



TOTEM TIMES



Canadian Forces Base Comox B.C.

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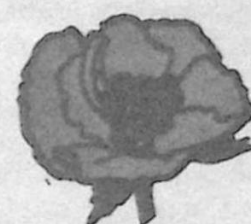
NEXT DEADLINE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1989

COST: PRICELESS

Remembrance Day

Special

Edition



Remembrance Day — likely the most important date in the military calendar. It means many things to many people.

To a veteran of WW I, WW II, or the Korean War it is a day to reflect, willingly or otherwise, on the traumatic and tumultuous events of long ago; to remember good times, bad times, and old friends, many of whom never saw their homes again, dying on distant, bloody battlefields.

To the vast majority who never served in the armed forces but lived through those troubled times, it is a day to remember the months and years of gnawing worry over whether a loved one or friend would return from the fighting and the daily news of momentous and far-reaching events that would inevitably reshape the world.

To millions of innocent victims, from the decimated Jews of the Holocaust to interned Japanese-Canadians, it is a day to remember man's inhumanity to man and the bitterness, hate and overwhelming tragedy and sorrow that are the most enduring legacies of any war.

For the rest of us who were born after the last war or were too young to remember it, it is often just another day. There is no callousness or thoughtlessness in this attitude, it is merely a normal facet of human nature. We tend to forget or ignore the unpleasant. Besides, for most of us it is ancient history, too far in the past to be significant. Unfortunately, what we also forget, as a famous historian once put it, is "those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." War forgotten is a lesson unlearned and likely to haunt us.

This special edition of the Totem Times is meant to encourage that necessary, indeed vital, act of remembrance; to remind the present generation of the sacrifices made by past generations; and by doing so, help succor a belief in the utter futility and waste of war.

(Public Archives, Canada PA 122813)

...at grave of fallen comrade in United Nations Cemetery, April, 1951, at Pusan, Korea.

Remember...

Heroism — an act of love?

It has been more than thirty-five years since Canadian soldiers last fought in a war. Many wounds, both physical and emotional, have been healed by this bandage of time. Some have not and thousands can never be; their graves lie scattered across Europe and Korea.

I often imagine what it would be like to fight in a war. Part of me, the naive child, thinks it would be an adventure. Okay, people would be dying (never my friends, of course), but every day would be filled with thrilling, heart-stopping (literally) action. And yes, I know I would suffer, but I would also grow in ways not possible otherwise; I would gain an insight into man and the world that can be acquired in no other way. In a life that sometimes drags from day to day with little change, that seems welcome.

The more mature part of me (I think), the cynicist, knows the truth is a far cry from my musings. I know war is a dirty, brutal, chaotic affair with no winners, at least not amongst the people who do the fighting. All the soldiers do is try to survive — so they can see their homes again. I wonder if any soldier thinks of what he is doing as being 'for his country' in the midst of battle or, indeed, at anytime after his first shocking encounter with enemy forces who seem intent on maiming or killing him. Surely facing death has a way of reducing the complications of life to a single, overriding desire — to live!

So this cynical part of me is astounded at the acts of courage which commonly occur during the fighting. I'm not talking of the everyday variety of courage displayed by soldiers just doing their job (which is remarkable enough), but those special cases which stand out. With bombs and bullets flying helter-skelter, seeking a deadly embrace with vulnerable human flesh, a few men (and women) willingly risk their lives, going well beyond what is demanded or expected of them. I have a particular case in mind.

On 12 June 1944, an R.C.A.F. Lancaster bomber, part of a large force attacking a target in France, was jumped by a German fighter and badly damaged. When a fire broke out, the Captain ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft. The mid-upper gunner, Pilot Officer Mynarski, making his way towards the escape hatch, spotted the rear gunner trapped in his turret. "Without hesitation... Mynarski made his way through the flames in an endeavour to reach the rear turret and release the gunner. Whilst so doing, his parachute and his clothing, up to the waist, were set on fire. All his efforts to move the turret and free the gunner were in vain. Eventually the rear gunner indicated that he should save his own life. Pilot Officer Mynarski reluctantly went back through the flames to the escape hatch. There, as a last gesture to the trapped gunner, he turned towards him, stood to attention in his flaming clothes and saluted, before he jumped out of the aircraft... He was found eventually by the French, but was so severely burnt that he died from his injuries." Miraculously, the rear gunner survived the crash. (Mynarski posthumously received the Victoria Cross.)

What could motivate someone to such incredible self-sacrifice? Was it his country? Did the thought of Canada somehow lying pregnant to the German jackboot cause him to put his life on the line? Was it democracy and freedom? Did he feel they would be lost if the rear gunner lost his life? I think not.

There is probably only one thing that could generate that degree of selflessness: love. Not love for his country or freedom or democracy — they are too abstract to influence a person during moments of extreme peril — but love for his friend; someone he had trained, fought, laughed, and perhaps cried with. For this person he unhesitatingly gambled his life — and lost.

I can't help but feel the vast majority of heroes in war are impelled to their acts for this reason. War generates an amazing kinship amongst individuals in a group (even just in basic training, most people in the military get a small taste of this). It is this which makes a unit fight effectively and also can lead to extraordinary deeds of courage. Freedom and other ideals have very little part. As Billy Joel sings, "And who was wrong, and who was right, it didn't matter in the thick of the fight."

So Remembrance Day to me is remembering, even amongst the carnage and death, the love and devotion of man towards man.

Way back when



In the Eulataw tongue of the local Indians, it was called "Komuchway," meaning abundance. Gradually the name shortened to Comox. In mid-1942, at the zenith of Japanese power in the Pacific, it was obvious that another aerodrome was needed in Canada's West Coast to support the increasing military traffic, and Comox was chosen as the site. Carved out of the forest, the runways were quickly laid down, followed by construction of the necessary base structures. Officially opened in May, 1943, this photo was taken in October, 1943, and shows what looks like, apart from the runways, a farming homestead. But by May, 1944, the base strength was over 1,000 and, with 50 some aircraft, large numbers of transport aircraft were being trained as part of the massive war effort.

Fond memories: in Brighton's fields

My father lies with poppies. Killed in 1943, he lies in Ortona, Italy. I will go one day to touch my fingers to the stone and trace his name. Oh, I have pictures, comments from papers when he was promoted, and the telegram sent to his mother when he was killed. I also have letters, many, many letters written to his brother in Alberta of his desolation being away from home, worrying about their mother. So poppies to me, and the meaning behind the symbolism, have a personal connotation. But they also mean something else.

My father, a captain in the Canadian Army, was stationed in England during WW II. I was born six months or so before he was killed, to an Englishwoman in her 20s who was alone and worked as a seamstress. Although I've heard stories of how they met and felt and of the anguish of his death, my earliest remembrances are of four and five years old. I remember swinging around a gun metal railing outside my house in Brighton. The metal, cold and smooth, was my favorite playground except for bike riding with mother.

And we'd go to the poppy fields of Brighton. On her day off, whenever that was, she'd pack a lunch and wheel out the bike. Behind her seat there was the little seat for me, with sides and a back, and the picnic hamper behind me. She'd pack me on the bike and we'd ride through Queen's Square and onto the front by the sea and away for miles, or so it seemed, the sea to the right, pebbles glistening, everyone on bikes. But she and I were going to picnic in the poppy fields.

But joyous memories, places, faces, cannot be taken away, ever. And though I remember thoughts of my father, for that's all I have, and pictures in my mind of my fields, for that's all I have, I feel joy with sorrow in November. I think of my father lying in his field of poppies, as I remember lying in mine.

by Anne E. McConnell
courtesy Legion Magazine

TOTEM TIMES

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A veteran of another kind

If the word 'veteran' is taken to mean one who has been in combat, then Warrant Officer Brian O'Cain doesn't strictly qualify. He is, however, a veteran of another kind. O'Cain is in his 30th year of military service, with eight to go. He has never engaged in a single warlike act. Yet, he and others like him may soon represent the single main source of strength for the acts and traditions of Remembrance, which we observe on 11 November, and throughout the year.

In a world less and less exposed to the gritty realities of large scale combat, and more hopeful of universal peace, it is difficult for present and emerging generations to visualize the agony of past wars, or to properly understand why those wars were fought.

O'Cain has served twice in Europe; while he was there, and in his own way, he made it his business to understand.

"At Grostenquin (formerly 2 Wing, RCAF) I was a member of an Honour Guard on Memorial Day at the nearby U.S. war cemetery in St. Avold. Later, I visited the French cemetery at Choley, which has a Canadian sector, including the graves of a complete Lancaster crew from



"But it was the graves, the sheer number of graves, and the ages of those who lie in them - 19, 20, 21 -- some from the same families, that I cannot forget."

World War Two, after that, I decided to visit places where Canadians fought in Europe, and where they were buried," said O'Cain, "starting with the Normandy beaches, then

through Belgium and Holland. I saw the city of Rotterdam being rebuilt, and thought 'how expensive'. But then I thought of the other greater cost; the lives of all those very young men who liberated Rotterdam."

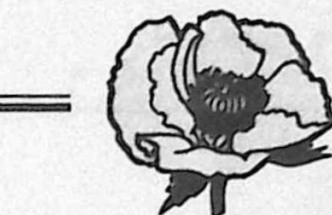
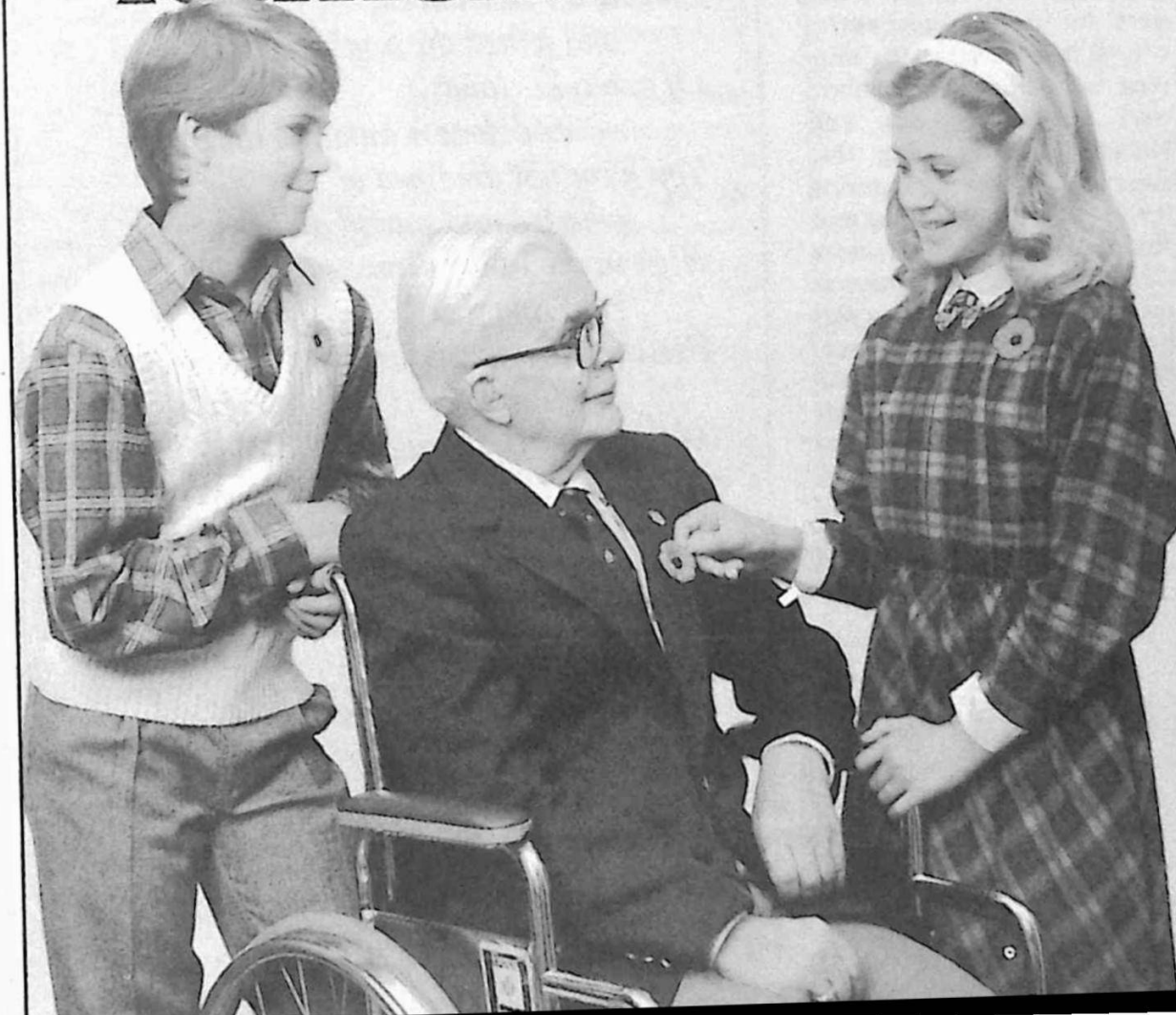
O'Cain visited Vimy Ridge and its towering memorial, "Built by a grateful nation" ... a pilgrimage for most Canadians overseas. There were other trips, to Nijmegen, Remagen Bridge and tragic Arnhem, the "Bridge too Far".

Near Gostenquin, "Every step we took on the ground, was a step into history, one of our combat shelters was a Maginot Line fort at Teting, At Verdun, I saw the 'Trench de Bayonet', named for an entire company of French soldiers buried in an artillery bombardment, with only their bayonets showing above the earth," recalls O'Cain.

"But it was the graves, the sheer numbers of graves, and the ages of those who lie in them -- 19, 20, 21 -- some from the same families, that I can not forget. When you walk on that hallowed ground, you'll know why you are there, and you will remember."

by Norm Blondel

The Royal Canadian Legion Together... We Will Remember



Why the poppy?

Every November I wear a poppy, not because someone tells me to, nor because it's a custom, but because I know about the brave men and women who fought for Canada's freedom.

I was young when WW II was fought, but I remember that many young men from our community went to war. Can anyone forget how dashing a well-pressed uniform and polished boots made every lad? The uniforms helped conceal fear and uncertainty, I'm sure, just as a loved one's pride helped conceal those feelings.

Some veterans of WW I, too, returned to barracks and uniforms. Like the young, they didn't wait to be called when their country required their services. Many left behind wives and children. Duty's call was strong.

