loss of two destroyers in collisions under similar circumstances several months apart was a significant blow for Canada's Navy. Unfortunately, as the fighting continued, Canadians would have many more opportunities to become accustomed with the senseless tragedies of war.

James Brien is a sea-going officer in the Royal Canadian Navy.

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Handley -Page Halifax Bomber. Source: <https://backtonormandy.org/the-history/air-force-operations/airplanes-allies-and-axis-lost/halifax/19128-LK8101944-06-23.html>

The Heroism of Eddie Laporte

By Dr. Randell Wakelam, Col (retd)

In the spring of 1944 Bomber Command struck dozens of targets not in Germany but in occupied France and Belgium. The raids were part of a larger plan to knockout key transportation links prior to the D-Day invasion in early June. With these links destroyed the Germans would, it was believed, find it almost impossible to send counterattack forces and necessary supplies to the areas of the landings. The attacks, which went on for several weeks were not without controversy. Arthur Harris, the dynamic and often provocative head of Bomber Command, had warned that his crews could not bomb with sufficient precision to guarantee that there would not be civilian casualties when attacking railway marshalling yards, roads and bridges often situated in the heart of Allied towns and cities. But the decision was made at the level of Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt and the attacks went ahead.

One such raid was carried out on the night of 22/23 May and it involved squadrons from 6 (RCAF) Group. The raid was reported as "accurate with much damage to the railways and the nearby Gnome and Rhone factory. Only two French people were injured." The 425 Bomber Squadron Operations Record Book, notes the loss of a Halifax B.III, LK 810, KW-Y, this aircraft carrying 16 x 500 lb GP was not heard from since take off and is considered missing."

Losing just one aircraft out of a force of nearly 100 seemed at the time a 'small cost' and was typical of the Transportation raids in the weeks before the invasion. It was certainly less than the 4-5 per cent losses that were common in attacks against Germany and much less than the disastrous attack on Nuremberg on 30/31 March 1944 where 11 percent of the attackers fell. But losing one aircraft and the seven men on board was a cost none the less. That one loss was a crew from 425 (Allouette) Squadron and this article is about them, and about the life of a bomber crew.

The 'skipper' of KW-Y was a 20-year-old Quebecois, Edmund Elie 'Eddie' Laporte. Like all Bomber Command crews, Laporte and his mates flew with an extra, and we can assume unwanted, member of the crew – fear. A Bomber Command veteran who survived the war, UK lawyer and author Miles Tripp, wrote about this reality in *The Eighth Passenger*. Canadian RCAF navigator Allan English describes in some detail the impact that fear had on many fliers who were in the worst cases taken off flying duties for lacking moral fibre or 'LMF'. Today we would more properly identify these men as having had operational stress injuries and PTSD. English has assessed that over 20 percent of crews experienced this psychological injury. Symptoms were relatively apparent with some crews experiencing unexplainable mechanical or navigation equipment problems that led to them aborting their flight and returning early; these were the 'waverers'. Others, and there was a strong tendency for this, would drop their bombs on the closest edge of the target area so that they could turn for home before encountering the heaviest flak.

Fear was ever present and for good reason. Casualty rates were always high, with the worst experienced during the first raids of the war in late 1939. These daytime attacks were disastrous with losses hovering around 50 percent; the shift to night bombing followed quickly. Night formation flying was deemed impractical and so crews would set off on their own to find and bomb the target somewhere in a darkened Germany. By September of 1941 it was recognized that bombing accuracy was poor at best, with less than 30 percent of crews getting within five miles of their targets.

But the night did not guarantee protection from German flak and night fighters, both of which were guided by an ever more effective radar and ground control system. Taking over Bomber Command in

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early 1942 Arthur Harris was advised that his crews were suffering losses averaging five percent on any given night. Higher rates were not sustainable. One way to reduce losses was by overloading the German defences and it was decided that crews, while still navigating individually, would be given routes time and altitudes so that they arrived over the target in a tightly packed 'bomber stream', often with 60 aircraft scheduled over the aiming point each minute. The added benefit of arriving on mass was that the targets could now be identified by 'Pathfinders', specially selected crews who would arrive over the targets before the 'Main Force'. The pathfinder 'master bombers' would mark the targets with high intensity 'target indicators', typically referred to as TIs.

Operational research scientists working in Bomber Command HQ predicted a less than one percent chance of air-to-air collisions and their findings were borne out through months of attacks, but the overall loss rate remained high. So high in fact that the same OR specialists informed Harris and his deputies that the chance of a crew surviving a tour of 30 'trips' was somewhere around 15 per cent.

This was the world awaiting Eddie Laporte and his crew in early 1944. Laporte's journey from Montreal to 6 (RCAF) Group of Bomber Command was not unique; but it is a journey not known to many outside the air force. And so his story begins in the recruiting depot.

Working for Canadian Pacific Railways as a junior clerk after completing one year of commercial school at Sir Geo Williams, Laporte entered No. 5 Manning Depot in Lachine Quebec on 21 November 1941, just past his 18th birthday, to sign up for the RCAF. His application complete he would have to wait until 25 March 1942 to be sworn in.

Laporte completed a year of ground and flying training on 16 Apr. 43. By then he had amassed just over 200 hours of flying, first on the Fleet Finch while at 13 Elementary Flying Training School at St. Eugene, located east of Ottawa, and then on the Harvard at 2 Service Flying Training School at Uplands/Ottawa. Not only was there the stress of mastering these new competencies, but fear came into Laporte's life even here as deaths in training accidents were too common. His course report perhaps foreshadowed his path towards bombers: "The student

exhibited the qualities of a high average instrument pilot. His clear hood [fair weather] flying was just average and he did not experience any particular difficulties except on aerobatics. He expresses himself well, very clean and neat and should make a good officer. Recommended for commission." And with that LAC Laporte became Pilot Officer Laporte and shipped out for England, where he completed his advanced flying course on the twin engine Oxford. His course report read: "Converting from singles [single engine aircraft], this pilot has completed an average course. He had difficulty with his landings before going solo and these are still rough now. General flying fairly good. Very keen and works hard."

The time was approaching to join an operational squadron. The policy of 'Canadianization' stipulated that all Canadians were to be assigned to Canadian units. But in practice crews often went where the need was greatest so Canadians often ended up in British or even Australian bomber squadrons. But Laporte and other French speaking Canadians were earmarked for the one French-Canadian squadron of the RCAF, 425 Squadron, les Alouettes, based in Yorkshire. At No. 23 Operational Training Unit Laporte was to learn to pilot a bomber and to lead a crew of five and was now 'crewed up' with a navigator, a bomber aimer, a wireless operator and a gunner. These five needed to meld together to operate as crew, while transitioning

to the Wellington III, an aircraft that had been largely replaced on front line duties, but was still a medium bomber with much capability. Laporte's course report shows that he completed all phases of the training and that his flying and test results were improving; he scored 78 percent in ground school, 68 percent in his flying and 62 per cent in leadership. Overall, he flew an additional 99 hours while at the OTU. His course report read in part: "He is an average pilot, who has been a satisfactory captain with a good crew control. He has shown a good average standard of kindness and efficiency, and has obtained average results throughout the course. One Nickel exercise has been successfully completed." That 'Nickel' exercise was an actual flight over occupied Europe to drop information leaflets over either civilians or enemy troops. These flights did not go deep into occupied territory and were thus seen as a relatively safe for inexperienced crews. Laporte

Flying Officer Edmund Eise LaPone. Source: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2846640>





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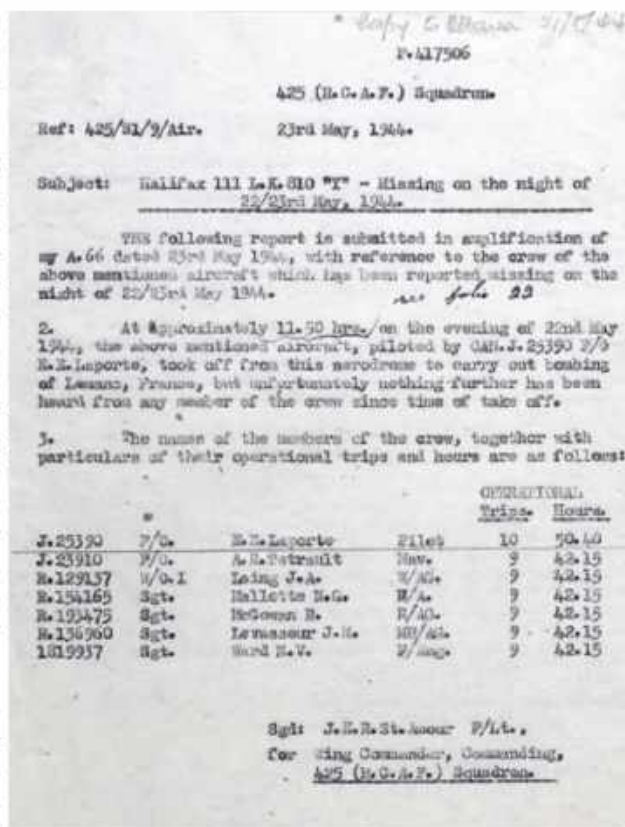
also participated in one Bullseye exercise in which the full range of German air defences were simulated in flight over the UK.

Laporte, promoted to Flying Officer in the following weeks, and his crew was joined by a second air gunner to man the dorsal turret and a flight engineer to manage engine performance and other aircraft systems. All of Laporte's crew were Canadian, with the exception of the engineer as there was no engineer training stream in Canada. The crew would have reported to a Heavy Conversion Unit in early January 1944 where they learn to operate a four-engine bomber. There is no record of which HCU they flew from in LaPorte's service records.

On 19 March, the crew was posted from No 61 (RCAF) base at Topcliffe, to 425 Squadron's station at Tholthorpe, just a few miles north of the city of York. There they were to find the squadron in full operation with a complement of 20 bombers. The crew was assigned to fly LK 810, KW-Y. In the phonetic alphabet of the time Y stood for 'York' or more informally 'Yorkie'. The name was no doubt seen as quirky given that the squadron was based only a few miles from the city of York.

It bears noting that all of 6 Group flew from airfields in an area known as the Vale of York – a long valley leading north from the city with high hills on both sides. This placed the group further from any target areas than the rest of the groups and so the flying times were longer and the fuel requirements higher. More fuel made the aircraft heavier on takeoff, sometimes over permitted maximum weight, and less easy to handle. Climbing out of the valley while avoiding the hills, and sometimes in bad weather would have more than replaced the fears Laporte felt during training.

