



THE FALCON

ISSUE NO. 11

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA REGIMENTAL FAMILY

SPRING 2007

48th Highlanders Participate in Vimy Ridge Memorial Rededication

by Pipe Major Iain Lang, CD

In March and April 2007, DHH (Directorate of History and Heritage) organized a pilgrimage to Vimy, France. The Canadian Corps was comprised of a 75 Piece Brass and Reed band of musicians from the Central Band, Ottawa

must memorize all the tunes, the Pipes and Drums were brought together a week prior to the main body to rehearse at CFB Trenton.

After a week at the Yukon lodge, we were joined by the brass band for a couple of days



CF Pipe Majors at Vimy April 9, 2007

and the Air Command Band, Winnipeg; a 300 man guard; CF naval gun battery; and 26 piece pipe band. Four 48th Highlanders were part of the contingent, Pipe Major MWO Iain Lang, Drummer MCpl Gary Grattan, MCpl Duff and Cpl Hum.

On March 25th 2007, 23 members of various CF Highland Regiments (all reserve regiments) augmented with 3 Regular Force musicians formed the Vimy 90th Contingent Pipes and Drums. Because the pipes and drums were mainly reservists and the fact that pipe bands

rehearsal before the contingent was split in two groups to leave for Lille, France. Due to the combined weight of passengers and luggage the CF Airbus stopped to refuel in Prestwick, Scotland for one hour, long enough for someone to get a pint since no alcohol is available on a CF Flight. The brass band's flight went direct to France.

We rehearsed for another week in France in a small town outside Lille called Lesquin. The drum corps was almost always with the guard at the local football field for this entire week,

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

FROM THE 48TH ARCHIVES EVENTS IN SPRING TIMES PAST

by HLCol Geordie Beal

115 Years Ago – On 21 April 1892 the 48th Highlanders marched out for their first public parade from their temporary home, the Upper Canada College buildings at the north-west corner of King and Simcoe Streets. During the past winter, since their official gazetting in October 1891, the Regiment's focus had been recruiting and basic drill. Now they were ready to be greeted by the citizens of Toronto who had championed their creation.

Three days later, they held the first church parade marching from Queen's Park to St. Andrew's Church. The 48th Pipe Band, under Pipe Major Robert Ireland, led the way supported by the bands of the Queen's Own Rifles and the 10th Royal Grenadiers who took part with the permission of their commanding officers. Over 50,000 lined the streets, fully one quarter of Toronto's population, standing dozens deep along the route.

Just one month later, on Victoria Day, 24 May, the regiment received its Colours, made by the Ladies of Toronto and presented by Lord Stanley of Preston, the Governor General of Canada.

110 Years Ago – In the spring of 1897 the regiment was equipped with Lee-Enfield rifles. Shooting prowess had been designated by the original Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Davidson, as an area in which the 48th Highlanders would excel. The new rifle led immediately to an increase in attendance at weekly practices and vaulted the regiment into a leading position in competitions. Fifty prizes including one bronze and two silver medals

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE:

| | |
|--|---|
| Lives Lived..... | 2 |
| Pipes and Drums..... | 3 |
| Did You Know..... | 3 |
| Update from Sierra Leone April 2007..... | 5 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Update from Sierra Leone May 2007..... | 7 |
| Vimy Medals Donated..... | 9 |
| Greetings from the Active Regiment..... | 9 |
| From the Vaults of the 48th Museum..... | 10 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Old Comrades Association..... | 11 |
| IOOE Celebrates 100th Anniversary..... | 11 |
| Confined to Barracks & Last Post..... | 12 |
| Events Schedule..... | 12 |

Lives Lived

MAJOR DONALD KEELING, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC – 1954 TO 1977 –

Donald was born in Colwyn Bay, Wales on December 9, 1912 the second eldest of five sons to Fred Keeling and his wife Margaret Louise (nee MacDonald). Fred (9th Bn. Royal Welch Fusiliers) was killed in action four years later at the battle of the Somme. Donald and



*Major Donald Keeling,
C.D., L.R.A.M, A.R.C.M., D.Y.R.M.S.
December 9, 1912 – April 20, 2007*

his brothers were sent to the Duke of York Military School where he found his lifelong love for music. Donald learned to play the French horn and eventually could play almost any instrument. While at Kneller Hall, the Royal Military School of Music, he was chosen as one of 12 trumpeters to play in Westminster Abbey at the coronation of George VI and the Queen Mum in 1937.

A military family by nature—all five brothers served their country with distinction. Donald had an uninterrupted 51 years of military service starting with The Queen's Royal Regiment, 1st Bn Seaforth Highlanders, 1/8 Gurkhas, 1st Punjab Regiment, 3rd Division Canadian Forces, Normandy to Berlin Victory Parade, 2nd Bn Parachute Regiment, and the 48th Highlanders of Canada.

As war broke out in September 1939, Donald married his sweetheart Enid (Green) and son Anthony followed in 1940. Donald distinguished himself in his WWII service, was seconded to the 3rd Canadian Division and mentioned in dispatches.

After the war, he was Seaforth Highlanders and then became bandmaster for the 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment where he wrote the regimental march. In 1952 he accepted a position to form and direct the Pakistan School of Music where he stayed until 1954. For Queen Elizabeth's Coronation in June 1953, Donald led the Pakistan army contingent and became the only British army officer to serve officially at both coronations. At the coronation, the 48th Highlanders approached him with an offer to join the regiment.

The family emigrated to Canada in 1954 and Donald joined the 48th Highlanders as bandmaster and Director of Music. Shortly thereafter he began to teach music at Upper Canada College where he was affectionately known as "Cap'n Keeling." He retired from both in 1977. Over the years the band played countless occasions including the Trooping of the Colour in 1967, annual Scottish Tattoos at the CNE, and numerous opening nights at Maple Leaf Gardens and Santa Claus Parades.

Donald and Enid left Toronto for more pastoral environs, first living near Tottenham where Donald was a gentleman farmer, and then in Kettleby. After moving to Dalston ON, they lived a quiet life with Donald's music and his incredible collection of Highlander memorabilia, musical instruments and war mementos. He regaled visitors with his wartime stories, his tours in Pakistan, prewar India and China, and wonderful memories of his friends and family. He worked part-time for several years at Burnetts & Struth Scottish Regalia in Barrie where he indulged his love and knowledge for all things Scottish. He composed a musical and taught piano to the neighbouring children right into his 90s.