Each leave home was an important event for the whole community. Everyone spoke to the serviceman and of him. He was a man willing to give his life for us all. He was entertained and praised. Farewells, though tearful, were usually "Till we meet again."

Some of these men never returned. Some came back crippled in mind and body. Time passed. Some resumed civilian activities, others found their jangled nerves couldn't cope with everyday life. War continued to demand its price.

For as far back as my memory goes, students from schools surrounding Kyle, Alta., where I grew up, gathered in the town hall for the Remembrance Day service. Was it compulsory? I don't know. We went. We participated. We remembered.

Mine wasn't a family of veterans, but relatives, class-

mates and friends married them, and some of their children became my classmates.

I became aware that war was a 'locked away' period of many men's lives. They never mentioned it. Others relived the terror nightly or while under the influence of alcohol. Occasionally some publicly recalled this part of their past. But veterans had one thing in common. Each 11 Nov they wore a poppy and gathered to remember the dead and the living.

I don't feel that Remembrance Day is a glorification of war. Men who silently lock away a portion of their lives are not glorifying battle. Perhaps their silence is a prayer that war will be no more.

The red, handmade, felt poppies of my youth have been replaced by machine-made, plastic-backed blooms, but their message is the same: Remember.

Books, movies and television shows about war abound but cannot convey to many of us the brutality, pain, anguish, fear and shame suffered by men in combat, or the anxiety and terror felt by their families. Many of us can never fully appreciate their desire that war shall be no more.

Veterans and their families can instill in young Canadians the importance of Remembrance Day. Those of us who are part of a younger generation perhaps need to be reminded of the significance of the blood-red poppy we wear 11 Nov. We need to remember with gratitude not only those who gave their lives, but also those who returned.

by Anne Rae
courtesy Legion Magazine

Poppy Campaign

OTTAWA -- The 1989 Poppy Campaign began 23 October and runs until 11 November.

Conducted by the Royal Canadian Legion, the Poppy Campaign raises money which is kept in trust and used to assist needy Canadian ex-service members and their families. Veterans of Commonwealth and allied countries who are resident in Canada may also qualify for assistance through the Poppy Funds.

The Poppy is a visible reminder of the sacrifice made by some 114,000 men and women who died while serving in Canada's armed forces

the Korean Conflict. For each donation given during the campaign, a visible symbol of remembrance is provided, either in the form of a single poppy, a wreath or spray, or, in the case of group donations, a certificate.

Poppy material is assembled by disabled veterans and their families. This not only provides them with a small source of income, but allows them to take an active part in the tradition of remembrance.

During 1988 some \$5 million were distributed in accordance with the general bylaws of the

Remember...

John Magee — the Pilot Poet

It was a grey, overcast day in December 1941, and in the skies above the flat Fenland countryside of south Lincolnshire a squadron of Spitfires was returning home to its base near the village of Wellingore after an uneventful morning patrol. The young pilot of one of the aeroplanes was a handsome 19-year-old called John Magee. As he looked down on the vast patchwork of fields, criss-crossed by long straight lanes and dotted here and there with farms and cottages, the feeling of exhilaration that he felt whenever he took to the air again swept over him.

Soaring above the mat-stick-sized figures far below, John wouldn't have changed places with anyone. The Spitfire had proved itself to be the swiftest and most deadly fighter plane in the skies, and as he sat at the controls of his own machine with every sense and sinew perfectly tuned to the feel of its fabric around him, and the familiar sound of its engine, John felt as free as a bird. He was a knight of the skies riding a charger that would respond like lightning to his every command; and, if he came under attack from any enemy aircraft, twist and turn out of the way with awe-inspiring speed.

Were it not for the presence of his fellow-flyers and the need to be in a constant state of readiness for the call to intercept enemy bombers coming in from the North Sea, John would probably have opened up the throttle and put the Spitfire through its paces, for to soar and swoop through the heavens was the supreme experience of his life. This love of flying was coupled with an equally powerful passion for writing poetry — the spiralling freedom of flight finding softer, more subtle echoes in the dramatic rising and falling of poetic rhythms.

In fact, when it came to poetry, John Magee was a genius. He had demonstrated this a few months earlier after his very first flight in command of a Spitfire, when his two great gifts for poetry and flying had come rapturously together to create *High Flight*, a poem which has in the past 50 years become a rousing anthem for pilots everywhere. It has been reproduced in scores of anthologies and now hangs on the walls at air training schools and flying museums throughout England, Canada and the USA.

But this was all in the future, and as he started his descent at the airfield at Wellingore, which as suddenly obscured by a thick bank of cloud, John could have had no idea of just



how famous *High Flight* would become — he had only ever shown it to his family and a few close friends. Nevertheless, no one who knew John Magee would have been surprised that his poetic genius had flowered so quickly. He had lived his short life at full speed, an unusual background of wide travel and hard-fought personal battles giving him experience and maturity far beyond his years. As the aeroplane disappeared into the clouds on that day in 1941, it was only John's dogged determination and burning desire to assist in the defence of England that meant he was there at all. Had he listened to the advice of others and put aside his own feelings and beliefs in favour of a safer existence, his life story might have been completely different...

Born to missionary parents in China, his father was American and his mother English. When he was nine he was sent to England for schooling where he quickly showed sharp intelligence and a mischievous nature. In 1939, he moved to America, to continue his education, where his great talent for poetry blossomed. But his heart lay in England and, as the Battle of Britain raged over the English countryside through the summer of 1940, he was drawn irresistibly to the skies and to the fighting.

In the autumn of 1940 he joined the RCAF.

Air Force discipline turned him into an assured and purposeful young man, even if he was still something of a daredevil who delighted in risky aerobatics.

John received his all-important 'wings' in June 1941 and shortly afterwards was posted to Great Britain and his

final training station at Llandow in South Wales. It was while he was in the officers' mess on day at Llandow, talking in a loud, excited voice about the qualities of the Spitfire, that a fellow-flyer suggested to him that, as he was interested in writing poetry, he ought to put his feelings down in words. Immediately John took an envelope from his pocket and in no time at all he had scribbled down the words of what was to become the most famous flying poem in the world, *High Flight*. Soon after, when he had completed his final training and joined 412 Squadron at RAF Digby in Lincolnshire, he sent a copy of the verse to his parents.

Time was divided between practising manoeuvres, taking part in usually uneventful coastal patrols, attacking shipping or intercepting bombers over the North Sea and Holland, and enduring that curse of all fighter pilots during the last war, the nail-biting wait for a call to action. There were also, of course, the parties in the mess that followed any particularly dangerous or successful exercise. On these occasions, John and the other young flyers would unwind as only fighter pilots knew how. John was a very popular member of the squadron and there was a great sense of comradeship amongst them all.

He visited Oxford where Elinor Lyon, the love of his life was a student at Lady Margaret Hall; John was quite sure that he was in love with her. Elinor, who now lives on the coast of Wales, vividly remembered the meeting:

"Before he went back to the squadron he came to say goodbye and brought an old motor-bicycle he had acquired. It was

just like him, I thought, to buy a cycle that kept breaking down and had to be pushed most of the time, and it caused him great amusement by its eccentricities. We shook hands rather solemnly when he went and it seemed rather foolish and inadequate to wish him good luck, because whatever happened he considered himself marvellously lucky and I never remember him complaining of anything. The motor-bike, however, cheered us up a bit; it went five yards and then stopped dead, and when at last it went on again he laughed and John waved his hand and disappeared round the corner."

John's flying ability improved all the time and he was soon a section leader, taking part in operations over occupied Europe. So it was that he came to be flying towards Wellingore on the December day in 1941...

While undergoing his fighter training John had once written: "I want to die in circumstances violently heroic", but as he descended through the bank of cloud, suddenly the unthinkable happened — he collided with another aircraft from the nearby RAF College at Cranwell. A farmer working near the village of Roxholm witnessed the incident. Looking up, he actually saw

John climb out of his doomed aircraft in an attempt to use his parachute. In the event, it got tangled up and failed to open. Both young men were killed.

John was buried in the village cemetery at Scopwick in Lincolnshire, close to where he died and alongside many of his friends who had also been killed defending Britain. The headstone of his grave bears the first and last lines of *High Flight*.

John's death came as a great shock to Elinor. "He liked to live life at full speed", she wrote, "and danger only made life more thrilling. I don't think he could have borne to grow old."

At the time of his death *High Flight* was virtually unknown, but after John's father had it printed in his church magazine it was spotted by a reporter and published in a Washington newspaper, when it captured the imaginations of the thousands who read it. More recently the poem was referred to by President Reagan in his speech to the American people following the 'Challenger' disaster in January 1986.

So, through this great work, the memory and spirit of John Magee lives on... nearly 50 years after he himself 'touched the face of God.'

by Stephen Garnett
courtesy This England Magazine

HIGH FLIGHT

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies
on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed,
and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds
— and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of —
wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence.
Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along,
and flung
My eager craft through footless
halls of air...
Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights
with easy grace,
Where never lark,
or even eagle flew —
And, while with silent, lifting mind
I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.*

JOHN MAGEE



Remembering the Holocaust

The look on their faces is as bleak as their surroundings. Surprisingly, there is no appeal to pity; they know, perhaps, no such emotion exists in the men facing them. They are wearing only undergarments and their feet are bare, although the day is obviously cold — the onset of a long, Russian winter. They stand huddled together but each seems wrapped in their own thoughts, their own suffering. They are all five women; the youngest a mere child, two show the bloom of early womanhood, one a mother, maybe, and the other a grandmother — a family one is inclined to believe. Transposed to a beach somewhere and it could almost be a casual family snapshot, taken before they had a chance to arrange their smiles. But it's not. Standing around them, in heavy greatcoats, are soldiers with rifles, soldiers with disinterested looks, as though they were lounging by a parade square waiting for a parade to start. Nearby are piles of discarded clothing and many more people in stages of undress.

The next photograph shows a group of women standing in a row, their backs to a deep pit filled with uncountable bodies, waiting for the inevitable.

Both of these photographs were discovered, along with many other Gestapo documents, after German forces retreated from the Baltic Republics in the later stages of the Second World War. They speak eloquently of a horror it is almost impossible to contemplate. Their very matter-of-factness — that someone would take the time to photograph, document, such horrific happenings — says even more than the people in the photograph.

What was the heinous crime these women were guilty of? They were Jewish. Their demise, and that of 6,000,000 others (in what has become known as the Holocaust), began in 1933 when Adolf Hitler assumed the Chancellery of Germany.

Anti-Semitism was a fundamental part of Hitler's program and "Nazi propaganda succeeded in popularizing the absurd theory that Jews were to blame for everything [wrong] in a Germany reeling under the effects of a worldwide depression. In progressive steps, Jews were robbed of their rights, their property, and finally, after the war began and released Hitler and the Nazis for maintaining a facade of civilized behaviour, their lives.

Initial plans for the destruction of European Jewry called for them to be concentrated in larger and larger ghettos and simply starved to death. To this end they were uprooted from



forcefully moved to the larger cities, often with only what they could carry in their arms. There they were barricaded off and supplied with quantities of food well below the subsistence level. Though many died of hunger, and in increasing numbers as the days and months dragged on, Nazi planners were unhappy with the slow pace of 'extermination' and conceived of large, efficient death camps where the killing could proceed at a much quicker pace. Thus were born names which still chill the blood: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald — a litany of almost inconceivable cruelty and mass murder which stretched across Germany and Poland.

At these camps, genocide became a science. As the huge numbers of prisoners arrived they underwent a careful selection process. Most women and children and some men — the elderly or those in poor health — were immediately sent to the gas chambers. Here, standing naked shoulder to shoulder, they died within dark, sealed, concrete rooms in agony and terror. The remaining men were used as forced labour until they reached complete physical exhaustion at which time, being no longer useful, they too were sent to the gas chambers. A few unlucky ones were selected for medical experiments — dying in low-pressure chambers, ice-cold water, or from injected diseases.

So great was the Nazi obsession with wiping out the Jewish population that resources desperately needed elsewhere were diverted, under the highest authority, to continue the killing. Even when it was clear that Germany was losing the war, still the ovens burned night and day disposing of the bodies as the gas chambers continued in full

And only the very few are born martyrs."

Have we learned any lessons from the Holocaust? That is doubtful — since 1945 further instances of genocide have left millions more innocent victims dead.

Unfortunately, when these awful events are rendered into statistics they often lose their significance. 6,000,000 horribly murdered human beings is a fact whose very enormity and repulsiveness is difficult to comprehend and so makes us reluctant to deal with. But one murder, or a few, we can immediately grasp — what if the person killed was someone I cared for? — and the emotional impact is powerful and unpleasant. Ultimately, that is how the Holocaust must be viewed if it is to have a lasting effect; not as a single colossal tragedy or evil, but as millions of individual and distinct ones. Eugen Kogon, a survivor of the death camps, put it better: "As you view the history of our time, turn and look at the piles of bodies, pause and imagine that this poor residue of flesh and bones

is your father, your child, your wife, is the one you love. See yourself and those nearest you, to whom you are devoted heart and soul, thrown naked into the dirt, tortured, starving, killed."

Robert H. Jackson, the U.S. Chief Prosecutor at Nuremberg where Nazi war criminals were tried, spoke of the Jewish dead and many, many others when he wrote: "These two-score years in this twentieth



Auschwitz survivor, 1945

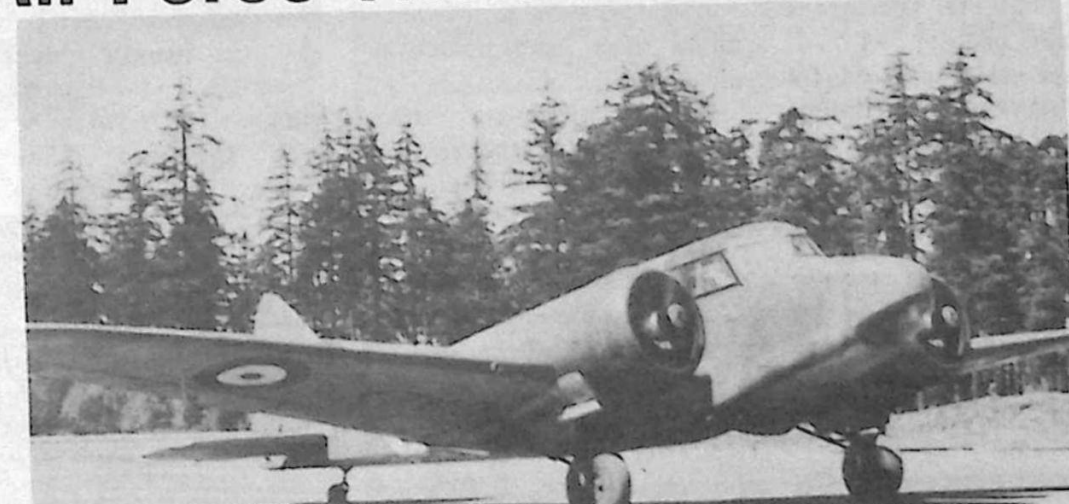
century will be recorded in the book of years as some of the most bloody in all annals. Two world wars have left a legacy of dead which number more than all the armies engaged in any war that made ancient or medieval history. No half-century ever witnessed such slaughter on such a scale, such cruelties and inhumanities, such wholesale deportations of peoples into slavery, such annihilations of minorities. The terror of Torquemada pales before the Nazi Inquisition."