After weeks of waiting Laporte and his crew took off for their first mission on 9 April. 15 aircraft were being sent to Villiers St-Georges to hit the rail yards. Bombing was accurate according to the ORB and all returned safely. Laporte was airborne again the next night accompanying 12 other Allouette aircraft to Ghent. Defences were light, bombing was accurate and all returned. This raid was followed by a week where the squadron was not tasked with ops; although considerable training did take place. On 27 April Y-Yorkie with 11 other bombers attacked Alloyd's marshalling yards. For Laporte



Updated report on missing aircraft. Source: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remember/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2846540>

and crew this was the start of an intense thirty-day period in which they were to fly on eight ops. The ORB records a confused attack with scattered TIs and confusing direction from the master bomber.

On the night of 1 May, 14 aircraft, Laporte among them, were tasked to attack St-Ghislain; all departed as scheduled though one aborted with an engine fire. For the next four nights the squadron was not tasked and training was carried out when weather permitted. Then on 8 May major ops returned. 13 aircraft, Laporte included, attacked Blaine St-Pierre. The weather was clear and the bombing well centred on the target. On 10 May yet another 'all available' raid was mounted, this time against Ghent. The aircraft, including Laporte's Y-Yorkie flew in clear conditions, and this time it allowed one aircraft to bring down an enemy fighter. After five straight nights of ops the crews were stood down on 11 May.

Laporte and 13 other crews were dispatched against Louvain the next night. One returned early with an in-flight fire and three could not identify the target in heavy ground haze. 12 May had also seen extensive training flights and ground training remained the main activity for the next six days as the squadron was not required for ops with a short pause on the 16th when Prime Minister King and RCAF leaders visited the squadron. Then on the 18th the squadron put up 14 aircraft, including Laporte's crew, for an attack on the coastal battery at Merville. Bombing was accurate, but as would be learned after the D-Day landings this attack and several others had not degraded the battery's abilities.

On the fateful night of 22/23 May, 425's op began with takeoffs just after midnight to ensure that the aircraft could operate under cover of full darkness. The full details of the raid were reported in the ORB: "14 a/c were detailed to attack Lemans, and all took off. 13 claimed to have attacked the primary and one is missing. One aircraft collided in target area causing damage to starboard wing. Aircraft returned to base and landed without causing any casualty. At H hour only illuminator flares could be seen, followed by yellow TIs at 0231 hours. All aircraft had to orbit and most bombed on yellow TI. Red and green TIs not seen. Bombing at first scattered and later well concentrated on yellow TIs. Explosions at 0235, 0237, and 0239 hours. Defences very slight. Weather: no cloud, hazy."



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The missing aircraft was Laporte's. Amplification of the missing status was recorded in a standard memorandum issued by the Squadron later that day. "At approximately 1150 hrs. on the evening of 22nd May 1944, the above-mentioned aircraft, piloted by CAN. J. 25390 F/O E.E. Laporte, took off from this aerodrome to carry out bombing of Lemans, France, but unfortunately nothing further has been heard from any member of the crew since the time of take-off."

Laporte may well have foreseen his fate in the days before the raid. Fellow pilot Jacques Cote, who completed his tour later in 1944, recounted.

We had shows that were hard. Like one evening, I had two [friends] who hit each other, together. There is one who came back... and we found the machine guns of the mid-upper gunner of the other plane in his airplane's belly. The guy who [went] down was a guy named Laporte, Tétrault [was his] navigator. ... Eddie Laporte, that day, he [had] said to me: "I bought myself a gasoline bicycle." "Well, that's okay, I just wanted to buy a bike." He said, "I'm going to sell it to you, I don't need it anymore. I have a motorcycle." So he says, "10 pounds." I said, "Are you crazy? 10 pounds! It's not worth 5 pounds. ... He said, "Jacques, tomorrow you will take it. It's yours. I give it to you." [Then], I understood what he had [meant]. I said: "Come on!" So that was it. He [went] down and they were killed. There were many premonitions. The padre, he said to me: "You, you never have the premonition. All the guys who [went] down, they had come to tell me."

But there was still no definitive word by early June and the squadron staff completed a routine Confidential Personal report. Perhaps ironically the assessment was approved on the eve of D-Day. Laporte was seen as "keen on operations, skillful, responsible"; this was the

second highest overall rating possible. There was no mention of Laporte's heroism, but it was as surely captured in those words.

When we think of heroism we often think of daring actions where the central figure takes supreme risks to accomplish some task, often to save his comrades in the face of enemy action. That act of heroism is most often observed by friend and foe. Eddie Laporte's heroism was no less remarkable but far less visible. After the stresses of training where a mistake could lead to death or crippling injury, he, and now his crew, were thrust into a pitch-dark world where there was no telling where the threat was coming from, and Laporte and his crew could not have been oblivious to the loss rates of Bomber Command. Even on those nights where ops were cancelled at the last minute the anxiety must have been considerable. In the air, the risk of enemy action, unseen until the flak or cannon shells exploded around the aircraft, was constant. Mechanical problems that could bring down the bomber, often fully loaded with bombs and fuel, were also a constant. The possibility of collision was far down the scale of perils, but it was not one to be discounted and something, we will never know what, forewarned Eddie Laporte to this possibility. Regardless he took to the air that night, his tenth op in just six weeks. His was an extraordinary heroism.

*Dr Randall Wakelam is a retired Colonel and a former air force tactical helicopter pilot, and has a PhD in history from Wilfrid Laurier. He has taught air power and military history at RMC since 2010 and is the author of *The Science of Bombing: Operational Research in RAF Bomber Command*.*



Graves of crew from Y for Yorkie. Left to right: F/O Edmund Elie La Porte, Sgt. Norman Vincent Ward, F/O Joseph O.A.R. Tétrault. Source: <https://aircrewmembers.com/la-porte-edmund-elie.html>



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Not For the Faint of Heart: *Canada's Spy School in the Second World War*

By Dr. Bernd Horn, Col (retd)

Canadian officers who served as Special Operations Executive agents arrive home in December 1944: (front, from left) Lieut. J.E. Fournier, Lieut. P.E. Thibeault, Capt. H.A. Benoit; (rear) Major P.E. Labelle, Capt. L.J. Taschersau, Capt. Guy Artois, Capt. J.P. Archambault. Source: <https://alanmalcher.com/2019/10/16/soe-canadian-agents-working-in-occupied-france/>

At the beginning of the Second World War, in the aftermath of the disastrous Allied defeat in Western Europe in May/June 1940, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill insisted on an offensive program of raiding, sabotage and subversion to deny the Germans sole control of initiative. He wanted to force his enemies to look over their shoulders to wonder when the next attack would occur, forcing them to tie down forces to defend their territory. One of the first initiatives, aside from the formation of Commandos, was the creation of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). The SOE, was a British secret service organization intended to promote sabotage and subversion, as well as covert intelligence gathering, in enemy occupied territory. It was designed as a "full scale secret service, the mere existence of which could not be admitted either to Parliament or to the press."

The SOE became responsible for "all operations of sabotage, secret subversive propaganda, the encouragement of civil resistance in occupied areas, the stirring up of insurrection, strikes, etc., in Germany or areas occupied by her."

The Canadian connection was not long in coming. Shortly after its creation, the SOE queried the senior Canadian Commander overseas, Major-General A.G.L. McNaughton, for Canadian volunteers. Specifically, they were looking for French-Canadians for service in France, Canadians of Eastern European descent for the Balkans and Chinese Canadians for Far East operations. Clearly, the racial, linguistic and cultural attributes, and knowledge of these volunteers would provide the SOE with, in many aspects, ready-made operatives. Inculcating the specific technical skills would just be a matter of training.

The Canadian volunteers, like the remainder of the men and women trained to serve in the SOE during WWII "were quickly made to forget all thoughts about Queensbury rules and so-called 'gentlemanly' warfare. ... [and they] were taught a vast range of sabotage techniques and bizarre methods of killing." Moreover,

they were thoroughly trained in advising, arming and assisting members of the various resistance movements in the enemy-occupied countries.

For Canadian volunteers, this extensive training began at Camp X, officially known as Special Training School (STS) 103, located on secluded farmland outside of Whitby, Ontario. The camp served two functions. The first was to train personnel recruited in Canada, such as French-Canadians and refugees from Eastern Europe for service with the SOE in Europe. The second function was to give top secret assistance to the American foreign intelligence service, an activity that could not be done in the United States (US) as long as the US remained neutral in the war.

Camp X was the first secret-agent training establishment in North America. It opened on 9 December 1941, and trained individuals according to their cultural groups. The officers, less the camp adjutant, were all British, however, the senior non-commissioned officers were all Canadian.

The training syllabus at Camp X was broader than any of the other SOE establishments. American students were given the Group B (Finishing School) training, as well as advanced instruction on propaganda. The Canadian SOE volunteers who were earmarked for deployment in enemy-occupied territory were given only the Group A (paramilitary) training. The rest of their instruction was completed in Britain. An official SOE report noted, "Courses at the school [Camp X] consisted of training in Intelligence, creation of an SOE organisation, unarmed combat, small arms, demolitions and incendiaries, and wireless telegraphy."

Joseph Gellery, a Hungarian born Canadian, attended Camp X. He described the camp as an unimpressive collection of wooden huts and out-buildings out

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in the bush. He remembered it had very tight security around it, despite the fact that there did not appear to be anything of any particular interest or value there. "When I arrived at the camp," Gellony recalled, "I was made a part of a group who were largely Canadians with Hungarian backgrounds. I also met some Yugoslavs while I was there, but we pretty much stayed with our own because that's the way it had been arranged."

Although agents trained in their cultural groups due to the desire to reinforce nuances in language and culture, all volunteers were first required to complete basic training, which lasted several months.

Gellony summarized, "We were trained to live by our wits, in any circumstance... On one occasion I was dropped off in Toronto, dressed in the uniform of a German soldier. My assignment was to take photographs of war materiel production factories. If picked up by the Toronto police, I was expected to be able to talk my way out."

Two critical components of the training were physical fitness and weapons familiarization. Durovecz recalled, "Physical training got tougher as we progressed. The idea was to survive not only punches but also the blows of a club or the butt of a rifle. There were exercises to maintain mobility in the most impossible situations." He also recounted, "There was every kind of hide-and-seek, climbing through pipes and fences, through the narrowest of gaps, over standing or moving objects, hanging on by the skin of one's teeth, then jumping down and disappearing - things a normal human being would not even attempt, thinking them impossible. But the impossible became possible after proper practice." Weapons familiarization was another key element of the training program. One agent revealed:

We were taught at Camp X that any object of everyday use could be a weapon: a box of matches, a lighter, a nail file, fountain pen, pencil - or anything else within reach. Even a newspaper, a hat, a glass of water, or a handful of sand could be a deadly weapon. One could blind an enemy for a moment, or divert his weapon-wielding hand when it mattered. The key was to catch on quickly and act with determination and speed.