Donald died peacefully at home. He was 94. He leaves his wife Enid, son Anthony and grandsons Ian and David and his wife Kathy.

FROM THE 48TH ARCHIVES EVENTS IN SPRING TIMES PAST
...CONTINUED FROM COVER

were won at the Ontario Rifle Association. This was followed by fifty-one prizes, at the Gzowski Match, with a team Second and three medals. Eleven Highlanders were sent to the Dominion Rifle Association matches, a competition for all Canada. Thirty seven individual awards were won. In team matches they came fourth in the Walker Match and second in the Lansdowne Aggregate. The highlight was the first in the British Challenge Shield, recording the highest score in the competition's history. Privates Davidson and McVittie were two of three tied for the Governor General's prize with McVittie winning a place on the Bisley Team and Davidson first place on the waiting list.

100 Years Ago – On 03 May 1907, the 48th Chapter IODE was formed, just seven years after the formation of their national organization. Colonel D.M. Robertson, Commanding Officer of the 48th, had given his consent on the understanding that the Chapter would direct its efforts to the benefit and welfare of the men of the Regiment and that membership would be restricted to the wives, mothers and sisters of Highlanders. Mrs. John I. Davidson, the wife of the first Commanding Officer became the first regent.

90 Years Ago – The year of 1917 saw three major battles for the 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders) – Vimy Ridge, Hill 70 and Passchendaele.

At Vimy Ridge the battalion was in the first assault, placed on the right flank of the 3rd Brigade and near the right flank of the Canadian Corps. They took their objectives, two consecutive lines of German trenches, on time and as planned, then watched and cheered as other battalions leap-frogged through to complete the capture of the ridge. The toll: April 9 to 12 – 90 killed, 175 wounded.

Hill 70 was a promontory overlooking the town of Lens. The 15th Battalion's orders were to take and hold the hill on the extreme left flank as the pivotal hinge of the division's attack and the inevitable focus of enemy counterattacks. At 0425 on 15 August and in complete darkness they attacked, clearing the hill in just over an hour. Then for 14 hours they repelled waves of counterattacks, guaranteeing the success of the total plan. The toll: 61 killed, over 164 wounded.

At Passchendaele from 29 October to 11 November the battalion fought the mud of the battlefield as they supported the assault by Canadian divisions. They built roads, dug trenches and poured sticky black mud into

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Pipes and Drums

by Piper Marilyn Willis, CD

The Change of Pipe Majors

The parade of parades took place on Friday February 9, 2007, when Pipe Major Sandy Dewar handed over the Pipe Major's Banner to MWO Iain Lang, and officially ended his 22 years of service as pipe major and 48 years of service to the Regiment.

Regiments from across Canada were represented by their pipe majors:

- Black Watch
– WO Cameron Stevens
- Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa
–MWO Alan Clark
- Cameron Highlanders of Canada (Winnipeg) – Sgt John Dawson
- Toronto Scottish Regiment
– Doug Swan
- Lorne Scots – Cpl Kevin Cranley
- Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada
– Sgt Doug Davidson
- Calgary Highlanders – Mike Giles
- Canadian Scottish Regiment
– WO Roger McGuire
- Seaforth Highlanders of Canada
– CWO Mike Bain.

Drum Majors and lead drummers in attendance included:

- Cameron Highlanders of Canada (Winnipeg) – Sgt Jim Seeley (lead drummer)
- Toronto Scottish Regiment
– DM John Miller
- Lorne Scots – DM Iain MacGibbon
- Calgary Highlanders – Jim Stewart
- Canadian Scottish Regiment
– DM Gary Louis
- 400 Squadron P & D
– Sgt Ralph O'Connor.

Many members from the Toronto Scottish Pipe Band, along with members from the Black Watch, LCol Lynn Moffat from the Calgary Highlanders and Pipe Major Eaton from the Niagara Police Pipe Band were also in attendance

A great time of fellowship followed the parade with the seams bursting in both the Sergeant's Mess and the Bands' mess.

One of the highlights of the evening was the announcement that, at the Queen's request, Pipe Major Dewar and his wife Carolynne



Pipe Major Sandy Dewar hands over duties to new Pipe Major Iain Lang.

Dewar will be guests at Buckingham Palace. The date chosen is July 18th 2007. A great honour at the end an outstanding career.

The Saturday evening following the parade, almost 200 people attended a dinner, in Pipe Major Dewar's honour, at the King Edward Hotel. Again, it was an evening of shared memories and great fellowship.

Band Activities

The pipes and drums have been busy throughout winter and early spring with numerous engagements including:

- Robbie Burns at the Old Mill and the Granite Club plus numerous other Burns events in the city
- Vimy Parade in Toronto while Pipe Major Lang and MCpl Grattan were playing at the memorial in Vimy, France
- Performance at Tartan Day, Toronto
- Concert with Caledon at St. Andrew's Church, Toronto
- Our show of support to the troops at the annual Davidson Challenge
- 48th Regimental Ball

Congratulations to James Dewar who was promoted to Sgt on March 23, 2007 and to MCpl Grattan for being awarded the bar to his CD.

This summer we will be performing in Lindsey, Fergus, at the Warriors Day Parade, the Opening of the new BMO Soccer Stadium, the Scotland The Brave Concert at Roy Thomson Hall and at Hamilton Place just to list a few of our upcoming engagements.



Did You Know?

Most Highlanders know that the 48th Highlanders was the only battalion to wear the Red Patch of the 1st Division in both the First World War and the Second. The rectangular red patch, placed on the shoulder below the regimental designation, was worn in the field by the 1st Canadian Division in 1916, just before the battle of The Somme. The Red Patch became part of the uniform again in the spring of 1940 while the Brigade was training in southern England as part of the newly formed 1st Canadian Division.

However, did you know that the 48th Highlanders was designated the 15th Battalion in both World Wars as well? In The First War the regiment became part of the third brigade with the designation 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders). In early 1940, just months after arriving on New Year's Day, the 48th received its vehicles. A sharp eye noted that each vehicle had painted on it the number 14 as the prefix to its vehicle number. This was because of the 48th Highlanders designation as the second battalion in the brigade. The number was soon brought to the attention of the commanding officer Lt.-Col. Eric Haldenby who had served with the 15th Battalion in The First War. He promptly went to the brigade command and requested that the 48th become the third battalion in the brigade. Command agreed and the 48th Highlanders became designated as the 15th Battalion.