"These deeds are the overshadowing historical facts by which generations will remember this decade. If we cannot eliminate the causes and prevent the repetition of these barbaric events, it is not an irresponsible prophecy to say this twentieth century may yet succeed in bringing the doom of civilization."

by Kirk Sunter

Air Force Trivia

WHAT WHERE WHEN WHY



Definitely not a Cessna Crane, this one. It is the first of seven from the H.W. Holmes collection. Harold Holmes is a member of 800 Wing RCAFA Victoria.

Trivia Answer



We are advised this is a T2 Trojan, possibly US Navy. Can anyone offer more details?

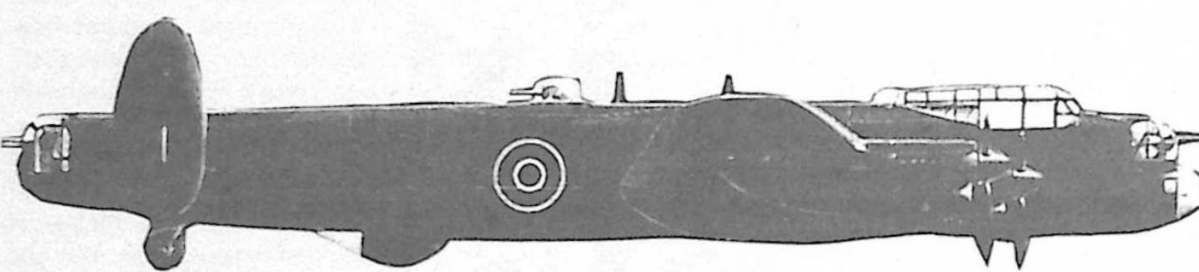
Remember...

Padre Bob speaks

Some folks think that Remembrance Services should not be held in Chapels because they feel that such services glorify war. When we meet on this coming Remembrance Sunday Service and on Remembrance Day we mark events that happened over forty years ago and can be thankful that most of us are too young to have any memories of the actual events. My maternal grandfather always called it Armistice Day, which as a boy I thought a funny word because Remembrance Day was so much easier to say. But more and more, Remembrance Day is not a time of remembering but rather a time to teach about the past events it represents.

Thankfully, my generation has not had to face the reality of war, but WW II had a tremendous impact on the older generations. I am not certain that I have had any experience that I can relate to theirs. In September '88 in Winnipeg, I took my father to the Convention Centre where, as a part of a Wartime Aircrew Reunion, veterans were gathering to be transported to

CFB Portage for an air show. I was impressed by their sheer numbers. Think of the impact that WW II had on that generation! An impact so strong it caused people from 18 different countries to gather in Winnipeg, Canada, over four decades after the fact.



Early last summer I had the privilege of standing next to a gentleman who had 250 operational hours on the Lancaster bomber in WW II. As we stood on the apron in Winnipeg and listened to the four big Merlin engines of the Mynarski Memorial Lancaster roar as it taxied out for take-off, he commented that he must have been crazy as an eighteen year old to fly them out of England and over hostile enemy territory. As the Lanc started its take-off roll, he said, "Wat-

ch her, she is a real lady; she slips gently into the air, not like the pushy jets of today that thunder off the end of the runway, noses pointed high." The Lanc did slip into the air, banked smoothly to the West, and came around for a fly-past. She lined up on the gap bet-

make it back home? He could remember. Thankfully, instead of having my own 'war stories' to relate, I have only had to read about these wars in preparation for Remembrance Day, Battle of Britain Sunday, and Battle of Atlantic Sunday. So why do we gather for this

not secured by good intentions and wishful thinking but by peaceful policies backed by an effective military capability. The second enduring lesson to emerge from WW II was the importance of air power. So why do we hold Remembrance Day Services? Because the younger generation needs to be taught those lessons learned years ago."

So as we gather at cenotaphs on Saturday, we do not glorify war, but we do honour those of previous generations who, like my acquaintance in Winnipeg, can reflect through more mature eyes, 'I must have been crazy...' That man and others of his generation were called on in their youth to fight for their ideals and for freedom. We gather at cenotaphs to hear their stories and learn the lessons of history so that we will not make the same mistakes.

See you at the cenotaph Saturday and see you at Chapel.

by Padre Bob

The privilege was ours



The clock in the Peace Tower began to strike 11, and at that moment a member of the House of Commons Protective Service Staff snapped to attention in the Memorial Chamber to begin the ceremonial Turning Of The Page. It seemed incredible that my friend and I were witnessing this solemn daily ritual, a privilege we never expected to be ours.

Although I'd visited the chamber a number of times over the years, this was the first time I'd be able to look at the name I was longing to see. It wasn't until recently that I had learned the date when his name appeared. A letter from the Veterans Affairs said my soldier's name appeared every 30 Sept in the WW II Book of

Remembrance. We'd made this journey to Ottawa specifically to see it.

The activity on Parliament Hill that morning was twofold: Outside, the armed forces were getting ready for the opening ceremonies of the United Way campaign. Inside the members of Parliament were preparing to appoint a new Speaker of the House. As we approached the Centre Block we had no idea how the next half hour would unfold.

The blow came when we paused to have a few words with an RCMP officer near the steps, who said all tours for the day were cancelled due to a special sitting of Parliament. As this news sank in he added, "I'm sorry. Have you come far?" Was 300 miles far? The distance didn't seem important, but the fact it would be a year before the name came up again did. Seeing my dismay, the officer suggested we approach security and tell them our problem.

Standing on the Centre Block steps, I repeated my continued on page 22

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Prisoner of war

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6:35PM.
Ottawa Ont
19th October 1942

Mrs Mary Smith
Box 6
Fisher Branch, Man.

10444....Official information has been received from Tokyo Japan through the International Red Cross Geneva that H.6501 Private Reginald Arthur Smith is a prisoner of war at a HongKong Camp stop further information follows when received.

Officer I.UT 3.Records
Y- 19.07

"... there are things you would like to forget... But I don't want to forget..."

Driver mechanic Private Reg Smith was on garrison duty in the Caribbean islands of Jamaica and Bermuda with 'A' Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, in late 1941, when the message came from Ottawa, transferring then to Hong Kong. Included in the move were the Royal Rifles of Canada (NFD) and Brigade HQ from Victoria.

Japan had massed more than 40,000 troops on the border at Kowloon, and Reg's machine gun regiment was sent in to bolster the defences of Hong Kong. Their trucks and Bren gun carriers were sent by sea. They never got there.

In simultaneous strikes at Pearl Harbour, the Philippines, Malaya and Hong Kong, the Japanese began to enlarge what they called their 'Co-Prosperity Sphere.' Ill equipped and badly organized, the Canadians fought for 17 days until Christmas Day, when the Governor of Hong Kong surrendered to the Japanese.

Smith recalls, "we were marched from Fort Stanley, (where the 16 inch guns faced the sea) to a refugee camp at North Point on Hong Kong island. We were badly treated from the start, having to perform heavy manual labour on very little food. We were eventually shipped in groups to the P.O.W. camp at Oyama, 150 miles south of Hiroshima. I was a prisoner of war for 1347 days, and my weight dropped from a normal 162 lb to 107 lb. Our treatment in Japan was worse than in Hong Kong. We

were forced to work, poorly clothed and fed, in the cold and wet of an open pit nickel mine. By war's end we were walking skeletons. After working as a medical orderly, I got fed up with putting so many of my comrades in coffins. After the 40th coffin, I switched to working in the mine."

A member of the Hong Kong Veterans Association for 43 years and a Legion member for more than 20 years, Reg Smith has his own way of remembering. Each year he purchases and lays his own wreath on behalf of the Hong Kong veterans, at the cenotaph on Mission Hill.

About remembrance, he says, "there are things you would like to forget about. They are always running through your mind. But I don't want to forget. I hope the reason for Armistice Day and the remembrance ceremonies is properly explained to our young people. I hope and expect the Armed Forces will keep these memories alive."

by Norm Blondel



Pte Reg Smith prior to departing for Hong Kong.



Reg Smith, 44 years after his release, reflects on the years spent as a Japanese POW.

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Remembrance Day Ceremonies

— in the Comox Valley —

Courtenay—

407 Squadron, veterans, and cadets depart the Courtenay Legion, 367 Cliffe Ave., at 10:20 and march to the cenotaph at the bottom of Mission Hill.

Comox—

442 Squadron, veterans, and cadets form up at 10:20 at the corner of Norden and Beaufort and march to the cenotaph in front of the Town Hall.

Cumberland—

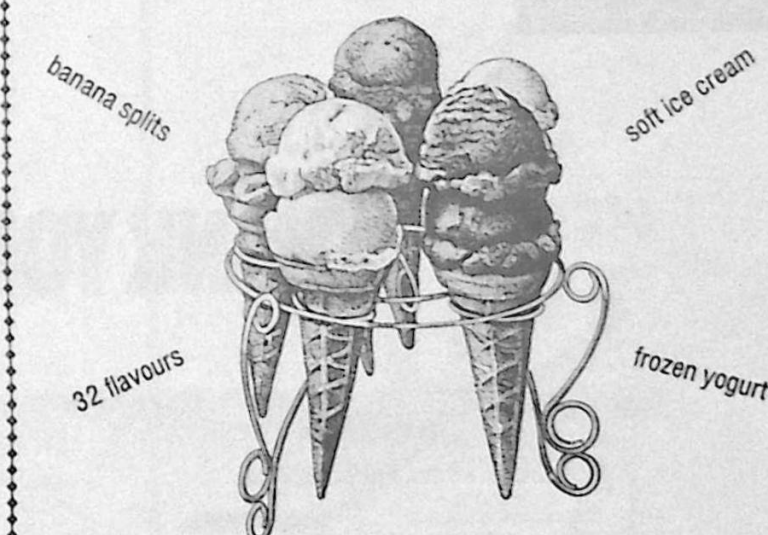
VU 33 Squadron, veterans, and cadets depart the Post Office at 10:45 and march to the cenotaph in front of the Legion, 2270 Dunsuir St..

The ceremonies, which pay tribute to the war dead and to local veterans, begin shortly before 11:00. Come pay your respects to those who gave so much to you.

Receptions follow in each of the Legions, and, for military, cadet, and legion members, in the Totem Lounge at CFB Comox.

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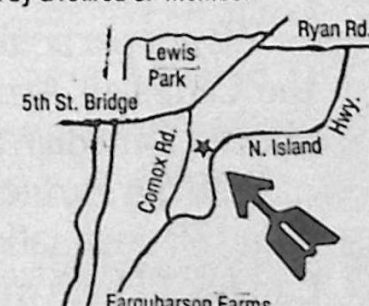
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Remember...

In Flanders fields

Each November over four-million poppies bloom in Canada. Dotted the lapels of half of Canada's population, this symbol of remembrance makes its annual appearance as it has done every year since 1926.

Although everybody knows what the poppy means, no one is certain of how it all began; how the poppy became so closely associated with remembrance of the war dead.

The association was certainly not new when the poppy was adopted in Canada in 1921. At least a hundred and ten years before that time, a correspondent wrote of how thickly poppies grew over the graves of the dead. He was speaking of the Napoleonic War and its campaigns in Flanders.

But a Canadian medical officer was chiefly responsible for this association, more so than any other single known factor.

John McCrae was a tall, boyish 43-year-old member of the Canadian Medical Corps from Guelph, Ontario. An artillery veteran of the Boer War, he had the eye of a gunner, the hand of a surgeon and the soul of a poet when he went into the line at Ypres on April 22, 1915.

That was the afternoon the enemy first used poison gas. The first attack failed. So did the next and the next. For 17

days and nights the allies repulsed wave after wave of attackers.

During this period, McCrae wrote "One can see the dead lying there on the front field. And in places where the enemy threw in an attack, they lie very thick on the slopes of the German trenches."

But McCrae came out of Ypres with 13 lines scrawled on a scrap of paper... "In Flanders fields the poppies blow..."

Working from a dressing station on the bank of the Yser Canal, LCol McCrae dressed hundreds of wounded, never taking off his clothes for the entire 17 days. Sometimes the dead or wounded actually rolled down the bank from above into his dugout. While awaiting the arrival of batches of wounded, he would watch the men at work in the burial plots which were quickly filling up.

Then McCrae and his unit were relieved. "We are weary in body and wearier in mind. The general impression in my mind is one of a nightmare," he wrote home.

But McCrae came out of Ypres with 13 lines scrawled on a scrap of paper. The lines were the poem which started: "In Flanders fields the poppies blow..."

These were the lines which are enshrined in the hearts of all soldiers who heard in them their innermost thoughts. McCrae was their voice. The poem circulated as does a folk song, by living word of mouth. Men learned it with their hearts.

In the United States, the poem inspired the American Legion to adopt the poppy as the symbol of Remembrance.

In Canada the poppy was officially adopted by the Great War Veterans Association in 1921 on the suggestion of a Mrs. E. Guerin of France. But there is little doubt that the impact of McCrae's poem influenced this decision.

The poem speaks of Flanders fields. But the subject is universal: the fear that in death we will be forgotten, that death will have been in vain.

The spirit of true Remembrance, as symbolized by the poppy, must be our eternal answer which belies those fears.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our places; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*



John McCrae

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

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Remember...

The stepping stone to victory

In the summer and fall of 1940, the RAF — which included many Canadians — won what was to become known as the Battle of Britain. Many regard it as the turning point — albeit an early one — in the war against Germany.