Foreign and allied weapons were also an integral component of the training plan. One agent described, "We had to learn to handle our weapons blindfolded, by touch alone. We took them apart and reassembled them blindfolded. We learned how to conceal weapons, even when subjected to close observation and body-searches, as when entering a building."

In the end, the training was simply about killing. Major William Ewart Fairbairn, the unarmed combat specialist who learned his trade as a policeman on the treacherous streets of Shanghai, consistently reminded the aspiring agents, "You're interested only in disabling or killing your enemy... There's no fair play; no rules except one: kill or be killed." One operator acknowledged, "All of us who were taught by Major Fairbairn soon realised that he had an honest dislike of anything that smacked of decency in fighting."

The training itself was conducted largely within the confines of the camp, but some training took the recruits out into the public. One agent described, "beyond the guarded fences of Camp X, our training fields stretched out in all directions of the compass to faraway areas, covering hundreds of square miles from our central location." He affirmed, "The area from Oshawa to Toronto and the whole countryside tens of miles to the north provided all kinds of targets for the practicing of demolition, destruction, diversion, dissipation. We built imaginary situations that resembled similar targets and situations in the country to which we would be sent."

In fact, Toronto, particularly its railway station, was a popular venue. The agents studied the roundhouse, as well as the turntable platform that placed engines on their tracks. The agents were also taught how to start, get up steam and stop a locomotive. In fact, a number of prospective agents stole a locomotive and just narrowly escaped a catastrophic collision with a passenger train. Durovecz insisted, "It was an unwritten law at Camp X that this sort of mischief, however dangerous, should be regarded as a bold venture rather than an offence against good order and military discipline."

Another favourite target was the Oshawa General Motors plant, which at the time was an enormous industrial factory. The plant was a substantive contributor to the war effort manufacturing tanks, armoured personnel carriers, armoured vehicles and motorized artillery. Durovecz explained:

We first went on a survey of the works with a view to formulating plans of action. Places of entry and retreat had to be found. Finally, the plan of action, including calculated risks was worked out. Similar surveys were carried out at the Toronto Telephone Exchange, power stations, oil and gas depots and similar sites. Everything was, of course, merely simulated, but the experience gained was nevertheless invaluable.

Once Canadian volunteers completed their training at Camp X, they deployed overseas where they then had to complete commando training and their parachute qualification course. Upon completion of all qualification training, the operatives were then separated according to their respective skills and sent to specialized training centres prior to deployment behind enemy lines.

The Camp's true purpose was never revealed during the War. Camp X closed on 20 April 1944. Throughout the war, approximately 227 Canadians served in the SOE in the various theatres of the conflict. In addition, Canadian Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) personnel and those posted to Royal Air Force (RAF) units also served in the Special Duty Squadrons used to drop weapons and insert and extract SOE personnel.

The value of the SOE was immense. In a Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on 18 July 1945, General Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower's staff noted, "without the organization, communications, training and leadership which SOE supplied... resistance [movements] would have been of no military value." In the end, undisputedly, the SOE was a unique wartime creation that represented innovation, adventure and a fanaticism by its personnel to the Allied cause. With extreme courage, tenacity, guile and an underlying "the end justifies the means" approach to war, the SOE, in consonance with Churchill's directive and with an ever-present Canadian nexus, set Europe ablaze.

...

Dr Bernd Horn, is a retired Army colonel and is currently the CANSOFCOM Historian. Dr. Horn is also an Adjunct Professor of History at the Royal Military College of Canada.

Editor's note - Of an estimated 1,800 S.O.E. agents sent into occupied France between 1941 and 1945, only 25 men or two percent of the total were Canadians. According to author Roy MacLaren: "... the ratio of Canadians to other volunteers cannot be a measurement of the individual courage required to jump in the night into an alien land held by an enemy aided by informers. Of the twenty-five Canadians, seven were captured and executed, a higher proportion than for S.O.E. in France as a whole. But this statistic too is of little real moment; ultimately what matters is the resolve of those Canadians..."



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Cypriot refugees 1974. Source: Wikipedia

The Crossroads of Peace and War

By Colonel (ret'd) James Holsworth, CD, LOM

In 1964, as a young lad in Scouts, I was oblivious to the turmoil around the world and our nation's commitment to peacekeeping. A decade later, as a new Lieutenant posted to the Canadian Airborne Regiment, I was in a war between two NATO allies and what now had become peacemaking.

In 2024, Canada will commemorate the 60th anniversary of its contribution to Cyprus and the actions of Canadian heroes in 1974. Cyprus 2024 will remember OPERATION SNOWGOOSE and a war unknown to most Canadians. I am not a historian and bow to more qualified interpreters to fully capture nation's history and peacekeeping legacy. My aim in this article is simple, to remember!

Crossroads of Civilization

Cyprus has been at the crossroads of civilization since the early times of Phoenician trade and the Assyrian, Byzantine, and Persian Empires. It was a playground for Alexander the Great, Cleopatra and Julius Caesar, and on the routes of Christian Apostles, the Knights Templar, and the Crusades. By the 16th century, the mostly Greek-populated island was ruled by the Venetians, later to be conquered by the Ottomans.

After 300 years of Ottoman rule, Cyprus was leased to Britain to protect its sea routes via the Suez Canal. In exchange, Britain supported the Ottoman Turks against any Russian incursion.

When the Turks joined the Germans in the First World War, Cyprus was declared a British protectorate and later a colony. Although Greek Cypriots fought with Britain in the Second World War, nationalists pressed for Enosis, the union with Greece. Turkish Cypriots wanted the island segregated, thus creating intercommunal violence.

In 1960, an agreement between Britain, Greece and Turkey created the republic of Cyprus, with two sovereign British bases, Dhekelia and Akrotiri. Archbishop Makarios became President and Turkish Cypriot, Dr Fazil Kuçuk, Vice President, each with the right to veto.

Clearly, this arrangement was unworkable; Greeks were no



HMCS Bonaventure, 1964.
Source: VAC website

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UN Peacekeepers 1974. Source: VAC Website

closer to Enosis and Turks had no separate governance. Instead, thousands of Turkish Cypriots, about 20% of the population, were forced into enclaves. Unrest and violence continued.

By 1963, Markarios removed all Turkish Cypriots from the government which then ceased to function, casting the island into turmoil. A year later, the UN Force in Cyprus, UNFICYP, was established.

Canada was an original contributor to UNFICYP, alongside with Denmark, Ireland, and Finland. The Canadian contingent (CANCON) arrived in March 1964 by Air Transport Command and HMCS Bonaventure, consisting of a brigade headquarters, 1e Battalion Royal 22e Régiment, a Ferret reconnaissance squadron of The Royal Canadian Dragoons, and elements of the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Service and Ordnance Corps.

Until 1993, Canada maintained a unit-sized contingent rotating every six months, first in the Kyrenia Mountains, then in 1969 moving to Nicosia. Every Regular Force battalion, including The Canadian Guards, The Queens Own Rifles, and the Black Watch, deployed at least once, with artillery and armoured regiments rolling as infantry for Cyprus duty. Over 25,000 Canadians served on OPERATION SNOWGOOSE.

Today, there is one Canadian staff officer in HQ UNFICYP.

Cyprus 1974

In 1974, UNFICYP consisted of British, Canadian, Austrian, Swedish, and Finnish contingents. CANCON was formed by 1 Commando Group of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, commanded by LCol Don Manuel, with RSM Bert Rajotte, and augmented by the Airborne Battery, Field Squadron, HQ & Signals Squadron, and Service Commando.

HQ and Signals were located in Wolsley Barracks. With operations staff which included Captains John Joly and Ian Nicol, along with and Austrian civilian police, and Canadian



UNFICYP 1974. Source: Wikipedia

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staff at UNFICYP HQ. Observation Company was at Kronborg Camp, with four platoons deployed along the Green Line, and at Louroujina, a Turkish enclave 25 km south, while Reconnaissance Platoon patrolled out of Maple Leaf Manor. Administration Company and the Engineers were at Blue Beret Camp.

With tensions already high between Greece and Turkey over oil rights in the Aegean, Greek Cypriot nationalists launched a coup d'état, on 15 July attempting to assassinate Makarios, overthrow the government and invoke Enosis. Objectives were the Presidential Palace, Cyprus Broadcasting, the Airport and Cypriot Police station. As written by Ian Nicol, "the first indication of the coup was at 8:30 am when a National Guard T-34/85 tank rumbled passed Wolseley Barracks towards the Paphos Gate traffic circle and began firing its 85 mm gun and machine gun at the Police Station."

The Turkish responded five days later, with OPERATION ATILLA, an amphibious landing near Kyrenia on the north coast and airborne assault outside Nicosia. Fighting ensued at key sites throughout the capital, including around Wolseley Barracks and Ledra Palace Hotel. Mr. Andreas Magnitis, the hotel manager, was mobilized as a Lieutenant in the National Guard to defend the area.

Canadian Bravery

Caught in the middle, Canadians were helping civilians escape and often required to engage both sides. There were many acts of heroism. On July 23rd, one of the patrols came under fire. Paratrooper Joseph Plouffe was shot while trying to apply a tourniquet on wounded Captain Normand Blaquière; their ensuing extraction under fire led by Captain Alain Forand.

At the Airport, the Canadians negotiated a ceasefire, then stood firm under the threat of Turkish attack. With few anti-tank weapons and machine guns, the ad hoc force of Gunners, Sappers, and Logisticians, held the Airport. As Ian Nicol recounted, "the Canadians made the Turkish commander blink...The international



media – but interestingly not the Canadian – hailed their actions as the saviours of Nicosia."

Reinforcement was rapid. Within 96 hours the remainder of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, along with a Recce Troop from the Lord Strathcona Horse (RC), flew out of Edmonton. Troops were redirected from training in England, APCs and Lynx came from Germany, and Signal detachments from UNEF II in Egypt. Upon arrival, the Canadian Airborne Regiment reorganized back to its original order of battle.

As the Canadians reinforced, so too did the Turks prior to the second round. From the Kyrenia bridgehead, the Turks pushed out to capture one-third of the island, including major ports, and displacing thousands of Cypriots.