Unfortunately this was to be short lived. After the fall of France in the summer of 1940 the Canadian Army reorganized and our brigade was given the numbers 55, 56 and 57. The number 57 became our battalion designation.

Many thanks to the "sharp eye" Bill deHarte for this story.

sandbags. Then, as the battle raged around them, they fought the mud again, waist deep, as stretcher-bearers for the 12,000 wounded Canadians. Moving through the clinging slime

There they were greeted by astonishing numbers who had come to honour Lt.Col. Donald MacKenzie, the 48th Highlander that had commanded the regiment that had liberated their town on 12 April 1945.

was hell as eight, ten, sometimes twelve men struggled to move with one stretcher.

80 Years Ago – On Sunday, 15 May, 1927 the 48th Highlanders' original Stand of Colours were laid up in St. Andrew's Church. The King's Colour was handed to the Assistant Chaplain, the Rev. Stuart Parker, by Colonel John A. Currie, who as Commanding Officer took the battalion to war in 1914. The Regimental Colour was given into the care of the church by Lt.Col. C.E. Bent, CMG, DSO who brought the battalion home. The Colours, emblazoned with the 21 battle honours awarded by His Majesty, now rest in the Regimental Museum in St. Andrew's Church. Two later Stands hang in the Chancel.

25 Years Ago – On Friday, 16 April 1982, twenty-one 48th Highlanders formed up on the edge of the town of Wilp in The Netherlands. Under command of the senior Highlander present, LCol M.E. (Mike) George, they came to attention and with two pipers in the lead marched to the Dutch Reformed Church in the centre of the tiny town. There they were greeted by astonishing numbers who had come to honour Lt.Col. Donald MacKenzie, the 48th Highlander that had commanded the regiment that had liberated their town on 12 April 1945. Present were all the local and regional officials including Burgomaster Nora Wissema of the district of Voorst, the children of the regional school, the Johan Willem Friso Band and many more Dutch citizens than the number posted on the sign outside the town. Then came the dignitaries – General Sir Michael Gow, Commander in Chief of the British Army of the Rhine; General G.L.J. Huyser, Commander of the First Netherlands Corps; the Canadian Ambassador to The Netherlands, Henri Blouin and Omar Deslauriers, Ontario's Agent-General in Brussels. The final guest arrived to the Dutch national anthem, His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard.

Three speeches followed, each serving to focus the audience on the occasion and on a light red cloth draped on the outside wall of the church and flanked by two more 48th Highlanders, Sandy Dewar and Drum Major Larry Fullerton. Prince Bernhard stepped forward and with Robert MacKenzie brother of

Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel Donald A. MacKenzie, DSO, DSC, born 9 July 1914 in Kincardine, Ontario, Canada, killed in action on 12th April 1945 at Wilp in the municipality of Voorst.

As the strains of Heilan Laddie died away, the entire party, dignitaries, Highlanders, band and citizens marched and walked five hundred metres along the dike to a neighbourhood under development on the edge of the town. There, in a small square, close to a paved walkway, Robert MacKenzie stepped forward to a metal pole over six metres high and draped in a cloth. Reaching up he yanked on the cloth. Revealed above was a sign, letters in white against a bright blue background: "MacKenzieplaats".

As the schoolchildren broke into a song entitled Thank You Canada a small single-engine plane droned over head, pulling a banner that summed up what was in the hearts of all in the audience. "Thank You Canadians"

Colonel Mackenzie at his side pulled the cloth to reveal the plaque underneath. It read:

"In memory of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, nineteen of whom fell in and around the municipality of Voorst, including the

VIMY 90TH CONTINGENT PIPES AND DRUMS
...CONTINUED FROM COVER

while the pipers and brass band rehearsed elsewhere. Many of the pipe practices occurred outdoors unlike the brass band who had the use of a local theatre. Fortunately the weather was good with no rain for the entire trip.

On Saturday, April 7th, the contingent attended the funeral of Private Herbert Peterson from the Loyal Edmonton Regiment just outside Vimy at Chaudiere Cemetery. In the evening a show, loosely based on a Beat Retreat ceremony was performed on the back steps of the Vimy Monument. Reports from spectators said the sky behind the monument was quite dark and ominous looking adding to the overall atmosphere of the music and Feu de Jois of the guard.

On Sunday, April 8th, the contingent paraded in Arras for the Freedom of the City. Afterwards they had several hours to enjoy freedom in the city for drinks and dinner on Easter Sunday.

Easter Monday the re-dedication of the monument was held. The park around the monument was full of spectators from Canada and around the world. We paraded in position an hour and forty-five minutes before the

Queen arrived. We stood for a total of three and a half hours before dismissal, on an inclined stage, making it indeed memorable. After the ceremony, the Pipes and Drums provided a 20-minute show as the crowds dispersed. No lament was played on the Vimy the monument by a piper, instead a fiddle was used to play a Métis Warriors Lament... a sore spot with many Highlanders and historians on parade.

Battlefield tours were offered on the 10th and 11th. Some rented vans and traveled to Ypres on the 10th. The Pipes and

Drums arranged a bus to Ypres and Mons on the 11th.

On April 12 the Pipes and Drums returned home, as did most others in the contingent.

Overall, it was an excellent trip, a once in a lifetime chance to be part of Canada's history.



MCpl Duff and Sgt MacDougal



Capt Bockarie and Alkema with a bunch of local kids at one of the villages 9 Bn is responsible for.