But the real turning point, "the stepping stone to victory", says W/C (Ret'd) James 'Stocky' (or Eddie) Edwards was the war in the North African Desert. At El Alemein and points west, it was the series of battles won by allied air and ground forces which was the first step towards victory over fascism in Europe and the Japanese in the Pacific.

Eddie played his part in this conflict: flying Kittyhawks and Spitfires he destroyed 20 enemy aircraft, (with another 6½ probable kills) and damaged a further 16, all in the air. On the

ground he destroyed 12 aircraft and damaged 2. Add a couple of hundred trucks to the tally and one can see Eddie, like many of his fellow Saskatchewan farm boys, was a crack shot.

There were a lot of Canadians who fought in North Africa and Eddie wonders if anybody in Canada knows of their deeds and their sacrifices in that crucial combat zone. Their graves litter the desert, but there is little recorded about them. At El Alemein there is a cenotaph for all combatants — the Allies and the Axis—but in Canada only the veterans remember.

In his book, "Kittyhawk Pilot," Eddie writes of the battles that began in North Africa and continued through Sicily and into Italy, and of the

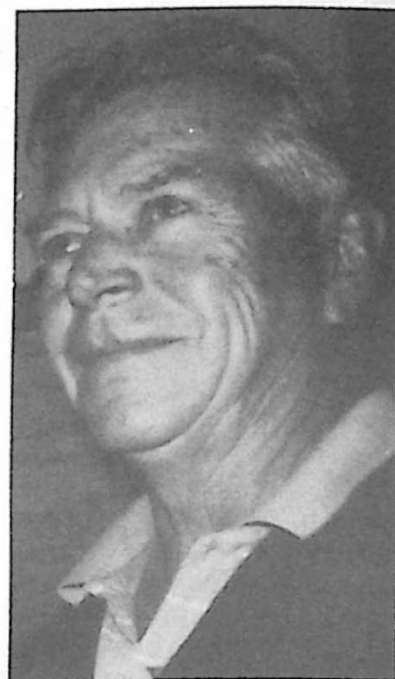
"... but what about the ones who couldn't go home? We remember them now, but what happens when the veterans are all gone?"

heroes on both sides. He comments: "But after it was all over (in Europe), Canada was too ready to 'Pack up and go home,' and forget about the war. A natural way to feel, but what about the ones who couldn't go home? We remember them now, but what happens when the veterans are all gone? The present generation has no memory of their

sacrifices. They will not remember."

While this sad commentary may not be shared by all, Eddie Edwards expresses a legitimate concern about Remembrance in the absence of these veterans, these comrades of the fallen. In the presence of peace, will we forget those who brought it about?

by Norm Blondel



They died for peace

Most people would not dispute that the United Nations is a noble venture, one which has found peaceful solutions to many of the world's tensions and conflicts. Born during the tumultuous and bloody years of the Second World War, it held out hope to a disillusioned world of an end to wars. And Canada has played no small part in it.

Major R.I. Sibbald, Commandant of the Air Force Instructional School at CFB Comox and, like a large number of Canadian Forces' personnel, a veteran of U.N. operations, writes: "Canada was one of the founding members of the United Nations. Ever since the Right Honourable W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada, signed the United Nations Charter on 26 June, 1945, Canada has been an active supporter of and participant in the whole range of UN activities."

Canada is the eighth largest financial contributor to the UN with more than one billion dollars give between between 1946 and 1979 but our backing goes far beyond money. As Major Sibbald says, "Canada has been a member of nearly all

of the various disarmament and arms control bodies... has been active in the general area of equal rights and self determination of peoples and specifically decolonization... has been involved in assistance to refugees and, perhaps more importantly, had accepted 200,000 refugees as immigrants [by 1975]."

Without doubt, though, Canada is most remembered and respected for its role as a peacekeeper in troubled lands around the globe. Since 1950, Canada has been a part of every UN peacekeeping operation (the only nation with this distinction), with more than 80,000 CF members serving to date. Most recently, a Canadian contingent, including four CFB Comox personnel, went to Namibia (or Southwest Africa) as part of UN forces trying to ensure the country moves forward from decades of civil warfare to a secure democracy able to decide its own future.

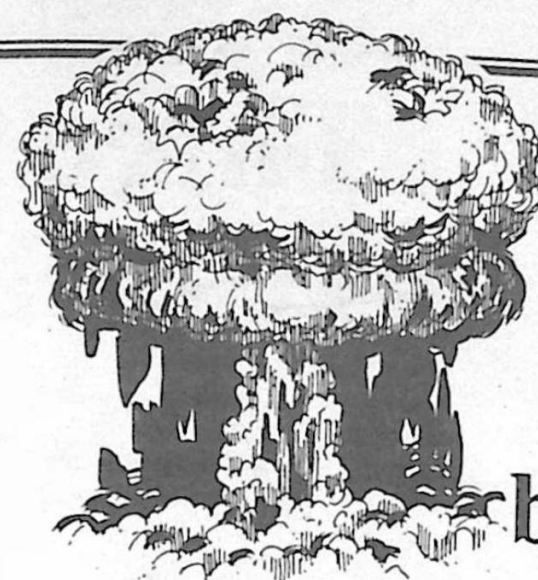
In a way, as Perrin Beatty, the former Minister of National Defence pointed out, Canada invented peacekeeping. During the Suez Crisis in 1956, Lester Pearson, then Secretary of State for External Affairs

and later to be Prime Minister, developed the concept of using an international peacekeeping force under the auspices of the United Nations to stabilize the military situation between Egypt and Israel. For his efforts he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957.

Peacekeeping has not been carried out without substantial risks. When former enemies are separated by only a thin cordon of minimally armed UN forces, 'accidents' will happen. Since the end of the Korean War, 81 Canadians have lost their lives on peacekeeping operations. But, as Major Sibbald says, despite this high cost in human terms "Surely there is no greater evidence of Canada's whole hearted support for the UN in general and for the cause of peace in particular."

Thirty-one years after Lester Pearson's historic peace endeavour, UN military peacekeeping forces were likewise awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Perhaps this Remembrance Day we should all reflect for a moment on the sacrifices of those of whom it can be said truly: "they died for peace."

by Kirk Sunter

Sacrifices:
Does the old
bargain still apply?

"The universe is so vast and so ageless that the life of one man can only be justified by the measure of his sacrifice."

By one of the miserable coincidences that war abounds in, those were the last words PO V.A. Rosewarne wrote to his mother before he was shot down and killed, at the age of 24, in the Battle of Britain. His mother sent his last letter to The Times, which published it 18 June 1940. The words are now inscribed on the wall of the Royal Air Force Museum in north London.

He probably did not say those words to himself as he fell out of the sky in his burning Spitfire, but he did mean them. Strip away all the rhetoric, and the core remains: We expect our young men to sacrifice their lives for us if war comes, and they are willing to be asked.

It is a very old bargain, and it is not just a practical one. We cannot help believing that a sacrifice like Rosewarne's — one which hundreds of thousands of young men make every year — confers a kind of dignity on those for whom it is done. It is a deeply entrenched notion in any culture with a military tradition — and that is practically every culture on earth.

What we avoid thinking about, because it is a most unwelcome truth, is that all this sacrifice is useless waste. Rosewarne died fighting Hitler, which we believe was a noble cause. But the German fighter pilots who died on the same day were just as brave, and their sacrifice just as great. The bargain was the same on both sides.

Hitler is now almost 40 years dead, but war is still with us.

New generations of fighter pilots prepare to lay down their lives fighting new enemies, and it really doesn't matter who: Royal Air Force pilots who were trained to fight Russians found themselves killing Argentines in 1982. Every war seems to have a specific and unique cause, but all wars are the same. The disorder is in the system.

The external symptoms of the disorder are the states in which we live: organizations of vast power that claim the right to complete independence from all the rest of the world. In defence of that absolute independence, they also claim the right to kill people living in other states, and to send their own young men to their deaths in war.

But these mighty and terrible sovereign states, for all their deep-rooted traditions, have no existence beyond the people who make them up. They behave as they do because we think as we do: What's ours is ours, and no damn foreigners are going to take it away from us.

It was always wrong, but we can find excuses for our ancestors. If you don't really believe that foreigners are fully human, which most people didn't — perhaps they still don't — then killing them rather than compromising with them is acceptable behavior. There were also grave practical difficulties: Attila the Hun was not very good at compromise.

We can find excuses for ourselves too. Compromise between different peoples with conflicting aims is still not easy: Both sides actually have to sacrifice things they care a great deal about. Everybody

understands the terms of the bargain almost instinctively. But the wars we fight now are not like that.

In most wars in the past half-century, the civilian dead have outnumbered the military dead. If the developed countries go to war again, using all the weapons they have now, there will be a hundred dead civilians for every soldier who is killed. The old bargain has become utterly meaningless, and we cannot go on pretending it still works.

But the idea of sacrifice does not become meaningless. It's just that we can no longer place that burden solely on our young men. Instead of asking them to die in war so we can all get what we want, we all have to make the lesser sacrifices necessary to avoid war.

Lesser sacrifices, but not small ones. We will not avoid war of unimaginable destructiveness just by expressions of goodwill. We will have to stop trying to make ourselves invulnerable to others, not that it is possible nowadays anyway. We will have to let all sorts of foreigners who think in strange ways have a say in what we do. It will hurt, and it will cost us dearly.

In short, we will have to give up our precious independence. It may sound naive even to talk of such a radical change in the way we run our affairs — the practical and psychological obstacles are immense, and it will happen, if at all, only over decades — but there is no other way.

What we always should have been doing, we now have to do. Either we adapt to our new realities, or we die.

by Gwynne Dyer
courtesy Legion Magazine



The corpse of a German soldier in the trenches of WW I. "What we avoid thinking about, because it is a most unwelcome truth, is that all this sacrifice is useless waste."

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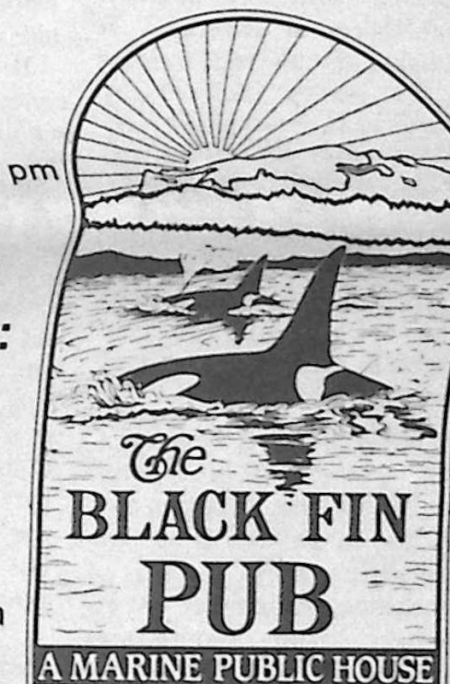
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STEWART • THURS, NOV. 2/89 • 10:00 A.M.

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DAWSON CREEK • FRI, NOV. 3/89 • 9:00 A.M.

The George Dawson Inn • Tremblay Room • 11705 - 8th Street

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Those wishing to appear at the above locations should notify the Clerk of Committees as soon as possible supplying him with 12 copies of any printed material intended for presentation to the committee.

Address all correspondence or inquiries to:

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Remember...

Korean War

Courtenay resident James Patrick Egan, 58, served with the British Army in the Korean War, at Kure, South Honshu Island, Japan. He was a Sergeant Instructor at "Casell's Camp," working with convalescent soldiers, sailors, and airmen wounded in the Korean front lines, and transported over from Pusan on a hospital ship.

His duties were the rehabilitation, education, and restoration of moral of the troops. The first two casualties he saw — one wounded in the left leg, the other in the right, supporting each other, both dressed in field grey uniforms and French army fatigue hats — were Canadians. It was truly a United Nations force.

As a British National Service conscript, James found he liked army life, and signed on as a regular, doing his basic training with the Seaforth Highlanders at Inverness, in Scotland, and his trade training at the Army School of Education at Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire. Posted to Korea, he expected to land near the front lines (producing a *Service newspaper*) but he found himself instead at the Casell's convalescent training camp, responsible for 56 wounded men, just released from hospital.

The so-called 'Korean Conflict,' was a dirty little trench war by this time, with men constantly on patrol, often ambushed by superior numbers of the enemy. The weather was extremely cold (sometimes reaching 40 deg. F below zero) and living conditions were similar to those of World War I, with trenches and underground bunkers. The misery was compounded by the strong enemy firepower — burp guns, anti-personnel grenades and landmines, and Napalm — and fanatical troops. Often overrun in mass attacks by drug-crazed, untrained Chinese and Korean lads — pushed towards the UN guns by trumpets, gongs and screaming commanders — the UN soldiers often called fire down on their own positions, leaving enemy bodies twenty deep around UN strong-points.

James Egan saw the UN survivors of those attacks, wounded in body and spirit, and it was his job along with a highly trained team from the Army Medical and Physical Training Corps, to rehabilitate them. The teams collective spirit and hard work saved many of these casualties from physical and mental collapse.

Almost all the wounded came in plaster casts — even for flesh wounds — which drove them itchy-crazy in the Japanese heat. James remembers the time when casts were removed by



James Egan at home

medical staff: "Look at that soldier!" they would say. Momentarily distracted, the 'soldier' had his cast suddenly ripped away, often taking body hair with it.

To revive their spirits, the convalescents were kept active in almost every sport known to man, and had access to a limitless supply of beer and grub. Frequent trips 'over the wire' by James' charges, were the most common 'sport.'

"One night I carried out a bed check," James remembers. "Out of 56 wounded men, only two were in their beds, apart from several makeshift dummies wearing Australian hats. I didn't need to ask where they went, or what they did, but it seemed to do them a power of good."

"When I think about Remembrance Day, my first thoughts are of my father, John Joseph Egan, who was a sniper and a Lewis gunner at Vimy Ridge, Paschendale, and other notorious WW I battlefields, with the Durham Light Infantry. He survived the war, in spite of being blown up by a railway gun shell. Wounded in the butt, he crawled to a nearby artillery position and directed return fire on the

railway gun (where his sniper's eye had spotted it), putting it out of action. For this he received no medal."

"Secondly, I remember my six older sisters, drafted to night time war work, making bullets for Spitfires. They all married servicemen, including one from the Polish Army. Thirdly, I remember my friends who went to Korea and Malaya and paid with their lives or loss of limbs for the freedom and prosperity which those countries now enjoy.