Canadians were again fully engaged along the Green Line, patrolling, bumping minefields, deploying Quick Reaction Forces to hotspots, evacuating Finns from Kykko Camp and Americans from the US Embassy, and mounting a deterrence force for Famagusta with the Swedes.

We hope to recount and pay homage to these events, and many more, on-site during the Cyprus 2024 pilgrimage.

Post-1974

As hostilities eased and cease fires negotiated, peace talks eventually divided the island by a 180 km long buffer zone. The humanitarian impact was huge, as more than 200,000 Cypriots became refugees in their own country. UN troops worked with the Red Cross to negotiate humanitarian relief, save lives, and coordinate the massive relocation of Turks to the north and Greeks to the south.

In 1983, a separate Turkish Cypriot state in the north was declared, recognized only by Turkey. Disputes, violence, and

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Canadian Peacekeeper Cyprus circa 1974. Source: VAC Website

frequent firefights continued. In 1988, soldiers of the 1st Battalion PPCLI were engaged when providing cover for medical extraction of a National Guard Sargent who had been shot near the Paphos Gate circle. The route from Fresenberg House became know as Patricia Way and is marked with a cairn.

To this day, Cyprus remains divided politically and emotionally.

Today, UNFICYP is a force of about 1100 military and police to monitor the buffer zone, and deal with land disputes, crime and ongoing tensions between the Turks and Greeks. Cyprus continues to be at the crossroads of an evolving world order, with Russia influence in the region, aggression over offshore gas rights, international crime, massive immigration, and human trafficking.

Cyprus 2024 will commemorate Canada's longest standing peacekeeping mission and the sacrifice of UN forces during the summer of 1974. The research team has found war diaries and historic maps, written accounts of the war, interviewed veterans, and prepared site visits, all to honour that courage. For Canada, two Stars of Courage and six Medals of Bravery were awarded, and five soldiers were appointed Members of the Order of Military Merit. No battle honour was awarded to the Canadian Airborne Regiment for its actions.

28 Canadians died while serving in Cyprus, nine of whom are buried in the Dhekelia War Cemetery. There are six Canadian Second World War aviators at rest in Waynes Keep Cemetery. We shall remember them with memorial plaques in Edmonton and Petawawa, Remembrance services in Cyprus and on National Peacekeeper Day, August 9th.

1974 was the deadliest period for our military since the Korean War. 15 Canadians were killed that summer, including the loss of UN Flight 51, six cadets at Valcartier, and five others in October from 450 Helicopter Squadron. Casualties in Cyprus were 30 wounded and two KIA, Paratrooper Lionel Perron and Paratrooper Claude Berger.

However, at the height of Canada's peacekeeping commitments, even the losses in 1974 were unknown to most Canadians. As Jaek Granstein wrote 'Canadians assume that there are no dead in peacekeeping...'

The reality, Canadians were caught in the middle of a forgotten war and engaged with NATO allies in combat. If there is a lesson for our military today, it is that success in any operation, even peacekeeping, requires tough physical and mental training, the ability to adapt, plus combat power and the will to use it.



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Women ambulance corps on parade 1940. Source: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/ehg/remembrance/people-and-stories/chinese-canadians>

Tribute to WW2 Veteran Peggy Lee, Chinese Canadian Ambulance Corp.

by Alison McLean

Canadian women had served as nurses in the Northwest Rebellion of (1885), the South African War (1899-1902), and the First World War (1914-1918), however, the war ended before an official Canadian Women's Auxiliary Corps could be formed. It wasn't until the Second World War that The Canadian Women's Army Corps, was formed. In 1939, Canada went to war and women across Canada, lobbied for the right to serve their country, and be recognized for their patriotism. Women as warriors was not a popular image due to gender stereotyping, so they filled the ranks of various auxiliary corps.

St. John Ambulance Nursing units were formed and deployed to the theatres of war from 1939-1945. At home, the St. John Ambulance Corp created the first ever Chinese Ambulance Corp platoon in Vancouver, British Columbia. In 1942 a young Chinese Canadian named Peggy Lee, "wanting to do her bit for Canada" set aside the discrimination of the time toward women of colour, and all women seeking non-traditional employment by joining the Women's Ambulance Corps, she was a brave young woman. At 19 years old, she was the youngest cadet of 20 other Chinese Canadian members in Second Company Platoon A, the only Chinese Canadian Platoon, in North America. The platoon drilled at the Seaforth Armoury in Vancouver, BC. Peggy, and the rest of her platoon, became very adept in nursing, first-aid, firefighting, and ensuring blackout protocols were adhered to by all civilians. Veteran Lee spoke fondly of her time serving in the Second World War.



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"I really enjoyed the Ambulance Corp. Our job was to patrol the streets, and make sure the blinds were down. We were told the Gambling Dens had white slavery. That was misinformation. They let me go in to inspect, even though I was only 19, and not supposed to go in. I took up all the St. John Ambulance Courses...I did everything. We did demonstrations at the Beatty Street Armoury. They made me an NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) ...We marched and paraded. At that time discrimination of all Chinese was bad. After the War, they gave us recognition in Chinatown, and treated us like humans. In 2002, I became a founding member of the Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society. I am very, very, happy we opened the Museum. I am so grateful I was part of it (the military). A lot of young girls are in St. John Ambulance now. I want to help more. I was asked to speak to schools and at the Vancouver Library, even in Victoria. I must admit being with the Ambulance Corp was the highlight of my life."

After WW2, Peggy Lee married, had four children, became a successful entrepreneur running four hair salons, and eventually a hair salon at Hotel Vancouver for over 20 years. She was very active in local politics and a long-time friend to the Honourable Grace McCarthy, the first woman in Canada to serve as BC's Deputy Premier in 1975. Peggy Lee, continued her philanthropic work with numerous charities. In 2014, at the age of 91, Veteran Lee represented the Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society (CCMMS) in China, where the Chinese Canadian World War Two Veterans were recognized.

Canada's World War 2 Veterans had a significant impact on our country. Veteran Lee overcame the racism of her time to serve her country proudly and with honour. I met Veteran Lee in 2005, when she asked me to document Chinese Canadian

stories to archive first person accounts told by the people who had lived through the racism of the time. She saw me as a friend and ally.

I documented the service of the veterans of CCMMS for 15 years. In 2010, CCMMS, ANAVETS, and WW2 Military nurses lobbied the Government of Canada for my press credentials, and raised travel funds for me to embed with Canadian and NATO troops in Afghanistan to continue to document Canadian service and sacrifice on the frontlines in *Outside the Wire* which became an award-winning TV special. Returning to Afghanistan in 2012, 2014, & 2016, I was able to continue to document frontline stories of courage in *Burkas2Bullets*.

Many of the CCMMS Veterans were devastated by the loss of so many Canadian and NATO soldiers in Afghanistan. Peggy was concerned about the plight of Afghan women and was impressed by the bravery of the Afghan Police and Military women. She knew what

it was like to prove herself as a young woman in military training. Chinese Canadians and other marginalized groups suffered daily discrimination in their formative years, yet they did not hesitate to join the war effort in many capacities. As a first generation Canadian, I am grateful to all of our WW2 Veterans, especially Peggy Lee and all women of colour who blazed a trail for the rest of us to follow.

How do you say goodbye to your hero and mentor?

On April 13, 2023, while on my way to visit Peggy at her care home I received a call from her daughter Deborah. Peggy passed away in her sleep with the cherry blossoms in full bloom. She was 99 years old.

Peggy Lee was the last surviving member of the WW2 CCMMS Veterans. CCMMS members that I met and documented were Veterans Frank and Bing Wong, Howe Lee, George Chow, Gordan Quan, William Marr, Tommy Wong, Monty Lee and Thomas Wong, and so many more. All of these veterans worked hard to advance Canadian Civil Rights for the next generation. They honoured the fallen each year at the Chinese Canadian Cenotaph and at Victory Square in Vancouver, Richmond, Victoria, other BC cities.

The veterans supported their First Nation friends and included First Nations veterans at all special events. They taught us about real inclusivity as Canadians. I am forever grateful to have documented so many Canadian stories of courage and sacrifice.

My children grew up speaking to many Chinese Canadian heroes. Their lives were enriched by attending the veterans Remembrance Day ceremonies and parades. They were the best of us. We will remember their stories.



Peggy Lee at 19. Source: Service, Vancouver Archives.

Peggy Lee's service to Canada has been recognised by many prominent Canadians. In 2020, Minister Harjit Sajjan recognised Peggy's service in a tweet stating "[Peggy] broke gender & race barriers to serve in the Second World War. Peggy also volunteered with St. John Ambulance at 19 years old & fought for the right to vote for Canadians of Chinese descent."

The Chancellor of the Priory of Canada, Andre M. Levesque, OMM, KStJ, OOnt, CD, said "It was sincerely an honour to personally meet Peggy Lee at her care home during my first official visit to BC as Chancellor last September. Meeting her in person further deepened my appreciation of her service to St. John and the sacrifices made during the Second World War while inspiring others, especially the young members who continue take an active part with St. John Ambulance in caring in our community. She will be missed by all, but her spirit will continue to live on."

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"As President of the Power Workers' Union, I am pleased to extend our continued support for this important endeavor. The National Wall of Remembrance pays tribute to Canada's fallen heroes and serves as a source of comfort to their families and loved ones. It will stand as an enduring reminder of our everlasting gratitude for all those who sacrificed everything to make this world a better place for everyone."

Jeff Parnell, President of the Power Workers' Union

Since its establishment in 1945, The Power Workers' Union (PWU) has been a proud partner in several initiatives that support and bring awareness to Canada's Veterans. Throughout our history, veterans have strengthened our organization as PWU members, members of the PWU Staff and elected leaders of our Union. Let us never forget the contributions that veterans have made towards our quality of life, and how much they are owed.



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Peggy Lee, CCMMS Velis. Photo courtesy of author.

Honourary Brigade Division President Richard N. Liu, MStJ, said, "I will always remember Peggy and so glad we were able to honour our WW2 Veteran while she was present with us."

Commander (Retd). RCN, King Wan stated, "Our beloved Peggy had an independent spirit and was a compassionate soul. Peggy's World War II service in St. John Ambulance was recognized in the eyes of her friends and she was embraced as a veteran comrade in our ANAVETS Pacific Unit 280. Her passing was a sad loss to us all. We will remember her."

"Today we celebrate the life of a historical icon of St. John Ambulance, British Columbia and Yukon! Ms. Peggy Lee who gave so much to the citizens of Canada, British Columbia and the City of Vancouver. Thank you, Peggy, you won a place in many hearts, especially mine!" R. David Valentine CSTJ, CD, AdC, Provincial Commissioner, St. John Ambulance BC/Yukon Brigade.