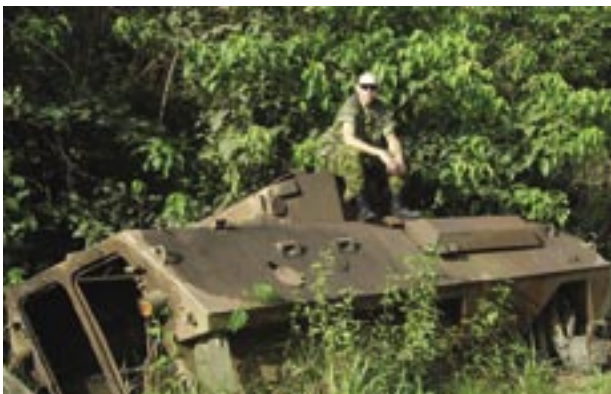
UPDATE FROM SIERRA LEONE

from Sierra Leone: 12 Apr 2007 by CWO Ron Alkema

Greetings All –

Hope that you are well. It is Thurs 12 Apr 07, and I am back in Freetown. Things here are going just fine. It has been a busy couple of weeks, but the way things stand right now, I have only got 2 up-country rotations left before clearing out of SL, and coming back home to Canada. Let me bring you up to speed with what has been going on.

After our 4 days in Freetown at the end of the last rotation, we headed back up to Kenema. After a quick over-nighter there, Capt Patrick Crowley and I set off for Simbakoro. We formed the Mobile Team for this rotation because WO Pat Parent had returned to Canada for his leave, and Murphy – my regular Mobile Team partner – was working with the 3 Infantry Brigade Skill-at-Arms Team for a couple of



A destroyed MOWAG Piranha – the Canadian AVGP was based on this vehicle. The hull is identical to the AVGP.



The RSM's 100m Sprint – this was as close as it got!

weeks. The brigade had their own Skill-at-Arms competition – with a team from each battalion – and from these, a composite brigade team was selected to enter in the RSLAF Skill-at-Arms Competition. Murphy has got a fair bit of experience working on these teams as he has done so in Jamaica for the last number of years. So, when this opportunity came along, he grabbed it.

The soldiers from 9 Bn in Simbakoro are doing quite well. I think I have mentioned previously that this is the finest battalion in the brigade. While we were there, the CO briefed us that one of his patrols was involved in a motor vehicle accident – the driver suffered a broken leg, and the 6 other soldiers were treated at the Koidu Government Hospital and released. The reason that I am mentioning this, is that was the patrol I was scheduled to be on – rather than the 2 Bn patrol out of Bomaru. The only reason that I accompanied the patrol out of Bomaru, is that Murphy wanted to work with the Skill-at-Arms

Team, and I couldn't get up to Simbakoro with him working in Daru. There but for the grace of God...

We had a rather strange experience going up to Simbakoro. Normally when ever we stop the truck, the kids are all over us like a fat kid on a Smartie, but when we stopped this time, the 2 kids dropped the bundles that they were carrying on their heads, screamed and ran off into the jungle. We have absolutely no idea why they reacted like this, so we just looked at each other, got back in the truck and continued on our way. We spent the week at Simbakoro and I spent the better part of a day at the FPB in Njagbwema Fama going over the tactical defence of the FPB and leadership with the NCOs and officers.

We came back to Kenema on Thurs afternoon because 3 Infantry Brigade was holding their annual Track & Field Meet on the weekend. This is a 2 day meet held at the Government Secondary School grounds in Kenema. Each of the battalions and the brigade HQ enter a team. They have the usual events – sprints, distance runs, long jump, high jump, javelin, shot put, discus, and the “tug of peace”. This is a tug of war, but has been renamed in SL following the civil war. The message is that the war is “dun-dun” (Krio for over / complete).

The soldiers are pretty good at the non-technical events, but in things like javelin, discus and hurdles they suck!! The runners are pretty darn good – 100m in 12 seconds / 400m in just over 1 minute. The 10000m race was won in 32 minutes (he lapped the second place guy 4 times). And this is by soldiers who receive no special training, and whose diet consists of mainly rice. They would be able to field some pretty good athletes with some training and good food.

The soldiers run in everything from bare feet, to socks, to sandals, to canvas deck shoes to trainers to track shoes – and it doesn't make any difference to them. They are fast!

I ran in the RSM's 100m – and came dead last. Even their “old guys” are fast. Our BAST entered a team in the 4 x 100m Invitational Relay, and again came dead last. But we were running against a team form the Sierra Leone Police (the current National Champions) and the SL national amateur team, so we have an excuse. We concluded that we are all now certifiable “old, slow white guys”. The youngest guy on our team was 32, and we were running against guys 19 – 22, so we didn't feel too bad.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...



Three quarters of the 3 BAST 4 x 100m Relay Team – Alkema, Murphy and Patrick.

This is one of the highlights in the Kenema Social Calendar. The whole town came out to watch the meet. The field is down in a small depression, and the slopes were filled with people. We estimate that there were between 3000 – 4000 people out to watch. The kids had a riot, and the whole event had a “fall fair” feel to it – music blaring, people out selling pop / juice / junk food. There were clowns, dancers, jugglers – the whole shooting match.

The track itself is dirt with a couple of small hills and a swampy area in the back stretch. The high jump was interesting – the landing pit is sand raked into a pile about 12 inches deep. The competitors have no technique – the run towards the bar and jump over it – some like a fish leaping over rapids, some barrel rolling over the bar, and some just pulling their legs up. They all landed like a sack of potatoes. But the winner cleared 5'-10" none the less.

This was the first time that 3 BAST attended the competition and actually participated in it. Even though we didn't do well in any of the events we entered, the RSLAF really appreciated that we were there and that we joined in. They got a real sense that we are part of their army, and are involved in what they do. There were a lot of soldiers (and especially the NCO's and officers that we deal with on a regular basis) who came up to us and told us that they were very pleased that we participated. It goes along way to establishing and enhancing our credibility.

We headed off to Kailahun on Mon 02 Apr. I did most of the driving last week, so Capt Crowley asked if I minded that he drive up. It was an interesting drive to say the least. We never got below 70km/h. I think that I had just about every filling in my teeth come loose. The roads are in terrible condition, ruts, potholes, washboarding, dust, villages – well you've seen some of the photos. The Brits are terrible drivers! I guess I have 3 big problems with driving this fast – it is hard on the body, it is hard on the truck, and it's very arrogant. The first is a minor issue. The second a big

one – if we break the wagon we cannot do our job. We will also tie up the second Mobile Team as they will have to come to us so all the kit and equipment can be off-loaded prior to the wagon getting towed back to Freetown for repairs. So, 1 broken truck has major impacts on the whole BAST Team. The third I also see as a big issue – the roads are dusty and unsafe – dogs, goats, chickens, ducks, kids, other vehicles are all on them. I don't think that we (IMATT) are sending a good message when we go tear-assing through villages at high speeds. I know that I don't like it at home when people

up the chain for approval and implementation – hopefully. The Saturday of Easter weekend I attended the Graduation Parade for the Senior NCO Course that was run in Daru. There were 39 soldiers who completed this course.