"Canadians should always be aware of the contribution made by young men and women from this country, often under hellish circumstances, thousands of miles from home. Many of them lie in unmarked graves, their names known only to God.

"There seems often to be a lack of understanding of the service man's and woman's role today. They still serve far from home in arduous conditions, often posted at very short notice with disruption of family life, to support Canada's role as a major peacekeeping force in the world.

"And who remembers the magnificent work of the Canadian Red Cross nurses in the Korean War? Only those who have experienced similar situations can truly evaluate their sacrifice. I hope that future generations of Canadians will also answer when the call comes — as come it will.

"We promised to remember. I will remember — and to me that is worth all the medals in the world."

by Norm Blondel
James Egan is Vice-President of the Canadian Korean Veterans Association, Unit 39, Courtenay. Anyone interested in more information about the KVA may write to: P. O. Box 3643, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 7P1, or telephone (604) 338-8515.



Canadian soldiers on patrol in Korea

Three wars —
three local veterans

World War One



George Hadley recalls a long ago war

George Hadley:

"The young may protest about a lot of things, but their right to do so was made possible by those who fought for liberty and suffered or died in the process."

heat of Suez, he returned to the U.K. with his battleship, and spent the remainder of the war at North Shields, Tyneside. He retired as an executive with the Furness-Withy Shipping Company, and moved to

Canada in 1960.

"Remembrance Day is a reminder to parents, to pass the word to the younger generation. The young may protest about a lot of things, but their right to do so was made possible by

those who fought for liberty and suffered or died in the process," he said. "We must never, ever forget that."

George Hadley isn't as mobile as he was a couple of years ago, but he keeps busy. An ex-accountant, he can still out-pace his bank teller when it comes to adding up the figures. "They rely too much on calculators these days. What happened to mental arithmetic?" George asked. What, indeed?

by Norm Blondel

Duke Warren:

"It's amazing how young we all were. In the graveyards overseas you almost never see the grave of a person over thirty."

"I always wanted to fly. The war gave me the opportunity... there were the patriotic feelings as well... the general feeling at the time was that Germany was mistreating people." Duke Warren, a local veteran of World War II who retired from the Canadian Forces in 1973, was eighteen years old when he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 and after training found himself on the shores of a beleaguered England in January, 1942.

"My first big operation was Dieppe. I flew four sorties that day." At Dieppe, 6,000 troops — mostly Canadian — landed on the beaches of this small French port (in the first amphibious assault since WW I), with the objective of capturing and holding it for twelve hours. But things went disastrously wrong almost before they began. The Germans commanded the cliff-tops and laid down a withering storm of fire, cutting down the helpless Canadians as they landed. Thousands were left dead and wounded with only a few actually making it into the city. The remainder were captured or withdrew in disarray to the waiting ships.

Overhead, the biggest air battle of the war raged, with RAF and RCAF flying more than 3,000 sorties in support of the ground forces while the German Luftwaffe flew 1,000 sorties against them. "There was a madhouse of airplanes going in every direction." Warren and his twin brother (they were known on the squadron as Duke 1 and Duke 2 — his brother died in 1951 in the first CF-100 crash), who went through training and the war with him, were flying Spitfires and shot down a Dornier 217. "I was very pleased. It's like winning an Academy Award — it means you've done your job... I didn't think about the pilot much, it was



A youthful Duke Warren poses before his Spitfire fighter

just a machine I was shooting at... I was happy when the pilot bailed out... I think four people managed to bail out of the Dornier that day."

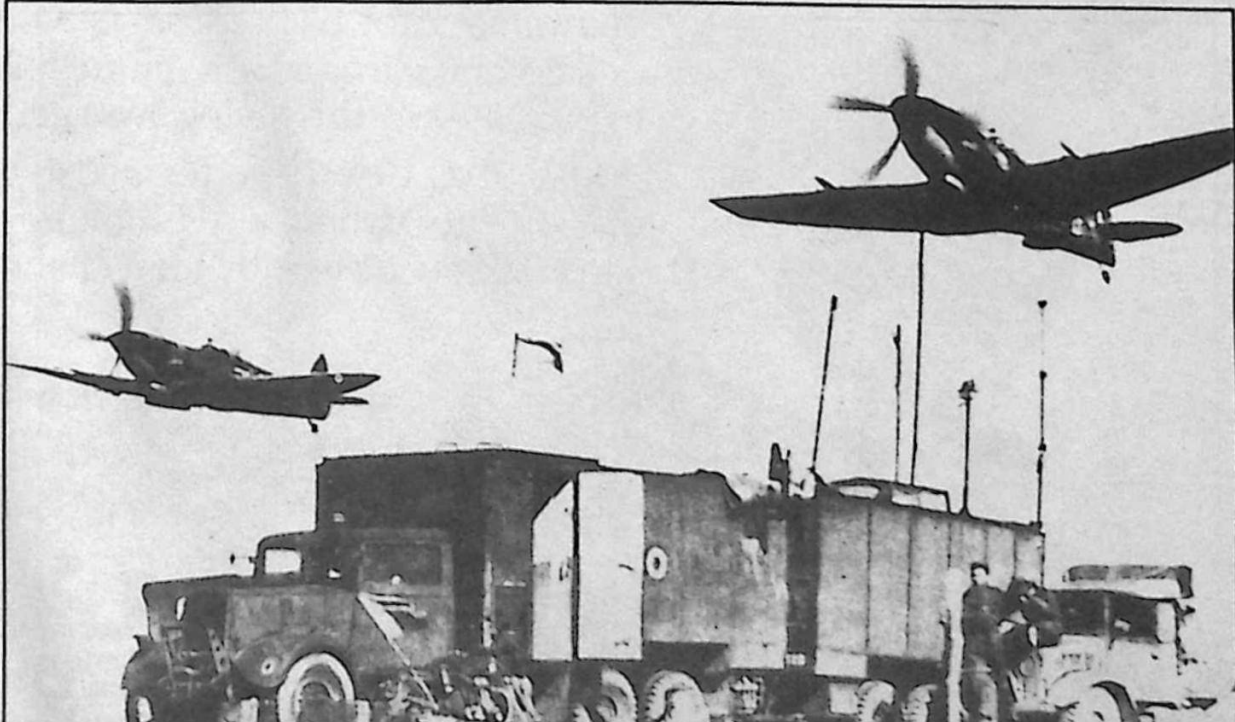
Too busy in the air, Duke remembers little of the battle on the ground although one indelible memory came strongly to him. It was the first time I saw a destroyer burn up. God, they are made of steel! How can they burn?" It wasn't till late in the day, after his last sortie, he found out how badly the Canadians on the ground had suffered.

The Warrens moved onto the fighter-bomber role later in the war, flying sweeps across the French and German countryside where the 'flak was fierce' and it wasn't unusual to return with a few holes punched in the aircraft. "I remember one time a large piece of flak came through the side of the cockpit and ended up nestled in my breast pocket. It was warm but it did nothing more than tear my shirt... it almost doubled over the D-ring on the seat harness before it hit me... otherwise it would have killed me."

Losses were unrelenting during this type of flying. "On most wing sweeps we would lose 2 or 3 aircraft... one day the wing flew 100 sorties and lost 8 pilots with 15 aircraft badly damaged... several times our squadron lost 3 out of 12 aircraft on one sortie." Warren is reluctant to talk about his friends who didn't survive the war. He's happier talking about aircraft — his love of flying is still evident. "There were 38 or 39 pilots on my initial course. Only 7 survived the war. A lot died in accidents... My roommate told me he would never return... 'I'm going to die,' he told me. Sure enough he died in a flying accident... he had a real premonition."

Sitting in Duke Warren's den forty-four years after the war in Europe ended, I glance at the walls adorned with WW II aircraft paintings and mementos from a long career in the Forces. Duke leans back in his chair. He seems uncomfortable with the conversation — as though I have stirred up the ghosts of lost friends and family that he would sooner see laid to rest. Like many veterans probably, I think he doesn't look forward to Remembrance Day. It takes little as it is to send his thoughts winging back to darker days when a comrade who was wonderfully alive one moment might lie broken and burned the next. "It's amazing how young we all were. In the graveyards overseas you almost never see the grave of a person over thirty."

In the Legion in the town of Westaskawin, Alberta, where Duke grew up, there are 34 dead listed from WW II. "Nineteen of them — in the class ahead of or behind mine — I knew personally... when I stand to attention [on Remembrance Day] I'm always thinking



From WW I — a soldier sleeps. (Public Archives Canada)

Remember...

Cracking up: when nerves fail

The failure of nerve is insidious. It creeps up on you when you are least prepared. It dries out your mouth. It gets into your bones and muscles. It's like dry rot in the brain and heart. Malaria or typhoid. You can't eat or sleep.

For weeks I had been feeling panic simmering in my gut. I couldn't make it to the latrines. I had developed a sickly odor. I began to hear whisperings. One night on patrol I got lost. My corporal had to find the way back. Then my rifle and pack vanished.

I was serving in Europe with the British army, a Canloan officer with the King's Own Scottish Borderers. When action was slack I censored letters, made out casualty reports, wrote letters to next-of-kin, checked ammunition supplies. I scrounged treats for my men: smokes, chocolates, socks. Scrounging was not to be confused with looting, which was what Jerry did.

Twice a week, if things were quiet, we held our current affairs class. The army was keen that men keep up with what was going on back home. Every soldier must have a chance to express his ideas on postwar construction.

I remember gathering my men together in the kitchen of a farmhouse near one of the main roads leading out of Arnhem. Somebody had tossed in a grenade the day before. The floor was covered with smashed dishes, scrapes of clothing, school-books. The walls and ceilings were spat-

tered with stains. Over the kitchen door was a portrait of a bearded and venerable old gentleman, a family patriarch. The frame and glass was gone; the portrait was hammered to the wall with a spike driven through the canvas.

I ordered my corporal to light a fire. He smashed up a couple of chairs with his rifle butt for kindling and got a fire going in the kitchen stove. It was soon warm and comfortable, and the men flopped down on the floor. They were dead tired; most of them had been on double guard duty. The corporal announced our topic for discussion was Job Training After The War. In the distance we could hear Moaning Minnies grumbling through the sky, and occasionally the sharp crack of an .88. The kitchen filled with the stench of damp clothing and

burning leather boots too close to the stove.

I stared at the stained walls and ceiling, the school-books, the face of the old man above the kitchen door. After a while, I could see my men were comfortable and announced we'd carry on with the break and forget the discussion until next time. My eyes kept straying back to the face of that old man. The picture reminded me of one of those paintings by Georges Rouault — agony of man on a cross.

Suddenly mortar shells started dropping near us. We doused the fire, and I babbled orders. What fools we had been to start a fire! Then the corporal took charge. Everything went quiet. The shells moved away in a big arc toward the south.

When the crack-up finally comes, the mind seizes up. I

remember a soldier cursing and shoving me away from a window. I babbled about the portrait. We must take it with us!

Before dawn, two officers from brigade and my corporal hustled me into a jeep. I was taken to Nijmegen, then flown to Brussels. A medic slipped a white tag around my neck and I read the big type — NEURASTHENIC. The tag hung like a mark of Cain, albatross, trademark of the outcast. Somebody said the tag was 'just to help sort us out'. Later I was shipped to Basingstoke, England. At the hospital it took months to toughen up my soul.

At the Remembrance Day service at our Legion branch, I listen to a pink-cheeked laddie blowing the Last Post. He shapes his notes with tender care and I remember clear as day fresh graves, the portrait of



an old man, cursing. I see a clump of fresh graves marked only with rifles and helmets, a toppled monument with the inscription *Nos Enfants* crushed under rubble, the fire the German mortars near Arnhem creeping slowly toward a farmhouse.

In our little Legion, I want now, at this moment, to be like the old soldier who never dies. I know I can't, but I try. I push back my shoulders, lift up my head. I hear the clink of medals. (I never sent for mine.) I go over the names of old friends. I think of my faithful corporal. I draw close to those around me, as though to make room for absent comrades now part of history.

by Sam Roddan
courtesy Legion Magazine

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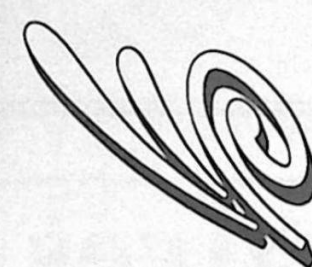
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Junior Ranks Mess

Upcoming events



Remembrance Day 11 Nov

Come to the lounge and reminisce with the veterans. Opening at noon with a light lunch. Entertainment provided by DJ Kirby. PMQ gate (walkers only) will be open. Dress Code DEU #3 with name tags. Ham and Turkey Dart Shoot. Cost \$5.00 per person. Sign up at the mess prior to 1700 hours.

Comedy Night 18 Nov

In conjunction with the Steak Night and Dart Tournament, Comedian Tim Bretcht will be performing at the lounge. See him and he'll have you in stitches all night. Begins at 2000 hrs and goes till midnight. No cost.



Ms Gay Cup Pageant 24 Nov

Time to get those dresses pressed and that hair curled. Ms Gay Cup Pageant is only two weeks away. Applications available for contestants at Junior Ranks' Mess office. Entry is FREE. DJ Candu will entertain, prizes for winner and runner-up. See you there! East vs West. Sign up at the Messes. Begins at 1300 hrs. Same rules as last year. Starting at 1100 hrs with the pre-game warm-up. Come and cheer on your team. There will be back to back TVs, munchies available.

Mixed TGIF 1 Dec

Ham & Turkey Dart Shoot. Cost \$5 per person. Sign up at the mess prior to 1700 hrs.

Jerry Watson 9 Dec

Come to see a professional billiards player at the Mess. Starts at 1800 hrs — he'll dazzle you!

Reminder

Every Friday afternoon beginning at 1730 hrs, there are MIXED TGIF and Sports. Check at the mess to see what event is taking place. Food is available. Sign up prior to 1715 hrs.

What A Night!!!

The Hallowe'en Dance was a great success. DJ Ozzy of Much Music was a hit for all. Thanks to everyone for coming out.



No you didn't have too much to drink, they did look like this



The Sheik of CFB Comox



Two weeks at Club Med without my sun screen!

The Junior Ranks' Luncheon on Friday 27 Oct was well attended. The Base Commander's speech was very informative in regards to future plans for the Base. He also presented a framed Lithograph to the Jr Ranks with the official words to the CAF Marching Song. Everyone enjoyed the meal. Thanks to all those who made it possible.