Deborah Rees Lee, Peggy's daughter stated, "Always humble and never seeking the spotlight, her tireless efforts were nevertheless acknowledged in books, and films, and she received many awards and honours throughout her life. Peggy was a humanitarian, fiercely independent, an amazing gardener, awesome cook, never complained and had a smile and helping hand for everyone in need."

Veteran Peggy Lee received numerous awards for her service to country and community. Some of her many awards are: St. John Medallion for Dedicated Service, Provincial Commissioner's Challenge Coin, Platinum Jubilee Pin, Veteran Affairs VAC Pin, Chancellor's Challenge Coin, BC Medal of Good Citizenship, The Variety Telethon Trophy for Canuck Place, UBC Special Collections & Archives.

Veteran Peggy Lee was a Canadian icon. She was a unique individual who spent her lifetime in service to Canada, her family and community.

Peggy's impact on my life, and career, as one of the first Indie Combat Camera women, is due in a large part to her support and attitude toward getting the job done, while overcoming numerous obstacles. She taught me the importance of standing my ground, developing factual Canadian stories of Service to Country.

Alison MacLean is a film director of documentaries, music videos, short films, television, commercials and feature films. She produced Burkas2Bullets about Afghan police and military women and Outside the Wire.

"Veteran Peggy Lee was a Canadian icon. She was a unique individual who spent her lifetime in service to Canada, her family, & community."

Courage et sacrifices au pays du Soleil levant : L'expérience des prisonniers de guerre canadiens

Par **Captain de vaisseau Hughes Canuel, PhD**

Le moment le plus frappant de ma recherche requise pour la rédaction de cet article fut certainement la lecture de cet extrait succinct mais poignant tiré des archives de l'Association commémorative des anciens combattants de Hong Kong : « Carabinier Howard Norman Bent, décédé le 7 septembre 1945, cause de la mort : consommation d'alcool frelaté (empoisonnement au méthanol) ».1 Une recherche un peu plus élaborée m'a permis de retracer la succession des événements menant à cette date fatidique. Enrôlé dans l'Armée canadienne en juillet 1940 et muté au 1er bataillon du Royal Rifles of Canada en novembre, Bent suivit ses compagnons d'armes comme troupes de garnison au Nouveau-Brunswick et à Terre-Neuve, avant de se voir déployer à Hong Kong en novembre 1941. Ayant participé à la défense de cette colonie britannique mais capturé par les Japonais après sa chute en décembre, Bent y demeura jusqu'en janvier 1943 lorsqu'il fut transféré au Japon avec d'autres Canadiens pour y être détenu dans des conditions effroyables en violation des normes concernant le traitement des prisonniers de guerre.

Et pourtant, en dépit de ce régime atroce, le carabinier Brent survécut et pu célébrer l'annonce de la capitulation du Japon le 15 août 1945 aux côtés des autres prisonniers canadiens, britanniques et américains détenus dans le camp « Fukuoka #5-B Omine », sur l'île de Kyūshū. Au cours des jours suivant, leurs geôliers disparurent avant même que les troupes d'occupation alliées ne débarquent au Japon, laissant les anciens prisonniers à eux-mêmes pour quelques semaines. L'un peut donc s'imaginer cette scène où certains se rendirent dans la petite localité près du camp pour y obtenir des vivres et en profitèrent pour faire main-basse sur une ration d'alcool pour une célébration impromptue. Une célébration qui tourna court alors qu'une vingtaine d'anciens prisonniers s'effondrèrent dans les heures suivantes, ayant

bu une mixture d'alcool contaminé par d'autres substances. Faisait partie de ce groupe le carabinier Bent, décédé à l'âge de 28 ans, à quelques jours de son rapatriement, après avoir survécu à la bataille de Hong Kong et près de quatre longues années de détention dans des conditions atroces.

Sa dépouille repose maintenant dans le cimetière de guerre de Yokohama, géré par la Commission des sépultures de guerre du Commonwealth. La grande majorité des tombes sont celles de prisonniers de guerre alliés décédés pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le site est divisé en quatre parties distinctes, soit la section du Royaume-Uni, la section australienne, celles des forces indiennes, ainsi qu'une section combinée pour la Nouvelle-Zélande et le Canada. Se trouvent dans cette dernière les tombes de 135 Canadiens, tous capturés après la chute de Hong Kong en décembre 1941 et transférés au Japon au cours des années suivantes pour y mourir tragiquement.2 Les circonstances de la bataille sont bien connues mais le sort réservé aux combattants canadiens par la suite, ainsi que les exemples de courage et de sacrifices dont ils firent montre au cours des années suivantes, méritent une plus grande attention tel que démontré au cours du récit suivant.

Déploiement et défaite de la Force C

Les circonstances ayant mené au déploiement de troupes canadiennes pour renforcer la défense de la colonie britannique de Hong Kong à peine quelques semaines avant le début des hostilités dans le Pacifique demeurent encore controversées aujourd'hui. Elles ne peuvent être discutées en détail dans ce court article. Il suffit de dire qu'un consensus se développa à Ottawa estimant qu'un tel geste serait approprié pour



démontrer le sérieux du soutien du Canada à la cause alliée alors que les troupes de l'Armée canadienne n'avait pas encore eu l'opportunité de démontrer leur valeur au combat. Répondant par l'affirmative à une demande d'aide de la part de Londres pour renforcer son dispositif militaire en Extrême-Orient en septembre 1941, Ottawa mit en route le processus pour envoyer à Hong Kong deux bataillons d'infanterie et un groupe d'état-major de brigade, nommé la Force C, sous le commandement du brigadier John K. Lawson. Les bataillons rassemblèrent des volontaires du Royal Rifles of Canada (formé au Québec et incluant beaucoup de recrues des Maritimes) et du Winnipeg Grenadiers, en provenance des Prairies et récemment déployés en Jamaïque.

La Force C débarqua à Hong Kong le 16 novembre 1941 mais ces troupes n'auraient que trois semaines pour s'acclimater et se familiariser avec leur nouveau théâtre d'opérations. En effet, c'est à l'aube du 8 décembre qu'une vague d'avions japonais lança une première attaque contre les forces défendant Hong Kong, quelques heures après l'assaut contre Pearl Harbor. S'ensuivit une attaque à grande échelle des soldats de l'Armée impériale japonaise. Les forces britanniques, indiennes et canadiennes firent de leur mieux au cours des jours suivant mais la supériorité des troupes nippones (en nombre, puissance de feu, expérience et support aérien) prévalut tout au long des combats. Dès le 11 décembre, les Japonais occupèrent toute la partie de la colonie qui se trouvait sur le continent (les « nouveaux territoires » et Kowloon) et un premier assaut amphibie contre l'île elle-même commença le 18 décembre. Le lendemain, le sergent-major de compagnie John Robert Osborn, un Winnipeg Grenadier, mourut dans des circonstances héroïques qui lui valurent la croix de Victoria à titre posthume, le premier Canadien ainsi décoré lors de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le quartier général du brigadier Lawson se vit encerclé le même jour et ce dernier trouva la mort dans un dernier baroud d'honneur alors que lui et ses hommes tentèrent de briser cet encerclement.

Les Canadiens continuèrent de combattre jusqu'à la fin, incluant une dernière contre-attaque meurtrière le matin du 25 décembre, à peine quelques heures avant la reddition de la colonie en fin d'après-midi.

La Force C avait payé un prix sanglant durant cette première bataille impliquant l'Armée canadienne depuis de le début de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Des 1 975 combattants présents, 290 furent tués ou moururent de leurs blessures (23 officiers et 267 soldats) alors que 493 autres (28 officiers et 465 soldats) souffraient de blessures plus ou moins grave en ce jour de Noël 1941. Néanmoins, maintenant que les canons s'étaient tués, les survivants pouvaient se considérer sains et saufs, faisant face à une détention vexante comme prisonniers de guerre mais se méritant un traitement équitable par leurs gardiens japonais, tel que mandaté par la somme des conventions formelles et pratiques communes à l'époque. Malheureusement, ce ne sera pas le cas.

Premiers abus à Hong Kong

Les témoignages contemporains révèlent une certaine incertitude au sein des forces alliées quant au traitement qui leur serait réservé par les Japonais. Bien que les atrocités qui s'ensuivirent sont largement reconnues aujourd'hui, la réputation de l'Armée impériale japonaise n'était pas encore entachée à ce point en 1941. Certes le Japon n'avait pas ratifié la Convention de Genève de 1929 relative au traitement des prisonniers de guerre mais les militaires détenus lors de conflits précédents, tant Chinois en 1894-95 que Russes en 1904-05 et Allemands en 1914-18, semblaient avoir subi un traitement équitable. Lors de l'intervention multinationale à Pékin en réponse à la révolte des « Boxers » en 1900, les troupes japonaises se comportèrent avec une discipline similaire à celles des autres puissances. L'étendue des abus dans les territoires occupés par l'armée japonaise – Formose (Taïwan) à partir de 1895, la Corée après 1905 et surtout la Chine continentale suivant le début des hostilités en 1937 – ne deviendrait de notoriété publique que bien plus tard.

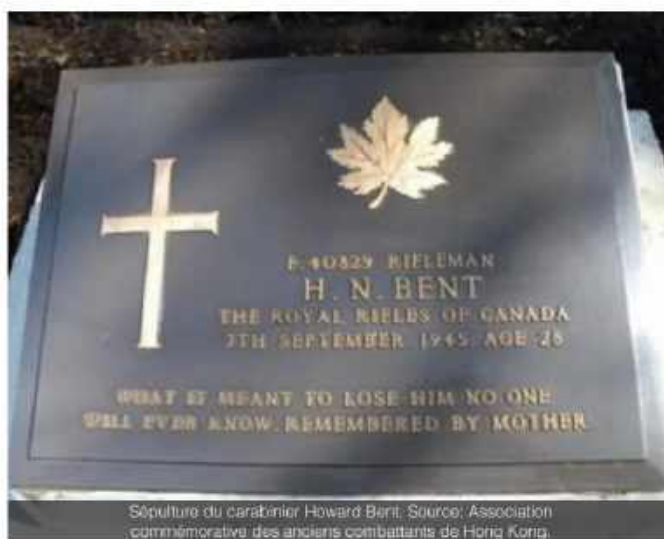
Et pourtant, avant même la fin de la bataille de Hong Kong, se déroulèrent des épisodes honteux. Au moins une demi-douzaine de Canadiens capturés dans les jours précédents la capitulation furent tués cruellement dans des épisodes séparés, des soldats japonais les utilisant comme cibles vivantes lors d'exercices de baïonnette. À plusieurs occasions, lorsque que retournant dans des tranchés alliés

occupées momentanément par l'ennemi, troupes canadiennes et autres découvrirent les corps mutilés ou décapités de leurs camarades, souvent avec leurs mains attachées dans le dos. En au moins deux occasions, des hôpitaux de campagne alliés (la « Salesian Mission » le 19 décembre et le « St. Stephen College » le matin de Noël) furent capturés par les troupes japonaises qui s'abandonnèrent à une orgie de violence, violant et tuant les infirmières ainsi que massacrant les blessés gisant dans leur lit, tant Britanniques qu'Indiens et Canadiens. Et les jours qui suivirent démontrèrent clairement que

les Japonais n'avaient pas inclus de préparations dans leurs plans de guerre pour la détention d'un grand nombre de prisonniers de guerre.