The weather here is still stinking hot and humid. The BAST house in Kenema has fans, but the battalion houses do not. This is not a problem during the days when we are working, but is terrible at nights. We just lay on our beds and sweat. We often don't get to sleep until 0100, when it finally cools down enough to get some sleep. Just to give you some indication, I



Murphy and Alkema at the border crossing into Liberia.

speed through our neighbourhood, so I try not to do it here.

Murphy met up with us half way through the'mplete. We spent the rest of the week just doing our normal work at Kailahun – working with the soldiers of 1 Bn. We went into Liberia to discuss the Border Patrol Meetings with the UN (Pakistani) soldiers. This was actually a waste of time – 3 1/2 hours one way, for a 20 minute meeting that accomplished very little – they didn't know when the next meetings are scheduled for, but promised to be there. This all came out of the fact that the UN and the Liberians missed the last set of these meetings. At least they gave us lunch!

We spent a day observing the relief-in-place – this is when the soldiers at the FPBs are rotated back to the main camp, and another company relieves them at the FPB. There were no problems with this.

Good Friday was spent back in Kenema – nothing special – just another day. The same with Easter Sunday. I spent the time completing the Level 1 & 2 Training Plans that I am putting together. It is ready to be submitted

am sitting inside a screened room, fan on, in the shade, and I am sweating – it is running down my arms, legs and body. The rainy season is getting closer – there are more and more days where the sky is overcast. We have had rain the last 3 days. There has been rain during the nights over the last couple of weeks, about

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...



Playing cricket – its funny what you do when you're away from home!

every 2 or 3 days: but we have had an hour of rain during the days for the last 3 days. The dust has almost disappeared, to be replaced by mud. But things are getting very green – trees, shrubs, bushes and grass are starting to grow. The rain does not cut the humidity – it often seems more humid after rain than before it.

Being Canadian – for the most part – we don't care or have any interest in the Cricket World Cup that is being played in the West Indies, but here with Murphy (a Jamaican) and the Brits it's a big deal. Every time there is a game on, the tube is booked solid for the 9 or 10 hours it takes to play the game. I have had to take crash course, and now understand the rules of the game. It'll never be my favourite game, but it's better than watching paint dry. The Saturday of the Easter weekend though, we went into the backyard of the compound and played a "pick-up" game of cricket – about 6 of us, using an old tennis ball that the dogs have chewed on, and a 3 foot long piece of 2" x 2" lumber as a bat. We played for about an hour and a half, just horsing around, and doing the usual "trash talking".

The highlight for my Easter was finding an 18" long Black Neck Spitting Cobra in my room. It reared up when it saw me, so I grabbed a broom and whacked it. The RSLAF Cpl who helps out in the house, heard the racket, and took the snake and cut its head off. The rest of the day was pretty tame after that.

Because of Easter Monday, there wasn't anything going on at the battalions. Murphy wanted to get up to Simbakoro before he goes on leave for a couple of weeks, so we went up on Monday. We spent Tuesday at FPB Njagbwema Fama. Then back to Freetown yesterday.

And that's it for this go around.

TAKE CARE,
RON



At the SL / Guinea border. Guinea can be seen across the river.



CO 9 Bn and Alkema – standing on the wrecked truck Alkema was supposed to be on.

UPDATE FROM SIERRA LEONE

from Sierra Leone: 03 May 2007 by CWO Ron Alkema

Greetings All –

How are you all doing? I trust that you are well. It is Thurs 03 May 07, and we are back in Freetown. Things here are going fine. It has been a busy couple of weeks, and I have got only one up-country rotation left. I can't believe how fast the time has gone by. It seems like only a couple of weeks ago that we landed and got started.

Our 4 days in Freetown at the end of the last rotation passed without any problems. Murphy and I went out for dinner, and I went for a couple of runs and spent some time in the gym. There were no dramas, and after our days off, we headed back up-country.

The weather here is still hot and humid – I don't think that there is any other kind in SL. The rainy season is approaching – the days are getting more overcast, there are usually 3 or 4 rain thunderstorms a week now – normally in the late afternoons or early evenings. They generally last about an hour, although the length is increasing as well. They start with the wind picking up, and lightning being seen to the north and the east. Then the sky gets dark, and thunder can be heard. Once the rain starts, it comes down in buckets. Our houses have corrugated steel sheeting for roofs, so things get very loud. The roads are getting worse – the dust is down, but we now have to contend with puddles and slick surfaces. And they will get progressively worse as we get more rain.

Out BAST Team is starting

to change – Maj Curt McGahhey (our US Marine who works at 3 Inf Bde (RSLAF) HQ) has gone back home at the end of his tour. He has been replaced by another Marine – Capt Teague De La Plaine. My partner, Murphy, is going to be moving from the Mobile Team to the Brigade Team, and Teague will be travelling with me for the next couple of weeks. This is a good thing – Murph has spent about 6 months working with the bns, and has established a



Alkema at the SL / Liberia border. Alkema has 1 foot in both countries. The first civil war attack came right along this road.

good rapport with the RSLAF officers. He has a good handle on the issues that the RSLAF face, and so should be able to move up to work with the next level quite well. It will also give Teague a good opportunity to get an understanding of what the soldiers have to deal with, and how they work. I think that this is a positive move for our team, although I will miss travelling with Murph – we have had a great time travelling together.

We have had some word from Canada regarding our replacements – they are supposed to be flying in on 02 Jun 07, and we are scheduled to fly out a week later on 09 Jun, and get in to Ottawa on 10 Jun. A couple of days there, and then back home to Ruth and the girls. I am looking forward to seeing them.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

Murphy is in England with his wife and kid for 2 weeks of leave, so I travelled with the other Mobile Team for the first week – we went to Daru and Simbakoro. Nothing major to report. I took Teague to Daru and Simbakoro during the second week – introduced him to the key players and showed him the lay of the land – routes, roads, FPB's, etc.