Remember...

Dad — I hardly knew you

If I want to hear firsthand what it was like landing on the beaches of Normandy 40 years ago, I am going to have to watch one of the many documentaries that will surface June 6 or frequent one of the Royal Canadian Legion branches conducting special memorial services.

The D-Day ceremonies will be a little more earnest this time. Normandy survivors will wonder if they will be around to mark the 45th and 50th anniversaries.

My dad never made it to the 35th. He died during bypass surgery in 1976. N. Leslie Clark served with London's 1st Hussars, landing at Normandy en route to the Lowlands.

Dad was a sergeant. He was not the type to interest historians. Somewhat typical of his generation — matured by global depression and aged by global war — he would later try to instill virtues of "truth, duty, honour" in a boy who happened to be in his teens when it was fashionable to turn on, tune off and drop out. When the son fell from those lofty ideals, the



Soldiers on the advance north of Arnhem, Holland, April 1945.

father was standing by, ready to help him up, dust him off and start him on his way back to the pinnacle.

He knew his sons. He encouraged one through RMC, but dissuaded the other from joining the U.S. military, correctly advising him he would rebel against "chicken-shit" aspects of military life.

Dad didn't talk much about the war. When he did, he usually selected the more humorous episodes. With marvellous self-deprecating wit he

explained to an enthralled child that the Canadian Army selected sergeants from among those stupid enough to stick their head outside a tank to lure snipers.

Dad had a knack for humanizing his enemies. His major war story was of the time he ordered a round of explosives fired over a haystack, behind which squatted a German soldier, pants at ease. He couldn't kill a man answering nature's call. His usual reference to the Germans was Jerry. It

sounded almost formal. He loved Lili Marlene.

Only when he talked of the German snipers who slaughtered his friends (then, eyes defiant, surrendered to troops they correctly surmised would not kill them) did I hear anger bordering on hatred.

Dad was brief in his descriptions. Normandy was vomit. France was wine that soon soured. Holland was starving children, and decades before the term became fashionable, liberated women.

He had a soft spot for the Poles, but never lost a chance to jibe my Polish father-in-law that "the damn Polacks" were so intent on killing Germans they would outstrip their flanks and have to be extricated by the Canadians at day's end. The Poles had no time for thanks as they rushed to the rear in the race for female companionship. It was a race the Poles traditionally won.

Ludwick, too, talked little of the war. He, too, is dead. It was not until they pinned his Monte Cassino Cross on his

burial jacket that I even knew where he served. He was among those labelled "D-Day Dodgers" by an arrogant English ass.

I have grown too old to be too sentimental. After my dad's death, I embarked on a journalistic career, interviewing many Canadian veterans of the Vietnam and Korean wars and finding it unsettling to realize I know more about their experiences than of my father's.

Shortly after dad's death, a family friend leaned over his beer and began telling me how rough it had been in Europe. "Les really saw some bad things over there," I was told. "I don't know how he did it without going crazy."

"Yeah," I bluffed. But dad to tell, I really don't know what Les and Ludwick did. All I have are some carefully preserved medals.

I wish I had more.

by Doug Clark
courtesy Goose Bay Times
(1986)

Veteran recalls WW II

near where the Terra Theatre is now.

took a job in following year, tow cables at Wire Company.

was only 16, he was for the regular army, joined the militia. But on 18th birthday, he was off to basic training in Cornwall, followed by eight weeks at A-11 Advance Infantry Training Centre ... and his drill hall was what is now the Terra Theatre.

"The biggest drill hall in the British Empire was at Borden then. It was called Lee Hall, and I watched it burn down after the war, in 1951." The Borden and Gun Club now adjacent to a large Lee Hall.

after Borden, there came England, and the wait for invasion. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry entered Europe on D-Day plus 28, and Private Doug Shaughnessy found himself at war.

"The stark reality of war faced us as we came up the beach, and saw the line of wounded men, bandaged, dirty and bloody ... I recall the wrecked vehicles and piles of barbed wire on the beach."

The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry was part of the 2nd Canadian Infantry division, which by the end of July was near Verrieres. The regiment's commanding officer, Colonel John Rockingham, summoned Shaughnessy-Sept.

help were from 5 am to 9 pm. "It paid \$40 a week and all the water you could drink. I remember seeing loads of green lumber coming in through what we called Red Road Station."

He had a while to wait, and in the meantime he watched convoys of troops rolling by on the roads, and saw flights of



Driver Doug Shaughnessy today

Private Harold Green was killed on 12 August at Barbey Crossroads, France. He was buried by his friend Doug Shaughnessy, on a hilltop above the town of Bretteville-sur-Laize.

The RHLI went on to play a signal role in the liberation of Holland, pushing the Germans back across the Scheldt Estuary and clearing Walcheren Island. When the Germans surrendered to Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery on May 4, the regiment was deep inside Germany. It had suffered 1,464 men killed in ten months ... about twice the war establishment of the battalion.

Shaughnessy and his comrades were demobbed in a ceremony in Victoria Park in Hamilton in November, 1945. But by 1950, with the Korean War in full flood, good soldiers were again needed, and he was asked to rejoin. He ended up in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, once again at CFB Borden, instructing at the corps school.

He retired from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1969, and later returned to Borden in his current job as a civvy driver. In September, Joe Shaughnessy joined other veterans of the RHLI at a dedication ceremony in Antwerp, as guests of the Dutch government. A monument to the liberation of that country was unveiled on 10 Sept.

The man they had captured was a member of the 272nd Infantry Division, and he was the first prisoner the Scout Platoon had taken in the war. He would

Ortona resupply: convoy through hell!

"The truck was sitting on the side of a cliff, with me hanging over the edge..."

In the fall of 1943, when rain was the daily curse and mud stuck to everything, we'd spent the better part of two weeks moving from place to place. The exact location, whose appearance changed with every new shelling, was a number on a map near Ortona, in northern Italy.

All we could see were dark clouds, destroyed buildings, lines of soldiers, mud and more mud. We were Canadian volunteers, but what were we doing in the mud in Italy?

I signed up for basic training at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Since I was in fairly good shape from doing farm work as a kid, and played a lot of soccer, basic training was hardly a major challenge. Later, a group of us volunteered to go overseas, but at the last minute the Canadian Army cancelled the draft and sent some of us to Delbert, N.S. After some more training, I volunteered to join the Sherbrooke Fusiliers, 27th Armored Regt., and we were shipped to Healdy Downs for training on the Canadian Ram tank — the early prototype of the American Sherman tank.

I was sick of all the training and had volunteered for the first opportunity that meant less of it. Little did I know putting my name on a sign-up sheet as a replacement would take me from England through North Africa, across the Mediterranean in an LCI boat to Sicily, and at last to the mud of northern Italy with the Canadian Service Corps.

My job was simple. I was to drive truckloads of weapons, explosives, fuel, shells, equipment and supplies to the army units along the front lines, in all but total darkness.

On occasion, I drove with a partner or a non-commissioned officer. To make large deliveries, we travelled in convoy with a jeep leading the way, the driver and an officer in the jeep trying to figure the

way in the darkness. Our only defense was darkness and not losing our wits on the side of a dark mountain. Driving a supply truck without headlights took a lot of nerve.

Ortona, somewhere west of our supply line, was being taken one building at a time, using a new tactic of infantry action. A squad of men placed explosives on the inside of the wall of a neighbouring house, then ran like hell while the occupation troops met their maker in the next apartment.

All the supplies, explosives, weapons, fuel, and food for that campaign had to be transported to the front by the Service Corps.

Once we drove our trucks all night over a god-forsaken, muddy mountain road to deliver supplies. My truck was right in the middle of the convoy, with two trucks ahead and the same number behind. We all carried personal weapons, but driving trucks loaded with gas, explosives, and ammunition, darkness was really our only defence.

Beneath each truck, directly behind the rear axle, was a little light with a small bulb the size of a fingernail. It was the only light showing the following driver where to direct his vehicle. The rear housing on the trucks was painted white to help illuminate the little light ahead. This helped a little under ideal conditions, but the mud made the job pure hell for the drivers. When the light got splashed or the bulb burned out, the truck ahead would seem to disappear into the darkness.

As I followed the third truck, suddenly, without notice, its light disappeared. I stared into the dark. The sergeant who was riding with me sat up. I stopped the truck, opened my door and for some unknown reason looked down. There was no ground below. The truck was

sitting on the side of a cliff, with me hanging over the edge. I hung onto the door, gasping for air, until I swung back into the truck.

The sergeant got out on his side of the muddy road and waved me to the right. The truck ahead had turned a sharp corner that way and its light was hidden by the rock face of the side of the mountain. The trucks behind, meanwhile, had stopped just in time to avoid pushing yours truly down the side of the mountain along with my load of ammunition. It could have been quite a fireworks display, at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer and two human sacrifices, namely me and the sergeant.

Somehow, we managed to get down the mountain to a clearing where some of the trucks had started to unload. The officer who led the convoy waved our vehicles to a location near some trees.

I backed into a spot beside the truck we'd been following. Without a word, we passed the ammunition into the eager arms of infantry men who had their hands and faces blackened for camouflage. We didn't stop to chat. We wanted to get off that mountain the fastest way possible, while the eager soldiers wanted us out of there to avoid their detection by the Germans.

It was about 2:30 a.m. by the time the trucks were turned around and headed back. I was directly behind the officer's jeep. The sun started to come



up two hours after dropping off the supplies, and as the trucks pulled around a low hill beside the road, I spotted a German soldier leaning against a boulder with his rifle pointed at the convoy.

Simultaneously, I hit the brake pedal, popped the motor out of gear, turned the steering wheel into the hillside, pulled up the emergency brakes and screamed, "Jerry on the hill!", as I opened the door, pulled my Thompson with me and jumped to the mud below.

The German sat motionless, his rifle across his knees. I took a breath and waited to see what would happen next. The drivers behind me were standing in knee-deep water and mud.

By this time the officer and sergeant were out of their jeep and doing the same as the rest of us.

I ran, half crawling, covered in mud, into a ditch. With the sun passed the German soldier and we to the high ground. Our convoy moving down on this hillside was totally motionless.

On his back, the German was wrong. It started raining again as we got to the high ground. I had to probably died during the constant wartime rain. I would have been in the mud.

I looked around for my comrades. With my eyes closed, I walked down the hillside.

James A. Black
The Canadian Magazine

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Remember...

Dad — I hardly knew you

If I want to hear firsthand what it was like landing on the beaches of Normandy 40 years ago, I am going to have to watch one of the many documentaries that will surface June 6 or frequent one of the Royal Canadian Legion branches conducting special memorial services.

The D-Day ceremonies will be a little more earnest this time. Normandy survivors will wonder if they will be around to mark the 45th and 50th anniversaries.

My dad never made it to the 35th. He died during bypass surgery in 1976. N. Leslie Clark served with London's 1st Hussars, landing at Normandy en route to the Lowlands.

Dad was a sergeant. He was not the type to interest historians. Somewhat typical of his generation — matured by global depression and aged by global war — he would later try to instill virtues of "truth, duty, honour" in a boy who happened to be in his teens when it was fashionable to turn on, tune off and drop out. When the son fell from those lofty ideals, the



Soldiers on the advance north of Arnhem, Holland, April 1945.

father was standing by, ready to help him up, dust him off and start him on his way back to the pinnacle.

He knew his sons. He encouraged one through RMC, but dissuaded the other from joining the U.S. military, correctly advising him he would rebel against "chicken-shit" aspects of military life.

Dad didn't talk much about the war. When he did, he usually selected the more humorous episodes. With marvellous self-deprecating wit he

explained to an enthralled child that the Canadian Army selected sergeants from among those stupid enough to stick their head outside a tank to lure snipers.

Dad had a knack for humanizing his enemies. His major war story was of the time he ordered a round of explosives fired over a haystack, behind which squatted a German soldier, pants at ease. He couldn't kill a man answering nature's call. His usual reference to the Germans was Jerry. It

sounded almost formal. He loved Lili Marlene.

Only when he talked of the German snipers who slaughtered his friends (then, eyes defiant, surrendered to troops they correctly surmised would not kill them) did I hear anger bordering on hatred.

Dad was brief in his descriptions. Normandy was vomit. France was wine that soon soured. Holland was starving children, and decades before the term became fashionable, liberated women.

He had a soft spot for the Poles, but never lost a chance to jibe my Polish father-in-law that "the damn Polacks" were so intent on killing Germans they would outstrip their flanks and have to be extricated by the Canadians at day's end. The Poles had no time for thanks as they rushed to the rear in the race for female companionship. It was a race the Poles traditionally won.

Ludwick, too, talked little of the war. He, too, is dead. It was not until they pinned his Monte Cassino Cross on his

burial jacket that I even knew where he served. He was among those labelled "D-Day Dodgers" by an arrogant English ass.

I have grown too old to be too sentimental. After my dad's death, I embarked on a journalistic career, interviewing many Canadian veterans of the Vietnam and Korean wars and finding it unsettling to realize I know more about their experiences than of my father's.

Shortly after dad's death, a family friend leaned over his beer and began telling me how rough it had been in Europe. "Les really saw some bad things over there," I was told. "I don't know how he did it without going crazy."

"Yeah," I bluffed. But sad to tell, I really don't know what Les and Ludwick did. All I have are some carefully preserved medals.

I wish I had more.

by Doug Clark
courtesy Goose Bay Times
(1986)

Borden veteran recalls WW II

"To many people at Borden, Scheldt and Walcheren are just the names of streets. But they were important battles of the Second World War ... they led to the capture of Antwerp and helped shorten the war. I know ... I was there."

Doug Shaughnessy is now working as a civilian driver with Base Transport at CFB Borden. But in 1939 he was a 14-year-old boy attending School No. 6 at Midhurst, just north of Barrie, Ont. On 10 Sept. of the year, King George the Sixth, as sovereign of Canada, declared the Dominion to be at war with Nazi Germany.

"If the war hadn't happened, I suppose I would have gone on and got more education," he says now. "But at that time I knew the war was coming. I read the newspapers, and I saw it coming from the time I was ten years old."

Within weeks of the declaration of war, CFB Borden had once again become the hub of military training, almost exactly 20 years from the time it had stood down from training tens of thousands of men for the trenches of Europe.

"I never had any doubts that there would be a war, or that I would be in it," Shaughnessy says.