Ordonnés de rendre leurs armes mais de rester dans leurs positions pour le moment, ce ne sera que le 30 décembre que les troupes canadiennes reçurent l'ordre de se mettre en route vers les camps de prisonniers de guerre qui leur furent assignés, le camp de North Point pour certains et celui de Sham Shui Po pour les autres. Ni l'un ni l'autre de ces cantonnements ne se montra prêt à accommoder un grand nombre de prisonniers. North Point, par exemple, était un ancien camp de réfugiés pour les citoyens chinois qui cherchaient à s'échapper des combats déchirant la Chine continentale à la fin des années 1930. Comme le camp se trouvait près du site du premier débarquement des troupes japonaises sur l'île de Hong Kong, la plupart des bâtiments avaient été considérablement endommagés par les tirs d'artillerie. Ces quelques huttes n'incluaient pas cuisine, de puits d'eau douce, de douches ou de clinique médicale pour les centaines de prisonniers qui s'y trouvaient confinés avec accès à des rations très limitées alors que salété et malnutrition menèrent rapidement à l'écllosion de maladies de toutes sortes.

Le sergent Lance Ross du Royal Rifles of Canada parvint à garder un journal tout au long de sa détention et ses commentaires montrent comment les prisonniers réalisèrent rapidement le désespoir de leur situation. Au début de janvier 1942, plus de dix jours après la fin des combats, les prisonniers continuaient d'enterrer des corps pourrissant au soleil, sources de pestilence. Le 16 février, il rapporta qu'une contagion de dysenterie se propageait d'un prisonnier à l'autre et, deux jours plus tard, apparaissait une première mention de la famine qui régnait alors que les Japonais ne pouvaient que des rations par trop limitées. À partir du mois de juin, il faisait référence à de nouveaux décès presque à chaque jour. Ses remarques du 16 août 1942 sont particulièrement désespérées : « les conditions deviennent insupportables, nous allons tous mourir dans cet endroit terrible ». En septembre, un nouveau régime de travaux forcés fut imposé aux détenus alliés, incluant l'agrandissement des pistes d'atterrissage à l'aérodrome de Kai Tak, une autre violation des conventions relatives au traitement des prisonniers de guerre.



Le besoin de main d'œuvre se faisait pressant dans l'ensemble de l'empire nippon à partir de l'automne 1942. Défaits dans la mer de Corail et à Midway, leur avance stoppée à terre en Nouvelle-Guinée et à Guadalcanal, les Japonais réalisaient que les Américains avaient déjà repris l'initiative dans le Pacifique, se préparant à passer à l'offensive en 1943 mais où exactement? Le Japon faisait maintenant face aux besoins simultanés de renforcer ses positions dans tous les territoires conquis depuis Pearl Harbor, de réparer les dommages considérables infligés aux infrastructures

dans ces mêmes territoires pour en tirer les ressources naturelles qui constituaient l'objectif premier de ces conquêtes (pétrole, caoutchouc, dépôts miniers, etc), de remplacer pertes navales et celles des navires marchands nécessaire pour acheminer ces ressources naturelles vers le Japon, le tout en mobilisant une grande partie de la population ouvrière pour remplir les rangs de ses forces militaires affaiblies au cours de combats de 1942. D'où l'adoption d'une nouvelle approche nécessitant l'imposition de travaux forcés aux dizaines de milliers de prisonniers de guerre capturés au cours des mois précédents, une mesure exécutée dans ces mêmes territoires et au Japon, tel qu'allait le découvrir des centaines de Canadiens soumis à des abus tout aussi barbares dans les colonies qu'au pays du Soleil levant.

Transfert et horreur au Japon

Une épidémie meurtrière de diphtérie faisait encore rage dans le camp de Sham Shui Po en janvier 1943 lorsqu'un premier contingent de Canadiens en meilleure santé (relativement parlant en de telles circonstances) s'embarqua à bord de navires marchands. Les quelques prisonniers qui avaient encore assez de force pour vouloir célébrer leur départ de cet enfer sur Terre durent désenchanter dès leur arrivée à bord de ces cargos vétustes. Les Canadiens se trouvaient à nouveau confinés mais cette fois-ci dans des cales étouffantes qui n'avaient pas été équipées pour recevoir des passagers, sans accès à l'air libre, à des couchettes ou à des toilettes pour leur longue traversée. Qui plus est, ce passage se déroulait sous la menace des sous-marins américains qui menaient déjà une campagne dévastatrice contre le trafic maritime ennemi dans ces circonstances où les sous-marins pouvaient rarement faire distinction entre navires marchands transportant une cargaison militaire et ceux transportant des prisonniers alliés. Tous étaient au courant de l'épisode du cargo Lisbon Maru emmenant un premier groupe de prisonniers britanniques vers le Japon lorsque torpillé par le sous-marin USS Grouper le 1er octobre 1942. Des 1 816 prisonniers à bord, 843 y perdirent leur vie.

Un millier de prisonniers canadiens se virent ainsi transférés de Hong Kong au Japon en quatre vagues successives au cours des années 1943 et 1944 mais, rare bonne nouvelle dans le cadre de cette saga, aucun des navires impliqués ne se vit la cible de torpilles américaines. Plusieurs prisonniers périrent tout de même de maladie et de malnutrition

pendant ces traversées alors que les survivants se virent confrontés à leur arrivée au Japon à des conditions par trop similaires à celles de leur détention à Hong Kong. De nouveau logés dans des camps de fortune surpeuplés, ils vivaient dans des conditions insalubres, pestilence et absence de soins médicaux appropriés menant aux mêmes maladies infectieuses alors que le manque de rations et la brutalité de leurs geôliers ne faisaient qu'empirer le taux de mortalité. Le tout envenimé par l'imposition d'un régime de travaux forcés sans répit, la raison même pourquoi les Canadiens et nombre d'autres prisonniers alliés avaient été transportés au Japon.



Des groupes de Canadiens se trouvèrent ainsi dans différents camps éparpillés à travers l'archipel nippon, de Sendai au nord de Tokyo à Fukuoka, plus au sud sur l'île de Kyūshū. Nombre de ces prisonniers de guerre seront contraints de travailler dans les usines, les mines et les chantiers navals de l'ennemi, où les conditions de travail étaient terribles. Ils étaient toujours sous-alimentés et trop souvent battus et torturés. La Croix-Rouge fournissait parfois des colis de nourriture et de médicaments aux prisonniers de guerre mais les gardes japonais gardaient souvent les colis pour eux-mêmes ou forçaient plusieurs prisonniers à profiter du contenu d'un seul colis. George S. MacDonell, sergent au sein du Royal Rifles of Canada, arriva au Japon avec le premier groupe de Canadiens logés au « Camp 3D » à Kawasaki, en banlieue de Yokohama, pour travailler au chantier maritime Nippon Kokan, à peu de distance de là. Son témoignage :

Vous ne pouviez pas faire grand-chose pour survivre dans un camp de prisonniers. Vous vous êtes levé à l'aube, le rôle a été appelé et vous êtes allé travailler. Vous êtes revenu, vous avez été nourri et vous vous êtes couché... Le paludisme était un problème terrible. Paludisme, punaises de lit et dysenterie. Les chances de survie étaient très faibles... Sale et jamais tout à fait exempt de poux, nous avons tirubé d'un jour à l'autre, d'un mois à l'autre et comme l'hiver fit place au printemps puis à l'été. Mes hommes mouraient un à la fois, incinérés après leur décès dans le cadre de funérailles shintoïste, organisées la nuit après le travail. Pendant notre séjour au Camp 3D, 26 autres de mes hommes sont morts de malnutrition et d'autres causes.

En dépit de ces conditions atroces, les archives démontrent que les Canadiens ont maintenu leur sens de la discipline et un certain esprit de résistance jusqu'à leur libération. La chaîne de commandement militaire demeura en place, basée sur les grades et la séniorité des officiers et sous-officiers canadiens au moment de la chute de Hong Kong. Plusieurs prisonniers cherchèrent à s'échapper même si cela devait se montrer virtuellement impossible, tant à Hong Kong qu'au

Japon, et le prix à payer lors de leur capture fut le plus souvent des semaines de torture suivies par leur exécution sommaire. Étant donné que ces tentatives d'évasion menaient aussi à des représailles brutales contre les autres prisonniers, les officiers canadiens en vinrent à dissuader leurs hommes de poursuivre cette voie. Ils les encourageaient plutôt à faire des actes de sabotage sur leur lieu de travail, actes qui affecteraient la machine de guerre nipponne et seraient difficiles à attribuer aux prisonniers canadiens.

Les prisonniers forcés de travailler dans des milieux industriels, comme les chantiers maritimes, se trouvaient plus particulièrement en position de le faire. Ayant accès à des outils, souvent employés avec peu de supervision que ce soit comme riveteurs, graisseurs ou soudeurs sans véritable formation professionnelle, ces hommes complétaient souvent leurs tâches de façon bâclée alors que les Japonais ne pouvaient exercer qu'un contrôle de la qualité des plus superficiels. Ce ne serait qu'une fois le navire lancé en mer ou les véhicules motorisés déjà en route que les effets de ces petits actes de sabotage – rivets mal enfoncés, grenailles d'acier déposées dans les réservoirs d'huile ou dans les cages de piston – résulteraient par des conséquences catastrophiques, allant de fuites d'eau majeures à des moteurs grippés au-delà de toute possibilité de réparation. Mention doit aussi être faite d'un acte rocambolesque en janvier 1944, alors que le sergent-chef Charles Clark et le soldat Stanley Cameron, qui faisaient partie de l'état-major de la brigade canadienne à Hong Kong, parvinrent à mettre feu à deux édifices dans le chantier Nippon Kokan.