Teague is a 32 year old United States Marine captain. He is a reservist, and is an Intelligence Officer (as opposed to an Infantry Officer). He is a professional Jazz musician in his “day job”. He has been to Liberia and to Haiti, and finds SL very similar to both. He seems to be a good guy, and we are getting along fine so far. He is

on the way, and coming to a stop when it hit a couple of boulders in the stream bed at the bottom of the hill. I took several photos, and have included them in the current batch I am posting. The truck has since been stripped by the RSLAF for any serviceable parts, but you will get an idea of the crash. I'm sure glad I wasn't on that truck!

The week was a bit of a short one – Fri 27 Apr 07 is SL Independence Day, a National Holiday. So the battalions – except personnel on essential duties – had the day off. We stayed in Simbakoro until Friday morning (so we didn't lose half of Thursday as well), and then returned to Kenema.

photos means that I'm normally done my “work” is done by 2000. We then watch a DVD – most of the time on one of our computers, and call it a day. But the weekends tend to drag on – there is not much to do in either Kenema or Freetown, so other than going for a run, cleaning up from the past week and preparing for the next, there is not much to do except watch TV or read.

On the trip up to Kailahun, a man and his wife were out walking along the road with a couple of dogs and a vehicle just ahead of us hit and killed one of the dogs. This would be a “major drama” in Canada, but the man just picked up the dead dog by a hind leg and tossed it into the jungle. Yet one more indication that things are different here than back home – not necessarily better or worse – just different.

We have a dinner with the Canadian Ambassador to West Africa tonight – she is going to be in Freetown for a couple of days, and wants to get together with us.

Other than that, there is no really much to tell you. Things are pretty quiet, but that could change. The Government of SL is broke – the foreign aid / World Bank / IMF have decided that the GoSL has not met the conditions



Teague and Alkema at the War Monument in Bomaru.

positive, wants to learn, works hard, and does not hate Africa and the RSLAF – unlike Maj McGahhey. So this is a positive thing for our BAST Team.

We spent a couple of days in Daru, went to FPB Bomaru, and just got him acquainted with things there. We then drove up to Simbakoro, and the next day went out to the border crossing at Gbongbokoro. The drive was just as long as last time, and the roads no better – worse with the oncoming rainy season. The river was up, not wadable anymore, and there was no ferry, so we didn't get across into Guinea this time. On the drive to Gbongbokoro, we came across the wreck of the vehicle that crashed on the way out to the Joint SLP / RSLAF Border Patrol that I was supposed to go on with 9 Bn – but didn't work out. It was kinda weird looking at the wreck of a vehicle that I was supposed to be on. The truck was coming around a bend in the road, at the top of a hill. The road is terrible there – huge rocks, ruts, and no shoulder. The driver must have been going too fast for the road conditions, hit some of the rocks and lost control. The truck went off the road and down the embankment, taking out a couple of trees

Teague had to undergo his IMATT Indoctrination Training the week that we returned to Freetown, so I went to Kailahun with a couple of the Engineers. For security and protection reasons, we are not allowed to travel alone outside the Freetown area.

We are starting to see more political rallies and demonstrations – each party has their own colour, and when we see a demonstration, everybody is wearing the colour of that party. There is a lot of singing, dancing, clapping, music – no suits and speeches – more like a big party than anything else.

We departed for Kailahun on Sun 29 Apr – I was glad to get going. For me, the weekends are the long days – when we are up country, the days go by fast – get up, go for a run, have a shower and breakfast, be at the bn for 0800 and spend the day with the soldiers. We are normally done work by 1630 or 1700 – then cook dinner, clean up, and work on our report. That with making some notes in my journal, adding to these “Updates”, downloading my



Alkema at Gbongbokoro – Guinea is across the river.

imposed on it with regards to ensuring that the money it receives is properly and transparently accounted for, and so has cut off all money coming into SL. SL cannot sustain itself. The RSLAF will be out of money on 10 May. And there are National Elections coming at the end of July. So things could get interesting rather quickly! In one way, I wish I was staying to see these issues through. But I am also glad to be coming home in a month.

I will be in Freetown for the next couple of days – we go back up-country on Monday morning.

TAKE CARE,
RON

MEDALS OF 15TH BATTALION HIGHLANDER KILLED AT VIMY DONATED TO MUSEUM

On Thursday April 5 the medals of Pte. C.A. Jensen, a 15th Battalion 48th Highlander, killed in action at Vimy Ridge, were donated to the Regimental Museum by Mr. William Clarke of the London Numismatic Society. The medals had been acquired by the Society thirty years ago. This year on the 90th anniversary of the battle for Vimy Ridge and the ceremonies for the restored Canadian monument on the crest of Vimy Ridge, they felt that the medals belonged in the 48th Highlander Museum,



Medals of Pte C A Jensen beside his name on our Vimy Cross.

where they would be honoured and preserved. The Society voted unanimously to donate the medals on the anniversary of the battle in which Private Jensen had been killed. The three medals donated were the British War Medal, The Victory Medal and the Memorial Cross. The Memorial Cross is sometimes referred to as the Mother's Cross or Widow's Cross because this medal was issued to the next of kin and could be worn by them on Remembrance Day or other occasions either around the neck or in a bow pinned to a sweater or dress. The Memorial

Cross is sterling silver and was issued on behalf of the Government of Canada (not the King or British Government). It continues to be awarded today to the next of kin of those killed in Afghanistan.

Coincidentally, at the time that William Clarke arrived, the CBC was in the museum to film the Vimy Cross that had been erected on the battlefield on the evening of 11/12 April, 1917, the last evening of the battle for Vimy Ridge that had begun the morning of 9 April. The wooden cross with the 15th Battalion's distinctive design was placed in a temporary cemetery "Grave CA 35, Neuville St. Vast, and 1000 yards west of Nine Elms Cemetery." After the war the Permanent War Graves Commission sent notices to Canadian regiments that had served at Vimy to ask if they wished to have their crosses at home. It is believed that only three units in Canada responded in the affirmative, making the Vimy cross in our museum a rare and valuable artifact of the battle that is credited with turning Canadians' perspective of themselves from that of members of a former colony to citizens of a full-fledged nation. When the cross arrived in Toronto, the 48th Highlanders mounted it outside the orderly room door in University Avenue Armouries. In 1963 the Regiment moved it to the museum to take a place of honour so that all Canadians and visitors to the museum could see it and understand more clearly the sacrifices that men of the 48th Highlanders had made for our country.