He had a while to wait, and in the meantime he watched convoys of troops rolling by on the roads, and saw flights of



Pte Doug Shaughnessy-Sept., 1944.

Anson bombers and Harvard trainers winging overhead. His formal education came to an end, in the summer of 1940. While his father worked building H-huts, the now 15-year-old Doug got a job with McCrawley and McCracken caterers, helping feed the army of civilian tradesmen labouring to put the base on a war footing.

"If you had a hammer and a saw you were a carpenter and got paid a dollar an hour. If you were a labourer I think it was 50 cents and hour."

Hours of work for kitchen help were from 5 am to 9 pm. "It paid \$40 a week and all the water you could drink. I remember seeing loads of green lumber coming in through what we called Roe Road Station

near where the Terra Theatre is now."

Shaughnessy took a job in Hamilton the following year, making tank tow cables at Greening Wire Company. Because he was only 16, he was too young for the regular army, so he joined the militia. But on his 18th birthday, he was off to basic training in Cornwall, followed by eight weeks at A-11 Advance Infantry Training Centre ... and his drill hall was what is now the Terra Theatre.

"The biggest drill hall in the British Empire was at Borden then. It was called Lee Hall, and I watched it burn down after the war, in 1951." The Borden Rod and Gun Club now stands adjacent to a large parking lot, which was the floor of Lee Hall.

After Borden, there came England, and the wait for invasion. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry entered Europe on D-Day plus 28, and Private Doug Shaughnessy found himself at war.

"The stark reality of war faced us as we came up the beach, and saw the line of wounded men, bandaged, dirty and bloody ... I recall the wrecked vehicles and piles of barbed wire on the beach."

The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry was part of the 2nd Canadian Infantry division, which by the end of July was near Verrieres. The regiment's commanding officer, Colonel John Rockingham, summoned Shaughnessy and



Driver Doug Shaughnessy-today

member of the Scout Platoon named Harry Green, and told them he needed a prisoner for interrogation. Armed only with rifles and grenades, they set out through the lines.

"Suddenly we broke into a clearing ... and we were in the midst of a maze of German trenches. Harry cocked his rifle and jumped in front of one trench. I pulled the pin on one of my grenades and jumped in front of another. I heard Harry yell, 'Come out you so-and-so.' And I heard a German voice: 'Nicht schiessen, Kamerad! Nicht schiessen!'"

The man they had captured was a member of the 272nd Infantry Division, and he was the first prisoner the Scout Platoon had taken in the war. He would

Private Harold Green was killed on 12 August at Barbary Crossroads, France. He was buried by his friend Doug Shaughnessy, on a hilltop above the town of Bretteville-sur-Laize.

The RHLI went on to play a signal role in the liberation of Holland, pushing the Germans back across the Scheldt Estuary and clearing Walcheren Island. When the Germans surrendered to Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery on May 4, the regiment was deep inside Germany. It had suffered 1,464 men killed in ten months ... about twice the war establishment of the battalion.

Shaughnessy and his comrades were demobbed in a ceremony in Victoria Park in Hamilton in November, 1945. But by 1950, with the Korean War in full flood, good soldiers were again needed, and he was asked to rejoin. He ended up in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, once again at CFB Borden, instructing at the corps school.

He retired from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1969, and later returned to Borden in his current job as a civvy driver. In September, Joe Shaughnessy joined other veterans of the RHLI at a dedication ceremony in Antwerp, as guests of the Dutch government. A monument to the liberation of that country was unveiled on 10

Ortona resupply:

convoy through hell!

"The truck was sitting on the side of a cliff, with me hanging over the edge..."

In the fall of 1943, when rain was the daily curse and mud stuck to everything, we'd spent the better part of two weeks moving from place to place. The exact location, whose appearance changed with every new shelling, was a number on a map near Ortona, in northern Italy.

All we could see were dark clouds, destroyed buildings, lines of soldiers, mud and more mud. We were Canadian volunteers, but what were we doing in the mud in Italy?

I signed up for basic training at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Since I was in fairly good shape from doing farm work as a kid, and played a lot of soccer, basic training was hardly a major challenge. Later, a group of us volunteered to go overseas, but at the last minute the Canadian Army cancelled the draft and sent some of us to Delbert, N.S. After some more training, I volunteered to join the Sherbrooke Fusiliers, 27th Armored Regt., and we were shipped to Heady Downs for training on the Canadian Ram tank — the early prototype of the American Sherman tank.

I was sick of all the training, and had volunteered for the first opportunity that meant less of it. Little did I know putting my name on a sign-up sheet as a replacement would take me from England through North Africa, across the Mediterranean in an LCI boat to Sicily, and at last to the mud of northern Italy with the Canadian Service Corps.

My job was simple. I was to drive truckloads of weapons, explosives, fuel, shells, equipment and supplies to the army units along the front lines, in all but total darkness. On occasion, I drove with a partner or a non-commissioned officer. To make large deliveries, we travelled in convoy with a jeep leading the way, the driver and an officer in the jeep trying to figure the

way in the darkness. Our only defense was darkness and not losing our wits on the side of a dark mountain. Driving a supply truck without headlights took a lot of nerve.

Ortona, somewhere west of our supply line, was being taken one building at a time, using a new tactic of infantry action. A squad of men placed explosives on the inside of the wall of a neighbouring house, then ran like hell while the occupation troops met their maker in the next apartment.

All the supplies, explosives, weapons, fuel, and food for that campaign had to be transported to the front by the Service Corps.

Once we drove our trucks all night over a god-forsaken, muddy mountain road to deliver supplies. My truck was right in the middle of the convoy, with two trucks ahead and the same number behind. We all carried personal weapons, but driving trucks loaded with gas, explosives, and ammunition, darkness was really our only defence.

Beneath each truck, directly behind the rear axle, was a little light with a small bulb the size of a fingernail. It was the only light showing the following driver where to direct his vehicle. The rear housing on the trucks was painted white to help illuminate the little light ahead. This helped a little under ideal conditions, but the mud made the job pure hell for the drivers. When the light got splashed or the bulb burned out, the truck ahead would seem to disappear into the darkness.

As I followed the third truck, suddenly, without notice, its light disappeared. I stared into the dark. The sergeant who was riding with me sat up. I stopped the truck, opened my door and for some unknown reason looked down. There was no ground below. The truck was



sitting on the side of a cliff, with me hanging over the edge. I hung onto the door, gasping for air, until I swung back into the truck.

The sergeant got out on his side of the muddy road and waved me to the right. The truck ahead had turned a sharp corner that way and its light was hidden by the rock face of the side of the mountain. The trucks behind, meanwhile, had stopped just in time to avoid pushing yours truly down the side of the mountain along with my load of ammunition. It could have been quite a fireworks display, at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer and two human sacrifices, namely me and the sergeant.

Somehow, we managed to get down the mountain to a clearing where some of the trucks had started to unload. The officer who led the convoy waved our vehicles to a location near some trees.

I backed into a spot beside the truck we'd been following. Without a word, we passed the ammunition into the eager arms of infantry men who had their hands and faces blackened for camouflage. We didn't stop to chat. We wanted to get off that mountain the fastest way possible, while the eager soldiers wanted us out of there to avoid their detection by the Germans.

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By this time the officer and sergeant were out of their jeep and doing the same as the rest of us.

I ran, half crawling, covered in mud, into a river bed that passed the German. When I got to the high ground, I looked down on this man, who was totally motionless.

On his back, I could see blood spattered all over. He had to be dead, and had probably died sitting, waiting for the Grim Reaper.

I looked around for more of his comrades. With none in sight, I walked down to him,

sweating hands gripped to my Thompson. As I got closer, I could see the death smile on the man's face. For what reason I don't know, I kicked him and he fell over. Talk about being stupid, I could have been blown up had he been booby-trapped; but you never think of things like that until afterward.

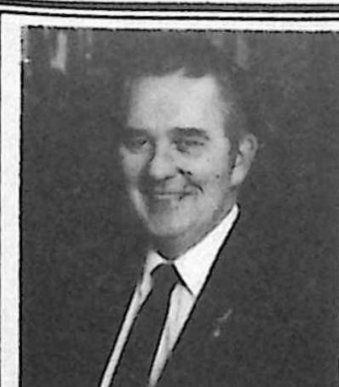
The soldier's wallet had been in his clenched hand, and when he fell over some pictures fell out on the ground. One picture was a woman and a kid. I figured it was his wife and daughter. The poor guy was trying to find his family picture before he died.

The German's hands looked big and hardened, as if they were the hands of a farmer. I looked at my hands and thought to myself, that poor guy could have been me had the situation been different.

But there was not time to reflect on it. With the sun already over the horizon, we had to keep our convoy moving or we were going to be sitting ducks, I thought.

But no, I was wrong. It started raining again as we got back in the trucks, and I had to add the constant wartime qualifier. We would have been sitting ducks in the mud.

by James A. Black
courtesy Legion Magazine



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Remember...



Comox Air Force Museum

Winter hours of operation are now in effect. We will be open 10 am to 4 pm Saturdays and Sundays. We have a special display in our feature gallery of Canada's UN peacekeeping role. Come by and see it. Admission is FREE and everyone is welcome.

Officers' Mess Ladies' Club

A Michel Delacroix is up for sale. The bid starts at \$150.00. \$150.00 once ... \$150.00 twice ... \$150.00 last chance. Sold to No. 20.

What an exciting evening and what an easy way to spend your spouse's money!

The Auction was conducted by Genesis Galleries of Atlantic, Georgia. The Gallery provided an excellent variety of lithographs, serigraphs, oils, and watercolors with prices ranging as low as \$35 through several thousand dollars.

The Auction was a great success as well as the Stand Up sale on Sunday morning: between 10 am and 12 pm, you could buy, with a reasonable offer, the art of your choice.

Door prizes, courtesy of Genesis Galleries, were drawn hourly. The winners were: Mrs. Anne Gibbon, OCdt Luc Guillelte, Mrs. Laurette Subchuck, and Mrs. Olive Wadelius. Congratulations!

And thank you to the Executive for their time and effort to make the two days a huge success.

We look forward to seeing you same time next year for another evening of entertainment and art.

Ladies, don't forget our next function 15 November. Make It & Take It will present craft demos and we will be making the Xmas decorations for around the fireplace.

Thank you!

On behalf of the Beavers, Cubs and their leaders, 1st Lazo Scout Group wishes to express appreciation for the parental and community support which helped to make this year's Apple Day and calendar sales a success. Funds raised through your contributions will assist District and 1st Lazo in carrying out various activities throughout the year. Sincere thanks to everyone involved.

Fortune 501 raffle

The Courtenay Museums' innovative fundraiser, the FORTUNE 501 RAFFLE, is proving to be a tremendous hit with Comox Valley residents. Just three weeks into the campaign and already one-half of the 5,000 raffle tickets are spoken for.

Fundraiser Al Crockatt predicts that all the \$2.00 raffle tickets will be sold by the end of November, a full two weeks ahead of the published draw date of 15 December. Mr Crockatt stated that there is no reason why we should not move the draw date up if ticket sales are completed.

It is not too late to purchase your chance to win five-hundred-and-one new scratch 'n' wins. Raffle tickets are available at leading merchants throughout the Valley, from most Lotto B.C. retailers, at the museum, or delivered free to your business or residence in books of ten by phoning 334-3611.

Jr Ranks Ladies Club

Jr Ranks' Ladies' Club general meeting was held 26 Oct in the lounge.

The entertainment was provided by Esther Thompson of Create-a-Book, a collection of personalized children's books. A special highlight was a personalized letter to your child from Santa.

A draw was made for 2 personalized books. The winners were Elizabeth Merpaw and Jeanette Frizell.

Secret Sister selection will be done at the Nov meeting and plans for our Christmas party will be finalized. Come out and make your party wishes known. Thursday 23 Nov at 7:30 pm. New members always welcomed.

Our 4th Annual Fashion Show was held on 1 Nov. As usual fabulous fashions were provided by Reitmans. New to our line up this year were Maida's Boutique (lingerie and maternity fashions) and Casually Yours (great casuals and one-of-a-kind accessories).

During the intermission everyone was treated to samples of wine from Calona

Wines and coolers from Pacific Breweries, and a wide variety of food donated by club members of food provided by Club Members, thank you.

Throughout the evening door prize draws were made several door prize draws were held. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to the generous donors.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation & a very special thank you to everyone who helped to make this evening a success (our apologies if we miss anyone): Vernia Mackenzie (Reitmans) Patti Eastman (Reitmans) Maida Samuels (Maida's Boutique) Linda Delany (Casually Yours)

Laurel Bazett (commentator) Linda Ball (Makario's) Dorothy Brown (Comox Flower Pot) Robert & Darlene Haines (Frames by Haines) Bob Butler (Pacific Breweries) Ted McEwen (Calona Wines) All the models Lin d'Entremont (photos) Gerry Fairbrother (photos)

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LEGION LOG

BRANCH 17 COURTENAY

ENTERTAINMENT

Fri 10 Nov. Music by SHABOOM
Fri & Sat 17 & 18 Nov. Music by DUKES
Fri & Sat 25 & 26 Nov. Music by EL DORADO

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

BINGOS—Thu, Fri, Sun at 7:00 PM

MONDAY.....FUND EUCHE
TUESDAY.....PUB DARTS
WEDNESDAY.....LEAGUE CRIB
THURSDAY.....FUND DARTS
FRIDAY.....TGIF & MONEY DRAW AT 6:30PM
SATURDAY.....FUND BRIDGE AT 12:30

EVENTS

"MORE PLAYERS WELCOME"
Phone 334-4322 (days) for more information
SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER—REMEMBRANCE
breakfast 0900, parade fall in 1015, return parade to branch
followed by an Open House.
SUNDAY 19 NOV -- Fun Crib Tournament -- Upper Hall,
everyone welcome, registration 12 to 1 pm.
NOW OPEN SUNDAYS.....12—7 PM

BRANCH 160 COMOX

ENTERTAINMENT

Fri 10 Nov. NO BAND, MEMBERS' NIGHT
Fri 17 Nov. Music by VALLYBOYS
Fri 27 Nov. Music by ALLEYCATS
Fri 1 Dec. Music by DUKES