Ces bâtiments abritaient les plans et les moules en bois qui étaient essentiels pour la construction des navires. Au cours des mois précédents, Clark et Cameron parvinrent à assembler des mèches incendiaires à retardement et à les installer de façon à ce que le feu éclate la nuit, en l'absence des prisonniers déjà retournés à leur camp. Non seulement les édifices furent complètement détruits et leur précieux contenu une perte totale mais les deux saboteurs ne furent jamais soupçonnés par les Japonais. Ils survécurent tous les deux à leur emprisonnement et se méritèrent des décorations distinguées pour leur service lors de leur retour au Canada. Par contre, leur action fut tellement efficace que le chantier maritime ne put résumer sa production avant plusieurs mois et la plupart des prisonniers canadiens du Camp 3D se trouvèrent transférés dans un autre camp plus au nord, près de la petite localité de Kamaishi. Ils s'y trouvèrent pour travailler dans une mine de fer, dans des conditions encore pires que celles auxquelles ils faisaient face au chantier Nippon Kokan.

Début 1945, la course contre la montre s'accéléra. Les Canadiens savaient que la guerre tirait à sa fin, pouvant observer de leurs propres

yeux les vagues de bombardiers américains survolant leurs camps en route pour dévaster les grandes villes japonaises. Ils se tenaient aussi au courant des progrès des offensives alliées grâce aux radios à ondes courtes assemblées de pièces éparses par d'habiles prisonniers, le tout dans le plus grand secret. Mais la santé de tous les prisonniers continuait aussi de se détériorer, les menant à douter de leur chance de survivre jusqu'à ce que les Japonais n'admettent leur défaite. C'est dans cet état d'esprit des plus sombres qu'ils observèrent tout à un coup un changement dramatique dans le comportement de leurs geôliers à partir du 15 août. La plupart des prisonniers ne savaient pas que l'empereur Hirohito s'était adressé à ces sujets ce jour-là, leur demandant « d'accepter l'inacceptable », mais la suite des événements fut dès lors similaires dans la plupart des camps. Les corvées de travaux forcés furent annulées le lendemain, les gardiens japonais disparurent quelques jours plus tard, les premiers signes de libération prirent la forme de vols de reconnaissance alliés cherchant à déterminer la location des camps de prisonniers. S'ensuivit les survols par des avions de transport et des bombardiers pour larguer vivres et médicaments près de ces camps au cours des semaines suivantes, le tout se concluant avec l'arrivée des troupes d'occupation alliées au début du mois de septembre pour coordonner l'éventuel rapatriement de ces captifs vers leur pays natal.

Conclusion

Malheureusement, même après leur libération, certains ne purent survivre jusqu'à leur retour au Canada. Tout aussi bouleversant que le cas du carabinier Bent fut celui du soldat Frank Airriess, des Winnipeg Grenadiers. Lui aussi enterré dans le cimetière de guerre de Yokohama, la date de son décès – le 15 septembre 1945 – est la plus tard de toutes celles trouvées dans la section canadienne. Son dossier militaire contient à la fois les rapports plutôt froids des quartiers généraux canadiens et les appels à l'aide désespérés de la part de sa mère, habitant alors dans la petite localité de Togo, en Saskatchewan. On y indique qu'il fut libéré par des troupes alliées le 6 septembre et rapidement embarqué à bord d'un navire-hôpital américain, souffrant

d'une tuberculose pulmonaire aiguë, menant à son décès neuf jours plus tard. Mais une lettre de sa mère aux autorités canadienne en date du 11 octobre indique qu'elle avait été informée le 21 septembre de l'hospitalisation de son fils et cherchait depuis une mise-à-jour sur sa situation. Ce ne sera que dans une missive du 13 novembre 1945 que l'Armée canadienne put officiellement informer madame Airriess de la mort de son fils deux mois plus tôt.

Le sort des prisonniers de guerre canadiens morts à Hong Kong et au Japon pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale a été tragique. Les conditions de détention dans les camps japonais étaient extrêmement difficiles, avec un manque de nourriture adéquate, des traitements cruels et des travaux forcés inhumains. En conséquence, de nombreux prisonniers canadiens ont succombé à la malnutrition, aux maladies, à la violence ou à la torture pendant leur captivité. Des 1 975 militaires qui débarquèrent à Hong Kong en novembre 1941, 557 ne revinrent jamais au pays : 290 moururent au combat et 267 en détention (135 au Japon et 132 à Hong Kong). Et même de nombreux survivants traumatisés par leur expérience ont continué de souffrir physiquement et mentalement, trouvant très difficile de conserver un emploi ou d'entretenir de saines relations humaines au cours des décennies suivantes. Les familles des prisonniers décédés ont également été confrontées à la difficile tâche de faire face à leur perte et de surmonter les traumatismes de cette période sombre de notre histoire. Ces hommes courageux méritent d'être honorés et leur sacrifice doit être commémoré pour ne jamais oublier les leçons du passé.

Captain de vaisseau Hugues Cannel – Conseiller de la défense canadienne à Singapour – est devenu un officier de marine en 1991, servant au sein des flottes du Pacifique et de l'Atlantique tout au long des années 1990 et 2000. Il a depuis comblé le poste d'attaché de la défense canadienne au Japon jusqu'à son transfert à Singapour en 2022 comme conseiller de la défense canadienne au Haut-commissariat du Canada.

Section canado-néo-zélandaise du cimetière de guerre de Yokohama. Source: Collection de l'auteur.





Remembering the Fallen Paratroopers at Wegner Point

By Colonel (retd) Rick Hatton

Fifty-five years ago, on the 8th of May 1968, 26 parachutists from 2 Airborne Signals Troop based at CFB Petawawa and the 1st Battalion The Royal Canadian Regiment, then based in London, Ontario parachuted on a training exercise from three CC-115 de Havilland Buffalo aircraft, expecting to land on the Mattawa Plains Drop Zone, CFB Petawawa. During the drop, unexpected high winds and wind shear blew the jumpers off course with 22 of them landing in the frigid waters of the Ottawa River, near Wegner Point. Tragically, seven of the men drowned before rescuers could reach them. It was the worst parachute accident in peacetime in the history of the Canadian Armed Forces.



MWO Reg Riddell



WO Mike McDonnell



CPL Bruce Chiswell



CPL Bob Knight



CPL Hugh Fields



CPL Dennis Clements



CPL Jim Misener

remained in service in the CAF until 2022. In 1968, it was still very new to the CAF and was first put to use for paratrooper training, supply and tactical transport tasks.

On the morning of that fateful day, the first wave of parachutists on Exercise New Shakedown was dropped without incident but the winds rose in the afternoon and the originally scheduled second drop was cancelled. The winds reduced in the late afternoon and at approximately 8 pm the second group of parachutists were on board three Buffalo aircraft that took off from Bonnechere Airport and headed for the Mattawa Plains Drop Zone. When it was noticed that wind was carrying several parachutists toward the Ottawa River, a "Stop-Drop" was called but 26 of the jumpers had already exited and

The CC-115 Buffalo was a reliable "workhorse" short take-off and landing aircraft introduced into the CAF in 1967, initially in a medium tactical transport role. In the 1970s it transitioned into a search and rescue role, and

were headed for disaster. Military parachuting is not a sport – it is a risky tactical activity and the equipment involved is bulky and constraining. The water in that part of the Ottawa River was



deep and cold. Parachute training includes preparing for water hazards by divesting oneself of a helmet, parachute harness, deployed chute and other equipment before landing in water, or especially once in the water itself, is not an easy task. Twenty-two of the jumpers landed in the water, some as far as 1000 feet offshore. Some were not able to get free of their equipment and became entangled and weighed down in the frigid water. Some could not swim.

Safety boats were positioned in the water, personnel on shore took immediate action and several men were successfully rescued but seven jumpers didn't make it. Some of the survivors were fortunate having landed on sand bars with their heads barely above the water, the casualty count could have been greater had they not. A military Board of Inquiry did not lay personal blame for the incident. Winds were at an acceptable speed both on the ground and aircraft level, however a subsequent scientific inquiry determined that there were unexpected high winds at 600 feet and a wind shear carried the jumpers eastward toward the river. Lessons were learned and retained. Since the incident, training and preparation for water hazards and some other technical procedures have improved.

The seven brave paratroopers who died on that day were MWO Reginald Riddell (1 RCR), WO Michael McDonnell (1 RCR), Cpl Bruce Chiswell (1 RCR), Cpl Hugh Fields (2 Sigs Sqn), Cpl Bob Knight (2 Sigs Sqn), Cpl Dennis Clement (2 Sigs Sqn) and Cpl Jim Misener (2 Sigs Sqn). MWO Riddell, a parachute instructor, is credited with talking several jumpers out of their equipment while he remained in his as he could not swim.

They are well remembered. A monument and engraved memorial stone were erected at CFB Petawawa and the site is well maintained and cared for by 2 CMBG HQ & Signals Sqn and CFB Petawawa. The engraved memorial stone was produced using donations received from friends, family and survivors. In 2022, the monument was refurbished and moved to a more accessible location on the base. Every year on the Sunday closest to the 8th of May anniversary of the disaster, a memorial ceremony is held at the monument. For many years the ceremony was coordinated by Dennis Stow, and now this responsibility has been assumed by 2 CMBG HQ & Sigs Sqn which mounts a guard and coordinates the event. The ceremony is well attended every year by affected family members and friends, former military comrades of the deceased paratroopers, serving CAF personnel and retired paratroopers and several wreaths are laid at the monument in honour of the Fallen Paratroopers.

We Will Remember Them.

Rick Hatton is a retired Colonel who served with the Royal Canadian Regiment and the Canadian Airborne Regiment. He is currently the President of the Canadian Airborne Forces Association.





NWORA Secondary Objectives - The Community Memorials Programme and the Education Outreach Programme

The secondary objectives of the NWORA complement our primary objective of commemorating our fallen heroes through both the physical memorial in Kingston and the virtual wall online at www.canadianfallen.ca. These secondary objectives are the Community Memorials Programme (CMP) and the Education Outreach Programme (EOP).