With the CBC cameras rolling Pte Jensen's medals were examined in a close-up shot. On the rear of the Memorial Cross was engraved "C A Jensen 803138". The camera then

continued on page 11



Cross erected on Vimy Ridge battlefield the night of 11/12 April 1917

GREETINGS FROM THE ACTIVE REGIMENT

by Warrant Officer Brian Kwok

I have recently returned from Afghanistan and I was asked to write about my experiences. I was attached to the NCE security Platoon as a Section Commander and was responsible for manning the main gate at Kandahar Airfield. Within my section, I had two other fellow Highlanders under my command who I am happy to report did an excellent job. Along with us, there were ten other presently serving or former Highlanders in many positions. Some of these included CIMIC (civil military cooperation), PAFFO (public affairs officer), and the force protection platoon. Others have decided to make the military their full time career in both 1 RCR and 2 PPCLI.



Highlanders on operational duty in Kandahar.

As I stated earlier, my platoon was responsible for the main gate at the airfield where we were responsible for searching all civilian personnel and vehicles coming in. It was a thankless job but also very necessary. As you can imagine, there were times of extreme boredom and was compounded by the 60 degree Celsius heat and the 60 plus pounds of equipment we had to wear. But there was always something to keep you on your toes which came in the form of intelligence reports or 107mm rockets. The base itself was fairly comfortable with many amenities such as a gym, hockey rink, welfare phones and computers, and even a boardwalk with stores such as burger king, subway, pizza hut and of course, Tim Horton's. The troops in the battle group had a much harder life and would enjoy coming back to the base to relax. All in all, I am happy to have done my small part and benefitted from the experience. There are many more opportunities to serve and I would gladly go over again.

DILEAS GU BRATH

FROM THE VAULTS OF THE 48TH MUSEUM

by Anthony Percival



One of the most popular type of artifacts that visitors to any Museum or Archive want to see are photographs. Beginning in France in the 1820's with images captured on pewter plates by the Inventor Nicéphore Niépce, photography has now been with us for almost 200 years and can be found in all corners of the earth. The 48th Highlanders Museum is no exception having a collection of over 700 framed photographs and a further 5,000 unframed images. The photographic collection spans from the earliest years of the Regiment through the great wars to the modern era. The Museum has images of the Regiment at peace and war, in garrison and in the field, at play and in training.

Often a visitor will ask the question "Do you have a picture of my Grandfather?" Not an easy question to answer. In order to be able to find a photograph the 48th Museum has developed a database to hold and trace descriptions of images. To be able to have a database these photographs need to be catalogued where the image has been systematically described. No catalogue is complete unless the events and people depicted in the image are researched. One of the hardest chores in describing a photo is finding a name for every person in the image. The Museum is always looking for help in this identification process.

The Photographic Collection of the 48th Highlanders Museum (which forms part of the 48th Highlanders Trusts) has been amassed from a variety of sources during the Museum's 50 years of existence. Some images of the 48th Highlanders have come from newspapers such as the Toronto Star, Daily Telegram and many others. Many photographs have

come to the Museum from individuals and family of individuals who served with the 48th Highlanders. Most of the formal group shots were commissioned by the Regiment. Some of the most recognized and best quality images were produced by the Canadian Army Overseas.

As early as 1939 the Canadian Government began to look at the Idea of forming a special film and photographic unit within the Canadian Army overseas. In 1940 a public relations photographic section was formed at Canadian Military Headquarters in London, England. It was the forerunner of the Canadian Army Film and Photo Unit which began operations the following year. The Air force and Navy set up similar units which in total along with their Army counterpart amassed over half a million photographs. Following the War all the images were transferred to the Department of National Defence who in turn transferred the collection to the National Archives of Canada in 1967.

The original title to the image shown is "Canadians Await Attack Order on Italian Front" 10th December 1943. Central Italy, the 1st Canadian Division having created a bridgehead across the Moro River were now hoping to push towards Ortona.

At 9:00 am on the 10th December the Loyal Edmonton Regiment broke out for San Leonardo with C Company of the Calgary Regiment a platoon of the Saskatoon Light Infantry and two companies of the 48th Highlanders providing a firm base. Despite



initial advance by early afternoon the Edmontonians were driven back.

Alpha & Charlie Companies were sent to the other side of the gully into San Leonardo to protect the right flank of both the town and the bridgehead before midnight on the 8th.

The 10th of December was a wet day and the ground boggy. Covering behind a wall and observing is a Platoon of Alpha Company 48th Highlanders. Observing through his binoculars is the Platoon Commanders Lieutenant Ian MacDonald who had just transferred into the Company a month earlier. Crouching on the far left is Sergeant J.T. Cooney in the centre all crouching are Privates A.R. Downie, O.E. Bernier, G.R. Young. Standing in the back with a tommy gun is Corporal Terrance Fereday who was killed in action eight days later in a subsequent battle. Lying in the prone position behind the Bren Gun is Private S.L. Hart. The Photographer was

Lieutenant Frederick G. Whitcombe.

...This is but a taste of what you will discover at the 48th Highlanders Museum open Tuesday & Wednesday, 10 to 3 or on the web at www.48highlanders.com/museum.htm

If you would like to contribute to future issues, please e-mail your stories and pictures to:

falcon_newsletter@hotmail.com

PLEASE NOTE:

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE IS:

29 AUGUST 2007

Thank you to all those who made submissions to this issue.

This issue of the Falcon published by:

Capt Steve Gilbert – Editor
Wade Gilpin – Assembly

Old Comrades Association

by Harry Wignall

On the evening before the Regimental Church Parade, 17 members of the 48th Family braved the wilds of Georgian Downs to do battle with the ferocious and unforgiving enemy, the dreaded Slot Machines. The Slots were relentless, but the Highlanders held out and were able to make it to the Dining Room where they were able to recoup their losses on an excellent buffet, fortified with the usual tea and coffee and other liquids from the bar. Following the sumptuous repast, some stayed for the Sport of Kings, while the remainder returned to the Den of Iniquity where they once again faced the dreaded Slot Machines. Unfortunately, the Slots outnumbered the Highlanders, but we lived to do battle another day and we all came home with our shirts on, at least I think so. John Dunne is already planning our next fun filled excursion so keep your eyes on the Bulletin Board and join us next time around.