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

SUNDAYS.....Lounge 11 am to 6 pm
MONDAYS.....Men's Dart League, Navy Room, 7:30 pm
TUESDAYS.....Ladies Crib League, Lounge 7 pm
Mixed Dart League, Upper Hall, 7:30 pm
WEDNESDAYS.....Navy League Drop-In Bingo
Upper Hall, 7 pm
THURSDAYS.....1st Br. Exec. Mtg. 8 pm
L. A. Exec. Mtg. (as req.)
2nd L.A. Gen. Mtg., Upper Hall, 8 pm
3rd Br. Gen. Mtg., Upper Hall, 8 pm
FRIDAYS.....Meat Draws, 2-6 pm
Dance, Lounge, unless advised
SATURDAYS.....Meat Draws, Lounge 2-6 pm

SPORTS

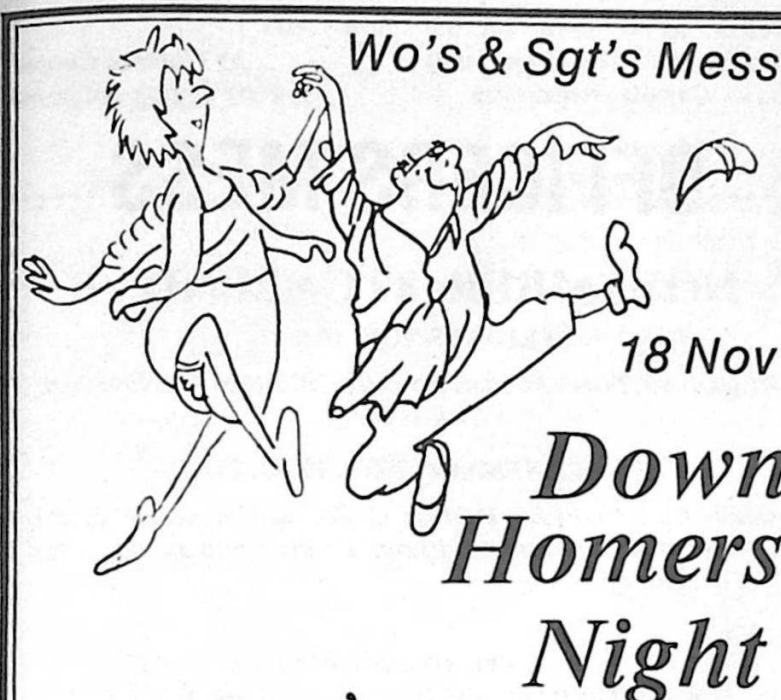
SUNDAY NOV 19—Monthly Euchre Tournament, Upper Hall
1pm start, members & guests, reg \$5.
CURLING (Ordinary & Seniors) Legion Provincial Competitions, Sports Officer All Cameron will accept Team (rink) entries in either Ordinary or Senior categories during October & November. Age limits for seniors is now restricted to those members over 50 years. For more info call 339-2022.

EVENTS

Friday Nov 10 -- Members Night, open to all members of Br. 160, No guests.

Saturday 11 November—Remembrance Day—Parade falls in at 1030. Service at Cenotaph 1100. After service Open House at branch, minors in Upper Hall, adults in Lounge.

Saturday, 25 November—Ladies Auxiliary—will hold their annual Christmas Bazaar and Lunch in the Upper Hall.



Down Homers' Music by 'Kirby'

Seafood Chicken & Chips

Doors open 1900 hrs
Food served 2000 -- 2100 hrs
members \$5 per person
Hon. members & guests \$7 per person

NOVEMBER EVENTS

9 Nov. RCMP MESS DINNER
15 Nov. CRIB CLUB
18 Nov. DOWN HOMER
25 Nov. PRIVATE WEDDING
29 Nov. CRIB CLUB



Base Fire Chief retires



On Saturday, 9 September the Base Fire Hall paid tribute to Capt Herb Livingston, CD. The occasion for this dinner was to honour Herb as he retires from the RCAF/CAF after a long and illustrious career spanning some thirty seven years, three hundred fifty-four days (but who's counting?). In 1952, as an aircraftsman, he started his career in Saint Jean, Quebec, and then

went to Aylmer, Ontario, for the basic fire fighter's course. Some, but not all of the stops along the way included RCAF Gimley, RCAF Winnipeg, RCAF Resolute Bay, RCAF Comox, CFS Masset, CFFA, NDHQ, and finally back here to CFB Comox.

A fine dinner and social evening was held at the Kingfisher Inn. Presentations and speeches were the order of the evening and, of course, numerous retirement messages were read. During his acceptance speech, Herb noted that this was the way he always wanted to go, in the company of fellow fire fighters. He then told a few 'war stories' about the old days as the gathering settled in for the evening.

Capt Livingston is a highly respected member of the trade and the Canadian Forces and will probably be remembered most for his days as CWO Livingston. His career, which has spanned four decades, was highlighted by his posting to NDHQ as Life Cycle Manager. This position was the most challenging and rewarding of the many positions he was asked to fill.

The BFC and staff of the Base Fire Hall wish Herb and Rosealie the best of health, luck, and happiness during their retirement in the glorious Comox Valley.

by Dave Ward

Recycling: it's time!

Composting is a natural process that breaks down vegetation into a rich soil conditioner and is an excellent fertilizer for most gardens.

Kitchen scraps and yard waste may be utilized for composting. Aside from being one of the best fertilizers, using these materials means a reduction in the amount of waste going to the landfill sites. Grass clippings, leaves, fish, egg shells, vegetable and fruit scraps make good compost material. Naturally, you would like you compost pile to be as productive as possible and to be pest-free. So gardeners strongly recommend excluding animal fats, meat, bone, poultry, dairy products, beans, and vegetable oil from the compost pile.

The easiest method for composting is to put the 'compostable' material into an open pile. Or a compost container can be fabricated by puncturing holes in a garbage can. Enclosing an area with chicken wire or wooden stakes is another alternative or wooden bins can be built with scrap lumber. The compost pile should be at least 1 cubic yard in size to guarantee sufficient heat generation.

The compost can be used as a fertilizer when it reaches a rich, dark colour and the materials have broken down into small particles. It can be applied to your garden in a 1" to 3" layer. Finally, mix the compost with the soil by working the compost into the ground.

Composting allows us to play a part in nature's continual renewal: to give back to the earth that which we have taken.

by Dave Ward

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Remember...

Privilege

continued from page 6

story to the House security members posted there. They listened sympathetically, then, hesitantly, one suggested: "Let's go inside. I have an idea." He left us momentarily to confer with authorities and his subsequent smile told us instantly his idea had worked.

Minutes later, as the Peace Tower clock struck the hour, we stood in the Memorial Chamber, in a corner out of the way, while the Turning Of The Page was performed. This ceremony is the daily act of turning the pages of the Books of Remembrance according to perpetual calendars for each book. The calendars are arranged so each page of each book is turned once a year.

The precision of every movement of each Book of Remembrance clearly showed the turner's pride in this act. His white-gloved hands moved with purpose as he lifted the glass tops of the cases and turned the pages. At each book, he briefly bowed his head and saluted it. This short, touching ceremony brought me to the brink of tears. I knew my friend beside me, a veteran of both world wars, was as moved as I, perhaps more so.

At the conclusion the two service staff men showed my friend about the chamber, pausing by the items of particular interest to him.

Meanwhile, I found the

name I'd come to see and my thoughts went back to the sunny Sunday of another September, when I knelt at a grave in the Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery in Normandy and read the same name on a memorial there. As I returned to the present, I realized the three persons in the chamber with me were discreetly leaving me alone with the memories of the soldier whose name was on the page before me. We remained for half an hour, unhurried by these gentlemen who seemed pleased and proud to show us around.

While returning to the rotunda, we thanked them for the privilege of accompanying them to the chamber for the ceremony and the opportunity it gave us to see my soldier's

name, which we'd have missed otherwise. Gallantly, they replied: "The privilege was ours. We couldn't see you disappointed if there was any way we could help." We'll long remember that morning and each of the men who briefly touched our lives with kindness.

It's said that more than half a million visitors a year come to the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower to view these five sacred books, put there in memory of the 114,710 Canadian soldiers, sailors, airmen and servicewomen who gave their lives in war for the liberties of Canada.

That day I wished every visitor could at some time be

present, as we were, for the Turning Of The Page that shows Canada remembers — every day.

by Florence Cooper
courtesy Legion Magazine

OFFICERS MESS

NOVEMBER '89 CALENDAR

FRIDAYS NOV. 10 & 17

REGULAR TGIF: Food as indicated 1700-1800 hrs. Free taxi. Ask at Bar.

WEDNESDAYS NOV. 15, 22, 29

OFFICERS COFFEE HOUR: Coffee will be served in the Lounge at 1000 hours. All officers are invited to attend. Dress will be dress of the day.

SATURDAY NOV 18

BLACK AND WHITE NIGHT: Theme: Black & White. Entertainment -- MESMER, "Canada's Foremost Mentalist". Menu--Chinese Food. Cost PER PERSON -- Members \$10, Limited Associates & Guests \$12. time 1900hrs. Reservations 15 November.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 26

MIXED DINING-IN to honour retirees: Capt P. Murphy, Capt M. Vermette, and Capt H. J. Livingston. Cost PER PERSON \$25. Dress Mess Kit. Time 1900 for 1930 hrs. Reservations by 22 November.

WEDNESDAY NOV 22

LADIES CLUB BRIDGE 7:30 in the Lounge

WEDNESDAY NOV 15

Officers' Mess Ladies' Club Craft Demos & Xmas Decorations

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

1 Dec -- Mess Decorating Party

10 Dec -- Children's Christmas Party

Section Xmas Party

The Base Social Centre still hasThe Base Social Centre still has many open dates for section parties. It's your facility and it requires your support. Remember--nobody recycles DND dollars better than us.

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Athletes Note: Dart facilities now available.

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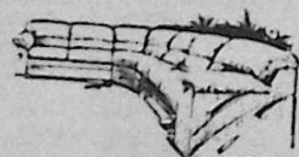
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The Base Golf Club will hold a New Year's Party if enough people are interested.

Details: Catered dinner 7:30 - 8:30 (Old House) DJ 9 pm - 2 am, post midnight sandwiches and coffee.

Cost: Glacier Greens members \$20.00 each, non-members \$22.50 each.

Interested? a \$10/person deposit required before 1 Dec. Go/No-go date 2 Dec. If No-go, all deposits returned. Deposits/tickets at the bar.

info: 339-8592

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A 14(F) Sqn pilot climb into his Curtiss P-40 Kittyhawk fighter in preparation for a mission over the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, during World War II. The squadron was deployed to England in January, 1944, and renumbered 442 Sqn shortly after.

Not recreation but re-creation!

What is recreation? Recreation is re-creation of the body. It is what you do in your discretionary time (time which you have after all your commitments and maintenance).

Many people use this time for exercise, but most end up on the couch watching MASH reruns or the Golden Girls. "It's too strenuous going to the gym for the sake of exercise," they say.

If this sounds like you, you're not alone. Very few people can maintain a level of enthusiasm when they are bored. You shouldn't race down to the gym to push weights just because it is good for you. You would do better to find an activity you like (ie. that does not bore you) and participate on a regular basis. Aerobics is a good example of an alternate to jogging which can be social and even enjoyable.

How do you know what you enjoy? Try different things. Diversity helps to add to your recreation, as does novelty. Let your mind go wild! If you've never tried something, you'll never know if you enjoy it or not. One of my favourite childhood memories was going to the marina at night with my parents to catch shrimp. The fact that I hated eating shrimp only made the event more enjoyable for my parents who were happy to relieve me of my burden at the end of the evening. Once you find things

Remember...

Base Commander's message



Col Jack McGee

This special Remembrance Day edition reminds us of the terrible price which democracies must pay to earn the privilege about all privileges: freedom, and that our freedom cannot be taken for granted. In Canada we have a proud legacy of volunteers defending our country in war so that our society, way of life, and values may endure. We have been fortunate that our country has seldom suffered invasions and we have been spared during this century the ravages of battle on our own soil. Canadian mothers have lost, seen wounded or captured too many sons and husbands, daughters and mothers. Those who returned deserve the peace they earned for the rest of us. Those who did not return deserve to be remembered for their supreme sacrifice. These things we do on Remembrance Day.

Those who have been in

combat will tell you that there is no glory in war. War is hell. The glory is in the restoration and the preservation of peace. It will be wonderful when the peace which we all seek so earnestly arrives. In spite of our prayers and hopes and the changes which are cascading throughout Europe and Asia, that time has not yet appeared. In some ways, the pursuit of democracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is of greater concern than the relatively stable East-West period of the Cold War. That stability has been replaced with chaos and uncertainty as mean, autocratic governments and social orders attempt to cope and survive the challenge of accelerating democratic reforms. Let us all pray that those democratic forces succeed and that peace will come. Let us not forget that China experimented with similar forms of democracy and retreated from

it this past Spring over the blood of those students and farmers who dared to be free. As the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe test their capacity for democratic reform, we must remember the raw military power at their disposal and their history of the abuse of that power. The pronouncements by Secretary-General Gorbachev are encouraging, but the substance behind the statements is lacking. New, more capable tanks, nuclear submarines, warships, and warplanes are still rolling off the Soviet assembly lines making their military might all the more potent. We cannot relax our vigilance while this process of change is ongoing, but we can and must do whatever is possible to encourage the success of that change.

Sadly, the only threat to our society does not come from the potential for superpower con-

frontation. Well over 100 wars have occurred in the world since 1945. Our peacekeeping commitments should remind us that while we have been blessed by geography in Canada, we are far from immune from the causes of those battles which have torn apart so many distant lands.

Now, a new scourge has appeared. Illegal drugs. According to official statistics, Canadians spend almost as much on illegal drugs as they do on national defence. A recent newsmagazine article claims that foreign drug lords are laundering another sum equal to the national defence budget in Canada. While the narcotics destroy the very soul of those who use and trade in them, the heart and economic engine of our country and way of life are threatened by the related crime and counter-economy. But this is not war. Is it not? Ask the citizens of

Colombia and Panama. Remember the drug related crime and drug busts in Miami, Los Angeles, and New York, not to mention the round-up of heavily armed drug enforcers in New Brunswick and the testimony from the recent trial of a drug pusher who murdered in the Town of Comox.

The challenge ahead will be to cope with all of these threats simultaneously. Will we have the resources and the national will needed to counter the increasing intensity of activity from these threats? We must if we truly cherish the freedom entrusted to us by those who knew war. We must be vigilant, prepared, and successful on all fronts if we are to know a lasting peace. Lest We Forget.



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