The CMP provides financial support to assist communities to either repair/refurbish their local community memorials, or build them if they do not already exist, somewhat similar to the programme that Veterans Affairs Canada already has in effect and which, in eligible projects, may be used in combination. The EOP further complements the CMP by providing funding to help establish a living memorial to the Fallen in the minds and hearts of young Canadians across the country. More information about the EOP is available at this link: <http://worassociation.ca/education-programme/>

The procedures for applying for financial support for the CMP and the specifics of the funding amounts which might be made available to any community requesting funds are posted under the title 'Community Memorials Programme' in the NWORA website as follows: <http://worassociation.ca/community-memorials-programme/>

Applications are accepted twice annually (due by 1 April or 1 October) and must be received by Bruce Ewing at ewing123456789@sympatico.ca

Objectifs secondaires de l'AMCN - Le Programme de monuments commémoratifs communautaires et le programme de sensibilisation à l'éducation

Les objectifs secondaires de l'AMCN complètent notre objectif principal de commémorer nos héros décédés à travers le mémorial physique à Kingston et le mur virtuel en ligne à www.canadianfallen.ca. Ces objectifs secondaires sont le Programme de Monuments Commémoratifs Communautaires (PMCC) et le Programme de Sensibilisation à l'Éducation (PSE).

Le PMCC offre un soutien financier pour aider les communautés à réparer/remettre à neuf leurs monuments commémoratifs communautaires locaux ou à les construire s'ils n'existent pas déjà, un peu comme le programme qu'Anciens Combattants Canada a déjà en vigueur et qui, dans les projets admissibles, peut être utilisé en combinaison. Le PSE complète davantage le PMCC en fournissant des fonds pour aider à établir un mémorial vivant aux morts dans l'esprit et le cœur des jeunes Canadiens de partout au pays. Plus d'informations sur le PSE sont disponibles sur ce lien: <http://worassociation.ca/education-programme/>

Les procédures de demande de soutien financier pour le PMCC et les détails des montants de financement qui pourraient être mis à la disposition de toute communauté demandant des fonds sont affichés sous le titre « Community Memorial Programme » sur le site Web de l'AMCN comme suit : <http://worassociation.ca/community-memorials-programme/>

Les candidatures sont acceptées deux fois par an (dues avant le 1er avril ou le 1er octobre) et doivent être reçues par Bruce Ewing à ewing123456789@sympatico.ca

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1160963 Ontario Inc.	28A	EXTRUSION PROFILES INC.....	18A
3V COMMUNICATIONS LTD.	38A	G	
A		G.L. HUBBARD LTD.....	6A
ABRAM'S SERVICE CENTRE INC.	22A	GARDWELL SECURITY AGENCY INC.....	6A
ADCO TIRE & AUTO INC.....	16A	GEOTERRE LIMITED.....	6A
AL ROOS ENTERPRISES/MINUTE MUFFLER.....	44A	GIANT TIGER.....	8A
ALGOMA HEARING CENTRE.....	16A	GLENGROVE PHARMACY.....	8A
ALL STAR MARTIAL ARTS NEWMARKET.....	44A	GODERICH DENTURE CLINIC.....	8A
AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 113.....	36A	H	
AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 1573	42A	HATTEN HOME HARDWARE BUILDING CENTRE.....	18A
AMPLIFON HEARING CLINIC - LISTOWEL	22A	HIGHLANDS PROPANE INC.....	18A
APETITO CANADA LIMITED.....	16A	I	
AUNDECK OMNI KANING FIRST NATION.....	2A	I & I CONSTRUCTION SERVICES LTD.....	8A
B		INNOVATIVE CONTROL SOLUTIONS INC.....	8A
B PHILLIPS CO. (1987) LIMITED.....	2A	INSULTECH INSULATION INC.....	18A
BARRICK HEMLO.....	2A	INT. ASSOC. OF BRIDGE- STRUCTURAL- ORNAMENTAL & IRON WORKERS LOC. 721.....	8A
BARRIE TRANSMISSION LTD.....	2A	INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PAINTERS & ALLIED TRADE D.C. #46	34A
BARRIE WELDING & MACHINE (1974) LTD.....	2A	INTERWEIGH SYSTEMS INC.....	8A
BELZONA GREAT LAKES LTD.....	16A	INVENERGY RENEWABLES CANADA DEVELOPMENT ULC	24A
BESTCORR CORRUGATED SALES INC.....	2A	J	
BIG ISLAND FIRST NATION.....	2A	JOHNNY'S FINISHING SHOP.....	46A
BLACK JACK AGGREGATE TRANSPORT INC.	22A	K	
BRANNON STEEL.....	2A	KAWARTHA UTILITY SERVICES LTD.....	8A
BRIGHOLME INTERIORS GROUP	22A	L	
BROWN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION CTR.....	2A	LEICA GEOSYSTEMS LTD.....	8A
C		LIDO CONSTRUCTION INC.....	46A
C & R TRANSMISSION SERVICE LTD.....	2A	LINDSAY DRY CLEANERS.....	8A
CAMPBELLFORD CHRYSLER LTD.....	16A	LONTOURS CANADA LTD.....	10A
CANADIAN SCALE CO LTD.....	16A	LOOK NO FURTHER CONTRACTING AND DESIGN INC.....	36A
CASCADE HAND CUT CRYSTAL INC.....	4A	LOWRY & ASSOCIATES	42A
CENTRAL ONTARIO BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL.....	16A	M	
CENTRE STREET DELI.....	4A	MAC PRINT.....	10A
CENTURY SIGNS INC.....	4A	MARQUARDT FARM DRAINAGE LTD.....	18A
CHAGGARES & BONHOMME, C.A.....	4A	MARSHALL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.....	44A
CHAPLEAU CREE FIRST NATION.....	4A	MCASPALT INDUSTRIES LTD.....	10A
CHEZ JEAN-MARC BAKERY INC.....	4A	MILLER PEST CONTROL INC.....	44A
CONCORD SPECIALTY PHARMACY	38A	MOUNT FOREST TRUCK CENTRE.....	10A
CONSTANCE LAKE FIRST NATION.....	4A	MUNICIPAL VU CONSULTING INC.....	44A
CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PICKLE LAKE.....	4A	N	
CREATRIX TRANSFORMATIONAL SOLUTIONS INC.....	4A	NETZSCH CANADA INC.....	10A
D		NIX TIRE INC.....	10A
DALI Local 675	32A	NNA TICKETS LTD	24A
DAVID E. MCDONALD ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONAL CORP.....	4A	NORM'S CASH & CARRY.....	10A
DELMONTE GRAVEL & CONSTRUCTION LTD.....	16A	NORTH-WEST ELECTRIC.....	18A
DEXTRAN PRODUCTS LTD.....	6A	NORTHWEST PETROLEUM EQUIPMENT LTD.....	10A
DOMINION MEAT PACKERS INC.....	6A	NOVA PLUMBING & HEATING LTD.....	10A
DUNFIELD UNRETIREMENT RESIDENCE.....	6A	O	
E		OPCMIA LOCAL 598	38A
EAGLE TRANSMISSION.....	18A	ORANGEVILLE BUILDING SUPPLY INC.....	10A
EATON POWER QUALITY COMPANY.....	6A	OUTPOST PACKAGING PRODUCTS LTD.....	12A
ELECTRICAL CONTACTS LIMITED.....	18A	P	
ELLIOTT'S TOWING.....	6A	PHIL'S CATERING.....	44A
EMERALD LAKE CAMP.....	6A	POWER WORKERS' UNION	INSIDE BACK COVER
ENZO'S NO FRILLS.....	6A		

PROVINCIAL BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL	
OF ONTARIO.....	26A
R	
R&S MOBILE.....	24A
RED ROCK COMMUNITY ECONOMICAL DEV. OFFICE.....	20A
ROOFCO ONT INC.....	24A
ROYAL LIGHTING.....	46A
ROYALTY STONE INC.....	20A
S	
SAMFIRU TUMARKIN LLP BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS.....	20A
SERVICEMASTER OF THUNDER BAY.....	38A
SEVERN AUCTIONEERING INC.....	12A
SKELTON TRUCK LINES.....	42A
SKIDS AWAY.....	12A
SMS MACHINE TOOLS LIMITED.....	20A
SMWIA LOCAL #30.....	30A
STARFIELD LION.....	20A
STEELES MEMORIAL CHAPEL.....	26A
STONE RIDGE INSURANCE BROKERS.....	20A
STREET BROS AUTO ELECTRIC LTD.....	12A
SUPERIOR CRANE CANADA INC.....	12A
SURPLUS FURNITURE & MATTRESS WAREHOUSE.....	20A
T	
TAKE 5 OIL CHANGE (BARRIE).....	20A
TECHNEL ENGINEERING INC.....	12A
THE ARCHERY PLACE.....	12A
THE CORP. OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PRINCE.....	12A
THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BONFIELD.....	12A
THE SARJEANT CO. LTD.....	12A
THE UP TOP SPORTS SHOP INC.....	14A
THE WELLINGTON CENTRE.....	36A
THESSALON HOME HARDWARE.....	14A
THORSONS MARKETING ASSOCIATES CANADA.....	44A
TLC ANIMAL HUSBANDRY INC.....	44A
TOWNSHIP OF AMARANTH.....	36A
TOWNSHIP OF LAIRD.....	14A
TRI-CAN - 1845301 ONTARIO LTD.....	14A
U	
U.A. OF JOURNEYMEN & APPRENTICES	
PLUMBING & PIPEFITTING- LOCAL 46.....	INSIDE FRONT COVER
UNIFOR LOCAL 112.....	14A
UNIFOR LOCAL 1285.....	36A
UNIFOR LOCAL 723M.....	36A
UNITED STEEL WORKERS LOCAL 2251.....	40A
UNIVERSAL AUTO BODY REPAIR.....	14A
USW LOCAL 2020.....	14A
W	
WAHNAPITAE FIRST NATION.....	36A
WAITO BROS.....	14A
WINDY LAKE MOTEL & RESTAURANT.....	14A
WIPWARE INC.....	14A
Z	
ZEX A/C COMPRESSORS.....	36A



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Remembrance Project

L'Association canadienne des anciens combattants de l'Armée
de terre, la Marine, et la Force aérienne soutient et approuve le
projet de l'Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale.



If you have a friend or family member who made the ultimate sacrifice
in service of Canada, we encourage you to provide names, letters home,
etc. Ensure their name is included on www.canadianfallen.ca and
the virtual component of the National Wall of Remembrance.

Si vous avez un ami ou un membre de votre famille qui a fait le sacrifice
ultime au service du Canada, nous vous encourageons à fournir
leurs noms, des lettres, etc. Assurez-vous que leur nom est inclus
sur www.canadianfallen.ca, la composante
virtuelle de la Muraille commémorative nationale.

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