The 48th Highlanders Chapter IODE were invited and participated in the Regimental Church Parade Service at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church on Sunday, May 6, 2007 in recognition of their 100th Anniversary Year. Following the service, the Ladies returned to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess where they were presented with Associate Membership Cards in the Old Comrades Association by the President Harry Wignall and Vice President John Dunne. Unfortunately not all the IODE Members were able to attend, but their memberships will be mailed out to them. It is hoped the Ladies will retain their membership in the OCA and by so doing, participate in our activities and social functions.

DINNA FERGIT THE REGIMENTAL PICNIC

At the Legion Grounds in
Acton Ontario
On July 21, 2007 at 1:00 pm

Sponsored by the Continuing
Sergeants and the OCA

All members of the
Regimental Family and their
friends are Welcome!

Bring your wives and sweethearts and
dinna fergit the children

Something for everybody:
BBQ, Games, Music, Liquid
Refreshments and more Music

THE OLD COMRADES
ASSOCIATION
CONGRATULATE
THE 48TH
HIGHLANDERS
CHAPTER
~ IODE ~
ON YOUR
100TH
ANNIVERSARY
DILEAS GU BRATH

MEDALS OF 15TH BATTALION HIGHLANDER KILLED AT VIMY DONATED TO MUSEUM ...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

moved to the cross on which 57 names were painted in black on the white background. Twenty three of these names had been placed on the cross on the evening it was erected with the others added subsequently of Highlanders who died of their wounds. There on the lower section of the cross was "C A Jensen 803138. To those in the room it felt as if a 48th Highlander was home.



Her Majesty with HLCol Beal in front of Vimy Cross in 48th Highlanders Museum.

Two days later, at 10 pm, the CBC National ran a special on Vimy Ridge. The last five minutes, closing the hour long broadcast, was the story shot in the 48th Highlander Museum. The clip opened with one of the museum volunteers showing visitors through the museum and past the Vimy Cross. This was followed by a close up of the cross then a shot of William Clarke of the London Numismatic Society who displayed the three medals, holding them up to the name of Pte Jensen painted on the cross. The camera then cut to Honorary Lieutenant Colonel Geordie Beal who was interviewed briefly about the importance of the Vimy Cross to the museum and today's regiment. The last shot returned to end with the cross. Now the public across Canada also knew that Pte Jensen was home with his regiment once again.



The 48th Highlander Chapter IODE was busy celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2007

A busy slate of events was planned to mark this important milestone. On April 23rd the Honourary Colonels had graciously invited the ladies of the IODE to a luncheon at the R.C.M.I. to mark the occasion of their

centennial. Then, on May 6th at the Church Parade, the members were acknowledged as part of the church services at St. Andrew's. On June 10th the IODE hosted a garden party at Old Fort York instead of its

usual Spring Luncheon. The 48th Highlanders Chapter IODE is very proud to have provided 100 years of service to the Regimental Family and the community and strives to continue the IODE's tradition.

SCHEDULE OF THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA REGIMENTAL FAMILY

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 8 – 26 August 2007 | Exercise MAPLE DEFENDER | Annual Area summer exercise. |
| 7 September 2007 | First Training Night | |
| 14 – 16 September 2007 | Exercise ABLE WARRIOR 1 | Field training exercise |
| 28 – 30 September 2007 | Exercise ABLE WARRIOR 2 | Field training exercise |
| 5 October 2007 | Thanksgiving Stand down | |
| 19 – 21 October 2007 | Exercise AGGRESSIVE VIPER 1 | Field training exercise |
| 26 October 2007 | Formal Dismissal | |
| 10 November 2007 | Sergeant's Mess Annual General Meeting | Mess function |
| 10 November 2007 | Ceremony – Mount Pleasant Cemetery | |
| 11 November 2007 | Remembrance Day Parade | Ceremonial parade |
| 16 – 18 November 2007 | Ex GU BRATH TREK | Field training exercise |
| 24 November 2007 | St. Andrew's Ball | |
| 30 November 2007 | Formal Dismissal | |
| 7 – 9 December 2007 | Ex STEADFAST RESPONSE | Brigade field training exercise |

LAST POST

The following Highlanders passed away recently:

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| George H. BRUMWELL | August 3, 2006 | Rainy River, Ontario |
| William A. SHACKLETON | August 22, 2006 | Goderich, Ontario |
| William J. HOZACK | September 4, 2006 | Sutton, Ontario |
| George A. Ross | September 30, 2006 | London, Ontario |
| Calvin J. FLETCHER | January 3, 2007 | Niagara Falls, Ont. |
| Col. Bernard W. LEE | January 14, 2007 | Lantzville, BC |
| Robert ROWELL | April 10, 2007 | Toronto, Ontario |
| Norman Hay McMURRICH | April 12, 2007 | Toronto, Ontario |
| Arthur "Art" DANIELS | May 4/07 | Elmvale, Ontario |

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning We will remember them.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADVERTISE IN THE NEXT FALCON?

FULL PAGE – \$600 HALF PAGE – \$300
 QUARTER PAGE – \$150 ONE EIGHTH PAGE – \$75

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
 falcon_newsletter@hotmail.com

CONFINED TO BARRACKS

- 1) SUNNYBROOK HOSPITAL
 – VETERANS WING
- Nelson Liston - K3E Room 21
 - Jim McCallen – L2 Room 34

- 2) BAYCREST HOSPITAL
 – 3560 BATHURST STREET
- Lloyd Tucker – 7th floor

- 3) SPECIAL CARE UNITS
- Don McCron
 - Keith (KC) Jackson
 - Jack Pickering
 - R.J. Girdlestone
 - George Walker
 - Clifford W. Carter

- 4) CONFINED AT HOME
 – PROBLEMS GETTING AROUND
- W. (Curly) Carothers
 - G.E. Colton
 - Ed Forest
 - Kenneth Soper
 - Jack McKenna

These Highlanders will be pleased to hear from you. Give them a call or better still, pay them a visit. Don't forget, they are Dileas, as are we.
 – HARRY WIGNALL

LAST MINUTE ITEMS

The O.C.A. is looking for a
Membership Chairman

Interested personal should contact Harry Wignall

*Dileas Gu Brath
 Harry Wignall, with thanks to
 John Dunne.*